

# **The Days at Florville**

*Anonymous*

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# The Days at Florville

Anonymous

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## *The Days at Florville*

*Anonymous*

### CHAPTER one

When the summer was over, memories of Florville dwelt in the minds of the lovers like phrases of a song.

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During the long months of the winter city, remembrance of Florville in its season possessed their imaginations like a ghost. It waylaid them at the rainy corners of the fashionable shoplit boulevards, as the glass treasure-houses were closing and the December crowds pressed homewards.

Other men and women in the winter city evoked the summer images and voices at their leisure. They conjured them from the warm resonant air of the theatre or the recital-room, while their companions sat still as prisoners of an enchanted castle before the rich keyboard dramas of Beethoven or Schumann.

To all the lovers, Florville was a dream of villas and gardens. Its air was the scent of mimosa in the silence of long, deserted corridors. A golden twilight of blinds drawn against strong afternoon sun dimmed the deep colours of Persian hangings and tall vases. At the stairway curve, a florid window-arch framed a distant flash of blue water.

The days of summer were unvarying and unalterable in such a place. Morning was a time of hot pearl-grey sky beyond white-painted rails. The calls of children rose among a dull salvo of breakers at the sea's limit. Blue and immaculate at midday, the afternoon tide glared silver in the sun's decline.

Every evening the disc of dark fire sank in the haze beyond the cypress trees, engulfed at last in a violet sea which lay calm as an Italian lake.

In the formal evenings of the winter city, while the salon music played, the lovers dwelt privately with the images and voices of the girls whom they had possessed in the secret places of the summer.

In the Villa Rif at Florville, within its deep gardens and behind its protective walls, such possession was complete. The lovers were the guardians of that place, the supreme arbiters of its laws. By removing the privilege of refusal, they bestowed on the girls another gift. It was the pretext of surrendering under compulsion to the most extreme fantasies of the lovers which removed from the girls all remorse and self-reproach.

At the centre of the Villa Rif lay a courtyard garden, built upon the site of ancient cloisters. Above its arches an inscription had been carved long before, the words drawing a charmed circle about the girls and the men who possessed them.

The sun was the servant which laid bare their beauty.

The grilles were the eyes which watched them.

The walls were the ears which heard them.

The carpets were the hands which caressed their nakedness.

The air was the gentle touch which ravished them. To those who had known it, Florville became a state of mind rather than a town with population figures and mean temperatures. Men and women in the winter city assured themselves that they need only travel there the next day to find the same azure sea and warm winds which they had known in June or August.

Men who knew Florville in their youth remained convinced that all their vitality would be restored by returning there. A man who lost the wife he had met at Florville knew that he need only to return to find another as young and beautiful. Even the victim of a mortal disease believed that health would be renewed if he could once regain the place where he had never known illness or pain.

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When spring came to the winter city, young men and women were subject to similar beliefs. At Florville, a girl would permit suggestions and acts of passion which she would reject elsewhere. She would submit to entreaties condemned as perverse in any place not wholly dedicated to pleasure.

The pleasures of the Villa Rif were not to be judged by the standards of the winter city. For the young women and the men who possessed them, much was possible at Florville that would have been unthinkable in another place or at a different season.

### CHAPTER two

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AFTERNOON light, cool and neutral as a gleam of water, filled the elegant modern bedroom where the young woman stood. Filtered by the pale scooped lace of the window curtains, the aqueous cloud-light broke in sudden jewels of radiant colour on the crystal pendants of the lamps. Shimmering lozenges of red and blue, green and violet, dappled the wall hangings of warm pearl.

From every wall the plain angled glass reflected the young woman's proud image, like mirrors held by the discreet hands of admiring servants. Above her, the tiny panes of the domed skylight seemed shaped to be the spyholes of her lovers. The wide bed awaited her with buttoned-vervet at its head and a cover of apricot silk.

Lesley stood before the mirrors for a moment longer, a thoughtful connoisseur of her own beauty. The plain glass held the image of a quite tall and trim young woman, twenty-eight years old, whose firm pale features and blue eyes were composed in an expression of self-possessed arrogance. She had the classic, fair-skinned beauty of an English middle-class girl, from the aloofness in her clear blue eyes to the slight sulkiness of her mouth and chin.

Her straight fair hair was cut in an urchin-crop, shaped close to her head from the high crown to the jawline, and worn in a long, centrally parted fringe. This boyishly unfeminine hairstyle was her boast of being an educated young woman, one who was modern enough in her outlook to be emancipated from any sense of belonging exclusively to her marriage and children.

It was perhaps the impatient flick of her fringe, the willful self-indulgent line of her mouth, which suggested a certain resentment against the world—or at least the male sex. Conventional morality dismissed Lesley as a promiscuous young wife because she had given herself to other men during seven or eight years of marriage—and because she had now walked out on her husband and infants in order to live with a succession of lovers. Yet, in the true sense, she was not promiscuous at all. Towards men who did not attract her, Lesley was as contemptuously dismissive as any prude. She was not a demure and courteous girl of eighteen with the world before her. At twenty-eight, resenting the years of submission to marriage and child-bearing, she gave herself to a few men and always on her own terms. To the admiration of the rest, Lesley returned the cool and disdainful stare of her blue eyes.

Turning from the bedroom mirrors, this modern young woman closed the door beyond which lay the peach-blossom marble and gold taps of a sumptuous bathroom. As she moved, the glass on every side reflected her figure in the chic Mack cotton of a coolie trouser-suit.

Lesley had the firm erotic maturity of a Spartan soldier-girl. As she drew off the short black jacket, a white singlet underneath moulded her breasts. Though softly developed in the years of marriage, they retained all their youthful poise and pride. The tight fit of the black cotton trousers showed that her long thighs were still trim and lightly muscled. Two well-controlled pregnancies had done no worse than impart a marginal

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broadening to her hips, a slight firming out of the cheeks of Lesley's bottom.

To the placid gaze of the mirrors, the young wife revealed herself more fully as she undid the Mack trousers, taut across her hips, and eased them down. Even in so simple an action there was, in Lesley, a curious mixture. She undressed with self-assurance, pushing down her pants to her knees, drawing first one slim foot out and then the other. Yet, as she turned to lay the trouser-suit on a chair, she walked in stockinged feet her head bowed, the urchin-crop parting under his own weight upon the nape of her neck, for all the world like a scolded child. Behind the challenge of her firm chin and parted fringe, she was both an arrogant young woman and, it seemed, an imploringly defenseless schoolgirl.

Like a pupil presenting herself for a ballet-class, Lesley was now dressed in nothing but the snug white singlet and a pair of sheer and translucent tights, whose deep honey-tone gave a warmth to the pale beauty they could not conceal.

The clinging white cotton of the singlet showed that her nipples were already erect as she faced the mirrors again. Standing before the glass in a moment of self-criticism, she combed the long fringe of her short fair hair briefly with her fingers. From the front, the sheer honeyed gloss of the tights showed the trim length of her thighs, the slight proud curve of her belly, the pubic hair pressed in the triangle of her loins as prettily as sea-fern seen through water.

Still inspecting herself, Lesley turned, her face twisted over her shoulder as she examined the seams which ran up her calves. She watched herself draw a hand over the seat of her tights as if to ensure that everything was as it should be. The angular mirrors framed this view, the lightly muscled rear of her thighs, the firm proud cheeks of Lesley's backside under the stretched film of the tights. The moonlike pallor of Lesley's buttocks was seen through this final veil, the cheeks pressing dosed the dark forbidden valley which divided them.

Bowing her head again, Lesley watched her stockinged feet as she walked with the precise and practised steps of a dancer to the silk-covered bed. Without bothering to turn back the apricot-coloured sheen of the covering, she knelt upon it, then slid down until she was lying on her back with her head supported by the pillow.

For several minutes she gazed up at the white ceiling with its mouldings of Viennese stucco. In the stillness of the room she listened to the sounds of the spring afternoon. The traffic in the street, below the balconies of the fashionable apartment buildings, was light and infrequent. It was the stirring of the linden trees just beneath the window which came more dearly to her. In the house itself there was no sound of the others, neither Connie nor Judith, Kurt nor Hassan.

Pulling up the singlet's hem to her ribs, Lesley slid her hands under tight white cotton and tentatively circled the nipples of her breasts with the tips of her fingers. She played with herself in this way for a while, her willful young mouth relaxing, her lips parting, and her blue eyes staring into some unfathomable distance of her own mind.

Her long, well-exercised thighs began to stir at last. Without taking off her tights, Lesley drew her knees up to her breasts so that she lay on her back in a squatting position. Mirrors at the foot of the bed, reflected her from underneath, her hips and thighs stretched to their broadest by the squat, the mesh of the tights shaping the lips of her sex like a second skin.

Shaking her fringe into place, the young wife allowed her hand to move up her legs from the knee, as though it were that of a lover approaching her. With the back of her nails, within the whispering film of the tights, she began to stroke the parted vaginal lips.

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There was no hint of shame nor of excitement in her action. She shifted a little, opening herself more fully to her own caresses, and stared at the ceiling above her without the least self-consciousness. Lesley made love to herself often, and however strange it might seem, she had done so more often during her marriage than at any other time.

It was not the failure of her husband as a lover which had prompted this. Like many modern young women of her class, Lesley held the view that her body belonged to her and that she would use it as she pleased. To explore her own sexuality and learn the routes of pleasure was the privilege of any intelligent and sexually liberated young woman. How else was she to determine those things which she would ask a lover to do to her—and those things which she would forbid him?

She had usually chosen the afternoon, when the children were still at school and her husband at work. Then she would leave her task in the garden or the house and go upstairs to the bedroom. There she would lie naked under the silent gaze of the mirrors and play with herself intermittently for two or three hours. It was both self-indulgence and experiment. For part of the time Lesley masturbated, slowly and intricately. For the rest she curled naked on the bed, lost in thought.

Now, in the spring afternoon of another main house, Lesley emitted a long shuddering breath and the wetness of her love began to form a sheen in the crotch of her tights. Her fingers opened as she rubbed and squeezed more vigorously, her thighs tightening in a slight and convulsive rhythm. There had been times when Lesley had brought herself to such a pitch that each of her knees had caused bruising by its pressure on the inner surface of the opposite thigh.

Lesley caught her breath, as if from exertion, and turned on to her side. Her knees were still drawn up and her fingers moved with irregular vigour over her clitoris and vaginal lips in the wet gusset of her tights.

Dreams of her lovers rose in her thoughts and faded again. As she abandoned herself to pleasure, she lost the power to control those ghosts which lurked in the recesses of her mind. There were men whom she had loved and deserted. There were men whom she had dismissed with contempt. And there were men who had taken a vindictive delight in humiliating her.

It was not by her own choice that her thoughts turned to one of the last group as her knees pressed together impatiently and the wetness of her tights spread down her legs.

The incident had been trivial enough and yet it haunted her, its memory woken by the sight of the black trouser-suit lying on the chair. As she played with herself, breathlessly and with fevered energy, Lesley saw again the sunlit garden in the last year of her marriage. She had been wearing the black suit then.

She had been picking flowers, the older child close by her. At first she had not even noticed the man, who was a well-dressed stranger of forty. Even when she saw him, she had not observed the camera in his hands. The wall and the trees had shielded him from her in part. She was also self-centredly indifferent to any man in whom her interest was not aroused. It was the child's fidgeting and turning of the head which made her realise at last that the faint clicking was the sound of the camera's shutter and that the man had been surreptitiously photographing her for half an hour.

He had not touched her or spoken to her. Yet any doubt was dispelled when she held the child against her and turned to the voyeur. He covered the camera lens and met her startled blue eyes with a wide smile of amusement at her shock and indignation over the use he had made of her. Before Lesley could even recover breath to protest, the man had turned and walked away.

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The incident might have been trivial enough, though an emancipated and self–possessed young woman like Lesley was angered and humiliated. She felt a natural disgust and contempt for the man who had taken these pictures of her for his private collection. Yet a certain fear and curiosity coloured her thoughts when she wondered what enjoyments and ordeals he inflicted on her in the person of her photographic image.

The true fright had come several days later, when the post brought her a package of finished full–plate photographs. There were portrait studies of her face, in every mood from a sulky turn of the mouth to a thoughtful softness in her blue eyes under the fair parted fringe of her hair. Other pictures showed her standing, sitting, holding the child against her, her breasts perfectly outlined by the white singlet. Some poses were erotically suggestive or comically vindictive. One had been taken from just behind her as Lesley stooped to pick a flower. Her firm thighs were braced apart a little and her knees bent forward. The thin black cloth of her trouser–seat was drawn skin–tight over the fully rounded and widely parted cheeks of Lesley's bottom. The man had scrawled some words below, fantasies of whips and impalement, leaving Lesley in no doubt as to the desires which she had stimulated in him.

What caused her heart to jump with a strange fear and excitement was the knowledge that the man who wished to do these things to her had gone to the trouble of tracing her name and where she lived. Was it only in order that he might send these mementoes of his lust to her? Or did his private moments of enjoyment seem more exquisite because the photographs bore the identity of a real woman?

The incident was some months in the past, half–remembered like a lesson from her schooldays. Yet the thought of it still affected her profoundly. As she dwelt upon the details, Lesley had without realising it stopped playing with herself. Her hand lay motionless on her stockinged thigh and the blue eyes under the boyish fringe of fair hair stared at the onyx boxes on the glass tables without seeing them.

Slowly she began to caress herself again, the willful young mouth tightening as she determined to bring herself to a climax. Sudden contrary surges of longing and its appeasement throbbed in her loins, her lips parted softly and her breathing became audible. The blue eyes closed, fluttered open briefly, and then closed again, as if to capture and hold the piteous dream of pleasure.

She had mistimed it. As her fingers moved again, now gentle and wet with the slippery dew, there was a light sound beyond the double dove–grey doors which led to the landing. The square onyx dock on the peach mirror table with its chromium banding stood with its gold hands at four o'clock. She knew that it was Connie.

Though Lesley stopped what she was doing to herself, it was not with any sense of shame or alarm. Connie, the young oriental servant, had seen such things before. Lesley lay with her hand on the soft inner swell of her thigh again and waited for the doors to open. She heard the metallic movement of the coffee pot in the dish, the diminutive rattle of china, as Connie balanced the tray and turned the glass handle.

Entering, closing the door behind her, Connie was a vision of the demure oriental maiden at twenty–two years old. The sheen of black hair falling to her shoulder–blades was held back from her face by a silver clip on either side.

Like a Thai temple–dancer in her movements, Connie's almond eyes and flat features were set in a pretty heart–shaped face. The moods of Asian beauty changed easily upon her lips and in her eyes, from beautiful impassivity to a devil–mask of laughter, and then to a quick glancing apprehension. Narrow–waisted, slim at shoulders and thighs, Connie's saffron yellow smoothness had the more neatly developed breasts and the less fully–rounded buttocks which made such Asian girls resemble children.

That afternoon Connie came to her mistress at the usual time of four o'clock. The almond–eyed girl seemed as if she had intended to come naked to the room but had been timid lest one of the men should see her as she

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went up the stairs. She wore a black silk cord, doubled, so that it ran round her waist, down her loins and under her legs, drawn up to the back of the waist between the demure pale yellow cheeks of Connie's bottom.

Without a word she set the tray down on the glass table and poured the coffee for her young mistress. As Lesley drew herself up against the pillow, Connie knelt at the side of the bed, like a handmaid of this fair-skinned Venus, offering her the petal-fine Meissen cup.

In the silence, Lesley took it and drank slowly, handing it back to Connie when she had finished. The fine-boned Chinese girl kept her eyes lowered as if not daring to gaze at the hips and thighs of the pale beauty. Presently she raised her face, looking at the dark line which the coffee had left on the fair skin above Lesley's upper lip. Connie leant forward slowly, as if about to kiss her. Instead, the tip of her tongue protruded and, with eyes closed, she licked the coffee smear from Lesley's mouth and took it into her own.

Then it was Connie who, like a well-trained servant, assumed the management of their relationship. She stood up and stooped over the bed, Lesley raising her hips a little from the silk cover so that her stocking-tights might be peeled well down her thighs. Then Connie, lay gently on the bed, her head towards Lesley's knees, her slim feet on the pillow, and her knees drawn up a little. Their two bodies formed halves of a complementary curve. Lesley's head was pillowed on Connie's legs just above the knees as they lay in their inverted embrace. Connie's face was level with the opening of the English girl's thighs. Lesley's view was of the slim saffron smoothness of Connie's bottom and the rear of her thighs.

Connie undid the black silk cord which had covered her most intimate body-furrows, and dropped it on the floor.

"You like to see me," she said with gentle firmness. There was no suggestion that Lesley was required to reciprocate in making love, only that it would be more exciting for her if she could see the Asian girl's vaginal lips and anus while Connie's fingers and lips performed their humble service.

Connie had been taught the arts of female masturbation by a domineering mistress when she was twelve years old. Her fingers stroked the wetness which matted the fair hair on Lesley's flushed vaginal lips.

"You have made love to yourself!" Connie said, in a quiet voice which mingled reproach and admiration. Then she began to exercise her own skill with gentle fingers upon Lesley's clitoris and labia, rubbing and squeezing, rubbing and squeezing, rubbing, rubbing, until it was Lesley's turn to utter the first muted, questioning cry.

The vaginal lubricant was wet on the inner surfaces of Lesley's upper thighs. Not disdaining the moisture, Connie began to lick it away with an agile tongue. Tantalising, she allowed these lingual caresses to come closer until she touched the pink sliver of the clitoris and brought a sharper cry from her proud young mistress. Holding Lesley firmly by the open thighs, the pretty Asian witch lunged her tongue between the widened and imploring lips, thrusting in and out, in and out, in and out....

Despite her years of marriage and her lovers, Lesley had never been able to bring herself to perform such a service for any partner—man or woman. Sometimes she would explore Connie with her fingers while the other girl's tongue made love to her. The slim Chinese beauty accepted gratefully the inexperienced fingers between her legs. Once Lesley had brought her fingertip to Connie's anus. The saffron-skinned girl had tightened instinctively with apprehension and refusal, only to relax her seat-cheeks and offer herself at once, as if for fear of offending.

At present, Lesley was self-absorbed in her own erotic torment. Her head rolled from side to side on its pillow of smooth Asian skin. She pulled restlessly at her lower lip with her teeth, her breath was like the

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victim of a fever and her cries grew higher and more plaintive.

The mingled saliva and vaginal lubricant was in danger of running down over the curve of Lesley's bare thigh and blemishing the apricot silk of the bed-cover. Connie wiped the wetness with her own hand and then wiped her hand on her flank. She lay quiet and impassive as her mouth served the English girl's pleasure. There was a mute innocence about the yellow tan of Connie's bottom-cheeks and the vaginal entry peeping back between her thighs as she patiently presented herself to Lesley's view.

Lesley saw a timeless tranquillity and submission in this pose. Connie lay quiet and timid as the daughter of a defeated city who knows that she must be ploughed and rent by the brutal soldiery of the conqueror, among the fires of destruction and the cries of butchery. She lay as if awaiting, one after another, the pitiless javelins of flesh which the drunken victors would plant between her legs and in her backside. She lay as if for a drama whose end must be the impaling pike-handle up Connie's behind and the keen blade drawn across her throat.

Lesley began a crescendo of sharp, hard cries, like a young animal in pain. Connie teased her further and further along the narrowing path of ecstasy, swelling the balloon of pleasure fuller in her loins before it should burst. In her delirium, Lesley's tongue ran aimlessly on her own parted lips. Her thighs began to tense spasmodically as if striving to beat together. In the erotic frenzy of her orgasm, anything was possible to her—betrayal, murder, torment—either to be inflicted or undergone.

With a final violent sob she had reached the crest of her ecstasy and was falling into the abyss, deeper and for ever.

In a few moments she lay calm again. Connie slipped from the bed, took a linen towel, raised Lesley's hips and spread it under her, in order to spare the apricot silk. Then the Chinese girl went to the bathroom and turned on a gush of warm water from the gold taps. In a moment more she returned with a bowlful, now lightly scented by orange blossom. Taking as much care as if she were making love to Lesley again, Connie began to sponge and dry the vaginal tract, the buttocks and their cleavage, the thighs, legs, belly, breasts, back, and neck of the young woman whom she served with such obedience.

By the time all this was done, Lesley's composure had returned, the self-possession filled her fine blue eyes again and the line of her mouth was firm and willful. The singlet and the soiled tights were left in a crumpled tangle on the floor for Connie to dispose of. Lesley dressed herself in a pair of black briefs of stretched cotton web, whose elasticated fit encased her hips, loins and buttocks tightly and revealingly as to their shape. She chose a matching breast-halter. Honey-toned translucent stockings were drawn sheer and smooth up her legs by the elastic straps of her black suspenders.

Standing before the mirror, she added to this ensemble a cream silk blouse with a tied neck, and a long brown skirt which came tight round her legs like a peasant girl's. When she had drawn on the smooth brown boots which encased her legs tightly from the foot to the top of the calf, she was almost ready.

Lesley, like the confident young woman she was, showed her emancipation by disdaining to wear make-up. This omission made her arrogant pate beauty all the more seductive to men who dreamt of subduing and punishing her. It was one of love's paradoxes, of which she was unaware and which, perhaps, she would never understand.

There were sounds outside of the servants carrying cases and portmanteaus so that all should be ready for the night train. Lesley watched Connie pick up the singlet and tights from the floor, beginning the last chores before the house was closed for the summer.

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Only then did Lesley walk across to the Chinese girl, who stood naked and demure before her. She kissed Connie on the lips and felt the quick, brief pouting response.

“You shall go to Florville with us,” Lesley said quietly, “Kurt has arranged it because it pleases me.”

She walked slowly away and onto the narrow landing of the circular stairway under the grey glass dome at the centre of the house. The pale marble stairs with their smooth brass rail and openwork design of the bannisters, wound down to a hallway paved with what might have been cabalistic signs. With one hand on the wide brass rail, Lesley went down the stairs, past the closed bedroom doors at each of the three levels.

Kurt was standing at the bottom, still in white riding breeches and tunic. The stern military cast of his features softened in a smile as he took Lesley's hand and kissed her lightly on the cheek. His voice murmured in her ear, little more than a breath.

“There is a ceremony to be performed before we leave. Had you forgotten?”

### CHAPTER three

Lesley brushed her parted fringe impatiently and turned her blue eyes to Kurt with a glance of doubt and resentment.

“Ceremony?” she said with distaste, “What ceremony?”

“Herr Muller and Judith,” Kurt held her with his smile, affectionate yet mocking, “The solemn farewell of the teacher to the pupil.”

“No!” said Lesley sullenly, “Muller is a brute! He has no right to do such things to her. You must tell him so, love! Please!”

They walked across the marble design of the oval hallway together to the ante-room with its gilt cornices and its long Egyptian settees of emerald velvet and carved scrolls. Kurt took her hand again.

“Don't be foolish,” he said, a harder edge to his voice which proclaimed him the master of the situation, “It is my parting gift to Muller for teaching her so assiduously in the past few months.”

Between the sofas the ante-room was carpeted by the blue and tawny patterns of Persian runners. The deep walnut gloss of a Steinway piano with its lid raised reflected the cloudy afternoon outside. On the music-stand of the keyboard someone had left a copy of Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques*, the familiar cover of an Augener edition, white with an inset border of blue and the composer's name in bold black script.

Lesley, her hand still held by Kurt, pulled back.

“No!” she said in the same peevish voice, “I won't go in there! I shall go back upstairs.”

Kurt kissed her gently on the cheek again and murmured in her ear.

“If we may not go into the other room with them, at least stay with me here. Who will there be to intercede for Judith, if you go upstairs?”

It amused him that Lesley's indignation on behalf of Judith faded so easily at the prospect of being caressed

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and aroused. He led the young woman to the partition which divided the ante-room from the drawing-room beyond. One section of the mirrored louvred doors separating the two rooms had been folded back by about six inches. It gave a full view of the long salon which lay on the far side.

They stood there, Kurt holding Lesley with her back to him, looking over her shoulder, so that both shared the view of the other room through the gap. Immediately in front of Lesley, between her and the screen, was a round leather-topped table. Kurt kissed the crown of the young wife's fair boyish crop and felt her relax a little.

In the drawing-room the first preparations were being made. The maidservant, Maggie, came in. She was a sturdy young blonde of twenty-one, dressed in black, the lank golden hair worn loose to her shoulders and parted, like Lesley's, in a fringe. Maggie turned the flower-patterned sofa so that the light from the long terrace-windows fell upon it. She cleared the loose cushions from its surface.

While she was busy with this, Herr Muller came in from the terrace. He was a man of fifty, his hair and beard a little grizzled, yet his shoulders were strong and straight. There was an appearance of compact power in his movements. He looked round the room and then nodded at Maggie.

"Very well," he said abruptly, "You may tell her to come in now."

There was a pause as he waited for Judith. During this moment, Kurt's lips brushed the ear of the young woman whom he was holding with her back against him as they watched.

"Lean forward, Lesley. Support yourself with your hands on the table."

"Why?" She half turned her head without looking back at him.

"Because I tell you to."

She hesitated a moment more, as if to indicate that she obeyed as a matter of her own choice and not under his compulsion. Then she curved forward from the waist, her palms well spaced out on the leather inlay of the table.

There was the sound of a door opening in the far room and then a girl of sixteen came into sight. Dressed in her school uniform, Judith had none the less the tall elegant figure of beauty. Her light brown hair swept like a veil from her high crown to her shoulder-blades, framing the pale oval of her face with its wide-set hazel eyes and its demure regular features. Judith was a beautiful woman of sixteen dressed in a uniform of childish simplicity. Her white school blouse and tie were covered by a navy-blue cardigan which was thin and tight. The little grey skirt was absurdly skimpy and brief for a girl of her height and age, coming down only to mid-thigh and leaving bare the slim pale grace of Judith's legs. Below that she boasted only a pair of tight black knee-socks which shaped her legs from her feet up to the elastic tops gripping tightly just below her knees.

She stood before Herr Muller, her teacher, with her hands clasped behind her neck and her head bowed a little in a gesture of good manners. She had learnt early in life to be demure, quiet, and submissive.

"You know what must happen now, Judith?" Herr Muller raised her chin with his finger and almost seemed to smile as he looked into those beautiful young eyes. "I have kept a careful inventory of all your misdemeanours in the past six months so that there should be a reckoning before we parted. You are a young woman now, Judith, and cannot be forgiven like a mere child. You know what I mean, I think?"

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She dared not meet his gaze. While he recited the catalogue of her offences, Kurt occupied himself with Lesley, who still leant forward with her hands on the table at their vantage point. He worked the hem of the skirt up over her calves and thighs until the material was gathered in an untidy tangle about her waist. Glancing down, he surveyed the golden sheen of her stockings legs, the bare pallor of her upper thighs, and her hips, which were tightly shaped by Lesley's black stretch-briefs. Kurt's hand slipped between Lesley's thighs from the back and his fingertips began to tickle the soft warmth of her vaginal lips through the warm web of elasticated cotton. He was amused to find that she was a little wet from her self-love on the bed and her fulfilment with Connie. His lips kissed her ear and he breathed to her as his fingers stroked between her legs.

"You've been a secret little girl, haven't you, Lesley? At Florville we shall insist that you do such things more publicly."

He felt her tighten at this. Was it the outrageous suggestion, or did her thighs tense involuntarily on the hand which gave her such satisfaction? Lesley spread her feet a little and lay further forward over the table, resting on her elbows, each breath becoming longer and audible as he played with her.

In a moment more Lesley reached back to open the front of Kurt's trousers and release his erection. Then she pushed his hand away from her sex. But it was only in order that she might pull the black briefs well down her legs. As soon as Kurt's erection approached between her legs from behind, Lesley made short, thrusting movements to impale herself on him. Her woman-sounds were in part gasps of exertion and in part muted whimpers of frustration. In her greed for satisfaction, she cared nothing more about Judith's fate.

As they made love, Kurt and Lesley watched the scene in the next room. Kurt had planned this and even Lesley, who had so indignantly denounced the barbarism of what Muller would do to Judith, now seemed to derive some excitement from it in her present situation.

"Your skirt, Judith?" said Muller peremptorily, "Slip it off and leave it on the chair!"

Muller and the two voyeurs watched as Judith undid the skirt, slid it down her long fair thighs and drew her feet from it one by one. She laid it on the chair and turned to her teacher again. Apart from her smart black knee-socks, Judith's only garment below the waist was a pair of white stretch-briefs, the traditional underpants of a sixth-form schoolgirl. Her long elegant legs with their slim grace would have been the envy of a ballerina. Where her tight briefs made a narrow triangle at her loins, a single tendril of Judith's fine light-brown pubic hair had escaped them to curl against her thigh. She turned, and now the seat of the tight briefs outlined a pair of elegant oval bottom-cheeks which the prettiest nymph in mythology might have coveted.

"Kneel on the sofa, Judith!" said Muller quietly, "Kneel facing the padded back. Good. Now, lift your hips from your heels and go right forward. Kneel *over* the sofa-back so that it supports your belly. Like that."

He studied her in this posture. There was a charming innocence in the sight of Judith's slim bare legs, so fair-skinned and womanly. The seat of her knickers showed a taut resilience in the shape of her tightly rounded and gently parted bottom-cheeks.

"We must have your panties down, Judith, so that we can whip you properly."

"No! Oh, no!" In this imploring protest there was, for the first time, a catch of tears.

"Don't be foolish, Judith! You've never been chastised before, I understand. It will make very little difference to the amount of pain whether you wear your knickers or not. You may just as well have it properly, without

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them, so that you know what a real whipping is like!”

Without further delay, he took the waistband of the white stretch-briefs and pulled them down, working them over her hips and thighs. The warmth of the day and her own slight perspiration, caused the thin white cotton to gather a little under her legs and in Judith's bottom-crack. Even before the agony of the whipping she had to undergo an ordeal from the fingers of her middle-aged teacher, who could not resist exploring between the thighs and buttocks of a tall and beautiful sixteen-year-old girl. At last Judith's stretch-briefs were twisted round her ankles. Muller was prepared to begin.

His choice was not the cane or the birch of the schoolroom but a length of sash-cord which he held at its two ends so that it dangled as a loop about eighteen inches long. Judith's sweep of light brown hair brushed across her back as she craned round fearfully to watch him. Muller had eyes only for the long pale thighs above her black knee socks and the bare moonlike ovals of Judith's bottom-cheeks.

With lips drawn back from his clenched teeth, he raised the whipcord and lashed it down across Judith's bare buttocks. She let out a wild scream and her hands clutched and tore at the sofa covering. Writhing desperately, she prevented the next two strokes from finding their mark—but only at the cost of taking the first lash of whipcord across the backs of her thighs and the next across the backs of her knees.

“Right forward over the back of the sofa, Judith!” said Muller sharply, “At once. Don't twist on your hip like that! Quite still!”

Yet as soon as he raised the whipcord again, she could not control her fright.

“Take your hand away from bottom, Judith! At once! Very well, I see that I must tie your wrists out of the way!”

Judith wept and sobbed, imploring him with all the tearful beauty of her pale oval face and its brimming hazel eyes. But Muller was unmoved and the girl knew better than to dare physical resistance. She allowed her wrists to be tied tightly together with another length of stout cord. Then she knelt forward, bending right over the sofa-back so that her hands might be tied, with her arms at full stretch, to the iron frame which supported the sofa at its base.

A tall and beautiful schoolgirl in this posture was made to appear at the same time absurd and yet extremely provoking. The tears in her wide-set hazel eyes and the downward curve of her mouth as she pleaded with her teacher, made the pale oval of her face in its frame of fine nut-brown hair no less appealing. As she knelt tightly forward over the back of the sofa, there was a rear view of her slim fair-skinned thighs rising to the tautly rounded nymph-cheeks of Judith's backside. Demurely rounded, yet wantonly parted, their womanly charm completed the paradox of her appearance.

High up between the rear of her thighs it was just possible to glimpse the rear view of the lightly haired adolescent pudenda which the pupil had exposed much more fully as she tried to evade the first three strokes of the whip. Between the parted ovals of her buttocks was the tight dark bud, its surround like a lightly veined leaf—Judith's anus which the punishment posture obliged this innocent girl to offer in so lewd a manner.

Muller sat down on the sofa, holding a strap which he had taken from the side-table. With this he pinioned the girl's legs together tightly, just above her knees, also drawing the strap through a metal strut under the cushioning to hold her in place. He continued to sit a moment longer, his eyes dwelling on the rear pout of her vaginal lips and the dark closed bud between her buttocks. Like the modest maiden she was, she had washed these areas before reporting for the punishment she knew had been decreed. Yet the day was warm. Already the clean scent of soap was mingled with the mineral and musty girl-scent from between her thighs and from

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between the cheeks of Judith's bottom. Muller breathed it as he spoke.

“Since I shall not see you again, Judith, there is no need for hypocrisy now. I have been looking forward to this day ever since you became my pupil in the autumn. If you were in my absolute power, it would not stop at a whipping. You would be made to suck the penis before it rode in triumph between your thighs and its knob sought the depths of your bottom. It shocks you that a teacher should dream of such things? I promise you that most men who have been teachers of such a girl as you have indulged these fantasies about you! They, too, would enjoy whipping your young bottom almost as much as I shall enjoy it now!”

He stood up and turned the hem of her white blouse back, well above her waist, so that Judith's hips and buttocks were properly bare. The girl twisted her face round further, more anxiously than ever, the veil of fine silken brown hair spilling forward over her shoulders.

Tight-lipped again, Muller raised the loop of whipcord and lashed it down with a vicious energy across the pale oval cheeks of Judith's sixteen-year-old bottom. For a moment the long-legged beauty seemed frozen by the paralysing anguish of the impact. Then she gave a frantic cry and contorted her buttocks in a wild surging.

The teacher tamed her by a second and a third whip-stroke, raising sinuous weals across the twin curves of Judith's behind. In angry crimson the looped tracery of the cord began to pattern her buttocks, sometimes curling round to catch the flank of her hip or the inner edge of her seat-cheeks where they curved in to meet. Judith screamed for forgiveness, for pity, even for a moment's respite.

The prints of the whipcord began to merge into two crimson patches, centred on the crowns of her buttocks. Muller deliberately aimed the next twelve strokes at those very areas of her behind where he had already hurt her so badly. In desperation, Judith tried to twist her backside away but the whip followed her pitilessly. A wickedly aimed stroke of the lash drew an irregular row of ruby dots from her thrashed seat-cheeks. As though he could not see it for himself, Judith screamed at Muller that the lash had made her bottom bleed.

“Control yourself, Judith!” he said with a smile, “When a beautiful girl like you is whipped, a bead or two of blood should be drawn from her bottom! Round your backside out properly. You must learn to offer it prettily for your punishments!”

With these last words, he slashed her with the cord across the softer undercurve of her bottom-cheeks, just along the faint crease where Judith's buttocks and thighs met. Judith had exhausted the first energy of her cries and she now responded to the strokes with an abrupt shriek after each impact of the whip. It seemed, after more than twenty strokes, that she had lost the breath to do more.

The teacher met the eyes of his weeping beauty with a mischievous smile, his tongue touching his lip as if in promise of some devilment. With all his strength he lashed her eight times across the tender and softer lower curve of her bottom.

Her head went forward over the sofa, and he looked to be sure that she had not swooned. The tall schoolgirl had merely clenched the woollen ribbing of the sofa in her teeth to brace herself. Lower down, the cloth cover of the furniture was torn where her fingernails had ripped at it in her frenzy.

Muller lashed her twice across the backs of her knees. For the next few days, Judith would not walk a step without being reminded of him by the discomfort which the movement caused.

Again he cut her across the bottom but her rescue was in sight. Under the final strokes, Judith screamed for her parents, her boy-friend—all those who could or could not hear her—to come and save her. Yet the

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teacher's hand was sliding into the front of his trousers to relieve a stiffness he could no longer endure. His lashing became irregular, the whipcord soon dropped and he sank at last on to the sofa in his paroxysm, his head pillowed on Judith's bare hip. Then without another word to her he got up and walked from the room. It was Maggie, the blonde maid, who came in almost at once, to untie Judith's hands.

Kurt still held Lesley over the table, impaled on his erection. He moved gently inside her as they watched Judith. The girl sobbed uncontrollably as a brokenhearted child. Yet even as she wept, Judith began to move slowly and painfully from her position. She stood up, brushing away tears with her hand and gulping down some of the sobs which rose in her throat. Then, like a well-trained young woman, she turned the sofa round and moved the table a little to its usual place in the room. These pieces of furniture had been moved for use in her punishment. It was her duty to put them back.

Cautiously and with many a wince, she managed to put on her short grey skirt. Her school knickers remained crumpled and concealed in her hand. Judith's buttocks were so swollen and bruised from the whipping that it was unthinkable for her to endure the tightness of her panties until she had sponged herself with cool soothing water.

Even so, she could not resist going to the drawing-room mirror and turning her back to it. She lifted her brief school skirt and looked round over her shoulder in a long and thoughtful inspection of her whipped backside. The agony of the ordeal did not quite conquer all her natural feminine fascination with what had been done to her. She picked up the sash-cord with which she had been flogged and ran it through her fingers. Her long brown hair fell forward about her face as she looked at the whip with the same unmistakable curiosity. Then she put down the lash, turned, and walked slowly from the room.

Kurt held Lesley's pale flanks with either hand as she bent before him. His loins smacked rhythmically against her buttocks as his erection thrust deep into her sex. How excited she was! He could feel the amount and rapidity of her lubrication. It was certainly a consequence of her misbehaviour in the bedroom, he thought. Yet, for all Lesley's protests at the severity of the punishment, she had lubricated copiously while watching Judith being thrashed.

She came with short spasmodic cries. Kurt feeling his own orgasm approach, withdrew and allowed all the spawn to arc on to the proud pale moons of Lesley's bottom, so that the gruel ran thickly down and spent itself on her thighs. He then pulled up the black stretch-briefs over Lesley's splattered hips and seat, ensuring the sheen of sperm on her pale flesh would not damage her skirt. She straightened up and turned round to be taken in his arms and kissed. With eyes closed she gave him her tongue in his open mouth. Then Kurt smiled and held her away from him, addressing her as if she were a little girl rather than a promiscuous young wife with two children of her own.

“Go upstairs and put on clean panties, Lesley. The car will be here in half an hour.”

She walked away with her short fair hair slightly bowed as if her young pride had been in some way humbled by the manner of her dismissal. Kurt withdrew to the drawing-room, the scene of Judith's chastisement. He saw a movement reflected in the glass and turned as Hassan came in from another direction.

Hassan, with his sleek dark hair and the wry sardonic line of his mouth, was smiling as he always seemed to smile on such occasions as this. There was no doubt that he, too, had watched Judith's ordeal from the concealment of the curtains on that side of the room. There was a cushion on the floor. Kurt knew that Maggie, the maidservant with the golden blonde hair and fair skin had knelt before him on it while she tasted Hassan's passion in her mouth. Of the four young women in the house, only Maggie was deemed to belong to Hassan. Lesley and her maid Connie, as well as Judith, were under Kurt's protection.

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Hassan laughed.

“How the learned Herr Muller must envy Lesley—to go to Florville as Judith's governess! How passionate that old man would be with Judith if she were in his power!”

Kurt sat on the sofa in his jacket and riding-breeches, smiling at his friend. He lit a cigarette and drew in smoke.

“Muller can never appreciate Judith and Lesley as you do. Suppose I intend to give them to you. Would you not curse me if I dismissed Lesley as governess now and put Judith under the power of Herr Muller? Come, you have Maggie for the time being. Let her satisfy you until our arrangements are complete!”

The talk of Florville and its season occupied every room of the house, even among the servants who were closing shutters across windows which would not be opened again until October. There was a sound of hat-boxes and portmanteaus being assembled, the baggage which would accompany the travellers, although by a different train.

When the car came, the two men and the four young women were ready. Kurt and Hassan rode in front. Behind them were Judith, Lesley, the governess, Maggie and Connie, the two maids. Judith was now dressed in a manner more fitting to her beauty. The green velveteen dress with its narrow waist suited the pale oval dignity of her young face, the wide hazel eyes, and the veil of fine light brown hair.

Judith had wept a good deal after her punishment and the traces of that weeping were still evident in her face. She had cried with the pain of her buttocks wealed and swollen by the whipcord. Yet her tears flowed even more for the thought of what had been done to her. She walked slowly and uncertainly. The chauffeur came to help her into the buttoned leather interior of the car but Kurt waved him away.

“There is no need of that! She was whipped by her teacher this afternoon and feels a little sorry for herself. She can manage well enough on her own.”

Throughout the drive to the Zoo station, the driver kept glancing at Judith in his mirror. When he caught her eyes he gave her a smile of quiet amusement. At length, to avoid this, the girl laid her head on Lesley's lap, allowing the young woman to stroke her hair and comfort her.

Rain in the winter city caused the wet black streets to soak up moisture—clouded lights along its shop—lit boulevards. The opulent window displays seemed to shine more splendidly against this curious black radiance. The long glass cases of the stores offered their treasures like the burnished and silken booty of an imperial campaign. These riches of conquest were tendered by a frieze of slim wax mannequins, like slave—girls in the victor's triumphal procession.

The round green poster pillars on the broad pavements offered *Salome* at the Opera, *Wallenstein* at the Schauspielhaus. A vintner's window displayed dark bottles on deep bloodstone velvet. One blue—black Madeira label bore *Gran Cama de Lobos* in thickly stamped gold. A small inset window by a fashion boutique appeared like a votive niche with a glass front. It held a pine statuette, oiled and polished, the symbolic sweep of a young female nude with sloping shoulders and turning thighs, half pirouetting among objects of tribute. To one side a pure silk scarf swept with casual elegance down the length of its wire stand, the crimson sheen patterned by a key motif in silver and bronze. On the other flank of the nude figure, the coffee brown gloss of a child's riding—switch curved slightly against the hessian—covered wall of the niche.

To Kurt, the sight of such shops brought back a first recollection of Maggie, when he and Hassan had made her acquaintance several months before. Maggie with her coltish figure and the golden blonde hair worn loose

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and lank to her collar with a parted fringe, just like a little girl. Maggie at work in the window, the faded blue jeans-trousers and close-fitting black singlet. Maggie with her fair-skinned face and blue eyes, features a little crude like a *jolie laide*. Maggie with her slut's brazenness and child's innocence so alluringly mingled. Maggie with her tongue pressed against her upper lip in a thoughtful moment. Maggie fooling energetically with the young men at work. Maggie on all fours brushing energetically. Maggie's bottom, full-Cheeked under the tight jeans-seat as she bends, drawing the attention of passers-by. Maggie pretending to lose a pin and looking for it. Kneeling with back to the window and head touching the carpet as she scans about. Maggie's bottom-cheeks tightly rounded and lewdly parted under her tight jeans in this posture, even the soft purse of pubic flesh outlined. Smiles and cameras among the onlookers. A boy playing with himself furtively under his coat, adoring Maggie's sluttish young rump through the glass.

Kurt smiled at the memory. Presently the black car drew up by the echoing glass temple of the departure hall. Judith, who had been holding Lesley's hand to her cheek as she lay with her head on the young wife's lap, now took the hand and kissed it, tasting her own tears upon it as she did so.

All stations, it seemed, had their individual association and odours. The travellers to Florville were embowered by the perfume of flowers and scents of fresh fruit borne in from the stalls near the Kantstrasse. Departure boards carried the names of distant cities and resorts like the verses of a poem. Close to the damp parks and lit shop-fronts of the city, the long nave of the terminus was adorned with frescoes which showed men and women beside a lavender sea, under pink pergolas hung with purple grape. However distant Florville might be, the flowery coasts of its perpetual summer, even the minarets and the arches of Moorish palaces beyond, were first perceived under this great glass roof in the winter city.

## CHAPTER four

Evening, under the echoing glass nave of the departure bay, the night express to the summer coasts stood waiting. From the tawny shades of its cabin-lamps a warm amber flush was diffused through the windows of the softly carpeted wagon-lit and restaurant car. Here and there a darker rectangle of glass reflected the dim blue glow of a sleeping-light. At the diminutive dinner-tables as the white-coated stewards brought ice and glasses, the talk was already of villas and tennis courts, polo grounds and casinos, hotels where the ranked flags signalled the opening of the summer season.

In the long lamplit restaurant car, women were dressed for their journey as if for the formality of the opera. Young wives in plain backless gowns like the maiden slaves of an Egyptian queen. Young brides in white satin, smooth and tight on their thighs and hips, with the short curled hair of page-boys. Women in cotton trouser-suits and a pair of amorous girls dressed alike in blue matador pants, coatees and cloche hats.

The table at which the two men sat with Lesley and Judith attracted the glances of other men and women alike. There was a piquant contrast between Kurt's blonde self-confidence and the darker sophistication of Hassan. Lesley, the self-confident young Venus-wife of twenty-eight, made a suggestive partner for the pale beauty of Judith, the sweep of her light brown hair from her high crown to her shoulders catching the warm slanting light of the lamps.

Pine forests and the gleam of early moonlight on flat grey lakes moved in a panorama beyond the windows of the restaurant car. The sudden movement of small animals in the light of the express and the isolated glow of a hunter's lamp animated the still and sombre scenes.

By ten o'clock, only a single couple remained in the dining coach, smoking and delaying the moment of their intimacy. For the other men and women, the long hours of the journey in their sleeping cabins had begun.

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Kurt, as usual, had reserved the three compartments which made a self-contained area at one end of the royal blue wagon-lit. These little rooms had an air of antique luxury, for the coach had travelled between Florville and the inland cities for many years. Its imperial dignity appeared in the dark polished wood, the rich and slightly faded upholstery of the deep banquettes. Flame-patterned mahogany in the wooden panelling had been waxed to a liquid gloss. On each side of the cabin, a bed was made up with crisp white linen and the air was freshened by a perfume of California poppy.

On Kurt's orders, one cabin had been allocated to Connie and Judith, another to Maggie and Hassan, the third for Lesley and himself. As the air raced past the steel flanks of the express with the sound of a stream in torrent, he watched Lesley close the blinds of the sleeping-car and begin to undress. She shook her fair parted fringe clear of her face and stepped out of her skirt. The skin and her blouse were neatly hung in the narrow mahogany cupboard.

The white breast-halter showed the soft but resilient rounds of Lesley's breasts, which despite her experience of child-rearing had retained an alluring tautness of outline. For all the moodiness of her fair-skinned features, Kurt noticed with amusement that the tight white cotton showed her two nipples erect with expectation.

"Keep your breast-halter on for the moment, Lesley," he said quietly. The young woman hesitated but obeyed him. Kurt saw that Lesley had discarded the black stretch-briefs which the sperm had wetted. Indeed, her stockings had gone as well, possibly because the wetness on her thighs had marked them at the top. She had put on another pair of translucent stocking-tights without panties. This pleased Kurt who liked her in such misty, mysterious veiling and often ordered her to dress in that way.

Kurt kissed her on the lips.

"Lie on the bed, Lesley," he said softly, "This one. Over here."

She sat down, drew her legs onto the cover and arranged herself, lying on her side with knees drawn a little upwards as she looked at him. Kurt took her hands together in his own.

"I should like to strap your wrists together, Lesley. Will you object to that?"

Lesley gave an impatient flick of her fringe, as if bothered by a stray hair on her face.

"No," she said uncertainly, "I wont object."

Kurt took a one-inch strap, drew it firmly round the young woman's wrists and used it to tether her hands to the frame of the bed. He turned towards the door and she said quickly, "Must I stay like this?"

Kurt smiled.

"It is better that you should. It pleases me that you should."

With that he went out, leaving her in the half-lit cabin until Lesley turned on to her side, lay down, and began to doze. The cabin-door opened an hour later and the two figures who came in were just discernible to her by the glow of the sleeping-light which had been left on all the time. They were Hassan and Maggie. There was no reason why they should have come to this cabin of the sleeping car to make love, except that they wished to perform certain acts in front of Lesley while she was obliged to lie with her wrists strapped down, unable to intervene in any way.

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Hassan had made Maggie dress in her working costume because that was the way in which she pleased him best. He liked to make use of her while she was dressed as a common shopgirl, reminding him of the first time he had seen her. So now, Maggie wore her snug blue singlet and the faded tightness of her blue working-jeans. Neither she nor Hassan paid the least attention to Lesley by word or glance, though she lay on her side watching them, her eyes open. They behaved as if she might have been asleep or, indeed, not there at all.

The light caught the bell of Maggie's golden-blond hair, spilling loose on her shoulders like a child's, its fringe parted on her forehead. The fair-skinned face with its firm crudity of features had a look of insolence. She pressed her tongue to her upper lip in a manner of sluttish anticipation. Maggie was not a tall girl, her thighs and legs being short for the rest of her figure. Above the waist of her jeans, where the singlet-hem pulled free, there was a pale sheen of plumpness. Her breasts appeared soft but not overweight in the tight singlet. Maggie was not a big-bottomed girl, yet as she walked the tight jeans showed a certain plump swagger of her lower buttocks. When she had been working on all fours, in public view, many of her male admirers had chosen to watch her from the rear. Her buttocks were not large but they were quite broad and sturdy in keeping with Mag's coltish appearance.

“Kneel down, Maggie,” said Hassan softly, “Here, in front of me.”

He pressed her to her knees beside the bed, until Maggie's face was level with Lesley's own, no more than eighteen inches away. Turning to one side, he switched on the bed-table lamp so that its tawny light illuminated Maggie's face. Hassan undid his trousers at the front and released a long tan-coloured erection.

“In your mouth, Maggie!” he said gently, “Remember you are to be my captive slave-girl tonight. This is the first tribute paid on all such occasions as that!”

Maggie hesitated only a moment. Her hand circled the penis at its base, as if to prevent too great a length entering her mouth and choking her. She held the erection like this and turned to Lesley. Teasingly, she showed it to the promiscuous girl in her helplessness. Maggie's golden-blond hair spilled forward slightly as she bowed her head and wet her lips. There was no false modesty about her. Mag sat on her heels and licked up and down the penis-shaft with her young and agile tongue. Maggie was a tart by birth and breeding, a girl of the lower orders who had known of such practises since she was ten years old.

Opening her lips wider she circled the knob of the penis with them and began to suck with a rhythmic movement of her head. Hassan looked down at her, a smile of satisfaction illuminating his features as he watched Maggie performing this service of humility with her mouth.

“Suck more slowly, Mag!” he said gently, guiding her head with his hand, “Make more use of your tongue! Play with the tip of it under my foreskin and round the vent of the knob! Ah, that is truly exquisite! What a bold and randy young slut you are, Maggie!”

Drawing away her hand, where she held the base of his prick, he took her head between his hands, holding it still and began to thrust more vigorously in and out. Once or twice the knob went too close to the back of her throat and drew from Maggie a slight choking protest. Involuntary tears smudged the mascara with which she had darkened the lashes of her blue eyes.

Before he could stop himself, Hassan released a single jet of sperm on to her tongue. Yet he had control enough to check the rest of his orgasm so that it might be used for another purpose. He chided Maggie gently as he drew from her.

“Show her love with your tongue, Mag!”

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Turning her face to Lesley, the blonde girl extended her tongue until it quivered a little with the effort. Upon it lay the last traces. Hassan, was aware that Lesley had been tensing her thighs rhythmically together as she watched and now there was a wetness of self-lubrication between them. With the hardened look of a slut, Maggie brought her tongue closer still to the lips of the promiscuous yet coolly arrogant young woman. Lesley hesitated. Then in a sudden access of frustrated desire, she closed her eyes and opened her mouth to receive Maggie's tongue and swallow all that the other girl had to give.

Hassan watched with amusement. Yet still he ignored Lesley's sighs as Maggie left her.

“Kneel down, Mag. On all fours with your seat towards me!”

Once again it was arranged so that Lesley had a view of the lovers from about eighteen inches away. The shopgirl now presented that view which so many of her passing admirers had stopped to smile at. In the tight jeans, firm but sturdily rounded, the cheeks of Maggie's bottom were suggestively presented. The outline of the stretch-briefs which she wore underneath was clearly visible.

Hassan undid and lowered Maggie's jeans with the panties inside them. Kneeling behind her he gently milked the fleshy lips of her vagina from the rear with his strong fingers. Adjusting his erection, he entered the blonde girl's sex from the same rear angle, causing Maggie to sob with relief. Lesley watched with aloof blue eyes. Yet the murmur of the bedsprings betrayed her squirming of her own thighs.

Maggie had one hand between her legs and was playing with herself quite shamelessly as Hassan made love to her. Hassan paused, smiling. He opened a small jar and vaselined the dark inward dimple of Maggie's anus. His penis knob knocked for admission at this tight hole. Maggie gave a child's cry of fearing hurt, perhaps to excite him. Then she uttered a short hollow gasp as her rear muscle yielded and her arsehole was stretched wide round the shaft. At no time did she ask him to spare her.

Hassan sodomised Maggie vigorously. All this while the twenty-one-year-old servant girl never ceased to play with herself.

“Were your other lovers too timid to insist on this, Mag?” panted Hassan, “I'm sure some of the men who watched you working in the shop must have imagined such things! Keep your face turned to the mirror so that I can watch you! Squeeze the shaft with your backside, Maggie, you young slut! Ah, what ecstasy that is!”

His piston of flesh rammed in and out with new zeal, his loins smacking rhythmically against Maggie's buttocks. At last he was ready, his hands gripping the soft white flesh on either side of her bare hips.

“Your head right down, Maggie, and your seat spread hard! I want you to feel this to the depths of your entrails! Now, my young slut! And now! Ah, you feel it pumping I think!”

His vigour caused the penis to slip from her behind after a few jets had gone deep. The remainder fell in arcs of spawn over Maggie's pale bottom-cheeks and the flanks of her hips. The lascivious young blonde put one hand behind her as if to inspect the damage. Instead she spread the sperm over her buttocks and hips as if it were a precious balm. Hassan sat on the bed by Lesley. The wetness between her thighs was visible now, the dew collecting on her tights.

“Lick Maggie's fingers, Lesley!” he murmured, as he masturbated her gently. But Lesley bridled at the fingers held to her lips. Hassan stopped his masturbation of her and Lesley gave a forlorn little cry.

“Lick Mag's fingers, then!” Hassan said with gentle insistence. He began to mould the wet lips of Lesley's vagina through the thin tights. And this time, as Maggie held the fingers out, Lesley's tongue slid between

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lightly opened lips and licked, and licked, and licked. Hassan laughed and stood up. He led Maggie out and left Lesley to her thoughts.

It was almost another hour before Kurt came back. When he did so, he was not alone. Beside him stood the demure fine-boned figure of Connie. The Asian girl was once again naked except for the black silk cord round her waist, running down between her thighs, under her legs, and up between the cheeks of her bottom.

Kurt made Connie lie beside Lesley on the bed, but this time with her head towards Lesley's feet. Kurt himself lay down so that he and Lesley looked into one another's eyes over the naked body of Connie, whose hips lay between them. He opened his dressing-gown and commanded Connie to suck his erection.

As she obeyed him, Kurt looked down at the Asian girl's beauty. Her sheen of black hair falling to her shoulder-blades, was held back by silver clips from the warm-toned heart-shaped face with its impassive almond eyes. Connie had had her admirers too when she had worked as a shopgirl. Men would pause to study her figure in tight denim as she arranged the season's fashions for display. Some of this casual admiration did not even attract her attention. There were other men whose smiles and questioning glances brought a wicked laughter to Connie's own slanting eyes.

Other men, with crueller passions, surveyed her in a different way. Unsmiling and sardonic, they watched her kneel, the tight denim showing the trimly rounded cheeks of Connie's bottom separated and giving an extra width to her behind in this posture. When she met the eyes of these men, the girl caught her breath with dismay. She read their thoughts of gags and restraining bonds, of their cruel pleasures indulged without pity. They would go on their way. Yet, later on, Connie would look round and see them standing there once again, contemplating her. Then her almond eyes would fill with fright, she would drop her dress-pins with a start and seek refuge somewhere beyond their gaze.

Now, with the penis in her mouth, her slim young breasts touched Kurt's belly. His eyes admired the slim-bladed shoulders of the girl, the delicate bone-pattern of her pale yellow back. Connie's hips, level with his own face, were demurely trim and yet silken smooth. He parted her slim thighs and smiled at the sight of the thin veil of dark hair which scarcely concealed her little clitoris.

Lesley murmured to him, with the slight peevishness of a little girl as she pulled at the bonds which held her wrists. Kurt smiled at her and shook his head. It was good for her to endure such frustration from time to time, to witness the enjoyment of others, to plead for a share of it, and yet to be refused. Hunger would sharpen her appetite.

Connie lacked the prudishness of an English girl in her acceptance of a man's admiration. She received gratefully the tributes paid to any part of her body and was not repelled by the manner of a man's worship of her. Now she lay with her head motionless for a while, the penis still in her mouth as she worked upon it, slowly and expertly, with her tongue.

Kurt stroked the slim satiny yellow thighs of the girl. He kissed her hips and belly. He allowed his lips to browse on the demure saffron cheeks of her trim Chinese bottom. His fingers teased her clitoris, stroking lightly, tickling and withdrawing, until Connie whimpered with longing for a more systematic masturbation.

He began this gently with one hand, rubbing and squeezing the eager clitoris, rubbing and squeezing, rubbing and squeezing, without remorse. With his other hand he parted the saffron-toned buttocks and kissed those cool seat-cheeks. The hand between her legs moved towards the path leading to her womb. Kurt began to kiss the warmer smoothness of skin where her buttocks curved in together. Settling down to rouse her, he moulded a long succession of light kisses to Connie's anus, feeling the delicate pattern of the flesh-bud under his lips.

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There was no doubt that this prolonged loving by his lips in so sensitive an area excited her profoundly. He felt on his fingers the warm slipperiness of natural lubrication between her thighs. Connie still held his penis in her mouth and tongue—washed it with sighs and moans of gratitude. Her nimble Asian fingers gently manipulated Kurt's testicles, as if to stimulate a stronger flow of passion.

Presently, Kurt took from his dressing-gown pocket a rubber penis of medium size. He pressed it into Connie's free hand as she sucked him. While he and Lesley watched, the Asian girl raised her upper leg, showing them the widened lips of her sex in this posture. Slowly but with a firm pressure, she pressed the tip of the artificial penis into her body.

Holding the base of it in her demure young fist, Connie began to make love to herself vigorously with the dildo, working it in and out with a fevered energy. As her cries began to grow more shrill and uneven, Kurt took her wrist and drew her hand firmly away so that the dildo came with it. He guided Connie to lie upon him, her black silken hair brushing his face, and threaded himself into her vagina. Her naked body squirmed and writhed against his own as she impaled herself and rode joyously on the erection.

The long mirror at the foot of the bed showed Connie's bare back and her buttocks as she made love in this posture. Now she took the rubber dildo in one hand, held it behind her, and touched it to her anus as she rode. The thought was stronger than her resolve, for her eyes showed a mingled excitement and apprehension. Kurt held her close to him, putting his hand over her own.

More resolute than the girl herself, he forced the way with the head of the phallus until Connie's almond eyes widened with alarm as her anus yielded. She gave a sudden cry and then subsided with the length of the rubber penis sheathed in her backside.

They made love like this for a little while more. Then Kurt turned Connie on her side so that she faced Lesley and had her back to him. Connie's bottom, slim, warm and Asian, was irresistible in its appeal now. With the dildo removed, Kurt took her that way, feeling the delicious tightness of the Chinese girl's anus upon him. At the same time he worked the dildo up between her legs, manipulating her so that Connie's lips and hands were free to play with Lesley.

With her hands inside the English girl's tights, Connie masturbated Lesley until the pale beauty came with cries of longing. This excitement precipitated the Asian girl's own crisis. Kurt felt the quick tremor of her thighs and heard her first short, rhythmic gasps. He gripped the scrotal sack of the dildo in a rapid squirting rhythm. At the same time his own jets of sperm flooded Connie's backside. He held his free hand over Connie's mouth so that she might scream her triumph into it without being heard beyond the confines of the sleeping cabin or above the muffled thunder of the express.

Unlike many a European beauty, Connie made no attempt to eject her lover. Was it another oriental girl, using a skilful finger, who had taught her how to retain a man inside her behind after the completion of the act? The tightening pressure of her anus held him despite his loss of sperm. Kurt fell into a doze and woke an hour later to find himself still in place and newly stiffened. His presence had kept Connie awake all this time. Feeling him stir, it was she, with gentle movements of her behind, who initiated a second sodomising of her lithe and graceful oriental backside.

The cocooning luxury of the sleeping car was invaded by grey Parisian light. In a canyon, between tall stone houses with peeling shutters and mansard roofs, the express passed under the open ironwork of bridges bearing the shabby streets of La Villette or La Chapelle above the broad expanse of the iron rails.

Yet the destination of the lovers lay far beyond this. In another hour, the journey would resume, the slipstream of the express washing incessantly over the plate glass window and the polished royal blue flanks of the

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wagon—lit with a sound like lashing rain. Tunnels which pierced the centres of great cities or the spurs of remote hills threw the streaming air against the coaches with a sudden impact, the brick wall of the excavation flashing away at blinding speed.

There was to be darkness and night again before the journey's end. In these hours, the travellers crossed a dream landscape of flat moonlit pasture. Here and there an old manor house or hunting lodge showed briefly among its plantation of dark trees. From time to time the train halted at the station of some anonymous city. There was a view of a town—bridge crossing a broad commercial river on which the starlight glimmered faintly. The dark eminence of a hilltop fortress, sinister even by day, testified to ancient war and slaughter on the flat land below, where the vaporous wisps of cloud redoubled the radiance of the full moon.

At last Kurt, Hassan and the four young women came to the place where the car was waiting for the last stage of their journey to Florville. There were no more cities or railway junctions, only remote and suspicious countryside, a place of little towns and scattered villages. Here was the land's end and the world's end, a realm of violent animal lecheries and strange cruelty practised in the name of law.

A long road swooped straight, mile after mile, over wooded hills with apple orchards. Lonely and grey the gothic churches stood aloof, steps leading down to the sunken floors of their dim, candle—lit interiors.

At night the travellers came to commercial hotels in little market—towns, their courtyards hidden beyond archways from the street. Along the uneven corridors above were bedrooms hung with prints of old barbarities, thin carpets on pine boarding. They ate in old dark—panelled dining—rooms with deep window recesses, the deep copper tone of cooking pans hung on the walls and the slow beat of a tall clock made by a country craftsman.

By day they passed the fields of maize and the open land where old women in dresses and aprons the colour of terra—cotta, and dark conical hats, were digging potatoes.

At last the countryside began to change. There were yellow fields of mustard and the first rows of early vines. A warm wind blew from the sea and, for the first time, the travellers sensed the presence of Florville.

## CHAPTER five

The journey south brought them to a land of vines, a landscape of rivers and flat fields, quiet canals and little inland ports from which the steeples of remote villages were seen at a distance. The purple judas trees were now in flower and blue wisteria overhung the stone boundary walls of old manor houses.

In the silence of the car, Lesley would raise her eyes slowly to dwell on Judith's beauty. The girl sat demurely with her hands folded in her lap. In the pale oval of her face, her lips were lightly parted, the gaze of her hazel eyes unwavering as she looked ahead of her. When she turned, the sweep of light brown hair from her high crown to her shoulder—blades moved with the allure of a dancer's veil. Then, before Lesley could look away, Judith's eyes would meet hers, calm and yet questioning, as if the girl who was within a week of her sixteenth birthday feared and longed for the future.

On the following day, in a white and blinding afternoon sun, they came to a high hill—town, a bastion, unknown to the world behind them. It was a place of wide spaces, brooding in heat and silence. Barracks and prison buildings with their shutters closed stood in a pale ensemble on a vast gravelled square. A narrow and deserted street of little shops with their awnings pulled out represented the commercial life of the town. There was another square, a gravelled space once more, with stunted plane trees. Beyond that lay the arid limestone hills and the descent to Florville.

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That night was passed at a little town which was no more than a clearing among a tall forest of pines and spruce trees growing in the flat alluvial soil of the coastal plain. The whine of saw-mills and thick scent of pine resin hung in the warm air of the spring evening. Before dinner, Kurt came to the room which Lesley was to share with Judith for the night. He explained with a smile that he wished to supervise Judith's dressing for dinner now that she was to appear as a young lady.

The girl had just stepped naked from her bath with her light brown hair braided in a pair of plaits down her neck. While she was still drying herself in the bathroom, Kurt dismissed Lesley and began to choose those garments which he had decided that Judith should wear. There were only two that he would permit for the moment and he summoned a maid to take them to Judith in the bathroom. Then he sat at ease in a chair and waited for her to appear.

She did so reluctantly and with good reason for her timidity. Judith was dressed in the sheer silk of lilac-coloured stockings and a short plum-coloured corset which encased her young breasts, leaving her shoulders bare, came down to a narrow waist and ended with a frill of lace round the top of her hips. Between this and the stocking-tops at mid-thigh, the girl was bare but for the elastic suspender-straps of the corset which drew the stockings high and tight on her legs.

She stood before Kurt uncertainly, her light brown hair now released from its braiding and once more falling in its veil about her pale oval beauty. Kurt beckoned her towards him until she stood at the arm of his chair. At the front the corset came down in a short V-shape between her thighs, not quite covering all the fine moss of pubic hair.

Kurt drew the girl's head down and kissed her on the lips, with such passion that Judith struggled breathlessly against him. He let her go.

"Fold your hands behind your back, Judith," he said quietly. When she had obeyed, he intruded a finger between her legs and touched her vaginal lips lightly. With a tightening movement of her long graceful legs, the girl began to back away.

"Stand still, Judith!" His voice was sharp and impatient. She obeyed him, looking down as if unable to take her eyes away from what his finger was doing.

"Look at me!" he said and a smile almost broke on his lips as she raised her hazel eyes to meet his gaze. "Tell me, Judith, when did you last make love to yourself?"

In her eyes, the shock of the question seemed to register with the force of a blow he might have struck her. She waited before him immobilised by it. The maid who had been emptying and cleaning the bath now stood in the doorway, astonished but also visibly amused at Kurt's questioning. Judith bowed her head again and said nothing. Kurt sighed.

"Very well, that is a matter we shall investigate properly when there is more time. Now, turn round, if you please."

With her head still bowed to avoid the maid's smile, Judith obeyed. At the rear the plum-coloured corset had been cut high and seatless. It was rare for a girl of fifteen to have a figure which could do justice to such lingerie. Yet it suited this tall and willowy beauty to perfection. Kurt surveyed the long elegant legs and the narrow waist. The frill of the corset arched high enough at the rear so that it merely touched the very tops of the pale oval cheeks of Judith's bottom.

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Kurt's fingers moved lightly on the cheeks of Judith's backside. He smiled to himself as he inspected the few fading bruises and weals of whipcord left by the thrashing which her teacher had given her.

"I'm sure the learned Herr Muller enjoyed himself when he whipped you, Judith," said Kurt lightly, "You are innocent in such matters as yet. Later on you will understand that for him to hurt you so badly was a true labour of love. Even you, my innocent Judith, must have guessed that there are men who enjoy doing such things to you."

The maid giggled at these words and went from the room with a final conspiratorial smile in Kurt's direction. Judith's pale resilient young seat-cheeks tensed together in her self-consciousness.

"Bend forward," said Kurt gently, "Support yourself with your hands on the little table."

Reluctantly she did as he commanded. Her demure young buttocks spread broader and parted until he had a view of her rear cleavage and the backward pout of her vagina at her thighs. Kurt's finger touched Judith's anus and the dark little inward dimple tightened with instinctive apprehension.

"Don't be foolish, Judith! You have overheard enough to know that a man who possesses you will want to vaseline you there for use!"

He kept her in this position for some while, fondling and caressing her. Then he drew his hand away.

"Choose a pair of knickers from your trousseau, Judith. Show me which they are before you put them on."

He was not easily pleased. Judith chose one pair of panties after another without gaining his approval. At last he consented to a pair of pale blue briefs, tight-fitting and translucent. Only then did he permit her to put on her petticoat and the simple but striking dress of green silk with its narrow waist. She sat at dinner with the others, beautiful as a young woman and yet submissive as a well-trained little girl.

The next afternoon brought them to Florville, the white villas in the Spanish style with their red-tiled roofs bordering a sheltered bay and overhung by wooded hills. Yacht sails hung like dragonflies on the glittering water beyond the pillars and stucco of the casino. Heat and tranquillity enveloped the pale sands, the gardens with their clipped hedges and tennis courts, the quiet streets with their fashionable boutiques and florists, the squares of whitewashed houses with Spanish balconies in black wrought-iron.

The way to the Villa Rif lay down a broad boulevard, a long vista of rhododendron trees on the pink paving, tall white buildings and the awnings of cafes with their interiors of dark buttoned leather and polished wood.

The Villa Rif was one of those residences in broad quiet roads which are seen only distantly through the wrought-iron railings that guard them from the world. As the day's heat waned and darkness came, the white lamplight of the street fell far short of its walls, the moon's glimmer lost in black foliage. In the stillness of night, there was no sound but the electric chatter of cicadas, no movement but the sudden looping of bats against the pale sky, no scent but the warm odours of the pines.

Within this villa and its grounds, two men with four young women at their disposal might pass the entire season and want for very little. Neither Kurt nor Hassan insisted upon such isolation. A demure girl of fifteen like Judith and even a self-possessed young woman like Lesley might be more effectively imprisoned by means which required no locks and bars. Kurt and Hassan had long known the simpler truth.

Let all her ways be unconfined. But clap your padlock on her mind. Their pleasures which began at morning would occupy them until night. Connie and Maggie, though treated as servants, were not exempt from these

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lecheries. The men exacted their tribute in nobly furnished rooms of the summer villa, among dark wood and flame-patterned Spanish rugs. The cries of the girls in their surrender wavered in the sunlight of white bedrooms among lace and angled mirrors, the tiny shrillness of pleasure fading before it reached the locked gate leading to the world outside. There were long evenings spent by lamplight in the cloistered garden courtyard at the centre of the villa. In the stillness of the night, sounds would have carried further. Yet if extreme forms of enjoyment were contemplated, it was only necessary to employ restraining straps and a padded leather gag in order to reduce the highest scream to a plaintive mewling.

Kurt took possession of Lesley on the first night. During their journey he had refused her any relief for her longings in order that she might be the better prepared when they reached their destination.

When he went with her after dinner to the wide bedroom above the garden, Kurt realised that his own preparation had been even more intense than hers. Now he wanted Lesley with a sudden obsessive longing.

She stood before the mirror, having taken off her shoes, skirt and blouse. The glass reflected an image of the sulky fair-skinned beauty as she combed the fringe of her urchin crop in a habitual impatient gesture. Her white breast-halter and matching suspender-belt were accompanied by the tan of sheer stockings and brief tight panties of slinky and translucent apple green.

He turned her at once and took her in his arms. Though she was quite a tall and trim young woman, Lesley in her stockinged feet seemed like a juvenile waif beside Kurt's powerful build. His hand smoothed over her bare belly with its slight proud curve.

“Open your mouth, Lesley,” he said gently and the self-willed wife gave him her tongue between his own lips. Then she bowed the high crown of her fair hair and walked in front of him to the bed. She looked, Kurt thought, for all the world like a forlorn little girl going to be chastised.

They undid her breast-halter. Kurt firmed Lesley's breasts with his hands, the white globes still taut and resilient. He tongue-flicked her nipples to erection and heard her first sighs of contentment. His hand slid between her legs and he smiled as he felt that, in her excitement, Lesley's panties were already wet there with the vaginal lubrication which the thrill drew from her.

It amused Kurt to think that under her disdainful manner and arrogant attitude to men, Lesley was so easily roused. Small wonder that she had walked out on husband and children in order to gratify the tormenting itch which tickled her between her thighs.

“What a depraved young wanton you are, Lesley!” he said gently as she gave herself to his fingers, “There are places for such as you, houses where the master or mistress will spare you nothing!”

Squirming under his caresses, she kissed his face with a brief and breathless rhythm of her lips. Then, unable to wait longer, she lifted her hips a little and tried to tug the panties down her thighs. Kurt drew her hands firmly away and obliged her to wait, after all, until he was ready. Lesley murmured in his ear, wheedling him with every form of endearment and promise.

“A little longer,” he said softly, still denying her, “You must reach such a pitch of desire that you would sell yourself to slavery for a release from it...Now, undress yourself.”

She obeyed him with an eagerness which might have been more proper in a girl of ten or twelve greedy for a treat. Kurt threaded himself into her, feeling the moist warmth of velveteen flesh part around him. Lesley cried out with joy and expectation. She began to move with a sudden spasmodic energy so that Kurt had to restrain her at first in order to begin their mutual rhythm of love. At last she adjusted herself to this and gave

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herself to him without reserve.

Kurt brought her easily to her first crisis, feeling her shudder with relief on the bed beneath him. As his own moment approached he took the necessary precautions, first turning her and entering the place again, between her thighs from the rear. The position had its advantages. He could still kiss the high crown of her urchin-crop, the sensitive paths of her neck and shoulders. His hands moved lightly over her breasts and the slight proud curve of her belly. The firm pale cheeks of Lesley's bottom rounded into his loins, cool and smooth. His fingers ran between them where the white skin turned to yellowed ivory as her buttocks curved in together.

As he made love to her, Kurt's fingers stroked her between her rear-cheeks and he felt an increased thrill in her movements. Lesley had never taken a man in that way but her refusal would be irrelevant in the months which lay ahead. Was that what she secretly wanted? Would her excitement be all the greater if she was ravished in that manner without her consent being so much as asked for? Kurt's own climax was near. He drew the sinewy erection from her and laid it between Lesley's bottom-cheeks. Then turning her carefully on to her belly, he rode in this manner with her buttocks pressed upon him.

"How that hot dry valley shall be irrigated now," he whispered, his lips touching her ear. And indeed she was trying to tense the two halves of her behind upon him, as if to excite him to fulfil that promise.

Already the first pulse-throb of the ecstasy had escaped him. Kurt's excitement in his release overpowered all sense of reason. With the rhythm of a mighty heart, his lust exploded in the smooth warmth of Lesley's compressed buttocks. For a little while longer she continued this pressure, as if trying to hold him and feel him in that groove which he had flooded so thickly.

"Lie there, my love," he said presently, as he drew away, "Wait for me like that."

She sprawled on her belly, close to sleep. Kurt went out, drawing his bathrobe about him, and went to fetch Judith. He led the girl back and made her stand in the doorway, so that she might watch the young woman on the bed without alerting Lesley to her presence. He saw the dismay in Judith's eyes at the sight of Lesley in so undignified a state, bottom-upwards on the bed with her panties round her ankles, the evidence of Kurt's passion on her buttocks and thighs.

He went across the bed and sat on its edge, kissing Lesley on the mouth and urging her hands in self-caressing movements where the traces of his lust were visible upon her. The young woman obeyed him, unaware of the girl in the doorway.

"Now lick your fingers, Lesley," said Kurt quietly.

And Lesley obeyed him again.

Nor was that all. Kurt unfastened his dressing-gown, underneath which he was naked. His penis was still half erect, the last sperm rising from it. Lesley turned her face, took the base of the phallus in her circling fingers, and licked its knob while she sighed her love to Kurt.

He allowed her to finish, to turn her head again and to fall into a light sleep. Then he went back to the doorway and smiled mockingly at Judith. It amused him that he had made her see Lesley in this state, the idol whose hand Judith kissed and on whom she wept for comfort. He was disconcerted at first and then even more amused to see that there was no revulsion or condemnation in the pale oval beauty of Judith's face. She looked upon Lesley with her quiet eyes filled by pity and love.

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It was Judith who sent Connie to the room. While Lesley hardly stirred from her sleep, the Asian girl sponged her gently with rose water and carefully drew off the tangled panties. Then she pulled a coverlet over Lesley, who was naked in the starlight except for her suspender-belt and stockings. Connie undressed until she was a nimble saffron shape in the dimly lit room. She came across, lifted the coverlet, and slid in beside her mistress. They held one another close. Then Connie's fingers began to move expertly between Lesley's thighs. As she kissed the young wife, the black silken hair of the Asian beauty fell like a discreet veil to hide their faces. It was after dawn when Connie moved gently from the side of the sleeping young Venus, quietly picked up her own clothes and slipped away barefoot to begin the day's work.

Hassan knew nothing of this. He had gone to his room with Maggie before it all began. Yet Kurt himself was aware of it and saw in her need for Connie an easy means of taming Lesley's educated, middle-class arrogance.

That evening after dinner, the two servants, Maggie and Connie, waited upon Lesley, Judith and Hassan in the lamplit courtyard garden where the moss grew in the shade of the cloisteral brick arches.

When Kurt took his place he summoned Connie at once to bring him coffee and liqueur from the tray. The girl moved with barefoot gentleness, the sheen of black hair brushing her bare yellow shoulders.

He detained her standing by his chair in full view of Lesley, whose blue eyes conveyed for this taunting a jealous contempt, which was silenced by her natural pride.

"Slip off your skirt and panties, Connie," said Kurt smiling, "Kneel by the chair."

The Asian girl betrayed no feeling in the mute tan features of her pretty heart-shaped face. Kurt looked at Lesley with a smile that teased her. He made Connie lay her head in his lap and stroked her like a favourite pet. The hand moved down, stroking the trim bare hips, fondling her between the legs, parting the taut saffron cheeks of Connie's bottom and stimulating her between them.

He required Connie to dip her tongue into the hot sweetness of the liqueur and then give him her tongue in his mouth so that he might savour the warm oily thickness of the fluid. Then he ordered Connie into the house to wait for him and followed her presently.

It was almost midnight when they returned, Connie walking with slow hesitant steps, naked but for the black silk of her breast halter. The lamplight showed the wetness of tears on her face. As Kurt took his place and the Asian girl turned to kneel at his chair again, the weals of a vicious caning were seen across the pale yellow cheeks of Connie's bottom. Yet when she stooped there was wetness on the vaginal lips between her thighs.

"Kiss my hand, Connie," said Kurt quietly.

Connie took his right hand between her own and kissed it.

"To whom do you belong, Connie?"

"To you," she said with a soft upward glance of her almond eyes.

Kurt's hand travelled down between her legs once again.

"When will you make love again, Connie?"

"When you command it," she whispered.

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He smiled at this.

“And when will your arse be thrashed again, Connie?”

“When you desire it,” she gasped.

This time when he smiled his eyes were upon Lesley.

“Will you be the slave of any other man or woman, Connie?”

“Only if it pleases you,” she said, in the tone of a child who has learnt such responses from long practice.

Kurt sent for the two grooms and gave Connie to them for the night, there in the courtyard while the others watched her ordeal. After a while he sent one of them for the cord whip. He took Lesley into the shadows and there made love to her with his fingers while she was obliged to watch the sequel.

In the stillness before daybreak the thunder and surge of breakers on firm sand came distantly to them. Then the cypress trees rose black and sharp against the green dawn-sky, which was as yet pale with—the promise of the day's heat.

### CHAPTER six

The events of that night, as of every other night, were a reminder to Lesley that she, as surely as Connie, had become Kurt's possession. Did she ever consider returning to her marriage and children? If she did, the idea was not entertained for long. The constant seductive prying of voices and hands, the nights of loving which left her exhausted and calm at last, held her willingly in thrall. More important still, to return to her former life would have been an unbearable humiliation. By such a step she must announce to the world a surrender of her sexual freedom, of her emancipation, of her right to be the proud woman she wished to be. To an aloof and self-possessed young wife of her kind, it hardly seemed that there could be any indignity or punishment worse than that.

Lesley consoled herself by believing that her submission to Kurt was of her own free will. At any moment, she thought, it would be possible to reclaim her freedom. The life of the Villa Rif was one which she could enjoy for as long as it pleased her, and which she would renounce when it pleased her no longer.

In all these beliefs she was mistaken, but as yet she did not realise it. The hot days were passed in the naked pleasures of elegant rooms, among brooding lamps and silent carpets. Her pale aloof beauty was the complement to ornaments of jade and ivory in cool recesses, alabaster and porcelain on painted shelves.

Afternoon drives in a shaded carriage took the lovers along the long elegant boulevards of white stucco, the imperial Parisian grandeur of hotels and the little boutiques with coloured sunblinds. The brilliance of the summer tide glistened on the fresh paintwork of the corniche, where pink tamarisk moved with feather-lightness in the warm breeze and yellow broom flamed in the gardens. The smell of tide-washed sand hung in the afternoon air as the emerald sea darkened in the heat to a black horizon line.

When evening light began to thicken, the carriage brought them again to the Villa Rif, the tall camelia tree and pampas grass, Italian cypress trees and white flowers in the depth of hot shade. As the pleasures of the evening turned to the passions of the night, blue tinted light shone on the white stucco of the grand hotels. In the gardens of Florville, the glass moons of the lamps on their wrought-iron mounts glimmered among dark evergreens.

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Not every day was passed in this manner. After two weeks, Kurt took Lesley alone on a journey which occupied them from dawn until dusk.

“Anton wishes to photograph you,” Kurt had said to her on the preceding evening, “You can have no objection to that.”

And he smiled at her in a manner which assured her that the truth was yet to be learnt.

They drove from the little town past the lime-green stucco of Spanish arches round country villas, through a flat terrain of canals and fields. Here and there an estate and its chateau were surrounded by tall iron palings and dense trees. Nothing but the curve of a gravel drive and the conical roof of a baronial tower could be seen beyond the gates. Kurt turned into one of these driveways and they came at last to the wide shuttered front of a manor house with a flight of curved steps before the door. A fountain played in the centre of the gravel space and the red tulips rose like tongues of fire from the trim lawns and flower-beds.

They were expected but not met by their host. Kurt led her into the house without announcing himself. In a small room near the door he ordered her to undress. When she had done so and while she was still naked, he brought Anton to her.

The encounter filled Kurt with a quiet amusement, all the more enjoyable because Lesley was too overcome to hide her desire. Of all the men she had met, Anton would be the most beautiful, the most perfect. It was common for Anton, so tall and fair at twenty-five, to have that effect on women. Yet Anton cared nothing for it. He had only to kiss a woman's hand and the thrill of it made her spine tingle. He had only to look steadily into her eyes and her legs grew weak beneath her. Why it should be so, Kurt did not know. Was it a trick of nature, of infallible animal attraction?

He looked and saw in Lesley the familiar symptoms, her self-conscious attempts to keep her eyes lowered or turned away and the compelling fascination which drew them, despite this, to the young man's face. She cared nothing for her nakedness, nothing for the wantonness of her behaviour. To ignore Anton, for a lascivious young woman like Lesley, was like a desert wanderer whose tongue is blackened by thirst turning back from a pure and sweet oasis pool.

Anton smiled at her from time to time with courteous and studied indifference. The comedy was played with eyes and lips at a distance, a performance which Kurt had witnessed many times before. Lesley offered no objection as they prepared her for the photographs which were to be taken.

They brought her into the stone-flagged hall of the baronial house and there dressed her in her costume. It was no more than a series of broad leather straps drawn tight on the trim pale body of the naked Lesley.

One strap was tightened as a collar round her neck with its loose end lying down her back between her shoulder-blades. The next formed a broad leather belt round her waist, drawn tight enough for the soft pale flesh to swell a little where the edge of the leather sank into it. There was a strap round each ankle and two more drawn tight round the middle of each long firm thigh. A leather cuff adorned each wrist.

Lesley, naked in black strapping, was drawn down onto the Persian rug in the stone-flagged hall of the manor house. Anton, murmuring his instructions, viewed her through the camera's eye.

“Lie on your back, Lesley—Head turned aside...Legs open a little...Again...Again...Now on your belly...Hands behind you, holding the cheeks of your arse apart... Again...Hold them wide apart and look back over your shoulder, into the camera...The collectors who buy the photographs need to see your face as you do it...A timid look now, frightened at what you've done...Now shake that fringe and look disdainful...Play the wanton

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slut, Lesley...Now do a sulky little girl...Sulky at being made to show herself, and a bit frightened too..."

It began well, Lesley obeying Anton as she had never obeyed anyone in her life. Next he led her to the wide stone stairs and made her climb a little. Anton asked her to climb very slowly—and repeatedly. From the side he took the proud tilt of her young chin and the uplift of her pale breasts. Then he moved round behind her.

From the rear he photographed the slight submissive bow of Lesley's head as he saw the short fair hair parting under its own weight on her nape. The light caught the pale sheen of her back, the long firm maturity of her legs kept in trim by careful exercise and bicycling. As she climbed, the pale cheeks of Lesley's bottom seemed to swell out from under the constraining waist-strap. Her buttocks swayed and contorted with the movement, touching and parting in a soft erotic enticement.

Anton photographed her methodically in these shifting postures. Presently he stopped her and approached. It was necessary to guide her movements a little. Kurt smiled as he saw the smooth flank of Lesley's hip goose-pimpled with instinctive excitement when Anton laid his hand there, touching her for the first time. He made her arch the back of her waist inward, increasing the swell of Lesley's pale backside somewhat and also causing her thighs to open a little more with a glimpse of the fair hair growing fine and soft on her vaginal pouch. Between her buttocks the forbidden cleft of Lesley's anal valley was wantonly and provocatively exposed.

Kurt drew her down again, on her knees, facing the camera. With her palms on her strapped thighs he made her incline forward towards the camera and hold a slim leather riding-switch in her teeth. She was like an animal sent to retrieve some object for her master, except that in this case she offered to the viewer an instrument of torture to be used upon her.

It amused Kurt—not only in Lesley's case—to see the effect of the camera on such a young woman. Even the most disdainful and arrogant beauty, once she was naked before the lens, seemed timid and obedient as a little girl in a dancing class. Before Anton, Lesley had lost all her self-assurance and had become the forlorn child begging only attention and affection from an adult.

Anton had not yet finished with her. In Kurt's company he took Lesley out into the sunshine, naked still but for her straps and a pair of high-heeled sandals. They walked across the gravel space, blinding in noon sunlight, and through the cool shade of the trees. At a little distance, on a grassy mound in the park, there was a round mausoleum, its grey stone now lichened with the passage of two centuries. From the rounded entrance arch, one stepped down onto the paved floor of uneven flagstones. Light came through narrow slits in the tall vaulted structure, above the railed niches round the wall where burials had taken place. So it seemed, though the mausoleum had the air of being built as no more than a garden folly.

Anton took from a stone shelf the garment placed there for Lesley's visit. It was a black cloche hat and a mourning veil, the emblems of young widowhood. When she put these on, the line of her long fringe was just seen through the fine mesh of the veil, whose folds came down almost to the nipples of her breasts and to her shoulder-blades. He then made her kneel with her forehead touching the ground and her hips raised. In this posture he attached one last strap. It was a black chastity-strap which ran from the front of her waist-belt down under her legs and tightly up between her seat-cheeks to fasten at the back of the waist-belt.

Keeping her kneeling with forehead touching the floor, Anton motioned to Kurt. It was Kurt's task to stand astride Lesley and ensure, by holding her round the waist, that she remained in position. From the rear Anton saw the firm proud cheeks of Lesley's behind stretched wide apart, tightly rounded and broadened. He took the long slim riding-switch of bamboo cased in smooth leather. He raised it and brought it down with a savage impact across the pale curve of Lesley's backside. A split-second of stillness passed in the warm noon and then the urchin-cropped young wife screamed with all the power of her lungs at the atrocious pain of the

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leather switch.

Anton stepped back a pace and then forward. He raised the switch behind his shoulder once more and lashed the pale squirming cheeks of Lesley's bottom a second time. Her mouth opened in a wild shriek. As it died away she burst into a violent storm of tears.

“Hold her,” said Anton to Kurt, for Lesley was now desperately trying to wriggle free, “She must bear one more.”

Lesley shrieked at him, pleading not to have it as Anton touched the switch lightly across her buttocks to aim the stroke. Indeed, she had reason. Two merciless welts now glowed across her behind and a bead of blood drawn from one of them had trickled down her seat—cheeks to her thigh. But Kurt held her firmly and Anton brought the switch down across Lesley's arse with a viciousness that caused the hairs on her nape to rise.

They moved her gently so that Lesley in her widow's veil lay curled and weeping on the floor before one of the tomb entablatures. With her face hidden, pillowed in her folded arms, she lay on her side with her knees drawn up, her hips turned to present the three blazing welts across her buttocks to the camera's eye. Anton placed on the tomb a laurel wreath and the switch, as if the latter had been the favourite implement of a dead husband for whom the young widow wept. Anton took a dozen photographs, camera studies of this affecting scene. Then the veil was raised and the studies were repeated with Lesley obliged to show her tears as well as her stripes. She was required to lie there while Kurt stood over her, the toe of his shoe between her rear—cheeks as if about to complete her subjection by rousing her with it. Only then was the photographic session complete.

Anton put the veil back on the ledge and took Lesley with him to the garden lake. Kurt walked back to the house alone. There was no camera now, only Lesley and Anton together. In his gentle arms she checked her tears and allowed him to guide her to the wooden landing—stage where a skiff had been moored.

She lay in the boat while Anton took the oars and rowed it to the opposite side of the lake, sheltered from the burning—mirror of the pale noon sky by the overhanging willows. He undressed and plunged into the lake, swimming easily and strongly. When he returned, he stood on the bank, drying in the sun, like a figure of Apollo.

The pain which he had caused her and which still burnt across her hind—cheeks was nothing to Lesley compared with her need. He was well accustomed to situations of this kind and knew that in the aftermath of punishment even the most resentful and contentious young woman may become soft and wheedling, like a smacked child seeking to be forgiven.

He lay naked in the boat beside her, stretched out at his ease and then began to sleep. Lesley had not dared to touch or embrace him, only to lie there quite unable to speak or to take her eyes off him. Anton, dozing in the warm afternoon on the summer lake heard the drone of insects, the light murmur of grass and guessed at Lesley's feelings. She was moistening despite herself, he thought, for he was almost able to detect the humid mineral odour of feminine arousal. Her eyes had moved down from his face and she was staring at the slack curve of his manhood.

Anton heard and felt the movement as she slipped down in the boat. Lesley's hand brushed aside the long fringe of her fair hair. Her arrogant fair—skinned features were level with his loins. Lightly at first, her fingers touched him there and began to play with him in slow repeated patterns of caressing. Anton, hands folded behind his head, watched her through half—closed eyes. In a moment more he was erect, and yet he made no movement.

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Lesley turned her long-lashed blue eyes upon his own with expectant curiosity. Anton ignored her. It amused him to see her on the verge of an act which she had never before performed with any man, except with her bridegroom on their first night together. Her decision was suddenly made. Lesley bowed the short cut of her fair hair and touched her lips to the head of Anton's erection in a brief, uncertain kiss. She repeated the kiss slowly, and then with more ease. Accustomed to the sense of her mouth touching the soft-skinned knob, her last resistance was overcome. She rounded her lips over him and began to suck with her eyes closed.

Anton looked down at her, stroking her neck gently as Lesley made her submission in this manner.

“What a hypocrite you have been, Lesley! Did you truly reject your marriage in order to enjoy your own freedom and rights over your body? I think not! At the first pangs of desire between your legs, there is nothing you would not perform to win a lover's attention to you there! All your freedom and self-possession comes to no more than that.”

Even the words by which he mocked her appeared only to add to the young woman's excitement. Lesley had grown so eager that the moisture of her thighs was just visible when her legs parted a little. Anton continued to watch her, making no attempt to embrace her yet.

“Shall we have you watched in such an act by those who know you best, Lesley? It would be the simplest thing in the world. Would it please you for your own children to see you now, the marks of the whip across your buttocks as you give yourself like this? A camera lens would accomplish that. Ah, I believe the thought of such humiliation excites you still further...It shall be arranged at a later time.”

They had removed her chastity-strap in the mausoleum. Now, as she worked at him, the stimulus of his words made the excitement shine more abundantly on her inner thighs. Presently, Lesley knelt upright and straddled him. She was no longer self-conscious or demanding. Her face showed only the breathlessness of exertion and desire. Quickly she lowered her haunches, impaling herself at once on his erection as if she feared it might otherwise elude her. Gripping the wooden edge of the boat at either side of her, she began to work her hips up and down upon him in an impatient butting motion. Her lips were parted, her eyes closed, and the perspiration began to gather on her face, her neck, and in the hollows of her shoulders.

Anton permitted this for a while longer before ordering her to turn about and continue with her back to him. Lesley now sat astride the erection, facing away from him. She was leaning forward a little, supported on her palms as she continued to ride him. Anton's fingers stroked her back, the white cheeks of Lesley's seat with their sheen of perspiration. He touched the tight inward bud between them. Then he reached out to the bank of the lake and snapped off a frond of nettles.

It was a pain no greater than that which children inflict on one another in a game. Lesley cried out as much with excitement as discomfort when the leaves of the nettles brushed her bare bottom-cheeks, the spike edges leaving a scarlet rash of white sting-blisters. By now she was in her first ecstasy, the short fair hair lowered as her hips pumped him harder still. Anton smiled, feeling his own sap rise, and applied the nettle leaves more intimately between Lesley's buttocks. Yet her cries were drawn out in the compulsive spasmodic obbligato of joy. Anton prudently withdrew from her, allowing his passion to curve and fall where it paid tribute to her pale thighs and wetted her smarting buttocks themselves.

She made no attempt to wipe him from her. Lowering herself, Lesley lay down in the boat beside him. Anton pushed her head downwards and made her take the penis in her mouth once more. In the long warmth of the afternoon the two lovers fell into a doze at the edge of the calm glittering lake. Lesley slept with the penis in her mouth, her lips gently upon it and her tongue loving it with half-conscious movements.

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The sun had left the sky's main vault and begun its last descent to the lakeside trees when Anton led Lesley back again to the house. After dinner that evening, since she and Kurt were to return to Florville in the morning, she made her confession in the presence of the two men.

"I love Anton," she said simply, "I am in love with Anton."

They looked at her as if not understanding the purpose of the statement.

"How can that be of the least significance?" said Kurt, smiling at her indulgently, "It matters only to you."

They were not obliged to explain further, though they did. Anton produced a set of photographs. Lesley recognised them at once, with a sense of shock, as those which the unknown man took surreptitiously of her in the garden with her child during the last months of her marriage. She was too dismayed even to ask how they had come into Anton's possession.

"The man who took these," said Anton quietly, "He loved you in ways that you would have found repellent. Yet he loved you with all sincerity. It did not matter because you lived in a world where you were the arbiter. Love was yours to allow or deny. Here things are different. The decision of love is ours, not yours. You are permitted to love—who can stop you? Yet now you may only do so as a supplicant—as the man who took those photographs loved you. It cannot matter to us."

Yet he made love to her that night until she wept with joy. The next morning, Lesley returned with Kurt to the Villa Rif.

## CHAPTER seven

The days which followed the visit to Anton were different from those which preceded it, just as the summer at Florville that year differed from the season of the year before. It was only in little things that the change could be shown clearly. Yet in these it was evident that the distinction between Lesley as the mistress of the Villa Rif and Connie or Maggie as the servants had altered. Now it was Kurt and Hassan who were the masters, as they had always been. Lesley and Judith, no less than Maggie and Connie, were cast in a role where submission or obedience was required without hesitation.

Lesley was left to console herself with dreams of the summer day by the lake, where she had been allowed to love Anton so briefly. Now, when she met the love for her in the calm hazel eyes of Judith, it was as if the ideal image was blurred and distant, distorted by her feelings for the young Apollo. Yet she was haunted as well by the quiet demure presence of Judith, the pale contemplative beauty and the veil of light brown hair which suggested a life of devotion to some adored object of desire.

If the events of the previous summer at Florville were now recalled in the long dusty days of August, it was because of an announcement that Claire was to be a guest at the Villa Rif in a few more days. The visit would be a short one, but it marked in every way the median point at which the high season of pleasure began to darken. The house and its tenants were marked for a more sombre and dramatic fate.

The truth about Claire was known only to Kurt and Hassan. She was a tall slim young woman who, like Lesley, wore her red hair in a short cut. Her face was marked by green eyes with a hint of cruelty and viciousness in their slant. Who was she?

Kurt and Hassan knew the whole truth. To the young women at the Villa Rif, Claire was the mistress of "the other house," which lay beyond frontiers and a mountain range. It was a place which they had never seen and

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whose darker reputation was known only by hints. During every season at Florville there were girls whose eventual destination was that other house. Whether they went willingly or as captives remained an unanswered question. They did not return to Florville, nor were they ever seen again in the winter city.

Several girls had made the journey to that other house in the previous summer. Nothing was known of them after that, except perhaps to Kurt and Hassan. Among them was Laura, a pretty girl of seventeen, of medium height and slim figure. With Diane, Ruth and Jacqui, she had passed into Claire's keeping. There was a mingled appeal of innocence and coquetry in her softly rounded, high-boned face and blue eyes, the page-boy style of light, golden brown hair brushing her collar. In tight riding-jeans her belly and loins showed flat and firm, her thighs having the slimness of adolescence. The tight seat of the jeans shaped Laura's bottom, its apple-firm cheeks seductively lithe.

Such girls as Laura went to their fate apprehensively but without resistance. This was not the case with others. Lesley recalled Noreen, a nineteen-year-old girl, tall and strongly built. The firm pale features, the insolent brown eyes, even the lank dark hair cut at her shoulders and fringed on her forehead, promised a struggle. So it was. Noreen had twisted and wrestled in the grip of the two men who dragged her to the closed car. In the tightly strained jeans, her strong young thighs had braced against her escorts. As her hips twisted, the firm full cheeks of Noreen's bottom received many a smack through the thin denim. After they had secured her in the car, one of the men had gone back to the house and fetched a pony-whip—a necessity for the journey.

Now, a year later, Claire returned to the Villa Rif. She was accompanied as always by one of her girls who had been trained to the most perfect obedience. On this occasion it was Laura.

After dinner on the first evening, in the lamplit salon of the Villa Rif, Lesley and Judith were present as the partners of Kurt and Hassan. When Claire came in she was accompanied by Laura, dressed in the sleeveless silk blouse and figure-fitting jeans, in which she might have swung through the streets of Florville with the agile young strides of a seventeen-year-old nymph. Laura walked a few steps behind her mistress, like a well-trained young animal, and stood by obediently while Claire sat down.

From beside her, Claire took a leather collar to which had been attached a four-foot leash.

“Stoop down and have your collar fastened, Laura,” said Claire.

The girl lowered the long page-boy waves of her golden brown hair until her mistress had clipped the collar round her neck. Then Laura sat on the carpet with her legs drawn under her, close by Claire's foot. The pretty high-boned face was lowered a little to hide her blue eyes from the inquiring scrutiny of the others. The fine gold hair, brushed across to either side of her forehead from its central parting, was all that could be clearly seen.

Claire and the men talked about Laura while the girl was obliged to listen.

“It was a great advantage,” said Claire, “that Laura had been so strictly brought up by her parents. Such girls are always the easiest to train in obedience, even the obedience of a concubine. Laura's self-discipline and subservience are quite admirable.”

The young mistress went on to explain that Laura had been abducted almost on the eve of her marriage to a gross and common youth who would never have done justice to her charms. In answer to Kurt, Claire explained that the girl's virginity had been taken by two visitors to the other house, in the mistress's presence. Some weeks later, a favoured friend had been the only man so far to sheath and employ his erection in Laura's bottom. The way had been so strait that Claire and an assistant had been obliged to hold her narrow waist and trim hips still while the man scaled this peak of perverse triumph.

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“Laura's training must continue, however,” said Claire with a smile at her pretty slave, “Such a lively little creature is apt to grow conceited if the lash is laid aside altogether.”

This caused a good deal of amusement among the guests and very little surprise. None of the other working-girls, Diane nor Wendy, Ruth nor Jacqui, had been so polite and eager to serve their customers as Laura. Yet that would not excuse her from such training as Claire had planned.

It was Kurt who asked to have charge of the lead and drew Laura to him first. He raised the girl's chin and swore she looked sullen and resentful—though her expression was one of startled prettiness. He laid her facedown over his knee and ran his hands over the jeans—denim stretched so taut and smooth upon the firm young cheeks of Laura's behind.

“I cannot forget,” he said, “that Laura was perverse enough to give herself in betrothal to a common young boor, when there were such men and women in this room who would have employed her far more fully. I believe she should be corrected for that!”

Laura knew the meaning at once, for her slim young buttocks tightened visibly with apprehension in the tight jeans—seat. Kurt returned the girl to Claire.

“Laura,” said the young mistress quietly, “slip off your jeans and underpants.”

With head lowered apprehensively, Laura's slender bare arms moved to obey. The lamplight caught the sleek waves of her golden brown hair. Laura pushed down her jeans with her panties inside them and stepped clear of the tangle. Claire jerked the lead a little and drew the girl towards a sturdy table. The four onlookers admired the easy movement of Laura's slim legs, the puff of fair hair at her loins and the high tight shape of her young buttocks. Claire bent her over the table and attached the heavy collar to the far side to hold her.

Claire used the dog-leash to inflict discipline on Laura. She doubled the thin leather and lashed it across the backs of the slim thighs. By the singing crack of leather and the redness of the weal it was evident that Lesley or Judith would have screamed out at once. Yet this stroke and a second one across her legs drew from Laura only a sudden intake of breath, released in a half-controlled sob.

There was a sense of excitement among the spectators in the room. During her first year at the other house, Laura had not only been trained to obedience, she had also been trained to take punishment. How many such whippings had it taken to teach her that pleading and screaming were not only useless but would actually be punished in themselves? Kurt and Hassan exchanged their first smiles.

Claire brought the leash down hard across Laura's bottom—cheeks, half a dozen times. The seventeen-year-old girl tensed her buttocks desperately and cried out softly. Yet she neither squirmed her buttocks aside nor gave vent to screams. Once or twice the loop of thin leather curled round and caught her flank. On a few occasions it fell short and curled between her rear—cheeks.

Then they heard Laura scream, her face twisted round, the golden brown page-boy tresses tumbling aside as she looked in terror at the witnesses.

Yet her hands had not been tied, though the collar kept her bending over the table tightly. Once, in the extreme anguish of another stroke catching her between the cheeks, Laura swung her arms behind her. Yet the hands with which she might have tried to cover her bottom remained stretched out at either side of it. So well had Claire trained her pretty slave—maid that even in such an extremity Laura knew better than to commit the offence of impeding the whip.

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There came a moment when even the best training was of no avail. Laura was whipped in this manner for a considerable time. Before the session was over they saw her slim young buttocks contort and twist wildly, they heard her scream without respite. Once or twice the thin leather wrought havoc in a line of pinprick dots across the trim cheeks of Laura's backside.

At midnight the others left Laura alone with Kurt. Brushing away her tears on the edge of her hand, the girl knelt before his chair and lowered her lips to the hard, demanding erection.

Claire had chosen to enjoy Connie's Asian beauty in her room. What passed between them remained a mystery. Yet next day, when Claire and Laura were to leave the Villa Rif for the other house, the result of that lesbian passion was revealed. Lesley came face to face with Connie, led by two men down one of the long corridors of the villa in the cool sunless light of early day.

Connie was naked. Her wrists were strapped behind her back and the men held her arms on either side, as they held Noreen when she was led away a year before. Unlike Noreen, Connie offered no resistance. Indeed, there was a leather collar round her neck, though without a leash. A gag-strap was drawn between her lips, and her beautiful almond eyes regarded Lesley with a mute appeal.

Claire appeared and smiled at the sight of Lesley's dismay.

"Connie must go with me," she said simply in reply to Lesley's questioning indignation, "It is time she was taken to the other house. Kurt has agreed to it. Since Connie belongs to him, he may dispose of her as he chooses."

In this, Claire was quite right. Yet while Connie was led away, Lesley ran to Kurt, begging him to deny all that had been said. He sat in the leather smoking-chair and drew Lesley onto his knee, as if she were a child. He smiled at her, as if he were truly indulging a sulky little girl by offering her an explanation.

"Connie will go to the other house with Claire and Laura. She goes of her own free will, having declared her love for Claire in their bed last night. The use of the straps and the gag is entirely logical. It is the first rule here that a wish expressed in the height of passion cannot be withdrawn in the calmer moments which may follow. To allow such a thing would be to deny the supreme authority of love. Have no fear, Claire will train Connie to accept her fate as she has already trained Laura."

To Lesley's protests, Kurt responded by revealing something further, news which in itself brought a deeper shock to Lesley's aloof blue eyes.

"I shall go with them," said Kurt gently, "It must be so."

"And what is to become of me?"

There was no mistaking the peevish arrogance in Lesley's voice, like a little girl denied a treat.

"You will wait here," said Kurt gently, stroking her silky hair, "You will be kept here with Hassan, Judith, and Maggie."

She moved quickly, turning her face to him at the words "kept here."

"Come now," said Kurt smiling at her, "I do not think there is anywhere else for you to go. It may console you to know that my place here will be taken by Anton. You cannot object to that, Lesley! How plaintively you confessed that you loved him!"

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Under the parted fringe, Lesley's face was a study in uncertainty. To be close to Anton seemed to make her pulse beat faster at the very thought of it. Yet the news that she had no choice but to remain seemed to intimidate her.

“Connie is mine and I give her to Claire,” said Kurt softly. “Maggie is mine and is given to Anton!”

A frown of displeasure crossed Lesley's sulky face at the news that she was to have a rival in the shape of the blonde shopgirl.

“Judith is mine,” said Kurt slowly, “She is sixteen now and therefore I give her to Hassan.”

“Hassan!”

Lesley's cry was one of despair and defeat, the sound of it bringing a smile of satisfaction to Kurt's lips. The thought of Judith's demure pale beauty at the mercy of Hassan's pleasures was terrifying.

“Please!” Lesley took Kurt's hand and kissed it as she knelt before his chair, “Hassan will be cruel to her! He will use her in ways which we both know. Judith is too young for that, too beautiful!”

“Hassan will enjoy her all the more for her youth and beauty.”

“No!” Lesley gave a tearless sob of protest, “I love Judith! Not as I love Anton, but as a woman loves a woman! Give her to me if she must be disposed of in such a way!”

Kurt laughed at the absurdity of it.

“She is already Hassan's, Lesley! It is all arranged.”

At this, Lesley relapsed into a sullen silence.

“And to whom have you given me?” she asked bitterly after a few more minutes.

“To those who want you. You have always been so disdainful and dismissive in granting your favours, Lesley. Now in a house of love, it is you who must be a beggar for love! You may beg from Hassan.”

“No!” It was the same wailing of a spoiled little girl.

“Then you may beg from Anton.”

She did not reply and so Kurt added a warning.

“Remember, Lesley, that neither Judith nor Maggie is your property. If you attempt to seduce either, it will be a crime against the man who possesses her. By the rules of the house, he may flog you for it, or have the penalty inflicted by another. Consider carefully, if you are tempted by another girl's beauty, whether the pleasure will be worth the pain.”

He bowed his head, kissed the crown of her head very gently, and then stood up. Before she could recover her wits and go after him, the door was locked. From the window, Lesley watched as the car containing Kurt, Claire, Laura and Connie set out on the first stage of the long journey to the other house.

TWO

CHAPTER seven

## CHAPTER eight

With the departure of the travellers, the long summer, even at Florville, passed its meridian and began to wane. The pastel-coloured blossoms of the earlier months and the rich perfumes of the evening gardens gave way to the first rattle of dry leaves in the light wind, scorched by months of hot sun. The bougainvillea climbed in a last purple blaze on the villa walls and the oleanders grew gaudy in the carnival of the dying Saturn.

Anton arrived at the Villa Rif on the evening of Kurt's departure. He remained courteous but distant in his treatment of Lesley, never allowing her to forget her duty of submission. He took Maggie to his bed, seduced by the hard sluttishness of her pale face and the childlike golden blonde hair which lay lank and fringed upon her.

Hassan had not yet possessed himself of Judith. When he did so, Lesley would be sure to know. The sleeping arrangements in the Villa Rif required that Judith should occupy a bedroom which could only be approached through Lesley's. Indeed, the door between the pupil and the governess was often left open at night. Yet the days passed and Hassan did not appear.

In the warm nights of August, Lesley lay upon her bed in the black breast-halter and stretch-briefs which were all the covering she needed. The scents of the garden and the distant salvoes of breakers on the sand came through the window which, though barred for safety, stood open above the lawns and shrubberies.

Beyond the open door, she sometimes heard the light rhythm of Judith's breathing in her sleep. For Lesley herself, this was the first time of sexual denial. Yet her liberation from emotional servitude of the conventional kind gave her the right to explore her own body, to masturbate as often and as much as it pleased her.

Lying on her back with her eyes closed in the starlit room, there was a quality of innocence in the firm fair-skinned face. Lifting her hips a little, Lesley would ease the black stretch-briefs down her thighs until they gathered untidily just above her knees. With her eyes still closed, perhaps in a dream of Anton, she slid a moistened finger between her legs and began to play with her clitoris.

Presently her breath would be released in long, uneven gasps. Her body would stir restlessly with a sudden convulsion of her long trim legs, like a patient in a fever. Turning her head aside she would muffle her sudden cries with a pillow pressed to her mouth. When that other hand could be spared, it would fondle her breasts and erect their nipples as if it belonged to an imagined lover. Later she would turn on her side as the tension rose, her knees pressed hard together, her thighs tight on her own hand almost in fear that it might escape. By then Lesley was wet with excitement, her finger deep in her vagina and her thumb still massaging the impatient young clitoris. Then her other hand would sometimes go behind her. She would fondle her own buttocks as a husband or lover might while preparing her for sex. Men who had watched her and lusted for her in vain, would have stared in delight to see Lesley's finger-tips playing between her buttocks as she lay there, the spasm of joy coming in her loins at last, and Lesley fingering her own arsehole at the same time to increase her sense of wantonness.

Her thighs wet with vaginal lubricant, Lesley scaled the peak of her orgasm, her face pressed into the pillow to muffle her cries. At last she lay there relaxed and fulfilled, not daring to move again for fear of waking Judith in the next room. Did Judith ever hear the muffled cries and think that Lesley was trapped in the toils of nightmare? Slowly pulling her panties up, Lesley would lie there thoughtfully, her fingers still stroking her

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moist pubic sheath through the gusset of black elasticated cotton.

A young married woman like Lesley had lost a good deal of her modesty by her middle twenties. Regular exercise by her husband's penis and two experiences of the nozzles and squirts of the maternity ward had banished the bloom of bridal innocence. Sometimes she would fall asleep with her panties still round the base of her lithe firm thighs. It was so frequent for her to stir during the night and play with herself again that she could pull them up then.

Bereft of Kurt and Connie, dismissed by Anton, Lesley was imprisoned in the Villa Rif by her woman's love for Judith and her yearning for Anton despite his indifference. Yet she seemed almost like a figure of bereavement among the others, a young widow who knew no consolation but that of her own fingers during the warm summer nights. The men ignored her, Maggie looked upon her with casual curiosity. Maggie would have consoled her and felt not a tremor of affection. But now even Maggie, the sluttish blonde shopgirl, belonged to Anton. It was only Judith, with her pale oval beauty and steady hazel eyes, who looked upon Lesley with pity and adoration.

Despite her promiscuity with men, Lesley could not bring herself to seduce a tall and graceful nymph of sixteen. Judith knew so little of such matters that she would feel soiled and humiliated by the grosser acts of lesbian passion. It was impossible. Lesley stroked the girl's fine brown veil of hair, kissed her lightly on the cheek and allowed her to indulge the innocent romance of a schoolgirl's passion for the governess. To the hazel eyes so full of innocent pity, Lesley returned a calm gentleness which she pretended with difficulty.

It was past midnight on a night when Lesley lay uncovered on her bed, the breast-halter fallen to one side and her briefs completely discarded on the cover. She slept fitfully and had no notion that Judith with the oval beauty of her face framed by the sweep of light brown hair stood, as she had so often done, and looked down in adoration and pity upon Lesley's sleeping body. Nor had Lesley any notion that Judith stood white and naked in all the splendour of her lithe young figure. It was then that Lesley stirred so far in her sleep that to Judith's eyes she seemed to wake—though in truth she had only half woken. This time Judith did not withdraw hastily on tiptoe to her own room. She eased herself gently on to the bed, which woke Lesley at last. Then Judith stretched out her own body so that it lightly covered Lesley's and assaulted her with an inexperienced passion which under other circumstances would have been comic.

She began kissing Lesley hard and repeatedly on the lips until Lesley responded as if to calm the girl. At the same time Judith's inexperienced hand thrust between Lesley's thighs and began to rub her with a vigour which expressed her own love rather than rousing it in the other. Breaking away from Lesley's mouth, Judith gasped as if she might almost be weeping.

“I love you! I love you! Oh, how I love you!”

Despite the wild confusion of her thoughts, Lesley gently drew away the hand which still rummaged between her thighs. She kissed Judith's face, mouth and eyes, tasting indeed the saltiness of tears upon her. The cruelty of sending the girl back to bed with a rebuke or a scolding was impossible. However arrogant Lesley was towards men, she softened more easily towards her own sex, as if in the face of a common enemy. Indeed, though she would not permit Judith's stroking between her legs, Lesley could not bear to part with the girl just then. After being deprived of Kurt and Connie, after being rejected by Anton, she so desperately needed a warm naked body to hold against her, if nothing more.

So the young girl and the young wife lay naked on the bed hugging and kissing like a pair of children. At last Judith took one of Lesley's hands to her lips and kissed its knuckles. She led it to her own breasts.

“Touch me there,” she pleaded, “Oh, please do!”

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Lesley massaged the cool softness of Judith's firm young breasts until the girl sighed softly in her arms. Then Judith led the hand to stroke her smooth pale back with the fine indentations of its vertebrae marked in adolescent clarity. Soon Lesley was persuaded to stroke the cool oval nymph-cheeks of Judith's bottom and then the hand was drawn into the rear opening of the thighs where it stopped at once. Judith cried softly in her need.

“Please, my love! Please!” There were tears in the intercession.

Lesley complied at last, stroking the soft-haired mound of Judith's vagina as if to calm a fretful child into sleep. Judith sighed in long-awaited contentment and allowed her lips to browse on Lesley's face, neck, shoulders and breasts. Despite herself, Lesley could not draw back now. Even if she could curb her own longing, Judith sobbed with dismay every time the beloved hand seemed about to withdraw from between her legs. There was dismay even when it was drawn back so that Lesley could run her fingers between the cheeks of Judith's elegant young backside.

Learning from what Lesley was doing to her, Judith's hand returned between the thighs of the first love in her young life. This time the thighs relaxed and opened, accepting the tribute. Judith's orgasm came with quiet cries of joy in Lesley's arms and Lesley herself had to bite back her sobs of happiness as she reached a shuddering spasm. There was a point where shame and decorum were cast aside. Love became pitiless in its intensity. As the first dawn light cast a wan glimmer upon the bed, Judith lay with her head towards Lesley's feet and kiss-teased the warm vaginal lips. Lesley gazed on the upward-turned cheeks of Judith's behind, kissing the tight anus-bud between them before darting and lingering her tongue upon the girl's clitoris.

When morning came, there was no remorse, no fear or dismay at the joys shared during the night. In the gardens of the Villa and on the corniche, Lesley and Judith walked hand in hand or arm in arm like lovers. Their happiness defied the world.

Hassan, who might have sought revenge for this now that Judith was put at his disposal, maintained an ironic detachment. He saw that Lesley had lost none of her self-possessed coldness in other respects, which suggested that love was without an improving effect on her. He was soon a witness to the truth of this.

At one side, the villa gardens were divided by a tall fence of wire mesh from a neighbouring boys' institution. The area was strictly forbidden to the boys of thirteen or fourteen who were savagely whipped across their bare buttocks by the warden for such trespass. Lesley knew this and chose the opportunity to avenge the female on the male sex.

In the trouser-suit of thin black cotton she would go down to the land by the fence and pretend to weed it. Seeing a young woman in the distance several of the lusty young boys would risk a sadistic whipping to reach the wire fence.

Lesley would simultaneously taunt them and pretend to ignore them from a few yards beyond the fence through which they watched her. Though they were only half her age, the boys allowed their eyes to wander over her in wistful admiration. They began with the straight fair hair cut short as if to boast her liberation from feminine subservience. They were undeterred by the dismissive contempt in Lesley's clear blue eyes or by the sulky weight in her mouth and fair-skinned features. They loved the shape of Lesley's spruce young breasts in the cotton singlet. They adored her trim thighs in the tight black trousers. Her vagina was something they yearned in vain to see.

Yet as she shook her parted fringe clear and bent to weed the land, turning her back on the boys in contempt, they enjoyed some reward. With her Spartan soldier-girl thighs braced apart and knees bent a little forward, Lesley bent tight to her task. The thin black cloth of the trouser-seat was drawn drumskin tight. The boys

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stared open-mouthed with delight at her in this posture. Their eyes settled like summer flies on the erotically firmed-out cheeks of Lesley's bottom!

With a vindictive feminine perversity, Lesley bent like this at her weeding a few feet beyond the wire fence. Furtively at first, one of the lads drew out his young tool and began to exercise it with his hand. Soon the others followed his example, half hidden from one another, their eyes staring at Lesley's tight black trouser-seat and hips as she stooped to her labours.

What dreams and ambitions did this view inspire in them? Did they envisage worshipping Lesley's backside on the bridal bed, the nuptial veil lifted, lips saluting her between her rear thighs?

Was Lesley to be their cabin-girl on a long oriental voyage? With her waitress-pants pulled down, did these landlocked sailors ride the rear way to her vagina, in their dreams, or sodomise Lesley vigorously as she lay over the bunk of her youthful captain?

In fantasy no image is too outlandish or bizarre. Which of the lads imagined a miniature garden-carriage with two bars across the shafts? Lesley, pale and naked but for her harness straps, stood in the shafts with her back to the driver. She had been bent forward over the rear bar, her leather collar and wrist-cuffs secured to the front one. She must run at the young driver's command, her firm hips swaying, her proud fair-skinned buttocks arching and rounding in a constant temptation to the carriage whip. Did the lad imagine a day's outing to such garden beauties as schoolboy humour might devise? Horsewhip Hill? Canewell Woods? Long Birching? In the intervals of spurring with the whip, how easily his hand might enter between the thighs of this pale young mare and tame her by soft caresses. Perhaps the more adventurous among them saw a pair of beauties between the shafts, the young mare and her own filly.

Yet even as these boys dreamed their dreams, Lesley would walk to the nearby summer-house and alert the warden to their trespass.

Then she would return and pose before them again, taunting them expressionlessly as she plucked the weeds. In their desperate state, the lads had lost all hope of escape from the most sadistic thrashing. In their plight they did not scruple to show their excitement to the treacherous young woman. With active hands, tongues running on their lips and eyes glazed, they brought on their crises. The tribute of several young loins fell only a little short of Lesley as she stooped before them.

Then, still ignored and despised by the arrogant young woman, the boys woke to the agony of the whipping which awaited them in an hour or two. They crept fearfully away. Indeed, Hassan had seen occasions when, having made her complaint to the warden, Lesley would merely stand and survey the young masturbators with cold indifference. How the lads begged her to return to the weeding, to offer them some view on which they could fix their hearts in the final moment of orgasm. To reply to this was, in her view, contemptible, and Lesley watched their sperm fly vainly and wildly. Disgust and triumph shone in her blue eyes.

Hassan held no strong views on this and yet he could not grudge the lads a chance of retribution when it came. Lesley was a demanding and faithless young wife, randy and greedy, the seducer of Judith who was his by rights. She had little cause to be so snooty over the young boys admiring her breasts, bottom and thighs. So it seemed to Hassan.

Lesley and Judith did not share a bed throughout the night but visited one another as they felt moved to. One night soon after this, Lesley had just stretched out on her bed in the darkness, still wearing her singlet and the translucent panty-tights which had been her underwear that day. The door to Judith's room was closed but, of course, Lesley had not turned the key in the lock.

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She was fondling herself through the gusset of the tights when there was a sound that made her draw the hand away at once. The door from the passageway was being opened and someone was coming into her room. By the starlight from the window it was easy to see that the man was Hassan, dressed only in his bed-robe. He saw Lesley move and his teeth showed white in the darkness as he smiled at her and said softly, "Judith is mine. Had you forgotten? I have come to take possession of her."

The horror of it broke like a slow dawn in Lesley's mind. A tall and beautiful girl of sixteen to be woken from sleep, her body rent and forced in every orifice by a brutal master. Screams and blood and foulness, almost in her own sight and hearing.

Was it unselfish love for Judith or her own feminine revulsion at overhearing such things which made Lesley reach out and take his hand, as if detaining him? Hassan had no idea. Still smiling in the darkness, he thought it might even be her simple longing for a man. He allowed her to draw him to the bed and sat down upon it.

"Please!" Lesley's voice was soft and promising now, "Please don't let Judith begin it like that. Not yet! Not tonight!"

Hassan smiled again. In the starlit room he could make out the shape of Lesley's high-crowned fair hair, the outline of her body in singlet and translucent panty-tights. He stroked her soft fringe gently.

"Be sensible, Lesley! There are some needs which it is quite unreasonable to deny!"

So that she would not misunderstand him, Hassan took her hand and led it through the opening of his robe so that she felt his erection hard and taut with excitement at what he would do. To his surprise and delight, Lesley began to circle it with her hand and excite him.

"Let it be me, then," she said quietly, "Not Judith, please!"

Hassan was so diverted by the thought of Lesley sacrificing herself to him to save the younger girl that he found her prospect quite irresistible. He went across to the door which led to Judith's room and turned the key in the lock to prevent interruptions. Then he found the light and flooded the room with a soft radiance. It was a modern bedroom, modern in its way as the young woman who lay on the bed cover. There were temple cats in sleek new porcelain, cabinets in dark green lacquer and rugs with an angular pattern of black and white. The bed-head and footboard were of buttoned satin in crimson. The quilted satin of the cover matched the gentler pink of the curtains. Mirror panels reflected the scene, as did the mirror-covered tables by the bed.

Hassan lay down, side by side with Lesley and took her in his arms. The willful young woman responded with lips and tongue to his kisses, her breath coming in sighs of longing, her thighs and hips squirming as she cuddled up hard against him. Presently Hassan drew away from her and slipped off his robe.

"Ready for the forfeit now, Lesley?" he asked, seeming to mock her.

"Yes!" It was an uncertain reply, having the timidity of a little girl rather than the eagerness of a mature young woman. Hassan took her with strong hands and turned her over on her belly. He wedged two of the pillows under her loins to raise and broaden the swell which the seat of her tights presented.

Hassan studied this view intently, the honey-toned film of the tights was like a seductive veil over the proud pale moons of Lesley's bottom and the dark cleavage between them. He whispered in her ear what he was going to do to her. The young adulteress's buttocks tightened together in alarm and her protest came in the petulant wail of a pampered little girl.

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“No!”

“Don't be foolish, Lesley! Anyone could have you between the legs! You mustn't expect to get off as lightly as that when you've seduced me away from Judith!”

It was evident that Lesley could neither struggle nor even complain loudly without waking Judith. Indeed, if she refused Hassan now, he would possess himself of Judith after all. As he reminded Lesley, she must not only submit but do so in a manner which would be exciting enough to detain him.

So Lesley lay on her belly over the pillows, her fair urchin-crop turned aside on the cover, the firm pale features of her English beauty reflected in the mirrored table. Despite herself she raised her hips a little as Hassan took the waistband of her tights, enabling him to strip this last defence from her. Lesley's pale hip-flesh swelled free a little as the constraint of the tights was drawn clear.

When she was naked below the singlet-hem at her waist, Hassan knelt over her so that his erection touched her lips while he bowed his head over Lesley's hips.

“Take me in your mouth, Lesley. Use your tongue well in the moments while I prepare you.”

The hardness which Hassan touched to her lips as he spoke was long and copper-toned. When Lesley hesitated to obey, he needed only to remind her that Judith would be compelled to perform whatever act was now refused him here. So the pleasure which Lesley had consistently refused to her husband and lovers was now performed without further demur for the third time in her life. Hassan fondled the cool smooth cheeks of Lesley's firmly mature young bottom. He parted them and admired the tight inward dimple of Lesley's anus. Where the cheeks curved in together, the satiny whiteness of the skin assumed a tint of yellowed ivory.

Hassan prepared her by taking a glass marble and dipping it in the jar of vaseline. Coating it well with the grease, he pressed the little glass ball firmly into Lesley's anus until the tight rear muscle yielded and then closed over the intruder. For a few moments, Hassan allowed her to lie there while he kissed and fondled her between the legs, stroking the warm pubic sheath through the back of her thighs. Then he told Lesley to return the marble to his hand.

Shocked by such a demand, she could not—or would not—at first. Hassan took the thin leather belt from his robe and dispassionately lashed her twice across the buttocks with it. She cried out, twisting away on the bed. Then, lowering her fringe to the pillow to hide her face, she lay on her belly and yielded the marble as he put his hand to her rear cheeks. Several more times he coated it with vaseline and inserted it until Lesley was well lubricated. He explained gently to her that, for all her other experience in the marriage bed, the taking of this rear virginity would be an agonising ordeal unless the way was well prepared.

He sat on the edge of the bed as she lay there and took from his pocket a dildo which was no thicker than his thumb. She began to struggle a little but Hassan held her firmly round the waist with one arm, looking down at the moon-pale cheeks of Lesley's bottom until she lay still again. Then he pressed the rounded tip of the dildo firmly between her buttocks until Lesley yielded under the increasing pressure with a muted cry of alarm. He exercised her with this device for five or ten minutes. At the same time he kissed her lips and eyelids, her ears and neck, his other hand manipulating her between her legs until she shuddered with a first spasm.

At length he arranged her on her belly over the pillows, stroking Lesley's proud pale buttocks as if to calm her as he drew the dildo clear. She turned her face to him over her shoulder. Under the long parted fringe the blue eyes no longer pleaded to be spared this ordeal. Instead, the spoilt and petulant young face of the suburban wife begged only that he would be gentle with her. Hassan replied, as if to the plea of a little girl.

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“Suppose there should come a point—as there will—where my passion overrules all promises? It is better to make no promises.”

However, he used the dildo for a little longer until he saw the first sign of Lesley's behind moving in a rhythmic contraction and slackening of her buttocks. He knew at last that she was responding to the stimulation. That was the only antidote which nature had provided against the ordeal of ravishing.

“You feel the stirring at last, Lesley? Relax and give yourself up to this. Forget the boggy-tales of old women and medical charlatans. It is certainly true that you will become addicted to these morbid pleasures—as they term them—if they are regularly inflicted on you. But will that not make you still more acceptable to your lovers? You pretend reluctance? How foolish! The speed of the pulse in your throat is sufficient betrayal of your excitement!”

Kneeling astride her, Hassan touched the head of his erection between her buttocks. There was a moment of narrowness and difficulty, a single cry. Then he felt Lesley yield and he was gripped by an elastic tightness, into which he firmly sheathed the entire length of his manhood. He moved in a firm but gentle rhythm, pausing while still in place from time to time to prolong the enjoyment. At last it was Lesley who stirred again first, now the initiator of her own continued anal violation.

In the mirror, Hassan was able to admire the reflected face of the pale-skinned young beauty who lay under him and endured that form of ravishing which marks a woman's bondage. It was apt, he thought, that Lesley's straight fair hair had been cut short in a manner rather unfeminine and almost boyish. Now she was being used like an overgrown page or stable-lad. The firm pale features of an English middle-class beauty were still there, the clear blue eyes still held their steady gaze. Yet he had only to thrust a little harder and deeper in her behind to bring dismay and fright to the proud young face under its parted fringe. How that he was getting close to his triumph, Hassan thrust deeper and harder all the time.

As he violated Lesley's bottom, his hands slipped under her, holding her breasts and firming them as he rode. In his passion he bit her shoulders and neck. In such desire, it seemed to him that his scrotum was full and heavy as a melon with its lust.

He made Lesley wad her mouth with the corner of the pillow and bite hard upon the padded cotton to stifle her cries. Then he rode hard, releasing a first throb of lust deep in Lesley's backside. He smacked the young wife's long trim thighs and raked the flanks of her hips with his fingers. His penis began to pump jet after jet of sperm into the depths of Lesley's bottom. It was a delirious sense of ecstasy and power, for this slave-wife was so impaled that she was powerless to evade anything he wished to do.

“Scream into the pillow, Lesley, if you must!” he gasped, “Do you feel the love squirting into you? How foolish your bridegroom was not to enforce this upon you during your honeymoon. You would have been subservient to him ever afterwards. This is how slave-girls are reminded of their master's absolute possession of them!”

His words ended in a gasping and spending of breath. Yet as Lesley stirred and began the cautious movements to expel the limp serpent from her backside, her lightly squeezing contractions caused it to begin hardening again almost at once. Lesley gave a cry of dismay as she felt its stiffness restored and her behind still securely impaled. Hassan smiled at her in the mirror, and the movements of sodomy began again, slowly and almost teasingly.

Afterwards they fell asleep together on the bed. Yet Hassan stirred later in the darkness, stroking Lesley's pale buttocks to wake her, for he had need of her again in that way. He woke her again at dawn and had need of her in his excitement once more before they got up. The possession of Lesley was like a madness in his brain. He

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had ravished her bottom four times that night and unburdened himself of sperm five times in its depths.

Nor was this all. Each night he came to the room and demanded the same sacrifice of Lesley as the price of sparing Judith. If Lesley was tempted to seek her freedom from the Villa Rif she could only do so now by sacrificing Judith to Hassan.

In the afternoons, Hassan would take her into the warm gardens of the villa. There was a tiled closet attached to the stables and here he would oblige her to shed the black cotton trousers of her trouser-suit and her panties. Lying on the floor, Lesley was required to wear the rubber dildo in her bottom for an hour or so while Hassan smoked his cigar and watched her with amusement.

He would even take her this way in the gardens. Once, bending her over a low wall, he stripped down her jeans and panties, sodomising Lesley in a long and leisurely session. During it, as she bent helplessly impaled, he drew her attention to four of the boys from the adjoining institution who were watching from the wire fence twenty feet away. Their mouths were open, their eyes shining, and their hands busy. Hassan made Lesley keep her face turned to them so that they might show her their delight in witnessing what was being done to her.

That night, as if satisfied at having avenged the boys whom Lesley had herself taunted in the past, Hassan did not come to her room. When it was evident that he was not going to appear, the time being long after midnight, Lesley went to the communicating door, opened it, moved softly to the bed in the next room, and took Judith naked into her arms.

## CHAPTER nine

The nights with Hassan were illuminated pitilessly by the white bulbs behind their shades of frosted glass engraved with flowers. There were nights when Lesley kissed her lover's hand as he ravished her backside, surrendering herself to his depravity and making it her own. There were nights when he rode in brutal triumph between the proud pale moons of Lesley's bottom, seeming to mock her marriage, child-rearing, even her very femininity. The pillow muffled her cries, so that Judith should not hear her. Yet the pillow itself, by the end of the ordeal, was wet with Lesley's tears.

From time to time, Hassan complimented Lesley on the pleasures which her behind offered him. And then, there was a sardonic note to his praise of her.

“Even at your age, Lesley, you're still tight between your hind cheeks. Almost too tight! Regular use must cure that...”

If there was a torment in Lesley's existence, a beloved punishment that kept her subservient to the way of the Villa Rif, it was Anton's presence so close to her. He was always courteous and never loving. In their dealings he treated Lesley as though the afternoon of pleasure in the boat beside the bank of the lake had never taken place. At every approach on her pan, he spurned her gently.

Worse than all this, to Lesley, was the frequent sight of Anton with Maggie. Disregarding Lesley's presence, he would take Maggie by her lank golden blonde hair and force her to her knees in front of him. Sometimes it was in the courtyard and sometimes in the long display room with its brooding lamps and Persian carpeting. While Lesley was obliged to watch and yearn, the twenty-year-old shopgirl with her hard young features sucked Anton to his climax and was then made ready for his bed.

The night which Lesley dreaded most of all came three weeks later. Hassan had not visited her on the previous

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evening. Now he entered her room, took her hand and kissed it as she lay on the bed. Releasing the hand with mocking courtesy, he turned to the communicating door, opened it and passed through into Judith's room, locking the door behind him.

There were voices at first, Judith's words trembling but obedient. The briefs which formed Judith's knickers for her night attire were removed and the singlet top pulled well up. That night marked the loss of Judith's virginity. Even with her hands over her ears, Lesley could not evade the sharp commands which Hassan gave. Judith lying on her back, her knees bent and thighs spread. Judith with the pale oval beauty of her face, the clear features and the wide-set hazel eyes, framed by the veil of light brown hair. Judith looking up at her ravisher and he adoring the long graceful legs of the sixteen-year-old nymph, the resilient young breasts, the light-haired triangle of her loins and the tiny sentinel of the clitoris standing guard, it seemed, over the entrance to her womb.

There were sounds of Judith first made to suck the penis, a refusal mewed between pressed lips and that defiance duly overcome. Then Judith's soft cries as Hassan masturbated her into a state of eager lubrication between her legs. Yet even now she still pleaded to be spared the ravishing—begged even for a postponement until the next night. Hassan's voice was adamant in his denial of this.

Then the thrusting and grunting of the man, the cry of the adolescent girl as her maidenhood was ruptured and the entrance to her body stretched upon her lover's erection. After the first scream there were softer cries. Lesley bit her knuckles to check her fury at the sound of Judith's pleasure with Hassan. The man and the girl, it seemed, had conspired in a double betrayal of her.

Later, Hassan took his departure. Lesley slipped into Judith's room and found the young beauty weeping in the aftermath of passion. As they lay naked together, Lesley kissed the brimming eyes, and the quickly responsive lips of Judith's beauty. For all that she had endured under Hassan's lust, Judith's responsiveness to the older woman seemed only heightened by it.

It was not to be expected that Hassan was content with what he had done. There were other scenes in the night which followed—and in the nights after that—to which Lesley was compelled to be an unwilling witness. Sometimes she was merely the eavesdropper who heard the sounds beyond the dividing door. On other occasions that door was left open and she glimpsed the events on the bed.

There was a cameo of Judith lying on the satin cover. Her long elegant legs were still encased in the sheer lilac silk of her stockings. A plum-coloured corset left her shoulders bare and ended in a waist so tight that her pale hips seemed to swell rounder and fuller. Hassan, admiring the fair oval of her face and the beautiful hazel eyes, had made her braid her light brown hair in two plaits, like a schoolgirl. Hassan fondled the young breasts through the tight silk of the corset. His hand followed the taut young belly and his fingers moved over the light pubic fleece at her loins.

The young beauty caught her breath in a little sound of alarm as Hassan turned her on her belly over the pillows. Her plaits with their two ribbons now lay on the bare pallor of her shoulders. The frill of plum-coloured lace at the top of the corset ran just under her shoulder-blades at the back. Because the corset was cut high and seatless at the rear, the lower frill of lace lay just across the upper swell of Judith's backside. Smiling gently at her dismay, Hassan unscrewed the jar of vaseline. Taking a blob of the lubricant on one forefinger, with his other hand he parted the pale oval nymph-cheeks of Judith Terry's bottom!

The young beauty's cry of panic rose to a wild shrillness as Hassan's bone-hard erection violated the tight privacy of her behind. He gave a long sigh of satisfaction at having established himself there and settled down to the long ecstasy offered him unwillingly by Judith's young backside.

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Worse, in its way, was the manner in which the only other two occupants of the villa, Anton and Maggie, found pleasure with each other. Sometimes it was done in Lesley's sight. Maggie, the sluttish blonde shopgirl, stripped off her working jeans and pants in the very room where Lesley slept. There was another bed, close to Lesley's own, and Anton seemed deliberately to mock her by enjoying himself with Maggie upon it.

Anton obliged Lesley to watch, from a yard or less, the sight of Maggie sitting on her heels, the golden blonde hair drawn back in a short pony-tail, the boldly crude pale features moving gently as she sucked him. Then shaking her fringe into place, Maggie would sprawl wide-legged on her back and Anton would take her, once again close to Lesley's eyes. "Turn on your belly, Mag," he would say later, for he chose the same means as Hassan to avoid the girl's pregnancy. Parting the taut broadened cheeks of Maggie's bottom, Anton made himself master of her backside. He turned her head on the pillow so that she faced Lesley during this, displaying to the young wife the grimaces and sudden thrills of the ordeal. When he came, he reserved the last pulse of passion to fall upon the blonde girl's seat-cheeks as he withdrew. He embraced her so that she lay on her side with her back to the other bed. By this means, Lesley was confronted at such close range by the sight of the man's lust spangling the plump sluttish pallor of Maggie's buttocks and the backs of her thighs.

Once he caught Lesley as, in her desolation, she took Mag's hand and squeezed it lovingly. Anton's reprimand was delivered with a smile, but it was given in earnest none the less.

"You must remember, Lesley, that Maggie does not belong to you. You have no rights over her, nor over Judith. We shall find some purpose for you in due time. Meanwhile, remember the warning you were given before Kurt left. If you poach upon the preserves of others, you will be made to pay the penalty without pity. I promise you, if you attempt to seduce Maggie, you will answer for it to me by a whipping that you will remember for the rest of your life."

Were his words more carefully chosen than they seemed? Perhaps he guessed the sequel. Lesley, infatuated with Anton and longing for relief in his arms, must have seen at once the easiest route to his bed. It appeared that she had only to misbehave with Maggie and incur the penalty. Then, stripped and punished by Anton, she would surely have the best opportunity of all to seduce him.

Perhaps nothing of the kind entered her mind. Or perhaps if it did, Lesley still had too much pride and self-possession to admit it consciously to herself. Was it the aching frustration of her loins, the desolation of hugging her pillow night after night, which drove her at length to a desperate remedy?

To sleep with Maggie and not be discovered was impossible. When the blonde girl was not in Anton's embrace at night, she slept in a room alone. To enter that room was easy but to escape from it impossible. There was a handle on the outside of the door which anyone could turn. On the inside there was only a keyhole and no means of egress to those who had no key. That key was safely in Anton's pocket. Rooms of this kind were necessary at the Villa Rif. There were girls who made promises and acts of surrender in the height of sexual passion which they begged urgently to renounce, in the cold aftermath of reality. Since this was forbidden by the First rule of the place, locks and restraints were sometimes needed to enforce the passionate surrender.

Judith was now in Hassan's possession, night after night, so that Lesley could have no hope there. Anton rejected all Lesley's advances with a gentle amusement. It was certain that he did not spend every night with Maggie. There were other young women who visited him, those beauties of Florville with the frail grace of mannequins, or younger girls-brought by older women. Lesley would glimpse these pupils of his love from time to time. There was Natasha, a slim elfin schoolgirl with blonde hair in a chignon, light blue eyes and fine profile, or Julia with her darker curls, higher colour and more robust figure.

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On one such night, Lesley was left alone on her bed to dream at first of Anton, who was unattainable, and then of Maggie, who lay bereft in her own bed as Lesley did.

What images of Maggie possessed Lesley's mind in that hour or more of indecision? They were perhaps only the unremarkable sights of Maggie as her admirers first saw her in the attitude of a working-girl. The young shopgirl had been sitting on her heels regarding the world with a certain slack-jawed vacancy, the lank pale gold hair parted aside on her forehead and a hard wantonness in her fair-skinned features. The incidental details of Maggie on all fours, polishing hard with a damp cloth. As the hem of the singlet pulled away from the jeans-waist, a lightly dented softness of pale flesh was revealed. The soft taut weight of Maggie's breasts shaped by the singlet. A slight stockiness of Mag's thighs in tight jeans, reducing her height. The firm full cheeks of Maggie's bottom as she laboured on all fours in the tight denim pants. Her little-girl-liveliness with her companions. Maggie's look of sluttish indifference to the world.

Perhaps even Lesley herself could not have told the truth about her motives as she got up from her bed and walked softly into the passageway outside the room. In a furious confusion of fear and longing, desire and revulsion, pride and submission, she opened the door of Maggie's room and then closed it behind her.

Maggie lay naked on the cover of her bed in the warm night. She was alone. In the lighted room the eyes of the two young women met and neither, for the moment, showed terror at the predicament they were in—for they must inevitably be found together in the morning. Instead, Lesley went straight to the bed and took the blonde girl in her arms.

It was surprising that though Lesley was the beginner of their pleasure, Maggie soon took the initiative. Underneath her slut's appearance, she had a warmth and responsiveness. It was certain that the two young women would be vindictively punished for their night together. There was no way to lull their terror but by pleasure. Yet Maggie did not reproach Lesley for what she had done. Instead, she took her in her arms, lulling and soothing her in a soft voice. They lay together for some while with no more sexual passion than a pair of affectionate schoolgirls. In the moonlit gardens of the villa the black spears of cypress trees rose against the pale night sky. Far off, a storm flickered and rumbled beyond the sharp ridge of the mountains.

“I love you, Mag,” said Lesley at last, “I want you so much!”

These were no more than the words of a cold young woman intent on her own pleasure, yet Maggie responded to them. With a boldness in her firm crude features she sought Lesley's mouth and at the same time, slid her hand between the taut erotic maturity of the bare thighs.

The two young women squirmed together naked, moaning and yielding in their passion. Maggie was not the sort of girl to win a husband easily, yet she had learnt the arts of love from her boy-friends in the dusty rooms of city slums. She bit lightly on Lesley's back, shoulders and breasts, exciting the young wife with the gentle sharpness of love-bites which left a red mark of wantonness.

Fondling each other as they did so, the two beauties turned head to tail and admired each other's upward squat of hips, thighs and rump. A drawer of the bedside table rattled as Maggie opened it. She took out a box of glass beads, each perfectly round, smooth and the size of a large grape. Lubricating the first one in her mouth, she brought her lips close to Lesley's vagina, kissed the warm opening and then with her tongue inserted the glass bead gently inside. The sullenness of Lesley's face was softened into a yearning languor by the pleasure of this. She cried out softly as Maggie repeated the process with two more glass beads. But Maggie had not finished yet.

She took a larger pendant, oval in shape and the size of a small egg. Oiling it, she pressed it between the parted curves of Lesley's pale buttocks until her anus yielded and then closed over the intruder. Hassan's penis

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entering Lesley's arse nightly for several weeks made her permanently more easy of entry in that place.

Since proclaiming her sexual freedom some months earlier, Lesley had allowed several other women to masturbate her. Yet none had used such devices as this. When Maggie's fingers manipulated her vaginal pouch, the movement of the three glass beads inside her gave Lesley an excruciating degree of pleasure. In her frenzy she was incapable of words. The soft "Ahs!" of ecstasy rose to cries and then almost to screams of uncontrollable desire.

The short cut of Lesley's fair hair twisted from side to side in the fury of her first orgasm. The lubrication of her vagina was so copious that it was clearly audible when she moved. No sooner was one climax achieved than Maggie's fingers began once more to mould the inflamed vaginal lips.

At first Lesley's middle-class reserve had been too strong to obey Maggie's other whispered request, which was to expel the larger glass oval by contractions of her behind. Yet soon there was no depravity she would not perform in her passion. Her lips sought Maggie's pudenda and her tongue ravaged the moist warm depths. Between the smooth pale moons of her buttocks, Lesley's anus seemed to tense and swell, the round end of the glass oval peeped out. Lesley's arsehole widened to expel the rest and the oval rolled at last into Maggie's hand. It was replaced by a larger one, and then a larger one still. Throughout their pleasure, Lesley's bottom received and expelled these devices several times in each minute. At last the multiple orgasms and the labours of her behind left her panting and exhausted in Maggie's arms.

Maggie's charm was in the combination of a slut's hardness and a child's innocence. There was an undeniable boldness in her blue eyes, firm features, the slovenly chewing of candy and her way of standing slack-hipped like a whore. Yet the ripe yellow hair which lay fringed and straight to her shoulder blades was still cut in the style of a little girl. Now she was frank as a little girl and brazen as a whore. Kneeling on all fours so that Lesley might enjoy watching her, Maggie played between her own legs with one hand. Then, pausing, she took the glass oval and inserted it in her own backside. Maggie played with herself, front and rear, until Lesley began to yearn for her in the colder hours before dawn.

"Come to me, Mag!" she whispered to the blonde shopgirl, "Ah, come to me, my love!"

They lay in one another's arms, exhausted and sleeping soundly as children. Neither of them stirred until after the door had been opened and Anton looked down at them.

There was no anger and no reprimand. Without a word to either of the young women, he made the grooms separate them. Lesley was taken away to another room. It was no longer the boudoir which adjoined Judith's but a more plainly furnished room. The windows looked out over the gardens but an ornamental grill covered them on the outside. There was only the single door which opened on to the landing. It showed no handle and no keyhole, for such doors could not be opened by the occupants of rooms like these.

## CHAPTER ten

The period of confinement which followed was no more than a few hours in the first instance. In the languid warmth of the afternoon, Anton came to her. He ordered Lesley to dress and accompany him, offering his explanation with a look of amusement.

"Since your infatuation with Maggie has driven you to such extreme measures, you shall watch her pay the price of your mutual indiscretion."

As he spoke he raised her chin with the back of his hand and paused to kiss her on the lips. Lesley brushed her

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fringe with an instinctive nervous gesture, sensing that he was about to continue the explanation. Anton looked at her, unsmiling now.

“Whatever it is you have to tell me,” she said coolly, “I would rather hear it now.”

The smile returned to his eyes, mocking her impatience.

“It is what you already know,” he murmured, “While you watch Maggie suffer the consequences of her lechery, remember that your own turn will come soon.”

They walked together into the gardens of the villa, where the afternoon heat was thick and thunderous. Live oaks and plane trees stood still and silent as if in anticipation of a storm which never broke. With Anton at her side and two of his grooms in attendance, they came to the dilapidated stable-block with its broken tiles and walls of roughened yellow stone. From the adjoining mill house, disused for the time being, the warmth of the day drew a scent of sour meal and ancient timber.

A space had been cleared on the red tiled floor of the harness room and a group of men stood by, smoking and talking, as if waiting for the display of retribution to begin. One or two of them glanced up with curiosity as Lesley entered. Though it was evident that she was not to be the victim of the punishment, there was a piquancy in the presence of a young woman to witness the thrashing of her own sex.

Two of the grooms carried a harness block, standing about waist height, to the centre of the floor and set it down. On its top they secured a leather saddle. Already one or two of the men were endeavouring to catch Lesley's gaze with secret smiles. But this time it was clear to them that she was an unwilling spectator and the knowledge of this seemed to give them a vindictive satisfaction.

When the saddle was firmly strapped upon the wooden block, the two grooms went to fetch Maggie. Above the gardens, the sky assumed the dull glare of hot nude pearl. Anton commanded Lesley to go into the stable beyond the door and bring him the short pony-lash of woven snakeskin. Every man in the room watched the order carried out, intrigued by the suggestiveness of the young woman bringing to her master an instrument of this kind.

Lesley handed it to him. The attention of the spectators moved at once to the other door as the two grooms led Maggie in from the garden.

Had she been told what was about to happen to her? If so, her natural apprehension was well disguised by the indifference with which the blue eyes and hard pale features of her young face surveyed the harness room and its occupants. It seemed more likely that she had not been told of the severity of her punishment, or that she did not yet guess the purpose of the saddle on its wooden block. The two grooms took her gently by either arm and led her across to it. Through the dusty windows the afternoon light caught the golden blonde lankness of her fringe and the hair which just swept the shoulders of her black singlet.

It was only when they had brought her to face the saddle and harness block that Maggie turned her head to Anton. Yet the tone in the young shopgirl's voice was still that of casual curiosity rather than fear.

“What are you going to do me, then?”

It was the same quiet lilting voice in which she always spoke to him, despite the boldness of her looks. The innocence of her question brought smiles to the faces of the men who watched these preparations.

“You must be whipped, Mag,” said Anton gently, “Whipped hard for your conduct last night.”

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“But why?”

The voice was louder now and shrill. Anton ignored the question and nodded to the grooms who tightened their grip on Maggie's arms. They hauled her forwards and bent her over the mounted saddle, looking for all the world as if she had been thrown across a horse's back, though her feet were still on the floor. One man drew a strap round her wrists firmly and so fastened them, with her arms at full stretch, to the base of the harness block on the far side.

Maggie's golden blonde hair split aside as she twisted her face, looking back at the men behind her. As yet, no attempt had been made to strip her of the black singlet or the denim working-trousers. The tight blue denim moulded the short coltish legs and thighs, the seat of the jeans drawn taut over Maggie's broadened buttocks.

Apart from the strapping of her wrists no restraint was used. The tension on her arms was sufficient in itself to keep her bending tightly over the saddle, while the curve of the leather surface would prevent her from squirming too far aside.

One of Anton's men stepped forward and undid the fastening at the young fashion-dresser's waist. He stripped the jeans down and off with Maggie's pants inside them so that she was bare below the hem of the black singlet at her waist. The onlookers were now regaled by a view of her firm compact legs, pale and bare, and of the sturdiness of Maggie's buttocks, rounded so tightly and firmly. As she bent with her golden blonde hair spilling forward, the face which she turned to those behind her still showed little concern for the fate which lay ahead of her.

The truth was that Maggie had never been thrashed before and had no idea of the degree of hurt involved. Perhaps she mistakenly supposed that Anton and the others would never dare to inflict real pain upon her. In consequence of this error, the rather hard and crude line of her fair-skinned profile was unaltered by fear or doubt. The blue eyes looked with unconcern and her jaw moved slowly as she chewed the candy which was still in her mouth.

By the door which led to the stable came the groom who was to inflict the punishment. From his hand there dangled a strap of the kind used exclusively for thrashings. It was made of thin leather, eighteen inches long and an inch or so wide. At one end it had been cut so that it formed three tails. Maggie saw it and called softly to the man, though there was still a trace of amusement in her voice. She did not yet realise, even now, that the discipline would be in earnest.

“Let me wear my panties then,” she said, a hint of laughter in her voice, “You're never going to use that on me while I'm bare.”

Anton ended this comedy in a quiet voice whose tone conveyed a greater menace than the words.

“You're here to be hurt, Maggie. When that happens to you from now on, your backside will be bare. If you'd ever been thrashed before, I cant believe you would be quite so eager to flirt with the man who will give you a beating.”

There was no further exchange of words. Maggie lay motionless over the leather saddle, bending tightly, watching the groom as he walked round behind her with the leather tawse in his hand. Her eyes followed him, the whisper of her bare belly on the leather as her hips turned a little.

Before he began the groom stepped forward, took her upper thighs in his hands and pressed them open to show the light-haired pubic lips to the onlookers. Releasing her, he moved his grip and parted her buttocks firmly despite the young blonde's efforts to tense her hind-cheeks together. He held her like this, displaying

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Maggie's anus and its dark cleavage until Anton signalled that the onlookers had seen as much as they wished.

“Come now, Mag,” he said casually, “you were never too shy to perform the same posture before a street full of admirers with only tight denim covering you. What hypocrisy to pretend that your modesty is outraged by being made to show your maiden secrets to a private audience like this!”

There was some amusement at this, which caused Maggie to stare back at Anton with a hard defiance in her firm pale features. He looked into her blue eyes while he spoke to the groom.

Thrash her with the strap,” he said quietly, “When that is over, I must exercise the pony-lash upon her buttocks.”

Maggie's hard young face flinched at these words. She drew breath to protest or intercede. Yet before she could do either, the groom raised the thin leather tawse and brought it down in a hard, flat smack across the firmly rounded and parted cheeks of Maggie's twenty-year-old bottom.

The young blonde's face seemed petrified in a gasp of dismay at the smart of the thin leather across her bare buttocks. With commendable stoicism she tried to keep still, merely tensing her rear cheeks inward a little. This caused Anton to smile. Maggie had assumed that once the stroke was given the worst was over. Yet the leather tawse-strap was designed so that the sting of the blow lingered undiminished until long after the next one had been given.

Maggie's lank, golden blonde hair flew wildly as she twisted her head round and cried out to the groom not to hit her buttocks again with the tawse just yet. This caused great amusement to the spectators. The groom brought the strap down with a ringing crack across Maggie's backside and then strapped her again an instant later.

To the delight of the onlookers, the blonde shopgirl gave a shrill cry and began to twist her backside lewdly to and fro over the saddle as the smart of the leather tawse became a pitiless torture. Her legs twisted and writhed, her blonde hair streaming as she performed a strange erotic dance of suffering. The groom was smiling broadly as he brought the strap flashing down again, again, and yet again, with all the power and skill of his arm.

Wide-eyed over her shoulder, Maggie screamed at the spectators, as if this would move them to pity her. Smiling back at her, the groom thrashed the strap twice more across Maggie's pale spread buttocks, which now began to grow crimson under the beating. In her desperation she made the grievous error of trying to kick back at the groom with her legs. The reward for that was a brace of strap-marks across the backs of her thighs which caused a shriek and a bursting into tears.

Whatever softness the groom might have felt in his heart for the young blonde was dispelled by this rebellion. He adjusted his aim so that the punishment no longer fell across the full width of her backside. He aimed it now to fall only on her left buttock, nearer to him. The consequence was that the spliced leather tail, instead of catching her right buttock or flicking round her hip, curled between Maggie's bottom cheeks with a devastating effect.

Twelve strokes of the leather tawse were given in this manner, after which Maggie lay moaning and sobbing over the saddle, quite unable to clench the firm pale cheeks of her behind together.

All this time Anton had watched, holding Lesley close with her back pressed against his chest. With his arms about her he could feel the chill horror which held her immobile and transfixed by the spectacle of Maggie's suffering. Her pulse beat against him with a rhythm of dread and yet she could not draw her eyes from the

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cruelty. Anton kissed the crown of her short-cut fair hair.

“Do not squander all your pity on Mag,” he murmured gently to her, “You will need much more for yourself. While you watch her, Lesley, imagine how it will be in a few days more when your own turn comes.”

He felt her shudder and was gratified by this. The groom stepped forward and completed his work, lashing Maggie's writhing bottom-cheeks another dozen times with the strap, this time allowing it to fall on the full width and the spliced tail to mark her flank several times.

As soon as this had been finished, Anton released Lesley. He had no fear that she would attempt to leave the scene of the punishment or even that she would turn her eyes away. Selfish and self-centred as she was, Lesley could think only of her own suffering, which waited for her like a crouching beast for its prey. It was visible to Anton that the young woman was drawn to Maggie's ordeal by a horrified curiosity as to precisely what would be done to her own body when the time came. This pleased Anton. He fully intended that Lesley should taste to the full the torture of anticipation in the days which passed before her sentence was carried out.

The groom had laid down the leather tawse and was now preparing Maggie for Anton's discipline as the blonde girl lay sobbing over the saddle. It was an easy matter to hoist her astride the saddle and the block while ensuring that she still bent tightly forward from the waist. In a moment more the work was done. Maggie straddled her “mount,” lying tightly forward on it, her wrists and ankles strapped to the legs of the block. Her face was turned aside to the spectators, blue eyes flooded with tears and golden hair cascading. Her thighs and buttocks were stretched hard apart, almost jutting out over the rear of the mount and thus offering a perfect target for the woven snakeskin lash which Anton carried.

He touched her crimson buttocks and felt her flinch away even from the lightest approach. It intrigued him that Maggie's bottom-cheeks, which would be so pale and cold with fear before her future punishments, should glow so warm from the strap that he could feel the radiance on his hand an inch or two away.

Maggie had been securely fastened and could do little to respond to her whipping except to tighten her spread thighs on the leather saddle. This pleased Anton who intended to spare her no refinement of discipline. The snakeskin lash flicked up and then down across the strapped soreness of Maggie's bottom in what seemed a single movement. She gave a shrill animal cry and then another, even before the whip landed again.

Yet Anton was too skilled in these matters merely to act the part of a torturer. He intended that Maggie should look back upon this first ordeal in a turmoil of emotions, terror mingled with longing, memories of the whip's keen agony softened by those of a yearning in her loins and the fulfilment of pleasures sweeter than any other she had known.

Pausing in his whipping of her, he allowed the groom to come forward. The man now held in hand a little pool of spiced oil, the elixir of passion which gives warmth to many an Eastern marriage bed. His fingers went between Maggie's spread thighs at the rear and he stroked the oil firmly into her pubic lips and the cleft between them.

The young blonde gave a little cry of alarm at the first sensation but soon, it seemed, she could think of nothing but finding relief by friction on the leather saddle. Her hips began to move to and fro in a rhythm which could not be mistaken for any other than that of love.

Her face was still turned to the spectators as she lay forward on her mount. Yet Maggie no longer saw them, for her eyes were closed in a dream of pleasure and her lips were gently parted.

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Anton cracked his snakeskin lash across the broadened cheeks of Maggie's bottom, causing the young blonde to cry out softly. Yet despite the plum-coloured weal left by the whip, the girl was moving her hips still more vigorously on the saddle. Her chastiser cut her again with a stroke of the whip which made the walls sing by its sharpness. The tip of the sinuous leather caught her intimately, just where the lower point of her rear cleavage touched the opening of her legs. Maggie cried out wildly and yet seemed to ride the saddle with more energy than ever.

The spectators watched with a consuming curiosity. There was no doubt that Anton was using the whip to punish Maggie in the crudest way which he could devise. And yet, by some strange and perverse alchemy, the whip was lashing her to ecstasy at the same time. A dozen thin and pitiless weals were displayed, raised and curling, across her backside in a pattern which must take some weeks to fade completely. Yet though each stroke of the snakeskin was an agony, it was not one which she asked to be spared.

It was possible to see the intensity with which Maggie's short firm thighs gripped the flanks of her "mount" as she rode. Her golden blonde hair flew side to side once more as she twisted her head and sobbed only for the triumph of passion, which as yet eluded her:

Had Claire trained Laura and her other girls to obedience by such devices? It seemed unlikely, for Laura had behaved as a pretty young creature who had been taught to subordinate her own desires to the commands of others. As for a rebellious young trollop of nineteen like Noreen, there could be little doubt. No question of her pleasure would be countenanced. Claire's minions would take the girl to the stable block and train her, using their whips across Noreen's bottom with as little compunction as when breaking in an awkward filly.

It almost appeared, at one moment, as if the anguish of the whip might overwhelm the growing spasms of release in Maggie's loins. A sudden cut of the whip across her backside made her scream for a respite and, indeed, she tried to twist her behind away from the lash. Anton, accustomed to such things, ignored the outburst, continuing to whip her with well-aimed strokes. He was deaf to all Maggie's screams as her hips went rigid, as if paralysed by the anguish once the antidote of pleasure was lost. Desperate for some relief, she sought it at last by clasping the saddle again between her legs and allowing her hips to surge and squeeze upon the smooth leather.

None of the onlookers asked for Maggie to be spared a single stroke. Lesley watched in chill horror, aware only that what she saw happening to Maggie was an intimation of the fate which awaited her in a few more days. The other guests had been carefully chosen and none would have interceded on Maggie's behalf. Indeed, as Anton later hinted, one or two of them had first seen the young blonde at work in the winter city and had paused to admire her. In her habitual brazenness, Mag had stared back at them with a hardness of contempt—or at least indifference—in her blue eyes and strong features. To such men, there was a particular satisfaction in seeing her present predicament.

It was Anton who took pity on her. Laying down the whip, he eased his hand between her legs at the back, so that Maggie pressed on his fingers rather than on the saddle. With gentle movements the living fingers accomplished the final excitement which the dead saddle had failed to provide. Maggie's strapped hands clenched into fists, her toes curled with ecstasy and her eyes fluttered open with a long expiring gasp. Caring nothing for the men who watched, she gained her release with a shivering of her entire body and a gentle moan.

Anton left her fastened on the saddle-block, the moist excitement shining on her pale thighs and Maggie's buttocks glowing with a tomato rawness from her whipping. He led Lesley back to the room where she had been confined and informed her that both Maggie and Judith would go to the other house next day. The young wife, fearing his answer, asked if she would be taken with them.

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“In a week or so,” said Anton smiling, “Have you forgotten, Lesley, that you must first be punished here as Maggie was? That duty will not be overlooked!”

Lesley looked at him with an attempt to mingle disbelief and indifference in the aloof blue eyes under her fair parted fringe. Anton held her gaze steadily as he continued.

“Do not imagine that I shall be the one who thrashes you, Lesley. I shall be far away from here when it is done. It will happen in the tiled room at the end of the corridor. The two men who do it to you will be strangers.”

She did not understand him and a look of impatience in her firm fair-skinned features told him as much.

“They will come from a place of barred windows and locked doors, Lesley. A prison for delinquent boys where whippings are carried out at night on the lads' bare buttocks by the two men.”

“No!” Lesley's dismissive blue eyes widened suddenly with panic and she started back from him. Walking rapidly to the door she tried to turn the handle and found that it was locked.

“Come, Lesley!” said Anton sharply, “You are not a little girl any longer! You must expect to be punished like a proper woman.” He paused and smiled again. “The prison guards have a certain notoriety in this area for thrashing the bare buttocks of their prison-farm boys in so sadistic a manner. Imagine how excited they will be to have a promiscuous young wife of twenty-eight—with boy-cut hair and a firmly mature feminine bottom! Your hands will be strapped out of the way, Lesley, so that the smooth pale cheeks of your seat are defenceless. You shall taste the cold agony of being cut by their whips!”

“N-n-o!” The same syllable was now an uncertain stutter, “You wont let them! Anton! Please! You wont dare!”

He laughed again.

“Still you do not understand, Lesley. Once you have been whipped like that, you will go to the other house. You imagine yourself complaining to the world at what has been done to you? No, Lesley! You will not be coming back from young Madame Claire.”

She was on her knees now, clinging to him, the side of her face pressed to his trouser front and feeling his hardening penis. Anton looked down and smiled before he pushed her away from him.

“In that country, Lesley, men buy slave-women as their whores. You go to Madame Claire as a slave.”

She cried out in dismay and he continued to look down at her.

“Don't you want to be a whore, Lesley? It is what you have always been. Because you have a high school and college education, you think you cannot be a whore? Because you have an arrogant and snooty manner, the ways of a spoilt little middle-class girl who grew up to be a spoilt young wife, you think you are not a whore? You have always been a whore, Lesley. A whore when you gave yourself to boys as a student. An eager whore for marriage and your husband's penis. Then a faithless whore who deserted that for another man. Perhaps it is fortunate you do not know what lies in store for you. The whipping you will receive here in five days time is only the first of many, many more!”

Lesley was securely locked in her room and her torment of waiting for the agony and humiliation of the lash began. Each morning her bed was disordered, the captive young woman twisting and tossing without sleep,

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dreading the time of the whip's agony and yet tormented by being made to wait for it.

Anton watched her secretly as Lesley lay on the bed in her short white vest and black stretch-briefs. Never closing her eyes in the long night, she twisted from one position to another. A few tears of self-pity dampened the pillow. Her hands roved over the tight elasticated cotton of the black briefs. The fingers seemed to smooth repeatedly and reassuringly over her flanks and over the tight seat of Lesley's knickers!

Anton knew that Lesley could not take her mind off the question of what it would be like to be hurt so pitilessly in that area. After several hours of squirming, she pushed her panties down to her knees and began to masturbate. It was not with excitement at the thought of being whipped, Anton guessed. No, it was a desperate attempt to distract her thoughts from the cold fear of what lay in store for her. No doubt she hoped that by exhausting herself through masturbation, she would fall into a sleep of temporary oblivion.

Lesley climaxed with gentle sighs and soft squirmings. Her body relaxed. Then, as the dreamy bliss faded, the chill reality returned. Soon the adulterous young wife was squirming and writhing in apprehension on the bed, uttering little half-sobs of despair, for all the world as if she was already under the whip.

Next night, Anton took sufficient pity on her to bring a sleeping draught. He stroked her long fair fringe and kissed her in its parting. Then, with her hand on the glass as well as his, Lesley took it to her lips like a good little girl and drank it down. Anton watched her, stroking her fair urchin-crop until she slept.

On the last day, Lesley scarcely seemed to know what to do with herself. She stood at the barred window, turned with a look of fright and tugged vainly at the locked door. This emancipated young woman with her illusions of sexual liberation was ill-suited to captivity. With self-pitying little sounds she moved about the room, lying on the bed, sitting, standing again, quite unable to keep still in her fright.

At one moment, Lesley even stood with her back to the mirror, dropping her skin and pushing her panties down, in order to look back over her shoulder at her pale unblemished bottom-cheeks and thighs reflected in the glass. Her arrogant young face was now a study in despair at the sight of those parts soon to be cruelly marked by the whip. With her face frantic and woebegone Lesley had the appeal of a little girl whom adults find more engaging when she sheds a pretty tear or two.

Anton was gratified to see a young wife who had rejected her married life for a lover now reduced to such trepidation.

"They will take you to the other house in three days," he said at last, "Therefore you will be whipped tonight. Go to bed as usual. They will come for you when the time arrives."

Before the men were ready to deal with Lesley, there would be preparations which they must make. Their footsteps would pass many times along the corridor in the hours preceding that moment when they came to fetch her for the cruel retribution from which there could be no reprieve. It pleased Anton to know that her heart must pound with dread at each approaching footfall and that Lesley's proud pale buttocks would crawl with a cold and fearful anticipation at the sound.

Part III. Venus in Nightmare

## CHAPTER eleven

As summer turned to autumn, the stars glittered more coldly above the tide-washed sand and the white terrace of the casino. By late afternoon the sun was low in the sky and the wide boulevards of Florville were empty of

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all movement but the dry scuffling of fallen leaves.

The Villa Rif stood untenanted and desolate in its deep gardens. Those whose voices and passions animated it in summer had gone, some to the winter city and a few to that other house beyond frontiers and a mountain range. The very furniture had been removed from the spacious rooms, leaving only the bare floors and the walls and ceiling from which footsteps rang back harshly.

A boy of fourteen, a solitary youth with private dreams and passions, noticed the open and untended gates on a fine autumn afternoon. Unchallenged, he walked along the driveway to the house, the grass and weeds already luxuriant after several weeks of neglect.

The windows of the house were shuttered and its doors still locked. Yet the first of the equinoctial storms had blown down a small tree and broken a catch on one of the window shutters. The boy heard the irregular clatter of the hinged wood, swinging back against the stucco of the wall.

No one would come there again until the winter was past and the early spring brought a time for refurbishing and painting the villa in readiness for the new season. The boy followed the sound and found the open shutter. It could only be secured from the inside. The boy knew that it would be an easy matter to open the window, close the shutter and the catch from within, then let himself out by one of the doors which would lock again by means of its yale fastening.

As he swung himself through the space of the open window and into the first room, the boy paused and gazed at the ghostly grandeur of the bare walls, dimly lit by the rays which filtered through the slats of the closed shutters. He walked slowly through the echoing apartments until he came at last to a room which was brightly lit by contrast with the others, for its windows were covered by iron bars and it needed no shuttering.

The floor of the room was paved with marble and the walls with their white tiles seemed like those of a prison or institution. It was strangely furnished. A hand-basin and a toilet-pedestal gave it the appearance of a wash-room. Yet there was a padded leather sofa with no back but having a heavy scroll at one end. This was almost the only piece of furniture left in the villa and stood at the centre of the paved floor. At intervals on its mahogany frame, restraining straps had been strongly riveted to the wood.

The boy was intrigued by the disorder of this room, as if it had been left forgotten by the occupants of the villa. No attempt to tidy it had been made in the days before their departure.

On the sofa lay a young woman's panties, a brief film of apple green translucence. The boy's interest quickened as he picked them up. A bamboo cane and an open jar of vaseline were on the floor beside the divan. As he lifted up these curious items, he noticed that where the restraining straps were low down beneath the padded scroll, the varnished wood bore tiny scratches, as if from the frenzied nail of strapped hands. The wiping-rag from the hook by the toilet-pedestal and the box of tissues from its holder both lay on the sofa. A pulse of excitement and curiosity beat harder in the boy's throat as he tried to conjecture what had been done in this room. On the padded leather of the sofa lay a soft pliable gag-strap, upon which it was just possible to see the impress of a woman's teeth clenched in desperation. A pencil-shaped glass squirt and the liquid-soap dispenser from the hand-basin had been left on a nearby stool.

Entranced by these objects, the boy examined the brief silk panties eagerly. They were not the knickers of a schoolgirl or a teenage nymph but belonged, he thought, to a mature young Venus.

The rest of the villa was empty, devoid of furniture or even discarded clothing. It was only as the boy walked through the rooms for a last time that he noticed the white leaves of paper in a grate.

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There was no doubt that the bundle had been placed on the fire in order to be burnt. Some charring of the paper suggested that a match had been set to it and that it had been left to blaze. Whether it was carelessness in arranging it or some quirk of down-draught in the chimney would never be known. Yet the boy picked the papers out and found them unharmed. There was also a small package, which contained a recording.

The boy's heart jumped as he saw that most of the papers were full-plate photographic prints, ten inches by twelve. At the top of the pile was a surreptitiously taken picture of a young woman standing in a garden with a child often or eleven. The boy looked at the firmly mature young figure, the fair urchin-crop and the regular fair-skinned features. He turned the print over and saw the name "Lesley" pencilled on the back.

There was no time to examine the rest in detail. A glance at them proved that most had been taken in the tiled toilet room of the villa at night. They showed Lesley stripped and at the mercy of two sadistic prison guards. Anticipation rather than unease made the boy collect these discarded treasures quickly and make his way from the Villa Rif.

Returning home, he locked the door of his room to guard against intrusion and began to investigate the photographs and the recording. But first he read with great eagerness a short dossier describing Lesley. He learnt her full name, where she was born and the fact that she was now twenty-eight years old. Her education was described and the seven or eight years of her marriage during which she had borne two children. Then there was an account of how the young wife had walked out on her marriage and children in order to live with another man. Now it seemed, she had committed some grave moral offence. The dossier ended with the condemnation of Lesley to a judicial whipping on her bare buttocks with no mercy to be shown!

At the promise of this, the boy's heart beat faster. He took the pile of photographs and examined them in sequence. At the same time he played through the recording, for it was an accompaniment to these images. The recording was amateurish and indistinct in places, yet it was undoubtedly an authentic record of what had passed in the tiled punishment-room.

The photographs had been taken at night by the magnesium brilliance of flash. Though they were less subtle than camera studies made by daylight, there was no doubt that they were the work of a true artist.

The boy began to examine the photographs carefully, at the same time playing the few moments of the recording which belonged to each picture.

1. The young woman's bedroom at night. Lesley in white singlet, tight translucent panties, suspender-belt and stockings, lay on the divan. Her back was to the camera. The boy admired this view of her, the high-crowned urchin-crop, the long trim legs, the firm young hips and the erotic maturity of Lesley's bottom-cheeks seen palely through tight slinky panties. The two men who were going to thrash her had come to fetch the young woman. To the boy's delight, the two men and their photographer had caught Lesley masturbating. There was no doubt of this. Her hand was seen between her legs, massaging her vaginal lips through the tight gusset of her briefs.

"You like to play with yourself, Lesley, don't you?" said the voice on the recording, "Let's see if a prison whipping will cool your randiness!"

2. The two men had seized her. Lesley was on her back on the divan. One man had drawn her knees up to her breasts so that the full spread of her hips and thighs was offered to the camera. The man had stripped her panties down, revealing the flushed and roused love-lips between her thighs. He fingered her there with firm arousal. The other man held her head between his hands to make her face the camera. Her arrogant blue eyes and spoilt young face under the parted fringe were now a study in dismay.

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“Look into the camera lens, Lesley!” said the voice on the recording, “You'll have a complete portfolio of photographs taken of you during punishment. The men who buy sets of the pictures want to see your face at the same time, to see how you take it...” The second man smiled. “Look at the young minx! She can't help bedewing her thighs even when she's waiting for the whip!”

3. In the next photograph the first man sat on the edge of the bed, holding Lesley facedown over his knee as if she were a child to be spanked. His left arm circled her waist tightly to steady her. The fingers of his right hand were snug between her thighs at the rear. Her legs squirmed in unavailing protest as he squeezed her vaginal lips gently, and skilfully excited her clitoris. As he masturbated Lesley to her unwilling climax, the recording caught his gently mocking words.

“I must finish you off with my fingers before your punishment, Lesley! It would never do to allow you secret pleasure by squeezing your thighs during discipline! Nothing must be allowed to distract you from the whip!”

She gasped and struggled but his hand moved with firm assurance.

“Relax and enjoy it, Lesley. I'm going to make you come. Once you've got it out of your system, you'll be more in the mood for a whipping. Ah, you can't help moving your hips in time to the rubbing can you, Lesley?”

“Don't turn your face from the camera, Lesley!” said the other man, “Look into the lens properly or must I hold you? Collectors pay well for pictures like these. They'll expect to see your face as you climax.”

Presently the young wife's capitulation to pleasure began. A series of short rising whimpers ended with a long shuddering cry of release.

4. This was the first of the photographs to have been taken in the white-tiled punishment-room which the boy had entered inadvertently at the Villa Rif. The clock on the wall showed that it had been almost 11.30 at night by then.

Lesley was facedown on the black buttoned leather of the heavy sofa, her head now pillowed on her folded arms. Black rubber cushions under her loins raised and broadened the pale swell of her bare seat. No one could question the aptness of the costume she wore, for the area to be thrashed was admirably framed by the white elastic arch of the suspender-belt across the back of her waist, the elastic straps drawn down either flank and the honeyed gloss of stocking-tops at mid-thigh.

As one would expect, the young woman was looking sidelong over her shoulder at the two men who made the preparation for her punishment. Leisurely the boy who held the photograph admired the high crown of Lesley's coiffure, the way her straight fair hair had been cut at the jawline and shaped so closely to her head. A last chill of self-possessed arrogance still lingered in her fine long-lashed blue eyes. Indeed, the fear of what lay in store for her had not yet dispelled all the slight sullen hardness of her mouth and chin.

So far, the men had used only the restraint of their own hands to position her on the sofa, though her left ankle had been strapped to the heavy frame of the furniture at one end. Their hands were running expertly on her long trim legs, especially on the bare pallor of her thighs above the tops of her glossy stockings. One man's finger touched a wisp of fair pubic hair which peeped between the rear opening of her legs. The other man had his hand on the firm pale maturity of Lesley's bottom-cheeks, his fingers touching the secret humid warmth between them.

It was the recording which gave life to this cameo, for the sharp indignation of Lesley's voice did not quite conceal a tremor of fear.

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“You have no right to bring me here like this! Let me go! Please! I've done nothing to deserve it! Please!”

One of the men laughed.

“Don't be foolish, Lesley! You're going to get a beating—that's why you've been brought here. Just like the delinquent lads in the next building.”

“No...No!” There was a sound of struggling and gasping. Then, it seemed, they were holding her still.

“Why make such a fuss about such a little thing, Lesley? You won't be the first young woman to get a good whipping—nor the last. You've got a firm proud bottom to take it on.”

The sound of struggling began again.

“Don't hurt me! Please! I couldn't bear to be whipped!”

The other man answered her.

“No need for such panic, Lesley. There are other things which must happen before your punishment.”

There was a further sequence of breathless protests and the shifting of sofa springs. Then the first man spoke again.

“Open your legs wider, Lesley. Wider still. Lie forward more tightly over the cushions. Now let me feel you. I shall expect to find you well prepared for this after what you were doing to yourself in the other room!”

The boy listened to what followed, hardly daring to move for fear of missing some detail. There was a pause in the recording after the first man had finished and, when it resumed, the voice was that of his companion.

“Hassan parted her buttocks the first time, several weeks ago. I imagine she must be well used to such things by now. Lie still, Lesley! I can't believe that the touch of a finger and vaseline in such a place is a novelty to you...”

5.

The preliminaries were over now and Lesley was sprawling on her belly over the cushions, still strapped by one ankle. Her face was turned in dismay towards her ravishers, one of whom had now picked up a long slim cane. The light caught a trace of wetness at the rear parting of her thighs and a slight oily smear at the meeting of Lesley's buttocks.

“Take your hands away from your bottom, Lesley,” said the voice of the man on the recording, “You won't like the cane across your knuckles.”

“Wait,” said the second man, “She needs more cushioning under her belly, so that her arse is properly lifted. Lift your hips a little, Lesley. At once! Or must we add a refusal to your punishment?”

There was a sound of the cushions being arranged and the bamboo being touched lightly across the young wife's buttocks. Then the cane lashed down in a vicious stroke across the bare pale cheeks of Lesley's bottom. There was a split-second's pause of total silence. And then Lesley screamed.

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Again the bamboo rang out across the firm pallor of Lesley's bottom—cheeks—and again she screamed at the swelling agony of the impact. Eagerly the boy counted the strokes to himself to see if it would be six—but it was more—or twelve—but that passed too.

6. The clock in this photograph showed that it was half an hour after midnight and that a dozen strokes or so of the caning had been given. The bamboo had left deeply coloured weals across the firm erotic maturity of Lesley's bare bottom, as well as two marks across the backs of her thighs. Frantic with the burgeoning smart, the young woman had twisted round on her hip and was clinging hard to the arm of her chastiser to prevent him raising the cane. Under the parted fringe, her blue eyes were imploring him as if her life depended on his answer. Her mouth had the woebegone, downturned shape of a penitent little girl who pleads with her teacher.

7. The next camera study was made only a few moments later. Yet there was a significant and predictable change in the scene. To avoid such an interruption as had taken place, Lesley's wrists were strapped together to the far end of the sofa frame and the caning had continued. Her finger nails had clawed at the polished wood until they broke, in the agony of the thrashing. Her hands had clenched into fists until the nails drew blood from her palms.

Her head was still turned, her mouth and eyes wide under the fringe of her short-cut fair hair as she screamed for a respite. But the two men replied to the desperate appeals of the promiscuous young wife with smiles which promised a long ordeal. The man with the cane had thrashed the crowns of Lesley's twenty-eight-year-old bottom—cheeks to deep crimson. Now he was measuring the bamboo across the softer, sensitive undercurve of her backside, just above the crease dividing her buttocks and thighs.

On the recording, the boy heard Lesley scream at the first of these savage lashes of the cane. Yet even so he was able to hear how the men had taught her to accept the inevitability of her punishment. Half an hour before, under the first stroke, he had heard the young woman cry out not to be caned. It amused him now to hear Lesley screaming instead only to have her strokes delayed. The boy hoped this would be denied—and it was.

8. It was almost one o'clock and the boy felt a stiffening excitement in his loins at the knowledge that the two men had made Lesley's punishment last so long. Indeed, it was by no means over, though the scene had once more altered. From the voices on the recording the boy had heard that Lesley was crossing her legs desperately, jamming one knee into the back of the other to contain the appalling smart of the bamboo. The men had already denied her this relief by strapping her ankles a few inches apart to the sofa frame.

To take the cane upon the flank of her hip was painful enough. Yet the boy had counted at least fifty strokes of the bamboo across Lesley's bottom and knew how frantic she must be to shield it from further punishment. So she had begun to twist on her side, away from the man with the cane. It was the second man who came to his colleague's assistance. Smiling at the folly of Lesley's attempted evasion, he perched on the edge of the sofa, tightened his arm over her waist, and turned her seat back to face the punishment. He remained like this, holding her, so that only Lesley's bottom and legs were visible in the photograph. It was on the recording that the chastiser's voice explained the consequences of her disobedience.

“Your punishment will continue in a moment, Lesley. First of all you must receive properly the stroke which you tried to avoid. Then there will be six extra strokes for your failure to keep still.”

The boy listened with his pulse racing to the sounds which followed these words. He heard the extra strokes given with vicious skill. Lesley screamed for her husband, her lovers, her children, as if one or all of them could hear her and would come to her rescue.

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It was also in this photograph that Lesley, in her writhing, had thrust her bottom out to its fullest extent and thus offered her most complete rear view. The boy took a magnifying glass and scanned the picture with prurient curiosity. He saw, between the rear of her thighs, the light pubic hair matted by the moisture of previous sexual excitement. Between her buttocks, the few stray hairs near Lesley's anus were plastered flat on the smooth skin by the sheen of vaseline.

9. At this point, for the prison thrashing was still continuing after one o'clock, the boy could not resist glancing at the piquant contrast offered by Lesley in the days before her enslavement. There was a photograph of her gardening in the black trouser-suit, not long before she had renounced her married life and children. Her present ordeal was all the more exciting for this portrait. The picture showed Lesley standing to face the camera, holding a child with its back to her. The arrogant blue eyes looked a little away from the lens, and the fair-skinned facial beauty under the parted fringe was marred by her customary sulkiness, seen most clearly in her mouth and chin. How much more the boy preferred to see her contrite and weeping under the bamboo.

10. From this portrait of an emancipated young woman, the boy turned to a full-plate study of Lesley's face during the present caning. He held the two pictures side by side and saw how the arrogant self-possession had crumbled at the first strokes of the cane. The picture of Lesley's face while she was chastised was one which any true disciplinarian would have hung among the treasures of his collection. Under the long fair-haired fringe, the aloof blue eyes were now wide with pain, the mouth forming a howling oval of torment.

Like the chastiser in the next picture, the boy had to undo the front of his trousers at this point in order to ease the discomfort of his erection.

11. Lesley's bottom was once again the centre of the composition. Now, however, tight strapping round her waist held her down without the need of a man's arm. The hands of the clock showed that the picture had been taken just before half-past one in the morning.

There was no longer any part of Lesley's behind which was not deeply coloured by the cane, except for a strip of whiteness where her buttocks curved in together. The cane was unable to touch her there and, for that reason, a whip was kept in readiness.

The chastiser was now caning her hard and sharply across the earlier weals of the bamboo. Lesley's voice was shrill with panic.

“Don't cane me any more! Not yet! Please! Oh, please!”

“Lie forward properly over the cushions, Lesley,” said the man impatiently, “Don't clench your buttocks like that!”

“I'm being tortured!” Her cry made the stone walls ring.

The other man laughed.

“You shall learn the true meaning of that word, Lesley, in the place to which you are being sent.”

12. With astonishment and delight, the boy saw that the caning had still not finished. The supple bamboo rod smacked and lashed across the woven crimson which marked Lesley's buttocks.

For the first time the boy paused to consider his own reactions as he followed the events of the photographs and the recording. In truth, he had first heard Lesley's cries and outbursts with a profound shock. By now, however, he was intrigued enough to consider them more rationally. He noticed, from the intensity of her

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screams, that the initial impact of the cane across Lesley's bottom seemed to swell for several seconds to an unbearable torment, sharpening her cry to a wild shriek.

It was also evident that her screams were now more abrupt than they had been at first, perhaps from so much crying out and pleading. It could scarcely be that she noticed the pain less. Between the strokes and the screams, Lesley gave vent to a storm of sobbing, rising in shrillness or falling in despair, like the arpeggios of punishment.

The boy wondered if the drama was merely acted for the camera and recording. Perhaps it was. Yet he knew by instinct that no actress, of however consummate ability, could mimic such a performance as Lesley's. In the photographs, there was a sense of authenticity which the onlooker saw immediately.

In the present photograph, Lesley's high-crowned head was turned, so that she faced her chastisers in pain and panic.

"You've cut me!" she cried out, "I can feel it!"

The boy looked quickly at the photograph. Where the bamboo had landed aslant Lesley's right-hand bottom-cheek it had raised a well-marked weal. It was plain to see that several ruby dots had welled up along this line and that the largest of them was trickling down the lower curve of Lesley's backside to gather in the crease which divided her thigh and her behind. The men dismissed her frantic cry.

"You have much to learn about prison thrashings, Lesley. You are not a little girl being smacked by a teacher. A young married woman of your age and type must expect a prolonged judicial punishment. A well-used bamboo will cut your backside a number of times before the thrashing is over. Lie forward properly over the cushions. There is much worse to come yet!"

There was much following this which had not been photographed, yet was to be heard in fragments on the recording. At one moment it seemed that Lesley was undergoing a softer ordeal in the hands of the two men, for she sounded like a spanked little girl now pleading affectionately to be loved and forgiven.

Soon after this she cried out in panic and seemed to wrestle vainly with the men who positioned her. A man's voice said, "Don't be foolish, Lesley. You're here to be punished. We want you strapped bottom-upwards over the sofa-scroll, bending very tightly forward."

13. It was shortly before two in the morning. Lesley was indeed strapped down kneeling very tightly forward over the heavy padded scroll at the end of the sofa, her arms strapped at full stretch to the base of its frame. In this posture her firm pale buttocks were pulled hard apart, showing the yellowed-ivory smoothness of Lesley's bottom-crack where the skin curved in towards her anus.

They were punishing the young wife for her arrogance, using a pony-lash with a stout handle and a short tail of braided leather. It was the second man who whipped her now. He cracked the snakeskin lash across the bare pale moons of Lesley's bottom in a sinuous weal. The whip curved and clung agonisingly to her first seat-cheek, curled down into Lesley's bottom-crack, and then curved up over the further cheek of her behind.

Lesley's face was twisted round towards him. Her blue eyes under her parted fringe matched the expressive frenzy of the shriek on the recording. Every muscle in her thighs and hips seemed contracted by the anguish, her knees were jammed urgently together and her toes curled with the sheer intensity of the impact.

Unmoved by this, the man who held the lash took aim across Lesley's backside, even including the rear of her thighs, and whipped, and whipped, and whipped.

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There was a pause in the discipline, allowing Lesley to check her sobs a little. It seemed that the men wished her to understand exactly what was going to happen.

“Now you must undergo the last part of your thrashing, Lesley. It will be the hardest for you to bear. The full rigour can only be exercised when you are already supremely sensitive from the previous strokes. Let us have no hypocrisy about punishment. I want to take you far, far beyond the limits of punishment, into a twilight world where nothing exists for you but the anguish of the whip across your bare buttocks. Don't twist your mouth from the cotton wad, Lesley! It is prudent that you should be gagged for this last adventure!”

Even before the first stroke was given, the recording caught the small sounds of Lesley's frenzy. Her shrill pleading and protests were reduced by the gag to an urgent mewling. The sofa springs echoed the strapped writhing of her thighs and hips. He heard the young wife's bare belly slithering vainly on buttoned leather in the sweltering southern night. Unable to contain her panic, there was no restraint of feminine rudeness from Lesley's behind.

14. Was it all a charade or did it truly happen as the man promised? The boy heard a wild mewling as the smack-cuts of leather across Lesley's bottom made the stones ring. As for the next photograph, it had been taken just after half-past two.

In this full-plate study, the whipping was over, the last stroke just given. Lesley was unfastened and her gag removed. Indeed, the two men had raised to her feet this urchin-cropped young wife, her firm erotic maturity laid pale and bare. As they assisted her upright it seemed that Lesley's bottom patterned the floor with red petals from the final tapestry of the pony-lash.

There was one more detail, deeply exciting to the boy as proof of how far the men had taken her. Lesley's head drooped on the man's shoulder as he held her, her arms limp at either side. The second man stared in wide-eyed admiration and open-mouthed delight. Like a ravished virgin-bride, Lesley had swooned in her chastiser's arms!

15. The last photograph of the sequence had been taken at dawn. Lesley again facedown on the sofa. She now slept, showing the softer feminine gentleness of her face in repose. It was as if the drama of the whip had been necessary to the deep and tranquil exhaustion of this slumber. Lesley slept at last, all anguish and passion spent.

The boy who had found this treasure-trove saw that there were several other photographs. It was evident at a glance that they had been taken on another occasion and in a place far away. This was confirmed by the notes which had been scribbled in pencil on the reverse of the pictures. If the notes were to be believed, Lesley had passed from the role of prisoner to that of a slave.

Both the room and some of the actors shown in these photographs were Arabian, though the subject of the drama closely resembled that which the boy had just seen and heard.

The photographs showed a pillared hall, lit by the flame of torches, lined by Moorish arches and dark recesses. So vivid was the scene that the boy could almost sense the odours of burnt fragrance in the rich velvet hangings, the murmurs behind the latticework screen.

A tall stool was bolted to the floor and Lesley bent over it, naked below the hem of a white bodice at her waist. To one side, a dark-skinned man stood with a flat, three-tailed strap raised in an attitude of punishment. It was evident from the wildness in Lesley's blue eyes and frantically distended mouth that her buttocks had already been strapped for some time. This was confirmed by a rear view which showed that the backs of her thighs as well as the cheeks of Lesley's bottom had been deeply coloured by the thrashing.

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This time, however, there was a further refinement. To the rear of the young woman was a portable lattice screen, which had been unfolded. Behind it, secretly viewing the scene, was a man who had not appeared in any of the other photographs. The note on the back of the picture named him as the husband of the promiscuous young woman who was now being thrashed as slave—girls are thrashed.

The boy read the note with astonishment. On hearing of Lesley's abduction, the jilted husband had publicly denounced the crime. Yet in secret he had asked the young woman's new master for a final glimpse of her. Was it to be a last tender interview and embrace? After all that he had endured, he chose instead to witness Lesley punished in a manner which the laws of his own country would forbid—even in the case of her adultery and desertion. He sat concealed behind the lattice in order that she should not even be aware of his presence.

For half an hour the firm pale moons of Lesley's bottom danced to the tune of the strap, and the cane. She drank her own bitter tears of repentance and filled the air with cries that rose like burnt spice from the sparkling coals of the braziers. Through the fine latticework, the husband watched with mouth open and eyes widened by excitement at the perfection of this tableaux. The sight of Lesley's arrogant young face twisting round, the blue eyes flooded by weeping, the mouth distended and imploring, brought only a faint smile to his expression. The man into whose possession Lesley had passed need never fear that her bridegroom would ever assist to save her from such slavery. Indeed, the camera had caught the eagerness in the husband's eyes as he admired the chastiser's an, the seat of agony which the man had woven across Lesley's backside.

Nor was this all. Another photograph showed the sequel. It appeared that Lesley was strapped and caned to the point where she would obey any command to escape further punishment. In the next camera study she was kneeling with her hands strapped behind her at the lattice screen. There was a hole, two inches wide, level with her face. She did not know that the erection protruding through it was that of her husband, only that she would be caned until her act of submission to it was made. Bowing her short crop of fair hair, Lesley rounded her open lips and performed that service as a slave—wife which she had disdained when it was begged in the marriage bed. Indeed, as the photographs showed, the eager husband paid this tribute three times in succession in the mouth of his faithless young wife before he was satisfied at last.

It was the last contact between the lovers and yet it was not quite the end of the story. In the remaining photographs, the husband was shown alone with the chastiser, proffering a carved wooden box. Opening this, the man who had caned Lesley found the husband's gift: a finely woven snakeskin lash. He looked at it with some doubt. The husband, fearing a refusal of his request, was seen pressing a gold coin into the other's hand. The chastiser smiled.

Regardless of the previous discipline, Lesley was now seen lying on her belly astride a vaulting horse, fastened in this position so that her thighs and buttocks would be more open to the whip. Behind the lattice the voyeur once more watched this most extreme form of retribution. The pencilled notes on the back of the camera studies merely remarked that Lesley had been spared nothing. Indeed, it would have been absurd to spare her. There was no bodily function, no swooning, no frenzy nor squirming which would be permitted to put an end to the ordeal before the chastiser was satisfied. When at last that moment came the husband, truly vindicated, took his leave. He asked only that the finely woven lash should be used regularly upon the promiscuous young woman.

The boy roused himself from reverie and saw a last scrap of paper, written by Lesley—a smuggled appeal for rescue slipped into these camera studies. The place of her captivity was written on the other side. The boy hesitated, not turning the paper over. He knew how often and with what fascination he would play the recording and brood on the sequence of photographs. Yet he feared that in a moment of weakness he might take pity on Lesley's continuing slavery and respond to this final appeal for help. Once the paper was turned over, he would know the place of her servitude and the knowledge must remain with him.

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He glanced at the final photographs of Lesley whipped. The smooth prints reflected the mute images of her mouthed frenzy, the beads and trickles of the lash—marks on her bottom, her swooning, the smelling salts and the punishment resumed. Then he made his decision.

Without turning the message, he went to the fireplace, dropped the paper on the glowing coals, watching it darken and flake to ashes.

### CHAPTER twelve

From time to time in the hot weeks of autumn an unrelenting African wind blew sand—coloured dust about the house on the rocky plateau where young Madame Claire was absolute mistress.

At times the dust—storm veiled the sun itself, hiding the broad stoney valley and the distant limestone escarpments. Then the dust would clear and the wind would drop as unexpectedly as it had risen. From its eyrie, the house with the barred windows looked down on a landscape of lizard and lynx, 300 feet below. Among the olive trees and umbrella pines on the slopes, the sun's heat shimmered from the time—eaten Roman arch and the last ruins of a great arena. During the white heat of the day no man was to be seen on the dry and rocky terrain. Even at night it was only crossed by those visitors whom the mistress of the house invited.

Those who knew Lesley as a self—possessed and indifferent young wife watched her with interest. Many of them hoped that her natural resentment and arrogance at the thought of slavery would break into rebellion—for the pleasure of seeing her punished.

Yet her new guardians were accustomed to young women of this type and knew by what trivial means obedience and humiliation might be enforced. Constant beatings would make her useless for other pleasures. She would be whipped and caned, of course, but when it happened it would be for the pleasure of a man—or woman. Lesley's educated and emancipated poise, her insistence on the rights of her womanhood were easily undermined by treating her as a little girl whose most menial bodily needs can be denied or compelled by those who possess her.

Like the other girls, Lesley was at the service of those guests who visited Claire from far and near. This was never more evident than in the evenings when the young women were made to act as waitresses at the dinner table before being put to other uses. The perverse appeal of Lesley's fair—haired crop and the firm, pale maturity of her body made her a frequent choice for such duties. Claire would stipulate the costume to be worn. As a rule this consisted of a white breast—halter and suspender—belt with sheer stockings, a pair of panties—brief and tight in thin apple—green silk—being the sole concession to modesty.

It was easy to detain the young woman as she stood before a guest or bent across the table to reach for a plate or glass. By the time the meal was over, Lesley had been well fondled between the legs in consequence of this. Through the tight thin silk of the panties, the glow of a smack—print was often visible on Lesley's bottom.

Claire would also assert her authority over Lesley by making the young woman stand by while the mistress recited her history to the dinner guests in sardonic terms. Claire would begin by describing Lesley the spoilt middle—class schoolgirl, then the promiscuous college student. She spoke of Lesley the greedy and pregnant bride, the brief period of child—rearing and then the series of lovers.

All this had changed now that the promiscuous young wife was the slave of those who had abducted her. Before proceeding to their pleasures with her, the mistress and guests amused themselves by passing around the dinner—table those photographs which showed Lesley being enjoyed as only a slave—woman can be.

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In one set of pictures, not only was Lesley herself punished for some misdemeanour. At the same time she was made to “horse” a charming adolescent pupil to be thrashed at the same time. The photographs showed Lesley naked, bending forward tightly along a vaulting-horse, upon which she was firmly strapped down. A schoolgirl nymph with fair shoulder-length tresses, solemn blue eyes and a firm pale beauty, was the second culprit. She was made to sit naked astride Lesley's waist, then to bend forward tightly until her breasts and belly pressed hard on Lesley's bare back. In this charming posture, “horsed” astride Lesley's waist, she too was strapped down.

The sequel was enacted by the appointed executioner, carrying a slim rod with a short tail of whipcord. He was confronted by two faces twisted round to him in double trepidation. Fearfully his movements were followed by Lesley's eyes under her long parted fringe and by the solemn blue eyes of the younger nymph with the fair tresses. The chastiser's excitement would have been great even on seeing the full pale moons of Lesley's bare backside as she bent tightly with legs strapped together. To see such a prospect crowned by the resilient youthfulness of Rachel's bottom-cheeks as she lay horsed astride the older culprit's waist was irresistible.

Obliged to unbutton for comfort, the man seemed deaf to their shrill duet as he cracked the whipcord agonisingly across the firm maturity of Lesley's bottom and the slimmer tautness of Rachel's buttocks simultaneously. It was a refinement of the punishment that each culprit communicated her suffering by the writhing of naked flesh against the other. With a smile at Lesley, Claire conceded that the whipping far exceeded the limits of any permissible prison discipline. Indeed, the hangman's superiors were obliged by the rules to reprimand him for its severity. Yet they did so with smiles of reassurance. To have two such beauties presented in such a manner made restraint unreasonable. The hangman was assured that his advancement would not be impeded and that when the two young women received their next month's whipping it should be in the same manner and by his hand.

Such experiences curbed Lesley's arrogance. Indeed, she was made to humble herself in countless ways. Sometimes, they sat her in the stone stoup of a pedestal in the courtyard where the guests gathered. There she was fastened, clad only in breast-halter and the film of honey-toned tights.

They detained her until a liquid pressure forced from her a self-conscious request. Claire would deny it at once. The guests watched with curiosity the urgent compression of Lesley's thighs, the slither of the tights in her restless stirring. At last the flood broke. With head bowed, Lesley yielded in a long liquid whispering, until she sat in the torrent which filled the hollow.

These libertines would keep her sitting in her pool until her filmy honey-toned tights were well soaked, the backs of the thighs and the flanks of her hips, as well as the seat and crotch. Then they would make her turn on her belly over the stoup for their inspection. The wet seat of the translucent tights clung to her rear contours like a second skin. Its thin filmy mesh shone wet and was a little darkened by moisture. Soaked and clinging smoothly, the tights made her upper thighs and the proud cheeks of Lesley's mature young bottom seem fuller and fatter in this posture.

Her male admirer, seeing this and knowing that Lesley was well fastened, bending over the pedestal, was seduced by the sight. He remarked that a punishment strap was the lot of little girls who misbehaved in this way. For half an hour he used a broad leather thong to spank Lesley's behind in wet tights. With eyes gleaming and lips pressed vindictively hard, he strapped her backside with explosive smacks of leather. Lesley's cries, her storms of sobs, her desperate pleas to be spared brought only a smile to his lips. Lesley's blue eyes under her little-boy fringe were in floods of tears after only a few minutes. By the end of the vigorous and smarting bottom-smacking, the crimson soreness of Lesley's firm wifely buttocks was a visible glow through the seat of her tights. Sometimes the man would then peel the wet tights down and employ whipcord across the wet trembling cheeks of Lesley's seat.

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So far as Lesley's backside was concerned, its most natural function was easily controlled by master or mistress. If she was to attend the guests, it was necessary that she must be able to perform any act demanded of her. Therefore, when she woke in the morning, two attendants fastened a broad leather belt firmly round her bare waist. From the front of this, a broad strap ran down her belly, tightly under her legs, and was then strained upwards, deep between Lesley's buttocks, to lock at the back of her waist. A thumb-sized projection fitted into Lesley's anus. Besides muzzling her natural needs, the wearing of this device, two or three times a week, was gradually curing the natural and extreme tightness of Lesley's arsehole. Her wrists were strapped in front of her to prevent interference. She could thus walk, lie or sit in her usual clothes until summoned for the pleasure of her admirers that night.

More important than the physical effects of this was the power of her mistress over Lesley's body. This reduced the young wife to the status of a girl-child whose physical needs are decreed by adults. When she first arrived at the house, Lesley had indignantly refused the use of her behind by men who chose her as a bed-companion. On each occasion she had submitted at last, compelled by the use of the cane across her bare bottom. Yet until Lesley chose to yield, her anus had been difficult, if not impossible, to force. In a few more months, as her admirers teasingly reminded her, all that would be changed. The unreasonable power of that tight little hole to forbid entrance to Lesley's behind would be gone for ever. Her decisions and desires must be irrelevant. It would be the stiffness of the man's penis and the amount of his sperm which alone would determine the fate of Lesley's arse!

Even the muzzle was a reminder of her slavery rather than a necessity for the pleasure of the guests. To this educated and promiscuous suburban wife it was an abject humiliation to be denied the use of the white-tiled closet on the grounds that she must be in a state to perform such acts before the guests if so required.

The guests had no taste for such things, but their amusement as Lesley was made to listen to an account of her predicament, was none the less for that. There was, it is true, one man whose passion was to have Lesley adorned with straps holding her wrists together in front of her and a choke collar round her neck with a long leather leash. He would allow her to wear a white breast-halter and a white suspender belt whose straps pulled the sheer gloss of filmy gold stockings well up her long pale thighs. Lesley's panties were not, of course, permitted.

It amused him to take her into the moonlit olive grove, as "a young bitch who had been mated a couple of times." There he brusquely commanded her to do what she had to, like a young bitch taken for a walk by her impatient owner. On hands and knees, even with one leg raised a little to avoid splashing herself, Lesley released her water in true canine fashion. Often he would jerk the choke-collar, forcing her to follow him before she was done. A few times he had ordered her on all fours with knees together, a small bowl set on the backs of her calves, its rim pressing the rear of her lower thighs. On the first occasion his peremptory command, as he stood behind her looking down, had shocked Lesley into immobility. He drew the pouch of Lesley's vagina well back between her thighs so that even there she would not escape his impatience. Then, with a dog-whip, he thrashed Lesley's buttocks until she obeyed, continuing the discipline even while her body performed its menial task.

In all these things, Lesley underwent the lessons of submission, humility and obedience—so necessary to this arrogant woman with her illusions about her own right to sexual freedom, and emancipation from the duties of marriage and child-rearing.

There were other forms of obedience imposed, which would have been impossible in the world outside. Lesley would be told to lie on the carpet of a nobly furnished room in front of the guests. Her black stretch-briefs were pulled down and her singlet drawn up, baring her from breasts to knees. One of those sitting round her would give the commands.

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“Make love to yourself, Lesley! Show us how you like to do it!”

Disobedience to such orders had long ago been subdued by punishment. Now she closed her eyes, in modesty or pleasure. Then her self-possession melted as she surrendered to this natural enjoyment which she had practised so often in private that public reticence was absurd. The spectators' murmurs accompanied her.

“Pull your singlet higher and show us how you fondle your breasts at the same time, Lesley!...Lift one leg a little, my dear, so we may see you diddle your clitoris... Your left hand, Lesley! Use it behind you! Play with yourself between those cheeks at the same time!...That's better!—...See the little madam! How it excites her!...You play between your buttocks when you make love to yourself in bed, Lesley. Our keyhole spies have watched you do it, never fear!”

Voices alone would enforce Lesley's sense of slavery, for she was compelled to answer all questions, listen to all remarks and perform all acts, upon pain of severest retribution as she lay naked.

“Describe your honeymoon with your husband, Lesley. Leave out no detail... Tell us which of your lovers' penises gave you most pleasure...Repeat the lewdest things your husband said while he courted you...Now your great lover, Lesley!. Your first partner in adultery! Tell us how you stiffened his penis! The lewdest thing he ever did to you in bed! The randiest thing you ever said to him!

Repeat them to us at once!...Now your husband again, Lesley. Did you truly suck him only once—on your honeymoon night?...Then take the rubber dildo and show us exactly how you did it!”

The voices entered her mind and echoed there until even in sleep they seemed to possess her still and she would wake with the phrases on her lips.

By the rule of the house, Lesley saw only those other girls who were brought to her bed or who were summoned for the pleasure of the guests on the same occasion. The weeks passed without a glimpse of Judith, Connie, Or Maggie. Her questions about them, as those about Kurt, Anton, and Hassan, were chided and unanswered.

One night she raised her head from the loins of a man whose penis had been used in her mouth. Looking across the lamplit room she saw with a jump of her heart that Judith was there, employed in a similar act. The girl sat on her heels before a man of fifty in a club chair. She wore only her short corset whose suspender-straps held her lilac stockings sheer and taut to the middle of her slender young thighs. Judith's gentle hand held the base of the man's erection as her lips rounded over the inflamed knob and she began to suck slowly.

Presently Judith paused for breath, looking up at the man. Then, as if sensing the eyes upon her, she turned and looked in Lesley's direction. The pale oval of Judith's face, framed by the long sweep of soft light brown hair was beautiful as ever. Yet the wide hazel eyes were startled into immobility by this sudden encounter across the room with the governess who had become her lover. The surprise died away and the lovely eyes held a steadier look, which hinted at longing tempered by fear. The man in the chair spoke gruffly and Judith bowed her lips to her task again. As if for Lesley's sake and her own, Judith avoided another encounter of glances.

Lesley remained on the sofa with the man who had chosen her. They were lying head to tail. Lesley played with the limp and exhausted penis as he commanded her.

The man's lips and fingers were busy between Lesley's thighs and upon her backside. She was suddenly aware that the other man had finished with Judith. The girl had been told to stand up and was being led away. As this

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happened, their eyes met again. In that instant, the young girl now looked upon Lesley with a gaze of hopeless love. Then she turned, a vision of an adolescent nymph with long elegant legs and thighs. Yet as she turned there appeared the fading marks of a severe prison caning across the pale oval cheeks of Judith Terry's fifteen-year-old bottom.

Lesley could now guess the reason which had caused Judith's glance of longing to be tempered by such fearfulness.

It was useless to plead with Claire to be allowed to take Judith in her arms or even to see the girl. Those who came to the house enjoyed the spectacle of two girls making love. Indeed, love between two girls was encouraged and then commanded. In a house such as this it was a universal custom that love-making between the girls was to be expected. Yet there was to be no free choice of partners in this, any more than in the choice of marriage partners in the society of which the house formed a part.

Claire had not yet taken Lesley to her own bed but she had decreed a number of love-matches between Lesley and other girls. At first Lesley had protested the impossibility of such passion. Claire had stroked her fair crop, kissed her forehead lightly and chided her a little.

“Be sensible, Lesley! You cannot deny that you enjoy making love to yourself. Do you not respond to the first caress of a hand between your legs? If you find pleasure in being roused by another young woman, it is absurd to make such bother over which young woman she is!”

“But I care!” A note of defeat sounded in her plaintive wail.

Claire stroked Lesley's fringe and kissed her again.

“Ah, you still cry for Judith! Is that it, Lesley? You must make up your mind that such things cannot be. Yet when you take Kim or Mandy, even young women like Maggie, Jennifer or Pat, in your arms, you need only close your eyes and imagine it is Judith. You may cry her name in your ecstasy, if you wish.”

In the weeks which followed, Lesley was made to accept a series of bed companions. First they chose Kim for her, a gently shaped and wide-eyed seventeen-year-old with blonde hair cut even closer than Lesley's. Yet in tight smooth trousers, the soft young cheeks of Kim's bottom and her flat loins soon won her a male admirer. Her new possessor employed her vigorously in bed, though not disdaining to use his bamboo often across the soft pale cheeks of Kim's bottom.

The next partner chosen for Lesley was Mandy, a tall and strongly made girl of fifteen. Mandy's lightly curled brown hair was worn in a cluster on her forehead and cut short at her nape—ah admirable setting for firm pale features and brown eyes. Yet the guests admired this young Amazon in her tight blue jeans and singlet. The strong young legs and hips, as well as the strapping young cheeks of Mandy's bottom won her the same lover as Kim. The fortunate man took them both to his bed simultaneously. When displeasure had to be avenged, the two girls lay naked, side by side, on their bellies over the bolster. The whipping was all the more severe in the excitement offered by a double target, the softly rounded pallor of Kim's bottom-cheeks and the more sturdy spread of Mandy's buttocks.

There was only one girl whom Lesley was required to make love with over a long period of time. Her name was Tania and she was nineteen years old. Unlike the other girls in Claire's protection, Tania belonged to a man who had lodged her in the harem of the young mistress, so that he might visit the girl when it suited him.

Tania, like many of the others, was a softly shaped young beauty with a neat straight nose, a demurely tucked in chin, her pretty olive-skinned face showing a tendency to dimples when she smiled. The short crop of

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brown curls clustering over her forehead and cut clear of her collar gave her a rather cherubic appearance. Perhaps it was only her eyes which betrayed. Their pale blue loveliness seemed strangely shadowed, in pan by her high cheekbones. Yet the shadowing also gave her the air of a masturbatrix.

To see Tania in the tight wool of her white vest and the still tighter fit of her working-jeans was to appreciate at once her lover's interest in her. The same softness which gave her face its charm also characterised her figure.

Where did her admirer see her first? Perhaps it was as she leant forward, elbows on the counter, chin cupped in her hands as she read the newspaper and smoked a cigarette. In this pose, the softness of Tania's breasts weighed in the tight wool of her vest. With her waist hollowed downward and her hips thrust out in this posture, the soft cheeks of Tania's bottom were broad and full in the tightened seat of pale blue jeans. It was visible that in a few years more, she would have reason to be self-conscious at a certain fatness which she showed in this position.

Tania was a polite and well-spoken girl, eager to please her customers. She smiled quickly, the whites of her blue eyes all the more radiant by contrast with the olive tone of her face. Yet her lover had never entertained any intention other than that she should be his slave-girl, held safely by Claire for his visits.

In consequence, Tania was left to her own devices for long periods of time. Rather than permit her to be corrupted by private debauchery with Gillian, Fiona or her other companions, it was judged best that she should be commanded to spend her love upon Lesley under the supervision of their mistress.

So it was that the girl of nineteen and the young wife of twenty-eight were first brought together. At Claire's insistence, they lay naked upon the bed, each facing the other with doubt and hesitation. Claire's patience soon failed her. She gave orders that they should be fastened together by a strap round their waists and that the most stimulating mixture of spices should be applied between their thighs and buttocks as well as to their nipples. No sooner was this done than the two young women began to stir and gasp under the teasing heat. Claire leant over them and used one hand on each. She fondled each between the thighs until both Tania's lips and Lesley's were wet with their mutual kisses.

Soon their own hands were more than eager to finish the work which Claire had begun. Looking steadily into one another's eyes—for love now overcame all sense of shame—Lesley and Tania masturbated one another as skilfully and intricately as they knew how.

Neither of them was, in truth, averse to such exercise. Once the first veil of shame had been torn aside, no demand was too extreme. What the world scorned as lesbian depravity became for them the expression of the truest and most tender affection. Many nights were passed with Tania and Lesley lying head to tail, each presenting her spread hips, thighs and buttocks to the other in an upward squat. The love which began with fingers now proceeded to the velvet caresses of lips and tongue in the most secret places of the female anatomy. Shivering with pleasure and cooing with the softness of a pair of doves, each rendered to the other the tribute of her orgasm.

Lesley longed for Tania every night, as if her life depended on such satisfaction. Yet she was not in love with the girl. The pleasure which she derived from their caresses was merely for her own gratification. When Tania's admirer paid his visits and took the girl for his own enjoyment, Lesley felt the pang of physical bereavement. Yet for Tania's fate she experienced no pity, only a curiosity as to what Tania suffered at the hands of her possessor.

On many occasions there was little to learn beyond the expected truth that the man had stripped Tania's young body with its slightly muddy pallor of bare skin, laid her on her back with legs spread and performed upon her

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the common act of copulation.

Sometimes there were variations to this. He would sit in his chair with Tania kneeling before him. Obliging her to bow her brown curls, he would lead Tania to suck his erection either until he laid her on her back or else until he paid his tribute into the mouth of this nineteen-year-old beauty.

The sight of Tania bending with her chin cupped in her hands on the counter was not without its effect upon him. By the way her waist was hollowed downward, Tania's broad full buttocks had been suggestively parted under the tight blue denim. Indeed the ridged outline of her stretch-briefs, arching up over each cheek of Tania's bottom, showed clearly.

Making her assume this position, the man would undress her and use a vaselined finger between Tania's buttocks. She made this ultimate sexual surrender of her body only under compulsion and with teeth clenched in the ferocity of the violation. He, determined that she must yield him the tight enjoyment of her behind more readily, sought Claire's advice. It was decided that though it would be unthinkable for another man to employ her thus in the lover's absence, a dildo would provide the answer. Every afternoon Lesley lay in the next room and heard Tania cry out at first as the rubber phallus was employed. Yet the cries grew rarer and less shrill as the weeks passed. By the time of her lover's next visit, Tania yielded him this pleasure with no more than her sighs and whispers of satisfaction.

In such a place as this, it was to be expected that many of the pleasures enjoyed by Claire and her guests would take a more elaborate form. So it was in the case of Tania and her lover. A room was set aside which was known as "The Schoolroom" because it was set out with individual desks, a table at the front, and a blackboard. The lover would take Tania and a group of adolescent girls into this place after dinner, in order to be their disciplinarian teacher.

His pretext for punishment was always the same. Tania had proved to be a thieving little minx who cheated her employer. Her lover insisted on this role so often that it may have had some counterpart in truth. He would make Tania come out before the other girls in order, as he said, that they might profit by the example. She was to bend over the table, her wrists and ankles strapped together to its frame. The class was regaled by a view of the full broad cheeks of Tania's bottom in the tight jeans, and by the apprehension in her soft face as she turned her clustering brown curls and looked back at her chastiser.

Her lover undid and drew down the girl's jeans, and then Tania's stretch-briefs. He used a prison birch-rod of the kind made by binding together at the handle three yard-long switches of the most supple and whippy kind. Gently he drew the white woollen sweater high, to bare the fullness of Tania's pate hips.

"You must have thirty strokes of the birch, Tania, across your backside. Ah, that alarms you? You dread that you cannot bear them?" He kissed her at the junction of her jaw and neck, his hand tickling her buttocks and flanks. "While you are fastened like this, my love, you have no choice but to bear as many strokes as are ordered. You think you will disgrace yourself and so end the ordeal? You believe that cries and swooning will save you, Tania? I assure you that you are quite mistaken."

With this advice he took the birch and measured it across the pale fattened spread of Tania's backside. The first stroke thrashed down, drawing from her a wild cry and causing her buttocks to tense convulsively together.

"You will learn not to clench the cheeks of your behind, Tania Nicola! That stroke will be given again and there will be an extra one across the back of your legs!"

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Tania cried out, this time in panic. The first raised weals of the triple birch had already begun to glow as the repeated stroke lashed down across them. Tania screamed—and yet it was nothing to the shrillness of the cry which followed as the birch caught the backs of her bare thighs, just below her bottom. The wildness and shrillness was far beyond the girl's control as her lover and chastiser continued his gentle litany.

“Bridle your screams, Tania! That stroke must be repeated and two more given across your bottom—When the birch hits your flank, Tania, you must be given the stroke again upon your buttocks—and three extra strokes across your legs to punish you for twisting aside... Such vulgarity, Tania! That stroke across your bottom shall be repeated and you shall receive four extra cuts to curb such outbursts!”

It was Claire's suggestion that Lesley should be brought in naked on these occasions and made to sit upon the knee of one of the guests. The man who held her would turn her a little on her hip so that his hand had free access between her thighs. Then, kissing her neck, ears and close-cut fair hair, he would caress her to the height of longing and the paroxysm of release. By these methods, Lesley was trained to associate the birchings, Tania's screams and the mass of raised weals on her buttocks and thighs, with a fulfilment of love's excitements.

Selfish as she was in her pleasures, Lesley took the other hand of the man upon whose knee she sat, pressing it to her lips and kissing it in gratitude for what his fingers were doing between her legs. Her blue eyes watched the plump cheeks of Tania's bottom arch and squirm, cut and thrashed by the birch. She saw Tania's wild eyes and distended mouth. Yet the suffering of the nineteen-year-old girl meant nothing to her by comparison with her own enjoyment.

After a month or two, Tania's lover wearied of the girl and his visits ceased. Tania remained in Claire's possession, the bed companion of Lesley. Yet with the lover's rejection of her, it seemed to Lesley that Tania was now destined for some darker fate. And so it proved to be.

## CHAPTER thirteen

Winter in that hot limestone country did not come as it had done in the northern city. The heat scarcely diminished during the days of white sunlight over the broad valley and olive slopes which led the eye to distant mountain escarpments. Even at the feast of Saturn and the return of the year the sun still set in a slow disc of fire, its resting place not far distant along the ridged horizon from where it had been when Lesley and her companions first came to the house.

Yet the nights were colder, the starlight more luminous and the moon more brilliant. The cry of jackal and lynx grew sharper and more menacing in the darkness. Yet the house and the little whitewashed town on the plateau seemed as much a state of mind as Florville had once been and the winter city soon became.

Lesley was parted from Tania, since Claire now chose to take the young wife into her own bed. They gave Tania to a lewd and soft-figured young blonde of twenty-five, named Jackie. With her bell shape of blonde hair, her pale and sulky features, Jackie had something of Lesley's aloof manner and appearance.

Lesley saw no more of Judith nor of Maggie. She asked if Connie was still in Claire's possession. The young mistress would only say that the Asian girl now belonged to a man, to whom Claire had given her.

Lying naked with Claire in the cold moonlight which lit the bedroom, Lesley did not dare at first to ask about Judith or Maggie for fear of what she might team. Yet she found courage at length to inquire in an indirect way about Tania's fate.

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Claire took the young wife in her arms.

“You have much to learn, Lesley. Much to learn about such houses as this. Caress me while I tell you.”

Lesley's fingers moved slowly between the thighs of the slim cropped redhead.

“In houses like this,” said Claire, “the logic of a woman's existence is her attraction for those who enjoy her. You are now, perhaps, more appealing to some men than when you were a bride of twenty. Tania's soft charms at nineteen will become gross in a few years. There is one answer to this. All houses of this kind have a certain room. When a girl is taken there, she does not return.”

She paused, feeling the abrupt cessation of Lesley's movements in the moment of shock. Then Claire stroked the young wife's cropped fair hair as if to calm her while the explanation was continued.

“There are a few men—very few—who have the taste and the money to inflict such final severities, when the time comes. In Tania's case, the arrangements are already made. There is a man who will take her into that room, where the walls are hung with whips and strange implements, blades and batons. After a few days—or a few hours—he will come out alone. The same fate is decreed for Noreen, a young trollop of nineteen, though she does not know it. No warnings are given. You have seen the photographs of Vanessa, the snub-nosed tomboy with her lank fair hair and insolent manner? Vanessa Cox was taken to that room while she was still fifteen, for her impudent charms were almost over and she would have grown into a drab. There was never such an array of whips or tiny implements in the brazier coals as was provided for the man who accompanied her. Two days and a night passed before her body was tumbled through the oubliette onto the rocks below, to be snuffed as natural prey by the predators of night.”

Later that night, Claire kissed Lesley and asked gently, “Tell me truly, my sweet. Have you ever loved anyone but yourself?”

“I have loved Judith as a woman can.”

“Will you prove it?” Claire stroked the moist vagina skilfully.

“Yes!” The word came as a whimper of longing, imploring forgiveness for the past, “Oh yes, if you will let me!”

“Will you share her life for ever, as her lover?”

Lesley nodded, blinking away her tears. Claire got up and left her for a while. When she returned, as if by a feat of magic, she was leading Judith, who stood naked in the moonlit room, taller and more graceful than ever at the close of her sixteenth year. Lesley stared at the vision as though it might be the ghost of beauty which would vanish at a touch. Claire led Judith to the bed and let her lie in Lesley's arms. She left them together.

For the First time, Lesley wept for some cause rather than her own, weeping for love of Judith. They lay in each other's arms, crying and kissing away each other's tears, brushing back one another's hair and feasting with their lips on every feature of the partner's face.

When the first storm of tears was over, they touched each other softly between the legs and began a long and gentle act of mutual masturbation. Then they kissed each other's bodies, scorning no crack or crevice. It was dawn when they fell at last into sleep with their arms entwined about one other.

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Claire returned a few hours later and woke them. She spoke to Lesley.

“Will you share Judith's life as her lover from now on?”

“Yes!” Lesley looked into Judith's lovely eyes as she spoke.

“Will you share every pleasure with her?”

“Yes!”

“Will you share every punishment or torture?”

“Yes!” The reply came without hesitation. “Even if you must accompany her to that room from which there is no return?”

“Yes!” The reply was quick but Lesley's voice trembled a little.

“One moment!” Claire smiled, “Judith will be sold, like many girls in this house. Sold as a slave to a master or mistress. Do you swear that the man or woman who owns Judith shall own you too? Own you as a slave? Will you submit with Judith to be cherished or chastised, to suffer those final severities of the leather noose or the blade, if your master or mistress decides?”

As she asked these questions, smiling, Claire's hand was between Lesley's thighs, bringing the promiscuous young wife to orgasm. Claire felt a tremor run through the pale limbs at the mention of the belly-skewer and the leather collar. But Lesley was now on the delirious edge of her orgasm and the answer was demanded.

“Yes!” she cried softly in her passion, “Oh, yes!”

Claire smiled again, satisfied that Lesley had at last learnt to know a type of love which was not mere selfish indulgence.

Not a night passed after this without Lesley and Judith being required to make naked love under Claire's gaze. Irretrievably lost in their infatuation, no persuasion was necessary. Lesley and Judith would have loved nakedly and wantonly if all the world was watching them because they could no longer help themselves. Often they would come to Claire in the heat of the day and ask if they might also spend the afternoon on the bed. The request was granted.

When there were guests in the evening, Lesley and Judith would be chosen together or separately by those who wished to enjoy them. On these occasions the nobly furnished rooms with their Moorish colonnades and verandahs displayed twenty or thirty of Claire's young women as they gave pleasure to those who had chosen them. It was on one of these occasions that Lesley had her only other sight of a girl who had been at Florville in the summer. After dinner, Judith was in the arms of a young Arab woman, the mistress of a pasha who allowed her this alternative diversion occasionally. Lesley, on the far side of the room, was naked but for her black strapping while the pasha himself fondled her at full length on a sofa. There was a disturbance of some kind and then two attendants brought in the padded birching-horse, whose presence suggested judicial punishment.

The news was whispered that one of the guests had chosen Maggie and Noreen for his diversions. Their admirer had made them lie head to tail, each presenting an upward squat to the other's lips. He then demanded the performance of acts so extreme that Noreen, a strongly built young woman at nineteen, had refused and resisted with violence.

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Maggie was brought in first, naked from the singlet hem at her waist down to her heels. The guests admired her pale coltishness of figure, the slight stockiness, the lank golden blonde hair cut short at her shoulders and fringed. Though she had not offended, the rather hard sluttish features of her fair-skinned face made sure that not a voice was raised on her behalf. Being rather short in the leg, Mag was drawn up on tiptoe to bend tightly over the padded horse, secured at full stretch by the strapping of her wrists to the base on the far side.

Nineteen-year-old Noreen came next. She was still dressed in her snug white singlet and the pale blue jeans worn tight on her lower limbs. Her taut strong thighs were clearly shaped, as were her firm sturdy hips and seat-cheeks, which, though broad, were not marred by surplus fat. The dark brown hair, lank and fringed, just covered her collar, framing the determined lines of her fair-skinned face and the insolence of her brown eyes.

She began to struggle at the sight of the horse, with anger as well as fright. Yet soon she had been bent over it and secured, a yard or so along from Maggie. A canvas screen on two wooden supports was next arranged, having the appearance of a banner. It was placed so that it ran along above the birching-horse, the base of the canvas framing the backs of the girls' waists. However hard they twisted their heads round, neither Maggie nor Noreen would be able to see what was happening behind them nor the identity of the chastiser. Noreen, in particular, was a strong girl who would certainly bear a violent grudge. This method was therefore judged prudent.

Those on one side of the birching-horse could see only the heads and upper halves of the two girls as the gag-straps were fitted to protect their teeth in the frenzy of the ordeal. To the other side of the room, where the guests now gathered, the upper half of the two girls was concealed by the screen. The onlookers saw only two pairs of buttocks, hips and legs as Maggie and Noreen bent over tightly.

For many of their admirers this seemed sufficient. They clustered round, certain that the two girls would never identify them. For almost an hour, the fondling continued. Maggie's pale thighs, so firm and stocky, were eased astride. The young thighs themselves were lingeringly kissed and handled, the vaginal pouch flushed from the embrace of expert fingers. Young slut that she was, Maggie scarcely showed any evidence of this to those who saw only her face. The rather crude pale features were brazen as her blue eyes, only the straight cut of her lank golden hair giving a little-girl innocence to this young woman of twenty. Other men fondled her seat-cheeks, more than one finger exercising her between them.

Noreen's determined and defiant look never faltered, whatever her feelings, as she shook the lank dark brown hair into place repeatedly. Through the thin tight covering of pale blue denim, her admirers handled her firm working-girl's thighs and the broadened sturdy cheeks of Noreen's bottom. Over her robust young buttocks the jeans-seat was taut and smooth. In her vain resentment she tried to twist away from the hands which roved over her two rear hemispheres. The seat of her jeans was divided by a stout central seam, drawn deep and taut into Noreen's bottom-crack. Strained under her legs by her bending posture, the stout seam even parted her vaginal lips whose soft shape was clearly seen in the tight denim between her thighs.

The tensing and squirming of her hips and legs redoubled as they undid her waist-belt and drew down her pants. In the tight denim the outline of Noreen's knickers, a pair of snug stretch-briefs, had been clearly visible. These too had to come down, baring her from waist to heels. Two hands at once made for her vaginal pouch. Others wandered over Noreen's bottom-cheeks and soon their insistent fingers vanished deep between the two pale mounds. A few men were so indifferent to public censure that they knew no shame whatever. When the chastiser arrived, the tributes which these libertines had paid were visible upon her thighs and buttocks.

The man who now entered carried the familiar pony-whip with its short tail of woven snakeskin. He pinioned each girl's ankles and her legs just above the knees. Noticing the blemishes which the lust of their admirers had left, he went into the adjoining room which the girls used and came back with a convenient rag in his

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hand. The clout was naturally dampened and, as he clutched it, he frowned in disapproval at the libidinous state of the rear views which both Maggie and Noreen presented. Neither of the culprits could see him or had any idea of what was about to happen. Yet as the spectators watched, he wiped over each pair of rear cheeks, first Noreen's and then Maggie's. The application of a communal cloth in so public a place and manner caused much attempted squirming but to no avail. Yet it was not the chastiser but the pasha's pretty little Arab mistress who tore the rag in half and used it to muffle the culprits' protests.

Noreen was punished first. She had no idea of her precise fate until the man trailed the cold leather of the pony-whip across her pale statuesque buttocks. Noreen's rear cheeks tightened with instinctive fright. Indeed, that cruel promise of the leather whip on her bare backside caused a visible thrill of terror. For the first time the man who carried the lash smiled. Reversing the whip in his hand, he pressed the rounded butt between the strong pale cheeks of Noreen's bottom in a promise of the most sardonic violation. It was impossible to say whether the high, wadded mewling which penetrated the folded cloth was a cry of fear or fury at such an affront.

Yet she was made to undergo it without further delay. For a young trollop of nineteen so sturdily built, Claire regarded this as a mere indignity rather than a torment.

The man withdrew the butt at last. He raised the slim whip above his shoulder and brought it down with a sharp crack in a wickedly sinuous weal across the firm pale cheeks of Noreen's bottom. The nineteen-year-old girl rose up on her toes with the intensity of the anguish, yet her cry was still one of rage rather than hurt alone. But the next ten or twelve strokes soon altered that. Noreen screamed into her gag, and screamed and screamed again. The flashing leather whip performed a dance of torment across her lash-marked buttocks, often catching her between them. To those who watched on that side of the room, divided from the other half by the canvas screen, Noreen was a bottom and little more! Yet Noreen's bottom was the most interesting thing about her to such men and they did not complain. The tail of the lash caught the flanks of her hips and the backs of her thighs occasionally, yet repeatedly it drew a ruby beadlet from the whipped seat-cheeks or, more wickedly, near the closed anus-bud between Noreen's buttocks.

The girl's mistress could not witness this for it seemed that she held Noreen's head on the other side of the screen, caressing and encouraging her gently.

“A little more punishment yet, Noreen! Come, let me lift your head a little. Soon you will understand why I would not let you wear your tight cotton briefs for the whipping, Noreen. You would never have known the undiminished agony of the leather whip on your bare buttocks. You might have wondered all your life what it would have been like without your panties on! It was my wish that you should experience such a thing at least once. Come, Noreen, breathe a little more from the bottle to fortify you. Ah, I think he cut your bottom with his lash just then! Did he not, Noreen? That is common in such punishments!”

When the drama had ended, it was Maggie's turn, though she was dealt with more leniently. The cane thrashed a score of times across the pale broadened cheeks of Maggie's backside and then she was reprieved.

It was Lesley who, without premeditation, provided the last act of the drama. She lay with her lover on the sofa, her tongue caressing the head of his penis gently. She had been profoundly moved by Noreen's ordeal but not in the expected manner. Her tongue still circling the knob of the pasha's penis, she looked up at him, a cold desire in the arrogant blue eyes under her urchin fringe.

“Let Noreen be punished again but with the switch,” she said softly, “Let her be made to wear a persuader for it as I was once!”

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Such requests were never to be denied when the guests made them. The pasha, in gratitude for Lesley's devotion with her tongue, soon asked for what she wanted. The others knew it was Lesley's own suggestion. While the two culprits still bent, fastened side by side, over the padded punishment–horse, the persuader–strap with its row of needle–points down either edge was brought and attached to the front and rear of Noreen's waist–strap. The onlookers could not see it as it ran down the girl's belly, only where it was strained back under her legs to run deep and tight between Noreen's bottom–cheeks. Gasping with the intensity of the needle tips, the strongly built nineteen–year–old girl could find relief only by bending very tightly with backside thrust right out, and by keeping absolutely still. Even then, it was possible to see how the needle points dented the smooth yellower skin of Noreen's bottom–cleavage with piercing imperiousness. Indeed the strap had been drawn vindictively tight to ensure that one or two of them pressed home.

The necessity of absolute stillness under a whipping with the slim wand of the pony–switch was evident. Yet the anguish of the switch made it impossible. Intrigued as never before, the onlookers witnessed the frantic drama of Noreen caught in this appalling dilemma.

To some, Lesley was the true object of interest. Claire thought so. It was true that Lesley was not yet excited by her own punishments, not even the anticipation of them or the memory of such occasions. Yet she had begun to find a morbid thrill in those of others. Perhaps she would never know excitement under the strokes of chastisement, but it was only a matter of time now before she began to dwell with increasing fascination on memories of what she had undergone in the past and what might await her in the future. That being so, Claire decided, Lesley was ready to play the part allotted her.

Several more weeks passed before Claire was visited by a man who would choose one or more of the girls she offered as bed slaves. There was a room set apart for this purpose, a well–lit place with a single item of furniture. This was a round ottoman of buttoned leather standing eighteen inches high and measuring six feet across. Those girls who were available for purchase were made to kneel in a circle at the divan, hips raised from their heels as they curved forward with their bellies and breasts pressing down on the leather padding.

They were easily kept in this posture, their hips raised and their heads almost meeting at the centre of the ottoman. By strapping each girl's wrists together in the small of her back, and by threading her leather collar through the ring fixed at the divan's centre, the posture was easily enforced. Sometimes the girls who were offered for inspection and sale still wore their panties or tights as they knelt but these were removed sooner or later. Their prospective master or his buyer would then walk slowly round and round the circle. As he looked to the centre of the divan he saw a dozen faces of the girls, watching him with fear or expectation. Their twelve bare bottoms, thighs and hips were obediently presented for his examination.

Naked but for their breast–halters and panties, Judith and Lesley were taken to that room for the first time with ten other girls. Most of these were no older than Judith, though there were one or two exceptions.

This time the man who came in was merely the buyer for his master, though his instructions were precise. The girls were named to him and he began to walk slowly round and round the charming circle. He was given the details of the girls and then left alone with them. As he stopped behind each one, he instructed her to turn her head over her shoulder so that he might see her face as he examined her.

Slowly he walked round them, pausing to open a pair of young thighs or part a schoolgirl's buttocks. Noreen delayed him next, the lazy insolence of her brown eyes and firm pale features, the dark hair fringed and lank as it brushed her bare shoulders. He considered the pale sturdy cheeks of Noreen's bottom, her strong young thighs and hips.

“You shall receive my attention later, Noreen,” he said quietly, “A room is being prepared to which you will be taken in an hour or two. You may guess the fate which awaits you there.”

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Lesley shivered, hearing these words and remembering Claire's account of the room to which Noreen would soon be taken and from which she would not return. Yet the shudder was also caused by being in the presence of the man who would take Noreen there, the tyrant who would not hesitate to proceed from whips and the instruments glowing in the brazier coals to the sinister devices necessary in the final moments.

Was this the same man who had taken Tania to that fateful room a few weeks before? To imagine those last hours, their precise events and incidents, was impossible. With no more idea than Tania of what awaited her in that room, Noreen was about to follow the same path.

The shock of this realisation was followed by another. It was possible that the man who stood at the circle of young women had also taken Vanessa to that same room while she was still fifteen. Even as the thought and its attendant images took shape, he had walked further round the circle of his subjects and paused on coming to Jane.

Jane, one of Claire's younger pupils, had a firm pale beauty under the short slanting fringe of her dark lank hair. As her admirer approached, she raised her chin coquettishly and showed her pretty teeth by touching her lower lip with them in a teasing glance. The man knelt, taking her pubic softness in his hand as he parted her legs from behind. His finger explored her there and between Jane's buttocks.

Standing up, he gazed at her taut resilient backside, which was no longer a child's and not yet a woman's. He took the cane in his hand, as if about to use it across the pale taut-skinned cheeks of Jane's adolescent bottom. Then he paused and seemed to think again of his intention.

“No,” he said quietly, “You shall be spared for the time being, Jane. Instead, you shall accompany Noreen this evening.”

It was impossible for Lesley to cry out, to scream with horror or intercede on Jane's behalf. She did not even know whether the sinister room existed in reality or whether the story was a gothic fantasy invented by Claire for her lovers. In any case, the man's words stunned her so effectively that she could scarcely gather her thoughts.

By then the man was fingering Judith in the same manner, making Lesley fear that any outburst now would endanger the girl as much as Jane or Noreen. Last of all it was Lesley's turn to submit to a similar handling. She bowed forward, offering herself more fully to the man who squatted behind her, as he had commanded her to do. His hands caressed her intimately and his fingers opened the portals of pleasure, sparing her nothing. As he made her tighten on him, he questioned her pitilessly.

“I am told that you have lived as an unpaid whore, Lesley. Is that true?”

“Yes!” She gasped out the word, knowing that it was impossible to answer otherwise. Indeed, he had delayed the question until he had caressed her to a point beyond all sense of shame.

“Even when you were a student,” he said softly, “you would open your legs for any boy who took your fancy. Yet you loved no one but yourself. When you were hot for marriage and honeymoon, it was no more than a sudden itch of desire. Is that not true?”

“Yes!” It was a gasp and a cry of longing for his fingering of her to continue.

“How could a husband's passion ever hold you?” he murmured, masturbating her firmly, “Who could expect duty from a whore? Is that what you were, Lesley? A married whore?”

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“Yes!” The cry came as a jerk, a spasm of longing for him to continue his fondling of her, “Yes!...Yes!...Oh, yes!”

The buyer drew his hand away at last.

“Lick my fingers, Lesley, like an obedient girl,” he said peremptorily. Fear of separation from Judith quelled her last natural rebellion. Lesley licked the fingers and the man smiled, seeing in this an act of submission by which her whoredom was confirmed.

When he withdrew it was Claire who took Lesley and Judith aside.

“You are both chosen,” she said with a smile, “I would pity most young women who were going to such a master as awaits you. However, I believe Lesley has tasted enough perversity to be truly excited by it at last. Yet life will still be hard for you until you learn to accept that you exist solely for the pleasure of the man who possesses you. Your bodies and all that belongs to them must now be his absolute property. And you must suffer until the day when you yield your minds and desires to him as well.”

Later that afternoon, Lesley and Judith were led to the closed car which waited to take them on their secret journey to the interior. Under their light gowns they were naked, their wrists strapped behind them. As they crossed the courtyard between two of Claire's servants, their new master walked behind, talking to the young mistress.

“Lesley shall bear the mark of her submission soon,” said the man, “It will be made on her flank or buttock with hot iron.”

Her legs trembling, she turned, defying all instructions, to see the identity of the man who spoke. He stared back at her, the cruel and beloved Apollo, the figure of Anton. Lost in a confusion of terror and desire she gave a soft cry and would have sunk to her knees if the escort had not held her. She and Judith were pushed into the back of the car, a servant on either side. The doors were closed and locked. Anton sat down beside the driver who was waiting at the wheel.

“That's enough,” he said brusquely, “It's time to go.”

## CHAPTER fourteen

Lesley opened her eyes, coming to the plateau of consciousness like a swimmer regaining the surface of a lake after a long shallow plunge. The square onyx clock on the peach-mirror table was striking four. It was surely this which had roused her from the long afternoon dream of Florville, the Villa Rif and that other house over which Madame Claire presided.

It was a shock to recall the cruel and humiliating fantasies which her mind permitted in sleep. Had the dream truly been so brief? The entire sequence had passed in her unconscious thoughts between the moment when she saw the hands of the onyx clock approach the hour and the moment when the dainty metallic strokes of its mechanism roused her.

She was lying on the apricot silk of the bed cover, her hand still between the thighs of her panty-tights feeling the wetness of her own arousal. In the severe modernism of that bedroom in the winter city, the cloud-light still broke with the cool neutrality of water on the angular mirror and the crystal lamp-pendants which dappled the wall with prismatic lozenges of red and blue, green and violet.

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“It's time to go!”

The man's voice spoke again. It came from beyond the double dove–grey doors which opened on to the landing of the fine circular staircase at the centre of the house. Lesley listened and knew that the words were not directed to her.

She waited for a knock, for Connie to enter with the tray and the coffee things. Then she looked and saw that the tray was already there on one of the glass–topped tables. Had it been left there while she slept? Had Connie come to her in reality or was their love–making no more than a dream?

Judith! Anton! She realised with a shock that Judith was real enough but Anton had been the creation of a brief afternoon dream. Lesley got up from the bed and began to dress quickly. Someone was playing the Stein–way in the drawing–room below. She heard the sublime leaping chords of the last of Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques* and knew that it was the music whose score had been folded on the piano in her dream.

Whose voice had said, “It's time to go”? Not Kurt's nor Hassan's. Had she truly woken from her dream? Lesley opened the dove–grey doors and went down the graceful circle of the stairway under the glass dome above the vestibule. Her heart beat a little faster and yet she was drawn with longing as well as dread to the riddle's answer. One might dream of reality or unreality, the past or the future. Yet surely what she saw now was just a dream.

Herr Muller had stopped playing the *Etudes Symphoniques*. Judith was walking, with head bowed in modesty or submission, across the marble circle of the hall and into the drawing–room to which she had been summoned.

Kurt was standing at the foot of the stairs in his riding breeches and jacket, looking up at Lesley as she descended the shallow curving steps. In a little while he would change and then be ready for the car which would take them to the Zoo station for the Paris express. Just at the moment he was flexing in his hands a supple bamboo which was no part of his riding costume.

Lesley stopped, one hand on the smooth rail of the elegant metal bannister. Her heart beat in her throat with fear and longing to know what he would say.

Kurt smiled up at her, vindictive in his amusement.

“There is a ceremony to be performed before we leave,” he said, pointing the cane towards the room where Judith attended her teacher's summons. “Had you forgotten?”

Then he stepped forward and took the arm of the young woman who seemed about to swoon on the last step of the staircase.