

The Connection

by Bud Sparhawk and Ramona Wheeler

I nervously walked the dawn. I'd been without my connection for fifty-eight hours, but it felt like fifty-eight years of colorless, emotionless need.

Fifty-eight hours, going on fifty-nine; damn it, damn it, damn it! My need for connection was so intense that it overrode companionship, food, warmth, and even sex. My connection. All that mattered.

Fifty-nine hours. I clenched my fists. I walked faster, trying to suppress the screaming need, but failing miserably. All I wanted was that connection.

People were counting on me. I couldn't face them now. Not when my need was so intense. Just to be connected for an hour, an hour of pleasure, an hour of delicious sensuality and I could once again be a loving, thoughtful mother.

But not now, not while my implant throbbed relentlessly; obsessed, unbending, remorseless, and crying for connection.

At sixty-two hours I was sitting in my chair, plug in hand. My insides quivered with anticipation. My nerves tingled. An hour, just an hour more.

Somewhere upstairs the kids were stirring, getting ready for school. I should be with them, not waiting to plug in. I wanted freedom. I lusted for the plug. I hated this. I loved it.

I hadn't always been like this. I'd had a steady job, good income. Then Helene said I'd feel better about my work if I got an implant. 'Just give it a try,' she'd said so innocently. 'You'd be surprised at how good it makes you feel. Company will pay.'

It was a lunchtime operation, hardly an hour to wire my pleasure centers, and the med tech gave me a two-minute connection; a rush beyond imagining! There was no turning back from that.

The next morning I plugged in as soon as I was out of bed. By week's end I was riding the ecstatic waves of my implant. The company's connection held the key to all the pleasure in the universe.

At sixty-two hours, fifty-nine minutes, and twenty-four seconds I stared at the shining tip of the plug as I drew it to my implant. The voices of the kids faded from my consciousness. I had no choice. I hated this. I loved it. I could be strong. I was lying.

I connected. It was almost sexual, this anticipation of pleasure to come, this act of sweet submission.

But there was no rush. No contact. I stifled a scream and frantically checked the clock. I was early, that was all. Thirty more seconds until eight AM. An eternity.

The monitor screen came on. I felt that first tingling surge. I lusted for more, but, at the same time, I knew that by five p.m. Friday I would hate this damned, horrible, wonderful connection.

'Monday morning work downloading, darling,' Helene said deliciously, seductively, tantalizingly. 'Two hundred and thirty-four case-files ready for processing.' Two hundred and thirty-four hits, each providing an orgasmic rush. I started work with a sob of relief.

Connected.

The End

