

ZONER

through neon eyes



Michael Barnette

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Through Neon Eyes: Zoner
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He waited for the person he had hired for the evening with a mixture of anticipation and just a tiny thrill of fear.

“This one’s supposed to be the best, right?”

The soft, soothing voice of his Environmental Control and Security Unit—the NeuroTech EnCoSet 2400, the newest in personal environmental maintenance and personal security—replied: “Yes, Mr. Jessman.”

The man got up from his chair, his lightly muscled body pale in the artificial sunlight that radiated from the overhead lamps. Real sunlight was considered too dangerous, the outside air too polluted for safety. But the company provided everything he wanted. Fresh air, a clean, safe place to live, the company even had an enclosed exercise yard for tennis, and a par three mini-golf course in the bottom level. All this was his without *too* many soul-wrenching fears....

Ever since he’d been ‘recruited’ away from the Megalli-Loran Corporation—recruited being the current term for the kidnapping of key personnel from another corporation these days—he had been on edge. MLC wouldn’t simply take the loss of their Chief of Computer Research and Development quietly. But he’d been taken from MLC by a skilled ‘hiring team’ from NeuroTech over three months ago

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and there hadn't been so much as an attempt to 'retroactively de-hire' him by the MLC's notorious anti-personnel team. And NeuroTech was paying him far better than he had expected—even better than MLC had done, which was an added bonus.

He paced the floor, his reflection flickering eerily in the large sections of bulletproof glass that covered the windows of his spacious apartment. Fifty-eight floors above the ground, the only chance to come in through that way would be via helicopter, and the winds at this elevation in the heart of the Centralized Corporate area were too strong for a helicopter to navigate with impunity. And the glass, tough as it was, wouldn't hold up against his greatest fear: a rocket launched grenade or missile. But then, those would have to be launched from a nearby structure, and the closest structure was another corporation's tower.

The buzzer alerted him the presence of someone seeking entry into the NeuroTech Corporate Enclave.

"Visual off," he commanded the telecom unit. A green light on the control center flashed to the warm orange of 'stand-by' mode as he began to dress. "Yes?"

"You have a visitor, sir," the voice of the front desk security officer said. "Your visuals are out. Is there a problem, sir?"

"No, no problem. I'm not dressed for a public appearance. You understand."

There was a slight pause, then the guard replied, "Of course, sir."

Jessman wondered what the man was thinking. If

the person he'd requested was all he had been led to believe he or she was...well then, maybe the guard was jealous. Or maybe not.

"Do I let him in or not, sir?"

Him. A man, then. He shivered a bit in anticipation. Jessman hadn't been with another man in a good many months, not since before his arrival at NeuroTech, and the thought of another man sent a thrill of eagerness through him.

"Does he have the security key?"

After a moment's silence the guard's voice relied, "Yes, sir, he does."

"Then send him up."

Jessman checked his reflection in the mirror beside his door. His short, dark hair was neat, his forest green silk shirt and pants were immaculate and spoke of an affluence that was the norm for a highly placed officer of a major corporation. He checked his teeth; perfect and white, the best implants money could buy—some of his own teeth having been lost when the 'hiring team' had subdued him those many weeks ago. NeuroTech had even been so kind as to give him the facial-sculpt that made him even more physically attractive than he'd originally been—not that he'd been unattractive. But MLC hadn't updated his look in several years, and he'd still been wearing the cheekbones and chin that had been popular five years ago. Then NeuroTech had 'recruited' him and the outdated look had been changed. Not only had they made the cosmetic physical changes, they'd added the latest in neurological hardware to sweeten the deal even more. Jessman now had the best available piece

of thoughtware NeuroTech had to offer; and the interface was cool-wired directly into his brainstem. Now he could jack into the Net or an entertainment simvideo without any static coming over a warm-wire like the one he'd been given by MLC. Though they'd been a very good company to work for, their thoughtware interface couldn't compare with what NeuroTech – who specialized in such hardware – had at their disposal.

The door chimed and the EnCoSet's gender neutral voice spoke, "You have a visitor."

Jessman's heart jumped.

He took a deep breath, hurried to the couch and sat. "You may let him in."

There was a soft click, and the door swung soundlessly open.

He was smaller than Jessman had anticipated, maybe 5'7", and he was dressed all in dully gleaming black leather. His hair was the color of cornsilk and fell in a mass of tight braids down over his shoulders, down his chest almost to the archaic looking gunbelt that rode his slim hips. Fastened in the wild tangle of braids were dozens of tiny silver bells, a riot of feathers and neon bright glass beads the shade of a simvideo summer sky.

"Hello, Mr. Jessman." His voice was a dulcet tenor, bordering on a baritone. Low and sexy.

Jessman stared, his dark eyes widening. This wasn't what he had expected. Not at all.

This gunwhore was supposed to be the best money could buy. Somewhere between a bodyguard and a common prostitute, a gunwhore was supposed to be

the ultimate in personal protection and sexual partnership all rolled up in one neat package. This one was reputed to be the best his agent could locate from out of the morass of crushing poverty that was the Liberty City FreeZone; a lawless part of the city where survival was determined with fists, feet, knives, and guns. He'd expected a ruggedly scarred man, not the beautiful boy who was standing before him now. This wasn't a real FreeZoner. Couldn't be. The boy was probably just one of the company's many prostitutes, all dressed up to play at being a FreeZoner to keep an employee happy—and safe. Jessman sighed and tried to hide his disappointment.

Neon-bright eyes the color of summer lightning gazed at him from behind half-closed eyelids. The brilliant color of those eyes left no doubt in Jessman's mind. This boy had probably never even *seen* the FreeZone, much less lived there. Neon color like that cost plenty of money. More than a FreeZoner would see in a lifetime.

"Come in," he managed to say as he stood to greet his visitor, his momentary lapse in composure quickly replaced with the smooth politeness of a man used to the politics of the corporate ladder. He was still disappointed, but he'd make the best of the situation.

The young man stepped into the apartment, his eyes taking in the luxuriousness of the thick cream-colored carpeting, the dark leather upholstered furniture and the glass and brass tables. Expensive neo-renaissance prints hung on the off-white walls. The neon lighting of the youth's eyes burned over everything, as if making permanent digital visual

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records of the scene, his eyes missing nothing of importance.

Jessman held his hand out as though greeting a business associate.

The boy's cool gaze caused him to withdraw his offered hand.

Well trained to his role as a Zoner, Jessman thought. Well, two can play that game. Jessman decided they would both play their roles, even if all they were doing was playing.

"Would you like to have a drink?" Jessman asked. "I have some scotch and a bit of bourbon."

"Either is fine," the boy replied, the rich quality of his voice softly modulated. Jessman decided it was a cyber-enhancement too, and he wondered what else the youth had enhanced. Speculation sent a thrill though Jessman. *Maybe this will turn out better than I have anticipated.* He poured them both drinks and discovered that he was shaking a bit. Even though the boy wasn't what he had expected, his beauty and grace sent a shock of wanting though Jessman. *Yes, this might just turn out all right.*

The boy took the glass from him, glanced coolly at it, then downed the scotch in one swallow. He smiled a slow smile at Jessman and held out the glass again. "I could have another go at some more of that, sir."

Jessman nodded and poured a bit more for the boy, staring at the slender fingers that held the crystal drinking glass. There were small scars on his knuckles, the kind you got from punching people in the teeth, according to the all the adventure simvideos Jessman had linked into. He 'remembered' looking

down and 'seeing' them on himself while he was taking part in the simvideo environment. That had been a good simvideo. One where he'd been a gun toting FreeZoner, hot-wired for speed, enhanced for endurance and strength and able to hold his own in any bar room brawl or gun fight on the street. He'd linked to that particular one over and over again, and each time it had been different, unique. And the sex had been wonderful....

Of course, he knew the scars were, like the rest of the boy's appearance, simply enhancements for the part he was playing tonight. Or does he play it every night? Jessman wondered absently.

While he watched the boy moved nearer to the EnCoSet's main console, looking at the touchpad controls and the system settings with mild interest. Jessman had to admit the boy was good in his role, studying the EnCoSet with half-lidded eyes and a slight smile on his face.

"Mr. Jessman?"

Still thinking about the lost simvideo, he came back to himself with a slight start. "Yes?"

Faster than he could have believed, the boy moved in, had a small device out and pressed against his stomach. "I'm glad I found you so easily, Mr. Jessman. The Megalli-Loran Corporation says hello."

He felt the sting of the needle, and wondered vaguely why the EnCoSet's alarm wasn't going off before the darkness closed in.

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Jessman woke—which in itself was a surprise—with the smell of smoke and something he couldn't identify in his nostrils. He'd thought it was a suicide hit rather than a 're-hire' by MLC. He was glad to discover that MLC had decided to get him back, rather than see that he was 'phased out' of both companies.

Still bleary-eyed from the drug and unable to clearly make out much of his surroundings, Jessman tried to sit up and realized that he was unable to do so. Solid handcuffs of gleaming steel held him spread-eagled to the bed.

It was then, through the clearing haze over his vision, that he noticed the bed itself.

A dark canopy of night-dark cloth that carried the dull shine of black satin arched over his head, held up by a spiderweb design of what looked to his still-bleary eyes like wrought iron in the dim light that suffused the room. The posts that held it in place were patterned after thorn-decked vines, as was the footboard and what he could see of the headboard by straining his neck to look.

It was the motion of his head that brought the other occupant of the room into focus.

The boy was seated on an equally unusual chair, complete with burgundy velvet cushion. There was a cigarette between two of his slender fingers, coils of smoke spiraling toward the distant ceiling. Behind the youth, hanging on the far wall, were an assortment of chains, manacles and other restraint devices.

"Where am I?" Jessman asked.

The boy grinned, his teeth just as perfect and white

as Jessman's own. "You're in the FreeZone, Mr. Jessman."

Jessman went white with the understanding of what he was smelling screaming loudly in his head. There were enough pollutants in the air of the FreeZone to permanently damage his lungs. Seized by a moment of panic, Jessman began to struggle against the solid cuffs that held him to the bed.

"Mr. Jessman, just stay quiet." the boy's voice urged.

"I have to get out of here," Jessman said, desperation sharp in his tone.

The boy stood, dropped the cigarette, crushed it beneath one black booted foot, and crossed the space between himself and the struggling man. "It's no good, Mr. Jessman. Those chains aren't going to break unless you are enhanced for strength, which I know you are not."

"What is it that you want?"

The young man sat down on the bed. "This isn't about what I want from you, Mr. Jessman. It's about what you want from me. *You hired me*, remember?"

Jessman froze, staring up at the boy in confusion. Yes, he *had* hired the boy for a sexual liaison, but....

"This is a simvideo setting, isn't it?"

The boy smiled again, shrugged. "Maybe. Maybe not." His fingers caressed Jessman's face, ran down his throat, over his chest and stopped suggestively right below the waistband of his silk trousers. The smell of the leather that the boy was wearing crept into Jessman's nostrils, along with the sharper odor of cigarette smoke and an underlying metallic tang of

gun oil.

Quicker than Jessman's own cybernetic eyes could accurately follow—the motion so fast that it left a blurring of ghost imaging in his wake—the boy leapt up, caught the iron frame of the bed's canopy and easily arced his slender body upward, to land with a slightly stomach jarring bump straddling Jessman's hips. The boy leaned forward, his leather-jacketed chest pressed against Jessman. He could feel the hardness of the leather, knew it was lined with a composite material, layers of bulletproofing. Just what you'd expect to find on a gunslinging prostitute who roamed the lawless streets of the FreeZone—in a simvideo. Jessman didn't think a real gunwhore off the streets could actually afford a jacket like that, much less the pants that went with it. He could feel the tightness of the leather over the boy's ass pressing against his hips. The boy's weight and the light armoring of the garment pressed against the bones of his pelvis in an uncomfortable way. But he found his heart rate had increased just a bit.

The youth leaned father forward, his breath warm on Jessman's cheek. "So, what it is that you want, Mr. Jessman?"

Jessman's mouth suddenly went dry and he blinked rapidly, trying to clear the imaging suite of his implanted opticals. They were only cosmetic enhancements, better than flesh eyes, but not able to track someone who could move at what passed for combat speed in the Zone. "I...uh...want...I want to know your name."

A look of disappointment crossed the boy's face.

“Is that all?”

He rose to his feet and was gone, leaving only cold air where his warmth had been. Again the optical phantom trailed the boy’s motions, ending where the boy had come to rest, back in the chair, another cigarette between his fingers. It was as though he’d never moved, never rested astride Jessman’s hips. Except for the slowly vanishing heat where their flesh had been in contact.

The dulcet voice purred in Jessman’s ears then, “They call me Bells, Mr. Jessman.” And the boy shook his head, the silver bells in his hair chiming sweetly. Jessman was dimly aware that each time the boy had moved he had been able to hear the gentle ring of the bells in his hair, but the speed with which he moved had been so distracting that the sound hadn’t fully registered on Jessman’s consciousness.

“Bells,” Jessman murmured.

“Sir?”

“Do you remember why I hired you?”

“Yes, sir, I do.”

“Let me go.”

The boy took a drag off the cigarette, tossed it aside, a tiny comet arcing through the darkness, and got to his feet. This time when he moved it was slow, an arrogant swagger that seemed to suit him. He climbed on to the bed, and crouched over Jessman, studying him from half-closed eyes. He reached up and took one of the cuffs that held Jessman’s wrists in one of his slender hands, gripped the metal and squeezed, tightening the locking mechanism more rather than doing as Jessman asked.

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Jessman's breath caught in his throat as the boy leaned across him to tighten the other cuff. The leather of the boy's jacket was pressed hard against Jessman's chest, the boy nearly lying down on top of him in order to reach the cuff. Though only of average height, Jessman was a good six inches taller than Bells, who had to strain to reach Jessman's other hand. The leather couldn't fully disguise the firmness of the boy's stomach where it pressed against Jessman. Bells pulled himself a bit farther across Jessman in order to get a firm grip on the cuff, and the man felt a sharp jab as the gun that rode the boy's trim hips dug into his ribs. He heard the lock click twice, the metal biting into his wrists almost painfully.

Jessman swallowed the slight tang of fear that had gathered in his throat. He'd jacked into lots of simvideos, but none had been like this. He'd always been the one in control of the situation before, and he'd thought this time would be the same for him. He'd paid for the fantasy, and he felt he should be the one calling the shots. Jessman's favorite role had always been that of the benevolent FreeZone gunslinger coming to the rescue of an old friend who'd gotten into more trouble than he could handle. They'd solve the problem and then have incredibly passionate sex. Jessman had enjoyed that simvideo. But it too had been lost. Left behind when NeuroTech's 'hiring team' hauled him out of the MLC corporate enclave.

This whole situation was different.

He was at the mercy of another man. Helpless.

Handcuffed to a bed of iron in an unfamiliar place. Simvideo or not, he couldn't help but be a bit afraid. Deep down, he realized that the fear he was feeling was part of the scenario too, but it was so compelling that it became *his* fear. Real and chilling.

Bells sat up, his eyes cold and bright. "I'm going to teach you a few things, Mr. Jessman."

"Teach me?"

The boy grinned, his strong fingers gathering up the silk of Jessman's shirt.

The man's body was jerked upward slightly amid the sound of tearing fabric.

Cool air caressed Jessman's bare skin where his shirt had been. The man's nipples tightened, his heartbeat taking up a newer, faster pace. Jessman turned his head in time to see the newly made rag flutter to the floor amid the dual optical ghosts of Bells ripping the shirt off of his body, then leaping off of the bed and crossing the room to a cabinet that Jessman hadn't noticed before in the darkness of the room.

When he came back toward Jessman, it was with that slow swaggering step.

The sway of the boy's gun-weighted hips sent a thrill of desire through Jessman. *He's so damned beautiful, and perfect that this just has to be a simvideo.* And then Jessman realized what it was the boy carried in his hands. A short riding crop of braided leather that he caressed while he stared at Jessman, the smile never leaving his face.

Jessman broke out in a cold sweat. "Wha...? What are you going to do?"

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The boy said nothing, but his smile chilled Jessman's blood.

Fear lanced through Jessman, driving a cold steel spike into his guts. "This isn't what I want. I paid you for this, you should do what *I* want."

Bells' sensual mouth curved into a slight smile of amusement, "But Mr. Jessman, you told the broker that you wanted the real thing. A FreeZone gunwhore. You got what you paid for, now I'm going to teach you a few things about life in the FreeZone. I'm going to teach you about the Sweet Sisters, Mr. Jessman."

"The Sweet Sisters?" he asked, worried by the way Bells kept running the length of the crop through his hands.

"Yes, Mr. Jessman. I'm going to teach you all about the Sisters, Pleasure and Pain." As he spoke, Bells had come closer to the bed until he was standing beside it. He ran the tip of the riding crop over Jessman's bare chest, lightly flicked his right nipple, then the left one.

"This isn't...." Jessman began, then bit his lip as the end of the leather crop slid slowly down his body, scratching gently, lower and lower until the sensation of its touch left his skin and flowed over the silk of his trousers. He found himself getting hard, much to his own surprise.

Bells' smile widened. "Ah, so you *do* like this. Good."

Again the visual phantom of motion frosted Jessman's vision as the crop swung to lay a stinging series of welts across his taut abdomen. A gasp of pain was torn from his throat, and then pain lessened

to a dull sting. Three stripes marred his faintly tanned skin and Bells stood astraddle him, one booted foot planted low on Jessman's trembling belly. The heel of his small foot pressed against Jessman's limp cock, causing it to stir to life once more. Jessman, his heart hammering in his chest, stared upward at the boy, his eyes twin mirrors of confusion and fear. The boy moved so damned fast that Jessman's gasp of shock was ripped from his throat long after Bells was once again kneeling over his hips, his tongue fluttering over Jessman's nipples. Jessman's cock stiffened beneath the boy's firm ass, straining against the confines of the silk bikini briefs he wore. Then the boy's leather clad ass pressed down hard, teasing Jessman to an erection that was so solid that it hurt inside the unyielding material. He groaned, his desire mounting higher, overcoming his fear.

Bells sat up, leaning backward to increase the pressure on Jessman's straining flesh. He rocked and swayed a moment, then stopped, his neon gaze meeting Jessman's dark eyes. "You want it bad, don't you?"

"Yes," Jessman agreed, desire thick in his tone. *I've been so long without another man, with only the companionship of the company's pretty-girls....*

Bells's teeth flashed in a wicked grin and he stood, staring down at Jessman's helpless body with something akin to contempt. "You're weak, Mr. Jessman. I could break you, make you beg for my slightest touch, the kiss of this...." he struck Jessman stingingly across the chest with the crop and watched the man flinch with an air of satisfaction.

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Jessman's cock lost some of its solidity as the pain seared through his nerves. He wanted this gunwhore, wanted him like he'd never wanted anyone before. But the handcuffs kept him from moving, kept him from grabbing the boy and pulling him down on the soft, satin-sheeted bed. He tugged in frustration at the handcuffs, knowing the futility of the gesture.

The boy's grin was feral.

And then Bells began to unfasten his armored jacket. First he undid the zipper that held the outside flap closed, then one by one the snaps that held the inside layer shut were undone.

Jessman's prick became like iron, a throbbing rod of living steel as he watched the youth slowly remove the leather that had hidden his flesh from Jessman's eyes.

The boy's chest was muscular, tanned to a color Jessman could only dream of attaining. Criss-crossing his chest and the hard muscled abdomen below was a harness of black leather that vanished into the waistband of his pants.

With the jacket gone, Jessman could see the enticing bulge of the young man's crotch seemingly so far away, though hardly more than three feet actually separated them.

He found that, despite the circumstances, regardless of the whip, he wanted this boy as he'd never desired any of his completely illusionary simvideo sex partners. Even if this *was* another simvideo—and he had no reason to believe it was anything more than that—he *had* actually seen and touched this boy in the waking world; knew he was

real flesh and blood in the solid world outside the simvideo. And he wanted him all the more for it. *The best simvideos are the ones that are made by a living person.*

With the grace of a trained acrobat—or a martial artist, Jessman realized—Bells hopped off the bed, twisting in mid-air so he was still facing Jessman when he landed on his feet.

Jessman was getting used to the blurring of the optics as they tried unsuccessfully to accurately track the youth's inhumanly swift movements.

The pain of the crop striking repeatedly to his chest and twice to his belly didn't hit until the boy had already stopped striking him this time. So rapid were the blows, Jessman's unenhanced nervous system hadn't registered them all until they were over. Even his swollen cock hadn't had time to go soft before the boy's warm hand was rubbing it through the thin veil of his trousers.

Flashes of pain rose from his abused flesh, the lash of desire rose from his prick, blending into a sensation that made Jessman tremble. The youth's hand kept up a steady but slow motion, expertly keeping him aroused. Then the crop stung, once, twice, but the speed and rhythm of Bells' hand on his cock never wavered.

Crack, crack. The need building in his groin, the sting of the whip across this chest. Over and over it repeated until Jessman was moaning in a fever of agony so intermingled with the pleasure blazing through his crotch that he couldn't have said when the pain and pleasure—the Sweet Sisters, as Bells had

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called them—had merged into one white-hot entity roiling in his flesh.

And then it stopped.

Jessman came back to himself, bathed in sweat, the pressure in his balls nearly unbearable. He looked for Bells, and found him seated once more in the chair, a lit cigarette dangling from his lips. His eyes were closed, his breathing slow, even, as though he'd fallen asleep.

"Bells?"

The eyes opened, focused on Jessman, "Yeah?"

The voice was still velvet in Jessman's ears, but the tone had changed. It was not the respectful murmur of a boy speaking, it was now the hard-edged voice of a man.

"Why did you...stop?"

A brief laugh rolled out of Bells' mouth, "Because I wanted to, that's why." He got to his feet, the cigarette dropping to the floor like the others had. He crossed the room, hopped up on to the bed and broke the steel handcuffs that held Jessman down with his bare hands as easily as Jessman would have broken a pencil.

"But," Jessman's confusion was plain to read on his face. "Why?"

The boy tilted his head, regarding Jessman, "You like the Sisters now, huh?"

Jessman nodded, faintly shocked by his own answer. The welts hurt, but there was no denying the fullness of his aching balls. The desire flaming in his blood. He wanted this boy.

"How old are you?" Jessman blurted, and then

wondered why it mattered.

Bells, caught off guard by the question, recoiled. He shook his head, "You wouldn't believe me if I told you."

"I want to know."

Bells sighed, ran a hand over his head, grinned. "Almost twenty-seven, I guess. I'm not sure."

Jessman stared at him, shook his head. He didn't believe it. Not at all. The boy didn't look a day over seventeen or eighteen at the most. Instead of voicing his doubt, though, Jessman said, "Not sure?"

"No birth certificates in the FreeZone, you know how it is. Hell, most people can't even read." The neon of his gaze met Jessman's eyes. He smiled.

Jessman suddenly slipped an arm around the boy, leaned forward and kissed him hard on the mouth. The boy's lips parted and Jessman's kiss deepened, his tongue probing and he drew him closer, his mouth moving until his lips and tongue were exploring the younger man's jaw and throat. He rolled Bells over himself, a bit stunned by how heavy he was, then remembered that the type of cybernetic enhancements that a gunwhore was likely to have would add five to ten kilograms to a person's mass. Based on how fast the boy moved, he had to be neurologically boosted to the technological maximum, and from the display of strength he'd shown in breaking the handcuffs off, he had to have some pretty hightech muscle enhancements. Probably even his bones were reinforced. Jessman was glad for the weight room that NeuroTech had. When he'd been at MLC he'd not had the benefit of weight

training. He'd been much softer then. Now a respectable amount of muscle clad his corporate-owned body.

Still caressing Bells with his mouth and tongue, Jessman rolled on top of him, enjoying the feel of the boy's hard muscled body beneath him. The added sensual feel of the leather that crossed over the boy's chest and vanished so suggestively into the waist of his leather pants served to excite Jessman's curiosity. His hands roamed, searching for the closures that held the leather pants together.

With an ease that annoyed Jessman, Bells pulled away, tried to stand...but Jessman's fingers were tangled in a handful of the youth's long braids. He hauled the boy down again. Bells lay back on the bed, staring coolly up at Jessman for a moment. Then, like a wisp of smoke, he was gone, walking back to the cabinet. Jessman's fingers opened, his wrist feeling slightly bruised. The boy's escape had been so fast, so sudden that Jessman didn't even know how it had been done. When Bells returned he was carrying a cat-'o-nine-tails. He stopped beside the bed, staring at Jessman.

"You want me?"

"Yes," Jessman replied, his voice deep, desire laden. He'd found himself enjoying this, despite the pain, or perhaps because of it.

"Then you're going to have to brave this for me," he told Jessman, running the supple leather of the cat through his slender hands.

The new whip didn't scare Jessman. He'd do anything to have the boy now. Whatever Bells wanted

was fine by him. "All right. I'll do it."

"Lay down."

Jessman started to lie back on the bed, face up as he had been before. Bells shook his head. "No, I want you to lie face down this time."

Obediently, Jessman complied.

His silk trousers went the way of his shirt in short order, his underwear following a fraction of an instant later.

"I expect you to lie still, just as if you were handcuffed. If you don't lie still, you can't have me. Understood?"

"Yes." Jessman gripped the iron head rails.

The cat battered his back, raising stinging welts, once, twice, thrice, all to the soft chiming of the silver bells in the boy's hair. The blows were rapid at first, in the same rhythm the riding crop had been applied; hard and faster than Jessman's nerves could register. But the stinging lash slowed, the tails of the cat falling motionless to rest on his burning skin and then slide sensuously away, slithering down his body, over his ass in a lingering caress.

A moan of ecstasy came from Jessman's lips. He was so close now. He was ready to cum. He wanted it. But the cat was unmoving on his back. He began to turn his head.

"Don't move!"

Jessman stared straight ahead, his body trembling under the lash of the boy's voice. But the voice was different in Jessman's ears. Deeper, softer, with a hard edge to it. Was it Bells's own growing desire that had put a harsh edge into the once dulcet tones?

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Then a finger touched Jessman's neck, just below his thoughtware port. Jessman felt the cool shock of a plug being pressed into the port and waited for the falling sensation that always hit him when he first jacked in. But there was no disorientation, nothing. Just a coolness, the distant ache of his groin and the burning heat of his welted flesh.

The cold snake of a heavily insulated cable coiled on his back then and he started to turn, only to have a hand grip the back of his head.

"Don't move."

Jessman opened his mouth to speak and then the link made contact amid a burst of neon colors and loud electronic music that quickly vanished into silence and darkness.

A voice, the boy's velvet words filled his head. "I've jacked you into my own port, Jessman. What you feel, I'll feel. But you'll also feel everything that I do to you too."

"Okay. Now what?" Jessman asked, trying to see through the darkness filling his head.

"Just lie still, and I'll do all the work."

Through the link Jessman experienced the boy's movements as he slowly removed his clothes, shedding the heavy pants he wore, realizing that the boots had already been taken off before the link had engaged. The air was chilly against the boy's skin after the warmth of the leather and the sudden change in temperature made his prick go partially hard. Jessman shivered with the boy, aware of the placement of an unusual harness surrounding the boy's stiffening member and tightly hugging his

already encased balls. Knowledge flowed through the link into Jessman's thoughts.... The harness wrapped the boy's cock, leaving only the head exposed, cupping his balls tightly. It was a sensation new to Jessman, and he found his own cock aching from the increased sensation feeding in through the link.

The fire of the riding crop stung Jessman's butt cheeks, drew trails of pain down the backs of his thighs, leaving a path of glowing heat that he now could see through the boy's superior optical suite. He heard the boy moan with the pain, its sting hardening his leather-girded cock until the leather was as tight fitting as a glove. Each sharp blow of the crop sent a thrill of pleasure rocking through the link, driving the young man's passion to new levels, showing Jessman the truth of the Sweet Sisters in a way Jessman had only glimpsed before now. The crop fell over and over, the pain climbing to levels that would have otherwise been unbearable to one so new to the Sisters Kisses. Jessman's own pleasure mingled with the boy's until Jessman shouted in the grip of the most powerful orgasm he'd ever known, only dimly aware that it had not been generated in his own body, though he'd shot his wad along with Bells.

Then the punishing caress of the riding crop ceased. There was the gentle feel of the boy's hands on his back, as Bells touched and caressed the red weals. His fingers were cool against Jessman's stinging skin, the touch light, but creating a new type of pain. Then Jessman was aware of the boy pressing the length of his firm young body against Jessman's back and butt. The young man's leather girt cock

teasing Jessman's ass, pressing against one butt cheek, sliding into the crack to probe at the pucker of his ass. But Jessman also knew the passion that was building within the boy as he kissed and licked Jessman's whipped flesh, as he slowly began to press himself into the crack of Jessman's ass with the tip of his leather-reinforced cock. The soft-skinned head of the boy's prick contrasted with the still smooth, yet firmer feel of the leather-wrapped shaft where it touched.

Jessman shuddered...and the sharp sting of the crop licked his thighs suddenly, one, two, three; flaming along his nerves like the beginning of a total thoughtware burn-out. Feed-back blared through Jessman's head as Bells writhed in an orgasm that left the Zonewarrior shaking with passion induced weakness screaming along his hot-wired reflexes. Helpless, caught in the grip of something so new, so unfamiliar to his experiences, Jessman's body was wracked by another thought-numbing orgasm, his cum soaking the already damp satin.

For a moment Bells was still, unmoving against Jessman. The leather of the harness crossing the other man's body felt like a lover's embrace to Jessman's overloaded nerves. And the cool air of the room was a lover's tender caress over his whip-raw back.

Finally, the boy sat back, a tremor ran through his body and was quickly stilled. His hands moved over Jessman's shoulders, down the older man's back, over the curve of his reddened butt to gently spread his stinging ass-cheeks.

Jessman gasped, groaned at the slight touch of the

other man's finger on his tight asshole. The finger moved away, and Jessman was lost in the ache of desire. He'd wanted the finger to do more than it had. He'd wanted more than the teasing pressure that he'd been given. More than the mere touch of the boy's finger, Jessman wanted the throbbing leather-clad prick to slip into his puckered ass. A low moan escaped Jessman's lips, and he arched his back, trying to induce Bells to use the eagerly presented orifice.

The cool slickness of a clear gel that the boy covered the head and leather-covered shaft of his cock with was in discordant contrast to the fiery blaze that was raging through Jessman's body. Right before Bells slid it into Jessman's eagerly awaiting ass, he gave Jessman a sharp slap on the hip. Jessman's legs spread a bit, giving the other man easier access to his asshole, wanting the feel of Bells' achingly hard cock pounding into him.

They both gasped when Bells' prick parted the pucker of Jessman's ass, the slickness of the gel making the passage one of coolness and contrasting sensations. Jessman's ass had never been probed before. He'd always been the one who'd done the penetrating. He'd never been the one on the bottom, and with an abrupt realization, he knew that it was where he'd *really* wanted to be, all along. Jessman found himself wanting this experience, this boy as he'd never wanted anyone before in his life. The deep arousal that drove Bells led Jessman to places he'd never known. These new sensations and emotions weren't part of himself they were part of this other, this boy, who Jessman now knew with a certainty

wasn't a boy.

The new frenzy of another climax was building inside Jessman, racing ahead of his partner's greater control. The thrusting of the man's prick in his ass was driving Jessman's cock against the satin sheets with a growing fury. The pressure was building, going harder and faster than anything Jessman had experienced before. His breath was ragged, gasping, being pounded out of his body with every hammering blow of Bells' tightly wrapped prick. The rhythm of the boy-man forcing Jessman to breathe not as he desired to, but as the demanding pace would permit. The feedback from Bells, the tight embrace of the leather, the smoothly slick interior of Jessman's own flesh on the head of Bells' cock, added to the agony of pleasure and pain that was growing beyond all bounds in Jessman's straining body.

Then, Jessman orgasmed, his body bucking beneath the youthful man who rode him. Bells' leather-wrapped cock pounded into him with an ever-increasing rhythm, faster and faster until Jessman knew that only someone with a very expensive reflex boosting wirejob could maintain such a pace. He shuddered under Bells, another orgasm wracking his flesh, the sting of the riding crop returning anew, across his shoulders, its pace matching the driving prick in his ass. Higher and higher went the spiral of passion, the driving cock pounding harder and harder until Jessman thought he would split. Then came Bells' release, and they screamed their joy together...

* * * *

Jessman woke later, groggy, naked...and alone.

He was in his own bed, sprawled out on his back, arms and legs akimbo. The sheets were soaked with sweat and semen.

For a while he lay there in the darkness, relishing the drifting feeling that was a combination of total sexual fulfillment and simvideo feedback, thinking about the strangeness of the sim he'd just been in. He knew he'd had someone come up to his apartment, realized that the EnCoSet hadn't sounded an alarm because he'd never been abducted, never gone anywhere but his own bedroom.

Then he wondered if the boy, if *Bells* was still there.

He carefully reached up to remove the jack plug in the back of his head, knowing that anything that intense had to have been a simvideo; no real person was actually that good.

His hands wouldn't move, they were tightly enclosed in the metallic caress of handcuffs, and his back and chest hurt in a way he'd come to associate with the whip's kiss. The caress of the Sweet Sister, Pain.

"Hello? Bells? Are you here?" He couldn't believe it. *Could it have been real?* "Bells?" the question was whispered, "Are you still here?"

"I'm here," the soft voice spoke from the darkness. Jessman shuddered with the memory of the younger man's passion as he'd spilled his hot cum inside Jessman's willing ass, and he wondered, "How much of it was real?"

ZONER

There was a gentle-sounding laugh from the darkened room, "All of it, Jessman. I brought you back here about two hours ago."

Jessman's blood went momentarily cold. "You took me out of NeuroTech's Enclave?"

"Yes."

"How?"

Bells' soft laugh preceded his reply: "I'm a bit more skilled than your average gunwhore, Jessman. I'm a real zonewarrior, not a pretty-boy corpman's plaything. And the EnCoSet isn't all that complex compared to security in a restricted area."

A shudder ran through Jessman, the memory of just how much above the average the boy—who wasn't a boy, truthfully—was burned into his raw nerves. His ass still ached from the pounding it had taken, and his balls felt drained.

Had he really been out of the corptower? Had he really been kidnapped? It all had a dreamlike quality. The same sort of unreal feel of a simvideo.

"But you brought me back!"

"Yes, I was supposed to kill you for MLC." He shrugged, "I could have used a feedback overload to do it, that's what I'd planned to do, but..." Bells appeared out of the darkness, his leathers once more covering his solidly muscled body. He sat down on the bed beside Jessman. "They offered me 20k in Zone script to off you."

Jessman paled, "Twenty thousand! But you didn't kill me?"

"I decided that I liked your ass too much to waste it." He sat, looking at Jessman's helpless form where

he lay on the bed. He smiled a slow, secret smile.

“What will you do now?” Jessman asked. His voice quiet, filled with a tinge of hope. *Just maybe...*

Bells ran his hand over Jessman’s chest, the fingers lightly trailing down his belly to finally wrap around Jessman’s cock.

Much to his startlement, he found himself growing stiff in the other man’s hand.

Bells leaned down, kissed the head of Jessman’s prick, took it into his mouth and began to suck gently. Then just as suddenly as he had started, Bells stopped.

“I was hoping that I could find steady employment...somewhere.” He tilted his head, his neon blue eyes filled with speculation as he studied Jessman. His gaze wandered down the older man’s body, and his hand, firm and strong, gripped Jessman’s prick, began to stroke it.

Jessman smiled, “You’re hired. When can you start?”

“Now, sir.” Bells' mouth found Jessman’s cock and began to suck eagerly.

End

About the Author

Michael Barnette once lived in the wilds of Miami, but moved to a quiet town in Northeast Georgia where he'd be able to concentrate on his writing rather than the sound of gunfire which he prefers to leave in his fiction.