

# Violette Enters Utopia



Rose Major-McMaster



A "New Woman" Novel



## **Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers**

This story (including all images) is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. All situations and events herein presented are fictional, and intended only for the enjoyment of the reader. Neither the author nor the publisher advocate engaging in or attempting to imitate any of the activities or behaviors portrayed.

Persons seeking gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy or any other medical and/or body-altering process should seek the counsel of a qualified therapist who follows the Benjamin Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorder. This material is intended for persons over the age of 18 only.



Copyright © 2017

Published by Reluctant Press  
in association with Mags, Inc.  
All Rights Reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotes contained within a critical review.

For information address  
Reluctant Press  
P.O. Box 5829  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413  
USA

Call toll free (800) 359-2116

[reluctantpress.com](http://reluctantpress.com) & [magsinc.com](http://magsinc.com)

# **New Authors Wanted!**

**M**ags, Inc and Reluctant Press are looking for new authors who want to write exciting TG, crossdressing or sissy TV fiction.

**S**tories should be in Word or Rich Text format, and around 24,000 to 30,000 words in length. Reluctant Press also prints some shorter stories in the 19,000 to 24,000 word range.

**I**f you think you have what it takes, this could be your opportunity to see your name in print on a real book, commercially published, and get paid for it.

## **Contact**

**magsinc@pacbell.net, reluctantpress@gmail.com - or  
call 800-359-2116 to get started.**

### **YOU CAN BE PART OF OUR FAMILY**

If you aren't part of the Reluctant Press family, then you aren't receiving our Newsletter every month. The Newsletter includes previews of the latest books, news, make-up tips, columnists — and more!

Joining our family is easy -- just make a purchase of any size directly from us, and you'll receive our newsletter absolutely free for up to one year. Or, you can have a trial subscription for a limited time by sending your name and address to Reluctant Press, P.O. Box 5829, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413 ...be sure to ask for a free trial subscription.

# **Violette Enters Utopia**

**by Rose Major-McMaster**

## **Chapter 1**

I'm not your average professor of electrical engineering, I think it would be fair to say—or rather I *wasn't*, even when I still lived in the United States. I'm pretty sure your average EE professor isn't a gay crossdresser who might imaginably have become a professor of English instead, if only the study of English literature hadn't been such a promising pathway to a career as a dishwasher, a grocery clerk, or some such thing.

It's not that I don't find electrical engineering fascinating; actually, I do, at least some of the time. It's just that I find English literature at least equally fascinating. That was one big reason why, in my previous life, I was close friends with Orson Rangeline, who taught Renaissance and post-Renaissance English literature at a local university. (His definition of

“post-Renaissance” was pretty broad, extending at least to Jane Austen.) As for the other big reason: read on, gentle reader, read on.

Orson and I were accustomed to meet on Friday evenings, at his home or mine, to relax, drink a little wine, perhaps watch a movie or discuss a book—and to do what, on one particular Friday evening in the spring before I left, it was quite obvious that both of us were eager to do. As soon as Orson opened the door of his home to me, I could feel the electricity, though not the engineerable kind.

“Oh, Violette, you’re so lovely tonight!” Orson said. “I’m so glad you can come!” He didn’t say “*could* come.” He was talking about the near future, not the past.

Orson’s house was full of mirrors. There was one staring me in the face at close range as soon as I entered the house. Orson stood beside me, put his arm around me, put his hands on both my breasts through my clothes, and said, “Don’t we make a lovely couple?” My breasts were fake back then, but Orson didn’t care.

“Ooh, yes, I think we do,” I agreed in my well-trained feminine voice, pressing his hands more firmly to my breasts with my own. We *did* make a rather lovely couple, I thought. I exuded the perfect combination of intelligence and eroticism, with my neatly brushed dark brown hair, my dark-rimmed glasses framing my bright brown eyes, my very light golden-brown skin, my small but full and deep red lips, my fairly small fake breasts, and my slender figure beneath my royal purple silk dress. Orson was as slender as I and even taller, with kindly-looking blue eyes, short brown hair, and a soft reddish-brown beard. The loveliness of our appearance, and of the accompanying feelings, was intensified when Orson kissed me on the neck.

“Would you like us to make an even lovelier couple?” Orson begged to know when his mouth was free. I knew exactly what he meant.

“Yes,” I said. “Please. Now.”

Still standing in front of the mirror, we embraced and kissed each other on the mouth, first delicately, then deeply. Before the kiss was over, I could distinctly feel Orson’s erect penis, only three inches long but incredibly excitable, through our clothes. My giant clitoris, more than twice as long as his penis at seven inches, was rising fast to meet him.

After the kiss, we almost raced to Orson’s bedroom and stripped each other nude. My clitoris was long but not yet fully hard; I seized the opportunity to press it down between my legs for the sake of feminine authenticity. We kissed again on the mouth, more frantically this time, gripping each other’s butts with urgent desire.

“Shall it be 69?” Orson asked. I agreed, knowing this was one of his favorite positions. Orson and I had done it with each other in almost every conceivable way but one: I had never admitted him into my rectum (nor, of course, had he admitted me into his). I wished I could do it with him in the way most like a woman having intercourse with a man, but the very thought of having a man penetrate my rectum was too disgusting to consider.

So, 69 it was. We lay on our sides on his big, wide bed. My lips and tongue caressed his short erection; his hips responded with rapid thrusts. My clitoris was still hidden between my legs. Orson pressed his head forward between them to engulf my bulb, now as big as a ripe plum, in his mouth. I clutched his neck between my thighs and bucked my hips hard as he skillfully blew me up toward maximum excitement.

Orson's orgasm came first, but mine was not far behind. Having him ejaculate in my mouth was not my favorite part of the experience, but I dutifully did the deed before discreetly spitting out his semen. Ejaculating in Orson's mouth *was* my very favorite part of the experience. I underwent the most extreme delight when he kissed my bulb to maximum heat, my shaft was pulsating hard and fast, and my semen flooded his mouth, while my thundering thighs were gripping his head and neck as if I were a woman uniting fully with a man.

\*\*\*\*\*

"So what's new in the world of English literature?" I asked when our breathing and our temperatures had returned to approximately normal, we were dressed again, and I was sipping some chilled white wine.

"Well, I decided to include More's *Utopia* in my Renaissance graduate course this semester, and now we're discussing it," Orson said. "It's evoking a great variety of opinions from the students, to say the least. There's even one who insists, allegedly from textual and extrinsic evidence, that *Utopia* must be a real place." He smiled.

"Well, how do you know it isn't?" I challenged him. My memory of More's *Utopia* was pretty fuzzy, but I had actually read it some years ago.

Orson laughed. "Well, I know from textual and extrinsic evidence," he said. "The very name *Utopia* means 'Nowhere.' It's obviously a satire on England and Europe at the time of Henry VIII, in the form of an account of an imaginary voyage to a nonexistent place that doesn't have the faults of Western civilization. And I'm pretty sure *Utopia* would have been discovered by now, if it existed."

“Unless the Utopians had something to *prevent* it from being discovered,” I said, “as they would, if they could, so as to prevent themselves from being over-run by undesirable elements from the outside world.”

“Perhaps they would,” Orson said, “but, in that event, they’d have something that would prevent *you* from discovering it too.”

“Only if I’m an undesirable element,” I retorted. We both laughed.

“Well, look, I tell you what,” Orson said genially, still glowing from the superb mutual blow jobs. “I’ll introduce you to the student who maintains that Utopia is real. You two can discuss the book, and then you can see what you think. Fair enough?”

“Fair enough,” I said.

\*\*\*\*\*

“Violette,” Orson said after his next Renaissance course session, “this is Tina Wazuma. Tina, this is Professor Violette Valkner. She’s interested in your theory that Utopia is a real place. Would you like to discuss it with her?”

“Uh—well, sure!” said the student, giving me a shy smile. I took her looks in at a glance. Her glasses were almost identical to mine, though in a slightly smaller size, but her face looked rather different: darker than mine, with more than a hint of Polynesian or East Asian ancestry, or both. She was short, and her presumably real breasts were even smaller than my fake ones. Her hair was pulled straight back, with no concession to fashion; her clothes were neat, modest, and quite plain.

“I’m pleased to meet you, Tina,” I said, shaking hands with her. “Have you got a few minutes to talk?”

“Sure,” she said, “if we can talk while I’m walking back to my study carrel in the library.” This young woman, I could see, was really earnest about education.

“So, Tina,” I said as we walked out of the humanities classroom building and headed toward the library, “tell me why you think Utopia is real.”

“Well,” the young woman said, “I know Professor Rangeline thinks it’s just a satire, but to me it doesn’t read like one, and I don’t think Sir Thomas More would have written it the way he did if it was one. He was *executed* for refusing to say things he didn’t believe were true. I don’t think he would have deliberately misled people, and I think it would have been misleading for him to put in all those historical facts in the first part, and all those details about Utopian life in the second part, if he didn’t believe they were true. Plus, the Utopians had some good customs and some bad ones, just like real people do. More thought some of their customs were absurd, and he said so.

“What would be the point of *that* if it was just a fictional satire, like, ‘look how bad and stupid we are, compared to the Utopians’? And if Raphael Hythloday was *lying* about having been to Utopia, would More have believed him? I’m sure More had a lot of experience with people lying, since he was a lawyer and a judge. I don’t think he would have believed lies too readily.”

“Hmm,” I said. “Well, you’ve obviously thought a lot about this.” I looked at her. Did I detect, I wondered, the yearning of a lonely, honest young woman for something greater and better than life in an American graduate school?

“Would you like to live in Utopia, if it does exist?” I found myself asking.

“Well, I don’t *know*,” she said. “I’d certainly like to see it, or at least to find out about it for sure. I don’t

know if I'd like to live there. For one thing, I don't know how much it's changed in 500 years, and what the changes have been."

"I thought the Utopians weren't too fond of change," I vaguely recalled.

"Not change for the *sake* of change," she said. "Like, you know, some people seem to think, *wow, change, therefore good*. The Utopians had some absurd customs, but they were nowhere near *that* idiotic. But if they thought a change was an *improvement*, they'd adopt it readily enough."

She was really getting me interested. What if Utopia did exist—and what if it had changed, perhaps for the better, perhaps even more than the outside world had changed? What if it had even changed in ways that would make it a far finer place for someone like me to live than America? Wouldn't it be well worth some expense and effort to find out?

"Well, I tell you what," I said—surprising myself at how readily the words rolled out of my mouth. "I won't be teaching during the summer session. There's some engineering research I could do during it, but that shouldn't take up all my time. I think I'd be up for some other research too—like on whether Utopia really exists or not. Where would you suggest I start?"

Tina's eyes opened wide with delight. "Wow!" she said. "You really mean it? Well, then, I'd suggest you start in Tahiti. See, Utopia was near what were called the Antipodes in More's time—about halfway between Tahiti and Antarctica, and far east of New Zealand. Tahiti's the closest place with an international airport. If anyone in the known world has any idea how to get to Utopia, I'll bet they'd be in Tahiti."

"And they'd probably speak French?" I said. "I know some French, and I could brush up on it before I go. Well, Tahiti would probably be a good place for a

vacation, anyway. If nobody there knows anything about Utopia, I could go on to visit New Zealand and Australia. I've never been to either of those places."

"If that happens, at least you will have tried," Tina said, "and I'll be terrifically grateful to you for trying. I wish I could go myself, but unfortunately I don't have the time or the money."

"How fortunate that I do, then," I said with a smile. "I promise I'll do my best to find Utopia, if it exists—and I'll also do my best to let you know what I find out." I laughed. "If they have e-mail in Utopia, I'll send you an e-mail letting you know I'm there, if you'll give me your address."

Tina laughed too. "I've never heard of anyone getting e-mail from Utopia," she said, "but it will be fine with me if I'm the first!" She gave me her e-mail address on a piece of paper, and I put it in a safe place in my purse.

\*\*\*\*\*

"You've got to be kidding," Orson said when I told him about my vacation plans.

"I'm not," I assured him. "Tina actually had some pretty good reasoning. I've reread More's *Utopia* myself now, and what she says matches what's in the book. I think it's at least worth finding out whether there's a real Utopia, if possible. If there isn't, or if it isn't possible to find out, then I'll move on from Tahiti to have some richly deserved R&R in New Zealand and Australia."

"Well, have a good time in New Zealand and Australia, then," Orson said with a wry smile. "And you'll still be welcome in my home any time when you come back."

"Especially on Friday evenings?" I inquired.

“Yes, of course,” he said. “And you know, if you ever change your mind about accepting my standing invitation, it’s still open.” He meant his standing invitation for me to marry him.

“Thanks, Orson,” I said, “but I’m still not the marrying kind.”

“That’s still really a shame,” he said, “and I still don’t know why you’re not. I really think we’d make a—a damn near perfect married couple.”

“Orson,” I said, “look at it this way. What if we got married, and then I promptly ran off to Utopia and never came back?”

“I’d just have to deal with that, if it ever happened,” Orson retorted. “But, as I’m sure even *you* are well aware in your heart of hearts, it won’t.”

## Chapter 2

When my flight touched down near Papeete, I was still thinking my trip would most likely just be a vacation in Tahiti, New Zealand, and Australia. I would diligently inquire, in French, whether anyone here in Tahiti knew how to get to *l’Utopie*; I would get some laughs and learn that no one knew; I would bask on the black sand beaches, return to Fa’a’a International Airport, and fly on westward. Still, for Tina’s sake and my own, I was going to pursue the diligent inquiries as far as I could.

As expected, I did get nothing but quizzical looks and laughs at first. Nevertheless, as it turned out, news was spreading fast about the tall, slender American lady who was searching for Utopia. So it was that, before too long, a stout, dark-skinned, Polynesian- or East Asian-looking man appeared at my hotel inquiring for that lady.

“Hello, may I help you?” I said to the man in French, on being introduced to him in the lobby by a member of the hotel staff.

The man looked me over carefully before answering—in English, with a British-sounding accent.

“I’m Vic Brahmaswami,” he said. “I’m told you want *me* to help *you*.”

“Do I?” I asked, raising my eyebrows. “Uh—that’s very interesting. Would you mind letting me know *how* I want you to help me?”

He looked around the lobby, in which there were several people. “Let’s go for a walk,” he said.

We emerged onto the busy, noisy street in front of the hotel. “They say you want to go to Utopia,” he said, apparently after satisfying himself that no one was listening.

“Well—yes, I do,” I said. I stared at him, feeling unsure that this could really be happening—and equally unsure whether it was a good thing that it was.

“Why do you want to go there?”

I hesitated, but I knew I had to say something. “I made a promise,” I said. “There was a—a person I knew in the United States who believed that Utopia was a real place. I promised I’d find out for her whether it was or not.”

“Why *you* and not *her*?”

“She didn’t have the time or the money, and I did. I’m a university professor on vacation for the summer; she’s a graduate student.”

“Do you know that, when people come to Utopia, they usually don’t return?”

I didn't know that, of course, and I wasn't sure I was ready to hear it. "Uh—well," I stammered, "is that because they can't, or they don't want to?"

"They don't want to. A few have left, but I believe they generally keep pretty quiet about it. If people in the outside world claimed to have really been to Utopia, I think, their story would be taken about as seriously as if they said they'd been to the planet Mars and back in a spherical spaceship with an undisclosed power source." For the first time, a hint of something resembling a smile crossed Vic's lips. "As you know, I'm sure," he went on, "the existence of Utopia was reported about 500 years ago, and presented to the outside world by one of the leading men of his time, a man with an impeccable reputation for honesty—and yet very few people believed the report was true."

I walked in silence, hardly noticing the noise of cars and people around me. In the space of a few minutes, I had gone from expecting a pleasant little vacation to being faced with a decision that could affect the rest of my life. I wanted to back out, especially since I couldn't even be sure Vic would take me to Utopia. For all I really knew, he might be going to rape me up the butt in a boat and dump me in the ocean. He didn't *seem* to be that kind of guy, as far as I could tell, but I could easily be mistaken. I knew only one thing for sure, or rather two things: I had promised Tina that I would do my best to find out if Utopia was real, and this might well be my only chance to do it.

My voice was usually pretty strong, as it had to be for lecturing, but it wasn't now. "So are you saying," I said in a high, weak, wavering voice, "you'll take me to Utopia if I want to go?"

"I might," he said. "Who are you, and what can you do? We want immigrants who can contribute to Utopian society right off—unless they're refugees, who get more time to start contributing. My people were

refugees from the island of Pala, and they moved to what's now called New Pala in northwestern Utopia—but now they're Utopians, the same as anyone else, and they contribute too.

“Me, I'm the superintendent of immigration for the polity of New Pala; different superintendents rotate duties coming to and from Tahiti, which is one of the obvious jumping-off points for anyone wishing to come to Utopia, the other being New Zealand. What about you?”

“Well, uh, my name is Violette Vaultkner,” I said, “and I'm a professor of electrical engineering. I hope that's worth something.” Hardly even noticing it, I had crossed a great line in my life. I was starting to think of myself as a possible immigrant to Utopia.

“It is indeed,” Vic said. “Electricity is immensely important in Utopia nowadays, as you'll see if you go there.”

I would see indeed. I was going, if this man was who he said he was, and would accept me on the voyage. “Well, then,” I said, “I *will* see, if you'll allow me.”

“Very well,” he said, sounding even more British than before. “We'll aim to leave at 8:00 tomorrow morning—or earlier, if we're ready, since you'll most likely be the only immigrant on board. Here are your directions to the spot in the harbor where our boat is moored. You can't miss it; it's the *Utopian Princess III*, white with the name in bright green letters, clear curved canopy over the front, sits fairly low in the water.” He handed me a sheet with a map and directions printed on it. “And let me be the first to welcome you to Utopia.” Now he actually smiled as he shook my hand.

\*\*\*\*\*

I got at least as little sleep that night as you would expect. I didn't really think Vic was going to rape me up the butt and dump me in the ocean, but I wasn't at all sure what I did think was going to happen. Most alarmingly, even if Utopia was real and I got there, I wondered what would happen if I was found out as a male—a *gay* male—in female's clothing. Were people like me really accepted in Utopia nowadays? And, if not, what was going to happen to me?

My bags were packed; my clothes were set out; my alarm went off; I groggily arose and dressed. I had selected my most conservative-looking outfit, with a fully opaque, high-necked, cream-colored blouse and a full dark blue mid-calf skirt, for I wasn't sure what the Utopians would think of something more revealing.

A member of the hotel staff helped me get a clunky, poorly-driven taxi to the harbor. I looked around; as predicted, I saw a white boat, shaped a bit like a large hydroplane, with big, bright green letters spelling out "UTOPIAN PRINCESS III."

Vic was on the boat already, and so was another man, also stout and Polynesian-looking, but taller. "Good morning, Lady Violette," Vic called out as I approached. "Very fine day for a voyage to Utopia, don't you think?" The weather was fine indeed, with not a cloud in the sky.

"I do," I said, trying to keep my voice from wavering as I carried my bags across the narrow walkway over the water to the boat. "Is there a reason why you call me *Lady Violette*?"

"Utopian custom," he said. "Men and boys are *Sir*, women and girls are *Lady*. In Utopia, I'm called Sir Victor Brahmaswami."

“Oh,” I said. “Is there, uh, no particular honor attached to being called *Sir* or *Lady* in Utopia?”

“There’s tremendous honor,” he said, “the honor of being a human being endowed with intelligence. We don’t call apes, dogs, or mynah birds *Sir* or *Lady*. Utopians value human intelligence highly. Some don’t have much of it, and that’s not their fault, but it is their fault if they do have it and don’t use it, or if they abuse it.”

“I suppose it is,” I said. “Are there many people in Utopia who have it and don’t use it, or abuse it?”

“Some,” he said. “You’ll see—but first we’ve got to get there. Here, meet the pilot, and then put your bags in your quarters below. This is our pilot, Sir Winston Rabnabana; Winston, this is Lady Violette Vaultner.”

I shook hands with the taller man, just as dark as Vic, but handsomer and more muscular-looking, with dark, piercing eyes. “Lady Violette, I am *most* pleased to meet you!” he exclaimed, with obvious sincerity. His face showed great appreciation indeed on seeing me, and his gaze was not strictly confined to *my* face, to say the least. I sensed at once that this man did not accept the ancient Utopian strictures on sex. I could see, I was pretty sure, that his eager, penetrating gaze was trying to discern whether I was the kind of woman who might have sex with a highly attractive man like him on short acquaintance. I had to admit, at least to myself, that I was—but what would this man think if he knew that this woman had fake breasts, no vagina, and a seven-inch secret beneath her long, plain skirt?

“I’m equally pleased to meet *you*, Sir Winston,” I said. I could feel myself blushing, and feel my heart racing, as I looked him straight in the eyes. I feared I was giving myself away by admitting frankly that I was just as pleased to meet him as he obviously was to meet me—and yet I almost hoped I was signaling to



him that my feelings were much like his own. My eyes darted to his white trousers, and I was sure he saw them darting. His trousers were bulging. I only hoped my skirt would not start to bulge as well.

Vic showed me the way down a narrow stairway to low-ceilinged sleeping quarters, where I stowed my bags and used the restroom; then I re-emerged to join him on the deck. Soon the boat began to move, but I heard no sound of an engine.

“What’s the power source on this boat?” I asked. “Electricity?”

“That’s right,” Vic said. “From highly efficient lightweight batteries. Our batteries compare to yours, I believe, as one of your lightweight electronic tablets or smartphones would compare to a computer from several decades ago, which was vastly heavier and bulkier, but with far less power.”

“Uh—that’s fascinating,” I said, staring at him in disbelief for more than one reason. “But how do you know about that? Did you find out in Tahiti?”

“No. In Utopia we’ve learned how to tap into the Internet to find out almost anything we wish about *you*, while keeping *you* from finding out about *us*.”

“Oh.” I was silent for a moment, while many questions raced through my mind. “Did you learn English on the Internet?” I asked. “The Utopians didn’t use to speak English, I believe—I mean, in the time when Raphael Hythloday went there, 500 years ago.” I guessed he probably knew about Hythloday, and maybe about More too.

“No, they spoke Old Utopian. Some still do, and we’ve imported some Old Utopian words into our form of English. But we first learned English after a British merchant ship crashed up on the shore of Utopia, almost 150 years ago. The sailors taught us the language and persuaded us we should learn to

use it, because they said it was going to be the new worldwide language in the near future—which, as you know, turned out to be true. At that time, Utopians were becoming quite concerned that they were going to have more contact with the outside world than they would wish, because the Gygean Shield hadn't yet been invented."

I could see that I had a great deal to learn. "What's the Gygean Shield?" I asked.

"It's a sort of force field that makes Utopia invisible to the outside world. Your maps of the South Pacific Ocean don't show Utopia. That's because of the Gygean Shield. You've got to have the electronic key, which the pilots of our immigration boats have but no one else does, to get through and see Utopia."

I sat in silence in my deck chair, looking around at the almost empty ocean ahead, trying to take everything in, but not succeeding well. We passed what looked like a French vessel patrolling the coastal waters of Tahiti; we hailed it and moved on, still traveling fairly sedately, with the deck of the boat on a level plane with the calm sea. Then, after some minutes, Winston announced, "We're on the high seas now, Sir Victor."

"All right, let her rip," said Vic. Winston complied at once. The nose of the boat lifted, the deck tilted, the wind and spray rose higher around us, and a plume of water shot up behind us. I could tell that we were moving very fast through the water—or rather *upon* the water, for the boat was indeed a large hydroplane—but still I heard no sound from the powerful, unseen electric motor propelling the boat. I took a deep breath and looked through the clear shield. Of course I could not yet see Utopia—but now I was confident that I was going to see it. I had chosen my destiny, and I could not turn back.

\*\*\*\*\*

That day I saw nothing off the boat but sky, sea, and occasionally one of the islands of French Polynesia in the distance, until we had left them all behind. When night drew on, the boat slowed; the deck returned to level. Vic and Winston retired to their sleeping quarters, separate from mine. "The boat's on automatic navigation," Winston said in response to a question from me. "It wouldn't be safe at high speed, but it's quite all right at low speed. There'll be an alarm if anything draws near. Don't worry about a thing."

I tried to comply, and succeeded surprisingly well. There was nothing to remind me that (to all appearances) I was a woman alone on a boat with two men—except for Winston's roaming, penetrating eyes, and the rather large bulge in his trousers that I could not help glimpsing more than once while he was speaking to me, suggesting that he might wish my sleeping quarters were not separate from his. If so, though, he kept his wishes to himself—at least at that time. That night, unlike the previous night, I slept soundly and awoke refreshed.

The next day, Vic put off many of my questions by saying, "We'll be in Utopia before nightfall, and you'll meet Lord Mahayananda next morning. You'll do better to ask him about that." Lord Mahayananda, it turned out, was the ruler of the polity of New Pala. I was going to meet him because all immigrants who landed in New Pala did.

We were again traveling at high speed for much of the day, but in the afternoon the speed lessened and the deck leveled out again. "Gygean Shield approaching," Winston called out. "All hands below."

Vic and I descended the stairs, and Winston did too. "We're on automatic again," he explained. "It's safer that way. The Gygean Shield can actually inter-

fere with brain waves, by way of the optic nerves, if your eyes are out in the open while passing through. I've put in the electronic key to get us through."

We floated along at low speed, while through the portholes I began to see bright lights reminiscent of the Aurora Borealis, or rather the Aurora Australis. The lights had not been visible, I was sure, until we started to pass through the Gygean Shield. They grew in intensity, but gradually diminished again.

"We're through," Winston announced after that. "You'll see Utopia on the horizon from the deck."

We started toward the stairs. Vic went up first. Before I could follow, I was startled—though not entirely surprised—to feel Winston's big, strong hand on my shoulder.

"Could I have a word with you, quickly, Lady Violette?" he asked softly.

"Oh! Well—uh—certainly," I said. I was fairly sure I knew what the word would be about. My heart started to race like a speedboat, feeling the un-engineerable electricity rushing into me from Winston's mighty, manly presence. My eyes darted, and then darted again, to the bulge in Winston's trousers, large and unmistakable. I was sure he was going to want sex with me, unless he would be repelled upon finding out the truth about me. As I soon saw, he was very far from being repelled.

"I can see you're what we call a *harxaturax*," he said. "That's Old Utopian for a man who looks like a lady—and acts like a lady, too."

I tried to keep myself from gasping. "Oh, dear!" I stammered. "Is it—really that obvious? I didn't think it was!"

"Some of us are connoisseurs of the ways of the *harxaturax*," he said. "Me, I can spot even a very

skilled one, like you. If you were to get the Full Treatment, and then if you were to have any interest in, er, one or more intimate encounters between you and me, I might suggest that such a thing would be most worthwhile. If no interest, of course, disregard.”

“What’s the Full Treatment?” I asked.

“Well, we need to get upstairs and on shore,” he said. “I could tell you soon after that, if you like.”

I hesitated for a second and looked up the stairs, but then plunged ahead. If the Full Treatment would enable me to have an intimate encounter with this tall, dark, handsome, extremely friendly and attentive man, then I needed to know what it was—right now. “No, please tell me right now—quickly, at once!” I begged him, feeling myself losing all self-restraint. I clasped him with both hands and pressed my body close to his, feeling his penis pressing against me through our clothes, and letting him feel my big clitoris, now fully erect, pressing against him. “What’s the Full Treatment?” I begged him to tell me, my lips very close to his ear.

“Well, it makes you even more like a female than you could become in the outside world,” he said, almost whispering into my ear. His hands descended to my butt and clutched it hard; I did the same to him. “But, unlike the so-called sex changes in the outside world that I’ve read about, it leaves your, uh, your oversized clitoris and your balls intact. See, your balls are retracted inside you and fit on either side of your new vagina, which works just like a woman’s vagina as far as it goes, complete with orgasms and all that. And the Full Treatment also gives you very nice breasts and hips like a woman. Does that sound at all interesting to you?”

“It sounds fascinating,” I said, with my lips very close to his ear. “When we get on shore, please tell me how I can get the Full Treatment—as soon as possible!”

“Will do,” Winston said, “with great pleasure!”

I knew what would happen next, and so did he, since I had shown him clearly that I had no self-restraint where he was concerned. Our lips and tongues met, and we kissed long and deeply. By the end of the kiss, Winston was gently pumping his hips and rubbing his erect penis against me through our clothes, and I was doing the same to him. We both knew I was promising him an intimate encounter, as soon as possible after I got the Full Treatment.

\*\*\*\*\*

Winston let her rip again as we approached Utopia. As reported in the book, there did seem to be an opening between two peninsulas, some miles apart, with a very large bay beyond—but now a large lighthouse stood near the end of each peninsula. We entered the bay and turned toward the peninsula on the right, the westward side, above which the sun was beginning to set. We slowed down as we approached the shore, where a fair-sized town with a quaint-looking harbor awaited us.

“Here’s Port Yonilingam,” Winston announced as we docked, “the gateway to New Pala—and, for Lady Violette, to all Utopia!”

“I should call you Sir Victor, I presume, now that we are in Utopia,” I said to Vic, starting already to speak English in a slightly more British manner. “Well, Sir Victor, I must thank you heartily for accepting me here—and for being a perfect gentleman. Perhaps not all men would have conducted themselves with such perfect propriety on an overnight voyage with a single lady.” After a moment’s uncertainty, I went on: “And thank you, too, Sir Winston. Your conduct, too, has been—entirely admirable.”

“I am very glad you think so, Lady Violette,” said Winston. “I look forward to seeing you again at an

early opportunity, to discuss the—the matter you mentioned to me.” His chest was heaving—with desire, I seemed to detect—and a glance at his trousers showed that the bulge was there again.

“Me, I’m married,” Vic said, “and not interested in cheating on my wife or trading her in.” He looked at me closely. “And besides,” he added, “Winston, who’s very knowledgeable about such things, tells me he thinks you’re a *harxaturax*, which is a man passing as a woman. Is he right?”

“Well,” I said, unsure what Vic would think of the answer, “I must admit he is.”

An expression of faint distaste crossed Vic’s face. “It won’t disqualify you for immigration,” he hastened to assure me. “But, for myself, I don’t think I would want any close contact with a *harxaturax* even if I weren’t married.” He looked at Winston, and then back at me. “I’m extremely different from Winston in that way, you see.”

“Oh, yes,” I said. “I certainly do see.”

“Well, I gather you and Winston have something to discuss. There’s an inn near the harbor here where we’ll be put up for the night. You and he can have a bite to eat and talk about, er, whatever it is.” Vic looked as if he might actually have a rather good idea what it was, but didn’t want to talk about it. “Then, in the morning,” he said, “we’ll go up to meet Lord Mahayananda.”

“Thank you very much,” I said, not specifying what I was thanking him for.

\*\*\*\*\*

Winston and I obtained some New Palanese food (somewhat like a blend of Chinese, Indian, and Filipino) from the buffet in the little inn by the harbor,

and sat down to eat. Hardly had we begun when I said to him, “Now please tell me more about the Full Treatment, and how to get it.”

“Well, certainly!” he said. Looking at me with great admiration, he added, “I can see you could benefit greatly from it—very greatly indeed.”

“I hope so,” I said. “It sounds like exactly what I’ve dreamed of. How can I get it?”

“Well, there are surgeons in the Grand Pyramid, or body sculptors as we call them, who are highly skilled at it,” Winston said. “They can make your new body conform pretty closely to your specifications, so long as there’s no mutilation of any functional body part. And in Utopia we still don’t use money, as you did in the outside world. You just need to be certified as a valuable contributor to society, and you’re eligible to get the Full Treatment. For a recent immigrant like you, if you’ve already made your mark in the outside world, we’d just need to be able to look you up on the Internet and see what you’ve done.”

“That should be pretty easy, I think,” I said.

“Excellent. Then you’re all set.” He smiled. “Please allow me, after your obligatory visit to Lord Mahayananda, to escort you through Utopia to the Grand Pyramid—where your dream, or your dreams, will be fulfilled.”

“Oh! That would be very—very kind of you,” I said. Again, just as with Orson but much more powerfully, I could feel the non-engineerable electricity.

“My pleasure,” he said, looking at me intently. “May I ask,” he asked, “if you’ve had these dreams for a long time?”

“Oh, dear, that’s a rather personal question,” I said with a coy little smile, drawing near him and speaking softly. “But, if you’d really like to hear a—an inti-

mately personal answer, I believe I should be able to satisfy you—I mean, to satisfy your curiosity.” I could feel myself blushing, and my clitoris was already long and hard again under my skirt.

“Or both,” he murmured into my ear, readily discerning the *double entendre*. “I’d like very much to hear it—the more personal, the better.”

“Well!” I said. “Oh, Sir Winston, you’re making me blush! But, if you really want to hear about it—I guess I’ll have to start a long way back. I’m 36 years old now, and it started 24 years ago, when I was 12.”

“Please tell me all about it,” Winston said.

“Well,” I said, “Back then I was a boy named Cuthbert, after my great-grandfather Cuthbert Williams Vaulkner. I was fascinated by girls at an early age, and by the time I was 12 I just absolutely *had* to know how it felt to be a girl and look like a girl. I had a sister who was 14, but about the same size as me, except for her breasts. I started to wear her clothes in secret, especially her—her undies. I wore her panties, hiding my—my rather large clitoris between my legs to make myself look like a girl, and I stuffed her bra cups with hankies to make her bras look like they fit me. Then once when I was looking at myself in the mirror with her panties and bra on, I was getting really excited, and I had a really warm, good feeling between my legs, where my clitoris was hidden. I started squeezing my legs together tightly and rubbing them back and forth against each other, and pumping my hips—and then something started squirting out of my clitoris behind my thighs, and I couldn’t stop it. I tried to pull my sister’s panties down quick so the squirts wouldn’t get in them, but it was too late. I had to wash the panties out by hand and wring them dry, and then put them in the laundry, hoping no one would know what happened.”

Winston smiled broadly. “You discovered this all by yourself?” he asked.

“Well, yes, of course,” I said.

“In many parts of Utopia also,” he said, “even today, the budding young *harxaturaxis* left to discover such things for herself, for it is deemed improper, and even forbidden, to train up a young *harxaturaxin* the way she should go. Fortunately, it is not so in New Pala and some other polities. I myself have trained promising young *harxaturai*, some as young as 11 or 12 years of age, to hide their clitorises between their legs and undergo such feelings while spurting sperm backwards—though not while wearing undies!” I felt mingled excitement and shock when he said that, remembering how intensely excitable I had already been at the age of 12 when I ejaculated in my sister’s panties, but knowing that such “training” would have been strictly forbidden where I came from as well.

“So then,” Winston observed, “you became a *harxaturax* at the age of 12 with no assistance from anyone, although you didn’t yet know the word.”

“I did,” I acknowledged, “and I’ve been one ever since.”

“That is very promising indeed. And when did you start dreaming of getting the Full Treatment, although you didn’t know what that was either?”

“Well, you see,” I said, “I started having sex with men, playing girlfriend for them, when I was about 19—I was too shy before that—but I was never all that satisfied with the ways there were to do it. I fantasized about there being something more, something that would make me able to do it like a woman without losing my big clitoris, but I could never find it back then.”

“What ways did you try?” he asked. I felt sure his penis must be erect from listening to me, and he seemed eager to prolong the erection.

“Oh, almost everything I could think of,” I said. “There was 69, of course. That was the last way I did it with a man before I came to Utopia.”

“What’s 69?” Winston asked.

“Oh!” I said, surprised that he didn’t know. “Well, in the number 69, the 6 faces one way and the 9 faces the other way, and that’s how the people’s heads are. You know, the man’s penis was in my mouth, and my, my clitoris was in his mouth.”

“That sounds more than a bit awkward. And did you actually spurt sperm into each other’s *mouths*?” Winston grimaced.

“Well, yes. I guess it *was* pretty awkward, now that you mention it, and I didn’t really enjoy having him ejaculate in my mouth, but it was pretty exciting for *me* to ejaculate in *his* mouth.”

“Hmm. What else did you try?”

“Well, there were separate blow jobs—I mean, you know, mouth insertions.” If he hadn’t known what 69 meant, I figured, he might not know what ‘blow job’ meant either. “My favorite was when I pressed my clitoris back between my legs and a man got behind me and sucked my bulb until I ejaculated backward.”

“Again, rather awkward,” Winston remarked. “What about actions not involving the mouth?”

“Well, I never did any actions involving the rectum,” I said. “Those were too disgusting for me to consider, and I thought probably too painful too, although I never actually tried it. In a way it was too bad, because the rectal actions were the most similar to intercourse between a man and a woman, I mean if the feminine partner hadn’t had a sex change.”

“That’s appalling,” Winston said. “The rectal actions are actually prohibited by law in New Pala, and

in many other polities in Utopia. They're considered far too similar to doing it with animals, and that sort of thing."

"Well—uh—I guess I can see the point of that," I said.

"So, aside from the mouth and the rectum, what was left?" he inquired.

"Well, mainly hands and thighs," I said. "Like, sometimes a man got on top of me from behind, I was on one hand and my knees, and he ejaculated in my other hand, a little bit like a man entering a woman from behind. Or we would be standing up, facing each other, sometimes with my clitoris hidden between my legs, and I squeezed his penis between my thighs until he ejaculated. Or we stood up with him behind me and did the same things."

"And you never thought of getting one of their so-called sex changes so a man could put it into you as he would into a woman?"

"Ugh! No! I wasn't getting rid of my—my lovely big clitoris!"

"Well, good for you. Actually, genital mutilation of any kind, including that kind, is forbidden in every polity of Utopia." He smiled again. "But getting the Full Treatment, of course, isn't genital mutilation. You're left with everything you had before, only slightly rearranged, but you also have a more womanly figure and a vagina, so you can do it with a man just as a woman does."

"I want it," I said. "Please help me get it."

"That I will, and gladly," Winston said. "It will be my extremely great pleasure. And when you are ready, if you should happen to have any interest in an intimate encounter—"

“You know I will,” I said, though I didn’t kiss him on the mouth again right there in the inn.

“I am very glad,” he said. “You, of course, know that *I* will, too.”

### Chapter 3

Next morning Winston, Vic, and I walked a short distance to the Port Yonilingam train station. There had not been trains in Utopia in More’s time, of course, and I was interested to know how they worked. As I should have expected, Vic told me they ran on rechargeable batteries, eliminating the danger of open electric lines or third rails such as were used in the outside world. The tracks were not made of metal, but rather consisted of three wide grooves in a solid surface of molded greystone concrete, with the middle groove being the widest. As I saw when our train almost silently pulled in, the middle groove was for the single front wheel, about as big around though not quite as wide as an American 18-wheel truck tire, partly covered by a canopy that slanted down from the driver’s windshield. That wheel and the two large rear ones on each car, which were largely covered by what looked like removable portions of the train’s gold-colored sides, appeared to have tubular rubber tires or something of the sort. Our train had only two cars (or “waggon,” as I later learned that Utopians called them), the front one for freight and the rear for passengers; we entered the rear one and sat down. The train’s movement was almost indiscernible at first, but it rapidly speeded up and rounded an uphill bend.

As we ascended and rounded more curves, the houses of the town soon gave way to orchards, terraced gardens, and open meadows with animals grazing in them. The train moved fairly slowly up the steepest slopes, but these were far steeper than a metal-wheeled train on metal tracks could have surmounted. After what seemed like a journey of several

miles, a small city on a high hilltop came into view, with what looked like a white-domed palace at its highest point. In the city, the train wended its way among houses for a little while, but then entered a tunnel. Within the tunnel, the train gradually slowed down and then stopped in a brightly lighted underground station with large blue letters on the white wall, spelling out "HIGH ANANDAPURAM."

We got out of the train; Vic led the way up a long moving stairway, and then in the direction pointed by signs saying "Lord's Mansion." After passing through high double doors, we encountered a tall, dark-skinned young woman, wearing a sleeveless, knee-length, form-fitting, many-colored dress, with a figure much like what I wished I could have after receiving the Full Treatment. Her breasts were fairly small but perfectly formed; her hips were broad and strong-looking. I gazed at her figure at least as much as I thought acceptable, trying to remember every detail, to be replicated as closely as possible in my specifications for the Full Treatment. At her face I barely glanced, though a glance was enough to show me that her dark eyes were big and lovely, and she was smiling at me.

"Immigrant here, formerly a professor of electrical engineering, to see Lord Mahayananda," Vic said after the young woman welcomed us to the Lord's Mansion. She repeated the message into a device that encircled her left wrist; then she led us to a dark, thick round-topped door and opened it.

A tall, dark-skinned man wearing a long white robe, with long graying hair and a long gray beard, stood ready to meet us. "Thank you, Sir Victor and Sir Winston, for bringing us this immigrant," he said. "And thank you, Lady Susanna," he added to the young woman. "I am Lord Mahayananda. Welcome to Utopia," he said to me, shaking my hand.

"Uh—thank you, Lord Mahayananda," I said. "I am Violette Vaulkner."

“You have much to learn. Let us waste no time,” he said, briskly bypassing all possible small talk about what I had done in the outside world, why I had wanted to come to Utopia, and the like. “Presumably you have read the book of Sir Thomas More from 500 years ago or so. It is, after all, readily available on the Internet.”

“Yes, I have.”

“The geography of Utopia is largely as it was described in the book, with a few glaring exceptions, but many of the 54 nearly identical peas-in-pod-like cities there described have been greatly changed over the course of 500 years. The exception is Amaurot, near the middle of Utopia, which has been preserved in something like its original state as a living memorial to the Old Utopians. What is now High Anandapuram, where we are, was once the city of Euburanax, but here very little remains from 500 years ago, and much is new since then. We have now 92 divisions of Utopia called polities, each one governed by a lord such as myself. Lords nowadays are elected for a term of six years at a time on the basis of the voters’ shared personal knowledge of the candidates’ perceived wisdom and trustworthiness—a procedure somewhat different, I believe, from the average election in the outside world.”

“That’s for sure,” I said.

“The lords, in turn, elect the king from among their number, also for six years at a time. The king is sent to reside in the King’s High Mansion, near the natural fountain at the center of what is now our one great city and capital, Fonsorgonot. That city extends along the southern edge of the Bay of Utopia and the hills overlooking it, and includes numerous polities within itself.”

“Is the Grand Pyramid located in Fonsorgonot?” I asked, for I was looking forward to getting the Full Treatment without undue delay.

“It is,” he said, with a slight, almost indiscernible frown. “I see you have been told about it already, for you certainly did not read about it in the book. The Grand Pyramid, completed about 60 years ago, is located at the highest point in the city, at its southwestern corner. It is an entire polity unto itself. I dare say the majority of Utopians, myself included, look upon it with some disfavor.”

“Oh, really? Why is that?” I hoped it was not because the Grand Pyramid contained surgeons who administered the Full Treatment—but, even if it was, I was not going to be deterred by the views of the majority of Utopians on that important point.

“The Grand Pyramid, ruled by Lord Stark Brekkekkexx,” said Lord Mahayananda, “is the great center for promotion of views that Utopians have traditionally regarded with abhorrence. Ever since the time of King Utopus many centuries ago, Utopians were free to adhere to any religion they believed to be true, but those of *no* religion—those who did not believe in universal justice and the soul’s immortality—were distrusted and dishonored. This is again true today among the majority of Utopians, but not among the inhabitants of the Grand Pyramid and those under their influence. In the Grand Pyramid those of no religion have gained a stronghold. They worship what they call ‘The All-Encompassing,’ by which they mean nothing more than their own power, which they wish to encompass everyone and everything. They pursue what they call ‘The Promise of Endless Grandeur,’ which means nothing but earthly immortality for a select few. Worse yet, they are known to wish to reinvent the Silent Dissolver.”

It must have been obvious that I didn’t know what the Silent Dissolver was, and that I was about to ask. “The Silent Dissolver,” he said, “was a device by which *being* could be silently, and perhaps painlessly, dissolved into *nothingness*. You will recall from the book that, 500 years ago, Utopia was sur-

rounded by other lands. You did not see any of those other lands on your voyage to Utopia.”

“Well, no, I didn’t.” I did have to wonder why not, although I hadn’t thought much about it on the voyage, my mind being otherwise occupied.

“It is because of the Silent Dissolver. This was invented by a genius who became King of Utopia under the name King David Good. It was not his real name, but he wished to create the appearance of a good and beloved man who upheld the greatest traditions of Utopia, whence the name. At that time there were still the Zapoletes, vicious men hardly worthy to live—no better than the greedy tyrant who ruled my native land of Pala in my youth, causing many to flee to Utopia. Utopians had long made use of Zapoletes as mercenary soldiers, but this plan backfired at last. The Zapoletes were seriously threatening Utopia and making demands the Utopians were not prepared to meet. King David Good and his advisors decided this problem would be solved by applying the Silent Dissolver to the Zapoletes and their land. This was done, and the problem was solved—or so it was thought.”

“You mean it wasn’t really?” I asked, already pretty sure I knew the answer.

“It was not. Inhabitants of all other surrounding nations were deeply disturbed by the fate of the Zapoletes, even though they were not sorry the Zapoletes were gone. They united to demand that Utopia should destroy the Silent Dissolver and the plans for it, so that it could never again be used against anyone. This King David Good refused to do. To forestall a war, he ordered the Silent Dissolver applied to all the nations making that demand. Millions of innocent men, women, and children died. Their bodies, and their homelands, vanished without a trace.”

I stared with my mouth open. Of course I had seen historical accounts of millions of innocent people being killed, complete with torture and unspeakable suffering. But was this really any better, merely because (it seemed) the victims felt no pain? What if someone had applied the Silent Dissolver to *me*, perhaps because I was despised as a *harxaturax* who wanted the Full Treatment? Would that have been quite all right, merely because I would have gone silently, painlessly, invisibly, into that endless night—if it *was* an endless night?

“Uh—but the Silent Dissolver didn’t dissolve *itself*, did it?” I asked. “What happened to it?”

“At last, too late, King David Good recognized the monstrous wrong he had done—but not before he had almost applied the Silent Dissolver to Utopia itself. He was descending into the deepest sadness and disgust with life, thinking it did not really matter whether there was *anything* rather than *nothing*. You will learn his story sometime, the story of how he became convinced that life was better than death after all, and that the other nations had been right: he should destroy the Silent Dissolver and the plans for it. For now, suffice it to say that he did just that, and he started to live a very different life than he had lived before. Eventually he married and, after ceasing to be king, he became a priest of Aeiouha Mithra.”

“Um, I remember Mithra from the book,” I said, “but not *Aeiouha* Mithra.”

“He was not then known by that name. Today, the majority of Utopians are worshippers of Aeiouha Mithra, who is thought to be a man who is also God, and to inhabit the sun. As for myself and most of my people in New Pala, we do not find this believable, although some do; Sir Victor here, for example, is a worshipper of Aeiouha Mithra.” I looked to Vic, who had been sitting in silence during our conversation; he nodded “yes.”

“Most of the New Palanese,” Lord Mahayananda went on, “make use of what we call our medicine of enlightenment, but only on infrequent occasions, to give us insight into what lies beyond the veil of our ordinary lives. This is not, we think, a God-man in the sun, and yet it is not *entirely* different. From our fellow Utopians we have learned that our medicine of enlightenment shows us something like what their God-man in the sun shows them: the endless life of the human soul; the universality of the good, the true, and the beautiful; the universal justice giving bliss to those who love what is good, and misery to those who love what is evil, even if the veil of this life makes things seem opposite to what they really are.”

“Hmm, I might want to take some of that medicine sometime,” I said.

“Perhaps you will,” he said, “but first, I think, you will wish to become settled in Utopia. Sir Victor will register you as an immigrant this morning, so that anyone in Utopia will be able to find out who you are. Then, no doubt, you will be given some work related to electricity by the King’s Council on Electrical Affairs. You will speak with a member of the council in the council house near the King’s High Mansion in Fonsorgonot, and there you will be given your assignment. Utopians still work only six hours a day, as they did 500 years ago, so you will have a fair amount of leisure, but I cannot predict where in Utopia you will be assigned to live. It may be far from here.”

“But I’ll be able to come back for a visit if I wish, won’t I?” I asked. “And, uh, surely there’s some way of contacting you by electrical transmissions of some kind, if I need to consult you about anything?”

“On occasion, you may be able to visit,” he said. “We do not use aircraft for passenger transportation, but our trains are fairly fast, quiet, and reliable, and they run throughout Utopia. But for consultation, you will not need to take the train. Before leaving here, you will be given a control band, like this, allow-

ing you to communicate with anyone in Utopia. Yours will also show you much useful information for immigrants.” He showed me a device encircling his wrist, like the one Lady Susanna wore. It had numerous buttons and a screen that looked a bit like a smartphone screen, only circular.

“When you have established a residence, you will probably also have a larger control station, like this,” he added, pointing to an upright circular device adjacent to a large keyboard on his desk. That device had a larger screen, a bit like a computer monitor in the outside world, but also circular. “Like the control band, the control station allows you to communicate with anyone in Utopia, and it also allows you to display content from the Internet. If you wish to *transmit* anything on the Internet, however, you must receive permission from the lord of the polity where you are located at the time. This precaution is needed to prevent too much knowledge of Utopia from penetrating to the outside world.”

“Oh!” I said, remembering Tina. “You mean you can give me permission to send an e-mail message to the outside world?”

“Yes, at least if it is brief and for one recipient only.”

“It will be!” I assured him. “Can I use your control station?”

“Certainly. You will find the keyboard familiar, for ours are modeled on yours. We do not use voice recognition or many other high-powered features found in the outside world, for our aim is to make maximum use of minimum electrical power.”

He showed me where to put the address and the message. I was too full of nervous excitement to type my short, simple message without mistakes, but at last I succeeded: “Dear Tina, / You were right. Utopia

is real. I'm here. But please don't spread the news around! / Best wishes, / Violette Vaulkner."

"Very well," said Lord Mahayananda. "I will authorize it to be sent, and it will go. Now you will wish to go soon to Fonsorgonot and receive your work assignment. Before doing that, however, you will wish to obtain some Utopian clothing. My daughter, Lady Susanna Mahayananda, will assist you." He did something on his control band, and Lady Susanna soon reappeared.

"Please come this way to our clothing storeroom," she said, smiling at me again. This time I did look at her face, but only until she started to lead the way to the storeroom, leaving Vic and Winston with Lord Mahayananda. Then I looked at her swaying hips and her lithe, strong-looking legs. I wanted mine to be as much like hers as possible after I got the Full Treatment.

She led me down a stairway and into a very large room, full of shelves on which packages of clothing were stacked high. "Many people contribute new clothing of all sizes for immigrants and others in need, which they have made themselves," she said. "It is an honor to contribute. In Utopia, you will see, many people seek to give and receive honor and admiration—and love, of many different kinds. You might almost say these are our medium of exchange."

"You mean, instead of money?" I asked.

"I suppose so," she answered, "although I know little of money, except that it is like the Units that Nulls have to use here—for want of honor, and admiration, and love."

"Um—I don't know what Nulls are, or Units either," I said.

“Oh, you will find out in due time,” she said. “These things are not very interesting to me. Come, let us find your clothes. First you will need underthings. What are your measurements?”

“Uh—I know them in inches. Do you use inches here?”

“Yes. Utopians adopted the English system of measurement along with the English language, well over 100 years ago.”

“Oh, good.” I gave her my measurements, but exaggerated the ones for the hips, to be like what I wished to have after getting the Full Treatment. Fortunately my skirt was full, so she couldn’t see that I wasn’t quite telling the truth.

“We use these linen drawers,” she said, showing me a pair of white drawers that looked a bit like basketball players’ shorts. “They are very comfortable and have plenty of room. After you get used to them, you will hardly notice you are wearing them.”

“Uh—that’s good,” I said.

“And on top,” she said, “we use these elastic-reinforced linen camisoles. They are sturdy and snug enough to provide the support you need, and to make sure nothing shows through.” She showed me one of those items too. It did appear sturdy and snug, although I wasn’t sure it had any other good qualities.

“So Utopian women don’t wear bras? You know what bras are, right?”

“Yes, I do. Some wear them, along with other clothing like what women wear in the outside world. But most ladies here who have even tried them think they are awkward, uncomfortable,

and inadequate. Some are even flimsy enough to let things show through.”

“And of course decent Utopian ladies *never* want things to show through—is that right?”

“Yes, it is,” she said without even a hint of a smile, though she had been smiling before. “Most Utopians are very concerned about decency. We have lived through the rule of those who have no religion and favor indecency—those whose leaders are now confined to the Grand Pyramid, the Varsity, and thereabouts, though they seek to reconquer Utopia through what they call ‘Omniview,’ which can be seen on control stations by those who wish to see it. Most Utopians have seen quite enough of that sort of thing, and wish to see it no more.” I thought about this in silence while she handed me the drawers and camisole.

“Now for your dress,” she said. “You are not married.” She said it as if it were perfectly obvious.

“No, I’m not,” I said.

“Unmarried people’s clothing is different from married people’s,” she said. “Unmarried ladies’ dresses have no sleeves and end at the knees. Married ladies’ dresses are longer and have sleeves. You can see that I am unmarried—but not for much longer.” She smiled again, more brightly than before.

“Oh! Well—I’m glad for you, and I wish you great happiness,” I said, hoping this was what a Utopian would say on such an occasion.

“Thank you very much. We would be honored if you would come to our wedding.”

I laughed in surprise. “Oh, thank you!” I said. “But we’ve only just met! Do Utopians usually invite people they hardly know to their weddings?”

“Often,” she said. “It is a way to get to know people better. The more people you know and care about, the better your life is likely to be.”

"I suppose that's right," I said. "Well, I'll certainly come if I can."

"Yes, please do," she said. "Now let me find you some unmarried ladies' dresses in your size. You may want at least one New Palanese one like mine, with many colors, and also a couple of the traditional Utopian white ones. The warm-weather ones are made of linen like the underwear, but you will want cool-weather ones, since winter is coming. Those are made of wool, but they are surprisingly comfortable, and fairly easy to clean." She looked on the shelves, pulled down a few packages, and handed them to me.

"Here is the dressing room," she said. "Now we will see how you look as a Utopian."

I entered the dressing room she pointed out to me, stripped, and put on the drawers; then I pulled on the camisole but left my padded bra on under it, so it wouldn't be evident that I didn't yet have real breasts. I selected the New Palanese many-colored dress, to make myself look as much like Lady Susanna as I could.

"Oh, that's perfect!" she exclaimed when I emerged. "You're so beautiful! And don't those clothes feel better than your old ones?"

"Yes, they do," I acknowledged. "Especially the underwear. Could I possibly get some more of that?"

"Certainly," she said. She got me some more of it. "Now let us return to my father," she said, "so he can see you as a Utopian too."

This we did. I got favorable comments on my looks from Lord Mahayananda, Vic, and especially Winston. After I got them, Lord Mahayananda reminded me that it was time to go. "But do not hesitate to get in touch with me at any time," he added. "Most Utopians believe that what may seem to us to be coincidence is guided, sometimes or even always, by

higher intelligence beyond the veil. You have, perhaps, been sent first to New Pala for a good reason yet unknown to you, and I am the first Utopian lord you have met, perhaps for the very same reason. I will remember you, Lady Violette.”

“I will certainly remember *you*, Lord Mahayananda!” I assured him, shaking his hand. “And you too, Lady Susanna!” I added, shaking her hand too.

## Chapter 4

Soon I had descended to the underground station, carrying my bags and now wearing my control band, in Winston’s company. Vic remained in High Anandapuram to perform his work as superintendent; he had quickly registered me as an immigrant, using information I gave him about myself. Now, as Winston had piloted me to Utopia, so he would escort me through it. As it turned out, he would tell me about many sights along the way—and his eyes would tell me plainly that I myself was the most fascinating sight of all to him.

For much of the trip, our train was within sight of the Bay of Utopia. From the train, in addition to that great body of water, we saw villages and cities, temples, farmland, pastures, orchards, brooks and rivers, and small forests full of falling many-colored leaves, for it was autumn in Utopia. Every station bore the name of the city in which it was located, and Winston told me about each, though I could hardly even remember all their names.

At length we entered the great city of Fonsorgonot, and soon the train was crossing a high bridge over a great river. On the bridge, on both sides of the tracks, were roadways carrying a few pedal-powered vehicles and a few car-like ones. “Are those electric cars?” I asked.

“Hmm? Oh, yes, of course,” Winston said. “Those are the only sort of cars we have here.” His attention seemed to be directed elsewhere. Soon I saw where: high above and beyond the bridge. “Up there,” he said, “you can catch a glimpse of the Grand Pyramid.”

Eagerly I looked to see the place where I was to receive the Full Treatment. It was far uphill and miles away, but I did see an apparently large, dark-looking structure with a pointed top. I wondered whether Lord Mahayananda was right in saying most Utopians looked upon it with disfavor—and, if he was, whether most Utopians were right in so regarding it.

We traveled away from the direction of the Grand Pyramid, toward the east, still in the middle of what had now become a broad, straight boulevard carrying a fair number of the electric cars and the pedal-powered vehicles in both directions. The boulevard was lined with trees and, beyond them, mainly with homes and parks both large and small. After stopping briefly at numerous above-ground stations and rushing on, we plunged into a tunnel, and before long entered a large underground station named “Fountain Centre.” Here we left the train, stretched our legs, and ascended a moving stairway to the surface of the earth, emerging into a covered walkway with large letters spelling out “Fountain Centre Station” at its end.

“Just a few quick sights,” Winston said, “before we head over to the council house.” He guided me toward a large traffic circle with a wide walkway around it. “In the center of the circle here,” he said, “is the Fountain of the City, pure water that flows down underground from the Northern Mountains, which you can see far up in the distance.” I looked up, toward the south, to see sizable mountains, the highest of which were covered with snow.

“The big round-topped building up there on the heights below the mountains,” he said, “is called the

Dome of the Heart; it's the supreme temple of Aeiouha Mithra in Utopia. Not of great interest to *me*, you understand, but it's supposed to be one of the great sights to see, if you're interested in that sort of thing. They won't let you into the secret parts unless you're one of the worshippers, but there's a lot of statuary, paintings, stained glass, and that sort of thing you can see. Even the exterior is rather beautiful, at least from a distance." It did seem so, from what I could discern. Predominantly white at its base, the well-proportioned building rose high into a great dome that seemed to be covered with intricate patterns of gold, red, and sky blue, though I could not see them clearly since the building was far away.

"Now, over here," Winston said, "is Fountain Brook, which forms a waterfall after emerging from underground, and runs down toward the ocean by the King's High Mansion, which you see over here." He guided me to another part of the walkway along the traffic circle, from which I looked down into a chasm and a brook near the bottom of a small waterfall. Looking beyond the brook, I saw a large, long white mansion in a classical style, three stories high on the side facing the boulevard west of the circle, but with more stories below the level of the boulevard on the downhill side. The brook flowed through the spacious, parklike grounds of the mansion, and then presumably descended to the bay, although I could not see where it went.

"Just one more sight before we go to the council house," Winston said. "Turn around." I turned around. Beyond the fountain, the waterfall, and the far side of the circle was a massive gray building, about twelve stories high. This was about twice the height of any other building I could see; there were no skyscrapers.

"That's the Great Greystone Building," he said, "the headquarters of the Regulators. They're Utopia's answer to Scotland Yard, the Mounties, the FBI, and much more. Most Utopians don't need their assis-

tance often, if ever—but, for those who do, they're invaluable. They do an excellent job of separating out the Nulls from the law-abiding Utopians."

"Um—are the Nulls the criminals?" I asked, though I was pretty sure I knew the answer.

"They are. If you're found guilty of a crime in Utopia, you become a Null for a period of time. Nulls are dishonored and prevented from sharing in the wealth of Utopia without money, as law-abiding people do. Whether they're in prison or in some lesser form of restraint, Nulls are forced to work and scrimp for what are called Units, the only form of money known in Utopia. Everything a Null obtains must be purchased, often at a high price, with Units. It's a terrific inconvenience, and a disgrace as well, to have to use Units." Winston smiled.

"Since gold is such a valuable conductor of electricity, we don't use golden chains for Nulls any more, as they did 500 years ago—but you could say that Units are today's equivalent of the golden chains."

He patted me on the shoulder, just a bit lingeringly. "But you won't need to worry about that," he assured me. "You've already got your credentials as a presumably law-abiding Utopian. You'll be assigned your work, and you'll be able to get what you need without money." He leaned close to me and whispered in my ear, "Including the Full Treatment—*today!* Come, let's head for the council house to get your assignment, and then we'll go up to the Grand Pyramid."

"Uh—you mean I just show up, and it happens?" I asked, astounded. "I won't need to wait?"

"Well, I took the liberty of transmitting an appointment request for you yesterday," he said. "But the body sculptors can generally get to you pretty fast. They're given great honor in the Grand Pyramid, even

if not everyone elsewhere approves of their work. Come along, you'll see."

\*\*\*\*\*

We walked west along the boulevard to a six-story brick building with a gold-colored plaque proclaiming that it was the Council House of the King's Council on Electrical Affairs. Upon entering, I gave my name; the red-haired receptionist spoke into her control band, and soon a short, muscular-looking man appeared. He wore a plain, simple white shirt and matching trousers, but his fairly short gray hair and his noble-looking visage made him look like someone portrayed in ancient Roman statuary, perhaps Cicero or Augustus.

"Hello, I'm Arnold Aristurax," he said, shaking my hand. "Lady Violette Vaulkner, I presume."

"That's me," I said. "I'm told you've got some work for me."

"I have, I'm sure," he said. "I'll just need to determine what it is. From your registration, I see that you were a professor of electrical engineering in America. I hope you won't be disappointed to learn that you probably won't be a professor or anything of the sort here, at least not right away. I'm sure you've already noticed that our electrical devices are somewhat more, er, what you might call *advanced* than yours were, at least in many ways. You'll have a lot to learn, but I'm sure you'll be able to do *something* useful with electricity, and more useful as you learn more."

"Well, I'm certainly willing to learn, and I'm glad to help however I can," I said, hoping this was a suitably Utopian-sounding thing to say.

"That's the spirit," he said. "Let's go into my office, and we can examine some possibilities." I followed him down a hallway, around a couple of turns, and

into a small, efficient-looking office, while Winston remained in the reception room.

\*\*\*\*\*

If humility was one of the qualities of a good Utopian, and if humility was likely to result from humiliation, then I was well on my way to becoming a good Utopian by the time I shook Sir Arnold's hand, re-entered the reception room, and rejoined Winston. "Well, what's it to be?" he asked.

"I'm going to be an assistant manager at an electrical generation plant," I said, smiling faintly.

"The manager will meet my train tomorrow. It's nothing like being a professor, but it's a very useful occupation, and it does have to do with electricity."

"Well, that's something," Winston said. "Where's the plant located?"

"It's near a city called Amabolux, in the far foothills of the Southern Mountains above the city of Endevrias."

Winston raised his eyebrows and frowned slightly. "Hmm, a bit too close to Antarctica for my taste—both literally and figuratively," he said. "But you'll be able to show you've got the true Utopian spirit—pitch in and help wherever you're needed, even if you'd rather be somewhere else."

"Uh—how delightful," I said, hoping my words weren't completely opposite to the truth.

"Perhaps," Winston said, "but not nearly so delightful as what awaits you now."

He meant the Full Treatment, of course. We did not actually run back to the station, but we strode at full walking speed. We descended into Fountain Cen-

tre Station, but to a different level, where the tracks ran north and south, not east and west. A train took us underground up the steep hill, going at least as slowly as we had gone up the steepest hills in New Pala, until we arrived at a station called “Mount Hearty.” There our train turned off at an angle toward the southwest and gained some speed on a less steep grade, still underground.

“Are we near a university?” I asked on seeing a station called “Professors’ Town.”

“The only university in Utopia,” Winston said, “commonly called simply ‘the Varsity.’ It’s actually a fairly recent innovation. Traditionally, Utopians have attended temple schools or the like for even the highest studies related to leisure, defined as pretty much anything that isn’t work. For studies that *are* related to work, again including even the most difficult, apprenticeships have been thought superior in practical value to university studies.” He smiled.

“To this day, I believe,” he said, “many Utopians regard the Varsity with the same sort of disapproval as the Great Pyramid.”

We rounded a bend and gained more speed on a more or less level track, stopping only at underground stations called “Students’ Town” and “Varsity Centre.” Then we turned toward the southwest and ascended a moderately steep hill, coming to a stop in an underground station called “Grand Pyramid.”

After emerging from the train, we went toward two sets of double doors, one labeled “Uplift” and the other “Letdown.” We entered the Letdown, which turned out to be an elevator going down; I guessed the cars must shift from one side to the other on reaching the top or the bottom. We didn’t reach the bottom, though; we just went down to the eighth level below ground level, and there were several more below that.

When we emerged from the Letdown, we were face to face with wide double doors and big letters above them, spelling out “HOSPITAL.” We entered, and I told the receptionist that I was Violette Vaultner. That was all she needed to know. Looking me up on a control station, she said, “You’re a *harxaturax*, here for the Full Treatment,” and I verified that I was. She spoke into her control band, and a man wearing yellow and green (the standard Utopian colors for medical attire, as I soon learned) rapidly appeared.

“Tom Mikloxas, body sculptor’s assistant,” said the man, shaking my hand. “Most pleased to meet you, Lady Violette. We’ll get you under pretty quick, and when you wake up you’ll have received the Full Treatment,” he said.

“Uh—just like that?” I asked, “Where I came from, I almost always succeeded in avoiding hospitals, but people told me the preparations for surgery were pretty time-consuming and not too pleasant.”

“Well, Utopian hospitals were far better than those in the outside world even 500 years ago,” he said, “and by now they’re *incomparably* better, in that and many other ways. You’ll see. Let’s go. Just strip in this stripping room, put this gown on, and lie down on the movable bed in the stripping room. Call out when you’re ready, and we’ll roll out toward the operating room. This gentleman, I believe, will retain your bags for you.” He looked to Winston, who nodded “yes.”

“But, uh—how will the body sculptor know how my body is supposed to look?” I asked.

“There’s a little room with a rolling control station next to the operating room,” he said. “I’ll show you adjustable images of your body, and you can make the desired adjustments until the images look exactly as you wish to look. Then the control station will be rolled into the operating room, where the body sculptor will use the images as models to work from.”

I could hardly believe my good fortune. The great dream of my life was going to come true, incredibly soon! I raced into the stripping room, stripped off my clothes and put on the gown, lay down on the bed, and called out that I was ready. Tom Mikloxas entered the room at once and started to roll me out at what seemed top speed. I barely had time to toss my clothes to Winston to put in my bag, and my bra fell on the floor when he failed to catch it. I would never need it again anyway, I thought, for I would no longer need ample padding to make up for my lack of breasts, and my new Utopian undies didn't include a bra.

Lying flat on my back, I was wheeled down halls, around corners, and into a little room. "All right, sit up," said Tom Mikloxas. I sat up and came face to face with my own image on a large control station.

"We'll zoom in on your face to begin with," he said. "I'd suggest just a tiny bit rounder and fuller in the cheeks, and you may want your lips to be even a bit fuller and redder than they are now."

"Oh, yes, definitely," I said.

"How's this?" he asked, manipulating knobs on the control panel, which appeared to incorporate a regular keyboard but was larger with extra features. As he turned the knobs, I saw my face in the image growing a bit more rounded and feminine-looking, and my lips becoming noticeably fuller and redder.

I scrutinized the image carefully. "Back off a bit on the roundness of the face," I said, "but you can make the lips even fuller and redder than that. It will be all right with me if they—um—really stand out."

He complied. "There, that's perfect," I said. My lips, in the image, were now among the hottest, most voluptuous-looking lips I had ever seen, and that was fine with me. My face was still fairly long and thin,



but now it unquestionably looked like a woman's face, which I wasn't quite sure it did before.

"Now your breasts," he said. "How big do you want them?"

"Not gigantic," I said at once. "In fact, I'd like them to be somewhat smaller than average for a woman, but with pretty big, dark, pointy nipples."

"All right, let's try this," he said, turning the knobs. My breasts in the image grew bigger, and my little light brown nipples became *much* bigger and noticeably darker.

"Back off a bit on the size of my breasts," I said, "but not my nipples. I want them *really* pointy, with nice, long, erectile tips."

He followed my instructions, and then showed me a side view. I was getting an erection just looking at my breasts in the image. As requested, they were smaller than average, but my nipples were big and dark, and their tips stuck out in a most eye-catching, exciting manner. My cleavage, though not very deep, was long and attractive too. "Yes, that's exactly right," I said.

"Your hips and legs?" he inquired.

"Strong and shapely all over," I requested. He turned the knobs and altered the image of me below the waist. My calves and thighs grew fuller, my hips broader, my butt rather larger and more provocative. After a few minor corrections, I expressed satisfaction.

"Your, er, large clitoris, of course, will remain as is," he said. "And now for your vagina. I'm guessing you'll want it to be able to accommodate a great variety of, er, insertion sizes with satisfaction, from very small to very large?"

“Oh, yes, certainly!” I said. I was thinking of Winston. To judge from the bulges I had seen in his trousers, I surmised that his penis was very large indeed.

“Very well,” he said. “All right, we’ll put you under and get going.”

\*\*\*\*\*

I remember nothing after that until I woke up, flat on my back, in a recovery room. While not yet fully awake, I wasn’t sure I had new breasts until I touched my nipples. Sure enough, they were big and pointy, although my breasts as a whole weren’t very discernible because I was flat on my back.

I lurched into a sitting position and felt my breasts again. Now they were very fine, exactly what I had dreamed of and specified for the body sculptor. A glance in a mirror showed that my face was also exactly according to specifications, including my full, red, extremely voluptuous lips. There was only one big problem: I couldn’t feel anything below the waist.

Tom Mikloxas came in, and so did Winston. “How’s everything?” Tom asked.

I tried to answer his question, but found I could hardly speak. “Why can’t I talk right?” I asked him in the loudest stage whisper I could manage.

“Your vocal chords have been altered as part of the Full Treatment,” he said. “Your voice was rather well-trained, but it was still a strain to reach the higher pitches. When you regain the full use of your voice, it won’t be a strain any more. You’ll naturally speak just like a woman. Until then, you can say you’ve got laryngitis, which is very near the truth. Now, aside from that, how’s everything?”

“Except for that, everything’s perfect up *here*,” I said. “But down *there*, I can’t feel anything.”

“You will,” he assured me. “Your new vagina won’t be ready for use for perhaps 100 days or so. Sensation will gradually return, but you’ll probably feel some pain and require some desensitizer for a while. You’ll receive some instructions, and you’ll be able to ask me any questions you may have. Then, at a suitable time after your 100 days are up, you’ll return here to be medically certified as ready for action.”

“Well, all right,” I said. “But am I going to be able to walk?”

“You should be able to walk by morning. You’ll spend the night in the hospital, and be released in the morning if all goes well. Then you’ll be able to do pretty much anything except to speak at full volume, and to have sex.”

“Oh.” I figured I had to accept it, so I might as well try to look on the bright side—if there *was* a bright side.

Again at seemingly top speed, Tom Mikloxas wheeled me through hallways, around corners, and into the Uplift, taking me into a room on the next floor up where I would spend the night, while Winston followed. “Here you go,” Tom said. I got off the bed; he showed me how to call for help if I needed anything, and left to do whatever he had to do next. Winston and I remained alone in the room.

“I’ll have to head back to New Pala,” Winston said. “We’ll keep in touch. And then, in only 12 to 16 weeks or so . . .”

I nodded and kissed him on the mouth again, though it felt very strange because there was no response from below my waist. He said good-bye and left. I began to prepare for bed—and for my new life as a Utopian.

## Chapter 5

For a while I lay awake in bed, reading the information for immigrants on my control band. In addition to many things I already knew from talking with Vic, Winston, Arnold Aristurax, and Lord Mahayananda, I quickly learned that the King of Utopia was Volton Vulgolloi, and the Lord of Amabolux was Arthur Hyparnion. Presuming that I could find out what I needed to know about these gentlemen in due time, I turned my attention to finding out about the place where I was to live.

Amabolux, I learned, was a city of about 10,000 people, the chief city of a large polity stretching from the polity of Endevrias, near the ocean, to the heights of the Southern Mountains. It was the site of one of the largest electric generation plants in southern Utopia, incorporating wind, hydroelectric, and underground clean-fuel-burning generators. Almost all the inhabitants of Amabolux were worshippers of Aeiouha Mithra. I wondered if this had anything to do with Winston's view that the city was too close to Antarctica, figuratively speaking.

At least, I noted, it would be easy to get there. Amabolux was served by one of Utopia's most traveled train lines, the same one on which Winston and I had traveled from Fountain Centre to the Grand Pyramid. The line continued through a pass in the Northern Mountains and down into the broad, fertile valley of the Anyder in central Utopia. From there, it wound up through the Southern Mountains, and then back down toward its terminus at the city of Endevrias, on Utopia's southern coast.

My control band alerted me that I had received a new message. I looked at it. My heart leaped. It was a response to my e-mail to Tina: "Dear Violette, Thank you, thank you, thank you! I knew it! Please let me know what happens to you in Utopia. Very best wishes, Tina."

I wished I could respond, but I knew I couldn't. I had met Lord Mahayananda, but not Lord Stark Brekkekkexx who ruled the Grand Pyramid, and I couldn't just find him and ask him to let me send e-mail to Tina. I would just have to wait until I saw Lord Mahayananda again—unless Lord Arthur Hyparnion, whom I also had not met, would let me send e-mail from Amabolux.

Despite my excitement at hearing from Tina, I soon found myself getting sleepy. I looked at miniature pictures of the Anyder Valley, the Southern Mountains, and the town of Amabolux on my control band until my eyes closed in sleep, and then the pictures began to enter my dreams.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mikloxas was right: I could walk in the morning, although I could still feel very little below the waist. I put on my Utopian underwear, noting with satisfaction that the reinforced camisole was as snug and supportive of my new breasts as a sport bra, but more comfortable and actually nicer looking too, once I got used to the look of it. Then I slipped on one of the traditional Utopian white dresses, figuring I should look as much like a traditional Utopian as possible when I arrived in Amabolux, even though I was not going to worship Aeiouha Mithra.

When I was dressed and ready to go, Tom gave me instructions about how to perform my daily functions without the assistance of sensation, until sensation returned. Then he escorted me, with my now jam-packed bags, back up to the Grand Pyramid's underground station. "A train should be along in a bit," he said. "I've got to get back to work, but you should have no problem from here; just get on the train and ride until you get to Amabolux."

"Thank you very much," I said. He left, and I sat down on one of the station's many benches to await

the train. I used my control band to notify the electrical plant manager of my ETA, and then I looked around.

Few people were in the station, and most of them did not attract my attention. Only one did: a tall, dignified-looking lady with streaks of gray in her dark hair, which contrasted with her large sky-blue eyes.

The lady turned toward me and looked at me soon after I sat down. She did not stare at me, but perhaps I did stare a bit at her—not only at her beautiful eyes, but even more at her clothes. She wore a long robe with long white sleeves, a bit like Lord Mahayananda's robe, except the main part of the robe was white only down to her breasts. There the robe displayed a great gold-colored insignia of the sun, in which a handsome, strong-looking man's face appeared. Below the level of the sun insignia, the white and gold gave way to an almost riotous profusion of colors in images of leaves, fruit, and flowers.

The lady was walking toward me. I did not know why. Then she spoke to me and surprised me greatly—indeed, astounded me.

“Are you the immigrant from America who is going to Amabolux?” she asked.

My eyes seemed to grow as great as her own. Now I certainly did stare at her. “*What?*” I exclaimed, still hoarsely. “Uh—well, yes, I am, but—how did you know?” I wasn't at all sure I liked having somebody know these things about me without my consent.

“Sir Victor Brahmaswami, in New Pala, registered you as an immigrant from America,” she said. “He happened to send me a message saying I might wish to meet you. When your registration information was supplemented by Sir Arnold Aristurax, I learned that you were to work in the generation plant at Amabolux.”

“Well, all right, I guess,” I said, “but—how did you know I was going to be *here*, in this station, this morning?”

“That took a bit of deduction,” the lady said. “You see, Sir Victor registered you as a *harxaturax*. I, too, am a *harxaturax*.” She smiled at me. I tried to smile back at her, but I fear I succeeded only in gaping at her with my mouth wide open.

“I received the Full Treatment many years ago,” she went on. “I am now a priestess of Aeiouha Mithra, residing near the Dome of the Heart. In his message to me, Sir Victor mentioned that you would be discussing a matter of interest with Sir Winston Rabnabana, whom he knows to be a strong proponent of the Full Treatment for the *harxaturax*, and who had discerned that you were one. I simply deduced what that matter of interest would be, and from what station you would be leaving for Amabolux after you got the Full Treatment. Therefore, here I am.”

“So you wanted to meet me just because we’re both, uh, *harxaturaxes*?” I asked.

“*Harxaturai* is the plural,” she said. “Sir Victor thought I would be a good person to introduce you to the best way for a *harxaturax* to live in Utopia. Many *harxaturai*—including myself, I admit, in years gone by—have lived in a manner that decent Utopians would regard as repellent and idiotic. It is not the only way for a *harxaturax* to live, and it is far from the best. So, if you have any interest, we can talk about it.”

I heard the soft sound of the train coming into the station, and started to pick up my jam-packed bags in silence while I thought about what the lady had said. “May I help you?” she asked.

“Oh!” I said. “Uh—sure.” I handed her one of my bags. We entered the train and sat down together. I

wondered if decent Utopians, in this lady's opinion, would regard my promise of an intimate encounter with Winston as repellent and idiotic. If so, I was pretty sure I wasn't going to agree. Still, the intimate encounter wasn't going to occur for months, and meanwhile I guessed I could try to live like what was supposed to be a decent Utopian—or at least to find out what it would be like to live like one.

“So what would you say is the best way for a *harxaturax* to live?” I asked as the train began to move. “And, oh, by the way, what's your name?”

“I am Augusta Euthroxas,” she said. “You, I know, are Violette Vaulkner. As for the best way for a *harxaturax* to live: well, perhaps the best way to explain is to contrast my own old way of life with my new one. You will see that Utopians, in general, are not too fond of talking about themselves—but I think this will be excusable.”

“Oh, I'll readily grant you an excuse, er, Lady Augusta,” I said with a smile. “Are you still just called ‘Lady’ if you're a priestess?”

“Yes,” she said. “Of course, I was not always a priestess. Indeed, there was a time when I was quite the *opposite* of a priestess.”

She sat in silence, apparently gathering her thoughts and memories. Meanwhile the train was rapidly gathering speed. Before she spoke again, the train had emerged into the open air and was racing along the side of a small, heavily wooded mountain. It appeared that the city of Fonsorgonot had no suburbs, at least on this side.

“When I was young,” Lady Augusta said at last, “I was fully carried away by the craze for sexual experience. At that time Utopia was ruled by those of no religion. Stark Brekkekkexx, a very vigorous old man who is now merely Lord of the Grand Pyramid, was then King of Utopia. Omniview, the great vehicle for

promotion of the views and the way of life of Brekkekkexx and his ilk, was viewed by many more people then than now. *Harxaturai*, most attractive ones who had received the Full Treatment, were often seen on Omniview. I was aroused to the maximum on seeing their erotic performances, in which absolutely nothing was left to the imagination. After an intimate encounter with an astoundingly excitable *harxaturax*, I decided I must become one myself.”

“Just like that?” I asked. “How old were you?”

“I was 14 years old at the time of the encounter, but I had been viewing the performances of the *harxaturai*, and imagining myself as one, since I was 10. At that time it was considered a crime to interfere with the erotic development of adolescents and pre-adolescents in any way, including preventing them from viewing such things on Omniview. Some parents were actually punished as Nulls for trying to keep their children from viewing them.”

“So, uh, did you do those things on Omniview too, after you got the Full Treatment?” I asked.

“I did. I received the Full Treatment when I was still 14, and made my first appearance on Omniview at the age of 16. Before I was 20, I was one of the great rising stars, and my copulation with both men and women, as well as with other *harxaturai*, was utterly superb. For an entire decade I reigned supreme on Omniview, with my own regular programme, on which I interviewed Utopian leaders of all kinds and then engaged in copulation with them in full view of all.”

I stared at her, but quickly looked away, fearing I was being rude. If only I could feel much of anything below the waist, I imagined, I would be incredibly excited by Lady Augusta’s story. As it was, I merely looked out the window and saw that we were traveling uphill between terraced gardens on the slopes of small mountains on both sides. Then I looked for-

ward in the train to see my fellow passengers, whom I had largely ignored before. There were not many people in the waggon where we sat; most of them appeared to be members of the same family, including five children of various ages, a mother, and an aging lady who appeared to be a grandmother. Most of the children were fairly short and had dark hair—like most Utopians, I was learning—but the eldest was a taller, slender, red-haired girl with very small breasts beneath her white woolen dress. When she and the mother addressed the grandmother, they used a language I didn't understand; I figured it must be Old Utopian.

“So,” I said after a long pause, “what happened? I gather you don't do that sort of thing any more.” I spoke almost in a genuine whisper now, as if it were somehow preferable that the young red-haired girl and her family should not hear Lady Augusta and myself talking about engaging in copulation in full view of all.

“I do not. In the end it was the Promise of Endless Grandeur, of all things, that changed my mind about how to live. Actually, of course, it was Aeiouha Mithra himself, shining upon my mind and heart from his home in the sun—but he used the Promise of Endless Grandeur to help me see.”

Lady Augusta glanced at me. Her eyes looked bright and kind, almost as if she herself were a source of sunlight, regardless of how absurd her belief in a God-man in the sun might be. I wanted to see more of her eyes, but she looked away before speaking again.

“King Stark Brekkekkexx, as he then was,” she said, “was one of the many men with whom I appeared on Omniview, and perhaps the most superb copulor of the lot. He had accepted the Promise of Endless Grandeur, so that he would never grow old or die. He would go on copulating, and ruling if he

could, for endless centuries. He strongly encouraged me to accept the Promise too. I almost did it.”

“Why didn’t you?” I had to know. I was pretty sure that, if I myself ever had a chance to accept the Promise of Endless Grandeur, I would. Why would anyone *not* do it, and then grow old and die?

“Well,” she said, “I envisioned myself going on, in just the same way, through those endless centuries. I wasn’t at all sure it would be a pleasant experience when the novelty had fully worn off and everything was just the same, century after century. It seemed to me that I might well end up desperately striving for something more, something greater, when there *wasn’t* anything more and greater to be had in the life I was living. Worse yet, it seemed to me that something inside me—I mean, what was best in my heart and mind, more precious than life itself—would wither and die. It was already withering away, because of the life I was leading, but it hadn’t died—and there it was inside me, crying out, protesting against being killed.”

“Why was it withering? And why would it have died if you accepted the Promise of Endless Grandeur?” Of course I wasn’t at all sure what Lady Augusta was saying was true, but she certainly seemed to think it was, and I wanted to know why.

“Well, I found that the problem with endless copulation was not only that it couldn’t give endless satisfaction,” she said, “but it would actually *interfere* with finding endless satisfaction that involved all of what was best in me. It was like noise drowning out beautiful music. I learned that, in the end, I could have either the noise or the music, and I could have the one I chose *forever*—but I couldn’t have both, not even in alternation. I decided I had to choose the music, not the noise.”

I wasn’t liking this too much at all. I figured there had to be something wrong with what she was say-

ing, and I was pretty sure I wasn't the only one who thought so. I wished my feelings below the waist would return. Surely, if they did, they would help me see what was wrong with Lady Augusta's views.

"What did King Stark say when you told him you weren't going to accept the Promise of Endless Grandeur?" I asked.

"I didn't *tell* him that, exactly," she said. "But he was outraged when I not only stopped copulating with men on Omniview, but started talking about how I had become a traditional Utopian and a worshipper of Aeiouha Mithra. He stopped my programme at once. That didn't go over too well with a lot of people who still thought Utopians should be free to speak about what they believed."

"Uh—I guess I can see why it wouldn't," I admitted.

"Priests and priestesses don't do political things," she said, "but of course I wasn't a priestess back then. I and some other people got together a group called Majority for Utopian Freedoms. As it turned out, a lot of other people were turning, or returning, to the worship of Aeiouha Mithra, and even a fair number who *weren't* were still getting fed up with King Stark. After the next election, a majority of the lords were on our side, and King Stark was voted out."

"Hmm," I said, wondering if Utopia was really better off now than before. "So you've stuck with Aeiouha Mithra ever since then, and so have the majority of Utopians?"

"Yes. Actually, there are more of us all the time. Most Utopians now, the same as in centuries gone by, are very concerned about fulfilling what is best in their old traditions—not discarding them and trying to build up everything anew from nothing, like Brekkekkexx and his ilk. The worship of Aeiouha Mithra fulfills all that is best in the three greatest tra-

ditions of Utopian religion. Many Utopians of old worshipped the Creator of the Universe in a rather refined, rational, philosophical way; others worshipped men who were thought to be gods; and still others worshipped the sun, the supreme visible source of light and life. In Aeiouha Mithra, we worship the Creator in the *form* of a man—a man who has ascended to the sun and made it his home.”

Lady Augusta sat in silence after saying this. In me, fascination and repugnance contended for the mastery. I had always been among those with no religion, and I couldn't imagine myself changing in that way. Still, I was becoming a Utopian now, and I figured I should at least try to understand what might seem to be the absurd, incredible beliefs of most of my fellow Utopians.

“Uh—how is it supposed to have been possible,” I inquired, “for a man to enter the sun and live there? Isn't the temperature rather too high in there?”

“On that point,” Lady Augusta explained, “Utopians rely on reported observations and rational inferences. There was a time when Aeiouha Mithra lived as a man on earth. He was then observed ascending in the general direction of the sun. He had previously been observed actually *shining* like the sun. Utopians drew the fairly obvious inference that his *destination* was the sun, and that he there sits on his throne. As for how he can live there, he is immortal, and it is thought that the fire of universal love in his heart makes the extreme heat seem like mere comfortable warmth. If you were made of ice, temperatures above freezing would seem unbearably hot and deadly to you, as the interior of the sun would seem to us—but as it is, they may seem quite pleasant, may they not?”

“Well, yes,” I said.

“Compared to him,” she said, “we are all made of ice, more or less—but he does not wish us to remain so. Indeed, we do not wish *ourselves* to remain so.

Why did I seek the high degree of heat to be found in copulation, if not to try to melt and break the ice that encrusted me within? But I found it did not work, you see. When the heat wore off, as it soon did, I only became icier than before. The true source of heat I needed had to be perpetual, like the sun—and, like the sun, it had to be a perpetual source of light as well.”

After Lady Augusta had said this, neither of us spoke again for a long time. I looked out the window of the train, trying to think about what she had said, but feeling I was disabled from evaluating it fully, with every relevant part of me. Full feeling below the waist would have to return before I could even honestly evaluate what Lady Augusta was saying.

I turned my attention to what I could see from the train window. We had now come through the pass in the Northern Mountains and were speeding downhill. Before me I saw a wide river flowing through a great valley from the south, and bending westward as it approached the mountains. On either side of the river I saw the heartland of Utopia, filled with farmland, orchards, pastures, and human settlements large and small. In the far distance I saw the Southern Mountains, larger and more numerous than the northern ones, with many snow-covered peaks. Above all, I saw the bright blue autumn sky, with pure white clouds floating slowly through it. I could not see the sun yet, because the mountains to the north and east of us were still in the way—but I knew it was there, shedding light on all I could see outside the train, and I was sure I would see it soon enough.

For a moment I almost seriously wondered if Aeiouha Mithra, that human yet superhuman being of Utopian myth and legend, did inhabit the sun. Something in my heart, however absurd it might be, responded favorably to the thought that the sun was a palace for a person, not merely an unmanned nuclear reactor or something of the sort, as I had always been taught that it was. Perhaps that was why so

many of my fellow Utopians believed the myth or legend: because it was satisfying to the heart, as an unmanned nuclear reactor could never be.

The wonder passed. I did not think I would ever really believe such a thing, especially if it would lead me to eschew copulation as Lady Augusta had done. When I regained full feeling and full capacity for action below the waist, I was surely going to copulate with Winston, as I had promised. Still, at least I was going to try to treat the Utopian belief in Aeiouha Mithra with respect—especially since it would be held by almost all my fellow townspeople in Amabolux, whom I would begin to meet this very day.

## Chapter 6

After a long silence, Lady Augusta and I began to converse again. She no longer seemed inclined to talk about herself. By the time we emerged from a long tunnel under the Southern Mountains and began to race downhill toward Amabolux, she knew almost all there was to know about me. I was grateful that she listened kindly and patiently, even when I was talking about things she must have found loathsome, like having no religion and copulating with men including, but by no means limited to, Orson.

The train slowed and stopped in an above-ground station along a hillside, where large royal-blue letters proclaimed that we had arrived in “AMABOLUX.” Lady Augusta helped me carry my bags out of the train. At once a stout, balding man, shorter than either of us, came up and introduced himself.

“You’re Violette Valkner, I take it,” he said, extending his hand. “I’m Reginald Roraturion, your plant manager. Welcome to Amabolux. The wind can get a bit chilly here in the colder seasons, but you’ll find the warmth of the people’s hearts more than makes up for it.” He gave me a big smile.

“Uh—that’s very good to know,” I said, shivering in the wind, “if it’s true!”

“It is,” he said, “but we’ll get you a good warm cloak, too. Here, get into my car and out of the wind. I’ll be with you as soon as I say hello to Lady Augusta; she’s well known all over Utopia, but not seen much in these parts.”

I got into Sir Reginald’s little electric car and watched his brief, animated conversation with Lady Augusta, parts of which I could hear through the closed car windows. She seemed to be saying she needed to get back home; he seemed to be pleading with her to stay for a while. At last, it seemed, she gracefully gave in; she got into the back seat of the car.

“That’s more like it,” said Sir Reginald. “Lady Augusta will be joining us for supper.” He entered the car and drove up a short street to the wide High Street of Amabolux, where he turned the corner and promptly stopped across the street from a very large whitestone building.

“This is the great central temple of Aeiouha Mithra in Amabolux,” he said. “Lady Augusta will be spending some time here before supper. You and I will go out to the plant, and I’ll show you how to get around.” Lady Augusta got out of the car, crossed the street, and entered the temple.

“From here, on the seaward side, you can see Endevrias and the ocean,” Sir Reginald said before we began to move again. I looked far downhill and saw a sizable city, but one in which all the buildings appeared to be no more than three stories high, like the buildings on both sides of the High Street here. Beyond Endevrias and its harbor, there was nothing but the ocean—and presumably Antarctica. I could not see it, but I almost imagined the chill wind I had felt was coming from there.

“Here’s the home of Lord Arthur Hyparnion and his family,” Sir Reginald said after the car was moving, pointing to a large three-story house near the temple. “You’ll be lodging and eating your suppers there, and I’ll drop in for supper myself this evening. I hope you won’t mind being regarded as something of a celebrity; we don’t often get immigrants in down here.”

“Oh, I dare say I shall be able to endure it, if it must be endured,” I said with a smile, thinking this was the sort of thing a real Utopian would say. From Sir Reginald’s laugh, I gathered that it was.

\*\*\*\*\*

After meeting many people and seeing many things at the generation plant, and also being given a warm hooded cloak as promised, I rode with Sir Reginald back to Lord Arthur’s house for supper. “Most Utopians still get together for big suppers every evening, as they did in the old days,” he said, “but we no longer have fixed quotas or assignments as to who or how many can eat at which house. It works out pretty well if you just use the old control band to notify your hosts in advance that you wish to come, and they agree.”

“Uh—then somebody must have notified Lord Arthur that I’d be coming?” I asked. “I certainly didn’t do it myself.”

“I did,” said Sir Reginald. He knocked on Lord Arthur’s front door. A short, striking-looking girl with barely discernible breasts beneath her white unmarried ladies’ clothes, with dark shining eyes, dark curly hair, full wide lips, and deep golden-brown skin, answered the door.

“Good evening, Candace,” said Sir Reginald. “Please let me introduce our new immigrant, Lady Violette Vaultner.”



“Oh, I’m so glad to meet you!” Candace said, grasping my hand with both her own surprisingly strong ones. “A real immigrant, like my grandparents! Welcome to our home!”

“Thank you very much,” I said. “Uh, where did your grandparents come from?”

“America. They didn’t think it would be a very good place to raise children, especially ones who looked like them. In America, they said, a lot of people had really idiotic ideas about how important your looks were, especially if you had dark skin like them. They decided to find out if Utopia was real, and if people here would accept them without caring what they looked like. It turned out it was, and they would. Then my mum was born here and grew up, and it didn’t bother my dad that she looked a whole lot different than he did.”

“Well, that’s good,” I said. “Um, can I meet your mum and dad?”

“Sure,” she said. “Come right this way. But would you like to sit next to me at supper?”

“Why, certainly,” I said. Sir Reginald and I followed her through a hallway to a large dining room, where many people were already seated at long tables. Candace led us straight to the head of the most prominent table.

“Lady Violette,” Candace said, “please meet my father, Lord Arthur Hyparnion; my mother, Lady Alice Hyparnion; the chief priest of the great temple, Sir Daniel Eupharrhax; and his wife, Lady Cecilia Eupharrhax.” I was greeted, in turn, by Lord Arthur, a fairly short, muscular-looking man with bright blue eyes, reddish-golden hair, and a bushy red beard; Lady Alice, a tall, dignified-looking, dark-skinned lady of obvious African heritage, with a wide, bright smile; Sir Daniel, a gray-haired, gray-bearded man of medium height, wearing a robe that looked like Lady

Augusta's robe down through the golden image of the man in the sun, but was all black below that; and Lady Cecilia, a short, plump, ruddy-faced lady, whose smile rivaled that of Lady Alice for brightness. Lady Augusta sat next to Lady Cecilia, but Candace did not introduce her to me yet.

"Lady Violette has agreed to sit with me at supper," Candace promptly announced after that. Lord Arthur raised his bushy eyebrows high, but smiled and nodded his head.

Candace then introduced me to everyone at the tables, starting with Lady Augusta, who said we had already met. Candace knew all their names, but I couldn't remember most of them. I did remember the name of a big man in a forest-green uniform with gold insignias, the Chief Regulator of Amabolux: he was Edward Barthaxas, and his petite, red-haired wife was Aurelia Barthaxas.

Candace and I then sat down next to each other near the middle of the first table; Sir Reginald sat across from us.

"I'm glad you could join us," I said to Candace. "In the old days, if I recall correctly from a famous book about Utopia, young people your age had to serve as waiters and waitresses, or else to stand around in silence and wait for their elders to hand them some food. At least, I *think* they were young people your age. How old are you?"

"I'm 12, almost 13," Candace said. "That book was written before most Utopians worshipped Aeiouha Mithra. He's a great friend of youths and maidens my age, and younger boys and girls too. We get much more respect now than they did back then."

"Your attention, please," said Sir Daniel, ringing a little bell. "Our brief reading for this evening's supper is from the writings of Sir David Good, priest of Aeiouha Mithra, once known as King David Good.

Here is what he says: “I never used to understand what the worship of Aeiouha Mithra, way up in the sun, had to do with living a good life down here on earth. I was perfectly capable, I thought, of discerning for myself how I should live, and of living just as I should. That was before I had applied the Silent Dissolver to all the nations that then surrounded Utopia, and almost applied it to Utopia too. At last I was shocked into realizing, what only a fool could have failed to realize, that my own views were not the supreme standard of what was good or bad in the universe. I then had to find out what *was* the supreme standard, the source of all true understanding of what is good and what is bad, as the sun is the source of all the light of day. The path was narrow, hard, and long, but at last I saw: Aeiouha Mithra is the source, and I was to find his light among his people in his temple.”

“Hear, hear!” Lord Arthur called out, and almost all the people (myself excepted) called out, “Hear, hear!”

A quartet of singers, two men and two women, then began to sing a lively song with multiple melodies, though not so loudly as to interfere with conversation. The words of the song weren’t in English; I figured they must be in Old Utopian.

I turned my attention back to Candace. “So do all the youths and maidens here,” I said, “obey Aeiouha Mithra at all times, and therefore abstain from all indecency?”

“No,” she said. “A lot of us obey him pretty much, but some don’t. A little while ago a youth was pestering me, trying to get me to go along with his indecent plans, even though I told him I wasn’t interested. I called the Regulators upon him. He’s a Null now.”

I raised my eyebrows. “You don’t think that may have been a bit too harsh?” I asked.

“No, I don’t,” she said. “If he’d only backed off when I told him to, he wouldn’t be a Null today. His problem was that he only cared about himself, not me. That’s what Nulls do: they only care about themselves. I can’t stand it. Everybody needs to care about other people, *all* other people.”

She blinked, then blinked again. Having imagined she was a pretty tough little maiden, I was surprised to see tears, even though only a few of them, emerging from her eyes.

“Uh, yes, I think that’s right,” I said. I felt I must go on: “But does everybody need Aeiouha Mithra to help them do that?”

“Everybody needs what he can *give* them,” she said, “the hope of sharing joy forever with everyone who cares, and the wisdom to live to fulfill your hope. Some people think they can have all that without *him*, and he lets them give it a fair try. But of course we think they’re secretly getting it all from him, even if they don’t think so.”

“And even though he’s, uh, way up in the sun, and they’re down here on earth?”

“Well, of course. I mean, the *sun* is way up there too, but it shines all around on earth. I think maybe that’s why he decided to live in the sun: because he’s so much *like* the sun. He shines on everybody too, and the sun helps us to think of him.”

I was silent, trying to think about what she had said. Then I noticed that everyone else at the table was silent too, and they were almost all looking straight at Candace and me.

“Uh—well, thank you, Lady Candace,” I said, though I wasn’t sure whether a 12-year-old girl should be called ‘Lady.’ “I’ll certainly think about what you’ve said.”

“Oh, thank *you*, too, Lady Violette!” Candace exclaimed. “You’re the first person to call me *Lady* Candace. It isn’t done until you’re really growing up.”

“Oh!” I said. “I was afraid it was a—*a faux pas*. I’m glad it wasn’t. Well, then, I’m honored to be the first.”

“But you won’t be the last,” Lord Arthur spoke up. “Well spoken, Lady Candace. Hear, hear!” The echo of his words resounded throughout the room: “Hear, hear!” Candace—*Lady* Candace, rather—turned to me and gave me the most beautiful, blissful smile I had ever seen. I almost wished I could believe in Aeiouha Mithra myself, if someone who believed in him could smile at me like that.

## Chapter 7

I was becoming a real Utopian with surprising speed, and I easily fell into the daily round of Utopian life in Amabolux. On occasion, Lord Arthur let me send a short e-mail to Tina telling her a bit about my life, though not nearly as much as I would have wished to say.

I quickly learned that Utopians had adopted the English calendar along with the English language, and Sundays, logically enough, were specially devoted to the worship of Aeiouha Mithra. Even on other days, many people in Amabolux went to his temple to worship him during their midday respite from work, before eating lunch (or rather midday dinner, as Utopians called it) and returning to work for the remaining three hours of their six-hour work day. Sir Reginald was among them; on many days I rode with him from the plant to the High Street in his little electric car, and I sat in the visitors’ area of the temple, reading and thinking, while he went in to worship. “You’ll understand,” he said, “that only the worshippers are allowed into the secret part of the

temple—but you’re more than welcome to make enquiries about becoming a worshipper, whenever you see fit.”

I did actually make some enquiries, largely directed to Lady Candace. My heart was touched, and warmed, to see how readily this lovely young maiden had come to care about me, and to befriend me. If this was Aeiouha Mithra’s doing, then I wanted to learn more about Aeiouha Mithra—and to learn it from Lady Candace’s smiling lips. It didn’t seem to bother anyone, least of all *her*, that I was a 36-year-old *harxaturax* and she was a 12-year-old real girl. Perhaps, I thought, that was because everyone knew she would promptly call the Regulators upon me if I ever tried anything indecent! Still, I was sure, she must have known I wasn’t going to try—not only because she was too young, but also because I cared about her too much to offend her.

That, Lady Candace insisted to me, was actually the one thing that made Utopian life work right: caring about other people too much to offend them. “Everything would fall apart,” she assured me, “if we didn’t have *that*, and Aeiouha Mithra makes us most sure that we can have *that*. Everything *was* falling apart, they say, when the people with no religion were in control, because they didn’t care about other people, and offending other people was just fine with them. They were really no better than *Nulls*, if you can believe that. I wasn’t born yet, back then—and I’m so glad I wasn’t!”

\*\*\*\*\*

No one in Amabolux, least of all Lady Candace, seemed to be bothered by my being a *harxaturax*—if they even knew about it. Of course they *could* have known about it, since I was registered as one. Maybe, I guessed, they figured there was no need to bother about it, since a *harxaturax*-like Lady Augusta could be as decent a Utopian, and as devoted a worshipper

of Aeiouha Mithra, as anyone else. They didn't need to know what I was going to do with Winston, after my new vagina was certified as being ready for action, and I certainly wasn't going to tell them.

Throughout the winter I kept in touch with Winston through my control band, though I didn't see him in person. As the weeks and months rolled on, I regained feeling below the waist—*strong* feeling, stronger than ever before. In secret, in my room at night, I started to give in to my feelings, imagining I was having intimate encounters with Winston. I felt ashamed of myself, knowing I was doing things that Lady Candace would regard as most indecent—but sometimes my feelings were so strong that I couldn't stop myself, and my shame even made them stronger.

One evening in late winter, after Winston had strongly expressed his eagerness to see me again, I rapidly entered the nude after speaking with him on my control band. My big nipples were fully erect as soon as I stripped off my camisole, and they gave me such incredibly lovely feelings when I touched them! This, in turn, made my clitoris swell to its full seven inches; I trembled with delight when I touched my big, plum-like bulb. Better yet, I could feel my new vagina—almost as quick to become excited as my nipples, and at least as quick as my clitoris—already throbbing with heat and dripping with moisture.

I was going to be ready for my encounter with Winston soon, really soon. My 100 days of waiting were almost at an end. I pressed my clitoris down between my legs, just as I had first done when I was Lady Candace's age, to cover my womanly entryway and make sure I would not succumb to the strong temptation to slip my finger into it prematurely. Then my hands returned to my luscious, fully womanly bare breasts. I began to pump my hips and rub my thighs together with my clitoris clutched tight between them, just as I had done while wearing my sister's panties at the age of 12.

I knew what was going to happen. Orgasm was going to overcome me. I grasped some tissues, not too different from the ones I had used for the same purpose as a lonely teenager back in America, and reached back beneath my butt to surround my bulb with them. Then I let loose, bucking my hips hard and spurting semen backward into the tissue—copious amounts of semen, for it had been long since my last voluntary ejaculation with Orson, and my wet dreams were few and infrequent. With every spurt of semen, I could feel my vagina strongly throbbing, in full unison with my clitoris.

I had underestimated how much tissue I would need. The tissue was fully soaked with semen, and so was my hand. What was more, the underside of my clitoris was drenched with love juice from my womanly entryway. I knew I was fully ripe for my intimate encounter with Winston. I only needed to return to the Grand Pyramid to be certified as ready for action.

\*\*\*\*\*

“I’ll be back soon,” I told Lady Candace soon after that. “I’ve been invited to attend the wedding of Lord Mahayananda’s daughter, Lady Susanna, in New Pala.” It was perfectly true, though not the whole truth. Lady Candace did not need to know I was going to attend the wedding with Sir Winston Rabnabana, after which I would go with him to the Grand Pyramid, where I would be certified for action and have an intimate—or, as she would say, a highly indecent—encounter with him.

“Oh, it’s too bad I wasn’t invited too,” Lady Candace said. “I love weddings!”

“Well, perhaps it’s all for the best,” I said, secretly thinking it was *surely* for the best that I wouldn’t have to figure out how to conceal the intimate encounter from her—or else to accompany her back to Amabolux, and defer the encounter until an un-

known future time. "I'll be sure to tell you all about the wedding when I get back, and take some pictures of it on my control band too."

Lady Candace and Lady Alice saw me off at the station, though it was very early in the morning, barely daybreak, and chilly enough that I really needed the cloak I was wearing. I waved at them through the window when the train began to move, and then I breathed a deep sigh—of what? Surely it was sadness, at least in part, at leaving Lady Candace and her family, even though I was to return soon. Still, it was a sigh of relief too, for I would soon be fulfilling my promise to Winston—and I would be astoundingly glad to fulfill it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Several hours later, wearing the many-colored New Palanese maiden's dress that Lady Susanna had given me, I emerged from the train at High Anandapuram. Winston, dressed all in white in the traditional Utopian manner, was at the underground station to greet me. His dark eyes, his strong hands, his full lips, his eager tongue, his bulging trousers pressing against me through my skirt, all greeted me most warmly.

He escorted me up to the ground and into the Temple of Endless Light, beneath the dome of the Lord's Mansion, where the wedding was to take place. The temple was circular, with curved benches around an open space in the middle, directly beneath the dome. Musicians were singing and playing Indian-sounding music, with strange foreign words, as the wedding guests assembled.

The music grew louder and more joyous as the family of the bride, led by Lord Mahayananda and a lady who appeared to be his wife, entered from one side of the temple and slowly advanced toward the center. On the opposite side of the temple another

family, evidently that of the groom, progressed equally slowly toward the center. When the families met, each family divided into two halves to allow the bride and groom to pass through and meet. The bride, Lady Susanna, now wore a white Utopian married lady's dress; the groom, whose name I did not yet know, wore a white tunic and matching trousers, just like the ones Winston wore, except that Winston's were larger. Still progressing slowly, they met at last, and held each other at arm's length with both hands.

"Fellow immortals," Lord Mahayananda then said in a resounding voice when the music had stopped, "we are gathered to see the beginning of a life together that, we trust, will have no end. Joy and sorrow will come and go, but this life together will endure, and every act of kindness exchanged in this life will bear fruit in the realm of endless light. Let this life begin at once, if now both halves of this new life are fully ready to unite. Lady Susanna Mahayananda, are you now fully ready to unite in this new life with Sir George Dharmabuma?"

"I am," said Lady Susanna, smiling brilliantly at her new husband.

"Sir George Dharmabuma, are you now fully ready to unite in this new life with Lady Susanna Mahayananda?"

"I am," said the tall, slender groom, gazing at Lady Susanna with what seemed quite like adoration.

"And is the family of Lady Susanna fully ready to join with the family of Sir George, to help this new life flourish without end? Let me be the first to say, 'We are!'"

"We are!" echoed the other members of the Mahayananda family.

“Is the family of Sir George fully ready to join with the family of Lady Susanna, to help this new life flourish without end?”

“We are!” the Dharmabuma family rejoined.

“Then let it be done,” said Lord Mahayananda. “Sir George and Lady Susanna, your endless union has begun.”

Sir George and Lady Susanna embraced and kissed; then, with their arms around each other, they led the combined procession of both families through an aisle perpendicular to the one in which the families had advanced and met. The music, now louder than before, seemed to express almost delirious joy at the beginning of the endless union.

\*\*\*\*\*

Like most weddings, this brief, momentous ceremony was followed by a reception. Unlike any wedding reception I had seen before, though, this one made *me* almost as much the center of attention as the bride and groom. Mahayanandas, Dharmabumas, and their friends and relations flocked around me, introducing themselves, wanting to know how I was getting along in Utopia, offering helpful advice, and even making discreet suggestions about what could be done if I happened to be in need of a husband. I didn't think it would do to tell them simply and frankly, as I had told Orson, that I wasn't the marrying kind. I merely informed them that I was still very new to Utopia, and I didn't think it was time yet to consider such a thing. I guessed I was becoming a real Utopian, in a way that Lady Candace would approve: I was starting to care about people too much to want to offend them, even by disclosing that I was a *harxaturax* with no intention of getting married at any time.

I enjoyed the reception, and I did get at least a little time to talk with Lord Mahayananda and Lady Susanna before the dancing started. When Sir George and Lady Susanna started to lead a lively, vigorous dance, Winston discreetly notified me that it was time to descend to the station and wait for the train that would take us back to Fonsorgonot, and to the Grand Pyramid.

I complied at once. I enjoyed the company of the people at the reception, but they were not the incredibly manly man with whom I was going to have an intimate encounter this very night.

\*\*\*\*\*

“I’ve never seen a wedding like that before,” I said to Winston as we rode on the train toward Fonsorgonot. “Why do they move so slowly toward the middle of the temple?”

“I think,” Winston said, “it’s to show that the bride and groom are not just being carried away by their urges. First and foremost, they’re carrying out a fully intelligent decision to come together for the continuation of life and the enlargement of their families. Only after that do they allow themselves to get carried away by the urges.”

He smiled at me. “It makes a certain amount of sense, if those are among your goals in life. They’re not among mine. My supreme goal is to attain ecstatic union, above all with *harxaturai*, but also with real females who’ve undergone the Norm.”

“Uh—what’s the Norm?” I asked.

Winston gave a little laugh. “It’s a sort of surgery that females get in the Grand Pyramid,” he said. “The Full name is the Intimacy Normalization Procedure. It turns a female into the equivalent of a *harxaturax* who has received the Full Treatment—except that it

does *not* give her a massive clitoris capable of ejaculating!” Now he gave a big, loud laugh.

“So, for her, there’s no enlargement of family or continuation of life beyond her own?” I asked, though the answer seemed fairly obvious.

“Exactly. Many females, I regret to say, are reluctant to get it for exactly that reason.”

“Then, er, it can’t be reversed?”

“Oh, it *can*—but the female needs to get permission from the Normalization Systems Board in the same polity in which she underwent the Norm, which is the Grand Pyramid. As you might imagine, permission isn’t often granted.” Winston smiled. “Just one of many reasons why you should be superlatively glad you’re a *harxaturax* who has undergone the Full Treatment, rather than a real female who’s undergone the Norm. Actually, if you were ever to wish to go in for marriage with a female who had *not* undergone the Norm, and revert to the whole traditional family bit, it would still be possible, since your male organs remain fully intact.” He rolled his eyes. “But not many *harxaturai* take that route, and with good reason. It’s been estimated that the average capacity of a *harxaturax* for sexual satisfaction, when engaging in an intimate encounter with a male, is more than 10 times as great as that of an ordinary male engaging in one with a female, or indeed with anyone. Your experience, as a *harxaturax* uniting with a male such as myself, will be utterly superb and without parallel.”

Winston gazed deep into my eyes. “Utopians do not consider it decent to engage in any obvious preparation for an intimate encounter in a public place such as a train,” he said softly, glancing around at our few fellow passengers, “so I shall not do so. But please rest assured that I do wish to unite with you without delay, as soon as your medical clearance has been received.”

I could not resist, and I did not want to. Thoughts of Lady Augusta, Lady Candace, and other traditional Utopians I had met, flitted through my mind, but did not long remain. They would not need to know about this. I would return to my ordinary way of life with them after the encounter, and all would be well.

“Yes,” I whispered. “Yes, *please!* That’s exactly what I want!”

## Chapter 8

At last, after what seemed an almost endless amount of time spent in trains and stations, we arrived again at the Grand Pyramid and descended to the hospital. Tom Mikloxas, whom I had notified on my control band that I was coming for my clearance, met me at the hospital entrance.

“No obvious problems, signs of distress, abnormal bleeding, or anything of that sort?” he asked me.

“No, indeed,” I said. “I feel very good, and ready for action.”

“All right, let’s just enter an examining room and verify that you are,” he said. “Please wait here near the entrance,” he told Winston.

Winston waited; Tom Mikloxas led me to an examining room. “I’ll just need you to drop your drawers,” he said when we were in the room. I pulled up my skirt and let down my drawers.

“Now please sit up on this table and raise your knees,” he said while putting on a glove made of some rubber-like stuff. I complied, exposing my clitoris and my new vagina.

“Does this feel all right?” he asked, inserting a single gloved finger into my vagina.

“Yes, it does,” I said, trying not to imagine too vividly how it would feel if Winston were doing the same thing.

“How about this?” he asked, doing the same thing with two fingers.

“Yes, that’s all right,” I said.

“And this?” he asked, inserting three fingers at once.

“Still no problem,” I said.

“Good. Now please turn over and get on your hands and knees. I’ll need to verify that you’re all right for rear entry too.”

I did so, and he repeated the process with one, two, and then three fingers. I assured him that I was quite all right for rear entry. I wondered if Winston would want to enter me from the rear, perhaps gripping my clitoris with one hand and one of my breasts with the other. I hoped he would. I tried not to get an erection while the medical examination was proceeding, but I didn’t entirely succeed.

“Excellent,” Tom Mikloxas said. “You’re ready to go—and may the All-Encompassing be always on your side!”

\*\*\*\*\*

Winston and I left the hospital and arose in the Uplift, far up into the above-ground portion of the Grand Pyramid. “I’ve reserved a room with a view for us,” Winston said. “I think you’ll find it highly satisfactory.”

We emerged from the Uplift, walked down a hallway, and stopped at a closed room. Winston pushed buttons on his control band, and the door automatically opened, then shut behind us. He put his arm around me, and let his hand linger upon my now remarkably shapely hips.

“Thank you so much, Lady Violette,” he murmured, still standing near the door, “for your extreme readiness to undergo this superb experience.”

“Oh, and thank *you*, Sir Winston,” I responded, “for your equally extreme readiness to provide it to me!” Our lips met; our tongues delved deep into each other’s mouths; our hands caressed each other, delicately at first, then with increasing eagerness. By the time the kiss ended, my clitoris was fully erect, my drawers were starting to absorb moisture from my vagina, and I could feel Winston’s massive penis throbbing through his trousers.

With our arms around each other, we walked toward the slanting side of the room, obviously part of the side of the pyramid, made of a clear, totally transparent material that looked quite like glass. The main item of furniture in the room was a very large purple couch near the slanting side. Beyond the couch we could see the great city of Fonsorgonot, on which the sun was beginning to set.

“The view is fine, is it not?” Winston said.

“Oh, yes, very fine,” I agreed.

“It would soon be even finer,” he said with a grin, “for anyone who might happen to be looking through the side of the pyramid—but that, I fear, would be rather difficult to do.”

“Oh, dear!” I said coyly. “Just how fine would it be?”

“*This* fine, and far finer than this,” he said. We sat on the couch, facing the slanting side and the view of the city. His lips were again on mine, his tongue and mine darting into each other’s mouths, and now his hand was on my breast through my clothes. I pressed it firmly with my own.

His hand descended from my breast to reach under my skirt and caress my erect seven-inch clitoris, first through my drawers, then underneath them. I made excited little noises, growing greater as he slipped his finger into my vagina, now quite hot and moist.

“We must enter the nude,” he commanded. “Oh, yes!” I agreed. He was already stripping off my dress and my camisole. I completed the process by pulling off my drawers at top speed. Then he stood and removed his own clothes extremely fast.

“Oh, Sir Winston, you’re so manly!” I exclaimed on seeing his nude penis, which must have been at least nine inches long and was very stout as well. His bulb looked as big as a nectarine. I was glad I had specified that my vagina should accommodate a great variety of insertion sizes.

“You find my *lingam* admirable?” he asked with a smile.

“Oh, yes! Is that what you call it here?”

“Yes, that is the Palanese word for it. I believe you will soon allow my *lingam* to enter your *yonis*.”

I didn’t need him to explain what *yonis* meant. “I will!” I cried. “Please! I can’t wait!”

“You will not need to wait. Here, I will show you what to do. We will sit in the traditional

position of *yonis-lingam-ananda*, which means the bliss of uniting the *yonis* with the *lingam*.”



He sat on the couch and guided me toward him. “You will clasp me with your legs,” he said. “My legs will go between yours.” I stood with his legs between mine; he gripped my hips and pulled me gently downward. “Now sit down and kiss my *lingam* with your *yonis*,” he said.

I did, supporting myself with my hands upon his shoulders while slowly letting myself descend. I felt his big bulb touching my *yonis*’s lips, then expanding my womanly opening almost to the maximum as he entered me. My excitement was already extreme as I felt him pressing deep into me. I was afraid I would undergo orgasm too soon; I tried to hold off, but I was not sure I could succeed.

“Now clasp me with your legs,” he said, “and sit very, very still. This is how the supreme power we encounter, in this act of total intimacy, arises from the *yonis* and the *lingam* to fill us entirely, and rises to unite us with the All-Encompassing.”

I complied, breathing deeply through my mouth. I could certainly feel the supreme power in the union of Winston’s mighty *lingam* with my tight, hot, dripping *yonis*. As we sat in union and held each other tightly, I imagined I could feel the supreme power rising to engulf us fully.

“Now I must rub your breasts,” Winston said. “Put your hands on my shoulders and lean back.” I complied. Winston rubbed my breasts, exciting my big nipples more than I could have imagined. The supreme power, surely, was in my breasts as well as in my *yonis*.

“Please turn over for me, and get on your hands and knees,” Winston then said. “Now it is time for the mighty climax.”

I pushed myself up, extracting Winston’s *lingam* from my *yonis*, and promptly got on my hands and knees on the couch. Winston knelt behind me and re-

inserted his *lingam* into my *yoni*, this time from behind. I could not have imagined becoming more excited than I already was, but that did it for me. I knew I could not hold my orgasm back much longer. "Please, Sir Winston, give me the mighty climax *now!*" I begged.

He entered me fully from behind; then he reached down to press my erect clitoris down between my legs, and between his. "Oh! Please be gentle!" I pleaded, for my clitoris was so hard that it was not easy to do the job painlessly. He was gentle, but firm. "Now come all the way back here, little *lingamini*," he said, explaining to me, "It is the Palanese word for a female's little clitoris, also used for the bigger one of a *harxaturax*." My *lingamini* was already far enough down and back that Winston was squeezing it between his thighs from behind me. He reached around beneath his butt, gripped my bulb, and pulled my *lingamini* backward and upward between his thighs as far as it could go; then he gripped it with his thighs with all his might.

"Now comes the mighty climax," he said. "Give me your breasts." He reached beneath me to clasp my breasts; then he started pumping his hips hard and fast, plunging his big *lingam* into my pulsating *yoni* as far as he could, again and again. My orgasm was upon me almost at once, a far more astounding one than I had ever undergone before, since my *lingamini* was ejaculating backward between Winston's thighs while my *yoni* was clutching Winston's *lingam* in fast-moving rhythmic pulses beyond my control, and the supreme power was flooding me until I imagined I was one with the All-Encompassing indeed.

"Oh, Winston!" I moaned when my throbbing had begun to subside, though Winston was still pumping out the last drops of his semen into my *yoni*. "Oh, I could never have imagined! Thank you so terribly, terribly much!"

"It is my pleasure," Winston assured me.

We knelt together in copulation until we were perfectly still. Then Winston said, “and now it is time for the encore in the shower. We will need to be cleaned up, and I hope you will find it acceptable that I am not fully drained until I have ejaculated *twice*.”

“Oh, dear!” I said. “Well—yes, I’m sure we do need to clean up, but I’m pretty sure I’m totally drained already.”

“You will be able to assist me in any event,” he said. “Your *yoni* is well suited for multiple encounters, even if your *lingamini* may find it difficult to keep up.”

We stood up in the nude and entered the shower area adjacent to the room. This, too, was next to the slanting side, so that we could have been seen in the shower if only anyone could have looked through from outside. The shower area was easily big enough for two; Winston turned on the warm water, and we both got in.

“May I kiss your breasts?” he asked when my breasts were good and wet, after he had cleaned off his *lingam*, and I my *lingamini* and *yoni*. I was pleased to find that my *lingamini* was still excitable even after the mighty climax, and it was becoming erect again as I cleaned it off.

“Oh, please do,” I said, wanting to do my best to keep up with his desires. He clutched my shapely butt, easily lifted me up off the floor, and kissed and licked my nipples while pressing my back against the upright side of the shower enclosure. My nipples were still as excitable as ever, and still as capable of rapidly transmitting their excitement to my *lingamini* and my *yoni*. My *lingamini* was soon fully erect again, and I could feel that my *yoni* was ready for re-entry.

“And now may I enter again?” Winston asked me. “You will raise your legs and clasp me again with them?”

I raised my legs and clasped him with them, while his strong hands supported my butt. His *lingam* re-entered my *yoni* and began to plunge me, as powerfully as before, while he pressed my back hard against the shower wall and held me up off the floor. My *lingamini* was rubbing rapidly against his tummy while he was plunging me. A second mighty climax was not long in coming for both of us; I found that I still had semen for a second ejaculation, and my *yoni* was as intensely responsive to Winston's potent thrusts as it had been the first time. "Oh, Winston, yes! Yes! Yes!!!" I moaned when my second orgasm overwhelmed me, as Winston's did him.

\*\*\*\*\*

Almost as soon as we were dressed, I heard a knock at the door. Winston arose to answer it. "Lord Stark!" he exclaimed. "Please come in!" A very tall, extremely muscular man with black hair and blue eyes, looking more than a bit like certain portrayals of Superman, entered the room.

"That was astounding!" the tall man said. "Lady Violette, I am Lord Stark Brekkekkexx. Let me welcome you most warmly to the Grand Pyramid!"

"Uh—thank you very much," I said, rising to meet him. "But—may I ask, *what* was astounding?" I was afraid I knew. I did not want to know. I had thought the intimate encounter between myself and Winston was to be totally private. This man, the Lord of the Grand Pyramid, was strongly suggesting that it had not been so.

"Your intimate encounter with Sir Winston, of course," said Lord Stark. "It was very far above the ordinary. You are needed here, Lady Violette. In recent years, our programming on

Omniview has suffered from a dearth of performers who are equally capable of both intelligent inter-

viewing and intense intimacy. You have shown yourself more than capable of the intense intimacy. If you are equally superb at intelligent interviewing, a future of endless grandeur awaits you here.”

I stared at him. “Am I to understand,” I said, “that the intimate encounter between Sir Winston and myself has been *observed*?”

“Observed, and recorded in full detail,” Lord Stark said with a grin. “This room is specially equipped for that sort of thing.”

I turned to Winston. “I—uh—I suppose you—you *knew* this would occur?” I stammered.

“I must admit I did,” Winston said. “I did happen to notify Lord Stark that you were an exceptionally excitable *harxaturax* with a strong interest in an intimate encounter with me, and he asked me to have the encounter take place here. Lord Stark is an old, old friend of mine, and I readily agreed.”

I did not scream, though I felt like screaming. I was extremely surprised and equally dismayed. I had unknowingly allowed myself to be the subject of a recording that could be disseminated on Omniview anywhere, at any time, to anyone with access to a control station. This, I felt, was completely unacceptable—and yet, to be honest with myself, I had to wonder whether it was any more unacceptable to appear in the recording than it had been to engage in the acts recorded.

I wanted to go home—and my home, now, was in Amabolux. I wanted to be surrounded by traditional Utopians who would be kind to me and not wish to see me doing highly indecent things. I wanted to see Lady Candace and her family again. I did not want to follow in the footsteps of Lady Augusta, trodden when she had been quite the opposite of a priestess.

“I did not expect this,” I said, “and I must say I am not pleased by it. I have been accustomed to regard intimate encounters as strictly private.”

“I understand,” Lord Stark assured me. “It would be frightfully poor form to *disseminate* the recording without your consent, of course, and there is certainly no wish to do so. If you prefer, the recording will remain securely hidden forever in the archives of the Grand Pyramid. Is that your wish?”

“It is,” I said.

“Very well. I would simply ask that, purely for the purpose of completeness, you should proceed to interview Sir Winston. The interview will then remain securely hidden with the recording of the encounter. Sir Winston, do you wish to be interviewed by Lady Violette?”

“I would be most pleased,” Winston said, “and I would be greatly honored if Lady Violette would do me the favor of interviewing me.”

I hesitated, but I could not see what harm it would do to interview Winston. Indeed, it would be very satisfying to my curiosity to find out more about this man who had fascinated me as much as I had fascinated him. I was not quite certain that I could believe Lord Stark’s assurance of secrecy, but I decided to give him the benefit of the doubt.

“Very well,” I said. “Er—is the interview, too, to take place in this room, since it is so well equipped for recording?”

“That would be entirely suitable,” said Lord Stark. “Thank you very much, Lady Violette, for your kind co-operation.”

\*\*\*\*\*

“Good evening,” I said at the beginning of the interview. I was sitting on the purple couch next to Winston. “I am Violette Valkner, and my guest this evening is Sir Winston Rabnabana—immigration pilot, expert on speedboats, and connoisseur extraordinaire of the ways of the *harxaturax*. Sir Winston, I am most pleased to welcome you.”

“Lady Violette, my pleasure is equal to yours, at least in *that* regard,” Winston said.

“Boats and immigration,” I said, “are matters about which, I believe, there is much information available to the public in Utopia. The same may not be true of the ways of the *harxaturax*, and of those who have come to know those ways well. Sir Winston, how was it that you first came to have a special interest in the ways of the *harxaturax*?”

“I was very young,” said Winston. “I was precociously fascinated with girls, but also with boys’ erections. Stark Brekkekkexx was then King of Utopia, and Omniview was quite full of lovely, feminine-looking *harxaturai* with erections on display for all to see. How on earth could I *not* have been fascinated by beautiful girls with boys’ erections?”

This, obviously, was a rhetorical question not requiring an answer. “How did you express your fascination?” I asked.

“I had my first intimate encounter with a *harxaturax* when I was 12 years old,” he said. “My parents didn’t approve, but they knew I could and would get them punished as Nulls if they tried to stop me, so they didn’t try. After that encounter, I was unstoppable. Copulating with *harxaturai* was my supreme goal in life, and I strove for that goal with all my might.”

“I take it you often *achieved* that goal,” I said.

“Yes, very often. While still in my teens, I achieved quite a reputation as a copulor of *harxaturai*, and they flocked to become my copuletta.”

“Uh—those words are not used where I come from. The male partner in copulation, I take it, is the copulor, and the female, or else the *harxaturax*, is the copuletta?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Did you become rather expert in discerning that certain persons who appeared fully female were, in reality, *harxaturai*?”

“Very much so. I learned to discern even the subtlest signs of their dual erotic nature. In recent years, at least 95 percent of my discernments have proven to be correct.”

“Er—among the remaining 5 percent, have you ever given offense to a real female by mistakenly enquiring whether she was a *harxaturax*?”

“Most have not been offended, and some have even laughed. I can recall only one who took offense. Fortunately I was able to soothe her feelings, and I even ended up copulating with her. It turned out that she had recently undergone the Norm, and she was overly sensitive about the new equivalence between herself and a *harxaturax*, whom she irrationally regarded as somehow inferior to herself.”

“Oh!” I hesitated, wondering what I should say next. “Er—but, aside from such unusual incidents, is it not true that *harxaturai* in Utopia are respected as fully equal to anyone else?”

“It is indeed. Remarkably, it must be admitted, we have largely to thank certain renegade *harxaturai* for this, above all the well-known Lady Augusta

Euthroxas. She and some others have abandoned the true life of a *harxaturax* in favor of a withered, dying, almost lifeless way of life with no copulation. For this very reason, however, these renegades have gained full acceptance among even the most traditional of Utopians. In former times, not so many years ago, these people would have regarded a *harxaturax* as practically equivalent to a harlot. It is no longer so.”

“Well, that is very good.” I said it, and I meant it. I thought it was about time to end the interview, and I searched for a way to do so.

“It must be acknowledged, however, I take it,” I said, “that the behavior of *some* among the *harxaturai* is still rather similar to what such traditional Utopians would regard as the behavior of a harlot. Is it not so?”

“It certainly is.” Winston gazed into my eyes and put his arm around me. “Indeed, Lady Violette, I think there is reason to believe that you yourself are among those who engage in such behavior. Is it not so?”

“Oh, Sir Winston!” I exclaimed. “What are you suggesting?”

“End of interview!” Lord Stark called out. “Lady Violette, that was perfect! You are a natural-born intelligent interviewer! I beg you, please reconsider your decision, and allow the release of this interview together with the recording of your intimate encounter!”

I was still dismayed, but excited too. I had to admit to myself that I had readily gotten into the spirit of the interview, and I had enjoyed it. If not for my wish to avoid giving offense to my fellow Utopians, I thought, I might actually agree to Lord Stark’s proposal. It all came down to that—but I was not yet ready to decide, one way or the other.

“I will reconsider my decision in due time, if and when I see fit, and not if I do *not* see fit,” I told him. “I must add that, if ever I am recorded engaging in another intimate encounter, the recording must be made with my full consent in advance.”

“Most certainly,” Lord Stark said. “You are welcome to take all the time you need for reconsideration. I am confident that, after that, you will give your full consent, and you will blossom in radiant splendor as one of Omniview’s greatest performers.”

## Chapter 9

Not long after I returned to Amabolux, I received notice on my control band that a new programme was available for viewing on Omniview. The programme was called *An Immigrant’s View: The Violette Valkner Programme*. I feared at once that Lord Stark had lied: he had said the recording of my intimate encounter would not be disseminated without my consent, while knowing that it would be.

I had to know for sure. One usually did not view Omniview on a control band, I believed, because the images were too small. Still, I hoped they would be large enough that I could at least see whether the programme included only the interview, or whether it included more. Besides, the images would be far easier to conceal on my control band than on a much larger control station.

That evening I viewed the programme. Sure enough, it did not stop at the end of the interview. It showed everything: Winston uniting with me in the *yoni-lingam-ananda* position, entering me from behind, supporting me by my butt while copulating with me in the shower, and all. It had been edited to make it appear that the interview preceded the copulation, but not to excise any portion of the events.

I decided to communicate with Lord Stark about the matter in writing by way of my control band. That way, I figured, there would be less chance of my inappropriately displaying any outrage.

“My dear Lord Stark,” I wrote, hoping this was a suitably Utopian beginning, “I note with interest, but also with dismay, the public release of the new Omniview programme featuring Sir Winston and myself—without my consent. This is hardly the conduct I would expect from a Lord in Utopia, who should be worthy of the full trust and respect of the people. I must beg you to withdraw the programme from public view at once, unless and until I give my consent for its release. Sincerely, Lady Violette Vaulkner.”

Soon afterward I received Lord Stark’s response. “My very dear Lady Violette,” he wrote, “I must inform you that the most urgent public necessity has overridden my tentative undertaking to refrain from releasing the programme without your consent. You are *needed*, Lady Violette, and needed *now*. We are locked in a death-struggle for the soul of Utopia. Those who would drag us ever further into the dungeon of the past, ultimately cutting off the penis of every free man and the big clitoris of every free *harxaturax*, have gained grip. They must not be allowed to prevail. We must regain grip. You are fully one of us; that is perfectly evident from your astounding performance. You must help Utopians to see that they can never attain full satisfaction in life until they break fully free from the chains of their traditions. Most sincerely yours, Lord Stark Brekkekkexx.”

I stared. I wished I knew what to do. Lord Stark was pleading with me to fulfill my wildest dreams of fame and excitement. He was begging me to take the side of those with no religion, and I had always had no religion. Why, then, did I hesitate to take his side, giving great offense to my new friends among the traditional Utopians?

I could not decide for myself what to do. I needed good advice I could rely on. The only person I could think of asking for advice, who was neither a worshipper of Aeiouha Mithra nor a friend of those with no religion, was Lord Mahayananda. Perhaps, as he had said, some higher intelligence beyond the veil of this life, *not* to be equated with a God-man in the sun, had guided me to New Pala, and to him.

“My dear Lord Mahayananda,” I wrote to him almost at once, “I need your advice, and I hope you can give it to me. I am a *harxaturax*. I have engaged in an intimate encounter with Sir Winston Rabnabana. The encounter was recorded, without my consent, by Lord Stark Brekkekkexx. He has now released the recording on Omniview, also without my consent, together with an interview I conducted with Sir Winston. Lord Stark now wishes me to become a famous interviewer and erotic performer. I am not at all sure I wish to do so. I know my traditional Utopian friends would be greatly offended if I did. Do you think I ought to stand up against Lord Stark? If so, what can I do? Yours most sincerely, Lady Violette Vaulkner.”

Fortunately Lord Mahayananda, like Lord Stark, was ready to respond to an important message. “My dear Lady Violette,” he soon wrote back, “first I must advise you as to what you *cannot* do. You cannot require Lord Stark to retract the recording. This is universally acknowledged by all Utopians. Those who favor indecency, of course, regard themselves as having every right to produce and distribute such recordings at will. Those who *oppose* indecency believe that, by engaging in such conduct outside the privacy of marriage, one simply accepts the risk that the conduct will be surreptitiously recorded and revealed. There is a saying, among those who believe in universal justice and the soul’s immortality, that ‘everything concealed will be revealed.’ Therefore, there is thought to be no reason to suppress truthful recordings of such conduct, unless the privacy of marriage has been violated. Utopians would not acknowl-

edge a so-called 'right to privacy,' equally applicable in all situations, as a basis for suppressing such things.

"As to what you *can* do," Lord Mahayananda went on, "first and foremost, of course, you can refrain from engaging in any more such conduct, most especially with persons such as Sir Winston and Lord Stark. This may not be as easy as it sounds, especially if you have been in the habit of engaging in such conduct, but it is your best hope. Traditional Utopians, in a place such as Amabolux where you are now residing, will of course be offended if they find out about this recording—but most of them will understand that human weakness could lead a person of indecent habits to fall into such a thing on one occasion, and they will be *more* than understanding of the possibility that Lord Stark would record your performance without your consent. It would be quite different, and far more offensive, if you were to become a regular performer of such acts on Omniview, obviously *with* your consent. I hope this advice will be helpful to you."

I read it, and thought about it. It would be helpful, I thought, if only I could carry it out! It was going to require more strength of will and strength of character than I possessed, I feared, to stand up against Lord Stark in the long run and never give in to him. It had been so incredibly exciting to copulate with Sir Winston, and perhaps it would be even *more* exciting to copulate with men on Omniview if I knew and consented to the recording! Never in my life, except when my sensation below the waist was disabled during recovery from the Full Treatment, had I been able to resist the lure of such extreme excitement for long. I could hardly imagine myself resisting it *forever*.

Still, at least I would try. I was not now in the Grand Pyramid, and I did not have to go there again. I was here at home, among my traditional Utopian friends in Amabolux, and I wished to stay here. I did not know how long I would stay—but, while I stayed,

I would try to make each day a precious addition to my life.

I thought of Tina, and of the countless people in the outside world who might wish to hear the story of my new life in Utopia—of what has already happened, and of what is yet to happen in the future. I wondered if anything could be done for them, without violating Utopia's strict rules against disclosure to outsiders. Before Lord Mahayananda had too much time to turn his attention to other matters, I decided I must ask him about this as well.

"Thank you very much for your wise advice, Lord Mahayananda," I wrote. "I will try hard to follow it. I do have one more question. I know it is strictly forbidden to make unauthorized disclosures about Utopia to the outside world, but I wonder if there is any way I can let people there know about my life here *without* unauthorized disclosures. I know you can authorize transmissions to be made on the Internet from Utopia. Is there any way I can tell my story, without letting on about anything I shouldn't?"

His response was prompt, almost as if he had been thinking about this very question before I asked it. "The only way this could be done," he said, "would be to present as *fiction* what is not permitted to be presented—and, indeed, would not be believed if presented—as *fact*. You will recall that the account of Sir Thomas More, though factual, was and is almost universally regarded as fiction in the outside world; the same would surely be true of your story, if published there. If you will write your story to date, I will discreetly enquire about the possibility of publishing it as fiction in the outside world. Perhaps, for example, some publisher specializing in fiction about the ways of the *harxaturax* (though that word is not used in the outside world) would be more than happy to publish it. Please let me know when your story has been completed to the present time, and then we will see whether this can occur."

I thanked him again and decided to set to work soon on my story, but not before trying to get a good night's sleep—at home, in Amabolux, among my traditional Utopian friends who would be shocked and horrified if they found out about the new *Violette Valkner Programme*. I wished I could assure myself, and them, that there would never be more than a single episode of that programme. I could not honestly do so. I could only try—and, if I failed again, try yet again.

###