

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

MADELEINE OH

POWER
EXCHANGE

POWER EXCHANGE

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Madeleine Oh

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Ellora's Cave
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Chapter One

"Trust me!" Annie Cavendish looked into her new lover's face and wondered why she hesitated. "You must trust me, Annie," Mark repeated.

"Of course, I do." Feeling a little guilty at half-snapping, she added, "Mark, You know I do."

"Completely?"

He had beautiful, dark blue eyes, almost too beautiful for a man, except they were no more feminine than the rest of him, and now they met hers with an intensity that had her shivering in spite of the summer sunshine. "Completely," she replied, ignoring the shiver down her spine.

Mark's wide mouth slowly curled up. His lips parted just enough to show the moist pink tip of his tongue and a glimpse of teeth. The corners of his eyes crinkled as his face lit with triumph. His hand covered hers. "Annie, you are perfect." His fingers squeezed. "And mine."

The unmistakable message in his eyes sent a long, hot shudder of excitement over her skin. They'd only just got out of bed. Did he want to take her back already? Not that she'd complain.

"My lovely slut," Mark whispered, just loud enough so the couple at the next table turned. "Did you enjoy it when I fucked you this morning?"

Annie swallowed to ease her dry throat. "Yes."

"Good." He turned her hand over on the table and traced slow circles on her palm. "What about last night? Did you like me licking your clit?"

"You know I did!" Her hand shook under his fingers.

"Of course. You screamed when you came. I wonder if the people outside heard. The window was open."

Heaven, help her! It had been. "Mark!" Her entire body tensed in horror.

"Yes, my dear?" His eyes seemed bigger and hotter as he raised his eyebrows. "Not getting shy on me are you? I can't allow that to happen."

They were on their way to lunch with friends. If he kept this up, she'd be wet and aching by the time they arrived. His fingers traced the inside of her wrists. Her breath caught as she tried to speak. Desperate to calm down before embarrassing herself in public, she pulled her hand away. His palm clapped down. Hard. Pressing her hand until she felt the ridges of the seersucker tablecloth.

"Don't pull away from me, my dear, I want to feel your hands. The soft skin of your palms reminds me of the inside your thighs."

Annie gulped. By the dark heat in his eyes, Mark was as turned on as she was. Maybe they would detour by his flat before driving out to his friends. It would have to be a quickie, just like yesterday afternoon. Minutes after she arrived, he'd bent her over his kitchen table and taken her so furiously she'd barely been able to stand afterwards.

"Relax," he said, resuming his teasing caress. "You like this."

Nodding was easier than forcing words through a tight throat. Relaxing her hand, she watched Mark's face as he intently stroked her love and lifelines and trailed up and down between each finger. "Beautiful skin, my dear, soft and sweet, soft like your breasts and sweet like between your legs."

"Mark!" Someone would hear, and she'd be mortified.

He smiled, a wicked grin that told all too clearly he'd planned every minute and was enjoying himself all out. "Sorry, dear. You're just so marvelous, I can't help it." He gave a little apologetic shrug. "Annie." He gazed down over her neck and breasts. "Are you wearing

panties?"

"You know I am." He sat in his leather armchair and watched her dress not half an hour earlier.

"Yes, of course, the lovely white lace ones." He nodded as a slow smile curled his full mouth. "Go take them off."

"What!"

"You heard me." He put an edge in his voice. "Nip into the ladies, take them off, and toss them in the trash."

"Mark, they're a good pair! Expensive! I can't throw them away!"

"My dear, I know exactly how much they cost. I bought them," he paused, the smile disappearing. "Take them off." Annie's heart flipped as warmth gathered between her legs. Cold excitement shivered down her spine.

"But we've a long walk back to your apartment."

"And I want the sun and the air blowing on your pussy every step of the way." Annie gulped. The rate he was going, she'd be lucky if she could walk. "Hurry up." He angled his head towards the inside of the coffee shop. "Panties off!"

It seemed miles from the June sunshine, through the open door under the striped awning, across the dark interior of the coffee shop, past tables and a very interested waiter lounging by the espresso machine, all the way back to the door with 'Ladies' in ornate copperplate gilt letters. Inside was cool and pink and smelling of floral air freshener. Two carefully dressed women glanced briefly at Annie and then gave a hundred percent of their attention to restoring their lip gloss. Just as well, she was sweating like a pig and her pulse rate had to be approaching stroke level. A conviction the women could read her intentions had her scurrying to the nearest cubicle and leaning against the door as she shot the brass bolt home.

She'd spend whole days minus panties in Mark's flat and enjoyed the feeling of naughtiness. Why was this so upsetting? No one would ever know after all. She eased her white lace briefs down and stepped out of them. Tempted to tuck the expensive lace and silk in her handbag, she remembered it still sat on the pavement outside. Too bad! She shoved them in the small trashcan on the wall, unbolted the door and stepped out. Shoulders back and head high, she went back to Mark.

He'd just put down the silver coffee pot and was pouring milk into her cup. Milk, not cream, and exactly the right amount. Perfect. It took two hands to lift the generously sized cup. Inhaling the aroma of good coffee, she touched her lips to the rim and sipped the rich, dark brew.

"How does it feel to be naked under your clothes in public?" Mark asked.

He was darn lucky she wasn't spluttering hot coffee over the table. Forcing calm, she met his eyes over the rim. And she'd thought the coffee was hot. "It feels...breezy," she answered. Pleased her voice stayed steady, she took a careful sip of coffee before setting the cup back in the saucer.

"Breezy!" Mark chuckled. "My dear, you pick wonderful words. Here." He pushed the basket of croissants in her direction. "Help yourself, they're almond filled." She reached for a croissant and dipped it into her coffee as Mark went on. "Let me tell you about Emma and Alistair, they're wonderful old friends. I spend a lot of time with them and I'm sure they'll love you."

Emma and Alistair were a nice couple: welcoming and openly affectionate. They lived in a sprawling, Edwardian house, complete with a sheepdog and two Siamese cats and enjoyed the sort of life style Annie imagined she and Mark might share one day. She said as much to Emma as they cleaned up after lunch.

"Sure about that?" Emma asked, as she bent over to fit a plate in the dishwasher.

"Yes, I really am." Annie replied. "You have such a beautiful house and Alistair is so obviously in love with you."

"Right," Emma straightened and reached for a wine glass. "Don't believe everything you see." She upended the glass in the top rack. "There's more to Alistair, and Mark, than meets the eye and..."

"What's going on?" Alistair spoke from the doorway. The handful of cutlery in Emma's hand clattered into the sink. "Pet, watch what you're doing."

"Yes, I...er..." Emma began, before her voice dried up.

No one spoke. Emma fumbled with the spoons and forks, Alistair scowled, and Mark frowned.

Driven to ease the tension simmering over the kitchen sink, Annie said, "We're doing the dishes. Want to help?"

Mark stepped towards her. "You're as good as finished. I want to show you something. Come on."

His hand closed on hers. His arm curved round her waist and she was out the kitchen door and into the garden before she thought about it. "Where are we going?"

"Here!" He opened the garage door and pulled her inside.

"What did you want to show me?" Other than two cars, a riding lawn mower and a few cans of paint stacked on shelves.

"This!" Mark slammed her against him, his hands on her bottom, his hips angling into her. That he was hard didn't surprise her. But his eyes did, they were raw, heated and almost angry as he frowned down at her. "My dear, I've spent a painful three hours thinking about your bare ass and naked pussy. His hands pulled at her skirt and slid up her thighs to cup her bottom.

"You're the one insisted I walk around without panties!" Mark smiled, and Annie yelped as he pinched her.

"Right!" His hands slid down her thighs pulling her even closer. With her skirt hiked up front and back there was no mistaking his arousal. While his cock pressed into her belly, one hand tickled and teased the back of her thighs, and the other moved between her legs. "You're wet," he whispered. "Wet for me, my dear?"

"It certainly isn't for Alistair!"

A deep echoing laugh rippled Mark's belly, bringing his hard body even closer. "Sure about that? You wouldn't fancy his cock inside you?"

"No way!"

"Mmmm," Mark's mouth nuzzled down her neck, nipping as he reached the soft hollow at her collarbone. Annie squealed as he bit harder and then shivered as his hand slid up between her thighs, parting them so she stood legs apart. "Feel the breeze now?"

Breeze? More like a storm! She moaned as his finger slipped inside and gently moved round and in and out until she squirmed and pressed her head into his shoulder. "Mark!"

"Yes, my dear?" Now two fingers filled her. "Want me to fuck you, Annie?"

She gasped as his fingers drove in deep, almost lifting her off her feet. She grabbed his shoulders. "What if someone comes in?"

"They'll find me doing what you like best," Chest heaving, Annie looked up into dark eyes that fairly steamed with lust. "Undo my belt," he whispered.

Her hands shook but she managed it. The two ends of his alligator leather belt hung loose as she tugged at the metal hooks at his waistband. She lowered his zip and smiled as he bulged out

of his white cotton underwear.

"See what you did to me?" His voice was slow and accusing. "For that, young lady, you deserve a good frigging."

"You think so?" Annie tossed her head back and smiled. Certain they both wanted the same thing. Needed the same thing. Without warning, Mark lifted her onto the hood of the car. Surprised at the cool metal against her butt and thighs, she wobbled and leaned forward, clutching his shirt.

"Easy," he whispered, uncurling her fingers and laying her back against the car. "Don't go anywhere." To make sure she couldn't, he stepped between her knees, spreading her legs with his thighs. He leaned over and, one slow buttonhole at a time, unbuttoned her blouse and pushed it open. He frowned, looking over her white lace bra, "We'll have to get rid of this."

"I'm not walking around without one!" Annie said as she arched her back bringing her breasts nearer to his pressing fingers.

"You won't take you bra off for me?" he asked, squeezing her nipples through the lace.

"Not outside!" She yelped as he pinched her nipple.

"What if I really wanted it?"

"You don't, do you?" Panties was one thing, but walking around with her boobs hanging loose...

"Don't worry," he whispered, his breath warm on her ear. "For now it goes." He unsnapped the front opening and bent his mouth to each nipple in turn. "but I'll let you keep your bra on outside."

"You'll let me! I'll wear a bra if I..." she forgot the rest as he grasped her hips with both hands and pulled her to the edge of the hood, her legs waving in the air. Her head dropped back against the car and her long drawn out sigh accompanied his slow penetration.

This was heaven, heat and wonder! How could one man do so much to her? Every nerve and fiber shook as his slow pounding carried her higher and higher until her head tossed and her shoulders and back arched and twisted under him. One hand still held her hips steady but his other slipped between her legs and found her clit. Two, three touches and she no longer cared how much she moaned, or who heard. A few more strokes and she was shouting. His touch continued as he drove in faster and harder. A final pressure of his finger and she screamed, her whole body bucking with satisfaction. Then he grunted and spilled into her before leaning over to kiss her gasping mouth.

"My dear," Mark whispered as he stood up and helped her to her feet. "Sure about that bra? I could keep it in my pocket for you?"

"Quite sure," she hooked it back together to prove her point. "I've got to wear something underneath."

His mouth suggested he disagreed but he said nothing more as they straightened their clothes in silence. Annie wished she had a mirror. She tried to smooth her hair, not easy with only her fingers. What must she look like?

"Like a woman who's just been soundly fucked!" Mark said.

Damn him! Could he read her mind? Probably! This closeness was a two-edged sword. She opened the door, dazzled for a minute by the sunshine, and stepped out, Mark right behind.

"Just a minute" He caught her by the wrist. "What did Emma say just before we came in?"

Annie blinked from surprise and the unaccustomed sunlight. "Not much. Just chit chat really. Why?"

Mark shrugged. "Things are a bit sticky between them right now. Alistair wondered if she'd been bad mouthing him."

"Not in the least!" As if she'd tell if Emma had. Women didn't blab like men. "What's wrong? They seem such a nice couple. He's so affectionate, not like some men who treat their wives like furniture."

"It'll sort itself out. Just didn't want her bothering you."

"She wasn't. In fact I like her."

"Good." He opened the door into the kitchen. "We won't stay much longer. I want to take you home."

"You'll be back next weekend then? Smashing!" Emma beamed as they said goodbye. "You'll play?"

"Not this time," Mark replied before Annie had a chance to ask what she meant. "We'll just drop by for drinks."

"Right!" Alistair, smiled, his arm round Emma's shoulders. "There'll be other times. Drive carefully!"

"What *are* we doing on Saturday?" Annie asked, not even trying to hide her irritation. Mark didn't answer for her, nor did he run her social life.

"After drinks with Emma and Alistair, which will give you a chance to meet more of my friends, I thought we'd go to that new Thai restaurant in Richmond."

She loved Thai food and Mark knew it. She could hardly complain about that without seeming bitchy. Bitchy had its place but not when she'd just enjoyed wild, hot, sex and was anticipating an encore when Mark got her home. "Sounds wonderful." She paused a minute watching the trees rush pass on the roadside as Mark's Jaguar hummed its way through the Surrey countryside. "I'll look forward to seeing Emma and Alistair again."

Mark glanced from the road just long enough to give her a pleased smile. "I've very glad you like them. Hope you'll like my other friends as much."

"I'm sure I will." No lie. She liked most people. Over her years of teaching she'd learned to.

Mark's left hand dropped from the steering wheel and eased its way under her skirt, "I love your warm, soft thighs and what lies between them," he whispered. "You'll keep your promise about no panties?"

What promise? But it did feel rather wicked. "I'll go without them when I'm with you, but if you think I'm going to walk into a classroom without them, you've got to be dreaming!"

His laughter came in a slow, long sexy peal from deep in his belly. Even the hand on her thigh shook. "I should hope not! I don't want a lot of spotty schoolboys getting glimpses of my pussy. You wear nice, sensible passion killers every day to work and rip them off when you get home."

"Okay." It wasn't hard to agree.

His hand eased a little higher, one finger gently tickling her curls. "I used to dream about a woman like you, Annie. Now I've found you, I don't think I'll ever let you go." He gave her pussy hair a gentle tug and then eased back his hand. He'd need both to maneuver the curves ahead.

Not far now. Five, ten minutes and they'd be at her house and one look at Mark's face told her he was counting on coming in for coffee. A super end to a great weekend. With another to look forward to. "What will Emma and Alistair be playing on Saturday? Bridge?"

The car swerved as he jerked with surprise. He righted the car and gave her a very amused glance. "Annie, you crack me up. Bridge indeed!" He cackled.

"What's so funny about that? My parents play bridge with their neighbors."

His eyes took on a thoughtful set as his mouth settled in a serious line. "Annie," he spoke slowly, as if weighing his words. "I'd meant to tell you this later, after you met everyone and got comfortable with them, but since you asked..." He paused to change gear as they approached the hill outside her village. "We play grown-up games." He glanced her way, a slight smile hovering on his lips. "You understand?"

She shook her head. What was he talking about?

Mark sighed. "Annie, after socializing and dinner, people take off their clothes and play sex games."

Annie sagged back against the leather upholstery, exhaled slowly, her heart racing at killer speed. What the hell did she say to that?

Mark broke her confused silence. "Did I shock you?"

"Yes!"

He smiled. Slowly. Never taking his beautiful eyes off the road. "Shocked...but perhaps...intrigued? Maybe just a little curious?"

"Maybe a little." What had she said? Nothing but the truth. "Very, very little." she added.

"I knew it! I was sure I had you pegged right." He grinned.

"All I said was. I was a very little bit curious. I never said I'd do anything!"

"I'll start with curious and build on it. If you'd said 'no' outright you'd have desolated me." While she digested that, he crossed the bridge and turned up her lane. Her house was the last of a Victorian terrace of four. She'd bought it with a legacy from a generous aunt and considered herself very fortunate. Most single teachers she knew rented apartments and she had the security of a house owned outright.

Mark pulled up beside her compact car. Knowing he liked to perform the courtesy, she waited for him open her door. He reached over, brushing her breasts as he unhooked her seat belt, and then reached into the back seat for a package. "Coffee," he replied to her questioning glance. "Wanted to be sure I was asked in."

"How could I not?" Annie asked, and stood on tiptoe to kiss him before, going ahead to unlock her door. She always sensed Mark wanted her to hand him the key but she wouldn't. This was her house and she felt territorial. Plus, despite his heavy hints she hadn't offered him his own key.

While Mark ran her bag upstairs, Annie started the coffee. He'd bought whole beans. Flavored ones. She sniffed the open bag and tried to place the smell. Not vanilla or raspberry or hazelnut. A drink? Brandy? Whiskey? She'd work it out when she tasted it. She measured four scoops and one for luck into the German coffee maker she'd bought last summer on a school trip to Boulogne. A marvelous machine, it even ground the beans and could be set in advance so she had coffee waiting for her when she woke up.

But tonight she set the machine to start immediately. Coffee was a perfect prelude to a nice loving session on the sofa before moving upstairs. The machine ground the beans in a rattling roar. As it slowed Mark touched her shoulder and she jumped. "You surprised me!" He must have crept in under cover of the noise.

She turned round to see the real surprise. He'd unbuckled his belt and unhooked his trousers. "I need something to go with the coffee." His hand trailed slowly up and down the side of her neck, causing shivers of anticipation. He rested a hand on each shoulder and gently pressed.

She understood that signal. Heart thudding, Annie, got on her knees. She had friends who declared they'd never kneel to a man. That it was humiliating, Neanderthal, and unthinkable for a liberated woman. They didn't know what they were missing. Nothing she'd ever done gave her as great a thrill. She smiled as she lowered Mark's zipper. She kissed the tip of his semi-erect cock

and watched him come alive. She curled her tongue over the head of his penis, savoring his taste. Her lips closed over him with a surge of excitement.

She had Mark in her mouth. At her mercy. In her power. She could bite and injure him. Inflict agonizing pain, or caress and suckle. Her tongue curved round him as he hardened and grew. She slid her lips up and down his length, feeling him swell until he filled her mouth. Her tongue flicked over the smooth head of his cock, lingered over the tiny opening to sample his sweet sticky pre-come and circled his ridge and teasing gently at the little nub of muscle under his tip.

"Annie!" Mark gasped and ran his hands through her hair, caressing her head and neck and bringing himself deeper into her mouth. Now he controlled her movements, easing her head back and forth as he fucked her mouth. He moaned, then groaned. Annie would have smiled with satisfaction but her lips were held wide by his massive cock. He grunted. His thighs trembled against her breasts. He grunted again. Louder. Tunneling his hands in her hair, he moved her head faster in rhythm with his thrusts. She breathed slowly, knowing from the tension in his legs, he was very close to coming. His knees jerked and he climaxed into her mouth. She swallowed as his hands eased on her head and her arms wrapped around his hips, holding him close as his legs went slack against her.

"You're incredible!" he muttered as he reached down to lift her back to standing. He kissed her gently, opening her mouth with his as if savoring his taste lingering on her tongue. "Got any coffee to revive a tired man?"

That was the big advantage of an automatic coffee maker. Annie unhooked a pair of hand thrown mugs from the cabinet as Mark reached into the fridge for milk and the cream she always kept for him. She poured the coffee. He added the milk and cream to their respective mugs. Annie added two spoonfuls of raw sugar to his.

"Perfect." Mark smiled over the rim of his mug. "Annie, you know just how to keep me happy."

"I endeavor to give satisfaction," she replied with a grin and sipped her coffee. Was it Whisky? Not exactly. "What flavor is it?"

"Drambuie. I thought I'd get you drunk and have my wicked will with you."

Annie chuckled. "Why go to the bother? All you have to do is ask."

"I know." He grinned and angled his head towards the doorway. So, he wanted to sit in the sitting room, not on the kitchen window seat overlooking the garden.

Mark settled in the wing back chair by the fireplace and Annie curled up on the rug by his feet, resting her head on his thigh. He quietly sipped his coffee, his hand absently stroking her head and ruffling her hair. "Mind if we talk?" he asked.

She'd known so many men who only talked about rugby or cricket, or at best, horses, that Mark's habit of talking and, even better, listening, delighted her. "Not at all? What do you want to talk about?"

"About how I shocked you back in the car."

"Oh!" Not sure what to say after that, Annie took a slow taste of coffee. "This Drambuie flavor is fantastic."

"Annie, don't fudge. You need to tell me how you feel."

Not so easy when she wasn't sure how she did feel. "You didn't tell me much, just that a group of you get together and take off your clothes. Then what?" Did she really want to know?

"We act out our fantasies. Not everyone always takes off all their clothes. Some keep them on, some wear costumes. It depends..."

"On the fantasy?"

"Yes...and on people's wishes at the time."

"I see." It was a lie. She didn't.

His hand ruffled her hair and caressed the back of her neck. "You really sounded like a school teacher just then."

"Trust me, I'd never be having this conversation in school!"

His chuckle sent a lovely warm shiver down her back, or maybe it was his fingers easing under the neck of her dress and smoothing over the sensitive skin by her collarbone. "Have I scandalized you?"

She thought about that a minute. "Flabbergasted might be a better word. Just the thought of being naked in front of strangers..."

"They're not strangers! Several, I went to school with, and the others we met through mutual friends."

"But I don't know them." Why wasn't she just telling him it was impossible? Unthinkable?

"You met Emma and Alistair. Saturday we'll drop by for an hour or so and you can meet some of the others. I'll never ask anything of you you're unwilling or uncomfortable with, and I'll never harm you or let anyone else harm you. Sounds fair?"

"Maybe." Now what had she agreed to? Her breath came in tight little gasps.

"You sound so worried," Mark ran the back of his hand along the side of her face. "Don't be. You call the shots. I promise." Slowly the tightness in her chest eased. "We've done pretty well by each other so far. You're the sort of lover I used to dream about."

"My dreams didn't go far enough to imagine you!"

"But you're happy with our reality?" His finger moved again, dipping to the swell of her breast.

"Yes," she whispered into the side of his leg, feeling his muscular thighs through the fine twill of his trousers. Mark might sit in an office all day but he had the body of an athlete and the hands of a maestro.

"Sweet, Annie," Mark said, bending to drop a kiss on her head. "Trust me. You'll like our group and nothing will happen you don't want to. I'm not talking about some wild orgy. Just a few fantasies."

"Fantasies?" That covered a wide range.

"I have few about you."

"What?" She shut her eyes a second. Did she really want to know? He'd already made some of hers reality. She'd done things with Mark she'd never have dared with any earlier lover.

"Well..." Mark paused and Annie sensed his arm move as he bent sideways and put his empty mug on the hearth. As he settled back in the armchair, he lifted one leg over her head and now held her between his thighs. She was walled in by male strength. She relaxed against him, resting her hands on his knees. "You want to hear a fantasy? Aside from having you trapped between my legs as you are now?"

"Yes." It came out as a dry-mouthed whisper. She wanted to listen, not talk. To shiver with the excitement and arousal he could produce by his voice alone.

His hands rested on the curve of her shoulders, gently massaging away tension she hadn't realized existed. "A fantasy with my lovely Annie," Mark pulled her back against him. "What would I like to do?" he paused. "Tie you up, I think." Annie almost sputtered but his hands closed on her chin and lifted her head back as he bent down to cover her lips with his mouth. A deep, long kiss replaced her surprise with warmth. "Don't interrupt me," he whispered as he lifted his mouth. "You'll enjoy this."

"I want to tie you up with silk covered ropes...no...velvet manacles, soft and warm just like you, and then fasten your arms to the bed." His hands slid down to encircle her wrists. "I want them over your head, like this." He raised her arms against the smooth linen of his shirt. "You won't be scared because you know I'll never hurt you. We're just playing. But you'll be naked for me. I'll be able to kiss and stroke your beautiful body. I'll reach inside and feel how wet you are. I'll put my fingers in your mouth and let you lick your juices. I'll lick your wonderful pussy and then kiss your mouth and let you taste yourself on my lips.

"I'll put a pillow under your head then kneel astride your breasts and fuck your mouth until I hear your muffled moans and feel your hips bucking under me. Then I'll pull out and make you wait. You'll complain but not really mind, as you know delaying will make it even better.

"Perhaps I'll rub you with scented oil, or kiss you all over, or stroke you with peacock feathers. Maybe all three. Then when you're moaning again, perhaps begging me to fuck you. I'll stop, fix myself a drink and watch you lying there, waiting and wanting. When I'm ready again, and I intent to take my own sweet time, I'll tie your legs, spread-eagled, so you can't move. You'll be helpless and wonderful in my bed, knowing I can do anything I want and you can't do anything to stop me.

"I'll kiss you again between your legs. Maybe fuck your lovely mouth. Roll my cock over you and rub it between your breasts. Of course I'll poke inside you with my cock, my fingers. Keeping you excited but not letting you come. I'll perhaps wet my finger with your juices and then feel how tight your arse is." Annie gasped. "Like the idea of that do you?"

"I'm not sure."

"I am," he whispered his breath warm on her ear, "You'll love it and wriggle and squirm as I stick my finger deeper." His hips rocked into her as he spoke and he chuckled quietly. "When you're moaning and begging me. I'll take your hips in my hands and shove into you so hard it takes your breath away. I'll pump in and out of you so fast and deep you'll shout and buck your hips, wanting more and harder and I'll give it to you. You'll think you can't take any more, but you won't want me to stop, and as you come, you'll scream."

His words echoed round her brain after he went quiet. Would he really? Of course not. Hadn't he said it was a fantasy? Why was she disappointed? Surely she...

"What do you think?"

"I'm not sure."

He laughed aloud. "Annie don't tell lies. What did you think?" His voice held a little edge as if he hadn't liked her evasion.

"It was pretty extreme."

"That was a mild one."

"Oh!" Why did he have to talk like this? He'd never embarrassed her before but this was...

"It excited you." He'd lowered his voice and whispered, tightening his thighs as he spoke. "Didn't it?"

"Yes, it did." Anything else would be a bold faced lie.

"How much." One hand pulled up her skirt and the other dipped between her legs. Wet? Heck she was sopping! Mark murmured smelling his fingers with an appreciative sigh. "Essence of Annie. You are sopping, wet, my dear. You know what this means don't you?"

"What?" She had a darn good idea without asking.

"That I'm going to have to fuck you hard before I go home."

Chapter Two

It didn't take long for Mark to have her naked and on her back. A few well placed scalding kisses later, she was moaning as his hands teased her breasts and trailed across her skin, smoothing along her arms until he pulled them above her head, but not hard enough to shatter her craze to feel him hard inside her.

"Mark, I want you!" she gasped as he pulled her arms against the pillow. What was he doing? She turned her head towards her brass bedstead just in time to see black bands circling her wrists and hear the soft scritch of velcro closing. "Mark!" She heard the panic in her voice and pulled uselessly on her velvet restraints. "No!"

"Yes, my dear. Yes," Mark insisted, stroking her arms. "Relax, I won't harm you." She took that as given. It didn't help.

She tugged down and pulled sideways hoping to find a weakness. All it did was hurt her wrists. "It's scary!"

"Good," Mark whispered, his breath warm on her ear. "Being frightened will excite you." He was darn right. She was getting wetter with each tug and tease of his fingers.

"Please, let me go!"

That brought a wicked glint to his eyes. "I will."

"When?" She heard her own panic lost in the question. Did she really want to be untied?

"Later."

How soon was later? Giving up on her hands, Annie tried to shift her back, thinking to ease herself up that way. He had her pinned as securely as a butterfly on a cork tray. "Move, Mark!" She jerked her hips in an effort to dislodge him. She might as well try stopping a flood by will power.

"Do you really want me to?" His lips trailed up from her belly button to between her breasts and moved east. "Sure?" He sucked her hard nipple and licked west leaving damp skin cooling in the air. "The only reason I'd do so..." He caught the other nipple and nipped. "...would be to tie your ankles down. Do you really want that?" He looked her in the eye, "I thought I'd start easy but if you want your legs restrained too..."

"Noooo!" Could be an answer to his question, or a response to his fingers pinching her now over-sensitized nipples?

"Another time, my dear," With that promise his mouth came down, his lips opening hers, his tongue plunging deep, searching, pushing hers, capturing her breath with his until she moaned.

"Why are you doing this?" She gasped when his mouth eased off hers.

"Because it excites you and I like you all hot and wet and horny." She couldn't deny that. She was so wet, she'd be the one leaving a damp patch tonight.

"Mark!" It was a plea, a moan of need.

"My pleasure, dear," With a stab of his hips, he entered her, hard and fast. She gasped but her cry was muffled by his mouth. Bucking under his frenzied thrusts, she arched into him, pulling in a futile attempt to free her arms so she could hold him close. He moved faster and harder, driving deep as her arousal spiraled quicker than thought. He groaned, raising his head and arching his neck back with a triumphant cry. As he jerked his climax, her body soared and she screamed aloud again and again until she sagged limp against the rumpled sheets, her chest heaving under Mark's weight, feeling his sweat against her skin, and half dizzy with the scent of sex and Mark.

"Happy, my dear?" Mark asked, pushing damp hair off her forehead before dropping a kiss on her heated skin and reaching overhead to open her manacles.

She had no breath left to speak. In reply, she smiled and curled into his outstretched arms.

Annie woke to an empty bed in a darkened room. A light shone under the door and she heard Mark moving about downstairs. Grabbing a red silk negligee, she tied the belt round her waist and went in search of her lover.

She watched from the doorway as he plugged in the kettle and reached for tea from the cabinet. He already had cups and saucers on a tray. She'd never thought making tea was sexy but when it involved a six-foot hunk of a man wearing nothing but boxers, she changed her mind. It was a hard decision. Should she ogle his beautiful back and wide shoulders? Or his nice firm arse and narrow waist? His feet weren't bad either, strong ankles and long, narrow feet with his first three toes the same length, perfect ballet dancer's feet, if he'd been female, which he certainly wasn't. Strong hands measured out the tea, counting scoops. The same hands that pinned her to the bed earlier and carried her to the heavens. Hands that had...

"Going to prop the doorway up all evening?" He didn't even turn but reached for the now boiling kettle. "I'll have you a cup in a minute, then I have to go."

"The weekend's always over too soon," Annie said as she crossed the kitchen.

"Yeah!" He smiled over his shoulder. "Here!" He turned and pulled out a chair. "Sit down. I'm surprised to see you down here. Thought I'd worn you out."

"Not quite." But it felt good to sit down.

"Oh!" He put the teapot on the table and leered at her. "Maybe I should have tied your legs down."

"Mark!" Damn! Why did she have to blush? In ten seconds she'd be red as the silk over her shoulders.

"Were you disappointed? I didn't want to scare you too much the first time. What do you think?" He sat down opposite and lifted the lid to stir the pot before pouring.

How could he act so calm, while she was going purple with embarrassment? Time to get hold of herself. "Do we really have to talk about it?"

Surprise shot behind his eyes. "Of course! How else am I to know what you like and dislike?" He paused to pour her a cup. Putting it close to her clenched fingers, he sat down and reached over to cover her almost shaking fist with his much larger, so steady hand. "Smile, Annie. You look more like a condemned criminal than a woman who's just been soundly fucked."

Her tight chest shook with a non-laugh. "It just feels...odd."

"I didn't hurt you, did I?" His hand tightened gently.

"No. But you scared me a bit."

"The fear is part of the excitement. You were very, very aroused."

Still was come to that. "Yes, it's just..."

"Just what?" He lifted his tea and sipped, watching her.

She buried her nose on her cup, it was easier that way. "It seems...well...kinky."

Mark grinned. "Most definitely, my dear. That's what makes it so much fun. You were turned on by the thought of doing something a little naughty."

"Naughty is flicking spit balls in class! Tying up people in bed is...wicked!"

"And you enjoyed being wicked." Would she ever stop blushing? Her face burned right now. Mark reached across the table to smooth her cheek with the back of his hand. "What embarrasses you so much? That I tied you to the bed, or that you enjoyed it?"

"Both...I mean..." She shrugged. "I suppose I sound silly."

"Not if it's the truth." He picked up the cookie tin. "Want one?" She nodded. Any diversion was welcome. If she concentrated she bet she could chew. "Annie, were you scared a lot or a little, when I tied you up?"

She swallowed a mouthful of custard cream. "A little...no, sort of middling. I wasn't sure what you were really doing."

"I told you what I wanted to do."

"But you didn't say you would."

He smiled at that. "Surprise and a little bit of fear are part of the aphrodisiac." He sipped his tea. "Were you afraid I'd harm you?"

She thought about that a minute. "No."

"Good, because I never will. That's a promise. Nor will I ever do anything you really don't want."

"How will you know what I do or do not want?"

"We'll talk about it." She wasn't sure how many conversations like this she'd survive. He put his cup down. "Your turn."

"For what?"

"To share a fantasy. Don't tell me you don't have any."

"Most of them involve Mel Gibson."

"Annie!" He sort of growled that. "I won't oblige there. Try again." He really meant it. She'd have to come up with something and, hell, she was blushing again! "Stop acting coy!"

His irritation riled her. Coy! She'd show him coy! Maybe she'd manage a blush from him for a change. She raked through her mind for something good, or bad, enough to shock him. "Would you refill up my cup, please?" That would give her another minute or two

"With pleasure." As he set the pot down he looked across at her, expectantly.

"Well..." she began. "I can't claim it as an original. It's a scene from a film I saw. I was in Florida on holiday with a friend, and the motel offered adult movies. There was this scene in one of them..." She paused to wet her dry throat with tea and gather her guts for the next bit. "The girl had been sunbathing in a field...that's not the important bit. Anyway these two men come riding in on a horse, and they both fucked her...together...the three of them...in the field."

"I thought it was exciting, Sarah, the friend with me, thought it was naf. But she has a lot of hay fever problems, and hates the countryside." Annie said the last bit a break-neck speed and swallowed half a cup of tea to ease her tight throat.

"You find the idea of two men at once, exciting. Want me to clone myself?"

"You asked for a fantasy. Doesn't have to be possible, does it?"

Mark smiled. Slowly. As if appreciating the joke, or something else. "How did they fuck her?"

"She was on all fours. One knelt in front and she sucked him. The other one took her from behind."

Mark grinned. "Annie your fantasies could be as wild as mine." He drained his cup. "And with that image in mind, I'd better get dressed and leave, or I'll have you back upstairs again."

Closing the door after a slow and steamy goodbye, Annie pushed back the melancholy that enveloped her every Sunday. Heck the weekend was over. Mark was back to London and Merchant Banking and she'd better get her mind ready to face Latin with 3A right after assembly Monday morning.

* * * * *

So far so good, she'd made it to Thursday, one more day to Friday and Mark. He called every evening to swap work woes and successes and to check she wasn't wearing underwear. Tuesday he'd called before she'd had a chance to ditch them. Since then she'd had a point of slipping them off as she closed the front door. Last night she'd mentioned the difficulty of gardening without underwear. Mark suggested shorts, without knickers of course. The pair she'd picked had been a little tight, delightfully tight.

She was about to go home when she got a phone call. "Annie?" Mark never called her at school. "Are you free this evening?"

"I've a little to do before tomorrow but not that much." Why? They seldom got together in the week, the drive from town was just too far.

"Super. I'm coming your direction, will you be home soon?"

"I can be home in twenty minutes." She couldn't hold back her grin. They'd have an evening together.

"I'll be there in forty, perhaps an hour. Be ready for me!"

Twenty minutes was more than enough time. If she hurried, she could shower and change.

"No problem, I hope?" the school secretary asked.

"On the contrary, a wonderful surprise."

Twenty-five minutes later, Annie dashed through the front door, to a ringing phone. She hesitated long enough to shuck her underwear. "Annie?" As she thought, Mark! Good thing she'd stopped to get them off. Tuesday he threatened to drive right down and spank her if ever he caught her again with them on. Okay, he was just kidding but no point in taking any risks. "I got held up a bit but I'll get there. Hopefully in a couple of hours. I'll bring pizza. That way you'll have time to get whatever you have to done. We'll have the rest of the evening...together."

An offer she couldn't refuse!

Two hours gave her time to straighten the house, shower, shave her legs, and dry her hair. Choosing what to wear took a little while. She settled on a calf length, indigo batik dress she'd bought on holiday in a street market in France. Full skirted, the light fabric billowed as she moved, and she fancied Mark would appreciate the thigh length slits. She seldom wore it as it showed far too much leg to be seen in public but for an evening home with Mark, ideal. Besides, how long would she keep it on once Mark walked through the door?

What to wear underneath? Knickers were prohibited. A petticoat would spoil the effect. A bra? Seemed silly to just wear that. She settled for just the dress and a pair of strappy sandals and was deciding between a cup of tea or a glass of wine when the phone rang. "My dear, I'm fifteen minutes away with pizza. Put the oven on."

She did just that and laid the kitchen table for two, nipping to the garden for roses to put in a vase, and shining two of her best wine glasses. Crisp ironed linen napkins and a hastily put together salad completed the table. She had a bottle of wine ready in case Mark didn't bring one and smiled to herself at the prospect of the evening ahead. This certainly beat correcting homework.

Mark's car pulled up beside her house. "How wonderful to see you!" she said as she opened the front door and almost croaked. Mark was there all right and so was another man.

"Annie," Mark hugged her with one arm, the other hand holding a bottle of wine, and kissed her. "I've brought wine and pizza, and a friend, Alan Branis. Alan, this is Annie Cavendish."

There hadn't been any mention of bringing the friend but Alan had such a warm smile it was impossible not to smile back. "Hello."

"Hello, Annie. I brought supper." Alan balanced the pizza box up on the flat of his hand. "Can you lead the way to the kitchen?"

The pizza looked and smelled wonderful. "Prawns, goat cheese and mozzarella on pesto," he said, sliding the pizza onto the oven shelf. "Mark said it was your favorite. Thought I'd better bring something special. Gate-crashing like this."

"If the pizza tastes as good as it smells, you're forgiven." What else could she say? Get lost! I want to be alone with Mark!

"Mark really wanted us to meet."

Mark had better explain this...eventually. Where was he? Upstairs leaving the seat up? "I enjoy meeting Mark's friends." She had so far.

"You had lunch with Emma and Alistair last weekend."

"Yes," Heck, was he another of the grown-ups who played games? "And now I'm having dinner with you." Or would be when she fixed the table. It didn't take long get the extra place laid and divide two salads between three. If there wasn't enough it was Mark's fault.

"You're very nice." Alan said as he uncorked a bottle. "A lot of women would throw a wobbly at a strange man arriving unannounced for dinner."

"Maybe I will, after you leave." Annie grinned. "Give Mark what for."

"No," Alan sounded certain. "I don't think you will."

Alan was right. After good wine, delicious food, and amusing conversation, nagging Mark seemed petty. They talked about work, a new play just opened, books, and mutual friends. Mark and Alan had apparently been at school with Alistair. Feeling distinctly mellow, Annie drained her second glass of wine and pondered the wisdom of a third slice of pizza.

"I told Alan about your fantasy," Mark said, refilling her glass.

"You told him what!" She probably shrieked. Hardly surprising.

Mark carefully turned the bottle to eliminate drips. "The fantasy you shared with me Sunday night."

She had not hallucinated! She should have thrown Alan out, forget his charm. "Whatever for! How could you!"

"I could hardly bring it to reality on my own." Mark spoke patiently, as if explaining the obvious to someone who didn't quite get it.

"Annie," Alan spoke before she had a chance. "Mark and I go back a long way."

That was supposed to make her feel better! "Bully for you! What about me?" They both got the benefit of her very best teacher glare.

"I *was* thinking of you and what you wanted." Mark put the bottle down between them.

She'd baptize the pair of them with the rest of the wine, but it seemed a wicked waste. Closing her eyes to block out her mortification, Annie took a slow breath. Mark and Alan were both still there when she opened her eyes. She hadn't been dreaming. Never mind, she could cope. "That was lovely pizza and since we've all got to get up for work in the morning, and you've a long drive home..."

"Annie!" Mark had the nerve to look and sound hurt. "I can see you're upset."

"I am not *upset*! I'm angry, furious, incensed, irate. Whatever you like. You betrayed a confidence!"

"He didn't, Annie,"

Now Alan got her twenty-four carat glare. "Oh? Seems like it to me." Why didn't she just pitch the pair of them out the front door?

"As a group we help each other make our fantasies come true. I came to help Mark make

yours a reality."

"And if I prefer fantasies to stay just that?"

"Do you really?"

It should be so easy to say 'yes'. But her throat had somehow closed as her heart rate sped up.

"What do you really want, Annie?" Mark asked.

Why were easy questions the hardest to answer? "It's just what you're suggesting is so... wild."

"Not really," Alan said. "Men and women fantasize about multiple lovers all the time."

"Maybe, but they don't make it happen."

"We do." He smiled at her over the rim of his wineglass. "You want this, but your nice, conventional upbringing tells you shouldn't." He was right, there. "Don't worry. We never share our secrets."

"Mark just did!"

"In order to make it come true." Alan made it sound as if they were doing her a favor.

"Doesn't the thought excite you?" Mark asked.

"The *thought* does!" The reality scared the willies out of her.

"Annie, trust us." Alan put his empty glass on the table. "You're anxious. That's natural enough. We'll take care of you. Nothing will happen you don't want. We won't harm you." He smiled. "The reverse in fact."

"Do you dare, Annie?" Mark asked, reaching across the table for her hand and lacing his fingers between hers. "Do you dare to make a dream come true?"

His touch decided her.

It was a long, slow walk upstairs, Mark leading and Alan following. She almost changed her mind when Alan suggested they shower first but it seemed ridiculous to quibble given what they planned to do. And Mark was right, warm water was relaxing. Having four hands soaping her with lavender scented shower gel was another matter.

Annie leaned back against the tiled wall as warm water ran over her, shut her eyes, and gave herself over to sensation. Two hands soaped her breasts, gliding over under and around them. Her legs wobbled but were held up by other hands smoothing up from her ankles, gently up the outside of her legs and now slowly down from her inner thighs, tantalizingly skipping the moistness between her legs. Now her arms got the slow foam treatment. They were held outstretched while soapy hands rubbed up and down.

She giggled a little as fingers lingered in her underarms. Gasp as a mouth closed on one breast and groaned and arched her back right off the tile as a second mouth clamped her other nipple. Hands raced over her chest and belly. Fingers skimmed up and down her inner thighs. Another hand teased and tugged the curls between her legs. A finger, two slipped inside, twisting and reaching until she squirmed. A thumb gently worked her clit until she whimpered. Another hand squeezed and kneaded her buttocks, while two hands held her shoulders against the wall. The pressure on her clit increased, wringing a moan from her. Her hips moved instinctively, as her climax began to build.

The hands disappeared leaving her empty. Their mouths left her breast bare, exposed to the warm cascade of water. "Can't let you come too soon," Mark said.

She opened her eyes to see two drenched but pleased males looking down at her as water pelted down their shoulders. "I think that's called teasing!"

"Yeah!" Mark grinned.

A wet soapy hand pressed against her hip. "Turn around," Alan said. "We need to get your back."

As she obliged, her arms were raised over her head, palms flat against the wet tile. "Stay that way." Mark whispered in her ear.

This was too much like being tied to the bed. A shudder worked its slow way through her. Somebody was carefully soaping her ankles. They were both soaping them. She felt two hands on each leg. Hands that slowly eased upwards, kneading the tight muscles at the back of her calves, stroking the sensitive spots behind her knees until they wobbled and needed strong male hands to steady them, and up the fingers went, easing a trail along the backs of her thighs. Annie held her breath, anticipating their next touch. Nothing. They'd both moved off her at the same time. Heck, they had to have planned this down to the last detail. That realization brought a gush of wetness between her legs. What next? A light tap on the inside of one ankle.

"Spread you legs, Annie." Without stopping to think, she obeyed Mark.

"Wider!" That was Alan.

Suddenly aware of her vulnerability, she hesitated. They didn't. Hands grasped both ankles. "Spread them, Annie!"

Mark's tone struck her on the raw. "Why?"

"Because you'll enjoy it," Alan said.

Before she realized, she spread her legs so wide her knees shook. The kiss landed in the center of her back, a slow, lingering kiss that all but burned into her skin. The lips moved away. Annie sighed at the loss, and moaned as a hand reached between her legs and cupped her pussy. A mouth. The same one? Different? Whose? Kissed her left buttock.

"You've a lovely bum," Alan murmured. Firm, soapy hands rubbed every inch of her arse, covering the curves, reaching under her cheeks, and caressing the tops of her thighs.

She felt as strong as a bowl of blancmange as other hands rubbed foam across her shoulders and up her now aching arms. Fingers smoothed down her spine, easing a sensuous trail between her crack, until a fingertip pressed against her puckered entrance and gently eased in. She squealed at the unexpected intrusion but before she could decide if she did, or did not, enjoy the unfamiliar sensation, Mark said, "Enough Alan, let's rinse her off."

They unhooked the showerhead and directed a fine spray on every inch of her skin, changing the speed and force of the spray as they rinsed. She was turned to face them and Mark, with an excitement in his eyes, sluiced her off, switching the spray to strong, as he rinsed off her breasts, and then, slow and tickling as her washed off her belly and legs.

"Mmm," Appraisal was the only word for the look in his eyes. "Pussy's still soapy, can't have that. It will taste funny."

Alan's hand nudged her knees further apart and the spray hit her right between the legs. A narrow, hard stream set to full force that wrung a cry as it smacked her clit. She'd have moved but Alan's hands held her shoulders and then she didn't want to move. Ever. Sensation raced though her. She moaned as her hips bucked. She was close to coming. Very close. She needed to come.

The spray became a slow, gentle trickle down her legs. Annie wailed in disappointment.

"Enough!" Mark said, "You can't come yet."

"Ready for us?"

Alan's comment got her on the raw. "Yes!" She brushed her wet hair out of her eyes. "I'm ready but I don't think you two are!"

Alan was a study in amazement, Mark, a beautiful picture of surprise. She grabbed the bottle of shower gel. Mark must have brought it, nice of him, and the loofah mitt. "You two are

not ready. It's my turn to scrub." Mark grinned. Alan still blinked though his damp eyelashes. "Turn around gentlemen and don't dally. I've two of you to take care of and don't have very big hot water tank. I'd hate to have to rinse you off with cold water."

"I think you'd enjoy it!" Alan muttered as he turned to face the shower wall. Mark just cast a look over his shoulder that promised anything but cold water.

She soaped them carefully and as quickly as she could. The last thing she wanted was to cool either of them off but she just had to take the opportunity to give two delicious men a good once over. Alan was taller, only a couple of inches but there it was. Mark had the wider shoulders and the nicer arse but Alan had particularly firm thighs. Mark's hair won hands down. She loved the thick surly golden brown mop that seldom stayed completely neat. Alan's dark, almost black-blue, hair was sort of Heathcliffish but a bit too heavy on his back for her taste.

Soaping them up was fun. They just hadn't expected that. She smiled to herself and made a point of scrubbing their bums with the loofah and rubbing it lingeringly between their cracks, just to pay back for the poke she'd just endured. One had done her and the other watched so they both got it back even-steven.

The fine, fast spray seemed to rinse the fastest, so she used that. She was out to conserve water after all. She stepped back to survey her handiwork. She certainly had two fine male specimens in her shower. A little chuckle escaped her lips as a sudden jet of water in the small of Mark's back sent his lovely arse jerking.

"Enjoying this, are you?" Alan asked. Not sounding as if he was.

She giggled. "This is much more fun then checking homework." Fun indeed, and this was just the hors d'oeuvres. "Alright, gentlemen, turn around."

Aha! She had two impressive, very erect, penises facing her. Both looking ready to fire off any minute. Her stomach did a very slow flip. Her throat caught. Her heart slowed a second and then raced.

"Annie, you're as pop-eyed as a Pekingese," Mark said.

She believed him. Her eyebrows were under pressure. She squirted more lavender gel on her loofah and a face flannel. "It's not every day I see two at one time."

"Glad to hear it!"

"The last time I must have been a teenager." She ignored Mark's glower. "I was babysitting nine month old twins." Grinning, she stepped in and soaped both broad chests simultaneously. If she kept her sights on their impressive rib cages, she could avoid meeting their eyes. She'd glimpsed enough smolder in each of them to ignite an inferno.

Mark's chest hair was thicker but Alan's covered a wider area. On both of them, the dark line of hair narrowed to a very sexy vee below the waist.

She let the loofah drop. It would be a little rough on tender male parts. Soaped up both hands, took a deep breath, and reached out. They were both stiff and heated. Alan wasn't circumcised like Mark so she rather enjoyed easing his foreskin gently back and forth. The hiss and moan he gave suggested he did too. Not to let Mark feel left out, she gave him a special slow caress they way she knew he liked, and then wrapped a hand round each penis. Mark's was slightly longer, Alan's a little thicker. Both were definitely designed with pleasure in mind. She stepped back to get full enjoyment of the view

"Annie," Mark muttered. "This is the beginning, not the whole show."

"Want me to hurry up?" She gave them a sweet innocent smile and then turned the shower full blast on Mark. Before he had a chance to finish spluttering, she got Alan. Then, with the same wrist movements she learned back in the Montessori percussion band, she washed off the last traces of soap that clung to their beautiful chests and lovely legs, being particularly careful not to neglect their most luscious cocks.

"Finished?" Alan asked as she switched off the shower.

"Almost," she replied and reached for three thick towels. As a good hostess, she handed them to her guests first and had hers half way round her shoulders, when Mark grabbed her wrist and pulled her against his still-damp body.

"Annie, you owe me for that bit of teasing." He placed a hand on each shoulder and pressed.

Excitement shivering her, Annie knelt, hands flat on his firm stomach, and closed her mouth around him, caressing his tip and skimming his ridge with her tongue. Sucking gently, she pulled all of him into her mouth. She was damp and cold and the tile was hard on her knees but the only thing that mattered was the taste of his warm cock on her tongue.

Mark's hands on her head gently eased her off. "Suck Alan a minute. Don't want him to feel left out."

She had Alan's cock between her lips before she realized what Mark had asked, and that she'd obeyed without thinking. She was on her knees in her own shower sucking a stranger's cock! Wasn't this her fantasy? Easily her lips moved his foreskin back and her tongue caressed his smooth tip, savoring the rigid flesh that stretched her mouth wide. A slow moan told her he was enjoying this and so was she. Her cunt was all but sopping wet. How long before...?

"Easy!" Alan pulled her off him, "Let's get this show on the road."

She leaned back on her heels and grinned up at him. "Don't worry. You're in top gear already."

Mark laughed. Alan twisted his mouth and looked at Mark. "We've got a wild woman here, pal!"

"A wet, wild woman!" Mark nodded at Alan. "Let's get her in the bedroom!"

"Hey!" Mark grabbed under her arms, Alan her knees, and they swung her from side to side like a roll of carpet. "Watch it!"

"Quiet!" Mark growled. "Or you might not like where we put you!"

She was quiet. His fingers nudging the swell of her breasts had something to do with it but what almost finished her was the look in Alan's eyes. Talk about leering! Holding her knees apart, he had a grandstand view of her cunt and was taking full advantage.

"Nice looking woman you have here, Mark."

"Yeah!" Mark strung the word out like a slow kiss. "Ready?"

For what?

In the air and free for a second, she landed with a bounce on her bed. "Yeaow!" She braced her arms to sit up, but Mark threw himself on her, plastering her flat on her back, his face over hers.

"Annie," he said, his voice raspy, and slammed his mouth on hers. Heat, need, and longing roared inside her. She wanted him. Deep, How long would he make her wait? She was gasping for air when he lifted his mouth, her chest heaving under his and her cunt aching.

"I want you in me," she whispered.

"Where?" He rocked his hips, pressing his erection against her belly.

"In my cunt."

"Soon." Was he going to tease her all night? "First you suck me." He moved to straddle her chest, sliding his hands over her breasts as he settled himself. Alan eased several pillows under her head, propping her up until Mark's cock brushed her lips. "Suck me, Annie."

At this angle he came deep, touching the back of her throat. She had to think. To pace her breathing with his strokes so she didn't gag. Thinking wasn't what she wanted. She needed to feel.

Hands parted her thighs. Fingers teased her curls and opened her. She almost yelled as a tongue touched her clit. Soft as a whisper it drove her wild. Up and down it went, side to side, and now in a slow tantalizing circle. Her heart pounded behind her ribs. Her mind and body soared. A wild rushing filled behind her ears. She was climbing to the peak, her hips jerking as passion rose, any minute now, very very soon, she would..."No!" she screamed round Mark's cock as the mouth moved away, leaving her wide and wanting. In the next instant, Mark pulled out of her, "How could you!" she yelled at the double abandonment.

"Because, it's too soon," Mark said, his voice so gentle she wanted to cry. "There's something you have to do first."

"What!" She was ready to leap on the pair of them if they took much longer.

"You need to get me ready," Alan said, and held up a small foil package.

"It's licorice flavoured," Mark said. "I know how you like licorice allsorts."

She'd give them both allsorts! "You want me to put it on? All right." She reached out for it, ripped the package open and tipped the condom into her hand. Black! Colored to match the flavor. She reached out to Alan's erect cock.

"No!" She stared up at Alan. Hadn't he just told her to? "No hands. Use your mouth."

They were trying to kill her with frustration!

The hardest bit was balancing it on the head of his cock. It took three tries. She closed her mouth over him and unrolled the condom with her lips. Almost running out of breath before she finished. "That's harder than I'd ever imagined," she said, sitting back to admire the black condom against his dark hair.

"So are we," Mark said. "Come on, Annie, let's make good use of your goat skin rug."

Good idea. Goat skin was easier on her knees than the darn shower. She suspected they'd keep her on them a long time. They took forever getting her positioned just so, shifting a knee here, moving an arm there, caressing her buttocks and stroking her breasts until she was ready to implore them to fuck her. She didn't, guessing it was exactly what they wanted.

"Ready to get double fucked, Annie?" Mark asked, just a couple of seconds before she'd have given in and begged.

"Yes!" She tossed back her head and drag the word out in her need.

"Where do you want it first, your mouth or your cunt?" Alan asked.

"Both at once!"

"You sound desperate, my dear," Mark's hand between her legs surely proved that. "I think we should let Alan go first, as our guest."

Did they think she'd argue? Impossible even if she'd wanted to, with a thick cock filling her mouth. Alan's penis against her tongue and Mark's fingers massaging her buttocks almost had her in orbit. One hand held her hips still, the other probed between her legs, parting her, slipping inside to tease with one finger, then two. She didn't want fingers. She wanted hard cock. He teased back and forth up towards her crack and now he was spreading her wetness between her cheeks and over the puckered entrance to her arse. Surely he wasn't fucking her there! She stiffened at the thought.

"Relax, Annie," Mark said. "Loosen up."

Hard to do with a finger pushing into her arse! Then his finger withdrew. Before she had time to worry what happened next, his cock drove deep into her cunt with one wild thrust. Her shout muffled by Alan's cock, she let herself go in a string of yells that only sent her higher and faster.

They pumped her in rhythm, one withdrawing as the other drove into her. She was constantly filled, lost in a morass of sensation and spiraling towards her own climax as they both

moaned and grunted over her. Hands held her head and pinned her hips as two hard cocks pounded her to climax. Alan was pumping faster now. The cadence broken as he jerked his hips into her face. Mark drove deeper and faster with each thrust and as her muffled cries echoed in her head, her own need built like a raging torrent.

Mark moaned. He was close to coming. Alan groaned as he drove into her. Her body throbbed. Her jaws ached. Her heart raced as her blood pressure thrummed in her ears. Her knees shook. Her arms stiffened as Alan came in her mouth with a groan. Seconds later, Mark's grunts reached a crescendo as his hot sperm filled her, sending her over the edge. She screamed, tossing her head against Alan's grip, arching her back, and with a wild shudder that racked her body. She came. Her mind and body roaring with passion. They gently withdrew and she collapsed onto the warm rug as the world went fuzzy and gray.

Still shaking, she was lifted and carried. Lips met hers. A hand eased her damp hair off her face. She felt the bed under her back and arms around her, as the room faded and went gray.

Mark lay beside her, inhaling the sweet scents of Annie and sex until her breathing changed and he knew she was out for the count until morning. Smiling to himself, he eased off the bed without disturbing her and pulled the bedclothes up to her chin.

Retrieving his trousers from the bathroom floor, he pulled them up and zipped as he crossed the landing, meeting Alan as he walked upstairs, a glass in each hand.

"Thought you could use this."

Gratefully Mark took the glass and raised it. "Thanks. Not just for this. Couldn't have done it without for your participation."

"Enjoyed every minute," Alan grinned, "Shall we sit down?"

"In here. I want to watch her sleep." Mark led him to the chintz-covered sofa under Annie's bedroom window. It was perfect for two and gave him an uninterrupted view of her curled up under the covers.

"You're smitten!" Alan said as Mark sipped his drink, savoring the taste of Annie's good Scotch.

"Why not? She's wonderful."

"Can't argue that one. Where did you find her?"

"Watching Pip's Christmas play."

Alan stared. "Veronica's boy? Whatever..."

Mark chuckled, "Tom was away and Pip wanted a father substitute. Annie was producing the play, and they had biscuits and lemonade afterwards for parents and actors. She was like a bird of paradise among the sparrows. Pip and I took her out for coffee afterwards. The next Saturday, we had dinner. Without Pip."

"A parent?"

"No! She teaches Latin, French and History."

Alan let out a slow breath. "Sheesh, what a waste for a bunch of spotty schoolboys."

"She is a treasure, isn't she?"

"So was my mother's charlady! Annie's much more, sexy, sensual, verging on beautiful, and responsive. Once she got over her good girl inhibitions."

Mark sipped. The ice cubes clinked in the quiet. "I thought she'd take more persuading. Amazing really."

"She enjoyed every minute. A natural as they say."

"That's my hope." Mark looked across at the dark head on the pillow. "I plan on keeping this one."

"She's a little independent. The way she took charge in the shower showed a real streak of dominance. Are you sure you can make a submissive out of her?"

"I don't plan on making her a submissive."

Alan stared, "Come now, Mark, you don't want a dominant. Not you!"

"Of course not," Mark tilted his glass to his lips, and lowered it just enough to look over the rim. "With your help and the rest of the group, I plan to make her my slave."

Chapter Three

Alan almost baptized himself with Annie's rather good Scotch. "You're kidding."

"Not in the least." Mark tipped his glass to his lips and sipped. "I found her. She's mine. And I'm making of her what I want."

"And she'll agree?"

"Why not? She's adventurous and curious about sex." He glanced towards the dark head above the sheets.

"She's independent and full of herself."

"Yes." Mark smiled. "That's what makes her so perfect. The subjugation of a strong woman is the most fun of all."

Alan watched him and then looked at Annie. "Mark, I'm beginning to wonder..."

"Don't." Mark sipped slowly, letting the fine whisky warm his mouth before he swallowed. "She's a sensualist. Look at this room. How many schoolteachers have four-poster beds with satin sheets and lace hangings? She redid this house herself. It's her all over. Think of that bathroom: shower big enough for the three of us and room to spare. You should try out her bath. It's got a whirlpool and holds two very, very comfortably." Mark smiled at his old friend. "She's been waiting all her life for what I'm about to give her."

"Maybe she has." Alan raised his almost empty glass. "It's you I'm beginning to wonder about."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

Alan shrugged. "If I didn't know you as well as I do, I'd say you've been caught."

Mark gave him a sharp look. And swallowed down the last half of his scotch in one gulp. It took him a few seconds to reply. "Trouble with you married sorts is you want everyone else to get hooked up too. Annie is for pleasure — mine and hers."

"Marriage and sexual pleasure aren't mutually exclusive, you know."

Darn Alan, he was smirking. "You have marriage and lifetime commitment. I'll have Annie for the pleasure she gives me." Mark rested his empty glass on the wicker her armrest. "I'm bringing her to Carrig."

"Hell, Mark! You'll scare her off for good."

"No, She'll be fine and perfectly comfortable with three nice couples."

"Claudine's bringing Tom."

Mark smiled. "Trust me, Alan. Annie won't let me down. She'll just have her eyes opened."

"You should know her..."

"I do."

Alan gave him an assessing look and tossed down the last mouthful of Scotch. "Want another?"

"No. It's time we turned in."

"Sure about this?" Alan looked again at Annie. "No point in scaring her off."

"Dead certain. And it won't." Mark stood up. "We leave now and she'll convince herself it was a dream. I want her to wake up remembering we both had her. She'll think about it all day long. Keep her mind on the right track for the weekend."

"Okay, I'll fetch the suitcase. We'll both need clean shirts in the morning."

Annie stirred as Alan thumped the case on the floor, "Shh," Mark whispered and brushed

her forehead with the his hand, "Go to sleep."

Fifteen minutes later, he set his travel alarm for six, curled up beside Annie, and grinned at Alan across her shoulders.

"See you at breakfast, pal."

The alarm wasn't hers! Annie roused herself for a bigger shock. Waking with Mark's arm under her breasts was a joy. Waking sandwiched between two men was a monumental shock. She sat up just as Mark reached over and silenced the alarm. His alarm.

"Snuggle down, Annie. We've got ten minutes." Mark held her close, one hand on her breast, the other still fiddling with the clock. Annie felt a hand between her legs.

She glanced at Alan's dark head, nestling inches from her left breast, and then at Mark, grinning beneath his tousled hair. She closed her eyes a moment, knowing both men would still be there when she opened them. What the heck? She bent her knees up, ignoring warm hands along the way, and bounced from between the sheets and off the end of the bed. They had an uninterrupted view of her rear, but only for as long as it took her to grab her dressing gown.

"Everyone likes bacon and eggs?" She faced them more calmly now she was covered. "I'll put the kettle on."

"Annie, don't rush..." Mark began but she was already halfway across the landing.

She raced downstairs but temper hit her as she filled the kettle and slammed it on the counter. She'd run from her own bedroom. It was...she glanced at the kitchen clock...just after six. She should have tossed them out, sent them to the Little Chef for breakfast, and gone back to sleep. They were the ones who...she smiled as she plugged in the kettle...screwed her magnificently last night.

She wrapped her arms round her chest, hugging herself as she remembered. She licked her lips and drew her mouth in a O remembering the taste of Alan's cock and shut her eyes at the thought of Mark's hands on her hips as he pumped hard into her. Making a fantasy real, he'd called it. He'd been right. He'd...

"Annie," Mark stood in the doorway. "Why did you run?"

"Mark..." He came towards her, a little crease between his eyes. Excuses about a boiling kettle and making toast faded as she looked into his eyes. "It unnerved me waking up between the two of you."

His smile made her wish she'd stayed in bed. "You regret what we did last night?"

"No!" The answer came without thinking.

Mark crossed the last few paces and wrapped his arms around her. "I knew it, Annie. You are wonderful!" He spun her round and kissed her hard as he set her feet back on the ground. She'd lost a slipper and the tiles were cold on her foot. It didn't matter with Mark's tongue in her mouth and his hands pushing through the satin to find her breast. "We'll do it again," he promised easing back. "Alan's up there wondering if you're mortified. I'll tell him you're up for an encore."

"Some other time. I'm not going to school with rug burns on my knees."

Mark chuckled. "Fair enough. The City awaits us, too. But the weekend starts soon."

It did. She smiled. "Bacon and egg is all right then?"

"With plenty of toast." He dropped a quick kiss on her forehead. "Don't burn it!" he said and swatted her rump as he walked away.

The toast didn't burn, the bacon didn't curl, and the eggs cooked perfectly. She rummaged her cabinets for a pot of marmalade she'd got at the last WI sale and after laying the table, opened the windows and the back door to let in the morning sunshine. The roses from last night were

still fresh, and the coffee just finished filtering as Mark and Alan came downstairs.

"Sleep well?" Annie asked. This was her house, her kitchen and now they were both dressed she could face them with a smile, or at least try her darndest.

"How could I not?" Alan's dark eyes looked her over, "You look almost as good in red satin as you do naked."

"Thanks, you look nice naked, too." She reached for the coffee pot. "Coffee suit you or would you rather have tea?"

"He drinks coffee." Mark said, taking the pot and putting it on the table. "And stop eyeing my woman, Alan. You can't touch her unless I say so."

"He can't touch me unless I say so!" Annie said, taking the bacon and eggs from the stove.

"Same thing," Mark replied, holding her chair for her.

"Pity it isn't Saturday," Alan said as he drained his second cup of coffee. "I'd like to sit here all morning. You've a lovely house, Annie."

"Thanks."

"Thanks for the breakfast and...your hospitality." He smiled. "I'd like to return it. How about you bring Mark to lunch next Sunday...I'd like you to meet my wife, Jane."

Annie almost choked. His wife!

"Be glad to." Mark replied for her. "Annie will meet Jane this Saturday anyway."

"Great!" They both stood up, "But if we don't go now..."

She wasn't too certain who said what. "Bye Annie! I'll call you tomorrow."

They both kissed her and left while she still processed what she'd just heard. Alan was married. How was she ever going to look his wife in the eye?

"Annie, you're getting your panties in a twist about this."

"How can I? I'm not wearing any!"

Mark leaned his head back and exhaled slowly. Annie knew she'd annoyed him, but heck, he'd got her into this. "They're expecting us." He turned to her and smiled. "Come in. Meet Jane, and the others. If you're really uncomfortable, we'll leave. But trust me, Jane understands."

Maybe Jane did! She certainly didn't! But they'd tossed this back and forth since before leaving Mark's flat. It seemed she was the only one on the planet who thought the whole situation odd.

"Annie!" Emma greeted her with a kiss, and Alistair with a hug. "So glad you came."

And so was Annie. The warmth of their welcome convinced her. A good dozen people filled the kitchen and dining room and another couple arrived just behind them. Mark got Annie a drink and they wandered over to the buffet. Remembering Mark's promise of Thai dinner, she passed over the quiches and mini kebabs and reached for a cheese straw. She could nibble it slowly.

"Hello! It's Miss Cavendish, isn't it?" Annie almost choked. She was eye to eye with Timmy Austin's mother and father.

"Mr. and Mrs. Austin? How nice to see you." What a lie! And what in hell did she say now?

"Please," Mrs. Austin smiled. "This is social. Ellen and Ian."

"Ellen," Annie shifted the bitten cheese straw to her left, and shook hands. "Ian."

"What a lovely surprise," Ellen's eyes gleamed. "We've never met you here before. I never realized you..."

"Annie's here with me." It wasn't like Mark to interrupt but it got notice.

Ellen's eyes widened beyond her eye shadow limits and Ian goggled. It was the only word. "Mark Hanson!" He said in the tone of voice usually reserved for 'your majesty'.

"Ian, Ellen." Mark's hand rested on Annie's shoulder. "Talk to you later." Gentle pressure made her turn. "There's someone I want you to meet."

"Thanks for the rescue," she replied as they were out of earshot.

"A boring, not terribly imaginative, couple but harmless enough. They're regulars in the larger group but not in my particular circle."

She wasn't sure what he meant, and didn't much bother right now. "They're parents!"

Mark stared at her. "Yes, Got two children. Always yammering on about them."

"I mean parents at school." Sometimes men were so thick. "Mark, I have to face them next Saturday at Founder's Day." He was lucky she hadn't shrieked.

"What's the worry?" He turned her to face him. "Afraid they'll tell the headmaster they met you at a kink party?"

"Yes!"

"Annie, relax." Easy for him to say. "First off, look around. Go on...look." At his insistence she glanced around the dining room with its oak paneling and laden table and through the open doorway into the wide entrance hall where newly arrived couples chatted with Emma and Alistair.

"What does it look like? A nice middle class gathering for drinks and gossip. The Archbishop of Canterbury could walk right in and see nothing amiss." True enough but... "And what are they going to say? That they met you at kinky circle they attend regularly? Annie, no one here talks about being here except to each other. Trust me."

She had to. "All right, But if Ian Austin starts ogling me during a parent's conference..."

"I doubt he'd dare. If he does, just let me know."

"And?"

"Annie, he won't. Now come with me. I really do have someone I want you to meet." He led her into the kitchen. At least she was in a different room from the Austins'.

"Annie!" Alan leaned against the expensive Swedish cabinets, a glass in his hand and his arm round the shoulders of a very pretty dark-haired woman. "I want you to meet Jane."

Annie would have darted back and claimed kinship with Ellen Austin but Jane stepped forward and drew her into a friendly hug. "Come on, let's refill your drink," Before Annie could refuse, Jane topped her glass up and steered her towards the window seat.

"Cheers!" Jane raised her glass, smiling mischievously at Annie's hesitation. "Don't worry. No arsenic, I promise, and I won't scratch your eyes out like a jealous wife either."

"I see." It was a complete lie. She didn't. How in heaven could Jane be so complacent?

"Mark hasn't told you much, has he?" Soft brown eyes watched Annie over the rim of an expensive wine glass.

"Only enough to utterly confuse me."

"Men!" Jane rolled her eyes. "What *do* you know?"

"That this is not your average stockbroker belt drinks party and I've just met the parents of one the boys I teach at school, and..." How could she say, 'I sucked off your husband off Thursday evening'?

"And to top it off, you've met me." Jane sipped her drink. "Don't worry." She patted Annie's leg. "You'll understand eventually. Just keep your eyes and your mind open and if you have questions, ask Mark."

"He doesn't always give good answers."

Jane cocked her head on one side. "Or perhaps doesn't give the answers you expect?"

"Maybe," Annie tipped her glass, to avoid the question in Jane's soft eyes.

"You know," Jane said, settling comfortably against the cushions, "when Alan first told me about his...lifestyle. I thought he'd been indulging in mind-altering chemicals. We've been together five years now." She smiled as if remembering pleasant times. "You're not staying to play tonight, fair enough. Mark knows to let you in gradually. But come to our house on Sunday. Please." Annie hesitated. What did 'letting in gradually' mean? "Emma and Alistair will be there," Jane went on. "You've met them. It'll just be the six of us. No one you don't know." She grinned. "And you know Alan very well, don't you?"

Annie swallowed her drink too fast. Her eyes watered. Her heart all but stopped. What was he getting into? Only one way to find out. "I'd love to."

"Love to what?" Mark asked. He'd walked over with her noticing.

"Have Sunday lunch with us," Jane replied. "Want to come too?" She grinned.

"We'll be there." Mark's hand felt heavy on Annie's shoulder. "Before we leave, I want to show Annie the set up."

"Mark," Annie said crossing the hall, "Jane as good as said she knows what Alan and I did, doesn't seem to mind and as asked me to lunch. And...I just don't get it."

Mark dropped a kiss on her forehead. "You're confused. We'll talk over dinner. Come in here. I'm about to confound you further." He opened the sliding door to the sitting room and closed it behind them.

Annie stared for a good minute before she remembered to close her mouth. Last weekend, she'd sat in here and sipped sherry while admiring the antiques and the Chinese carpet. Most of the furniture was gone, or moved against the walls, and her shoes sounded on bare boards.

Two naked men were moving heavy equipment. Not quite naked they did have heavy boots on, in case they dropped things on their toes, Annie supposed. Somehow the black leather work boots only served to accentuate their nudity.

A tall woman in a long black leather dress nodded at her and Mark and turned right back directing operations. "Shift the cross over here, Tom," the woman said. He picked up what looked like the cross St Andrew carried in the school chapel window Annie caught her breath as the muscles in his thighs and nice round butt, literally rippled under his smooth skin as he moved the cross to one side. His shoulders and back were certainly worth a good look too. She started in shock. She was staring at a naked stranger

She took a deep breath and made herself look around. Another man, on a small step ladder, was suspending a pair of chains where a very nice Venetian chandelier had hung last weekend. The satinwood sofa tables were still under the tall windows, but covered with cloths. No doubt to stop scratches from the whips and canes spread out on them.

Annie swallowed. Mark hadn't been kidding. What looked like a small vaulting horse from the school gym stood by the fireplace, except the ones in school didn't have leather straps.

"Hello. I'm Claudine. You must be Annie." The tall woman smiled. "Look around. Try anything you want to. We won't start for another half-hour."

All Annie wanted to do was run -- or did she? Fascinated in spite of the horror curling inside, she watched the chains swing as the man reached to adjust them. Her throat tightened. It just about closed as Mark handed her a riding crop.

"What do you think?" he asked.

Annie stared at the black leather-covered crop. He was trying to shock her. Fine. She took a deep breath and closed her fingers, smoothing them up and down as she caught the scent of good leather.

"It's missing the thingamebob for opening gates." She was not losing her cool.

"It's got another thingamebob," Mark said softly. It had. And not for opening gates. The end was a dildo. "It hurts, too." Mark took it out of her hand. "This is softer." He trailed the soft suede thongs of a whip down her arm. "Much nicer, feels like a caress." It did. But some of the other implements spread on the dark cloth looked less than gentle.

"You're scaring her, Mark," Claudine said. "Everything looks worse than it really is." She smiled at Annie and took the whip from Mark. "Let me demonstrate." Demonstrate what?

"Tom, come over here. I want to show Annie the suede tickler."

"Yes, Boss." Tom came over. There was something familiar about him as he nodded at Annie and Mark. "Where, Boss?"

"The cross. Get ready."

He stepped over to the giant X. Annie then noticed small steps at the bottom and several handholds near the top. Finding the ones most comfortable, Tom settled himself in position.

"Just three, Tom," Claudine said and raised the whip. Thongs swished through the air and Annie flinched as they landed. Tom didn't move. Two more times they came down. Annie shuddered. No one else turned a hair.

Claudine replaced the whip on the table, Tom stepped down, thanked Claudine and went back to arranging a thick foam pad over the sofa back. Annie tried not to shake.

"Look at his back," Mark said.

He had a very nice back with just enough muscle and..."There's not a mark! I thought..." What had she thought?

"I never leave marks," Claudine said, as casually as if discussing silver cleaning. "Unless I want to. Mark won't either. Don't look so scared. This isn't about hurting...it's about power and pleasure. Let Mark explain."

Mark had a hell of a lot of explaining to do.

"What's bothering you most? That Alan's married or that Jane didn't act the wronged wife?"

He just didn't get it. "Both!"

"Annie, you're focusing on the wrong thing." Mark hissed with exasperation. "You're harping on about Alan and Jane to avoid talking about Claudine and the whips."

Damn him for being right! "We'll get to that in a minute." Or an hour or three. "You should have told me Alan was married."

"So you could have tossed him out the door and missed something you thoroughly enjoyed."

Damn him twice! "It's not that simple." Or was it?

"Forget your preconceived notions and start from square one. Alan's my friend, as is his wife. I asked a favor of him to please you. He agreed. She knew about it from the first. You're the only one hiccuping over this." He paused at a red light. "Alan and I are part of the same circle. We're not content with imagining our fantasies. We live them. I want you to join us." He glanced sideways and smiled. "Will you?"

"What does it involve?"

"Just about anything you, or I, want."

Her stomach went leaden. "Including whips?"

"When you're ready."

"And if I'm never ready?"

Mark smiled. "You will be."

When she was old and gray and desperate!

She mulled his words over. Mark said nothing more until he opened the car door and helped her out. "Don't let the whips worry you," he said, taking her hand and walking towards the restaurant door. "They are for later."

After what? She followed Mark to a small table in an alcove, forcing her awareness on the aromas of lemon grass and garlic, and the sounds of subdued oriental music. She tried not to think about Mark's last comment, opened the menu, and forced herself to think about hot and cold appetizers.

"Relax, Annie," he said as she sipped from the small cup of jasmine tea. "I've worried you and I didn't mean to."

"I've just seen someone whipped and I'm not to be worried?"

"Why?" He smiled. "Was Tom hurt? Did he object? Refuse? Act as if it was unpleasant?"

"No. But..."

"No 'buts' Annie. Trust what you see and feel and not what you think you should. Your mind says Jane should have scratched your eyes out and instead she greeted you as a friend and invited you to her house. Your mind says Tom should have fought or refused or at the very least been scared but he wasn't. He complied quite willingly, happily took several swipes of the whip, thanked Claudine and walked away, unmarked. You're fighting believing what you've seen."

He was right there. A smiling waitress setting their appetizers on the table, gave her a few moments to think. Annie slowly unpeeled lemon grass leaves from a cube of chicken. "I'm still trying to decide what I did see."

"You know what you saw, Annie. It intrigued you so much, I bet you got wet watching."

She had, and shocked herself in doing so. "Mark, I don't understand all this."

"It's not hard, just at odds from your mind set. It's about pleasure, and sex, and power. Remember what Kissinger said about power being a great aphrodisiac? The old man was dead right."

"What's power got to do with it?"

"Absolutely everything." Annie swallowed. Something cold shuddered deep in her soul. She tried to spear a piece of chicken but her hand shook and the fork clattered out of her hand. "Annie." Mark's warm steady had covered her cold shaking one. "I'm putting you off your dinner. I didn't mean to. Here." Reaching across the table, he speared the chunk of meat with his fork and held it out to her. Without thinking she leaned towards him and bit the chicken off his fork.

"It's all about power," he went on. "Sharing power. Holding it. Giving it to others. When I told you to deep six your undies, you looked at me as if I'd asked you to strip in the street, but you did it."

"Yes." She had and tossed a very nice pair of panties.

"And now you enjoy the feeling of being uncovered. Knowing I can touch you easily." Annie nodded, her chest tightening as she tried to swallow. "You liked it when I tied you up, after you got over being scared, didn't you?" Annie couldn't deny it. "Your fantasy...the one that caused you twinges of guilt...You wanted two powerful men taking you at once. How was it?"

The last bit of meat went down. "Incredible."

Mark grinned. "See. I know what you want, even if you're not even sure. Trust me and we'll do things you've never even imagined."

"That's what's worrying me!" That and the way this talk had her wet between the legs.

He reached across and held his hand open palm up. "Trust me and I'll bring to reality your wildest dreams." He looked across the table to her the candlelight reflected in his eyes. "Do you

dare?"

Because she'd never turned down a dare, Annie put her hand in his. "Yes."

After dinner, Annie expected an evening of lovemaking at his flat and maybe a bit more talk about fantasies coming true. Instead, Mark headed for her house, explaining he wanted her to think seriously if she really did trust him.

"Haven't I said I do?" She sounded, and felt, peevish.

"Yes, my dear, you have, but if I'm taking you with me on an erotic adventure, I want you certain."

"I am!" Why worry? She had a very nice bed. They could manage there just as easily.

"Look in the glove compartment," Mark said as they approached the village. It was still early and the lights shone from the pub as they passed.

She clicked open the door. A thick envelope sat on top of his maps and spare change for parking meters. "This what you want?"

"It's for you." He took the bend a little too fast and she fell against him. He looked sideways and smiled. "Take it."

She did and pushed the door closed. "What is it?" The envelope was fastened with a metal prong. She started flicking it open.

"Wait until you get home."

They were approaching the hill now. Minutes later, Mark pulled up by her house, took the envelope from her fingers, and turned off the engine. What was in the darn packet?

"Annie," Mark's breath was warm on her cheek as he leaned towards her. His hand eased up her neck and under her hair, smoothing to the back of her skull as he pulled her close. "Trust me," he whispered, and brought his mouth down to hers. His lips opened hers, as his tongue slipped between them.

She moaned and leaned right into him, pressing her breast against his chest as his mouth drove her crazy. She felt a hand inside her dress, smoothing gently, then closing on her breast to make her cry out. He moved lower. Slowly. Tantalizing. Circling gently on her belly, as it eased up her skirt, then dipped down, fast. Right under her skirt to cup her pussy, and ease along her slit. "You're wet, aren't you?" he muttered. "I want you to stay that way!"

She all but ran up the path. She'd have dragged him if she could but he insisted on walking, holding her close, one arm around her shoulder. The other hand carrying the blasted envelope, which he used to tap her breast when she tried to hurry him.

"I don't know about you. I want to get in the house!" She said, when he stopped two paces from the front door.

"I want you safe in there, too," he said. "Here." He held out the envelope.

"What is it?" She asked as her fingers closed around it.

"Our road map."

"What?"

"We're off on a erotic trip, my dear, and I need a road map to know where to go. Take this. Read it. It's quite simple. When you finish it. Give me call." He dropped a kiss on her forehead. "I want you safe inside before I leave."

He was going! Walking away and leaving her! She'd road map him. "Fine!" He'd have to be thick as a short plank to believe that.

"Annie!" He took the key from her hand before she realized. "Here." He held open the door, handing her the key. "Keep your temper. Read that through, and call me when you're done. You said you'd trust me. Start right now."

Talk about being left hanging! The echo of his engine died away in the country night, and here she was alone. Abandoned on a Saturday night and feeling what her Virginia cousin, Sally Anne, called 'horny'.

She threw his envelope on the dining room table and went in search of sustenance. She had a fresh bottle of wine in the fridge, she might just swig it all. She found the wine and a giant slab of fruit and nut chocolate she kept for emergencies. Chocolate wasn't better than sex, whatever the wits claimed, but it was all she was going to get tonight unless she chose self-service.

Two generous glasses and half the chocolate later. Annie felt mellow enough to consider opening that damn envelope. What was in it that Mark considered it a substitute for a nice fuck? She balanced the wine glass on the arm of the sofa, eased open the little metal clasp sealing the envelope, and tipped the papers onto her lap. Twenty minutes later she'd forgotten wine or chocolate existed.

The top page gave directions for the checklist: tick 'yes' if she'd done each activity, 'no' if she hadn't and then rate it 0-5, 5 indicating she'd ranked it as one of her all time favorite activities and 0 meaning never as long as she lived and breathed. A handwritten note from Mark told her to take her time, be totally and scrupulously honest, and to call him when ready.

Annie flicked over to the next page. The first words she read were: anal fingering, anal play and anal sex. Mouth open and heart speeding, she read all three pages and let out a long, slow breath. Leaning back, she closed her eyes. Answering all this meant exposing her innermost secrets, her wildest desires. Was that what Mark meant about trusting? Trusting him with her forbidden dreams. She poured another glass of wine. Was she ready for this? Could she? And how long was this going to take? Days? Weeks?

What the heck! It wouldn't be any easier six months hence.

Pausing only to get a pencil, Annie snapped off four squares of chocolate and read again. Slowly this time.

More than a few lines had her blushing. Some she answered quickly, almost by reflex. Others took slow soul searching. She finished the last sheet, glanced over to make sure she hadn't mistaken a 5 for a zero or vice versa, and swallowed down a last glass of wine in one go. She was done. Now to call Mark.

About the fifth ring, it occurred to her it was late. She'd wake him, but hanging up now would be worse. Three more rings and a sleep voice growled, "Hello".

"Mark, I'm sorry I woke you but..."

"Annie? Are you all right? What happened?" Worry replaced grogginess.

"Nothing, I mean nothing wrong. I'm sorry I woke you, I called to say I'm ready. I finished your..." What the hell could she call it? "...er, list."

He was silent a minute. "Annie, I'm delighted you're through but have you any idea of the time?"

"No." She hadn't looked at a clock. The last few hours had been occupied with sex, chocolate, sex, wine, and impure thoughts.

"My dear, it's somewhere between midnight and morning, It's..." he paused, "two-thirty. Sheesh." Another pause while Annie contemplated apologizing again. "Look, Annie. Go to bed. I'll be down tomorrow to take you out to lunch."

Mark stared up at the ceiling, his hands folded behind his head. Awakened, he wouldn't sleep for a while. Didn't want to. His mind whirled over the possibilities ahead. Trust Annie to surprise him! He'd imagined at least two days of shock and two more days of agonizing. Thursday had been the earliest he'd expected her call, and she'd sat up half the night completing it. His chest shook in silent chuckle. His instincts never failed him. Now he just had to lead her. Train her. Starting in the morning.

Chapter Four

"Where are we going?"

"On a picnic."

Annie frowned at Mark's profile. The effort was wasted. His eyes were on the road and his mind was...heck if she knew what was going on inside his skull. He'd been preoccupied ever since she'd handed him that darn checklist. "Mind telling me where we're picnicking?"

The corner of his mouth twitched. "Somewhere secluded."

Very communicative of him! Or perhaps it really was. If he wanted somewhere secluded... then..."Sounds nice."

"I was going for tastes nice, smells nice, and feels nice."

"Sounds like an interesting menu."

"Spread your legs." Annie started, but shifted her legs apart. "I shouldn't have to keep reminding you," Mark said as his hand slid under her skirt. "Take it as given. Part of keeping yourself available." As he spoke, his hand rubbed her pussy and her legs parted wider as her hips tilted towards the pressure of his fingers. "Getting impatient, eh?" Two fingers dipped into her cunt just enough to tease. "You're sopping wet. Mmmm." Fascinated, Annie watched as Mark brought his hand to his mouth and slowly licked his fingers. "Yes." He spun the syllable out. "Annie you're mine this afternoon."

Parking the car on a grassy verge, Mark took two blankets and a hamper out of the boot, and led the way along a narrow path. Darn good thing it had been dry all week, her strappy sandals weren't made for traipsing though the country. Mind you following Mark wasn't a hardship...his firm butt in black jeans was very easy on the eye.

"Here, we are!" Mark stopped in a small clearing and spread a blanket out on the leaf mold.

He'd picked a perfect spot. The sun dappled light through the trees. It was quiet and peaceful and the sky above so blue and...Mark's arms circled her from behind, his hands cupping her breasts, as his lips found the back of her neck and eased a trail of light kisses across her shoulder, until he reached the top of her arm and nipped.

"Yeooow!" She jumped but his arms held her still.

"Shush," he whispered, his breath warm in her ear. "I'll kiss it better." His lips returned, soft and seductive, and his tongue gently swirled where he'd bitten seconds earlier. "Relax," he said, his lips now on the back of her neck. One hand stroked her breast through the soft cotton, and the other one opened the back of her dress, button by button. "Mmmm," he murmured as he eased her dress off her shoulders and both hands smoothed circles on her back. "Your skin's like silk." He gently licked a line from the nape of her neck to her shoulder. "And tastes like a promise."

Slowly he nipped her shoulder. This time she was ready and moaned quietly as she leaned against him. His hands moved and her dress fell down to her waist.

"Hey!" Annie yanked her clothes up but he stopped her.

"Leave it down. I want your breasts naked." He moved her hands away. "This is private land, I know the owner. Don't you trust me?"

How could she not? Especially when he'd moved round to face her and his mouth was mere inches from hers. Tossing caution to the winds, Annie leaned towards his mouth. Her lips parted and his tongue darted inside to tease, and taste before withdrawing and slowly tracing the inside of his lips, before nibbling them.

His hands cupped her breasts. Squeezing just enough to elicit a whimper as he leaned her back on the blanket. Now he lay atop her and his mouth took over, opening hers wider, his

tongue plunged deep while his hands grasped hers and raised her arms over her head. She was pinned. Lost under the power of his mouth and the heat of his hands.

He came up for air, and looked down at her, his eyes dark with desire. "Annie," he said, his voice hoarse, and covered her breast with his mouth. Wild thrills raced through her as he tugged on each breast in turn, and kissed his way down to her navel, pushing her dress lower. "Lift your hips."

He eased her dress off her feet and tossed it aside before it registered. She was stark naked! Her three seconds of panic were swallowed by the heat of Mark's mouth between her legs. His hands opened her and his tongue intruded deep and soft, and her brain flipped. She could be naked in the middle of the High Street on Saturday for all she cared. Nothing mattered but the slow, teasing touch of his tongue circling her clit, or licking slowing from her arse to her cunt.

Her hips took up their own rhythm and his tongue shifted and darted in and out of her teasing, arousing. Now it was back brushing softly across her nub, and a finger, then two, came in deep. As his tongue caressed, his fingers drove hard and deep, until she moaned and cried out, her voice rising as her hips jerked and little whimpers echoed among the trees.

"Beautiful, Annie!" Mark's voice came from beyond the edges of her passion. "Come for me, Annie," he said, and she soared over the edge, her screams rising to the treetops.

Shaking in his arms, she waited while her ragged breathing eased. When she opened her eyes, he was sitting, watching her, a slight smile twisting one corner of his mouth. She tried to sit up but pressure on her shoulder kept her down. She could have fought him but lack of will, or energy, had her acquiescing. She slumped back, vaguely aware, she was stark naked and sated, and he was fully clothed and calm as the woods around them.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"Ravenous!"

"A woman of appetite!" He turned to open the hamper and Annie sat up and reached for her dress. "No!" Mark stopped her. "Leave it off. Nakedness stimulates the appetite."

"What if I get cold?" It was hardly heat wave weather.

"A minor inconvenience compared to the pleasure your nakedness affords me. And it does please me."

And he'd just given her a mind-blowing climax. "All right." She tried to sound gracious. "What do we have for lunch?"

A bottle of wine, some strawberries, a lot of smoked salmon, and egg mayonnaise later. Mark helped her get dressed. "I like this dress," he said as he fastened the buttons up the back. Lend it to me when you get home, and I'll have others made. It's easy to take off. If I don't want to take the trouble, all I have to do is bend you over and you're available." He turned her around and kissed. Slowly. "Remember that, Annie. I like having you available."

A slow shiver started in her throat. As she swallowed, it slid through her down to her...She couldn't be aroused after that climax, could she? She could and Mark knew it. His eyes darkened as he looked down at her, a slow promise in his smile.

He held her hand in his all the way back to the car.

Was she worn out or was it just the wine? She'd drunk three quarters of the bottle. Mark drank sparingly, as he was driving. Nothing like wine, fresh air and wild sex to wear a woman out. Smiling to herself she shut her eyes, leaned against the leather upholstery, and listened to the soft purring of the engine as hedges sped by.

She was fast asleep, her lips parted, her breasts rising and falling. Four glasses of wine and she was out for the count. Worth remembering that! He'd picked a shady spot at the far end of the car park. She could doze undisturbed. While he took the time to get inside her mind.

Adjusting his seat to a comfortable recline, he took out the three sheets of paper she'd poured over until dawn this morning. It took all he had not to whoop out loud. She was wonderful! Reasonably willing and definitely adventurous. Her firm 'nos' matched most of his. She was a bit reluctant over anal sex and corporal, but she hadn't refused, and he could overcome her reluctance. Her big 'Yes' to oral sex didn't surprise him, she'd already been a most willing pupil, and it seemed the taste he'd offered of bondage hadn't put her off, the reverse in fact. Satisfied, Mark reread the list, folded it carefully and tucked it safe in his jacket.

Training Annie would be a joy, but a hard task for both of them. He'd be satisfied with nothing less than her total submission.

He let her sleep another fifteen minutes, before gently unfastening her seat belt, releasing the webbing so it rewound without touching her. Slowly he raised her skirt above her thighs. Nice legs, but her pussy hair would have to go. He hoped she wouldn't be difficult over that. Heck, one day he'd have her pierced and she'd wear his rings on her labia, but that would come later. He knew better than to push too hard and too soon.

He bent closer, inhaling the perfume of satisfied woman, and Annie. When she woke, they'd take walk round the gardens, stop for tea, and then he'd take her home and fuck her. Hard.

With that thought in mind, he lowered his mouth to hers, forcing her lips apart.

She didn't take long to wake, her lips moved against his, she sighed sleepily, and then her eyes shot open. Her hand closed on the back of his head and she returned his kiss with ardor and enthusiasm.

"Mmmm, Mark." She sighed as he moved off her mouth, leaving his hands cupped on her right breast, her nipples hard under his fingers. He'd definitely keep her without bras in future. "Waking sleeping beauty with a kiss?" She smiled.

"I think so." Keeping his voice low, he dropped a soft kiss on her forehead. "Let's pretend you're waking to a new life, as...my princess." No point in scaring her. Yet.

Annie glanced at the clock on the dashboard. She'd been asleep an hour. How long in this car park? And where was this car park come to that?

"We're at Pencombe House."

He'd done it again, Anticipated her question. "Oh."

"We've been here a while. I hadn't the heart to wake you."

"Was I out for the count?"

He shook his head. "No, just dozing off the wine and the lovemaking. Thought I'd let you get your stamina back."

"Nice of you!" His smugness niggled. He was just so darn confident and controlled. And she still wasn't sure what to make of the luncheon prelude. She'd been naked, while he hadn't even unbuttoned his shirt. And he'd kept his cool while she sweated and shouted.

"Annie..." He put just enough reproach in her name, to tweak her guilt. "I thought we could walk in the gardens and stop for tea. I read your responses while you were sleeping."

Annie nodded, her face burning, barely looking at him as she opened the car door. She'd been so aroused when she completed that list of his. But that was in the small hours of the morning, in the afternoon light, things felt vastly different.

Mark took her hand in his and continued their way along a raked gravel path, between manicured lawns and herbaceous border. "Your responses pleased me immensely," he said.

"Good." Annie forced out the answer. Had it been the right one? What was the right one?

Mark stopped, pulling his arm behind his back to bring her close. "What's the matter?"

She couldn't look away with his hand on ear chin. She took a slow breath. His calm eyes demanded an answer. "It's talking about it. Filling it in was bad enough, but you want to rehash

it. It's hardly necessary!"

"It's very necessary. Don't you understand." He spoke gently, as if soothing a frightened child. "I need to know what you like and don't like. What pleases you and what scares you. You need to share your sexual hopes and fears."

"Now?" Not that tomorrow would be any easier.

"You woke me in the middle of the night."

She still didn't understand that. "I wanted you to know I'd finished it." And she'd been so wound up and horny, she wasn't thinking straight.

He said nothing for a few heart beats but looked at her as if trying to look behind her eyes into the mind beyond. "Don't you realize, Annie. Nothing is finished. We're beginning. You're mine and I have such plans for you, Come on." He relaxed his arm, but held her hand even tighter than before. "Your responses showed, Annie, that you want what I want." That was a relief. "One thing disappointed me."

He said no more, as they walked to the end of the path and they turned into a formal walled rose garden, "What was wrong?" She asked when she couldn't stand the silence any longer. He was quiet for a few more paces. Annie bit back the urge to repeat her question. He'd heard and he'd reply in his time.

"Your reluctance about anal sex. Have you ever tried it?" They paused at an ornamental well, his hand played on the old stonework,

"No!"

"Then why the reluctance?" He put a sharp tone in his question, and then softened his voice. "Annie, it's something I want from you very much. I can give you pleasure and sensations like no other. I want to put my cock up your arse, will you let me?"

Her face had to be purple! She looked down into the cool darkness of the well, beyond the iron grating, dark water glistened. And beside her Mark waited for an answer. "It seems so... extreme."

"It is, and so are the sensations."

She bet they were. "It's just...it'll hurt!"

"Not if you relax and trust me. You do trust me Annie?"

"Of course!"

"Then think about it." He paused to let that thought sink in. "I understand your hesitation." She bet he did! He wouldn't be the one receiving. "Didn't oral sex seem extreme the first time you heard about it?" Lord yes! She'd read about it in her cousin's Cosmo and nearly upchucked when she got to the bit about swallowing. "And now you give better head than any woman I know."

Her face burned. Thank heaven, they was no one else was close enough to overhear. "Thanks for the compliment!" it came out a but terse.

"It's the truth. Your mouth is magnificent and if I were a poet I'd write odes about what you can do with your tongue." His hand reached over to hers. "Do you dare try something more?"

Dry throated, Annie nodded.

"We'll go slowly," Mark promised and they walked on. "It's not something we'll do in one night. I'll open you gently, take it slowly, prepare you to take my cock. Trust me. I'll take care of you."

What had she agreed to? Why? Had she really agreed to let him fuck her ass? Yes. Her muscles tightened as if in anticipation. Mark, just held her hand, and strolled, until the first drops of a summer shower fell on them.

"Let's run!" Mark pulled and she followed, running as fast as she could to keep pace with him. A few feet from the door, the summer shower turned into a downpour. Mark found a table by a mullioned window and ordered tea while rain beat against the leaded lights.

"I'm glad we made it in dry." Well almost, raindrops glistened like glass beads on Mark's golden brown hair and left darker spots on his linen jacket.

"Think I'd let you get wet?"

"Maybe not on the outside!"

He was still chuckling when the waitress returned with tea and scones and clotted cream. Annie poured the tea, and as she sipped hers, watched Mark split a scone in half and liberally spread it with cream and raspberry jam before biting into it. Every little thing he did, he did with an air of certainty and confidence. Even drinking tea. She still barely believed what she'd agreed to out there in the rose garden. She had no doubt he'd hold her to it.

"I wish you could stay the night," Annie said, as she poured their coffee. Shutting the dishwasher on their supper dishes had left her melancholy. Weekends were always over too soon.

"It's a temptation, but getting up at dawn is no way to start the week—for either of us."

"I know. It's just..." Why worry? Next weekend would come soon enough. All she had to do was survive the last week of term. "Here." She placed his mug on the table.

Mark put milk in hers as she sat down. "There's something I want to give you before I go," he said.

Annie's eyes popped wide as Mark opened his hand. Her jaw hung slack and she was past caring how many tonsils she showed. Every bit of attention was focused on the small, tapered cylinder of red plastic, sitting on her kitchen table. She'd seen pictures in kinky catalogs but never imagined...

"You know what this is?" Annie nodded, not trusting her voice. "Good," Mark said, as calmly as if they were discussing the weather, "I'm going to insert this before I leave. You're to wear it thirty minutes a day. I suggest early in the morning when you are relaxed from sleeping, or at night after your bath. You choose. Always use plenty of lubricant, or you'll hurt yourself. I want you opened not injured."

"Why red?" What a stupid thing to say. Why not. 'Will it hurt? or 'Do I have to?' or 'You've got to be kidding!' or simply 'No!'

"I picked it to match that silk negligee you wear. Would you rather another color?"

As if it made any difference! "No, red's fine." No, that was a lie. It wasn't fine. It was...

"Don't look so worried. Trust me on this and you'll discover a whole, new avenue of sensuality. It'll feel tight and different but it's not big enough to hurt. I'll save the larger ones for when you're stretched."

"And they will hurt?" She was not sure about this at all.

"By then sensation will exceed any discomfort. You'll feel pleasure, Annie. There are more nerve ending in the anus than in your cunt."

As if she wanted a human biology lesson. "You're really set on this aren't you?"

"And so are you for all your protests."

"Okay." She'd agreed! For the second time. When would Mark...?

In his own sweet time.

He drank his coffee slowly, talking about the week ahead. He would be in Paris at the end of the week but promised, as always to call her. What would she wear to Tom and Jane's? Why not

the short red dress he liked? Did she have any digestive biscuits? He fancied a snack before he left. Hobnobs would be fine.

It was almost a relief when he drained his mug, stood up, and held out his hand. "Come on, Annie!"

Upstairs in her bedroom, he slipped her dress off and told her to shower. Fast. She managed in record time. Remembering his warning not to keep him waiting. He was naked, reclining on her bed when she returned. "Stand there," he said as she reached the foot of the bed. She stopped in her tracks and waited, glad that at least he'd drawn the curtains. "Hold your arms above your head, and clasp your hands." She obeyed, watching him, wondering what came next. "I like that pose, it accentuates those lovely breasts." She blushed at that, and his next command: "Turn around. Slowly." Gave her a respite from his unrelenting gaze.

As she turned back he stood and came towards her, his thigh muscles moving under his skin as he strode. He stopped just inches from her. Close enough so she inhaled his scent. She wanted so much to run her fingers through the dark springy hair on his chest, to tease his nipples to hardness with her fingertips but she kept her hands clasped. He'd tell her what he wanted next.

He raised his arms and lowered hers, clasping her hands in his as he pulled them behind him, and held her tightly against his chest, his silky hair brushing her breasts. "Kiss me," he said.

Annie stood on tiptoe and tilted her face until her mouth found his. A slow tremor shook her, as his lips parted. She wanted him so, all of him. Her tongue explored his mouth, teasing his lips, tracing his teeth, pressing hard before retreating. Glorifying in her power, as his cock hardened against her belly. He pulled her closer and she ground her hips into him, pressing his erection against her belly as his hands cupped her bum and gently pulled her cheeks apart.

Now he kissed her, taking over, forcing the pace until she moaned, needing so much more than a kiss. And all the while, moving, slowly and certainly towards her bed.

She fell onto the mattress. Mark sat up against her pillows. "Make me hard," he said as he positioned her between his spread legs.

"I think you are already." Heck, he was almost standing to attention.

"Make me harder."

Was it possible?

Resting her hands on his muscled thighs, she gently kissed the skin beside her fingers. He'd made her stand and display, she'd tease a bit. Slowly she kissed up to the soft skin by his balls. She nudged gently, pushing them aside to nuzzle the tender skin behind. His slow intake of breath told her she'd scored a point. She grinned. Safe enough, her mouth was safely out of sight.

She flicked her tongue in a teasing trail round the base of his balls and slowly made her way to the other side. After a few good tongue thrusts in his tender groin, she kissed her way down to his knee and back.

"Annie..." Mark all but groaned. "What are you playing it?"

"You said to make you harder." Her voice was muffled in his groin. She paused, and looked up at him. She'd been successful. "I did, and no hands."

"Annie, suck my cock before I spank you!"

She closed her lips over the head of his cock, just as it occurred how available she was for spanking. His hands stroked her bottom cheeks, gently kneading and parting them as she tongued his cock into even greater strength. She tasted the sweet pre-come and wondered if he'd come in her mouth. Three times she teased her mouth up and down his cock before he pulled out and taking her shoulders in his hands, flipped her on her back, on the bed.

Leaning over her, and holding her hands above her head, he gently teased her nipple with his teeth and then kissed his way down her body. His hands let go of hers, and his fingers trailed

across her shoulders and down, until they cupped her breasts while his tongue stabbed in and out of her navel. She reached down to stroke his head but she'd barely touched his curly hair when he lifted his head, his eyes wide and hard. "Keep your hands above your head," he ordered. "Tonight you may not touch me without permission."

She clasped her hands tight, fighting the urge to hold him, to grind his face into her belly, to squeeze his firm shoulders and hold him close. It was twice as hard when he moved lower, his warm fingers parted her labia, and his mouth found her clit. She yelped as he bit down and bucked her hips, but he held her thighs, down and open,

"Easy there," he whispered as if she were a skittish horse, His warm breath eased her still sore tender flesh. "That hurt, I know. I'll kiss it better."

Kiss it better? He sent her into orbit! His tongue circled and then crossed her clit in every direction of the compass and few he'd just invented. Then he licked her slowly, dragging the flat of his tongue from fore to aft until she moaned. His tongue entered her cunt darting back and forth while his nose rubbed beneath her clit, keeping her on the edge. His hands grasped her bottom, tilting her hips towards him, so his tongue delved even deeper, filling her, penetrating her, making her long for his cock inside her but not wanting this to stop...ever.

She was moaning now. Tossing her head and jerking her hips harder as his hands kneaded her bottom. His mouth moved off her, her whimper of disappointment faded almost immediately as two fingers penetrated her and his thumb flicked over her clit. She was climbing, flying, soaring. she was..."Come for me, Annie, Come. Show me."

Her body shot into climax, she screamed and flailed her arms, as her chest heaved. Another scream and her body writhed and jerked as Mark eased beside her to hold her shaking body in his arms.

"Magnificent!" he whispered, as she calmed and her breathing eased, and he flipped her on her belly. "Easy," he murmured, his hands holding her still until she calmed. Gradually her breathing settled and then she gasped feeling cold between her bottom cheeks. He was spreading lubricant! "It's okay. It'll make it easy for you." His hands were gentle through the cold gel. "Always use plenty of lubricant, Annie. It's very, very important. Not enough might injure you. I'll never let that happen." His fingers soothed, while as his words shot anxiety straight into her heart.

His finger entered her, just a little, He paused to apply more lubricant. "I know it feels cold," he said, his voice gentle. "You'll get used to it."

She had. Already, his touch was easy, confident. Her back and hips relaxed, until she felt the tip of the plug pressing against her tight muscle. "Oh!" Her voice shook. "I think..." before she could say another word, her muscles gave way under the pressure and the plug was in and Mark lay alongside her and as she turned to face him, he kissed her.

"All done," he said smiling. "Not as bad as you feared, was it?" She had to agree. "Remember, Annie. Together, we're on a wild sensual voyage together. I'll surprise you, scare you, excite you. But I'll never harm you." He paused to brush the hair off her face and then kissed her forehead. "Does it hurt?"

"No." Not hurt exactly. "It feels...odd. Strange...but it doesn't hurt."

"You'll get used to it. Learn to enjoy it even. Soon you'll be looking forward to the next bigger size." That she doubted but it didn't seem the thing to say. "Just remember, use masses of lubricant, what seems too much is ideal, and never leave it in too long. Your asshole has no lubricant of its own, not like your pussy," He eased his hand between her legs, "That gets wet without my touching you. You moisten up at my voice."

Annie nodded. Her voice box had closed down.

He held her close a few minutes, then told her to get on all fours. Hands on her hips, he

eased into her. For an awful second, she wondered if there was space inside her for him and the plug. There was! Talk about feeling full! She exhaled slowly as he withdrew a little before surging back to come in deeper. "How do you feel?" he asked.

She had to catch her breath before replying. "Expanded!" His cock moved inside her as he chuckled. "Annie, you crack me up! Expanding you is what I'm doing all right." His hand slapped her bottom gently. "Like that?" he asked when she sighed. "You like what I'm doing?"

"Yes!" she breathed out the word, as he pressed the plug and twisted, eliciting a moan as she tossed back her head.

"My love," Mark said and began driving in and out. Holding her hips still as he moved harder and faster. She was panting, climbing back up. He grunted, and drove in even deeper as his hand came between her legs and pinching her clit, he came. She climaxed seconds later, as his heat spilled into her.

She wasn't sure how long they lay together, arms around each other after Mark pulled the bedclothes over them. She was dozing half way to sleep when he shook her awake. "I have to go soon, Annie, but first I'm going to take the plug out and you'll reinsert it. I'm going to watch to be sure you do it properly."

Annie still had final marks, school reports, and programs for Saturday to run off before the end of the week. It was a good thing Mark lived up in London. She'd never get her job done if he lived close. Not that he wasn't constantly in her mind. Especially, since she carried the darn butt plug in her handbag. She had cheated a bit by wrapping it in a handkerchief inside a plastic lunch bag but she had a nightmare of dropping her bag in the staff room and having everything roll out on the floor. May Bowles dropping a Tampax and watching it roll between the Head's feet, or the time Sam Smith opened his wallet and flipped a condom across the staff meeting table, would have nothing on seeing her little red rubber johnny bouncing across the floor.

With that last thought in mind, she turned on her computer and started entering student grades into her spread sheet.

"Hey, I heard you have to effrontery to give homework to the fourth form."

Annie turned to smile at Don Whales. "Were they complaining?" He'd had bus and car duty.

"Complaining? They were crying to heaven for justice." He perched himself on an adjacent desk. "Cast-iron Cavendish isn't in it. I wish I had your nerve."

Annie chuckled. She liked Don, had even had a little fling with him a year or so back, but he let the kids run over him. "It won't hurt them. It'll take them fifteen minutes. They'll probably do it on the bus."

Don shifted on the desk. "Interested in lunch next week? Let's celebrating our freedom from school before we all go our separate ways." Annie hesitated, what did he mean by lunch? "Jim Haig suggested we all go to the new place opened on the river. He knows the owner."

"I'd love to."

"Brilliant! I'll tell him. You're on."

She'd just settled back after Don leaving, when Peter Bly tucked his head round the door. "Annie, can you give us a hand? We've a little problem. The lights on the stage are playing merry hell. Neither the Head nor I can figure out what's wrong."

Wishing she'd never taken that stage lighting course a couple of years back, Annie agreed.

The 'little problem' took almost an hour to solve. Weary and sweaty from standing under the lights, Annie gave up on school and went home.

She'd made an extra pot of coffee this morning left in the fridge. A nice, long glass of iced

coffee suited her mood right now. She couldn't wait to get home and stretch out in the garden.

Just her luck! There was a hold up on the bypass where a milk tanker had turned over, blocking all but one lane. By the time Annie got home, she was tired, weary, and fed up, and the phone was ringing. She raced through the door and grabbed the receiver.

"Hello, love." Annie ground her teeth together, it would be Mark! "Is that bottom of yours bare?"

"No it is not! I've just walked – no dashed – into the house and I've had one hell of a day!"

"Annie, I know this time of year it stressful but that doesn't excuse you." His voice came harsh down the phone. "You know the rules. I warned you I'd spank you for breaking them."

"Mark, I've had one shitty afternoon and I'm in no mood to play games!" She slammed the phone down, and swore at it. She was sweating, and felt like crying. She'd had over excited kids bouncing all day, and needed pace and quiet. Not Mark getting on her.

She stomped up stairs, stripped off her work clothes and showered her sweat and frustration away. Pulling on a tee shirt and cotton skirt, she hesitated over undies, half ready to pull on a pair just to show him. Why bother? He'd never know. But she had agreed and yelling was petty and childish.

She picked up the phone to apologize and punched in his work number. He'd gone. She'd just missed him, his secretary told her, and no, he wasn't expected back. A call to his flat got his answering machine. "Mark, I'm sorry I yelled. I've just had a rough day, and I snapped...I'm sorry," she added and hung up.

She'd done what she could. She rewarded herself with a generous tot of whipped cream on the iced coffee, picked up the paperback thriller she was half way through, and settled into a deck chair under the old apple tree. And read until the strains of the day eased out of her, and she began to feel hungry. She was just to come in and start something for supper when the doorbell rang.

Chapter Five

"Mark!" What surprised her more, that he was here, or that he looked furious?

"Yes, it's me." He walked in, pushing the door shut behind him. "Come for a much needed discussion. Whatever you may think, I'm not playing 'games' over this matter of dress. We set up rules and I will see them kept."

"Mark, what in heaven...?"

"I could well ask the same..." He stepped closer, his eyes almost purple and his face set hard. "But it would waste time. I want to get this over with."

"Get what over with?"

"Your punishment, of course!"

Annie didn't reply. Her throat jammed tight. "Mark..." she began.

"Annie." He spoke gently, as if to a child, as he caressed the side of her face with the back of his hand. "You have to understand. I don't like punishing, but you disobeyed, and on top of that, you shouted and yelled down the phone like a bratty child." He took her hand and kissed her knuckles gently. "This won't take long, and as it's your first time, I'll go easy on you. But I want you to understand, I cannot ignore transgressions." He paused to feel under her dress. "Good, if you still had them on I'd really have to punish you. Now, go and pee."

Annie was washing her hands, before reality struck her. Mark expected her to walk out there and calmly let him spank her! Where was he? Living in the fifties? The middle ages? Was she seriously going to walk out and let him do this? What were her choices? Tell him to get lost and show him the door, or agree and find out if every spanking story she'd ever read was anything like the real thing.

Taking a deep breath, which did nothing to slow her racing heart, Annie dried her hands, very carefully folded the towel, and opened the door.

Mark was standing three feet away. Before she even thought of what to say, he hugged her. "I know you're worried and scared. Don't be. It'll soon be over."

He pulled one of her French mahogany dining room chairs into the middle of the sitting room, and sat down, Standing between his legs, Annie shivered at the touch of his warm thighs under the tan chinos. "Don't be so scared. All you're getting is a hand spanking. I won't use my belt or a stick on you. I'm spanking you for disobedience and impertinence. Two things I can't have. You understand that, don't you, my love?"

Annie nodded, unable to speak, barely able to think. She shivered, looking down at the stern set of his mouth and cold eyes.

"Let's get it over with then." Mark turned her to her right, and tipped her over his knee. She cried out, as her face ended up inches from the floor. "It's okay," he soothed, as he settled her on his thigh and caught her legs under his. "You won't fall, You're safe."

Safety was all in the definition and falling wasn't her first worry. The immediate future was. She reached out her hands to the floor in an attempt to ground herself, and braced herself for his blows. How many times would he hit her? Would he make her cry? No way!

"Relax, Annie." His hand smoothed between her shoulder blades and down her spine, like a caress. The last thing she'd expected. "You're so tense. Let go a little. It will make it easier." He should try 'letting go' with his bottom in the air, and the blood running into his head. His hands continued to stroke, now drawing soft circle on her lower back, smoothing her dress over her bottom. She relaxed. Just a little. Maybe it wouldn't be as bad as she feared.

"Good girl!" Pleasure softened Mark's voice. "That's what I want, you relaxed and

beautifully submissive over my knee." He continued his slow, calming caress. As she calmed and settled, her dress came up and over her head. Falling like a curtain over her face, half obscuring the carpet and leaving her in a strange twilight. Her bottom felt cold, and exposed, and she braced herself for his first slap.

He kissed first one buttock and then the other.

"You're tensing again, Annie!" She was, but made a real effort to relax. "Much better." His hand rested warm on her bare skin. For a few seconds he didn't move and then slowly, almost lovingly, he rubbed her bottom and the backs of her thighs and spread her legs a little. She was exposed, and helpless, and...aroused. It wasn't possible! But she could feel the warmth beginning between her legs, and shivered.

"Annie, stop worrying. Just relax and think about what I'm doing to you." What he was doing was driving her round the bend! He gave her another kiss. This time, at the base of her spine and then spanked her twice, once on each cheek. Annie relaxed. That had been easy. What had she worried about?

"That didn't hurt did it?"

"No," she replied though yards of skirt.

"This will." As he spoke, his hand came down hard. She heard the resounding smack first and cried out in shock even before her mind registered pain. At the second one she yelled and jerked as far as she could. Unable to move the legs locked under his, she reared up and arched her back.

Mark grasped her waist with both hands, forcing her back down. He placed one hand between her shoulders, and another at the base of her spine and held her until she stopped struggling.

"Easy, Annie. I don't want to have to punish you for resisting." At that she made herself calm down. It wasn't exactly easy. "Good girl! Now you know what to expect. Just lie still and take your punishment. It won't take long."

Lie still while he hit her like that? But the next few were easier, sounding worse than they felt. Loud splats of his hand on her soft flesh echoed as the hurt spread and built. He covered her bottom and thighs with smacks, never hitting the same place twice. Each slap wasn't too bad, but together they had her smarting and he showed no sign of stopping. "You're getting a nice rosy pink. When you are red, I'll stop." Nice of him! How long until she was red? Could she last?

He was slowing now, the spans came less frequently, or so it seemed. But each fresh slap stung more than the last. She was crying now, silent tears running down her cheeks. She lost track of time. It seemed he'd been spanking for hours, days. She sobbed and sniffed and then Mark said. "Just three more Annie and we're through." As her fuddled mind processed his words, his hand came down. Harder than ever.

When her scream died. It was over.

Gently Mark stood her on her feet, smoothing her skirt down and wiping her tears with the pads of his thumbs. "It's over, Annie." He kissed her. "I've very proud of how you took your punishment, now..." He stood up, holding her close as her last sobs died. "Let me make you some tea."

Chiding her gently for planning yogurt for dinner, he fixed bacon sandwiches and they ate at the kitchen table, after Mark brought two cushions from the sitting room for Annie to sit on.

She still winced as she sat down.

"Sore?" She nodded. "If it still smarts when I leave, I'll soothe it with lotion." He put her tea in front of her. "I want you to feel the hurt for a while, so you'll remember and I won't have to repeat it any time soon."

"I'm hardly likely to forget!"

"That was the point." He sat down opposite her. "Annie, I make rules for a purpose. I want you without panties. Your nakedness under your clothes keeps your mind on me." He paused to take a bite of his sandwich. "I dislike disciplinary punishment. I much prefer, erotic spanking or flogging."

"How can that be erotic?" Even as she spoke, she was only too aware of the wetness between her legs.

"Easy." He paused while he finished chewing. "Skin is sensitive. It covers your entire body and responds to all sorts of stimulus—including spanking, beating, flogging. Responsive individuals will even orgasm after repeated striking with a cane or riding crop."

"That's ridiculous!"

"Is that your heart or your convention-bound mind speaking?" he looked her straight in the eye. "If we had a bet over whether you're aroused now, you'd lose."

She dignified that comment by picking up her cup and concentrating on her Dargeeling. She was almost shaking with the realization of how aroused she was. It had to be Mark's voice. Heck, just talking to him on the phone got her excited. As she set the cup back in the saucer, her body stiffened and her hips jerked, completely independent of her mind.

Mark was on his feet in an instant, "Annie, it's okay!" He was on his knees, between her legs, and pushing her skirt up as his hands spread her thighs. She moaned, unable to stop her hips rocking. Mark spread her labia as she gave into her rising passion. He touched her once, twice, the third time his thumb brushed her clit, she climaxed. He drew her shaking shoulders against his hard chest. "It happens for some people that way, Annie. As much as your mind hated the punishment, your body was stimulated."

He pulled his chair round so they sat, touching. "Eat up, Annie! You're thirsty and hungry even if you don't realize it."

She did realize it. Worn out in mind and body, she was ravenous: finishing her sandwich before Mark, and drinking three cups of tea.

"Go upstairs, undress, and lie face down on the bed. I'll be up in a minute."

As she lay on the cool sheets, glad to be off her still sore bottom, she listened as Mark put the plates in the dishwasher, and then went out to his car. The front door closed, and his even tread came up the stairs. She looked up as he came in the room, a bottle of lotion in his hand.

"This will soothe you."

It *was* cool against her heated skin. She winced as he spread the scented lotion, but slowly the smart eased, and she relaxed under his confident but easy touch. "It'll hurt a little tonight, but not enough to keep you awake. By tomorrow morning you'll just be a little bit sore, maybe not even that."

"You hurt me!"

"And aroused you." She went quiet, unwilling to discuss that. "Are you angry at me?" he asked, after a few minutes.

Annie lifted her head and turned to look at him. "Not angry exactly," she replied after a moment's thought. "more like confused."

"Confusion is good. You're sorting out your feelings."

"They don't feel very sorted!"

He kissed her between the shoulder blades and stretched out alongside her. "Let me help you sort things out. What confuses you the most?"

"That I didn't throw you out of the house! That I let you do that to me! That I'm still letting you near me...but most off all, that it turned me on...I must be nuts!"

"Not in the least." Mark propped his chin in one hand, the other rested on the small of her

back, just above her still tingling rear. "You let me spank you because you trust me, and in your heart, you knew you deserved it. You need me, Annie, You need a strong man to surrender to. To give over control to. Someone to redirect you. I'm that man Annie, and in your heart you know it."

"I'm still not sure..."

"Don't lie, Annie, either to me or yourself. You are sure, but hesitant to admit it. If you weren't sure, you would have thrown me out. If it hadn't felt right, you'd have fought me instead of accepting that spanking. Trust me, Annie. Give in to me. I'll never abuse your submission."

"You want me to submit? To you?"

"Yes, Annie, that's what this evening, and that list you filled in are all about. Trust me Annie, give in to me, and I will give you more pleasure than you ever even dreamed of."

"Like a sore bum!"

"Like the climax you just enjoyed. Like the excitement you felt when you stopped fighting me. Like the arousal you feel under my hands, whatever I do to you." As if to prove his point, he eased a finger between her bottom cheeks stimulating the nerve endings until her hips rocked. "I can teach you everything I know about pleasure, Annie. Are you willing to learn?"

She raised herself on her forearms and looked deep into his dark, violet eyes. Eyes that gleamed in the twilight, and crinkled at the corners as his lips parted in a smile. Her heart dip a little flip as her chest tightened. "I'm willing," she said, meshing their fingers, as their hands touched.

As he drove back to London, though the night, Mark smiled. Annie was beautiful, vibrant, sensual, and eminently trainable. Soon he'd own her completely. It was only a matter of time.

"Let's share the last bit." Mark drained the bottom inch or so of champagne into their glasses.

"One more experience I've never had before." Annie reached for her glass. "Champagne and fish and chips."

"You like new experiences?"

His question hung in the summer evening. He wasn't talking about fried cod. "So far I have, with you."

"There's more I plan to share with you." He reached across the table and stroked the back of her hand with one finger. His touch went all the way up her arm. His slow smile showed he knew exactly what he did to her. "Do you bear a grudge over that spanking on Wednesday?"

Talk about shift and shock! Annie clicked her tongue, realizing too late she sounded and probably looked like, an irritated teacher. "Do we have to talk about it?" She tried to sound unperturbed even if her mind going in loops.

"We must, Annie. I have to be sure you understand, and don't feel discontented."

"I'm supposed to feel *contented*?"

His fingers glided over her knuckles. At some point she'd balled her fists. "I want you to understand and accept my reasons for physical correction." He lifted her hand and kissed it. "Relax." He kissed the other, his touch easing her tension. "Listen." It was hard not to. Her breathing slowed under his calming voice. "I've set rules for you: underwear, the plug. I'll make others, harder perhaps as time goes on. It's not a game to me, but an important part of our relationship. I need your obedience in these things."

"Why?"

"Because that's how things will be between us. I lead, you follow. I'll order, and you obey. I dominate, you submit." He smiled. "The very idea scares and fascinates doesn't it?"

"Yes." Speaking was an effort.

"Trust me, Annie. I'll never harm you. But I want your surrender, in return I'll give you pleasure beyond your wildest dreams. Will you surrender to me?" Annie nodded, her throat too tight for much else. Even swallowing hurt. "Will you, Annie? I need to hear it?"

"Yes." It seemed her voice came from outside her mind. "I'll surrender but..."

"But what?"

"I'm not sure what will happen." Her mind raced over memories of 'grown-up games' and the paraphernalia she'd seen last Saturday.

"Nothing you can't take. It's one step at a time, Annie, and at our pace." (It wasn't until later she remembered it was no longer 'her' pace.) "Let's pack up, there's something I want to teach you tonight. He drained his glass and then pulled her close, his mouth coming down on hers. As she opened her lips against his, he kissed champagne into her mouth.

"Is that an intoxicating kiss?" she asked as they eased apart,

"That's my promise," Mark replied. "Now, go upstairs, and take your clothes off."

That direction always excited her. Tonight was no different. Weary as she was, his calm, measured voice imbued her with an energy she'd thought impossible after her long day. She kicked off her shoes and reached for her zipper, as Mark sat on the sofa and watched.

He wanted a striptease. She'd give him one! She shimmed out of her skirt and carefully folded it over a chair, and unbuttoned her blouse slowly, letting it slide off her shoulders and fall to the floor. All she had left was her bra and slip.

Never taking her eyes off Mark she lowered one strap, then the other, and with a little bump of her pelvis worked the satin slip down over her hips until it fell to a circle at her feet. Stepping sideways she then bent forward to up hook her bra.

"Turn around."

Surprised, she turned. "Bend right over." She obeyed, feeling exposed and awkward. "You are so beautiful." How could he sound so darn calm, when she had blood rushing to her head? "Now take off you bra and then turn around."

Unhooking upside down wasn't the easiest thing she'd ever done, but the gleam in Mark's eyes as she turned around made the effort worthwhile.

"You are exquisite, Annie." He was sitting, arms resting on the back of the sofa, and his knees apart. "Come closer. Walk slowly, and swing your hips."

Four steps, four swings later she stood between his knees. What next?

"Kneel, Annie, right here,"

Was this another one of his games? She didn't ask but knelt on the rose patterned carpet, his knees level with her shoulders. His voice might be even, his face impassive. But he had an erection that made her smile.

"What are you smiling at?"

"Your erection."

"Call me, Mark." He'd put an unmistakable edge in his voice. "Let's try that again. What are you smiling at?"

"At your erection, Mark."

"Is my erection so amusing?"

She shook her head. "Not amusing, Mark. It's just the thought of what will happen later, Mark." Somehow on her knees, the 'Mark' came naturally.

"What do you want later?"

"I want you to fuck me. Please, Mark." She watched him, for what seemed an age.

"Lower your eyes." Now she looked straight at his crotch, and if anything, the bulge was even bigger. This game aroused him too. She was soaking. "You are very amenable this evening, Annie. As a reward, I will fuck you—later. Shut your eyes and don't open them until I give you permission."

Her lids dropped, almost without effort. In the dark quiet, she heard a car turn the corner. When the echo faded, a owl hooted in the trees beyond her window. She wobbled a little, but steadied as the soft fabric of his trousers brushed her shoulder. She heard her heart beating and felt the pulse in her temple as she waited.

"Very good, Annie." He stroked her face as he spoke. "You obey beautifully. No, don't open your eyes. Stay still. I won't hurt you, but I'm going to touch you."

She sighed as he jiggled each breast in his hands. "Lovely. Your nipples are nicely hard, but I think we can do even better." As he spoke, he gently pulled one, rolling it in his fingers until the nipple stiffened and Annie whimpered. Something tightened around it, but his fingers were on her right nipple, tugging until that too, was tight and heavy. He was no longer touching, but a tug on both breasts at once startled her.

"What...?" she asked, fighting to keep her eyes closed.

"Shhh." Mark put a finger on her lips. "Don't say a word. But you may open your eyes." One look at her breast, and she'd have spoken if Mark's finger wasn't against her lips. "Look at your breasts carefully. Think about what you see, and when I move my finger you may ask one question."

Only one? A dozen raced thought her brain as she looked at the two tiny loops circling her nipples and the gold chain hanging between. She'd better choose her question wisely. "Why did you do this?"

"To help you feel submissive. A gift to show you how much I value you. You will wear it when I tell you. Just one more thing you'd never have done without me." True enough, and how many more would he ask? "You're beautiful with my nipple chain, Annie. Stand up." He steadied her upper arms to help her up. His eyes darkened as he looked her up and down, holding her hands to prevent her covering herself. "Lovely, Annie. beautiful. Now where's our butt plug?"

"In the bathroom."

"Fetch it and bring the lubricant." As she turned, he gave her bottom a gentle love pat, little more than a caress but a clear reminder of what disobedience would bring.

Annie watched the chain swing between her nipples, as she walked. What was she doing? Wearing chains and fetching plugs? Her chest caught with excitement. Opening the bathroom drawer, her hand tightened on the tube, squashing it before she realized. Her breathing quickened. She felt almost lightheaded as she reached for the plug and walked back into the bedroom.

"Here they are." Her hand shook, as Mark took the plug and lubricant.

He put them in his pocket, without a word, and left her standing in the center of the goat skin rug. Her toes sank into the warm pelt, the soft goat hair brushing her ankles. Cold excitement curled in her gut as Mark stepped back and slowly walked round her, his eyes observing every inch of her. She turned her head to follow him but a gentle hand on the side of her face, redirected her gaze.

He was behind her, now, she sensed his eyes taking in every detail, the line of spine, the curve of her hips, and the soft vulnerable flesh of her bottom. She jumped as his hand smoothed from the small of her back, to caress the curve of her buttocks. As his hand moved and her breathing eased, his lips pressed against her right shoulder blade. He stepped back and then slowly circled her, running a hand down the curve of her hip, gently tugging the chain between

her nipples, and placing her hands together behind her back, before nudging her legs open with his hand.

She steadied herself, legs apart as he knelt in front of her. Her knees shook a little as Mark knelt and placed his hands on the inside of her thighs. He stroked the soft curls of her pussy and then opened her labia. She shivered as his breath warmed her sensitive skin. Would she be able to stand still while he kissed her there? Her legs wobbled and her breathing caught as she waited for the first touch of his tongue.

It never came.

After a heart-thumping wait, he released his grip and stood up. He tilted her chin up, his eyes dark as he looked down at her.

"Wonderful, Annie. You wanted to speak or move but you controlled yourself. I'm very proud of you." Her heart warmed at his praise. "Now," he went on, "I'm going to kiss you but you must keep your hands together behind you, You may not move."

He framed her face with his hands, holding her still while his lips pressed hers open, She sighed as his tongue touched hers. Slowly she thrust her tongue forward. Was permitted? Apparently. His tongue curled under hers, thrusting and darting back and forth. Teasing her, until she whimpered with the simulation and effort of keeping her hands clasped. His mouth worked hers, faster and harder until she moaned and her hips moved on their own volition.

He pulled his mouth away, keeping his hands on her face. "Shh. Just a little more patience, Annie."

He stepped back, his eyes glinting, and a smile at the corners of his mouth. He placed a hand on each shoulder and she knelt at his nod. It wasn't easy with hands clasped but he steadied her and stroked her head as looked up at him. He looked down at her, his lips slightly parted, as if deciding what he wanted next.

"I'm going to teach you something you must remember," he said. "As you are now, I call kneeling up. Listen carefully, I will give directions for kneeling down. I will only tell you once. Do you understand?"

Throat tight with expectation, Annie nodded.

"Do you understand?" he repeated. "I want to hear an answer."

"Yes, I understand...Mark."

That pleased him. She read as much on his face. But she made herself concentrate, ready to listen to the directions she'd only hear once.

"You are to bend forward until your forehead touches the ground. Place your arms over your head, extended out, palms flat on the ground. That done, spread your thighs."

Was it right? Head down, hands open, Annie shifted her legs apart. The rug tickled her breasts and face, but her hands reached beyond the rug resting on the cool polished wood. Had she done exactly what he wanted? She thought back over each direction as she waited for his verdict.

"Open your legs a little more." She obeyed. "Lovely, Annie! I wish I had a camera."

Her head shot up at that, but before she could straighten, she sensed his disapproval and forced herself back down. Surely he wouldn't take pictures of her like this! Her shoulders shook until his hand steadied her. "No need to be anxious. You look beautiful like that. You shouldn't have raised your head, but you realized your error immediately. That was good. You're a fast learner, Annie."

She relaxed at his reassurance. She had pleased him. She smiled against the goat skin. He pressed her shoulders down towards the floor and her bottom came higher. "Stay like that whatever I do. Please don't move."

What next? Panic now replaced confidence. Sweat gathered under her arms and breasts, as her face got hot buried in the thick fur. Mark stroked the raised curve of her bottom, easing her cheeks apart and then holding them open with both hands as he covered her ass with kisses. She had to fight herself to keep from moving. How could she keep still when he touched stimulated her like that?

He ran his hand over her bottom again and muttered, "Beautiful, Annie." before kissing each buttock just as he had on Wednesday. Was he going to spank her again. How could she stay still if he did? Excitement and fear sent thrills coursing through her. She jerked at cold lubricant squeezed between her bottom cheeks.

"Be still!" Mark spoke sharply, as his hand pressed on her lower back.

"I'm sorry, Mark," she whispered. "It's cold."

"I know. You must get used to the sensation." He spread more, his fingers moving with calculated slowness, working the jelly into her arse hole as he penetrated with the tip of a finger. He took his time, touching just enough to stimulate her nerve endings as she fought to keep her hips from moving. As he held her cheeks apart with one hand, she felt the cold metal tip of the tube against her hole and the cold shock of jelly squirted right inside.

He arse felt wet and cool and slick, just as her cunt was heated and soaking.

"Very good." Her heart warmed at his approval. "Now remain still, do not move." He spread her cheeks again and she felt the tip of the plug pressing against her muscles. "Relax, breathe out," he ordered, and as she obeyed, he slid the plug home.

"That went in so easily. I'm pleased. Does it hurt?"

"No, Mark, not now. It did the first few times."

"Excellent! Time we started with a bigger one." Now? A bigger one? She wouldn't panic. There was no point. "You are to remain in this position until I tell you to move. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Mark."

"Good!"

She heard him move around the room. The door opened and closed. She was alone. She fought the temptation to lift her head, to reach back and ease the plug that was pushed deeper than ever before, to bend her elbows and ease the pressure on her arms. It seemed almost a matter of pride to prove she could do all, maybe more than, he asked. How long would he leave her like this? Had he gone downstairs? She hadn't heard his footsteps on the stair but the door was closed and the blood throbbing behind her ears interfered with her hearing. Was he fixing a drink? What if he'd left the house? Was he ever coming back? Would he leave her here until morning?

Fighting that panic, Annie forced herself to breath slowly and relax her shoulders. Resting her head on one side would ease the stretch of her neck. Did that count as 'moving'? Probably. How much longer?

"Impressive!" Annie jumped at that. He'd never left the room! He stepped and stood astride her, one foot either side of her waist, the hems of his trousers brushing her. "I'm delighted with you, Annie. Now roll on your back."

That wasn't the easiest thing in the world, but she worked her way turning the hips and legs until she lay looking up at Mark looming over her. Her chest was heaving with the effort, and excitement, her breasts rising and falling with each gasp.

"As a reward for your obedience, I will fuck you." He held out both hands and, stepping back a bit, pulled her to her feet and carried her to the bed.

"Do you want to come, Annie?"

Come? She'd been on the edge all evening. "Yes, Mark. Please, Mark."

Spreading her legs wide, and pushing a pillow under her hips, Mark eased her labia apart, and slowly licked her. In seconds she was moaning, her hips moving as her passion built. His fingers were inside her as his thumb worked her clit. Moans came loader and faster. "Come, Annie, come for me." His thumb pressed down and as Annie cried out. As she started to climax, he pulled the plug from her arse. The added sensation threw her over the edge, and she came with a scream.

He wrapped his arms round her as the aftershocks subsided, then without a word, he spread her legs, and fucked her with slow deep strokes. She came again just before he did. Shouting with a wild, intense passion, as the room darkened around her, and she lay gasping until her heart stilled and she dropped into sleep.

Chapter Six

"Are you all right, Annie?"

Annie smiled at Jane. "I'm fine. It's just..."

"You feel as if you've woken up in the Twilight Zone?" Emma asked, from her perch on the opposite side of the table.

"Yes!" Annie looked across the kitchen. By focusing her gaze on the bright red Aga, she could avoid looking at Emma and Jane. She was afraid she'd stare. It was hard not to gawk at their hairless quims. Emma wore a chain like Annie's between her nipples, but Jane's had been pierced with small gold rings, attached to dangling teardrop pearls.

"What did Mark tell you about coming here?" Jane asked, looking up from slicing a baguette into chunks.

"That we were coming for lunch."

"That's all?"

Annie nodded, feeling her face burning. Jane slammed the bread knife with a disgusted mutter. "Men! He might at least have warned you. Heck it's your first time isn't it?"

"At something like this, yes."

Emma clucked her tongue. "I guessed as much from the look in your eyes went you arrived. Unnerved you, didn't it?"

"Not as much as the party last weekend." She'd never get over meeting the Austins. She'd hardly been able to meet their eyes on Parent's Day.

Jane frowned a crease between her eyes. "But you knew what it would be like?"

"Mark told me, yes. But the reality..." Annie shook her head. "That sort of yanked me by the nose."

"It'll do that," Emma said. "But you can trust Mark, he'll answer your questions."

"I know...but..." But what?

"Oh, heck!" Jane pushed the basket of bread aside. "You've got a million questions, haven't you?"

"They're waiting for lunch, you know." Emma angled her head to where the three men sat outside.

"They're busy planning a little scene. Hang on..." She crossed to the fridge and took out a silver bowl piled high with strawberries. "Here's our alibi. These need hulling." She tossed the berries into a colander and handed out fruit knives. "Okay, Annie," Jane said as she pulled up a chair. "Fire away. What's your first question?"

"Did it hurt having your nipples pierced?" Annie wanted to bite her tongue off! That was too personal.

"I want to know that, too." Emma said. "Alistair wants mine done."

Jane shot Emma a quick look and shrugged. "It hurts." She looked down at the two pearls that swung with every movement. "I wasn't too keen about it, but it was important to Alan. I gave it to him for our first anniversary." She looked at Emma. "Alistair is insisting?"

"Not 'insisting', but what choice do I have?" She sighed. "We agreed no piercing or tattoos. But now he wants to expand my limits."

Annie only understood half of this. Surely if Emma refused..."Don't sweat. It's not that bad. Worse than childbirth but not as long." She held Emma's hand reassuringly. "There's lots of interesting accessories you can wear."

Emma reached for a berry and gripped the stalk. "It's just...heck, why set limits if they're going to be 'expanded'?"

"The whole point," Jane said, "is to stretch them as far as they can. Mark pushed Annie's when he got her to walk in here in the altogether. Alistair is renegotiating body modification."

Emma shuddered. "It sounds worse when you call it that." She looked at Annie. "What else? They'll be baying for food soon."

"Your collars and your..." she hesitated, "...pussies. And why do you do it? I mean everything."

"Collars," Emma began, "are for ownership. Alistair gave me mine on my birthday. I'd known him about a year and a half. As long as I wear it, I belong to him." Her words sent a shiver down Annie's back. Owned...like a dog!

"Think of it as an alternative wedding ring," Jane added. "At a play party or a gathering, it shows everybody we're taken. I've got a gold choker chain I wear to work, it keeps Alan in my mind."

"We don't wear collars in public," Emma said, "just among other people in the scene."

"Shaved pussies are the same." Jane hulled and sliced strawberries as she talked. "Sooner or later Mark will ask it of you. It's more of a bind than anything else. It grows twice as fast as your legs. But..." she grinned, "it does make everything more sensitive. Sort of worth the trouble."

"Never use aftershave," Emma warned. "You'll hit the ceiling."

She was never going to shave herself there

"Have we sent your anxieties into overdrive?" Jane asked,

"They were in pretty high gear before you started. It's just..." Annie paused, "Listening to you both I'm back thinking about the things Mark's done—that I've let him do. In a rational moment, I think I'm nuts. But I know I'll let him do them again, and I'll enjoy it. Even want it." She looked up. "I wonder if I'm loony."

Emma shook her head. "No more than the rest of us! Look at me, I've all but agreed to have my nipples pierced. The idea scares the socks off me. But I'm willing to do it to please Alistair and I enjoy being scared. Make sense of that, if you can."

Annie couldn't! Any more than she understood why she hoped Mark would tie her up again before he went home tonight. "I've been trying to sort out how I feel, and I've not had much success."

Emma shook her head. "Just go with your heart and your own needs and forget what the convention conditioned part of your mind tries to tell you what 'nice' women should want."

"That's what Alan said when..." Annie broke off. She could hardly tell Jane when he'd given her that advice.

"He's right, you know," Jane said looking up and smiling as Annie turned the color of the strawberries. "Don't worry, I know about that afternoon."

Her complacency shocked Annie. "You know?"

"Yes, dear. I knew ahead of time. He and Mark discussed what to do sitting at this very table."

Sledgehammered was a good way to describe how Annie felt. "And you don't mind?"

"That you sucked Alan off?" Jane shook her head. "Good heavens, no! Annie, you're not the first, and won't be the last woman I share him with, but I'm the only one who wears his collar."

This would take days to process. Anger, jealousy, Annie could understand but this easy acceptance, Even friendliness, was enough to make scrambled eggs of her thought processes.

"Annie," Emma added, "sharing and being shared is part of our lifestyle. You'll

understand."

That she doubted. "Aren't you jealous?" she asked Jane.

"Not any more. I was the first few times, but Alan pointed out, I didn't own him. He owns me. He only shares me among the circle. Think how many women cope with husband's infidelity and never know who their men go with. We know. When Alan goes to another woman, it's part of a scene. Mark needed him to help satisfy your fantasy. He didn't go to you to have an affair." Annie still couldn't work it all out. "You did surprise him with that loofah though, he came right home and experimented on me."

"I'm sorry!" Heck -- what had she done?

"Don't be. I like the feel of a soapy loofah across my back...and other places."

Annie should probably give up trying to understand and go with flow. So far, she'd darn well enjoyed the way she'd flowed.

"Hate to interrupt," Emma said, "but I think we should get some food to that lot outside, and get their minds off whatever they're hatching up."

"Dream on!" Jane said, with a dry laugh. "Think they'd get distracted by mere food." She glanced out the bay window to where the three men sat by the pool. "They're too busy planning someone's torture."

Emma smiled as if the idea pleased her. "Who's turn do you think?"

Jane laughed. "Annie's initiation, I'd imagine." She patted Annie's hand. "Don't worry! They know what they're doing, and Mark knows your limits."

Maybe Mark did. Annie wasn't sure she did.

It was an odd luncheon, to say the least. They had shrimp and scallop brochettes and cold roast beef and salad, sitting in the sun by the side of the pool. The men dressed casually in shorts and sports shirts and the women in nothing. Unless you counted the collars and nipple chains and the sunscreen Mark solicitously applied, warning Annie of the dangers of sunburn. Was Annie the only one seeing anything unusual? Apparently. The others acted as if lunch in the garden and female nudity happened every weekend. And if what Jane and Emma had said earlier...they did! No wonder the Brandises had a seven-foot brick wall around the pool area.

After they'd demolished the last of the strawberries. Jane produced iced coffee topped with coffee ice cream. Sated and sleepy from summer heat and good food, Annie leaned back against Mark's knees and glanced up at him. He was watching her, his eyes a deep violet under his dark lashes, and a wry smile turning the corners of his mouth, "Enjoying yourself?" he asked.

"Yes, but I think I ate too much." At least she didn't have to worry about a tight waistband. "It was delicious."

"It's not over yet. Watch."

Nothing happened to watch. Until Jane and Alan came back from clearing the dishes, and Alan sat down, grabbed the chain between Jane's breasts, and pulled her towards him.

Everyone went silent. Waiting. Jane watched Alan, her eyes wide, her chest rising and falling with her shortened breaths, and everyone else watched the duo. No one moved. No one spoke.

Annie sensed the expectation like a silent crackle in the air. Was this the 'scene'? Her own nipples tightened as Jane's stretched, they had to hurt, as Alan pulled harder, bringing her closer. Sympathy was swiftly replaced by relief that this was between Jane and Alan. She was only a spectator.

"A wonderful lunch, my love," Alan said, still holding Jane's nipples taut by the chain, but sliding his other hand down her belly to the top of her naked pussy. "As always, you make me proud of you." He eased a finger down her hairless crack, easing her lips apart before penetrating

her.

Annie watched, mesmerized. What if Mark ever did this to her? Exposing her in front of everyone? Annie's stomach clenched as Alan eased his fingers out of Jane, and them to his lips and tasted.

"Essence of Jane." He smiled as he tossed a flat cushion on the ground between his knees and pulled down on the chain. Jane flinched, at the sudden pressure, but quickly controlled her face as she gracefully sank to her knees. Alan held Jane's face in his hands. "I have a test for you, my love. You have ten minutes to suck me to climax. Ten minutes, Jane. Don't disappoint me."

Annie's heart felt as if a giant hand was squeezing, tight, inside her ribs. How could Jane? Calmly, it seemed! With a silent nod, she reached out for Alan's erect cock and covered the head with her lips.

"Relax, Annie, breathe." Mark whispered, She *had* been holding her breath! She remembered the taste of Alan's cock and the touch of his retracting foreskin against her tongue.

Slowly Annie forced air in and out of her lungs. Was she the only one affected? Mark lounged back, his face impassive. Emma waited, as if unsure what happened next, but Annie sensed in the other woman the same relief. Alistair watched but seemed to put more attention on the timer in his hand than the kneeling woman. Annie's gaze came back to Jane, who was looking up at Alan, as her mouth worked his cock. Slowly, his cock disappeared into her mouth. Working back and forth, she fucked him with her mouth.

Sweat beaded on Jane's forehead as she sucked Alan's cock. Time was passing and he remained impassive, unaffected. How? Jane was working faster now, even stroking his balls with her fingers until Alan stopped her. "No hands, Jane. Just your mouth."

A flash of emotion. Worry? Panic? Crossed Jane's face, but she controlled it, putting every effort into working Alan's cock. Annie watched Alan, remembering how she'd sucked and licked, and he'd come to climax with slow, drawn out groans. Now he just stared at his wife as if determined not to climax. Why?

No one spoke. A couple of birds twittered in the trees, and in the distance, a car raced down the road. Ten minutes seemed like sixty. Jane was sweating freely and Annie bet her jaw was aching. For Jane's sake, Annie wanted the time to be up, but what would happen if Jane 'disappointed' Alan? She was about to find out.

Alistair called time.

Alan pulled out of Jane's still moving lips. "You disappointed me, my love," he said, stroking the side of her face with two fingers. "Move over there," he pointed to a space between the chairs and the edge of the pool, "Assume full kneel forward, hands on your neck."

"Yes, Master," Jane said, tears gleaming in the corners of her eyes. She rose gracefully, and walked the three paces to the spot Alan had indicated. "Master," she asked hesitating, "which way do you wish me to face?"

"Away from me, you disappointed."

Tears ran down Jane's cheeks. What were they playing at? Deliberately humiliating and setting her up to fail. Annie had a darn good mind to..."Easy, Annie," Mark said, his hand on her arm. "Watch how gracefully she kneels. You can learn a lot from Jane."

She already had.

As Jane knelt, Annie winced imagining the paving stones against the other woman's knees and breasts. No one else moved, no one spoke. They waited like an audience for the curtain to rise on the next act. Annie slowly exhaled. For no reason she could explain, she was scared.

"What am I going to do?" Alan's low-pitched voice seemed to shatter the summer air, as he looked down at his still obvious erection. "Let down by the one woman I trusted to take care of me."

"Annie will oblige."

Mark's reply bounced off Annie's heart and reverberated inside her mind. "No!" she shouted, jumping to her feet, in the ensuing silence she realized she'd mouthed the word. Not a sound came from her paralyzed throat. Her heart raced and blood pounded her temples. Mark stood up and wrapped his arms around her.

"You can, my love, I want you to do this."

"No!" This time she managed a strangled squeak and a vehement shake of her head.

"Don't let me down, Annie." Mark gave her forehead a gentle, encouraging kiss. "You can. You have already. Remember?"

As if she could forget, no matter how hard she tried! "Mark..." she began, but denials and refusals died under his gaze as he held her face in his cool hands.

"I want you to do this."

"Why?" It came out a dry throated whisper.

"Because you belong to me." She shivered in the warm air and the heat between them. Belonged to him? He owned her, or wanted to? Was that what he meant. While she agonized over that. Mark kissed her. Slowly, his warm lips opened her mouth and his tongue took hers with a power and potency that left her weak and shaking. She was still wobbling as he lifted his face from hers. "Make me proud of you, Annie," he said and sat down, leaving her standing in front of three other pairs of eyes.

A cold calm wrapped her like an insulated cloud. She moved towards Alan, oblivious to every one and everything but Mark's parting words and Alan's very erect and purple tipped cock. Alan smiled up at her, holding out a hand as she stood between his open knees. He was as relaxed and as confident as an emperor on his throne, and she was almost too scared to think. Her chest rose and fell in shallow anxious flutters.

"Relax," Alan whispered, "you can do this. I know."

Unfortunately he did! Blood rushed to her face at the memory. Why was she even standing here? Why not step back and walk away like any sane woman? Because of Mark's wishes? Her own desire to please him? Or her own roiling urge for the power of holding Alan's cock between her teeth? She wobbled as she knelt. Without Alan's strong hands steadying her, she'd have tumbled in a heap between his legs.

She was on her knees, and not shaking that much. Dry mouthed she looked up at Alan. Half hoping for some sort of reprieve, even as anticipation sent curls of desire spiraling down her belly.

She almost jumped as Alan reached forward and traced her mouth with the pad of his index finger. Her lips parted under the pressure, and her chest tightened as beads of sweat gathered between her breasts. His other hand gently, but certainly, cupped the back of her head, easing through her hair as he pulled her down. She caught the scent of his arousal, saw the smooth purplish head of his engorged cock and shivered as she opened her mouth and took him in.

She sighed as she eased her mouth down his cock. Annie shut her eyes a moment to forget her audience and concentrate on Mark's wish. She would not fail. She would make him proud. Whatever game the man had concocted, she could play...and win.

Breathing carefully with Alan's cock deep in her throat, Annie opened her eyes and looked up. He was smiling down at her. Confident, all knowing, secure in his power, he rested his hand on her naked shoulder.

"Remember, Annie, you're being timed, too." She almost choked in her panic, but his touch calmed her.

Annie detached herself from her racing thoughts, forgot the audience, and Jane kneeling just

feet away, and put all her will, every scrap of concentration, into pleasing Alan.

She sucked and caressed, easing his length in and out of her mouth, savoring his strength and taste, pausing to lick his balls and kiss and gently nip the soft skin in his groin before swallowing him again to his root. It seemed she sucked forever. As if time and the summer afternoon stood still while she worked her lips over his cock. He tensed, his hands tightened in her hair, his hips jerked into her face, and with a groan, he spilled into her mouth. She sucked for all she was worth, sensing spilling his come wouldn't please anyone, only stopping when Alan pulled out of her mouth.

"Yes!" He was grinning with every sort of satisfaction. "You have a talented mouth, Annie."

Now she blushed with a different embarrassment, but nothing marred her relief. She wouldn't have to humiliate herself like Jane and she'd pleased Mark. But she still had to get up and walk back to him. That wasn't as hard as she'd feared, and for the look in his eyes and the thrill at his, "You were fantastic, Annie!" she'd suck off Alistair too.

But that wasn't part of the agenda.

She'd just settled, and relaxed at Mark's feet, when Alan stood up, and walked over to Jane. He frowned as he slowly walked around her. Annie shivered. What if she'd failed and had to kneel, like Jane, shamed in front of everyone?

"You are useless!" Alan shouted in the quiet. "You failed me! Refused me the release I needed, so I had to go to another woman." He ignored Jane's muttered apology, "Silence! There is nothing for you to say."

Annie jumped at a resounding slap of flesh on flesh as Alan hit Jane's upraised buttock, and a silent minute later, his hand came down on the other cheek. He stepped back as if to admire his efforts. Annie opened her mouth to protest, but Mark stopped her. "Watch," he whispered, "and don't speak unless spoken to."

No one else seemed the least surprised. Was this the 'scene' Jane and Emma had suspected the men were planning? If so, what next? A spanking for Jane? Annie shifted in her seat at the still very clear memory of her chastisement.

"Slave," Alan said to Jane, his voice so harsh, Annie shivered. "Your failure deserves punishment, do you agree?"

He paused a moment. "I don't hear an answer, my love."

"Yes, Master," Jane replied, her voice coming fast and nervous.

"I'm glad you agree," Alan replied, his voice soft and loving as he bent to stroke Jane's head. "Remain as you are, while I fetch the instrument of correction."

As he strode off towards the house. Annie glanced at Alistair and Emma. Neither seemed concerned, or the least surprised. Emma sat very still, but nothing in her face suggested anything but calm acceptance. A sideways glance at Mark, earned Annie a little smile and a whispered. "Very good! Remember, say nothing, whatever happens. Alan knows what he's doing, and Jane will accept whatever he decides."

"But..." Annie began but stopped as Mark put a finger to her lips.

"Just watch," he said, and reaching for her hand, meshed his fingers with her, and place her hand on his thigh.

The back door slammed and Alan strode across to Jane, a wide leather belt dangling from his right hand. He stood a foot or so from her head and told her to look up. Easily, she raised herself to the position Annie now knew as, 'kneeling up'.

"See, slave, what I have brought for you." Annie was darn glad she couldn't see Jane's face. How could she meet the other woman's eyes knowing what was about to happen? "Ready for your punishment, my love?" He held out his free hand to Jane and helped her to her feet.

Annie shivered at the thought of what would soon happen, but as Alan led Jane over to a spare sun lounger, her face showed nothing but tranquil acceptance. Trust? Nuts! Annie's throat went dry as Alan positioned Jane on the lounge.

"Sit next to me," Mark whispered and pulled Annie up onto his chair. She sat between his spread legs, his arms tight under her breasts. She couldn't relax, sensing he'd pulled her close not out of intimacy, but to keep her from interfering. But she didn't pull away, needing the reassurance of his touch.

Having arranged Jane's prostrate body to his satisfaction, Alan trailed the pointed end of the belt down her spine, from the nape of her neck, to the curve of her buttocks. Back and forth he stroked with the dark leather. Annie relaxed, maybe she'd worried for nothing. Alan arranged the belt across the back of Jane's thighs and kiss each shoulder before planting a line of kisses down her spine. When he reached her buttocks, he kissed each cheek. Annie shivered remembering the prelude to her spanking. Alan slapped each buttock hard. The sound ringing across the summer afternoon, as Jane let out a surprised squawk.

"Silence, slave!" Alan all but shouted. "Not a sound, do you understand?" He stood up and reached for the belt, but instead of striking Jane as Annie expected, he walked around her pacing slowly and without a word.

Annie jumped as the belt slapped the patio paving. Mark's arms tightened around her, "It's okay." She wasn't sure she believed him.

Alan continued circling Jane like a predator waiting for the right moment to pounce. Each time he cracked the belt against the ground Annie shuddered. The others just sat and watched.

He paused in his pacing to wind the buckle end of the belt around his hand. Annie tensed. Mark's hands stroked her arms but didn't soothe. Alan raised his arm over his head, and the belt cracked down on Jane's bottom. She flinched but said nothing, not even when it came down again twice in succession. "Very, good, Jane," Alan said, "let's see how you handle this." As he spoke, he slapped the belt repeatedly up and down her legs. Jane jerked a few times but kept silent. When Alan, paused, Annie heard a muffled sob. Was it her own? Her heart was racing, hands sweating, and she was wet between her legs...aroused. Why? This so horrified her!

The belt dangled from Alan's hand, as he stood over Jane. She still hadn't made a sound, but her back rose and fell, as her breaths came in fast, heavy rasps. Engrossed in the sight of Jane's obvious pain, Annie hardly noticed Mark's hand dipping between her legs.

He chuckled in her ear. "Brilliant, exactly as I'd hoped." She opened her mouth to ask what he hell he meant, but stopped as Alan spoke.

"You've some beautiful marks, my love. Now, can you succeed where you failed earlier?" He helped Jane kneel and unzipped his shorts.

Was he going to repeat his earlier charade? Annie tensed and even Mark's touch failed to relax her. But within moments, Alan climaxed into Jane's mouth. As he withdrew, he bent down and kissed her. It was a slow, deliberate kiss, branding her and imposing his ownership, and every muscle of Jane's naked body quivered as she relished his possession.

If that had been Mark, she'd...what? Need a good fuck like she had after he'd spanked her? She didn't understand and wasn't sure she wanted to.

Alan helped Jane to standing. He stroked her breasts and slid his hand down over her belly to caress between her legs. As his hand worked, she moaned quietly, rocking her hips. Annie didn't know where to look. Surely he wouldn't! Not in front of everyone! Seemed Alan agreed. With a shrug he moved his hand away and stepped back as Jane whimpered in disappointment and frustration.

"I don't think so," Alan said, sitting down as relaxed as if the past fifteen minutes had never happened. "Maybe someone else will oblige you, Jane." He glanced round at the others. "Any of

you willing to offer release to my wife?"

Annie's stomach plummeted as her chest tightened. Her brain seemed to have tightened inside her skull, and she was gripping Mark's arm for all she was worth. Would he offer? Would Alistair? Would Jane just stand there with her eyes shut, and her body tensed like a tightened drum?

Mark made no effort to move. Alistair just sat, watching with the same mildly interested expression he'd worn throughout the entire episode. Emma stood up and crossed over to Annie. "Come on," Annie's jaw sagged as she stared at Emma's outstretched hand. "It's up to us, Annie. That's what they want."

Unbelieving, Annie looked over her shoulder. Mark nodded. "Make me proud of you, Annie." He gave her a gentle push to standing.

Her brain had to have shorted out. It was the only explanation for taking Emma's hand and following her across the patio. Her brain might have slowed but her body hadn't. She was all but shaking with anticipation and shock as Jane smiled at them.

"Thank you! I thought for one minute he'd leave me like this." Her arousal was all too obvious: her nipples peaked up on her breasts, her face and chest were flushed, and so was her naked pussy...that gleamed with moisture.

"Anytime to help a friend," Emma said. "Can you lie down? Your back must feel like hell."

"It'll be worse later," Jane replied. "I can manage on my side." She eased herself down on a lounge as she spoke. "Will that work for you?"

"Of course," Emma replied and knelt gracefully, her hand on Jane's tanned thigh.

Annie followed her lead but whispered, "I've no idea...I mean what do I...?" Silly question. But the best she could manage with semi brain function.

Both women stared at Annie, as her face flushed scarlet.

"You mean, you've never, with another woman?" Jane asked.

Annie shook her head. Both women exchanged looks.

"Damn them!" Emma muttered between her teeth, "This is a bit much. It's not fair to make the first time in public, I've a darn good mind to tell them." She half rose on one knee.

Annie stopped her, remembering Mark's parting words. If they could do this, so could she. "It's all right. I'm with you, just tell me what to do."

"Cut out the girl-talk," Alistair snapped. "We're waiting."

"Use your imagination," Emma whispered to Annie. "I'll take below the waist, you take above."

Above meant Jane's beautiful rounded breasts. Annie nodded.

"Go easy with your teeth," Jane warned.

"I will," Annie whispered, reaching out a shaking hand to cup Jane's breast.

Annie almost gasped, she'd expected to give Jane pleasure, not get any herself. She'd been wrong. As her fingers caressed the swell of Jane's breast, a warm thrill shook her. Using both hands doubled the sensation. Annie eased her fingers up to tug the hard, pouting nipples. It wasn't enough, almost shaking with anticipation, Annie leaned over to lick Jane's nearest nipple. Slowly she laved the firm tip, and blew gently on the dampened skin before taking the whole nipple and aureole in her mouth and sucking with a tender rhythm.

Jane gave little whimper of pleasure. From Annie's attentions, or Emma's? Hardly mattered. Keeping up the gentle pressure, she worked Jane's other breast with her hand, hefting and jiggling the abundant warmth. Annie changed sides, suckling the other breast while feeling the dampness her mouth had left on the Jane's nipple. Slowly, she withdrew her mouth, sitting back

and wiping the beads of perspiration on Jane's forehead. Gently, she traced the outlines of Jane's face and, on impulse, bent down and kissed her full on the mouth.

Heat roared through Annie as Jane opened her lips and plunged her tongue into Annie's mouth. The warmth, the heat, and the need sent her brain whirling and her body wasn't far behind. Her mouth locked with Jane's as Annie's hands covered her body, feeling the roundness of her shoulders, the lush softness of her breasts and the flat plane of her chest. Annie wished she had four hands and two mouths, to better feel and share the excitement.

Now Jane's hands were on Annie's breasts, sharing the touch and the sensation. Annie let out a little moan, but it was lost in Jane's mouth. Releasing her mouth, Annie made a trail of soft kisses down Jane's neck, smiling as Jane arched under her lips and almost grinning as she nuzzled between the beautiful warm breasts. Annie eased her hand down Jane's stomach, pressing her palm into the softness gliding down until she touched Emma's head and remembered the 'above the waist' agreement. Annie pulled back, but not before Emma looked up and smiled. Before Annie could think or move, Emma kissed her with gleaming lips tasting of Jane.

A long, slow moan protested Emma's breaking the kiss. Annie started to protest, but Jane muttered, "Forgetting me?" She almost had.

"No way!" With a grin, Emma dived back between Jane's legs.

Still savoring the taste of woman. Annie kissed Jane, She pinched Jane's nipples and rolled it between her fingers. Jane moaned and arched her body, jerking and twisting under the hands that held her. Annie kissed deeper, darting her tongue in and out of Jane's mouth, matching the rhythm of her body. Jane groaned, her hips jerked under Emma's mouth, and with a shout she came. Shaking and quivering with after shocks as Annie and Emma held her close.

"Bravo!" That was Mark!. Annie turned in horror, to realize the three men stood a yard or so away and had watched every move close up.

Chapter Seven

He was scared he was losing her! Mark's hands tightened on the leather covered steering wheel. His eyes were on the road ahead, his mind on Annie, feigning sleep beside him.

She'd done so darn well! Better than he'd ever dreamed! When he'd taken her upstairs to a spare room and fucked her, she'd responded with the ardor and enthusiasm he'd come to expect.

She got dressed to go home, and things changed. Just in putting on her clothes, she created an armored shell. Oh, she'd been pleasant enough with her goodbyes, agreeing to meet Emma and Jane later in the week. But once in the car, she'd answered his comments with monosyllables, and soon closed her eyes. What had gone wrong? Had he been way off in his estimate of her readiness? She'd taken part in the scene like an experienced submissive, but now, closed off like an affronted virgin.

They'd be at her house in fifteen minutes and he was afraid, she'd give him a nice, goodnight kiss, and leave him standing on her front step.

Hell, he had to do something! Annie was his! He hadn't brought her this far to have her slip away. He turned at the next side road and drove until he reached a grass verge leading into a field.

Annie opened her eyes as he killed the engine, looked around, took a fast breath and stared at him, her eyes wide with panic. "Why did you stop?"

He let go of the key, leaving it in the ignition. Taking it out would, only raise her anxiety. Leaning sideways in his seat, he looked at her, but purposely stayed back. "We need to talk."

"About what?" She sat up very straight, watching him.

"About whatever's gnawing inside you."

"Nothing's 'gnawing' inside me! I've got a rough week ahead of me, that's all. The last week is always a zoo."

Mark sighed, slowly and deliberately. "Annie, yell at me, shout at me, rant at me, call me all the names under the sun, but please, don't lie."

She opened her mouth but paused, and then closed her lips without speaking. Mark waited as Annie looked out the windshield at the field outside. In a few minutes, she got tired of watching mustard grow, looked down at her clenched hands, and then up at him with a sad smile. "Mark, I'm just in a lousy mood, can you let it go at that?"

"No, Annie. I can't and won't." She looked ready to cry at that, but he couldn't let up. If she wouldn't trust him with this, how would she ever trust him to flog or restrain her?

She sagged against the seat, and looked up at the roof of the car. "What happened this afternoon. It...bothered me." Mark waited, hoping, "It was...awkward. I've never done anything like that and I still can't believe it really happened, and that I..." She'd gone red in the face as her voice faded in a soft choke but she got her voice back, and turned angry eyes him. "You planned it all, didn't you?"

"Of course."

She looked ready to sock him one at that. "How could you!" She shook her head as if to shake away her gathering tears. "Just take me home! Please, Mark."

"Not until we finish talking." She balled both fists at that and threw him a look perfected in front of a blackboard. "Let's talk this out, then you can take a punch at me, if you want." He'd hoped for a smile, but he had her cautious attention.

"What else is there to say?"

"A good bit, Annie. You amaze, intrigue, and fascinate me. I want to care for you, love you,

and cherish you. I want you as my submissive. This is all new to you. I thought a scene with people you knew, and seemed comfortable with, was an easy way to start. Yes, I did plan it. For you." Her shoulders relaxed, just a tad. Taking that as acceptance, he went on. "I wanted you involved, not just a spectator. You'd already sucked Alan off, so I was sure you could handle that. I wanted you to witness a beating, so you'd understand that Jane wasn't really hurt."

"I realize that. It's just...planning was sort of cold blooded."

"Heck, Annie! I'd never do a scene without planning. The next one we'll plan together."

Shock came right back to her face. "I'm not sure about that!"

"You will be."

She didn't look convinced. Mark started the car and drove the last mile or two to her house. He accepted her invitation for coffee and was tempted to stay longer, but a little deprivation would be good for her.

"You're mine, Annie," he said as he kissed her goodbye, "but we can't go further until you're willing to plan our next step. Call me when you're ready." He gave her one last, long kiss that meant he'd need a cold shower when he got home. But it was all in a good cause.

To survive the last three days of school, Annie needed patience, plenty of sleep and the constant reminder that it would be over on Wednesday, promptly at noon. She could handle the paperwork and the excitement of small boys ready to break loose. She even enjoyed a couple of original excuses for lost text books and damaged lockers. But what almost sent her over the edge was Mark's ultimatum. She'd accuse him of sadism but in fairness how could he realize the mind-wracking lunacy of the last days of a school term? No one could who hadn't lived it. She just hoped she'd pull through this one with her reason intact, and her mind made up.

She wanted him, of that she had no doubt. She'd never had a lover who excited and satisfied as he did. But was his price too high? What was his price? That she *tell* him what she want!

She'd done her share of moaning to women friends about men who wouldn't listen, who put their own needs and concerns first, who wouldn't commit. And here she was, Annie Cavendish, who'd griped with the best of them, faced with a man who wanted to please her, insisted on knowing what she wanted, persisted in the face of her reluctance, and she was backing off. She'd better never complain again about men being hard to understand!

Annie sighed. Time enough later to figure things out, right now she'd better check the lockers in the corridor. Last year they'd found a mouse nest in young Simpson's.

She had to decide, and tell Mark, what she wanted. But could she?

She held out until Tuesday.

"Annie, my love," Mark said, the minute he heard her voice.

"Mark..." she began, "I need to see you."

"Why do you need to see me?" He wasn't letting her off the hook.

"I want to talk to you, about what I need."

"I'll be there tomorrow night as soon as I can. Don't cook."

Mark took her to the village pub. They ordered rare steaks and ate them, sitting outside in the summer evening.

"What is it you need me to do?" Mark asked filling her glass with wine.

Annie sipped. It was like liquid velvet. Mark Hanson didn't offer her plonk! No, there was nothing cheap about him. From his Bruton Street haircut to his bespoke linen shirt, to say nothing about the man inside them, she was looking at the best of everything and he wanted an answer. "I need you to help me. I know what I want, but sometimes it seems so far out."

He reached across the weathered teak table and covered her hand. "Nothing's too far out.

I'm going to make love to you as soon as we get back. What do you want me to do?"

Time to deliver! Annie half drained her glass, took a nice relaxing breath and looked her lover straight in the eye. "I want you to undress me. Slowly. Downstairs. Then I'll undress you. Even more slowly." She grinned, as she warmed to the idea. "Then we'll go upstairs and shower. I like showering with you, I've plenty of soap and a new loofah." His eyebrows went up at that! "I want you to kiss me and then make love to me."

"Where shall I kiss you?"

"My lips, my eyelids, my face, my neck, especially my neck. My breasts, my belly," She was breathing faster now, but having started, she'd finish. "Between my legs, along the inside of my thighs, down to my ankles then back again, and when I can't stand any more I want you to fuck me."

"Yes, Annie, I will." He sipped his wine watching her over the rim of the glass. "I'll do everything you asked. And since you didn't specify, I'll fuck you in the arse."

No point in being silent. "That scares the hell out of me."

"I know, love. But you've worn plugs long enough. It's time. I won't hurt you. Just think of it as a second loss of virginity."

"The first one hurt like hell!" She never would quite forgive her ham handed, three-parts-drunk, and half-cocked partner after her first May Ball.

"This one won't."

* * * * *

They'd barely closed the back door before he'd unzipped her dress and was sliding it off her shoulders. "I prefer the dress you wore on our picnic. I've had six made just like it."

"Why?" Duh! Because they were easy to get off.

"I want you to have something suitable to wear when I take you away next week." Her dress pooled on the floor.

"We're going on holiday?"

"Yes, to Cornwall. You're off school and I want more than a weekend with you."

She wasn't going to argue about that! "You could have given me more notice."

"You don't need it." Her bra hit the floor. "I'll bring everything you need, just arrange to be away ten days." He stepped back to admire her and signaled with his hand for her to turn around. She did, slowly, warming as his eyes caressed her naked body. "Now you undress me."

She didn't need to be asked twice.

Annie would have been very happy with a quick soap off. Mark delighted in dragging out the lathering and rinsing until she was all but begging him to get her in bed.

Pulling back the satin sheets she'd put on new that morning, Mark stretched her out on the bed, like an artist preparing his canvas, smoothing her hair, and stroking her hypersensitive skin.

He kissed each breast, laving it, before tugging at her nipple with his lips. He kissed down between her breasts, and across her belly. Kissing her just once, between her legs, he opened her thighs and placed her feet flat on the bed.

She felt open and exposed, until he spread her labia and flicked her clit with his tongue until she felt nothing else but the need to be fucked. She gasped out her need.

"Soon, Annie, but I need to get you ready." He looked up at her, his lips glistening with her juices. "Where are the restraints I gave you?"

It took several seconds for her desire-fuddled mind to understand what he'd asked. "On the

bed, where you left them."

That pleased him. "You didn't take them off? Hide them away?" he asked, scooting up the bed to lie beside her.

"No, I didn't." But half wished she had the way he was looking at her.

"Why didn't you?" He leaned up on one elbow and gently circled his fingers on the soft skin inside her elbow.

Anne looked at Mark's dark eyes, almost purple in the twilight, and then up at the ceiling, "I thought..." she began. Half-a-dozen reasons raced through her mind but she remembered Mark's insistence on truth. "I thought...no, I hoped, you'd use them again one day." Did she really? And had she just said that? Judging by Mark's smile...yes.

"I will," he said, trailing his finger slowly up to her shoulder and up her neck. "But not tonight. One new experience a night is enough, don't you think?"

She'd half hoped mention of the manacles would get his mind off his other proposal. As if Mark could ever be distracted when he was determined on something! "Quite enough," she replied and reached up and kissed him full on the mouth, parting his lips with hers and plunging her tongue deep into his warmth.

They kissed, fondling and stroking each other until Annie's passion rose again. Mark straddled her chest, supporting her head with his hands while she sucked his penis and he worked himself in and out of her mouth. "I love fucking your mouth," he said, "and I can't wait to fuck your sweet bum."

Annie shivered, as Mark gently fucked her mouth and continued in his slow, sexy voice. "Get ready, Annie. I'm going to massage your back until you're relaxed and aroused. Then I'll spank your arse." She tensed at that, but he reassured. "Gently, no punishment this time, just arousal. Fifty gentle love pats to warm those beautiful cheeks while I spread them apart. I'll use scads of lubricant, work it inside you, stretch you with my fingers. Just improving on the job that plug's done for me. When I decide you're aroused enough, I'll come in, slowly. Giving you time to relax until I'm sunk in up to the hilt, and you're impaled on my cock. I'll slide in and out with the lubricant deep in your hole, and you'll come with my cock up your lovely bum."

If he wasn't careful she wouldn't last that long!

He rolled her on her belly and treated her to a slow, sensuous massage. Annie all but forgot what would follow as she gave herself over to his hands and the soft touch of his lips down her spine. His lips started on the sensitive spot near her hairline and then worked their way down between her shoulder blades, past her waist and along the curve of her back. Reaching the swell of her bottom, he didn't pause but continued down. Spreading her cheeks, he kissed down to the tight puckered rose of muscle. He licked back and forth, and blew gently on her damp skin. When she jerked, he held her still, drilling at the tight muscle with his tongue until he penetrated her. Annie moaned with pleasure. This was only the beginning. Would she last? She had to! She couldn't climax yet.

He kissed each butt cheek, his hands resting lightly on the small of her back. She was utterly and completely relaxed and aroused, all at one and the same time.

He hit her, gently, as if patting a puppy, in a soft erotic rhythm; he spanked her from the top of her bottom to her thighs. She tingled with arousal, everywhere he touched. Was it a fifty or a hundred he'd promised? Two hundred? He could make it a thousand if he wanted. He could do anything.

He stopped and she moaned in protest.

"I'll give you more another time," he promised. "Today, I have other plans for this."

He spread her apart, stretching her open. She was truly vulnerable, and tensed at the thought of what came next. Cold lubricant. "It's okay," Mark said, as she'd stiffened in shock.

"You'll get used to it. I'm using a lot, to ease the path for both of us." His hand dipped between her legs. "Wet as can be. Spanking aroused you."

She wouldn't think about that, couldn't with his finger penetrating her cunt as his thumb worked her clit. She barely noticed him add more lubricant and slowly insert his finger. The plugs had done their work.

"How does that feel?"

"Tight but okay," she whispered.

"Relax. I'm coming deeper." He did. His finger pressed into her arse, for several long, tight minutes, until he withdrew. "How does that feel, now?"

"Empty!"

"Never mind." More lubricant, so much she heard the squelch and he pushed it inside, and then he stretched her far wider than before. "Get ready for two fingers."

She was stretched, but the soft kisses he scattered on her still warm bottom made her forget any discomfort as slowly he worked deeper into her. He paused after each progress, letting her body adjust. "Does that hurt?"

"Not really."

"What does 'not really' mean?" He asked pressing deeper

"It hurts a little, but feels good at the same time." She hoped he understood that. She didn't.

"That means you're ready for me." He eased his fingers out and turned her on her side. He was right behind her, the soft pelt on his chest rubbing her back as he brought her knees up to her chest. "Comfortable?"

Strangely it was, perhaps it was his hand on her breast that reassured and kept her on the brink. His cock felt hard as a poker, was he really coming up her arse? Yes. Slowly he stroked between her thighs, rubbing back and forth until her hips rocked against him. He squeezed and kneaded her breasts until she sighed with need, and then he bit her shoulder. She cried jerking her head back as his penis poised against her tight opening. One hand grasped her hip, holding her still as he slowly pressed into her. "Relax, Annie. I'm coming in, inch by inch, centimeter by centimeter because you're mine."

The probing head of his cock opened up her tight muscles. She gasped a little and he held still, neither retreating nor advancing. "You'll open up in a minute," he whispered.

It took less than that. As her sphincter released, he pressed in another inch and paused again. He'd been right. It didn't hurt but she'd never felt so full. He came a little deeper and then his hips rocked and he was in. In her wildest imagining she'd never thought she could be so filled, so utterly and completely owned and plugged, and overfilled with sensation.

His lips on her shoulder, kissed the spot he'd bitten earlier. She sighed with pleasure. Then he started to move. Stroking slowly at first, withdrawing a little, before coming back deep. His hand came up between her legs to her clit and he caressed, as he worked in and out of her bum.

She was close to the edge. Her breath quickened with his. He moved faster, she worked her clit against his hand, almost unaware of the little cries that echoed off the bedroom walls. Mark was groaning, driving in faster, no gentleness, just hard, male passion as the sensation inside and out climbed the peak.

She was whimpering with need. Two, three more, hard strokes had him shouting, with the fourth he came, and as he spilled his warm sperm inside her, the sensation took her over the brink and she screamed aloud as she came.

She could still feel him inside her, softening a little, but filling her with warmth and spent passion. She was worn, loved and used, and utterly sated.

Mark left her far too soon. But it was close to midnight. She knew he couldn't, wouldn't stay

the night. But her still smarting rear would remember his fucking all night. He held her gown for her, slipping it over her arms, and tying the belt as he kissed the back of her neck before going downstairs to retrieve his scattered clothes

"That was wonderful," she said, as he buttoned his shirt.

"You were," he replied. "Better than I'd ever imagined." He buttoned his cuffs. "This weekend, bring those manacles with you. I have the matching pair in my place. I'm going to restrain you hand and foot and you'll discover the joy of being helpless."

She was close to speechless as her chest caught and excitement tightened her throat.

"All right," it came out like a tight squeak.

"It will be more than all right." He stepped in his trousers, tucked in his shirt and zipped. "One last thing," he said as he buckled his belt. "Remember Claudine? You met her at Alistair's," Annie nodded. "She owns Meadowbank Spa. I made an appointment for you to go there. Tomorrow."

A day at the spa would be wonderful but..."We've got a lunch for the teachers. Headmaster gives it every year at the end of term. I can't not go."

Mark dropped a kiss on her forehead. "No problem, go after lunch. She's expecting you at three."

"It's already arranged?"

"Yes. You get your pick of services you want; massage, pedicure, manicure, facial." He cupped his hand to feel her mound through the satin. "But one thing you must have, is that pussy waxed. Claudine's the only one I'll trust to do you just the way I want. Remember how Jane and Emma are? I want you smooth as they are when I see you next."

* * * * *

A facial, body wrap and massage left her relaxed, and half asleep. "Stay there and enjoy it for a few minutes," the masseuse said, as she left Annie alone to doze under the heated covers. She was on the verge of sleep when a cool hand touched her shoulder.

"Annie?" She turned to meet Claudine's dark eyes.

"Hate to disturb you but I made Mark a promise."

"So did I." Or was she just following orders? There hadn't been any discussion. His fiat and her stunned shock.

Claudine pulled in a small trolley and closed the door behind her. "Worried?"

"I wasn't. But now I remember why I came, I am."

"You came for pampering. This..." She nodded towards the trolley the Annie now saw held a pan of molten wax. "is a little extra. It means a lot to Mark, but you know that."

Did she? Annie watched Claudine assemble talc and a squeeze bottle of lotion. "This hurts more than leg waxing, right?"

Claudine nodded. "Yes, but is over sooner. It's a much smaller area. You'll be extra sensitive for a while after, but being relaxed will help. That's why I arranged the facial and massage first. Starting tense is not a good idea."

"But ending up tense is a given!"

Claudine gave her a friendly, woman-to-woman, smile. "You won't be tense, I promise. I've done this a good deal. My specialty you might say." She moved out of Annie's sight. "You've never done this before, have you?"

"No, and I wouldn't be doing it now if Mark hadn't..." Annie broke off. She hadn't come to gripe about him. Plus, she didn't trust Claudine not to repeat everything.

"If Mark hadn't asked?"

"He didn't exactly ask!"

Claudine chuckled. "But you came all the same. He's what you want, isn't he?"

"I think so. It's just sometimes..." This was far to personal a conversation to have with someone she barely knew.

"Sometimes you wonder why you agree to so much." Claudine stepped back to the head of the massage table. "Don't think about it too much, Annie. You're what he needs and it seems he's what you need. Why worry about it? Roll over on your back, might as well start."

Annie settled on her back, what next? Her feet were positioned flat on the table, knees apart and Claudine had her edge down the table. Talk about exposed! Annie shivered

"You need fresh covers." Claudine switched the blanket for a fresh, heated one. "There." Annie was comfortably covered and tucked in tight from neck to navel. The rest of her was displayed naked. After finding a soft pillow for Annie's head, Claudine pulled up a stool up the bottom of the table. Cool fingers touched the inside of Annie's thigh. She wanted to run. "Mark wanted me to restrain your hands but I told him it was unnecessary. It isn't, is it? You will keep still, won't you?"

"Yes." Letting Mark tie her down was one thing but this woman, never!

Claudine smiled as if she'd read that last thought. Her cool fingers smoothed all over Annie's pussy, before pulling her labia apart, and inspecting her cunt. There was something almost clinical about Claudine's touch that unnerved Annie. She felt like an exhibit on display.

She wanted this to be over or better still, not to be happening. Impossible! Mark wanted this, therefore it would happen. She had nothing to do with the decision. She was the decision.

"I'm going to trim you first." Annie caught the glint of the metal blade and felt a slight tug on her hair, just before the quiet snip of the scissors. This wasn't bad at all. The blades were cool against her skin but...it was what followed she dreaded.

Claudine dusted her with talc, rubbing it in. "Try to stay relaxed. It really will help."

She was relaxed, even as Claudine spread the warm wax. It was the first pull that took Annie's breath away. The second brought out a surprised moan and after that Annie bit her lip until she tasted blood. There were tears in her eyes and she felt she'd bitten a hole right through her lip, before she realized Claudine was rubbing warm oil into her tender skin.

"That bit's over," she said. "Just roll over in a minute and I'll get the little bit round your butthole."

"My butthole, too?"

"If my Mark says he wants it all off, he means all of it."

That Annie didn't doubt. She rolled over. Her pussy smarted and the thought of more waxing gave her stomach jitters, but Mark wanted this. The prospect of pleasing him, gave her contentment and an odd satisfaction.

She nearly yelled as Claudine ripped off the first strip. "Easy. Not much longer." Annie closed her eyes, and bit down again on her already bruised lip.

It was over. Light headed from holding her breath, Annie sagged into the table as strong fingers rubbed oil between her bottom cheeks. Her pussy hurt and throbbed. Annie rubbed against the table to ease the ache. It didn't help.

"I'll take care of that," Claudine promised. "Just give me a minute. Sit up and have drink first." She held out a glass of chilled juice. Annie gulped it down, ignoring the sting on her cut lip. "You've hurt your lip," Claudine said, touching the cut skin and she took the empty cup. "Never mind. I'll make it better."

Annie expected lip balm or Vaseline. Instead, Claudine kissed her: a gentle, soothing kiss, a

sweet pressure of lip on lip that was over too soon. Annie sighed as the kiss ended. Her lips might feel better. The rest of her ached worse.

"Get up on your knees." Annie didn't ask why. She knew. Poised on the table she waited, as Claudine massaged more oil on Annie's denuded pussy.

Was this what Jane had felt on Sunday? No wonder she'd sighed and moaned with joy. Annie forgot the pain and ache. All her body knew was gentle fingers, probing and caressing her fore and aft. She arched her back, easing towards the gentle teasing, trying to impale herself deeper on the fingers that filled her and the thumb that worked her clit. It took only moments before her passion stirred faster and spiraled into a great wash of heat and sensation. Forgetting where and who and why, Annie cried out, as a wild climax hit her like a tide.

She was shaking and half sobbing as she came down to earth. Claudine stroked her back. "Feeling better?"

She didn't know what she felt! Her pussy still hurt, but over the pain were layers of pleasure and satisfaction. "Is that all part of the Meadowbrook service?"

Claudine laughed. "Only to special customers." She plumped up the pillow under Annie's head and brought out fresh covers. "Rest a while. You need it."

Annie dozed off, to be woken by the manicurist. A couple of hours later that Annie walked out the spa and drove home. She hadn't seen Claudine again and only the soft hairless skin on the pussy convinced Annie she hadn't dreamed it.

What was she doing? And more to the point what was Mark doing with her? What would he expect this coming weekend, when he tied her down, hands and feet, and had her helpless?

Chapter Eight

She was late. Or rather the train was. If only, she'd brought a book to keep her mind off the velvet manacles tucked in her bag. What was Mark planning? As if she didn't know! It was what he'd do *after* she was bound and helpless that had her mind hopping. Long phone calls on Wednesday and Thursday promised her pleasure and satisfaction beyond her imagination, but mention of a purple suede whip with her name on the handle sent her anxiety into overdrive. His assurance that he'd never harm her jangled in her mind beside his insistence that she accept whatever he chose.

Did it matter? Mark drew her by a power she couldn't understand. She wanted whatever he could give. Even if it scared the willies out of her.

"A present for you." Mark handed her a gift-wrapped box as soon as she arrived. The design of chains and handcuffs on the shiny gilt paper, clued her in to the possible contents. What ever was inside hadn't come from an ordinary department store.

"What do you think?" he asked, as she pulled a purple whip from the nest of black tissue paper.

"I'm not sure." It was smaller than she expected. The thongs were soft and thin as chamois leather and her name was stamped in gold letters along the handle.

"It's yours," Mark said, "and mine. For our pleasure."

"You're sure it's pleasure?"

"Absolutely." He trailed the thongs up her arm, and across her shoulder, so the tips tickled her breasts. His eyes never left her face. "You like that."

She did. Thrills of excitement ran from her arms and shoulders, in a direct line to her cunt. This was fine but..."Will you always be this gentle with it?"

"Of course not! You'd be disappointed if I were." Would she? Heck if she knew! "You look worried. Or is it hungry? I'll feed you first—after I undress you." Holding her close with one hand, he untied her wrap-around dress and eased it off her shoulders. Kissing the hollow at the base of her neck as he unhooked her bra. "I love you naked. Maybe, I'll keep you naked all weekend. That okay?"

A cold thrill shock her at the prospect. "As long as we stay indoors."

His laughter echoed against the high ceiling. "I'll lock the door and you'll be my naked prisoner."

Happy to play that fantasy, she reached for the buttons on his linen shirt.

"No!" His hand stopped hers. "Only prisoners are naked!" He led her by the hand into the kitchen, and pulled over a stool, one with a padded leather seat. "Sit there while I cook. And remember to keep your legs apart."

He fixed fresh fettuccini with shrimp and basil. Aromas of garlic and olive oil filled the kitchen. Annie sipped her wine as she watched Mark chop and stir. Soon she'd get the attention he gave to the cooking pots.

"Anxious?" Mark asked, as he slid the pale green pasta into the boiling water.

"Not really...yes," she replied. Why lie?

"Good." He looked over his shoulder at her. "A little anxiety and fear add to the experience."

She took his word for it.

"Comfy?" Annie nodded as Mark pushed in her chair to the dining room table. "Sit back in the seat." As she obeyed he wrapped a long silk scarf round her waist and tied it behind the

chair. It wasn't tight or uncomfortable, but kept her mind on what waited. She barely remembered to open her legs.

Mark brought her plate and a half-empty glass. "That's all you get tonight. I don't want you woozy. You might miss something."

Like the wild sensations spiraling in her gut.

Chewing took effort. Food was the last thing on her mind. Half of her wanted to reach back, untie the scarf, grab her clothes and run. But would toss away a chance she'd never have again. Did she really want what Mark offered? How could she? How could she not?

Mark had no such anxieties. He ate with gusto, poured her mineral water when she finished her wine, and cleaned his plate while she toyed with her fettuccini, too nervous to chew, let alone swallow.

"You don't seem too hungry. Shall we have desert...later?"

Mark's eyes were dark as violets in shadow. He was affected, no matter how controlled he appeared.

"Yes...later." After...

He untied the scarf and helped her to her feet. "Remember how I taught you to kneel?" Annie nodded. Her throat was too tight to speak. "Good. Go into my study, kneel forward, your hands flat on the floor in front of you and wait. I'll be there as soon as I clean up here. You understand what I want?"

"Yes," she replied, a bit amazed she could still speak.

"Good." He put his arm round her shoulders. "Before we start, we need a safe word. If you want me to stop. If you're uncomfortable. If anything is too much, just say your full name. Understand?"

She moistened her suddenly dry lips before replying, "Yes."

"Say your safe word."

"Annette Sophia Cavendish."

"You won't forget, will you?"

As if she could forget her own name! "Of course not!"

"Then go and get ready. Stop off in the loo...and don't forget to pick up your whip on your way though the hall."

Her hand was sticky with sweat as she turned the knob to enter Mark's study. Why here instead of his bedroom? She got that one answered as soon as she opened the door.

The floor length curtains were drawn across the window leaving the room in twilight, but not too dark to see what looked like a smaller version of the vaulting horse in the gym at school and the chain that hung from the ceiling. He'd cleared his desk of his books and stacks of paper and covered it with a dark cloth. Resisting the temptation to lift it and find out what really made those odd bumps and shapes, Annie looked at the Victorian fainting couch against the wall. She'd always thought it romantic imagining ladies in crinolines and tight corsets. How appropriate that a red satin corset lay on one pillow. Right next to a bigger version on the whip she clutched in shaking hand.

Why was she here?

To do what Mark asked.

Crossing to the medallion in the center of the carpet, Annie knelt. He hadn't told her what to do with her whip. Uncertain, she put it beside her on the red, Turkish carpet and lowered her head to the floor.

It seemed she waited forever, but when the door opened it was too soon.

Could she do what he asked? What was he asking? Submission and trust. So simple. So immensely difficult. The door closed behind Mark and she felt, rather than heard, his footsteps on the soft wool carpet. As he came closer she looked up and caught a glimpse of black, leather boots.

"Don't move, Annie."

Head back to the floor, she waited, as he slowly paced around her. What was he doing? Watching her? Waiting for something? What? He stopped. The air moved as he bent down. To touch here? No. He'd picked up the whip. She felt a stray thong brush her leg as he moved it away.

What next?

With a gentle thwap, he hit her shoulders and slowly trailed the whip down her back. She shivered as lines of sensation warmed her skin after the whip. He hit her again and again, four, five times, before pausing. She relaxed and exhaled, not realizing she'd been holding her breath. This was what she'd dreaded! It was more a caress than a punishment. But as she smiled with relief, she knew there was more. Much more.

"Stand up, and look at me." Her hand brushed his leg as she rose. As she met his eyes, he smiled, stroking the side of her face with the back of his hand. "You're so beautiful in your submission. Are you ready?" She nodded, unsure if she could trust her voice. He took both her hands and helped her to stand. "Tell me your safe word."

"Annette Sophia Cavendish."

"Good. Say it and I will stop immediately. Understand?"

"Yes."

"Now, the rules. You may not speak unless I give you permission. You may not climax without permission."

"What..." she began but his hand against her mouth stopped her.

"Listen. I will allow questions in a minute. If you feel close to climax, say 'Edge'. Remember?" Annie nodded. "Good. You must obey, whatever I ask. No hesitation, no argument." He turned away and leaned back against his desk, watching her. He wore black leather boots, not riding boots as she'd first thought but dancer's soft soled boots, tan knee breeches and a white shirt with full sleeves and a gathered yoke. At a distance he'd have passed for a character in a pantomime. Close to, he was her dream man. "Any questions, Annie?"

"Why did you change clothes?"

His eyes widened, as if that was a question he'd not anticipated. "To impress on you that this is play. That we've left behind the everyday world and its conventions. When you walked in this room, you entered a world where I command and you submit. You're the naked, helpless prisoner and I'm your jailer, with complete power over you. Any more questions?"

If she had, his reply and scattered them with the rest of her thoughts. "I don't think so."

"Let's get started." He reached under the cloth on his desk. She couldn't see what he had. He kept that hand behind him. "Hold out your hands." Her arms shook as she offered them. Wanting to obey, but dreading what came next. He snapped wide, leather cuffs on her wrists. "How do they feel? Uncomfortable?"

They were tight but padded and fur lined. "No, just tight."

"They need to be tight to support your weight." He clipped them together and led her to the chain hanging from the ceiling. "Raise your hands." Her arms were stretched over her head, just enough to make her reach up, not enough to hurt...yet.

She shivered as he ran his hands down her back, over her bottom, to the backs of her thighs. "Spread your legs."

Was this how convicts felt being patted down in prison? Helpless. Defenseless. Vulnerable. Scared? He hadn't even started yet.

She sensed he'd stepped back. She wanted to turn and look, but knew instinctively it was forbidden. Something was being moved. A dull thud was followed by a soft clink. What was Mark doing? Warmth ran in a narrow stream down her back. Scented warmth. Oil. She almost laughed with relief as the flat of his hand eased over her shoulder blades and down her spine. He was anointing her with scented oil.

His touch was magic. Caressing. Arousing. A confident touch of a man who knew exactly what he was doing. He covered every inch of her, soothing away her anxieties, easing her tension until she hung, relaxed and breathing easily, and wanting this to go on forever. She whimpered with disappointment, when he stopped.

"Shh!" He put a finger against her lips. "Not a word. Prisoners are forbidden to speak." Then he kissed her. Deep and slow, opening her mouth with his, while she fought to keep all inside her the soft moans of pleasure that rose like bubbles.

"See this, Annie?" He was holding a dark scarf. Silk she imagined from the way it draped over his hand. "I'm going to blindfold you."

She shook her head and stepped back as far as the chain allowed. She couldn't let him do this.

He stepped close, placing a hand in her back to prevent further retreat. "Remember your safe word?" She nodded. "I want you to speak, Annie."

"Yes, it's Annette Sophia Cavendish."

He smiled. "I'm going to blindfold you because I choose to. Do you want to use your safe word?"

Did she? She bit her lip as she looked up at his glinting eyes. She saw power in them and desire. This gave him pleasure. She dreaded being in the dark. She wanted to please him. "No, I don't want to." At that second in time, it was the truth. She almost changed her mind as he wound the dark fabric round her head. It was silk, She'd been right. Soft, but tightly woven, it blocked out all light. Waiting, suspended in body and mind, she listened, for sounds, for clues, for any hint to what would happen next.

A drawer opened, or was in a cabinet? Something clicked. There was a thud. She heard metal jingle against metal. Maybe the chains as she shifted her weight. She waited for what seemed like an age. She was close to calling out and begging him to hit her, beat her, anything but this unnerving quiet.

She almost jumped as his hand closed over her hip. "Ready, Annie?"

For what? One way to find out? She nodded. Seconds later the whip came down on her back.

The shock was far worse than the hurt. More like a hard tickle than pain. Harder than when he'd caressed her, but nowhere near what she'd feared. She almost sighed with relief but remembered the order about silence. Instead she relaxed as the soft tails of the whip landed in a steady rhythm, covering her from her neck to her ankles until her entire back felt warm and tingling.

"How's that?" he asked, when he paused.

"Good!" Her reply amazed her. But it was true. The warmth from her back seemed to gather between her legs. She was enjoying this. That shocked her.

"Splendid! Now to torture your lovely breasts."

They responded faster than her back. Each soft slap brought a catch to her breath. Holding back sighs and moans took all she had. He moved to her thighs, slapping front and back before

hitting the sensitive skin on the inside. He built up the pace, moving from left to right until her feet slipped, and she spun on the chain before Mark steadied her and set her feet back on the carpet.

She was panting, gasping, and when he hit her on her naked pussy, her hips jerked and she remembered to cry, "Edge!"

He stopped. She waited. Mark undid her blindfold and she blinked as her eyes adjusted. Her arousal had eased off but her breathing still rasped, and her cunt throbbed.

Mark unhooked her hands. Her arms tingled as the circulation returned. She'd never noticed it slowing. "Your skin has a lovely blush." He ran his hands over her breasts and belly, stopping short of her wet pussy. "You make a model prisoner. Now..." He held up the purple whip. "That wasn't so bad, was it? It's called a pussy whip. Small and gentle, for stimulating a pussy or to warm up before a beating."

Annie gasped. Her heart went cold and her throat closed in fear. That wasn't a beating! She should have guessed. What next? A large whip, twice as big as her little purple one, dark brown tails and a braided handle. Now was the time to use her safe word. She looked up at Mark, at his flushed face, and the sheen of perspiration on his forehead. "Are you going to blindfold me again?"

"Silence! This is your last warning! Next time you speak, without being spoken to, I will punish you." He pushed the blindfold into her hand. "Hold this until I need it again."

He led her over to the horse. "Bend over!" Too scared to refuse, she obeyed. Blood rushed to her face and it wasn't all gravity. Mark tied her ankles to the horse so she was spread open. Her cunt exposed and her bottom ready for whatever he willed. Her arms he fastened to the other end, before taking the blindfold from her, now sweating, hand.

"The blindfold makes it easier for you," he said, as he rewound it. "It scares you, yes, but helps you focus. This time I will hit harder. Don't make a sound until I give permission. It will be difficult."

Why hadn't she used the damn safe word when she had the chance? She still had a chance. No, not yet. She was helpless, waiting, her body tense, her cunt wet and aching. She wanted whatever came next and she dreaded it.

She heard the first blow a split second before it landed, on her back. The second she was ready for. The third took all she had to keep silent. He whipped slowly, waiting for the heat and smart to bloom before adding the next. It felt like a million bee stings, a thousand scalds, like nothing else she'd ever felt. He moved to her legs and bottom, leaving her back aching as he slashed the whip from one side to the other.

Biting her lip to hold back her cries, her hips jerked and her back and neck arched the few inches of slack he'd given her. He was beating more slowly now. But harder. Her skin was beyond warm. Her body was boiling and slick with sweat. She felt the kiss of each tail as the need deep inside her peaked. A wild passion churned like a storm deep in her gut, building like a boiling cauldron of need. She was going to come! From being whipped! She..."Edge!" she screamed.

The whip hit the floor with a thud. A warm hand pressed between her shoulder blades, wet against her sweat. Warm against her throbbing flesh. Her need had calmed a little but throbbed ready to leap at his touch.

"Do you want to come, Annie?" He could have been asking if she took one lump or two in her tea.

It took a couple of seconds to process his question. Come like this? Tied down. Spread. Exposed. Throbbing? "Oh, yes! Please!"

He flipped open the restraints, lifted her into his arms and set her on the couch. As gently as

if she would break at a sudden touch, he laid her on her belly. Kissing her heated buttocks, he eased a cushion under her stomach, making her available to his touch. She was wet and slick as his fingers entered her, he touched her clit once, twice, and her mind and body shattered into a wild, screaming climax.

"Good?" Mark asked, a smug look on his face as he brushed damp hair from her face.

"Incredible!" Heck, she was still shaking.

"The first of many. When you're rested a little, because you were a model prisoner, I'm going to show you why we call it a pussy whip."

* * * * *

Annie frowned. The alarm clock said 2:47 and it was broad daylight. She hoped it was still Saturday, but if she'd slept until Sunday she wouldn't be surprised. She had no memory of getting into bed. It must have been some time after the fifth climax, or was it the sixth? She still ached from the wild things Mark had done to her, and she wanted more. But not at once, she was thirsty and ravenously hungry. She must have burned up a zillion calories last night. Had she discovered the perfect exercise program? Grinning, she borrowed Mark's paisley silk dressing gown and padded barefoot into the hall.

Mark looked up from the paper as she walked into the kitchen. "Feel rested?"

"Yes, I do."

"Good, You'll need your energy tonight." She hoped so. "Hungry?"

"I could eat the proverbial horse."

"Sorry, I'm all out of horse. How about ham and eggs?"

"Wonderful!"

"Better take off my dressing gown. Did you forget?" He cocked an eyebrow at her.

She had! "I forgot, sorry."

"This time I won't punish you." He stood up. His finger under her chin tilted her face up. "Although, I am tempted. You rosy up so beautifully under the lash." And even without. Her face was burning. "You're forgiven." Her kissed her. Hard, as if to brand her lips. She was panting when he moved off her mouth. "Put my dressing gown back where you found it."

It took just minutes. Coming back naked took longer. In broad daylight, she felt completely exposed, vulnerable, and nervous. Glimpsing herself in the full length mirror on the door, she realized just how completely naked she was, even those few inches of pubic hair would have been something.

Her mouth watered at the aroma of frying ham. As she came in, Mark tossed a handful of mushrooms in the pan and gently shook it with both hands.

"Lovely." He looked over his shoulder. "I'll have this ready in two ticks. There's coffee on the table, and something else."

'Something else' was her butt plug, and a tube of lubricant sitting squarely on a folded serviette between her knife and fork.

"Take care of it will you, Annie. Now."

She hoped he didn't mean here and now, but she guessed he did. Fast as she could, she lubed the plug and eased it into place and sat down. Carefully. Sipping her coffee she looked cautiously across at Mark and wondered if he'd even watched her.

"Eat up!" He set the plate in front of her. "You need to keep up your strength. The weekend's just begun." He came back with a filled toast rack. "You comfortable sitting like that?"

He was kidding wasn't he? "It's not as bad as when you spanked me."

"Annie," he'd put an edge in his voice. "Give me a straight answer when I ask a question," he paused. "Are you comfortable?"

Okay, if he insisted. "No."

"I thought so." Why did he have to look so darn smug about it? "Stand up." He turned her chair around so the back rested against the table edge. "Sit on it back to front. It will bring your weight forward off your bum and besides," His mouth twitched a little. "It'll keep your pussy open."

Seemed even eating breakfast was to be a sexual experience! What did he plan for dinner? She didn't want to know right now! She was hungry and the ham smelled like food from heaven. She chewed in silence for a couple of minutes.

"Any comments, thoughts about last night?"

She almost choked on a mushroom. "It was...incredible."

"Ready for more?"

Now her throat closed entirely. She had to take a deep breath before replying. "Not just yet. Okay if we finish breakfast first?"

"I think so." He reached for a slice of toast. "I've got to go out for a couple of hours later on." He took a generous corner off the butter. "I won't be long. I promise. You can read, watch a video," she'd seen some of those already, "whatever. Later we're going out to dinner and afterwards, I've something planned."

She bet he had! "Out to dinner? Do I get to wear clothes?"

That amused him. "Yes, Annie." He reached for the marmalade. "You'll wear clothes." The way he smiled, she wondered if she'd be better off naked.

He'd been gone all afternoon. Not that she minded. Alone with a book or the TV, she was in control. When Mark came back...a frisson of fear sneaked up her spine. He'd outright told her he had 'something planned'. What? More than last night? Her mind juggled a score of possibilities but she suspected her imagination only covered a fraction of what Mark could devise.

The brrr of the phone interrupted her ramblings. "Annie, I'm running late. Go take a bath and start getting ready. Use the bath oil and lotion I've left out."

She'd have preferred a shower, but he'd been specific. She filled the bath and added a generous measure of the bath oil. The smell of lavender steamed up. She closed her eyes and leaned back. Warm water and heady lavender had her relaxed and half dozing, she didn't bother to open her eyes when the door opened.

"Hello, Mark," Annie said as the door closed.

"It's not Mark." A female voice replied.

Annie sloshed water onto the floor as she sat up. Claudine settled herself on the upholstered stool and smiled. "Mark's making tea. I thought I'd come and say hello."

"Hello," Annie replied, wishing she'd used bubble bath. Plain, scented bath water offered no camouflage.

"Mark wants me to bathe you. Don't worry," Claudine added in the same tone Annie used to calm nervous seven-year-olds on the first day of school. "I'll have you ready in no time. The tea won't have a chance to get cold." Cold tea wasn't her chief anxiety right now. How could she get this woman out of the bathroom? "Kneel up." Claudine said and reached for the soap.

Annie eased a little deeper under the water and thought about calling for Mark. But if he'd sent Claudine here...

"Annie," Claudine put a definite edge to her voice. "I believe you promised obedience this

weekend."

"To Mark!"

"He wants you washed. Do I have to get him in here? Tell him you disobeyed? Kneel up."

Annie obeyed. She had no say in the matter, and why was she worrying, Claudine had seen all there was to see already.

She had a gentle touch. Annie relaxed as the other woman washed her, spreading soapsuds generously and smoothing them off with the flannel. Claudine gave special attention to Annie's breasts, soaping and rinsing until her nipples stood hard and aroused. And her nipples weren't the only part. How could she get turned on at this? It was embarrassing. And stimulating.

Claudine tapped Annie's shoulder and signaled her to stand. Unable to disobey, Annie got to her feet, the water running down her body accentuated her nakedness, if it were possible. How can you be more naked than nude? When every inch of you is under scrutiny. Including...

"Lovely!" Claudine ran a finger down Annie's denuded pussy. "A very nice job, if I say so myself!"

Annie shivered. She wouldn't forget that afternoon in a hurry. "Cold?" Claudine asked and reached for the soap. "I'm nearly finished." She lathered her hands. "Turn around and bend over."

Annie stared. Surely not..."What? I mean..."

"Do I have to repeat myself?"

An answer wasn't expected. Just as well! Her throat had somehow closed with panic. Annie turned to face the black and cream hexagonal tiles. The grout had darkened in one spot and...

"Put your hands flat on the wall and bend over."

Annie obeyed, nervous and unsure but half-guessing what was coming. Her knees wobbled. Darn good thing the wall was there. Falling over wouldn't earn her any brownie points.

"Don't be so nervous." A soft hand smoothed over her buttocks. "Mark said he'd been plugging you, I want to check."

Annie closed her eyes. It didn't make it easier. Her face burned with shame. Mark doing this was one thing but this strange woman! Annie whimpered as Claudine's finger pressed against the tight ring of muscle.

"Relax, Annie. It'll hurt if you tense up like this."

That had her tightening more. Relaxing was impossible with Claudine's finger pressing so hard on her tender parts. Annie looked over her shoulder. "I'm trying, I can't." She half sobbed.

Claudine paused long enough to kiss Annie on the mouth. "You can, I'll help, bend back over and open your legs as wide as you can without slipping."

Annie obeyed, telling herself she'd fallen asleep in the study and this was a dream. Now with that pressure up her bum it wasn't! Now another hand snaked between her legs. Soft fingers opened her and very gently, one fingertip stroked her clit. Annie sighed. Hateful as this was, it felt so good. Familiar warmth spiraled through her and slowly her hips rocked in response as she relaxed and Claudine's finger stabbed home. Annie groaned at the intrusion. She couldn't move. A hand flat on the small of her back held her still and her thighs hurt from her wide stance. Slowly, as if she enjoyed this, Claudine worked her finger in and out.

"Tell me," she said, "has Mark ever fucked your arse?"

"Yes!" it came out like a whimper. She did not want to tell Claudine, and not bent over and prodded.

"What about a dildo? A nice hard, rubber one?"

"No!" Annie shuddered at the thought.

"Never mind," Claudine said, easing her finger out. "He will." Annie shuddered as Claudine threw a towel round her shoulders. "You worry too much," Claudine said as she rubbed the soft towel over Annie's breasts. "You must give your mind and body over to Mark, or whomever he chooses. We'll worry and decide what happens. All you have to do is accept. It's so much easier for you."

"What if I don't want to accept?"

Claudine chuckled, as she dried Annie's back. "You'll accept. You'll do everything Mark asks." All business, Claudine toweled Annie off, and then slathered her body with scented lotion. Her touch sent Annie's mind and body roaring, how could she be so unmoved while Annie was ready to spread herself on the floor and do or accept anything? "Nice." Claudine could have been appraising a piece of furniture or antique china. "Just one last thing." She produced the chain Mark had given Annie. "Wear this." She pulled and rolled Annie's nipples until they were firm and with a practiced, deft movement, slipped and tightened the rings in place.

She gave Annie's hair a quick brush and stood back as if admiring her handiwork. "Very nice. Let's see what Mark thinks."

Chapter Nine

Mark was sitting at the table, drinking tea with another man. Annie stopped mid step and stared. It was the man she'd seen naked at Emma's. The man Claudine had whipped. But now he was wearing clothes. In a navy polo shirt and chinos, he looked just like Tom Baldwin, the heart throb of Thursday night's detective series. But he couldn't be...

"What do you think?" Claudine's question and a tug on her nipple chain brought Annie back to the present...and her nakedness.

Mark stood up. His face calm, but his eyes were gleaming with excitement. "How is she?"

"Aroused."

"Splendid!" Almost absently, he slid his hand down Annie's naked belly, eased his fingers between her labia and felt the wetness inside. "Wonderful! Thanks, Claudine." Annie was about to say something snippy about being more than furniture, when Mark looked at her. "Want a cup of tea? We made Earl Grey."

He held a chair for her. "You remember Tom, don't you?"

Tom smiled. Now there was no mistaking! Women all over England turned on their TVs on Thursday nights to get their fix of that smile and the sexy under cover cop.

"Yes."

She managed that much. She wanted to ask, 'are you really Tom Baldwin'. But Mark put a cup of tea in front to her. "Now drink up and yes, he is Tom Baldwin. Don't stare, you'll embarrass him." He'd be embarrassed! Good luck! He wasn't sitting there in the altogether! "Drink up, Annie!"

She tried, but just didn't taste the same drunk naked in the company of three fully clothed people. She barely tasted it. She wished herself anywhere but sitting between Mark and Claudine, and having Tom Baldwin right across the table didn't help. She tried forgetting she was naked, but had no luck. She couldn't get her mind round anything but her nudity.

"Something bothering you, Annie?" Mark asked.

Could she tell? She couldn't lie. "It feels odd being the only one...er...naked."

"Of course it does. Sorry, love, should have thought of that." He looked over her head to nod at Claudine. "All right with you?"

"Fine." Claudine looked across the table. "Strip, Tom!"

"Of course, Boss."

Annie used every facial muscle she possessed to stop from gaping as he stood up, stripped down to his skin, and calmly sat back down to finish his tea. But not before Annie noticed his nipples were pierced, his broad chest seemed to beg her fingers to smooth across his tanned skin, he had a nice tight firm butt and...he'd just stripped in front of her. She'd seen Tom Baldwin's naked butt...and every bit of the rest of him and...to get through his afternoon, she'd need more than tea.

She drained the rest of her cup hoping to might help her dry throat, and stared at her saucer, trying to decide where she'd seen Tom before. She gave up. Thinking was too much effort. Breathing regularly was about all she could handle.

"Something still bothering you, Annie?"

If Mark had asked, she could have handled it—perhaps. But her brain all but froze at prospect of discussing her discomfort with Claudine. And in front of Tom.

It was all too much. She swallowed hard, blinking to keep back the tears prickling behind her eyes lids. Mark held her chin between his thumb and fingers, wiping a tear from the corner of

her eye as he turned her face to look at him. "It's okay. Don't let it bother you. He kissed her. "Now stop getting so upset, calm down and let's all have another cup of tea."

How she drank it, she never knew, and as for eating, the shortbread tasted like sawdust. She couldn't take any more. She wanted to run and hide...or better still get dressed and take the first train home.

"You'll get used to it," Mark held her hand. Tight. As if knowing she was ready to run. Her skepticism must have shown in her eyes, probably written all over her face. "Believe me, Annie. You'll be naked in front of other people when we go away, this is to help you get used to it."

"When we go to Cornwall?"

He nodded his face very close to hers. "Tom and Claudine are coming too. Along with Alan and Jane and Emma and Alistair. I want you to understand, this is how it will be."

"I'll be naked?"

"Yes, whenever I want you to be." Her face and neck flushed as if burning and a cold weight settled deep in her gut. "You'll be fine, Annie. And you'll enjoy it, even when you won't admit it."

Annie stared at sunbeams on the ceiling. Was Mark right about her? If she denied it to herself, was she just proving his point? Was she a plain fool to go along with his demands? Thing was, he fascinated her, and gave her the best sex she'd ever had. She wanted him, she needed him, and yes, she did enjoy what he did to her. Enjoyed feeling helpless, controlled? There must be something wrong with her! But there was nothing wrong with her body. She felt relaxed, satisfied and loved, even if her bottom ached from the larger size plug Mark had insisted she wear for half an hour before she was allowed to get up.

The whole weekend had her off kilter.

After the surreal tea party, Mark had dressed her and the four of them ate dinner in a fashionable restaurant in the dock lands. Tom's celebrity status got them a prized table overlooking the river. Looks and glances came their way all evening, and Tom even autographed a menu for an eager fan. He was poised, confident and charming, the mirror of the charming undercover cop, who fought crime, evildoers and battled his own force's inner politics.

It didn't quite gel with the submissive man who stripped to Claudine's command. But was she, Annie, any different? At work she was commended for her class control and discipline and was nicknamed by the kids as 'cast-iron Cavendish' and last night, she'd obeyed Mark's order to hold her ass cheeks apart while he fucked her, and she climaxed as he spanked her red.

Thinking about it could bring on a migraine. Maybe that was the answer! Stop thinking and just follow Mark's lead.

A few minutes later, the alarm went off. She got out of bed, padded down to the bathroom, and eased out the plug. She showered quickly. He was taking her home early and he'd promised to explain why. He'd better. She felt like a kid sent home early from school for bad behavior, but she'd done every damn thing he'd asked.

"You look worried," Mark said as she walked into the hall, "Don't be. You're not about to be punished." He came close, frowning a little. "You seem angry."

"Perplexed might be a better word." Hell, that did sound like a ruddy schoolteacher. "Mark it's just..." Heck he'd asked. "I thought we'd spend the weekend together." Now she sounded desperate. "Doesn't matter. I can get the train back. It's no trouble."

"I'm driving you home, and it does matter. Come on. I'll explain as we drive."

It had better be good!

"I'm not exiling you, Annie," Mark said as the car headed out of London. "Things have been

pretty intense. You were uneasy yesterday. You need some time alone, to decide if you want to go on."

"Have I said anything to suggest I don't want to 'go on'?"

"Not in words."

"Well then..." Well what? Was she getting dumped? Like this? Brother would he get a few choice words! Especially feeling the way she did right now.

"Annie, you've got to understand what I want. Your submission, your obedience."

"And you haven't had that? Do you think I've been waxed, or worn butt plugs, or eaten tea in the nude for anyone else?"

He was silent a minute or two. Negotiating the back up of traffic onto the motorway probably had something to do with it. She felt cut out. What was he playing? Did he expect her to beg? He'd be lucky!

"You're getting angry. Don't." Why should she make things easy? "I want to keep you, but you have to understand what I expect."

"You said, 'obedience and submission'," Right now she felt inclined to neither.

"I'm ready to move things farther. To take you deeper into my needs. I want to take you away with me, but you have to be willing to do it my way. To be naked at my wish, to be proud of your nakedness, not ashamed. Will you obey me, even if I push your limits? I want to exhibit you, constrain you, flog you in front of others. Test your mettle under stress. Take you to heights you can't imagine," he paused. "Will you come with me?"

He wanted to go a whole lot farther than Cornwall! "I'm not sure."

"I know! I can't go on, if you're not sure."

"You have doubts of me, because I was uncomfortable being naked? That was only part of it. That was Tom Baldwin there! You did that just to unnerve me, didn't you?"

"Yes." At least he admitted it! "I wanted to see how you handled the unexpected. I knew you hadn't recognized him the other weekend."

"He looked different without clothes on!"

"We're getting off track. Tom isn't my concern. You are. I want to take you away with me; I'll keep you naked most of the time. Can you handle that?"

"Will I be the only one naked?"

"That's your stumbling block, Annie. Your concerns for what others do. What I want has to be your only concern."

They drove on in silence several minutes. Mark was waiting for her reply. Her acceptance. She wasn't sure she could do this. "You're asking a lot."

"I'm asking for everything. I want you as mine, Annie. But I want you willing. You have to decide to take the next step. Can you accept my dominance, my demands for ten whole days?" He smiled. "Maybe longer?"

"I'll never know until I try."

"Trying is not enough. Decide if you can give me what I want."

It was as good as an ultimatum. But it certainly made her focus her thoughts. She knew what she wanted, if she had no idea what would happen

"I can do what you want, Mark."

"I have your complete submission?"

"Yes." Her throat went tight at that. "Will I have a safe word?"

"Of course...except when you're being punished." She inhaled sharply and tensed, and

realized he'd reached to touch her clenched hand. "If you obey me, I'll have no need to punish you." He patted her hand. "I won't ever harm you, Annie. That's a promise.

"I'll pick you up first thing, Tuesday. Don't pack anything, not even a toothbrush. All you need to bring is twenty-five yards of quarter inch nylon rope."

The rope sat coiled in a paper bag by the front door. Every time Annie walked past it, or looked in that direction, her body tensed. She should have stuck it in the shed, or the bottom of the garden, anywhere but right where she saw it umpteen times a day...or wasn't the anticipation part of the excitement, just as Mark claimed? Whatever he wanted the rope for, wasn't for hanging out laundry.

Mark arrived early Tuesday. Declined her offer of coffee or breakfast. Kissed her passionately and thoroughly after inspecting she had nylon, not cotton rope, and told her to strip while he took it out to the car.

"Why did it have to be nylon?" she asked, as he paused with his hand on the door.

"If you'd ever been tied up with cotton rope, you'd know the answer to that one!" he grinned. "Patience, Annie, patience! You'll feel that rope on your skin soon enough. Now, get naked. If you're still dressed when I get back, you'll be over my knee. It will be a long drive with a sore butt!"

She stripped where she stood. Going upstairs would take precious minutes, and...her body had responded to Mark's voice with a flood of arousal. She wanted him to take her upstairs and go to it...but instead they were off to Cornwall. How could she last all day, as hot for it as she was now?

Mark came back with a large, white box. Inside were six cotton dresses. "I had that dress I kept copied. Pick one to put on now. We'll take the rest with us."

"So, I get to wear clothes sometimes."

"They'd look askance in the Six Bells without them. Put one on now. Nothing else."

They were comfortable, heck that was why she'd bought the original, but with nothing on underneath, and a loose skirt, she felt exposed. Which no doubt was what Mark planned. Excitement shivered through her as she checked herself in the mirror and ran a comb through her hair. "I can bring a comb, right?"

"Bring your pocket book. Nothing else."

He locked it in the trunk. "It's there in case of emergency," Mark said. "I'll decide if you need anything in it."

"I feel lost without it." It was half way to being her adult security blanket.

"I know," Mark replied, with an infuriatingly smug smile, and fastened her seat belt. "Remember to keep your legs open. I won't remind you again."

"What happens if I forget?"

"You'll be chastised later." She'd laid herself wide open for that one, and he'd darn well enjoy having the opportunity. "Pick out a CD," he added as he closed the door.

She chose Mozart and they sped down the M25 to the strains of Eine Klein Nacht Musik. Annie leaned back, shut her eyes, tried not to think of the yards of rope coiled in the trunk, and made darn sure her knees stayed wide enough apart to suit Mark.

They stopped for petrol and lunch at one of the motorway service places just beyond Bristol. As they finished eating, Mark pushed a small, brown paper bag across the table.

"What is it?" She wasn't sure she really wanted to know, but she was about to find out.

"A dildo, and a harness to hold it in while you walk. I noticed you getting sleepy. This will

keep you awake. You've five minutes to go into the Ladies, put this on, and come back."

"What if there's a long line?"

He raised an eyebrow. "Five minutes." He pressed a button on his watch. "Time has started."

She grabbed the bag. Why waste time debating? It was probably what he wanted!

There was a line, only two people, but enough to delay her. She had no idea how to put on the harness and she could hardly bring it out and check while she was waiting. The seconds ticked away while she sweated from the heat of the hand dryers.

At last! She slid the bolt home and she looked into the bag. The dildo was easy enough, she knew where that went. But the mess of nylon webbing, d-rings, and velcro resembled a Chinese puzzle. She fished out a folded piece of paper. Directions, and probably in Japanese. Following the illustrations, she got the darn harness on and buckled up, before she realized she forgotten the wretched dildo. Sweating even more now, she half undid the contraption, inserted the dildo. He would pick a purple one wouldn't he! And refastened half-a-dozen strips of velcro.

At last, she was ready, but had forgotten to pee.

She gave up worrying and finally refastened in what now felt like a medieval chastity belt.

"Six minutes and twenty-three seconds," he said. "I'll had that to your list of peccadilloes." He took her hand. "Let's stop by the book shop and get you something to read."

Why wasn't she surprised when he insisted she pick a book from the very top shelf? He even enjoyed her awkwardness when the assistant smirked as he paid for "Sarah in Chains" and "The Story of O."

"Mind carrying them?" he asked, folding his credit card receipt into his wallet.

"Not in the least!" She whisked them both off the counter without waiting for a bag. He wanted to play, she could bounce the ball right back. She hoped.

She marched back to the car, her mind so fixed on the two paperbacks in her sweaty hand, she almost forgot the nylon straps circling her waist and rubbing between her legs.

"Comfortable, my love?" Mark asked, as one hand fastened her seat belt, and the other eased under her skirt to twang the nylon straps.

"It feels odd."

He dropped a kiss on her forehead. "You'll get used to it." A few miles further on he asked, "Read something to me, how about starting with 'The Story of O?'"

Another test! Heck! He should know she read aloud all the time in her job. Well, maybe not Pauline Reage! Annie creased open the first page and began. In the quiet intimacy of the car, it was easier than she'd thought. As they headed west, she read about O's journey and entrance into Roissy. As O was stripped, and her wrists bound, Annie stopped, as a horrible suspicion grew in her mind. "Is that what you're doing with me?" she asked. "Taking me off to some house in the wilds?" Her panic echoed in the confines of the car.

Mark took his eyes off the road to glance her way. He looked more than worried. Was she right? She should never have trusted him. Who knew what would happen to her? Visions of the harder passages of 'O' raced across her mind in a series of panics. "I want you to turn around and take me back!" As if he would! And her handbag was locked in the trunk...

"Hell!" Mark muttered under his breath. "I never thought...Heck, Annie! Reading was supposed to turn you on, not scare you. Don't you trust me?"

"I thought I did." He frowned. Had she rumbled his little plan? Or was she being paranoid?

"Annie that's fiction. What I'm offering you is reality. My reality. I'm not about to abandon you to a bunch of anonymous torturers. There will be no one in the house you don't know. Just Emma and Alistair, Jane and Alan, and Tom and Claudine. And I'm not going anywhere. I'm

certainly not leaving you!" he paused. When she said nothing went on. "We're renting an old family holiday house from a friend. It's certainly not a chateau." he let out an exasperated sigh. "Annie, if, and I mean *if* places like Roissy exist, I've never seen one and I doubt a chartered accountant's pay runs to that sort of thing. We're strictly do-it-yourself. We don't have dungeons, valets, or servants." He looked her way. "We take turns cooking, and all pitch in with the washing up."

He made it sound so damn normal and ordinary, and normal and ordinary were the last things Mark had offered her so far! "You expect me to believe you?"

"Yes, I do." He didn't look her way. "If you don't, I'll be glad to take you back home." And leave you forever—the last wasn't said, but she understood. "What do you want me to do, Annie?"

She thought at over while her drove on in silence. "I want to come with you. It's just I'm scared."

"Good! To both those! I want you with me, and we both know how a little fear excites you." He eased his hand up her knee and under her skirt. "Go on reading, Annie."

They stopped for lunch somewhere in Devon. Mark pulled off the motorway, and after ten minutes or so of winding down country lanes, they pulled into the gravel car park of an old, whitewashed pub. They sat under an apple tree laden with tiny, growing apples and ate cheddar ploughman's and drank Real Ale.

"This is a beautiful spot," Annie said, "I wouldn't mind staying here."

"And miss what I have planned for you?"

"What *do* you have planned for me?"

He set his glass down on the weather worn table top. "Only one way to find that out."

"Maybe I don't want to find out. Maybe I'd rather go home." Or just stay here and listen to bees gorging themselves on the lavender bushes that edged the lawn.

Mark shook his head. "I don't think so, Annie." He reached across the table to take her hand. "You want what I give you. You need it. Even when I scare you, you want more. Not knowing is part of the excitement. You're curious and I'm creative. We belong together. You're coming."

She jumped before she could stop herself. She almost leapt off the seat. Her dildo was alive! A gentle vibration slowly increased, until she gripped the edge of the table and sat up very straight. "Mark, what..." she began.

"I'm making certain you're coming," he replied. "You've worn that belt several hours, I'm rewarding you."

"Not here!" There was a family with three children and a toddler not eight feet away, and two other couples almost as close. "Please, Mark!" The vibrations came a little faster now. She could hear the buzzing.

"We're sitting here, until you come." Mark raised an eyebrow at her horrified gasp. "No faking."

"There are people watching!"

"No one is watching you, but they will hear, if you make your usual enthusiastic noise. Better restrain yourself."

She'd be lucky if she didn't split something! He had to have some sort of remote control. The vibrations would ease a moment and then come fast and stronger. Her hips were working now, despite what she did. "Please..." she begged, breaking off to contain a groan, as he flicked the power higher.

"Please what, Annie? You want it faster?"

She did. More and faster and harder. "Yes!" Sweat gathered under her breasts and trickled

down her back. He was playing her, and she was rushing along with him. Her hips and back undulated as she let out a slow moan. The vibrations came faster. Her whole body rippled with arousal. She was close to coming and no longer cared who saw or knew what was happening.

Panting, shoulders shaking, she gripped the table edge until her fingers cramped, and then held tighter. She was climbing, approaching the peak, her body tensing, ready to soar, and with a final toss of shoulders, she shut her eyes, threw back her head and came.

"Perfect!" Mark stood behind her, his arms round her shoulders. "I'll help you to the car."

She needed help! Standing was a challenge, walking impossible without him holding her up and she had a wide swathe of lawns and an entire car park to cross.

"You'll make it," Mark whispered. She hoped he was right.

"Missus, okay?" The father of the family, asked as they passed their table.

"Must be the heat," his wife added with a sympathetic smile.

"She'll be fine once I get her to the car," Mark replied. "She's just a bit overcome."

Annie half choked at that but she made it to the car, feeling lucky she hadn't been arrested.

A little while down the lane, Mark pulled into a field and removed the dildo. "That's enough for now. You can doze the rest of the way. I want you rested when we arrive."

Dozing was easier said than done. She was relaxed, but still aroused, and grew more nervous with every mile.

It was late afternoon when they arrived.

After passing through a village of stone cottages and gift shops, Mark turned and Annie caught a glimpse of sea and white breakers in the distance. "I hope you packed a swim suit in that box you brought for me."

"Of course not! We have a private beach and I've no intention of letting you wear anything but your delectable skin. When I allow you on the beach that is," he paused as if to let that sink in. "Almost there!" She wasn't certain that news was reassuring.

Mark turned by a worn signpost saying "Rosehaven" and slowed along a narrow track.

"You've you been here before?"

"Once, with Alistair. It's perfect, secluded, big enough with a nice beach you can only approach from the house. Ideal for our purposes."

The track went gently up hill. Rosehaven would be at the end—and heaven know what else! They reached tall iron gates set in a high stone wall. Annie got out and opened them, and looked down the drive. She'd imagined a big sprawling family house, maybe Edwardian, with high ceilings and spacious rooms, built to accommodate a large, noisy family or maybe elegant house parties. She saw a large two story yellow brick house with large windows. Back in the sixties it might have been the height of modern, now it looked dismal. And she was here for over a week! A hoot from the car, got her attention, She closed the heavy gates and got back in the car.

"What do you think?" Mark asked.

"I wasn't sure what I expected, but not this."

'Pretty awful isn't it? Apparently when it was built it caused a local sensation. They were nearly denied planning permission. But we're not here for the architecture, the rent is fair, it's secluded and we've no close neighbors for miles."

As Annie thought over that, Mark drove the last few yards and parked beside three other cars. The others were already there.

She followed Mark through double front doors into a large, two storied hall with a wide open tread staircase that led up to a gallery. A sitting room with wide picture windows looked over the cliffs, and from the left came appetizing cooking smells from what had to be the kitchen.

"Hello!" Emma came from the kitchen, wearing an apron, her collar, and nothing else. She gave Annie a hug and Mark a grin. "You got her here then. Without scaring her I hope!" She looked back at Annie. "I'm glad you got here."

"So am I." At that minute, Annie meant it.

Emma's welcome eased her doubts.

They came back ten minutes later, when Mark took her up to their bedroom and told her to strip. Naked again, she knelt up, and then stood to his command.

"Lovely! Now clasp your hands behind your back." She obeyed as he walked round her. "Unpack everything and put it away." Mark nodded at the suitcase and box on the bed. "Then shower, put on your nipple chain and meet me downstairs."

Her unpacking was easy enough. Just the five dresses. She hung up Mark's slacks and shorts, and folded his shirts and underwear in the drawers. It was the items at the bottom of the case that sent cold waves to the pit of her stomach: the purple whip he'd given her Friday, a matching bigger one, and one with a thin tail that looked horribly painful. Fascination growing with her dread, Annie fingered each in turn, smoothing her fingers down the soft leather and the plaited twine, trying to imagine how each would feel on her flesh, not wanting to know. But the certainty of learning had her damp between her legs.

She hung the whips up on the nails inside the wardrobe door, and placed the manacles and the harness she'd just worn in a drawer, along with the dildo, another smaller harness, her butt plug, and a selection of odd items that all looked as if they'd fit in one orifice or another. There were two silver balls joined together, a string of large beads, and a small egg with a string attached.

At the very bottom of the case were two-inch thick, dowel rods with big screw eyes in each end. She didn't want to know what Mark used those for.

Annie closed the drawer on them.

She showered, dried herself, and put on her nipple chain. It wasn't much, but somehow she felt comforted. Wearing it meant she wasn't totally naked. And now Mark expected her to walk downstairs and into a room full of people. Time to do it.

The stairs seemed twice as tall as when she'd walked up. But too soon she was down in the hall.

"Come in here, Annie," Mark called to her from the open sitting room doorway.

She almost ran.

She looked through the open door and saw Tom, trussed up, in the middle of the floor.

"Just watch," Mark whispered. "Don't say a word."

She wasn't sure she could. Her throat tightened all the way down to her stomach and her innards seemed to twist as Claudine and Alistair brought Tom's bound arms and legs together. Annie watched, mesmerized as Claudine ran a piece of rope between Tom's wrists and ankles. Shoulders pulled back, and knees bent, he grunted as Alistair tightened the rope and then the two of them stepped back leaving Tom hog tied in the middle of the carpet.

Or to be precise in the middle of a sheet and blanket on top of the carpet. They'd done that much to save him from rug burns. Annie couldn't decide whether to stare or clench her eyes shut, as Tom flexed his shoulders against the ropes.

"Relax." Claudine rested a hand on his shoulder and stroked his tense arm. "Don't fight the ropes, go with them. They're stronger than you are."

Annie shuddered, imagining how those thick ropes would feel against her flesh. How her shoulders would ache, tied back like Tom's. If Mark's hand hadn't gripped her shoulders, she'd have jumped up and rushed across to Tom, apologizing for bringing the ropes that held him like

a trussed animal.

"Here." Annie started at the cup in Jane's hands. "Take it," Jane said. "It'll help your dry mouth."

"You guessed?" Annie took the cup with both hands, half scared of spilling it as her hands shook.

"Of course. I feel the same." She smiled. "Watch long enough and you start wishing you were in his place."

That, Annie vowed, would never happen! But she gratefully half drained the cup, and sipped the rest, eyes glued on Tom. Maybe that was why she'd missed whatever signal passed between Mark and Alistair. All she caught was Alistair saying, "Sure." and then crossing the room, a couple of yards of rope in his hand.

"Stand still, Annie," She couldn't hold back the shudder as Mark took the rope from Alistair. "I want you to know how it feels. So you'll know why I insisted on nylon rope. Cotton cuts."

And nylon didn't? She wanted to cry and scream as the two of them wrapped the rope twice round her waist, and Mark fastened a reef knot in front. The two spare ends hung down, one rubbing the top of her cleft and the longer one came between her legs.

"It suits her," Alistair said, stepping back as Mark tied the two ends together.

"How does it feel?" Mark asked.

"Scary."

"Good." He kissed her. "Look at Tom." Mark turned her around, holding her against him. Tom lay unmoving, eyes closed. "He's relaxing, soon he'll be enjoying the constriction. As you will later."

How much later?

"Not until you are ready," Mark said, as if reading her thoughts. "You're still very much a novice."

His hands closed over her breasts. "Your nipples are hard."

Hard? They were so tight they hurt! She just hoped he wouldn't feel between her legs. This couldn't arouse her so much. She didn't want it to.

"Are you wet?" Mark asked.

She wanted to lie, but..."Yes."

"I hoped you would be." He kissed the side of her neck. Annie felt his lips all the way down to her clit. "Go into the kitchen and give Emma a hand. After dinner, I'm going to tie more rope on you."

It didn't seem quite real but it was so very conformable. Annie didn't even want to understand the thought that whirled through her head as Jane and she cleared away the plates. Four of them were naked, except for the rope belt and nipple chin she wore, Jane's and Tom's nipple rings, and the others' collars. The others wore slacks and sports shirts, and Claudine a cotton blouse and blue jeans, just like anyone else on holiday. They'd just eaten dinner together and passed the wine around as comfortably as if having half the group naked was nothing to comment on.

Annie helped Jane clear the plates, while Emma and Tom made coffee and put strawberries and clotted cream in serving dishes. They had coffee in the sitting room. Annie followed Jane and Emma's lead, and sat at Mark's feet, while Tom handed round coffee.

She expected them to play out a scene, at the same time dreading and longing to be included, but instead they talked about the weather, the nearest shops, the tides, and whether or not they wanted to spend a day in Penzance later in the week. Tom came round refilling cups. Mark covered Annie's with his hand.

"No, thanks, Tom. It was good coffee, but I'm taking Annie upstairs to put her through her paces. Want to make sure she's ready to join in tomorrow."

Her face burned scarlet. Why did he have to announce it? And what were her 'paces' anyway? She looked round the room, Emma smiled. Jane nodded and gave her an encouraging grin. Tom didn't even look up from pouring cream for Claudine's coffee. Mark nudged her back with his knee.

She took a deep breath and stood up.

"Want the rope?" Alan asked.

"Later," Mark said. "I've got enough equipment upstairs. If I need something, I'll give you a yell, or send Annie if she's not tied up."

Mark chivalrously, stood aside so she went up the stairs first. Halfway up, he swatted her on the rump. "Get a move on, Annie!" Another swat followed. They weren't hard, but reminded her she'd agreed to do whatever he wanted. She thought of the floggers she'd hung in the wardrobe. Would he use those? The single tail whip? And what about the nasty looking dowels?

Chatter drifted up from the group downstairs. They were all so confident, so comfortable. And she was scared wet!

Chapter Ten

Mark slapped her rump three times as he followed her upstairs. He didn't hurt, in fact she hardly felt it, but it sent her mind and nerves jangling and made her wonder what waited once they closed the bedroom door.

A heavy chain hanging from the ceiling!

"Grab hold of it with both hands, there's a love," Mark said. The door closed with almost a thud in the silence.

Annie stared at the chain, as her brain slowly processed his order. "Just hold onto it?"

"Let's make this easy. I don't want to bother with manacles." His hand flat between her shoulder blades propelled her forward. The chain glinted in the light.

Not sure what he meant by 'easy', Annie stood under the swinging chain and grabbed with both hands, about six inches from the end. "Like this?"

"A little higher." She shifted her hands until her arms were stretched above her head. "Beautiful. Shift your legs apart, just a little." The smooth cotton of his chinos nudged between her thighs. "Perfect!" He kissed her, and stepped away. "Feel all right?"

She felt exposed, more than a little nervous, and she wanted him to touch her, not watch her hanging like a free-range chicken in a high-class poultry shop.

"Listen carefully, Annie. I don't plan on repeating myself. When you have questions, and you will, ask me when we're alone. Don't comment or react, whatever you see or hear. As for you," Mark stroked her face with the back of his hand. "I make all the decisions, you follow my wishes. I want your trust and total obedience. Do I have them?"

What did he think standing in the altogether hanging onto a chain was? She knew better than ask that! She took a deep breath. "Yes." It took an effort to speak, but saying it, made her arms lighter and her head clearer.

"Yes, Mark." he cupped her chin in his hand, tilting her face up so their eyes met.

"Yes, Mark," Annie repeated.

He smiled. "Our informality lets you off easily. Many dominants would insist you use 'Sir' or even 'Master'."

"What about Claudine? Tom calls her 'boss'."

"That's between them. In our circle we don't go for theatricals, but Tom was used to calling his former dominatrix 'Madam'. Claudine hated it. Said it made her feel like the proprietor of a cat house, so they compromised."

"Oh!" She wasn't sure what else to say.

Mark kissed her, slow and lingeringly, easing her lips apart and taking her tongue with his, sending shivers over her skin. "Mmm," he said, as he drew back. "That felt as if you were ready." He stepped back, watching her face. "Tell me, Annie, should I leave you hanging here, or take you down and tie your hands and feet to the four corners of the bed?"

The second before she replied, she remembered his comment about accepting his decisions. "Whatever you want, Mark." Just saying the words scared and exhilarated.

Pleasure glinted his eyes. "The perfect answer, Annie what do I want?" He stroked her breasts, and she let out a little sigh. Of excitement? Uncertainty? Arousal? All three? "Let go of the chain, and look on the bed."

The velvet restraints she'd seen before. It was the black satin blindfold in the middle of the pillow that got her attention.

"Put it on. Make sure you have it tight. I don't want you seeing anything."

"Why?"

He clucked his tongue. The sound seemed to echo in the quiet, "You'll feel more helpless that way. Remember your safe word?" She nodded. "Say it."

"Annette Sophia Cavendish."

"Good." He sounded pleased, but he wasn't smiling, just watching her with still, impassive eyes. "I don't want to hear a sound from you except your safe word, if you want me to stop and 'Edge' when you're close to climax. Understand?"

Annie opened her mouth to reply, stopped, pressed her lips together and nodded.

Mark smiled. "Good girl! Put on that blindfold, and get flat on your back on the bed."

She managed, shaking hands, wet palms and all. Was the blindfold as tight as he wanted? She couldn't see anything, but there was a glimmer of light round the edges. Now she had to get on the bed. Shouldn't be too hard, the edge of the mattress was right against her shins. She climbed on, and lay down on her back and waited for what Mark would do or say next.

Nothing! Not a sound. Not a movement in the room. She heard snatches of muffled conversation from downstairs, and a laugh, was it Emma's? Had Mark left her? She hadn't heard the door open but the way her heart had been racing, while she tied on the blindfold, she'd have missed drum beats. The silence hung on until she couldn't stand it. "Mark, are you there?"

"I said not a word and I meant it!" He was there, his voice harsh and angry. "Want me to spank you for disobedience?"

She shook her head. Remembering the heat in her bottom, and the humiliation. To make sure he understood, she shook her head harder.

"I didn't think so," he spoke softly, he had to be quite close. "Give me your right hand."

She reached in the direction of his voice, and lay still as he tied one arm, and then the other, to the bed. She rolled a little to her left, as the mattress sagged. Was Mark sitting on the side of the bed? Her answer was a gentle touch on her cheek, Annie turned her head towards him, but the fingers slid down her neck and his open hand rested just above her breasts. As her chest rose and fell, her left breast brushed his arm.

"Don't move, Annie. I love to see you like this. Now I'm going to restrain your feet. You'll be helpless, and silent."

He kissed each ankle as he tied it down. The touch of his lips shot right to her groin, and her legs shook as he pulled them apart. She was spread-eagled, flat on her back, like a pioneer woman captured by Indians she'd seen in a TV western years back. Then the image vaguely excited her. Now she was shivering.

"It's okay." Mark lay beside, her stroking her shoulders and arms. He kissed her, and ran his hands slowly over her chest and belly, resting his fingers just above her slit. "Relax, Annie. Time to get excited later."

"Mark..." she began but stopped, remembering, seconds before his fingers covered her lips.

"Not a word. Unless it's your safe word."

Annie inhaled sharply and waited. She'd agreed to trust and obey him. He'd promised not to harm her, and she'd be lying if she pretended not to be aroused.

Something soft and warm, trailed from her breasts to between her legs, and up and down the insides of her legs, was it velvet? Fur? Did it matter? His mouth closed over each nipple in turn before gentle fingers kneaded and squeezed each breast. Her nipples went from firm to hard as he played with both at the same time. He stopped, then tugged hard on the chain. Sensations shot from her nipples to her clit. Unable to stop herself, she moaned and immediately clenched her lips together.

"Annie!" Mark's voice held an edge of severity. "That had better be the last sound you make or you'll be sorry."

She would be already, but the soft trail of his fingertips between her spread thighs stopped her thought processes short. What was he doing? What was she letting him do? Drive her crazy? The mattress sagged between her legs. She sensed him kneeling there, knew he was watching her every move. She told herself to relax, accept, obey and then she felt his lips on the soft skin of her inner thigh.

His lips teased and caressed, with an assurance that told her more clearly than any words, that he would do whatever he wanted and she was helpless, bound and aroused like hell! Wetness oozed between her legs and he hadn't even touched her there. She bit her lip to hold back her sighs as his lips teased one thigh, then the other while his hands pressed them even wider apart. The gentle, steady weight of ten strong fingers sent a clear message of possession to her now foggy brain.

His lips crept up her inner thighs, closer and closer to her now almost flowing cunt. She smelled her own arousal, her sweat, and her need. Her hips rocked as if by reflex, she tasted blood on her lips in the effort to keep still, and a long, slow groan echoed in the silent room.

Before she could stifle the last sounds with a sharp inhale, she almost cried out. Mark had moved away! Her thighs chilled without the warmth of his hands and her legs shook missing his lips. The mattress shifted, was he leaving her?

She opened her mouth to cry out and remembered why he'd stopped. She'd broken the rule for silence. Once he might forgive, twice, she doubted. She waited, panting with need as she shuddered with slow disappointment. He couldn't leave her like this, could he? Yes! He could do anything. She was bound and helpless and promised to obedience and silence. She waited, silent and aching with arousal, wondering if he'd abandoned her. Panic shook her at the thought. She fought for control, made her shoulders relax and her legs stop shaking.

"Brilliant!" She turned towards his voice. "For that sincere effort, I'll ignore the sounds you made." The back of his hand smoothed her flushed cheek. "I know it's hard, Annie, but the reward will be worth the effort." He kissed her shoulder, his lips almost cool against her heated flesh. "What do you say when you're close to coming?"

Her mind was clearer than a few moments ago. "Edge."

She imagined his satisfied smile. "Use it, okay? No more undisciplined and unsanctioned moves."

She opened her mouth to reply, but just in time, nodded.

"Very, good." As he spoke, something warm and soft trailed down between her breasts, over her belly and then teased the insides of her legs. The bed shifted as he settled back between her legs. He kissed slowly up from her knee until he was inches from her now soaking cunt. His fingers parted her labia and she tensed, waiting for, needing, his lips. Gently, like a warm breeze, he blew across her now aching flesh, stimulating and torturing her. Heat, need and sensation spiraled inside. She was ready, almost...

"Edge!" She all but yelled but it had its effect. He stopped, holding her open but barely touching her as she struggled to keep control.

"Excellent, Annie!" His words set off a warm tide of pleasure. She'd pleased him! "Do you want to come, Annie?"

As if she'd refuse! She nodded.

"You may speak."

"Yes!" It was an effort not to moan. "Yes, please, Mark."

"Then you shall."

He slid three fingers into her wet cunt, filling and stretching her, and gently circled her swollen clit with his thumb. As her hips rocked, he quickened his movements, pressing on her hot flesh until her whimpers became groans and her hips bucked of their own accord.

"Come for me, Annie, come for me!" Every nerve ending she possessed rose in obedience, and her body leaped, taking her into a wild, soaring climax that left her giddy and shaking.

She lay panting, heart racing, her mind only half aware of Mark releasing her legs. She was still feeling boneless, when he raised her legs to his shoulders and entered her, hard, fast and heated. He pumped into her, bringing her back up to another flying until he came, and she came again and again. She was still quivering as he released her hands, and removed the blindfold, holding her close until her mind and body calmed and she sagged against him, content in the circle of his arms.

"Game time!" Alan said, tossing a pack of cards on the newly cleared dinner table.

After a long day on the beach, Annie was more ready for an early night than playing cards. She glanced at Mark, who smiled and held a chair for her. Unsure what came next, she sat down. Tom took a seat and so did Emma. Jane hesitated and got herself a resounding slap on her rump for her delay. What was going on?

"Annie deals," Alan pushed the facedown pack towards her.

"Would someone please explain what we're playing?" Did she really want to know?

"Beat the sub," Emma replied. "It's like Old Maid but the cards are different."

They were! Picking up her hand after dealing, she had three pairs: cuffs, riding crop, and blindfold. The rest of her cards had pictures of gags, whips, ropes and restraints of every imagination, and she held one other the card, the one she guessed no one wanted—a bound sub being beaten. She tucked it carefully in the middle of her hand, and hoped someone else pulled it.

No one did. Annie paired up two different gags, a butt plug and three dildos, and the others paired up more variety of whips, gags, restraints and canes than Annie could have imagined. The play was fast. An air of desperation hung over the table. The others had played before, and knew what to expect. By their attitude, Annie guessed it was bad. She hoped someone would pull the bound sub card. No one did. She was down to three cards, and halfway to desperate, when she pulled a matching sub from Emma's hand. Safe! Just as long as she didn't land the last one. She didn't. Tom was left holding the last card, which he handed to Claudine. Emma and Jane didn't bother to hide their relief.

"Too bad, big boy," Claudine pulled him by his cock. "Let's get you ready. You'd think you'd learn by now not to let me down."

"Mark?" Annie wanted him to deny what she knew was happening.

He ran his hand over her hair. "You can sit by me and see what happens when you lose."

She shook her head. A cold tightness closing around her chest. How could he expect...

"Yes, Annie." His tone that denied refusal. His hand on her chin tilted her face up. "You promised obedience. Either watch in silence or take his place."

Annie sat on the floor between Mark's legs. Usually she took comfort from the warmth of his legs. Tonight, she didn't. She barely noticed Emma or Jane seated on the floor a few feet away. She'd all but forgotten Mark was there. Her entire attention was focused on Tom lying over Claudine's lap. The first slap echoed in the still room. As did the second and the third. Annie shivered, remembering her own punishment. After a few minutes, Claudine picked up a small wooden slapper and used that on Tom's now very pink posterior. The slapper made a duller sound and echoed in the silent room, as if lingering with the pain.

Annie shuddered, unable to ignore the quivers and vibrations of Tom's punished flesh. He

never made a sound, apart from the occasional exhale after a particularly heavy swat. How did he endure it? She'd wailed and cried when Mark spanked her. Just remembering had her shaking – and warm and wet between her legs.

Tom let out a groan during a volley of extra heavy thuds and Claudine stopped. At last. Annie's shoulders relaxed and her fists unclenched. Tom stood up, his arse and thighs red and his legs a little wobbly. But he soon steadied, standing in front to Claudine, his head bowed.

Annie waited for a signal from Mark. She glanced at Jane and Emma. They seemed unaffected apart from a flush on Jane's face.

"Bend over, and grab your balls, boy!"

Annie jumped at Claudine's command. Tom bent over, one hand clasping his knee cap, the other cupping his balls and cock. Claudine ran a carefully manicured hand over Tom's still red arse and thighs, gave him a casual swat as if for luck, and turned and slowly walked across to the bookshelf.

She came back with a cane in her hand.

For all her years teaching, Annie had never seen one, except in films or comics she'd read as a child. This was the real thing. Claudine flexed the narrow cane a couple of times and asked. "Well Tom, would you like six or twelve?"

"Whatever pleases you, Boss."

"Mmmm." Claudine mused, looking from Tom's firm posterior to the three subs seated on the floor. Surely she wasn't starting on one of them! They hadn't lost the darn game! Annie felt Mark's hand, stroking her hair. His touch might have soothed more, if Claudine's dark eyes hadn't been boring into her. Annie let out a sigh of relief as the woman turned back to Tom. "You took that warm up very well, six will be enough, I think,"

"Thank you, Boss."

"Annie will count for you," Claudine went on. "If she makes a mistake, I'll have to start again." She glanced at Annie. "You can count, can't you?"

Dry mouthed, Annie nodded, but, at a squeeze on her shoulder from Mark, whispered, "Yes."

"I didn't hear you!" Claudine frowned.

Annie forced her eyes from the evil looking cane to the woman's face. She took a slow breath. "Yes, I can count, Claudine." She repeated, amazed that her voice held when her heart stuttered like dying engine.

"I hope so. Loud and clear now. If I can't hear one, I'll start again."

Annie was aware of only two things. Mark's hand on her head and the resounding crack of the cane hitting Tom's rump. His knees wobbled a little, and Annie watched in horrified fascination as a thin line of magnified redness appeared across his arse cheeks. Only when Mark nudged her with his thigh did she remember. "One!"

It was louder and steadier than she expected and immediately followed by another slash of the cane. This time across the back of Tom's thighs. "Two!"

Another slash, just below the last, left a trail of tram lines across Tom's muscular thighs. Annie called out "Three!" And almost choked on it when she realized she was watching Tom Baldwin, the nation's heart throb getting caned. She'd never be able to watch Coventry Cops again. She'd be lucky to look him in the face again! A fourth line now crossed his posterior and Claudine waited.

"Four!" Annie all but yelled. Surely, Claudine wouldn't really start from scratch? Just in case, Annie made herself to concentrate. A fifth line made three parallel marks on his butt and the final one caught him beneath his cheeks with particular force, making his knees wobble.

It was over. Annie watched in fascinated horror as Tom kissed the cane, and then stood up and wrapped his arms around Claudine. The drawn out, passionate embrace that followed stunned Annie more than the caning. From the corner of her eye, she noticed, Jane nestling her head, between Alistair's thighs. Embarrassed, Annie turned just in time to see Emma stand as Alan kissed her breasts. Bemused, Annie looked back at Tom and Claudine. He was now shaking but whether from pain, relief, or Claudine's hand on his cock, Annie couldn't even imagine.

"May I come, Boss?" Tom asked as Claudine's fingers closed around his very obvious erection. "Please, Boss." His voice came strained and tight, and his face tensed with the effort of controlling what had to be imminent orgasm.

Surely Claudine couldn't refuse.

"Of course, sweet boy." But as she spoke, she took her hand away. "The only thing is...you have to ask Annie very nicely...if she'll oblige you, you may."

Annie heard Claudine perfectly. She just didn't understand. Claudine couldn't mean what Annie heard, but Tom Baldwin, red stripes on his butt, gleaming nipple rings and all, was coming straight towards her.

With a lump in her tight throat, Annie glanced at Mark. "It's up to you," he said. "Do you think he deserves a release? You may refuse."

To do so would be cruelty to sex symbols. But to agree...Her throat went dry as Tom knelt in front of her and bowed his handsome head. His hair was dark with sweat and clung to the dome of his scalp. Damp curls clustered on the nape of his neck. "Please, Annie, please let me come." His voice caught as if he was close to tears. "Please." He sounded desperate and, judging by the state of his erection, he probably was.

Almost by instinct her hand reached out to his rampant cock. "With pleasure," she replied as her fingers closed around his hard flesh.

She could almost feel this heart throb through his cock, as she slid back the almost fragile foreskin, to reveal the sweet, rosy head. A pearl of moisture gathered at the opening. Annie watched, fascinated at the need expressed in that sticky fluid. She lowered her head and licked him clean. She barely touched him with the tip of her tongue, but felt his shudder and his stifled need. He exhaled hard before breathing slowly.

It was if all the tension in his body was concentrated in his cock. Her heartbeat picked up at his need. It wouldn't take any time to bring him off. But how? Suck him? Was that allowed? If she'd only had a chance to talk to Mark. She could hardly ask now—not with Tom's desperate heartbeat in her ear but she sensed if she did it too swiftly the entire audience would be disappointed.

She took the condom Mark handed her and rolled it down over Tom's cock. She had to put on a show, and satisfy Tom, and she knew just how to do both. It might be a pretty short show... but...

She knelt up and smiled, looking Tom in the eyes. Lord! He was drop dead gorgeous, and the look of desperation in his eyes only added to his appeal. This man was in need and he was hers. She ran her fingers up from the curly mat of hair in his groin to the softer, sparse hair on his chest. She couldn't resist smoothing her fingertips over his nipples and the gleaming gold rings. They were different from Jane's. Hers were thin and delicate and went through the points of her nipples. Tom's gold, was thicker, and much larger, passing from one edge of the aureoles to the other, so a good half-inch or more of gold disappeared into his flesh. Putting them in had to have hurt. Like hell. She kissed each nipple to make it better.

"Annie," Mark said from behind her. "You're to jerk him off, not feast your eyes."

No reason why she couldn't do both. But she'd keep that thought to herself. Sliding her hands down to his crotch, she cupped his balls in her left hand, and circled his shaft with her

right. She was tempted to take him in her mouth, but doubted Mark included that in his definition of "jerk off," so she closed her hand and eased it up and down Tom's cock in a steady rhythm.

Looking up to his face, she saw tension in the taut line of his jaw and a flicker of relief in his eyes. As he exhaled slowly, he lowered his eyelids, his long lashes shadowing his cheek bones as the sinews in his neck tightened. She glanced down and saw tension in his hard stomach and his almost-shaking thighs, fascinated at the intensity of need concentrated in a few inches of hard flesh.

Tom groaned and grabbed her shoulder. Her hand moved faster in response to his quickened breathing. He let out another groan, followed fast by a gasp, and a scream that half-sounded like her name, and he climaxed, filling the condom, his gasps and sighs of relief echoing in her ears.

For a few seconds there was no sound but their breathing. "Thank you, love, you're a star!" Tom said, the words coming out between gasps.

She couldn't help grinning up at him. "Any time!"

"Don't get any ideas!" Mark all but growled in her ear. "Only with permission."

That irked. No end. But now seemed not the time to say so. Tom disappeared to the loo to clean up. Claudine came over and smiled. "Nice job, Annie. There'll be another time, never doubt it...but it's not for you to decide when."

Double irk.

"Come on, Annie!" Mark tapped her shoulder. "We're going upstairs."

She wasn't arguing. She wanted some answers.

She wasn't to get them tonight.

Mark was hard as granite and barely had her in the door before she was on the bed and obeying his demand to undo his zip. His cock sprang out, ready and heated. She was wetter and randier than she'd have thought possible, and came almost as soon as he entered her.

"Mark, I'm sorry!" she said, panic in her voice.

"Never mind, this time!" he grunted, "You're so damn hot!" He pistoned into her, fast and hard, and climaxed almost immediately.

"Why?" Annie asked as she lay drowsy and stated but unsettled. "Why did that arouse me so?" It seemed wrong to get so heated at someone else's pain and humiliation.

"Because, Annie, you're a natural submissive. The real thing. You imagined yourself in his place and it aroused you."

That couldn't be it! It wasn't! Annie was still denying it, as she drifted off to sleep.

Whatever she'd expected in the morning at breakfast, it hadn't been Tom, in a business suit.

Mark dropped his car keys on her plate. "Tom needs to go back to London for a few days. You'll drive him to Penzance and drop him at the station." She was so gob smacked, Mark had had to remind her to put on one of the dresses he'd bought her.

Soon she was steering his precious Jaguar through narrow lanes and hoping to heaven she didn't scratch his sacred paint work.

"Relax," Tom leaned back in the comfortable leather seat. "We've got ages. Enjoy the ride. We're passing through some of the most beautiful countryside in England." Annie slowed a little, but the country side still passed in a blur. "What's bothering you, Annie? Driving Mark's precious machinery?"

"That and having TV's sexiest detective sitting in the passenger seat."

He let out a deep throaty chuckle. "Shouldn't let that intimidate you. Not many women

have seen me without my Y fronts." She'd have grazed the bank at the side of the road, if Tom hadn't grabbed the wheel. "Sorry," he said, with the smile that dazzled several million viewers. He righted the car and patted her still shaking arm. "You're really strung out, aren't you? Did last night bother you that much?"

She couldn't lie. "Yes. I just don't understand..."

"Why I stood there and let Claudine beat the hide half off me?"

She didn't understand his calm acceptance. "It seemed so unfair. It was only a silly game. I couldn't see the point."

"The point was, that one of use would lose."

And they'd all had an equal chance. It hadn't been a game of skill! "It could have been me. If I'd lost..." Her voice petered out as she imagined herself bent over Mark's lap in front of everyone. And the thought of a cane! She shuddered.

Tom seemed surprised at her shock. "Sweetheart, doesn't Mark beat you?"

What a thing to ask! "He spanked me once." Her face burned at the memory. And something was happening between her legs that she didn't what to think about.

"Bless, us! You're as good as a virgin!" Tom's voice was gentle. "No wonder you were so calm, when we were playing cards. You had no idea."

"And the thought of getting spanked in front of everyone..." She shuddered.

"Mark wouldn't have done that! Not with you so new to the scene."

She'd have been let off? "He'd have taken you upstairs, just like he did the night before. Trust him. He knows what he's doing." Mark might, she wasn't sure she did. "Mark won't do anything public until you're ready."

"What if he thinks I'm ready, but I don't?" That was more than likely.

Tom squeezed her hand where it gripped the steering wheel. "Trust him Annie. You don't have to make that decision. It's all done for you. That's the beauty of all this. It's the perfect stress release." She wasn't sure about that! "Look at me. I work in a rat race, wondering all the time if the series will go on for another season. I go to Claudine and she takes all responsibility off me. All I think about is pleasing her, and in return I get a lot of fun and excitement. Okay, a bit of pain and humiliation, and wonderful sex."

"I'm not so sure..."

"What are you not sure of? If this is what you want? Or are you unsure of yourself? Or Mark?"

She thought for a moment, and sighed. Put so bluntly..."All of the above."

Tom shook his head. "Only you can answer the first two, but uncertainly about Mark is not one of the things need to worry about. I've never seen him like this."

"Like what?"

He gave her the oddest look. "You really don't know, do you?"

"Don't know what?" She shouldn't have snapped but honestly, she'd had enough confusion the past couple of days to last a lifetime.

Tom shook his head. "Look, I may be way out of line here, but..." he shrugged. "What the hell... You might as well know, everyone else seems to."

"Know...what!" She used that tone with guilty-looking ten-year-olds.

This was Tom Baldwin but...

Tom gave her the self-same smile that had millions of women turning on their TV sets every week. "Annie. I've known Mark almost as long as I've known Claudine. I've seen him with quite a few women over that time."

Was he trying to tell her she wasn't the first. She'd pretty much figured that out on her own. Tom went on, "Mark's a thoughtful dominant. He takes care of his submissives. Gets quite fond of them even."

This was meant to help her feel better? "But with you, Annie, it's different. He's changed too. You should see the look on his face when he's watching you."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean my dear Annie, unless I'm very much mistaken, Mark is either in love, or so close to it as makes no difference." Tom leaned over and kissed her. "Just thought you ought to know, my dear."

Half the female population of the country would kill for a kiss from Tom Baldwin. Annie barely noticed it, but his parting words obsessed her all the way back.

The drive back wasn't anywhere long enough to sort things out. Her mind whirled, mulling over Tom's words, the past few weeks with Mark, and the unforgettable scene last night. Could Tom possibly be right? Was Mark in love with her? If so, he hadn't mentioned it and Mark wasn't exactly shy about saying what he felt. And what about her? Did she love him? Did she really want to share his sort of life? Her questions weren't answered, in any satisfactory fashion, before she pulled up behind Emma and Alistair's Range Rover.

Annie stared through the windshield at the sprawling house on the cliff, and knew she couldn't go in. Not yet. Not ever perhaps. She had to think hard, before she walked back into that house and smack into whatever Mark planned. She winced at her choice of words. Locking the car, she tucked the key in her pocket. Skirting the side of the house, she set off for the cliff path she'd noticed yesterday.

Annie had no idea how long she walked. The path petered out after a while, or rather it had collapsed. The sun was well past overhead and her stomach told her she'd missed lunch. It was time to return. Tom had been right, she'd promised to obey Mark, she had to trust him. If he loved her, sooner or later he'd no doubt get around to mentioning it, and if he didn't. She had one less thing to worry about. She walked back light-hearted and longing to see Mark again.

He met her, a couple of hundred yards from the house. "I saw the car back. Where have you been?"

"I went for a walk. I needed some time to think."

Mark frowned. "I gave clear directions. Take Tom to the station and come back. Nothing about disappearing for a couple of hours."

Anne tried to ignore his disapproval. "Mark, I had a lot of conflicting thoughts. I needed time alone, to sort things out."

"Last night worried you?" She nodded. Mark smiled and traced a finger down the side of her face. His touch was soothing and told her he understood. "If you'd only come and asked me, I'd have gladly given permission. If you need time alone, all you have to do is ask." She relaxed, unaware she'd tensed at the thought of his disapproval. He took her hand and walked beside her towards the house. "If you'd asked me," he repeated, "I'd have given you permission. You didn't. So I'll have to punish you."

"Mark!" Annie stopped in her tracks, clenching his hand, as a cold knot of shock twisted inside her.

"Annie!" He used the same tone of voice she used to quiet arguments about homework. "Don't argue or I'll double what you're getting." He jerked her close. He was warm under his sports shirt, and his eyes darkened as he looked down at her.

Asking what she was getting no doubt came under arguing. Shaking with anger and trepidation, Annie walked in silence into the house. Alan and Emma were cleaning up from lunch. Annie had no idea she'd been gone that long. No wonder Mark had worried. She opened

her mouth to speak, but catching his eyes, thought better of it. No one said a word, but Annie fancied a look of sympathy on Emma's face.

Annie followed Mark upstairs, remembering with each tread, the humiliation and pain of her first spanking, and now she was facing a repeat performance.

Why didn't she just turn around and leave? Heck, she still had Mark's car keys!

That thought died as soon as it started. She wasn't going anywhere but upstairs with Mark. Why? Why this compulsion to follow him for what would be painful and unwelcome?

She hadn't answered that one by the time he pushed her face down on the bed. Faster than she could think, he had her skirt up and one hand splayed firm between her shoulder blades, pinning her to the mattress. She hadn't caught her breath from the shock before the first slap hit. This time there was no sensual build up, no caress, just one resounding slap after another until the sound of flesh on flesh echoed in the quiet room. Her cries and his hard breathing added to the noise. She was squirming, trying to evade his hard palm that fell and hit with measured regularity.

Her bottom burned and throbbed but still he continued his seemingly tireless, stinging blows. Ears throbbing, throat sore with screaming, she tasted salt on her lips. Tears poured down her face and heavy sobs interspersed her cries. She was bawling so fast, it took her a moment or two to realize he'd stopped. Her bottom and thighs still throbbed and burned but the blows had ceased. At his touch, she stood, and through her tears, met Mark's eyes.

"What have you learned?" he asked, his voice soft as gentle fingers wiped tears from her face.

It took a moment to get her sobs under control. "To ask permission before I go off on my own."

"You won't ever forget, will you?" He kissed her, his mouth hard and heated against hers. Her lips were swollen, where she'd bitten them in her useless effort to hold back her screams. His lips were warm and persistent, opening her mouth, so his tongue could claim hers. After the pain of the spanking, his kiss ignited a wild passion inside her. Her heart raced and a flood gathered between her legs. Unable to control anything any longer, she moaned into his mouth.

He lifted his mouth off hers. "Enough." He put a hand on each shoulder. "Kneel." Annie obeyed. Even through her half dried tears, she couldn't mistake the size of his erection. "Suck me, Annie."

His quiet words sent a thrill down to her pussy. Without hesitating, without even stopping to think, Annie unzipped Mark's fly and inhaled sharply as his erection sprang out. He was naked under his pants. Not waiting for another order, she bent her head and circled the smooth, almost purple, head of his cock with her lips.

This felt so right, like absolution. She was forgiven her mistake and permitted to take Mark in her mouth. Working with tongue and lips, she brought him closer and closer to climax, listening to his ragged breathing, and luxuriating in the touch of his fingers tunneling through her hair and his cock in her mouth. Mark's breathing sped, his hands clasped her head, moving her with his rhythm. Lost in his power and strength, Annie came, and in the wild throes of her own passion tasted him in her mouth. She swallowed as her climax eased, and sagged between his legs, her face against his thigh.

Mark stroked her head, "Sweet Annie, you please me so." The words caused a soft wave of pleasure that obliterated her earlier anguish. She turned her head to kiss the soft cotton of his trousers. "You came didn't you, Annie?" She looked up, suddenly realizing his prohibition. Would he punish her again? He stroked her cheek, "Don't worry, Annie, I'll forgive you this time. It's been a difficult for you." Leaving her kneeling, he poured a glass of water from the carafe at the bedside. She gulped it down, surprised at her thirst. Mark poured her a second glass, it helped to ease her sore throat. "Had enough?" Annie nodded as he poured himself a glass,

swallowing it thirstily. Had this been as wearing for him as it had for her?

She didn't have time to think that one out. Gently Mark stood her up and removed her dress, turning her around to look at her bottom, stroking her still heated flesh. "You won't forget this easily, will you?"

"No!" Not if she lived to be a hundred.

"Good, because if I have to punish you again, I'll use my belt." She turned in horror to meet a pair of amused eyes. "I hope I've made my point. Get in bed and rest. Punishment is exhausting and we're going out this evening. I want you rested and beautiful." He pulled her close and kissed her, drawing out a slow moan of desire. She was still aroused and needy—from being spanked? Why? How? Mark went on. "Do not on any account touch yourself. One climax without permission, I will forgive. Another, and you will learn what punishment really is."

Chapter Eleven

After the past thirty-six hours, Annie welcomed a nice, predictable evening with a bunch of friends in the village pub. Mark and Alan stood at the bar ordering drinks and supper. Sitting at a wide, round oak table with Claudine and Jane, Annie watched Emma and Alistair playing darts by the now empty inglenook fireplace. The old oak beamed pub reminded Annie of evenings with friends back in Surrey, as long as she sat sort of sideways. Five Bells' chairs were not upholstered.

Mark brought over a tray of drinks. Emma and Alistair came back to the table, and Mark passed around the glasses, handing Annie a gin and tonic. As she sniffed the sweet perfume smell and sipped from the squat glass, she looked sideways at Mark. Their eyes met and he smiled with such tenderness, Annie almost forgot the lingering ache in her body. She wanted Mark to take her home and fuck her. She'd obeyed his prohibition about not masturbating, and now the ache between her legs seemed ready to equal the smarting of her bottom.

"Doing all right?" he asked, after they'd all offered each other cheers and good health.

"Not really!"

He grinned. "I'll take care of that later." His hand settled on her thigh, his palm warm through the cotton of her dress. "Relax, and remember not to comment, whatever happens."

Every time he said that, something strange or unsettling occurred. What now?

Nothing much. Alistair bought two bottles of wine for dinner. Mark ordered her fresh tuna and new potatoes and they shared an enormous slice of treacle tart with clotted cream. In an effort to work off some of the cream, Annie took up Mark's challenge at darts.

"Do I have to let you win?" She couldn't help wondering how this fitted into submission.

"Hell no! This is a rare chance for you to beat me! If you can."

She couldn't, but planned to practice like mad when she got home, in case she ever got another chance.

The evening wore on. No one seemed ready to leave, even though the crowd in the pub was thinning. The door opened but Annie barely gave it a thought, people had been coming and going all evening, until a tall, broad shouldered man came over to their table.

"John!" Mark stood up and clasped his hand, clapping him on the shoulder. "Wonderful to see you!"

Annie felt lost for a minute, unsure whether to introduce herself or not. John was as tall as Mark, but several years older and carried himself with confidence. Something about him, both intrigued and repelled.

"So this is Annie." He closed his hand over hers. How had he known her name? Mark must have talked about her. John smiled at Annie and gave Mark an appreciative grin. "You were right."

About what? Mark had obviously told him about her. The idea set her senses on alert, something about John and his compelling dark eyes gave her the heebie jeebies.

"Let me get you a drink." Mark offered.

"Thanks, but I can't stay. I just came to get Jane."

Had she heard right! She had! And she was the only one surprised. Jane went a little pale, but didn't hesitate, just stood up, reached for her cardigan, and without a backward glance followed John out into the night. Annie's jaw dropped but she remembered Mark's order, make no comment. She closed her mouth and turned to Mark.

He smiled. "You're learning, Annie."

No one else batted an eye. Okay, John obviously wasn't a stranger, at least not to the others, but why had Jane walked out into the night with him? Mark owed her a few answers. Another reason to get back.

With Jane's departure, the evening broke up. Emma and Claudine left with Alistair, Annie and Mark waited while Alan made a last pit stop. The others were long gone by the time he reappeared.

"Here!" Alan put a packet of condoms in Annie's hand. "Got a spare pocket?"

She had, but so did he! Closing her fingers round the cardboard pack, Annie glanced at Mark as she slipped the pack in her pocket. Alan opened the door and all three walked out into the summer evening. Annie shivered, not from the night air, but in anticipation. If Alan had given her condoms, he and Mark planned on using them.

The lights of the village were well behind them, as they turned off the lane, down a footpath. Alan led, carrying a flashlight to light the way between dry-stone walls. Annie glanced back at Mark, but in the dark, his face was only a pale shape. She could barely make out his eyes, much less read his expression.

"Keep going, Annie," he said, "Follow Alan. We're almost there."

Almost where? She didn't ask, knowing this was one question Mark wouldn't answer until he was ready. The stone walls stopped but the path went on across a field of closely cropped grass. Annie stumbled but Mark caught her before she fell, his arms tightening under her breasts. A warm kiss touched her neck as he whispered, "Take off your dress."

"Now?"

He ran a warm finger down the side of her face. "Yes, Annie. We're almost there and I want to see your bare bottom in the moonlight as you walk." Almost where? They were in the middle of a field for heaven's sake! "Now!" Mark repeated, in a sharp whisper.

Annie pulled her dress over the head, shivering as Mark reached for it. She was glad of the night and darkness. Until Alan turned the torch on her. A beam of light danced over her breasts and wandered down her body to her naked pubes.

"She is lovely, Mark," Alan said, "Want to stop here?"

"No, go on to the spot we decided."

Alan led them across the field. Annie followed, suddenly aware of every stalk of grass that brushed her legs, and only too conscious of Mark's eyes on her naked backside. In the far corner, they both helped her over a stile. Wherever she moved, there was a man watching, or touching her knee, or holding a hand. Mark even ran his fingers down her spine to her crack as she climbed over the stile, and Alan ran his hands up her legs as she stepped down. They were readying her for an encore of the night in her cottage...or had they something totally new planned?

They stopped in a corner of the field by a dark shape that turned out to be a stack of folded blankets. At least she wouldn't have to lie in the stubble! Alan put one folded blanket on the ground. "Kneel here, Annie. While we get ready."

With as much grace as she could, Annie knelt. The blanket was rough on her knees but it was thick enough to soften the ground.

Mark stood over her. "Do you want to be blindfolded, or bound?"

She barely hesitated. She'd learned a lot in the past few days. "Whatever pleases you most." Her stomach hung heavy as she spoke, followed by a lightness as she sensed his satisfaction at her reply.

"I'll tie you. I like you helpless. Put your arms behind your back."

She obeyed, but realized it was Alan who moved behind her. She didn't want him to tie her!

She almost protested but waited, shivering, as Alan wound something warm and soft, round her wrists, clipping them tightly together.

She had to move her knees apart to keep her balance. Was that what they wanted? Was it what she wanted? She shivered in the night air while heated anticipation raced through her. Was this a rerun of the night in her cottage? No, They hadn't bound her then. This time they had her helpless from the beginning, where would it end?

They didn't speak to her, ignoring her as they shook out a blanket. Preparing for what they would soon do to her. She shuddered, shoulders shaking and knees wobbling.

Mark's reassuring hand on her shoulder calmed her. "Are you all right, Annie?" She was now, with his touch steadying her. She nodded. "Wonderful." He knelt beside her, his breath warm on her cheek as she whispered. "Make me proud, Annie." That meant, obeying. Whatever. Annie nodded, a lump gathering in her throat. He smoothed his fingers over her breasts, and she felt his touch between her legs. And groaned as he pinched her nipple. "Hush!" Mark said. "Not a sound until we give permission." He placed his hand on her forehead, and his thumb and fingers lowered her eyelids.

Speckles of light flickered in the darkness behind her lids. She lost track of time, listening to their movements: a rustle of clothes, another blanket unfolded? A clink—perhaps a belt being unbuckled? A distant car engine. Were they near a road? No, Mark wouldn't do that. He could... he had. He'd made her come within sight of those people in the pub gardens. Surely there wasn't a road the other side of the hedge. No, please...

Warm hands settled on her shoulders. "It's okay, Annie," Alan's voice said. "We're here." She wanted Mark's touch, but knew to accept Alan's. "Kneel forward." There was command in his voice as he eased her shoulders down until her face rested on the blanket. Her tied wrists made her unsteady. How could she ever get up?

Annie took a deep breath. If Mark needed her to get up, he would help her. That concern faded as she felt fingers opening her and couldn't help shivering.

"It's okay. I'm just getting you ready to be plugged." That was hardly reassuring when it was Alan speaking! It was hard enough when Mark did this, but Alan! The hard tip pressed against her tight opening. Involuntarily, she tightened. "Relax, Annie. It will hurt if you fight it." That she knew, but getting her body to agree was another matter. She whimpered as the cold silicon pressed against her muscle.

"Annie!" That was Mark. Disappointment and anger tinged his voice. "Obey Alan!" She wanted to but...warm hands stroked her bare back, easing the tightness in her shoulders and the tension in her spine.

"Open up for me, push out." This time, her body obeyed, she even stifled the groan as the plug slid home. "Good. Think how that feels and imagine how a hot, hard cock will feel."

She didn't need to imagine! She already knew! A slow shudder took over her body, but in its wake, a warmth calm remained. Almost light headed, Annie knelt in the field and waited, with sore knees and soaking cunt, longing for whatever they planned next.

The flogger hit gently, right across her shoulders and wrung a sigh from her. "Shh," Mark's voice reminded her. A succession of blows covered her, from her shoulders to her bottom. They were soft, like a stinging caress, and Annie melted under them. When they finished, she felt too soft to stand.

A pair of hands held her shoulders as they stood her up, She leaned back against one of them, Alan she thought, she was sure, when, the other one tipped her face up and kissed her. She knew Mark's lips. This kiss was slow, and teasing, and as hot as the heat between her legs. She tasted a faint hint of the beer he'd drunk earlier, and felt his passion against her tongue. She barely controlled the sigh that rose deep inside. Then he left her mouth and took a nipple between his teeth and this time, she moaned.

A hand slapped the front of her thigh, the sound echoing in the night until Annie sensed every night animal listening. A second and the third slap bit and echoed in the quiet. She knew, without Mark saying, that was a punishment for breaking silence. These had hurt, and still smarted, but her cunt responded all the same.

What was wrong with her? Or was it right? It felt so wonderful and so terrible, and she wanted more.

"Kneel up," Mark said, as they helped her back to her knees. "Open your eyes."

Her face level with Alan's crotch and Mark's. They made her suck each of them, passing her back and forth until her jaw ached and her cunt throbbed with need.

It all became a blur, she no longer distinguished one cock from the other, her mind spiraled off as her body responded to theirs. She was close to coming but her muffled 'Edge' got lost round Alan's cock. Or had it? They pulled back immediately, and spread her on her back, legs apart, arms over her head, as Alan knelt astride her chest and rubbed his cock between her breasts.

She was closer to coming than ever and Mark's fingers brushing her pussy brought her closer and closer. "Edge!" she all but shouted it this time, and in the fog of her need, she felt Mark's fingers inside and his touch on her clit, as he said, "Come for me, then, come for me. Make noise!"

How could she not obey! Her body reared up, her legs jerked and twisted as Alan's weight pinned her to the ground and Mark's touch took her over the clouds to collapse in a whimpering, panting heap. They never let her catch her breath, but flipped her over on her belly, and she gasped as someone pulled out her plug with a sharp tug and replaced it with a finger that snaked and turned inside her until she moaned aloud.

"You're a sexy little cunt," Alan said. She was too far gone to feel ashamed. She agreed! She wanted to be!

They turned her back, so she looked up at the stars, and this time Mark loomed astride her chest, his hands lifting her head while he fucked her mouth. She wanted him, wanted more. She was close to coming again, her body climbing and soaring as her legs were lifted in the air, exposing her cunt and arse. She was helpless, and being fucked all over and she loved it. Her legs resting against Alan's shoulders, her feet pointing to the heavens, fingers fucking her cunt, dipping in and spreading her wetness, and more cool gel against her arse. Then came the pressure of his cock against her tight opening. Fear fluttered on the rim of her reason, but her mind knew nothing but cocks, and sex, and being fucked, She groaned as Alan pressed in, but gagged by Mark's cock, the sound floating out into the night,

They were both fucking her hard, driving deep in her mouth and arse and there were fingers in her cunt. She was being taken completely, in every way, and that was the last thought before her mind shorted out. A great wave of orgasm crashed through her, again and again. She cried, screamed aloud around Mark's hard flesh, as she tasted his warm jism, heard Alan's groans of pleasure, and the world faded into warm black.

She came to briefly, vaguely aware she was rocking. Mark was carrying her wrapped in a rough blanket. "What happened?" she asked.

Mark chuckled, his laugh echoing in the night air. "I think we fucked your brains out!"

It all had a tinge of the unreal. Sitting in the morning sun, spreading marmalade on wholemeal toast, between the two men who'd fucked her senseless, in the middle of a field last night. Only Mark's undisguised pleasure saved Annie from extreme mortification. She still couldn't believe what she'd done. Twice! And even more incredible, this time she'd enjoyed just about every minute. Was Mark sucking her into his erotic world, or was this where she belonged

and he just the guide showing her the way?

Emma brought over a dish of fried mushrooms and bacon, and Alistair followed with a pile of toast and a second pot of coffee. As everyone passed plates and handed round milk and sugar, any casual onlooker would see a group of friends, twenty and thirty-somethings, enjoying a holiday. Appearances were definitely deceptive.

"Mushrooms?" Alan asked, handing Annie the dish.

"Fresh picked in the fields this morning?" Mark asked. Annie felt her face redden.

"Yes! The Tesco field," Emma said. "Give Annie a break, Mark, you're embarrassing her!"

Did everyone know what they'd done? Of course. The others probably stacked up the blankets in readiness and hid the flogger under the hedge. Annie cut into a mushroom and decided she'd better grow a thick skin...fast. If she blushed every time someone mentioned sex, she wouldn't last long in this group. And she wanted to stay part of them. Ridiculous as it would have seemed a couple of months ago, among Mark's circle, she felt safe and welcome. She belonged.

That idea shocked Annie as much as it reassured her, but she didn't have much time to ponder. Emma asked her to pass the butter, and then the back door opened and Jane walked in.

Everyone turned, and Alan all but leaped out of his seat, before striding across the kitchen and enveloping Jane in a bear hug. He released her long enough to give her a welcoming kiss that would have left cinema audiences swooning, and then gave her a quick hug before walking her up to the table, his arm round her shoulders as if he'd never let her go. That wasn't what surprised Annie most—it was the look of utter serenity and contentment on Jane's face. Radiant wasn't too strong a word and the look on Alan's face wasn't far off either. Annie just didn't understand.

"You will," Mark whispered to her.

"What?" Annie turned.

He smiled. "Understand...one day. If you want to talk about it, we can, later."

She wanted to talk, right now! But got caught up in greeting Jane. Emma fetched her a plate warm from the oven. Someone else poured her coffee. Alistair offered to make some fresh toast.

"Welcome back," Emma said. "We missed you."

"I've only been gone a night."

"Feels like longer, doesn't it?" Emma asked in a way that convinced Annie Emma had visited the scary John.

"Yes," Jane breathed it out like a sigh. "It does." Before Annie managed to work out what that meant, or even if she wanted to know. Jane reached into the pocket of her skirt. "Before I forget, John sent this." She placed a velvet jeweler's box on the table. "He said it was for you, Alistair asked him to get them." As she spoke, she scooted the box across to Emma.

Emma's eyes darted to Alistair and back to the little box sitting between the toast and the milk jug.

Alistair nodded and smiled. "You've been expecting this, haven't you?"

Without a word, Emma flipped up the lid and looked intently at the contents. "Yes, I have," she replied, a tremor in her voice.

What was in the box? Annie got her answer moments later when the box passed from Emma to Claudine to Mark. As Mark passed it to Annie, she stared down at two miniature gold barbells. Miniatures of the decorations Tom wore in his nipples.

"Beautiful!" Alan said as he passed the box on. "When are you getting them fitted?"

"This morning," Alistair replied. "Claudine brought her equipment with her."

Emma looked as if she'd have been much happier to wait.

"Who's going to assist?" Alan asked. "Tom's not back until Saturday."

"Annie is," Mark replied. "It'll help her to understand."

Understand what? That she was being shanghaied? That..."Thanks, Annie." Emma almost sighed the words out with relief. Annie could no more refuse than fly.

Mark's hand patted Annie's leg. One glance at his face and she knew she would manage this, whatever it involved. Somehow.

Half an hour later, upstairs with Claudine, Annie wasn't as certain she could do this. She was about to help make holes in another woman's nipples. It was okay for Mark to be so blasé, he was sitting downstairs enjoying a third cup of coffee.

"What's worrying you so much?" Claudine asked in the couple of minutes while Emma scooted ahead into the loo.

"Everything!" It came out before Annie stopped to think.

"About life in general, Mark, or just nipple piercing?" Claudine asked, pausing at the top of the stairs.

"The latter." Annie shrugged. She would go through with this, but how?

"Not to worry," Claudine smiled and nodded as if encouraging a nervous child. "Everything is just about ready. The needles are sterilized. You can help me lay it all out."

Annie did, after scrubbing her hands with anti-bacterial soap and then putting on thin surgical gloves. She tried not to stare at the needles that looked like drill bits, but she was a little surprised at how little equipment there was. Surely this was more complicated than piercing ears?

Emma arrived, several shades paler than when she'd gone down the landing to the loo. She lay down on the bed, and made every attempt to calm herself with slow breathing. Annie glanced at the needles in their sterile wraps and thanked the heavens John hadn't sent *her* a present of gold. But why would he? He didn't know her from Adam apart from that brief introduction in the pub. And a good thing to! Annie didn't fancy a night with him any more than she wanted gold decorations on her boobs.

Emma seemed unreasonably calm, lying still, looking up at the ceiling, her hands behind her head.

"I've got some cream," Claudine said, "to deaden the pain but takes a good hour to work. Want to use it? Or would you rather get on with it?"

"Get it over with!" Emma's voice betraying her anxiety.

"Don't worry, we will." Annie shivered at the 'we'. What did Claudine expect her to do? "Her nipples need to be hard. Go ahead, Annie,"

Annie gulped and managed to not ask "How?" She knelt on the bed, and gently took one nipple between her lips, while her fingers played with the other. If Emma wanted this done fast, Annie would try her darndest. Emma's skin smelled of lavender soap and she sighed and relaxed a little as Annie flicked her tongue back and forth across the point and swirled around the aureole before suckling the whole nipple. She didn't stop until it was rigid and damp, and then set to work on the other. The second took less time, Annie's fingers having started the job, but she indulged a little and enjoyed the sensation of easing her tongue over the tiny ridges and bumps.

"Ready yet?"

Annie blushed at the amusement in Claudine's voice. "I think so."

"Emma did ask us to get on with it."

Annie winced. She'd enjoyed it so much she'd half forgotten the reasons for playing with Emma's nipples, "Sorry." She looked up at Claudine and felt her face burn under Claudine's

unmistakable interest.

"I'll have to ask Mark to lend you to me to play some time. Now," her voice changed to all business, "let's get on with this before poor Emma chickens out." Claudine handed Annie two small packets. "Use one on each nipple, they're swabs, to sterilize."

That was easy enough. What next?

"Do you want them vertical or horizontal?" Claudine asked. Emma stared, obviously not expecting this. "They're not rings, remember?" Claudine added. Watching Emma's hesitation she asked, "Want to check with Alistair?"

"No!" Emma frowned. "I'm deciding, I want them...vertical."

"Righto." Claudine then took a fine-pointed pen and carefully marked spots on the upper and lower side of each nipple and handed Emma a mirror. "Have a good look. Make sure that's where you want them."

Emma stared at the mirror, as if realizing for the first time exactly what she'd agreed to. She swallowed. Twice her eyes big. "Okay."

Emma's voice was tight, Annie didn't blame her. But it was enough for Claudine to proceed. She placed a small clamp on each nipple and handed Annie another swab packet. This time, Annie knew what to do but was surprised when Claudine nodded to the gold barbells, now in two parts soaking in a small dish of sterilizing fluid. "Get ready to hand me one."

Annie stared at the fine gold columns, so much thicker than the heaviest earring and wondered how they would feel. She turned at Emma's muffled cry, and hesitated a minute while Claudine frowned. Annie took the cue and handed her one decoration. She then noticed the needle right through Emma's nipple, her wrinkled shut eyes and the bead of perspiration on her upper lip. In an instant, Claudine withdrew the massive looking needle and slid the gold in place.

"That's the done!"

Emma's eyes shot open. "Already?"

"One of them." Claudine looked down at her handiwork with obvious pride. "Keep still a jiffy and we'll do the other."

That took less time, since Annie was faster following Claudine's lead, but seemed to hurt Emma more. "There!" In seconds, Claudine took the two little balls and fitted them on the flat ends before wiping off a couple of drops of blood. "All done!" Claudine stripped off her gloves. "Put some of that antibiotic cream on them," she said to Annie, nodding towards the tube on the bedside table, "And we'll be ready to join the others on the beach. You might want to wear a teeshirt," she added to Emma, "even at night for a few days. They'll be tender."

That sounded like the understatement of the year! But Emma seemed none too much the worse and actually preened in front of the mirror before leaving to borrow one of Alistair's tee shirts.

"Doing all right?" Claudine asked as Annie helped pack away. "Not going to pass out on me are you?"

"No!" Annie was sure of that. "It wasn't as bad as I expected."

Claudine smiled. "You think Mark would send you up here to witness torture?"

"No, it's just..." Annie shrugged. "I've always imagined it would be bloody and horribly painful."

"It can be, especially in the hands of an amateur or a do-it-yourselfer. Emma will be fine." That Annie believed. Emma had all but skipped out, eager to find Alistair. "So will you," Claudine added, and to Annie's surprise, pulled her close, so they were pressed literally breast to breast. "You're getting used to us already, treasure." Annie jerked her head up at the unexpected endearment, staring into Claudine's clear blue eyes, as the older woman lowered her head and

kissed her.

Annie's little gasp was swallowed as Claudine's mouth closed down on hers. Annie sighed and opened her mouth to accept the heat and the power of a woman's loving kiss.

Claudine's mouth was soft and warm. As Annie brought her hand up to Claudine's face, she felt soft female skin. She felt almost giddy at the rush of sensation as Claudine's tongue met hers, getting wet between her legs as her body remembered Claudine's kisses soothing her there after waxing.

Annie whimpered as Claudine pulled away. "Whoa!" Claudine said, smiling down, her hands cupping Annie's face. "We'll finish this some other time." She dropped a farewell kiss on Annie's forehead. "Go along."

Annie left, her mind still a little scrambled at how readily she'd responded. The time by the pool, she'd been following Marks' orders. This time she'd wanted Claudine's embrace.

This holiday was turning it a wild erotic voyage of discovery way beyond Annie's wildest imaginings.

Chapter Twelve

Had he pushed too hard, too soon? Annie looked pale and strung out. Mark crossed the room, gently resting his hands on Annie's shoulders. "Doing all right?" She nodded and smiled as an after thought. "Tell me the truth, Annie." He kept his voice soft but she caught his insistence and smiled again, more readily this time. "Are you all right?" he repeated.

"Yes I am. I'm not sure I could handle it every day after breakfast but yes," she took a relaxing breath. "I'm okay."

"Okay?" Claudine echoed as she came in with Emma. "She's a bloody trooper. I might just take her on as assistant."

Annie's shoulders tensed under his hands. "Don't tease, Claudine. She's had enough for one day. She needs to relax, I'm taking her down to the beach."

Her hand was cold against his as they walked. He smelt the sweat on her skin, and the tension in her muscles. "Tell me about it."

She looked down at her feet, placing one ahead of the other on the grass. "I'm not sure I want to."

He couldn't let that pass. "Tell me about it, Annie," he repeated, stopping mid-step and pulling her against him. Her warm body gave a wonderful little shudder as he flattened her breasts against his chest. She smiled slowly as he looked down at her anxious eyes. He waited.

She didn't look away, although he sensed she wanted to. He dropped a gentle kiss on her forehead, just to reassure. She wasn't going anywhere until she told him what was stewing inside.

A little sigh signaled her acquiescence. "I didn't like it." She paused but he waited for her to continue. "Maybe it shouldn't have shocked me so. I've seen Jane's and Tom's but actually seeing them go in is another matter." She bit her lip. "There was bleeding. Not a lot but enough and heck, it had to have hurt. My ears did when I had them pierced."

He ran his thumbs up the side of her face to her ear lobes, gently fingering the small gold studs she wore. "Did they really hurt."

She nodded. "Yes, actually they did. A friend who had hers done after she'd had a baby said it hurt worse than labor but didn't last anywhere near as long."

She sounded almost light-hearted but her eyes watched him behind a veil of uncertainty. "Did it hurt more than when I spanked you yesterday?"

She blushed deliciously. "No! Nowhere near as much."

"And you survived that didn't you?" She was so transparent, he had to smile. "So, it wasn't Emma's pain that worried you. You've handled worse. What was it? Was she unwilling. Did she seem coerced?"

"No!"

"Was Claudine rough? Incompetent? Did it seem dangerous?"

She shook her head at each question. "No, way. She was very gentle, quick and heck, a surgeon couldn't be more careful...it wasn't any of those."

"Then what has upset you so?" She had to open up and tell him, even if they stood here all morning. He needed her trust and to know her fears. She tried to look away, but he angled her face back up with one finger under her chin. "Tell me, Annie."

It took several silent seconds while the vein at the base of her neck pulsed with distress, before she took a slow deep and blurted out, "Will you do that to me?"

He kissed her trembling mouth, savoring her fear. He could all but taste it and the thought

made him hard. "Not yet, Annie, not for a long time yet." Her shoulders relaxed as he spoke, he began to walk, bringing her close to him. "Alistair gave them to Emma as an anniversary present. They've been married five years." Mark said after a few yards. "Alan gave Jane hers instead of an engagement ring," he paused a little to let that sink in and watched the muscles in her neck undulate as she swallowed. She was still nervous. "Don't worry, Annie. I won't ask you to wear gold for me until you are ready."

"What if I never am?"

He had to stop again and kiss her. "You will be," he whispered, his mouth close to hers. "I'll make sure." Her shiver half made him want to spread her on the grass there and then. But waiting would make it so much sweeter.

He helped her down the rocks to the beach, and took her dress off, easing it over her head as she raised her arms at his command. Mark thought back on the night before, Annie might be ready to wear his gold sooner than she imagined.

"Race you to the water!" he said, after he'd stripped off his own clothes.

Annie shot off like a charged hare, her head back, chest up, and lovely legs pumping. He let her lead at first, then came neck and neck, and they approached the first waves. She ran on, finally stopping in waist deep water. "This is cold!" she yelled.

"I know." He wrapped her in his arms. Her nipples were stiff with cold and tasted of salt as he kissed them. "We'll leave them as nature intended...for now." he said. Annie trembled. From cold, or unallayed anxiety? Or both? It really didn't matter. She was his to have as he wanted. "Let's get towels, Jane and Alan brought a stack down when they came."

Mark picked two off the stack, wrapping the first one around Annie's shoulders before rubbing himself down. He looked up and caught the shock in eyes.

Jane was lying face down on the sand, Alan massaging sun lotion into her skin. But Annie was staring at the pale marks that covered Jane's back, bottom and thighs. Mark grabbed Annie's hand as her mouth opened, looking into her horror-wide eyes, he shook his head. She understood, but still gawked in shock at Jane's marked body.

"Let's walk over to the rocks," he said, angling his head a little way down the beach.

Annie walked in silence, but he could feel the indignant questions bubbling up inside her. She was so wonderfully easy to read. "It was John," he said. When he judged they were out of earshot. She looked more, not less, shocked. She had to learn. "He likes to use a cane. It leaves marks like that."

That left her speechless for all of fifteen seconds. "Why on earth did Jane let him do that?"

"She agreed to submit." He let that sink in before continuing. "She could have refused."

"But to make marks..."

He reached over and took her hand, meshing his fingers with hers. "Annie, most beatings leave marks. When I hit my hand on your bottom, it makes a red hand print. The suede pussy whip I use leaves narrow red trails. Next time. I'll leave you unblindfolded so you can see."

She made no argument about 'next time'. "But they fade...what Jane has are bruises."

"And bruises fade." They'd reached the rocks. Mark sat down, stretching out his legs, and pulled Annie beside him. "If that first evening we met I'd said. 'Get to know me, and I'll tie you up and fuck you, use a butt plug on you, fuck you in duo with a friend, beat you with your own monogrammed whip, and make you walk naked in front of my friends.' What would you have done?"

She let out a tight, tension-wrought laugh. "I'd have run a mile."

"You're not running now." He let that sink in. "I don't think you'd have run then. You'd have come to me, scared and apprehensive as you are now, but you'd have come, because you're

submissive, Annie and I'm what you need."

"What makes you so sure?"

"I'm dominant."

"If that's so." She looked towards him, raising one eyebrow. "Why didn't you approach me that way, instead of asking me if I'd join you and Pip for coffee?"

"I wasn't sure you truly were submissive...then. It took a while to be sure. I didn't know for certain until the day you let me spank you."

She mulled over that in silence, while he watched the frown gather between her eyes. "Sometimes I get so confused."

"Don't we all? You think I don't wonder why I need to tie you up and watch you struggle, or why I get such a charge seeing Alan fucking your mouth? We all question. Ask too much you'd go round the twist. Better to accept and enjoy." He pulled her in front of him, so she sat on the rock below, and enclosed her in between his thighs. "Doesn't this feel right?" He gently ruffled her hair.

"Yes," she replied exhaling as she spoke, and rested her cheek against the inside of his leg. "Yes."

Her warmth and acceptance went straight to his groin, but it could keep, they had plenty to time. Time to watch the tide come in. Something she seemed quite content to do. "Any more questions?" he asked a little while later.

"Who is John?"

So, she couldn't forget John, no matter how she tried. Good. Let her think about him. It would make it easier when the time came to send her to him. "An old friend of my family. He owns the house we're renting, It's too big for him so he lives in a cottage along the coast. He's also the dominant who trained me." That she hadn't expected, not by the way she turned and stared up at him. Mark stroked her cheek with his finger, her skin was getting wind burnt. He'd take her back inside soon. "Treasure, I wasn't born knowing. I learned about this life, just as you are. And I started as John's submissive. He's a strong dominant. He trained me, as I'm training you."

Two days after their conversation on the rocks, Annie was on her way to her first play party, to join in. Her mouth went dry remembering the equipment she'd watched Tom and that other submissives assemble in Emma and Alistair's house. All the reassurances from Mark, and the others, couldn't ease the ever tightening knot in her stomach. And all her anxiety couldn't shake her resolve to obey Mark.

"Remember your safe word," Mark said. "Never hesitate to use it. And we'll drive on our own in case you need to leave early."

Now she half wished for the others' company as they drove through the evening towards... whatever Mark chose.

She almost chickened out when she saw the cars parked in front of the large house on the edge of the town. A house full of strangers, who'd soon see her naked. Could she do this? At least here she wouldn't meet parents from school like she had at Alistair's. Annie reached out a shaky hand to Mark as he set the car in park and pulled up the brake.

He squeezed her fingers, lifting her hand to kiss her white knuckles. "Annie, you'll amaze yourself. Just you wait and see."

The others awaited them, and they all walked up the graveled drive in a crowd, Annie taking courage from their company. She needed it when the front door opened, and John stood in the hallway. All Annie could think of were the marks on Jane, which still remained as faint gray lines after three days. No one else had any reservations. The men all shook hands, Emma and Jane hugged him. Annie swallowed twice and willed herself not to shudder.

"Annie, of course I remember you from the pub the other night. Welcome." His eyes were dark and compelling, his smile genuine and there was no mistaking the strength in his handclasp or the tremor that chilled her spine as he looked her up and down. How could Jane have let this man dominate her?

"Come on," Alan said, "Drinks are in the next room."

It could have been any ordinary neighborhood cocktail party — almost. There were just a few too many people in leather or latex to pass in the stockbroker belt. Annie would have felt better with a couple of drinks inside her but Mark insisted she have only one glass of wine. "You will need all your wits about you," he said. She also noticed he only drank ginger beer. For the same reason, she hoped.

An air of anticipation hung over the two half filled rooms. Certain pieces of equipment tucked in corners or against the wall, left Annie only too aware that soon the evening would take a new twist. She couldn't have said at what point the crowd started thinning but it did. She noticed the first couple return, the woman rather magnificent in red leather, and her naked companion following on a red leather leash and a matching harness around his cock and balls.

Annie reminded herself not to stare. But when she looked away, as unobtrusively as she could, it was to see another couple. This time the woman was naked, her body adorned with tattoos. Annie inhaled, what next?

"Time I got you ready, I think, Annie," Mark said.

She had no energy to argue even if she'd want to.

They weren't the first people to use the small room for disrobing. Clothes hung over the back of a chair and shoes peeked from under the bed. Annie kicked hers off beside them and Mark took her dress and hung it in the wardrobe. Annie waited in the middle of the room, her toes curling and uncurling against the faded gray carpet. Chintz curtains billowed inwards in the night breeze, and from downstairs came the sounds of music and people and soon...

"Okay?" Mark asked. Annie nodded, her throat too tight to speak. "Put these on."

The package he handed her contained fine denier black stockings, the holdup sort. She pulled them on, slowly, taking care not to snag them or poke her finger through the fine nylon, or was it silk? They were warm and smooth against her skin and felt softer than her usual tights. They might feel comfortable but a glance in the mirror at the black sheen on her legs, and the wide lace circling her thighs had her decidedly uncomfortable. The darkness on her legs emphasized her naked pussy. Lewd wasn't the word! Did Mark really expect her to walk out looking like this?

"Beautiful, but not yet perfect," he said. "Come over here." He had a pair of black high-heeled shoes in his hand.

Mark held each one and slipped it on her foot as she raised her leg. Easing each shoe on, he ran his hands up her calves, massaging the muscles and smoothing his fingers over the fine mesh of her stockings. "Comfortable?" he asked.

Annie looked down at her feet. She'd half expected five-inch heels like in the fetish magazines she'd looked over the past week. Instead, she wore patent leather sling backs, with little petersham bows and inch and a half heels. She had a pair almost the same she'd bought last year for a cousin's wedding. "Yes, at least the shoes are."

"You're not yet?" he kissed her. "Let me do your hair." Sitting on the straight-backed chair, Annie watched as Mark fluffed her short curls out around her face. "Almost ready," he said, putting the brush down. "Just a couple more things." Right now she wouldn't mind it there were a hundred. He took out her earrings, replacing them with diamond studs that were so big, they couldn't be real, but they reflected the lamplight as if they were.

She raised a finger to her right ear, watching herself in the mirror. "Mark are they...?"

"They are as real as you are, Annie."

She tried, but failed, to hold back a shiver. Could she really do this? Mark gently lowered her arms, putting both her hands on her thighs. "Remember to keep your legs open," he whispered.

He tugged on her nipple so they stood proud and hard, and carefully hung her gold nipple chain between them. The loops circling her nipples felt cold at first, but soon warmed. She took a deep breath. The chain rocked gently, tugging her breasts. The last thing Mark produced, was a narrow band of black ribbon, which he tied around her neck. "You're not ready for a collar yet," he said, adjusting the bow until it satisfied him, "but this will mark you as mine."

At Marks' signal, she stood up, surprised her legs actually held her. She took two steps across the carpet following him to the door but caught a glimpse of herself full length in the mirror.

Brazen! Exposed! Weren't enough to describe how she looked, her breasts and nipples leading the way, her legs long and shimmering in black silk, and the denuded pussy as exposed as a vulnerable, white triangle of flesh. Something snarled up inside her and her legs no longer moved. "I can't do it, Mark! I can't go out there!"

One stride brought him just inches from her. "You can, Annie and you will."

She shook her head. "I'm sorry to let you down."

"You're not going to let me down."

"I can't go out there looking like this!" She was half afraid she was shrieking.

"Why not?"

She looked down at the swinging chain and her shaven body. "Mark!" she pleaded, "There are so many people out there." Up here it sounded as if a mob had assembled below.

He took her face in his hands, tilting her up to meet his eyes. His blue eyes, now seeming cold as ice. She couldn't hold back a shudder. What had she got herself into? "Don't you trust me to take care of you?" His quiet question stilled her racing thoughts. She'd expected persuasion, maybe an order to walk out the door but...there was only one answer and they both knew it. She nodded. "Speak to me, Annie!"

"I trust you." Her heart shimmied as she spoke and a strange serenity washed over her.

"Why hesitate then?" Mark held out his hand and Annie followed him out onto the landing.

If she'd expected everyone to stop and stare, she'd have been sorely disappointed. As it was, she almost laughed with relief. Not a soul stopped what they were doing to cast as much as a glance at Annie Cavendish. Considering what some of the others were and were not wearing, her outfit was downright sedate. She'd never in her life seen so much leather, latex, and the past few days notwithstanding, bare skin.

Mark took her by the hand and led her through the open double doors into what had once been a sitting room but now was set up as a dungeon. Annie just had time to glimpse a naked man - not Tom, she'd recognize his bare bum anywhere - bent over the back of a sofa while a leather clad woman laid into him with a much larger version of the pussy whip Mark had, thank goodness, left behind in their house. A slim, red-haired woman hung by her wrists from a chain in the middle of the room while another woman rubbed her naked body with oil. That brought back memories. But in the privacy of the bedroom with Mark was one thing, here in front of a crowd, and an interested crowd at that, was quite another.

Mark tugged her arm and pulled her to the side of the room, taking a seat, he signaled her to sit on the floor. Nestled between his parted legs, she felt safe and protected. She leaned her head back against the warm muscle of his thigh and watched the closest scene unfold.

A short, stocky man with tattoos across his back was wrapping a tall woman in rope. Annie

remembered watching Claudine hog-tie Tom, but this man was skilled as a virtuoso. The rope crossed the woman's breasts in a double figure eight. They were large and had dark, almost brown, nipples that stood hard and tight against the constraint of the ropes. Annie watched, fascinated as the man methodically knotted to form a mesh of rope diamonds down her body. The rope was tight enough to press into her flesh, but she appeared to feel no pain, standing contentedly as her partner knotted his way to her pussy. After a little hesitation, he knotted all the strands together, then passed the ropes right between her pussy lips. She gasped as he tugged the rope up behind, and Annie saw the carefully tied knot press right on the woman's clit. Annie shifted her own hips, imagining the pressure of the rope on her most sensitive place and seeing the sweat bead on the woman's face as her tormentor tugged the ropes tight and proceeded to knot all the ropes together across her back.

Annie was so engrossed, she failed to notice John take the seat beside Mark until he asked, "Mind if I take a good look at her?"

"Go ahead."

Annie barely had time to hear, much less process that, before John reached his arm forward and his finger and thumb closed on her chin, turning her face until he stared down at her. His eyes were dark heat and calculating cold at the same time. It took all she had not to pull away or whimper under his gaze. She waited, as motionless as she could, while her heart raced and she felt her breasts rising and falling against the back of his arm.

John said nothing, just traced the outlines of her face with his free hand and slowly stroked her right breast. She shivered but managed to keep still and silent as, she knew, Mark expected. A reluctant, wry smile twisted one side of John's mouth as he nodded, as if in acknowledgement of her effort, and let go of her chin before leaning back in his seat.

"How's she doing?" he asked. "She seems to be learning."

"Annie's very willing," Mark replied, "I'm pleased with her training." Mark's hand on her shoulder should have reassured. It didn't, it seemed to underscore the fact they were talking over her head as if she didn't exist.

"How does she accept discipline?"

"I've only had to punish her twice. Both times for disobedience." Mark paused to slide a finger up the side of her neck. "I think she's learned."

"I think you're too easy on her!"

"Doubt she'd agree!" Mark half chuckled as his hand closed on her shoulder.

"She's submissive. She's not here to agree. She's here to accept."

Annie couldn't hold back a shiver at John's tone. And poor Jane had spent an evening and a night with this man.

"The more independent, and strong-willed the submissive, the more sweet the gift of surrender," Mark replied. Was that what he cherished? Her surrender? She half burst holding back her questions, but vowed to do nothing to disappoint Mark, not in front of this man.

"Let's see then." John stood up. "The hook by the front door is free, let's display her."

Before Annie had time to imagine what 'display' meant, Mark helped her to her feet. He turned her to face him. "I need you to trust me, Annie. Trust me and obey me implicitly. Promise?"

Annie nodded. "I promise," she whispered, her voice hoarse with uncertainty, "Mark..." she began, but he stopped her by blocking her words with his mouth. He kissed her slowly and particularly thoroughly, and as he drew his lips off hers, whispered.

"Follow me and do whatever I tell you."

Without another word he walked out the room.

Annie followed, barely noticing the woman in the rope dress was now trussed as securely as a Christmas turkey, and that man once bent over the sofa was now standing painfully and moving away on his mistress's arm as another couple took their place. Annie half glimpsed Jane through the crowd beyond the open dining room door, but turning away hurried to keep up the Mark...and John.

They were standing below a large, brass hook. It was too high for hanging coats or bags, and unnecessarily heavy for pictures. But it was the double chain hanging from it, that took Annie's attention, that and the sheepskin lined leather manacles in John's hand.

Every instinct she possessed screamed at her to walk away, to hide, grab her clothes and flee. But her heart told her Mark was on trial every bit as much as she. She couldn't let him down. She took a slow, scared-witless-breath and took two steps towards him, trying to ignore the nervous sweat beading on her upper lip. He smiled. His eyes lighting up like violet blue jewels and the terror in her mind eased. She could do whatever he wanted. She would do whatever he asked. She wanted nothing more than to please him.

John buckled the cuffs tightly around her wrists. They weren't uncomfortable...yet, but she wondered how they'd feel after time.

"I'm going to blindfold you, Annie," Mark said. Her heart took a downward jump. Surely not?

"You'll find it, easier," he went on, "If you don't have to meet everyone's eyes." That was probably true but his words weren't exactly comforting.

John clipped the end of the chain to the two D rings on her cuffs and lead her towards the wall. Mark fixed a silk lined leather blindfold over her eyes. Her breath caught as her hands were lifted above her head. A clink of metal and she was hoisted upright. Her arms weren't stretched to the limit. She appreciated this concession as Mark turned and positioned her. She had a lot of slack in her arms and could stretch and ease them when the stiffness grew uncomfortable. But stiffness seemed the least of her anxieties, being displayed for everyone's titillation was terrifying. Her feet were flat on the floor. She wasn't suspended like the woman she'd seen earlier. She could do this. She hoped.

She heard John step down from the chair he'd used to reach the hook. "She seems set," he said. "Let's see if she can last."

"She will," Mark replied and Annie echoed the sentiment in her heart. She would.

"I'll stay beside you, Annie," he said, popping a soft kiss on her shoulder. "People will look and admire you, comment I don't doubt, but no one will touch. I'll stay and see to that."

She had to be thankful for that mercy!

It was about all she was thankful for. What followed was the longest hour of her life.

Footsteps crossed the wooden floor. "Nice tits!" An appreciative male voice said.

"Mmm," another said, "I've seen better, but that shaved pussy, bet that's fun to eat."

"Hot little bitch, do you think..." and it went on.

Mark was right, not seeing the leers and looks did help. It would have been heaps easier if she wore earplugs. She went from embarrassed, to ashamed, to wanting the earth to open and swallow her, as the comments increased. The appreciative or critical ones were bad enough but the lewd or derogatory were downright mortifying. Whoever said words couldn't hurt had never stood naked and helpless before strangers.

People wandered to and fro. In the darkness, she listened intently for footsteps across the floor and started bracing herself for comments. A few people just passed. Some stopped and talked to Mark, others spoke about her to their companions or the air around them for all she knew, but other than Mark's occasionally asking her if she was all right, not one person said a word to her. They talked about her, over her and at her, but never to her. It was as if she were

invisible and exposed, noticed and ignored, all at the same time.

Mark wanted this. It seemed to matter so much. She'd comply, but she felt safer in the quiet and darkness within her mind. Lost behind her blindfold, Annie let her mind wander. She left her body, the room and the crowd on another plane and drifted into a stranger nether world where strange lights and flashes lit the darkness with beams of sound. She was floating upwards, resting on the currents of air that carried her up towards the light. She felt warm and relaxed and oddly energized. Mark was close in the strange pool of comfort in which she floated...She felt him near, sensed his breathing in sync with hers, then opened her eyes, and blinked. She still wore the blindfold, but her arms were by her side, and instead of standing she was lying on something warm...and Mark was...

"I'm here, Annie. You're okay."

She was more than okay. She felt wonderful! "Mark?" Her voice sounded thick, as if emerging from a fog. It was an effort to turn her head towards his voice. Her neck felt heavy and her mind seemed loose and light as if thoughts floated freely but rarely connected.

Mark's hand clasped hers. "You're all right, Annie, I'm taking the blindfold off." She blinked at the sudden return of sight, she was still in the hall but lying on a Victorian style chaise lounge she'd half noticed earlier. Around her, activity and play continued. Another victim hung from the chain in the corner, and Annie heard sounds of a whipping somewhere behind her. But all that seemed as if at a distance.

Mark was close, his eyes dark and a worried crease crinkling his forehead. "I'm okay, honestly, Mark," she said and was rewarded with a smile.

"Here, drink this." That was John! Annie almost gasped in surprise, but gladly drank the glass of water he offered her as Mark supported her shoulders.

She drained the glass while John tilted it to her lips. How had she got so thirsty? More to the point, how had she ended up reclining here like a Victorian heroine? She drank half of the second glass John offered, then leaned back against Mark. His bulk and presence seemed to bolster up her shifting mind.

"You were right," John said, more to Mark than her, "She is something. Went into orbit with bondage alone. This one will definitely be worthwhile." And with those odd parting words, he stood up and walked away.

The next few minutes went back into fog. Tom on one side and Mark on the other, she walked upstairs and with a little help from both of them, she put back on her dress and the sandals she wore to come and agreed with Mark, it was time to go home.

"Did I faint or something, back there?" Annie asked as they drove back through country roads dark with overhanging branches.

"It was or something," Mark replied, "you went into orbit, sometimes called flying. it's the ultimate submissive state." While she grappled with the implications behind that, he went on, "You surprised all of us. It usually takes an intense scene, with both bondage and beating to reach that point. Some submissive never do. You slid into it with ease, and stayed for over an hour."

An hour! She'd imagined she'd been out for a few minutes. "What exactly does it mean?"

He glanced from the wheel and smiled. "It means, Annie, that I have found a born submissive." He gave a quick glance at the road before turning back to her. "What do you think? Are you ready to cast aside your inhibitions and admit what I give you is what you really want in your heart?"

Her silence lasted several bends and a pause at a country cross road. She had to answer but her mind fought with her instincts. She was on a dark threshold. She could either draw back into the safe and known and leave Mark and his lifestyle behind, or go forward with him, into the

unknown. That prospect sent cold prickles rising in her soul, but the idea of walking away from Mark and his own special brand of sensuality was unthinkable.

“I want you, Mark, and everything you have to offer.”

After his delighted chuckle faded he drove faster, zipping through the dark lanes like a man possessed. They were the first back, and he all but tore her clothes off in the empty hall, and fucked her with a wild and driving passion on the carpeted floor. She came again and again until they both collapsed in a sweaty heap on the floor. They finally made it upstairs and into bed.

“You’re mine, Annie. Don’t ever forget it,” Mark whispered as she drifted into sleep. His words still echoed in her mind when she woke the next morning.

Chapter Thirteen

It was magnificent morning. The windows and doors stood open, the sun leaving warm patches on the quarry tile floor. Everyone had awakened late and was enjoying a lazy morning. Tom and Alan had carried the kitchen table outside and they all sat around it, reading papers and talking over the night before. Annie was outright relieved it was her and Mark's turn to make breakfast. After putting croissant and brioche in the oven to defrost, she made coffee in the large press pot. She missed her automatic machine, and that wasn't the only reason she wanted to get home. She wanted Mark to herself. Communal life and sharing him and her body with the others just wasn't the same.

Jane and Claudine had let her know she'd established a reputation for herself last night. Nutty really, when she hadn't actually done anything—but let go totally to Mark and his wishes. Submit, was the word he used.

"Dreaming?" Mark pulled her back to reality, and the summer morning.

"Sort of." She smiled, remembering his mouth on her pussy not an hour ago. As a wake up it had been spectacular, but it she was still wet and aroused. "Coffee's ready."

Mark carried it out, along with a tray of mugs, and left her to bring out the jam and butter. She stacked the lot on another tray. Marmalade, lemon curd, Marmite, which Tom seem to live on, homemade blackberry jelly someone bought in the village the other day, and Mark's favorite, cherry jam. It was an expensive, French brand. The rounded, squat jar filled with ruby bright jam, looked almost voluptuous beside the mundane lemon curd and marmalade. Trust Mark to choose something different...like her? That thought grabbed her like a clutch to her heart. "What's happening in there?" Alistair called, and Annie picked up the metal tray.

She should have taken a hint from the pile of condoms by the sugar bowl. She didn't. Surprised to find she was ravenously hungry, she gave all her attention to food and completely missed the glances passing between the four men. She'd made the decision not to have a third brioche, and was sipping the wonderful, rich coffee that had been Claudine's contribution to the communal pantry.

Annie had just made a mental note to ask where she bought it, when Mark asked. "Annie, be a love and bring me the cherry jam." She reached for it to pass to Alan and down to Mark, when he said, "No, bring it yourself."

She looked down the table, where Mark sat between Claudine and Alistair. "Come on." He motioned with little movement of his eyes and head and she picked up the jam.

Everyone stopped chewing and drinking. Instinctively, Annie knew this was important to Mark, but why? Handing over a jar of jam was hardly a great act of submission. But one look at the gleam in Mark's eyes was enough to know he wanted more than a couple of spoonfuls of jam. He pushed his chair away from the table, as she stood in front to him, the jar still in her hand, he raised his hands to her shoulders and his gentle downward pressure sent her mind almost crackling as she knelt between his parted thighs.

Surely he didn't expect? Not right here? "Unzip me," he said as he took the jar from her hand.

The stone patio was hard and warm on her knees, but she barely noticed. She heard a chair scrape a sudden intake of breath from someone behind her, and the sound of a knife against a plate. They were all watching! Close to lightheaded, she reached for the tag on Mark's zip. His cock was hard and ready. She took a deep breath and vowed she wouldn't hesitate. She remembered what happened to Jane.

"Put it on." She stared a second or two at the foil packet in his hand and without another thought took it, ripped the packet open, and smoothed the condom over his erect cock.

Immediately bending to take him in her mouth, he stopped her with a hand on her head. "First," he said and as she looked up in his violet eyes she saw a look she knew well, "I want you to cover me with jam. All over and then lick me off." He held the open jar in his left hand. "And I expect to come but not before you've cleaned off every trace of jam."

Was he going to deliberately hold back like Alan? No point in worrying. She felt an unexpected, and almost scary, calm as she dipped her fingers into the jam. Mark's cock hardened even more as her fingers spread Morello cherry conserve up and down his shaft. When she'd effectively used up half the jar, and drooped a fair bit on the stone by her feet, Mark took each finger in his mouth and with the slowest, most tantalizing strokes of his tongue licked them clean. She was hot before she dipped her head to his cock and as she licked from the tip of his cock down to the root, she could smell his arousal, over the aroma of imported cherry jam...

"You may not come," Mark said. "This is for me, Annie. Not you."

She decided to be glad. She wasn't quite ready to climax in front of an audience. Still, this was Mark's cock and she loved to taste him, and she didn't mind cherry jam in the least. She continued to lap the jam off him, between taking him in her mouth and working his cock with her lips and tongue.

It took longer than she'd ever imagined. She was slick with sweat from the sun and exertion and damp between her legs with arousal, before Mark grabbed her head with both hands and worked her mouth up and down until he came with a long drawn-out groan.

She sat back on her heels, relieved it was over and pleased she'd done exactly as he'd ordered. In a few minutes she could help clear away the breakfast things, and since he smiled down at her with such obvious enjoyment, surely they'd go upstairs for a hot and much needed fuck.

"Perfect," Mark said. "You are too wonderful to keep to myself. Go to Alan now, and take the marmalade with you."

Her shocked gasp was out, before she had time to lift her head and see the purpose and determination in every muscle in Mark's face. In the space of a couple of breaths, her shock eased to simple acceptance. She'd done this before. Twice. She could do it again. If there were spectators each time, so be it. Not quite understanding herself, but hell bent on not thinking about it, Annie nodded her agreement and stood.

As she walked round the table to Alan at the far end, she reached between Claudine and Emma and picked up the marmalade and a condom. She could, and would do this. If it was a test, she'd pass.

She got wetter and hotter by the minute as she worked her tongue on Alan's cock. It didn't take long, within minutes Alan grasped the back of her head, pumping hard until he came. But as he pulled away giving her a chance to ease her jaw and fill her lungs with air, Annie knew it wasn't over. She felt no shock now when Mark said, "Alistair prefers lemon curd."

She almost giggled but managed to hold it in. Alistair wouldn't take to kindly giggles over his sacred equipment and it was rather impressive. She couldn't help staring, the condom clenched in her fingers. Alistair was magnificent, beautifully rosy at the smooth engorged tip, and wide and firm. Heck, just getting all of him in her mouth would take some doing. Thank heavens he wasn't as big as Tom. Tom's massive cock had fascinated her for days...but Alistair's was amazing. Smooth firm, and the color of butterscotch, proving once and for all, his golden skin was his own, not a tan.

"Annie, quit ogling him and get that condom on before I come over and do it for you!"

As fast as her trembling fingers allowed she sheathed Alistair. He didn't look any less impressive encased in pale rubber. Reaching for the lemon curd, Emma helpfully held out to her, Annie set to work on Alistair. By the time he came, jerking his hips into her face, tears streamed down her cheeks as she gagged, his cock battering the back of her throat. As Alistair pulled out,

she bent over, gasping for air.

She was so hot she was shaking. Heck, she half expected to see a damp patch on the stone.

"You're damn right, Mark. You've got a good cock sucker here," Alistair said Annie knelt upright, hoping she could stand without her knees shaking.

Alistair's, casual, almost insulting, words slashed through her mind. Why did Mark expect this? She sniffed back her tears, as her breath settled to a normal rhythm and told herself it was over—at last. She waited on sore knees for Alistair or Mark, or anyone, to tell her to rise.

Instead, Claudine pushed back her chair, scraping it against the stone patio. "Might as well let her have a go at Tom. He's more than ready for a nice cocksuck."

Coming from Claudine it seemed ten times more insulting than from one of the men. She had to know how Annie's jaws ached. Did she really expect...? Would Mark...?

"Why not?"

Because her knees hurt, her mouth was bruised, her whole body felt used, and her mind recoiled the prospect of more public shame. Annie bit her lip to keep back the words she wanted to hurl at Mark and moved on her knees to Tom.

He had at least the kindness to toss a cushion on the floor between his spread legs. It would spare her knees a little, but nothing could make taking his massive cock in her sore mouth anything but torture. She half expected regular condoms wouldn't fit him. But fit they did, though it took both hands to roll the latex over his incredible penis. In a different situation she'd be awed at holding such a magnificent cock in her hands. Now, she eyed it with something near horror. Inside her now aching cunt he'd feel marvelous but between tired lips...she gave a little shudder.

"Come on Annie, don't quit on me now!" Mark said from down the table. "Okay Tom, want marmalade or lemon curd? Or the last bit of cherry jam?"

Annie closed her eyes to stem back the tears that threatened to come in a torrent. She would not cry. Not show weakness. She'd show the lot of them! If they thought this would break her, they were damn wrong! She spread the lemon curd Tom wanted up and down his eleven-inch shaft and thanked every higher power he hadn't asked for Marmite.

It was every bit as bad as she'd feared. Just licking up and down the side of his cock left her tongue tired. Taking his tip in her mouth stretched her now tender lips to the point of hurting and as for taking him in her mouth, well she just couldn't! She manfully swallowed a good eight inches without gagging, and wanted to thank him on the spot when he stroked in and out with slow controlled movements that let her breath though her nose each time he withdrew. But any attempt at speech would be effectively muffled by the vast engorged muscle that seemed to reach down to her tonsils.

Slowly the shame and body aches receded, and a wild rush of arousal caught her as if in a raging current. She forced her mouth to take more and more of Tom, oblivious to her own gasps for breath. Need and desire carried her, her own climax was close, building to a wild release as she felt Tom's thighs stiffen and jerk against her face.

"That's enough, boy!"

Tom was pulled out of her with a rough jerk and now she was shaking in earnest, her clit throbbing with pent-up need. Why had they done this? She was too tired, worn, and aroused to care. She just wanted Mark to take her upstairs and bring her painfully aroused body to climax.

"Get up, Annie," Claudine spoke kindly, as she ran a soft hand over Annie's sweat slickened face. "There are no more cocks left for you to suck this morning."

Annie stood, glad of Claudine's helping hand and then turned to Mark. He was beaming.

"Magnificent! I had every confidence in you." She wished she had as much confidence that

he'd give her what she needed. It hurt just to keep her hips still and her cunt had a pulse of it's own, ten times faster than her still racing heart.

"Mark..." she began.

"I know," he said, his eyes sparking across at her. She smiled, very much aware of her breast heaving with her racing breathing. "Yes, Annie, We've been here half the morning and you need to get the washing up done. We won't keep you any longer. Come down to the beach when you're finished."

And with that, the whole damn lot of them scraped chairs back and strolled across the soft summer grass to the cliffs.

It took all Annie possessed not to smash every last saucer and cream jug on the stone patio, but in the one almost calm corner of her brain, she knew the inevitable repercussions wouldn't be worth a few minutes of sheer destructive joy.

She piled tray after tray with the used dishes, almost empty jam jars, and the unused condoms. The table and chairs put straight and ready for lunch, Annie then tackled the dishes. It wasn't that bad, they did have a dishwasher but she was worn, confused, still smarting from the humiliation, and if possible, hornier than ever. Would anyone notice if she slipped upstairs and indulged in a little self-service sex? It wasn't what she really wanted but it might keep her sane until Mark deigned to oblige her.

Annie shut the dishwasher door and set it going, wiped down the counter tops, and then slipped a finger between her pussy lips. She almost came on contact! Talk about needy! They had done a number on her and left her to hang. She'd take her chance while everyone was out.

She ran her fingers over her naked pussy, She was so wet her fingers almost squelched in her juices. She would darn well make this good. Slow tremors of sweetness mounted as she stroked herself. Annie shut her eyes to focus every bit of effort on her own coming pleasure. Her mind was so intent on her rising need, it took a few moments to realize the door had opened.

Tom stood in the doorway. "Boss sent me back for some suntan stuff," he said crossing the kitchen before stopping mid-stride just an arm's length from Annie. His eyebrows shot up as he spied her hand still cupping her mound. "Annie!" He shook his head. "Mark will flay you if he catches you!"

That did it!

"Too fucking bad! I'm hot and horny and need a good frigging."

"Go easy, Mark will take care of you in his own good time." That was nowhere near good enough. As she stood there, glaring at Tom, after all, he was as responsible for her current state as anyone, she saw the condoms sitting by the bread bin. She grabbed one. "Okay, big boy. You got me like this. Put this on and give me what I need!"

It was a toss up which of them was the most stunned. Tom spoke first, "Annie, you don't realize what you're saying."

"Oh yes I do!" She shoved the foil packet in his hand. "You put it on this time. I did last time."

"Annie, we'll both get flayed."

"How the hell will anyone know? They're all sunning themselves and you owe me!" An almost imperceptible flicker of hesitation in his eyes spurred her on. "Come on, Tom, you're as needy as I am."

That he couldn't deny. He'd got even bigger in the last few seconds and now stood magnificently to attention. She had in front of her eyes, what half the female population of the country dreamed about and it was going to be hers. "Annie..." he began again. For an actor he certainly had a hard time with words.

"Tom! I need you!" With that, she grabbed him by the arm and pulled him into the pantry.

With the door closed, they stood facing each other in the dim light. "Sure about this?" he asked.

"You're damn right I am!" Without giving him another moment to think about it, she stood on tiptoe and smashed her open mouth on his.

He didn't hesitate, and darn, the man could kiss! His mouth opened under hers, almost sucking her tongue against his, and then his lips and tongue worked until she heard herself whimpering and groaning and her hips bucked against his hot and hard erection. They kissed for a minute, maybe thirty, she had no thought in her mind but the need to climax with his marvelous cock inside her.

"Please, Tom..." she whispered against his mouth.

"Okay, Annie. Hell you are some kisser!"

Moments later, he had the condom on and with a quick and sure movement, cupped his hands on her arse and hoisted her up. She gasped as her feet left the floor and all but screamed as he impaled her with his cock.

This was every bit as wonderful as she imagined. He filled stretched and penetrated her until she whimpered with pleasure and burning need. Slowly he stroked in and out, his hands cupping her butt cheeks as she wrapped her legs around his waist. She tilted her hips forward just a little, so his wonderful cock rubbed along her clit each time he pumped. It was too incredible, too fantastic, too hot to stand, and with a great shudder and shriek, she came, shaking all over and throbbing around him.

Her held her up still, but he was not yet finished, He continued driving in and out of her, like a wild rutting animal, while she whimpered as the great waves of her climax eased and she closed her eyes to better feel the last fabulous ripple of pleasure. His body stiffened with his approaching climax, she paused, poised to take everything from him, and sagged against him as he drove into her and came.

They were both sweaty, worn and sated when Tom slowly slid her down his damp body until her feet touch the floor. She opened her eyes to smile up at him,

The panty door was wide open and light streamed in.

"How sweet," Claudine said, her voice suggesting anything but sweetness.

Mark said nothing.

Tom fell to his knees, his head on the ground at his mistress's feet. "Forgive me, Boss," he said, "Forgive me, I humbly apologize. Punish me, I deserve it!"

"Wouldn't argue with that, Tom," Claudine said, a little smile curving her mouth.

Something snapped inside Annie's brain. This was all set up! Planned from the very beginning! Another of Mark's 'games' and she was the ball to be tossed around. Her chest heaving with anger, she glared at Mark. What reduced ten-year-olds to obedience, bounced right off Mark Hanson.

"Well, Annie." His face was impassive as he watched her. "What do you have to say for yourself?"

"Me?" Indignation had her ignoring every mite of his body language. "You interrupted us, maybe you should apologize."

A dark flicker of anger crossed his beautiful eye, but it faded and they turned stony still. "Get on your knees," he said, "At least Tom has the decency to admit his fault."

"What fault?" She was past caring now, "What exactly have we supposedly done wrong?"

She'd gone too far. She almost jumped back as Mark stepped in and grabbed her chin, yanking her face up. "You want to push me, Annie? Let's get this straight. You're mine. I own

you. You will not fuck, kiss, suck, look at or even fantasize about another man unless I give the word. Understand."

"Yes." It was hard to speak with his hand clamped on her jaw, but she managed.

"Good, I'm glad we sorted that out. Now get on your knees."

"Mark..." she began but her voice faded in horror as she watched him unbuckle his smooth leather belt.

"Annie, why did you have to push the issue. You knew what I'd do if you disobeyed me again."

She still wasn't ready to submit. "You've only just set out those rules. You're going to blame me for something you never explained properly."

A little muffled gasp came from Tom's prostrate body.

Mark just looked. "I told you twice to kneel." He slid the belt from its looks. "If I have to make it three times, I'll double what you're now getting."

It was then she realized her anger had carried her too far.

She knelt, and copying Tom put her head to the ground. She was trying to get her brain round an apology when Mark's cold determined voice cut into her scrambled thoughts. "At last. Now I don't want a single word from you, Do you understand?" She understood, that she'd dug herself in deep with her stupid temper. "I asked if you understood."

Mark wanted an answer and had forbidden her to speak? How...? She lifted her head a few inches off the floor and nodded, hoping he could see and praying she hadn't raised too high

"Good, Annie. I think we're getting somewhere at last." She shuddered as something trailed like a cold snake up her back from the base of her spine to between her shoulder blades. Three times it slithered up, up like growing fear and then it stopped. She stayed curled in a humble ball, shivering with worry. "Yes, much better," Mark said. "Now listen. I'll say this once and you will obey me. Understand?"

Again she nodded her eyes glimpsing his tanned feet in his leather sandals and thanking heaven he wasn't beating her with one of those.

"Go upstairs and take a shower, I want all evidence of any other man off you, before I beat obedience into you."

She managed to stand without tripping or falling. But almost fell when she glimpsed beyond Mark and Claudine and the open pantry door into the sun filled kitchen. The others were all standing here, every single one, and they'd witnessed everything.

Choking back a sob, Annie fled upstairs.

Eyes misting and stinging with tears, she turned on the shower, and as she stepped under the warm spray, let her tears roll and her sobs burst out. How could she? Why on Earth had she acted so? She'd lost every bit of sanity in a wave of temper and brother, had she now fucked up! She shuddered at her choice of words.

Why on Earth? She'd all but dragged Tom Baldwin into a pantry and demanded he ease her itch. Tom Baldwin! The heart throb of millions and she'd used him and got him into this mess into the bargain. How could she have? Heaven help her! She still only half believed what she'd done. And as for the awful sequel where she'd yelled and Mark. She must have lost control of her brain along with her hormones and now had to pay.

A slow shudder racked her as she thought of the smooth leather belt dangling in Mark's hand. She was in for it! Maybe she'd only half believed his warning a few days earlier. Maybe she'd been too wound up to think straight. She didn't want to think about how that narrow, smooth leather would feel landing on her flesh. It couldn't do anything but hurt. Horribly. Could she stand it? What choice did she have? The only way to avoid her coming punishment would be

to put on her clothes and walk out the front door...and never see Mark again.

She thought back on tales the older teachers told about corporal punishment in school. Would this be any worse than what countless children once took as a fact of school life? She was about to find out. No point in dragging this along, the sooner she was ready, the sooner it would be over. The warm water poured over her face, washing away the last of her tears. She was calmer now, and almost...

"Are you going to take all day?" Mark stood inches away, the shower curtain gathered up in one hand and his belt in the other.

"No," Annie replied, as she turned off the shower taps. She looked up into his eyes, amazed at the sudden calm that seemed to drop on her like a shroud. "I'm ready."

He wrapped her in a bath towel and dried her as tenderly as if preparing to make love to her, not lay into her with cold leather. "Frightened, Annie?" he asked.

"Yes." No point in lying. She was terrified.

He dropped a soft kiss on her forehead. "It will be hard for you, but you made it necessary. I warned you, but you didn't listen. I even gave you a second chance, and you refused. What choice did you leave me?" He towed her hair dry with gentle rubs then brushed her hair off her forehead and kissed it. "Let's get this over with shall we, Annie?"

Annie nodded and asked what she just had to know, "What's happening to Tom? Is Claudine punishing him?"

Mark shook his head. "Annie, that's nothing you need to worry about. Forget about Tom and concentrate on what you have coming." Good advice, but she still she'd dragged Tom into this. "Carry the belt for me."

Annie followed Mark's glance to his belt hanging over the towel rail. Without hesitating, she closed an almost steady hand over the smooth leather. Against her sticky palm, it felt warm from his body and the summer sun. Her fingers closed a little tighter and she vowed to take whatever was coming, and never, ever, disobey him again.

"Stand still a minute." She obeyed him immediately, shivering as he tied on the leather and silk blindfold he'd used the night before. Then it had protected and comforted her, now it added another layer of fear. "Come on Annie." He took her hand in his as if they were off for a stroll along the cliffs, and led her down the landing to their room.

Her bare feet crossed from polished bare boards to soft carpeting. He stopped. She waited, her heart racing. She sensed the warmth of his body close behind her. His hands rested on her shoulders and the smooth cotton of his shirt rubbed her back as he whispered in her ear. "I don't want to hear a sound from you. Not a whimper, not a moan. You keep utterly silent until I give you permission to scream."

She remained silent, but nothing could hold back the slow shudder that racked her. If he expected her to scream, he intended to hit hard enough to cause true pain.

"Not a sound will pass your beautiful lips, do you understand?" Annie nodded. She couldn't have spoken if she'd tried. Her throat seemed to have closed up and her mouth no longer produced saliva.

The flat of Mark's hand, warm between her shoulder blades, pushed her forward. She reached out her hands and felt air before she doubled over. Her belly was resting on something soft and her fingers burrowed into their honeycomb bedspread. She was bent over the end of the bed but lying on what? A pillow? She didn't waste effort thinking, just concentrated on breathing as Mark's spread hand held her down.

"I'm not tying you to the bed," he said. "I'm relying on you to stay down until it's finished. If you get up, I'll start over." Annie swore to herself that she'd stay still and silent and pray it wasn't more than she could take. "Ready?" Mark asked as if checking she had her handbag

before leaving the house.

Anne nodded.

Before she took another breath, the belt hit her square across her bare arse, four to five times in quick succession. Mark paused and she breathed a sigh of relief. Her bottom felt warm and sore, but she could take this. Her fears had built it up to be so much worse. Then he started on the back of her thighs. It hurt more here than on her arse but she could take this. Heck, his spanking had hurt more.

The next five or six hard slaps took her by surprise. She hurt! Bands of fire burned across her thighs and bottom, and the next volley wrung a cry from deep in her throat.

Mark stopped. "I don't want another sound. This is your last warning."

His voice was calm and steady and she was ready to sob. His hand pressed into the small of her back and then the pain truly started. It was endless, steady, and relentless. Annie gasped into the bedclothes as the belt bit into her flesh again and again. Afraid she'd cry out, she chewed the side of her mouth and tasted blood. Somewhere distant, a far corner of her brain registered that her mask was soaked with tears, but it didn't matter, all she knew was line upon line of pain. Her shoulders came up off the bed, and then were pinned down. Mark had too many hands, they were on her shoulders, on her back, and wielding the belt that punished and bruised.

In the whirlwind of pain, she shuddered and bit down harder, until even that didn't work and a low moan slipped out. "Not many more," she heard Mark say through her veil of pain. "Make them harder." Someone else? She couldn't think. She hurt, and a low sob rose in her throat.

"You may scream now, Annie," Mark's voice said again. And scream she did with a barrage of the hardest slaps she'd ever had. She yelled herself hoarse, until she no longer heard the sound of his belt on her flesh above the echo of her screams in her ears.

He'd stopped. She couldn't. She cried and moaned as Mark's arms comforted her. "It's over, Annie. It's over." She sobbed a little longer as he wiped her eyes and held his handkerchief while she blew her nose. She tried to sit up but she smarted from her bottom to the back of her knees. "Try on your side," Mark said, "Here."

She drained the glass of water he offered. Cool and lovely it soothed her raspy throat but it wasn't enough. "More," she asked, hoping she was allowed to speak now, and almost not caring if her wasn't.

"Of course." He held out the glass to be filled. Who was there? Annie turned her head, and saw Claudine

She'd witnessed this! Tears rose behind Annie's eyes and she wanted the crawl under the bedclothes and hide forever, but doubted how could even move. "Why?" she asked Mark. Hoping he understood. Saying an entire sentence would hurt too much.

"Don't worry about it," Mark said, smoothing the damp hair of her sweaty face. "I'll explain later. You need to rest now."

"But Claudine..." Annie managed two words this time.

"She was here to make sure Tom beat you properly."

What! Annie turned and sat up, ignoring a hundred stabs of pain and a thousand muscle aches. Tom stood impassive by the end of the bed. His naked body streaked with sweat. Hands by his sides like a soldier to attention, and Mark's belt still dangled from his right hand.

She couldn't help it. A great sob rose deep in her chest and tears of shame and humiliation fell down her cheeks until she tasted them. Mark held her close, stroking her head and kissing her gently until her cries subsided. She wanted to ask why again but was too worn to speak and hurt too much to think.

"Rest now, Annie. I'll stay close. When you wake, we'll talk and I'll explain why."

She didn't think she could sleep with the throbbing and ache in her body but she did. As her mind closed down in exhaustion, her last thought was Mark had better have a damn good explanation.

Chapter Fourteen

"You still don't get it, do you, Annie?"

She didn't and wasn't sure she wanted to! Annie shifted her still sore bottom and thighs against the cushions and frowned at Tom. "What I don't see is why the lot of you expect me to accept this as my due!"

"Heck, sweetheart! You fucked me. You looked Mark straight in the face and behaved as if he were to blame for interrupting us, and then twice refused a perfectly reasonable demand. What did you expect?"

Was that her problem? That she still didn't know what to expect? "I didn't expect you to lay into me like that. I still smart!"

"Would it hurt or bother you less if Mark and beaten you?"

"Yes...no..." Annie shook her head. This conversation wasn't helping anything. "I don't know! But heck, you're my friend! Or at least I thought you were. If we're both supposed to be submissives doesn't that put us on the same side?"

"It's not a case of whose side we're on, Annie." Tom shook his head, obviously trying to explain. "Claudine was every bit as pissed at me as Mark was with you. My punishment was to have to beat you. I know you won't believe the 'this hurts me more than it hurts you' line but heck it wasn't much fun for me."

"If it made you so miserable, why didn't you just say no and walk away?"

"Because, I couldn't! It would mean leaving Claudine. She's to me what Mark is to you."

Right now, Annie wasn't sure what Mark was to her—but she'd leave that alone for now. She still had a bone to pick with Tom. "You honestly think if you'd refused, she'd have left you, tossed you out?"

"I don't think it, Annie. I know." He sighed. "Listen, a couple of years back, about six months after I first met Claudine, she and Alistair ordered me to whip Emma. I declined. Heck, I've never hit a woman. Plus, I'm a sub I don't want to top anyone, I flat out refused." Tom shivered as if reliving a bad memory. "Well, Sweetheart, I ended up getting the shit beaten out of me by Alistair and Claudine, and when they got tired of hearing me yell, they left me hanging on the whipping frame and made me watch Alistair lay into Emma." He shook his head. "My misplaced sense of chivalry did nothing but get me the worst flogging of my life...and Emma still got beaten, she also had to watch mine, anticipating what she'd soon be getting, and wait until Alistair got his energy back from doing me."

"The way I see it, she was worse off, having the inevitable delayed a couple of hours, and I certainly was. When I finally could move again without groaning, Claudine warned me if I ever refused her in public like that again, that was it. If I'd been noble and refused, you'd have been spared nothing, and I'd have been out on my ear." Tom shook his head. "I need her, Annie."

Annie stood up, her legs still ached like hell, and gingerly walked over the edge of the patio. No, she didn't want Tom to have refused, not at the price he'd have paid. But there was just too much she didn't understand or perhaps, didn't want to understand. Like the way she'd woken in the early morning, still hurting but hotter and wetter than she'd ever been in her life. And how two, three strokes of Mark's finger and sent her into a wild climax that left her shaking and clinging to him, her face pressed into the warm of his chest, as he held her close. The incredible bonding, she'd felt then, stunned and worried her.

"Still hold it against me?" Tom had come to stand beside her.

"No, Tom." She looked up at the seagulls wheeling overhead. "I don't hold it against you."

"And don't hold it against Mark, either. It isn't healthy."

With that, he walked away, leaving Annie wondering how 'healthy' her relationship with Mark was anyway. But by who's yardstick? Nothing between her and Mark resembled anything she'd felt or needed with another lover. Tom was right; she did need Mark, just as Tom needed Claudine.

Annie started back towards the house, gathering up her pillow on the way. Would Mark ever order her to whip another sub? And if so, would she obey? If it were Tom, yes. But the others? She didn't want to consider that.

They went out to dinner that evening at a renowned four-star restaurant in a country house hotel, Annie had read about in a couple of glossy magazines. Alan and Alistair were leaving in the morning, taking Jane and Emma with them. In two days she and Mark would be going back to their everyday lives. But for this last evening, they'd agreed to go out for a better meal than the Five Bells provided.

It was an easy drive, with occasional glimpses of sea until they turned inland and drove in silence through the summer evening. From the open windows, Annie caught the sweet scents from in the hedgerows. She leaned back against the leather upholstery, closed her eyes and let the breeze caress her face. This was the most peaceful she'd felt for days. She opened her eyes as they slowed. They were passing through a village of stone cottages and steep pavements above the level of the road. She glimpsed children skipping, while their mothers gossiped over a fence, a man digging in one of the gardens, a pair of teenagers washing a car, another woman bringing in the wash from the line, brief but clear, slices of normal everyday life. The life she'd left behind in Surrey. How easy would it be to go back to the time before Mark? Did she even want to?

"You're very quiet," Mark said as they turned a bend in the village street.

"I'm thinking." The houses were thinning now, just a few modern semis and then open country again. As if they were leaving normalcy and returning to with wild primeval world of open country.

"Feeling sore at me?"

"Do you mean that literally or figuratively?"

Mark's laugh was as rich and warm as Viennese hot chocolate. "Do I take it you no longer wish me the other side of perdition, or was that a slip of your lovely tongue?"

"It was unintentional," she replied. Okay, it came out a bit stiff, but how could he joke about it?

He nodded, his eyes on the twisting road ahead. "Well, are you? Sore?"

"I wouldn't want to sit on concrete, if that's what you're asking." She was damn glad of the soft cushions he'd brought out to the car for her.

"You'll hardly feel anything by the morning," he paused, "and by tomorrow afternoon, even the last marks will have faded."

"What makes you so sure?" As soon as she asked she wanted to bit back the question.

"Annie," Mark glanced her way and smiled before looking back at the road. "I watched every one he laid on you. He knew damn well if he laid on too heavy, I'd let into him myself."

"And if he laid on too lightly?"

"Claudine would have flayed him! Do you understand better now?"

"Not really. I think you're confusing me even more."

"Let's see if we can't sort it out between here and Mina Bream. It's really quite straightforward. You needed punishing for disobedience, bad attitude, and unsanctioned sex. Most likely climaxing without permission, too. Tom needed punishment for fucking you. I'd planned on seeing to you myself, but Claudine suggested making Tom do it. He hates it. Even flat out refused once. So, we took care of you both in one sitting so to speak."

Yes, he had. But that wasn't quite all of it. "To be fair to Tom, I didn't give him much chance to refuse. I sort of dragged him into the pantry and demanded he fuck me."

"Playing the dominant were you?" Mark almost sounded amused.

"No. I was darn aroused and hot and...needy." She shivered remembering. "I think I truly jumped his bones. I'm sorry, Mark."

"For what, Annie?" His gentle voice almost undid her. She was churned up inside.

"For grabbing another man, when you were who I really wanted. And..." she thought back on what Tom said earlier.

"For point blank disobeying. Twice."

He patted her right thigh. "Just don't do it again."

She couldn't speak for a few seconds. A strange rush of emotion shook her. Mark's hand closed gently over the muscle of her thigh. "I won't, Mark." As she said the words, a great feeling of peace wiped out all her turmoil.

Mark blew her a kiss as they turned off the lane. A stone house stood at the end of a drive edged by mature chestnut trees. As they turned into the car park, Annie noticed Alan and Jane's Range Rover.

"Here we are," Mark said, as he parked and turned to her. His mouth closed on hers. His lips were warm and hard and sweet as they opened her mouth for his tongue to take possession. Mark knew how to kiss! She whimpered against his mouth, as his tongue battered hers just as her brain fizzed out. His hands squeezed her breasts through her dress until her nipples sprung hard and upright. His mouth still worked hers, as, one hand holding the back of her head, this other hand eased down to lift her skirt and feel between her legs. "You're wet," he whispered against her mouth. His fingers came deep inside. Not gently but probing and pushing until she squirmed. When he withdrew, and raised his fingers to her lips. She knew at once what to do, and tasted herself as his fingers came between her now swollen lips.

"Good!" Annie wasn't sure if it was a statement or a question, but she met his eyes and nodded, Mark smiled back. "Let's join the others."

The others were already seated at a large round table in a bay window overlooking a rose garden. Annie almost felt she was rejoining her family, until she noticed the extra person seated between Claudine and Alan. John! Even her still faintly smarting thighs chilled as he looked up and smiled.

"You got here!" He stood up. "We'd half decided you'd got lost. Now we can order, if we wait too long there's always a risk the venison will run out."

Mark held one of the remaining chairs for her. Annie sat down, grateful for the cushion someone had thoughtfully provided and more than thankful that she wasn't next to John. Until she realized he was directly opposite. Every time she looked up, she would meet his dark, searching eyes.

"Comfortable?" he asked as she settled gingerly on her seat.

God in Heaven, he knew! The others must have told him! How much? Blood rushed to her face. Taking a slow breath, she looked straight across to John, "Oh, yes," she replied, thanking providence for the years in classrooms that had taught her to keep a calm face whatever was said or done. "I'm looking forward to dinner. I've heard the food here is fantastic."

"It should be," John replied giving her a look of she couldn't quite measure. "We just got a new chef, I hope he's up to snuff."

"We?"

His smile was a combination of pleasure and amusement. "Yes, we. I have a part share in it. Our previous chef decided he could make more setting up his own establishment, so my partners

and I spent the last few months scurrying around for a replacement."

"And you found someone?"

"That's what we're about to find out."

They did. Annie ate her way through a miniature pastry starter with a Stilton crust, and the venison that was every bit as wonderful as John implied. They drank a light wine, "Imported from Sussex," John said, with the smile that was beginning to fascinate Annie. Conversation flowed with the wine. Annie indulged in a summer pudding with clotted cream that was nothing short of decadent. They could be any group of friends out for a celebration dinner. No one seeing them, chatting and laughing by the open windows, would ever imagine...

They moved into a lounge with French doors opening onto the garden. Annie settled thankfully into the chintz-covered sofa—the dining room chair had got a bit hard somewhere between the venison and the pudding—her ease lasted all of twenty seconds. John perched himself on the wide arm, as Mark sat down beside her.

"Comfy enough for you?" John asked.

"Yes, it's a lovely old sofa. My grandmother used to have one like this." She leaned back and wished she hadn't. John's thigh was at eye level, and so was his crotch, and he either had an erection, or he wore a much bigger version of the dildo she'd worn driving down last week. She wished the other would come. They were busy debating coffee choices.

"Those dining room chairs are a bit hard."

He was a fine one to talk about things getting hard! "I'm fine now."

"Certain? I gather Tom laid into you pretty hard." How she didn't blush puce, she'd never know. Maybe she was learning.

Anne looked up at John. "Is it necessary to talk about that now?" Mark's hand closed on her thigh. A warning? She rested hers on top. She would not make a scene or embarrass him, but John was asking too much!

"No," he shook his head and smiled. "Not if you don't want to." Annie relaxed. Too soon. "Mark tells me you like anal sex."

Annie all but choked. This was too much. "Yes, I do. Very much, but only with Mark." She managed a sweet smile. "I'm a bit particular."

John threw back his head and roared with laughter. A couple by the Adam fireplace turned their way. The others even interrupted their coffee debate.

"You're right," John said, right over her head. "She is definitely worthwhile." Before Annie could get irritated at being spoken over, John stood up. Resting the flat of one hand on the sofa back, he leaned over and took her chin in one hand, tilting her face up. "Definitely," he repeated and kissed her, and walked right out the open French windows.

He'd barely touched her lips but they felt scalded. She gave a sideways glance at Mark. If he blamed her for this, she'd tell him what.

Mark smiled and nodded, his eyes true violet hued in the now quiet lounge. "You've been approved of," he said.

Annie wanted to ask why it mattered, but the others arrived followed by a waiter carrying a tray laden with cups and saucers and a coffee pot. Annie would just as soon have skipped the coffee, and even forgone the dark chocolate leaves and the handmade mint fondants, but everyone else seemed disposed to talk the night away. It was an evening before friends parting, the last night of a holiday, and Annie accepted that.

What she had a hard time accepting was Mark asking her to ride back with Alan and Jane. Heck, Annie had at least a dozen questions, but he needed to talk to Claudine!

"Smashing," Emma said. "We can all three sit on the back seat and plan when we'll get

together for lunch."

Annie was too tired and too sore to argue it out. The three women rode back on the back seat. Once home, a warm shower eased the worst of her stiffness, and after Mark settled her half on her side, a pillow tucked under her hip and stomach and another against her back. She fell easily asleep, wondering what would happen next,

The two couples left after hugs and kisses, and tears from Emma. As the dust settled on the gravel drive, Tom and Claudine went into the house to clean up breakfast. Annie was plain relieved when Mark suggested a walk along the beach. Yesterday's breakfast was still so sharp in her memory.

The water was cool this early but eased away the last vestiges of her aches. They swam side by side from one corner of the bay to the other. Just after they turned, Mark signaled to swim towards shore. Annie followed in his wake, he was pushing the pace and she knew she couldn't race him. He stopped a few yards from shore, standing waist deep in water and caught her by the wrist as she reached him.

"I want you, Annie." He pulled her against his wet body. "I want you here and now."

She looked up into eyes that were dark as spring violets in a dark wood. "Yes. Please!"

Still holding her slap against his body, he half carried her to the shore and set her on her feet. He was facing the sea. "Suck me, Annie."

Without hesitating, she knelt on the damp sand, and took his soft, cold cock in her mouth. He tasted of sea salt and morning. His cock hardened and filled her mouth. It felt so right. She wanted to spend the rest of her life, here on the sand with Mark's swelling cock in her mouth. Waves broke on her legs, spraying her face and shoulders. She barely noticed. Her mind and thoughts were bent on pleasing Mark, and amazement at the power she held between her lips. She wanted him, needed him. Every nerve ending ached for him. Deep in her mouth was not enough, she wanted to him everywhere, pounding her cunt, stretching her arse.

A wave hit high on her back, drenching her hair and propelling her forward against Mark. Driving his cock deeper until he touched the back of her throat. Annie gasped and opened wide to take him deep. A wild wetness of longing poured from her cunt and mingled with the salt water bathing her. She leaned into his steady legs, rubbing her breasts against his thighs and her face against his sea damp crotch. Would she ever get enough of him? She wrapped her arms around his hips to steady herself as the incoming tide brought the waves closer and stronger.

She ran her tongue up and down his cock, circling the head and lapping the sweet moisture that gathered under her tongue. She sucked and eased her lips back and forth, fluttering her tongue on the delicious ridge underneath, and rubbing her wet lips over his ridge before easing off his cock to lap the salt spray from his balls. They were fantastic against her tongue but she needed his cock and almost greedily swallowed him deep as he held her head.

His legs stood firm. But she felt the movement in his hips. Her tongue sensed his growing need as blood and vibrations built up from the base of his cock. He was close to coming, and she had done this to him, with her mouth.

His cock all but gagged her triumphant chuckle, but Mark heard and sensed her satisfaction. He pulled her away. Gently. Her whimper was lost in a crashing wave that covered her head and drenched her hair.

"I'm not ready to come yet, Annie. And I don't intend to lose you to the sea." Both hands on her shoulders helped her to her feet. "We're moving to higher ground."

Mark paused by a cluster of rock pools, pulling at the damp seaweed, he yanked off a good long strand and turned to Annie, waiting a two paces behind. "Give me your wrists."

She hesitated barely a few seconds before offering her wrists. Wonderful, she was training up beautifully. His instincts hadn't been wrong. He loved the way her wrists shook as he bound

then with narrow thongs of damp weed. She was anxious but unhesitating. Perfect. He took the free end of the seaweed in and led her diagonally up the beach to a few feet above the tide. "Kneel," he said, "head to the sand."

It took her a minute or two. Her knees wobbled as she got down on the sand but she moved gracefully and with a confidence she hadn't had only a few days ago. She rested her head between her outstretched arms and exhaled. So beautifully submissive and vulnerable, Mark half wished he'd brought a whip but no, this time would be to indulge her. Still..."Don't move." he said and walked back to the rock pool for more seaweed.

Why had he never thought of this before? A nice generous stalk of bladder wrack made a perfect flogger and a long ribbon of green something or other seemed designed to tease. Come to that, if he really got creative he could devise some interesting torments with starfish and sea anemones...

He walked back slowly, enjoying the view of her upturned arse, and the thought of her anxiety. He walked around her, making sure he was close enough for her to feel his footsteps on the sand but saying nothing. Her shoulders tensed a little, but other than the rise and fall of her ribs as she breathed, that was the only movement. Her hair fell forward, leaving her neck bare and vulnerable.

He touched the back of her neck with one end of the sea weed ribbon. She shuddered. Why not? It was no doubt cold and not what she'd expected. She didn't move, not even as he trailed the end along the curve of her spine and down between her arse cheeks. He repeated the cold tease five times, then stepped back and waited a minute by his watch, knowing it seemed like fifteen to her.

Taking the bundle of wrack, he slapped it against her arse. The first time, she left out a surprised squeal. "Not a sound," he reminded her. She kept silent for the rest. He imagined her biting her lip. He didn't hit hard, just enough to keep her alert, and wondering when, and how, it would escalate. Three more, heavier blows, and he let her rest but not for long. "Get up on your knees, arse as high as you can hold it. I want access to your thighs."

She was a little awkward as she shifted to assume position, but she got there, sliding her arms along the sand and shifting her body. "Keep those shoulders down." Just to be sure she did, he rested his bare foot between her shoulder blades, and wrung a little gasp from her.

Stepping back, he surveyed her. She had a few marks but they were pale and would fade soon. His goal wasn't to mark her, but to bind her to him as surely as he'd bound her wrists with the narrow string of seaweed. He wanted himself imprinted on her mind and body...and he had one afternoon.

She was waiting and expecting another slap, so he knelt behind her and gently stroked her butt, running his hands over her upturned flesh and down her back. She was cool to the touch and shivered as his hands massaged her tense shoulders.

"Cold?" he asked.

"Not exactly," she replied. "Sort of cool, and nervous...I'm not exactly warm," she added.

"That's easily taken care of!" As he spoke he laid a volley of spanks on her bottom cheeks. They reddened nicely as she squirmed beautifully. "Feeling warmer?"

Was that a giggle? Yes, but she held it back and replied. "Much warmer, thank you, very much."

"Want more?"

She paused. "Only if you want to, Mark."

Hell, she was a fast learner. "I've something more in mind." He ran his hand up from the back of one knee to the top of her thigh where it met the curve of her bottom cheek. "I can't neglect your luscious thighs." He cupped both cheeks, a hand on each, caressing them and

pulling them apart. "Or that lovely arse. Want me to fuck it, Annie?"

"If you wish, Mark." She gave a little gasp as he pressed his fingertips into bottom cheeks, making white patches in her rosy flesh.

"I do wish...but not yet," he replied, savoring her disappointment. "I need to give some attention to these thighs of yours, wouldn't want them feeling neglected."

The wrack made a nice sound against her flesh, her thighs quivering nicely as he caught her just where her bottom met her legs. After a while he paused, and before she had time to realize he'd stopped, ordered, "Open your knees wider." She wobbled but kept her balance as her muscles tensed with the effort of keeping her shoulders down. "Lovely," Mark said and stroked the seaweed ribbon up and down her spine, until her quivering was uncontrollable.

"Annie you're having trouble keeping still," he said gently. "Let's see what's the matter." As he spoke, he thrust his hand between her legs. "You're wet, you little slut. That needs taking care of!" To prove his point, he shoved two fingers deep in her wet cunt until she whimpered, and her whole body shook with the effort of keeping steady.

He took his fingers out slowly, sliding them up her crack to pause over her arse hole. He pressed the pad of one finger very gently against her muscle. "Pity I forgot to bring a plug with me," he said, "I just fancy watching it disappear deep into you lovely arse." Her suppressed whimper suggested she shared his disappointment. "Never mind, plenty of time for that this evening." He'd planted a little seed there, but not enough to get her worried...yet. "I want you to kneel up now."

Stiff from forcing her body down, Annie had trouble getting up. All it took were his hands on her ribs to help her.

Sand clung to the undersides of her breasts, her shoulders, arms and knees, brushing it off took a nice long time. Most was gone, and a few swipes of seaweed would take care of the rest. But the narrow string of weed binding her wrists had stiffened in the sand. He broke it loose, no point in hurting her unless it served a purpose. "Put your hands behind you," he said after he'd rubbed her wrists to bring the circulation back. "Clasp them as tightly as if I'd tied them." As she did, he rubbed the sand off her cheeks and nose and kissed her.

Hell, she was hot! He could smell her arousal, even above the tang of salt air and the residue of seaweed on his hands. Her entire body responded to his tongue thrusting against hers. Just a little more play and he'd fuck her brains out.

He took the bundle of wrack to her breasts, not to beat, but in a tantalizing caress that had her thighs all but twitching as she fought to keep control. When he trailed the now ragged fronds down her belly to her smooth white pussy, she couldn't hold back. A slow tremor began in her chin and lower jaw and shivered out to the rest of her face, down her shoulders and arms to her waist. She ripe for fucking.

Without a word, he moved her onto all fours. Setting her hands just far apart to keep her steady through his coming onslaught. Making sure her knees were firm, he came behind and holding her hips steady, rubbed his cock between her pussy lips.

Her head reared up as her body arched. He held her still, waiting until she calmed before giving her any more. It was then he noticed the wave that hit the back of his thighs. The tide had almost had them. But not yet. He waited until a large wave hit him in the back and drove in deep with a smooth thrust. Her hands clutched at the sand as it shifted down the beach with the receding wave.

He timed his thrusts to the rhythm of the waves, as each hit his legs or back, he drove into her, never letting up until he felt the drag of the water sloping back on the sand. Her need matched his, from the strung tension in her body and the little moans she no longer held back, she was as close to exploding as he was. One larger than usual wave, broke over his shoulders, and drenched her face.

"Mark!" she called in panic.

"Okay, Annie. Trust me." He thrust deep and the easing of her shoulders told him she did trust him. Completely. She was his. "Come, Annie. Come for me," he said, driving deeper and faster. She came, throwing back her head like a wild creature and bucking like an unbroken colt.

He climaxed at her peak, and continued pumping her as her orgasm broke out in a wild rhythm until she collapsed on the sand and he stretched over her, her back heaving in sync with his racing heart.

A crashing wave breaking over their heads had her spluttering for air.

He levered off her and stood, reaching for her with his back to the tide. "I think it's time we went in."

She wobbled to her feet, holding onto his hand. "I'm not sure I can walk that far."

"I'll carry you to the cliff." Before she had time to think about that, he lifted her with both hands round her waist and tossed her over his shoulder, her ankles held securely in one hand.

"Going for the caveman act?" she asked, wriggling.

A slap on her rump stilled her. "Yes, Annie, I am. You're mine and I'll do whatever I want. So..." He smoothed her bottom with his free hand. "...will you."

She didn't have any argument with that. He helped her up the cliff path—carrying her up would probably send them both crashing onto the rocks—but hoisted her back over her shoulder before covering the stretch of rough grass to the house. She didn't complain this time. Good. She might as well get used to the idea of complete obedience before tonight.

The kitchen was empty when Mark strode in like a warrior bearing his booty. Annie had seldom been so glad not to see anyone. She had to look a fright, hair hanging in wet rat tails and sand still clinging to her damp, and now cold, skin. And she didn't doubt she had an variety of marks all over. What had he used to beat her with? She knew darn well he'd carried nothing down with him.

"We're getting a nice, hot shower," Mark said, brushing the damp hair off her face. "Then you're getting a nap. I want you rested before tonight."

"What's happening tonight?"

"A surprise." He kissed her and refused to explain further.

Chapter Fifteen

"Wake up, Annie." Tom sat on the bed beside her, stroking her face.

"What?" She shook her head to clear it. She'd slept the day away and..."Tom?" What was he doing here! If Mark found out! Her back tensed at the thought.

"Sweetheart, look lively!"

"Tom, if they find you here..."

He shook his head, and gave her the smile that umpteen women across Britain had fallen for. "Don't look so worried. It's all above board, Mark sent me to get you ready?"

"Ready for what?"

"To go down to the Five Bells." He stood up and pulled off the covers. "I'm to bathe you and shampoo your hair and make sure you pass muster."

She had umpteen questions but forgot them all when she saw what Tom was wearing. Round his hips, and between his legs was a chastity belt! "Tom!"

"Pretty isn't it?" He sashayed his hips before twirling around and striking a campy pose. "What do you think?"

"That my Thursday night TV watching will never be the same again!"

As his chuckle faded, he grabbed her hands. "Come along, if we take all evening we'll have two pissed off Doms out to get us."

Annie got to her feet. "What's going on?"

"I'm getting you ready. Come along." The view as she followed Tom down the hall was interesting to say the least. Most of his very nice bum was still on view, with the interesting addition of some nylon webbing and velcro.

"Do you have to wear that because of what happened yesterday?" she asked.

"Annie, lass, you jabber too much! Watch it or Mark will put a gag on you." Tom shrugged as if relenting his sharp words. "Annie, I wear it because Claudine wants it, same reason you're getting in that bath for Mark."

Scented candles burned on the window sill and round the edge of the tub, and that was filled with steaming warm water that smelled like a rose garden in high summer. "Hop in!"

Nothing seemed more inviting, she climbed in and reached for the tablet of scented soap in the dish.

"No," Tom said, taking it before she could. "I'm washing you. Kneel up and put your hands on your head."

Tom washed and rinsed all he could reach, smoothing the washcloth over her skin and rubbing between her legs until she squirmed. Then she sat at his word and offered one foot and leg at a time for his slow soaping. It was oddly sensual and strangely disturbing. "What's the point of all this?" she asked as Tom's strong hand circled her ankle.

"I'm getting you ready! Stop asking questions and sit back down."

Tom lathered up her hair with scented shampoo, making her lean back over his arm as he rinsed her hair. It would have been a darn sight easier to do it herself—but he was adamant. He had orders to follow and so did she. Helping her out of the bath, Tom wrapped her hair in a towel and patted her dry with another, taking three times as long as she ever had to dry herself. He had a pretty skilled touch as he towelled and dried her hair.

He silently took her hand and led her across the landing to Claudine's room. When he opened the door, Annie decided it was time to object. "You'll get the pair of us flayed alive if we

go in there."

"No, sweetheart. Just following orders. The massage table is in here."

It was, covered with a soft pad and towels. "Do you know what's going on?" she asked.

Tom shook his head. "Don't ask, Annie, just lie down."

No way she was finding out from Tom. She'd have to be patient and learn when Mark was ready to tell. She gave up worrying about it, and stretched out face down on the snowy white covers, and let Tom go to work.

The man had magic hands! Annie sighed with sheer delight as he kneaded her shoulders and worked scented oil down her back and hips. He didn't leave an inch of her unworked, and the only effort required from her, was to turn over at Tom's direction. She shut her eyes and let the tension ooze out of her muscles and her mind. She was half way to boneless when Tom pronounced her 'done' and helped her to her feet.

She could stand, which rather surprised her, and she couldn't remember ever feeling so relaxed. "Do you give massages to Claudine regularly?"

He grinned. "Just one of my many talents."

And she'd sampled another one yesterday. "I feel wonderful."

"That's the idea. Now, stand still."

He slipped a freshly ironed dress over her head, smoothing the bodice over her breasts and easing the skirt over her hips and legs. He had her sit down while he brushed out and styled her hair, then pulled a table over and gave her the most careful and precise manicure she'd ever received.

"Tom, you're not just a pretty face," she said as she held out her drying nails.

"Neither are you, Annie!" He quirked an eyebrow at her. "You're just beginning to plumb your depths." Millions of women would die for that look from Tom Baldwin. Annie wasn't immune.

"You know what's going on, don't you, Tom?" she persisted.

"I don't *know*, Annie. But I've been around this group long enough to have a darn good idea, and no, I'm not about to tell you. That's Mark's place." He held out a hand, but before opening the door, pulled her close to a tight hug. "You'll be brilliant, Annie. Trust me."

She trusted Tom, and Mark, come to that. She just wasn't yet certain she trusted herself.

"You look lovely, Annie!" Mark waited at the bottom of the stairs, meeting his eyes as she descended, Annie felt a bit like Cinderella meeting her prince. Mark wore black jeans and a dark green linen shirt, open at the neck to show off his golden skin. As she stepped close, she saw the throb of his pulse at the base of his neck.

"Mark..." she began.

"Come on!" He gave her hand a tug. "Time to go."

They were out the door before she had time to give Tom a goodbye wave for all his work.

Mark's hand shook as he buckled her seat belt. He was nervous. About what? As he started the engine, she asked, "This isn't just a drink at the pub is it?"

Silent a minute before he answered, Mark said, "No, but you can have a drink if you want one."

"Am I going to know what's going on before it happens?"

He didn't reply until he pulled into the graveled car park and turned off the engine. She half expected a reprimand or threat of discipline for her questions. Instead, Mark kissed her very gently. It was a soft, loving romantic kiss, not the wild, pulsing passion she'd learned to expect. "We're going inside, Annie. You can get a drink if you like, but I'm not staying long. In ten minutes or so,

John is meeting us here and I'm giving you to him until morning."

It was possible to be heated, chilled, trembling and frozen stiff all at once! "Why?" She had a hard time squawking out the one syllable.

"Because I wish it." He stroked the side of her face with the back of his hand. "Because I'm ready to do this, and I'm convinced you are, even though you won't admit it."

She did not share that conviction! Not with the clear memory of those cane marks on Jane's things. John was plain scary, no, terrifying. Annie shook her head, her mouth and throat too tight to protest, and what was the point?

"Annie," Mark spoke kindly. "I know how you fear the cane. John won't use it, I promise." Maybe, but there were a lot of other implements she bet hurt every bit as much. "This is important, Annie. For both of us. John is my mentor. This is your chance to show him how well I've trained you. And my opportunity to share you with someone I respect deeply." Her hand close over his, in a grip like a vise. Her face was burning or was it her hand was icy? "It's okay, Annie, You're terrified. I expected you to be. I know you can do this. Come along."

She was astonished she could even stand, much less walk.

"Want to back out?" Mark asked as he opened the door on the almost empty bar. "If you really can't do this, I'll take you back."

Annie shook her head. Talking seemed impossible; a strange acceptance seemed to flow in the wake of her earlier terror. "No. If you think I'm ready. I am." Seldom had she ever said or thought anything that felt so right.

"What shall I get you to drink?"

It took her several seconds to process that. "Perrier, please."

"Perrier?" Mark's mouth twitched at the corner.

"I'll need to be very sober to get through this."

He dropped a kiss on her forehead. "You'll make me proud of you, my love."

He wished. She hoped! A shiver slithered down her spine as she watched Mark cross to the bar. No point in standing blocking the doorway. She crossed to an empty table by the window and sat down, ignoring the damp beer circles on the old wood tabletop. The Five Bells didn't do too well in the service department. Leaning back in the heavy wheel back chair, Annie closed her eyes and took several slow breaths. Had she ever been this scared? For Mark she'd done some wild things, but this surpassed everything. Or did it? Was it any different from that night in her house with Mark and Alan, or that time in the field, or some of the other things she'd done the past few days?

Yes! Very different! She'd be alone with John. She'd have to walk away and leave Mark and he was her rock, her anchor, her reason for doing this at all. Her—she wouldn't use the word dominant—it scared the willies out of her. Her was her lover, that was all. All? She'd laugh if she wasn't scared mirthless.

"Here you are, love." Mark had had them fill the glass with ice, the way she liked, and add wedges of lime and lemon.

"Thanks, cheers." Her hand shook as she lifted the glass. She made her arm get the glass to her mouth, and forced her lips to the rim. Swallowing wasn't easy but the chilled sparkles eased her dry throat as she took a deep gulp.

"Sure you're alright?"

Annie shook her head. Why lie? He knew anyway. "I'm scared witless."

"It will be hard for you. Maybe very hard. But you can save word out any time, remember that. Just having you consider this thrills me."

Her other hand, cold from grasping the glass, slid over his. She'd so miss his warmth when

she walked away with John. "Is this that important to you?"

"Oh, yes!" his smile could melt polar icecaps. It almost thawed her fear. "John knows all your limits, everything you've done." That thought sent a slow freeze down her spine. "He watched you Saturday, Annie. I asked for you. Trust him, Annie. I do."

What was there left to say? Nodding and giving her attention to her mineral water seemed the best bet. Maybe she should have had a stiff gin!

The outside door opened. Annie looked up, her throat tight and her heart racing. It was the local postman, ambling up to the bar having finished his rounds. Maybe John wouldn't come. Maybe his car had broken down. Maybe he'd been arrested for speeding. There were all those speed cameras along the road, after all. If he never turned up, she could go home with Mark and she get out of this without letting him down.

"Hello!" John must have dropped from the ceiling! No, he'd come in from the side door that still swung gently. He pulled out a chair, and sat down. Three at the small table was a crowd. John gave Annie a smile, Mark a friendly nod. "All set then?" He looked at Mark. Mark looked at Annie. She wanted to stare at the ceiling, the flagstone floor, the village street beyond the tiny panes of the window, anywhere, but she made herself meet John's dark eyes. "Yes." Her voice so calm and composed it frightened her.

"Ready then?" John asked.

Annie nodded and stood up.

"Want to finish your drink?" That was Mark.

She looked down at the two inches of sparkling water, the melting ice, and the squeezed out yellow and green wedges. "No, I'd better go while I still can."

"Sure?" John gave her a searching look. Annie nodded, easier than trying to talk. "Sure?" he repeated. "Tell me." His quiet voice commanded. She had to answer.

"I'm sure."

A very gentle touch on her elbow turned her towards the back of the pub and guided her through a low door with a wrought iron latch. They were in a back room, cluttered with stacked chairs, a furled flag atop boxes marked salt and onion flavored crisps, an artificial Christmas tree still with its lights and decorations and a wide, scratched table. Annie almost froze. Were they going to bend her over that table, or spread her out on it. No! Not with people the other side of the door!

"Don't worry, Annie." John spoke to soothe. "We're only going to be here a couple of ticks. Just while Mark prepares you." He nodded at Mark "Take her dress off."

"Not here!" If someone came in!

"It's okay." Mark stroked her cheek, "John's blocking the door to the bar. The other door..." he angled his head to end of the room, "can only be opened from inside. You're quite safe." Safe! That was a relative term. "Raise your arms." Without thinking, she obeyed, shivering as he took her cotton dress over her head. She had to be nuts! Standing there in the dusty back room of a village pub as naked as the day. "Here." Mark draped a black cloak round her shoulders. It came to her ankles, and the lining felt warm and soft to her skin. Silk perhaps? She smoothed her arms against the soft fabric as Mark slowly closed the row of gilt edged china buttons up to her chin. Finished, he smiled down at her. "Want me to take her shoes, John?"

"No, she'll hurt her feet on the walk. Leave them."

Mark dropped a quick kiss on her head. "Good luck, Annie."

"Come." John held out his hand. Long fingers with carefully manicured nails reached out for her. She tried to move her hand but the folds of the cloak covered her. If she reached out, she'd expose herself. "There's slits for your hands," he said. She found one and reached out to

him. Shaking a little, as his strong fingers closed over hers.

The back door shut behind them before she realized Mark had stayed behind. She was alone, naked and scared to the point of shaking.

"Hop in." John opened the car door and fastened the seat belt round her. Adjusting the shoulder harness carefully to avoid her neck, but not touching her. "Keep your knees apart, remember." With that, he closed the door.

Annie adjusted her legs before he walked round the car, and earned herself a nod and smile of approval, but he never said a word as he started the car and drove slowly up the narrow street.

He didn't speak until about ten, fifteen minutes after they left the village behind and were traveling through a maze of narrow, high hedged lanes. "Worried?" he asked. Concern in his voice.

"Worried?" Annie heard the note of panic in her high pitched voice. "I'm petrified!"

The corner of his mouth twitched upwards, just a smidgen. "Don't be." He glanced at her, his eyes, warm. "Petrified?" he said it slowly, as if savoring the word. "After walking out of there, head high like a queen."

"Yeah! Now I know how Mary Queen of Scots felt on the way to the scaffold!"

His chuckle was warm, appreciative, and sexy. "Annie, relax. We've still got a bit of a drive, and I promise don't have a headman's block or a guillotine," he paused. "I've got plenty of other equipment though."

That was what worried her!

After a half-hour drive, they reached his house. A pair of stone cottages on the cliff top. "It's beautiful!" Annie couldn't stop herself from saying, as she walked across the stone path to the wide terrace.

"Yes." John agreed, a smile lighting his face. "It is beautiful, but I didn't bring you here to admire the coastline." He took a couple of strides to the front door, and holding it open said, "Get inside and take that cloak, and your shoes off. I want you naked."

Her stomach clenched as she stepped over the threshold into a large, airy kitchen, complete with Aga and oak cabinets. It was like an illustration out of a glossy magazine. And she'd come here to be beaten and heaven alone knew what else! She shivered under the long cloak.

The door closed with a quiet thud, "Strip, Annie!" John said a definite edge in his voice. "And this is the last time I'll repeat an order without punishment." Her skin tightened all over her body as she stepped out of her shoes and unclasped the cape and hung it over her arm. "There's hangers in the laundry room. And you can leave your shoes there too."

It was a relief to walk away, if only for a matter of seconds. Walking back in, and facing him was a whole different matter. The way he sat in a wicker chair by the window, suggested having naked women in his kitchen was commonplace. Maybe it was! He beckoned her over and made a downward motion with his hand. Without thinking, Annie knelt, looking John in the face until she lowered her eyes, cheeks burning with the knowledge she'd committed a faux pas.

"Mark's right. You're willing, and learning fast, but it's not yet instinctive," John paused. "We're hoping this session will take care of some of that." Her shoulders shook. It took all she possessed not to let the shiver take over her body. "I want to see how well you obey simple orders." Annie tensed. What would he want? "Make me a cup of tea."

She almost laughed. Was it relief, or disappointment she felt as she filled the kettle? As she opened cabinets searching for tea and cups, John got up and walked out, only to return as she was pouring water into the pot. She almost scalded herself when she noticed the long black leather riding crop in his hand. But she got herself back together enough to remember he'd said 'make *me* a cup of tea'.

She poured one cup. "Do you take sugar or milk?" she asked, suddenly aware he was watching every move.

"Both, two sugars and you should address me using my name."

"I'm sorry, John." She felt the blush burning her cheeks. He spoke quietly but the rebuke stung all the more because that was something she knew.

"There's digestive biscuits in the tin on the dresser."

She might well be fixing a cup of tea with a couple of digestives in her mother's kitchen. Except she was naked and the black leather riding crop on the kitchen table wasn't for opening gates. She carried the cup and saucer to John, noticing the pillow on the floor by his feet. Should she kneel first? And risk baptizing the both with hot tea? Keeping her eyes down, she set the cup and saucer on the table and knelt.

"You make a good cup of tea," John said after what seemed an age.

"Thank you, John." She couldn't believe she was kneeling at his feet while he drank tea. Was this his way of stretching out the anticipation? He'd made darn certain she saw the crop on the table.

"I'll go over a few rules," he said, "What's your safe word?"

"My name, Annette Sophia Cavendish...John," she remembered to add.

"We'll use that. Don't feel you're failing or letting Mark down if you use it. What happens here is between us. I intend to push you farther than Mark has, but you always have the option to safe word out. Understand?"

"Yes, John."

"My rules are simple; complete and utter obedience, unless you safe word out. In addition, you have the obligation to communicate if any order is impossible or if you don't completely understand. Is that clear?"

"Yes, John."

"You may not use the furniture, unless I give permission. If you need to use the loo, or get a drink, you ask. I won't refuse. But you have to ask permission."

"I understand, John." It couldn't be this easy! Or was she fooling herself just because he voice was so smooth and assured.

His hand came down in front of her face, a broken piece of digestive biscuit between his fingers. Her throat tightened as she understood his invitation, but she barely hesitated as she leaned forward to eat from his fingers. Between dry throat and nervousness, it took forever to chew and swallow a quarter of a biscuit. But she managed. "Thank you, John." She ran her tongue over her lips, hoping she didn't have crumbs down her chin.

The back of his hand brushed the side of her face. "You are made for submission." Was the tightness her inside terror or anticipation? Or both? "We've agreed, I won't use my cane on you – this time. Anything else you want me to remove from my arsenal of toys?"

Was it a trick question? Would he make sure to use whatever she named? Or would he respect her hesitation, as he had with the cane? What else might he have that could leave those awful welts she'd seen on Jane? She sensed his irritation at her delay. "John, I don't know what you have, plus I don't know enough to know what I don't want."

"Mark is so right." While Annie wondered what that meant, John stood up. "I'm giving you ten minutes to wash up and take care of whatever you need to do in the loo. Then join me upstairs. And bring the crop."

Shoving his cup in the dishwasher took all of forty seconds, a quick trip to the loo maybe a minute. It was picking up the crop that took all her courage. The scent of good leather seemed to rub off on her hand as she closed her fingers over the narrow wand. It might feel wonderfully

warm and smooth under her fingers, but there was no doubt this could hurt. Should she exercise the option he'd offered and put this beyond her limits? That thought lasted less time than it took to exhale. She wouldn't refuse, she wanted, needed, to find out what John, and through him, Mark, wanted from her.

Grasping the crop firmly on one clenched hand, Annie walked towards the spiral staircase. The metal treads were cold under her feet but her hands were sweating. She stepped up into John's bedroom. A larger than usual bed filled one wall, on the end wall, a wide picture window looked out on the cliff top and the sea beyond, and the opposite was filled with fitted mahogany wardrobes, and a door that stood open on another room.

"Come in, Annie," John said.

Taking a deep breath, and holding her shoulders back, Anne crossed the soft, red Turkish carpet and walked into the room beyond.

After the clear light of the late afternoon sun of the bedroom, her eyes took time to adjust to the dim light. Just as well. If she'd seen into the room right off, she'd probably have fled! She'd crossed the polished floor to where John stood, before she noticed the rows of whips and canes on the wall, and the bench and St Andrew's cross at the far end. She was about to kneel, when John stopped her with a hand on her arm and gently took the crop from her clenched fingers.

"You're too tense," he said, his voice low and almost caressing. "Relax! I want you to look at my toys. Walk around. Touch if you want to, and tell me if there's anything else you want to put off limits."

'Relax' was one order she doubted she could obey, but look she'd manage. Annie walked over to the nearest wall that seemed to drip with whips and chains, and metal, and leather, and stared, feeling like a mouse eyeing the cheese in the trap. There was more here than her wildest dreams, or nightmares, could ever conjure up and he expected her to...

"John?" She turned. He was still standing in the same spot, watching her. "I don't know where to even begin. I've never seen half these things. I've no idea what they'd feel like or if..." She shook her head.

"Okay!" John crossed the few to stand by her. "Let's take it another way. Show me what Mark has used on you and we'll take it from there."

Annie reached for a pair of whips. "These, almost the same but mine are purple suede."

"Yours?"

"Mark gave them to me as a present."

"Pity I didn't have you bring them, but never mind." John turned her around to face the middle of the room. "See the bar hanging from that chain?"

Annie nodded "Yes...John."

"Go grab it, and stand with your feet planted wide."

She had to stretch to reach it. The soft padded leather covered bar felt cool and comfortable against her sweaty palms. As John watched she set her feet apart and took a slow deep breath.

"Ready?" he asked.

Dry throated, she nodded. "Yup."

"Is that how you address me?"

Annie shivered at the menace in his calm voice. "I'm sorry, John. I'm ready, John."

"Good," his voice had gone from harsh to caressing. He walked around her. Twice. Her skin began to tingle under his silent scrutiny. "I'm going to beat you with my crop. For as long as I choose or until you call out your safe word, you understand?"

This time she remembered. "Yes, John."

"When I stop you will kiss the crop and then get on your knees and suck my cock. But first, I'm going to blindfold you."

He used a silk scarf. The darkness helped her retreat into herself as she braced for the first blow.

She waited for what seem like forever, and almost jumped at the touch of his hand on her hip. His fingers were cool and gentle as he stroked a vee down to her pussy and up to her other hip bone. He touched between her breasts and trailed sensation down her breastbone and belly until she couldn't hold back the shiver.

"Mark's right, you're ultra sensitive, and..." His fingers entered her fast and confident. "...wet already. Doesn't take much does it?"

"No, John." She almost cried with shame and confusion.

"Don't worry," he whispered, his breath warm in her ear. "There's nothing you can do but take what I give you." His finger touched her lips. "You may only speak to say your safe word." He stroked her cheek. "Get yourself ready."

She braced herself and waited for the first blow—which never came. He was toying with her, making her wait, tempting her to speak. She bit her lip and made herself breathe slowly, willing the shaking and shivering to stop.

She felt the first touch. Between her breasts. Not his fingers. This was hard and cold. The end of the crop. She held back the shudder but she couldn't restrain a quiet moan as the end of the crop parted her labia and rested a hair's breadth from her clit. As she rocked her hips to rub herself against the crop, he moved it right away.

"Bad, girl," he whispered in her ear. "Now you really do deserve to be beaten. And remember, no coming until I give permission, or you'll learn that my punishment is more than a few swipes of a belt."

Annie steadied her legs and waited. She couldn't steady her breath, that seemed to come at its own speed, chasing her heartbeat. She felt his hand on her arse, stroking, smoothing. Was he readying the skin he was about to beat?

He moved away and she hung alone in the dark with her fears until his crop touched her between her shoulder blades. Just a gentle rub that slid down her spine to stop above her crack. She felt the soft pressure ease to the right as the crop traced the outline of her hip and thigh, across the back of her knees, and then up her other side. John repeated this, seven, eight times, she lost count but each time the downward trail stopped a little higher until he was circling her arse and the tops of her thighs.

"Just a little part of you," John said, his voice making her jump in the quiet, "but the best, and you're a virgin to the crop aren't you?" Annie nodded, remembering his taboo on speech. She had no idea if he noticed, or understood. "Ready or not, here comes the first one."

Annie braced herself. Would it hurt more or less than the belt? It was a gentle tap.

Nothing more. Not even a smart. But it was followed by a rain of them. Soft enough not to hurt, but just enough to need effort to stifle her sighs. He continued, never harder, never faster, Annie relaxed into the rhythm of his strokes. She'd dreaded this and it was wonderful! Her arse throbbed as the crop sent thrills straight into her cunt. She lost track of time, half floating in a strange veil of need, poised on the edge of pain.

An edge that she half toppled into when John put his arm round her shoulders and said, "Let go. You've had enough for now."

She hit the present with a rush as she half collapsed to her knees. "Easy," John whispered. "I'm taking off the blindfold. Close your eyes a minute."

She opened them slowly, blinking against the light and the throbbing in her bottom and thighs. "'You do Mark proud, Annie."

Inches from her face he held the crop. She kissed it without stopping to think, and tasted the sweet, salt savor of her own sweat on the damp leather. She licked her own taste from her lips before meeting John's eyes.

He wasn't too pleased. "You're taking too long, Annie. Have you forgotten the rest of my order?"

She had. Momentarily.

Her wore black, button front jeans and obviously had no intention of making anything easier for her. Every movement or twist brushed her hand or fingers against his burgeoning erection. With sweaty hands and fumbling fingers she managed one, stiff metal button and saw he was naked under his jeans. The second button revealed a dark mat of almost black hair, and as she released the third, his cock burst out of the fly, the round pink, purple head just inches from her face.

Annie swallowed as her eyes feasted on the firm arm of flesh aimed at her mouth. John's circumcised cock was shorter than Mark's. But what it might lack in length, it more than made up in girth. She'd have to open wide to take him wherever he planned to invade. She knew, her mouth was just the beginning.

Before she returned to Mark, John would fill her every orifice and she would let him, but the thought of that massive cock stretching her arse...

"Annie, your amazement flatters me but I want it sucked, not adored."

John's words brought her back to reality, and her obligation. Without hesitating any longer, she leaned forward, and resting the flat of her hands on his thighs, opened her mouth and took him in. He filled her with his heat, strength and raw maleness, as she ran her tongue up and down his length, skimming over the silk-smooth head and shaping her lips around his ridge. His hands took control of her head. She relaxed her neck and shoulders and let him take command. Moving her back and forth, he fucked her mouth until her muffled whimpers accompanied his thrusts.

He pulled out suddenly. She almost toppled forward in surprise. "Easy," he said, almost sounding amused as he helped her to her feet. "You are, aren't you?" Annie blinked, not sure whether to answer or not. "You're so easy, Annie. A couple of hours back, you didn't want to leave Mark and now you want me to fuck you." Her face burned at the insult, and the realization it was absolutely true! She wanted his cock buried deep in her and she didn't much care where. "I will, but not yet. You've got to earn that, same as you've got to prove to me you deserve a climax." He glanced to his right. "Go over there. Put on everything you can and bring me the rest."

The soft leather ankle and wrist restraints were lined with padded silk and fastened with velcro. Putting them on would have been easy—if her hands weren't shaking slick with anxious sweat—but she managed, taking far longer than she knew was reasonable. The tit clamps she recognized from the party last weekend but she had no idea how to put them on—and was darn sure she didn't want to know. They had to hurt. But hadn't she been afraid of the crop not an hour earlier? She closed her hand over the shiny silvered clamps and picked up the flogger in her other hand. No question what he was using that for, and the tube of lubricant, she didn't have time to think about. She carried everything over to where John waited by the padded bench.

He had a glass of water in his hand. "Drink this. You must be thirsty." She hadn't realized how dry her throat was until she swallowed the first mouthful. She gulped it down and reached out for more. "Drink slowly," John said, tilting the glass for her as she drank deeply. "Let me see what you have," he said, as he put the half-empty glass down.

She dropped the tit clamps into his outstretched hand. "You didn't know what these were for?"

"I did, but I've no idea how to put them on."

He nodded. As he slipped them into the pocket of his jeans, Annie noticed his fly was buttoned back up but he was still obviously aroused. Come to that, so was she. "It's rude to stare, Annie."

"I apologize, John," she said, lowering her eyes, and, as if by instinct, kneeling.

"Nicely done. You're forgiven for that little peccadillo..." he hesitated as if thinking, "But I'm not sure I can forgive dragging my flogger on the floor."

Annie raised her hand as if shocked. The long tails of the flogger had trailed the floor. There was just too much to remember. "I'm sorry, John."

"I know you are, and I'm not displeased. You've given me good reason to flog you." He took the flogger, and snapped it in the air two or three times. The sound sent a wild shiver of apprehension and expectation right through to her bones – and just about every nerve ending she possessed. "One of my favorites, this. Look at it carefully."

As he turned the slim rounded handle between his fingers, Annie couldn't hold back the gasp. "It's dildo!"

"And it's going up your arse. Go get yourself over the horse."

She was bent over it, her wrists and ankles shackled to the legs, and her belly flat on the top before she realized how much it resembled the one in the gym at school. But this was bigger, blacker and much more padded. This was never intended to be vaulted over. This was for torture. She shivered as John rubbed the cold gel into her arse hole, tensing as he pushed one, then two fingers into her.

"Relax, Annie. I don't want to hurt you. Not yet, anyway." He was pressing the cold tip of the handle against her sphincter. She forced her muscles to relax, but couldn't hold back the groan as he slid the entire handle home, letting out a little scream as he twisted it deeper.

"Want to say your safe word?"

It took a minute to understand what he'd asked. Did she? "No!"

"Good. I'm going to fuck you with this awhile, just to see how much you can take. Or would you rather I flog you with the other end?"

"Whatever pleases you most." She exhaled at the effort of shaping the right words in a brain over washed with sensation.

"I think what pleases me, is to find another flogger."

He teased, trailing the thongs over her back and hips as she lay there unable to do much more than breath and feel. Every so often he'd stop, and tweak or turn the handle in her arse and then resume the gentle rain of blows that raked her skin with sensation. He built up speed and force until the thongs stung and her hips rocked in rhythm with the flogger, and a wild need build up deep inside her with each slap of the leather tails.

"John!" Annie called out, her voice sounding strange and tight. "I'm close to coming, Please! Edge!" The last word she almost screamed.

She heard the flogger drop to the floor, as his hand came between her legs. "Come, Annie, come for me!" As he spoke, he stroked her clit and her climax rose like a wave carrying her on its swell. Her pleasure peaked and Annie came with a wild scream. John pulled out the dildo with a twist, and she came again and again, riding the pleasure until her body sagged in a sweaty mass against the leather horse. Her wrists and ankles ached where she'd pulled against the restraints but nothing mattered but the slowly ebbing pleasure that left her light headed and weak.

John must have loosened the restraints, because now she was in his arms as he moved across the room, Her body still rippled with pleasure as he lay her on the bed.

"My turn now, Annie," he said as she watched him unbutton his jeans and let them fall to the floor. The mattress shifted under his weight. She felt his knee spreading her legs. "I've fucked

your mouth," he said, lifting her hips to slide a pillow beneath. "and your arse with my whip handle." He gently ran his hands over her breasts. "I'm going to have your lovely red wet cunt soon, but first." He pulled one nipple. Something glinted like silver. She gasped. He'd clamped her left nipple. It pinched a few moments before going numb. The second she was ready, for but the pain still brought a gasp to her lips.

"Feel okay?" John asked,

Annie nodded. "Now they do. They don't much feel your first time." As he spoke, he raised her hips with both hands and drove home. He fucked her slowly and deliberately, drawing almost completely out to plunge in deep and hard. "I love a wet cunt, Annie." he said as he pistoned in and out. "You're mine now, you know. Mine and Mark's never forget that."

Could she? Ever? Her body had take over her mind. She wanted what John could give her—and what Mark gave her—she wanted what every man and woman in the group could give—and she'd take....Her mind cut out, as she neared another climax. With a flick of his wrist, John pulled off the clamps and wild pain rushed with the blood back into her nipples. She screamed as she came again and again and again.

John slowly softened and slipped out. She was half asleep as he offered her more water, holding her shoulders as she drank. She was barely awake, as he wiped her face with a cool washcloth, and then washed between her legs, and dried her with a towel.

"Go to sleep," he said pulling the cool sheets around her. "The rest I have planned can wait for the morning."

Chapter Sixteen

The aroma of good coffee woke her. That and the weight of John's fists on the mattress beside her pillow.

"You can't sleep the whole morning away," he said. "I'm not quite finished with you yet." Annie opened her eyes, John smiled at her. "You need waking up. Go into the bathroom and bring me what you find on the ledge by the bath." She stood up, still foggy brained but getting more awake by the minute. "You may also pee while you're there."

Good of him! But she kept that thought to herself. She'd heard Emma and Tom talk about golden showers. That was one thing Mark hadn't introduced her to, and she had no wish to start this morning—if ever! Another whipping or fucking she could handle, but her arse still ached from the whip handle and her nipples were still too tender for comfort. She'd had enough first times to last her days.

A tube of lubricant, a peppermint flavored condom and a pair of latex gloves lay neatly on the black marble shelf. Annie took them with an almost steady hand. Lubricant meant her arse. Flavored condom: oral sex. Rubber gloves? Did he want to play doctor? She bit back the nervous smile, she'd come this far, she sure as hell wasn't screwing up now. Great choice of words! She exhaled slowly. Whatever waited, Mark and John had choreographed, that she felt certain. She had to trust them and submit that was all. All! It was everything!

"Put them on the bedside table," John said as she knelt at his feet. "Then assume display position, hands braced on the window ledge."

She had a perfect view across the cliff path. The morning was bright. Wispy clouds scudded across the sky and only the smallest of white caps broke the surface of the almost blue sea. In the distance a pair of fishing...

She gasped as John's open hand slapped with full force on her left butt cheek, followed in a fast crack on her right, and a swift tattoo of heavy spansks that had her biting her lip until she tasted the sweet copper tang of her own blood. When a stifled groan finally slipped out, John stopped, only to grab her hair and pull back her head.

"You don't like this?" he asked. "You'd rather the crop or my flogger?"

She had to gasp to reply. "Whatever pleases you, John!"

"It pleases me to see you keep this position."

She wanted to thank him for allowing her the support of the windowsill but curbed herself. She'd show her thanks by following orders. Even if her arms ached, and her leg muscles protested. She wouldn't think about her throbbing arse. She'd completely ignore the hand that stroked her heated bottom, and teased her thighs—or she could, until he pried open her cunt and rubbed between her lips.

"You love this don't you?" John asked, "Pain slut! That's what you are. Hot and dripping after just a half dozen spansks. Hell, next time, I will use that cane on you. Without a gag. It'll be fun to hear you squeal."

Her face burned to match her butt! More so, as she realized a river ran between her legs, the inside of the thighs were wet and she could smell her own arousal. Was John right? Did she really like this so much? She refused to answer that, even to herself! Her body's responses were more than she wanted to understand right now. She took several slow, deep breaths. And almost jumped as John squeezed cold lubricant up her arse hole.

"Want my cock up here?" he asked as a finger penetrated deeply and with teasing slowness. "Do you slut?"

"Whatever pleases you...John." Sooner or later she'd regret saying that, but she sensed a

wrong answer would get her real punishment.

"You've a rather nice arse," he said easing his finger in and out until she moaned. "Yes!" His finger came right out and then he slammed in deep and fast. Her moan became a shriek of surprise. "Like that?"

She had to catch her breath before replying, "Yes, John!" Her reply sent her mind into a spin. She *was* enjoying this: the hurts, the pain, the caresses, the wild climaxes last night, even the insult of slut, all pushed her mind and body into a dark, secret place of pleasure.

John was standing right behind her now, rubbing what had to be his erection against her crack. Would he fuck her arse? Annie shut her eyes, waiting for his wicked intrusion. He smoothed his hands up and down her back. One hand spreading the remnants of lubricant, the other sliding warmth along her spine. With a sigh of pleasure and surrender, she pressed back against him, wanting him deep inside.

The noise of the slap struck her just ahead of the sting. "Not yet, you slut!" He stepped back. She almost stood upright, but a dark instinct made her keep her position. She wasn't braced for the next slap, and the force made her wobble. John steadied her with a hand on her hip. She'd just regained her balance when he pulled her upright and jerked her round to face him.

His eyes were dark and gleaming and his mouth curled just a little. "It's not your arse I'm playing with this morning. I think I'll try your lovely cunt for size." Annie shivered and swallowed slowly. Waiting. He brushed the hair from her forehead. How could a hand with such a gentle touch hit so hard? The hurt from his slaps and the earlier beating had faded to a warm glow but the need between her legs throbbed.

Annie bit her lip, knowing John called the shots and she had to wait and follow his lead. His hands slid down her face to her shoulders and lower to cover her breasts. Her already hard nipples stiffened like beads.

"Get on the bed," he whispered. He positioned her on her back, knees bent and spread, and feet flat on the mattress. Open and exposed, she shivered as his hand round her ankle repositioned her foot. "Cold...or excited?" John asked.

"I'm not cold," Annie replied. Just saying that much seemed an effort.

"You're right there." His fingers skimmed the edges of the cunt lips. "Hot and ready for it is closer the truth." Two fingers dipped inside her. "Taste," he said, his voice low and compelling and taste she did, almost repressing the shudder of excitement.

"Does Mark insist you keep your pussy smooth?"

Caught in the eroticism of savoring her own arousal, it took a minute or two to process John's question. "He does," she managed. Speaking wasn't easy with John's hand spread across said pussy and his thumb on her clit.

"When did you last shave it?"

"I didn't, Claudine waxed it."

Fingertips tapped across her pussy. "If you can handle waxing, you'll have no trouble with what I have in mind." He grinned

"What do you have in mind?"

He was silent several seconds. Annie waited for the reprimand for questioning him, or even a slap, but he grinned. "Opening you up, so I send you back to Mark, a different woman." He'd barely finished speaking when he placed a hand on the inside of each thigh, spreading her even wider and put his mouth on her pussy. She all but came off the mattress as his tongue tickled her cunt lips apart and teased, but never quite touched, her clit. Her hands clutched at the sheets as she whimpered.

"Like that?" John asked.

"Ye...yes!" She'd never stuttered in her life. Now she felt lucky to be able to speak.

"Shut you eyes. Keep them shut until I tell you to open them and I'll do it some more."

Being blind folded would be easier. But she gladly closed her eyes and waited in the comfort and excitement of the dark. John was as good as his word. His mouth came back between her legs and she felt herself spiraling towards climax as bright points flashed behind her closed lids and her mind and body poised on the brink of release. "Edge!"

"Good, girl!" John promised, his head resting on her thigh as he gently stroked and then parted her cunt lips. "You may climax later...but not yet. I'm nowhere near finished."

He kept her close to the edge with persistent and skilled fingers. Never letting her climax but building her need into a slow fever as she clenched her eyes shut and wetness pooled between her legs. At some point, he'd pushed a pillow under her hips and she lay tilted and poised for whatever he wanted.

He had one, then two fingers inside her, stretching and pulsing against her inner walls. Now withdrawing, then reaching deep inside, and all the while his thumb worked her clit. She should have climaxed long ago, she wanted to climax, but she wanted this to last forever.

"Eyes still closed?" he asked. She nodded and grunted assent. Speech seemed too much effort. "Keep them that way."

Good thing he warned her. For a few second she felt nothing, no fingers, no touch. What was he doing? The cold made her jump but she scrunched her eyes together. John spread lubricant all over and up her cunt, while his fingers pumped her

"Like that?" he asked, pushing how many fingers? Two? Three? Deep inside her.

"Yes!" she gasped out.

"Lie still. Don't move. I'm coming in deep."

Was it two fingers? Three? She was filled. Stretched He moved inside, turning and pushing gently. Squishing with the lubricant, and pulsing against her inner walls. Or was her channel pulsing against his fingers? She neither knew nor cared. Nothing mattered but her body and how John filled her. She'd wanted his cock but his fingers seemed bigger and wider than the largest cock in her dreams. He moved again. Seemed his fingers grew in size as her body throbbed against them. She was filled. Invaded.

"Stay steady." She obeyed, loving the feeling of pressure inside. He propped her up on a pillow. "Now open you eyes slowly, and look between your legs."

The sunlight dazzled for a few moments. As her eyes adjusted, Annie looked down. And stared.

Her breath caught in her throat and her eyes stretched wide. "John!" she said in a scared whisper. She couldn't believe her eyes. His wrist lay between her open cunt lips. His fist had disappeared. Inside her. "What are you...!"

"Don't panic! It's okay." His fist pumped gently inside her. "Like that?"

"Yes. But..." She looked up into his eyes. "What...?"

"I'm fisting you. Lie back and enjoy it."

Easy for him to say! And not so hard to do. Not when he bent down and his tongue played her clit. When her hips rocked, he paused. "Come whenever you are ready, Annie," he said, his breath warm on her heated cunt, before he bend back down. This time he never stopped, he went on and on. Teasing, driving her to the edge as his fist slowly turned inside. Stretching her to her limits until her body soared. As her hips jerked in rising rhythm, his fist rocked with her. Pressing and pushing, until she climaxed again and again in a bursting crescendo that left her panting and sweating in a boneless heap on the pillows.

She felt his fist ease out, leaving her wide open and exposed. A little moan followed her

realization it was over. She was sore inside, tingling outside, and every never ending in her body thrummed. She said something, but didn't remember what. Her eyes closed and she slipped back into sleep.

But only for a little while.

John shook her awake. "You need to shower and get dressed. Mark is waiting for you."

She'd almost forgotten Mark in the intensity of the last...however long it was!

Warm water on her welts and bruises reminded her that she would bear the marks of this night for several days but she didn't hurt as much as she'd expected. A look in the mirror as she dried off, showed far fewer marks than she'd imagined.

One of her holiday dresses, the blue one, was spread out on the bed. She pulled it on, slipped on her sandals, and went downstairs. She froze half way down at the sound of voices. Who was it? Knowing better than to linger, she walked though the open doorway into the kitchen. Mark was, quite literally, waiting for her. While she'd showered, the pair of them had been drinking tea as if nothing untoward had happened in the past eighteen hours. She stood in the doorway, torn between relief at seeing Mark, and anger at their calm while she still teemed with unsettled emotions.

"Annie!" Both men spoke together.

Mark stood and crossed the room, wrapping his arms around her. "You look so sexy this morning. I'm tempted to fuck you here and now." He smiled and her body responded, nipples hard under the blue cotton and dampness collecting between her legs. After the past night, she marveled her body still reacted so. "Wish I could..." Mark smiled. "But we've got to leave. I'm off to Brussels tomorrow morning."

That took a minute to process. "What happened?"

"Emergency. Got a call from a client last night."

He allowed her ten minutes to swallow a cup of tea and chew the bacon sandwiches John slapped together for them. This wasn't what she'd expected, but now they were leaving and she'd barely said two words to John. Mind you she wasn't sure what to say! 'Thank you for having me,' seemed a bit trite. She settled for just, "Thank you".

"My pleasure, I assure you, Annie," John replied. "I'll leave an evening free for you, next time you're down here," he paused and reached across to the dresser that lined one wall. "Meanwhile something special for you." He handed her the riding crop.

Dry throated she closed her fingers over the now cool leather. "Thanks." Not that she was completely sure she meant it but...

"I'll have that!" Mark took it out of her hand and swished it a couple of times in the air. "Something to look forward to when I get back."

"Be sure to use it regularly," John said. "Make sure she never forgets what it feels like."

As if she ever could!

It was early evening when Mark dropped her and her suitcase at her own front door. He'd been quiet most of the drive back, dismissed her offer to continue reading the "Story of O," stopped only long enough to grab coffee and a snack, and failed to produce a single toy or torment the entire journey. If Annie hadn't been so occupied with her own thoughts, she'd be worried. As it was, she decided Mark was as unsettled inside about resuming his "normal" life as she was. He looked tired, and to her utter amazement, accepted her offer to drive the end part of the way.

Mark carried her things into the house, but refused her offer of tea. He had to get back – fair enough – he was off to Brussels on business in the morning but...

"Is something wrong, Mark?" He was halfway to the front door before she finally asked what had been chewing her up all the way home.

"Wrong?" He gave her the oddest look, parted his lips as if to say something, and pulled her close, his hand on her hips pressing her into him.

He had not lost interest in her, whatever might be niggling him. She longed to feel him pounding deep within her, to feel his hands all over her naked body. Surely they had time for a quickie. "Can't you stay a minute?" She pressed against his erection and sensed his response. "Or five?"

"No, Annie," he whispered as his mouth came down.

Her body heard a different answer. His lips opened hers and she let out a little sigh as his tongue pressed deep. His hand in her hair held her close and his mouth played hers, as his lips promised even more. She leaned into him, rocking her hips against his. Naked as she was under her dress, it would only take seconds to have him inside her. She was wet already and her nipples were hard. Not long before...

She lifted her lips from Mark's. "Come inside."

He stepped back, keeping his hands on her hips but putting space between them. "Not now, Annie."

She tamped down her disappointment. "Are you telling me I'm not ready yet?"

He shook his head. "I'm not ready, Annie."

His body darn well said otherwise but..."Mark?"

He came close enough to drop a kiss on her forehead—a bit of a let down after what he'd started a couple of seconds ago. "I'm not ready Annie, I need time to think."

Muscles tightened from the roof of her mouth to the pit of her belly. Here it comes! She blinked back tears...After all they'd gone through, was this a brush off?

Mark took two steps to his car and turned. "I love you, Annie," he said and opened the driver's door.

She leaped after him, grabbing the door handle with both hands. "What do you mean?"

He looked up at her and smiled. "Exactly what I said. I love you Annie. I don't know what to do about it. But I love you."

She stood in the driveway after the sound of his engine faded in the summer evening.

Closing the door on the night, Annie looked around her. The cottage looked the same, but was she? Yes? Perhaps. Other than knowing Mark loved her. What next? She'd figure it out or find out. Later. She put on the kettle, opened windows and the back door to let in fresh air, and turned on her answering machine. Her mother wanted her to call, two people wanted her to buy double glazing and the village newsagent reminded her that she owed for the last month's newspapers. Right at the end of the tape was a message from school. Everyone from school was meeting for lunch at a pub in Effingham on Monday. Could Annie join them?

Monday was tomorrow. She'd be there. She needed to spend time with her own friends.

Her body might be in the dining room of the Barley Mow. Her mind was torn between replaying Mark's parting words, and deciding how she'd respond. What exactly did Mark's love mean? A permanent relationship, with anniversaries commemorated with piercing and nipple rings?

"You're not with us. Still on holiday down in the West country?" Peter Bryan, physics and maths, did a lousy fake Cornish accent.

"Sort of. I had a great time."

"You look as if you did," Ellie, the art teacher, said. "Sort of honeymoon, was it?"

At that, Annie blushed. "I thoroughly enjoyed myself,"

"Bet Mark enjoyed himself too," Ellie said.

Getting ribbed by friends, teased by her colleagues was a world away from the days with Mark and his circle. Where did she really belong? In Mark's erotic world or the familiar and predicable life of a schoolteacher? Or could she, perhaps, have both?

"You're still miles away," Peter said. "Better come and concentrate on darts."

She did and surprised herself by beating him. They sat around half the afternoon, talking, teasing and luxuriating in a free day while the rest of the world worked.

Driving home, Annie's thoughts went right back to Mark. She missed him, and the passion her stirred in her, but was the lifestyle he offered what she really wanted?

She'd answer that, once she and Mark had a heart to heart. She tried on the phone—twice. Both times he'd put her off, insisting, not entirely unreasonably, that they needed to be face to face. Was he regretting what he'd said? Did he or did he not mean it? Did she love him? It was a lot simpler when it was just sex between them. Or had it ever been "just sex"? Mark filled a need she'd never known existed. It was as if he completed her. Could she ever walk away from what he offered? Was this being in love?

She had a hundred questions chasing round her mind as she waited for Mark to arrive Saturday, but they stilled as opened the door. He held a bouquet wrapped in green florist's paper in one hand.

"Mark?" It came out as a question—not what she intended. "I'm glad you're back."

He paused a moment on the threshold. "So am I. Traveling has lost some of its lustre." He handed her the flowers. "Missed you like hell!"

The bouquet stood a good chance of getting smushed as he gathered her into his arms. She dropped it on the hall table just in time. And got her breath back some seconds after her let her go. Her heart was racing and a wild need stirred deep in her gut, but she was not letting him distract her. Not yet at least. "Want a drink?"

"Tea. I want you stone cold sober tonight at Alistair's."

Yes. The party tonight—but before then...She filled the kettle, plugged it in and measured three scoops into the pot. She was delaying. Not any more, she wasn't "Mark," she paused as he looked up and she had his attention. "On Friday, you said you loved me. Did you mean it?"

"Do you doubt it?"

Answering a question with a question always irritated her. "Given the way you announced it...I did wonder! You love me but you don't know what to do about it. Sheesh!"

He took a couple of steps closer, his eyes dark with an emotion she couldn't quite read. "I do love you, Annie and I spoke the truth. I don't know what to do about it. Perhaps I should start by asking, do you love me?"

"Suppose I do love you, what then?"

He looked at her as if she had half a head. "You'll be mine for good."

"I thought you didn't know what to do?"

"Hell, Annie." He ran his hand through his hair, backed off and turned to look out the open back door. Seemed he was fascinated by the old apple tree.

The kettle boiled and she let it distract her enough to fill the pot and put it on the tray with the cups. She felt more like smashing them against them wall. But they'd been her grandmother's and..."Mark?" She seemed to be doing nothing but making a question out of his name.

"Let's go outside."

She wasn't sure how fresh air would help, but it couldn't hurt. He held out his hand. "Walk down to the stream."

The brook that skirted the bottom of her garden was almost dry. They sat side by side on the bank, looking at the slow trickle that rippled over the pebbles.

"I love you, Annie. I hope you love me, but it's up to you what we make of it."

She took a deep breath. "Up to me? What happened to Mark the Dominant?"

He let out a sigh of exasperation. "Annie," He turned to her, his face showing what looked like pain. "This has nothing to do with being dominant or submissive. I love you, but I can't make you love me, anymore than I can make you do anything you don't agree to." He picked up a small rock and tossed it into the stream. "I wish the hell I could!"

"Make me love you, or make me do things I don't agree to?"

"For Heaven's sake! Stop your facetious questions! I'm serious. Do you love me?" He yelled the last three words.

"Yes!"

His shoulders sagged with relief. He grabbed her by the shoulders and in seconds, she was flat on her back, every ounce of his weight on her, her heart skittering with anticipation. "Sure about that?"

"Yes!"

"Going to change your mind?"

"No! And who's asking all the damn questions now?"

"That's another facetious question. I should spank you for that."

A sensation she now recognized gathered deep in her belly. "At the party tonight. Right now, we've got to decide what to do."

He ran a finger down the side of her face. "Got any ideas?"

"How about stop squashing me. I can think better when my lungs function."

He kissed her before he rolled off and lay on his side, grinning at her. "All right? Lungs functioning? Let's have an idea."

"I'm in the same bind as you. What do we do now? Move in together? Get married like Jane and Alan or Emma and Alistair?"

"No!" Was that no to getting married? Maybe she had leapt ahead a bit but..."Whatever we do. It won't be like anyone else. It'll be like Mark and Annie."

It couldn't be any other way. "What do you want, Mark?"

"Whatever you do. We can get married. Live together, or stay as we are now for the rest of our lives. It's up to you."

As it always was. She took a deep breath and leaned up and kissed him. "Give me a bit of time, Mark."

His hand stroked her arm. "I'm not going anywhere. Just let me know when you decide."

After making a fresh pot, the first one went cold, they spent the afternoon at a local antique fair—almost like any ordinary couple looking at Victorian silver or thirties chinaware—and now they were parked in Emma and Alistair's front drive. In a few minutes, she'd walk upstairs to Emma's spare room and let Mark strip her naked in readiness for...hell if she knew.

"Annie?" Mark stood by the open car door, waiting. "Everything all right?" he asked, as she stepped onto the graveled drive. She nodded. She was fine. She felt confused and horny as hell. She needed a good fuck, and...maybe after tonight she'd have a better idea of what she really wanted.

Claudine and Emma greeted her like a long lost sister. Jane and Alan arrived minutes later.

Anne was introduced around, and recognized several people from the last time. And praise Providence, the Austins were nowhere in sight! But this time she understood more, a whole lot more! She knew why there were eye bolts in the dining room ceiling, and didn't have to guess the use for the leather covered horse set up in the sitting room. The last time she'd seen one, she'd been bent over it.

"Annie!" Tom Baldwin came towards her, all celebrity smiles and a wicked gleam in his eyes. "Seems like ages since I had my hands on you." He gave her a big hug.

"Restrain yourself, boy!" Claudine said. "Your time will come, when I give the word and not until."

Tom stepped back. "Yes, Boss." He sounded sober, but the glint in his eyes didn't fade one bit.

Annie caught an undertow of communication between them and Mark. "What's happening?"

Tom grinned. "The bosses have something planned for us." He glanced at Claudine who handed him her empty glass.

"Earn your keep, Tom, I need a refill."

Tom left with her empty glass. Annie looked from Mark to Claudine. "What do you have planned?"

"You'll find out, duckie!" Claudine replied and walked off.

"Mark..." Annie began, looking at him as her stomach did a few slow flips.

"I'll tell you very soon." Mark took her by the hand. "There's someone here I want you to meet."

Turned out there were a good dozen people he wanted her to meet, and it was over an hour later, as Mark watched her undress in Emma's spare bedroom, that she learned exactly what they had planned. "Tom's going to flog you while I watch."

"No!" she whispered, but meant it as surely as if she'd yelled. Tom was not laying into her again. Just thinking back on the way he'd thrashed her with Mark's belt sent her body throbbing with remembered pain.

"Annie?" Mark's quiet voice held a very strong question. Not exactly displeasure but...

She looked up at Mark's deep blue eyes. "You always said I could stop any time I wanted, right?"

"Of course. You're worried Tom won't honor your safe word? He will."

"That's not it! Tom's already beaten me once. If one of us is hitting the other, it should be my turn now."

She hadn't planned on leaving Mark speechless, but she as good as succeeded. His eyes widened and his mouth gaped just enough to show his one crooked tooth at the bottom. As he stared down at her in silence, her blood pressure pounded in her ears. "Annie," he said at long last, "I never imagined you felt the urge to dominate."

"I don't. Not really. I just don't want to submit to Tom."

Mark nodded. "Not even to please me?"

"Why do you want this?"

His forehead creased between his eyes. Had she gone too far? Mark shrugged. "Truth to tell, Annie, I'm too darn travel worn to give you what you need. Didn't want you to feel let down. I know you were expecting to play."

"I was, but submitting to Tom isn't what I had in mind." As she spoke, her thoughts seemed to straighten themselves out. "I don't want to dominate, not really. But for once, I'd like to know

what it feels to be on the giving rather than receiving end."

"You don't know the first thing about giving a flogging."

"No," she conceded, "but couldn't you give me a few pointers?" Mark's eyebrows almost got lost under his hair at that. "I mean; everyone was a beginner once, right? I already know the difference between a flogger, a crop, and a belt, at least from the receiving end."

Mark shook his head, but his eyes gleamed with something like appreciation. "You'll never cease to surprise me, Annie," he paused. "Kneel." She obeyed. "Wait here. I need to talk to Claudine."

As he opened the door, he spoke to someone outside. "That's fine, come on in, just ignore Annie, she won't get in your way."

Another couple came in; Annie heard the door close and fought the urge to see who had just entered. She kept her eyes on Emma's geometric blue and gray carpet, while a soft voiced woman told her partner exactly what she planned to do with her, later on in the evening. Just listening to her, Annie felt the moisture gather between her legs and her imagination and body followed the promise with vicarious terror. The next couple prepared in near silence, that half spooked her. Where was Mark? Was she going to have to wait here all evening? A third couple came in, Annie thought she recognized the voices. Perhaps she'd been introduced to this couple earlier in the evening. She fought the urge to look up, keeping her eyes down, even during the over-the-knee spanking that filled the room with cries and sobs.

They left, the sub quiet now. What next? How long would Mark leave her here? Her knees were getting stiff and she had pins and needles in one foot.

The last couple must have left the door open. At least she never heard it open, just sensed footsteps vibrating along the floor as someone approached. "Stand, Annie." Mark held out both hands. Stiff from kneeling, she was glad of his help. "Follow me."

They crossed the landing to Emma and Alistair's own room. Claudine waited, wearing a black leather catsuit and a rather odd expression on her face. "So! You want to pay my boy back, with a little tit for tat?"

"No!" Annie had thought that out while she waited. "I just want to know what it feels like to be on the other end of the whip."

Claudine nodded. "And it just so happens you owe him a few, right?"

"Not exactly. More, I won't feel guilty slapping him."

Claudine smiled. "Annie, you won't feel guilty."

That Annie took as agreement but her relief dried up in a cold flash of panic. What was her mother's maxim about being careful what you wished for? "Take it." Claudine held out a small flogger, not much bigger than the pussy whip Mark loved to use. "Before I let you loose on my boy, we'd better make sure you don't do him any harm."

Mark arranged a puffed up bolster and a couple of pillows on the bed. "Pretend this is Tom."

Freshly ironed white linen didn't exactly mirror Tom's broad shoulders, but she got the idea. They wanted her to practice before letting her loose on Tom's body.

"Stand with your legs planted securely on the floor."

"Don't lock your knees."

"Move your waist."

"Strike from your shoulder."

"Keep every thong under control. If you wrap him it'll hurt like hell."

Annie lost track who gave which instruction. The two of them watched her constantly and

critiqued her every move. After what seemed like forever, and Annie was sweating as if she'd run a ten K race, Claudine seemed satisfied.

"I'll go tell my boy we've changed our plans," she said with a wicked grin. "This is going to be fun."

"Here." Mark broke the seal on a bottle of mineral water and handed it to her. "You need this." She did. She swigged most of the bottle in one go. As she lowered the almost empty bottle she met Mark's eyes. "Ready to go?"

She nodded. "I think so."

"You sound less confident than you did a half hour ago."

"Now I have to worry about wrapping him with the ends of the flogger, getting him in the kidneys, or having it land wild."

He smiled. "Thought we just stood there and let fly with gay abandon, eh?"

"I hadn't really thought about it at all. I mean when you're getting beaten, all you're aware of is what's happening to you. You don't give much thought to the other end of the whip."

"I'll bet Tom will." Mark took the now empty bottle. "Getting a beating from a submissive, who's half his weight and ten inches shorter, isn't something he'll forget in a hurry." Had she made a big mistake? Would Tom bear a grudge after this? "Don't frown so." Mark pulled her close and treated her to a slow, sensual kiss that sent warm confidence roaring through her. "You'll be brilliant. I knew the day I first saw you, you were a woman worth having. I'm going to enjoy the next hour."

She hoped she did.

Tom Baldwin, the heart throb of millions of women, was tied naked on the flogging horse. Annie stopped still in the doorway to Emma's sitting room. Did she really have the nerve to walk in there and beat Tom with the whip she clutched in her now sticky hand?

"Before you begin, ask in his safe word. And check every so often. It will be harder for him, taking this from you, than from Claudine."

Annie nodded to acknowledge Mark's words, exhaled slowly, and stepped over the threshold.

Tom's eyes were closed, his dark lashes, a silky fringe on his cheeks. Annie smiled. Lots of women dreamed of having Tom Baldwin in their bed. She'd fucked him, and now she had him helpless. She rested her hand on the firm flesh of his shoulders. "Hello, Tom."

His lids snapped open. His breath caught, and he swallowed, heck it was a gulp. He didn't look her in the face, just lowered his lids. "Hello, Annie."

Almost without thinking, she spread her fingers and smoothed her open palm down Tom's back. His skin was cool almost clammy. There were two of them scared here! She almost walked out, but Mark was watching, Claudine sat back in a wing chair by the fireplace, and Annie half suspected, more people stood in the doorway behind her.

"What's your safe word, Tom?"

"Thomas Sebastian Alexander Rudolph Baldwin."

What a mouthful! Almost as many names as the royal family. "Say it and I'll stop right away. You understand."

"Yes, boss."

That stopped her a few seconds. She wasn't Tom's "boss." But she was. Now. She'd taken Claudine's place and Tom trusted her not to let him down.

Anne stepped back, planted her feet steady as Mark had taught her, raised her shoulder, and brought the flogger down with a wide sweep. The ends landed across Tom's broad shoulders

with a satisfying slap. With a soft twist of the wrist, Annie dragged the thongs along his back, over his firm arse, and down his thighs. Tom shivered, from his neck to the soles of his feet.

She did the same next time, but when she brought the tails down to the backs of his knees, she flicked her wrist and dragged the soft leather back up his thighs and up to his shoulders. A slow appreciative sigh greeted her efforts. She gave him two more, slow, almost caressing, body strokes, before upping the pace.

She went gradually, still uncertain of her own skill, but with each blow and Tom's response, her confidence grew. Annie increased the force and speed of her blows, keeping a comfortable rhythm and remembering Mark's admonition to watch Tom's skin and his face for any sign of distress. She marveled at the marks she made on his tanned skin. Her first strokes did nothing but raise a sigh, and faint pink marks. Now, her strokes left red trails across his shoulders. She alternated between Tom's shoulders and his rather nice bottom and strong thighs. Mark had warned her to avoid his lower back, and that part of Tom stayed unmarked—a wonderful contrast to the red trails crisscrossing the rest of him.

Sighs and moans gave way to loud grunts, and finally a hard swat across his buttocks brought out a yell. Annie stopped. "Remember your safe word?" she asked her hand on his shoulder. His skin burned warm under her fingers.

"Yes!" It came out in a rush of pent-up breath.

"Want to use it?"

Tom grinned, the sweat trickling down his forehead. "Getting tired, little boss? More than you can handle?"

He'd never have dared say that to Claudine, or anyone but her for that matter! Annie stood upright and looked down at Tom's captive body. "In that case, I'll continue."

It wasn't anger, she realized that somewhere in the back of her mind, more a need to prove to Tom she wasn't playing—or rather *was* playing. Seriously. She found a good rhythm, slower than before with longer rests between hits, but she put all her strength into each swing, and was rewarded with louder groans and stronger cries. They were both sweating. Tom's entire body glistened with exertion and trickles of sweat run between her breasts and down her back, and felt the added weight of Tom's sweat on the thongs.

How much longer? She couldn't go on forever—but how could she call it quits? Ask Tom again? She knew his answer. She could beat him all night. Tom would never concede defeat to another submissive. Thoughts raced around in Annie's scrambled brain. She sensed other guests watching, gathering round the room, but saw nothing but Tom's ever reddening, slick, naked body.

Annie paused to brush damp hair off her face, take a deep breath, and flex her tired arm.

"Wind it down." She almost jumped at Claudine's whisper.

"Time to call it a night. Give him three more, hard as you know how and make him count."

Annie nodded and as Claudine stepped away, bent to whisper to Tom. "Almost over, if you count down the next three."

Tom grimaced, He was beyond grinning cheekily now. "Yes, boss." His voice came strained and tired. Should she plain stop now? She glanced at Claudine. Claudine mouthed, "Go on."

Annie nodded, stepped back, planted her aching legs as firmly as she could, raised the flogger and brought it down for all she was worth.

On the echo of Tom's yell, she heard. "One."

Two and three followed easily enough and then Annie froze. She just stood and stared at Tom through hazy eyes, the flogger dangling from her aching arm.

"It's considered thoughtful to release him." Mark said.

Annie stared at Mark. Her fogged brain took a few seconds to process what he'd said. Tom needed untying. Annie released the velcro straps that held his left leg. She noticed Mark released his arms and Claudine did his other leg and then between them they helped Tom to his feet.

Watching him place one shaking leg in front of the other, Annie felt his weariness. Or was it her own? Alan stepped in from the edge of the room, and Mark moved back, letting him take Tom's weight.

As Annie watched Tom's painful movements, Mark came close, and took the flogger from her grasp. "It's over, Annie."

Was it? Or was something just beginning?

"Mark..." she began, and couldn't think of another word to say.

"It's okay." How could she not believe him? She managed to walk out the room, only because his arm kept her upright.

He sat her down, on what she recognized as the window seat in the kitchen. Someone handed her a glass of sparkling water. She stared at the clinking ice and watched the bubble rise and burst on the surface. "Drink it," Mark said. She gulped it down, and the refill that appeared right away.

"I never realized how thirsty I was."

"Never knew how hard a dominant has to work, either."

"I never thought about it." She smiled at him, even her face seemed to ache. "Awfully self-centered of me."

"I won't punish you for it."

She smiled at the gentleness in his voice. "I'm worn out."

"Don't want to play any more?"

"Not tonight."

"Let's go home."

Nothing would please her more. She was cold and weary. Every muscle in her body hurt. This was one night when the only use she'd have for a bed was to sleep.

She felt quiet inside during the drive back to Mark's flat. Not peaceful, more like empty, used up. She'd been relieved to leave the party, and half wondered how she'd ever look Tom in the face again. But as Mark pulled into his underground car park, she felt nothing but bone-aching weariness. It took all her energy to swallow the drink he made her. She thought it was cocoa, but it seemed her taste buds had gone on strike. What was wrong with her?

"Okay?" Mark asked, taking half-empty mug from her shaking hand.

"Yes...I don't know...No!" She shook her head and her entire body quivered. Her flesh rattled within her skin, every nerve and muscle seemed to move in opposite directions. "Mark!" Annie called as she collapsed into a wobbling mass.

Mark swept her into his arms and carried her into his bedroom. She was under the covers in seconds, Mark holding her until the shaking eased. "It's okay, Annie," he said. "It happens. Your mind can't quite accept what you've just done to another human being. You'll be fine in the morning." A little while later, Annie took him at his word and fell asleep.

"Want to dominate again?" Mark asked at breakfast on his balcony over looking the river.

Did she? "I'm not sure." It would be sometime before she sorted out her mixed emotions. She clearly remembered the elation at wielding power...but...

"I might order you to."

There was a long silence broken only by a horn from a passing boat, and the sound of

distance voices in the street below. "Then, I will." Had she really meant that?

"I know." Mark grinned. "You'll never refuse me, will you Annie?"

Her throat went tight at the thought of what that sentence implied. "No," she just managed to say.

"Annie, fetch the black box on my desk."

She left her coffee to cool in the morning air, and went back inside. The box was smaller than a paperback, a deep shiny black and heavier than it looked. She resisted the temptation to lift the lid. If Mark wanted her to know the contents, she'd be shown.

"Did you open it?" he asked as she stepped back onto the balcony.

"No... but I was tempted."

"I knew you would be," he paused, "but you knew better than to peek. Good." He signaled her to kneel.

The stone was cold under her knees. She wouldn't think about that, just concentrate on obeying. On...

"Look, Annie."

She stared at the open box in his hands. Bright and shiny against the black velvet and satin lining was a thick gold chain and a small lock—like a grown-up version of the locket bracelet she'd worn as a child, but this lock had a small gold key.

"You're ready for it, Annie. Will you wear my collar?"

Wear his collar, the way Emma wore Alistair's, and Jane wore Alan's? Could she? Was she really ready? What else was she agreeing to? In a wide moment of clarity, Annie knew it didn't matter. Nothing mattered but Mark and what they had between them. Whatever he asked, she'd find the strength to do, and trust him not to ask the impossible.

"Yes, Mark." she said and knelt, immobile, as he fastened the cool metal round her neck.

She gasped at the rush of emotion as the lock snapped tight. She given herself to Mark, but more than that, she was possessed by an immense latent power. She and she alone had agreed. She loved Mark and he loved her and they had a future built on joy and respect, and okay, wild and pretty wonderful sex.

Epilogue

They stopped at a riverside pub in Richmond on the way back to Annie's and ate in virtual silence—unusual for them—but Annie was still coming to terms with the weight of the gold around her neck and the events and emotions Saturday night. The wild elation of dominating Tom, followed by her commitment to wear Mark's collar, left her in a state of emotional overload. She longed for a few days, alone, just to sort her brain out.

"You're very quiet," Mark said, "Something bothering you?"

"Not really. Just thinking about the Saturday night." And how Tom's beautiful body glistened with sweat, and the whip left a rosy hue on his smooth skin. How he collapsed as the others eased him off the whipping frame. It had been a beautiful contrast, his limp body and the vigor of his erection, and...

Mark leaned over the wrought iron table and kissed her. "Don't worry about that, now. I've got something else for you to think about."

"What?"

"It's your birthday next month, what you want?"

If he was asking her, it meant he hadn't fixed on nipple rings. Wonderful! "I get to choose whatever I want?" Mark put limits on most things.

"As long as it's within reason and something I can give. World peace and a saving the rain forests are both out." His hand closed over hers. "But make it something special. I want to give you a present you really want, and you'd hesitate to go out and get yourself."

"Hummm. I'm not sure..."

"Take your time deciding, Annie. Sleep on it if need be. You can wait until next weekend if you like."

It didn't take her that long. After the drive home, with her thoughts still fixating on Tom's aroused body, she knew what she wanted—she owed Tom a decent climax, half-drowning in the deluge of emotion, she'd patently forgotten Tom's needs.

Mark walked her to the front door, taking the keys unlocked it, and kissed her good bye. "Take care, love."

"I will, Mark. And I've decided..." she hesitated. Was this going beyond the boundaries of their relationship? One way to find out.

"About my birthday present..."

"Already?" He looked delighted. "Tell me and I'll go shopping."

"It's not something you'll go shopping for."

"Tell me."

His voice was quiet, but commanding. She couldn't back out. She didn't want to. If it was impossible and unacceptable, Mark would let her know. "I'd like Tom." The surprise in Mark's eyes had her blurting the rest out. "I want an evening with him. Not at a party, just the two of us."

Mark was silent a good twenty seconds, his lovely mouth curled at the corners and he shook his head as his face broke into a grin. "Annie! You were born to surprise me!" He grabbed her waist with both hands, pulled her close and kissed her. Hard. She was halfway to gasping when he finally let her go. "Tom it is. I'll talk to Claudine as soon as I get back."

They kissed again, slowly and gently this time, before Mark stepped over the threshold. "Annie," he said pausing on the front step. "I knew the moment I first saw you, that you'd be something wonderful but you've surpassed my wildest dreams."

Annie stood in the open doorway as he drove away. When the sounds of his engine faded in the night quiet, she closed the door. Her fingers brushed the heavy chain, now warmed by her body. She was Mark's, and for her birthday he was giving her Tom Baldwin. What a shame she couldn't share that with her friends, but never mind. Three weeks to her birthday. Time to start planning.