

The Dirty Dawg Collection

Romance

Celeste
Dana
Kris
Lisa
Lynn
Shannon

Older Women

Connie
Courtney
Hope

Cops & Spies

Holly
Jamie
Jill
Marjorie
Nicole

Something...Different

Eileen
Tracy
Trish

Part I
Romance

“Celeste”

*“We that are true lovers
run into strange capers.”*

-Touchstone, “As You Like It”
William Shakespeare

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The phone call took me completely by surprise. I was working in the bedroom I had converted into an office when my personal line rang. I almost never got calls, and when I did, more often than not it was a wrong number.

Lifting the receiver, I kept one eye on the computer screen in front of me and mumbled, “Hello...?”

“Brad?” In an instant, the computer screen was forgotten, and I was thrust back more than a dozen years, to a time and place far away from San Diego, to a time when my life was full of promise and wonder and love. That's the way it's always been with Celeste; just the sound of her voice can bring the memories back with a rush, filling my head and crowding my thoughts.

Celeste, as the saying goes, is the one true love of my life. For me it had been instant. The first time I'd laid eyes on her, I knew she was the woman I wanted to marry. Full of life and happiness and joy and wonder, she gave off her beauty in waves. Watching her walk across a room was a treat in and of itself. Like I said, for me, it had been instant.

For her...it hadn't been. The stark, naked truth of the matter was that Celeste was just not attracted to me. I wasn't handsome enough, sexy enough, masculine enough... whatever it is that attracts women to men, I just wasn't... enough. We became wonderfully close friends, and I fell quietly, desperately in love with her. Maybe not so quietly, though. It became apparent to Celeste what my feelings for her were, and she told me as gently as possible that she just didn't...couldn't....feel the same way about me. She took the emotional responsibility off her shoulders and thrust it squarely onto mine. It became obvious that I was once again in control of my life, that Celeste wanted nothing to do with me in...that way.

When we lived in the same city (Baltimore,), and I saw her every day, life was indeed hard for me. Because of our closeness as friends, I got a view of her life that I would have probably been better off not having. Boyfriends came and went, none of them in my eyes good enough for my sweet Celeste. Slowly, a picture of who she was and what she wanted emerged to my startled, love-struck eyes. To this day, I still love her, but Celeste was, and is...a bitch. There is no other way to put it, no nice euphemisms to use. She is demanding, controlling, and completely unreasonable in the exceptions she holds for the men in her life.

She wants the man in her life to have a good body. Yet, she complains when the man spends time in the gym to keep that body in shape for her. She claims that she wants the man to put her at the center of his life, and when they do, she bitches that they are smothering her. She wants him to be successful, yet gives them grief when the hours required at the office cut into time that would otherwise be spent with her.

I never wanted to delve into the underlying psychological reasons Celeste was this way. I just held the knowledge that if she had given me the chance she had given so many other, lesser (in my view, anyway,) men, that she would have found what she was looking for. But I never got that chance; Celeste wouldn't consider a relationship with me in that way. I was not her type. I didn't turn her on. I was not a man in her eyes.

There is no way to describe that kind of pain. Men do a lot of macho posturing about not needing women and being happy single. I can't speak for anyone else but myself...Celeste owned me heart and soul. And the fact that I couldn't be who she needed me to be nearly killed me. The mood swings that set in whenever she found a new boyfriend and proudly announced to me that they were sleeping together grew worse and worse over time. It finally became apparent that something was going to have to be done. I knew that if I was in the same city as Celeste that there was no way I could stay away. She had gotten completely and utterly under my skin. I had several choices. I could kill myself, a rather abrupt and final solution, or I could move away. I chose the latter, and announced my decision to Celeste without telling her why.

The casual way in which she received that little piece of news should have sealed it for me. She just agreed with me and mouthed empty words about missing me and hoping that I was doing what was right for me. The meal continued, and I silently fumed, knowing two things at once: I desperately wanted her to beg me to stay, and that she never would.

After my move to the West Coast, Celeste and I had kept in touch with occasional phone calls (mostly made by me in moments of terrible weakness,) letters, (also mostly written by me. I think she wrote me three times in six years,) and cards and presents. The relationship had a strong base in the shared experiences in Baltimore, but wasn't growing. Slowly, over the last six months, we'd grown apart, slowly, quietly realizing that the relationship was coming to an end.

That's why the phone call was so surprising.

"Celeste? What's up?"

"Brad...I'm coming to San Diego tomorrow. I was wondering if I could come and see you." There was something in her voice, a note I didn't recognize, that sent a chill

down my back and made the hairs on my neck stand up.

"Uh...sure. No problem. I work at home. Anytime is good."

"Fine. I'll call when I land. See you tomorrow. We.. .." She trailed off, and then finished it in a rush. "We have to talk, Brad. I'll see you tomorrow." And then she hung up. I sat, listening to a dial tone from three thousand miles away and wondered what the hell was going on.

I had a hard time returning to my work.

I was pacing in the living room when I heard the taxi stop outside my house. I looked through the curtains and felt myself frown. Celeste was standing on the curb, two suitcases at her feet, looking up at the house with what can only be described as a look of trepidation on her face.

I opened the front door and stepped out onto the porch, waving. She looked at me and smiled, and then it all flew back into my head. I had been hiding the memory and

dodging the remembrance almost since the night it had happened.

The one and only night Celeste and I had spent together as a man and woman were meant to. One month to the day before I left Baltimore to come here.

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“A memory is what is left when something happens that does not completely unhappen.”

- Edward de Bono (b. 1933)

British author

Baltimore, three years ago:

It had been a long week, and I was looking forward to having a few drinks after work at the local watering hole, a favorite place for the employees of DynaTech, the company I programmed for. I entered O'Mally's Pub and took a stool at the bar, Sam the bartender sliding a glass of tap beer in front of me without asking. He didn't look for money and I didn't offer. We would settle before I left, and I trusted him to keep an honest count of the beer I consumed.

Three silent beers later, I heard the jangle of the door and looked into the mirror to see Celeste entering the bar. She had a morose, forlorn expression on her face, and spotting me, made her way over and joined me, taking the stool to my left.

“Scotch, rocks,” she told Sam, and he vanished to grant her request. We sat in comfortable silence for a few moments, and then she started talking. Her boyfriend had broken up with her not minutes before, telling her that she was a controlling, evil bitch, and that he never wanted to see her again. Publicly, I agreed with Celeste, that he was a bastard and a jerk, and that it was his loss. Privately, I admired his backbone. Anyone who had gotten to know Celeste as well as I had knew how hard it was to get the woman out of your head.

Celeste was a brunette, hair so dark black that it was almost blue. She wore it short, just below her shoulder blades. It cascaded down and looked soft and sweet to the touch. I didn't know; I'd never touched Celeste in my life. Not even a

friendly hug or a New Years' kiss. Well, to be completely accurate, the one time I had touched her was still fresh in my mind, no matter how hard I tried to forget. Standing beside her at her desk, trying to show her how to work a new program I'd written, I leaned over and put my hand on her shoulder. I felt her stiffen, and slightly pull away, as though the feel of my skin against her repulsed and disgusted her. I quickly pulled my hand back and tried to hide the flush of shame and self-hate that filled my face. I never tried to touch her again.

Back at the bar, Celeste and I got stinking drunk over the next four hours. Beers and shots and slammers, empty glasses accumulating on the bartop. Money ran out before desire to consume more did, and I helped her to my car, taking her keys with me. I didn't want her driving, even though I was in no condition to drive myself. With typical male macho thinking, I was sure that I was able to drive better drunk than she was.

They say that the Gods protect babies, fools, drunks, and ships named "Enterprise," and I qualified on three of four counts. We made it the two miles to her house with little trouble and, thankfully, no cops. I got her upstairs to her apartment and unlocked the door. I turned to leave, and felt her hand closed around my arm.

"Where you goin'?" she slurred, smiling at me with a grin I'd never seen on her face before. "Why don't you come in and stay awhile?" I'd been over her apartment a dozen times, mostly to install things or fix stuff... I'd never been just 'invited' over, so this was promising to be a new experience. Truth be told, there were alarm bells going off inside my head about this, and I knew were it was leading. I also knew what the eventual result was going to be, but I went along anyway. I'd had enough of long lonely nights spent talking to a pillow instead of a warm body, of greeting the mornings with no one to kiss hello, of just being alone all the damn time. The secret promise in Celeste's eyes was all I needed to allow myself to be dragged into her apartment...into her web.

You can guess the rest. We had fumbling, sweaty, intense sex. The best sex of my life, for several reasons. The alcohol had lessened both of our inhibitions, so some of the things we did and said to each other have not, at least for my part, been repeated since. The best of my life because it was Celeste, the woman of my dreams, the center of my life, my reason for living, undulating and thrusting beneath me as I brought us both to the crest of pleasure several times that long drunken night.

But when the morning came, you can probably also guess what happened. A small, fervent part of me wanted her to wake up and look at me and smile and kiss me softly, aware that she had found the man of her dreams. But that, as you know, was not to be.

Her eyes opened, and she took in my form. I saw confusion cross her face, and then her eyes widened as the memories of the night before flooded her mind. And then she got this look on her face, a look that I still have trouble describing. It was something like disgust and sadness and determination all mixed together. There is no single word for all three emotions, but I knew what they added up to. I could almost predict, to the letter, what she was going to say next.

“Oh, God,” she said. “We didn’t.”

I nodded, careful not to smile. She threw an arm across her eyes, blocking out the bright rational sunlight of morning. “I can’t fucking believe it,” she said, turning away from me. I reached out a hand to touch her shoulder, to make sure, and she pulled away from me as if stung. I needed no more hints.

Standing, I dressed quickly and left. The night was never mentioned between us again. It was as if it had never happened. I never brought it up, alluded to it, and for the most part, tried to forget it. For Celeste had been a truly wonderful, exciting, generous lover, who had shown me things and done things to me that I’d only to that point read about in various men’s magazines. She had completely and utterly stolen my heart, and my soul, and to be frank, my cock, and I wanted to spend the rest of my life exploring and discovering the secrets her mind and body held.

One month later, to the day, I left Baltimore for San Diego. Three long years had passed, and I hadn’t seen Celeste in any of that time. The occasional phone call, like I said, and some cards and letters. Mostly letters from me.

Until now.

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*“Memory, the priestess,
kills the present
and offers its heart to the shrine of the
dead past.”*

- Rabindranath Tagore
Indian author, philosopher

Celeste leaned down and grabbed her suitcases, and slowly walked towards me. In the three years since I’d last seen her, several things had happened. Firstly, I wasn’t about to stoop and scrape and come running at her beck and call. She was a strong young woman; she could carry her own damn bags. Secondly, she had that look on her face, the same look she always gave me when she wanted something.

And I knew that unless it was something that didn’t have the potential to hurt me, something that I wouldn’t mind giving to a stranger on the street, she wasn’t going to get it from me.

Not this time.

And again, I was wrong. So wrong.

Celeste dropped the suitcases on my porch and was suddenly in my arms, her own arms around my neck, burying her face against me. “Brad,” she said/moaned, “It’s so good to see you.” She pulled her head back and then slowly, softly kissed me on the lips. It was a friendly, warm, brotherly kiss, and then it lengthened for a second, grew some heat, and then was dust.

“Can I come in? We need to talk, big guy.” I had said nothing to this point, and I just nodded, opening the door and pointing with my chin. If she took offense at my non-offer of help, she didn't show it. She just bent down, grabbed her suitcases and followed my lead. She dumped them at the base of the stairs and found the living room. She sat on a couch and looked around. I'd had a decorator in about two years ago, and the place looked good. I knew it, and she knew it. We were three years and as many thousands of miles away from Baltimore and those times.

I took a leather wing chair across from the couch and crossed my legs, folding my hands in my lap, looking expectantly at the woman who had once filled my life with joy. I took a fast moment to think about her as she gathered her own thoughts.

I remember what it was like having her in my life every day. How I didn't feel complete, didn't feel...whole, or human, until I'd seen her every day, talked to her, made her laugh and heard the sound that made the songbirds in the trees hang their heads in shame. How she made me feel human when the forces controlling my life conspired to make me feel less so.

And then I remembered the callous way she'd treated me, the easy ways she found to crush my spirit and trample my feelings. Celeste had a cruel streak in her, something she didn't hesitate to use when she felt trapped or cornered. She sometimes delighted in seeing people bend to her will, seeing them flush with anger or embarrassment when her venomous tongue hit the mark. She was a bitch, through and through, and I'd fallen into the ultimate vanity, thinking I could tame her.

“Brad,” she said, her face somber and direct. “I don't know quite how to say this...I...” she trailed off, I suppose looking for the right words. I sat silently, not offering any help or brooking any bullshit.

“Last year,” she started, “the company switched insurance carriers in an effort to control costs. This new company believes more in preventative medicine than waiting

for something to happen and then worrying about it. Towards that end, physicals are two dollars, drugs are like six dollars, most preventative procedures are likewise very affordable. I hadn't had a physical in about five years, so I signed up and had a complete one done.”

A sudden ball of ice appeared in my stomach, and my mind started working, getting the denial circuits warmed up. Somehow, I knew. The only reason Celeste would come three thousand miles to see me was because she...

“They found something,” Celeste confirmed, searching my face. “They have this new toy, something called an MRI. Stands for Magnetic-”

“Resonance Imaging,” I finished for her. “It can take crystal clear pictures down to the cellular level. Thousands of times better than that old Computerized Axial Tomography...”

“Yeah. And what they found is...” Shaking her head, Celeste tapped a finger against her skull. “What they call 'a mass.' I call it a tumor. About the size of a plum.”

“Where?” I asked. “Exactly where?”

"I don't know if I can remember it. Hemispheric something-or-other."

"Hemispheric Bridge?" I asked, fear dripping from every word.

"Yes," she said, and seeing the look on my face, she knew I knew.

"It's inoperable, isn't it?" Celeste nodded. "Chemotherapy? Radiation treatment?"

"Tried and failed. Both of them. My hair just finished growing back. The mass got bigger. It's now about the size of a baseball. A small baseball. And it's strike three for me, Brad. I'm out."

I sighed, all thoughts of turning her away gone from my mind. "Do you know what the rate of metasis is?"

"What's that?"

"Cancer is so horrible because it's basically uncontrolled cell growth. The cells keep dividing and growing. The rate that happens, the rate of growth of the mass...the tumor, is called the metesis rate. Do you know how fast it's growing. How...long...?"

Celeste's smile was perhaps the saddest one I'd ever seen. It spoke of dreams vanquished and hopes dashed, and made my bowels do a backflip. "I don't know the exact rate. They said no longer than six months. As I get closer to... that time...my vision will start to go, I'll get flaky, my vision will dim...all sorts of bad things are going to happen, Brad."

My hunger for knowledge and the way I chewed through reference books of any color had given me a huge base of information about cancer and cancer patients. I knew that Celeste would be lucky to last three months, let alone six months. Her life was ending, right before me, and I was powerless to do anything about it. Frustration welled up inside me, threatening to break free and run screaming around the room.

Back in Baltimore, I'd spent many a night whispering to the pillow that I'd have given 30 IQ points to be handsome, that I'd have given almost anything to be Celeste's hero. To save her from some horrible demon, just to see the look of gratitude and love on her face. Just to see her finally acknowledge that I was the man for her. And now, here, in my living room, thousands of miles and thousands of days since we'd seen each other, Celeste was telling me that the biggest, baddest demon of all was slowly wrapping his cold, smelly hands around her neck and squeezing, and all I could do is watch.

And I knew that's what she wanted me to do. Watch her die. Help her die with dignity. I knew then, with a certainty borne only of complete self-knowledge, that I was

the closest thing to a friend that Celeste had. She'd never let anyone, least of all me, get close to her, get inside her, and now, when she needed someone, she'd turned to me, hoping that there was enough residual love left inside me to do this one last thing for her.

"Wait here," I said, standing and striding from the room. I went to my office and closed the door. The office had been the biggest bedroom in the house, and it now held what I laughingly called the center of my life. The past three years had been good to me professionally. I was one of the highest paid contract programmers in the world, working on various contracts all the time. I had

nothing pressing, and about two hundred thousand dollars in the bank. I could put my life on hold, I knew, but did I want to? Did I want to spend the next ninety days with the one true love of my life, watching her slowly waste away?

“Shit!” I said, looking at my favorite picture of her and I. Taken at a company Christmas party, Celeste and I are standing next to each other, smiling at each other... If

I look at that picture hard enough and long enough, I can almost imagine us as a couple, together and happy.

There was never any question, never any debate. My mind and my heart were in total agreement. My life, my personal life, had been in some kind of holding pattern for three years. I'd dated off and on, but none of them had been pretty as Celeste or as smart as Celeste or... enough. They hadn't been enough like Celeste for me to even think about a long-term relationship. This would provide...closure. A way to say goodbye to a time and a person in my life that had held me for so long. It was horrible, sad news, and I would have gladly spent the rest of my life quietly and desperately in love with her, personally stagnant, if it would mean Celeste got to live. But I didn't get to make those decisions; the Fates did. All I had to do was live with them.

All Celeste had to do was die with them. The least I could do is let her die with some love in her heart and some dignity in her bearing.

Returning to the living room, I retook my chair and studied her silently for a moment. There was a look of hopeful want on Celeste's face, and for a single, cruel moment I considered dashing her hopes. It would be a sweet revenge, the dark side of my heart said, one that she truly deserved. But the good side of my heart won out, and I just nodded.

“I'll be with you,” I said softly. “Until the end.” Relief flooded Celeste's face as she sat back and smiled. And then she started to cry. Long, wracking sobs that tore my soul and rended my heart. I joined her on the couch, wrapping her up in my arms, rocking her gently, stroking her hair.

And this time, Celeste didn't stiffen, didn't pull away from my touch or my hug. She gripped me back, her arms surprisingly strong, as we cried together for almost an hour.

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*“The man who gets on best with women
is the one who knows best how to
get on without them.”*

-Charles Baudelaire

The next week was interesting. We got to know each other again, and I noticed something different about her. This may sound strange, but it's true. Celeste had

mostly dealt with the fact that she was dying, and in some strange way, it had freed her. The cruelty and hate and bitterness that she'd felt toward the world for all those unknown reasons had fled her, and she was once again the woman I'd originally fallen in love with.

She smiled and laughed more than I remembered, or expected, and we found a wonderful warmth and closeness still existed between us. Celeste waited three nights before joining me in my bed, and it came as a wonderful shock and surprise.

I'd put her in the guest room, not wanting to make any assumptions. But we'd been touching more, hugging more, spending time on the couch, watching old movies on TV and just stroking each other. That night, I'd kissed her neck and gently tickled her ear with my tongue, and she'd moaned and pressed herself against me. The movie ended ten minutes later, and I'd turned in, still excited by the taste of her skin and the warmth and closeness of her body.

I was almost asleep when my mind announced that there was someone else in the room. I'd long ago understood what the concept of the Second Amendment meant, and had a Baretta 92F 9mm pistol under my pillow ever since. My hand closed around the grip, and I softly took it off safety. I wasn't sure who it was, and my half-dream state, I had forgotten that Celeste was even in the house.

My hand relaxed when I heard her voice. "Are you awake?" One of the most inane questions in the world.

"Yes," I said softly, and turned to face her. The moonlight was streaming in from my skylight, casting her in a silvery puddle of warmth. She was wearing one of my button-down shirts, and apparently nothing else. Her hair was combed out and rested on her lovely shoulders. She had a haunting look on her face, like she was afraid I was going to send her away. I peeled the sheets back and patted the bed next to me, and eagerly, she joined me.

Celeste turned her back to me and snuggled up in spoon position. The years apart had put some steel into my backbone, and I didn't shy away from her, letting her feel my throbbing need pulse against her buttocks.

She laughed, a short, sweet giggle that seemed to fill the room. "My, my, " she said, "is that all for me?" I just grunted a little, hunching my hips against her.

Turning to face me, Celeste pressed her palm against my cheek and softly kissed me, letting me taste her lips for the briefest of seconds. "Make love to me, Brad. Please. Make me feel alive."

Taking my hand in hers, she slid it inside the shirt and around one of her breasts. The night we'd spent together flashed across my mind again, and I knew I didn't want a repeat of that particular morning-after.

"Are you sure?" I asked.

She frowned. "It's not catching, you know." I laughed with her at that.

"No...I know that. I was just remembering the last time we did this." Finally, the words had been spoken. Celeste frowned and then understanding flew across her features.

"I'm sorry...about the way things went that time," she said. "It was...difficult for me to get close to anyone. And you weren't...what I wanted, what I thought I needed then. But now-" I silenced her with a kiss and started exploring her body,

the body in thousands of my dreams, with my hands and mouth and lips and tongue. She was slightly sweaty and salty under my mouth, and I rejoiced in each discovery. It was like going back to your childhood home, finding all the nooks and crannies, all the hidey-spots you remember from your youth.

Slowly, we became one with the night. Our bodies joined and separated, making gentle, passionate love as the moon slowly marched across the floor. Celeste was wet and warm and welcoming, her legs caressing my side as I gave pleasure the best I knew how. We tasted and sucked and kissed and caressed as the night drew on, and when I finally spent myself inside her, we collapsed against each other, sweaty, sticky bodies adhering with the moisture of our passion.

The next morning came early for me; I'd stayed awake after Celeste and I'd pulled apart and watched her sleep. The gentle, graceful curves of her legs and buttocks amazed me, and I traced the soft, silky skin with my fingers as she lightly snored.

The sun replaced the moon, golden beams of light crawling across the floor and up the bed. When they were an inch from her face, Celeste opened her eyes and smiled at me. I waited for it.

It didn't come. She lifted her face to mine and kissed me softly, her tongue playing across my lips. I opened my mouth, and we shared a passionate greeting to this new day. One day closer to her death.

We spent the day in bed, tussling and wrestling and making slow, passionate love. Thrusting into her, supporting my weight on my arms, I looked down at her face, twisted in pleasure, her legs crossed over my back, her heels urgently encouraging me to go faster, deeper, harder, I remembered now why "Angel Falls" had been my favorite television show of the Fall 1993 season.

The actress that played Rae Dawn Snow, Chelsa Field, looked exactly like Celeste. They could have been sisters; same dark hair, same flashing eyes, same body, same whiskey-and-honey voice. I'd never put it together before, and that amazed me. Picking up speed, I emptied myself inside her just as Celeste joined me, dissolving into climax.

The days and weeks settled into a routine. Celeste let me guide her, showing her new things, trying new things out. We spent hours on the couch, watching as many old movies as I could find. She started to learn French under my expert guidance. We ate Thai food and rented a sailboat. Every memory recorded for posterity by my handy camcorder.

Once, I asked if I should contact Maryanne, Celeste's only living relative, an older sister that lived in Spokane. Celeste's expression clouded, and then she shook her head.

"She hates me," she stated. When pressed for a reason, Celeste would only shake her head and refuse to answer. I let it drop.

Most days we greeted the mornings by making love. Those interludes stretched and grew until we were spending most every day in bed until noon. Celeste was hungry and generous, asking to try new things. She wanted to please me, and this was surprising. I'd always assumed that Celeste was a selfish, demanding lover. For all I know, she had been before. But she wasn't now.

We explored our mutual fantasies together, discovering those hidden pockets of excitement that pushed buttons and made cocks hard and pussies wet. We spent long hours between each other's thighs, tasting and licking and slurping. At first, Celeste was reluctant to let me cum in her mouth, but after coaching and some time, she began greedily drinking me, savoring the taste of my ejaculate.

The day she asked me to tie her up was a banner day, to say the least. With ties and my bathrobe sash, I secured her to our bed (interesting how quickly it had come from 'my' bed to 'our' bed...) and proceeded to tease and please her for one rainy California afternoon. Celeste had climaxed repeatedly, flowing from one to another, soaking the bed and my crotch with her arousal.

After, I'd untied her, and she'd collapsed into my arms, kissing and hugging me.

"That was wonderful, Brad," she said. "I never thought that I'd be able to...trust someone enough to do that to me. That was so special. I'll never forget it...or you." Brave words for a woman two months away from her own death, I thought.

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*"It is not death, but dying,
which is terrible."*

- Henry Fielding

"He that dies pays all debts."

- Stephano, "The Tempest"

William Shakespeare

One warm afternoon we spent naked, sitting on my bed, telling each other our life stories. We gently frigged each other, not so much to arouse the other, just some friendly touching. My hands were filled with her breasts as she told me about her parents (both dead now,) and her sister (aforementioned Spokane problem,) and the boys she dated and slept with.

Before, when she told me of the men she'd taken to her bed, I'd been filled with jealousy and anger. Now, because it was me and not them in her bed, I listened as she explained why she could never find the man she was looking for.

Her waning days on this mortal coil had forced Celeste to examine who she'd become, and why. Back in Baltimore, she'd discovered that she was a selfish, controlling bitch, and that she'd pushed away the only man that had ever cared about her the way she'd wanted. The only man who had taken her shit again and again and come back for more. That realization had changed her somehow,

softened her, made her more free and accessible. And that's when she'd jumped on a plane to spend her last days with me.

As the second of the three months drew to a close, Celeste started exhibiting changes. She would enter fugue states that would last up to an hour, and when she came out of them, she had no memory of ever having been gone. Entire hours vanished for her, and she had no memory of what'd had happened while she'd been away. Her vision started to deteriorate, and after examining a medical text on the matter, I concluded that she had last then three weeks to live.

When she was lucid, Celeste and I spent as much time together as possible, making love constantly. We were hungry now, trying to cram every last fuck in before the piper had to be paid. She was constantly wet for me, cornering me in the shower or the kitchen, begging me to make love to her, to make her feel alive.

The last two weeks were the worse. The fugue states came and went with such rapidity that it was almost as if Celeste were schizophrenic. One moment we would be making urgent, hungry love, our bodies slapping together wetly as we wallowed in our pleasure, and in the next I would be making love to a lump of dead flesh that was staring at the ceiling. And then she would be back, blinking her eyes and starting to fuck me again. It played hell with my emotions, and with hers too. She could see the pain and confusion in my eyes.

With one week to go, we stopped making love. I didn't know that she was only six days away from death. It wasn't like I'd marked the days on the calendar. Celeste and I made out her will, and then I managed to get her sister's telephone number out of her, to inform her of Celeste's death... after the fact.

She spent most of the time in bed, talking with me. Talking about all the things she'd wanted to do, wanted to see, wanted to read and hear and watch and taste. I held her in my arms and told her fairy tales, related the plots to wonderful novels that I'd read, and promised her that I'd never forget her.

Celeste made me promise that I'd go on with my life after she was gone, that I'd find someone to love me as much as I loved her, someone that would treat me well, the way I deserved to be treated. I made the promise, but in the back of my mind I wondered if I could keep it. Celeste had once again become the center of my universe. We were in a little cocoon, she and I, spending those last days in my apartment, not going out, just talking and laughing and holding one another as the cool hand of death slowly approached.

Celeste died in her sleep. I woke to a bright new morning, reaching over to shake her awake. The stiffness told me all I needed to know. I kissed her face once, and got out of bed. Walking into my office, I sat down at the desk, called the funeral home, the police department and Celeste's sister. And I finally found out why Maryanne hated Celeste so much.

Celeste had seduced her husband and fucked him while Maryanne watched from the hall. Maryanne said that she was sorry that Celeste was dead, but that no, she wouldn't be able to attend the funeral. I promised to forward a copy of the will, and she thanked me and ended the call.

I buried Celeste two days later, in a cemetery six blocks from my house. For three months, I visited her grave every day, leaving flowers and poems. I spent one horrible drunk night sleeping on the mound of earth, crying out to the Gods

that would do such a thing to me, and to her.

It's been six months since Celeste died. I've got a new girlfriend now, a woman I met in church. She heard the entire story of me and Celeste one night, and held me in her arms as I cried myself to sleep. When the morning came, a little of Celeste's memory had left me, and Susan was more in my thoughts. Susan and I are growing closer every day, and the memory of Celeste is fading equally slowly. I have a feeling that Susan and I will be married someday, because she is able to understand why I will never be able to forget Celeste, and never be able to love anyone else the same again.

“Dana”

Shopping for her that Christmas had become quite a problem. She was my best friend, and in a perfect world, we'd be dating. But as anyone can tell you with a quick look around...this world ain't perfect. I lusted after Dana with the lust only the truly infatuated and completely unsatisfied can. If I were to open my personal mental dictionary and look up the word 'perfection', Dana's smiling face would be staring right back at me.

And, if you listened to her personal definition of 'perfect man,' I fit the bill completely...except for one crucial detail. She wanted someone “Funny, warm, sensitive, caring, not afraid to show his emotions...” And then, always, she would add, to my chagrin, “...oh, and sexually attractive.”

Well, if you haven't guessed by *now* in which category I'm deficient in, let's just say that I *am* funny, warm, sensitive, caring and not afraid to show his emotions. GET THE PICTURE? What I did have was an absolutely undying love for this woman, a love that was fueled by lots of late-night and early-morning fantasies. She once asked me if I fantasized about 'us,' and if so, what were my fantasies.

I told her quite honestly that I *did* have sexual fantasies about her, but in the overall scheme of things, that was only about one-tenth of the total fantasy/sex content ratio. The rest of the time, it was about dumb, romantic things like walking down the beach hand in hand, having dinner in some classy restaurant together, doing the dishes together, having people over to 'our' apartment...dumb, adolescent stuff like that, stuff I

craved with every fiber and nerve ending of my being. And I knew with the deepest, most moral and emotional certainty that if we ever *did* get together, she would be popping her head against a brick wall for taking so damn long.

I'm one of those guys who's always on the outside looking in; a little smarter than the rest of the people around me, a little funnier, a little more 'hip', in a weird, Nick-at-night kind of way. When it came to answering the questions on Jeopardy!, I had no equal. When it came to playing Trivial Pursuit, everyone wanted to be on my team. When a female friend bought a new VCR and had no idea how to program it or get cable channels, they always, invariably called me. Manual? Who needed a manual? I'd scoot down in front of it, pushing my glasses back up my nose as I instantly decoded what the problem was and fixed it. If it was electronic and had some way of interfacing with the world, I could figure it out.

It was the flesh and blood computers, the one with the two large disk drives in front and the core memory underneath that I could never reverse-engineer and decode. They spoke in a language as foreign to me as binary is to most people. I swear to God, if I heard the “Let's Just Be Friends,” speech one more time, I was going to kill something.

But Dana was different. She knew on some private mental plane that I was hopelessly in love with her, but didn't make me feel bad about it, didn't ridicule

me about it. She rejected my affections without making me feel bad, and in my own private hell, that earned her high marks. So we remained friends, good friends, the kind of friend that will call you last thing at night and first thing in the morning...just to talk. Just to hear the sound of each other's voice, the sound of each other's laughter coming over the line. We had private jokes, inside little comments that we threw back and forth like a personal, private code that only we could understand.

If it were possible to have a love affair without the sex, Dana and I did. We were closer than most boyfriends and girlfriends, and we reveled in it.

But, as with all things of this nature, there were invisible lines drawn, unspoken but understood limits that we could never cross. Or, actually, that *I* could never cross. You see, it was somehow OK for her to call me and tell me about her latest boyfriend and what a stud he was between the sheets, and how he treated her like a queen. But it was *not* ok for me to talk about the women in my life (what few there were...) because that hurt her feelings. I know, this sounds incredibly masochistic, but those were the rules, and I stood by them and tried to quell the little flutter in my heart and the twisting knot of agonizing pain in my gut I felt every time Dana started dating someone new. That's not even mentioning the times I'd call her first thing in the morning and some man's voice would answer. Those times absolutely fucking sucked.

Or the times she would regale with me tales of her sexual activity. Like the time she and one boyfriend flooded out the bathroom because of some bathtub gymnastics. Or the weekend she spent in front of a fireplace with another guy, twisting their bodies into impossible positions for hours on end.

I know.

Love's a bitch.

So here I was, Christmas shopping for the most important woman in my life, and there were still rules I had to follow: Nothing too personal. Nothing even vaguely sexual. Safe things, like sweaters and books and videos. Possibly a CD or two. But nothing personal, private...nothing that she could cherish and treasure for the rest of her life as having come from my hands and heart.

Oh, sure, I'd broken the rule once or twice. Like the time I sent her a vibrator as a joke. She told me that there was a dearth of male action twixt her sheets, and I helped her out with this glow-in-the-dark, plug-into-the-wall latex vibrator that was huge. She loved it, and we nicknamed it "Glow Worm."

I'd given her a priceless Japanese porcelain mask to hang on her bedroom wall. It'd cost me almost six hundred dollars. It was a birthday present. You know what she gave me that year?

A keychain.

In the shape of a guitar.

I don't even *play* guitar!

So, anyway, being the miserable, self-abusing asshole that I am, I was shopping for Christmas and trying to figure out what to get her. The mall had shown me everything it had, and I had one of two reactions to every possible gift:

Reaction #1 : Not personal enough.

Reaction #2 : Too personal.

I hate Christmas. What did I have to look forward to? My parents were long since dead, my sister had her own thing going with a husband and two kids and her husband's entire family. She'd made it more than clear that as long as I sent her a check every month, she'd be happy if I stayed away. My brother was off in some far-away country with the Navy SEALs, and so was not going to be celebrating Christmas this year, unless it was to stick a Bowie knife in his mouth, sneak up and slit the throat of some unsuspecting guard somewhere. Dana was spending it with her new boyfriend, Ralph.

He was ten years younger and looked like a male model, and if you could believe Dana, had this thing between his legs that would make Mr. Ed hang his head in shame. So much for *my* Christmas Eve.

Anyway, I was passing through the lingerie department when something inside me snapped. I wasn't going to be sorry for my feelings anymore. I was going to give this fucking woman a real gift, a gift from the heart. Something classy and sexy at the same time, something beautiful and precious and wonderful, just like the way I saw her.

I spoke to a salesclerk and explained what I was looking for. She smiled at me and asked Dana's size. I had all that information in my address book, under "D." I read off all of Dana's measurements, obtained by going through her closet when she was in the bathroom. (It always amazed Dana that I managed to get everything right without asking....hehe...)

She brought it out and wrapped it in front of me. It was a teddy, emerald green with black lace trimming. I'd seen it on a mannequin, and knew immediately that Dana's long curly blonde hair and sea-foam blue-green eyes would do that outfit *justice*. A little part of me was sad that I'd never get to see her in it. A couple of years ago I was planning to get her another present along those lines, and she somehow found out about it and was kidding me on the phone.

"Hey," I'd said, "I won't buy you *anything* I don't get to see you in." And that had been the end of it; she hadn't had a response to *that* statement.

But this time it was different. I asked the salesclerk for a small card, like the one you send with flowers. I thought for a moment, and then remembered a little ditty from Willy Shakespeare:

*"To me, fair friend, you never can be old
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still."*

I wrote it on the card and taped it to the outside of the box. It was three days to Christmas, and I planned to drop it off at her apartment that night. But I got paged by work, and had to go in and rewrite some system utilities, and that turned into a forty-hour programming marathon. It was Christmas Eve, about noon, when I finally emerged from my office and told me secretary that I was calling it a night.

I walked in the door to a ringing telephone.

"Hello?"

"Rick!" The voice was Dana, and she was crying.

"What's the matter, honey?"

“That bastard Ralph! He broke up with me today!” She started crying again, long wracking sobs that tugged at my heart and made me wish evil things to happen to Ralph. Things involving anthills and honey.

“I’ll be right over,” I said, and hung up. The drive to Dana’s apartment took six minutes. I walked in, as I always did when I knew she was alone, and found her on the couch, feet curled under her, crying into her hands. I went to her, sat on the couch, and gathered her shaking form into my arms, doing my wonderful best friend/Dutch uncle/good buddy routine.

She felt wonderful in my arms, like she belonged there. I was just over six feet, and Dana stood five-nine. Five-eleven in heels, so when we danced on those rare occasions, her head fit wonderfully on my shoulder. I chased those thoughts out of my head as I stroked her back.

“What happened?” I asked softly.

“He c-c-called me, and t-t-t-told me that he d-d-d-didn’t w-w-want to s-s-s-see me anym-m-m-more,” she sobbed. “He s-s-said that he m-m-met someone else!” She dissolved into another round of crying, and I let her get it out of her system. We had this routine down pat. Dana would cry, I would hold her, I would tell her what a bastard he was and that he didn’t know what he was giving up (and thus saying without saying that *I* knew what he was giving up and was ready, *anytime*, to take up the slack...but that’s part of the dynamics of the relationship...)

So we went through the script. Neither of us flubbed a line. Finally, all cried out, she asked, “What are your plans tonight?”

“I don’t have any,” I said.

“Oh, Good. I’d hate to be alone.” It sort of annoyed me that she automatically assumed that I’d spend the night with her, but there wasn’t much I could do about it now. So, we made dinner, ate it, did the dishes (just like in my fantasy,) and sat down to watch “It’s a Wonderful Life” on TBS. She loves that movie, and as usual, was in tears by the end. I must admit, I was also a little damp around the edges, and she knew it. I didn’t care if she did or not.

We sat in silence, with her head on my chest as the credits rolled, and then the screen went to commercial.

We started talking about Jimmy Stuart, and what a great actor he was, always playing sweet, warm, sensitive men.

“Now why can’t I meet someone like that?” Dana complained. “Someone kind and sweet and warm and funny and sensitive?” I’d heard this perhaps a thousand times before, and each time had kept silent. My arm was around her shoulder, and my hand reflexively closed, gripping her tightly, so great was my sudden anger.

Keeping my voice even so as not to let on, I finally said what I’d been waiting to say for as long as I can remember. “Yeah, it must be pretty tough to find someone like that. I mean, someone so funny that you can just call them on the phone whenever you’re sad and he’ll cheer you up. Someone so warm that whenever something happens to him, either good or bad, the first thing he wants to do is call you and share it with you. It’s so hard to find someone sensitive, someone who cries at the end of “Wonderful Life.” Someone so sweet that they write poetry to you for your birthday.” I had done all of those things, and I knew

she knew it. Sarcastically, I added, “Yeah...must be *real* tough finding someone like that.”

She didn't say a word. I dropped my hand from her shoulder and walked into the kitchen to get another beer. I was disgusted with myself for finally saying it...at ten to midnight on Christmas Eve.

“Oh!” Dana said, sitting up. “Your present! I almost forgot!” She ran into her bedroom and returned with a box. It had polka-dotted wrapping paper and looked like a huge dice. (die?) I took it and opened it carefully, smiling at her.

I pulled out a coffee mug. It said “Bestest Best Friend” on it. I exclaimed that it was *just* what I needed, and that I loved her for the sentiment. I kissed her on the cheek and she smiled at me with shiny eyes. I told her I'd be right back, and retrieved my present from my car.

Suddenly, I was scared. She was going to freak. I knew it.

I handed her the box and watched carefully as she opened it, ready with an excuse or an explanation as soon as she saw it and went ballistic.

Amazingly enough, that didn't happen. She read the card and smiled at me. (I'm sure that I'd have to explain it to her later...she was never a Shakespeare fan...) Then she folded back the tissue paper and saw what it was. Squealing, she lifted it by the straps and held it in front of her.

“It's gorgeous,” she breathed. “And my favorite color!” (Actually, her favorite color is *forest* green, not emerald green, but I wasn't going to correct her at *this* point.) She suddenly leaned over and kissed me straight on the lips.

Let me make something clear at this point. The entirety of our physical contact over the past six years had been two wonderful hugs, some slow dancing at a mutual friend's wedding, several kisses on cheeks here and there...and this kiss.

It was over in an instant, but it was an instant that would be burned into my mind forever.

She jumped up and ran into her bedroom, slamming the door behind her. I knew that she was trying it on, and I wondered if she remembered what I'd said about giving her sexy clothing. I turned my attention to the TV and tried hard not to imagine Dana stripping her clothes off to try this new present on. I flipped around and found some choir singing “Joy To The World” on cable and watched the sopranos reaching for those high notes. My mind began to drift and fantasize, and in my dream I imagined us married, on Christmas morning, watching our children opening presents and giggling, me standing behind Dana, my arms around her waist, the both of us in comfortable, fuzzy bathrobes as we watched our prodigy open their gifts. I got lost in that comfortable fantasy, turning it over and over, looking at it from different angles, the way a film director might, looking for the best shot.

And then, as always, that sad little tug at my heart as the fantasy machine ran out of steam and told me that it would never be, that I was chasing rainbows again, that I should be happy with things the way they stood, and that I should find someone to love, someone that would love me as much as I loved Dana.

The idea that there might actually *be* someone like that was, of course, ludicrous.

Snorting to myself, I changed the channel to HBO. "Ghost" was playing, and I watched Demi Moore and Patrick whathisname make slow love after smearing clay over each other. That closeness, that physical intimacy that was made so much better by the already-established emotional intimacy made me teary eyed. And as always, when I watched two characters in love kiss on screen, I felt like I was having a heart attack. This little pain starts in the middle of my chest, about heart-high, and then makes a sharp left and descends...and then slowly fades away. I'm not sure what that is, but I feel it. The most intense I ever felt it was when I saw Dana kissing her boyfriend in the mall. She didn't see me, didn't know I was there, and I watched them osculate hungrily, tongues meeting to play on that silken field, and I wanted to kill that man with my bare hands. I heard the door open behind me, and I noticed the clock on the VCR. It was 12:30am...Christmas Morning. Dana had been in her bedroom for forty minutes. I wondered if she'd brought Glow Worm out to play.

"Ghost is on," I said, without looking. I knew that it was one of her favorite movies. There was no response, and I detected that she was standing in the doorway to her bedroom. Curious, I looked over my shoulder and felt my heart seize and the breath lock in my chest.

Dana was standing in the doorway, leaning against one arm held above her head, all her weight on one leg, the other bent slightly and held forward of the other...a model's pose. And she was modeling my teddy.

"Like it?" she said. Her voice was a husky, deep-throated whisper. I was speechless. I nodded softly. "I remembered what you said a few years ago...about not giving me anything you couldn't see me in. And then I remembered what I said tonight about looking for a nice guy. And then I finally listened to what you had to say, Rick. I really heard you this time."

Still speechless, all I did was nod.

"C'mere," she said, softer still. I stared at her, my mouth dropping open. Surely, she couldn't mean....could she? My question and prayers were both answered when she crooked her finger at me.

On shaking legs I stood and walked to her. She dropped the arm that had been on the jamb and let it fall on my shoulder. She curled her fingers, and she was suddenly scratching the back of my neck lazily, as one might scratch a cat behind the ears. Believe me, if I could have, I would have purred. Her touch on my skin, this first electrical, sexual touch sent bolts of passion shooting through my body. I wanted so desperately to feel and smell and taste every inch of her that I shook with desire.

Dana stepped in and molded her body against mine. I could feel the dual pressure of her breasts against my chest and the hot, burning pressure of her vulva against my abdomen. She levered my neck, bringing my face to hers, closer...closer.

And then we kissed. Really kissed, for the first time. Her lips were soft and hot and slightly moist, just as I'd always imagined them. It was a soft, friendly kiss at first, scared and slightly tentative. As the passion grew to overtake us, the pressure increased in little leaps and bounds until we were kissing hungrily, trying to consume each other through our mouths. My arms went around her, crushing

her body against mine. Six years of accumulated passion and denial welled out of my body, transmitted to hers through the kiss. She could feel my need, my hunger for her, for every soft, sweet, tender inch of her, and she responded, grasping my shoulders with her hands, pulling me closer. As Groucho once said, "If I were any closer, I'd be behind you!"

And suddenly, it was clear. As clear as a mountain lake on a cool spring morning. Still kissing her, I bent and swept her legs into the crook of my arm and carried her into the bedroom. The only light on was the bedside table lamp, and it had a red handkerchief draped over it, giving the room an eerie, ethereal glow. Gently, like she was made of porcelain, I laid her on the bed and stood above her, admiring.

Dana's hands were by her side, and she slowly trailed them up, over her ribs, shoulders, and then into her hair. She lifted it away from the pillow, arranging it beside and behind her, imploring me with my eyes.

"Hurry," she whispered. "Oh, please hurry."

I started to take my shirt off, a heavy flannel workshirt that I loved because it was so warm and soft. Dana shot to her knees and slowly made her way to the edge of the bed.

"Let me," she said. Locking her gaze with mine, she undid the first button and spread the shirt, kissing the part of my chest that was suddenly visible. Her kisses were light and kittenish. Slowly, she unbuttoned the entire shirt, exploring the muscles and skin she found, slowly and gently licking each nipple until it throbbed in her mouth.

Returning her gaze to mine, she tugged the tail of the shirt out of my jeans and worked it down my arms, tossing it over her shoulder. I sat down on the bed, my back to her, and started to work my cowboy boots off. Dana wrapped her arms around my neck from behind, slowly and softly running her silk-covered breasts across my back. I could feel the twin hot, hard points of arousal digging into my back. I moaned softly, deep in my throat, still trying to get my mind in gear.

The boots came off with a little tugging, and then my socks followed. I could feel the tension in my groin, a hot, bulging hardness, a staff of pure passion and hunger, all emotional and physical appetite that would not be denied any more.

Standing, I turned to her and slowly unbuckled my belt. Dana sat back on her haunches, sexily biting her lower lip, her eyes focused on my hands as I worked. The belt opened, then the button, and the fly. I don't wear underwear, and the hot, hard tip of my staff peeked out.

"Ooooh!" Dana said, her features melting into an expression of pure desire. I shrugged my hips and the jeans fell straight to my ankles. I stepped out of them, and she could finally see me, all of me, presented for her inspection and approval.

She smiled, and I suddenly felt proud that I could display my hunger. Dana reached out a tentative hand and grasped me softly. Her hand was almost unable to enclose my girth, so aroused was I. She began a gentle stroking motion, sending electric shocks up and down my spine.

"I had no idea," she whispered. "No idea at all!" Then with a giggle, she said, "Is that *all* for me?"

“All for you, always and forever,” I whispered. With shining eyes she looked up at me, and then leapt from the bed like a jungle cat, wrapping her arms around my neck and dragging me back to the bed, crushing herself with my weight. I tried to shift myself off of her so as not to crush her, but she held on.

“I want to feel you against me,” she said in between kisses. I settled on her body, running my hands through her hair, returning her kisses with all the passion I felt. We stayed that way for a long time, eagerly devouring each other's mouths, lightly rubbing against each other, my erection lightly teasing her silken mound.

Slowly, I began to expand the scope of the operation. Kissing Dana's neck, I removed the shoulder straps and moved to the skin there, lightly, dryly kissing her, taking my time. A little voice in the back of my head was patiently lecturing that this might be my one and only chance with the woman of my dreams and fantasies, and I was going to do it right. I had always professed to getting my own greatest satisfaction from my partner's satisfaction; it was now time to put rhetoric into practice.

I worked her body softly, always touching, always stroking, taking my time to taste every single inch of her, never rushing, never hurrying. I spent a good ten minutes on her shoulders, neck and face before removing the silk cups that surrounded her soft, snowy peaks.

When I finally revealed her breasts, I noticed that the nubs were already hot and tight with arousal. Her taste was sublime, better than the ultimate sorbet; I worked each orb slowly, gently, patiently working towards the ultimate conclusion. My hands were busy, stroking here, lightly touching there, always gently exploring, like a blind man might.

She began to writhe beneath me, the combination of my touches gathering momentum in her center, drawing her ever closer to the inevitable. I could feel her moist heat underneath my hand, and I gently rubbed her pleasure center, looking for the right mixture of pressure and motion. Her hands clutched my shoulders and she gently rode my probing digits through a wave of climax, sobbing softly so great was her pleasure.

Returning to the land of the living, Dana attacked my mouth, kissing me with an animal desire that I didn't know she had, but always suspected she possessed. I removed the teddy, and we were finally together, naked, bodies touching in the soft red light of her bedroom, staring into each other's eyes as my hands gently touched her chest and legs and her hands stroked my buttocks and back. There was a long moment where we did nothing but stare at each other, each thinking silent, private thoughts.

I have never felt closer to another human being than I did to her at that moment. Her skin was warm and soft and smelled slightly of lilacs. Under that, at a more primal, pheromonal level was the scent of her arousal. It filled my nostrils and made the thoughts in my head turn from the soft, loving encounter I had planned (?) to more animalistic, passionate “taking”...dismissing those thoughts from my head, I slowly lowered my head and kissed Dana again, savoring the taste of her mouth as our tongues gently entwined.

Two hands pushing against my chest filled my head and heart with sudden panic. Looking at Dana's face, I did not see reproach or anger, only passion. She wanted me to turn over, not leave. Heaving a mental sigh, I did as she wished, and then underwent the staggering pleasure of having her repeat to me what I had done to her only moments ago, a gentle touching and feeling of my entire body, centering around my pleasure centers for instants at a time, only to move on to less...dangerous place, lest I spend too quickly and break this most magical of spells.

She was kissing my knees, and then the inside of my thighs as she approached the towering monument of my manhood. It twitched, trying to both encourage and repel her slow, feline attack. And then her mouth was around me, enveloping the head, bathing my most sensitive skin with hot, moist saliva. I struggled, trying to think of anything but the incredible pleasure I was feeling. I thought of calm lakes and still ponds, sunsets over a gently crashing ocean. I thought of horseback riding across a grassy field, the sun at my back, the scent of wildflowers-

And then it was too late. With a lunge and a staggering gasp, I spent, casting my seed upon her. Dana did not let up, but redoubled her efforts, intense on retaining as much of my essence as possible, wanting so much to keep this gift I had offered her. In my dealings with her in the past, I knew that this had been a sticking point with a previous lover, her inability or lack of desire to fulfill to completion this most intimate of kisses, and I was warmly touched by her efforts to satisfy me in this way.

Finished, she crawled up my body and settled into my arms. Knowing that it would both surprise and amuse her, I kissed her mouth, tasting the brine of her most recent activities in my own mouth; if asked previous to that moment, I probably would have denied any desire to do this, but with Dana it was an intimate, special moment that sealed the passion between us better than any mere words ever could have.

She was tentative at first, unsure that I knew what I was doing; as she realized that I not only knew, but welcomed it, the kiss intensified and we shared the remnants of my generous liquid. Rolling over on the bed, I returned to tasting her body, eager to give her the same pleasure that she had given me. I worked my way down her torso, stopping to French tickle her navel, listening to the responding giggle and thinking that the songbirds in the trees would be jealous could they hear Dana's laugh, and then continued on to her legs, all the way down to her petite feet, taking each toe in my mouth and sucking gently, rubbing and touching seemingly everywhere at once.

Returning northward again, I slowed as I approached her center, wanting to draw out the agonizing tease, wanting her to be shuddering with need and desire minutes before I arrived.

And then I had a sudden thought. I knew something about her that no one else did. Years ago, scant months before we first met, there had been another man in her life, a so-called friend that had taken advantage of my Dana one night, a night spent with too much liquor and not enough common sense, until she was in no position to refuse his advances, until he took from her that which should always be given. My outrage and murderous impulses towards this man were only

compounded the night Dana tearfully admitted that not only had he committed that atrocity against her body and soul, but he had left something with her, something that would always be with her, a little horrid something that would appear in times of stress and linger for days. We called it "The 'H'" between us, and there was always an understanding that it made no difference to me one way the other, and it was about to be proven in the most intimate way there was.

I'm sure she expected me to swerve, lest it be the wrong moment. I knew that if she knew, she would tell me so that we would take the proper precautions, so I continued ever upward. I was willing to take the chance, and not stop and spoil the mood by asking. I wanted my absolute disregard of personal issues to be another gift to her, another way of telling Dana that I loved her no matter what...forever and always.

And then I was upon her, tasting her arousal and excitement, following it up by rubbing her pleasure center with my nose, gently, like a kitten might bump noses with you. Dana's hips responded like a young colt's driving herself into my mouth again and again as I tried to keep her still so I could concentrate on giving pleasure. Her slickness aroused me to no end, and I tried to capture and taste as much as I could, knowing and believing that it was ambrosia. Her hands were in my hair, nails scratching my scalp. Little feral moans, animal sounds really, started emanating from deep within her body, and I rode her slick "V" through two monumental climaxes, grinning to myself and feeling myself grow closer still.

Finally, I separated from her vulva and made my way still northward, again sharing a kiss with her. She sucked hungrily at my mouth, eager for her own taste, her own scent. We stayed that way for several long moments, enjoying the glow of pleasure and satisfaction between us.

A hand reached down below my waist and gently circled me. "My, my," Dana said. "Is this all for me? And so soon?"

"Always and forever," I whispered again. Dana smiled at me and tugged at my waist, pulling over on top of her. I felt myself nudging at her entrance, and then I was penetrating her, filling her with me. She was mercurially warm for me, a silken vise coated in slick, hot honey that covered every inch of my passion and bathed it with hers. We began to move together, gently at first, softly, two friends exploring the dimensions and limits of passion together, trying to find a rhythm, a pace that we could call our own and dissolve into, losing our separate identities and becoming a spiritual 'one.'

Slowly, in stages, our passion increased until we were rutting like animals, sweat pouring between us, our skin sticking on each stroke. Our breathing intensified, and we moved closer and closer to the ultimate, mutual release point. My view was filled with the sight of Dana's face, her eyes closed in enjoyment, concentration and passion, sexily biting her lower lip, her upper lip covered with a fine sheen of perspiration, her incredibly soft and firm breasts jiggling with each stroke, her soft, guttural moans of enjoyment filling my ears. I could feel my own impending release arriving, and I waited for her, exercising a control I wasn't aware I possessed, until I felt her clutch at me, inside, drawing my semen from me, into her, until we completed...together, collapsing against each other as the

waves of release and passion washed over us, drowning us both in their unstoppable waves.

Slowly, our breathing returned to normal as we held each other and talked and laughed quietly.

"My God!" she enthused, smiling like a woman who had just discovered a very delicious secret. "I had no idea, Rick!"

"I did," I said seriously, a half-smile on my face. "I always knew it would be like this...between us."

A little frown crossed her face. "Really? How?"

I shook my head, eyebrows raised. "I don't know 'how' I know...I just did. I've been thinking about this moment for six years."

"Since when?!"

"The day we met. I looked up at you, and I knew at that moment that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with you." She opened her mouth to respond to *that*, and I silenced her with a finger across her lips. "That's not what I meant, Dana. Even if nothing else ever happens, it will be worth it, because I have this perfect pristine moment, holding you in my arms after we made love. I've wanted nothing but that for the longest time, just the chance to show you what we can be like together. Let's just leave it like this for now, honey. I'm not expecting anything from you. I just want to spend tonight in your arms, holding you, feeling you next to me. As far as *tonight* goes, I don't want to let you go. When the bright, rational sunlight of morning is filling this bedroom, we can discuss all the other issues. But for tonight...just let me hold you."

She dissolved into my arms, sobbing either with happiness at this newfound joy, or sadness because she suspected it was only for tonight.

I didn't know which, but you know what? As we slowly, softly fell asleep that Christmas Eve, I didn't care. I knew that I had given her something only one person on the Earth could give her; I'd given my all to her, given of myself to her, and she had taken it gratefully, with love and warmth and tenderness. Whatever arctic winds waited in the wings for tomorrow, ready to blow what we had out to sea, I knew I would be happy and content.

We fell asleep in each other's arms. I woke first, almost half an hour before Dana did. I spent the time watching her sleep, the sun cutting in from the window, split into prison-bar shadows by the blinds, perpendicular to her body. Dana was on her stomach, her face towards me, her hair a glorious mane of disarray on the pillow. I could see the flattened weight of her breasts against the mattress, and the gentle sloping curve of her rump. The sheets were down below her waist, low enough so I could only see the beginning of the cleft of her behind. Breathing slowly, evenly, her face the innocent mask of an angel, I toyed with her hair and brushed it away from her face, content to just look at her as she slept. In my fantasies, I always used this special time to whisper sweet nothings to her, to tell her sleeping form how much I loved and adored her, how I would never, ever leave her, things like that.

"Dana," I said softly so as not to wake her, "I'm not sure what today is going to bring for us, let alone tomorrow. But I want you to know...that I always loved you, and I will always love you. You're the first person I want to talk to every

morning, and the last person I want to talk to at night. I want to share every aspect of my life with you. I know that it may not be what you want...but I want you to know that it's here for you if you want it. All you have to do is ask me, and I'll be yours...always and forever."

Dana opened her eyes and smiled at me, and I knew with a sudden, embarrassed certainty that she'd heard my entire spiel. Kissing me gently, she asked, "Always?"

Kissing her back, I said. "Forever."

“Kris”

It was a fine summer evening, a Friday. The sun still had two more hours of hang-around time, and the gentle breeze wafting in from the west filled the air with the scents of summer...cut grass and honeysuckle. The radar unit sitting on the dash of my patrol car showed a steady “00” as no one was using County Route 2, my assigned post for violators duty. Write tickets, they told me. Lots of them. So I sat here and waited. On most days, I could write three tickets an hour, and that kept my sergeant happy. Friday nights, though, this road was quiet, because it led further up county, in the opposite direction of the city where everyone wanted to go. I used the time to daydream and think and just kind of take a break from a hectic week. Summer Fridays were the best, because of the weather (I despise cold weather!) and the general laid-back attitude of everyone.

The green blur that went by my windshield shocked me back to reality. I was already turning the key before I checked the radar readout. I didn’t need it to tell me that the driver was speeding, but I was slightly curious as to how much this particular driver was going to be ‘donating’ to the county coffers. Seventy-eight in a forty. A least a hundred bucks, I thought, gunning the motor and hitting the switches for the lights and sirens. My roof rack came alive, as did my high-beams, alternating with the red grille lights. The car sped up, and I dropped the hammer. I was reaching for the radio microphone when something stayed my hand. Normally, procedure requires that I call for backup when a pursuit situation arises, but something told me not to. The driver wasn’t running...really, just speeding up a little.

County Route Two is a windy, twisty little road that stretched for another six miles, and I kept right on the car’s tail, taking every turn like Mario Andretti. I was just enjoying the ride, not worrying too much, because something told me the driver was just...playing. The car wasn’t making a serious attempt to evade me, it just wasn’t pulling over. The other car, I noted, was a Porsche Cabriolet Turbo, and could have easily left me in its dust.

The county line was fast approaching, and at our current speed, we would close the last half mile in under fifteen seconds. With three seconds to spare, my speeder hit the brakes, her rear lights filling my windshield as the car pulled to the side of the road.

Again, I would normally have run the plate through the NCIC from the terminal in my patrol car, but that small voice told me that I wouldn’t need to, that the car would come back clean. I wasn’t sure what was going on here, but I knew that it wasn’t what it had appeared to be at first glance.

I wasn’t stupid, though. I put the take down lights on, flooding the car in front of me with several hundred thousand watts of aircraft-grade lights. I worked the thumbbreak of my holster so that my Baretta 92F would be within easy grasp, should things turn ugly. I approached the car slowly, watching for any sudden movement.

“You were going at quite a clip,” I said, loudly.

And then, from the driver’s side window, came a voice from my past. “Hey, copper! You’ll never take me alive!” And then came the giggle.

And then came the memories.

Kris...Kris was the girl of my past, of my youth. She came into my life at that time between boyhood and manhood when I was still discovering who I was going to be in this world. I was 13 when Kris moved in next door to me. She was 12, the daughter of an Army officer assigned to Fort Stern.

Even at 13, I knew that when it came to the fairer sex, I was not what was considered boyfriend material. Some of my friends had begun to go on dates, attend makeout parties...all those wonderful rituals of growing up that, for some reason, I had been excluded from. The girls my age all dated boys a year or two older. The girl I could date, as it were, were a year or two younger...and none of them wanted to date me, or go into the closet to play Post Office with me, and my invitations to the neighborhood Spin the Bottle games got lost in the mail, I guess.

So when Kris moved in next door, you could say that I was a little bit excited. Our houses were set off from the rest at the end of a winding, grassy cul-de-sac, and I knew that I might have a day or two to get into her good graces before she explored beyond the boundaries of our two properties, before the other girls in the area poisoned her mind.

Looking back on those days, I remember thinking that it was a lost cause anyway. The first time I saw Kris I knew that I didn’t stand any kind of a chance with her anyway. She was too beautiful, too perfect to be satisfied with a pogue like me. She was so...sweet and innocent and perfect. Tall for a girl, even at 12, standing five and a half feet and seemingly growing more every day. Long blonde hair that she wore in a bobbing ponytail that just added to her almost magical allure, wide-set blue eyes the color of the ocean on a stormy day. Her voice was slightly husky, almost man-like. Her laughter was a song that the birds in the trees themselves envied. I know it sounds like I idolized her, and to a certain degree, that is true.

Kris was more of a tomboy than I realized at first. She liked wearing jeans and sneakers and t-shirts. She kept her hair pinned up under a baseball cap that she always wore. One of the great pleasures of my young life was watching her take that cap off and shaking her long, golden hair out. She always looked like a goddess to me when she did that, some magical metamorphosis taking place that turned her from a dusty, baseball-playing, tree-climbing, insect-catching, frog-racing tomboy into a vision of young beauty and innocent perfection.

Kris showed up two weeks into the summer, and to my complete surprise, we became fast friends. Best friends, as a matter of fact. The Orioles were our favorite team, and by mutual, unspoken agreement, we would listen to every game together, either on the radio, or watching the night games at one or the other’s house. I saved my allowance and bought her a fitted Orioles cap as a present. It became her pride and joy, and she wore it everywhere. Seeing her in

that cap, and seeing the fat lip she gave Bobby Chambers when he stole it off her head made me feel proud.

Kris and I spent that first magical summer together, doing all the things kids do together. Climbing trees, taking long walks in the woods, spending entire afternoons flat on our backs, staring at the clouds, talking about Important Things like Life and Love and The Meaning Of Everything. She had little time for Love, she told me. She thought she was ugly and fat. That was about as far from the truth as you could get and still speak English, and I didn't hesitate to tell her so. She thanked me, but I could tell by her expression that she didn't believe me.

As I got to know Kris better, I also understood a little of why she was the way she was. An only child, it was obvious to me that her father had wanted a son. The way he talked about Kris, the way he treated her, made me hate him quickly. He called her "TuffStuff," and was constantly treating her like he would a son. He once told her, in front of me no less, that she had better learn a trade, because no guy was going to want to marry her, ever. I saw the hurt and the shame in Kris's eye, and I wanted to punch and kick and bite her father until he apologized. The fact that her father was a US Army Ranger, a Major in command of an entire Battalion, made me reconsider my actions. The man was huge; he could have snapped me in two with his little fingers.

The summer ended, and school began. One of the first social events of the year was the Sadie Hawkins turnaround dance. When I saw the posters going up in the hallway, I got a little depressed and morose. I knew there weren't going to be any girls shyly coming up to me, wondering if I would say yes. That's just the way my existence was. When the girls went down the mental lists as to who they would ask, my name just never came up. Kris and I were still close, but she had found some other friends, and we didn't spend as much time together as we'd used to. It was hard, but I took great pains not to let her know how much I missed her. She needed to have other friends, I felt, other, more popular friends, lest her entire school social life be ruined by her association with me, the outcast.

So you can imagine my surprise when Kris asked me to go to the dance with her. I accepted immediately, and instantly began wondering what was behind the invitation. Kris explained, haltingly, that she wanted to go to the dance badly, but didn't know any boys well enough to ask, and was sure that anyone she did ask would have turned her down. So I kind of won by default. She was glad, she said, that she was going with 'a friend,' and that she would be able to meet people there.

The phrase 'a friend' rang in my head like the death knell of my social life. I understood what the parameters of the evening and of our relationship were, and just gave silent thanks that I was going with someone. It was at that point that I knew I was in love with Kris. Quietly, desperately...but still in love.

The night of the dance will stand out in my memory for the rest of my life. I put on my best clothes, what might have been called "Sunday Clothes" had my family been religious. I went over to Kris's house to pick her up, and knocked on the door.

There was a wait of perhaps thirty seconds, and then the door opened. Kris stepped quickly out and shut it behind her. I turned at the sound, and felt my

breath leaving me, my throat locking. Gone were the jeans and t-shirts. Gone was the by-now dusty Orioles cap I'd given her seemingly a thousand years ago. Gone was the rubber-banded ponytail she wore to school most mornings.

Replaced, instead, by a stunningly beautiful little girl wearing a gorgeous royal blue party dress. It came down to just below her knees. Her long blonde hair had been washed and brushed, and it cascaded around her shoulders and neck like waves of hand-spun gold.

"What?" she asked, seeing my dumbfounded expression.

"You...you're beautiful!" I managed to croak out. Kris punched me in the shoulder. Hard.

"Shut up!" she said, but there was the smallest hint of a smile in her voice. "Don't say that. It's not true." I started to open my mouth to argue with her, and then thought better of it. "C'mon," she said, tugging at my arm, "Let's go." We walked to the party silently, me scuffing the soles of my shoes on the sidewalk, Kris looking off in the distance with this look of intense concentration on her face. We didn't talk, didn't say a single word to each other.

We got to the dance, and I knew that I was the luckiest guy there. None of the other girls could even hold a candle to Kris...and they knew it. Seeing the looks of jealousy and outright bitchiness Kris got from the other girls made me feel proud and excited that she was my date.

Well...that wasn't exactly true. Kris and I had arrived together, and I had every intention, at that point, of leaving with her. But as I was to discover, I wasn't her date. Not by a long shot.

The dance was held...where else? In the gym. Streamers dangled from the ceiling, and a low-grade garage band was pounding out tunes from The Eagles and Bob Seeger in one corner, drowning out most conversations. A long table filled with refreshments occupied one corner of the room. I mimed drinking with my hands and then raised my eyebrows, and Kris nodded, so I went off to get us some punch. Returning with two paper cups, I saw Kris and Billy Warner standing, talking. Kris had her back to me when I came up, and the band had just finished a song.

"I said, you look beautiful tonight!" Billy said, a little loudly. I winced, waiting for Kris to belt him, and then was both surprised and hurt by what happened next.

Kris laughed this nervous little giggle, looked down at the floor and said, "You really think so? Thank you." At that moment, I wanted the floor to open up and swallow me whole. I'd said the exact same thing to her on her porch, and gotten a punch in the arm. Billy had said it, and gotten the reaction I wanted. The smile, giggle and thank-you. And then it all became clear. What I had said didn't matter to Kris, wasn't important to her, because...because it had come from me. I guess she felt that since we were friends, it really didn't matter what I thought. She wanted me to think of her as a friend, not as a girl, so my feelings for her towards that end were...extra, unimportant.

Make no mistake. I knew that Kris didn't mean to hurt me, wouldn't have said those things for the world had she known the effect they ended up having on me. But that didn't lessen the pain one iota. That's when I began to understand what role I was going to play in the lives of all my female friends. I was always going

to be the best friend, the surrogate big brother. They would take the flattery I offered in the spirit in which they thought it was intended, that of a friend who was 'required' to say such things. On that warm fall night, that scent of sweat and moisture that seems to be in every school gym in the world filling my nostrils, the sounds of the band pulsing against my eardrums, I watched silently for almost ten minutes as Kris flirted with Billy. She laughed at his jokes and tossed her hair, and even went so far as to scuff the toe of her shoe back and forth on the floor when Billy told her she had the bluest eyes he'd ever seen.

When he asked Kris if he could call her, sometime, maybe? I closed my eyes and wished with all my heart and soul that she would tell him thanks, but no thanks. Her quick and eager acceptance made another little piece of my heart break off and float away. Billy left, smirking at me over Kris' shoulder as he walked away. She caught the expression and turned to see me there. I smiled my best smile and handed her the cup I'd brought. It was a paper Dixie-cup, and was dented from where I'd been gripping it. She took and sipped from it, her eyes finding and tracking Billy Warner across the room.

The rest of the dance passed slowly. About six different boys came up to her and asked her to dance, and she did with all of them. She and I danced, but she was always looking elsewhere, following the boys. I just watched her, entranced by her subtle and captivating beauty. And truth be told, I felt like an ass, because I knew that she would never look at me the way I was looking at her. I wasn't in Kris' future as anything but a friend, and a little part of me died that night.

But the worst was yet to come. With twenty minutes left to go before the dance ended, Kris came up to me.

"Uh...Dan, can...um..." I thought I knew what was coming, and I was right. "Billy wants to walk me home, and I was wondering if..."

I let her off easy, because at that moment I wanted to be anywhere else but there. "Sure," I said quickly. "No problem. Have fun. Call me tomorrow."

She smiled and I smiled back, and I turned on my heel and left. I walked home...alone...and knew with a certain sureness and sadness that that was the way I'd be spending most of my life anyway. As good a time as any to get used to it, I supposed. The walk home seemed to take three times as long as the walk over had.

I was in my room (which faced Kris's house) working on my tie when I heard noise through the open window. I got up and walked over and saw Kris and Billy on her front porch. They were standing in front of her door, talking quietly.

And then they fell silent, and Billy started... leaning towards Kris. I was rooted to the spot, powerless to move, watching this happen like you watch a car accident happen. You can see it coming, but you know it's too late to do anything, and it's all in slow motion. They kissed, and I wanted to scream and shout. That was my kiss, the one I'd earned. I'd been Kris's friend, I'd fallen in love with her, I knew all her secrets. I knew her favorite color was royal blue. I knew her middle name was Ethel (a name she hated,) and I knew that her father thought she was fat and ugly. I knew that her cat's name was Mr. Cheevers and that her mother liked to sing "Amazing Grace" while doing the laundry. Kris and I had a thousand

and one experiences together, an entire summer of history that this...boy couldn't begin to touch. That was my kiss, with my girl. And Billy was getting it.

They pulled apart. The kiss hadn't lasted more than a second or two, but all that had flashed across my mind in that time. Billy pulled back further, and then Kris lunged at him, kissing him back. This kiss lasted longer, and I felt the tears starting, hot, fat drops of salty water slowly filling my eyes only to spill out and run down my cheeks.

That kiss ended, and Billy turned to leave just as Kris turned to go into the house. As you can probably guess, she turned towards me, saw the light, looked up, and saw me standing there crying like a baby.

I just turned away from the window and went to bed.

Things between Kris and I...changed after that. There was a new coolness, a new distance between us. Kris had seen me, had seen the manifestation of my feelings for her with her own two eyes. As much as she was my friend, that's all she would ever be, and Kris didn't want to lead me on or encourage me. Even at that young, tender age, she understood more about the dynamics of our relationship than I did.

What I did was try and forget how much I loved Kris. I put it away, in a secret place deep inside, and worked to rebuild the friendship. Kris and Bill started dating, as much as you can date at that age. They would go for ice cream or go to an afternoon movie together, always holding hands, always staring into each other's eyes. Billy took every opportunity to kiss Kris when I was around, and it drove me quietly insane.

Kris eventually broke up with Billy, but the damn had been broken. Kris was a beautiful young woman and she had no trouble finding suitors. I had taken to watching her on her front porch with my lights turned off. Kris was always proper and virtuous, never allowing more than a peck on the cheek and a fast hug. It still hurt like hell to watch, though.

Kris and I grew further apart. She was popular now, both with the boys and the girls. She ran for Sophomore class president and won, with a lot of help from...me. I campaigned for her, put up posters, did everything her campaign manager asked me to. When she won, and made her short acceptance speech, she thanked everyone who had given time and effort on her behalf...except me. I felt my face flush with anger and embarrassment as she walked off the stage. She caught my eyes, and silently mouthed the words, "Thank you," and kept walking. That was it.

Since I was a year ahead of her, my prom came first. But Kris was dating a kid in my class at that time, and I knew she was going, too. As you can probably guess, I went stag. Kris looked beautiful in her special dress. She was 16 then, a gorgeous young woman in the full bloom of her young life. Her date, Richard, was the handsomest kid in our class, and they made a wonderful couple. I watched them slow dancing around the gym, eyes locked together, a little smile on her face.

It was late in the evening, about twenty minutes until the entire thing was over. I was staring at the streamers taped to this ring hung from the center of the ceiling

when I felt this tap on my shoulder. I looked over as Kris sat down in the empty chair next to mine.

“Dance?” she said softly. I nodded and stood. I wanted to dance with her very, very badly, but didn’t want her to know *how* badly. We moved to the floor just as an old Elvis tune started playing. “I Can’t Help Falling In Love (With You)” We danced slowly, at arms length, even as I tried to bring her closer. We stared at each other, and I felt something... break loose inside me. I was six days away from graduation, and college called. This was Kris’ way of saying goodbye, her final gift to me. Or so I thought.

The dance ended, and I leaned in and quickly kissed her on the cheek, and squeezed her hand. “Thank you,” I said sincerely, turned and left. I walked home (again,) that same walk I’d taken four years ago. I got home and trudged upstairs, thinking about college and my future, trying to forget my past and Kris. But it wasn’t to be.

In my bedroom, sitting on my bed, was the dusty, creased Orioles cap. No note, nothing. Just the cap. It looked lonely and forlorn sitting there, and I joined it, running my fingers over it, thinking back to that first summer, the seemingly endless days spent making memories, memories that were going to have to last a lifetime for me, because I knew there wouldn’t be any more.

When I came home from college and joined the local police department, Kris’ family had moved. Her father had been promoted and transferred, and Kris was...gone. A new family lived next door, an elderly couple who had retired and were spending their twilight years in the house the love of my life once lived in.

They turned Kris’ bedroom into a sewing room.

That was four years ago. I was 22 at the time, Kris was 21 and somewhere else.

It was four years later, now. I was 26, and Kris was 25, and she was in the car, laughing that same laugh.

“Hey, copper! You’ll never take me alive!”

“Kris?” I asked, my hand still on my gun. I knew it was her, but I was still careful.

“Dan!” she squealed, getting out of the car and running into my arms. Her hug was ferocious and tight, and I found myself wrapping her up in my arms, pulling her closer. She smelled wonderful, just the way I remembered from those summers almost fifteen years go.

We pulled apart, and I got my first look at her in eight years. The time had been kind to Kris. She was a beautiful young woman, mature and luscious. Her breasts were full and firm, held in a tight grasp by the black leotard top she wore, and were pressed together by the size-to-small leather vest she was wearing. Her tight, round butt was molded by the snug jeans she wore. Long, slim legs were tucked into cowboy boots. Her hair was kinky now, either naturally or by some beauty parlor magician, and it looked wonderful.

“I stopped by the station, and they told me you were out here looking for speeders, so I figured I’d let you finally catch me!” I just smiled and hugged her again.

“When do you get off?” she asked.

I told her that my tour would be up at midnight.

“Would you like to...oh, I don’t know...go out for a drink or something?”

I agreed, and she told me to meet her at Finnegan’s, a local pub. She turned to get back into her car, and then stopped, turning back to me to kiss me quickly and chastely on the lips. “It’s so good to see you again, Dan!” she enthused. Kris got in the car and was gone.

I spent the rest of my tour in a daze. Three people blew by me at over sixty miles an hour, and I let them all go. I was in too good a mood to chase anyone, let alone write any tickets.

Midnight came, and I rotated out, changing into street clothes and taking my Baretta and shield with me. Department regulations required that I have my gun and shield at all times, but I wasn’t thinking about enforcing any laws that night. My mind was filled with questions. Climbing into my PathFinder, I drove over to Finnegan’s in two minutes flat, a trip that normally took ten.

Walking in, I spotted Kris talking to two guys at the bar. Spotting me, she excused herself and walked over to greet me. Throwing her arms around my neck, she gave me a kiss that took my breath away. It was a close-mouthed kiss (no tongue!) but it still shocked me to my socks.

“God, it’s sooo good to see you!” she said, smiling up at me, her arms still around my neck. Her hands dropped to my waist, and she felt my pistol, snug in it’s inside-the-pants holster.

“So, is that a gun in your pocket-?”

“I’m just happy to see you,” I finished. “But yes, it’s a gun.” We cracked up at the stupid joke and made our way to the bar. The two guys she’d been talking to had vanished, and she didn’t even give them a parting glance. We sat and I ordered a beer.

“So,” I asked, “What are you doing in these parts?”

“Well...I finished medical school, and...I’m back.”

“Back? Back where?”

“Back here. I’ve decided to start a family practice here. I’m going to be the new town doctor. You can call me ‘Doc.’”

That news, frankly, blew me away. “Really...” I said, not sure, exactly, what this meant. Kris was apparently back in my life...but in what capacity?

“You don’t sound very excited, Dan.” There was soft reproach in her voice, and I moved quickly to control the damage.

“I just thought that I’d never see you again.”

“Didn’t you get any of my letters?”

That shocked me. “No. Not one. What letters? I never got any letters from you!”

“I...gave them to your mother to mail to you after you left for college. When I left, I mailed them to my parents, and my mother gave them to your mother...and you didn’t get any of them? Not one?”

I nodded, suddenly understanding. My mother knew how I felt about Kris, and knew how Kris, at the time, felt about me. Trying to protect me, I suppose, she hadn’t given me a single one.

"I thought you hated me," Kris said softly. "I kept apologizing in my letters for...ignoring you. For not..."

"Shh," I said, holding a finger to her lips. "Don't worry about it. I got over it. I...went on."

"So," Kris said brightly, after a minute, "What's going on in your life? Got anyone special?"

I snorted. "You know better than that."

She heard the hurt and loneliness in my voice and just let it sit there.

"Still have my hat?" she finally asked. I nodded.

"Why did you put it on my bed?" That had been bothering me for nine years.

Kris took a while to answer, sipping at her beer as she framed a reply. "Back then...on the night of the prom, I wanted you to have a fresh beginning. You were going off to college, and I was still home, in town. I wanted you to move on, Dan. I knew how you felt about me. Hell, the whole school knew! I didn't think it was fair for you to carry around all that baggage...especially since I couldn't return the feelings."

"So why'd you write me?" I challenged.

Kris sighed. "Because once you were gone...you know the old saying. You don't appreciate something until after it's gone." At that moment, I remembered another old saying. 'If you love something...let it go. If it comes back, it's yours. If it doesn't it never was.' I had let Kris go, and now she was back. Was she mine?

Kris and I spent that night catching up on nine years of each other's lives. I told her about college and being a cop in a small town. She told me of college, and medical school, and her internship. She'd graduated a year early from college, and then finished medical school in three years instead of two.

"I was looking for something. What, I didn't know. But I do now."

I left that alone for the moment. Too many explosive, volatile emotions surrounded that. Kris was leaving me openings left and right...and I was determined to be sure what she was thinking before I made my move. If she was hinting, one more day or week or month wouldn't make a difference. If she wasn't, and was just making conversation, I couldn't stand the pain and the humiliation again.

We went our separate ways that night, Kris kissing me again before she got into her car. I drove home and fell into a deep, restless sleep. I dreamt of the prom, only this time we were adults, and Kris was my date, and she was wearing that same dress, only in adult proportions, and the cowboy boots, and we danced every dance together in an empty gym, just the two of us.

I had four more four-to-midnight shifts left to go before I rotated to midnights, and three days off before I had to start midnight-to-eight shifts the following Saturday night. Those four shifts I spent thinking about Kris and I...together. She had been hinting the entire time that night at the bar, and I was trying to work up the courage to call her up and ask her out.

Finally, I did it. Wednesday night, I was in my house (the same house I'd grown up in, my parents long retired to Florida,) pacing in the living room, staring at the silent phone, letting it mock me. Nothing ventured, etc, I thought, and sat

down. Unfolding the bar napkin that Kris had scrawled her telephone number across, I dialed the seven digits with a shaking hand.

The phone was answered by a machine, and I breathed a sigh of relief. I'd already rehearsed the message I'd leave on the machine. It was easier to talk to the machine, because it couldn't say no. And the message I'd leave would give me an easy out.

"It's Dan," I said after the beep. "It's nine-thirty Wednesday, and I was wondering if you would like to have dinner with me Friday night. If you do, call me at home. Leave a message if I'm not here. If I don't hear from you... I'll understand. Talk to you--"

There was a click on the line, and then Kris, out of breath. "I heard the phone ringing when I pulled into the driveway," she gasped, "and almost broke my key off in the lock when I heard your voice. Give me a second..." She caught her breath, and I heard sitting noises in the background: the scrape of a chair against a kitchen floor, the weight of her body settling into it.

"Dan...are you asking me out on a date?" My blood turned to ice and I wanted to die. Another ten seconds, and the message would have been safely with the machine. Forty-eight hours of silence from her, and I would have realized that once again I'd made an asshole out of myself, that there was no way in hell this intelligent, sexy woman would ever want any part of a pogue-

"Dan? Are you still there?"

I sighed. "Yes. I was asking you out on a date. I'm sorry. It was just that in the bar--"

"I'd be delighted, Dan." Silence from me prompted a footnote from her. "Really. I'd be delighted. I was hoping you would ask."

"Fine," I managed. "I'll pick you up at seven."

"You don't even know where I live!" she chided.

"You forget. I'm a cop. I know everything. See you Friday." I hung up to the sound of her songlike laughter and immediately freaked. Because now I had to face something I'd been ignoring for a long, long time.

At the tender age of 26, I was still...a virgin.

Friday came, and I was nervous all day. I bought new clothes and then discarded them, tossing them into the back of my closet. I wanted to look good, but casual and unstudied, like I hadn't gone to any trouble. I settled on a light blue oxford, wash-faded jeans, and cowboy boots. I was known well enough in the town that I could tuck my Baretta into the small of my back and not worry about someone calling the cops. After all, I was the cops!

I studied myself in the mirror as I shaved for my first date with Kris. I, too, had changed since Kris saw me last. I'd lost about thirty pounds in college, and another ten or so when I joined the force. Constant workouts had gotten me in shape, as a fat, flabby cop was not effective on the streets. My face was mostly still the same, though. Average. Brown eyes, the shade of shit. A small nose, neither distinctive nor striking. I'd grown a mustache, the color the same as the mousy brown on my head.

“You’re an idiot,” I told the mirror. “She’s never going to love you...” And then I put thoughts like that out of my head and finished preparing for the date.

I drove over to Kris’ place wondering what the hell was going to happen that night. If I’d known, I might have turned around and driven right back home. Pulling into her driveway, I parked and turned the truck off, getting out and ascending the front porch stairs. Ringing the doorbell, I turned around and remembered another night I stood on a porch, waiting for Kris.

The door opened and I turned around. Kris was wearing a light blue, off-the-shoulder dress. It came down to just above her knees, and she was wearing those same cowboy boots. Her hair was in a bouncy ponytail, her face scrubbed clean and devoid of makeup. She looked perfect.

“Well? What do you think?” she asked, twirling for me.

“I’d tell you,” I started.

“But you’re afraid I’d punch you, right?” I was touched that she remembered that night as well as I. “Tell me anyway,” she said, batting her eyelashes at me.

“You look beautiful,” I said sincerely.

“You really think so? Thank you.” Wow. That was too much. It was as if I were Bobby, in the gym, at that first dance. I was blown away. It was like Kris had peeked inside my head and read the mental script that I kept of that night.

We walked to my truck, got in, and drove to Finnegans for dinner. When we walked in, every head turned and every guy was instantly jealous. I felt a little puffed up with pride, and we made our way to my regular table, a small intimate little booth in the back. She slid in next to me, her leg pressing against mine.

The waitress came over. “Hello, Dan. What can I get the law tonight, and his pretty date?”

“Cheryl?” Kris asked. Cheryl Lingstrom had been a classmate of mine, a girl who had been charitably known back then as...well, as the class slut.

“Yes...?”

“It’s me! Kris! Kris Russo!”

“Kris?” The girls squealed and hugged. “What are you doing back in town?”

“I’m setting up my medical practice here!” Kris said, sitting back down. She put her arm through mine and grabbed my hand. “And having dinner with the handsomest man in town!”

Cheryl’s eyebrows went up at that, but she didn’t say anything. She just nodded and opened her pad. “What’ll you folks have?”

We ordered, and then Cheryl left us alone. I was still blushing from Kris’ earlier comment. “So tell me about what goes on in law enforcement in this town,” she said softly, staring into my eyes. I was at a complete and utter loss of words, and was only saved by the arrival of our salads. Cheryl put them in front of us and vanished, leaving me the opportunity to feed my face. It was better than trying to make conversation with Kris. I had no idea what to say. I didn’t feel witty or charming. I didn’t want to say or do *anything* to fuck this up. She looked so beautiful, so perfect, sitting next to me.

So right.

That's what it felt like...that it was right, perfect, pre-ordained that Kris would be there with me. The years apart vanished, and it was like we were kids again, no secrets, endless summer afternoons talking about Important Things and looking at the clouds.

Cheryl was a great waitress, the entrees coming directly on the heels of the appetizers, and Kris and I didn't have much opportunity to talk. She and I both declined desert, and the check came with rapidity heretofore unseen at Finnegans. I tipped Cheryl mightily, and Kris and I left.

We got into the truck and Kris was silent. I smiled, and remembered my gift. Reaching back behind her seat, I found it and dropped it into her lap. Kris raised it in her hands, and then smiled at me, the warmest, most beautiful smile I have ever seen on another human being. She put the dusty, creased, well-fingered Orioles cap on her head,

letting the ponytail stream out the back.

"Let's go to the docks," she said. I nodded and started the truck. The docks were mostly just a series of piers, used by some of the bigger ships up until about ten years ago. They were mostly deserted now, and had turned into a local lover's lane.

We got there and parked, and then got out and started walking along the water.

"You're awful quiet tonight," Kris offered. I just shrugged. "Penny for your thoughts," she tried again.

"I...just don't want to fu-...screw this up."

"You're not."

"I know. That's why I'm not talking." She laughed and I joined her.

"Do you know why I was so happy when you called and asked me out?"

I said that I did not.

"Because...one of the reasons I came back here, back home, is you. I knew that you were here, living and working. ...I want you to be a part of my life, Dan."

That was fairly vague. I didn't say anything. I'd learned a few interrogation techniques, and one of them was to let the silences build, let the subject dig themselves in, rushing to fill the void.

"After you left for college...I felt empty. I knew how you felt about me, and I missed that. I was selfish and petty back then. I liked the idea of having this boy devoted to me...even if I wouldn't ever think of dating him. It made me feel beautiful and desired and wanted. You remember how my father used to be. I broke up with Richard that summer when he started fooling around with an older girl. She let him make love to her, and he wanted me to do that with him, but I just wasn't ready. We had huge fights. He tried that old 'if you love me you'll do this for me' routine, and I used that old 'if you love me you won't make me do this' thing on him. So I got rid of him. And I was angry for a long time, angry because I suddenly realized that you never would have given me that ultimatum. You would have waited until the time and place were right, and then it would just happen...naturally, beautifully, the way it was meant to be. And with that realization came the understanding of how shabbily I'd treated you over the years. That's when I started writing."

"I know," I said quietly.

“Excuse me?”

“I went through some of my parent’s papers. I found a box full of your letters in the attic. I read them. All of them.”

“Oh.” Her voice was suddenly small and far away.

“If I had gotten them...I would have come to see you, Kris. Like you asked. But I never got them, I swear.”

“I know,” she nodded.

We fell silent for a few moments. Kris shivered a little. The wind was coming in off the water. She turned her back to the water, facing me, and I could see the hard points of her nipples under the dress, and I realized with a start that she wasn’t wearing a bra!

“Cold?” I asked, turning to leave. She reached out and touched my arm.

“Kiss me,” she said. “Please.” I turned back slowly, and wrapped her up in my arms. She had gained about an inch, and stood about five nine. Her face was at the perfect height. Lowering my face towards hers, I closed the distance between our lips in slow, agonizing increments. And then we were kissing...really kissing, for the first time. Her mouth was soft and hot, and after minute her lips parted, and her tongue came knocking against my mouth. I opened my mouth, and then we were deeply Frenching, her hot moist tongue in my mouth, setting my toes on fire. Kris’ arms encircled my back, moving up to my shoulders, pulling me tightly against her.

“Mmm,” she moaned into my mouth. Pulling away, I turned my head to the other side and came in again. This kiss was hotter than the first, if that was at all possible. Our mouths worked eagerly, hungrily together, and I knew at that instant that I had never stopped loving Kris, not completely. This was perfect and right and just and inevitable. I was kissing the woman I loved, the woman I’d always loved, and she was kissing me back.

“Take me home,” she moaned against my throat when we parted. “Take me to your house and make love to me, Dan. Please!”

I pulled away from her, pursing my lips. “There’s something you should know,” I started, ready to reveal my secret to her, finally.

Her features clouded, her eyebrows drawing together. Concern was written all across her face. “What?”

“I...um....I’ve never....” Surprise turned to outright astonishment.

“Never? Ever?” I shook my head. Laughing, she said, “You saved yourself for me?”

“No...I mean, yes, but not...I mean, there was never anyone else who...wanted to....with me, I mean.....I mean..”

“Shh,” Kris said, kissing me. “I don’t care why. And it’s not important. I just wish that I was...that I hadn’t.. ...before tonight...that way, it could be, for both of us, the first..”

“Shh,” I said to her, kissing her again. “For me, it will be. I’ve...dreamed about this...forever. Whenever I thought of my first time with a woman, it was always you in my mind. Always you showing me what you liked, what you wanted. Teaching me how to do it right, to make you feel good.”

“But what about you?”

"I don't care. If...if you get pleasure, the maximum pleasure, that's all that was important to me." And it was true. It was.

"Take me home," Kris said. "Take me to your bed, Dan."

The door to my house swung open, and Kris stepped in ahead of me. I closed and locked the door, and turned to face her. Kris leaned up on her toes and kissed me, softly, once. Taking my hand, she led me up the stairs to my bedroom. It was the same bedroom I'd slept in as a child. I'd replaced the twin bed with a king-sized, the thing dominating the entire room.

Kris shut my bedroom door and turned on the light by the bed. She turned to me, biting her bottom lip and slowly walked over to where I was standing. She kissed me again, wrapping her arms around my neck. Once again, our mouths were working hungrily and eagerly against each other. My hands were on her waist, gently holding her. One of Kris' hands left my neck and found my hand, lifting it to her chest and placing it on her right breast.

Gasping into her mouth, I closed my fingers around that full, perfect tit. It's plump, heavy weight felt like heaven in my hand, and I gently hefted it, testing it's bounce and resiliency. My thumb worked across her nipple, and Kris gasped into my mouth. Thinking I'd hurt her, my hand flew off her breast and smacked against the wall. "I'm sorr-" I started. Kris smiled and reached for my hand, replacing it on her breast.

"It felt good, Dan, that's all. Don't worry. If you do something I don't want you to, I'll tell you. But I don't think that's going to be a problem." And then we were kissing again. The kisses gained strength and passion and emotion, and I had to move my mouth. I was gasping, hungry for air. Kris kissed my neck and chin, moving down to my throat. Her hands left my neck and started working on the buttons of my shirt. Kris kissed each new portion of skin that was revealed, taking several minutes to lick and tug on my nipples with her lips and tongue. I reached behind me and removed my pistol, reaching past Kris to put it on the dresser. I checked the safety before returning to her arms. Didn't want it going off NOW. I was in danger of shooting off, though.

Kris pulled my shirt off and tossed it over her shoulder. She leaned down and kissed my stomach, then moved lower and teasingly licked my belly button. I felt her hands on my belt buckle, and I stopped her.

"You," I said. She smiled and stood, holding her arms out. I kissed her neck and shoulder and throat, Kris moaning as I did so. Her hands were in my hair, nails lightly scratching my scalp. She kissed my ear and licked me there, turning me on even more.

I slid the short sleeves off of her arms and gently lowered the top of her dress. Kris' breasts bobbed as the material passed over them, and for the first time in my life, I had a pair of naked female breasts to kiss and touch and stroke.

They were perfect, as only a young girl's can be. They weren't overly large, but they were in perfect proportion to the rest of her body. Perfectly round, about the diameter of an orange, they sat high and proud on her chest, the little pink nipples stiff in excitement. I dipped my face down and kissed her left nipple,

tugging at it gently with my teeth. Kris' fingernails dug into my scalp, pulling my mouth closer to her breast. Moving to the other one, I repeated the action. Kris pulled my face away and her mouth ascended towards mine, her tongue reaching out and licking and teasing mine. She worked the dress off her hips and it fell to the ground. She sat on the bed and worked her boots off, standing to face me again in just her tiny pink panties.

I lost my pants and boots and socks in a heartbeat. We were facing each other, her in her panties, me in my jockeys. I had a tent in mine, though. Hooking her fingers in her panties, Kris lowered them, and I saw the fine blonde down covering her mons.

"Christ," I said, "it grew a beard!" Kris laughed with sudden remembrance. That first summer, we'd gone swimming down at the lake, and since neither of us had brought a suit, we'd swum in our underwear. I still remembered the brief glance I'd gotten of her fat, bald little twat.

"Very funny," Kris laughed. So did yours, I bet!" I took a deep breath and hooked my own fingers in the waistband of my underwear and slid them down my legs. We were finally, gloriously naked for each other.

For the first time.

She was perfect, beautiful, fragile.

And, for tonight, at least, mine.

We fell onto the bed together, laughing and giggling like kids. Kris rolled over on top of me, kissing me. Her long, lithe body felt hot and smooth against mine. My hands cupped her ass, that ass I had lusted after for so many years. She ground her crotch against mine, and I could feel the moisture of her arousal against my thighs and pubic hair. My cock was trapped between our bodies, rubbing against Kris' stomach.

"This ain't no gun in your pocket, pardner!" Kris laughed, reaching between us to stroke me. Her touch was feathery light and exciting. "Careful," I warned. "I'm a quick shot!"

"I know...this first one's gonna be fast. Don't worry about it. We have all night. And all day. And all night. And all day again..." She stroked me, once, twice, and I climaxed, covering both of our bellies with my cream.

"Mmm," Kris said. "So hot and creamy..." She got off my body and licked her way down to my crotch, cleaning me with her mouth. She worked slowly, teasingly, lovingly. I didn't get soft at all. Not one little bit. My hot, hard cock was eager for action. Kris worked it slowly, taking my entire length into her mouth with gentle, deep strokes. My first blowjob was better than I could have ever imagined.

I was getting close to another orgasm when I pulled her face from my cock. "Now you," I said, rolling her onto her back. Eagerly, Kris spread her legs, and I got down between them...and realized that I was lost. I had never seen...one of these up close before.

"What's the matter?" Kris teased. "Don't like the view?"

"I like the view fine," I said. "I just...need a map!" Laughing, Kris showed me what I needed to know. She pointed out all the locations I needed to be aware of, and told me to go to it.

I never could have imagined how exciting she would taste. So hot and tangy. So beautiful. I sipped and licked and blew and gently sucked at her, covering every inch of her pussy with my mouth, lips and tongue. Kris announced that she was getting closed, and directed my attention to a very specific spot. I worked it, and her, using my lips and tongue, and felt her shudder under me. I was bathed with her secretions, and I gulped them eagerly. Kris pulled me to her, raising her face for a kiss.

"Mmm," she said. "I taste good!" I smiled, and we kissed again, softly. "Ready for the main event?" she asked.

"Ready as I'll ever be!" I assured her. Reaching one hand down, Kris located my throbbing member and guided it towards her pussy. I felt wetness and warmth, and then I was sliding inside. She was incredibly hot and tight and wet and slick for me, and I groaned as I bottomed out inside her. She clutched at me with her muscles, milking me, and I groaned again. It was beyond belief. I was inside the woman I'd loved for so many years, finally a part of her. What we'd done tonight could never be taken back, never be undone by anything anyone ever did. If I died tonight, I'd go a happy man to whatever came after this life with no regrets.

Pulling out, I slid back in again, the second thrust better than the first. We set up a slow motion, a gentle rocking gait, and stared at each other as we made love this first, special time.

"I love you," Kris whispered. "I can't help falling in love with you," she said in her best Elvis and I laughed, once again touched that she remembered and realized how important she, and that night had been to me. Was to me.

My strokes began to quicken, and Kris grunted in pleasure, her legs coming up and around my back, one palm against my ass, urging me on. We made love hungrily, eagerly, giving and taking to and from each other, staring at each other's eyes as we became one on my bed that night.

When I spent again, Kris joined me, her pussy contracting around me, milking me, happily accepting my creamy offering. I collapsed, rolling over onto my back, bringing Kris with me. She kissed me then, once, softly on the lips, and snuggled her face into my chest.

"This feels so...right," she said, just before drifting off to sleep.

"I love you," I said, and felt her arms tighten around me.

I slept.

I woke first, and disengaged myself from Kris. I went downstairs and made coffee, eggs and toast. Retrieving the paper, I put it on the tray and carried the whole thing upstairs. Entering the bedroom, I saw that Kris was still sleeping. The covers came up to the bottom of her butt, that perfect ass of hers looking soft and smooth in the early morning light. Kris had taken the rubber band out of her hair sometime during the night, and her golden tresses were spread over the pillow. I could see the press of her breast against the bed, and saw her perfect, pert little nose buried in the pillow.

She was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen in my life. She woke then, smelling the foot. Donning my shirt from the night before, she motioned me over

to the bed. We ate in silence, sharing the paper and enjoying the companionable silence.

I was reading the sports page when I felt a hand inside my bathrobe, reaching for my cock. I lowered the paper and saw that Kris had unbuttoned my shirt. I could see her breasts inside, moving gently against the material.

“Again?!” I said in mock horror.

“Again!” Kris said, grabbing the paper and tossing it away. “Love me, Dan. Again. All day today. And tonight. Forever.”

Lowering my face to hers, just before I kissed her, I said, “Forever.”

“Lisa”

How do you tell your best friend that you're in love with her?

For a week now, I've been thinking constantly about that question. About a week ago, Lisa called me to tell me the good news. We hadn't talked for about six weeks, and for us, that wasn't atypical. We had that special, intense kind of relationship where time and distance stopped mattering almost from the outset. We could go weeks without talking, and then pick a conversation up where we'd left off, as if we'd only been apart minutes. Once, Lisa called me at work, and when I picked up the phone, I heard, "...so, as I was saying..." and I knew right where she was. That was the kind of relationship we had. We were the best of friends, soulmates.

And now, it seemed like that's all we would ever be.

And for a long time, that's all I ever wanted. Wasn't it? Pushing back from my desk, I walk to the window in my den that overlooks the back yard. I can see some ducks playing in the pond, the mother gently calling to her ducklings to follow her. My thoughts are confused and whirling around inside my head. A thousand memories shared with Lisa flash across the movie screen inside my head, and I fight to regain control. Shaking my head, I walk back to the desk and sit down.

I stare at the phone.

It sits there, silently mocking me. Call her, it seems to say to me, pick up the phone and make a complete fool out of yourself. You've had more chances than anyone has a right to expect, and you've turned away from all of them. Go ahead. Call her.

I push the phone away in disgust and slide my chair back, tilting it so I can put my legs up on the desk. As I settle back, my hands clasped behind my head, my gaze takes in the Lucite picture frame perched on one corner of the desk. It's a photo of Lisa and me, at the beach, taken about three years ago. She's wearing a terrycloth wrap, but it's open slightly, and the banana-yellow bikini she's wearing can be barely glimpsed. Her face is tan, and her smile is wide and eager. It's obvious that we'd had a fun day at the beach, the two of us, and her arm is casually slung around my waist. I'm wearing jams in the picture, and I've got a towel draped around my neck. You can see the top of my hand on Lisa's shoulder, and I'm looking at the camera. Lisa's looking at me, with this stupid dreamy expression on her face.

That single picture sums up our entire relationship. She was always looking at me, and I was always looking elsewhere. She'd gotten tired, apparently, looked elsewhere, and seen someone else looking back. And now they were looking at each other, and I was stuck staring at a goddamned picture on my desk.

I look at the phone again, then back at the picture. How long, I wonder. How long have I been in love with my best friend? When did it start? My sudden, intense reaction to the news that she is getting married tells me that the feelings have been there for a long, long time.

I try to remember. We've known each other for so long. So many years between us. I know that I've always had affection for her, always thought that she was an incredible person...and incredible woman. An incredible friend.

When did it become more than that? And why am I so afraid to tell her that I love her?

I can always take the cop-out that I'm scared that anything romantic, anything intimate between us might turn to shit and ruin our friendship. Even as that thought flits across my mind I dismiss it. It's bullshit and it's a rationalization. I know enough about myself and enough about Lisa to know that if we had gotten involved, and it had turned to shit, we'd still be friends. Maybe not as close as before, not with the pain of a supposed breakup that hadn't even happened yet, not with the walls that were sure to go up between us, but still friends.

So what was I worried about?

I know what it is. I just don't want to admit it. It's several things, actually. Fear, mostly. Fear of loving someone too much. I know how totally insane that sounds, but remember: I'm a man. I'm genetically insane.

The liquor cabinet called to me. I could hear Mr. John Daniel's calling to me. You might know him as Jack, but when you've been involved with the man as long as I have, he prefers the more formal John. Ah, sweet dark liquid of life. He has the cure for my ills.

No, he doesn't. All he will make me do is get maudlin and depressed. I'll rage against the storm, scream at the walls and have huge conversations with people that aren't even in the room. It's interesting, don't you think, that when you're having a fight with someone that's not there, imagining their responses to your responses...you always win those fights.

I shake my head and try to refocus my attention on something I'm unfamiliar with. My feelings.

What, exactly, are my feelings? I love her. I know that. I love her very...much. I know that, too. Another thing I know is that I am completely terrified of making love with Lisa.

Ah. The crux.

You see, in order to have a fully functioning adult relationship, you have to have sex. I mean, it's not a requirement or anything, but it does help. And it wasn't that I was a horrible lover or that I had a tiny dick that I was ashamed of...it was just the gnawing certainty that I wouldn't be able to satisfy Lisa in bed.

Getting up from behind my desk, I walk to the couch and lay down and put my feet over the edge. I'm relaxed now, or, a little more relaxed than I was a moment ago. I can now look at this dispassionately and dissect it with all the calm coldness of a scientist examining a specimen under a microscope. No problem.

Two things contribute to this feeling. The first is the fact that Lisa has the rather annoying habit of discussing her sex life with me. I knew she wasn't a virgin, or a nun, but I had no idea that women talked about sex as eagerly...as hungrily, as nastily as men did. Lisa had dumped more than one boyfriend because she'd found him lacking between the sheets. More than more than once Lisa has given me a blow-by-blow, you will pardon the expression, description of her sexual encounters. About how one boyfriend actually asked permission to

come in her mouth. And how she had turned him down, turned off that he was so wimpy as to even ask. She likes her men strong and in-control. She likes a challenge. She wants someone to tame, someone to bend to her formidable will.

And one more thing. It had happened once already. Well, almost. Two years ago. We went away for the Fourth of July weekend. Neither of us were seeing anyone, so we decided to spend it together. We got very, very drunk, and ended up on the couch together. I was aware that Lisa was on the make, that she was hot and horny and she wanted to fuck me. We started kissing and necking and having fun, and these fears surfaced in me again. I started to pull away, to get distracted. Lisa looked at me strangely, got up and walked into her bedroom. The next day we didn't speak about it. At all. It had never come up again.

I assume that she feels that I don't find her attractive, or that I am not interested in a romantic relationship with her. How ironic that there is nothing further from the truth. How idiotic that when I can finally face my feelings, can finally begin to do something about them, Lisa is beyond my reach.

Or is she? Perhaps this is one last attempt on her part to force my hand. Perhaps this is what I have been waiting for, a galvanizing event to make me realize what is right under my nose, what has been directly in front of me for all these years.

Do I dare? What is it that someone once said? A coward dies a thousand deaths, but the valiant die but once. Time to make a stand. Time to get up and do something about my life.

I stand from the couch and grab my car keys. It's about two hours to Lisa's house from where I live. Two long hours in the car, looking at the road passing under my tires, listening to the radio. Every song is about us. Every song is a love song, every twisted, painful emotion reaching out to me from the speakers, reaching inside my soul. I hear the words, and I feel the music and I know the emotions. Love. Never-ending, undying love. She will be mine. I can feel it. I will make her mine.

I arrive at Lisa's house just after dusk. I can see that she is home, and that she is alone. Or, so I hope. There is no strange car parked in the driveway, just Lisa's Jeep Cherokee, black and sleek in the soft light.

I park my car and lock it, starting the long walk up to her house. The front light comes on; Lisa heard my door slam. The front door opens and she's standing there, barefoot, wearing old jeans and a T-shirt of mine that I gave her one day on the beach. I can tell that she's not wearing a bra, and the thought that her naked, full breasts are pressing against a piece of clothing that I've worn is strangely exciting. I wonder if she would sleep in just my pajama tops, me in the bottoms. A picture fills my head, a perfect mental snapshot of Lisa standing in her breakfast nook wearing my light-blue pajama top, the morning paper, folded over, in one hand, a cup of coffee in the other, reading by the early morning sunlight. In slow motion, she turns, in my head, and looks at me, her eyes finding mine. She's wearing her glasses, the ones that make her look shy and sexy and bookish and devilish all at the same time.

She takes them off and tosses them casually on the table to join the coffee cup and paper, and she walks towards me, smiling, reaching out with her arms, taking me inside them, lifting and turning her head for a good-morning kis-

“Jeff!” She squeals my name and runs down the stairs at me, into my arms for real this time. I feel my arms going around her body, enveloping her, feeling her warmth against me, loving it, inhaling her scent, knowing that it’s the most beautiful smell in the world, wanting to smell that smell every morning as I wake up to greet the bright, rational sunlight of a new day.

“Why-? When-?” She’s full of questions, this one, but her smile tells me everything I need to know.

“Are you alone?”

Her face clouds for a second. “No, Alex is here.” Ah, the dreaded enemy. Alex. Such a name. Reminds me of that damn dog in the beer commercials years ago. He’s probably well trained.

“I need to talk to you.” I say, and then add, “Alone.”

Her face changes expression again, and then she nods once, a decision made, a line crossed. She takes my hand and walks with me back to the house, ascending the stairs slowly. There is a heaviness to her now, a resignation that she knows what is coming and either eagerly anticipates it or dreads it. I cannot tell, and to be truthful, I do not care. The time has come to say what must be said, to face the reality of the situation.

“Alex,” she is saying, bringing me into the foyer, “I want you to meet someone. This is...Jeff, my...best friend.” The words struggle out of her mouth as if something unseen is pulling them with a tow rope. I can hear the machinery struggling. I hear and sense movement to my side and turn to face this man, this obstacle in my path, this nemesis.

He is handsome. I see that immediately. I can say that. He is good looking. He has a strong chin and deep eyes the color of the ocean. They will be beautiful children, I think.

“Glad to meet you,” he says, and I can hear the strong timbre of his voice. It is a radio announcer’s voice, a voice a woman longs to hear call her name in the throes of passion during the wolf hours of the night. It is a voice that I immediately hate.

“Yeah,” I say lamely. “Me, too.” He shakes my hand, and there is a moment where we both consider attempting to establish superiority by the tried-and-true method of Handshake Olympics. The moment passes, and we drop hands like sulking schoolboys faced to shake on the schoolyard after a fight.

I take the initiative. “Alex, I hate to impose, but Lisa and I need to talk.” Again, I add, “Alone.” Surprised, he looks from me to her, seeking some kind of ruling on this offense. Lisa is the final arbiter. She can say something hollow and trite like “Whatever you have to say to me, you can say in front of Alex.” I know that is what he wants, but I pray that she will deny him.

She does. “Please, Alex,” she says softly. “I’ll call you tomorrow.” There. It is done. Another line has been crossed. I have achieved dominance without having to resort to any mental games. It makes me feel good to see the look on his face. But he is not done yet. He moves to her, smirking at me over her head as he leans

down to kiss her goodbye. It is a hungry, possessive kiss, and I see his tongue intrude into her mouth. She pulls away, embarrassed, and glances at me to see if I've noticed, but I'm already looking away, pretending my attention is focused elsewhere.

Alex leaves. Lisa takes me into her living room. She sits on the couch, directly in the middle of that hilariously small piece of furniture. I notice that she has not left me enough room to join her. She is distancing herself from me, pushing me away. She is probably not even aware that she is doing it.

I take a chair opposite the couch. My body language is free and open. I don't cross my legs or arms, choosing instead to use my forearms to lean on my thighs, my hands clasped loosely between my legs. I am the picture of cool, serene confidence.

"Well?" she asks, a small half smile/half frown playing around the edges of her mouth. "What's so important that you drove all the way up here to see me?"

I take a deep breath. Where to begin? Announcing out of the blue that I am in love with her is probably not the best course of action. But I don't want to start a long, meandering conversation that will lead nowhere and will only give me ample opportunity to chicken out.

"Well, the thing of it is..." I start, and then find myself lost in my own thoughts. And that's what I decide to do. I will share my thoughts, my feelings, my emotions with Lisa. Not words. I'll tell her pictures, images, scenes that I've seen before and treasured since. If anything, that will convince the artist's heart and the poet's soul inside her.

I take a deep breath and start again.

"Do you remember the time we went to the beach for the Fourth of July? We had so much fun that weekend, Lisa. It was just two of us, thousands of miles away from here, from each other, from our lives. It was like we went to Mars. We spent four whole days together, just the two of us. It was...incredible, Lisa. The most incredible weekend of my life. Swimming and walking down the beach, holding hands, just laughing about anything and everything. Getting drunk together, seeing how we were together...like that...together..." I take another breath and begin again.

"You see, Lisa...the overriding feeling I have from that weekend is...rightness. It was right that we should be together like that. Together. I keep using that word, together. But that's what I mean. We should be...together."

I stop, and wait for her to respond. She reaches over and grabs one of the throw pillows and starts playing with it, teasing the corners, plucking at the huge button in the center. She waits. I wait.

I continue.

"The more I think about it, the more I come to realize that we belong together, Lisa." There. I'd said it.

Lisa purses her lips a second longer. Sighing, she tosses it aside. "Why am I hearing about this now?" Her tone is cool and modulated. She is testing me, perhaps punishing me. I can feel the panic rising. I fight to quell it.

It's time to give something. To admit. "I will admit that your... plans have

made me realize certain things.”

Lisa accepts that. Her smile is curt. “What about...you know.”

“No, what?”

“About that night. On the couch. When we started...and then did nothing. Why did you push me away?”

I sigh.

“Don’t you find me attractive? Don’t you know that I loved you?” The past tense scares me. Lisa just spoke about her love in the past tense.

“Loved?”

“Yes. Loved. Love. There. I’ve said it. It’s out. I love you, Jeff. I always have. For the last six years I have loved you and waited for you to notice. And now that I’m getting married, now that I’ve met a wonderful man who loves me back, you come here and beg me to love you again. That is what you’re asking, right? For me to drop Alex and love you again?”

I have no choice, no alternative. “Did you ever stop?”

She grabs the pillow again, pulling viciously at the corners. Her head drops and I can sense that she is crying. When she speaks, her voice is choked with emotions and tears. “No, damn you. I never stopped.” And then, quieter, almost in a whisper: “I never will.”

That is a beginning. I can work with that. I know that if I can last the next five minutes, I will last the rest of my life with this woman.

“I love you,” I say. “I do.”

“Who are you trying to convince?” she asks. “Me or you?”

“You.”

“Why didn’t you make love to me?”

Again. The fear, crawling up my spine like a cold, furry spider. The tendrils of my fear reach out to my limbs. I can feel the sweat at the base of my back.

“I was scared.”

Her voice is a plaintive cry in the dark. “Of WHAT?”

“Of getting too close to you.”

Her face lifts and she looks at me. “Asshole!” she spits. “That’s bullshit, and you know it!”

I say nothing.

“Tell me the truth! Why didn’t you make love to me?”

Again, I say nothing.

“Tell me!”

“I was afraid...” I begin. “I was afraid of loving you too much. Of losing myself inside you. You are such a part of me, of my life, I couldn’t imagine getting closer to another human being than I am to you right now. And the thought of making love with you...I was afraid that I couldn’t satisfy you.”

That was new. To her, at least. Or, so I thought.

“I know.” Now it is my turn to stare and gape. “I always knew. But I wanted you to try, dammit! I wanted you to at least fucking try!”

I stand. I walk over to her. I hold my hand out. She takes it.

“Come with me,” I say softly. She stands, looks at me, her eyes red from crying, from pain, from the hurt I’ve caused her.

“What will I tell Alex?” she whispers.

“I’ll tell him,” I say. I turn and leave the living room, bringing Lisa with me. We ascend the stairs to her bedroom. I’ve slept in this bed before, with her in my arms. I’ve woken up next to her, watched her sleep, noticed the form of her body under the T-shirt she wears. My T-shirt. Tonight is different. Tonight we will be as one.

We arrive in the bedroom. I can hear the beach. I can smell the salt air. And then all I can smell is Lisa, because she is in my arms, her body against mine. How many times have I hugged her, I wonder. How many times have I felt her body pressed against me. Now the comforting, warm weight of her breasts against my chest is welcome and savored. The feel of her loins against mine is urgent and needy and also welcomed.

We kiss. Our mouths touch softly first, and then harder as the long-awaited passion between us finally arrives. Lisa’s mouth opens against mine, and I feel her tongue against my lips, slipping between them, entering my mouth, softly scraping against my teeth. I feel her moistness and passion and suck at it, eager to have it.

My hands find her ass and I pull her against me. “Jeff,” she whispers into my mouth. “Oh, my God, Jeff....” She can feel my hardness pressing against her, the evidence of my desire for her, my want for her.

My hands move to the hem of her shirt and I go under it, across her belly, towards her breasts. Breasts I have dreamed of, fantasized over, lusted after. My left hand finds one, her perfect, pale white right breast. Her softness is intriguing. It is unlike any other breast I have ever felt. It is alive, I can feel her nipple against my palm, pressing against me.

I thumb the nipple softly. Lisa moans into my mouth again. She opens against me, her slick, warm lips gently sucking at mine. The kiss is so incredible, so deep and wet. The need passes between us, from one mouth to the other.

I take her shirt off. Her breasts bounce as the material of the shirt clings, and then releases. Her nipples pucker harder under the cool breeze.

“Touch me,” Lisa whispers. “Touch me everywhere. Make me yours. Posses me, Jeff.” I know that is what she always wanted. To belong to me. More importantly, for us to belong to each other.

My mouth finds the spot on her neck she has told me so much about. And then the fear is inside me again. I know so much about this woman. A thousand conversations. I know all her secrets, all her vices, all her pleasures. I know what will make her happy, what will turn her on like nothing else. I know she adores having the small of her back lightly kissed. I know she loves to spread her legs and be eaten for hours. I know

that she likes to get nasty sometimes, likes to talk dirty in bed and do lewd things. Every once in a while, she likes to let a man spend on her face.

All of a sudden, a feeling that I’m invading her privacy flashes across me. There are no secrets left for us to discover in each other. I know all of it. Everything.

I am tensing, ready to push her away...and then I don’t. I realize that I may know what she likes, but we have yet to experience it together. I remember that

sixty people can look at the same painting and see sixty different things.

My passion rekindles and I attack her. My hands lift her up and carry her to the bed where I dump her. My clothes vanish in a flash, and I join her. Our hands are everywhere at once, finding secret places and touching, caressing them. Her hand finds me and guides me, grasping my length and pulling it closer. I feel her moist center and cleave her neatly. As if we are made for each other, we join on the bed and become one. The passion has never been greater, never been this perfect. This is what I have searched for my entire life. This perfect unison of mind and body and soul.

We move urgently against each other, finding solace and warmth in each other. Her mouth is against my throat, licking my pulse point. Her legs grasp my hips as she undulates against me. She is welcoming me with her body, using herself to squeeze and caress that part of me that is so deep inside her I don't know where I begin and she ends. We are one.

"Fuck me, Jeff!"

I speed my actions, anxious to spend within her, to give her my gift, to prove my desire and love for her. She needs this, this hot, sweaty movement, this give and take of fluids and lust. She needs to feel wanted and desired, to feel lusted after and needed. I give her all I can, drawing on what I know about her to bring Lisa pleasure. My hands find her breasts as I fuck her, as I give her my cock. She is no longer the pristine woman I have known and loved. She is my woman, my cunt, my slut. She is there for me as I am for her, and we move together even harder, faster, deeper.

My hand moves from her breast and slides lower, towards her center. I find her button and caress it, twist it, watching my actions bring Lisa closer to the ultimate release, our first together.

And then it is upon me, as well. I feel her clasping me with herself, drawing me in, milking me as I erupt inside her, emptying myself inside my lover, my woman. My future wife.

I fall against her, finding her mouth with mine. "I love you," I whisper. "I love you Lisa."

“Lynn”

October, 1982

Walking back down to the old field brought back all the memories, all the wonderful moments of high school. I'd had a better time of it than most kids these days, and I remembered those autumn afternoons spent on the gridiron fondly. I guess the fact that I was the starting quarterback and captain of the team had a little bit to do with it. The memory of those years was running through my mind as I approached the field. There was another game going on today, one with different players and different opponents, but some things remained the same. Youthful enthusiasm, dedication, drive, determination, the hunger to win...it was all still there, out on the field and in the stands. I stopped down by the end zone and leaned over the waist-high fence that surrounded the football field. This was the same exact field I'd spent four years on as QB. I looked over at my high school team, in a huddle, and had to grin. The QB was wearing my old jersey, #15. Only, instead of my last name written across the back, it said "JENNINGS." I wondered who Jennings was, and if he was any good. I decided to stick around and watch a while. Looking over at the home crowd, I spotted the cheerleaders working the stands, their short, dark blue skirts swishing side to side as they went through their routines. I had to smile, and then I had to remember.

October, 1972

My breath was coming hard. I chanced a glance over my shoulder. The clock on the scoreboard, and the scoreboard itself, told the entire story. There was less than a minute in the game, the score was 28-0, and my team, the Falcons, were leading. I'd passed for four touchdowns and over 200 yards that day. It was the last game of the season. After coming off a perfect 8-0 undefeated season, I'd taken the Falcons first to sectionals, then regionals, and finally, to the state championships. Well, the Class III-C championships, but it was still the state championships. And we were winning. With less than sixty seconds to go, nothing could stop us. The clock was stopped, and I took a few seconds to catch my breath.

I looked at my teammates in the huddle and had to smile. We'd come far as a group, playing together for four years, first as the Freshman team, then as JV, and finally when we were Juniors, we were all promoted, en masse, to Varsity. And we'd kicked some serious ass all up and down the county. This was our crowning moment. I looked from face to dirty face, uniform to muddy uniform. And then my eyes came to rest on Todd. His uniform was spotless. His helmet unscratched. The back of my own helmet had sixty-three small football decals on it, one for every touchdown I'd passed, handed off, or run across the line myself. Todd's helmet was bare. In four years of playing football, Todd had been in on exactly six plays. This was his seventh.

Todd was my best friend, had been since the 2nd grade. Todd was a great guy, the absolute heart and soul of the team. Everyone liked him, a few of the guys might even have loved him. He was at every practice, giving 200 percent, doing everything the starters did, only slower and a little less gracefully. Hell, a lot less gracefully. Todd was a great guy, my best friend, but possibly the worst football player the world had ever seen. The six previous plays the coach had put him in on were all in games where we led by at least three touchdowns, and always late in the fourth quarter. He'd played hard and sweet and honest, but I'd never given him a pass or a handoff. The coach called the plays, and as much as the coach knew Todd wanted to handle the ball just once in a game, he'd always called running plays or passing plays to the opposite side. I smiled at my best friend and he smiled back, excited to be playing in this, the state championship game. Something he would be able to tell his grandchildren about, I thought.

I glanced over my other shoulder and took the sign from the coach. He wanted me to fake a handoff to one running back and give it to the other. I nodded, turned back into the huddle...and set a completely different set of circumstances into motion. We were one, maybe two plays away from the end of the season, the end of our high school careers, the end of a championship year. I was captain and QB. I was taking control.

I looked at my teammates and said it. "Red right 39. Todd." Todd gulped. I looked from face to face, looking for dissention. At least three of the linemen had seen the sign, and knew that I'd changed it. All I saw were warm smiles and knowing looks. They wanted this, too. They wanted to give Todd the chance to catch a ball in a game, make a contribution. He'd earned it, and I knew that my teammates would give their all to make sure that it happened. We broke the huddle and assembled, Todd on my left, at tight end. The play was simplicity itself. A twenty yard run, then ten in. When he turned, the ball would be in his hands. He knew it, I knew it. He had only to catch it.

The defense lined up, and I checked it. They were expecting a run play, or perhaps even for me to fall on the ball and run down the clock. Everything started moving in slow motion. I could see my breath coming in soft white puffs as I leaned over the center and looked right, then left. My eyes met Todd's, and then unfocused a little more, and I saw Lynn standing behind Todd, on the sidelines, her pom-poms forgotten, her hands at her face, looking at her boyfriend.

Lynn and Todd had been going out since anyone could remember. He had asked her out in the seventh grade, when she was...well, not exactly ugly, but she was nothing to brag about. Kind of short, with dirty blonde hair she wore in a listless ponytail. Todd had shyly approached her and asked her to go out with him, and thrilled, she had accepted. They had been together ever since, and were a shoe-in to be named Senior Couple when the yearbook came out later that spring.

Lynn had changed a lot in the six years she and Todd had dated. Sometime over our sophomore summer, she had bloomed. She was gorgeous, tall and lithe and blonde and tanned and perfect. Her high, saucy breasts caught more than one eye as she walked down the hall, and the rear view was even better. Her tight, taut ass was something to behold. The boys had started coming around then, hanging around Lynn's locker, asking her out, trying to pry her away from Todd. To

Lynn's credit, she had stayed loyal, remembering when none of the boys would even give her a second glance. Remembering that Todd had loved her when she looked just OK. ...and she loved him. Todd loved her. And I loved her.

My head swiveled back to stare at the opposing nose guard, and as I called out the count, I remembered...

June 1972

Three months earlier

The phone call caught me by surprise. It was the first week of summer vacation, and I was planning on sleeping in. My summer job wasn't scheduled to start for another week, and Todd was away at summer camp, working as a counselor. My own girlfriend and I had broken up about a month ago, so it couldn't be here.

"Lo?" I mumbled from under the covers.

"David? It's Lynn." There was something wrong, something in her voice that snapped me awake in a second. "Could you come over please? I... I...oh, God, David, please just come over!"

"I'll be right there," I said, and hung up. I jumped out of bed and threw on a pair of old, faded jeans and a t-shirt. I slid my naked feet into some topsiders and ran down the stairs, grabbing my car keys as I went out the front door. My new car, a 69 Mustang, sat in the driveway, sleek and silent. Dad had given it to me for my 17th birthday a few weeks ago, and it was the love of my life. I jumped in and fired it up, backed into the street and turned towards Lynn's house. It was normally about a ten minute drive. I made in three.

I knew something was up when I turned down her street. Cars were parked everywhere. I parked in a neighbor's driveway and made my across the street. Parked directly in front of Lynn's house was an olive-drab Army staff car. Standing on her front porch were an Army Captain, a chaplain, and a woman, probably the Captain's wife. It was a notification team, and I knew instantly what had happened.

Lynn's brother, Kevin, was in Vietnam, with the Army. He was a LRRP (Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol), assigned to the 173rd Airborne Division near Chu Li. LRRP duty was among the most dangerous duty there was. Their name said it all. Long Range Recon; deep into enemy territory.

I ascended the stairs and nodded to the Army personnel. I tapped the Chaplain on the shoulder and motioned him over with my chin. "Yes, my son?"

"I'm a friend of the family's. Actually, a friend of Lynn's. She called me a few moments ago, but I don't know what's happening. It would help me a lot if you could give me some idea. I assume this is about Kevin?"

The padre nodded sadly.

"KIA?" I asked, and he shook his head.

"MIA. I'm sorry, son."

I thanked him and went inside. Lynn was sitting on the couch in the living room, sniffing softly. I went to her, and she buried her face in my shoulder. I held her and stroked her back as she let it out, the sobs wracking her petite body. After

about half an hour she straightened up, ran both hands through her hair and demanded that I take her somewhere... anywhere.

We jumped in my car and we drove out to the country. County Route Twelve is a long, windy stretch of driving with plenty of serene, beautiful scenery. I held Lynn's hand as we drove, more to give comfort than anything else.

Now, before any of you think me a cad and assume that I made moves on my best friend's long-time girlfriend when she was vulnerable, let me just say here that I may have been a normal, hormonally-charged horny teenager back then, but I wasn't that much of a cad. I was just there for her, when she needed a friend. As the weeks went by, we spent a lot of time together. She and Todd still wrote, and Todd wrote me a letter thanking me for being there for Lynn when he couldn't. He'd wanted to quit his summer job and come home to be with her, but Lynn had insisted that he stay. Todd needed the money for college, and Lynn had me there for...comfort.

Neither of us was sure when it started. She slowly became accustomed to the fact that her brother was missing in action. The crying jags lessened, and she started to smile and laugh more. The first time I made her laugh after the awful news, she stopped in the middle and looked stricken. I took both her hands in mine and told her softly that it was ok to laugh, ok to have some fun, that Kevin would want (I was careful to always use the present tense,) her to go on with her life.

"Never forget him, Lynn...but live your life."

She thanked me, and kissed me on the cheek, and I forgot about it.

About eight weeks after the awful news had been delivered, towards the middle of August, Lynn and I were spending most of our free time together. We went to the movies a few times, and out to the lake once or twice. I enjoyed her company, and she mine. She was a funny, intelligent girl, sexy as all hell. I can still remember how she looked in that bikini...and later, how she looked out of it.

How Lynn and I came to almost make love in the back seat of my car up at the lake is still a little cloudy. I knew from Todd that Lynn was a virgin, and that she was saving herself for her husband. Even in the aftermath of the sexual revolution, some girls still wanted to present their husbands with an untouched body. Apparently, Lynn was one of those girls, and it added, somehow, to her sexiness. Knowing that she loved to neck (also from Todd,) and that she'd let him touch her nubile breasts through her top, but never underneath, listening to Todd's accounts of her growing excitement and horniness under his hands had always turned me on. I'd been silently rooting for Todd to wear down Lynn's resistance and finally make love with her. For me, at that time, it was a forgone conclusion that they would marry after college. After all, they were applying to the same schools.

Lynn and I were up at the lake, one of the last weekends of summer before Todd was to return. She got all sentimental on me, thanking me for being there for her when she needed it, for being her friend. She was sitting in the passenger seat, turned slightly towards me, and I could see the crotch of her bikini stretched tightly across her mound. So tight, in fact, that the fat lips of her pussy were creating a channel in the material.

I leaned over and was planning to kiss her on the cheek, like I always did, when Lynn turned her head at the last minute and our lips met for the first time. It was a soft, lingering kiss, one that slowly grew in heat and passion. The shared experiences of the last two months surrounded and enveloped us, and before we knew it, we were necking like long-time boyfriend and girlfriend. Her arms came around my neck, and she pulled me against her, forcing my body on top of hers. My hands went to her hips, her soft, silken hips, and then around her back. We were sort of half on our backs, half on our sides...my hand gently cupped an asscheek and tested its firmness with my fingers.

Her buttock was perhaps the most perfect female teenaged butt I had ever felt, and I never wanted to let go. I pulled her against me, and she could feel my warm, aching need pressing into her belly from inside my swimsuit.

Suddenly, Lynn's mouth opened against mine, and I felt her tongue licking at my lips. I opened my mouth to hers, and we started Frenching deeply, adding more fire and passion and heat to the kiss. One of my hands came up and cupped a breast; I expected her to stop, and half of me knew that I'd grabbed her tit for exactly that reason. I was hoping that she would break away and slap me, tell me to behave myself, and then the moment would be over. But I wouldn't be honest if I didn't admit that the other half of me wanted to feel her breasts for the sake of feeling them, that I'd always wondered what it would be like to feel and taste her delicious looking, saucy little tits. Surprising me, Lynn groaned into my mouth and pressed her body harder against mine, crushing her right tit into the palm of my left hand. My thumb worked the nipple softly, slowly, arousing it to a hot, hard point in a matter of seconds. And then instinct took over. Unlike my friend Todd, I had enjoyed the pleasure of a woman, two women, in fact. I knew what to do. I'd fucked both my previous girlfriends, but I knew instinctively that this was not a fuck. I was going to make love to Lynn, and her to me, and it was going to be one of the most special moments of both our lives.

My hands went to her neck, and I undid the knot holding her bikini top on. It was dark and deserted at the lake, but the moonlight gave me enough to see by as her top fell away to reveal two breasts, perfect as only a teenager's can be, full and firm and round. They were stark white in contrast to her tanned chest and abdomen, and the difference really turned me on. Hadn't someone once said to me that white meat was the best part?

I dropped my lips to her breasts and circled one full, hard nipple with my tongue, taking it gently between my lips to suck and lightly bite. Lynn's fingers wrapped themselves in my hair as she tugged me tightly to her breasts. I went from one to the other, giving as much equal attention as I could manage.

"Oh....David....this feel so goooooood," Lynn moaned. I just grunted in response...and then I lifted my head, looked into her eyes and kissed her softly, almost brotherly, on the lips. "Are you sure?" I asked.

Lynn stared into my eyes.

"We're going to make love, aren't we?" she asked in a small, scared voice.

"If we keep this up, we are. But if you want to, I'll stop right now. I'd be full of shit if I said I never thought about doing this with you. I've been attracted to you for years. But..." I drifted off.

“Todd is your best friend,” Lynn said softly. “And he’s my boyfriend.” I just nodded. Lynn kissed me again, and then buried her face in my neck, her hands lightly stroking my chest. My arms went around her back, and we held each other for about two minutes. Finally, Lynn pushed away from me, only a little, and then kissed me again, hungrily, like a woman would. “David,” she said, “This is probably not going to make much sense. What Todd and I have is... separate from you and me. I love Todd and you can believe that. But, in a way, a different way, I love you, too. Not the way a girlfriend and boyfriend love each other, not romantic love...but love just the same. A special love. You were there for me when I needed you. You spent all your free time with me this summer. You helped me get through one of the toughest things in my life. I would have fallen apart without you. When Todd comes back... he and I will still be going out, and you and I will just be...over. It wouldn’t be fair to Todd to... share me with you. This is my way of saying...thanks.”

“You could have gotten a card,” I teased, and then grew serious. “Lynn...it does make sense. You feel very close to me right now, very special and loved and protected, and I’m glad that I could do this for you. But...this is something special, something you should share with Todd, or the man you’re going to marry. I love you kiddo...not in the way that a boyfriend loves a girlfriend, or a husband loves a wife...not even the way a brother loves a sister. The way two very special friends love each other. I’ll always be here for you, Lynn...I’ll always be your friend. Even if Todd and I aren’t friends, which is pretty hard to believe, you and I will still be...because we’ve shared this night, this moment. Even though it’s not going to end the way either of us planned...it will still be special, because we both realized that we love Todd more than we love each other, because we both know that we wanted to do this...but we didn’t. We stopped in time.” And with that, I picked up her top, retied it around her neck, gave her one last, soft kiss on the mouth, and sat up.

We were silent on the drive home, both of lost in our thoughts. I was sure that I was going to kick myself in the morning. When I dropped Lynn off, she got out of the car and walked around to my side.

“Walk me up?” she asked, and I got out and followed her. At her front door, Lynn took my hands and put them on her waist. “David... you have no idea how much I love you right now. What you said, up there, in the car, goes double for me. I’ll always be your friend, and I’ll always be here for you. All I can say is that the girl that gets you is going to be the luckiest girl I know. You’re a very special guy, David...and I don’t want you ever forgetting that.” And then we kissed one final time. Softly, gently, on the lips, the passion overridden by tenderness. We hugged, and Lynn let herself in. Todd returned six days later.

October, 1972 - The Game

I saw Lynn standing there, on the sidelines, her pom-poms forgotten, hands at her mouth. I caught her eye, and she smiled at me for a half second before turning her attention back to Todd, back to the man she loved. Some of the other cheerleaders had teased her at first, for dating what was essentially the team loser.

Lynn had defended Todd so ardently and, yes, viciously, that they had backed off. No one was looking at her as she watched Todd. They were working the crowd, the other girls taking up Lynn's slack as she watched perhaps the final play of Todd's high school football career. "This one's for you, Lynn," I thought as I called the last count. There was the briefest of pauses, and then the center shoved the ball into my hand. We were tired, it had been a long season, and I half expected the line to buckle. Had there been college or pro scouts in the stands that night, they would have signed every single lineman to a lifetime NFL contract. No professional team worked as well as those guys did that night. I had enough time in the pocket to do my laundry and make a sandwich before I had to worry about getting nailed.

The defense, expecting a run play, was caught off guard when they saw me drop back, rolling right. Todd was off like a shot, making his twenty yards in the blink of an eye. He planted his left foot and came across the field, turning at the ten-yard-in mark. The ball had left my hand on autopilot, a thirty-yard frozen rope that hung there like a brown, fat bullet and hit Todd right in the numbers. There was a tiny, pristine moment when it looked like he was going to drop it, and then Todd found the handle, planted his other foot, and blazed past his stunned defender. It was thirty yards to the end zone, and as Todd gained speed, I looked over at the sidelines. The coach was smiling at me, and he gave me the thumbs-up, saying that he understood. I chanced a quick glance over at Lynn. She was jumping up and down, this incredible smile on her face. I looked downfield, and Todd was just crossing the goal line. He ran into the endzone like a man with a rocket strapped to his ass; his nearest pursuer was ten yards away. He ran across the width of the endzone, holding his forefinger in the air. It was a meaningless touchdown in a blowaway championship game, but for Todd...for Todd it was the culmination of four long years of hard work. A touchdown in the final seconds of the state championship game. I felt my heart welling, and tears in my eyes as the whistle went off, the crowd emptying onto the field. Todd made his way through the crowd, through the backslaps, tearing his helmet off. He didn't let go of the ball, though. Not until he got to Lynn.

She stood, waiting for him, her hands clasped across her breasts. Todd stopped short in front of her and looked down at her proud, tear-streaked face. He just smiled wider, and then shyly, he handed her the ball. Lynn took it in her left arm, and threw her right arm around Todd's neck. As my teammates lifted me onto their shoulders, the entire scene was framed for me like the final shot of a sports movie. The cheering crowd on the field, Todd and Lynn kissing like a returning war hero and his bride, and above them, above it all, the scoreboard, with the 00:00 blinking and the score screaming at me in six-foot high white bulbs: 34-0. It was a perfect ending to a perfect season.

Later, in the locker room, the guys drifted out until it was just Todd and me. He sat in front of his locker, still in his gear, as if he was reluctant to take it off. He just stared into the interior of his locker, breathing slowly and evenly. I'd showered and changed, and was preparing to leave. I sat on the bench next to Todd.

"Great catch, man," I offered.

"Yeah." His voice was distant. "Great throw," he added after a minute. "Just like we practiced...since I was seven." He laughed, a hollow laugh that made me feel suddenly wary. A little voice in the back of my head was screaming that something was up.

"I wanna thank you, man. You didn't have to do that. You took a big chance. I could have let you down, you know."

I clapped him on the back. "Nah," I said. "I knew you wouldn't."

"Yeah." Again, that hollow laugh. "Just like you didn't. Let me down, I mean." And then I knew. Todd knew. She told him. I looked at the floor, feeling my jaw clench. Was this the end of our friendship?

"I want to thank you again, man..." He let his breath out in a huge, long rush. "Lynn told me. About what happened up at the lake. She told me everything." I waited for the other shoe to drop. "And..." Todd stopped, searching for the words. "And...I'm not sure I could have done what you did, if the situations were reversed." Todd turned and caught the look on my face, and quickly moved to clear his position. "I mean...I probably couldn't have...stopped. I understand how it happened, and why it happened. And I want to...thank you...for letting me keep my girlfriend."

That stunned me. "Todd!" I started. He held up a warning hand.

"No, David...no. Don't. You're the starting QB. Captain of the team. BMOC. Handsomest guy in class. Straight-A honor student. Friend to all, enemy to none. You can stop me anytime."

I laughed, and then he laughed, and some of the tension was broken. "Seriously, David...if you and Lynn... had ended up making love up at the lake, it would have been over for her and me. A girl's first....that's something special. Something that can only happen once. My dad told me that women need a reason to have sex, and men just need a place. She gave you a reason, and you...did the right thing. The right thing by her, by me, by all of us, and I'll never forget it." He paused, as if he was thinking whether or not to finish it, and then he went ahead anyway. "Part of me wants to...hate you for what happened. But...I was there, you were here, she needed someone, and I couldn't be here... you were. You grew close. It happens. But...it all came out ok. Lynn and I are still together, and I trust her more, now, than I did. I know she loves me, and I know I love her. And for that, I want to thank you. I'll never forget it."

I stood and clapped him on the back. "Talk to you later man. Go find Lynn, go up to the lake, and enjoy yourself. I'm going home and going to bed." I was almost out of the locker room when his voice reached out to me.

"David?"

"Yeah, pal?"

"How was it man?"

"How was what?"

"Lynn. I still haven't gotten my hands on those tits!" He laughed, and I knew he was kidding. Sort of. I walked back over to him. "Todd...they're just bags of fat and skin. It's not her tits you want, it's what's under them that you want. Her heart. And that, that my friend, you've already got."

“Yeah, “ Todd agreed, “but she let you see them. And touch them. She let you touch her places she won’t let me. How do you think that makes me feel?”

I sighed. “Todd...this may sound strange, but here goes: When Lynn and I were up at the lake, it was the right time and place for... what happened. You and her just haven’t gotten to that time and place yet. It has nothing to do with you...specifically. She’s just...waiting until the right moment. Believe me, man...she loves you more than any man has a right to expect. Me, you...anyone. When the time and place are right...she’ll give herself to you in a way she could have never given herself to me, or any other man. What you two share is...perfect and special and wonderful. When the right time and place come along, you’ll understand what I mean.”

“Yeah, I guess,” Todd said softly. I clapped him on the shoulder and left.

June, 1973

The prom was winding down when I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned around to face Todd. He took my date’s hand from mine and escorted her to the dance floor. As Todd left my line of sight, I saw Lynn standing there, looking gorgeous in her special dress. She held out her arms, and I walked over and escorted her to the dance floor after Todd and my date.

It was a slow song, but not an overly romantic one. Lynn and I stared into each other’s eyes. I was leaving the next week for the Naval Academy. This was probably our last chance to be together. Midshipmen didn’t get a lot of time off.

“Looking forward to the Navy, David?” Lynn asked, and I just nodded. “Aren’t you glad the war is over?”

“Well, we’ve still got guys over there...” I started, and immediately regretted it. Lynn saw my stricken expression and smiled softly.

“It’s ok. You can talk about it. If anyone has the right to talk to me about Kevin, it’s you.” Her hand came down from my shoulder and found my right wrist. A sterling- silver MIA bracelet was around that wrist. It said simply “Lt. Kevin Walker” and below that “USA 6-23-72 Laos” I’d gotten it from the Association of POW and MIA Wives in Washington DC, and I’d sworn to myself that I’d wear it until either Kevin came home, or his body was accounted for. I hadn’t made a big deal out of the bracelet; as a matter of fact, I hadn’t told anyone. Lynn had just...noticed it. “I can’t tell you how much it means to me that you...made the effort to remember my brother.”

There wasn’t anything to say, so I didn’t say anything. We just danced the rest of the number, staring into each other’s eyes. I knew something Lynn didn’t know I knew. She and Todd were going to be spending the night in a hotel room that I’d helped him bankroll. Tonight, as Todd had solemnly informed me, was “The Night.” I’d even grabbed a couple of condoms for him; he was too embarrassed to buy them himself.

As the music ended, I leaned in and kissed her softly on the cheek. Then, unable to resist, I whispered in her ear, “Have fun tonight,” and straightened up. Lynn was blushing to the roots of her naturally blonde hair. She punched me on the arm and then gave me a wicked smile.

“I will!” she promised, turned and returned to Todd’s side. My date came back to me, and we spent the rest of the night in each other’s arms. I took her to the lake in my Mustang that night, and yeah, I fucked her in the backseat of the car. As I rose and fell above my date that night, I wondered what Lynn and Todd were doing, and if they were having as much fun as I was.

I figured they were probably having more. Discovering each other’s body for the first time was an incredible experience, and I was glad that Lynn had managed to save herself for Todd. I’d given Todd some quick lessons on what to do, aided by my parent’s copy of “The Joy of Sex.” He’d been simply amazed at all the different positions two people could twist themselves into, and I’d cautioned him into going slow, taking his time. I explained how a girl needs much more foreplay than a guy, and told him that Lynn would enjoy herself much, much more if he went slow and was patient with her. I left for Annapolis the next week. I said goodbye to Todd at the train station. Lynn didn’t attend, but Todd sent her regrets and her goodbyes. That was the last time I saw Todd.

October 1982

The voice caught me by surprise. It was the same. Honey-sweet with a touch of huskiness. “Hey, stranger!” I turned, and Lynn was standing there. She was older, more mature, as was I, but she still held the youthful beauty that had attracted me to her in the first place.

“Hey yourself!” We ran into each other’s arms and hugged like old friends do. Separating, we took stock of each other and smiled even wider. As a teenager, Lynn had been cute and sexy. As an adult, she was a knockout. Her hair was longer now, held back in a saucy, bouncy ponytail that made her look great. Her body was the same, a little fuller through the hips, and through the bust, but it was still a powerful male-motivating figure, and I knew that I was still powerfully attracted to her. Hell, you’d have to be dead not to be! She held my hands in hers and then looked down. My right wrist was sticking out of my jacket, and she saw the silver bracelet. It was a little scarred, little nicks and grooves testifying to the years I’d worn it. I’d been true to my word; I hadn’t taken it off but twice in the intervening ten years. I had a permanent tan line on that wrist, something I was very proud of.

“You dear sweet man,” she said softly, lifting one palm to cup my cheek. We locked gazes for a long moment, and then she dropped her hand back to mine. “So? Tell me? What are you doing with your life? Judging by that haircut, you’re still in the Navy! What should I call you? Admiral?”

I laughed. “Hardly. Lieutenant is more like it. I’m up for Lieutenant Commander, but I probably won’t make it this time. I’m still a little young. And I’m not due for a command quite yet. But...I’m back. I’ve been assigned to the hospital up near Pave Creek.”

At the mention of the word ‘hospital,’ Lynn’s eyes clouded, and she looked a silent question at me. “Oh, I’m sorry. I forgot to explain. I was in an accident during my Junior Cruise. Fell off the flight deck of the USS Nimitz onto an aircraft elevator. Broke my leg in three places. Jets went out the window, couldn’t

pass the flight physical. The doctor that flunked me told me to consider medicine. I went to medical school on the Navy's dime, and I've got four more years of my six before I can retire. I probably won't though. Being a Navy sawbones is kind of a nice way to make a living."

"You're a doctor?" Lynn asked, and I nodded. "What kind?"

"Trauma surgeon. Flight surgeon, actually. I can pass the flight physical for crewman, but not pilot."

"What does that mean?"

"That means that every six months I threaten one of the reserve pilots into taking me for a spin in an F-14D or F/A-18 so I can get some jet time. What happens up in the cockpit is the pilot's decision, and you wouldn't believe how cooperative they get when I threaten to flunk them on a flight physical! So, I get to fly...some times, and I get to stay in the Navy...and everything worked out for the best, I guess."

She just smiled. A little sadly, I thought. "So," I asked. "How... did things work out for you and Todd?"

Lynn held up her left hand and wiggled her bare ring finger at me. "They didn't." She saw my expression and burst out laughing. "Oh, no! That night in the hotel was...very special, and it went off without a hitch." She laughed even harder. "Todd told me all the...help you gave him." She paused. "I guess you didn't hear."

"Hear what?" Her face clouded again, and I felt that same feeling in my stomach.

"Todd died. About two years ago." I felt the world start to spin, and I had to sit down. The crowd was cheering now, but the game was forgotten for me. At least, the game that was happening here, now.

"How?" I asked softly. Lynn sat next to me and wrapped her hands up in mine. Leaning her head against my shoulder, she spoke softly and evenly. "He started getting headaches and he had problems with his vision. The doctors found...a mass...in his head. Inoperable. He went fast, about six months. I was with him to the end."

I was silent.. ..and then I started to cry. I felt horrible. I should have been there. I should have known.

"Ah, shit," I said.

Lynn just stroked my arm and hand. "Listen," she said, "Come by my place tonight, OK? I've got something I want to show you. And we can play memory lane, and catch up on all our news. About eight, OK?" I just nodded, and Lynn stood. "See you then." And she was gone.

I sat for a while, thinking about my best friend, glad that Lynn, at least, had been there for him when he needed it, just like I had been when she needed it. It all made sense, somehow.

Later that night, I went to Lynn's house. She answered the door dressed in jeans and a T-shirt. After a minute, I recognized the shirt. It was the T-shirt that Todd had worn underneath his jersey during The Game. It had been washed a thousand times since, but still bore our high school crest.

Lynn invited me in, and I could see that she'd been crying. We moved to the living room, and she sat next to me on the couch. "This is gonna be rough, David. Todd asked me to hold something... something for you. He wanted me to give it to you if I ever saw you again. We tried to contact you through the Navy, but it was during the whole Iran Rescue thing, and...well, no one at the Pentagon was talking. So, he wrote this," Lynn handed me a sealed envelope, "and asked me to give it to you."

I turned it over in my hands. It said, simply, "Scooter" on the front. My old nickname. I heard the name coming out of Todd's mouth a thousand times in my head, when we were kids, playing War and Cowboys & Indians and Cops & Robbers... I tore open the envelope. It was a single handwritten page, and just like in the movies, and on TV, I heard Todd's voice as I read the words:

Scooter-

It's funny how things work out, buddy. By now, Lynn has probably told you what's happening to me, and by the time you read this, I'll be gone. I wanted to say goodbye to you in person, but since we can't, I wanted you to know a few things. First, you are the best friend I ever had, and I'll always love you. For what you did for me all those years, and what you did for Lynn when I couldn't be there. Most of all, for that one spectacular moment in my life that wouldn't have existed if it were not for your kindness and generosity. That touchdown was the most perfect moment in my entire life, short as it is turning out to be (haha), seconded only by my first night with Lynn, another gift from you. You've enriched my life, and showed me what it means to be friends, and I'll never forget you, buddy.

Goodbye.

Love always,

"Red Right 39" Todd

I was crying openly by the time I finished it, and I carefully folded the note and returned it to the envelope. I placed it inside my shirt pocket and tapped it once, feeling the painful thumping in my chest. Lowering my head to Lynn's lap, I let it all out as she held me and stroked my hair. We stayed that way for about an hour, and I finally managed to pull myself together.

I sat up, and Lynn moved into my arms. She kissed me once on the cheek, and then on the nose...and then on the lips. And then it happened. We were both fighting against death, against the monster that had taken Todd...we wanted to feel alive and vital and human. Grasping, sweaty hands made short work of clothes, and before either of us knew it, we were naked on the couch, straining towards each other, feeling that long-denied passion growing and feeding on itself. I could feel Todd in the room, watching and smiling and cheering us on, as Lynn and I became one for the first time, enveloping each other in warmth and love and passion. It was a bit of unfinished business for us, something that gave closure to

the entire affair, and it was the most spectacular, intimate, tender moment of my entire life.

We spent the night together...and then the rest of our lives. It wasn't ever announced or discussed. I just moved in. The drive to Pave Creek every morning took about an hour, but it was worth it to return home and into Lynn's arms and bed every night. The night I proposed still stands out in my memory, and we were married seven months later. Eleven months after that, Lynn gave birth to our son, David Todd Clark.

In the fall of 1991, my seven-year-old son started playing Pop Warner football. The day uniforms were issued, David Jr came home proudly wearing number 43. Todd's number. Lynn and I stood and cried and held each other while our son looked at his parents as if they'd lost their mind. We both knew that it was a cosmic joke from Todd, that he'd reached out from whatever is after this life and told us that he was still with us, that he still loved us, and that he was still thinking of us.

“Shannon”

I love the TV show “Brisco County, Jr.” A few weeks ago, there was this episode where Brisco gets into a gunfight with his girlfriend’s ex-husband. They draw down on each other, Colt Peacemaker .45’s held steady in two hands. The ex-husband looks at Brisco across the divide between them and wryly observes, “We’re both in love with the same woman.”

Brisco nods, in that great-tradition of western heroes and observes, just as wryly, “Life’s funny that way.” I remember thinking that a more apt line had never been written concerning matters of the heart.

Life is funny that way. I started thinking about all the trite little phrases I’d heard applied to Life: Life is what’s happening to you while you make other plans. Life is a bitch, and then you marry one, and then you die. None of them are true, and to an extent, they’re all true.

Life is funny that way.

Especially when it comes to Shannon. I never would have thought that Shannon and I would end up where we are today. The road, for us at least, has been uneven and bumpy, filled with twisting little paths and unmarked turnoffs. Neither of us knew where we were going until we got there, and you would be hard-pressed to find two people more surprised than when we both realized what had actually happened between us.

Shannon has been my best friend for more than ten years. We met in college. She was a business major, eager to make her mark on the world and take the biggest companies by storm. I, being a computer science major, was more of a nerdy, geeky kind of guy than your average college stud, so it was pretty incredible that Shannon and I not only met, but became friends as well. It was almost beyond the pale of consideration that we would become the best of friends, as we managed, somehow, to do.

It all started when Shannon had to take a CS 101 level course, Introduction to Computers. I was also taking that course, but more for an easy “A” than anything else. I spent most of my time haunting the school’s computer lab, trying to snag as many cycles as I could for my own pet projects. My private thrill has always been Prime Number Theory, and the VAX system that the school ran finally gave me access to the kind of power I needed to further my projects.

I noticed Shannon on the first day of class. It would be hard not to. She was the kind of girl that stood out in a crowd. Not because she had the best body in the world, or because she was drop-dead model gorgeous. She was very pretty, in an understated, fresh kind of way. The kind of pretty that you know will last for the rest of her life. You know that when she’s sixty, she will still look very, very good, long after some of the more temporarily gorgeous women have come and gone. Her body was fine, it fit her well, but it just added to her overall effect. She looked... comfortable. I know that’s a stupid word to describe a woman’s body, but it was the kind of body that you knew you could press up against every night for the rest of your life. Her legs weren’t impossibly long, her breasts weren’t unbelievable huge. Everything was there, in good proportions. You just knew that

she'd also keep that body just the way it was through the rest of her days. What was unique about Shannon was her smile and her eyes.

Shannon had very dark black hair, and these piercing blue eyes that seemed to twinkle whenever she looked at you. When Shannon focused that gaze of hers on you, you felt like you were the only person on the planet. The rest of the world ceased to exist. The only thing that mattered was you, her eyes seemed to say. And when Shannon treated you to one of her thousand-watt smiles, you felt something melt inside you.

I noticed Shannon, but I didn't do anything about it. I knew my limitations, and to be honest, I wasn't real comfortable dating anyway. Women, unlike computers, were a mystery to me. I could program a computer to tap dance if I put my mind to it, but the program running inside a woman's brain was written in a language I could never decipher or understand. Talk about GIGO! It was more like EIEO, as Emotions In, Emotions out!

About six weeks into the semester, the class was given their first programming assignment. It was a prime-number program written in BASIC. Now, for people that have never programmed a computer before, an assignment like that can be quite daunting. I'd mastered BASIC at the age of 9, and had since moved onto C++ and other high-level languages. I was in the lab, cranking away on a Unix program that was going to deliver me some serious bignums, when I saw Shannon walk in. She was biting her bottom lip and looking around like a deer trapped in the headlights of an onrushing car.

She sat down at a free terminal, and after several tries, managed to log on to her student's account. As a system manager, I had the ability to monitor her session. As a matter of fact, I'd completed a neat little utility a few days ago that allowed any of the system administrators to watch what anyone else was doing by running this little program that displayed their screen on yours. So I ran the utility, called MYSPY, and watched on my screen as Shannon tried to figure the program out. She was going off in a completely wrong direction, and feeling a little sneaky, I decided to have some fun.

WRONG IDEA, I typed, and the words appeared on her screen.

I saw her sit up in shock and surprise. A second later, she typed, slowly: WHO IS THIS?

THIS IS THE COMPUTER, I typed back, trying not to laugh. YOU ARE DOING THIS WRONG.

I saw her sit back and stare at the screen for a good minute and a half. Then she leaned forward and typed FINE. WHAT AM I DOING WRONG?

That's the only opening I needed. WATCH, I typed, and then took control of her program. I moved the loop structures to the right place, declared the variables before they were used, and then rewrote about sixty percent of the program. The entire time, I gave Shannon a running commentary across the bottom of the screen, explaining what I was doing and why, using much more basic-sounding language than the BASIC computer language. SEE HOW THE LOOP IS CLOSED? IF YOU DECLARE THE LOOP VARIABLE RATHER THAN USING A NAKED "NEXT" STATEMENT, THE PROGRAM IS EASIER TO READ AND UNDERSTAND. EXAMPLE:

```
10 FOR X = 1 TO 20
20  FOR Y = 1 TO 10
```

```
30 PRINT X,Y
40 NEXT Y
50 NEXT X
60 END
```

IS MUCH MORE CLEAR THAN:

```
10 FOR X = 1 TO 20 : FOR Y = 1 TO 10 : PRINT X,Y : NEXT : NEXT
20 END
```

UNDERSTAND?

YES, she typed. CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION?

GA, I type, meaning "GO AHEAD."

ARE YOU REALLY A COMPUTER? she asked.

SOME PEOPLE THINK SO. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M NOT A COMPUTER?

BECAUSE I CAN HEAR YOU TYPING BEHIND ME, GREG. And then Shannon stood and walked over to me, treating me to my first thousand-watt smile. She sat down next to me and cupped her chin in one perfect hand. "So," she said, "Why did you help me?"

I just smiled at her. "You looked like you needed it," I said. "And I was glad to do it. If you have any questions, please ask me. I'm really good at this, and I like to help."

"I will," she said softly. "You've made what could have been a horrible assignment a little bit better. Thanks." And she stood, leaned down and kissed me on the cheek. Then she left, leaving me stunned, and to be honest, a little turned on.

For the rest of the semester, I tutored Shannon in basic computer theory. I explained the concepts of computer programming in English first, and then demonstrated how to translate those ideas into something the computer could understand and then execute. Shannon is very intelligent, and I had little problem teaching her everything she needed to know to get an "A" in CS 101. The semester brought to an end our association, and over the break I got a little depressed. Most business majors tend to take the minimum requirement in MIS courses, and I knew that she would probably be concentrating on Management and Finance courses, and that I'd probably never have a chance to help her again.

Shannon and I had become sort-of-friends. I helped her study, and she let me, and that was the end of it. We never went out, never had a beer, never went to each other's dorm room. I was vaguely aware that Shannon belonged to one of the sororities, but since that life had never appealed to me, I made no attempt to investigate which one. (I later found out that she was a TriDelta.)

When we got back to school for the new semester, it was about four or five days before I saw Shannon. I was in the lab, working on another one of my pet projects, when I sensed someone behind me. I turned and saw that it was Shannon and I felt something in my heart lift and soar free. She looked beautiful, standing there in a sweatshirt with our college's logo on it, and wash-faded jeans and sneakers. Her long black hair was pulled back in a ponytail, her freshly-scrubbed face free of any but the tiniest makeup.

“Hey, stranger, how was your break?” she asked, plopping down in the chair next to mine. We laughed and talked about what we’d done over the holidays.

“So, “ I asked, “You taking any MIS courses this semester?”

“No,” she said, and I thought that I detected a hint of something in her voice. “Listen, Greg...I want to talk to you about something. When are you going to be done here, anyway?” I glanced at my watch. “Well, unless some time frees up on the Vax, I can leave anytime, really.”

“You want to go get something to eat?” I just looked at her for a long, hard moment, and then I slowly nodded. I wasn’t sure what the hell was going on, but a little voice inside my head was screaming warnings.

In the months and years to come, I would learn to heed that little voice. But for now, it was a new experience to be having dinner with a beautiful, sexy woman.

We went to a burger place just off campus, and after we’d ordered, Shannon took a big sip of her beer and leaned forward. “I never really thanked you for all your help last semester... and... um...well, this is kind of hard...Listen, Greg...we got to be kind of...friends last semester, and just because you won’t be helping me anymore with my work, I don’t want tolose that. Do you know what I mean?”

“Yeah,” I said. “I kind of missed you, too.” She smiled, and then reached across to quickly squeeze my hand. “So, we’ll hang out a little, keep in touch, that sort of thing, right?” She nodded.

“Yeah,” Shannon said, “I still want you as a friend. A good friend.” I nodded, understanding my role in life. Friends.

Life’s funny that way. Even then, I knew that I wanted to be more than friends with Shannon, and even then, I knew that it was probably not going to be that way. I just... It just wasn’t going to happen.

The semester went on, and I saw Shannon on the average of about twice a week. Usually for lunch at the caf, or in the library. We would stop and talk and laugh and catch up on things. Towards the middle of the semester, I spotted Shannon in the library with a young man. I knew him from around campus; He was popular, a jock and big in the fraternity scene. Watching them together, it wasn’t hard to deduce that they were dating. Shannon was all smiles, and she took every opportunity to touch him, running her hands up and down his arms, across his back.

I stayed away, not wanting her boyfriend to misinterpret my attention towards Shannon. She...sensed what I was doing, and the smiles she gave me made it all worthwhile. Back then, especially at that age, friends, true ‘friends’ of the opposite sex are hard to explain to your significant other. Shannon and I had never talked specifically about it, but we both knew that we were, somehow, more than ‘just friends,’ yet less than boyfriend-and-girlfriend. It was something unexplainable and undeniable, but it existed, it was valid and true and one-of-a-kind. We were comfortable with it, as it was, and didn’t want to jeopardize it by exploring it any further.

Seeing her with her boyfriend made me realize something too. Somewhere along the line, I’d fallen in love with Shannon. Quietly, desperately in love with a girl that I could never have. And that presented a problem. It wasn’t the burning hormonal passion that marks ‘love’ at that age. I’d be lying if I said I never

thought of making love with Shannon. But that wasn't all of it. The feelings I had for her ran true and long and very, very deep. I knew, even then, that I'd have a special place in my heart for that woman for the rest of my life. Everyone has a person like Shannon in their life.

Life's funny that way.

The semester went on, and Shannon and her boyfriend (who I found out had a name: Eric,) grew closer and closer. I attended a midnight movie put on by one of the student committee, and spotted them in the back, necking urgently. Shannon looked like she was in another world, and I envied Eric at that moment more than I ever had envied another person in my entire life.

That's when I made a conscious decision to try and distance myself from Shannon emotionally. I wanted to be her friend, I knew that, but the feelings I was having for Shannon were just too painful. I decided then and there to be just her friend, nothing more, and set about actively trying to forget the fact that I was in love with her.

That worked for all of a week.

One Thursday night I was in my dorm room, studying for a calculus test. The numbers and squiggles were beginning to blur when I heard a soft knock on my door. Calling for whoever it was to come in, I shut the book and turned to see Shannon standing there, looking very pensive.

"What's up?" I asked.

"Can I talk to you? You got a minute?" I nodded and indicated that she should take a seat. My roommate and I had...performed some construction on the room. The beds had been lifted off the floor onto specially constructed lofts, and there was plenty of room underneath, which we'd furnished with second-hand couches. An unused steamer trunk acted as a combination coffee/card table. I took the couch opposite Shannon and looked at her expectantly.

"What's up?"

"Eric and I..." she started, and I knew this was going to suck big time. Shannon continued, "Eric...wants..." She sighed, looking around, searching for the words, searching for a way to tell me what I already knew.

"Eric wants to make love to you." I suggested, and Shannon's head snapped around.

"He TOLD you?"

"Of course not," I laughed.

"Then how did you know?"

"Because Eric and I are both men. And I know how men think."

"Oh." Her voice was quiet. I knew that Shannon was a virgin, just as she knew I was. "What do you think I should do?"

If that wasn't a conversational, emotional and every other kind of --otional land mine, I didn't know what was. I stalled for time, thoughtfully stroking my chin.

"What do you think?" I finally managed to ask, falling back on that old therapist's trick of answering a question with a question.

"Well...I do love him..." As she trailed off thinking about *that* particular topic, I felt my guts knot up in agony. "...but," she continued, "...I'm not sure I'm ready for this."

“Is he pressuring you?”

Shannon was silent for a long moment, and then she slowly nodded. “Yeah. He keeps telling me that if I really love him...” She smiled ruefully, knowing that I understood the position she was in.

“So tell him you’re not ready. If he loves you, then he’ll understand.”

“I tried that,” she said softly. “It didn’t work. Eric is... insistent. I’m almost afraid to be alone with him. Every time we get together, he starts...making moves, trying to get my clothes off... touching me where I’m not sure I’m ready to be touched yet.”

At that moment, had Eric been in front of me, I could have cheerfully strangled him. “Tell you what,” I said slowly, “why don’t I have a little...talk with Eric? I’m sure that if I explain things to him, he’ll understand what’s happening here.”

The hope and happiness on Shannon’s face made any physical discomfort I was sure to feel over getting the shit kicked out of my by her boyfriend worthwhile. I found Eric the next day in the library. He was hunched over a history book, his face a scowl of concentration as he tried to figure out why Germany invaded Poland.

I sat down across from him.

He looked up. “Hey,” he said, and then returned to his book, studiously ignoring me.

His hand was spread over the page, tracing the words as he read, his lips moving. Without a second thought, I reached over and swiftly slammed the book closed on Eric’s hand.

“Ow! HEY!” he said, starting to stand. I applied more pressure and he sat back slowly, holding his wrist. I stood, leaning even more of my weight down on the cover. Leaning close, I whispered, “If you ever, and I mean ever, threaten or pressure Shannon to sleep with you again, you *will* be sorry. Am I making myself clear?”

“I...I didn’t-” I gave him another little nudge with the book.

“Stop talking and start listening. I mean it, Eric. Shannon is a dear, sweet friend of mine, and if you don’t stop screwing with her head, you *will* be sorry. She loves you, you asshole. Let her work up to what you want to do in her own sweet time.” I slowly released a little of the pressure, and then applied twice as much. Eric yelped and tried to pull his hand out of the book. “If I have to talk to you again about this...” I warned. He just nodded. “Don’t put this hand where it isn’t wanted, you fucking jerk, or I’ll be back.” I lifted my hand and turned, leaving him sitting there, massaging his fingers with his good hand.

Shannon came to me two days later and threw her arms around my neck. “Thank you,” she said. “For whatever you did, for whatever you said, THANK YOU!” And then she kissed me on the mouth for the first time. It was a quick, chaste kiss, but it shook me to my toes.

“Eric is completely changed. It’s like he’s a whole other person! What did you say?”

I grinned at her. “I think it was more how I said it than what I said.”

“Well, whatever it was, thank you.”

Three weeks later, it all came crashing down. I was again in my room, studying chemistry this time, when Shannon showed up. She was crying, her eyes red-rimmed and puffy.

“Greg!” she wailed, running into my arms. Her face was against my chest and I could feel her shaking, she was sobbing so hard.

“What’s wrong?”

“Eric! I..I..” and then she lost it. She dissolved into wracking sobs. I just held her, stroking her back, wondering what the fucking bastard had done this time. If he’d hurt one fucking hair on her head!

Finally, Shannon managed to get herself under control. She sat on my couch, drying her eyes, sniffing as she tried to tell me the story. Apparently, she’d gone to visit him unannounced, and found him fucking another girl in his dorm room.

I sat down next to her and knew better than to say anything. I just wrapped her up in my arms and held her, rocking softly. She fell asleep that way, and I held her for a few hours. Towards midnight, she woke up, looked at me sleepily, and then stood, holding her hand out to me. I took it and she pulled me upright, and then led me to the ladder to my bed. She went first, and lay down. Not knowing exactly what was happening, I followed her.

What happened was that two friends slept together. Not in a sexual way. We didn’t even take our clothes off. I was on my back, and Shannon nestled her body against mine, throwing one lean thigh across mine, snuggling her head into my neck and shoulder. Her arm came across my chest, and we slowly drifted off.

As sleep slowly took me, I thought that I could get used to the feeling of Shannon sleeping next to me.

Life’s funny that way.

When the morning came, there was no awkwardness, none at all. Shannon woke shortly after I did and kissed my cheek again. “Thanks,” she said. “I just needed to be held...without any of that other stuff.”

“I’m glad you felt you could trust me,” I said.

“Of course I can trust you, silly! You’re my best friend!” I felt a wave of conflicting emotions. Glad she felt that way, and sad that she felt only that way about me.

She went on her way, and I got ready for classes. I was walking across the quad when Eric found me.

“Hey, asshole!” I heard him shout. I sighed and stopped. He came up behind me. “Just couldn’t wait, could you?” he asked. “Just couldn’t wait to get your hands on my girlfriend.”

I turned to face him. “First off, Eric, not that it’s any of your goddamned business, but nothing happened. We just slept together. She needed someone she could trust. That obviously means you’re left out. Secondly,” I said, taking a step

forward, "I don't think that Shannon is yours' or for that matter, anyone's girlfriend right now. We're just friends, ok?"

Eric took a couple of deep breaths. "I'm sorry," he finally managed. "Look, ya gotta talk to her man, you just gotta! I love her! I don't want to lose her!"

"You should have thought of that before you cheated on her!" "C'mon, man...you know how it is. She wasn't giving me any...a man has needs, you know! It didn't mean anything to me! It was just fucking!"

I shook my head sadly. "I'll tell you what I'm going to do, Eric. I won't talk to Shannon about you, and I mean that I won't say anything either way, good or bad, unless she asks me. But you have to figure out what is important to you. If you want to be with Shannon, then you're going to have to respect her wishes and be faithful to her. If you don't, and you need to...fuck...as you so eloquently put it, find someone else. Shannon's just not ready for that yet."

And with that, I left him to his devices.

Eric and Shannon broke up shortly after that. Shannon dated on and off, a few different guys, never getting serious. That summer, I took two classes and worked as a part-time systems manager for the school. Shannon became a summer camp counselor somewhere near Boston. When she returned for the fall semester, she was bursting with news.

Apparently, during the summer, she'd met her True Love, a man who waited until the moment was right, waited until Shannon was ready to give him her most special gift. They'd made love under the stars in the woods one night, and Shannon was sure that she was going to marry this man.

I was happy for her, because she seemed to happy for herself. That lasted until a three-day weekend, when Shannon conned me into driving her to her boyfriend's school for a surprise visit. After seeing how Shannon's last surprise visit to a boyfriend had turned out, I wasn't sure I wanted to go along, but as always, Shannon knew that I could deny her nothing.

The drive was about four hours, and I waited in the car while she went up to his apartment. I wanted to make sure that he was home, and that everything had turned out ok. Ten minutes later, Shannon came back downstairs, got into the car and told me to drive back to school. Right that minute.

It had happened again. He'd had a girl in the apartment. They weren't naked and fucking, but they were obviously headed in that direction when Shannon had knocked on the door.

We drove back to school in silence.

The rest of our college careers passed rather quickly. Shannon dated off and on, but never allowed herself to develop any serious feelings for any man. I'd started to date to, but could never get past the necking stage. It wasn't that I was trying to, mind you, but I just got the feeling from the girls that I was dating that they weren't looking to deepen the relationship.

So, I graduated college still a virgin. It wasn't a big deal for me, but it was mildly annoying. Shannon and I started the process of getting a job. Interviews, resumes, the whole works. My degree in computer science helped a little, because back then computers were still a young science.

I interviewed about a dozen times, and then my break came. A rather large computer company was expanding in our area, and was looking for hardware technicians that had software experience. I covered both bases pretty well, and was hired on the spot.

I returned to my new apartment and immediately placed a call to my best friend Shannon. The phone rang about six times and then a breathless Shannon answered: "Hello?"

"Hey! I got some great news!"

"Greg! I have great news, too!" We both started talking at the same time, and then I graciously said, "Go ahead. You first."

"Well, a friend of mine got me an interview today for a sales and marketing position. The job is really good, and the money's great! I killed them in the interview, and I got hired! I've got a job!"

"That's great! I got a job too!" I went on to talk about my new job, and after I was finished, there was dead silence on the other end of the phone.

"Shannon?" I said.

"CyberDyne? You're going to be working for CyberDyne?"

"Yeah. In the business systems divisions, why?"

"Because I'm the project manager for the business systems divisions of CyberDyne. We're working for the same company!"

We shared a moment of stunned silence, and then burst out laughing. "You have *got* to stop following me around, Greg!" Shannon teased.

The next year passed relatively quickly. Although Shannon and I worked for the same company, we really didn't work together. I was on the customer service and technical side, and she was in sales and marketing. Technically, she was in a higher position than I was, but she never held it over me. On the two or three occasions we had to work together, Shannon always treated me as an equal, a member of the team, rather than as an underling.

And something else cool happened; I finally got a girlfriend. Her name was Molly, and she was a techie like me. The only thing rarer than a hardware engineer that was also a programmer was a female hardware engineer and programmer. Molly was smart, scary smart, and we got along great. A friend of mine told me after she and I had been working together for about six months that Molly had a crush on me, and had been looking for a way to let me know how she felt and that she wanted to go out with me.

We started dating, and settled into a comfortable existence. Shannon was dating off and on, too, and the four of us double dated a few times. I wasn't sure that I wanted Molly and Shannon to get together, seeing as how a little piece of my heart still belonged to Shannon. Shannon, if she knew, handled it perfectly. I was just an old college friend of hers, and we took great pains not to share private

jokes or tell old war stories around either of our dates.

Molly and I finally slept together. It happened after the company picnic when we were both drunk. It was clumsy and awkward, but loving. Neither of us really knew what we were doing, but we managed somehow to get it done.

Afterwards, we fell asleep, and in the morning, Molly told me that she thought we needed to do a little...research on the subject. She went out and got some books and we taught each other everything about sex.

Which brings me to that topic. I had a lot of affection for Molly, but no passion. I liked her, a lot, but I didn't love her, and I knew that I wasn't *in love* with her. Maybe it wasn't fair of me to lead Molly on, but as I look back on it now, I realize that we were using each other. Not in a bad, cold way, but using each other nonetheless. She wanted someone to sleep with and snuggle with, and I wanted the same thing. Neither of us were fooled; this wasn't the world's great romance by anyone's standards. It was basically satisfying, comfortable, familiar sex.

But there was no passion. I missed that. I wanted some passion in my life. About the only thing I could feel passionate about was the fact that I knew I still loved Shannon.

Things with Molly and Shannon came to a head when Shannon's father died. He had a heart attack and died in his sleep. Shannon's mother tried to wake him, and then realized what had happened. The phone call came at about four in the morning.

A ringing phone after midnight is never cause for celebration. As soon as the phone started ringing, I knew something was wrong. Molly was spending the night, and the phone was on her side of the bed. Before I could get to it, she'd answered it.

"Lo?...oh, hi Shannon. What? Sure, just a minute." Wordlessly, her face still buried in the pillow, Molly handed me the phone.

"Hmmm?" I managed to grunt.

"Greg, it's me. Can you come over? I know this is a bad time and that you...have company, but I really need you."

"What's wrong?"

"My father died. I need you, Greg."

I was instantly awake and sitting up in bed. "I'm on my way." I got up and tried to dress as quietly as possible. I didn't even tell Molly what was going on. In retrospect, that was a pretty shitty thing to do. But at the time, my thoughts were focused on Shannon.

I made it over to her apartment in about ten minutes flat. And then I spent the next six days there. Not once did I call Molly. I found out later that she heard about Shannon's father through the company grapevine. But at that time, it didn't matter to Molly why I was gone. She only knew that I was, and that I'd left to be with another woman. Molly knew that there was nothing sexual going on between Shannon and I, but it didn't take her very long to figure out where my heart and head were.

When we got back from burying Shannon's father, Molly was waiting for me in my apartment. She had that We Have To Talk look on her face, and until the moment I'd walked through the door and seen her sitting on the couch, I had completely forgotten about Molly's role in all this. I immediately felt like a shitheel, and thought about apologizing. Then I realized that apologizing would only make matters worse.

I simply walked over to the couch and sat down, ready and eager to talk.

With no preamble, Molly asked, "You love her, don't you?"

I had no answer that would satisfy. I simply nodded.

Slower now, with more emotion: "Are you in love with her?"

"I think so," I said thickly. It was hard to talk. My tongue was swollen and dry.

"So...if I stay with you, if I stay with us...we'll always have this between us. This wall, this...person. Between you and I ever being truly happy." She was getting close to crying, but I knew the worse thing in the world I could do would be to move to take her into my arms. I just sat and let her have her moment. She was due this, if not a hell of a lot more. I'd acted like an asshole, had treated her poorly. She'd done nothing to me but love me. And to my eternal shame, I would never be able to return that love. Not the way she wanted. Molly, too, would have an affectionate place in my heart. But not the same kind of place that Shannon could claim as her own. It sucked, it really sucked.

But life is funny that way.

"I didn't mean to hurt you," I offered lamely.

"I know," Molly said, and there was more resignation than bitterness in her voice. "That only makes this harder. I knew you didn't do it on purpose. I know you didn't mean to hurt me. I want to hate you, Greg, but God help me, I can't. You just followed your heart, that's all." She paused. "The only saving grace...the only reason that I'm not mad as hell is because Shannon was in your heart long before you met me. I couldn't take it if you'd left me for another woman you'd met after me. That would have killed me. But Shannon...she was a part of your life long before we ever met."

I didn't say anything. There was nothing to say.

Molly got up and moved closer to me. She reached out a hand and found my face, her fingers lightly caressing my cheek. Her friendly, almost sensual touch surprised me. "Listen to me, Greg. I love you, but I'll get over it. I'll go on with my life. We can still work together, you and I. I know that you're man enough to understand what's going on here. But... and I mean this sincerely, as a friend...you have got to do something about Shannon. Either get something started with this woman, or get her out of your life. Living in this constant state of want is going to eat you alive unless you do something about it.

"If you need me, if you need to talk to someone about it, I'll always be here for you. I know that we're still going to be friends, Greg. I know that about you. You're the type that doesn't want anyone to think badly of you. And I want to be your friend. Talk to her, Greg. Go and see her and tell her how you feel. The worst she can say is that she doesn't want to be with you. But then at least you'll know, and you can deal with it and get on with your life.

"Who knows?" she said ruefully. "Maybe, if things don't work out between

you and her, we'll get back together." She looked at me for a long moment and then slowly, sadly shook her head. "No...that won't happen. She'll always be between us. I'll always know that you left my side for hers, even when she needed it. We won't get back together.

"But," Molly added as a final note, echoing my own thoughts, "I'll always have a special place for you in my life, Greg. You were my first lover, and so far, my best lover!" Her weak joke made me smile, and Molly leaned forward and kissed me one last time. Then she got up and left my apartment.

Two days later, despite what she had said, Molly resigned.

I brooded over what Molly had told me for the same two days. She was right, she had a good point, but I couldn't bring myself to confront Shannon. Over the next couple of weeks, the need to get it out in the open slowly faded, and Shannon and I faded back into our comfortable relationship. I was basically happy with the way things were, and in the back of my head I guess I was afraid that if I pushed the issue, that Shannon wouldn't be in my life anymore. And that I couldn't bear.

I went over to Shannon's house for dinner the next Friday. She was still on bereavement leave and hadn't returned to work. She answered the door wearing jeans, a man's white T-shirt and a flannel shirt over that. She looked warm and comfy.

Her greeting caught me off-guard. "I heard about you and Molly, I'm sorry." I just nodded and hoped Shannon would leave it at that. But of course she didn't. I followed Shannon into the kitchen and watched as she finished preparing our meal.

"So," she asked after a few tense moments, "What happened?"

I chose my words carefully. "Molly was not pleased that I got out of bed the instant you called," I started.

"I thought it might be that."

Now or never.

"But that's not all," I said.

"Oh?" Shannon was still distracted, buzzing around the kitchen. I hoped she was listening closely enough for what I had to say next.

"She thinks...rightly so, I might add...that our relationship was...doomed. Because...um...I have feelings for someone...else."

There. I'd said it. And Shannon heard it, because she froze. She had been chopping tomatoes for the salad. Her hands went still on the cutting block, her back to me.

"Oh really? Who?"

I took a seat at the table, my elbows on my knees, looking at the floor. I heard Shannon turn and walk over to the table. Holding the cutting board in one hand, she used the edge of the knife to scrape the tomato chunks into the salad bowl.

She was standing next to me. She was less than a foot away. I could smell her hair, and underneath that, her clean, pure scent. Almost as if it had a mind of its own, my hand reached up and slowly stroked her stomach through the shirt. I heard Shannon's sharp gasp, but she didn't step back or move my hand away.

My hand moved slowly, gently stroking Shannon through the shirt. Her tummy was flat and firm, and this was a whole new experience for me. This first touch,

this first electric, sexual touch between us was incredible. I started breathing deeper, my eyes getting heavy with passion. My hand moved slowly up, a single finger tracing between Shannon's breasts. I moved it over the top of one breast, just tracing the edge. I chanced a look up. Shannon's eyes were closed, and she was biting her bottom lip.

My fingers trailed down and over her left breast. I felt the subtle bump of her nipple under my fingers, and as I touched it, Shannon gasped and pushed her breast harder against my hand. One of her own came up to capture mine, and she pressed it still harder against her.

Still not a word had been spoken.

My hand left her breast and moved down again, finding her belly and stroking it softly. Shannon opened her eyes but didn't look at me. There was something behind them, something I couldn't describe or identify.

Slowly, I tugged the T-shirt out of her waistband. As soon as there was room, my hand slipped underneath. The feel of her warm skin was incredible. She felt warm and alive, different than Molly ever had. I repeated my actions, this time on her bare skin. As my finger ascended between her breasts, I felt her bra. My palm captured her breast again, and Shannon moaned loudly.

I stood, turning her to face me. My free hand came up and found her face, stroking her cheek with my fingers as I slowly approached her with my lips. Shannon and I had kissed a thousand times as friends. This would be the first kiss as man and woman.

Our lips touched, softly at first, and then harder as the passion and hunger grew. I heard a moan, more of a whimper really, come from Shannon, and then her lips opened against mine. Sucking and kissing my lips, her arms came around my neck, lifting the T-shirt, giving me freer access to her body.

My hand massaged her breast, feeling the nipple stiffen under my loving touch. The dam all but burst then. We were finally doing, finally kissing and gasping and feeling all over each other's body. One of Shannon's hands dropped from my neck and found my asscheek. She squeezed it with her hand, making me moan as she pulled me harder against her.

"Make love to me, Greg! Please!" Her plaintive cry drove me crazy. I scooped Shannon up into my arms and carried her into the bedroom. She stared into my eyes as I carried her, and a small smile played at the corner of her mouth.

"You're my best friend," she said softly. "There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you. You've been there for me when no one else would. You've never hurt me, and I know you never would. I love you, Greg. I've loved you for so, so long."

"Why didn't you say anything?" I whispered, setting her down on the bed.

"Because I didn't want to take the chance you didn't feel the same way. I mean, I knew you loved me...but I didn't know if you wanted me."

I stood back a little and crossed my arms, removing my sweatshirt. "I've wanted you for so long...I've loved you forever. "

My jeans and underwear were gone in a heartbeat, and I fell to the bed, naked, ready for love. Shannon helped me undress her, and then I was discovering all the secrets of her body one by one, learning that she loved to have the small of her

back kissed and lightly stroked, discovering that the inside of her left knee drove her insane. I finally tasted the woman I love at her very center, and found that the taste was ambrosia itself. I found God in the temple of her body, and I promised myself that I would worship every single day for the rest of my life.

And then we were one on the bed together, our bodies moving in sweaty, urgent harmony, her sex wetly, moistly clutching at me, making me groan into the hollow of her neck as she convulsed around me, her legs around my waist, her hands on my ass, pulling me against her harder.

The night went on and on and on. All those years of repressed desire had finally found an outlet, and we surprised each other with the depth of our love, passion and hunger for each other. The sights and the sounds and the scents in that room will remain with me always. And one more sound, the sound of gentle, comfortable laughter, a sound that should be heard in more bedrooms. Shannon and I snuggled against each other in the wolf hours of the night, softly teasing each other's bodies, telling secrets, giggling at each other, drunk and intoxicated with the knowledge that we'd each found our perfect soul mate, a person that had been under our noses the entire time.

Life's funny that way.

Part II
Older Women &
Younger Men

“Connie”

Along with the bright, rational sunlight of a new day dawning on the city came yet another decision of what to wear. Well, not what to wear, exactly, but what to wear under what I wear. The clothes that I must show to the world are predefined by my career choices and my desire to succeed as a corporate attorney. Severely cut, unflattering business suits are basically the required uniform for the day. However, no one at my firm can control what I wear underneath those horrid clothes, and so that's where I let my true self be expressed. That's where I let the identity I keep so well concealed has the ability to express itself. And how do I express my true nature? My inner self?

By wearing the sexiest, silkiest lingerie I can find. The specially constructed walk-in closet next to my bedroom might be filled with suits and dresses in another woman's life. Mine contains those items that allow me to be free on the inside, even when the stupid societal constraints force me to wear unflattering and concealing, constricting attire. It also contains all my shoes, and my toys. Other women collect silly porcelain figures or stupid painted plates or velvet pictures of Elvis. Me? I collect sex toys to use on my sometimes-unsuspecting but always-willing partners. There hasn't been a man in my bed who hasn't gone along exactly with what I wanted, when I wanted, and how I wanted. And for those times when there wasn't a regular visitor between my sheets, the toys came in very, very handy.

Like this morning, for instance. After getting out of the shower, I felt that annoying tingle between my legs. Normally, I would welcome it and encourage it, allowing it to grow and spread until it covered my entire body, only giving into the ultimate release of pleasure and joy when it became unbearable. But this morning, there was no one to share it with, no one to inform about it, no lover waiting in my bed to surprise with my always-eager sexuality. All I had was myself, my hands and fingers...and my toys.

Pulling open one of the black lacquered drawers, I located a nice seven-inch vibrator and a hand mirror. I took them back to my bed and lay back against the pillow, spreading my legs and lightly stroking the silky, soft skin of my inner thighs as I remembered an intimate experience I'd had a few weeks ago with a man I'd met at the Knicks game. He'd been hungry for me, that I could see in his eyes. He'd taken me back to his loft near midtown, and we'd spent the night testing the limits of each other's endurance and stamina. In the end, I'd won, as I always do, and he'd begged for the chance to sleep and recharge his batteries. I remembered what we'd done to each other as I felt myself moistening between my legs, the thick, engorged lips of my pussy getting slick and hungry for stimulation.

I enjoyed a leisurely session of masturbation as I remembered my recent lover's successful attempts to bring me to orgasm over and over again. The vibrator, although wonderful between my legs, was no replacement for a real, live blood-filled cock, and I ached for a man to share this moment with. Glancing at the

clock, I saw that I was running a little late, so I quickly cleaned myself up and prepared for work.

I chose some sheer stockings (no seam, after all, I did have to go to work...) a nice red and black satin garterbelt, black crotchless panties and a matching sheer demicup bra. Had I been dressing to go out, (or even stay in, with the right partner,) I would have gone with nippleless bra and higher heels, but since today was a work day and not a play day, I settled for the demibra and mid-sized heels. The conservative business suit I draped over my sexy, alluring body hid all my delicious curves and made me look like a spinster schoolmarm. Ah, the price one has to pay for corporate success.

Sighing, anticipating the moment when I could tear these clothes from my body, I went to work.

=*=

Of all the forms of law I could have chosen to practice, corporate law has the smallest percentage of actual in-court time. (Aside from patent law, which is basically a subset of corporate law, in my opinion.) Most of my days are spent in my office, going over merger agreements and leveraged buy outs. My specialty is fending off attempted hostile takeovers. In the 80's, it was an explosive way to practice law. In the merger-happy 90's, with corporate downsizing and cost-cutting across the boards, the financial rewards are smaller, but there is still money to be made out there, and I'm one of the best.

On this particular day, I was working on fending off the hostile takeover of a large cookie manufacturer by an international conglomerate. It was boring, repetitious work, but I tried to make the best of it as I kept one eye on the clock. I had a meeting with a new client scheduled in twenty minutes, and I'd rather be doing that than this. Finally, the time rolled around for me to meet this new person, and I buzzed my secretary to see if he had arrived yet. He had, and Janice, my secretary, showed him in. My appointment book listed him as "D. Wagner, Wagner Importing," and that was it. He was a referral from another client.

As I rose from behind my expansive, glass-topped desk to greet him my thoughts were on other subjects. A rather boring looking man entered my office and took my offered hand, then sat in the chair across from my desk. He introduced himself as David Wagner, and quickly explained that he owned an importing business and that he was being pressured to sell out. He wanted to know what his legal options were.

As I explained David's options to him, I noticed that his eyes were crawling all over my body. Not in an annoying, cloying way, but more in an appreciative way. It had been a long time since a man had looked at me that way when I was wearing one of my corporate monkey suits. I found myself oddly flattered and getting a little turned on.

We concluded our business quickly. As David stood to leave, he hesitated, then turned back to me and said, "Uh... I'm not very good at this, and I hope I'm doing the right thing. I don't suppose you'd be interested in having dinner with me tonight, would you?" The look on his face was a combination of hope and

something else, something I couldn't describe. It looked almost as though he was already sure I would tell him no, thank you. But the look of eager hopefulness shone through any other emotion, and on the spur of the moment I decided to accept. We agreed to meet at a midtown restaurant after work, and he smiled and left.

David Wagner. I sat, slowly twirling in my chair as I thought about the man I'd just met. There was something about him, something a little distant and sad, that interested me. Most of the men that I dated were aggressive and confident. They were masculine examples of all that was wonderful about men. David was different. He was unsure of himself, nervous that I would say no, that I would turn him down. He was an interesting man.

=*=

The restaurant was doing brisk business when I arrived, shortly after seven. The headwaiter showed me to David's table, and he rose to greet me this time. We shook hands and sat across from each other in the intimate booth. He'd ordered a carafe of wine for the both of us, and we enjoyed a few glasses as we unwound from the stress of the day and talked about our respective jobs. When the waiter came to take our dinner order, David offered to order for the both of us, and I allowed him to. Dinner was delicious, and I found David to be a funny, intelligent conversationalist who had opinions on everything, and more importantly, wanted to hear my opinions as well. He flattered me a few times, telling me how deep and blue my eyes were, how much he liked my legs, things like that. The compliments were delivered in a way that told me David almost expected a rebuke from me.

Slowly, over dessert, it came out that David didn't have very much experience with women. He admitted that he hadn't been out on a date in almost a year, and that he hadn't dated very much at all, for that matter. It was obvious that he felt alone and unattractive. Make no mistake, David was in no danger of channeling Fabio for the most handsome man title, but he wasn't a slouch either. He was just a little...withdrawn is all. Very unsure of himself. He needed his confidence lifted a little. He needed an overwhelming success with a woman.

That's when I decided to give him one. We were having after dinner drinks when I slid a little closer to him and started turning the charm on. I laughed prettily at all his jokes and made it a point to touch his hands and arms as much as I could. He turned to look at me, a question in his eyes. He wasn't sure if it was happening, but I saw the naked hope on his face that it was indeed happening, finally happening to him.

He paid the check and we stood in front of the restaurant. He offered to pay for a cab back to my apartment, and I told him that he was welcome to...but only if he joined me in the cab. He blinked a few times, and then nodded once, quickly. The cab ride was a little strange. I'd slid over to David's side of the cab and was softly stroking his thigh as the cab slid through traffic.

Once we got back to my apartment, I started to feel much more comfortable. I installed David on the couch and went to change into something much more

comfortable. I got out of the strangling suit and put a silk dressing robe on over my lingerie.

Re-entering the living room I found David still on the couch.

David was sitting exactly where I'd left him, in the same precise position. He hadn't moved an inch. I made us drinks and brought them over to him, sitting down next to him, but not too close. We clinked glasses softly and sipped once. Taking David's glass from his hand, I set it down on the coffee table (screw the coasters! I thought) and turned to face him.

The room was very, very quiet. The sound of the traffic outside the window was the only break in the silence. David's soft, brown eyes locked with mine, and I moved my face a fraction of an inch towards his. He moved too, a fraction closer. Slowly, with the inevitability of the sun rising, we approached each other. I could smell him, his masculine scent, feel his hot breath on my face...and I started getting seriously excited.

We kissed each other for the first time. His lips were soft and warm. My head twisted for another angle, kissing him again, just as softly. I could feel him leaning towards me, into me, and I opened my mouth to moan with arousal.

David pulled back as if he'd been shocked.

"Did I hurt you?" he asked, worry all over his face. I had to struggle not to laugh. I wasn't laughing at him... but it was funny and touching in a...well, sad kind of way.

"You've never...necked?" I asked, and I saw the shame and embarrassment flood across his face.

"No. There weren't any girls who...wanted....." And at that moment, I realized how lonely this man must be. I remembered how he'd looked at me in my office, with that

mixture of hope and sadness on his face. I knew that he had thought, then at least, that regardless of his feelings for me, that I would never want him.

That no woman would ever want him. That he was somehow...not enough. Not handsome enough. Not sexy enough. Not successful enough. Whatever the woman of the moment was looking for, he would just not...be enough.

I took his face in my hands and turned him back to me, urgently, hungrily kissing his mouth, letting my tongue play across his lips. "So," I said, pulling away, still stroking his strong jaw with one finger, "you are...?"

"A virgin," he confirmed. "In every sense of the word."

"You've never...anything?"

He giggled suddenly. "This," he said, taking a deep breath, "is the furthest I've ever been with a girl. I mean. ..I've read, and I've thought about it a lot. But...no real experience."

He lay back, resting his head on the back of the couch. I lay against him, my head once again on his chest, my hand rubbing his pecs through the blue oxford he wore. Jesus! I thought. A completely unspoiled virgin. Unsullied. Mine to do with as I please. To teach and instruct on the ways of adult physical love. This was going to be *great!*

"David," I whispered. "I don't know quite how to say this." I paused, and he waited for me to continue. "I'm very attracted to you, and I want to be with you."

There was a very long pause. Finally he said, "You'll have to show me. I'm...not sure what to do... exactly. I mean, I'm familiar with the theory and all that...it's just that you'll have to tell me when I'm doing something wrong, or too fast or whatever." I smiled, not

only at his words, but because the anticipation of being with me had started a rather interesting effect in his pants, an effect that I was now witnessing.

David nodded and kissed me, softly. We pulled apart, foreheads touching. "We don't have to do this tonight, I know that. I want you to be comforted."

"David," I said. "Shut up!" Standing, I held my hand out, and he took it, standing to follow me into my bedroom. I closed the door to the outside world and turned to face my new lover. He was staring at me, this hilarious dreamy expression on his face.

I stepped up next to him and slung my arms around his neck. We kissed, his hands at the small of my back. I opened my mouth and slowly let my tongue ease its way into his mouth, finding his tongue and touching it, teasing it with my own. I pulled my tongue back, and he followed it with his own, understanding what was happening. We did that for a few minutes, letting the hunger and the passion grow and feed upon itself. I reached behind me and took one of his hands, placing it on my buttock. David's hand closed around my cheek, and he gasped into my mouth, feeling my soft, resilient flesh under his touch. The silk dressing gown outlined and highlighted all my curves.

David's other hand dropped, of its own volition, to my other cheek, and he drew me against him, pressing my body to his, letting his chest flatten and press against my breasts.

The kiss gained heat, and my hands came to his face, holding his cheeks in my own palms, guiding him. His lips worked hungrily against mine, and I felt and heard him moan into my throat, once...twice. Reaching behind me again, I grabbed one of David's hands and lifted it to my left breast, placing his fingers around it. He felt and tested the heft and weight of my tit, his fingers slowly tightening his grip. His touch was so...hungry, I decided. Desperate for human contact, for connection. I had no doubt that tonight was going to be the most passionate and romantic night of my life.

Stepping back, I smiled my secret little smile and turned around. I slid the gown off my shoulders and let it fall in a black silk puddle at my feet. I was reminded of Christmas morning, of finding brightly wrapped presents under a lighted tree, of the joy of opening new boxes, finding new toys and playing with them. David's warm, soft hands caressed my back, from my neck to the top of my buttocks, tracing the edge of my garter belt.

"My God," he whispered, as he saw the sexy undergarments I wore.

I felt his breath on my skin, and he kissed my spine. I shivered and turned around again, losing myself in another passionate kiss. David returned to the one-hand-on-the-breast-and-one-hand-on-my-ass thing, and I knew that I really had to tell him what to do, to show him how to make love to me.

"Undress me," I said softly. "Make me naked for you. Explore my body. Find its secrets!" David looked at me for a second, his smile wide and boyish. David saw my bra-covered breasts, my aroused, itchy nipples pushing two hot points

through the cups. Like most men, David was fascinated by my breasts, and dropped his head for a closer look.

He kissed one, his hot breath almost stinging me through the silk of my bra. "Use your tongue," I said. "Lick my nipple." He did as I told him and softly, gently licked at me through my bra. My fingers were in his hair, pulling his head to me as I arched my neck and shivered. His patience and understanding were so arousing!

Moving to the other breast, David repeated his actions from the first, blowing and kissing and then gently licking my nipple.

I straightened up and basked in David's glow. His eyes were wide with wonderment as he took in my scantily-clad form. I could feel the arousal building in me; David looked at me like I was the most beautiful girl in the entire world. And at that moment, that's exactly what I felt like. The definition of female perfection.

"Now you," I whispered. David was wearing a shirt, tie and slacks. I stepped in close to him and worked the knot on his tie, kissing his chin as I worked. The tie came loose and I slid it out from under his collar, loving the slick, silky 'hsss' sound it made. I tossed the tie over my shoulder and bent to his buttons, working them quickly. I parted the shirt and gasped. David had a wonderful body! His muscles were clearly defined, a light sprinkling of dark brown hair, hair that matched the curly mop on his head, covering his pecs and leading down to his navel.

I parted the shirt even more, sliding it off his arms. I kissed his chest, right between his nipples, using an opened-mouth kiss that let me taste his hot skin. He smelled wonderful...manly. My hand came up and grasped his breast the same way he had mine, and I thumbed his nipple. He gasped.

I giggled. "Didn't know your own were as sensitive as mine, didya?" He just moaned as I continued to work his breast. My hands dropped to his belt as I continued to kiss and lick his chest. The belt came open under my fingers, and I slid it out from the loops, tossing it over my shoulder to join David's tie in a crumpled heap in the corner. The snap of his pants was next, and then my fingers worked his zipper. It was...hard...going for a second as the zipper had to climb this little...mountain. David's pants fell, and he stepped out of them, having kicked off his shoes moments ago.

David and I stood, kissing each other, he in socks and boxers, I in my underwear. We just stood and enjoyed each other's bodies for a few moments, David's hairy chest, scratching against my sensitive breasts and abdomen. He was so warm against me that I never wanted this to stop.

Finally, I whispered, "Take off my bra..." David's hands ascended to the back of my bra, and he fumbled with the catch. I smiled into his chest and let him work; like all young men encountering this problem, he would have to learn how to do it. I turned, so he could see what he was doing, and felt the sudden release of the elastic. David's fingers crept up to my shoulders, sliding the straps down my arms. I felt the bra fall away, my heavy, full breasts settling against my chest.

David's eyes were as big as saucers. I tried not to laugh, but couldn't help it. "You look like someone who just found religion!" I teased.

“Well then,” he said back, “let me kneel and worship!” And his mouth closed around my naked breast for the first time. The pleasure shot straight to my brain, and to my crotch. I felt myself moistening even more, getting ready for his penetration. That was going to be special, wonderful.

But as I was going to teach David, getting there was half the fun. Yes, he would discover that there were times when hunger and passion overtook you, that there were times when it was more fun and more desirable to just loose your clothes as fast as you could and start humping like lust-crazed weasels. But this first time, this most important time, it was going to be slow and romantic and special.

David worked my breasts slowly, gently, lovingly. He kissed and licked and sucked. “Bite my nipples gently, David. Just use your teeth a little, honey.” His sharp, white teeth closed around one nipple, tugging at it, and I gasped. It felt so good to have someone's hands on me, touching me, making me feel loved and wanted and desired.

David buried his face between my breasts, his arms around my back. He sat down on my bed and drew me to him, softly kissing and licking the sides of both breasts as his hands found my buttocks again and grasped them through my panties.

David's cock was poking at his boxers. I reached down and found it, moving my hand around inside his shorts. I brought it out into the air and slowly fisted it.

David

shook and held me tighter.

“Don't...if you don't want me to...”

I stopped, instead kneeling before him. “David... there's something you need to know. Certain women like to do certain things more than other women. Part of the fun of being with a new lover for the first time is discovering all those things about each other. I like to...give head. Do you know what that means?”

“Yes, Connie,” he laughed. “I know what that means.”

“How do you feel about that?”

“Connie, if you put my cock in your mouth, you're going to get a huge surprise!”

“Goody!” I giggled, clapping my hands together. David stood, reaching down and losing his socks, then yanking his shorts down and kicking them away. His cock bobbed in my face and I licked my lips, already anticipating his hot meat in my mouth.

Now...it was David's turn to enjoy the benefits of that labor. This first one was going to be fast, I knew, but that would make it all the more interesting, and have the added benefit of making other, more pleasurable actions last longer.

David sat back on the bed and spread his hairy thighs, his cock wiggling in anticipation. I moved slowly, wanting it to last for him, wanting him to enjoy it as much as I knew I was going to. From several inches away I began to blow on his cock, the hot air from between my pursed lips tickling his throbbing meat. David just grinned at me, and I swear I could see his cock getting harder before my very eyes.

“You know, “ I whispered, moving my mouth ever closer to his meat, “some people think that it's very sexy to cum in a woman's mouth. Do you agree with that, David?” He grunted and hunched his hips at me face, apparently eager to experience that little treat. Opening my mouth, I used my pink, moist tongue to lightly lick his cockhead with a circular swipe. Slurp! Moving my face in closer, I blew on his balls and cock again, taking the chance and licking his balls, too. Then I had a sudden inspiration. I would finish him, quickly this first time, and then give him the blowjob of his life to get him ready to fuck my leaking, needy pussy.

“Hold on, lover,” I growled, taking his cock with my hand. Opening my mouth, I swallowed his cock with a single lurch of my head, bathing the hot, hard meat with my tongue, sucking with my cheeks and throat.

“Oh my God!” David cried, his legs and stomach muscles contracting, making him do a sit-up with my mouth in his crotch. “Connie! My God!” His hands were in my hair. My hand was around his scrotum, and I jiggled, once.

That was all it took. David grunted, screamed, and then erupted, shooting what seriously felt like half a pint of warm, creamy cum into my sucking mouth. I greedily sucked and swallowed, not wanting a drop to escape. His load was warm and creamy and delicious, and I wanted every goddamn bit of it in my stomach.

As David slowly ebbed in my mouth, I renewed my attack, eager to keep him hard and throbbing. My slick, moist mouth moved smoothly up and down David's cock, lubricating it with my glistening saliva. My hands worked at his balls, pulling and tugging at them. More than once I popped David's cock out of my mouth and worked my way down, sucking first one, then the other, warm, hairy testicle into my mouth to lick and suck. As I licked and mouthed his balls, I continually jacked David's cock, feeling my own saliva oozing through my fingers. David's hands were by his sides, and I took one of his hands in mine and put it on my breast. Closing his fingers around my tit, David started stroking and playing with my nipple as I sucked his dick.

David finally pulled me off his cock and into his arms. We kissed, my cum-slick mouth meshing with his. I found it highly erotic that David didn't try and wipe my mouth or make me brush my teeth or something juvenile and stupid like others had. David not only didn't mind the taste of himself on my lips and in my mouth, but seemed eager to find more of his own taste inside me.

Falling back against the bed, I pulled David on top of me. We kissed and gently stroked for a long time, and I could feel his hot hardness pressed against my belly between us. He was drooling precum onto my stomach, and I wanted very badly to feel him inside of me.

“Now you,” David said, slowly moving his way down. “But you'll have to tell me what to do!”

“I thought you watched movies!” I kidded. He nodded, his face suddenly serious. “Tell you what,” he said, “I'll do what I think is right, and you just...correct me if I go astray. How about that?”

Breathing heavily with arousal, I just nodded silently. David spread my legs and took a long few seconds just staring at my molten center. The hair was matted and slick with my juices, and I suddenly worried that David was one of those men

that found the sight of a moist, open vagina distasteful. I needn't have worried. He was just getting his bearings.

Leaning in, David kissed my pubic mound, and then burrowed lower. His nose tickling my clit a little, his tongue reaching out and tasting me softly.

"Well...what do you think?"

"Jasmine," he whispered, trying another small, tentative taste.

"Do you know where my clit is?" I asked. A second later I felt his lips close around it, sending sparks of pleasure up and down my spine.

"That it?" he teased.

"Smart ass," I said, hunching my hips into his face. Slowly at first, and then faster as he gained confidence, David began to eat my pussy. He wasn't the best slit-licker in the business, but he showed promise, and more important than that, he showed determination and enthusiasm. With time, and patience, and lots of experience (which I knew I was going to be more than happy to provide,) he would turn out great.

He worked me slowly, and then steadily faster as I coached him, wriggling his tongue inside me, teasing the walls of my slit with his tongue, drinking more and more of my juices with every second.

At my request, he inserted first one, and then another finger inside me.

"You're so hot...and wet." He said, and then added, "...and *tight*!" He looked down at his own cock, and I knew what he was thinking, and tried hard to stifle the laugh. "Are you sure...it's going to fit?" he asked, the expression on his face priceless.

"Don't forget," I said, choking back my laughter, "a baby comes out of there, too! If he can fit, I'm sure you can to! Now...lick my clitty a little more...oh, yeah. That's it. Now, David, darling...start with your...that's right, use your fingers...ahh....now, take it all together and just...." I dissolved into orgasm as David finished me off that first time, his fingers and mouth and tongue working in concert to send me to the heights of pleasure. My thighs clamped around his face, and then fell apart, spreading myself lewdly for him as I shamelessly ground my overflowing slot into his face. David licked and sucked like a trooper, making sure he got as much of me as was possible.

Finally, I shuddered and started sliding back down into normal time and space. David was still kneeling between my wantonly-spread thighs, licking at his lips, smiling at me, those huge brown eyes locking with mine as I sat up on my elbows.

"Ready for the main event, tiger?" I asked, waggling my eyebrows at him. He just nodded shyly and got up between my legs. I grabbed a couple of pillows and jammed them under my ass, lifting my sex to give him a better angle.

"Slow and easy, pal. At first." David searched for my hole with the head of his cock, and I put my hand down, grasping him, guiding his throbbing length to the entrance of my soul. He gasped as his cockhead rubbed against my moist lips, and I set him in place. "Give me some," I grunted, eager to feel him inside me.

David moved forward slightly, and the first inch popped inside. His face screwed up in mask of intense concentration, and then I felt another inch. And then another. Slowly, agonizing us both, David filled me with his cock. He was

sweating and gasping, fighting not to cum as my cunt collapsed around him, squeezing and milking him.

"This...is....incredible!" he gasped, supporting his weight on his hands as he peered down to where our bodies were joined.

"David," I said, "Please fuck me. Move inside me, David. Give me your dick! Fuck me!" He withdrew and then entered me again, a little faster this time. I grabbed his ass with my hands, feeling his tight, hairy buns under my fingers, and started pulling to me. David got the idea and began speeding up, feeding me his cock in faster and faster strokes. Within thirty seconds he was fucking like an old pro, slamming his dick into me as I wailed and cried with pleasure. His cock was so hot and so hard, and it thrilled me to know that I was his first woman, his first lover...his first fuck.

David collapsed on top of me, one mouth covering a breast as his hips continued to pound me. He started a low keening wail, and I knew he was close. Grabbing his head, I

lifted it off my breast and brought his mouth to mine. We were locked in passionate, tongue-twisting kiss when he shouted into my mouth and blew, the spunk erupting from the tip of his dick, splattering cum against the walls of my twat. I felt every spurt hitting me, coating me, covering the inside of my body with his precious pearly load. My legs closed around his waist, drawing him deeper, wanting every single drop of him inside me.

David still hunched against me, rubbing my clit with his pubic hair. I groaned into his mouth this time, the sensations finally overloading my already passion-addled brain, and I came along with him, my pussy spasming around his cock, milking him with my satiny walls.

Gasping, we parted, David still inside me but shrinking. He kissed my face and my ears and my mouth and my neck, still breathing heavily.

"Well?" I managed to ask. "What did you think?"

"I...love it!" he said. "I...want to do it again!" David looked a question at me, and I just smiled and nodded. "Just wait, David my love. Just wait until I teach you all about love."

David and I dozed for a while, our bodies comfortably intertwined. I had my head on his chest, and was lazily running my fingers through his chest hair, idly stroking his nipples. David was stroking the hair on my head, and kissing the top of my head from time to time. We slept until early the next morning, and woke just as the sun was coming up. I disengaged myself from David, who was still drifting in and out, and donned a robe, heading towards the kitchen.

I was making coffee when David entered the kitchen, wearing a pair of track shorts that some other lover had left behind. His hair was a mess, but his lazy smile was in place, as were his glasses. He gave me a sleepy grin and kissed me softly on the mouth.

"Good morning," he said softly. I smiled and kissed him back. "Good morning."

We sat at the table and silently drank our coffee. David's eyes were all over me, quietly undressing me with his gaze. Flustered, I stood and walked to the sink, looking through the window at the early morning sunshine. I sensed, rather than felt, David behind me. His hands came down on my shoulders, and I had to fight not to turn and rape the poor boy right there. I needn't have worried, though, because David had the same thing on his mind that I did on mine.

His mouth found my neck, and he kissed me gently there. I purred and moved back against him, feeling his arms encircle my waist. One of his warm hands insuated itself inside my robe, and moved up to cup one heavy breast in his fingers.

"You are so beautiful," he whispered in my ear. I could feel myself moistening again, and wanted him desperately. I decided to wait a little longer.

"David," I said turning in his arms, "I'm going to go take a bath now." Seeing the crestfallen expression on his face, I added, "Stick around. We've got the whole weekend together...if you want to." He nodded like an eager puppy, and I left him at the sink as I went to take my bath. A long, hot bath always made me feel sexy, and having my young lover in the house only added to that feeling. I ran the water and added some bubble-bath, and then shed my robe and climbed in, letting the warm, soothing water envelope my body in its slick embrace.

I was lying back, just enjoying the feel of the bath, when David entered the bathroom and sat on the toilet. He'd added a sweatshirt to his clothing, and was just

sitting and quietly watching me. The silence grew and stretched.

"What?" I finally asked.

"Nothing," he said. "I just...like watching you. Your body." I smiled at him, wondering if he knew what effect his words were having. It was thrilling to know that David found me attractive. I sat up in the tub, David's eyes zeroing in my soapy, bouncing tits. I reached under the surface of the water and found my washcloth. Handing it to David with a bar of soap, I asked, "Wash me?"

Nodding eagerly, David got down on his knees beside the tub. I turned sideways and presented him with my back. "I've never done this before," he said.

"You've never taken a bath?" I asked.

Laughing, he responded, "No. Of course I have taken a bath. I've just never *given* one, that's all."

"David," I said patiently. "I'm not made of china. Wash me like you'd wash yourself. Just...do it a little more slowly, and pay attention to detail, that's all." David didn't say anything, and then I felt the damp cloth against my neck. He worked slowly, methodically, washing my shoulders and upper back. Then my neck and throat, always using lots of soap and water, moving slowly and sensuously. When he came to my breasts, I shivered as his touch. His hands were gentle and soft and soothing. He covered each breast with soapy water, bringing my nipples to hot, hard points as he cleaned them.

Leaning back, I pressed my wet head against David's crotch, and felt his erection pressing against the shorts. I stood in the tub, taking David with me, and turned to face him. His expression was priceless. I looked at my body, and then at him, and had to smile.

The water was running off me in rivulets. My legs and crotch were soapy with bubble bath, and my slick, soapy tits looked very inviting indeed. I pulled David against me by his shirt, using an open-mouthed kiss to convey my excitement. Reaching out and grabbing the hem of his sweatshirt, I lifted it up and off his body, tossing it into the corner. David took his cue from me, hooking his thumbs into his shorts and peeling them off his hips and down his legs. He was erect, his hard cock bobbing with his motions.

Stepping into the tub with me, David resumed washing me, concentrating on my legs. He worked his way up past my knees, heading for my crotch. His head moved as if to kiss me there, and I stopped him.

"No. Not yet. Just enjoy the tease, David. Enjoy the anticipation. When we're done in here...we'll go back to bed. I want you to explore my body. Get to know it. Every inch of it." He just nodded, and returned to his washing. Turning me around, David applied the washcloth to my buttocks, getting them soapy and then clean, using handfuls of water to wash the soap away. His hand, covered by the washcloth, glided between the cheeks of my ass, and I shivered at the intimate touch.

"Now you," I said, taking the washcloth from his hands. I started at his ankles and worked slowly upwards, letting David look at my body as I worked. My round, soft breasts bounced and swayed as I worked, and I couldn't help but rub my nipples against his hairy thighs. His cock was throbbing hard now, leaking precum, and I used the washcloth to clean his rod, stroking gently. His balls were next, and I made sure they were squeaky clean before moving to his chest. David's eyes were heavy and drooping with passion, and he was breathing heavily.

"I'm not sure I can wait," he said.

"You're going to have to. We're almost done." We finished up, and then stepped out of the tub. I grabbed a towel and tossed it to him, grabbing one for myself and heading back into my bedroom. David followed, wrapping the towel around his waist.

He moved to intercept me, and I pushed him away.

"Sit on the bed and watch me," I said. He did as I asked, the towel still around his waist, as I sat at my vanity and dried my hair with the towel. I loved being naked in front of him, loved the way David's eyes crawled all over my body, taking in every detail.

"You are so gorgeous," he said in a strained voice, and I turned to see that he had loosened the towel, and was now slowly fisting his cock. I had always wanted to watch a man masturbate, and now I had my chance.

"Do it for me, David. Jerk yourself off. I want to watch." He just grunted and sped his hand up, his mouth open, tongue peeking out. His cock was leaking steadily now, as he watched me watch him. I spread my legs and showed him my pussy.

"Just think about what it'll be like when you are inside me again, David. Think about how wonderful my pussy felt." David grunted and sped up again, his hand almost flying up and down his cock.

"I bet you jerked off a lot, didn't you David?" He just grunted and nodded. I lifted one of my breasts in my hand, teasing the nipple with my fingers. "Did you ever think about someone like me? Ever think about kissing someone like me, about sucking me, about making love to me when you did it?"

"Yeah," David groaned, throwing his head back. "Wasn't it better when it was real, David? Wasn't sticking your virgin cock inside me better than imagining it?"

"Yes!" David screamed. "Oh Yes!"

"David!" I said. "Look at me!" I was frigging myself gently, and I wanted him to see me do it. My hands were in my twat, one finger in my hole, my thumb working my clit. David's eyes zoomed in on my pussy.

"I didn't think women...did that!" he grunted, standing to move closer to me.

"Oh, yes, David, we do. We think about sex just as much as men do. Maybe even more. Do you know what I'm thinking about right now?" He shook his head. "I'm thinking about how wonderful your cock feels inside me!" That was all it took. David grunted one final time and began spraying. Even from six feet away, I could see his spray arcing from his cockhead, falling in a pearly white shower to the carpet. He convulsed, jerking his cock off, watching me bring myself to climax with him.

David fell back on the bed, gasping for breath. I joined him, lying on top of his hard body. His maleness felt so good against my softness.

"Tell me something, David. Tell me something you've always wanted to do. Something you've always dreamed about." He looked at me and then kissed me softly. His smile was wide and genuine.

"I want to make love to your breasts with my dick. I want to titty-fuck you!" The words coming out of his mouth seemed so odd, but with the new sexual freedom David was discovering with my help, I knew that he was going to tell me the most intimate details of his sexual fantasies. And I wanted to help him act them all out.

Rolling onto my back, I grabbed my breasts. "These tits?" I asked, thumbing the nipples. "You want to fuck these titties? These here?"

"God, yes," David growled, rolling over on top of me. He put his still hard cock between my tits, and I pressed them together, trapping his cock in my satiny valley.

He started slowly stroking, his hands on my shoulders.

"Does it feel as good as you thought it would?" I teased.

"God, yes! Better!" I turned my head and sucked his thumb into my mouth, working it with my tongue. David gasped and his hands replaced mine on my tits, pressing them even tighter against his rod. This was a first for me, too.

My hands were free now, and I placed them on David's butt, feeling the tight muscles flex every time he slid his cock between my breasts. At the top of the stroke, if I

leaned down I could just lick the head as it popped out from between my tits.

"Oh God..." David said, thrusting harder, "This is so great, Connie. I love this...I love you!" That brought me up a little short. In the heat of passion, I was sure that I would feel the same way. But in the bright rational sunlight of morning, I knew it was too soon to be talking about love. I opened the nightstand

and retrieved a handy dildo. It was about six inches long, and not very thick, and I wanted to watch David's reaction when I slid it up his ass.

I reached down as best I could with one hand and scooped some of my own lubrication out of my pussy, slicking the vibrator. David's eyes were closed as he titty-fucked me, and it didn't take much effort to separate the hairy, sweaty cleft of his butt and find his clenching asshole. Gently, I slid the vibrator past his sphincter. David groaned and started pumping my tits harder.

"That feels so incredible!" he moaned.

David's pumping speeded up, and then he was cumming, showering my neck and chin with his goo. He shot four good streams, covering my skin with his creamy warmth. I took his cock into my saliva-filled mouth, wetly gliding his cock in and out of my face. I loved the taste of his meat in my mouth, and hoped that he would let me suck his cock often. I twisted the vibrator in his ass, and felt David lurch again in my mouth, giving me another bolt of his creamy warmth to drink.

Just then I began to understand the level of power and control I had over my young lover. David had learned a lot since last night, but he was far from an accomplished lover, and I was sure that his confidence level was still lagging. I wasn't sure how to correct this, and I also wasn't sure that I wanted to. His body felt so good, so.. right, against mine that I knew I wasn't ready to have him go off and start chasing girls closer to his own age. I wanted David for myself, and my selfish feelings brought a blush of shame to my features. I popped David's cock out of my mouth, and he laid against me, burying his face into my neck. I reached behind him and retrieved the vibrator from his ass. I had a momentary desire to lick it clean, but realized that action might shatter my young lover's mind. Too much too soon, you know.

David started kissing me, softly at first, and then with growing hunger and passion. I was secretly thrilled that he was still aroused and hungry, and languidly stretched, letting him do what he wanted to me. I wanted to see David discover my body and all the secrets and treasures it held. David kissed my neck and throat, working closer to my breasts. He licked all around my chest, between my tits, then went to work on my tits, playing like a little boy with a new toy. His fingers were eager and a little rough, and I cautioned him to take it easy.

Chastised, David's hands became gentle again, working my breasts softly. The fire in my loins was starting again, and I sighed, letting the passion grow inside me. David moved to my torso, lightly kissing and sucking my skin, tickling me with his tongue. He was straddling one of my legs, and I lifted it a little, feeling his amazingly- still-hard cock throbbing against my skin.

"Give it to me, David. Give me your cock..." I moaned, eager to feel him inside of me. David grabbed my waist and turned me over onto my stomach, lifting me as he did so. I ended up on my hands and knees, and smiled. Being someone's first and only sexual partner did have its advantages; I knew David had never done it this way, rear- entry, and I wondered if this was another one of his fantasies.

"C'mon, tiger, let me have it," I whined, wiggling my ass at him. David just grunted again, settling between my legs. His cock bounced off me a few times; he didn't know yet how to get himself seated. I reached between my legs and grabbed

him, lining him up with my hole. David pushed, groaning as each fraction of an inch sank into my wet crevice. I groaned with him, moving back against him, enveloping him with my satiny walls.

“Slowly, lover. Slowly at first. Let me get used to you in there!” I said, starting to pump slowly with my hips. David put his hands on my hips and let me set the pace, eager just to feel me around him, sucking and milking at his meat.

“Talk to me, David. Tell me what you're feeling!”

“This is...incredible!” he gasped. “I never thought it would be like this. So many nights...spent wondering what it would be like to...oh God!...be with a wo...oh God!... with a woman. OOP!” he said, burying the last inch of his meat inside me. His hands clutched at my hips, and I found it funny that each time I clasped my vaginal walls around David's penetrating member, his hands tightened on my hips in response. We set up a slow, passionate pace, David's thighs bouncing into my ass on each stroke, his scrotum slapping against my vagina. His hands found their way up to my hanging, swaying breasts, and he covered them, gently squeezing and stroking.

I was biting my bottom lip in pleasure, starting to climb the mountain. David speeded his actions up, and I knew that if we timed it right, we could come together.

“I need you to...” I moaned.

“What? What?” he gasped.

“Touch my clit. Help me cum with you!” One hand left a breast and wondered down to my slot. He fumbled around for a minute. I grabbed his wrist and directed him, and he found it, stroking it in soft circles with the pad of one finger. I clamped tight around him, and felt David bury himself again.

“Oh...oh...” he moaned. His face was at my neck, his mouth licking and sucking my skin. “Oh...oh....oh!” he said again, trying to hold back. “Let...me...know...when...” he moaned, trying his best.

“Almost...almost....now!” I screamed, and David convulsed, rearing back and grabbing my hips, spraying my insides with his sauce. I fell into a shattering orgasm, the room going gray around me, as David fell on top of me, crushing me against the bed. I groaned, all the breath out of me, and tried to push him off. The waves of climax were still spreading throughout my body, but I couldn't breath. David was passed out on top of me. I turned my head to the side and sucked in a pain-filled lungful of air. We were going to have to work on that, I thought. Can't have the poor boy killing me every time he does me like a dog! I smiled at my own little joke and managed to get into a barely comfortable position.

David and I slept, and sometime during the nap, I felt his cock slide out of me to slap wetly against my thigh.

David and I awoke around noon. He kissed me awake, and I knew that he was raring to go again. I opened my thighs, and he slid into me, both of us still lubricated from our early morning bout. He stared deeply into my eyes as we screwed.

"Tell me your fantasies," I whispered. "Tell me one that you've always wanted to live out."

He stroked me once, twice. "Twist your hips at the bottom of a stroke, David. Use your groin to stimulate my clit." He nodded and did it the next time, and I gasped, my legs closing around his lower back, hunching myself at him.

"Your fantasies," I reminded him.

"Later..." he gasped. "After...can't think now..." I grinned and let myself go, eager to have another climax in David's arms. I promised myself that I would fulfill one fantasy of his today, and one tomorrow. No matter what it was. No matter how depraved...well, I promised myself I'd think about it, at least. If it wasn't too kinky, I'd let him do it. Whatever it was.

David speeded up, and I decided that we were also going to have to work on endurance. It was nice that he could cum five and six times a day, but I liked longer, deeper lovemaking. Not the rapid-fire sex that David was capable of. But that was ok. I knew how to make it last. This last time, for him, I'd let him bang away to his hearts content.

Without having to be told this time, David's hand found its way to my crotch and began working my button. The feelings were incredible as I looked up at him.

We screwed on and on for about another ten minutes, and then I came, and shortly after, David did also, giving me another load of his delicious cream.

"Now then," I said, after he'd had a chance to catch his breath. "First things first. You," I said, poking him in the chest, "have to learn to last a little longer. We'll work on that. I understand that this is all new and wonderful for you, but I like it a little longer, kay?" He nodded, pleased that he would be 'able to work on it' with me.

"Second things second. Your fantasies, David. Tell me about them. Don't hold back."

He looked sheepish. "I really don't have anything out of the ordinary. I mean nothing kinky or anything like that."

"When you fantasized about having a girlfriend or a lover, what did you see yourself doing with them?" He was silent this time, thinking.

"Well...promise not to laugh?" I swore that I wouldn't. "Well," he started, "you may think this is a little juvenile, but whenever I think about being with a woman, it's usually romantic stuff. Having dinner, going to a movie, walking down the beach, stuff like that. Part of what makes the fantasy so good is that I know we're going to make love that night; there's no question. No worrying about weather or not I have to seduce her. That's my fantasy, having a regular lover and doing romantic things with her."

"What's the most romantic thing you can think of?" I asked. David looked deep into my eyes, and then smiled. "Wait here," he said, and got out of bed. I snuggled under the sheets, feeling the warm imprint of David's body on the bed and shivered. I had no idea what he was going to do, but I wanted him to do it, and do it with me.

Ten minutes later David came back, carrying a tray. I saw what was on it, and smiled. A man denied sex this long certainly had enough time to fantasize, and apparently David

had put the time to good use. On the tray were: A bowl of fresh strawberries (from my icebox,) a bowl of ice-cream, a small bowl of chocolate sauce, and another bowl of honey.

“See,” David said, putting it on the bed between us. “I thought about this one day after I read about tactile stimulation. The chocolate is warm, the honey is room-temperature, and the ice-cream is cold. Three different sensations, three different tastes.”

With that, David took a strawberry and dipped it in the honey. He lifted it above my head and let the honey drizzle off and onto my face before lowering the strawberry to my mouth. I sucked it in and bit down on it, slicing half of it off. David bent to my face and slowly, lovingly, cleaned the honey off of my nose and cheek. We kissed, gently, and he shared the honey with me as I sucked at his tongue. His hand vanished off to the side, and then he was back, this time with two strawberries. One had chocolate on it, the other, ice-cream.

David moved down and used the tips of the strawberries to circle my nipples. My right one got the ice-cream, the left the chocolate. The dichotomy of sensation, one nipple hot, the other cold, drove me insane with pleasure, and I arched my back, driving my tits towards the strawberries. David licked and sucked at my nipples, cleaning the gooey substances from my body.

“Forget the strawberries,” I said. “Just use the gooey stuff. It feels so sexy on my body...”

“Why?” he asked. “I mean, I really want to know.” He'd dipped his finger in the chocolate and was tracing warm brown lines on my shoulder and neck. As he bent down to lick it up, I thought about it. “Because it just feels sexy. Warm and wet and cold and moist...feels like cum, a little, and like my own sauce. Feels...slightly nasty, David, and sometimes the best sex feels that way...slightly naughty and nasty. You know you shouldn't do certain things, that society doesn't think it's right. But it feels good, and so you want to....oh, right there!....do it. Just do it, as the ad says!”

David took a small spoon full of honey and held it over my face, slowly turning it over so that it drizzled across the bridge of my nose and down each cheek. It felt like someone was cumming on my face. No one had ever done that to me before, cum on my face, and I wondered if this was what it felt like.

David lowered his face to mine, and we kissed, our gooey faces sticking together. Slowly, with the patience of Job, he worked my face over, trying to get all the honey. Our kisses were sticky and gooey and it was driving me insane; all these sensations on my skin, hot and cold, and David's warm, slightly rough tongue cleaning me up. I wondered what other devilish fantasies he had in store for me...ones that we could discover together.

After my face was reasonably clear, David reached over and grabbed a warm washcloth he'd brought from the kitchen, finishing the job of cleaning my face. I smiled at his thoughtfulness, and watched in growing anticipation as he grabbed the bowl of ice-cream, and the bowl of warm chocolate sauce and scooted down my body.

My legs fell open of their own volition, and I bit my bottom lip in anticipation. David used his fingers first, lightly coating the inside of my thighs with the

chocolate sauce. The heat was warm and wonderful, adding to the heat I already felt in that region. And then David thumbed a dollop of ice-cream into my pussy, and I convulsed in pleasure. It was so incredible, feeling that little ball of ice-cold cream in my slot. David's mouth covered my hole and he gently prodded the small ball of ice cream with his tongue, and then he sucked it out again, pushing it in once more. He repeated this, while a chocolate-covered finger worked over my clit.

I started leaking heavily, and David kept adding ice-cream to my hole until the entire area was a gooey mess. I came three times under his tutelage, grinding my chocolate-and-ice-cream-sloppy slot all over his face.

We ran to the shower to clean each other off, and then back to the bed. It was my turn, and I wanted to make David feel as special as he had made me. The chocolate was my favorite, and I liberally covered his cock and balls with it. It had cooled since we'd started, but that didn't matter. David lay on his back with his legs spread as I crouched between them, working my hot, slavering mouth up and down the length of his chocolate log.

"Is this what you fantasized about?" I asked. "Someone doing this to you?" He nodded. "How is it?"

"Better than I ever imagined, Connie...oh my God... don't stop!" I'd moved my mouth to his scrotum and was cleaning the wrinkly sack of the chocolate, and I knew that David was going to shoot. So I backed off, letting him cool down.

"Tonight," I said, "We're going to go to dinner down by the bay. I'll wear my prettiest dress, just for you, David. We'll take a walk on the beach, then go have dinner. And when we go to your place after dinner, we will make love again. Nothing will stop me from doing that, David. Nothing. We're going to live out that fantasy tonight, David. Just you and me!"

David just grinned and gently guided my head back to his cock. It tasted so wonderful that I decided not to push the issue and to finish him off. David hunched several times against my face and emptied himself inside me, coating my mouth and throat with a beautiful mixture of chocolate and cum.

We arrived at Finnegan's just after seven. I had on a tight red dress that someone in my past had made me buy. Underneath, I'd worn another satin garterbelt, this one red to match my dress, and tiny G-string panties. The small cord running between the cheeks of my ass tickled, and I liked the sensation. The bra I wore was scalloped with fine lace patterns, and I knew when David undressed me later that night he'd love it. The stockings and heels I wore only complimented the outfit, and I knew I looked hot and tasty. I liked looking that way for David, for my new lover, for this man who had come into my life.

The waiter seated us at the best table in the house, and I knew that David had called ahead to reserve this just for us. I felt a tug inside my heart, and warned myself not to fall in love with this beautiful man-child.

Fairly a battalion of waiters fawned over us, and I knew David had set this up too. We enjoyed a wonderful meal, with sparkling conversation. David was well-

read on a variety of subjects, and he was so interesting to talk to. I found myself getting drunk on the sound of his voice, and decided to have a little fun with him.

Kicking off one heel, I ran my instep up and down the back of David's calf. He was in the middle of some discourse about the Middle East, and stammered in mid-sentence as he felt my foot slowly ascend his leg. I rested it in his crotch and began teasing him through his slacks.

His face got very, very red, and I giggled into my wineglass.

"I never thought anyone could be so sexy..." he whispered to me across the table.

"Sexy? Or sex-crazy?" I teased back. David reached over and took my hand in his. "Sexy," he whispered. "Unbelievably, absolutely sexy. I never thought it would be this...great."

I just smiled and continued to tease him. Dessert came, and I took the opportunity to remove my leg and replace my heel. David paid the bill with his credit card, and we walked out of the restaurant and down to the beach. I took my heels off and we walked down the sand, hand in hand, looking at the moon on the water and hearing the soft sound of the waves lapping against the shore.

"Penny for your thoughts...?" I ventured. David had been silent for the last ten minutes.

"I'm not sure you want to hear them," he said. "I'm not sure that I want to say them." I let it drop, but it only took two minutes. "I was wondering...when this is going to end."

"Does it have to?" I asked, immediately regretting it. I didn't want to be vulnerable again. As soon as I said that, I knew I was opening a door that might be better left closed.

"I don't know, Connie. I know how I feel about you.. .But, as much as we've...been through, together, as much as we've...done, together, I just don't get a sense that the feelings are mutual. That's ok...I guess. I just wish..."

"What?"

"I just wish...." he sighed. "Let me tell you a story. When I was in High School, I knew this girl named Becky. Every guy has a Becky in his past, somewhere. That first love. I loved her more than I ever had anybody else in my life. She didn't even know I was alive, though, and it hurt. I would have done anything for her, and she knew that, and took advantage of it. I did her chemistry and physics homework, usually when she was out on a date with another guy. I didn't care...I figured that eventually she'd wise up and realize that I was the only guy for her. That didn't happen, and she's gone now...but I always wanted...I always wished...that the person I loved would love me just as much. That's what I was thinking, that I wished you loved me as much as I love you."

I stopped and took David into my arms. Stepping back, I took his face in my hands. "I can't say that I love you, David. I have very strong feelings for you. Stronger than I've ever had for any man. But I'm not Becky, and you're not the kid you were back then. This is an adult relationship. I want to continue it, and see where it leads. But I'm not making any promises, David. Do you understand?" He nodded, a little sadly I thought, and then kissed me. We turned and made our way back up the beach, towards David's truck and his apartment.

“If you could change one thing about me, what would it be?” he suddenly asked. I was taken a little aback, but decided to answer him anyway.

“Your confidence and aggressiveness. I'd give you more of both.” He smiled at me and kissed me softly.

“You're doing wonders for my confidence,” he laughed.

“Courtney”

-1-

*“And the world's shrunken to a heap
of hot flesh straining on a bed.”*

-E.R. Dodds

British Classical Scholar

To be frank, I wanted her the moment I saw her, which is strange because she was 20 years older than me. But there was that certain something about her that attracted me

to her, and I knew that if the feeling was even slightly mutual, I would act on it.

Courtney was the wife of a co-worker. Don had come to our company first as a consultant, and then as he proved himself with his performance, he was invited to stay on at a much higher salary. Moving from the cold Midwest to sunny San Diego was probably a mitigating factor, but just the same, he packed his wife and two kids up and moved to southern California.

He was a management specialist, and I was in Information Systems, working as the senior database analyst. As such, we had ample opportunity to interact both professionally and socially. It was the first social interaction, however, that started this entire...affair. And I suppose, after all is said and done, that that is what this is. Courtney has no desire to leave her husband or end her marriage, and I have no desire to become her husband or a stepfather to her children, both of which are only younger than me by a few short years. Frankly, all Courtney and I want to do is screw the living daylights out of each other. But I digress; it took me a while to get to that point, so I'd better back up and let you all join us here as well.

Don had invited me over to his new house for dinner and discussions about business. Wanting to appear friendly, I accepted. The door was answered by a goddess. She was somewhere between forty and forty-five, of that there was no doubt. She was short and slim and had a wonderfully warm smile, and dark, intelligent eyes that drew me in like a buglight. She reached out and shook my hand, introducing herself.

“You must be Dan. I'm Courtney, Don's wife.” I smiled and nodded at her, too stunned to immediately speak. She took my windbreaker, and led me into the kitchen. It was one of those wonderful California kitchens, all light and air and room to maneuver. A huge butcher-block counter dominated the middle of the room, complete with a working stove and ample room to prepare meals. An opened bottle of rose wine was on the counter, and she offered me a glass.

“Thank you, no” I said. “I'm not much of a wine drinker.”

“Hmmm,” she said, playfully stroking her chin. “I suppose you're more of a beer drinker, hmm?” I nodded, and she turned, opened the icebox, and bent down to rummage around the lower shelves.

At that point, I nearly fainted. She was wearing a light-colored (peach or ivory,) silky blouse, and tight, black pleated trousers that were now stretched tightly across her buttocks, revealing to me that although she could count four decades of time on this planet, she had fought Mother Nature tooth and nail. Her ass looked invitingly tight and firm, and I wondered for a moment how it would feel filling my hands as I thrust my slowly stirring cock into her cunt.

“Hey, Dan!” I heard from behind me, and turned to see Don staring at me from the family room. To my sudden horror, I realized that he'd caught me ogling his wife, and to add to my humiliation, I could feel myself beginning to blush. “You've met Courtney, I see,” he said, indicating with a sweep of his hand his wife, still bent over in front of the icebox. I nodded, dumbly, and shook hands with her husband and my co-worker.

His big, meaty paw covered my own hand, and I wondered if we were going to get into one of those insane hand-squeezing tests. Perhaps I should add that although I'm six-three and 250, Don made me look like a dwarf. He was six foot six, and weighed close to four hundred pounds. And not an ounce of it, a single ounce of it...was muscle. He was a huge blob of a man, with swinging jowls that reminded me of those things on a chicken. (What *do* you call those, anyway?) I looked back at Courtney, all five foot three and about 90 pounds of her, and instantly, several questions jumped into my mind:

- 1) How did they *ever* have children?
- 2) How did they have sex *now*?
- 3) And if the answer to #2 was “We don't”,
- 3a) Would she like to sleep with ME?

But that was best put off for another time. Suffice it to say that I had an instant attraction to Courtney, but fearing for my own job-related political life, I decided to bury those feelings deeply inside.

Flash forward about two months. Don and I played golf more than a few times, went shooting more than a few times, and shared more than a few beers at his house before and after these various events. Every time I was treated to the sight of Courtney, and I began to realize that each succeeding time I came over, Courtney was dressing more and more...well, suggestively. After two months, she answered the door in a pair of tight nylon running shorts and a T-shirt. It was obvious from the press of her nipples through the shirt that she was *not* wearing a bra, and I tried to keep myself from staring at her still-firm, supple 36C's. (We later measured...)

She knew (I know now,) that I was interested in her, and she was trying to encourage me without tipping her husband off. She had a basically happy marriage, as far as the straight emotional aspects of the relationship went, it was just that the sexual side had all but died. I wondered about that *at all*, but Courtney had shown me a photo album filled with snapshots just after she and Don were married, and I was stunned to see that if anything, he had *lost* weight since they were married. What a beautiful, petite woman like Courtney would see in a gargantuan like Don was beyond me. But then again, love *is* blind, right?

Well, flash forward about another two months. Don's administrative assistant was pregnant, and had to take six weeks off to have the baby and all that. The company didn't want to hire new help, so Courtney volunteered to work for free as Don's assistant. Which means, of course, that I got to see even *more* of her.

When Courtney started appearing at the job, I found it harder and harder to concentrate on the tasks at hand. She was always wearing chic business attire, but just the *way* she wore it turned me on. And then it started, the awful teasing that had me wondering what the hell was going on, if anything, between us. She would appear in my office to ask me a question about something, and lean over to show me or point something out, and I would always get a clear shot down her unbuttoned-just-enough blouse to see her creamy breasts being lightly cupped in some really outrageous lingerie. I always wanted to reach out and cup one gently swelling breast with my hand, and scrape my thumb across a nipple to see what it felt like...but since my office had front-facing windows and no blinds or shades, I always kept my hands to myself.

This kept up, and then she started touching me. Every chance Courtney had, she would touch my arm or my hands or my shoulders, the feather-light feeling of her fingers on my body sending butterflies directly to my stomach. I wanted her to touch me *everywhere*.

And finally, I did it. I called her on the intercom. As her extension rang, I noticed that my hands were shaking and there was an awful taste in the back of my mouth. I knew, instantly, what it was as I flashed back to my high school days, days when I would ask a girl out and pray to the mightiest God there was that if she *did* turn me down, that she wouldn't laugh and call me a silly boy.

"Hello?"

"Courtney." It was a word, not question.

"Hello, Dan." Her voice was soft and soothing.

"Do you feel it?" I asked, without any preliminary. I knew she would understand what I was talking about instantly, and I didn't want to preface it, give her time to build defenses.

There was the slightest of pauses, and then, "Oh my, yes. Since the beginning."

We sat in comfortable silence for a few moments. And then she asked, "Can you be discreet?"

"For a chance to find out how we are together...I wouldn't tell God himself if he appeared before me."

She chuckled at my exaggeration. I clarified: "I have as much to lose here as you do, perhaps more."

"I have a husband," she said pointedly.

"I know you do. But, apparently, you're not as married as he thinks you are."

There was a long pause. "I suppose you're right," she conceded. "But I do not want to divorce Don. I'm not in love with you."

"Neither am I. In love with you, I mean."

"I know what you meant," she said.

Another long pause.

"You can't come to my house," she said.

"I know. And you can't come to my apartment." My roommate also worked at the company in the Marketing department. Lawrence just wouldn't understand, and he had a huge mouth to boot.

"So how are we going to do this?" she asked.

"I don't know. I'm waiting for suggestions."

"It's not like I've ever done this before!" she snapped.

"Courtney. I wasn't saying you had. It's just that.. well, you and I have both obviously been thinking about this for a long time. Do you have any ideas?"

When she answered, her voice was so soft and distant, I wondered if she was speaking to me...or something that was not quite there, not quite real. "When I think of you...of us...all I see is you and I together in glorious physical harmony." She fell silent. "I suppose that sounds corny."

"Not at all." My own voice had dropped a few decibels. I felt like I was in a church. "I knew the instant I laid eyes on you that...we would be wonderful together."

"Did you? Did you really?"

"Yes," I almost whispered.

"What took you so long?" she fairly cried. "I've been...hungry since I met you at the door. Hungry for your touch, your kiss...your cock." Her use of the word surprised, but did not shock, me. I was beginning to zoom in on her erotic core. She was tired of playing The Good Wife, and wanted to have some physical fun. So much the better if it were someone who knew the score, didn't want anything from her that she chose not to give. Someone who was as intelligent...and as lonely...as she was.

That, of course, luckily, was me.

"Don has to travel," I offered. And it was true, he traveled often for the company, sometimes he was gone for weeks at a stretch, communicating through faxes and cellular phones and pagers.

"The kids," Courtney whispered. I could hear it in her voice, the desire to shed, if only for a moment, the emotional and societal restraints that her marriage and family that were keeping us apart. I would never suggest to her that she outright lie and scheme to her family to provide situations for us. That would be going too far.

"When Don leaves, if the kids sleep over friends houses...anything like that. Call me, at once."

"No."

My stomach dropped again. "It's..." she started. "Please don't take this the wrong way. I want to be with you very, very much. I want to explore every inch of your body and have you explore every inch of mine. But...I have a family, like I said. And more importantly, I have neighbors. I can't imagine making love with you in my husband's bed... and I don't want you to be seen coming and going when my husband is out of town. We have to think of somewhere... else."

My secretary appeared in my window, making motions like she wanted to come in. I held up a hand, staying her as I finished the conversation. "Courtney...I will think about.

..ways to make this happen. Until then, remember to act natural."

“What's natural?” she asked.

“What's natural is the fact that just talking to you, just hearing the sound of your voice over this telephone has giving me an erection that I'm going to have to beat down with a baseball bat! Think about that, Courtney. Think about the fact that every fiber of my being hungers for you, the feel of you and the taste of you. I have to go.”

I hung up the phone without letting her respond, and motioned for my secretary to enter.

“Jeez,” she said. “Did you win the lottery or something?”

Confused, I looked at her. “What?”

“You have a very strange expression on your face, like the cat that ate the canary or something.”

I just smiled.

-2-

*“Tisn't beauty, so to speak, nor good
talk, necessarily. It's just IT.
Some women'll stay in a man's memory
if they once walked down a street.”*

-Rudyard Kipling

Two nights later, the phone rang just as I was drifting off to sleep. Lawrence and I had separate lines into the apartment, because I mostly used mine to connect with the mainframe at work. Sleepily, I lifted it to my ear.

“lo?”

“What are you doing?” I was instantly awake. Her soft, slightly husky voice was instantly arousing.

“I'm getting ready to go to sleep,” I said.

She didn't say anything for a long, pregnant moment. “Ask me what I'm wearing,” she finally said.

Agreeably, I asked. “OK. What are you wearing?”

“Well,” Courtney said, “I'm wearing very, very high heels, almost five inches tall. Black seamed stockings, fishnet, with a wide weave. A black leather garter belt, black satin panties, and a demicup bra. What do you think of that?”

I let her stew for a second. “I'm thinking of what you would look like, wearing that.”

“Well?”

“I think you'd look good enough to...eat.”

“And to fuck, I hope.” There she went again. At work and publicly, she was always so ladylike and proper. And now, on the phone, having what I devoutly hoped was a private conversation, she was telling me that she was dressed like a slut and using words like “fuck.”

“Courtney, can I ask you something?”

"Mmmmmm," she said, with a tone in her voice that led me to believe she was touching herself in very naughty places. "Go ahead. Ask me anything."

"How do you like your sex?"

"What do you mean?" Her voice was hesitant.

"Well...do you like it soft and gentle, or hard and rough? Do you like to talk dirty? Do you like giving or getting oral sex? Do you take it up the ass? What?"

There was a very long pause this time, and I was sure I'd gone too far.

"What prompted you to ask that question?"

"Well, in public, you never say 'shit' and 'fuck'. And I damn sure know that you don't normally wear the kinds of things you have on now!"

"How do you know?" she asked.

"Because," I said smugly, "I've been staring down your shirt for months!" She laughed, and then grew serious. "Dan...my sex life with my husband was never that great. We managed through trial and error to conceive two children. Aside from that, my sexual experience is next to nil. I've done what most good wives have done over the years: I fantasize, masturbate and read lots of trashy novels. You're the first man in a long time to make me feel attractive, feel like a woman again, like a sexy plaything. You have no idea how important that is to me, and how flattering it is coming from...from someone like you."

"You mean someone as young as I am."

"Well..," she hedged, "...yes."

"Look, Courtney. I don't know why I'm attracted to you, I just know that I am, and that I want nothing more right now than to be next to you, gently tracing the lines of your shoulders and necks with my fingertips, tasting the sweat at the base of your neck and behind your ears..."

"Oh...MY!" Courtney stage-whispered into the phone.

"If my age is going to be a problem...perhaps we should deal with that now. But I'd much rather tell you what I'm going to do with you the first time we're alone and free from interruptions."

"Oh, God....tell me, please!"

"Well, first...we'd dance to some slow music, to really get in tune with each other's body. I'm about a foot taller than you, so in heels, your head will be just high enough to rest on my shoulder. I want to feel your body next to mine, through our clothes, the gentle, pleasing weight of your breasts pressing against my chest as we sway to the music.

"I want to drop my hands to your incredible ass and feel you through the material of your skirt. A short, tight skirt that makes your legs look like they reach all the way up to your armpits. I want to lower my head and gently brush the hair away from your ears so I can get at that sensitive part where your neck and shoulder meet, so I can taste it with tip of my tongue, and gently, oh, so gently, suck at it. Not hard enough to leave a mark...but enough to let you know that I want you."

"Mmmmmm, don't stop," Courtney whispered.

"I want to pull away for a long, slow instant, to see your incredibly deep eyes locking with mine. I want to watch your mouth open slightly, in this little surprised 'o', so that I can move in and taste the heat and warmth of your lips

against mine. I want to feel your fingers suddenly clutching at my shoulders as the kiss intensifies and wettens.

"I want to kiss that throbbing vein in your neck, the one that tells me that you're as scared as I am about fucking this up..."

"And then?" she fairly screamed. "THEN what?"

A sudden evil thought popped into my head. "I'll tell you the rest...when we can be alone." And I hung up the phone.

I sat up for about an hour, waiting for the phone to ring. It didn't so just before I turned the light off, I called her back. If one of the kids answered, I'd just disconnect.

She answered. "Hello?"

"I just wanted you to know," I said softly, "that you're the last thing I'm thinking about before I go to sleep."

And I hung up again.

The phone woke me at about seven.

"Hello?"

"I just wanted you to know," Courtney said, "that you were the first thing I thought about when I woke up." The phone went dead in my ear, and with a smile, I replaced the receiver and rose to greet the new day. It was a work day...a Friday, and I knew that Don was leaving for Florida. .. for three entire weeks. And I also knew that Scott and Kathy, Courtney's children, were leaving for summer camp for a month. Courtney did not know that I knew this.

Leverage. God, how I loved it.

And then, as always, she turned the tables on me. I was sitting behind my desk, smugly thinking of ways to tease and please her, when Courtney walked into my office. She smiled at me, leaned over and planted a quick peck on my lips, enough of a taste of her to make my cock start throbbing immediately.

"I've been thinking about you all morning," she said. "I've been so incredibly wet thinking about you touching and stroking and kissing me that I just have to give you these..." And then I noticed that she was holding something in her hand, something small and silky. It was her panties, little black lace things. The crotch panel was stained with her juices. She dropped them into my lap and turned to leave, stopping at the door to say one last thing over her shoulder to me.

"Just think about the fact that I'm not wearing any underwear under this skirt...for the rest of the day."

She smiled, waved a little wave at me, and then vanished back to her own office. Looking down at my lap, I rubbed my finger across the moist crotch of her panties, and raised the finger to my nose. She smelled like ambrosia, like strawberries in a soft summer wind. I kept those panties in my lap for the rest of the afternoon, letting them drape across my thumping cock. If anyone came in and asked me to stand, I'd be in a shitload of trouble, but I didn't care.

At five-ten, my intercom buzzed. I picked it up.

"Daniel Byrne," I answered.

“Regent Plaza. Room 1402. Seven thirty. Don't be late.” And then there was nothing.

Ohmygod.

-3-

*“License my hands and let
them go
Before, behind, between, above
below.”*

-John Donne

The door to 1402 was closed, and I'd been standing in front of it for about ten minutes. I was thinking about my own experience, or more to the point, my own lack of experience with the fairer sex. No virgin I, but it could not be said by any *stretch* of the imagination that I was a 'stud.' The word just did not apply to a 24 year-old computer whiz from the East Coast who had three dates in High School. My first sexual experience was with an older woman, a 21-year old counselor at a camp I attended when I was fifteen. And that, I later learned, was what women called a Mercy Fuck.

Well...it's now or never, I thought, and raised my hand to knock. At that moment, the door opened.

“Ten minutes,” Courtney said with a smile in her voice. “Until you raised your hand, I didn't think you were going to make it.” I felt myself blush to the roots of my hair, and I wished immediately for a chasm to open up in the floor and swallow me whole. Instead, Courtney reached a hand into the hall and dragged me inside.

She shut the door behind her, and then we were in each other's arms. Her body melded itself to mine, and though she was teetering on her high heels, I felt consumed with that first kiss. It lasted for at least a minute, a tangling of tongues in both mouths, and exchange of fluid, that first, delicious, illicit contact sending sparks through us both.

We separated, and I took a moment to look her over. She was wearing a short, tight black skirt that hugged her tight little ass, dark stockings (not seamed, and not fishnet, but probably a little more respectable, considering that she *did* have to walk through the lobby...) Her blouse was dark blue, almost royal blue, and was made out of satin or some other shiny material. Identifying women's clothing by name has never been a skill of mine, but make no mistake; I know what I like. And this, I liked!

“You look...spectacular,” was all I could say. She batted her eyes at me and giggled. It was a wonderful sound.

“And you,” she said, raising a hand to my face, gently stroking my cheek with her fingernails. “You look so handsome.” I looked down at myself, at the jacket and tie I'd worn to work that day, and my slightly scuffed shoes. “This old thing?

I just threw it on!" She laughed at my feeble joke, and took my hand, leading me inside. The room she'd rented was actually a suite, with a sitting room, a small 'living' room, and a door that presumably led to the bedroom.

There was a room-service cart parked in the sitting room next to the couch, and I spied a bottle of champagne peeking out of a silver ice bucket. Shit. I hate that stuff. Makes my nose tingle.

"Why don't you pour me some?" she said, indicating the bottle. "I want to freshen up a little." I smiled at her, and bent to the task, twisting the little wire cage off of the bottle as I watched her walk towards the bathroom. Her hips had an extra little wiggle in them, and knowing it was for me made my own stomach do a little flip.

And then I noticed that in the bottom of the ice bucket were three ice-cold bottles of beer. Beer she had obviously ordered for me.

I poured the champagne, and then a beer into a stout, iced mug that I found on the tray. I took them to the couch and sat. Courtney appeared a moment later, and stopped at a wall switch to dim the lights before joining me on the couch. She tucked her legs underneath her and held out her hand for the glass I offered.

We sipped and stared at each other, neither one of us saying anything.

Finally, from her: "This is insane."

My free hand was toying with her hair, lightly scratching the skin on the back of her neck. "I know," I said, and then added, "but I also know that if we don't make love here tonight, I'll probably explode."

"You want me *that* much?" she asked. Silently, I nodded. "Why?" she asked. "I can understand my feelings for you; you're young and handsome and so...sexy!" I blushed at her words, but only because I didn't believe her. I was never 'sexy' to anyone.

I started moving towards her, gently approaching with my head tilted. We kissed, softly, and then backed away, rubbing noses. I kissed the tip of her nose. "I think, " I whispered, "that you are the sexiest woman I have ever seen in my life." A small, grateful smile appeared on Courtney's face as her hand came around to caress my cheek.

"You dear sweet man," she said. And then her mouth was on mine again, hungrily sucking at me. Her hands clutched at my jacket, working it off my shoulders and down my arms. Once discarded, her hands went back to work, loosening my tie, and then separating the buttons on my shirt. When the first button went, her face dropped to my chest, exploring and tasting the exposed skin with her lips, mouth and tongue. Her touch was electric and wet and hot and moist, and I wanted it to never end. Her hands were busily working to get my shirt off, and then she was pulling the tail out, and working the shirt down my arms. She tossed it over with the jacket. Her hands were all over my chest, tracing the outlines of my pectorals, toying with my nipples as she took me in.

"God, you're perfect," she said. "So young...so strong." Our mouths came together again, and I lost myself in her moist heat, sucking at the lightly probing tip of her tongue. My hands went around her back and started working the buttons of her blouse slowly, one at a time. My hands invaded the blouse from the back, spanning the smooth, warm skin of her back, feeling the strap of her bra. The

blouse came off slowly, tantalizingly... Her bra was sheer and tiny, barely supporting the substantial weight of her breasts. Her nipples were hard, pushing against the soft material.

"You're so beautiful," I whispered. "So soft and so sexy." And again we collided at the mouth as my hands easily worked the bra fastener. It came away in my hands, and I slipped the straps off her shoulders, and followed them down to the cups. As slowly as possible I removed the cups from her breasts, and tossed the bra aside, returning my hands to gently cup and weigh her tits. Exercise, or perhaps a visit to the body shop, had kept her breasts firm and soft to my touch. They were warm and slightly moist with sweat, and I felt the hard nubbins of her nipples graze my palms as I spanned her chestflesh with my hands. I tightened my grip just a little, and felt Courtney gasp into my mouth.

Her hand strayed to my crotch, and she traced the outline of my cock through my pants. "Is that all for me?" she asked.

Nodding, I said, "All for you. Whenever you want it...."

"Oh god, Dan," Courtney whispered urgently, "please do come inside me!" Her hands frantically worked my belt and trousers open and down. My erect cock was poking at my jockeys, and she could see how hot and hard I was for her, how much I wanted her touch.

Lowering her head, Courtney blew hot streams of breath across my cotton-covered cock, and I felt the goosebumps rise on my legs and arms. Her tiny little hands worked my shorts down and off, and then my erect, angry cock was bobbing and staring her right in the face.

"It's so beautiful," she said. "So hard and thick." Notice that she didn't say *long*. That's because even when I'm at my most aroused state, my tumescent little tiger measures a sub-average 5 inches. I'd never had any complaints about its performance, though, so I don't worry about it.

And then Courtney's incredibly hot, wet mouth was closing around the head of my cock, and she was gently bobbing, taking more and more of me with each stroke. My own hands were filled with her breasts, and as the animal passion of our attraction took over, the gentle lovemaking went out the window, replaced instead with two hot, sweaty bodies grasping at each other, struggling towards the first ultimate release of passion between us.

Courtney's hands were in my crotch, two fingers around the base of my cock, the other hand gently working my balls. The sounds coming from my crotch were loud and wet and very exciting. A woman old enough to be my mother was between my legs, eagerly suckling at my cock, making me feel like I was going to blow my load any second.

Sensing this, Courtney backed off for a moment. Standing, she then kneeled before me, using a hand on each knee to spread me thighs to give her more room to operate. It was comical, because I still had my shoes and socks on.

I quickly got rid of those and settled back into the couch as Courtney again dipped her head to take my cock into her mouth. In this position, we locked gazes as she slowly worked my erect member in and out of her soft, wet mouth. Twirling her tongue around the tip, Courtney applied more suction than a vacuum

cleaner, and I had to resort to doing multiplication tables in my head so as not to cum.

But in the end, it was fruitless, and the orgasm was made that much more special because I was staring into her depthless brown eyes when I climaxed. Her own eyes closed

with pleasure as I spurted my cum across her wildly licking tongue. Courtney kept her mouth around my cock until I was spent (but still hard...ah, youth!) and then slowly raised her face. She crawled up into my lap and smiled at me with dreamy, heavy-lidded eyes. She lowered her mouth for a kiss, and I noticed a bit of my own cum in the corner of her mouth. And when we kissed, I could taste myself in her and on her, and it drove me crazy. I searched her mouth with my tongue, looking for more of my essence to share with her. She sensed this, and our kiss extended and lengthened.

My hands were on her legs, working their way under her skirt. She started to shift to take it off and I stayed her with my hands. "Leave it on...please..." Agreeing silently, she settled back into my arms as I worked a hand up between her thighs.

I stroked the soft skin of her inner thighs, slowly working my way to her molten core. My hands grazed the edge of her mons through the panties, and she gasped into my mouth, her hands clutching at my shoulders.

I lifted her off my lap and set her in the position I'd been in recently. Putting her arms over her head and stretching, Courtney scooted her ass to the edge of the couch and spread her legs wantonly wide. I knelt before her and started at her knees, kissing my way up. The skirt wasn't so tight as to restrict my movements, but I moved it out of the way anyway.

Her panties were black silk, and I could see a wet spot the diameter of a beer can in the center. She was hot and aroused and I could smell her passion from her knees. My face grazed her crotch once, and I gave a single, thrilling lick with my tongue, tasting her tangy juices in my mouth.

"Oh Jesus!" she said, grabbing my head with her hands and forcing my face against her swampy panties. I sucked and slurped and licked at her through the material, and she started bucking her cunt up to meet my mouth.

"..take them off," she whispered, "...oh, God, please take them off!" I reached to her waist and fairly tore the panties off, taking a half in each hand, and then burying my mouth and face into her now-naked cunt. Her hair was sparse and dark black, like the hair on her head. Her cunt looked wonderful, and tasted better. She tasted like sweat and summer strawberries, and I licked at her like a desert-crawler finding an oasis.

She shuddered through three quick cums, and then pushed me away. "Time for the main event," she said with a smile, took my hand and led me to the bedroom.

-4-

*"That which we call sin in others
is experiment for us."*

-R.W. Emerson

American essayist, poet, philosopher

*"Toute me est une melodie qil s'agit de
renouer."*

(Every soul is a melody which
needs renewing.)

- Stphane Mallarm

French Symbolist Poet

The bed was already turned down. Courtney sat on it and drew me to her, resting her head on my stomach. Her hands were gently tracing my buttocks as I stood before her, my cock lightly rubbing against her chin.

"You dear, sweet man," she whispered. "Do you even *know* how excited I am for you right now? Do you have any *idea* how much I want to feel you inside me, inside my body?"

Gently caressing the soft skin of her cheeks, I replied : "I imagine about as much as I want to be inside you, my love. Now lean back, and let me taste you again." Eagerly, smiling, Courtney fell back on the bed and splayed her thighs wide. Her hands went to work on her own tits, testing and cupping their weight in her hands, eager thumbs working on her erect nipples. I could see the wet evidence of her arousal surrounding her hole.

Starting at her feet, I slowly kissed every inch of her toes, ankles and calves. As I slowly kissed and licked my way up her body, my hands continued to stroke and caress her skin, find little spots that gave Courtney pleasure and added to her arousal.

As I crossed the midway point of her knees, her breathing deepened. "My God, my husband would never even think of doing this to me," she whispered.

"A little lacking in the loving department, huh?" I joked.

"He's just from the old school." She quoted him bitterly, mimicking, "Ya gotta get it up to get it to get it on to get it off."

I was gently sucking at the tender skin of her inner thigh, being careful not to leave a telltale mark. I raised my head and locked eyes with her. "Wham bam, thank you, Ma'am?" I asked.

She nodded. "You know it."

"Well...you've come to the right place, then." And I resumed my slow, teasing, agonizing licking and kissing until I was again face to muff with her cunt. The scent of her almost overwhelming arousal filled my nostrils. It was an almost

palpable physical presence, and I took a moment to savor the effect I'd had on this woman.

And then I dropped my face into her crotch and lightly bit her clit. The effect was instantaneous and climactic. She lurched upright in bed, bending from the middle as though doing a sit-up, and dug her hands into my head, forcing my mouth and face against her incredibly wet and juicy crack. I started long, thrilling licks from top to bottom, alternating with teasing tongue stabs past her lips and into her hole. I could feel the walls of her incredibly slick cunt snapping and closing around my tongue, trying to keep my wriggling mouth-snake inside of her body.

For almost twenty minutes Courtney rode my face like a cowgirl, screeching through one climax after another. When I finally pushed myself away, I glanced over at the mirror and had to grin: My face looked like a glazed doughnut.

Courtney pulled my face to hers, and she started licking her own juice off of my face. I found this to be highly erotic, and our kisses mounted in passion as I lowered my full weight on top of her.

"I love this," she said simply. "I love feeling your body next to mine." We started rubbing against each other, and I could feel my cock slithering between her lips lengthwise, pointed at the mattress. Her fat, greasy cunt lips rubbed along the sides of me, and I wanted so much to just ramfuck her into the mattress. Perhaps later, I thought. Right now, she wanted gentle and soothing and giving.

I leaned back and gently spread her legs a little wider, watching as her slick crack opened for me. Her hole was winking at me, and looking up at Courtney, I could see that she was biting her bottom lip, waiting for my penetration.

I rubbed myself along her wetness, getting ready. The head of my almost-purple cock penetrated her slowly, inch by inch, and she suddenly gasped.

"My God..you're so thick!" Well, that did a lot to boost the 'ol ego, and I used my weight to slowly drive the entire five inches inside her with a single slow push. The air in Courtney's lungs exited with a long exhale that matched my penetration, and then I was flat against her chest, buried to the roots in her spasming cunt.

She was as warm as hot, slippery honey, and I wanted to stay buried in her pussy for the rest of my life. Her long, slim legs came around my waist and her heels started beating against my butt.

"Slowly," she whispered. "Please make this last as long as you can." Smiling, I began stroking gently and slowly, wanting to please her and make it last. Our bodies joined and separated, our loins slapping gently together as we rode the waves of pleasure. After about fifteen minutes, I pulled her over on top of me and let her set the pace as I played with her tits and pulled her face to mine for a kiss. She was grounding herself against me on each downstroke, mashing her clit against my body. Her cunt would spasm tightly around me, and I would groan and think about batting averages so as not to cum. Her incredibly tight, wet cunt was slowly, inexorably milking the jizz out of nuts, and I wanted nothing more than to spray her insides with my cum.

After half an hour of fucking, I was shaking with my need to cum. It was time to become a little bit more forceful. I laid Courtney down on her back again, and

lifted her legs onto my shoulders, and then leaned forward, spreading the lips of her still-clutching cunt with my cock. I started pounding into her, listening to her whimper and moan with each thrust.

“F-f-f-uck me” she stuttered, “h-h-h-harder.” I really started slamming against her, again and again, and then I knew I was a moment away from blasting my jizz. I buried myself in Courtney's cunt, clutched her asscheeks in my hands, and blew my load. Huge pumping streams of my cream poured from my cock, filling her so completely that it started to back out and ooze from her slit, covering the both of us with a mixture of our juices. I collapsed on top of her, feeling the comforting weight of her tits crushed against my chest. We kissed softly, gently as her cunt milked me of my last drops.

“That was wonderful,” she whispered. “Just like I imagined. Better, in some ways.”

“You ain't seen nothing yet,” I promised, as I kissed my way softly down her body and then slowly and carefully licked the mixture of my cum and her honey out of her swampy, used slot. “Oh my God!” she screamed, against thrusting her crotch against my face.

“Three weeks,” I said. “We have three weeks. Three entire weeks to fuck and suck and learn all we can about each other.”

“Mmmm,” Courtney moaned. “When you're done there... oh god! Right there!...I have something I want to give you. Something I've never given anyone before.”

“What?”

“My asshole.”

“Hope”

I can't begin to tell you what Hope means to me. My mother died when I was very young, so young in fact, that I hardly remember her. She is a faded image in my mind, and only old photographs remind me of what she once looked like. She was very pretty my mother, and I guess I miss her. That may sound a little cold and callous, but I never really knew her.

Hope, on the other hand, was another story. Hope is my best friend's mother, and I have had a crush on her for as long as I've known what girls and boys do together in the bedroom. It got very, very bad during puberty, and now, at the tender age of 17, it's finally leveled off. But there's a good reason for that.

Hope and I...wait. Let me start at the beginning.

Hope is the kind of wife and mother that reminds you of those perfect women in sitcoms. Always ready with a plate of fresh-from-the-oven cookies and a ice-cold glass of milk, Hope helped form my opinion of what a woman should be. Even at that tender age, I knew that Hope was different from other Moms. She was smarter, funnier...sexier. It wasn't like she was slinking around the house in a silk dressing gown, flashing glimpses of her underwear at my tender, underage eyes. She never looked inappropriate; it was just that she has this...fresh, sexy appeal, kind of like one of the girls you see in a beer advertisement, or a chewing-gum commercial. I know how stupid and insipid that sounds. My father summed it up: There are girls you want to meet, and girls you marry. Hope was both.

When the first stirrings of my teenaged lust started appearing, Hope was the primary focus of my fantasies. In my fevered jack-off dreams, I saw her and I together, doing things that I still had no names for, things I only knew would feel perfect if I were to do them with her.

Looking back now, I know that Hope was aware of my feelings, painful and immature though they were. She always treated me well, and I like to think that she thought me the son she never had. I mean, I know she had a son, but...you know what I mean.

Jeff was her son, and my best friend. We met in the first grade, and it was basically set from there. Even now, after all that's happened, he and I are still best friends. He doesn't understand it, and I'm sure he doesn't agree with it, but I know that he'll be my best friend until the day I die. Just as Hope will be my one true love.

What happened is that during the summer between my junior and senior year, several things happened. Jeff's father left Hope and moved in with his bimbo secretary. It was an old story, but no one had seen it coming. Hope had always thought she'd had a happy marriage, that her husband was satisfied and content. Amazing what a pair of nineteen-year old tits can do for a man, huh?

What also happened is that I broke up with a girl that I'd been dating for about six months in a futile attempt to get Hope out of my soul. Erin dumped me for a better-looking jock, crushing me. And Jeff started dating his first serious girlfriend.

What happened, then, was that Hope and I found ourselves spending a lot of time alone. I would go over to Jeff's house to see if he was doing anything, and more than likely he was screwing around, out with Heather somewhere. Hope as all alone, and she was starting to show some of the wear and tear the separation was causing her. Hope still thought that her husband would return after his midlife crisis, but with each subsequent day, it looked like the divorce was actually going to happen.

In all fairness to Jeff's dad, he was handling the thing as well as could be expected. There were no money problems. He'd agreed to make sure that Hope and Jeff were well taken care of. Hope didn't have to worry about finding a job or losing the house. She just missed having a husband around.

As I was to find out.

One Friday night I got to feeling kind of lonely, so I headed on over to Jeff's house. He was out with Heather again, and Hope was obviously feeling kind of down.

"So, what are your plans for tonight, stud?" Hope always called me that and whenever she did, it made me feel. ...good.

"Well, since Jeff is going out, I'll probably just go back home and watch a video." I tried to keep the hint of desperation and loneliness out of my voice.

Hope stopped what she was doing and glanced at me. "Tell you what. I was just going to read a little and then go to bed. Why don't we watch the movie together. I could really use some company tonight, Greg."

Suddenly, my throat was dry.

"Uh," I said. "The movie is, uh, at, uh, home."

Hope waved a dismissive hand. "We'll see what's on cable or pay per view. No problem. What do you say? I'll pop some popcorn, get some sodas..." She raised her eyebrows, "Maybe a beer or two...? What do you say, huh?"

In to the breach, dear friends.

"Sure." Hope laughed gleefully and clapped her hands. She set to work instantly. In ten minutes we had a big bowl of popcorn, a beer for me and a glass of wine for her.

Pay Per View was showing one of those heavy-duty R- rated movies that had lots of nudity and sex in it. Hope looked at me, embarrassed, but I just shrugged, and we went back to watching. The plot of the movie was a gift from the Gods. An older woman's husband leaves her for a younger woman, and she gets her revenge by taking over the company she inherited from her father but the dallying husband runs. In one later scene, she's talking to the Dictaphone, remarking about how since she doesn't have a man in her life anymore, she'll have to make her business the focus of her life.

I was reaching for my third beer when I heard the sound next to me. Hope was on the other side of the couch, and I saw that she had sniffled. She was crying softly, staring at the screen, her eyes out of focus, her thoughts obviously somewhere else. As she continued to think about whatever it was (and I'm sure I know what it was,) the tears increased. Even crying, she was beautiful. Hope was so wrapped up in whatever it was that she was thinking about, I had a moment to

really, really look at her. I'd always been shy, and I preferred to look at pictures of Hope that were around the house.

I was reminded again just how beautiful Hope was. She wasn't wearing any makeup that night, and at the tender age of 36, she looked better than some of the girls I went to high school with. I studied the soft line of her jaw and suddenly wanted to kiss it very badly. She was wearing soft chinos and a blue oxford. The first three buttons were undone, and I suddenly realized I could see the edge of her lacy bra. That was somehow more exciting than if I had seen her naked. The thought that her full, round breasts were just underneath that smooth, silky material made my blood pound. I actually started to salivate.

She finally noticed me staring at her and snapped her head towards me. "Oh," she said softly. "I must look horrible. I'm sorry."

"No!" I said, meaning it. "Don't be sorry." I reached for the remote and snapped the TV off. The room was suddenly quiet. Hope put her hand on her forehead, shading her eyes as another sob wracked her body.

"It's just that..." Hope took a deep breath and then did something that shocked me. She held her hand out as if she wanted me to take it.

I did.

She pulled me towards her, and I slid across the couch, wondering what was going on. Hope released my hand and used that arm to grab my shoulder. She pulled me towards her, and for one panicked moment I thought she was going to kiss me.

Hope buried her face against my chest and started crying in earnest. My arms went around her and we just held each other. I let her get it out, and as she continued to sob against my chest I realized this was probably the first time she had really cried about the whole thing. She was the kind of woman, the kind of mother, that would want to present a strong front to Jeff.

I felt oddly touched that she felt she could do this with me, in front of me. My hands were massaging her back, and the little dirty boy inside my head announced that my fingers were running over her bra strap, and that her warm, full breasts were pressed firmly against my chest. Completely and utterly against my will, my cock hardened in my pants. I thanked God that the way we were sitting hid my thumping erection from her view.

"How could he do it?" she wailed. "How could he... fuck that little bimbo?" Hearing that word come out of her mouth both amazed and aroused me. The blood started flowing even harder to my cock, and I started to feel a little lightheaded. The beer and the growing arousal I was feeling began to take effect.

"I think he's crazy," I said softly. I turned my head against hers and kissed her clumsily on the side of the head, through her hair. She clung to me tightly after the kiss, and I returned the embrace, starting to get comfortable with the feeling of Hope's body against mine.

She started to pull away. One of my hands slid up her back and over her shoulder, and I cupped her cheek. Her skin felt hot and electric under my fingers. I stroked her cheek. She looked up at me, and the pain in her eyes, the betrayal, the loneliness was overwhelming.

One of her hands came up and found my face. She traced my chin with her thumb. Her other hand came up to the one I had on her face, and she gripped my wrist. She was looking up at me, her eyes searching mine, looking at my face, at my lips. I could feel her breath on my skin, feel her pulse under my fingers. Her heart was beating fast, almost as quickly as mine was. I knew that we were going to kiss.

I made a small movement with my head, stopping long enough to give Hope a chance to back out. I haven't necked with a lot of girls, but I know a lot about body language, how to send signals, how to telegraph intent before action. As I paused, Hope gave me a chance, moving her face a fraction of an inch closer to mine. We did it that way, tiny intimate little steps, until our lips were an inch apart.

"Are you sure?" she said, opening her mouth, showing me moist tip of her little pink tongue.

"Never so sure in my life," I whispered back, and pressed my lips against hers. Our mouths worked together softly, gently. It was the most perfect kiss in my life. All the years of crush and desire had added up to this moment in time. I knew that Hope had been aware of my feelings for her, and how they had grown. As our mouths opened and we softly, gently exchanged tongues for the first time, I had a fierce wish to be ten years older. At twenty-eight, I could mean something to this woman. I could be a part of her life. I could fill the void left by her bastard of a husband.

All I was now, I knew, was an eager young man willing to let her find solace in the warmth of my embrace. It was a learning experience for me, a passing of the sexual torch from one generation to another. A rite of passage; every young man has an older woman in his life, a surrogate mother who lets him see what is fine and beautiful about women, aside from their bodies and their faces. Every man has that woman, the one that shows him what life will be like when he finds The One to spend it with.

The kiss ended and we pulled apart...just a little. We touched foreheads for a moment, and I kissed her dryly there.

"We shouldn't," Hope whispered, but her fingers were pulling me tighter against her even as she spoke. I took a second to catch my breath; Hope's kiss had stolen it from me. "Do you want to?" she whispered. "Jeff won't be back for hours...and I need to feel beautiful again." Her eyes came up and found mine, and she bit her bottom lip waiting for my answer.

"I've never..." I started. "You'll have to show me," I said after a second. She closed her eyes and nodded softly. "You're so beautiful, Hope. So damn sexy..."

"You think so? You really do? You're just not saying that?"

I took her head in my hands and kissed her again. It was gentle for a second, and then we were hungrily mouthing each other. I pulled away and kissed the tip of her nose. At that moment, I finally understood what the word intimacy meant. No more secrets. "I...think about you when... I touch myself," I whispered.

She smiled, and it wasn't the condescending smile of a cheerleader or a prom queen, the dismissive grin of girls I could never have. It was the warm smile of a woman accepting a strange sort of heartfelt compliment. She understood its import; Most boys my age were thinking about those same prom queens and

cheerleaders when they took themselves by the hand. I had chosen her, a fully-grown and completely realized woman as my sexual ideal. She was all woman to me.

“Greg,” she whispered again. “I want so badly to feel you next to me...”

“I want to take my time,” I said. “I’ve thought about this for my entire life. I want to learn everything about you tonight. Everything.”

“Yes, you dear sweet man, yes. Everything.” We stood from the couch and hugged firmly. Her arms were pressed against my chest, and then they went around my torso, around my back, pulling me against her as we kissed again. One hand ascended to my neck and she pulled me harder against her, using her fingernails to lightly scratch me. If I’d been a cat, I would have purred. We were sharing breaths now, breathing through our nose, not breaking the kiss. She could feel my urgent need, my hunger for her, and she stepped back.

“Not here,” she said. “In the bedroom.” She took my hand in hers and led me to her bedroom, the place where she and her husband had made love countless times before. It was a truly symbolic act that was not lost on me. I was, in a way, replacing a man that had wanted out. I had wanted in.

Once there, she sat me on the bed and stood between my spread legs. She took my hands and placed them on her waist. I kissed her tummy through the skirt and she smiled down at me, running her fingers through my hair.

“Undress me,” she whispered. With shaking hands, I started unbuttoning her shirt. Each tiny white button slipped through its slot with a soft click! sound. I tugged the shirt out of her waistband and saw the wide expanse of her flat, silky belly. I buried my face against her skin and inhaled her fresh, clean scent. I kissed her stomach and licked it softly and she groaned.

“Are you sure you’ve never...?” she giggled, and I smiled into her skin.

“Never,” I assured her.

Talking stopped as I stood in front of her. Hope is about five inches shorter than me, and she looked directly into my eyes, burning my soul with a laser, as I slid the shirt off her shoulders and down her arms. The lacy bra I’d glimpsed before was in my face now, her creamy breasts jiggling with her shaky breath. She was as excited and nervous as I was.

I lightly traced her neck with my fingers, trailing them down her throat, across the top of her chest. Lightly, ever so lightly, I traced the outline of her bra-covered breasts. Biting her lip and shivering at my touch, Hope stood higher on her toes, trying to get more contact from my hand. I said nothing, only watched my hand as it moved across her chest to find her other breast through the sexy, silky material of her bra.

I lowered my face and kissed the side of her neck as my hands went around her back, searching for the clasp of her bra. It separated under my touch, and I remembered Jeff telling me how hard it was to get one of those undone.

Not if it's right. If you're sweating in the backseat of a car, wrestling with emotions as well as your date, your hands are unsteady. But when you've got the woman of your dreams standing in front of you, her eyes cast down as you remove her bra, revealing her to you for the first time as she awaits your approval, everything is smooth as silk.

The cups of Hope's bra clung sweatily to her breasts for a moment, and then the wispy garment fell in a white lace puddle at her feet. Her face was still down. Her breasts sagged gently against her ribs, and I reached out and cupped her face.

"Look at me," I whispered. Slowly, she raised her face to mine. "What's the matter?"

"I wasn't sure that you'd...I mean, the girls your age are all so...fresh and..."

"Shhh," I said, putting a finger across her lips. "Listen to me... If I wanted to look at your breasts, just your breasts, just... breasts, I'd go rent a movie or buy a magazine or go to a strip joint. I want to make love with you, Hope. All of you. Every exquisite inch of you."

"Oonnh!" she said, lifting her face to mine, throwing her arms around my neck, pulling my face against hers as we kissed again, another spectacular explosion of intimacy and sweet, pure passion.

We kissed for...hours, it seemed. My arms were looped around her waist, and I took two handfuls of her rump, pulling her against me. It felt soft and exquisite in my hands. A woman's soft, round ass. I loved it. I wanted to kiss it.

My hands went to her belt and I loosened it, finding the snap and releasing it. The unlocking metal teeth of the zipper sounded incredibly loud, almost accusing, as I slid

it down. Hope did something with her hips, and the pants slid to her feet. She stepped out of them, now clad only in a tiny pair of light pink panties. I could see the dark mat of her bush through the material, and I knew that's where I wanted to be.

In time, my son. Patience.

"Now you," she said, moving her hands to my waist. I'd been slow and gentle, but Hope was eager and hungry. She tugged the T-shirt out of my waistband and lifted it over my head, bearing my chest to her gaze. I'd worked out a little over the past few months, and my chest and abs were tight, tan and trim. "Mmmm," she said, leaning in to kiss me between my pecs. "So young...I'm going to have so much fun corrupting you!"

"Sit back," I said, stepping away to heel-toe my sneakers off. I fingered the socks over my ankles next, and made quick work of my 501's. I was like her, in my boxers, a pole of need in my shorts.

"Lie down," I whispered, and then joined her on the bed. Holly moved as if to take me into her embrace, and I gently pushed her back, turning her over onto her stomach.

"Let me play," I requested, and she settled. I started at her legs, just above her ankles, lightly kissing her calves. Slowly, gently I moved upwards, kissing the back of her knees, the backs of her thighs. The vertical smile of her rump greeted me next, and I kissed each cheek softly. My fingers followed my lips, stroking and squeezing everything gently, trying to stimulate her, turn her on. It was working, because Hope was squirming under my touch, under my caress. I was filled with the power of making a woman respond to me; I felt invincible, manly, macho.

I kissed her spine slowly, moving closer to her shoulders. "Turn over," I said, and she did. Her breasts shimmied with her motions, but I ignored them for the

moment, kissing just below them, moving down. Hope's legs bent at the knees, and she spread her legs. I could smell her scent wafting from between them, tantalizing me with her aroma. It made me salivate.

I kissed lower and lower, and then moved between her legs. Lifting them above my head, Hope slid her panties off and down, and then tossed them away. Slowly, her legs came back down, and then she spread them, allowing me my first unobstructed view of her.

She was beautiful. Exquisite.

I closed my eyes and moaned.

"What?" she said, worried.

"You're a work of art," I said, lowering my face between her legs. Her bush was an inch from my nose and I kissed it, feeling her curls in my nose. Blowing hot air with my mouth, I reached my tongue out and gently tested the waters. Her natural lubrication was tangy and tart, a treat for the tongue. I instantly wanted more.

"Tell me," I whispered. "If I do it wrong, tell me. Teach me."

"Oh...you're doing wonderful," she moaned. "Perfect. Don't stop!" My arms went around Hope's legs as I settled between them, and began to eat my first pussy. Gently at first, and then with growing hunger, I licked and sucked at her snatch, finding all her intricate tissues. I used my fingers to spread and open her, and I saw the eye of God staring back at me as I extended my tongue and used a long, thrilling lick from the base of her pussy to the top, stopping only to circle her clitoris once, twice, and then down again, delving inside her molten cave to taste her again.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" Hope groaned, lifting her hips off the bed and twisting them against my face. I renewed my attack, using more friction and moisture, using one of my hands to tease and caress her clit as I used my tongue to lick and gently suck at her juices.

Hope was getting closer now, ever so much closer. A woman was about to have an orgasm because of what I was doing to her, and I didn't want to miss a thing. I looked up, surprised to see Hope fondling her own breasts, pulling and twisting her rock-hard nipples. Her eyes were closed and she was tossing her head from side to side, biting her bottom lip, hunching her hips up off the bed into my face. Hope's hands left her breasts, finding my head, pressing my face against her sex harder as she dissolved into her first orgasm under my tongue. It was long, drawn-out and very wet. Her cunt saturated my face with her orgasm and I went wild, licking and sucking and gulping. I didn't want to miss a single molecule of her. I wanted it all. She was on my face, in my mouth and on my tongue, in my hair and eyebrows and eyelashes. It was the scent of love, of pure passion, of desire and hunger.

Finally, she pushed me away, rolling me onto my back. Hope rolled on top of me, and we shared a tender, intimate kiss.

"Thank you," she said. "Thank you so much."

"For what?"

“My husband...hates to do that. He thinks it's gross.” I kissed her again, and then said, “Tell you what: I'll make you a deal. Any time you need someone to go down on you, you give me a call, and I'll be happy to relieve the itch.”

Hope laughed and kissed me again. It was a wonderful sound, a sound I could listen to for the rest of my life. Hope continued to kiss me, and then she started moving south. She kissed my hairy nipples, and then between them, and then my stomach, and my belly button. My cock was throbbingly erect. I was so ready for her, so eager for her touch.

She got between my legs as I had done for her, kneeling, bending over, letting me watch her breasts sway with her movements. She grasped my cock with her perfect hand and stared at it, whispering softly. “It's perfect. So hard and strong and...FAT.”

I laughed at that. I remembered someone's words: Doesn't matter how long it is, as long as it scrapes the sides. Apparently that was true, because Hope lowered her face and kissed my cock softly, as if it were a rare treasure that needed to be savored.

That's the best description that I can find. She savored my cock, licking its entire length gently, softly, getting me wet and slick with her mouth. She lowered her face and licked my balls, something I'd never even considered. The feeling was delicious, and it sent shivers up and down my body. “Mmmm,” Hope moaned into my testicles. “I love the taste of your nuts!” That was a little dirty, a little kinky, and it turned me on. I began to understand that you could mix the good and the nasty together and get a potent concoction. The thought that Hope trusted me enough to show this side of her to me was exciting and a little scary at the same time.

“Yeah, suck my balls,” I said softly, and she lifted her head to smile at me.

“You must think I'm a horrible slut,” she said with a grin.

“Yeah...but you're MY slut!”

She laughed that gay, happy little laugh. “You do understand, don't you?”

“Yes, I do. Every woman wants to let her hair down from time to time and just be a person, instead of a wife and a mother. And every person needs a little nastiness, a little kink, a little delicious sleaze to feel alive and wanted and desired.”

Hope had been stroking my cock during my little speech.

“I'm so glad that it was you...” she whispered. “I couldn't imagine a more perfect night with anyone else.” And then she lowered her face, opened her mouth, and slid the entire length of my cock into her mouth and down her throat. I gasped with the sudden contact of her mouth and tongue and lips against my cock.

Slowly at first, and then gaining a little speed, Hope bobbed her head up and down my cock, using one of her hands to stroke my thighs, the other to gently massage my balls. Her face was closed in concentration or pleasure, and I just sat back and watched her. It was going to be soon, I knew, but I wanted to enjoy it as much as possible. Never in my wildest dreams had I imagined Hope making love to me orally. It was just too much to hope for.

And then I was there, feeling my nuts tighten in Hope's hand. She massaged them, squeezed them, used them to lift my cock deeper inside her mouth. My

cock throbbed once, twice, and then I was shooting, filling her mouth with my cream. Hope sucked and gulped, eagerly welcoming it all down her throat.

She slithered up my body and kissed me. I could taste myself in her mouth, and it only made me kiss her harder.

“Make love to me, Greg,” Hope whispered. “Please!”

Hope gazed into my eyes as she slowly brushed the hair out of my eyes. Her eyes were soft and sweet and loving. Her smile was small and secret, and I knew a little of what she felt. No matter what happened in my life, no matter where I went or what I did, or who I eventually became, no one could take this away from me, this perfect night with Hope.

I was a little scared as I rolled her over. This was It. The Big One. The loss of my virginity to this exquisite woman. I had wanted nothing else for as long as I could remember. And now here it was, in front of me, waiting for me, beckoning me. Hope spread her legs open beneath me, and I felt the heat and moisture of her crotch pressing against mine. My cock had barely gone down since cumming in Hope's mouth, and I was eager to get started, but remembered my manners.

I lifted my weight off of her and reached down to grasp my rod. It felt hard and fat, even to my hand. I slid it up and down her leaking slot, looking for her entrance. Hope smiled at me and reached down, guiding me to her entrance. I felt her opening, and slowly inserted the first inch.

I don't remember what I thought sex would be like, but this was not it. It was a million times better than I could have ever possibly thought it would be. Inch by slow, hard inch I filled Hope with my rod, watching her face as she felt me inside her for the first time. She bit her lip sexily, smiling up at me, and then closing her eyes and groaning low in her throat as I bottomed out inside her. Hope's vaginal walls clasped me snugly, milking me.

Hope laughed out loud. “You should see your face,” she kidded me. “You look like you found God.”

“No,” I managed to whisper, “But I've found my Goddess...” And then, as she smiled wider at me, I started moving, withdrawing my prick slowly, feeling her walls trying to hold me inside her. I left just the tip in and then slid forward again, grunting at the pleasure and the ecstasy.

“A little faster, please,” Hope requested, and I quickened my pace. Hope pulled my head closer to hers and lifted her face to kiss me. Our kiss was soft, gentle and loving. That's what this was, I realized. We were not fucking, we were not having sex...we were making love. Two people that cared deeply about each other as individuals were expressing their love and care in the best way possible. This was an incredibly special and intimate moment between two people, and I wanted to savor it all night long.

Our lovemaking wasn't hurried or rushed, allowing the both of us to experience maximum pleasure and satisfaction. Hope's blowjob had given me a little stamina, and my oral sex had given her more natural lubrication. Her legs came up and closed around my waist at the same moment her arms closed around my neck. I was cocooned by her body, by Hope's pussy and breasts and face and mouth, and at that moment, in the middle of all that pleasure and closeness, I sincerely wondered if her husband had lost his mind. I mean.

.... what man wouldn't want to come home to this woman every night? She was funny and smart and heart-meltingly sexy? What more could you want? Sure, she didn't have the tight, trim body of a teenager. But she did have experience and intelligence and compassion, things sorely lacking in most of the teenagers I knew personally. She was warm and giving. She was everything I ever wanted, and I cursed my bad luck for not being older, not being a man for her to love, a man she could welcome into her life. I wanted to stop this, just for a second, stop this carnival ride of lust and pleasure and quietly, gently explain that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with Hope, that I loved her more than anything in the world, more than I could ever hope to love anyone in my life.

Instead, I continued to make love to her, continued to use my cock to give her pleasure, continued to do my best to be a man for her. I was getting close, I knew, and it wouldn't be long before I exploded in my first orgasm inside a woman. I was aware that Hope hadn't cum yet, and I wanted to change that. I wanted her to cum with me; I knew it was probably unrealistic to expect that we would have a mutual orgasm, but I desperately wanted her to cum with me inside her.

I reached a free hand down and gently stroked her clit. Hope's eyes flew wide open and she bucked against me, lifting her hips harder against my groin. I felt her vaginal walls clasp incredibly tight around me, and then it happened.

"Oh, you dear sweet man, please do come inside me!" I had no choice. Hearing her ask for it, beg for it, plead for it did it to me. I grunted and shoved, burying every last inch inside her, twisting my hips, letting me pubic hairs scrape against her clit, trying to bring her over the edge with me. Miraculously, it happened. We came together, clutching our bodies against each other, sweating and smiling and kissing as our brains exploded in mutual, simultaneous pleasure. Our mouths broke apart, gasping for breath.

Hope's laugh started low in her throat, and built to a chuckle. She was laughing out loud, an incredibly happy, joyous laugh. I knew she wasn't laughing at me, but I was curious.

"What?"

"I've never...never had an orgasm with a man inside me before."

I gaped at her, and then realized that her husband must be a selfish, shitty lover. "Well, I'm glad I could be the first one," I smiled. Hope tightened her legs around my waist, holding me inside her. "You're the only one in my life now, Greg."

I moved us over until I was on my back. Hope fingered the hair out of her face, tucking it behind one ear. I wanted so badly to tell her that I loved her, wanted so much to let her know how much she meant to me, but I held back. I didn't want to sound like an infatuated teenager, someone who had no control over feelings governed more by glands than by brains.

I remembered a fantasy that I'd had about Hope about a year ago, and burst out laughing myself.

"What?" she wanted to know.

"Nothing," I said. "I was just thinking about a fantasy that I had about you a while ago."

"Mmm," she said, tracing my chest with a fingernail. "Tell me about it."

"You'll think it's silly," I said.

"No, Greg. Never!" Her face was serious, and I decided to trust her. I wasn't sorry.

"Well...I used to have this fantasy that we spent an entire day together, as boyfriend and girlfriend, doing all sorts of neat, romantic things, like having breakfast in bed, then going out and doing stuff, having a picnic lunch maybe, going to a movie and dinner, maybe drinks and dancing, and then back to my house for a night of lovemaking. And in the morning, you wouldn't remember a thing, and I'd have this perfect memory of a night spent with my perfect woman." I finished my story and waited to see her reaction.

"Why wouldn't you want me to remember?" she asked.

"Because," I explained, "I was never very popular with the girls, and I wanted to be able to love you, to be in love with you, to make love with you...without having you feeling embarrassed or...silly." Her expression grew serious.

"Do you love me, Greg?"

There was a moment of silence. "Yes," I finally whispered. "I do."

Her hand caressed my face as she stared into my eyes. Her smile was soft and tentative. "You have your whole life ahead of you, Greg. All of it. Why me?"

I laughed. "Why is the ocean blue? Why does the sun come up? It just does, it just is. I don't know why or when. ...I just know I do." I looked away. "I'm sorry if that...if that's a problem."

Hope just kissed my jaw softly, using her hands to turn my face back to hers. "No problem," she said. Her mouth opened against mine, and as she slid her tongue into my mouth I knew it was going to be all right, no matter what happened.

What happened was that Hope and I made love twice more that night. As it got late, and we realized that Jeff might return, we reluctantly got dressed, and I went home. I could hardly sleep that night, my thoughts so filled with Hope as they were. The next day, I went back over to see Jeff, and Hope met me at the door with a huge smile on her face. As I stepped in, Hope drew me into a passionate embrace. Her hands clutched at me as she drew me against her, and I kissed her back as hungrily as she kissed me.

"I have news!" she said, her face alight with merriment. For a sudden second, I had a fear that her husband had returned.

"Jeff is going away to camp!" she said. "He'll be gone for nine weeks!"

"What?"

"Jeff is going away to camp! He and Heather got jobs as counselors at a camp in Maine! They're leaving in four days for nine whole weeks!"

And then I realized what it meant. We would have nine weeks alone together, nine weeks to discover what, exactly, was going on between us.

I pulled her to me again, kissing Hope's neck and cheeks. "Where is he now?" I moaned.

"At Heather's," she moaned, wrapping her arms around my neck. "He'll be back in about an hour-ooooh!" she moaned as my hands found her breasts. We sank to the floor and made love right there on the kitchen linoleum. It was fast and sweaty and eager, and I kept telling her how beautiful and sexy she was. Once

again, she orgasmed as soon as I did, and as we got dressed, Hope kissed me softly.

“I couldn't stop thinking about you when you left,” she said. “I must be crazy...but I think I love you, Greg.”

Part III
Cops & Spies

“Holly”

Holly and I had a good gig going. We'd been partners for four years, working Narco buy-and-busts as a pair of dirtball-biker wannabes. Holly wore her trashy best, with the torn jeans and midriff t-shirts, high heels and snapping bubblegum. I had my hair long, in a ponytail, wearing the leather vest and usual biker garbage. The huge old Harley the department bought us for the gig carried us to and from work. We'd racked up an impressive list of arrests, and were looking forward to several more years of busting bad guys.

One of Holly's biggest assets as a cop was the fact that no one in their right mind would ever guess that the petite dirty-blond was on the Job. She carried herself like a cokehead biker bitch, but I knew the real Holly. Sweet and soft on the inside, hard as nails on the outside. We'd been in some hairy situations over the years, and more than our share of firefights. The small Colt Commander .45 she carried in her purse worked well for my little partner, and she was a fucking dead-on shot when the heat was on. I couldn't even think of ever having another partner, or another best friend. Working that closely with someone, undercover for extended periods of time tended to bond you to one another. I knew all of Holly's secrets, and she knew all of mine...but one.

Somewhere along the line, sometime in the last six months, I'd fallen quietly, desperately in love with my partner. When I realized it, I started working even harder to hide my feelings from her. The last thing either of us needed was personal romantic feelings fouling up our professional relationship. And most of all, I didn't want to risk our friendship. Holly was the most special, most beautiful woman I'd ever known, and I fancied her my little sister. She was so small and quiet at times, it was hard to imagine the little firebrand she could become when it was time to take down a scumbag.

Then we got made as Narcs, and we had to be transferred from Narco to somewhere else. At least the brass upstairs understood that Holly and I were great together and didn't split us up. What they did do to prove that they had their heads up their asses was transfer us to Vice. Hooker details and bookmaking busts. Not nearly enough excitement to make up for getting transferred out of Narco after six successful years.

And the first thing they did after transferring us to Vice was give us the shittiest assignment on the books. One that had been waiting for us, they said. Tailor made for a team like us. This one was going to make our careers, they told us. Front page of the newspaper. All the talk shows. They'd probably make a television show out of this one, they told us. A lot of ego stroking took place before they revealed what the damn job was.

Word on the street was that a strip bar called “Hooters” was dealing drugs out of the back, and that some of the girls were available for more than lap dances for a certain amount of money. They wanted us to go undercover, Holly as a stripper, me as a bouncer, and 'make the case,' as we were told.

Holly and I had spent a lot of time in and out of strip bars when we were undercover for Narco. We knew what the lifestyle was like, what the women went through. It was a hard, rough life, and I wasn't sure Holly wanted to go undercover as a fucking stripper, taking her clothes off for a room full of men every night. And that's what undercover meant to her and I: We went under, completely under. We became new people. Shields and guns left at home, new names, new identities. The Intelligence boys provided good paper and backgrounds that would pass almost any investigation.

Holly and I talked about it in one of the interrogation rooms.

"You know," I said. "We don't have to take this one. We can do hooker detail. Get you dressed up in a short skirt and high heels, and let old men talk dirty to you. At least no one..." I trailed off.

"Has to see me naked, right?" Holly's smile was rueful, and I knew what she was thinking. "Ben," she started, "you know what it's like for a woman on this job. We have to do it better, cleaner than any of the men. If I turn this down, word will get around that I'm getting soft, and no one will offer me any of the good jobs anymore. Hell, they might put me back in uniform, writing traffic tickets or some nonsense like that."

"Holly," I said. "No one will think any less of you if you don't want to take your clothes off for this job. No one can make you do this."

Holly sighed, looking at me with her deep blue eyes. "Don't you see, Ben? They can make me. Just by offering me this undercover, they are making me do it. If I don't... after we left Narco...we'll never get anything ever again worth doing. Hell, they might split us up, partner!" Her open palm came across the rickety wooden table, and I took it, feeling her warmth. Truth be told, I didn't want Holly up there, taking her clothes off, getting pawed by men...but for a completely different reason, a reason that I couldn't tell her. It was completely her call.

We held hands for ten minutes, and then she nodded silently at me. "Let's do it."

I went under first. I didn't want Holly in there without backup. I'm a big guy, about 250, 6'3, so I had no problem doing what it took to get the bouncer's job. Which was basically taking out the existing one.

I went into Hooter's one Friday night, and started throwing Department money around like it was going out of style. I had three dancers working my table, shaking their silicone in my face, grinning emptily at me as I tucked twenties into their garters. I waited until the bouncer was looking directly at me before I cupped the nearest dancer's left breast in one huge hand.

He was over in a heartbeat. I felt a hand close around my shoulder, fingers digging in painfully. I turned slowly, giving him time to back off. I knew he wouldn't; he was too dumb.

"Take your hand off me." My voice was quiet, almost too quiet to be heard over the pounding rock music.

"Can't touch the girls," the guy said, like it'd taken him three weeks to memorize that single phrase. "Gotta leave, pal. Can't touch the girls."

Slowly, I stood, turning in his grip. I was the same height, and he had about twenty pounds of chemically-enhanced muscles on me. But I had my .45 Colt Officer's Model in my waistband quick-draw holster. And I knew how to use it.

"I'm not leaving, asshole."

He smiled and turned away from me. Anyone could see the haymaker coming. The pistol was in my hand, the hammer almost cocking itself, the motion was so automatic, and the barrel was against his temple before he finished turning.

"Move...and die. Your choice." Eyes as big as dinner plates, he slowly relaxed and took a step back.

"Is there a problem here?" I turned and saw a slimy little dude standing behind me, a thousand-dollar suit not going very far towards hiding the rodent that inhabited it.

"No problem, boss," the bouncer said, his voice shaking.

"You realize, of course, that I have to protect my girls," the rodent said.

I laughed. "With him? He couldn't protect a schoolbus full of nuns."

"Big man with the gun," the bouncer said, finding a little backbone somewhere inside. I smiled my darkest, most evil smile and slowly pulled the gun away from his head. My thumb hit the magazine release and it slid out of the well and clattered to the floor. For good measure, I worked the slide, ejecting the one lonely round from the chamber. It bounced and clattered on the table, and slowly rolled off the edge to the carpeted floor. The music had stopped, and everyone in the place was looking at the three of us. I placed my pistol on the table.

"No gun, asshole. Now it's just you and me." I saw him thinking, the little wheels in what passed for his brain turning. He had the weight on me, but I knew something he didn't: Fifteen years of Aikido training.

His arm came around, the big ham of his fist heading for my face. I caught the fist with one of my hands, stepped into it, locking his elbow with my free arm, and levered the arm over mine. The snap of bone was loud in the quiet club, and the bouncer folded like a wet suit.

I had the job.

-2-

It took me two weeks to find out that they were indeed selling drugs out of the club. The waitresses were carrying the small packets in the hands that held the tray. If you knew what to order, you could get whatever you wanted: smack, crack, blow, uppers, downers and inside-outers.

But I couldn't find out if the girls were hooking. I just couldn't ask, and my only job was to make sure that the drunk businessmen didn't paw the girls. Holly had to come in.

I was there the day she came in to 'interview.' She was wearing a denim miniskirt, a pink midriff shirt that hung away from her skin under the pressing

weight of her breasts. Her long blonde hair was tied in a bouncy ponytail, and she was snapping a wad of gum big enough to choke a horse.

"Wherz the manager?" she asked me, bouncing on one hip. I smiled at her and jerked a thumb at the door marked "PRIVATE." She went in, and closed the door behind her. Thirty minutes later the door opened, and the manager, Tony, walked out, smiling. I looked over and caught a glance of Holly, putting her shirt back on. I saw the material of her skirt crossing the line of her nipples, and then nothing. That small view of her tits sent blood lurching to my cock. She was so incredibly hot, and I wanted to kill Tony for making her undress for him.

She came out, smiled at me, and left.

"Some cunt, huh?" Tony asked me, watching me watch Holly. I turned back to him with murder in my soul, ready to snap his neck with my bare hands. "Yeah," I said. "Some cunt."

"Name's Holly. She'll be dancing as Sugar starting next week. Man, oh man, if she plays her cards right, she'll make a fucking fortune!" An alarm bell triggered in the back of my mind, but I didn't say a word. Not yet.

I got off work at nine that night and met Holly at one of our favorite bars, O'Mally's. She was waiting for me when I got there, sitting in our booth, staring into her beer as I slid into the seat opposite her.

"How did it go?" I asked. Holly just shrugged.

"Ok, I guess. He made me-"

"I saw." We sat in silence for a few seconds. I poured myself a beer.

"He wanted...to see my body. To make sure that I could take my clothes off in front of strange men." Her voice was...sad. That was the only word I could use...sad. Instantly, my desire to snap Tony's neck returned.

"Bastard!" I hissed.

"Hey, hey," Holly said, covering one of my hands with both of hers. "Take it easy, Ben. It's Ok. He just looked. He didn't touch. It was just my body, Ben. Not my heart. Not my soul. It was like....oh, hell, I don't know. Like going to the doctor's office or something. I just took off my clothes, and spun around. He looked at my body and told me I could make a ton of money if I played my cards right."

Hoping against hope, I asked, "Did he mention anything about...?"

Shaking her head sadly, Holly said, "No. Not a thing. Any progress on the drug thing?"

"All the waitresses are in on it, but I still can't figure out who's supplying them. And that's who we want." Holly nodded, and we went back to drinking. Four hours later, we were both buzzed. We jumped on my bike and I took her home.

As was my habit, I walked Holly to her apartment door. She lived on the second floor of some converted warehouse space, in a wonderfully decorated loft that had a wonderful view of the harbor. Riding up in the elevator, Holly was leaning against me, her arm around my waist, head against my chest. Her free hand was rubbing my chest. Holly had always been a touchy-feely kind of person, and before I'd fallen in love with her, it hadn't bothered me at all. Now, however, it was having a different effect on me. My cock was as hard as steel, and I wanted

nothing more than to turn her head up to mine and kiss those lips. Those sweet, soft lips.

We walked to her door, and I unlocked it with my keys. “Goodnight, partner,” I said, turning to leave.

“Hey.” Her arm caught mine, and she turned me around. Standing in the pool of light outside her door, her face was unreadable. “I know... how you feel about me, Ben.”

My heart stopped. I could feel the sweat on my brow.

“When...?” I asked.

“About a week ago. I just...knew.”

Sighing, I looked at the floor. “Now what?”

“That depends, Ben.” I looked at her face. Still unreadable.

“On what?”

She looked away for a second, and then back at my face. “On how well you can separate your personal life from your professional life, Ben.” Stepping next to me, close enough for me to feel the pressure of her breasts against my chest, she looked up at me, directly into my eyes, and said, “Because the thing of it is, Ben, I find myself wondering what it would be like to...be with you.” Her hand came up and captured my cheek, her fingernails teasing the hair at my temples. “I find myself thinking about you and I... together...all the time. But not on this gig, Ben. This is just too close to what I want to do with you...to you...and I can't have you thinking with your cock and your heart. I need your brains and your badge on this one, big guy. Can you understand that?”

I couldn't speak. Every dream, every fantasy, I'd had for the last six months, was about to come true. I nodded, looking at her face, at her eyes and nose and lips, loving the gentle curl of her ears, the soft cupid's-bow of her lips, her long, thick eyelashes.

“Yeah,” I managed to grunt, looking directly into the most beautiful face I'd ever known. “I can understand that.”

“Good,” Holly whispered, standing on tip toes, “because as soon as this case is over, I'll race you to the nearest motel.” And then her lips were on mine, soft, gentle pressure exerting against me. Something happened to me then. My toes started tingling, and my fingers went numb. My heart lurched, and then started cranking along. A short, eager, hungry moan came from inside Holly's throat, and she pressed even closer for a second, and then she was gone, and I was blinking in the light outside her apartment as I heard the click of the door lock.

Wow.

-3-

Holly and I didn't speak about what I'd started to call The Kiss the entire next week. The day when Holly would make her dancing debut marched relentlessly

towards us, and I was trying to focus on the case, not on what was possibly the single most erotic moment of my entire adult life.

My history with women was spotted at best; I tend to obsess over women that I can't have. I built intense, erotic, complicated fantasies around them, finally working up the courage to ask them out. Inevitably, I get turned down, and my world comes crashing down around my ears. Holly... I'd always considered Holly way, way out of my league, and kept my love to myself. Until now. Now she knew, and it was quite possible that she was beginning to feel the same way about me.

Tuesday was the day. I went on-shift at seven. Holly was due at eight, and she would dance until two. I got off at three. She breezed past me without a sideways glance, always the consummate professional when she was undercover. When eight o'clock came around, I listened for it.

"Annnnnnnnnnd noooooooooow, " the announcer said through the over-amplified PA system, "Dancing one stage one, we have Spice...and dancing on stage two, we have SUGAR!" The music started, and I watched in slack jawed, dry-mouthed amazement as the love of my life pranced out onto the stage. She was wearing thigh-high black leather boots, a black microskirt, a black leather bra and a white leather vest over it all.

She looked hot.

She looked sexy.

She looked slutty and nasty.

She looked wonderful.

She was a natural. Def Leppard was booming through the speakers as Joe Elliot demanded that someone pour some sugar on him. Holly moved to the music as if she'd been born to strip, showing the men her legs and butt and tits, wiggling inside her leather getup. The vest was off by the end of the first song, and the bra came off at the beginning of the second. Holly worked the crowd, her face a twisted mask of professional passion, making kissing motions with her lips, palming her own breasts and tugging at the nipples.

The second song ended and Holly worked the bar-rail crowd, getting dollar bills jammed into her garters. My eyes were like lasers, making sure that no one touched her where they weren't supposed to. No one did, and I relaxed.

A little.

Holly danced six times that night, the outfits and her routines getting hotter and hotter. I also noticed something else about my love: She was enjoying herself. Immensely. The smile on her face was genuine, and the heavy-lidded look she gave the men who tipped her sent blood rushing to more than one cock in that place.

During her last dance, Holly was making love to a long brass pole at one end of the long runway, and her eyes locked with mine in the mirrors that surrounded the place. She grabbed her tits, tweaked her nipples and blew me a kiss.

I almost shot in my pants. She looked so hot, so deliciously nasty, showing her naked charms to the men in that place, shaking her boobs and her ass, loving every eye on her, every mouth open and practically drooling as they took in my partner's naked form.

When she got off, Holly left by the back way. We'd agreed to meet at her place after I got off, and I couldn't wait to get over there. I don't know why, I just couldn't wait to see her and get her impression of this first night.

I got over there in record time, tapping my foot impatiently as the elevator creaked its way to her floor. I used my key and found Holly sitting on the couch, a cup of tea in her hand, wearing a bathrobe. She'd just gotten out of the shower when I arrived.

I sat on the chair across from her, conscious of the fact that she probably didn't want anyone near her right now, including me.

"So," she said brightly, sipping her tea. "What did you think?"

"About what?" I stalled.

"About the price of tea in China. Christ, Ben! What do you think I mean? About...me. About my dancing." Her voice dropped a notch. "About my body."

I stood and shed my jacket, stopping to unclip the .45 Colt Officer from my belt and lay it on the mantle. Stepping around the coffee table, I joined her on the couch and wrapped her up in my arms.

"I think that you are the sexiest woman I have ever known, and I can't fucking wait for this case to be over."

"Why?" she asked. "I mean, is it just so...we can... be together? Or is it because you don't like other men looking at me, Ben?"

I didn't even hesitate. "Both," I said. "I've been thinking about being with you for so long, Holly. And I hate the way they look at you. Drooling and gasping and stroking their cocks under the bar."

She sat up in my arms and turned to face me. "Really? They were touching themselves?"

I nodded, realizing that she couldn't have seen that from the stage. "You...like it, don't you?"

Settling back against me, one palm on my chest, Holly didn't say anything for a long time. "Yes," she finally admitted. "I think I did. I know that none of those men wanted to get to know me. They just wanted to...fuck me. In the true sense of that word. I wasn't a person to them, just a body, a set of tits, an ass...a cunt. I was nothing but an object to them, something to be lusted after, to be chased and caught and fucked."

I was breathing a little heavy now, getting just a little aroused listening to her talk that way. "Don't get me wrong, Ben," she continued. "I...think I'm falling in love with you, and I couldn't be happier. And I want to be with you, Ben. I think I want to be with you forever. But, dancing like that, up there, in front of all those men, was...well, exciting. Liberating. It was freedom for me, Ben. Freedom from every image I've ever held of myself...everything I thought I was."

"Up there, on that stage, with my body on display, I got some kind of...validation that I didn't expect. I mean, I know that I'm attractive, and that I have a good body. But I've known that only from the feedback of the men in my life. My father, my brothers, a boyfriend here and there. My view of my own sexuality has always been a mirror of what they thought of me. And deep in my heart, I always felt that...that..."

"They had to say those things because they loved you, right?" I finished. I was beginning to understand...a little.

"Yeah," Holly confirmed. "I guess. But when a man finds you attractive...sexy... desirable, and you show him everything, bare your soul, as it were, and you know that he wants you...it's an interesting feeling, Ben. And it...turned me on. It made me really, really hot."

"It made you feel...nasty, didn't it?"

She snuggled tighter against me, burrowing her head into my chest. "Is that wrong?"

I was stroking her hair, letting the clean, washed smell waft into my nostrils. "Not necessarily. There's a time and a place for...that, and a time and place for love."

Turning in my arms, Holly looked at me. "And what this time and place for, Ben? What do you feel like doing now?"

"You said...I thought..."

Smiling, Holly kissed me, and stood, offering me her hand. The robe had parted slightly, and I could see the swell of her breasts pushing at the material. That was somehow sexier than her nakedness, which I'd already seen.

"The dancing made me...hot, Ben. Very, very hot. I.. took matters into my own hands, as it were, in the shower, but it wasn't enough. I need you, Ben. Tonight. Here. Now."

I took her hand and stood, following her into the bedroom. Holly and I stood next to her bed, not saying anything, just staring into each other's eyes. Slowly, our faces inched closer together, and then we were kissing, a true, honest, passionate kiss that about blew my socks off.

Holly unbuttoned my shirt and pulled it down my shoulders, kissing my chest and slowly licking my nipples. Her breath was hot on my skin, and my cock was threatening to punch out of my pants. Shirt off, I stepped closer, sliding my hand inside her robe, across her stomach, feeling her warmth as I kissed her face and neck and shoulder. Slowly, gently, I kissed her, turning her on as best I knew how. My hand arched up, filling itself with one pale, perfect breast.

Holly gasped at that first intimate touch, and then we were in a frenzy of shedding clothes and sweaty, grasping hands. Together, we fell to the bed, naked, rolling around and laughing. I worked my way down between her satiny thighs and stared at her lightly furred mons. It was leaking eager, wet lubrication, and I bent to taste her for the first time. It was like drinking from the fountain of youth, friends and neighbors. At that moment I knew there wasn't anything I wouldn't do for my Holly.

Slowly, gently, I worked her closer and closer to our first orgasm together. My mind played tricks on me, playing mental movies of our time together, in shootouts, bar fights, dropping suspects together...watching her dance, shaking her tits and ass for the drooling idiots in the bar. ..it all came together in a mental collage that had me bursting with excitement.

Holly dissolved into her first orgasm, a pink flush spreading across her chest, her hard nipples begging to be sucked, her legs clamping across my head as I rode her cunt.

Gasping, she pushed me away and flat onto my back, climbing between my legs, staring at my pounding, throbbing cock with hungry, cat-like eyes. She started licking at me, using little nips and bites, coating my throbbing meat with saliva. When all six inches had been covered, she slowly started working me into her mouth, taking an inch at a time and enjoying it before moving on to the next inch. She took all of me, happily and eagerly, down her throat, and then started bobbing her head, setting up an intense suction that sent my world spinning.

Too soon, I emptied myself inside her throat, and lovely Holly drank every drop. She came to me, kissing me, and I tasted myself in her mouth. We shared a long, intimate kiss, hands still grasping, bodies moving wetly together. I didn't lose a single bit of my erection, and I rolled over to finally be one with Holly.

“Make love to me, Ben! Please?!”

“Jamie”

My name is Eddie, and I'm a cop. I'm not your normal cop. I have no definite hours, and I never wear a uniform. I carry a gun, but I rarely use it. My job is listening. I listen to conversations over telephones, and in restraints, and in moving cars. I can listen in on almost any conversation anywhere at any time. I'm assigned to the surveillance unit, and I'm very, very good at my job. So good, in fact, that I'm stuck as a Detective/Second Grade, and any chance I had at promotion vanished the moment the brass found out how good I am at what I do. They gave me a special van filled with the latest in technological goodies. A warrant comes down from one of the high-visibility units like Robbery/Homicide, Narcotics or Major Cases, and I go to work. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week until the case breaks, I'm in the van, earphones clapped over my ears, listening to my mark until he says the one thing I can take into court and convict with.

I've been doing this for eleven years, and I've never lost a case in court. I put on my dress uniform, with my shining gold detective's shield, and all my breast bars, and I sit there and testify about my technique. No can beat me. I'm the best.

Which is why I was so confused when I was informed that I was getting a partner. Last week I was sitting in the squadroom, drinking cold, stale coffee when the Captain walked by my desk and tossed a tear sheet at me. It was a communication from headquarters informing me that a Detective/ Third Grade Edwards, J., Shield #104166, formerly assigned to the Mayor's Staff, was being transferred, in grade, to the Surveillance Unit, reporting to me until further notice. I called an old friend of mine, a guy I went through the Academy with, who is now assigned down at HQ in personnel. He informed me that my new partner had a lot of clout with the PC (Police Commissioner,) and Mayor, and that after six years of satisfactory service at City Hall, had asked for and gotten this transfer/promotion as a reward. My friend also told me that my new partner had a great set of legs.

“Excuse me?” I asked, wondering if there was something about my friend that he hadn't told me, something I really didn't want to know.

“Detective Edwards, J. is Jamie Edwards, and she is a stone fucking fox, pal. Word has it that she was pumping her Sergeant for a while, but no one could ever confirm it. She rates at least three inches on my scale, pal.”

Which meant that he'd cut three inches off of his cock to fuck her. And I'd seen him in the shower; he didn't have the inches to spare. Which meant that I was in for a shitty detail until I could figure a way to transfer her. It was my experience, and I'm not saying this is true for *all* female cops, but in my experience, the better looking they are, the worse cops they are.

The next week, she reported in. I was sitting in the turnout room, my feet on the chair in front of me, polishing off the third doughnut of the day when I heard the catcalls. The guys were welcoming her to the sixth district, and using their mouths as weapons. The remarks were crude, adolescent and totally juvenile. In other words, business as usual.

Jamie walked into the turnout room, and I halted, hand halfway to my mouth, powdered sugar falling on my shirt like fresh snow. She was fucking gorgeous. Tall for a woman, almost five ten. Long, curly red hair that came down to mid-back. She was wearing cowboy boots, blue jeans, and a flannel shirt. Under the flannel shirt I could see a leotard top straining to keep her tits in check. (Why is it that redheads are either flat as boards or stacked like a fucking brick shithouse? I've never seen an 'average' redhead!) Her face sported a light dusting of freckles, and a little voice inside my head calmly announced that she probably had the same light dusting of freckles on her tits. She was wearing an old-style shoulder holster, the Dirty Harry-style that was better for your back than the more modern style preferred by the hot-shot detectives in this squad. The butt of what appeared to be a short-barreled .357 poked out the holster.

"Edwards," she said, offering her hand.

"Eddie," I answered. "Eddie McClintock. I'm your new partner," I offered. She nodded and took the seat next to me, turning it around to sit on it backwards. Something about that motion, the way she sat and the way she held herself, arms crossed across the back of the chair, just screamed out "Dyke!" I hoped to hell that she wasn't one. I didn't need a woman partner trying to prove how much of a man she was.

"So," she said. "What's our gig for today?"

Her voice was light and had a nice melody to it. I began to rethink my position on what it would be like to spend long, hot hours cramped up with this woman in the back of my van.

"We're watching a local wiseguy for the OCB (Organized Crime Bureau) boys. I stuck a wire in the restaurant last night, because we got a tip that he is meeting to pay off the DiCarlo shooter." Buddy "Buddy Weasel" DiCarlo had gotten an acute case of lead poisoning two weeks ago, and since the local mob never used local talent (rule #1 to professional assassination) the wiseguy would pay him, and then the shooter would leave town, to move onto his next assignment. We were going to try and get the wiseguy and shooter at the same time, so no deals could be cut.

"Great," Jamie said. "Just tell me what to do, and I'll do it." I liked her style. We listened to the morning briefing, and then we attended a special OCB briefing. She kept her mouth closed, took a few notes and nodded to the few cops she knew from other assignments or Academy days. And then we were in the van, driving to the restaurant.

"How come you never get made?" she asked as I took the highway downtown.

"Me, or the van?" I asked.

"The van, I guess. I hear you never get out of it." IF there was a rebuke in her voice, I couldn't hear it.

"Well, I get it painted after every bust, and the local DMV contact makes sure I get new plates at least once a week. All the plates come back in DMV to local delivery services and things like that. It's all preplanning. Remember the Six P's?" She nodded. Prior Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance.

We got to the location and setup. I tested the bug fast, and got some background noise. It was Omni-directional, so I'd be able to pick up all the conversation. It was also tunable, so I'd be able to filter out all but what I needed.

I turned the bug off and shrugged out of my jacket, and took my gun out and placed it on the counter next to me. Both walls of the van were covered with electronics of all shapes and descriptions. It looked like the bridge of the *Enterprise*, and I was in my element.

We sat in silence for a while, and then Jamie's portable radio squawked: "David Six Five, David Six, K."

Jamie raised the radio to her mouth. "David Six, K. Proceed Six Five."

"Subject approaching. Thirty seconds, max."

"Get on the scope," I said, pointing to a sniper's spotting scope that was pointing out of a portal lined with one-way glass. Jamie scooted over and bent over, peering through the scope at our target's table. In doing this, I had an impressive view of her jeans tightening across her wonderful ass. She had an incredible body, and I was enjoying every minute.

"Enjoying the view?" Jamie asked, reading my thoughts. I cleared my throat, mumbled an apology, and then turned to my electronics, tuning my antibug detector. The ABD will sense and detect a bug detector that might be used. If one is being used, I can shoot a laser beam from a unit on top of the van to defeat it, so I can use my bug without being detected. It was the latest, state-of-the-art toy, and the mob didn't know we had it. As a matter of fact, the PD didn't know we had it. I'd gotten it from an old Army buddy.

"Is the shooter there yet?" I asked.

"No," Jamie said after a moment. "He's all alone.... wait. There's someone joining him."

"Does he have anything with him?" I asked. "A small black box, perhaps?"

"Yes," she said slowly, after a second. "What is it?"

"A bug detector," I answered, tuning in my countermeasures. Sure enough, there it was, cycling around three kilohertz. I focused the beam and fired it off. I got a return signal, and then activated my bug.

"...you did a nice job, Tony. I like the way you stitched a smile across his body with bullets. Very, very nice."

"Thank you, sir. But you should know that I always do what I promise."

"Yes, Tony, you do. How about some lunch?" And so it went, for the next two hours, as the two Mafioso talked about families (real ones,) and then fake ones, talking about various people in the Organization they both knew.

Jamie was getting impatient. "Why don't they just *get* to it?" she asked.

I shrugged, concentrating on my headsets.

"It's fucking hot in here," Jamie complained, and then started to take off her holster and shit. The tight leotard was stretched to capacity trying to restrain her breasts, and I watched out of the corner of my eye as she bent over to grab her holster off the floor of the van. The low scooped neck of the leotard told me that she wasn't wearing a bra, and I got a good glimpse of her tits.

"Get a good look?" she asked, straightening up. I nodded, a small grin at the corner of my mouth. "It's ok," she said with a laugh. "I'd be more worried if you

didn't look!” I chuckled at that, and found myself liking the fact that she knew she was good looking, and didn't mind that I found her that way, too.

Sure enough, about fifteen minutes later it all went down. The wiseguy handed an envelope over to the shooter, and thanked him for “Removing that DiCarlo problem,” and shook his hand. I nodded to Jamie.

“David Six to all units...GO! GO! GO!” And then the restaurant was swarming with plainclothes and uniform cops. I started the van and Jamie and I drove away, back to the squadroom to write our reports and book the tapes into evidence.

And for the next six months, that's how it went. Jamie and I spent a great deal of time together, sometimes days at a stretch. And as any cop can tell you, when you're on a stakeout, you get very, very close to your partner. You can't break cover to get out and go to the bathroom, so you have to make do. I'd been using an old mustard jar, dumping it out when I needed to. When Jamie first asked what to do about taking a piss, I showed her the jar and shrugged my shoulders.

She turned it over in her hands and smiled ruefully. “Well, we'll have to get one with a bigger mouth. I can't direct it as well as you can!” The very next day I brought

in an old Mayo jar that had a huge, wide mouth. Jamie noticed it and patted me on the back. Six hours later, she had to take a piss.

“Don't look,” she warned, and I laughed. There was no way I could avoid it, but I pretended not to notice as she wriggled her tight jeans down her legs and squatted over the jar. A second later I heard her steaming piss hit the glass jar, and I felt a lurch in my pants. I cast a quick glance over and caught Jamie looking right back at me, over her shoulder, a little grin on her face. My eyes, operating on automatic pilot, dropped, and I saw the back of her furry little snatch, little red hairs peeking back at me. I could see the dark line of her slot, and I wondered what it tasted like.

“Get a good look, Eddie. You're going to be seeing a *lot* of it!” I grinned and turned my attention back to the tape deck.

We went on and on like this for about eight more months. Jamie wore loose, revealing clothing during the summer months, mostly tank-tops and shorts. I never, ever saw the girl wear a bra, and it really turned me on. After about three months of working together, we started talking about our private lives. She asked me if I had a girlfriend, and I snorted in derision.

“Who,” I asked, “would want to go out with me? I'm a nerd, and... well, there's other reasons, too.”

“Eddie,” Jamie said softly, “there are a *lot* of women who would count themselves lucky to have you as a lover.”

I snorted again. Jamie, with all her well-meaning, just didn't understand. First off, there were my looks. I stand about six two, and weight in at almost three hundred pounds, none of it muscle. I have a beer-and-Twinkie gut, aggravated by the fact that I sit on my fat ass all day listening to other people's conversations. I never get any exercise. She didn't know what it was like to be invisible, like I did.

I tried explaining it to her. “I walk into a bar, or a place like that, right? And the women who are there to scope look around the room, and when I come into their line of sight, it's like I'm...furniture, or something! They don't even *see* me! Their mental computer just disregards the input as garbage, and continues through the acceptance loop! I talk to them, buy them drinks...and then as soon as a better looking guy comes along, poof! They're gone.”

Jamie listened and shrugged. “You're obviously looking for the wrong kind of woman, in the wrong kind of place. You need to meet some *nice* women. Women that will like you for you.”

I gave her the acid test. “Ok, Jamie. Time to put your money where your smart-ass mouth is. I'm going to ask you a question, and you're going to answer. Don't try to lie, because I'll know immediately. Are you ready?”

“Yes, Eddie, I'd go out with you,” she said softly.

“That wasn't it, smart-ass. You are saying that because you know me, and you want to be nice. Now, the real question is: Would you introduce me to any of your single girlfriends as a potential boyfriend?” There was the slightest of pauses, and then Jamie said, “Of course, Eddie. “

“Sorry, you fail, sweetie. I thank you for your kind wishes, but I can hear it in your voice. You say that now, but you don't really, truly mean it. And if you did...you'd only introduce me to the friends that you think couldn't do any better.”

“Jesus!” Jamie spat. “You're such an asshole, Eddie! I meant what I said! I'd introduce you to any of my girlfriends as a potential lover! Let me tell you something, asshole. When my girlfriends and I get together and talk about men, we usually talk about men that we've never slept with, but know. And we always wonder what they'd be like in bed. You, I might add, have come up more than once or twice. “

That was new. “Oh, really? And what was your interpretation of what I'd be like between the sheets?”

Softly, Jamie said, “Gentle. Very, very gentle.”

“You mean disappointing,” I said under my breath. She still didn't know the BIG secret.

“What did you say?”

I threw my arms up. “Jesus, ok. Finally, you will get to learn the big secret. The REAL reason why I'm not dating.”

“What- You're gay or something?”

“No. Although there's nothing wrong with that. No, I'm hopelessly straight. The problem is that...well, I'm not exactly well-endowed.”

There was a short pause. “You know, it's true. Size doesn't matter.”

“When you know and love someone, no, it doesn't. But when you're trying to impress a new partner with your virility, and you pull your pants down, and she points at

your fucking dick and fucking LAUGHS..!” I sobbed for a second, and then composed myself. The memory of that afternoon in the Bonaventure Hotel was still fresh in my mind, and still vividly painful and degrading. “She laughed, Jamie. She pointed at my cock and said that not only would I never be able to

satisfy *her*, but there wasn't a woman over the age of twelve that I would be able to satisfy...and then she got dressed and left, laughing the entire time."

Jamie was finally, suddenly quiet. "I hope I meet that fucking cunt," she said after a minute. Her hand wrapped around the butt of her .357. "I'd like to tell her one or two things." She released her grip. "Eddie...That was one woman, a long time ago. What you have is a confidence problem, more than anything else. That translates to a lack of experience. And that translates to even lower confidence. ...it's a never-ending, vicious circle. You need someone to love and care for you, someone to show you that you can be a man...that you are a man, all man." And with that, Jamie brought her face to my stunned one and kissed me softly on the lips.

"When this stakeout is over, I'm going to show you what loving someone is all about."

"B-b-b-but," I stuttered. "We're partners! It wouldn't be right!"

"If you can't do what's right, lover, do what's necessary. And there is something else I haven't told you, pal."

"What?"

"Remember when you sensed that I was lying about introducing you to my girlfriends?" I nodded. "Well, that's because I don't *want* to introduce you to them, and not for the reason you think. I don't want to introduce you to them because I've fallen hopelessly, carelessly, head-over heels in love with you."

And you know what? She wasn't lying this time.

That stakeout seemed to take a fucking week to end, although it was only two or three days. We ended at around nine-thirty on a Friday night, and Jamie and I had four days off before we were scheduled to start a recon down by the docks.

The last thing Jamie said to me before vanishing into the locker room was, "My place...midnight." And then she was gone. I looked around to see if anyone had noticed, and quickly made my way to the men's locker room.

I showered and dressed, then went down to O'Mally's to kill the two hours until I was due at Jamie's place. I was shaking by the time I knocked on her apartment door. She opened it, dressed in a silk kimono and not much else. Her long red hair was draped over her shoulders, a burning stroke of fire-red paint that had me painfully erect in seconds.

"Come in," she whispered, reaching out to grab my tie. She led me into the living room and pushed me onto the couch. I was still too stunned to move. She turned to go to the bar and make me a drink, and I watched her tight ass under the silk dressing down, and her long, impossibly slim legs vanishing underneath, only hinting at the treasures they connected with.

She returned, handing me my drink, Scotch, neat. She sat down beside me and rested her head on my shoulder, her hand toying with the buttons on my shirt.

"I've been thinking about this night for a long time, Eddie. Have you? Thought about me, I mean?"

I gulped my drink and nodded stiffly. "Yeah. I've thought about it. I'd have to be dead not to think about it!"

She laughed, low in her throat, a delightfully throaty, husky sound that made my puny little cock lurch in my pants. To my eternal shame and humiliation, no one could tell that I had a monumental erection. All of a sudden, I had The Feeling.

That's what I called it. I liked being a recon cop, away from the action and women. I liked the fact that I didn't have to interact with anyone, that I was never depended upon to be the hero. I'd gotten used to the idea that I'd be alone for the rest of my life. But that never stopped The Feeling. One of the reasons I transferred to Survail was because when I was a beat cop, I ended up watching a lot of TV on my off hours. And since I was on rotating shifts, three weeks out of every month I got to watch soap operas. Watching the handsome men and lovely women kiss and make love on the screen tore me apart. Just watching two people kiss made me get this painful, heavy tugging in the middle of my chest. Then, as I watched the handsome, dashing leading man gently lower his conquest of the moment to the bed in preparation for ravishing her body, I was washed with waves of self-loathing so deep that once or twice I actually considered swallowing my service revolver.

That was The Feeling...and I was getting it again. The taste of bile rose in my throat, and I had to fight not to cough or cry. I was moments from bursting into tears, because I knew as soon as Jamie got my pants undone she would see my little cock and all her good intentions and sexual desires would flood out of her, and she would do what they all will eventually do...point and laugh.

Her hands were on my zipper, working it down, and I moved to stop her, my voice catching. "Don't. Please. Please don't." I said. She persisted, and soon my zipper was down. She fished in, and brought my little three-inch wonder out into the world.

Her hand was gently stroking it, sending hot, electric thrills up and down my spine. It felt much better than when I touched myself.

"Have you ever been with a woman?" she asked. "I hope that's not an offensive question, I'm just curious."

"Once," I said softly. "A hooker, when I was 18. She smirked the entire time, making all this noise like I was splitting her in two. What a joke!"

"So...technically, you're still a virgin, right?"

"Yeah..I suppose. The only 34-year old virgin in the world! Aside from priests and nuns, I mean." I laughed at my own joke, and stared at her hand still slowly working my tiny penis.

"What do you know about female anatomy?" Jamie asked.

"Not much."

"Did you know that the first four inches of the vagina contain the majority of the nerve endings? That anything after that is basically dead, empty space?"

I shook my head. "And did you also know that the average depth of a vagina is only five inches? Lots of big, huge men that have tried to fuck me have ended up with several inches still outside. So, dear Eddie... dear, sweet Eddie..when we make love later tonight..and we will, I will be able to take all of you inside me. I've never done that before, you know. I'll be able to take every single inch inside my hot little twat!"

That dirty, nasty word coming out of her mouth turned me on. "And another thing, Eddie. My mother always said, 'It's not how long it is, as long as it scrapes the sides!' And you are wonderfully thick!" With that, Jamie leaned down and kissed the tip of my cock wetly. A shiver ran up my spine again, and I had to fight not to cum.

"How long has it been since you had an orgasm?" Jamie asked.

"About three weeks. I jerked off."

"Mmmmm," she said. "Then we'd better get this first one out of the way!" Her hands increased their motion on my cock, tightening her grip. Her other hand reached into my pants and fondled my nuts. That's all it took. I was shooting my load, three weeks of accumulated slime poured out of my cock in a thick, sludgy pile that covered Jamie's hand. I expected her to be grossed out and disgusted, but she just smiled and kept on stroking, cooing in my ear the entire time.

"That's right...cum for me, baby. Empty your nuts so you can fuck me long and hard later. That's right..all of it. I want all of it." After eight or nine bone-crunching spasms, I stopped heaving, and my nuts settled down. Jamie locked her eyes with mine and slowly raised her cum-covered, dripping hand to her mouth and *licked* every bit of my jizz off of her palm and fingers. I watched in open-mouthed amazement as she slurped my spend off of her hand and then smacked her lips like it was the tastiest ice cream she'd ever had.

"You taste wonderful," she breathed. "Salty and bitter. God, I love that taste."

I wanted to ask her at that moment how many men she'd tasted, but thought better of it.

"Do you want to taste me?" she asked. Stiffly, I nodded. I'd heard about eating pussy, and had always wanted to try it. "C'mon," Jamie said, taking my hand and leading me into her bedroom. A huge waterbed dominated the room, and she fell back on it, spreading her legs. Her red-furred cunt was visible, and I got onto the bed, on my knees, and started knee-walking towards her.

"Uh-uh," she said. "Get naked first, big guy." An electric jolt of fear shot through me. She'd already seen my cock, but what would she say when she saw my body? I have these stretch marks along the sides of my abdomen, just like a woman has after giving birth. I have huge tits for a man, and I wondered what Jamie was going to think when she saw my dumpy, doughy body. Well, now or never, I thought, and quickly divested myself of my clothes.

Jamie was still smiling at me, but she was fingering her slot now, her knees flexing and relaxing in rhythm to her fingering. "C'mon, hurry. Please hurry, Eddie. I need it so bad. I need *you* so bad!" Naked now, I made my way towards her again.

"Ever done this before?" she asked. I shook my head, kissing the inside of her right knee. Her skin was soft and sweaty, and I loved the taste. "Ok, then I'll teach you to do it *right*. Just work your way up to my twat, Eddie. Do whatever you think is best." She didn't say 'be gentle', but then I remembered that she expected it from me. Slowly, softly, I kissed and licked my way up her legs, tasting every square inch of skin I could reach. Her odor, the scent of arousal, grew stronger and stronger as I approached her pleasure center.

“Oh God...” Jamie moaned. “Please, kiss me there, Eddie. Kiss my hot twat!” I plastered my mouth against her hole and sucked and blew at the same time. She shuddered and hunched her hips up at me, rubbing her cunt all over my face. I lost myself in her moist center, licking and sucking at her with absolutely no finesse, but with a hell of a lot of enthusiasm!

“Lick my clitty!” Jamie moaned, directing my head until I was lashing her pearl with my tongue. Her legs closed around my head, and for a moment I was cut off from sounds and sights as Jamie thundered through her orgasm. A full thirty seconds later her thighs fell apart and she fell back, gasping, a wide smile on her face.

“That was wonderful,” she moaned, running her hands along the inside of her thighs, smiling at me. “You really made me cum, Eddie!” That made me proud as a peacock, and I didn’t know what to do next. My cock was painfully erect, throbbing and bobbing with arousal. I mean, I *knew* what to do next, I just wasn’t *sure* how to go *about* it.

“C’mere,” Jamie said, holding her arms out for me. I looked at her skeptically, wondering if she wanted my entire weight pressing down on her. “Are you sure?” I asked.

Nodding, she waved me in with her hands. “All of it Eddie, I want all of you inside me and on top of me.” Shrugging my shoulders, I did as I asked, gently settling my considerable bulk onto her lithe frame. She shifted once or twice, trying to get comfortable, and finally we were together, naked bodies pressed against each other.

“Now, fuck me!” Jamie said. “Put your cock in and fuck me!”

I reached down and tried to work my hand underneath. Finally, I had to lift myself a little, find my tiny little cock and align myself with Jamie’s slick hole. The head of my dick found her entrance, and I slowly slid in, an inch at a time. The feeling was incredible; the slick, hot walls of her cunt clung to me like warm, gooey honey, and I never wanted to leave. My stubby little cock was buried to the hilt inside her warm, clutching vagina, and I knew that I had found heaven.

“Jesus,” Jamie moaned. “That feels wonderful!” Jamie’s eyes were heavy-lidded with passion, and I felt a newfound pride as I slowly started to stroke in and out of her. Because of my short length, I wasn’t able to give her the bone-pounding strokes I saw in the porno movies I rented, but then I discovered something else in the process: The fact that my considerable girth was on top of Jamie provided her with a lot of direct clitoral stimulation, and judging by her reactions, she enjoyed it a lot! Her hips were swiveling against me, rubbing her crotch against mine with every short stroke. She started cumming again and again, barely finishing one monumental orgasm before dissolving into another.

The walls of her snatch gripped and sucked at me, drawing me in deeper (if that as at all possible,) and I was clenching my teeth, concentrating on baseball scores and multiplication tables in an effort to prevent my own impending orgasm. Moments later it was too late, and I emptied myself into her for the first time that night. Even after Jamie had jerked me off, I still had a full load to give her (forced celibacy will do that to a person...) and she wanted all of it.

Her legs had closed around my waist, and she was pulling at my ass to get me in deeper. I could feel the sharp prick of her fingernails on the cheeks of my ass, and that little bit of pain made the pleasure much more sublime.

Finally spent, I started to roll off of Jamie to give her a break, but she stopped me, spreading her legs wide again. "Please don't," she asked. "I like feeling you on top of me; I like your weight on me." Always wanting to do what a lady asks, I settled in and held her head in my hands, staring deep into her bright green eyes.

"Thank you," I said sincerely. "That was wonderful. The best."

"You said it!" Jamie enthused.

“Jill”

"A desperate disease requires a dangerous remedy."

- Guy Fawkes (1570-1606)

Catholic Conspirator on the gunpowder plot
to blow up the Houses of Parliament

"Assassination has never changed the history of the world."

- Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881)

Prologue

Since President Gerald R. Ford signed Presidential Executive Order #1471-736, the United States of America has been prohibited from recruiting, hiring, training or fielding assassins. A civilized country does not send highly-trained killers to distant shores to enforce foreign policy.

However, there exists inside the government of the United States a small cadre of men who believe that this was a poorly motivated decision, and that there will always be circumstances where the direct application of violent physical force is the best solution to certain problems. Monies set aside by Congress for the intelligence agencies are buried deeply inside so called 'black' budgets, numbers and programs and projects so highly classified that only a handful of people know of their existence, purpose and scope.

The National Security Agency, (NSA) perhaps the largest and most secret of all the agencies that make up the alphabet soup of the US intelligence community, has a budget higher than that of any other single government entity, excepting only the Pentagon. The NSA is charged primarily with gathering, processing, analyzing and summarizing SIGINT (Signal Intelligence) and ELINT (Electronic Intelligence), information gathered by the super-secret spy satellites and listening posts scattered around the world. The NSA Headquarters at Fort Gorge G. Meade in Maryland contains the single highest concentration of computing power in the world. Within the walls of those buildings lie several high-powered Cray supercomputers who do nothing all day but process and analyze SIGINT and ELINT from around the world. It has been rumored, and it has also been denied, that the NSA monitors every single telegram and telephone call leaving or entering the borders of the United States, looking for keywords such as "nuclear" and "espionage".

As with all of the intelligence agencies, secret, top secret and top secret-plus programs and projects are secured by a process of compartments. A person with a top secret clearance for one project may not have a need to know about another,

and thus, is denied access to that program or project. The fewer people that know of a project or a program, the more highly classified and sensitive it is.

The GOLDEN ROPE Project, started in the late 60's, remains the single most highly classified project ever undertaken by the NSA. The various directors of the project, six in all, have been one of only two men who have ever understood the scope and content of the project.

Named after the mythical rope that Wonder Woman carried, the golden lasso that made anyone under its influence tell the truth, GOLDEN ROPE was designed not to gather ELINT or SIGINT, but the rarest of all intelligence sources, HUMINT, or Human Intelligence. HUMINT was what the CIA and DIA specialized in, the agents-in-the-field rodeo that had marked the more dramatic and secret moments of the Cold War.

GOLDEN ROPE had been designed in two stages. The first stage, the most important stage, was developing a way to get an agent-in-place close to the particular subject. The method had to be foolproof and fast. Studies were made, statistics analyzed, computer models designed and run. The solution, when it was hit upon, was simplicity itself. It was remarked (by a rather junior agent,) that most of, if not all, of the people that the NSA wished to target for infiltration were men. And men all had one weakness: Women. A highly-trained woman, familiar in the skills of seduction and sex, could get closer to a particular subject faster than any other type of agent. Using women to get close to men for intelligence purposes was nothing new. Dating back to the times of the Roman Legions, women had been used throughout history to betray the men they took to their beds.

But this was going to be different. The GOLDEN ROPE project had the full support of the entire NSA machinery. A woman could be completely briefed on her subject before move one was made. She would be aware of every single possible facet of her target. She would be able to become any woman that was needed: A seductive temptress, an innocent waif, a die-hard slut...whatever the particular tastes of a specific target, a woman could become that person and thusly get close to the target.

The second stage was turning the women into the perfect assassins. She couldn't use a gun or a knife, unless one was already handy. She couldn't risk being frisked and being found carrying a weapon. She had to be expert in all forms of martial arts, all styles of bare-handed and unarmed killing. A master of various poisons and toxins, ways to kill without leaving a trace.

The third and final stage was indoctrination. The woman had to be completely loyal to the NSA and their objectives. Towards that end, she had to be completely psychologically stable, intelligent, capable, and above all, sexy. She had to have a cold heart and the ability to kill on a moment's notice. Finding such a woman was the hard part of the entire project.

Two tacks were taken. The first was to find hardened criminals, women who had killed before and were eager to kill again. The concept was to take them, and through a variety of drug therapy and intense psychotic manipulation, turn them into government-sponsored assassins. Sadly, that project failed. The women failed the most important test: They were psychologically unstable at their basic levels.

A second idea was suggested, discarded, and then approached again, discarded again, and finally accepted. It was almost unthinkable on its surface, but the more the powerful men who ran GOLDEN ROPE thought about it, the more sense it made. Instead of finding a woman that fit their specifications, why not create one? Not in the sense of genetic engineering, but taking a woman...a girl, really, in her early stages of development, and turning her into the perfect agent-in-place, the perfect assassin, the perfect embodiment of what GOLDEN ROPE stood for.

Various attempts were undertaken with women in their late teens and early twenties. Each failed. The age was backed up to 16, and the project was attempted again, this time with limited success. It was finally decided that in order to generate the perfect GOLDEN ROPE agent, a very, very young girl would be needed, someone who had only begun her psychological development. Someone who had no moral frame of reference. Someone who could be molded from the outset, created in the image of the project.

She was found. At the age of eight, Jill Tanaka was discovered living in an orphanage outside Chicago. The daughter of an American GI father and a Japanese woman who died giving birth to her, Jill had been at the orphanage since her father had died in a training accident at Fort Polk. Her intelligence tests were off the scale. Her tested IQ was in excess of 160. At the age of eight, she already spoke three languages: English, Japanese and Spanish. She had learned Spanish by watching cable TV.

In 1983, Jill Tanaka, age 8, was 'adopted' by two 'parents' sponsored by the NSA. After that, she was taken to the GOLDEN ROPE training facility located in the sprawling Skunkworks base in the middle of the Nevada desert. For the next ten years, she was instructed by the best in the business. Upon her graduation from the program, at age 18, Jill (code-named MEDUSA) was a sixth-degree black belt in Aikido, an expert with a wide-variety of small arms, an expert knife fighter, an adept pharmacist, and more than qualified as a sexual temptress. Her mixed heritage had turned her into a seductive, gorgeous young woman. Her hair was long and straight and glossy black, so dark it was almost blue. Her wide set almond-shaped eyes showed a hint of her Western ancestry, as did her full, rounded bosom and long, slim legs. The Asian influence on her looks only contributed to her overall beauty.

Jill Tanaka, at the tender age of 18, was both gorgeous and deadly, and she was about to undertake her first official mission.

*NSA Training Facility MJ-9
Tonopah Test Range, Tonopah, Nevada
Monday Morning*

Deputy Director, Operations for the NSA Walter P. Stark studied the dossier on his desk. It was thick, covering just over ten years of the subject's life, and was complete in every conceivable way. If he cared to check, Stark could flip to the back and see how often Tanaka had a bowel movement. That, however, did not interest him. What did interest him was the mission had had planned for her.

The door opened and Takana stepped through. Stark had to fight to catch his breath. The official black-and-white glossy clipped to the inside cover of her dossier did not do the woman justice. She was beyond gorgeous.

She strode into the office as if she owned the place. Dressed in skintight leather from head to toe, she looked like a walking wet dream. Her long hair was worn in a saucy, bouncy ponytail that swished from side to side as she walked. Her long, slim legs were encased in sheer black stockings, and the tight leather skirt she wore was so tight, Stark imagined that he could see the garterstraps holding the stockings up. Her black heels only added to her already impressive height and Stark had to fight the overwhelming feelings of arousal he felt welling in his groin.

"Good morning, sir," Tanaka said, taking the seat in front of the desk. She crossed her legs, and Stark had the treat of listening to the sleek sound of her stockinged legs rubbing together.

"Good morning, Jill. Do you know why I've called this meeting?"

"No, sir."

"We have something we want you to do for us."

"Of course, sir."

"Are you familiar with Toshi Yumura?"

"President and CEO of Yumura electronics, the sixteenth wealthiest man in the world, worth somewhere in the area of five or six billion dollars American. Married, two children."

"That's correct, Jill. We want you to get close to his son, Yoshi. The NSA is getting ready to release specifications on a new data encryption algorithm. It will make the fiber-optic computers of the future impenetrable by foreign powers, but open to our systems. For obvious reasons, this is a matter of national security. We have some intelligence that indicates that Yumura electronics may have gotten their hands on our encryption algorithm, which means they can reverse engineer a chip that would break our codes. Again, for obvious reasons, we cannot allow this.

"Now," Stark said, opening another folder on his desk, "Unlike his father, Yoshi is very western. He lives in Los Angeles, running the US subsidiary company of his father's firm. If anyone would know if Yumura Electronics has

the plans, it would be Yoshi. We want to put you in place next to him." Stark closed the folder and passed it to a silent Jill, who opened it on her lap and quickly scanned the pages, memorizing everything she read. In addition to her other skills and qualifications, Jill had a photogenic memory.

She closed the folder and silently handed it back to Stark. "What's my in?" she asked.

Stark stroked his chin and swiveled in his chair. "You tell me. From what you read, how would you get close to him."

Jill didn't pause or blink. "Yoshi likes...trashy women. Especially Eurasian women. He likes artists and musicians. I suggest that we get some studio musicians and create a fake band, and go on the road. We can get booked into clubs that Yoshi frequents. Nature will take its course from there. If that doesn't work in the require timeline, I can run into him at another social function. All I need is five minutes with him to plant the seed of desire." Stark knew that was true. He'd seen the tape.

One of Jill's training exercises had taken place inside another secret NSA facility, near Pave Creek Montana. The exercise had been part of her sexual training, and the entire session had been videotaped. Her target, or subject, or whatever you wanted to call him, had at one time been a Catholic priest. Long retired, he had been told that he was to hear the confession of one of his old parishioners who had been a long-time deep cover agent who was near death from cancer. Jill had been the one that had entered the confessional specially constructed for this exercise.

Jill had performed incredibly well. She had spoken in low tones to the priest, telling him of all the horrible, sexual things she had to do in the performance of her duties. The invisible camera that had been placed inside the confessional had revealed the old priest's excitement, and later, after they had exited, it had taken Jill only six minutes to get his pants down, his cock out, and into her wildly sucking mouth.

The fact that the priest had committed suicide three days later had not impacted Jill's grade on that exercise one iota.

"Very well, Jill. Standard sterile practices. If you get made, we don't know you. You never existed. You have twelve weeks to get the information." He handed her a third folder. "All your contact information is in this file. Read it, memorize it, then destroy it. You're dismissed."

Jill Tanaka stood and took the proffered folder and turned smartly on her high heels and left the Deputy Director, Operations, National Security Agency staring at her twitching ass as she left his office.

-2-

"There are two levers for moving men: Interest and fear."

-Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 - 1821)

Los Angeles, California

Two Days Later

Jill Tanaka studied her new digs with satisfaction. The rent had been paid, in cash, for the next six months, courtesy of the NSA Special Funds Account. It was a loft above an abandoned warehouse, just the place for a struggling musician. The place had been steam-cleaned and then painted blank, stark white everywhere. It looked like the sort of place you might film a "Docker's" commercial in.

The entire place had been decorated from Government storage facilities. It had the practiced, casual look of a place that had been lived in for several years. The three neighbors in the building were actually fellow NSA operatives, all of them paid to back up Jill's stories and to keep an eye on her. The floor immediately above Jill's held an apartment complete with a suite of electronic eavesdropping equipment. Every square inch of Jill's apartment was wired for video, sound, thermal imaging and voice stress-testing. Anything done, said, whispered...even thought inside the apartment would be recorded, forwarded to Fort Meade and analyzed by faceless, nameless technicians, the final results and conclusions delivered to Stark's desk.

Sighing, Jill decided to take a shower. Her first gig was the next night, at a place called "X-MEN" in La Jolla. Intelligence said that it was a place Yoshi frequented. A little pressure applied through a double-blind NSA front had gotten "MEDUSA" booked as the headline act the next night.

Shrugging off her half-length leather jacket, Jill kicked off her shoes and contemplated the mission ahead. Getting close to Yoshi would not be a problem. Getting him to make love to her, also, would not be a problem. Jill knew exactly which buttons to push on a man, any man, to get him excited, to make him want her. After all, she had learned her lessons well. She had been taught by the best.

Unzipping her short, tight leather skirt, Jill remembered some of those lessons with a smile. Her entire life, her upbringing and training and education, had been focused towards turning her into the perfect woman, the talented seductress, the perfect sexual partner for any man.

The leather bustier was next, and Jill stood in her stockings, garter belt, black silk panties and matching black silk bra. Jill was well aware that the technicians on the floor above her were getting an eyeful, but she didn't care. Let them look. Probably the only thing they're capable of.

Jill padded into the bathroom and started the shower. The bathroom quickly filled with steam, and Jill waited until then to shed her underwear and stockings.

She knew for a fact that only the thermal imaging unit (a CyberDyne XM2 Mark V model,) would be able to penetrate the curtain of steam she'd thrown up. Let the technicians watch her if she was working, Jill thought, but not when I'm on my own time. Not if I can help it.

She washed quickly, liking the sensuous feeling of the hot water sluicing off her body as she soaped herself. Jill took enormous pride in her large-breasted, slim-waisted body, and knew that she turned both men and women on. In her private life, away from the NSA, she liked to dress to impress. When her assignments, like this one, allowed Jill to dress close to the way she normally did, it made everything that much easier.

Jill exited the shower and wrapped a large fluffy towel around her body and returned to her bedroom. Slipping on an oversize T-shirt to sleep in, Jill slid between the sheets and was asleep in minutes.

Oddly enough, her dreams were about her fourteenth year, her sixth year at The Compound. The year she began her sex education courses.

Stark was still an Assistant Deputy with the Operations Directorate when Jill was fourteen. The GOLDEN ROPE project has been his brainchild since its inception. Funded with money intended for and diverted from other projects, Stark was sure that he was four short years away from seeing his efforts bear fruit.

They had decided to wait until Jill was aware of her sexuality before introducing her to the ways and means of adult physical love. When the close-circuit TVs monitoring her bedroom caught the young girl openly masturbating, it was decided at the highest levels that it was time to teach her the ropes...and the whips and the chains, as the joke went.

They started off with erotic novels and short stories. The reading material covered the entire gamut of adult sexuality. She was encouraged to read and ask questions, and let her instructors know which works made the largest impression on her. By far, the nastier the material, the stronger Jill's reaction to it. She loved reading about gang bangs and rapes and bestiality, group sex and lesbianism. Anything what was off the beaten path, anything that was perverse and dirty and nasty, she loved. The stranger the sex, the more she got off on it. A medical doctor was brought in, and he explained all her sexual organs to her, even going to far as to point out her clitoris and what it was used for. Seeing the look of glee on Jill's face when she was told that not only was she allowed to masturbate, but encouraged to do so as often as she liked, Stark knew that he'd found his temptress for sure.

Jill became overtly sexual. She began mimicking the characters she read about in thought, word and deed. She dressed to highlight her developing body, trying at every turn to excite and arouse her instructors and mentors. Many of the men assigned to teach Jill hand- to-hand or weapons found themselves on the receiving end of a little fourteen year old sexpot who desperately wanted their approval and affection.

When Jill turned fifteen, it was decided that her virginity would be taken. There were long discussions about how this was to take place, and it was finally

decided that Jill herself would be allowed to pick whom she wanted. To everyone's surprise, Jill picked one of her bodyguards, an Air Force enlisted man who had been Jill's shadow for more than two years. When the twenty-six year old Sergeant was brought into Stark's office and informed of his 'duty assignment,' it was rumored that you didn't need a KH-11 spy satellite to see his smile from twenty-two thousand miles up. He agreed to do exactly as instructed and break the future assassin in as a woman.

That tape, widely copied and distributed throughout the base, was a favorite jack-off fantasy for the men of GOLDEN ROPE, and more than a few of the women. Jill was perfect in the role of teenage seductress. She had worn a black T-shirt with the logo of some heavy-metal band on it, and strategically torn blue jeans when her bodyguard came to tuck her in on the fateful night. She had been given official permission to attempt to seduce him, and the young enlisted man had been given permission to let her.

They sat and talked for a while, mostly about nothing. Jill was giggling and smiling and acting coy, and the enlisted man was slowly moving closer and closer to the young girl. When they first kissed, it was a tender and perfect moment that never failed to move anyone who watched the tape. What followed was also tender and moving, and undeniably sexy.

The EM undressed Jill slowly, revealing her perfect, virgin body to the camera and the excited eyes of the monitoring technicians. She was an eager, hungry lover, willing to do anything that might bring her or the young sergeant pleasure. He taught her well, using patience and gentleness, and brought the girl to her first orgasm with another person.

After that night, Jill had been unsuitable. She wanted sex constantly, and wasn't too picky about who she invited between her sheets. Understanding that a rather loose sexual morality was desired in an agent of this kind, Jill's handlers subtly encouraged this, and even went so far as to keep her bodyguard phalanx full of constantly rotating good-looking young men. Jill bedded them all, and they all left the assignment with wonderful stories about a Japanese-American temptress who did things to them between the sheets that they had never imagined in their wildest dreams.

After about six months of unfettered sexuality, the GOLDEN ROPE project leaders decided that Jill needed some coaching. She was doing fine on her own, but her sexual practices had been limited to the basics of screwing and mutual oral sex. Nothing exotic, nothing out of line or unusual. Unfortunately, men of great power also tended to have sexual quirks, and so it was decided that Jill needed to be aware and comfortable with a variety of sexual acts and practices.

Several Thai whores were brought in, B-girls notorious for their ability to do anything that a man requested, and act like they enjoyed it and were only disappointed that they hadn't thought of it first. They took Jill under their collective wings and taught her everything she needed to know. Inside of a year, Jill had learned quite a lot about being an adept sexual partner. She had also learned to control her sexuality when she was on one of her practice missions. She was taught that it was more important for her to appear certain ways at certain times than it was for her to give free reign to her own unique, unbridled sexuality.

Jill woke the next morning feeling refreshed. She took a fast shower and dressed simply, in Levi's and a T-shirt. She threw a leather jacket over that and headed out the door. She had an address that Stark had given her, a recording studio downtown, off LeBrea. The Jeep Wrangler that the NSA had provided her for this mission was topless that morning, and Jill drove quickly, loving the power of the machine under her hands and feet.

The address turned out to be another faceless, nameless warehouse. A single video camera, mounted on an L-brace, scanned the doorway, fixing Jill with it's electronic Cyclops eye. She stared at it for perhaps ten seconds before hearing the electronic buzz of the lock's solenoid. Stepping through, Jill was greeted by a large, hulking man with arms the size of tree trunks. He didn't look too bright, but Jill was sure that he was assigned to Operations, not Analysis. Smiling at her own private joke, she followed the man into the interior of the warehouse, and was surprised to see that the place did house an elaborate, high-tech recording studio, complete with 64-track two-inch decks, various other electronic sound equipment, and a sound mixing/production board that looked like it had been lifted from the bridge of the Starship Enterprise.

In the rehearsal/performance room were three men, all dressed in the current fashions of the grunge music element. Long, dirty, unwashed hair, flannel shirts, torn, stained jeans, the whole routine. A drum set and two guitars were set up, and a lone microphone stood on a stand in front of the band.

They eyed her suspiciously as she walked in, her cowboy boots making loud clunking noises.

"Jill," she said, not offering her hand. The three men stood and introduced themselves as Billy, Sam and Joel. Joel was the lead guitarist, Billy the drummer, and Sam held played the bass.

"Well," she said after the introductions were over, "Let's get to it. We play tonight at X-Men and we've got a lot of practicing to do."

The band climbed into and behind their instruments and tuned up quickly. They were obviously professional and had played together often before today. The drummer tapped his sticks together four times, and the band launched into the opening chords of a hard rock tune that Jill instantly recognized. Stepping to the mike, Jill came in at the appropriate time and let loose with her voice, matching the chords and melodies of the band perfectly. It was as if they'd been playing together for years.

The band went through dozens of tunes, finding the rhythm and getting used to one another's style. After several hours, they figured they had it down, and Jill left to return home and prepare for her premiere as the lead singer of her new band. After some debate, it was decided that the name of the band would be "The Pickle Factory." Jill smiled at her own private joke and left the band-mates to pack the equipment and move it to the club in La Jolla.

She drove home quickly, eager to get the assignment underway. She had no doubt that she could get close to Yoshi, if he was at the club. Everything, at this

stage of the operation, was dependent on Yoshi's appearance at the club. If he didn't show up, Jill would have to move to Plan B.

Whatever that is, she joked. As she drove, Jill aware of the machinations going on behind the scene, the secret deals being made and solidified. As she turned onto Sunset and drove towards the freeway, she knew that the band that had been scheduled to play this week at the club were being informed by their manager that he had gotten them a better gig in San Francisco, and that they were to be at the airport in an hour. The manager was then calling the club and informing them that the band had cancelled, had run out on their contract. After listening to the club owner's tirade for ten minutes, the manager said he had heard of another band and that he just happened to have the number of their manager.

Planning. Everything was planning. Steps had been taken, monies paid, people reached and forced to operate to the whims of the nameless, faceless men who actually controlled the machinations of government. The first band's manager had a hefty deposit in his bank account, enough money for him to retire for the rest of his life on. Normally, deposits of that size were to be reported at once to the Treasury Department, and then to the IRS. Neither had occurred. A phone call here, a voice mail there, a telex, and a memo, and the rules had been neatly circumvented 'for the needs of the government,' as the parlance went. The reach and control and power of the men at the reigns of the NSA never ceased to amaze Jill.

Two phone calls later, her band, "The Pickle Factory," was scheduled to play at the club where Jill hoped her target would appear that night.

When she got back to the loft, one of the technicians from upstairs was waiting for her. Sitting on the couch, he was looking around nervously while tapping a slim brown manila envelope against his knee.

"Message for you," he said, standing and handing the envelope to Jill. She turned it over and saw that the seal was still intact. She nodded, and the technician turned and left. Jill took his place on the couch and carefully slit the envelope open with one long, painted nail.

Jill noticed that the message was coded. Concentrating, she remembered the day's code sequence. With a pencil, she quickly decoded the message into word blocks. Once fully translated into plaintext, the message simply said: GREEN BOX PHONE PICTURE PEN KNIFE CAMERA.

That, in and of itself, made no sense to anyone but Jill and Stark. The message gave her operational permission to execute the first step of the plan. Reaching into her purse again, Jill removed a small, unlabeled vial of clear liquid. It was the inert portion of a binary poison called DIXIE PEACH 12. A binary poison is a pretty ingenious way to kill someone. It is administered in two portions; first the inert half, which is colorless, odorless and completely untraceable. It can be mixed into a drink, into food, into anything that the victim might consume.

The second half, the activator portion, is also completely colorless and odorless, and has the added advantage of not having to be consumed. The activator portion can be dissolved and then applied to a piece of clothing that the victim will wear. All he has to do is touch it to his skin; the chemical is absorbed through the sweat glands, and the victim will die within minutes of an apparent

heart attack. The combination of the two chemicals is completely untraceable. Although Jill was an expert in all forms of hand-to-hand combat, martial arts, and was able to kill with guns, knives, pens, credit cards, feathers, practically anything within reach, as well as her bare hands, Jill preferred the binary poisons. They seemed a little more humane.

If, after about ninety days, the second, activator portion of the poison wasn't administered, the inert portion dissipated in the body.

The second half of the message also indicated that there was another agent coming to provide backup. The message didn't give a clue as to who it might be, and Jill sat and wondered for a few minutes who Stark might send.

Then it was time to prepare. Jill showered, and then carefully applied her makeup, and chose an outfit that would be sure to catch Yoshi's attention. Torn fishnet stockings, very, very high black stiletto heels, a black leather skirt so short that the top to inches of bare thigh were visible, a black leather and lace bustier, and a shorty leather jacket. Standing in front of the mirror as she applied her pigeon-blood red lipstick, Jill thought she looked like the popular image of an Asian Rock Slut...In Heat. Yoshi was going to love her.

-3-

*"Rock 'n' Roll is part of a pest to
undermine the morals of the youth of
our nation. It is sexualistic, unmoralistic,
and...brings people of both races together."*

- North Alabama White Citizens' Council, 1954

X-MEN was rocking when Julie got there. The warm-up band, although not up to The Pickle Factory's stature or skill, had the majority of the bar's patrons on the floor, bodies writhing, everyone sweating and having a goddamn good time. Jill spotted two pairs of NSA operatives on the floor, posing as couples. She still hadn't made her backup, but she knew he or she was there, somewhere, in the crowd or posing as a staff member. They would not make themselves known unless required by circumstance, but Jill couldn't help wondering who it was.

There was a thirty-minute break between bands as the stage crew exchanged equipment. Jill made her way backstage and found her band-mates in their dressing room, exchanging their grunge look for the spandex and leather required by popular expectations. They went over the playlist and then fell quiet as the pre-performance jitters settled in.

Then it was time to go on. The club was darkened, and a single spot lighted the microphone. There was a long anticipatory pause, and then the band hit the stage. Jill waited in the wings, waited for them to crank the sound up to a rocking, thumping crescendo ..and then she made her entrance.

The spotlight lit upon Jill as she strutted onto the stage, reflecting off the shiny leather and blinding the audience. The band brought the sound up, held the note, and then descended into a crashing downbeat that started the first song of the first set. As if

they'd been doing this for years, the band and Jill molding into one complete musical entity. The crowd roared with approval as The Pickle Factory crashed through number after number.

The first set was forty minutes long, and as they left the stage for their break, Jill scanned the crowd, smiling and waving. She caught the high sign from one of the floor agents. Yoshi had been spotted.

The game's afoot, Jill thought.

Halfway through her second set, Jill spotted Yoshi. He was standing in the back, surrounded by pretty women and three huge, hulking bodyguards. He was wearing sunglasses in the dark club in an attempt to make him look cool. Jill thought he looked like a parody of a movie gangster. But she flattered him with her performance, giving him just a bit more attention than anyone else. Not too much, but she let him know she was interested.

It worked. In between her second and last sets, one of the staff came backstage and informed Jill that a man wished to meet her after the show. He handed her a business card, and Jill took it, turning it over in her hand to read it.

"Yoshi Yumura," it said, "President, Yumura Electronics America, Ltd." On the back, in an immaculate script, a single word: Dinner?

Jill smiled to herself. She took a pen from the staff member and wrote "...breakfast?" and handed the card back to the man. He tried to avoid looking like he was reading it, but the small smile on his face destroyed that effect. He took the card and vanished.

The third set was almost anticlimactic for Jill. For her, the thrill was in the hunt. The quarry had been sighted and marked. All that remained was for Yoshi to fall into her trap. Yeah, Jill thought, leaning back to belt out the final, lingering note of the last song, the trap right between my legs.

The band begged off an encore and Jill changed into her version of street clothes. She left everything she was wearing on, and added another glossy coat of lipstick, then reemerged to find Yoshi and go have dinner.

He'd had the good grace to get rid of the girls that had been hanging around, leaving only the daunting phalanx of bodyguards surrounding him.

"Jill Tanaka," she said, offering her hand. As if he was a member of the British peerage, Yoshi bent from the waist and kissed the back of Jill's hand. Jill took her arm back and made a show of wiping it on her skirt.

"Let's get out of here," she said, taking his arm. They left the club and got into a waiting limo, settling back against the plush, comfortable seats. The car pulled smoothly into traffic, accelerating powerfully.

"I had reservations at the Polo Lounge," Yoshi said, speaking softly and slowly, "But...considering the way you're dressed, perhaps another location might be more...appropriate."

Jill turned to look at him, fixing him with her steely gaze. "What," she asked, "is wrong with the way I'm dressed. It caught your eye, didn't it?"

Yoshi didn't speak for a long moment. "In Japan," he finally said, "It is normally a woman's position to acquiesce to her husband's wishes. In the absence of a husband, her lover or the man who is courting her takes his place." His meaning was clear; Yoshi didn't like Jill's impertinence. Or, he was testing her.

Jill decided to take the initiative. "In case you haven't noticed, asshole, we're not IN Japan!" She leaned forward and depressed the button to lower the one-way glass.

"Stop here," she said to the driver. "I'm leaving."

"Continue on," Yoshi ordered, and the driver nodded. Turning to Jill, he said, "I apologize for my...criticism. Yes, you are right. We are not in Japan, and although you do have some of the blood of Nihon in you, you are not truly Japanese, are you?"

"No. I'm an American. Is that a problem?"

"No, of course not!" Yoshi's laugh was somehow hollow and empty. "Not at all. I just...didn't wish you to feel uncomfortable, that's all. Perhaps you know of another location, another place that's not so... formal as the Polo Lounge?"

Jill named a popular LA restaurant, and the car turned as smoothly as an aircraft carrier coming about into the wind. They arrived within minutes and were shown immediately to the best table in the house. The food was plentiful and good, and they finished the meal in a little under two hours. By that time, it was almost one in the morning. Yoshi and Jill returned outside to find the limo idling at the curb. She wondered how they managed to do that, how the car always managed to be ready for Yoshi. Then she realized that the bodyguards, who had been mostly unobtrusive during the meal, must have a chase car and radio contact with the driver of the limo.

Jill realized that the bodyguards might be a problem. If she'd been armed, and this had been a straightforward hit, she would have had no compunction with taking the guards out, single shots to the head for each. And then a final bullet for Yoshi. But this assignment was a little more subtle than that. The bodyguards presented a...difficulty, but she had an idea of how to overcome that.

The limo pulled up in front of Jill's loft, and she knew that the entire place was blanketed. The two surveillance technicians upstairs would be in front of their consoles, tape reels turning, recording everything said and everything done until Yoshi left. The other NSA agents, posing as tenants, would be in constant radio contact with the survail team. In case of trouble, if everything went to shit, Jill would have eight NSA agents in her apartment in a matter of seconds. She remembered her trouble code phrase: "I'm not sure this is a good idea, Yoshi." If she said those words, all hell would break loose. Six miles away, in an underground complex of the Los Angeles Federal Building, an ISA (Intelligence Support Activity) QRT (Quick Reaction Team) would be on constant alert for the entire time Yoshi was inside the apartment. If Jill uttered her code phrase, the NSA QRT could be overhead in four minutes by chopper. Jill felt protected at the same time she felt like a specimen under a microscope.

Jill moved as if to exit the limo, but Yoshi placed a hand on her arm. "Just a minute. My men wish to...inspect your apartment."

Jill felt a small tingle of panic run up her spine. "Check it for what?"

"Listening devices, video...things like that. I'm a very powerful, influential man, Miss Tanaka. When you are in my line of business, one can never be too cautious." The panic was rising inside Jill now. She didn't know very much about electronic surveillance techniques, but she wondered if they had any countermeasures to defeat the bodyguard's detection equipment.

After a moment of thought, Jill relaxed. The NSA was the single largest intelligence agency in the world, even larger than the old, pre-reform KGB. If anyone could get her out of this, the NSA could.

The wait was interminable. It took almost ten minutes, but the bodyguards returned and gave Yoshi the high sign. He escorted her to the elevator and they rode up in silence. Yoshi was carrying himself with a self-assured air that made Jill want to kick him in the balls.

She knew she was going to sleep with him. She knew that it was her job to get close to him. She knew that she was going to let Yoshi seduce her. And she also knew that she was going to give him the inert portion of the binary poison. Yoshi was halfway to death, and he thought he was halfway to heaven.

They entered the apartment together, two of the three bodyguards close behind. Jill glanced at Yoshi. "What are they going to do...watch?"

"If need be," Yoshi said, and then, noticing the expression of shock and horror on Jill's face, quickly added, "No. Of course not. They will be out here, in the living room. In case I need them."

Jill didn't want to ask for what, and she didn't get a chance. Yoshi suddenly leaned in and kissed her. At first, Jill was repulsed, but she made a good show of it, molding her body against his, opening her mouth and gently teasing lips and tongue with her own. The kiss lengthened and deepened, gaining passion and urgency. Truth be told, Jill was getting a little turned on, kissing like this in front of the huge, silent bodyguards.

Let them watch, she thought. Let them see what they'll be missing. Hopping up, Jill wrapped her legs around Yoshi's waist and attacked his mouth with renewed vigor. They stumbled into her bedroom where Yoshi dumped her unceremoniously on the bed. Jill lifted her skirt and revealed her tiny, lace G-string panties to Yoshi's gaze. The electronics millionaire reached down and softly rubbed his crotch.

"You like these?" Jill whispered. "You like my tiny little panties?"

"Yes," Yoshi said. "Oh, yes."

"Fine. Why don't you tear them off my body and fuck me?" Jill's harsh, nasty words had an immediate and visible effect on Yoshi. His cock hardened against his pants, tenting them, and his breath deepened. Jill got up off the bed and shrugged her jacket off. In the leather bustier and microskirt, she looked like a vision of hot, wanton sluttishness that every man dreamed of. Including Yoshi.

Jill stepped over to where he was standing and removed his tie, slinging it over

her shoulder and moving on to his jacket. She slid it over his shoulders and down his arms, letting it fall in a fabric puddle at his feet. The shirt was next. Jill bent her face and used her mouth to undo his buttons, a trick she'd learned from the Thai whores back at the NSA training facility. Yoshi's shirt fell away, and Jill moved to his pants. Her hands glided over his throbbing erection and Yoshi groaned, moving his hands to Jill's heads.

Good little Japanese wives don't suck dick, Jill thought... but I do. She unbuckled and unzipped Yoshi's pants and let them fall around his ankles. He stepped out of them, and his shoes and stocks, finally standing in front of her wearing only his boxer shorts.

Jill reached for the waistband, lifting her head to gaze into Yoshi's eyes. His expression was one of barely controlled lust. Jill smiled at him and lowered the shorts. Yoshi's cock was not exactly large. In fact, it was puny, like most Japanese men. Just over four and a half inches long, it was the diameter of a hot dog. Jill hid her disappointment well. All this thinking about fucking Yoshi had gotten Jill hot, and she'd been looking forward to a fat, hard cock that would make her cunt happy. What she got was...Yoshi.

Jill opened her mouth and lowered her face over Yoshi's cock, reaching with her tongue to lick the purple, throbbing head. Slowly, gently, Jill began sucking Yoshi's cock, easily taking all of it into her wet, slavering mouth. Yoshi's hands tightened on Jill's head and he started humping his hips into her face, pulling her mouth hard against his groin.

Jill let Yoshi lead, eager to have him cum in her mouth and get this over with. The sooner Yoshi emptied his load inside of her, the sooner she could open her purse, get the vial and-

Her purse! Jill almost bit Yoshi's cock off in surprise. Her purse was still in the front hallway! She'd dropped it when Yoshi had started kissing her. The bodyguards were out there, doing God only knew what... her purse, goddamn it! That was a mistake only a rookie made!

Incredibly angry at herself, Jill began sucking Yoshi's cock with a vengeance. Yoshi tried to slow down, tried to hold off, but it was no use against Jill's educated, experience mouth. Within moments he was shaking and gasping, and then he was erupting, emptying himself inside Jill's mouth. She licked and slurped at his spitting rod, drowning herself with his copious load.

Yoshi fell to the bed, a wide grin on his face, pulling Jill along with him. His hands were all over her, removing the bustier, working the zipper of the skirt down, tearing her clothes off. Before a moment had passed, Jill was wearing only her garterbelt, stockings and heels. Yoshi was above her, panting hotly, staring down at Jill's young, tanned, trim body, his little cock hard and rejuvenated again. Yoshi was not a very... good lover, Jill realized. He basically got on top of her and just thrust like a rutting rabbit. He had no finesse, no skill, no desire to do anything that might please Jill. And to make matters worse, it was over in about two minutes. Yoshi rolled off of Jill, turned over, and started snoring twenty seconds later.

Jill lay there, stunned. This man was perhaps one of the wealthiest in the world. He could have almost any woman in the world, at any time, in his bed...and he

was a dead fuck. Well, she thought, in a few weeks, it wouldn't matter anymore. Yoshi would not just be a dead fuck, he'd actually be...dead.

And that reminded her. The inert portion of the binary poison was still in her purse, which was still in the front room, under the watchful eye of the bodyguards. She had to figure out a way to get out there, get the purse from under their noses, and return to the bedroom, all without raising their suspicions.

Jill got out of bed, careful not to disturb the sleeping Yoshi. She stripped off the garterbelt, stockings and heels, and picked up Yoshi's shirt. It hung down below her butt by about two inches. Combing her hair out, Jill checked herself in the mirror one last time. On an impulse, she unbuttoned the shirt all the way. It was held closed only by the weight of her breasts. If she moved too quickly in any direction, it would billow open, giving revealing, tantalizing glimpses of her perfectly round breasts. If she could keep the bodyguard's attentions on her body, Jill knew, then they wouldn't care about the purse.

Walking softly back into the front of the apartment, Jill found the two bodyguards standing in the kitchen. They stood, staring off into space, holding their hands in front of their waist. They looked at her quietly, studying her, looking for...what? A suspicious move? To see if she was going to get a knife from the drawer and go back into the bedroom and finish Yoshi off?

She walked into the kitchen and made a big show out of getting a mineral water from the icebox. She smiled coyly at the two men and bent carefully over as she pretended to search the interior of the icebox for the water. Jill knew that the bottom of the shirt was slowly crawling up her body, revealing more and more of her firm buttocks to what she hoped was their fervent gaze.

She shut the door and turned to face Yoshi's men. "Can I get you two anything?"

The taller of the two looked at her and grinned softly, intentionally lowering his gaze to stare at her almost-visible tits. His grin widened as he saw her nipples harden under his view. Almost against her control, Jill was getting excited having this man look at her. She knew it was wrong, but she suddenly wanted this man. She wanted both of them, right there, right then. Yoshi was asleep in the next room, and probably would be for another few hours. And her purse was still on the counter, where one of the men had put it. Jill hoped that they hadn't gone through it.

"Really?" Jill asked, stepping a little closer to the man. "Both of you want...me?"

The big one turned to his partner and shrugged. The little one turned and left them alone. Jill smiled up at her new friend and ran a shaking, tentative hand over his chest. He was completely unlike Yoshi. His body was hard and firm under her fingers. "We have to make this fast," Jill said, "your boss might wake up at any second."

"My partner will keep watch for me, just as I will when he has you. If our employer awakens, he will be...detained until things are once again as they should be. For the time being, we can be assured that we will not be interrupted." And with that, the man reached down, grasped Jill's waist, and lifted her onto the kitchen table. Jill's shirt parted, revealing her body to the man's hot, horny gaze.

He smiled at the sight of her, and Jill actually found herself blushing.

The bodyguard pulled out a chair and sat in it. And then his face was approaching Jill's crotch. She watched in amazement as he lowered his mouth between her legs and began to expertly, patiently eat her cunt. His mouth was everywhere at once, teasing and licking and probing, tasting her most intimate of spots. It didn't seem to bother him that Yoshi had been there first, and in fact, if anything, it made him eat her that much harder. His hands came up and found her thighs, pushing them apart, spreading Jill wider so he could get at her cunt.

Jill lowered her hands to his head and rode his face, grunting softly as she felt her first orgasm rapidly approaching. She wondered what kind of joke the Gods were playing on her. Why was it that the rich man, the one she was supposed to want to be with, was a dead fuck, while this man, the bodyguard, the man-servant, was a skilled lover that was making her cunt leak like a faucet? Why was it always that way? Why was it that the ones you didn't suspect always turned out to be the animals?

Putting that and all other thoughts from her mind, Jill surrendered to the pleasure and rode the man's face through an incredible climax. Her cunt gushed lubrication and the man doubled his efforts, finding Jill's clit with his fingers, twisting and tweaking it, making the poor girl shudder and shake with pleasure and joy.

Finished, he sat back and unzipped his pants and fished out a truly huge cock. His gaze was fixed on Jill's face, and she just smiled, moving as if to take it into her mouth. His hand stopped her, and he lifted her again, moving her over his lap. Understanding what he wanted, Jill reached down and grasped him, lining herself up with his prick.

With a single smooth lunge, Jill settled herself down on the man's prick, taking it completely inside. Her tight vaginal walls clutched and massaged the man's prick, and when Jill consciously applied pressure he groaned. His huge hands came up and swept the shirt off her shoulders, baring her tits to the night air. His mouth closed over one erect nipple and he tongued it hungrily, making Jill moan and groan. They began moving together slowly, liquidly, staring deeply into each other's eyes as the nameless man fucked Jill. Jill had the ability to tighten her pussy muscles to an almost unbearable level, and keep them that way for as long as she wanted. Other men that had had her, other men that had fucked her, had all sworn at one time or another that she was about to rip their cocks off, tear them at the root and leave them implanted inside her body. Jill loved watching the men trying to concentrate, trying not to lose control as her slick, impossibly tight cunt took them for the ride of their lives. She knew she was an incredible sex partner, and took power from that.

The man suddenly pulled out of Jill, grimacing as he did so. Holding her by the waist, he lowered the small Eurasian woman to the floor and got between her legs again. With the better angle, he was better able to penetrate her, and the bodyguard took Jill for the ride of her life, fucking the shit out of her tiny body. Jill moaned and groaned and fucked back at the man, lifting her hips off the floor to take him as deeply as possible with every single stroke.

With a huge grunt, the man came, but not before taking Jill with him. She felt

the pleasure exploding from her groin, enveloping her entire body, spreading out to her arms and legs in crackling electric waves of joy.

The man continued to cum, pumping Jill's pussy full of his cream, emptying himself inside her. Jill felt each spasm and spurt against her walls and she clutched at him, eager to have it all inside her. The bodyguard finished off inside her, and stood, pulling his limp, dripping cock out of her cunt. He stood there, looking at her with a serious, studious expression on his face.

"I do not wish to make assumptions," he finally said quietly, "but my comrade..."

"Sure. He can fuck me too," Jill said, turned on beyond belief. The thought of having another man right after this one was exciting and arousing and just a little bit nasty. She could feel the first one's semen slowly leaking from her pussy, and she wanted another load shot inside her, she wanted another man to drop down between her legs and bury his cock inside her hungry, clutching hole.

A minute later he was there, smiling widely, undoing his pants in his eagerness to fuck Jill. She just smiled at him and spread her legs further, eager to have him fucking her. The man was naked in a heartbeat, and then he was upon her, poking at her thighs and belly with his cock. His inexperience showed, and Jill lowered a hand to help him out, grasping him firmly and guiding him inside.

The second bodyguard fucked Jill hard, using short, brutal strokes that filled her every time. Closing her legs across his back, Jill reached up and brought his face down to hers, losing herself in a hard, crushing kiss. The two relative strangers moved as one on the cold kitchen floor, and Jill had a fleeting thought of the two surveillance technicians getting an eyeful of her performance upstairs. What the hell, she thought. If they ask nice, maybe I'll let them fuck me, too.

Jill's mind, in the middle of the frenzy of sexual activity, diverged into two wholly conscious halves. The one half concentrated on the pleasure she was giving and receiving, reveled in the feel of the hard, fat cock squishing around inside her cum-filled hole. The other side quietly debated the entire issue of Jill's sexuality. She knew that she liked sex, and under certain circumstances, loved it. Jill knew that she was a very sexual person, that she liked the give and take and the physicality of the sexual acts. She liked the fact that certain things were considered dirty or nasty or just wrong, and she loved the fact that she liked to do those things for that specific reason: Because they were dirty or wrong. She had been brought up to believe that nothing two people did to each other that felt good could be all wrong.

She remembered back to the gangbangs she'd eagerly participated in while undergoing NSA training. A small portion of her mind knew, instinctively, that she had been molded, shaped to be the way she was, that she had been taught this so that she would have no difficulty submitting to the various and assorted sexual appetites of her future targets. It was said that the most powerful men, accustomed to having any woman they wanted, had lost the taste for the thrill of the chase, and thus had to resort to more exotic sexual practices to get their jollies; Jill was specially trained, hand-picked, to get close to these men and be able to stand whatever they wanted to do to her, to eagerly participate if the scenario so required.

Jill wondered if she, too, would eventually fall to that sexual cynicism. Would she ever be bored with this, with the joy of being filled with a man? Would she have to revert to deviant sexual practices to get her fulfillment and satisfaction?

All those thoughts were blown out of Jill's mind as the third man to fuck her started to cum. The feel of his goo impacting against her walls sent Jill over the edge with him, and the duo shook and screamed on the floor.

Slowly, the man rolled off of her, and Jill stood on shaky legs. Her purse was on the counter, three steps away. She made it in the blink of an eye. She thrust her hand inside and found the secret compartment that held the vial.

Nothing.

It was gone.

"Looking for this, I suppose?" Jill spun, naked, the combined semen of three men slowly leaking from between her legs, to find the first bodyguard, standing in the door, holding the vial in one hand and a silenced Browning Hi-Power 9mm pistol.

"I'm not sure this is a good idea," Jill said, hoping that the technicians upstairs would know what the fuck was going on. Jill and the bodyguard stood, studying each other silently for a full thirty seconds.

And then all hell broke loose.

“Marjorie”

-1-

The phone call was not completely unexpected, but it did surprise Dan a little. The voice on the other end was instantly familiar, bringing with it a rush of memories and emotions and feelings.

“Dan?” Still soft, sweet and honeyed with a layer of Deep South. A voice promising so many distant dreams and unfulfilled yearnings. He could immediately picture her on the other end: Sitting on that ridiculous white couch in her living room, one leg curled under her, twisting the phone cord as she talked.

“Marjorie.” He tried not to let her hear the sigh, and instead asked the inevitable: “How’s tricks, kiddo?”

“Not too good, Dan.” As expected. He only heard from her when things were going poorly. What this time? Did she need a loan? A traffic ticket fixed? One of her neighbors giving her troubles? Something that a flash of a cop’s shield in their faces usually cleared up?

“What’s wrong?” Even in his cynicism Dan was concerned. She still had the old pull on him, the same effect.

“It’s my boyfriend...” she started, and Dan felt the sinking feeling begin. She probably wanted Dan to fix a traffic ticket or something.

“...actually,” she continued, “...he’s my ex-boyfriend. Only he doesn’t think so. I’ve told him we’re through, Dan, and he just doesn’t listen. He’s shown up here a few times, drunk and angry. He’s broken a couple of things around the apartment in a drunken rage, and...” She trailed off, obviously reluctant to finish.

“What, Marjorie?” Dan gently prodded.

“Well, the last time he was over here, two nights ago, he was really ripped. I mean, he was blotto. He pounded on the door until I let him in, and then he began ranting and raving, waving his arms around, threatening me physically, telling me that I was a no-good bitch and that he would teach me a lesson. When I asked him to leave, he...he hit me. Across the face. With his fist, Dan, not his hand. I’ve got this awful bruise on my cheek and I’m just so scared Dan, I’m terrified of him!” The last sentence had come out all in a rush, and Dan had a palpable sense of her fear.

“Have you called the police? I mean, besides me.”

“No.”

“Have you contacted an attorney? Tried to get a TRO?”

“What’s a TRO? And no, I haven’t called a lawyer...yet.”

“A TRO is a Temporary Restraining Order. Basically it’s a court document that says that this boyfriend of yours can no longer approach you, talk to you, come over to your apartment, anything. No contact at all. If he does, then he’s in violation of the order, and can be arrested and prosecuted. But I only recommend

that as the first step. Most assholes like this don't even blink at a TRO. They just think that the court is meddling in their business, and just ignore it."

"What can I do?" Marjorie's question was almost a wail.

"Well, the first thing to do is change your phone to a non-listed number. Secondly, move. Find a new apartment in a new part of town. You tell me when you're moving, and I'll make sure lover boy is tied up with something else, maybe a traffic stop or a drug search or something. That way, if he's watching your apartment--"

"You think he's watching me?"

"Well, it fits the profile. Let me tell you something about this guy; you tell me if I'm right. He was incredibly possessive when you first started dating, jealous to the point of violence against any guy who looked at you. At first you found this kind of flattering, but then his attempts at controlling you and your actions become oppressive and smothering. When you broke up with him the first time, he laughed at you, then got angry, then got contrite. Promised to change, to do anything you wanted if only you'd take him back. He told you how much you meant to him, how much he wanted to be with you, all that stuff. So you took him back. He behaved himself for a few weeks, and then something set him off again. You smiled at some guy at dinner or in the mall or said some actor on television or in the movies was good looking, and he went off again. He went ballistic. Told you that you belonged to him, that you were basically his property. And when you broke it off this time, he went nuts. Started calling at all hours, either just hanging up or breathing heavy or shouting obscenities into the phone. Threatened you...and then finally, what happened last night."

Marjorie had been silent during Dan's entire speech. When he stopped talking, she was quiet for perhaps thirty seconds more. "Do you know Bobby?" she asked.

"Not specifically, but I know hundreds of dirtbags just like him. Trust me, Marjorie. Move. And tell me where and when so I can take care of it."

"Can't you just go over and have a talk with him? Flash him your badge or something?"

"It's called a shield, Marjorie. And no, I can't. That would be an abuse of power, and I could lose my job. No, Marjorie. If you want me to act in an official capacity then--"

"Please?" Her voice was plaintive and quietly beseeching. And Dan knew deep in his soul that he could never refuse her, would always do whatever she asked.

"Very well. Give me his full name and birthdate."

-2-

Dan parked the unmarked car and looked up at the address he'd written down. 1439 Bainbridge, Apartment 6A. Well, if this got back to the captain, I'll be walking a beat again in no time. But, Dan also knew that most guys of this type weren't smart enough to figure out what to do.

As he ascended the stairs, Dan wondered for the thousandth time what made these guys act like they did. Why were there so many men that liked to slap women around, to make the live in fear and cower at the sound of their voices?

Arriving at the door, Dan knocked twice, hard.

“Who is it?”

“POLICE!” Dan shouted. “Open the door!” There came the muffled sounds of shuffling from the other side of the door, and then the sound of a lock being turned and the chain being taken off. The door opened to reveal a man obviously fresh from the shower, hair dripping, a towel wrapped around his waist and gripped by one hand. He was tall, but not as tall as Dan, maybe six foot two, with sandy blonde hair, deep blue eyes, and a surfer’s build and good looks. Just Marjorie’s type, Dan thought.

“What can I do for you, officer?”

“Detective Stone, Atlanta Robbery/Homicide. May I come in?”

“Now’s not a good time, detective. I was in the shower.”

Dan stiff-armed the door open and walked in. “Go turn it off, then. You and I have things to talk about.” The man looked at Dan strangely for a moment, then nodded and turned to walk down the hall and into the bathroom.

In a few moments he returned, dressed in bluejeans and a hastily thrown-on sweatshirt. He was shoeless, and he had combed his hair.

“What’s this all about, Detective? I haven’t murdered or robbed anyone lately, and I’m sure that I don’t know anyone who has?”

“Are you Robert James Walker?”

“I am.”

“May I seem some identification, please?”

Walker started to ask a question, and then thought better of it. He walked to a small table in the living room and opened his briefcase, returning with his wallet, holding it out for Dan to take.

Refusing it, he said, “Please take out your driver’s license.”

Visibly impatient, Walker complied, handing the small laminated card to Dan. Dan stared at it, hoping against hope that it was expired.

It was, of course, not expired. Handing it back, Dan took a notebook from his inside jacket pocket and opened it. “What kind of car do you drive, Mr. Walker?”

“A ‘92 Nissan 300ZX. Black. Plate is Georgia 3JM-A34. What is this all about?”

“Just a few more questions, sir, and then I’ll answer any questions you have. Fair enough?”

“Fair enough,” Walker nodded. “Ask away.”

“Where do you work?”

“InfoDyne. I’m a systems analyst.”

“Must make a good living,” Dan offered.

“I do all right.” A look of mixed confusion and wariness had crept across Walker’s features. “Detective, I’m not going to answer any more questions until you tell me what’s going on.”

“Fair enough,” Dan said, snapping the notebook closed and returning it to his jacket pocket. “The entire purpose of this little exercise, Bobby, is to make you

understand a few things. First, I know who you are, where you work, and what kind of car you drive. I have you in my little book, see, and if I ever get another single complaint from Marjorie Clark about you, I will be back to pay you a visit. Understand?"

Whatever Dan expected Walker's reaction to be, the expression of amusement was not it. "Is that what this is about? Detective, I assure you that Marjorie exaggerates a great deal. All we're having is a small lover's quarrel. Nothing to trouble yourself about, really."

Dan took a step forward, grabbing a handful of Walker's sweatshirt.

"You like to beat up on women, huh? Makes you feel like a big man, slapping women around? All Marjorie has to do is sign a complaint, and I'll arrest your ass for assault so fast it'll make your head spin. Maybe I'll let you pick on someone your own size, someone a little like...me."

"I'm not going to take a swing at you, Detective. I don't want to be arrested for assaulting an officer or obstructing justice or something like that. Whatever Marjorie told you is just simply not true. It's true, we're having problems right now, but all couples go through this kind of thing."

"Perhaps I'm not making myself clear, asshole. You and Marjorie are no longer a couple, no longer together. I am an old friend of Marjorie's and if she tells me you've even sent her a postcard, I'm going to come back and--"

"What?" Walker interrupted, an insolent little smile on his face. "What are you going to do? Huh? Come back here and shoot me? Beat the shit out of me? I got two words for you, Detective. Rodney King. As of now, I'm filing assault charges against you, the Atlanta Police Department and the City of Atlanta. If you ever come near me again, I'll have your badge."

Slowly, Dan released Walker's shirt, then made a smoothing motion with his hand. "You do what you feel you have to, asshole. My warning still stands. You touch, call, or make any effort to contact Marjorie Clark, and I will make your life a living hell."

"Get out, Detective. You will be hearing from my attorney." Walker still had that insolent little smile on his face, and Dan ached to slap it off his puss. He turned and left the apartment.

-3-

"Hello?"

"Marjorie, it's me. I talked to Walker, but I gotta warn you I don't think it did any good. I want you to come down here and sign a statement that he physically abused you. Then I can arrest him for assault."

"I'd rather not do that, Dan. There would be a trial, and then all sorts of ugly things will come out."

Suddenly, Dan was wary. "Things? What kinds of ugly things, Marjorie? What aren't you telling me?"

There was a long pause. "I'd rather not go into it right--"

“You listen to me, Marjorie Alice Clark. I put my fucking job on the line for you today. If there’s something going on here, I have a right to know about it, not only as your friend, but as the guy who risked his ASS for you! Am I making myself clear?” The

intensity of Dan’s sudden fury stunned Marjorie into silence.

“Yes, it’s clear. But not over the phone. Come over, and I’ll cook you dinner tonight, kay? Then I’ll tell you everything.”

“Fine,” Dan said and hung up.

Marjorie answered the door wearing jeans and a T-shirt, her long, curly blonde hair in a ponytail. Dan knew that Marjorie knew that he loved her when she looked this way. She had the elfin good looks of the girl next door, and a simmering, seething sensuality that made men turn their heads, and then bang them against brick walls. Deep, ocean blue eyes were all but hidden behind her glasses, which only served to make her beauty a little more obvious, despite her attempts to downplay it.

Her breasts were firm and bouncy, and Dan wondered if she was wearing a bra under the shirt. He tried to force that and all thoughts concerning Marjorie’s sexuality and his attraction to her from his mind...and failed miserably. His attraction to her was chemical, spiritual...there was no denying or escaping it.

“Hi,” she said. “Come on in!” He followed her down the short hall leading away from her door into the living room. The kitchen branched off to the left, and another short hall led to the only bedroom and bathroom to the right. The ludicrous white couch still dominated the living room, but she had added a glass-topped coffee table and a leather wing chair since the last time Dan had been there, almost six months before. An expensive-looking stereo was housed in a glass-fronted cabinet, and soft jazz filled the small apartment. The scent of a dinner moments away from completion wafted from the kitchen, and Dan felt his stomach rumbling. The last thing he’d eaten was a sugar doughnut that morning.

“What’s for dinner?” he asked.

“Lasagna, garlic bread, salad...a little wine...sound good?”

“Sounds great!”

“It’ll only be a minute,” she said, vanishing into the kitchen. Dan followed her and opened the fridge, looking for a beer. Finding a six-pack, he removed one and twisted the cap off, sending it flying into the garbage can with a snap of his fingers.

“Two points,” Marjorie said, watching it drop into the basket. Dan silently watched her as she prepared the meal, tossing the salad with two wooden forks, setting the bread under the broiler for a few moments, moving around the kitchen with the familiar motions of a practiced cook. From time to time she would sip at Dan’s beer, always without asking, always handing it back silently.

And that’s the way it is with us, Dan thought. Six months apart, and we slip back into these personal rhythms like I left this morning to go to work. I can sense her body language like a trained interpreter, and we fit together so well...the comfortable silence; so many couples felt like they had to fill each moment with conversation, with words and sentences and paragraphs...fill the holes with sound to convince themselves that they weren’t alone.

Studying her motions as she moved around the kitchen, Dan was surprised at how arousing just watching her move was. Marjorie was a very sexual, very sensuous person, even if she pretended not to know it. Just watching her made Dan feel good.

"All done," she said, handing the salad bowl to Dan. "Put this on the table, will you?" Dan carried it into the tiny dining room and set it on the table, returning to the kitchen only to have Marjorie hand him a breadbasket filled with steaming slices of French bread liberally doused with a butter and garlic mixture. After setting those down, Dan turned to see Marjorie walking in from the kitchen holding a glass pan filled to the brim with warm, gooey lasagna.

He sat down at one end, and she at the other, and they ate for a few moments in silence, catching each other's eyes from time to time. For the meal, Marjorie had poured herself a glass of red wine. As she tipped the long-stemmed glass back to take a sip, their eyes locked once again, and Dan felt a tugging in his chest. He felt the same tugging every time he saw someone kiss a tall, curly-haired blonde on television or in the movies. It was a gnawing sensation, and he never acknowledged it or tried to do anything about it.

"So tell me," he finally said. "I need to know everything if I'm going to be able to help you. And I mean everything, Marjorie. We've known each other for a lot of years, and I need you to be completely honest with me."

"Well," she said. "It's kind of embarrassing. It's hard for me to talk about, even though I know it's basically over." Marjorie put the glass down on the table with a soft 'clink', folded her hands and placed them on the edge of the table and began to speak:

"Bobby and I met...well, that's not important. What is important is that there was this instant spark between us, and instant physical attraction. We went home together that night and...slept together. I know what that makes me sound like, but Dan, it was something that neither of us could deny, even if we wanted to. And I'm not trying to cause you pain, but he was...wonderful. He was the single best lover I've ever had. He was so gentle, so knowing...so understanding. At first. We started seeing a lot of each other, and we even talked about moving in together."

At the mention of this, Dan's stomach lurched. He put his fork down, the lasagna forgotten as he leaned forward to listen.

"Then things got kinky. Well, maybe not kinky, but definitely a little strange. He started asking me to do things, things that I had never done before, never even thought of doing before."

"Like what?" Dan interrupted, not sure that he wanted to know, but curious all the same.

"Well, things like not wearing any underwear underneath a dress when we went out so that he could...touch me. Things like that. Things like going separately to a singles bar, letting him watch me dance with other men, watching me let them feel me up, and then having him step in and whisk me away to his car. We'd drive home and have furious, passionate sex until all hours of the day and night. And then things got a little too intense for me. He wanted me to sleep with another man while he watched. He wanted to take nude pictures of me,

wanted to make a videotape of us making love and then send it into one of those places that exchanges amateur porn tapes. Things like that.”

“Really,” was all Dan could muster.

“Then it got totally out of hand. He wanted me to work at a strip club on the weekends, wanted me to pretend like I was a prostitute or something like that in a bar. See if I could get a man to offer me money for sex; then he, in his plan, would step in and ID himself as a cop and ‘arrest’ me for prostitution. Strange things like that. And the sex got more violent, more controlling. He demanded that I do certain...things to him, and when I asked for some attention, some tenderness, he would laugh at me and call me names. Dirty, horrible names that made me feel low and degraded. He made me perform oral sex on him while he was driving the car, holding my face in his crotch by the hair while he screamed down the highway. I was humiliated, seeing that all the truckers knew what was going on; they’d pass us on the highway, honking their horns and then dropping back.

“He’d raise my skirt and leave my rear end exposed, with his fingers inside my...inside me while the truckers stared and honked and hooted and made rude noises and comments as they passed. He said that it got him off, that it excited him to know that all those men, the men in the bars and on the dance floor that I let touch me for his pleasure, all those men...he said that it excited him to know they all wanted me, all wanted to be with me and to touch me and to...fuck me. That’s the word he used, ‘fuck.’”

Dan thoughtfully stroked his chin. It sounded like Marjorie had taken a walk on the other side of the street, and decided that the grass wasn’t greener, and was now regretting it.

“The final straw was when he wanted to tie me up and let all his friends have sex with me. He begged and pleaded and promised me the world if only I’d let him do this to me, only let his friends in between my legs, one after the other, again and again, until they would all be satisfied.

“And that,” Marjorie said, “was it. I’d had it. I told him in no uncertain terms that I didn’t want to be a part of his life anymore. I told him that I was breaking up with him, that I didn’t want to be his slut.

“And then, as you said this afternoon, he changed his tactics. He tried to reconcile. Promised that he would never ask those things of me again, that he only wanted to experiment. That I was all that was important to him, that he wanted to be with me forever, for the rest of our lives.

“I took a chance,” she said sadly. “I believed in him, and I decided to give it another try. For about three weeks, everything was fine. We had conventional, if passionless sex, for a few weeks. Then things started to get weird again. He started being more forceful in bed, more demanding. Gone was the sensitive man I’d wanted, gone was his warmth and compassion when we were making love. Replaced by a rude, crude, aggressive asshole that was only concerned with his own pleasure.

“And then the absolute final straw. We were making love in my bed when a friend of his walked into the bedroom. Bobby had left the door unlocked and told him to ‘surprise’ us, I guess. His friend started to get undressed while I watched in

horror. Bobby kept trying to get me to sleep with the both of them.

"I started screaming, shouting, kicking, anything to get Bobby and his friend out of my bedroom and out of my apartment. They went, but Bobby stopped at the bedroom door and told me that he'd make me pay for embarrassing him like that, making him look bad in front of his friend.

"The next day the threatening phone calls started. Shortly after that he started showing up drunk, shouting and screaming, pounding on the door at all hours of the day and night. The last time I let him in, three days ago, he did...this." She indicated the bruise on her face, covered almost completely by heavy makeup. Normally, Dan didn't like her to wear a lot of makeup, but he thought it better in this instance. If he got a good look at the bruise, Dan knew he might do something to Bobby he would later regret.

"Well, you did the right thing. You knew that you were in over your head, and you called...me. I talked with him, as I told you, but he's a lot smarter than I thought."

"Not smarter than you, though," Marjorie teased. "At least, I hope!"

"No," Dan said, smiling. "There aren't many people smarter than me."

Marjorie laughed.

"Anyway," Dan continued. "I'm serious about your moving. If he knows where you live..."

"But I like it here," Marjorie whined.

"Listen to me. The justice system is not currently able to handle problems of this nature. We can't do anything to him, until he does something to you! The police, me included, aren't your private storm troopers! We can't go off half-cocked every time you get your pretty little tit in a wringer!"

"Do you really think they're pretty?" Marjorie asked coquettishly.

"I'm serious, Marjorie. Being cute isn't going to help matters. Bobby has already shown that he has a violent tendency. He's already hit you. If he decides to come in here and do something worse...there's nothing you or I could do, until after the fact. If that's what you want, then I'll be happy to prosecute him for assault, or rape...or worse. Perhaps I'll arrest him for your murder, Marjorie. Is that what you want?"

Dan saw that his words had the desired effect. The color had drained from Marjorie's face as he spoke.

"Can't you do anything else?"

"Your options are these: 1) Sign a complaint against him. I'll arrest him for assault, and he'll probably get probation. When I ran his record through the computer, he has no other arrests, just a few tickets here and there. He got a citation for drunken fighting a few years ago. He might get counseling. 2) Move. If he doesn't know where you are, he can't do anything to you. And since you basically work out of your house, once you move, it will basically be over. Or, thirdly, you can do nothing. And he might show up again, drunk and angry. And then, there's no predicting what he might do. No predicting at all, Marjorie."

"Oh, very well. Here's what I'll do. I'll come down the day after tomorrow and sign a complaint. Tomorrow I've got some work I have to get finished, and if the police department is like every other bureaucracy, it will probably take all day to

take my statement and swear out a complaint.”

“Swear out a...have you been watching LA Law again?” Dan teased, glad that Marjorie would be pressing charges.

“Very funny. But I mean this, Dan. I won’t be moving unless it’s the only other opportunity. Do you understand me?”

“It’s your choice,” Dan said. I just hope it’s the right one, he added silently.

That taken care of, the couple returned to the meal, which had grown lukewarm while Marjorie had been talking and Dan had been listening. They ate in silence, each contemplating their private thoughts.

When they were done, Dan helped Marjorie clear the table, and then do the dishes and clean the kitchen. They retired to the living room, she with a glass of wine, Dan with a beer, and relaxed on the couch, separated by the width of a single cushion.

They listened to the stereo, which had since changed CD’s and was now playing some old Motown tunes. After a few moments, Marjorie swung her legs around until her feet were resting in Dan’s laps.

“Rub my feet, please,” she asked, “it’s been a hell of a day.”

Dan removed her shoes and began rubbing her feet. Never having been a foot man, Dan was content to idly rub while his mind ran rampant with fantasies of rubbing other parts of Marjorie’s body. He was in the middle of a rather involved scenario involving Marjorie and some hot massage oils when he realized she had spoken.

“Excuse me,” he said. “I was thinking. What did you say?”

“I said, ‘Penny for your thoughts.’ You had the strangest expression on your face. You looked like a kid in a candy store.”

A slight blush of embarrassment began to creep up Dan’s neck. “Sorry, I was just having a mild sexual fantasy.”

“The hot oils one again?” she asked. “We’ll have to do that sometime.”

Abruptly Dan stopped rubbing her feet. “That’s not funny, Marjorie.”

“What?”

“It’s all right when we tease each other back and forth. You know I’m attracted to you; I’ve made no secret of that over the years. But you’ve told me and shown me in more ways than one that you have no desire for a more... personal relationship. Comments like that just serve to remind me of that fact, a fact that I still, unfortunately, find painful.” Dan was proud of himself. For the first two years of the relationship, he’d been unable to stand up for his own feelings, and had to settle for the little ‘teasers’ that Marjorie occasionally tossed his way.

“Keep rubbing,” Marjorie complained. After a moment, Dan returned to her feet, stroking her instep softly.

“I was serious, Dan,” Marjorie said after a moment. “I know that I’ve always told you that I didn’t want to get...involved. But this business with Bobby has been making me think a lot lately.”

Dan felt his heart accelerate.

Continuing, Marjorie said, “Mostly I’ve been thinking about what I look for in a guy. Or, more to the point, the differences in what I have been looking for, and what I feel I should be looking for.

“In the past, I’ve always wanted a rich, good-looking sexual gymnast. I mean, what girl wouldn’t? But most of the guys that I meet that fit that description are also self-centered, egotistical assholes. In the middle of this mess, I asked myself, ‘Where have all the nice guys gone?’ And then it hit me. I’ve had a nice guy in my life for six years, always patiently waiting for me to come to my senses and realize it.

“Well, Dan, I’ve finally realized it.” Marjorie withdrew her feet from Dan’s lap and scooted across the cushion separating them. She reached a hand out and gently traced the outline of his face with her fingers, stopping to run her forefinger across his lips.

Dan sat immobile, afraid to move, afraid to do anything that might break the spell. Marjorie’s face slowly approached his, and he saw her lips open slightly a moment before she pressed her mouth against his.

Then, finally, gloriously, he was kissing her, tasting her for the first time, reveling in the feeling of her warmth, the taste of her, the scent of her. His hands automatically went around her back, bringing her closer to him as he explored her mouth with his tongue.

The heat and the passion built until Dan could feel his need pumping and surging inside him, eager to break free of its confinement and burst forth into the room.

Marjorie’s breath was in his lungs, in his heart, when she suddenly pulled away and walked out of the living room and down the short hall into the bedroom. She hadn’t told him to follow her, and Dan was taking no chances. Too many mixed signals over the years had taught him to let Marjorie take the lead; when she wanted him, if she wanted him to follow her into the bedroom, she would have to tell him.

Dan was surprised a moment later when he heard the shower start. She might expect him to join her in the shower, help her wash the dirt and grime of a day off her body, help make her clean for what was to follow.

Considering his options, Dan thought that if this was, finally, going to happen, then discretion was the better part of valor. Allow this most perfect night, for him, end as it already had, with a single soul-burning kiss that was branded into his memory forever. Even if he never touched her again, Dan knew his remembrance of kissing Marjorie on the couch that night would be replayed in his mind again and again.

He sat there, waiting to see what would happen next. After fifteen minutes, Marjorie appeared in the living room again, her wet hair plastered against her scalp, wearing nothing but a smile...and a bath towel wrapped around her torso, hiding everything and promising nothing.

“I’m sorry,” she started, and Dan felt the familiar lurch in his gut again, the same feeling he had every time Marjorie got her signals confused. She was going to give him the Best Friend speech again, the one that she used whenever Dan’s attentions grew overeager or over attentive.

“I’m sorry,” she said, “for starting something I don’t want to finish...tonight. I do want to continue this Dan, but I want to take it slow.”

Slow! he thought. You can't GET much slower than six goddamn years! But, he reminded himself, the six years of feelings were all on his part, none except friendship on hers. This was new for her, and although Dan had known the moment he'd laid eyes on her that she was the woman for him, he knew Marjorie was still grappling with these newfound intense emotions.

"That's Ok," he said softly. "I don't want to spoil anything, especially what just happened."

"And what," she asked softly in reply, "did just happen?"

"The most special night of my life," Dan said honestly. "A memory, that even if unconsummated in the future, I will carry with me for the rest of my life as one of my most treasured moments. I will always remember tonight as the first time I ever kissed you. I only wish there was a clock around here somewhere so I could even add the time to my memory."

She smiled as his effortless romanticism, and plopped her wet body into his lap. "When this Bobby mess is over," she said, running her fingers through his hair, "we can talk. And I mean really talk, as a man and a woman should. That's the one thing we've always had between us, Dan, is the ability to truly communicate. I know I've been a bitch to you in the past, but I want to make it up to you, fella. I want to see what we can be like together, as a couple, as a man and a woman."

Dan kissed her softly on the forehead and heaved her body off of his without effort and stood. "Well, I'll see you at the station day after tomorrow. Call first, so if I'm on a case and can break away, I can take your report. I'll walk the paperwork through personally."

She smiled and walked with him to the front door. Standing on the porch, getting ready to take the short flight down to the front walk, Dan heard Marjorie call his name. He glanced over his shoulder and the site shocked him so much he stopped in mid-stride, looking like a comical cartoon character frozen in time.

Marjorie was holding the towel she had been wearing a moment ago, with a secret, elegant smile on her face, her weight placed carefully on one leg to tilt her hips seductively as she slowly shut the door.

The kiss had been one precious memory; now Dan had a companion image to go with that kiss, his first view of Marjorie's nude body. Her breasts had sat high on her chest, seemingly pneumatic in design. Her waist gently flared to wonderful hips, and Dan had caught just a hint of the dark hair between her thighs.

Well, he thought as he got into his car and drove home, what do you know.

She's not a natural blonde.

-4-

The next night, Dan had come home from a long day. A body had turned up in a warehouse, the death having all the markings of a mob hit. The mob wasn't big in Atlanta, but they were forceful in establishing territory and discipline. Dan had no hope of catching the triggerman; he was probably already on a flight back to

wherever he came from. Never use local talent. Rule #1 for a professional hit.

He'd walked in the door, opened the fridge for a beer, taken his Ruger P-85 9mm pistol off of his hip and slid it onto the top of the fridge when the phone rang. Hooking it with two fingers, he raised the receiver to his ear.

"Hello?"

"Dan! Come quickly! He's at the door, and he's going to kill me!" The phone went dead in his ear, and Dan sprang into action. He grabbed his gun again, sheathed in a paddle-holster, and slipped it onto his right hip again. The beer, forgotten, sat on the counter gently spouting foam from its neck as Dan raced out of the apartment.

En-route, he reached under the seat of his late-model Pathfinder and retrieved the revolving red bubble-light, slapping it on the roof at the same time he hit the foot switch for the siren. Traffic parted for him as he sped the three miles to Marjorie's apartment. In the last half-mile, he decided that playtime was over. Reaching into the glove compartment, Dan grabbed the radio handset and raised it to his ears.

"2201 to Central, K." he said.

"Central, go ahead 2201."

"145 in Progress, 887 Spring Creek Lane. Plainclothes officer on scene. Request backup."

"Central, 2201, K."

"Proceed, Central."

"We've got no cars in the immediate vicinity. Be advised that your nearest backup is approximately ten minutes away from Metro West. Copy, 2201?"

"Copy, Central. Also, please roll an ambulance to this location if you don't hear back from me in ten minutes."

"Copy, 2201. Central out."

Dan dropped the microphone on the seat beside him and pressed the accelerator to the floor with one foot, working the siren with the other.

Dan screeched the Pathfinder to a stop and jumped out of the door, grabbing a portable radio in the process. Jamming the radio into his back pocket, he ascended the six stairs leading to Marjorie's front door in a single bound. The door was slightly ajar, and Dan could see marks where Bobby had kicked it in.

Sliding up against the frame, Dan drew his pistol with his right hand and slowly slid the door open with his left. He could hear the argument in the living room clearly.

"Get out!" Marjorie screamed. "I mean it, get out right now-" Her voice was cut short by the sound of an open hand meeting flesh. The next sound was a soft moan, and then a body crumpling to the carpet. The entire symphony of violence cut like a knife through Dan's soul.

He stepped into the apartment and saw nothing. They were over by the stereo, out of sight from the foyer. Dan could go through the kitchen and approach from the left, or down the hall and into the living room, approaching from the right. Being a right-handed shooter, Dan made his decision and went to the right, the

Ruger held in two stiff hands in front of him, leading the way like a magic wand.

Three steps down the hall and he had the entire situation. Marjorie was on the floor, holding one hand to her left cheek, crying as she looked up at Bobby Walker standing above her. And then Dan's blood ran cold. Bobby was holding a gun in his left hand, a 2-inch snubby, either a .38 special or a .357 Magnum.

"Call the cops on me, will you? I'll teach your ass a fucking lesson you won't soon forget, bitch!"

His hand slowly raised the gun so that Marjorie could see it. She gasped, and then caught sight of Dan. At that exact moment, the radio in Dan's pocket screeched.

"Central to 2201, K."

Ignoring it, Dan screamed, "POLICE! DROP IT!" Walker, having spun around at the sound of the radio, smiled an evil shark's grin at Dan and leveled the gun at Marjorie's head.

"You drop it, cop, or the fucking bitch gets a third eye!"

"DROP IT!" Dan repeated, taking another step, placing him fully in the living room. A thousand thoughts went through his mind at that instant. Marjorie was safely out of the line of fire. The wall behind Walker bordered the outside wall; there was an empty field behind Marjorie's apartment, for perhaps three hundred yards. If the shot missed, and passed through the wall, it would be slowed enough not to do much damage. Unless someone was walking outside the building right now.

"2201, Central, K." The radio repeated.

"TURN THAT FUCKING THING OFF," Walker screamed. "RIGHT NOW!"

Dan took his left hand off his gun and slowly reached behind himself to retrieve the radio. He raised it to his lips. "Central, 2201. Man with a gun at this address. This is now a 138 hostage situation. I need SWAT and a negotiator, now!"

"2201, Central, 10-4." Far off in the distance, Dan could hear the sounds of sirens as patrol cars raced to the scene.

"You shouldn't have done that, cop. I don't like it when people FUCK with my plans!" His hand was rock steady holding the small revolver, and Dan knew he would have less than a microsecond to decide whether or not to shoot.

All he would need would be the slightest tightening of the finger on his trigger. The Ruger had had a trigger job done on it last month, the gunsmith shaving more than two pounds off the pull. With less effort than it took to blink, Dan could touch the trigger and Walker's brains would go flying.

Every ounce of training in his body screamed at Dan to go for a center mass shot, somewhere in the upper torso. His Ruger was loaded with Glazier safety slugs, and he knew that they were renowned for their one-shot-stopping power; but if in this one case it didn't work, then Marjorie would die. No, it had to be a head shot if there was to be a shot.

Dan had been distracted by the conflicting voices in his head, and Walker took that moment to cock the pistol. The hammer was now back, and the click of the spring engaging seemed to echo in the small apartment's living room.

“I mean it,” he said reasonably. “Drop the gun, or I swear, I’ll shoot her.”

The harsh bark of Dan’s P-85 filled the room, and time froze. Later, in his testimony at the inquest, and in recounting the situation to his fellow cops, Dan would swear that he saw the bullet leave the barrel and travel the six feet to Walker, impacting just forward of his left ear. Walker’s head jerked with the impact, and a moment later the air behind his head was filled with a fine, pink mist of brain matter, blood and vaporized bone. The right hemisphere of his brain separated itself from the rest and slapped wetly against the wall, leaving a vicious red smear as it slid to the carpet.

Walker crumpled to the carpet, dead, the gun slipping from his hand and landing with a thump on the carpet. The revolver discharged, and Dan felt a stinging pain in his lower leg. With a start, he knew that the wet, warm sensation and coppery smell meant that he had been shot.

The echo from Dan’s and Walker’s gunshot echoed in the apartment, and the smell of cordite, blood and violence filled Dan’s nostrils. A slight ringing sensation in his ear was replaced with Marjorie’s screams. She had blood on the front of her shirt, and a large blob of brain matter was in her hair. Her hands were at her face, her nails scratching at her cheeks as she screamed again and again, a high and keening wail that made Dan take the four shuddering steps towards her and collapse into her.

“Help me up,” he said to her. “Help me get out of here. I’ve been shot.” Marjorie looped an arm across his shoulders and stooped, Dan and Marjorie made their way out of the living room, down the hall and out the front door in time to greet the first of the Metro West patrol cars screeching to a stop at the curb. Since the RMP’s weren’t from Dan’s district, none of the first cops knew who, or more importantly, what, Dan was. All they saw was a bloody woman helping a bloody man with a gun out of an apartment where they had heard a “man with a gun” call coming from.

“Freeze! Drop the gun!” the first officer screamed. Dan raised his hands above his head and said, “I’m a cop! Don’t shoot!” Very slowly, he put the pistol on the front-porch railing and took one clumsy step back. Keeping his right hand high above his head, Dan slowly reached into his jacket and returned with a battered leather badge case, flipping it open to reveal the shield and ID card of an Atlanta Police Detective. “Stone, Robbery/Homicide,” he said. Some of the cops relaxed, others holstered their weapons as a sergeant ascended the stairs.

“What happened here?” he demanded.

“Ex-boyfriend went over the top, had a gun to her head, hammer back. I blew his brains all over the wall.”

“Wait here, Detective. Homicide and IAD will want to talk to you.”

“Yes, sir,” Dan said, wondering where the hell he was going to go with a hole in his leg. He sat down on the steps and gingerly lifted his pants leg, then let out a long sigh.

It was a scratch. The bullet had winged him on the left shin, leaving a bloody trench about a quarter-inch deep, about four inches long, traversing his leg from front to back. The wound was pink, meaty, and slowly oozing blood. It looked

like it could stand a stitch or two, but Dan hoped the paramedics could just slap a bandage on it. He hated hospitals.

Marjorie was sitting next to Dan, hugging her knees to her chest, shivering, and slowly rocking back and forth. Her eyes were wide open and shiny, staring at the cobblestones leading up to the front stairs. She was moaning unintelligibly.

Dan snaked an arm around her shoulder and she leaned into him, nestling her head on his chest.

They stayed that way for a little while, until a voice brought Dan out of his post-shoot reverie.

“Detective Stone?” Dan looked up into the eyes of a hard-looking IAD officer. “We need to talk.”

-5-

Four hours later, Dan drove Marjorie from the station to his apartment. She had asked Dan if she could spend the night there, and he’d readily agreed. Her apartment was still being gone over by forensics, the CSU team, and the homicide and IAD detectives. The body had been removed while Dan was being interviewed by IAD at the scene, and he’d seen the mask of horror on Marjorie’s face when the body-bag draped gurney was wheeled out and placed into the M.E.’s van.

The scene interview had lasted only long enough to get the bare details. The longer interview, or interrogation, had taken place at IAD headquarters, and had lasted three hours. The IAD detective agreed that it would most likely be ruled a justified shoot, and that Dan had nothing to worry about, as long as forensics jibed with his account of the events in the apartment.

Leaving the station, Marjorie was silent, and remained that way the entire trip to Dan’s apartment, which took about ten minutes. She went immediately to the shower and emerged half an hour later, wearing only an old oxford shirt of Dan’s she’d found in the closet. It hung past her hips to almost her knees, but one part of Dan’s mind reacted with pleasure at the sight. He’d always loved women using men’s clothes as sleeping attire.

But tonight, that thought was pushed to the back of his head. The last thing she wanted....

Dan had opened the couch and turned it into a bed, taking sheets from the linen closet and making it up. He didn’t want to make assumptions, and he was sure that Marjorie was probably suffering from some kind of post-traumatic stress problem, similar to what she might be feeling after a rape or violent assault.

She sat down on the bed, and Dan turned to leave when she caught his arm in her hand.

“Don’t leave. Lie here with me a while.” Dan laid down next to her and tried to give her the comfort of his warmth. He felt her breathing slow, and then quiet. Thinking she was asleep, Dan tried to disengage himself so he could undress and turn in himself.

Marjorie clutched at the arms encircling her. "Don't go," she whispered. "Not yet." Dan relaxed back into the bed and drew her closer.

"You saved my life tonight," she whispered.

"You don't have to whisper," Dan whispered, and then realizing he was doing to, barely managed to stifle a giggle. Each got the giggles watching the other try and stifle them, and before long the bed was jiggling with laughter. Slowly, they calmed down, and managed only an occasional snort or two.

"I'm serious," Marjorie said. "You saved my life tonight. What do you say to the person that saved your life?"

"A simple thanks and your firstborn should suffice," Dan said, trying to keep it light.

"I mean it, Dan. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart. If you hadn't been there, he would have...would have...killed me." The realization as to how close she had come to death that night reached Marjorie, and she clutched at Dan, her limbs shaking with fear. He held on to her, wishing there was a way he could feed her his strength.

On his ten years on the force, Dan had shot three people, and this was the second that he'd killed. The first had been awful, but also ruled a justifiable homicide. That hadn't stopped the dreams and night sweats that he knew Marjorie would soon be getting, but they stopped after a while, after the mind performed its magic self-healing process. All he could do until then is wait.

He felt her shift in his arms, and then her lips were pressed against his. For a moment, stunned, he did nothing, and then gently kissed her back. Marjorie's kisses grew more insistent, and he wasn't sure how to respond. His conscious mind finally gave up analyzing it, and he fell into her mouth, losing himself in the moist warmth of her sucking mouth and tongue.

They kissed for a long time, and then Marjorie began to explore his body, tracing the rigid muscles of his chest with her fingers through his shirt. She tugged at his tie, unknotted it and tossed it off the bed, reaching for the buttons.

"Are you sure?" Dan asked.

"Yes. I'm sure. I need you tonight, Dan. I need you more than ever. In every way possible. Make me feel warm, alive and loved, Dan!" Those were the words he'd been waiting to hear for six years. With Marjorie's help, Dan stripped himself in record time, and then began to explore her body.

The buttons on her shirt came open one after the other, and after each one Dan took the time to kiss each piece of skin as it became exposed. He tasted her, smelled her, loved the feeling of her silky skin under his tongue. As he drew the material of her shirt off her breasts, it caught on one nipple and then released, arousing it to a point. He laved his mouth over her left breast, feeling the hard nubbin push against his tongue.

When he sucked it, Marjorie gasped and grabbed his head, fingernails scraping his scalp as she drew his mouth closer to her breast. Dan's left hand gently massaged the plump weight of her right breast, using the material of the shirt to irritate and scratch lazily at her nipple. He could feel it pressing against the palm of his hand as he abandoned her left breast with his mouth and tenderly licked the underside of her left breast.

She was gently undulating her hips against him, and he could feel the liquid warmth of her arousal against his thighs. She was warm and wet for him, and he spent the better part of half an hour tasting every sweet inch of her body for the first time. When he got to the lightly haired vee between her legs, he licked at her center for a few moments while teasing her erotic center with his thumb. Her legs flexed convulsively around his head, and he thrilled to Marjorie's response to his touch.

Raising himself up on her body, he kneed her legs apart and slowly entered her, drowning himself in her mercurial warmth. She was a warm, wet, slick sheath for him and he moved above her, staring at her face in the light. Her eyes were open, and they locked with his, her ocean, sea-foam blue ones boring into his dark brown ones. Marjorie bit her bottom lip as a wave of pleasure crashed over her, and she dug her fingernails into his back.

Suddenly, he swung, riding with her as he ended up on his back, Marjorie astride. He watched the enticing jiggle of her breasts as she slammed herself up and down on his erect member.

"Harder," Marjorie said. Dan began slamming his hips up to meet hers, feeling the pleasure tickling his scrotum, the pressure building for his ultimate release.

"Almost there," Marjorie said. Dan reached his hands between her legs, grabbed the moist pearl there and tugged its hood gently. Marjorie crashed into an orgasm, her inner muscles gripping him tautly. Dan jerked once, twice, felt himself jerking and filling Marjorie with his seed. She accepted it, gratefully, could feel his creamy warmth filling her to the limit, until the combined secretions of their love seeped out between them.

Marjorie collapsed against Dan's chest, kissing his mouth hungrily. "So good," she whispered, "so, so good." And then they disengaged and Marjorie lay atop him, pressing her full body weight into his.

Playing with the hairs on his chest, Marjorie looked into Dan's eyes and said simply, "I love you."

And the gates to Dan's heart opened and he felt the overpowering emotions he had been bottling up for six years come pouring out. He clutched her to him and knew that it would be all right. No matter what happened next, he knew that it would be all right.

“Nichole”

The stench of stale coffee, urine, vomit and sweat hung in the air as I made my way through the squadroom to the interrogation area. I'd just caught a 187 squeal, and the uniform boys had picked up a witness at the scene. She'd seen the whole thing, but was denying it, claiming she'd been in Philadelphia at the time or some such shit. In a city with eleven million citizens, each with a story, it was my turn to listen to hers. After six years with homicide, I'd heard most of them at least twice.

Stopping outside the interrogation room door, I opened the casefile and took a quick glance. Nichole St. Clair, age 29, single. Lived at a fancy uptown address. Single, no kids. Worked as...a 'personal facilitator,' whatever the *fuck* that was. She'd been inside a limo outside the restaurant when Johnny “No Neck” DeBargo had gotten his comeuppance from sixteen 9mm rounds fired by some kid on a motorcycle. The motorcycle killer had used a Tec-9, and had sprayed the entire area with hot lead while Miss St. Clair watched from the limo.

Only she hadn't seen anything. Says her.

Pushing through the door, I caught a whiff of the smoke from her cig, and frowned at her. “Smoking is not allowed in here, miss.” I hadn't even gotten a look at her yet, just sat down at the table across from her, setting my machine-generated Styrofoam cup of coffee down next to it.

“What are you going to do, Detective? Arrest me for smoking?” I smiled at her, getting in on the joke, and then took a good, hard look at her. She was familiar, in the same way that each year's new supermodel was familiar. Same strong facial structure, arrogant cheekbones, aristocratic nose. She looked and smelled like old money. Dressed for a night on the town. Slinky blouse, tight black skirt, dark stockings, heels. The perfume wafting across the table at me cut some of the smoke, but not much. It was musky and somehow fit her; it smelled like a jungle cat might, hungry and on the prowl. She was a blonde, as someone once said, a blonde that would make a bishop kick in a stained-glass window. The breasts pushing at her blouse with hard-nippled urgency weren't the result of some plastic surgeons' magic; the natural gentle sag and heft of them told me that much.

The legs were long and lean and seemed to go on for miles. Hours at the gym spent on some new-wave torture machine had seen to their firmness and muscularity. Suddenly, I wanted to be a gym machine. I felt an animal, pheromonal attraction to this woman. Something hormonal, in my sack, grumbling to let me dump a load inside this haughty bitch. Just the way she was sitting told me this interview was going to be a huge pain in the ass.

“Miss St. Clair,” I said, opening my notebook and clicking my eight-nine cent ballpoint. I started to write the time and date and case number on a blank page, but the pen chose that moment to fail. I patted my pockets, finding my shield, my own cigs, a couple of crumpled pink telephone message notes, and thirty-six cents in change.

“Uh, I’ll be right back,” I said, moving to stand. I looked up and saw the cool bitch holding out a gold men at me. A Mont-Blanc, judging by the look of it. I took it, amazed at how much it weighed. “Thank you,” I said.

“Now, you were in the limousine outside Torturro’s at the time of the...incident?”

“The murder? Yes. I already told that to three policeman already.”

“I know, Miss St. Clair. But I just have a few questions for you. Formality, really, since you didn’t see anything...?” I let the question hang in the air, challenging her to correct her statement.

“That’s right,” she affirmed. “I didn’t see anything. My face was turned away, and the windows were dark, tinted glass. I didn’t see anything.”

“And you were there to meet...?” I asked.

I watched as her jaw worked, sucking her tongue between her teeth, trying to keep her temper. “Is that really necessary, officer?”

“Detective,” I automatically corrected her.

“Detective...?”

“Stone. Dan Stone.”

“Well, Detective Stone, is that really necessary?”

“I’m afraid so. We need to talk to him, too. For all we know, you were there for Johnny “No Neck”, and set him up!” I said it as a joke, and then watched the color drain from her face. An alarm bell started ringing in the back of my head, and it wasn’t because I could see the sweat trickling down this broad’s neck, heading for the deep, creamy valley between her tits. *Spectacular* tits.

“This could be a problem,” she said. “You see, the man I was there to meet was...is....married.” Ah. Things were beginning to make a little sense now.

“And his name was?”

Sighing, the lady reached for her purse and retrieved a small DayTimer. Opening it, she flipped to today and ran her finger down the page. “Kelly. Walter Kelly.”

“Phone?” She read me all his information, and I copied it down with the heavy gold pen. The words flew out of the tip and across the page. Done for the moment, I lifted the pen. “How much does one of these go for, anyway?”

“About four hundred dollars.” I looked at her, saw she was serious, and gave a low, surprised whistle.

“Now then,” I continued, “The purpose of your meeting with Mr. Kelly?”

Just then I saw the small green light go on above and behind her. Someone was in the hallway between the interrogation rooms, watching through the two-way glass, and wanted my attention. I excused myself and made my way there.

Capetti, from Vice, was standing there, holding a thick file in his hands.

“Yeah?”

“Listen, Stone. Figured I’d help you out. The lady you got is-”

“St. Clair, I know. What’s the deal? Got some pull in the department? Gonna try and wriggle her way out of making a statement?”

Capetti looked at me for a long, hard moment, his jaw working in annoyance. I held my hands up in surrender, asking, “Sorry. What do you got for me?”

“Lady’s name is *not* St. Clair. It’s Jill Meadows. And she’s a hooker.”

Two things struck me at once. The first was the confirmation of my original feeling. I did know her. Or at least, I had known her, a long time ago. High school, to be exact. And Jill had been the love of my life. She'd been brunette, then. Long, soft, wavy brown hair she always wore around her shoulders, covering that exquisite neck of hers. How many times had I kissed that neck? I suddenly realized that I'd had my hands on those tits before, and the memory of that afternoon blew across my brain at light speed.

"Jesus, Jill..." I said.

"You know this ho?" Capetti asked, and I suddenly wanted to kick his ass across the squadroom.

"Is Interrogation Room Three in use?" I asked. It was the only one without two-way glass. Capetti nodded, and then walked away. I knew what he was thinking, and I hated him for it. Many a cop over the years had taken a lady of the evening into Room Three and worked out an...exchange, of sorts.

Fuck him.

I re-entered the room and asked Jill/Nichole to follow me. She looked relieved, like she was getting out of here or something. She followed me into three, and then turned on me, anger written all over her face like subway graffiti.

"What is the meaning of this?" I explained about the glass, and wanting some privacy, and she bought it. She took a chair, and I mine, and I faced her, wondering what the fuck I was going to say.

"Nichole..." I started, and then decided, screw it. I knew. The sooner she knew I knew, we could get this over with. "Jill. Jill Meadows." Jill's face fell, and she buried her head in her hands. Long, wracking sobs came from between her arms, and I let her cry. Didn't want to touch her yet, but God, how I wanted to take her in my arms.

After a good five minutes, Jill pulled herself together. She dried her eyes, extracted a compact from the purse, and fixed her makeup. Looking across the table at me, she gave me a rueful smile.

"So," she said. "You know."

I just nodded. "How long?"

"Bout five years. If it makes any difference, Danny, I never forgot you."

"I'm sure you didn't, Jill." My voice was hard, my face harder still. I knew her game, knew it like the back of my own hand. She knew that I still wanted her, even if she was a hooker, and was going to try and seduce me, promise me the world between her legs, if only I would let her go. See, it's bad for business for a high-class whore like this to get nailed by the police. Especially if she had been there to set Johnny "No Neck" up.

"So tell me Jill, just between us old friends, were you there to set him up?"

"No. He wasn't the target."

"Who was?"

"Tony. Tony Amaratto. He was in the limo with me. He was the real target."

"How do you know?" She told me about the meeting she'd overheard, about the conversations she'd eavesdropped on. Tony had a thing for my little Jill, got off on paying her to do nasty things to him. Things you don't ask the girl you

brought home to meet Momma to do, but things you can pay a nice looking piece of street meat like Nichole/Jill to do.

"How much?" I asked.

"Thousand bucks an hour, Danny."

"And how much is he into you for?"

"About three quarters of a mil." I caught my breath. Seven hundred and fifty hours! Tony liked to p-a-r-t-y.

I was still staring at her when she popped the question. "Danny. Can we keep my name out of this? I'll... make it worth your while."

There it was. Out in the open. I sat back and looked at her. Her face was a mask of self-hatred and hope. Hating herself to offer herself to me like a cheap whore, but needing to, having to, to keep it going. Keep the ride going.

"You into drugs, Jill?"

She shook her head, and seeing my look of skepticism, raised her sleeves, showing me her arms. They were clean. "Knees," I said, and she stood, turning to show me the ass that had turned more than one of the Brother's heads at St. Agustus fifteen years ago.

Her knees were clean.

"Toes," I said.

Jill sat back down and started to take her shoes off. "That's enough," I said. "If you say you're clean, I'll believe you." I thought about it long and hard. I owed her nothing, and the idea of having her owe me was pretty good. Prime pussy, on the string. But I couldn't do that to her, not to Jill. Maybe to Nichole, but not to Jill.

"Ok, here's the deal. I cut you loose, you get gone. Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, LA. I don't care where. But get gone, and fast. A prime piece like you can command that much money anywhere in the world. Fuck, try Japan. They love blondes like you."

"What's the catch?"

"No catch. Send me a postcard from somewhere, Jill." I stood to leave and the way she said my name stopped me dead in my tracks.

"Dan."

I turned back.

"Don't you want to know...why?"

I put my back against the door, crossing my arms at my waist.

"Ok. Why?"

She stood, one hand on the rickety wooden table, moving towards me slowly. "Remember how we used to neck in the back seat of your father's car?" I nodded, my mouth suddenly too dry to speak. "Remember how you used to touch my breasts, with those sweaty, shaking hands?" As she talked, Jill mimicked my actions. Cupping her breasts through the blouse, Jill took another step towards me.

I just stared at her, feeling the hot hardness of my cock punching through my pants.

"Remember the time I let you touch my naked tits? What were we fifteen? Sixteen?"

“Sixteen,” I managed to choke out. Another step.

“Well, remember when I made you stop? I didn’t want you to stop, Danny. I wanted you to touch my tits all afternoon. And then I wanted you to kiss and suck them, and lick my little nipples. And then I wanted you to do something truly nasty, I wanted you to kiss me between my legs and make me go. That’s what I called it back then, when I touched myself in the shower. Going. I liked to go a lot, Danny, and I wanted you to be the first boy to make me go. But I couldn’t...nice girls didn’t do that, did they?” Her voice had dropped a couple of registers, and she was stroking her own neck with long, slender fingers, fingers I’d dreamed of having wrapped around my own cock.

“But...even though I didn’t let you touch me for very long, and I didn’t let you kiss me between my legs, I let someone else do it to me that summer. I met him in the park, Danny. He was older, rode a motorcycle. Black leather, chin-stubble, the whole bad-boy deal. He liked me, and I liked him...for what he was. I saw the bulge in his pants, that nasty lump, and I knew that I was gonna let him do it to me. He took me into the woods, you know the place, and took off my panties. He lifted that little stupid skirt they made us wear, and he did it to me, Danny. He put his thing inside me and made me go.

“And you know what?” She was about two feet away now, moving like a snake. “I went that first time, Danny. He made me go. Hard and fast. And then I started going and going again, climaxing one after the other, drenching us both. I found out something that warm summer afternoon in the park. I found that I liked to fuck, that I was good at it, and that nearly every man that met me, looked at me, saw me walking down the street was thinking that he wanted to fuck me. And when that boy stood over me, zipping up his pants, tucking that delicious cock away in his underwear, he stared down at me, and smiled, and took out his wallet. He threw three twenties on the ground and told me that he wouldn’t mind paying for what I had any day of the week.

“And that turned me on like you wouldn’t believe, Danny.” Her face was six inches from mine; I could feel the hot breath on my face. The blood was pounding behind my eardrums, and between my legs. “I loved being dirty and nasty and slutty for him. Before that summer was out, I’d had two dozen other guys, and had about a grand in the bank. They just loved me, Danny, because I love it so much.

“I just *love* to fuck and be nasty.” Her mouth was scant inches from mine now. I could see her red, plush lips. “Do it with me, Danny. Be nasty with me.” I snapped.

She was in my arms, my hands grasping her ass, drawing her to me, crushing her against my body. She was soft in all the right places, and hard in all the right places. I felt her breasts flatten against my chest, and I knew that I was going to fuck this board, screw the shit out of her right here in the interrogation room.

Jill pulled away from me and walked over to the table. Spinning on one heel, she started unbuttoning the blouse, letting me see her in the bright light. I was in the shadows, watching her, another nameless cock wanting entrance to her gates of heaven. Buttons undone, Jill let the blouse fall off of her, showing me the wispy bra that held her pale, perfect breasts. Her nipples pushed urgently at the

cups, two beacons of pleasure drawing me closer. I went to the table, pushing her on to it, burying my face between those tits, smelling her clean, earthy scent.

Jill's hands went to my tie, working it from around my neck and from under the collar of my shirt. She tossed it over her shoulder, practiced fingers moving to the buttons on *my* shirt, opening them quickly and expertly. She buried her face against my chest, licking my hairy nipples, biting my lightly as she dragged those bright-red talons she called fingernails down my stomach. Her hand grasped me through my pants.

"All for me, Danny? Fuck me, big boy. Fuck me like you always wanted to. Make it hurt."

I stepped back, kicked off my shoes, and lost my pants. My gun clattered to the ground, sliding out of my holster and spinning into a corner. I didn't care anymore. I just wanted to be inside her in the next thirty seconds.

Jill spread her legs, showing me her tiny pink panties under her skirt. Pushing the skirt up, I grabbed her panties and ripped them away, throwing them over my shoulder. Her cunt was wet and sparkled with her dew, beckoning me. My cock was pounding, and I dropped my boxers, showing her my arousal.

"Ahhh!" she growled, reaching for me, grasping me with one sweaty, smooth hand, guiding me between her legs. As I felt the moist contact of her mound, my hand reached up and freed her tits from the bra. They bobbed into view, showing me pink little erections for nipples, looking itchy and tasty. I covered one with my mouth and bit lightly as Jill took the first four inches of my cock into her blast-furnace cunt.

"That's it," she screamed, "Fuck me, Danny. Give me your fucking cock!" With a quick snap of my hips, I buried the last two inches of myself inside her, feeling the warm, wet walls of her cunt collapse around me as I began to fuck her. My mouth was all over her: tits, neck, ears, face. We kissed and sucked and bit at each other, letting the anger and the hunger take over. Too many denials in my life. My wife, gone, a causality of the Job. My kids, with her, strangers to me, voices on a phone line on birthdays and at Christmas. My son, growing up calling another man, "Daddy," acting forlorn and hostile when I could find the time to visit. All that bubbled out of me as I began to fuck Jill, grasping her hips in my hands, pulling her to me again and again. She crossed her legs across my back, urging me to plunge harder and deeper. She was the future I once could have had, smiles and promises and meals at home. But we were both different now; I was a cop, with a shield and a job and a gun, tracking scumbags that killed other people. Jill was a pussy-for-hire, spreading her legs at the drop of a thousand-dollar-bill, grunting and groaning for the customer's pleasure.

We were both whores, I realized, whores to our emotions. Jill liked to fuck, liked being the center of attraction, liked knowing that every man in the place wanted to bury himself inside her. I liked being a cop, being The Law, The Man, watching people's faces when I arrested them for murder.

Pulling out of her, I turned Jill over, putting her face-down on the table. Her ass was open for me, an inviting target. Putting my hand at the base of her neck, I wedged myself back into her cunt and buried my cock with a single stroke. This violence, this...fucking, was turning me on like straight sex never had in the past. I

wondered how many cocks she'd taken in this hole. How many men? How many loads of jizz had been emptied inside her?

My cock popped out of her cunt, and I lined myself up with her pink, inviting asshole. I pushed against it, and she gave, gritting her teeth. Her face was turned sideways on the table, eyes closed, grimacing with concentration or pleasure, I couldn't tell. As I hunched my cock into her asshole, Jill moaned and grunted and pushed herself back against me, wanting it, taking it all in her asshole.

"Oh, use me, Danny! Make me feel dirty and nasty and slutty! Make me cum, Danny! Make me cum on your cock!" Jill did a pushup on the table, and I latched my hands onto her swinging tits, twisting and pulling on her nipples, letting Jill shove her ass back against me with every stroke.

I started to feel it, the rumble in my balls. I was going to blow a load in this slut's hole, and love every minute of it. But she sensed that, somehow, and popped me out, getting down on her knees in front of me, grasping my cock with one hand, hungrily licking the top with her tongue.

"Cum on my face, Danny! Make me sleazy and nasty for you! Cover me with your jizz!" I groaned, threw my head back, and then forward, forcing my eyes to open as I watched the slimy white arcs of my jizz erupt from my cock and rain down on her smiling, upturned face. She was licking at the air, trying to get my jizz into her mouth, running my cock all over her face. I splashed once across her forehead, watching my scum splatter her hair and eyebrows, another shot covering almost one entire cheek. She had cum all over her face, and I watched it slide in creamy rivulets down her face, dripping off of her chin, impacting wetly against her pale, perfect breasts.

Jill licked me clean, mewling like a kitten, slurping at my jizz, cleaning my cock and balls. Tucking me back into my pants, Jill stood, grabbed me by the hair at the hair at the back of my neck and kissed me, deeply.

"Fucking-A!" she shouted.

Dressed, we faced each other across the table. "Go, Jill," I said. "Away. Get gone. Hunt a hole and vanish."

She stood, purse slung over a shoulder, one hand on a hip. "Call me sometime, huh?" she asked, and I just nodded. She was halfway out the door when I called to her.

"Jill!" She turned and looked at me, one eyebrow arched. I held the gold Mont-Blanc to her. "You forgot your pen."

"Keep it," she said, and then was gone, the door clicking shut behind her with the finality of a jail cell.

Part IV
Something...Different

“Eileen”

She had been one of my brother's best friends for as long as I could remember, but I hadn't seen her for almost four years, since she went off to college in California. Both she and my brother had returned home for Christmas, and Eileen came over to talk to my mother and brother.

I had just come off duty, being the low man on the pole at the station. A day spent driving around in a patrol car in this small town was mind-numbing and ass-crushing, and all I wanted to do was take a long, hot shower and then relax in front of the TV and watch some football.

I came in the back door and ran into Eileen. The girl I remembered from four years ago as being all elbows and knees had matured into a very attractive female, and I was caught quite short by the view I was presented with. She was bent over, looking in the icebox for a beer when I walked in. I let my briefcase hit the kitchen table, and she looked over in surprise.

“Oh,” she said casually, “hi, pig.” I slapped her on the ass with my gloves as I walked past. “Better watch it, bitch, or I'll arrest you.”

“Yeah?” she sneered. “For what?”

“Mopery in the first degree.” She was a math major, smart as well as pretty, and she looked like she wanted to ask what mopery was. Thinking better of it, she shrugged and return to the icebox.

“Bottom shelf, behind the egg salad,” I said, going up the stairs. “And get me one, too.”

“Fuck you,” she called cheerfully after me. She'd always been like that, a sixty-pound mouth attached to a one-ounce brain. A major pain in the ass, but lovable all the same only because she'd been around the house in one form or another since she was six. She and my brother had dated briefly a few years ago, but that was over now, and they were just good friends.

I thought about Eileen as I soaped myself up in the shower. She had turned into quite a good-looking woman, a woman I might be interested in asking out. I was 26, in my first year as a policeman in my hometown, and was pretty much just looking for a casual screw. I knew my brother had copped her cherry, and that he considered her a dead fuck. He told me once that she just laid there like a fish. I contributed that more to my brother's apparent lack of skill as a lover than any frigidity on Eileen's part. Maybe all she needed, I chuckled to myself, was a *real* man.

The sudden cool blast of air on my ass drove all thoughts like that from my head, and I turned over my shoulder to see Eileen standing outside the stall, holding the door open with one hand a cold, sweating bottle of beer in the other.

“You want it here, or outside?” she asked, totally unconcerned. I hooked my chin over my shoulder. “Out there. And close the damn door! It's cold in here!”

She checked my back and ass out and then shot me one of her smirks, the same expression that always makes me want to kick her ass. The door closed, and I

finished my shower. When I came out, Eileen was sitting on the bed, legs crossed, looking at my gunbelt. I laughingly called it my 'bat utility' belt after the comic strip Batman. It had my Ruger P-85 9mm semiauto duty pistol, two extra fifteen-round magazines, two pairs of handcuffs, a slot for me to stick a portable radio into, and a collapsible metal baton.

"What's it like," she asked, "carrying a gun all the time?"

"It's a responsibility," I said, "like driving a car or owning a house, that's all. Only a little more so."

"Can I see your badge?" she asked.

I tossed my uniform shirt over to her. "It's called a shield," I said. "Not a badge. Firemen wear badges; cops wear shields."

"Why do you say that?"

"Because it's supposed to shield me. From what, I have no idea!" Eileen didn't laugh at my admittedly feeble joke, and I didn't push it. She held the shirt close to her face and lightly traced my silver patrolman's shield with one delicate finger. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed that her nostrils were flaring, and I realized she was sniffing my shirt!

Deciding to ignore her for the moment, I walked to the bed and retrieved my duty pistol. Clearing it, I put the magazine and extra round on the dresser, and the now-empty pistol on the top shelf in my closet.

"Don't you keep it loaded all the time?" she asked.

I nodded and opened my dresser drawer, returning with another magazine. "The rules say I have to carry hollowpoints on duty. I like these Devastator rounds better, so that's what I carry when I'm off-duty." I reloaded the gun and returned it to the top shelf.

"Can I see your handcuffs?" she asked. I indicated with a nod that she should take them out if she wanted. Eileen reached into one of the cases and took out my black anodized hinge cuffs.

"I thought they had little chains."

"That's so I can speedcuff," I explained.

Her expression indicated that she didn't know what I meant. "Stand up," I said, using my cop-voice. Eileen stood and looked at me with wide doe eyes.

"Turn around, hands behind your back!" I said. She slowly turned and presented me with her wrists. Taking the cuffs from her hand, I speed-cuffed her. (If you don't know how that works, you hold the middle of the cuffs in your hand, closed, and then apply them with a little force to both wrists at the same time. The ratchets release, and the free ends of the cuffs come out, around and back. In this way, you can cuff someone with a single motion.) She was now effectively cuffed. I heard Eileen take a sharp intake of breath, and I turned her around to face me.

"That's speedcuffing," I said.

"Oh." She was breathing deeply now, and I noticed how much her breasts had grown since she was younger. They were round and about the size of a softball. Very pretty breasts that were now jiggling as she inhaled and exhaled.

"God, this feels weird," she said. "Being handcuffed and all."

“Just be glad you're not hogtied!” I laughed. She gave me a confused expression, so I explained how we'd use legchains and then connect the handcuffs to the legchains, and make someone 'hogtied.' Eileen's eyes got very, very wide.

“When would you do that to someone?”

“When they resist arrest, or are violent, or on drugs or something like that. It's for the protection of the officers, and mostly, for the protection of the person. It's not cruel, it's actually a lot safer!”

She nodded. She'd been in the cuffs now for about five minutes. She started twisting her hands in the cuffs. “I can't get away, can I?”

“Not unless you're a magician or something!” I kidded. I went to my gunbelt and got my cuff key. It looked like a miniature PR-24.

“No, don't!” she said, twisting away from me. She took a step away and turned to face the wall. “I like the feeling of being...captive. Of not being in control. If being in...*your* control.” That, to say the least, took me a little aback. I'd never experienced anything like this.

“You mean you *like* being cuffed?”

“It's...strange. Comforting. Like I'm safe, protected. Since I'm in your custody, you're responsible for me. I have to do what you say, whatever you say...right?”

I nodded silently, not sure where this was going, but damn eager to find out. “That's right, missy. If you screw with me, you're going to find out *what* trouble really is!” The effect my cop-talk had on her was electric. I watched in amazement as her nipples visibly hardened under her sweatshirt.

“How can you tell if someone is carrying a weapon?” she asked.

“Usually, I search them.”

“Oh.” The invitation was unspoken but glaring nonetheless. I finally understood what was going on here. Eileen wanted to know what it was like to be arrested; this had taken on the kinky air of some sex game, and I didn't know the rules. But, I was willing to find out. My brother was crashed out in his bedroom, probably sleeping off a long day of delivering flowers. My mother was probably still at her law office. We were, in effect, alone in the house for at least another three hours.

I spun Eileen around and put her head against the wall. “Feet apart...spread 'em!” I snarled, kicking the inside of her left ankle to spread her legs. In that position, all it would take was a light shove to send her tumbling to the carpet of the bedroom.

“Before I start this, do you have any needles or anything in your pockets?” I asked.

“No...sir!” Eileen said. “I'm not a junkie.”

“Yeah, that's what all you hookers say!” Instantly understanding where this was going, Eileen fell straight into character. “Search me, pig!”

“You bet I will. Don't move. I don't want to have to kill you.” Eileen nodded, rubbing her forehead against the wall. I ran my hands across her shoulders and down her arms, stopping when I hit the cuffs. Next, I ran my hands along the inside of her waistband, looking for concealed “razors” or something. Meeting in front, my hands glanced off her crotch and started down the front of her legs.

Reaching her ankles, I ran my hands back up the back of her legs, stopping to check each rear pocket of her jeans.

"Well, you don't have anything *on* you," I said. "But that doesn't mean anything. I've known hookers that put heroin or crack inside a condom and then insert it in a body orifice, like your vagina or anus."

The gasp this time was for real, and I waited for Eileen to order me to stop. She didn't.

"Well, I guess we'll have to wait for the matron," I said.

"The what?"

"You've never been arrested before? An obviously slutty-looking hooker like you? A matron," I explained, "is a female prison officer that will have to conduct the body orifice search. I can't, because you might cry sexual harassment or something. She puts on this rubber glove and sticks a finger inside you...both holes."

"Oh God!" Eileen moaned. "What if I agree to let you do it?"

"Well, if I don't find anything, then I might consider letting you go. Or...I might not. I might want something...more for my consideration." When I said that, I rested the palm of my hand on her taut little ass.

"Do it!" Eileen gasped. "Look inside me! Stick your fingers...inside me!"

"Not so fast, sister. We've got to make this all nice and official." I went to my dresser and returned with a microtape recorder. "Repeat after me. I, " and then I had her say her full name, the time and date, and the fact that she'd consented to a body orifice search by a male officer as a result of an arrest for solicitation of prostitution, and that the search was *not* being made in return for prosecutorial consideration.

Eileen said everything as I dictated it. I wasn't worried...this was just to keep the excitement...the anticipation. I think that's what aroused Eileen...the not knowing what was coming next, the fact that I could basically do *whatever* I wanted with her firmly handcuffed body.

I got my gun from the closet and carefully, quietly unloaded it and replaced the magazine I removed with an empty one. Stepping back over to Eileen, I tucked the gun into the waistband of my sweatpants. I reached around her front and undid the snap on her jeans, and slowly slid them down her legs.

Imagine that! Eileen wasn't wearing any panties! Her naked ass stared back at me, two incredibly cute dimples marking each cheek. She had a wonderful ass, and the sight of her standing there, hands cuffed behind her back, naked from the waist down with her jeans in a blue denim puddle around her shoes gave me an instant and powerful hardon.

I had some rubber gloves in my closet from when I'd been a paramedic, so I retrieved a pair and loudly snapped them on.

"Sorry, dearie," I said. "Seems we're all out of lubrication. Hope this doesn't burn *too* much."

"Unngn!" Eileen moaned from between clenched teeth. Carefully, I spread the cheeks of her ass and ran my rubber--coated finger down the cleft, tapping softly on her little pink asshole. "Hold on, here it comes!" I slowly forced my finger up

her little bung, feeling her sphincter muscle clamp around my invading digit. Eileen pushed back against my finger.

God, she was loving this! I wormed my finger around inside her, searching for a drug-filled condom or some other 'contraband.' Finding none, I removed my finger and switched hands. (As fun as this was, I didn't need to give her an infection by sticking a possibly shit-coated finger inside her tender twat.) My hand reached underneath and lightly traced her mound. I was less than surprised to find her cunt lips were slick with arousal.

"Hmmm, seems like our little slut is enjoying this!" I said softly. Eileen wiggled against my touch. I spread the lips of her pussy and slowly worked a finger inside, stroking the incredibly soft, warm walls of her vagina, again looking for 'contraband.' Of course, there was none. Pulling my finger out, I noisily snapped the gloves off and casually tossed them into the garbage can.

"Well, you've got nothing stuck up you, so that's good. At least you won't get a possession or intent charge added to your prostitution charge."

"Please officer," Eileen whined. "I'll do ANYTHING you want... please don't arrest me. Don't take me to jail!"

"Anything?" I asked.

"Anything!" she affirmed. Guiding her by the shoulders, I made Eileen kneel before me. The tent of my erection inside my sweatpants was obvious.

"Just pretend I just gave you a \$20 bill," I said, thrusting my crotch at her face. Eileen started to nip at my cock through the cotton of my sweatpants.

"You can do better than that, slut!" I said. Pulling my pistol out of my waist, I pointed it at her forehead. "And you'd better, if you know what's good for you!"

Eileen's eyes opened almost as wide as her mouth did as she covered the cloth over my dick with her hot, slavering mouth. I softly thrust my cock into her mouth for a few moments before removing my sweatpants and presenting her with my erect, throbbing cock. Gratefully, greedily, Eileen lowered her face over my cock and started to Hoover my meat.

Her head worked up and down the length of my massive cock and I watched in fascination as she gave me the wettest, hottest, no-hands blowjob I'd ever seen. The suction of her mouth felt like a thousand wet, velvety fingers gripping my cock.

I held her head in my hands, guiding her up and down my meaty stick, getting closer and closer to orgasm. Her long black curly hair stroked my thighs as she worked me closer and closer to dumping my load.

"I'm gonna cum!" I said, trying to pull her face off my cock.

"Mmmph!" she said, forcing her face harder against me. Oh well! Eileen started sucking me harder and harder, until her cheeks were hollowed with the effort of taking my load across her tongue.

With a huge grunt, I blew my load into her face, thrilling to the feeling of my seed shooting across her lapping tongue, feeling my cock feed her shot after shot of my cream as she greedily sucked it down, bobbing her head and sucking harder for more.

After I emptied myself inside her, I fell back on the bed with a gasp. My cock popped out of her mouth with a moist, nasty “slurp!” sound. Eileen looked at me from her kneeled position, licking the last of my jizz from her lips.

“God, I need to cum!” she said. “Please fuck me!”

“I don't fuck sluts!” I snarled. “Unless they beg for me!”

“Oh god! Please fuck me! Please, I'll do anything! I'll be your personal whore, your slut, to do with whatever you please! God, Dan, please screw my hot cunt!” As if to show me what I was missing, she pulled legs out from under her and laid back, her cuffed hands digging painfully into her back as she wantonly spread her legs, giving me a bird's eye view of her lewd, spread-open cunt. Eileen was so aroused that her entire crotch was swampy, the fat, greasy lips of her cunt were spread open in obscene invitation. I wanted nothing more than to drop between her spread open, welcoming legs and slam my cock into her for the rest of the night.

With a growl, I dropped down twixt her legs and slid into her with one stroke. The warm elastic walls of her pussy snapped closed across the surface of my cock and I had to think about something else so as not to cum right away. Eileen started bucking her hips up into me, trying to get some friction, some contact on her clit.

“Oh, god! Fuck me...pound me! Fuck my horny cunt!” she moaned, levering her hips up against me again and again. Her legs crossed behind my back, her heels digging into my own bare ass as she urged me breathlessly to fuck her harder and harder.

At the end, I was grasping her sweating, heaving asscheeks as I pounded into her, slamming her pussy again and again, my pubic bone rubbing against her clit on every stroke, bringing her closer and closer to orgasm.

We came together, our muscles locked. The feeling of my cum painting her womb sent Eileen over the edge and every muscle in her body locked as her cunt milked my prick of every drop. We collapsed against each other, and I gently unlocked the cuffs. Her arms came around my neck and she kissed me deeply.

“Thank you!” she said softly. “Thank you so much!”

“Don't mention it.”

“Tracy”

Prologue

The thing of it is, we both know it's basically wrong. But we didn't ask for the situation to end up this way. When Tracy and I met, we were friends, good friends at first. Slowly, over time, it grew and blossomed until it became something much, much more, something special and unique, something you'll be lucky to find once or twice in your life.

It's just that we never wanted it, we never intended for it to get this complicated. It all started two years ago.

-1-

Meet Cute

The first day of high school is always a blast. Everything is new and special again, just like your first day of any other grade. But there's the added excitement of being in a new school, new teachers, new rooms. Everything takes on a unique, electric kind of charm. You find yourself thinking ahead to all the days and weeks and months you'll be spending here, learning, growing, becoming who you're going to be in this world.

For me, the first day of high school had an added bonus. I met Tracy. You see, the school sent me this little piece of computerized paper that told me which locker had been assigned to me, and what my classes, rooms and teachers were. When I figured out how all the lockers were numbered, I finally tracked mine down. That's when I met Tracy.

Her locker was next to mine. If that isn't divine intervention, I don't know what is. I came up behind her, intending to snap my shiny-new padlock on my locker, and saw this...goddess standing next to my locker. All I could see was the side of her face. She was beautiful.

A word here on Tracy's looks. I don't know how to explain it without sounding corny, but I'll try my best. Tracy was...fresh face, like a farm girl. She had a natural beauty, the kind of beauty that never goes away, no matter how old she gets. She wasn't model- gorgeous, and she didn't look like a junior slut-in-training that some of the girls at that school did. She wasn't wearing any makeup that I could see, but her skin was perfect. Pale, white, porcelain skin. Her eyes were huge and round, deep blue, the color of the ocean on a stormy day. Her nose was perfect and small and upturned just a little. Her hair was glorious. Long and the color of honey, it hung to the middle of her back in flaxen waves. Her smile, when she showed it, was wide and white and invigorating. She was wearing an

ized shirt and dockers and topsiders. She looked like a vision to me. She looked perfect.

I turned and walked away. The thought that this girl, this perfect person, would be next to me, all year long, every morning and every afternoon, and possibly even between classes, blew me away. I was going to have to get to know her. There was no other option. But then what? Would I ask her out? Could I? She probably already had a boyfriend, some huge hunk that played football or basketball, or worse, wrestled or boxed. There was no way this girl didn't have a boyfriend. Life doesn't work that way.

But it was true. She was single and alone. No one had asked her out. She wasn't flashy enough for the jocks and the popular guys. She was quiet and studious and just a little too shy for her own good.

Her name was Tracy, and I found that out because the same computer that had assigned our lockers together had also has the vision and insight to assign us to the same homeroom. Freshman didn't get to pick their own schedules, and I was astonished to see Tracy in class after class after class that first day. I couldn't take my eyes off of her.

The second day of class, I got to my locker early, stocking it up with blank notebooks and paper and pens and all the shit you need for modern education to work. I sensed her there a moment before she walked into my line of sight. She dialed her combination and opened her locker, inserting a lot of the same stuff into hers that I was jamming into mine.

"Hi," she said out of the blue. "I'm Tracy."

"Steve," I said, offering a smile.

"I saw you yesterday," she started, and I paled, thinking she was going to say that she'd seen me staring at her. "...we have a lot of classes together, huh?"

"Yeah," I said. I couldn't think of anything more to say.

Then she turned and looked at me full in the face for the first time. I heard this funny buzzing in my head, and felt something strange in my stomach. Looking at her was hard; looking away was harder. I wanted to reach out and stroke one of her cheeks with my finger. I wanted to feel her skin under my touch. And I wanted to kiss her so much. In my mind, I could see her leaning towards me, her eyes slowly closing, her mouth parting just a little as we pressed our lips together, the passion, the sweet, pure hunger between us growing and-

"Steve?"

I snapped out of it as she said my name for the first time.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I'm just thinking about classes and stuff."

"Oh," Tracy. I could hear the smile in her voice.

It seemed that everywhere I turned, the fates were conspiring to bring Tracy and I closer together. I've always been a writer ('natch) of sorts, and so one of the first extracurricular activities I investigated was The Centurion, our school paper. I wanted to be a journalist or a novelist when I grew up, and this seemed like a way to get some good experience.

At the orientation meeting, I had found a seat in the back and was settling in to become invisible when I saw Tracy walk through the door. She spotted me and smiled, walking over to take the seat next to mine. She leaned over and whispered, "Looks like we're the only two Freshman," she said. I just nodded, not sure what, if any, reply was appropriate.

I had some writing samples with me, as did Tracy. She looked at mine and lifted her eyebrows. I handed them over. She read them quickly, scanning them, I assume. She handed them back with a noncommittal face on and I waited for a good two minutes before finally whispering, "Well?"

"They're very good," she allowed. I indicated that I wanted to read hers, and she was suddenly shy and demure. She was getting ready to hand them over when Dr. Kelton, the faculty advisor, walked into the room and started the meeting, saving Tracy from my critique. But that didn't stop me from enjoying her opinion of my work, however.

We both made the paper.

But that wasn't all. Things really started to get interesting in science class about three weeks later. In our school, if you want to take honor classes, you have to take a test to see if you're capable of the work first. Also, you have to be invited to take that test, you just can't ask to take it.

Dr. Kelton, who also happened to be our science teacher, took Tracy and I aside one day after class and told us that he wanted both of us to take the test in two months, and that we had all that time to prepare and study. He suggested that we work together to divide up the work and make it easier.

And that's how Tracy and I started spending a lot of time together. That's how Tracy and I became best friends. And that, friends and neighbors, is how I started to fall in love with her.

We agreed to meet at the library after school every day. Dr. Kelton gave us a suggested reading list, and on the first day we located all the books on the list and piled them on a table in the reading room. There were four piles, each two feet tall. We sat back and looked at them, then at each other, and then burst out laughing. There was no way we could cover all the material, but as Tracy so sagely reminded me, we only had to cover enough to pass the test. We could learn the rest at our leisure as we took the honor courses in the following years.

I agreed. Tracy sighed one last time, opened her purse and pulled out a pair of reading glasses. Donning them, she reached for the reading list and started checking off volumes, assigning some to me, some to her. Me? I was lost. Just watching her read, seeing how the bangs of her silky golden hair hung over her brow, lightly brushing her eyebrows, the way the glasses perched on the end of her nose, the way she tapped the eraser of the pencil against her perfect pink lips...I was lost. She looked so... good. That's the only word that fits. Good.

She caught me looking again, and I blushed, turning away.

“Ok,” she said, handing me the list. “The checks are yours, the x’s are mine. What do you think?” I checked the list. She had given me chemistry and physics. She took biology and earth sciences. It seemed like a fair trade, and I agreed to it. We opened notebooks, licked the ends of pencils, and reached for the books.

All that week, we met in the library after school, dug into the books and took copious notes. I filled up three notebooks that week. On Friday, near six, we looked at each other and just nodded. It had been a long week and we were both beat.

“Ok,” Tracy said, putting her stuff away. “We take a day off, and Sunday we meet at my house and go over the notes. You teach me what you learned, and I’ll teach you what I learned. Fair?”

“Fair,” I agreed. “What did you learn this week, anyway?”

“More about biology than I ever thought I wanted to know.”

I was rubbing my eyes. “Anything in particular, or just biology?”

“Hmm?” Tracy asked, making some final notes in the margin. “Oh... no, uh..all kinds of things. I got a ton on sexual reproduction.” The way she said it, the casual air with which she tossed that off, caught me by surprise. Surely, she couldn’t be dropping some sort of obtuse female hint, could she?

My fingers stopped rubbing my eyes. I looked over at Tracy, but she was still writing notes in the margin. I figured it was nothing and stood to leave.

But I was really looking forward to Sunday.

All day Saturday, I thought about Tracy. I couldn’t get her out of my mind. I had this huge mental image of her studying, the hair, the eyes, the bangs, the pencil-against-the-lips, the whole thing. She was perfect. I couldn’t stop thinking about her. I knew that I was starting to fall for her, but I didn’t know what to do about it. I didn’t want to ask her out, in case she told me that she didn’t want to go out with me. I couldn’t take being rejected by the most perfect girl in the world. No way, no how.

So I did nothing. My Dad caught me sitting in the reading nook, staring off into space. Since the divorce, my father has been trying to spend a lot more time with me. I live with him, mostly because my mother had gone off to ‘find herself,’ and didn’t want to be bothered with a kid. It still hurt, even though it had been almost two years. I wished my father would date, but he was still hung up on Mom.

“Hey sport,” he said, lightly thumping me on the back. “Whatcha thinking about?”

“A girl,” I said. I could always tell my Dad anything, and I really wanted his advice. I told him all about Tracy, and I guess I was a little moon-eyed, because when I was done I looked over to see my father smiling softly.

“Guess I got it bad, huh?” I asked.

“Yeah, but that’s cool. There’s nothing like your first love, Steve.”

“Who was your first love, Dad?”

He was quiet a moment, and then he softly said, “Your mother.”

Ah, shit.

“So what should I do?”

“Just keep it even and cool for now, pal. If she likes you, you’ll know it. There’s no need to rush. You’ve got all the time in the world.”

“Yeah,” I agreed. “That was my plan.”

Dad left me to my thoughts.

When I got to Tracy’s house the next day, she answered the door after one ring. At school, Tracy normally dressed pretty fancy. Lots of flowery dresses and things like that. I think she wore pants twice in all the time I’d seen her.

Today, however, she was casual. She wore a T-shirt and jeans, and topsiders. Her hair was up today, in a sexy French braid. Her youthful breasts were pushing softly against the well-washed material of her shirt, and I wanted to badly to reach out and cup one in my hand. I wanted to feel their weight and softness, the heat of her against me. But I just smiled and said, “Hey!”

“Hey yourself,” she said. “C’mon in. We have a ton of work.”

Always the whip-cracker, Tracy was. I stepped inside, carrying all my notes, and we went to her father’s den. Or, what had been left behind after her father had died. I’d learned that Tracy’s father had died in a horrible car wreck about two years ago. She was like me, a single-parent kid.

We set up shop. I sat behind her dad’s desk, in the big leather chair, and spread out. She sat down in a huge, old leather wing chair across from the desk, sitting Indian style, and opened her notebook on her knees. She poised the pencil above the page and gave me the go-ahead signal.

For the next three hours, I delivered a lecture from my notes on all the things I’d learned about physics that week. She took notes very quickly, and I was amazed at how fast she picked it all up. She asked several highly intelligent, pointed questions, questions that told me little escaped her steel-trap mind.

We broke for a snack. We were in the kitchen, joking and laughing as we made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and poured huge glasses of cold milk. I felt so at ease with Tracy, like I’d known her my entire life. I felt like she was a person, instead of just a girl. I know how strange that sounds now, but back then, girls were an entirely different species.

We sat down at the table and ate our sandwiches.

I was in the middle of a bite when Tracy put hers down and said “Danny Stoner asked me out on Friday.” I paused chewing for the briefest of seconds, and then managed to continue. I kept my face as expressionless as possible. I’d feared this, worried that someone else would find out what an incredibly special girl that Tracy was, feared that someone with a whole lot more experience with girls than I would figure out a way to approach her and ask her out. And now it had happened.

After about a minute, I managed to croak, “Are you going to go out with him?”

This time Tracy paused. “I haven’t made up my mind yet. I told him that I’d let him know.” I digested that piece of news with the sandwich. We finished our lunch in silence. Tracy stood and gathered my plate and glass and went to the sink to wash them.

Now or never, pal. I stood up and walked over to Tracy. She had her back to me, and I put my hands on her shoulders. I heard her gasp softly.

"I don't think I'd like it if you went out with Danny Stoner," I said quietly.

Silence, for about thirty seconds, and then, just as quietly: "I'm glad that you wouldn't like it." Slowly, Tracy turned in my arms until she was facing me, her butt against the sink. She was about seven inches shorter than I was, and she lifted her face to look into my eyes. Her gaze was serious, unblinking, and we stared at each other for one incredible moment.

The moment grew. Tracy licked her lips with the tip of her little pink tongue. I didn't need an engraved invitation. I did the One Inch Head Move. Every guy knows what that is. The One Inch Head Move is when you move your head one inch, one single inch closer to your girl. If she doesn't move back, or better, if she moves towards you, you know that the kiss is OK.

Tracy moved towards me, that one single inch. Net gain: two inches. There were still seven between us. The room was very quiet. A bird chirped in a tree. Far off, a dog barked. Another inch. Tracy blinked, and it was in slow motion. Her eyelids came down slowly, paused, and then back up, her eyelashes fluttering. Her huge blue eyes found mine again, and her head turned to the side, slightly, just an inch. We move closer still. My fingers tightened on her shoulders.

Tracy lifted herself just a little, onto the balls of her feet. She was so close I could feel her warm breath on my face, on my lips. Her eyes closed a moment before mine did, and then our lips touched gently. That first kiss was incredible.

First, there was gentle pressure. The pressure relaxed, and Tracy's mouth opened just a little, and she kind of...sucked my lower lip between hers. Then she released again, and then caught my upper lip and gently sucked that one, at the same time stepping against me, pressing her body against mine. I felt the soft, firm pressure of her breasts against my chest and I moaned in my throat.

The kiss intensified. I felt Tracy's mouth open against mine, wider this time, and then she reached in with her tongue and gently licked mine, and then she ran it over my teeth. I sucked at it gently, and then felt it retreating. I chased it with mine, and Tracy gently sucked at it. Her hands went around my waist, and she pulled me against her.

I was as hard as a rock, and I knew she could feel my need pressing against her. And then the kiss ended. We pulled apart a little, and then pressed our foreheads together. Our eyes opened, and Tracy smiled up at me, and then she giggled.

"Took you long enough," she said.

Obviously, things changed after that. Tracy and I kissed a few more times in the kitchen, until things started heating up. My hands were aching to touch her breasts, but I stopped them with sheer willpower.

Tracy pulled away from me and put her perfect, tiny hands on my chest, and then put her head on top of her hands, turning her face to the side.

"You have no idea," she said softly, "how long I've wanted you to do that."

“Probably as long as I’ve wanted to do it.” I hugged her to me, and then she stepped back. “C’mon, we still have a lot of work to do.”

We went back into her dad’s den and got back to work. But it wasn’t like it had been. It was her turn to talk, and my turn to listen. Tracy liked to walk as she talked, using her hands as she lectured me on biology. She was up to pheromones, talking about how animals attracted each other with scents, and how some species were monogamous and how some were not. She was behind my chair as she talked about species mating for life, and suddenly she spun it around, her face an inch from mine.

“How about you?” she demanded. “Do you stay with one partner?”

There was a hint of humor in her voice, but not much.

By way of answer, I leaned up and kissed her. “I don’t want anyone else,” I said. “Just you.” She kissed me back, and then we continued to study.

Later, she was talking about erosion or something like that. She was standing in front of the window, looking out on the block, reciting her notes from memory. I got up as silently as I could and walked behind her.

I slid my hands around her waist and pulled her body against mine. Tracy didn’t falter, didn’t even break stride. She just kept talking about erosion as I lowered my head and kissed her neck.

“Mmmm,” she said, lifting one of her hands to hold my head against her. “That feels nice.” I moved up slowly and kissed her earlobe, and then blew a little air into her ear. She giggled. When I gently, softly licked her ear, she groaned and twisted in my arms, bringing her hands up to my face, bringing my head closer...and then we kissed again, a soft, moist kiss that made me melt. The kiss intensified again, and our mouths worked together, hungrily. Her hand was at the back of my neck, her nails scratching my skin, pulling me harder against her. I could smell Tracy, her clean, pure scent in my nose as I tried to devour her with my mouth.

I could feel the hot, hard points of her nipples pressing against me, and I knew she was aroused. But...something held us back. Something made me pull away from her after the single most intense kiss of my life. I started to pull back, aware that my hormones were raging, that my arousal was almost out of control. Tracy saw the fear and naked need in my eyes and let me go, her hand still on my face until I stepped back.

She turned back to face the window and continued on with her lecture. Slowly, I went back to the desk and sat down, and resumed taking notes.

We finished about three hours later. I packed my stuff up and got ready to leave. I was at the door, opening it, when I heard a discrete cough behind me. Ah, that’s right. Gotta kiss her goodbye!

“Oops,” I said, turning back to Tracy. “Forgot to kiss my girlfriend goodbye!”

The look on her face when I called her my girlfriend made my heart sing. She smiled at me, and I felt the warmth of the sun. I leaned down and kissed her softly, and then turned to go. She caught my head with her hands and turned me towards her again. Tracy kissed ME then, her mouth opening against mine again. We touched tongues, and then she broke the kiss and pushed me towards the door, laughing.

“See you in school tomorrow, Steve.”

“See you.”

What happened next is probably not what you’re expecting. But in a weird sort of way, it was predictable. What happened was that on the way home from Tracy’s that day, I got hit by a car.

My mind was in the clouds, thinking back to the kisses that Tracy and I had shared, and I stepped off the curb without looking first. I heard a horn, a screech of wheels, and then a blinding flash of light and pain.

And then nothing.

No, I didn’t die. But I did break both my legs in several places. I woke up in the hospital the next day. The doctors told me that I’d be in the hospital for about two weeks, and flat on my ass for about four months.

My dad was there when I woke up. He told me that Tracy was waiting downstairs to see me, but the hospital had a rule about having to family or something, and she could not come up to my floor. She was worried about me, my father said, and wanted to know if I needed anything.

What I needed were her arms around me, holding me, but I shook my head.

“Nice girl,” my father said.

“Yeah,” I managed weakly. “She’s great.”

“Is she the one?”

“Huh?” And then I remembered our conversation. “She’s my study partner,” I said, because I didn’t want my father interrogating her about our relationship. I would live to regret telling him that.

“Her mother is down there with her,” my father said, and then his voice got a little distant. “Interesting woman, Kate.” The pain medication they were giving me took effect, and I passed out.

The phone woke me two days later. It was Tracy.

“Hi,” she said, her voice music to my ears. “How are you?”

“I’m much better now,” I replied.

She giggled. “When are you coming home?”

“About a week.”

“Good,” she said. “I’ve got some news you are not going to believe.”

“What?”

“Your father and my mother are dating!”

“What?!”

“They met in the ER after your accident. The next day, your father called my mom and asked her out! They’ve been out like four times in the last week!”

“Oh, shit!” I said.

Tracy turned defensive. “What’s the matter with my mother?”

“Nothing, Tracy! But what if they fall in love?!”
“That’d be great!” Tracy said. “My mother really needs someone in her life.”
“What if they get married?!”
“Even better! I think they make a wonderful couple!”
“Tracy! If they get married, we’ll be stepbrother and sister! We.. we..can’t...!!”
That got her attention. “Oh,” she said, her voice suddenly small and far away.
“I hadn’t thought about that.”
Shit.

It happened. Against all odds, it happened. I got out of the hospital about two weeks after the accident, and I spent the last four months on my ass. I missed the test Tracy and I had started to study for, and she passed it, gaining admittance to the honors program. I had a nurse at the house that was there all day, every day, and Tracy and I didn’t have a single chance to be alone. Nurse Helga, as I called her, watched over me like a mother Hawk.

Meanwhile, Dave, my father, and Kate, Tracy’s mother, continued to date. It came as only a mild shock when they announced that they were getting married. They were so happy, so ecstatic about finding each other that neither Tracy nor I could bear to break the news to them, news we already both knew.

Kate and Dave might have loved each other, but so did Tracy and Steve. Very much. And now we were going to be brother and sister.

Part II

Our parents had decided to get married immediately, if not sooner. It was decided that Tracy and Kate would move into our house, as we had more room. Neither Tracy or I could bring ourselves to tell our parents about what had been going on between the two of us, and it was killing both of us. My feelings for Tracy had not changed one iota the entire time I’d been laid up in bed with my bum legs. And I knew that Tracy felt the same way.

She called me every day. We talked for hours. It was interesting; the more we were separated physically, the closer we became emotionally. The intimacy grew between us like a ripe fungus. Ok, so my choice of words isn’t that great, but you get my drift. We slowly grew closer and closer.

She would call me at all times of the day and night. Mostly at night. The phone would ring and it would be her. We would talk and talk and talk about everything and anything under the sun. And we wouldn’t talk, too. We had these long stretches of comfortable silence that were just amazing. We would be talking, and then one of us would fall silent, and then the other would join in, and we would just... stay that way for about ten or twenty minutes.

The first time it happened, I’d been home for about two days. Tracy called me at about one in the morning. We talked about a lot of things, and after about an hour, she fell silent and let me ramble on for about twenty minutes. And then I fell silent. We just enjoyed it for a little while, and then I said, “Penny for your thoughts.”

"I was just thinking," she said softly, sweetly, "how much I love the sound of your voice. I could listen to you talk forever." We laughed, and then hung up.

Tracy was becoming a part of me. When our parents announced that they were getting married...our world fell apart.

Sometimes I think parents forget what it was like when they were our age. And then I think that what love means to kids today is a lot different than what it meant to our parents. I mean, I know for a fact that my parents were virgins when they married. I also knew for a fact that I was one of the last virgins in the Freshman class of my high school. I couldn't speak for all the girls, but I knew Tracy was a virgin, too.

So, it was hard for us to find a way to tell them how Tracy and I felt about each other. I could predict with certainty what their reaction would be. "There are lots of people to date! You don't have to date each other!" Or some such nonsense like that. Without talking about it much, Tracy and I agreed not to bring it up. We took a 'wait and see' attitude. After all, they weren't married yet, and until they said "I do," anything was possible, right?

Wrong. The wedding went off without a hitch. I was best man, and Tracy stood up for her mother. Our parents went off for a two-day honeymoon, and then they returned to set up house. And that's when the trouble really started. You see, up until that moment, the concept of actually living with Tracy hadn't solidified in my head. When I realized what the living arrangements were going to be...

You see, our house had three bedrooms. The master bedroom, which obviously belonged to my dad and my new stepmother. My bedroom was on the opposite side of the house, and had a common bathroom with the guest room. Which was soon to be Tracy's room.

The day of the move was interesting, to say the least. I helped Tracy carry all her stuff to her room, and then I put her bed together. It was this huge canopy affair, and her entire bedroom suite matched it. Then there were the boxes. We unloaded box after box of clothes and books and stuffed animals and crap of every shape of description.

I helped her unpack, and that's how I got to open the box full of her underwear. It was your basic brown cardboard box, no special markings or anything. I used my pocket knife to slit the tape and lifted the flap. Inside where silk and cotton panties and bras and teddies and all sorts of things that I knew instantly that I loved, but couldn't put a name to.

I lifted a pair of tiny silk panties out of the box and held them up. Tracy saw what I was doing and screeched, running across the room to snatch them out of my hand.

"Give me those!" she screamed, grabbing for them. I handed them over and she fumed at me. "That's not funny, Steve!"

"Sorry," I said. "I didn't know what was in the box."

Tracy sighed once, long and hard. "I know," she said. "I overreacted."

I smiled and leaned down and kissed her on the nose. "That's ok. You're entitled. This has all got to be freaking you out, huh?"

“Yeah,” she said, smiling. “But not as much as living with my boyfriend is!” And then she was leaning up and kissing me on the mouth. It was the first time we’d kissed like this since the accident, and I remembered in a flash what I’d been missing. Tracy molded her body against mine, and the kiss took on a life of its own. Her arms slowly closed around my neck, my arms going around her waist and drawing her tighter against me.

After a long, hot moment, I pulled away. “We can’t,” I whispered. Tracy touched her forehead against mine, smiling wistfully.

“I know. I know we can’t be alone, and we can’t kiss and we can’t touch. But there’s no one else I want to do that with.”

“Yeah. Me too.”

Things got kind of strange after that. We settled down into a fairly routine existence. We were a family, and that was strange, having a sister after all these years, especially a sister that I shared a bathroom with. Especially a sister that I loved with all my heart, and not the way a brother usually loves a sister. It was killing both of us. Neither Tracy nor I had asked for this, had planned for it. We’d met, fallen in love, and realized that we were meant for each other. I couldn’t imagine dating another girl, and Tracy felt the same way. We were meant to be together, we knew it. But the fates had conspired against us, and we found ourselves circling each other like animals.

Take last Friday. Tracy and I got up about seven for school, and we had the usual tango about dealing with the bathroom. I went in first to take a piss, and forgot to lock her door. I was standing there with my cock in my hand when she barged in. Realizing what was going on, she started backing out, but not before I caught her taking a peek at my equipment. She smiled at me shyly and shut the door. That made my cock hard as a rock, knowing that she had seen it (again, this went on at least twice a week,) and I stepped into the shower with my mind on thoughts of Tracy not only seeing my cock, but touching it and stroking it. I was having thoughts like that more and more lately.

After I got out of the shower, I went back into my room to get dressed. I had my socks and underwear on before I realized that I’d forgotten (once again,) to shave and brush my teeth. I walked back into the bathroom.

You guessed it. Tracy was getting ready to shower. Just as I walked in, she had dropped the towel and was preparing to step into the tub. I had a momentary glimpse of her naked body before I started to back out the door. I shut it, hard, and sat down on my bed harder. My mind was filled with images of her perfect body, her youthful breasts, firm and perfect, her long, coltish legs, the soft brown down between her legs. Everything was burned into my mind. In the six weeks that Tracy and I had been living together, I’d seen her this way about a dozen times, and each time it made me crazy. I wanted to get in the shower with her, wanted to take the soap and clean each and every inch of Tracy’s body.

After the dance in the bathroom, we would go down to breakfast with our parents, and then it was off to school. After school, it was back home. Since it was

Friday, we put our homework off and spent the night watching TV in the family room. Usually rented videotapes, sometimes cable TV.

This Friday, Mom and Dad decided to go out to a movie, and invited Tracy and I along. We both pleaded tiredness and claimed that we were going to turn in early. Mom and Dad left us alone, and just like the six previous times Tracy and I were alone, before an hour had passed we were snuggling on the couch watching TV.

We knew it was wrong. We knew we shouldn't do it. But we couldn't help ourselves. I would lay on my side facing the TV and Tracy would lie in front of me, pressing her butt back against me. My arm was around her waist, usually under her shirt, teasing and stroking the skin of her belly.

That constant touching just deepened the intimacy between us. Tracy would lie her head along her arm, and her hand would tease my hair as we watched TV. It felt so comfortable, so right, to be with her that way. I loved the feel of her, the smell of her, everything about her. I wanted to spend the rest of my life like that, every night in front of the TV, holding Tracy like that, just feeling her next to me.

Once in a while it would get to me, it would just be too much, and I would lower my face to her neck and kiss her softly there, teasing us both. She would let me do it for a little while, purring like kitten as she felt my lips against her, and then she would push me back with her neck, telling me without saying a word that I'd better stop, that I was getting to her. I could see her nipples hardening against her bra, and she would moan at my touch, at my kiss.

So I'd back off a little, but we still stayed pressed together. I know she could feel my hardness pressing into her buttocks. She knew how badly I wanted her, and I knew she wanted me to. What kept us apart was the fear that we'd get started, get into it, get naked and make love on the floor, and in the middle of it, our parents would return. We couldn't bear the thought of their disappointment, so we did nothing but tease each other.

We'd talked about it a lot, Tracy and I, and we'd decided that when we were old enough, old enough to make the decisions for ourselves, we'd see how we felt about each other then, and if we still loved each other the way we did now, we'd date. It would probably kill our parents, but at least we wouldn't be doing it inside their house.

Then it all came crashing down. Sort of.

What happened was that on this particular Friday night, Mom and Dad decided to check into a motel. My father called me and told me that he and my stepmother wanted some 'private' time alone. I knew what they meant. They were newlyweds after all, and they wanted the freedom to make love as loud and as long as they wanted without having to worry about the kids overhearing. Since Tracy and I were both eighteen, they figured we could take care of ourselves for the night.

I hung up the phone and informed Tracy that our parents wouldn't be coming home that night. She took my meaning immediately. We wouldn't be interrupted. We were alone. All night. Just the two of us. Alone. All night.

I got back down on the couch, and Tracy moved against me, just like always. But there was something new this time. She seemed... closer, somehow. Her heat

was stronger, her scent more evident. She was aroused, hotly aroused, and she knew I knew she knew I knew.

You know?

We were watching an erotic thriller on HBO. This stripper was running an insurance scam against a company that had hired an ex-con as their investigator. There were a ton of hot, steamy scenes, and before long, they got to us.

I was stroking her stomach, feeling her smooth, silky skin under my fingers as we watched a couple make love on the TV. Tracy's hand came down and grabbed my wrist, and I thought she was going to pull my hand away. Instead, she pulled it up, towards her breasts.

Without a word, one of my hands closed around Tracy's perfect firm boob. The heat was incredible. I stroked her softly, feeling her firm, warm flesh under my fingers. Tracy's breathing got deeper and deeper as I slowly, lovingly touched her breasts for the first time.

Suddenly, she sat up, dislodging my hand. I thought that the night was over. It wasn't. Tracy reached underneath the loose-fitting T-shirt and did some female magic trick, pulling her bra out of one sleeve ten seconds later and throwing it over the edge of the couch. She lay down against me again. My hand was on her waist. I was terrified. I knew what was waiting for me, but I couldn't move.

Tracy's hand found mine, and she brought it under her shirt again. I felt her bellybutton under my fingers, but I still didn't move.

"It's ok," she whispered. "I want you to touch me." Slowly, my hand ascended Tracy's body. My fingers touched the edge of her breast and Tracy softly gasped. It wasn't a gasp of shock or surprise, but arousal.

"Oh, God," she whispered, and then her hand closed over mine through the shirt, pressing my fingers tighter against her breast. "Stroke it," she said. "My nipple."

Softly, gently, I stroked her pink little nub. I was a little above her now, looking down at Tracy's face as she closed her eyes and bit her bottom lip. "I love your hands on me," she whispered. "I love it when you touch me. I feel so beautiful."

"You are beautiful," I said. "The most beautiful girl in the world." I lowered my mouth to Tracy's and kissed her. Her hand closed tighter around mine as our tongues lightly touched. The kiss was nothing but pure, sweet, clean passion. I felt her breath in my lungs as we started to move together on the couch.

"The other one," Tracy whispered into my mouth. "Touch the other one. Please, Steve. Touch me. Touch me all over." I moved my hand to her other breast and felt its warmth and heat. We began to kiss urgently as I moved my hand back and forth, gently stroking and squeezing her breasts and nipples. Slowly, we sat up, until Tracy was on my lap, kissing me, my hand still under her shirt, still feeling her incredible breasts.

Tracy broke the kiss, leaning back a little as she crossed her arms at her waist and lifted the shirt off over her head. Tracy's hair was up in her trademark French braid. She lifted her hands to her head, making her breasts bobble gently in my face, and then her hair was cascading down, covering her shoulders, the longest

tendrils just reaching her nipples. Her gaze was fixed on mine, and I knew that I loved her, because I was looking not at her breasts, but directly into her eyes.

Tracy's hands came down and captured my face and we slowly approached each other, a small smile playing across Tracy's face as she opened her mouth against mine and we kissed. I felt her tongue playing softly, moistly against mine, and then we were Frenching hotly, the passion growing and growing. My hands returned to her breasts, and Tracy whimpered softly, kissing me harder.

Her crotch started to grind against mine, softly at first, and then harder and harder as her arousal began to take hold. My mouth moved from hers as we both gasped for breath. She was breathing hard, sighing every time my hands tightened on her boobs. My mouth moved to her neck, and I kissed her there, tasting her sweat and heat. I felt her pulse beating under my tongue as I licked the hollow of her shoulder.

"I love you so much," Tracy whispered. "So much, Steve. Make love to me. Please, Steve, make love to me."

I pulled back and stared at her. "Are you sure?" My voice was small and scared.

"Yes. I'm sure. I've never been so sure of anything in my life. I want to make love with you. Here. Tonight. Just the two of us. All night."

She got off of me and found her shirt. Holding it shyly in front of her body, hiding her breasts from my view for the moment, Tracy said, "Give me ten minutes. Then come to your room."

And then she turned and left me sitting there.

Part III

I sat there, stunned, looking at the sweep-second hand on my watch crawl around and around again. The ten minutes crawled by, and then it was time to go upstairs and discover the surprise Tracy had waiting for me.

The trip upstairs took a thousand years, and then I was in front of my bedroom door. I opened it and stepped inside, and heard myself gasp. Tracy was on my bed, the covers turned down. She had draped some sort of thin, gauzy red scarf over my bedside reading lamp, casting the entire room in a hazy, erotic shade. Tracy was lying on the bed, wearing a royal blue teddy, her long honey-colored hair brushed out and fanned around her head. She had applied the tiniest amount of pink lipstick, and she looked good enough to eat.

I approached the side of the bed and stopped, just taking the delicious sight in. Tracy rolled onto her side, facing me, propping her head up with her hand.

"You like?" she asked, and I could hear the desperate need for approval in her voice. I nodded, once, twice, and then spoke: "I love. I love you, Tracy. More than I could ever say."

She got up on her knees and made her way to the edge of the bed. Her hands came to my shoulders and she squeezed, smiling at me with an expression I'd never seen on her face before. Her hands moved to the buttons on my oxford, and one by one she undid them, tugging the tail of my shirt out of my jeans.

Tracy lowered her face to my chest and kissed me directly between my nipples. I felt her tongue come out and lick my skin softly. I groaned, feeling my own breath speeding and deepening.

Her fingers traced my muscles, finding my masculine nipples and teasing them gently. Her mouth closed over one, and I knew some of what she felt when I played with her nubs. The feeling was moist and hot and exquisite. She raised her face to mine and we kissed again, our mouths opening, our tongues touching softly, wetly.

“Get naked,” Tracy said with a giggle. “I want to see all of you.” I sat down on the floor, hard, and kicked off my topsiders, using my fingers to get rid of my socks. Standing, I unbuckled my belt, undid my trousers and lowered them to the floor. I was wearing my boxers and nothing else. My hardness poked at my shorts and Tracy’s eyes widened.

“I knew it was big,” she whispered, “But I had no idea!” And then she giggled when she saw my expression. “Don’t worry, Steve. I want all of it inside me before the night is over!”

She held out her hand. “Come to bed.” I took it and joined her. We lay on our sides, facing each other. Tracy slung one of her legs over my hip and we stared into each other’s eyes. Tracy used one forefinger to trace my face, stroking my jaw as she smiled softly. I dropped one hand to her leg, stroking her thigh and the bottom of her rump.

“This feels so...right,” Tracy said, echoing my own thoughts.

“I know,” I whispered, kissing her gently. “I could stay like this forever!” Her hand stroked my chest as she kissed me back.

I slid my hand up Tracy’s body to her shoulder and lowered the strap of her teddy. Her breast was slowly revealed to my gaze, and Tracy watched me watch her. I lowered my mouth and took her erect nipple between my lips, licking and sucking at it gently. Her nails dug into my chest as she moaned at the contact.

“I love it when you touch me, Steve. I love the feel of your body against mine. I love the fact that we’re going to make love to each other tonight.” She pulled my head from her breast and gazed deeply into my eyes.

“This is the first time for the both of us,” she whispered, “and I want it to be as good as it can possibly be. Let’s go real slow and find out everything about each other!” I just nodded and kissed the tip of her nose, but she wasn’t done yet. Pushing me back gently, she once again held my gaze with her own. “Listen to me, dummy! I’ve been doing some reading about...sex and stuff.” That surprised me, and then again, it didn’t. Tracy had always been a research hound. When she wanted to learn about something, she gave it her all.

“And what did you learn?” I asked.

“That there’s all kinds of things we can do to each other that feel good. Some things you probably know about...and some you might not.” That caught my attention, too. What kind of books was she reading, and where in the hell had she gotten them?

“What I want to say, Steve...once we do this, there won’t be any going back. I know myself. I’m going to want you even more after we do this. But, because of the way things are, we aren’t going to be able to be together as often as we want.

So, I want to try lots of things tonight, lots of different things. Things that you might think are...gross." I knew what she wanted. She wanted me to eat her pussy. I had no problem with that.

"Tracy," I said, putting a silencing finger to her lips. "Listen carefully to me. You know me. I'm not like most guys. I'm not in this to get my rocks off. I want to share this with you, I want to remember this night for the rest of my life. If I do it with you, and it makes you happy, it could never be gross. No matter what it is." And then I kissed her gently, opening my mouth against hers, sliding my tongue between her lips. We Frenched hotly for a few moments, and then my hands returned to Tracy's breasts. One was naked and free, the nipple poking delightfully into my palm the other covered with the silk of her teddy. Both feelings were exquisite.

"If there's anything you want me to do," I whispered, "anything at all, just tell me. If I do something wrong, or too fast or too slow, just tell me, Tracy. You can tell me anything in the world. I'll always love you, no matter what!"

"Oh my God, Steve!" Tracy cried, using one of her hands to crush mine against her breast. "This feels soooo goood!" She gasped, and then kissed me, hard. "The same goes for me, lover. Whatever you want me to do, just ask me. If you want me to do it to you, or with you, then it can't be gross."

"Promise me one thing," I whispered.

"Anything."

"I want you to buy a lot more of this sexy underwear. I love looking at you in it, knowing that you're wearing it for me, to turn me on, to make yourself look sexy for me." Apparently, I'd said the right words, because Tracy went insane then, kissing and licking my mouth and face.

"When's the last time you masturbated?" she asked.

"Last night," I answered honestly, a little startled by her question. "Why?"

"Because the first time is going to be a little fast for you, and I don't want to ruin our first time by having it end too fast. So, I thought maybe you'd like me to..."

"To what?"

Quietly, her voice tiny, she said, "Suck your dick." She blushed at her words, and I held her face in my hands again. "Inside this room, when we're making love, you can use any word you want. Sometimes, it's fun to be a little nasty, right? It adds to the excitement. We're already doing something we shouldn't, and that makes it a little more nasty."

Tracy nodded. "Then let me do it. Let me suck your cock!" The way she'd said 'cock,' I knew that Tracy had been thinking about doing just that. I lifted my ass off the bed and lowered my boxers, letting my cock bob into view. Tracy's eyes lit up as she took in my throbbing erection. She slid her way down my body, rubbing her silky breasts over my hairy chest and abdomen, heading for my crotch.

My six and one half inches of thusly-untried cock was pulsing with need and leaking precum. "I've never done this before," she said, "so tell me what you want me to do."

“Start by jerking it lightly, sis.” Tracy blushed when I called her that, but her dainty hand wrapped gently around my hot, firm meat.

“Oh!” she squealed. “It’s so hard and soft and hot!” And then she started slowly moving her hand up and down my cock, gently frigging me off. “Is this right?”

“A little harder. Grip it just a little harder.” She did, and a tiny drop of precum oozed from the tip. I watched in gape-jawed amazement as my girlfriend/sister/lover’s mouth slowly descended to my cock. She reached out with her tiny, wet, pink tongue and scooped the shiny drop off the top of my dick. The moist, raspy contact of her tongue against the head of my sensitive meat made me moan and jerk in response.

Concerned, Tracy looked up at me from between my legs, her eyes shiny with lust. “Did I hurt you?”

“No, not at all,” I managed to gasp. “That felt wonderful! Do it again, please. Now! Please.” Tracy grinned a Cheshire’s grin at me and lowered her mouth to my prick again. She planted a kiss on the head, and then opened her mouth and licked it again. She continued to kiss and lick my cockhead, getting it wetter and wetter as she went along.

“Are you sure you want me to continue?” Tracy asked.

“Trish”

Great. Another fucking Christmas spent alone. My sister in California and her husband, plus her two curtain-climbing, crumb-snatching, ankle-biting rug rats had invited me there, but I had no desire to spend five days watching my nephew proudly announce that he had, indeed, completed a successful delivery of “number two” in the correct and proper place. Neither did I want to watch my niece pick her nose and fling it at her brother, which according to my sister was her new hobby.

My brother was overseas, working for “the government” in some shadowy capacity, and wouldn’t be heard from. Both parents dead as Kelsey’s nuts, which all added up to the fact that I’d be spending yet another Yuletide season staring at the walls and wondering why I got so depressed.

I mean, aside from the fact that the last time I’d had a date Ronald Regan was in the White House, what else did I have to be depressed about? The fact that my job was a go-nowhere, mind-numbing, ass-crushing bore and I wanted nothing more than to drill my boss with a 9mm right between the eyes might contribute something to my depression. The fact that my last girlfriend had told all her friends that I was probably gay, nullifying any chance I might have had at dating any of them might have added a little to it, too.

But I wasn’t gay. I just wasn’t attracted to her anymore. She had turned from a warm, wonderful woman into a screaming shrew and I’d had enough. She wanted me to make love to her while she was wearing curlers and this green... gunk on her face. I mean, hey, I can be a trooper with the rest of them, but I have my fucking limits, right?

So there I was, Christmas Eve, watching a log slowly turn to ash in the fireplace, a cold Genuine Draft clutched in one paw, losing myself in the flame and remembering Christmases Past.

Like my senior year in high school. All of seventeen, ready to take on the world, full of piss and vinegar. Ten goddamn years ago. I remember wanting nothing more than to get out of high school and into the world. School, as I remembered, was boring and mind-numbing. Hah. I’ve been in the world since those years, and I’d give almost anything to go back to those days of hopeful innocence, days when my only worry as a developing zit on my nose and where the next beer was coming from.

And Trish. Who could forget Trish? She was a sophomore in college, a friend of my sister’s, and my girlfriend. I was the envy of all my friends, dating an older woman...a college woman. We’d known each other since about moments after my own birth, and had essentially grown up together. I was nine, she was eleven and just beginning to get interested in boys when she pulled me aside and solemnly asked if she could practice kissing with me.

Now, being a boy of nine, replete with frogs in my pockets and a disdain for anything even *remotely* female, I originally decline, lest any of my friends find

out. If *they* found out I was kissing, of all things, a *girl*, I would have to fight for weeks to get back into their good graces, to prove that I was not a wimp.

In the end, she persisted, and I finally gave in. She practiced for hours, using her lips and tongue on me. Frankly, at the time, I was grossed out. But I learned how to kiss, and how to kiss well, because she taught me what a woman likes best, and more importantly, taught me that different women like to be kissed different ways. *That* went along way when I started dating.

I was a junior, and Trish was a freshman in college when we started dating. It had been pretty innocent, me filling in when my sister had a date and Trish tagged along. I became the fourth, so poor Trish wouldn't feel like a third wheel. And things just went from there. She started calling me for dates for just the two of us, and I started calling her. We'd been together for almost four months when she suddenly started laughing.

"You know," she said. "You never asked me out. I mean, officially or anything. We just...happened."

With a mock-serious expression on my face, I dropped to one knee and held her hand lightly in mine. "Will you please go out with me?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said slowly, "I mean, you're awful young and all that..." With a laugh and a growl I pounced on her and we spent the rest of the afternoon wrestling on the couch, stopping only for tickle fights and long, wet, deep kisses that made my toenails ache.

I was the first boy she let pet her below the waist, and a day after that, she let me be the first girl I ever performed oral sex on. I can still remember her taste today: A mixture of sweat, urine and her distinctly female taste that I craved. I must have spent the better part of a summer between her thighs, exploring and learning and licking and tasting every square inch of her. She never, ever returned the favor.

Because I never asked her to. The truth was, I went home every time with blue balls so bad all I could do was jerk off. I was jerking off so often and so hard that I had these little...I'm ashamed to say it, but scabs on my cock from tugging so hard. I knew that if I took off my pants and showed her my poor, abused cock, she would absolutely refuse to take it into her mouth, so I didn't ask.

And then, in her junior year in college, my freshman year, I got a "Dear Peter" letter. Sorry, she said, but I've met someone else, and we're going to get married. You'd like him, she wrote, he's a lot like you. And then, as always, she dropped the bomb that all women like to use, few mean, and ever fewer still can live up to. I hope we can still be friends, she wrote.

Yeah.

Right.

And I'm fucking Santa Claus.

I *don't* think so.

So there I was, like I said, sitting on the couch, feeling pretty goddamned sorry for myself, a rapidly-warming beer clutched in one hand, watching the fire slowly dim. Peace on Earth and Goodwill Towards Men, my ass!

The doorbell rang.

Probably fucking carolers, I thought. Too-cheerful people standing around singing about a joyous season. I decided to ignore them.

The doorbell rang again, and then again.

Sighing, I stood and walked to the front door, leaving my beer behind. One song, and then I would plead tiredness and go to bed.

I opened the door and felt surprise and astonishment, and frankly, arousal.

Trish was standing on my doorstep.

Alone.

Crying.

Trish was standing on my doorstep, alone and crying. (My mind, at this point, had vapor-locked. It screamed at me "LET HER IN, STUPID!")

I opened the storm door and she fell into my arms, resting her head against my chest and sobbed. "Oh, Peter, I don't know where to go," she said.

Pulling back, I asked, "What's wrong, Trish?"

"I left my husband yesterday and drove here. I didn't tell anyone, and I planned to stay with my parents. They went to Hawaii for the holidays. I don't have a key, and I have nowhere to go."

Thank you, Santa.

"Come in. You can stay here, of course." She smiled at me through her tears and took off her coat. I caught my breath and tried not to stare. She was dressed to impress someone, that was for sure. She was wearing a white leather miniskirt and a dark red blouse that hugged her tits. At 29, she looked wonderful. Her light brown-almost-blond hair lightly brushed her shoulders, and if anything, her figure had ripened into the mature body of a desirable woman. I felt a lurching in my trousers and ignored it.

Following me into the living room, Trish spied my beer and cocked an eyebrow at me. Nodding, I went and got another one.

"So," I said, handing it to her, "what's this about leaving your husband?"

"Bastard!" she spit. "I caught him giving some seasonal joy to his goddamn teenybopper secretary on his fucking desk. I threw his present at him and stalked out."

"So it's over?"

Sadly, she nodded. "I've known for a while that he was screwing around on me, just not specifically with who. But when I saw that little 19 year old slut spread-eagled on his desk getting butt-fucked by my husband...I decided it was over then and there."

"Butt-fucked?" I said, fairly shocked by her language. Trish blushed. "He likes that," she explained. And then, after a moment, added cryptically, "...and so do I. "I gulped so hard I was sure she heard it.

"So tell me what's going on in *your* life," she said. "I'm sick of my problems. Give me some of yours."

I laughed, and we sat down on the couch. We talked for about twenty minutes, about my crappy job, about her crappy job, and about all the things we'd missed out on in the last ten or so years. We were laughing at some of the old antic's we'd been through and I suddenly felt very, very aroused.

I stopped laughing and looked at Trish straight in the eyes. "I never forgot about you, you know."

She blushed. "I didn't, either."

"Do you believe in the axiom that 'What's good for the goose is good for the gander?'" I asked softly.

She nodded.

"Well then, I have to say that I am incredibly attracted to you, and I would very much like to make love with you."

A small, very private smile tugged at the corners of Trish's mouth. Quietly, almost too quiet to hear, she said, "I think I'd like that very much, Peter."

We inched closer, and then after ten years apart, we were together again, kissing softly, feeling each other grow hungry with passion as the kiss lengthened and intensified. Her mouth worked eagerly against mine, her tongue searching my mouth for all the familiar spots and locations. My hands moved to her shoulders, stroking her through the satiny material of her shirt. She clung to me, kissing me deeply, trying to suck my tongue down her throat.

My hands dropped to her breasts, and I massaged her gently through the shirt, feeling her hard little nipples poke into the skin of my palm. Trish broke the kiss and stood before me, gently swaying her hips as she unbuttoned her blouse. Tugging it out of her skirt, she sat on my lap facing me, her thighs outside mine as I buried my face in her chest, rubbing my cheek against her breasts as my hands went around her back, under the shirt, losing myself in the warmth and smoothness of her body and her shirt.

She kissed the top of my head and ran her fingers through my hair, pulling me urgently against her. "God, hold me," she said. "Hold me please, Peter!" I groaned and licked a nipple through her bra. The result was instant and exciting. She ground her chest into my face. "Oh, God, lick me," she screamed. "Lick my fucking titties!"

The old Trish had, apparently, learned some new tricks.

My hands went up her back, and instead of the fumbling teenager, my smooth, somewhat experienced but out-of-practice hands easily undid her bra clasp.

Slowly, I revealed each breast, tasting the skin as I removed the lace. Her breasts had grown, but they were still firm and heavy in my hands. "So beautiful," I whispered. "So wonderful, so perfect." I closed my mouth around her right nipple and felt the rough texture on my tongue. Trish started undulating her hips against mine, getting into the contact and the friction and the moisture.

My hands dropped to her leather-clad ass as I pulled her against me, trying to get inside her, trying to become one with her. I was cupping a breast in each hand, gently thumbing her nipples when she pulled away from me and stood, turning around and facing the fire.

I watched as her hands slowly came around the back and undid the button on her skirt, and then worked the impossibly tight zipper down. Swaying her hips from side to side, she worked the tight material off of her hips, down her ass and off her legs. She was wearing a white lace garter belt and long, black seamed stockings.

No panties.

“You like?” she whispered?

I fell to my knees and kissed each jiggling cheek, reaching my hand under and around to feel the moist excitement of her pussy. Like an old friend, my fingers located her clitoris, and I rolled her pearl between my fingers, feeling her gasp and tighten in my grip. She turned to face me and slowly rubbed her cunt over my face, slicking my skin with her arousal.

“Taste me,” she said. I lowered my face between her thighs and inhaled her scent, feeling the tension in my groin become almost unbearable. I licked at her, and it was the same old Trish, only more aged, more refined. Sweat and arousal and the slight tang of urine filled my senses as I avidly licked her trench from just beneath her asshole to her clit and back. I stiffened my tongue and tried to drill it up her cunt, wanting to pop my entire head inside her wet, warm vagina.

Trish had my head in both hands, and she was mashing herself against me, bucking her hips into my face as I held on to her asscheeks and went for the ride of my life, feeling her slick juices cover my face, soak into my mustache and slide down my throat.

“Oh yeah!” Trish was saying, “yeah, yeah! Yeah! Fucking YES!” And then she liquefied into a wondrous climax, shuddering, her pussy snapping closed around my invading tongue, her fingernails digging painfully into my shoulders as I rode her out, screaming out in the pleasure I gave her.

She collapsed to the rug and sat there, her legs lewdly splayed open, gently playing with herself as I watched. “I’ll be right back,” I said. Quickly walking to my bedroom, I tore the comforter off the bed and snagged two pillows, returning to spread them out in front of the fire.

I tossed another log on and felt Trish kneeling behind me, placing her arms around my neck so she could rub my chest, her naked, heavy breasts resting against my back.

She kissed my neck and ear, teasing my canal with her wet little tongue. She remembered. That was one of my favorite things, something we jokingly called “Ear Sex.” Feeling her thick, meaty tongue trying to worm its way into the center of my brain made my cock throb harder still. “Turn around,” she whispered throatily. I did, and her hands fell to my belt as we kissed again, hungrily. Without looking, still kissing me, Trish stripped me and then gently pushed me back on the comforter. My cock, all thickly throbbing seven inches of it, bobbed from my waist.

“Mmmmm,” she said. “You grew up, too.” I laughed at her, but the laugh died in my throat as she opened her mouth and slid my entire cock in, to the root, in a single stroke. I groaned deep in my throat, and my hands reflexively grabbed hers and held it there for a long moment. I could feel the muscles of her throat clutch at my cock like another mouth, and I was afraid that I was going to shoot already; I wanted that blowjob to last, because Trish had apparently picked up a few tricks along the way.

I sat back and watched her blow me in the gentle light of the fire. Her golden hair caught the firelight and made it shine, and watching her gently bobbing head move above my cock fueled my passion to a new level. She used a shitload of saliva, getting me wet and slippery and more excited by the moment.

Her hands were not still; she teased my balls, rubbing each one like a crap player might a pair of lucky dice. I was doing multiplication tables in my head to keep control when Trish slid a finger into my unprepared asshole and started rubbing my prostate gland.

I forced her head down on my cock and blew a load down her throat. Gasping and gulping, Trish took it all, greedily drinking my load and smacking her lips. "So good," she said. "Sooo good." She licked at my pisshole and milked my nuts, making sure she got every drop of my creamy gift.

She fell on top of me and kissed me. I could taste myself in her mouth, and it turned me on beyond belief. We stayed that way for a while, gently kissing as she lay atop me, her heavy, full breasts pushing into my chest, our pubic hair mingling. Slowly, I became excited again, and she felt me stirring against her.

"My God," she said. "So soon?" Evilily, I grinned and rolled her over, spreading her legs.

"Fuck me hard," Trish said. "I love it hard and deep." I placed the head of my again-throbbing cock at her slick entrance and slid my entire length into her with one shove. I felt the slick, slippery walls of her snatch snap closed around me and I had to stop for a second, the pleasure was so intense.

Trish had locked her legs around my waist, and she beat a tattoo against my ass. "Fuck me," she hissed. "Fuck me hard!" I started a slow rhythm, building up speed until we were slapping together, sweat flying as I pounded her receptive cunt as hard as I could. Her fingernails were digging into my back and my chest as she held on.

Trish had several intense orgasm as I pounded her into the carpet. She pulled away from me and got up on all fours, wiggling her ass. "From behind. Fuck me as hard as you can from behind, Peter! Really slam me!"

I lined myself up and grabbed her shoulders, pulling her violently back, spearing her wildly clutching cunt with my cock. She groaned and slid a hand underneath, flicking her clit as I rode her through several more orgasms. Her tight, sticky cunt began to vise around my cock harder and harder. I was amazed at her muscle control and knew I couldn't hold out much longer.

"Gonna cum," I moaned.

"Oh, Peter, dear, please do come inside me! Give it to me! Give me all of it! I want your fucking cum in my CUNT!" Her dirty talk, combined with her hot, tight body worked their magic and I blew my load inside her, burying my cock to the balls as I emptied myself inside her. I could feel my own cum backing out of her cunt and warming my cock and balls.

We fell apart, and she rolled over on top of me. I could feel the accumulated sludge of our coupling leaking from her cunt onto my thigh.

"Merry Christmas," she said with a twinkle in her eye.

"Well," I said, "you certainly got *your* stocking stuffed!"