**Confessions of a Mailgirl**

by Seahawk

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47**

**SLEEPLESS IN WILDWOOD**  
I awoke in the early morning hours long before the alarm. After a rare weekend where I had both Saturday and Sunday off it was Monday, the beginning of a new work week. This wasn't just any work week, though, it was the final week of my Mailgirls contract and my mind was racing with all of the possible outcomes of it. I knew there'd be no more sleep tonight as I stared at the ceiling fan spinning slowly above the bed.  
  
Anna lay next to me in the bed sleeping soundly, untroubled by any thoughts of the future. She still had a few months left on her contract but she already knew what was going to happen at the end of it. Anna was leaving - leaving the company, leaving the condo, leaving me - as soon as she was able. There was nothing acrimonious about her leaving, it was simply time for her to move on with her life. She'd come to me as an abused, naive, sheltered eighteen-year-old girl and had become a strong, independent twenty-year-old woman. What had been exciting to her at first about being a mailgirl had eventually begun to feel like shackles. All the restrictions imposed on her within the Mailgirls universe had begun to chafe and Anna yearned to taste true freedom for the first time in her life. When her contract ended she was determined to make that happened.  
  
I knew Anna's leaving was best for her - best for both of us really - but I still felt the familiar ache of a dying relationship nearing its end. She was still a sweet girl who cared deeply for me but was also restless to get onto the next phase of her life, one that didn't have much room for me in it. In many ways Anna had already checked out of our relationship. The dominant/submissive roleplaying that had once been so exciting to her had become boring and she went through the motions of it only because Barbara had ordered it. It had been weeks since we'd made love. What Anna really wanted to do was have sex with a man, something she'd yet to experience. And there was one man in particular she wanted to have sex with: Brad Hostler, a graphic artist on the Demon Slayer game.  
  
I don't know exactly how Anna and Brad had connected but they had despite the strict rules against fraternization between mailgirls and regular employees. It wasn't allowed even away from work and if Barbara found out about it there was no doubt she would fire Brad in a heartbeat. She could even fire Anna and force her to pay the exorbitant financial penalties for failing to complete her contract. Anna was so paranoid about cameras and bugs planted in the condo or Barbara intercepting her texts and emails that she had set up a system where the two of them left hand written notes for each other in secret spots around town like a couple of spies in a Cold War movie. Anna confided in me about Brad one day on our walk home from work when she was certain that Barbara couldn't somehow listen in.  
  
For my part I'd always been honest with Anna about the things that took place at Barbara's house and if she was bothered by it she never showed it. Anna always knew that our relationship was a way station for her, not a final destination. I think she also sensed that the intensity of my relationship with Barbara could never be matched in ours.  
  
It had been well over a year since that first visit to Barbara's house and there had been many more since. Although she still treated me like her personal slave, there had also been many moments of passion, tenderness, and kindness between us. Barbara remained an enigma though. Fire and ice. In between those sessions at her home she often went long stretches where she treated me as just another lowly little mailgirl or ignored me altogether. I often wondered if this was calculated or was just part of her defense mechanism to keep herself from falling too hard for a mailgirl.  
  
There'd been no more whippings since the day I'd bypassed the chain of command to bring Lin to her office but I'd given her no reason to whip me either. I'd become the obedient mailgirl she'd demanded from the beginning. Obedient in all ways but one: every couple of weeks or so I'd be summoned to that little room in the east wing where the Hiromoto tech would hand me a cellphone and I'd tell Mariko everything I had seen or heard about DDE's projects along with any rumors floating around about its top executives. I worried after each time that Barbara would find out but there was never a hint that she had. Mariko assured me that she had taken steps to insure that I'd be summoned only during times that Barbara was out of the building or in meetings and that my visits to that room would remain invisible on the computer log of my daily activities. That made me wonder just how Mariko was able to keep such close tabs on Barbara's schedule and movements. I was pretty sure I wasn't the only DDE spy in Hiromoto's network.  
  
I even told Mariko about my trysts with Barbara at her home and this seemed like a bigger betrayal than any of that other stuff. I felt like Mariko was my only lifeline though if Barbara tried to force me into another oppressive contract. And now that all new Mailgirls contracts included language that allowed the contracts to be bought and sold on the open market I wanted more than ever to avoid signing another one. There were now six licensed North American companies signed onto the Mailgirls program - four in the U.S. and two in Canada - not to mention all of the foreign companies licensed by Hiromoto Industries also eligible to buy and sell Mailgirls contracts. I had no desire to be sold to the highest bidder if Barbara ever grew tired of me. As the famous "Mailgirl 9" I knew there'd be no shortage of bidders for my services.  
  
Whatever my future held would in large part be determined over the next few days. Not only was my contract expiring but it I knew that representatives from Hiromoto Industries would be in town this week to sign a long-term extension of the agreement with DDE as their North American partners in the Mailgirls program. There were even rumors that Mr. Hiromoto himself might come and I very much hoped that Mariko would, too.  
  
Kelly's contract was also expiring at the end of the week and although I hadn't had a chance to talk to her about it for awhile it seemed like a foregone conclusion that she'd be leaving DDE. Barbara and Kelly hated each other and Kelly couldn't stand being treated like a dumb bimbo by people who lacked her intelligence and education. Although I'd become friendly with some of the other mailgirls I knew it would be a lonely feeling continuing on without Kelly or Anna. Maybe it's because good memories often remain while bad memories tend to fade over time but I thought back now to the days when it was only the three of us working the tower together as my favorite time as a mailgirl. I'd miss the two of them terribly when they were gone.   
  
But I'd already decided that I would continue as a mailgirl if I could even without Anna and Kelly. The last two years had been the most bizarre, intense, and exciting of my life and I wasn't ready yet to jump off of this crazy train. Barbara hadn't said a word about a new contract in months though which made me nervous. Was she so certain she had a way to make me sign one that she didn't mind waiting until the last minute? Would she even allow me to continue working as a mailgirl without one? As I lay awake staring at the ceiling I was filled with apprehension over what this week might hold for me.  
  
The jarring sound of the alarm going off jolted Anna from her sleep. She reached over and shut it off, then turned to me with a sleepy smile. "Have you been awake for awhile?" she asked.   
  
"Yes ma'am," I replied.  
  
"Big week, huh?"  
  
"Yes ma'am, it is."  
  
Anna sat up in the bed and wiped the sleep from her eyes as the blanket fell revealing her beautiful bare breasts. As I looked at this sweet, lovely young woman the ache of loss returned. I knew moments like this were coming to an end, maybe as soon as the next few days.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47b**

**MONDAY MORNING**  
There was already a lineup of mailgirls at the security desk in the employee entrance lobby when we arrived at the DDE complex at 7 a.m. Mailgirls were now forced to undress in the lobby and surrender their clothes to security to be placed in bags and locked up until the end of their shift. This particular humiliation had been cooked up by Barbara over a year ago to allow mailgirls no access to their clothes while on duty. She'd used the time Kelly had gotten dressed and left the complex without permission to talk to me in the condo as the rationale for it. I knew the real reason, though. It was intended as yet another demonstration of the complete control the company had over it's mailgirls when they were within these walls.  
  
Another change initiated by Barbara was that all mailgirls had to wear an "identity necklace" with each individual mailgirl's number stamped on a plate attached to the front of it. In reality it was the same type of flexible metal collar that I wore full time. Barbara had once actually told a reporter that this was done to give mailgirls a "cleaner, more stylish look" than inking numbers on their bare skin. While this was true it was a pretty low bar to clear since just about anything would have been cleaner and more stylish than scrawling numbers on our skin with a felt tip pen. These collars also contained a RFID chip that would set off an alarm if a mailgirl tried to leave the premises without authorization. Since these collars were locked on at the beginning of each shift and could only be unlocked by a security guard at the end of the shift this made us virtual prisoners of the company whenever we were on duty.   
  
Even though I always arrived to work naked and collared anyway I still had to wait in line to get my MMU, the smart phone that was strapped to each mailgirl's arm that was used to alert us to deliveries, deadlines, compile demerits, and track our movements throughout the large DDE complex. It also held the mailgirl's digital company ID so we weren't allowed beyond the employee lobby without this electronic leash.   
  
While waiting behind Anna I noticed a very pretty young woman dressed in a stylish blouse and skirt staring at me from a corner of the lobby. She looked familiar to me somehow but I couldn't quite place her face. Had she been a student at my college? While she definitely hadn't been one of my close friends could she be someone I'd seen around campus? Anna had just finished handing her clothes to the security guard and was being fitted with her collar and MMU when this woman walked toward me. "You're Mailgirl 9, right?" she asked.   
  
"Yes ma'am," I replied.   
  
"I'm supposed to start training with you today," she said. This was the first I'd heard of it. There was a lot of training going on here at DDE lately to supply the other licensed companies with mailgirls but I hadn't been involved in any of it. Tanisha, a thickly built African-American woman who was working the Mailgirls security counter this morning, overheard this and turned to the woman.   
  
"What's your name, hon?" she asked her.  
  
"Diana Clarkson," she answered. That name sounded familiar. I knew it from somewhere, but where?  
  
Tanisha typed into her computer. "Yep, she's with you today Nine." Then she turned to Diana. "You won't be doing any training like that, hon. Get your clothes off."  
  
Diana took a deep breath to calm herself. "Yes ma'am," she replied as she glanced nervously at the regular clothed employees - the "norms" - entering the lobby to begin their day. She began fumbling with the buttons on her blouse.  
  
While Diana was undressing, Tanisha took a fully charged MMU from a drawer and typed a passcode into it which unlocked my company identification and assigned this particular MMU to me. This passcode also locked me out of the MMU settings so I couldn't tamper with them, not that I would even if I knew how. This security feature had been added after one tech savvy mailgirl had figured out a way to alter the number of demerits she'd received. After it was discovered that she'd been doing this the girl had managed to avoid termination and those huge contractual financial penalties by agreeing to receive 1000 demerits as punishment. Since each ten demerits meant an extra hour of unpaid work this meant an additional 100 work hours that the company could assign as mandatory overtime whenever it felt like it. And since these extra hours wore her down she failed to meet deadlines more frequently which meant accumulating even more demerits. It was a vicious cycle and even though it seemed like this poor girl was always at work it barely put a dent into the number of additional hours she owed the company.  
  
After Tanisha had strapped the MMU onto my arm we both turned to look at Diana who was now down to her bra and panties. I also noticed that she was wearing a necklace, earrings, rings and a watch and also had a handbag that she'd placed on the floor. These were all no-no's for mailgirls when they showed up to work.  
  
"Listen sweetie," Tanisha said to Diana, "since this is y'alls first day as a tango I'm going to cut you some slack. Mailgirls are allowed to wear only a single item of clothing to work along with a pair of sandals or sneakers. That's it, hon. No underwear or socks, no jewelry, no purses or handbags. You're not allowed any personal items anywhere on the property past this point and we barely got enough space to lock all of y'alls stuff up in our storage closet as it is without mailgirls showing up dressed like normal folk. You ain't gonna need any business attire on this job, sweetie, so don't wear any to work."  
  
"I'm sorry ma'am," the girl replied. "I didn't know."  
  
"Didn't you get a Mailgirls handbook that you were supposed to read before coming to work?"   
  
"No ma'am," Diana responded. "I looked at one online though. I guess I missed the part about what I was allowed to wear to work. Or maybe I was looking at an older version of the handbook."  
  
Tanisha shook her head. "You're damn lucky you got me working the Mailgirls desk today, hon, because most of the other security guards would've dinged you with some demerits. I ain't gonna do that to you on your first day. Next time I will though." I knew she was telling Diana the truth. Even though Tanisha could be loud and overbearing she was actually nicer to mailgirls than most of the other security guards and DDE employees.  
  
"Yes ma'am," Diana replied. "I won't do it again."  
  
Tanisha nodded. "Now take off the rest of your clothes. We ain't got all day."  
  
When she had finished stripping Diana stood self-consciously nude before us, her arms crossed over her breasts. "Put your hands at your side," I told her as a warning before Tanisha could. "No covering up at any time." She quickly obeyed and I got a good look at her. She had a beautiful, natural body with soft round breasts that were well proportioned to the rest of her body but a little large for the job and would bounce uncomfortably when she ran. She wasn't fat by any means yet there were a few areas that could use tightening up. She was also tall for a mailgirl, probably about 5'9" or so. Her tall, curvy frame meant more body parts jiggling and her feet would take more of a pounding over the course of her shift. Women with firm, compact, athletic bodies generally did best in this job.   
  
This was how I evaluated the female body now, by how well suited it was for the job. While Diana had a beautiful body by any conventional measure I found myself critiquing any tiny flaw that might cause her difficulties as a mailgirl. Her face, however, was perfect. Diana's jet black hair hung down to just over her shoulders framing fresh faced girl-next-door looks and dark brown eyes. This look, along with that tall, curvy body, would make her very popular here or wherever she eventually ended up. As I looked her over I once again had the unshakeable feeling that I knew her from somewhere.  
  
"I'll see you upstairs, Nine," Anna said, clearly bored waiting for me. She turned and headed for the doorway that led to the service stairs without waiting for a response. I turned back and saw Tanisha scrounging through her desk looking for a trainee ID necklace. She finally found one and held it up to read the number printed on it. "You're going to be 17 Tango," she said to Diana. Each new girl was assigned a number with the letter "T" at the end to identify her as a trainee. One ex-military security guard always used the phonetic pronunciation of "tango" for the letter "T" and it had stuck. Now everyone called trainee mailgirls "tangos." After six weeks of training a tango was assigned a permanent number and her collar and number were then recycled to be used by a new trainee.  
  
Tanisha began typing into her computer and then turned to Diana. "There's no company ID photo or personal information on file for you. Didn't you get that shit done when you signed your contract?"  
  
Diana shook her head. "No ma'am. My contract is, um...a little different than the normal Mailgirls contract. In fact this is the first time I've been in this building." This struck me as odd since all Mailgirls contracts were now signed in Donna Haverly's seventh floor office after Barbara had approved the hiring. Tanisha stared at her with an annoyed look on her face.  
  
"F\*ck it then," she said finally. "Turn around." Diana did as told and Tanisha placed the collar around her neck and it locked into place with a distinct click. It would be nearly impossible to remove now without a special key that was kept at the security desk. Then she typed a passcode into a MMU and strapped it onto her arm.  
  
Tanisha turned to speak to me now. "She's going to have to go to HR to get that shit done and they don't open until eight. Get her showered and shaved in the meantime and then take her there."  
  
"Yes ma'am,"  
  
Then she turned back to Diana. "In case y'all didn't know it, and I'm guessing you don't, I'm gonna bag and tag your stuff and lock it up. You won't have any access to it until your MMU says you're off duty for the day. You're only allowed to have the ID necklace, the MMU, and what your mama gave ya until then. Got it, 17 Tango?"  
  
"Yes ma'am," Diana replied.  
  
Tanisha waved her hands at us. "Shoo then. You got mailgirls lined up behind you waiting."  
  
Diana - aka 17 Tango - followed me through the entrance to the north wing service stairs that led up to the fifth floor Mailgirls showers. "God I can't believe I'm actually doing this," I heard her say as we climbed.  
  
As she spoke there was something familiar in her voice that rung a bell. We were in between the third and fourth floor when it finally struck me. I knew who she was.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47c**

I stopped and turned to Diana. "You were one of the Bixby girls, weren't you?"  
  
Diana smiled. "I could tell you were trying to figure out where you knew me from. I get that a lot."  
  
"I do remember you now! You were the youngest daughter, Ellie. God you were so young on that show!"  
  
"I was six when it started and thirteen when it went off the air."  
  
"That was my mom's favorite show," I said. "I used to watch it with her all the time." 'The Bixby Girls' was a family-oriented network drama about a single mother raising four daughters in a small Midwestern town that had been popular when I was a teenager. It's run had ended during my senior year of high school so that had been, what, nine years ago? That would make Diana about twenty-two now. I remembered seeing her in a minor role in a movie while I was in college but she had all but disappeared since then as far as I knew. "So you're going to be a mailgirl now?" I asked.  
  
"Not exactly," she replied. "You know that Mailgirls movie they're going to start filming here in a couple of months? I'll be playing the lead role in it."   
  
"Really? I hadn't heard that."  
  
"Yeah, it hasn't been publicly announced yet. Now that I'm doing this though," she said waving a hand in front of her nude body, "I'm sure it won't take long for word to get out."  
  
I knew there was a Mailgirls movie in the works. It was a project that Barbara had been pushing for almost two years and what Barbara wanted at DDE, Barbara got. It was set to go into production soon with most of the filming being done on location here by DDE's film department. This was the first time I'd heard that Diana Clarkson had been cast in it though. "Wow, that's a big departure from your role as sweet little Ellie Bixby," I said to her.  
  
"Yeah, no shit. That's why I'm doing it. I've been typecast by that role for so long that it's hard to be taken seriously as an actress in adult roles. When you're a washed up child actress you can try to create a new image by either going into rehab, constantly making an ass of yourself in public for the tabloids, or by taking your clothes off. Since I've never done either of the first two things I'm doing the third." I could see why Barbara wanted Diana for the role. The movie was part of her plan to help push Mailgirls into the cultural mainstream so who better to have playing one than a girl who had once been one of America's sweethearts?  
  
"So you're doing research for the role now by doing this?" I asked.  
  
"Yeah, that was part of the agreement to get the role. Barbara Anderson insisted I had to go through the full six weeks of Mailgirls training in preparation for it. God, does it really take six weeks to learn how to deliver shit around an office building?"  
  
"No. You can learn the basics of the job in a few days. Most of it's about getting the girl in shape and making sure she'll accept her role as a naked inferior."  
  
"What if she doesn't?" Diana asked.  
  
"Then they'll wash her out of training."  
  
"Really? Do they have to pay the financial penalties if that happens?"  
  
I shook my head. "No. The first six weeks are considered probationary. Tangos are paid minimum wage during training and the company has the option of washing them out or the girls can quit during that time without any penalties."  
  
"That's surprising. I've always heard they were like slave contracts and once you start as a mailgirl it's just about impossible to get out."  
  
"That's pretty much true after completing the training. If a girl wants out she'd better do it before the contract is put up for bid and the full bonuses and penalties kick in."  
  
"Well at least they're giving them a chance to back out if they decide they don't want to do it after a couple of weeks," Diana said.  
  
"They aren't doing it for the tango's benefit, believe me," I scoffed. "There are so many women applying for Mailgirls jobs that Barbara wanted to be able to weed out the weak ones along with any potential troublemakers. If a girl racks up too many demerits during training or shows any kind of insolent attitude they're gone. Barbara wants only the most beautiful, fit, and obedient girls to come out of training and go up for bid."  
  
"Are there really that many women applying?" Diana asked.   
  
"Oh yeah. There are many more applications than openings."  
  
"Why?"  
  
"Lots of reasons I suppose. It's a tough economy for young people right now and there are virtually no other jobs out there that pay this well to start out."  
  
"Yeah, I can most definitely relate," Diana said. "If this movie flops I may have to become a full time mailgirl myself to make ends meet." I couldn't tell if she was joking or not.  
  
"Don't you have any money left from being on The Bixby Girls?" I asked.  
  
Diana shook her head. "Not much. Most of it went into a trust fund that my dad raided when he left my mom. I've had to sue him to try to get it back. I'm earning some residuals on syndication but that money's mostly going toward lawyers' fees."  
  
"Ugh, that sounds like a mess."  
  
"It is. It's the kind of crap that's pretty damn typical in Hollywood, though. I don't know any child actors who haven't eventually ended up in some kind of financial mess because of family, agents, taxes, bad financial advice, the studio screwing them, or whatever."  
  
"I didn't know that," I said.  
  
"Yep. I need the money so that's why I'm doing this. My mom thinks doing this movie will kill off my career like 'Showgirls' did for Elizabeth Berkley though."  
  
"Do you really think it's going to suck that bad?" I asked.   
  
Diana shrugged. "You never know but it's not as if my phone was ringing off the hook with job offers anyway. I doubt it, though. I've read the script and it's actually quite funny and sweet."  
  
"What's it about anyway?" I asked. "Besides tits and ass."  
  
"It's a rom-com about a mailgirl and a computer geek who fall in love and have to keep their romance a secret from their friends and co-workers to keep the company from finding out. Boy meets naked girl, boy loses naked girl, boy overcomes obstacles to get the naked girl back. Not exactly original, except for the naked girl part. Most films in this genre are pretty formulaic though." It may not be original but it sure as hell was a lot closer to reality than Diana realized. They could just follow Anna and Ben around with hidden cameras and film pretty much the same story, I thought to myself.  
  
"It's not nearly as raunchy as 'Showgirls' was," Diana continued. "And I really like Katherine DeAngelo as the director. I would never have signed on if not for her." Although DDE would handle most of the technical aspects of the filming Barbara had insisted on going outside of the company to hire mainstream screenwriters and the director. Romantic comedies weren't exactly in DDE's wheelhouse.  
  
"So are you going to be naked through most of the movie?" I asked.  
  
"Some of it takes place off the job so I'll be wearing clothes in those scenes. There will be plenty of nudity in it, though. I've talked to Katherine and she's planning on starting the film with a long unedited tracking shot of me running naked through the building on a delivery."   
  
I thought about Diana having to resort to this to try to revive her acting career. "You're so beautiful and talented I have a hard time believing you're having trouble getting offered roles."  
  
Diana sighed. "Beautiful women are a dime a dozen in Hollywood and talent is only marginally important," she said. "The film business is no meritocracy, that's for sure. I can totally nail an audition for a part that's perfect for me and it'll end up going to some girl who has a look they want or is blowing the producer. That's why most actors tend to be so damned neurotic. You never know where your next role or paycheck is coming from. Even if you're successful for awhile you're always just one or two flops away from the scrap heap."  
  
"If it's like that why do you want to keep doing it?"  
  
"Damn good question," she laughed. "Believe me I've asked myself that more than a few times. Vanity mostly, I suppose. I liked being famous and I miss it. I hate it when people look at me now like you did and wonder where the hell they used to know me from. I mean, don't get me wrong, I love acting but if that's all it was about I could just do community theater."  
  
"And you think this role will make you famous again?" I asked.  
  
"It'll get me attention again, that's for damn sure. Whether that turns out good or bad remains to be seen. For better or worse, though, I've decided to roll the dice on this project and see what happens." Diana wrapped her arms around her body and shivered. "Damn, it's cold in this stairwell."   
  
"Yeah, I think they intentionally keep the stairwells freezing to keep us moving and make sure our nipples stay hard." Down below us I heard the sound of a door opening and several female voices. Probably more mailgirls heading upstairs to the showers. "We'd better get going," I said. "You do know you're going to have to shower and shave right now in front of a bunch of horny geeks, don't you?"  
  
"Oh yeah," Diana said. "Believe me my mom made damn sure I was aware of every sordid aspect of the job before I signed on." She sighed as she looked up the stairwell toward the fifth floor. "Let's go do this. Lead the way Mailgirl 9."

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47d**

**A STEAMY SCENE**  
The look on Diana's face as she surveyed the Mailgirls locker room was a combination of wide-eyed wonder and terror. The room was filled with beautiful, naked mailgirls in various stages of preparation for their shifts. I'd been doing this so long now that showering and shaving in front of an audience seemed almost normal to me, but seeing Diana's face reminded me of how very not-normal this really was. "And that's the two-way mirror where the horny geeks get to watch all this naked female flesh every morning," she said to me as a statement rather than a question.  
  
"Yep," I replied. ''Turnover is down to next to nothing in the 'Gangsta' department since they built this, or so I'm told. A lot of guys even show up early to work to catch the show." DDE had released Demon Slayer 3 a few months earlier and it had also been a big hit which meant the guys on that floor were bitching about not having their own Mailgirls showers to peep into. I knew Barbara was mulling over ideas on what to do for them and whatever it turned out to be was certain was to be yet another humiliation for us mailgirls.  
  
"Wow," Diana said, shaking her head. "I never ever would have imagined this kind of thing would take place in a modern American corporation."  
  
You've never encountered the irresistible force of Barbara's will either, I thought to myself. "We'd better get started," I said to her. I began walking toward the shower area but when I turned to check on Diana she hadn't moved. She remained frozen in place staring at her nude reflection in the mirror. I returned to her. "Are you okay?" I asked.  
  
Diana shook her head. "I think I'm a very long way from okay. Do you think anyone out there is taking pictures or videos?" she asked nodding toward the two-way mirror.  
  
"Probably," I said. There was no reason to sugarcoat things for her. "Pictures and videos of your shower might end up on the internet this morning before you dry off."  
  
Diana shuddered. "You mean because you think they'll recognize me?"  
  
"No. That's not exactly a 'Bixby Girls' crowd out there. Unless you've been in 'Game of Thrones,' 'The Walking Dead,' or a superhero movie I doubt any of them will know you. They take pictures and videos of all the girls, especially the new ones."   
  
"God this is crazy," she said shaking her head.  
  
"Didn't you think about this before you signed up?"  
  
"Of course I did," she replied. "I'm not naive. But now that I'm actually here doing this..." Her voice trailed off as she turned her attention from the mirror to me. "How were you able to do this the first time?"  
  
I'd been doing this so long that sometimes I'd forget how hard it must be for new girls their first time. I began telling Diana the story about how I was the first one to "inaugurate" this shower room and how scared and nervous I'd been. "Have you ever heard the sonnet 'Ozymandias?'" I asked.   
  
Diana nodded and began reciting part of it. "And on the pedestal these words appear. 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!' Nothing beside remains round the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare the lone and level sands stretch far away." She must have seen the look of surprise on my face. "Hey, I love poetry and literature." Diana was obviously no empty-headed starlet.  
  
"I guess thinking about that is what finally helped to get me through this that first time," I said. "Knowing that whatever I did would someday be buried under the sands of time anyway. That helps free me up to live more boldly. To take chances."  
  
"I don't know," Diana replied. "That sounds pretty damned nihilistic to me. I like to think that what I do in this life has meaning and purpose." I obviously lacked Barbara's powers of persuasion seeing how quickly Diana dismissed a philosophy that Barbara had gotten me to buy into. No, it's not that, I thought to myself. Barbara knows how to read people and can quickly discern what drives and motivates them and what doesn't. She somehow knew that philosophy would resonate with me just as she probably would've guessed that it wouldn't work at all with Diana.  
  
"So what do you want to do?" I asked her. "Maybe Barbara will let you slide on doing some of this stuff since you're not going to be a real mailgirl anyway."  
  
Diana shook her head. "It's in my contract that I have to complete the entire training just like any mailgirl and Barbara made it clear that she'd fire me from the film if I didn't. 'No diva bullshit' I think were her exact words." That sounded like Barbara alright. She always negotiated everything to her advantage from a position of strength and must have sensed how desperate Diana was to get a starring role in a film.  
  
"So what are you going to do?" I asked again.  
  
"I'm just going to have to do it and act like I'm loving every f\*cking second of it," she said. Diana closed her eyes for a minute and then took a deep breath and exhaled. When she opened them a confident smile spread across her face. "Alright Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up." The transformation in her look and attitude was amazing. She can definitely act, I thought to myself.  
  
Diana followed me across the locker room, although calling it that was a misnomer now. Barbara had ordered the lockers removed after banning clothes beyond the employee lobby. In their place were numbered hooks on the wall where we hung our MMU's while showering. We were allowed nothing of our own anywhere in the building so there was no need for a place to store things. Towels, soaps, lotions, razors, makeup kits, hairdryers, brushes, and even the food, drinks, and snacks we would consume throughout the day were all supplied by the company. It was yet another demonstration of control over its mailgirls and the intent was to make us feel completely vulnerable and dependent.  
  
We placed our MMU's on the hooks and headed toward the showers grabbing the disposable razors, gels, and shampoo we needed from the shelves on the way. If any of the girls recognized Diana it wasn't obvious. As just another new tango she was mostly being ignored. Anna was already almost finished at the far end of the shower. I looked around for Kelly but didn't see her which was unusual since we normally had the same start time. I led Diana to an open shower head next to Sasha Gutheridge and her two daughters.   
  
Much to the delight of the Gangsta floor, Sasha's second daughter Becca had also joined the Mailgirls club at the urging of her mother, although by the sounds of it there hadn't been much need for arm twisting. When Becca saw the paychecks that her mom and sister were bringing home she'd wanted to sign up as a part time mailgirl after turning eighteen even though she still had another semester of high school left. Barbara had thought long and hard about letting her work after school and on weekends before ultimately deciding against it. She was worried that the optics of having a high school girl doing the job would just stir up unnecessary controversy.   
  
The outgoing and adventurous Becca, Mailgirl #28, was the polar opposite of her shy sister April. She'd been a cheerleader and gymnast in high school and Barbara had once remarked that she had the ideal mailgirl body. It was a compact, athletic body that was a perfect combination of functionality and aesthetic beauty. Becca had a sculpted ass, powerful thighs, and round, firm breasts just large enough to give her body nearly ideal symmetry without bouncing too uncomfortably. That body, along with her brown hair, blue eyes, and natural good looks, had made her an immediate fan favorite at DDE.   
  
Becca also had the ideal personality for the job. She was a born exhibitionist who loved being naked in public and was ultra competitive by nature. She saw making deadlines on her runs as a continual challenge and took pride in rarely missing one. She also knew exactly how to play the game in dealing with the norms at DDE, exhibiting just the right mixture of overt sexuality and submissiveness. No mailgirl earned fewer demerits than she did. If some mad scientist ever wanted to clone an army of perfect mailgirls he could use Becca's DNA to do it.  
  
I stepped into the shower next to Becca as her mother and sister April shared a shower head together on the other side. I knew April was still mortified by having to shower and shave her pussy next to her mom every day but if that bothered Becca at all it never showed.  
  
"Hey Nine, how are ya," Becca said with a smile as I turned on the water and began to adjust the temperature. Even the other mailgirls called me Nine these days even though they didn't have to. I'm not sure if Becca even knew my real name.  
  
"Hey Becca. This is Diana. She's just starting training."  
  
"Ah, fresh flesh. How did you manage to score the famous Mailgirl 9 as your trainer? I didn't think she ever trained anyone."  
  
"I asked Barbara Anderson to train with her," Diana replied.  
  
"Wow, you must have some juice," Becca said. "What did you do before this?"   
  
"Just odd jobs here and there." I guess Diana didn't want to reveal the real reason she was doing this for some reason.  
  
"Well this is definitely an odd job," Becca laughed. "You should have no problem with it then."  
  
A very pretty blonde named Linda entered the shower next to us and I also introduced Diana to her. Diana recognized her immediately. "Hey aren't you the one who was suing DDE with that feminist group?" she asked her.  
  
"That was me," Linda replied.  
  
"And you came back here as a mailgirl?" Diana asked incredulously.   
  
"I didn't have much choice once I dropped the lawsuit," she replied. "It was either this or pay the penalties."  
  
"I'm surprised DDE agreed to let you come back," Diana said. Linda merely shrugged in response.  
  
I'd always assumed that Hiromoto had paid her off to get her to drop the suit but whatever had happened Linda was remaining tightlipped about it. What I did know was that she had completely torched the feminist group United American Women and its lead attorney Jennifer Erickson on her way out. Not only had she dropped the suit against DDE but she'd filed a suit against UAW claiming they were the ones who had recruited her and forced her to sign the contract so she could be used as a pawn in the organization's war against DDE and its Mailgirls program. On top of that she told the media that DDE had always treated her fairly while it was Jennifer Erickson and other women at UAW who had made unwanted sexual advances toward her. Erickson and UAW vehemently denied these allegations but the scandal had put them on the defensive and had taken a lot of the wind out of the sails of the anti-Mailgirls movement.   
  
Since returning to DDE Linda had fit right in with the other girls and seemed like anything but the strident feminist that she'd been portrayed as by the media in the early days of the lawsuit against DDE. If I hadn't seen with my own eyes Barbara's reaction to the intense pressure that the suit and its publicity had put on her I might have thought that she had orchestrated the whole thing herself.  
  
As we soaped up I took a couple of quick looks over at Diana and she seemed to be doing fine. She remained quiet but followed my cues until it came time to shave our pussies. This was the part that new mailgirls usually had the hardest time with.   
  
"How are you doing?" I asked..   
  
"I'm totally f\*cking freaking out right now," she replied with a calm smile on her face.  
  
The girl can definitely act, I thought to myself.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47e**

**TRAINING DAY**  
Our visit to Human Resources on the third floor of the tower to get Diana's ID photos taken turned out to be a chaotic mess. Since she had never signed a standard Mailgirls contract there were no proper computer records for her which led to mass confusion among HR personnel. It took a long phone call to Donna Haverly's office to sort the matter out as the two of us knelt on the floor waiting. The room also had several clothed new hires waiting to be processed staring wide-eyed at us, one of them a cute guy with a large boner straining against the fabric of his pants he was trying to hide..   
  
A mailgirl was finally dispatched to Donna's office to bring down copies of relevant paperwork, and as luck would have it my ex-friend Stephanie was the one who showed up to deliver it. She glared down at me after handing over the documents to the HR guy as she waited to be released. I just ignored her. I'd long ago given up trying to patch things up with her and no longer felt the slightest bit of remorse about the role I'd played in forcing her to become a mailgirl. She'd made her choices and I'd finally decided I was no longer going to let the bitch run her guilt trip on me.   
  
I glanced over at the guy with the boner and had to suppress a smile as he now had both hands covering his crotch. His first day on the job and he's already surrounded by beautiful naked women. Welcome to DDE, dude. No wonder turnover at the company had dropped to an all-time low among male employees.  
  
Once they'd finally unsnarled the bureaucratic mess Diana had pictures taken of her from every angle and her digital employee ID was created. They also weighed her and measured her body mass index which would be used as benchmarks. Mailgirls were required to keep their weight and BMI within an optimal range and these were periodically measured. It took awhile to get all of this done but she finally officially became Mailgirl 17 Tango, at least for the next six weeks.  
  
"Sorry about that mess," I said to Diana after we'd finally exited the HR office.  
  
"No worries," she replied. "This is pretty much like the first day of every film set I've ever been on. Total chaos while they sort out the paperwork and the pecking order of who gets what trailer, who gets priority in costume and makeup, who gets special food catered, etcetera. By the end of the day almost everyone is pissed off about something."  
  
"Sounds like fun."  
  
"So now what?" Diana asked.  
  
"Now I get to take you on a naked stroll through the entire complex, floor by floor. The company calls it an orientation tour. The norms here call it the 'walk of shame.'"  
  
Diana's eyes opened wide at the prospect. "Every floor?"  
  
"Yep," I nodded. "The goal is to help familiarize you with the layout of the complex and the numbering scheme of the offices and cubicles you'll be delivering to. It's also supposed to help you get used to being naked in front of a bunch of clothed people." It also gave DDE employees a chance to check out the "fresh flesh."  
  
Diana took a deep breath. "Okay, Nine....what the hell is your real name anyway? I don't want to call you that."  
  
"Danica."  
  
"Okay Danica, do me a favor and don't mention the movie if anyone recognizes me."  
  
"Why not?"  
  
"My role in it will come out eventually but I'd rather be seen as just another mailgirl trainee for now. I don't want to be treated any differently than any other tango."  
  
"Sure," I said. So far Diana seemed very down to earth and likable. She was no Hollywood brat.  
  
Since we were already in the tower I decided we might as well start here first. I led Diana to the stairwell and we began ascending toward the tenth floor. I heard her breathing begin to labor as we climbed. "I'm going to fire my personal trainer," she said as we reached the tenth floor landing. "I thought I was in better shape."  
  
"You will be by the end of six weeks," I told her.   
  
I pushed open the door and began leading her through the floor past expensively dressed execs, secretaries and assistants. These people were at the top of the DDE food chain and the arrogance and condescension here toward mailgirls was always palpable. They'd seen me naked many, many times but Diana was definitely getting checked out. I took a quick glance at her to see how she was handling it. Her face had turned a shade of crimson but she obediently kept her eyes lowered and her arms at her sides offering everyone a deferential view of her nude body. She really is beautiful, I thought, even by mailgirls standards.   
  
As we walked through the floor I pointed out the numbering scheme used by mailgirls to identify delivery locations as well as the offices of important DDE execs. "God, it feels so weird to be walking naked through an office building like this," she said at one point. "Like a dream."  
  
At the far end of the floor I led Diana down a corridor past a large conference room and through the glass windows I saw a meeting taking place. Barbara was in there sitting at the table facing the window but her attention at the moment was focused on someone at the end of the table speaking. I quickened my pace hoping to get by without her noticing us but I heard the conference room door opening behind us.  
  
"Nine. Diana," I heard Barbara's familiar voice say. We turned to face her. "Come," she said as she waved us toward the room.   
  
**CONFERENCE ROOM A**  
I stood naked with my right hand clasping my left wrist behind my back, my legs spread at shoulder width, and my back arched thrusting my tits enticingly toward the DDE corporate elite sitting around the large conference table. This was the standard standing position for a mailgirl awaiting instructions from a superior, and everyone is a superior to a mailgirl. The people in this room were at the very top of the food chain, though, and it felt like a Grand Canyon-sized chasm separated them from us. I glanced over at Diana and saw that she had done her best to emulate my stance but her eyes betrayed her nervous anxiety. I can't say that I blamed her since this was an intimidating position to be in even for me.  
  
"Everyone, I'd like to introduce you to Diana Clarkson," Barbara said to the assembled group of company execs as she stood next to Diana. "She's been cast in the lead role in our upcoming Mailgirls movie and is going through our training program to prepare for it."  
  
"She's lovely," CEO Dan Evans said from the head of the table. "She looks kind of familiar. Where would I know her from?"  
  
"You probably know her from the TV show 'The Bixby Girls,'" Barbara replied. "She played the youngest daughter Ellie."  
  
"Oh yeah, I remember. She was just a kid on that show! God I'm starting to feel old," Evans said to laughter around the table.   
  
"My youngest daughter loves that show," said Thomas Eagleson, one of the company's Executive VPs. "She watches it on one of those cable channels that broadcasts old syndicated shows. I've got to say that little Ellie has grown up nicely."   
  
"She definitely fits into her Mailgirl costume nicely," another VP said to more laughter. I couldn't help but notice they were talking about Diana rather than to her, as though she wasn't worthy of conversing with. They'd almost instantly internalized her as a mailgirl even though she was going to be the lead actress in a motion picture that the company would be spending millions of dollars producing.  
  
"I never watched that show but I definitely recognize the famous Mailgirl 9," said a man at the table I didn't recognize. He was sitting with another unfamiliar man and I assumed they were visiting clients of some sort. They looked to be in their early 30s and were dressed more casually than everyone in the room except Dan Evans who was wearing his trademark blue jeans and pullover shirt. They had a look of geekish confidence you often saw in high tech entrepreneurs.  
  
"So you're a fan of our 'Gangsta' series?" Evans asked the man.  
  
"Most definitely. I played the hell out of 'Gangsta 4.' This last DLC, though, I spent more time on the Mailgirls mini-game than anything else. I wore my fingers down to the nub trying to make the top ten. Finally did for about a day before someone knocked me out."  
  
"Yeah, it's definitely addictive," Evans replied. "I played it a lot but never got anywhere near the top of the rankings so you're a hell of a lot better at it than me."  
  
When the first expansion pack was released the Mailgirls mini-game featuring me as the mailgirl character had been a surprise hit despite the relatively simple gameplay. Lin had added a global ranking table that kept track of the fastest times for various runs between floors as well as rankings for the longest streak of runs without a demerit. Apparently some gamers spent many hours trying to get to the top of the worldwide rankings.   
  
It had done well enough that Lin had been given a lot more money and resources to expand on the Mailgirls game for the second Gangsta 4 expansion pack. Her team recreated every floor of the fourteen story building based on Hiromoto headquarters in Tokyo where I'd made my first naked mailgirl runs what seemed like ages ago now. Lin also gave my character some parkour moves that allowed me to jump, wall run, slide down rails, and pull off other moves to gain time and avoid obstacles. This version of the Mailgirls mini-game had become so popular that a whole online community had sprouted up surrounding it as gamers spent hours trying to find shortcuts and pull off moves that would get them into the top of the rankings. I'd tried playing it a few times but I suck at video games and seeing an animated version of my tits and ass on display was a little disconcerting.  
  
"Some of the stuff modders did with her was hilarious, too," the guy said, "My favorite was the mod where they replaced all the cops with Mailgirl 9. I don't think I've ever laughed so hard as the first time I was chased around by a bunch of naked Mailgirl 9s trying to subdue me. It made me want to get caught!"  
  
Dan Evans laughed. "Yeah there are definitely some creative nutjobs out there in the modding community. I've hired more than a few of them myself to work here."  
  
"So I've heard you guys are building a full standalone Mailgirl 9 game, is that right?" asked the second unfamiliar guy.   
  
"Yeah, it's in production," Dan Evans replied.  
  
"What's that going to be like?"   
  
"It takes place in a future dystopian society where an oppressive corporation runs everything. There's a resistance movement that uses mailgirls to run information and hack into and sabotage the conglomerate's computer system while avoiding the security militia. We're expanding on Nine's parkour moves in the game. It'll take place in a futuristic high tech city with lots of opportunity for wall running, jumping, sliding, ledge running, zip lines, that kind of thing. Also plenty of timed runs for gamers."  
  
"So is Nine going to be naked in the game?"  
  
"Yeah, of course. She's going to be our first naked video game heroine. We even have a naked female as our lead programmer on this project," Evans laughed.  
  
"Really?" the first guy asked.  
  
"Yep. Her name is Lin Park. Barbara found her. Offered her a job as a programmer if she agreed to work naked. Turns out Lin is kind of a genius at both programming and game design."  
  
"And you still make her work naked?" the second guy asked.  
  
"I offered to let her wear clothes after the success of the Mailgirls game in the second expansion," Barbara interjected, "but Lin turned it down. She says it helps keep her in touch with her lead character. I didn't try too hard to dissuade her."  
  
"Man," the first guy laughed shaking his head. "You guys have a hell of a work place here. This must be the coolest place on earth for a young guy to work."  
  
"You'd be surprised how many women have learned to appreciate our acceptance of female nudity as well," Barbara said.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 47f**

"So the way they're standing now is how they're supposed to stand when they're waiting to be told what to do?" the first man asked pointing at Diana and me..   
  
"That's right," Barbara replied. "Our mailgirls' beauty and sexuality tap into a dynamic that's never been seen before in the corporate environment and has proven to be a very powerful tool in stimulating creativity and productivity. Our goal is to keep the mailgirls fully exposed at all times and these positions are one of the ways we accomplish this."  
  
Barbara turned to us now. "Kneel," she ordered. I quickly obeyed and Diana followed suit. "This is the second waiting position. They are never allowed to sit on any furniture for obvious hygienic reasons." Even after all this time as a mailgirl being forced into such a humiliating subservient position in front of all these powerful people was a tremendous turn on to me and I felt the first pangs of arousal begin to stir.   
  
"Amazing," the second man laughed while shaking his head. "I never in my life ever dreamed that I'd see something like this in a corporate environment. I can see how this is obviously 'stimulating,' but doesn't it distract the hell out of the workers? How does anyone get anything done when a mailgirl is around?"  
  
"It can be distracting, especially at first," Barbara said. "After awhile though they become a normal part of the fabric of the workplace and most employees are able to get a glimpse of their beauty and then continue on with their work. Also, the mailgirls' duties keep them moving so their interactions with employees tend to be relatively brief."  
  
"So they get all their instructions from those smartphones strapped on their arms?" the first guy asked.   
  
"That's right. It's called a Mailgirl Monitoring Unit, or MMU. It's connected to a network set up throughout the complex and it monitors and controls every step they take from the moment they arrive in the building until they are released from duty at the end of the day. Even their breaks and the food they eat are tightly controlled by the MMU."  
  
"How does that work?"  
  
"We've got food, snacks, and drinks that have been formulated by nutritionists to maximize performance. The MMU estimates how many calories have been burned and then tells the mailgirl the amount of food and drink she's required to consume during breaks to maintain her optimal weight and energy level. The food is kept in various break rooms throughout the complex and are monitored by cameras to make sure they eat and drink the required amounts."  
  
"Wow," the second guy said. "So basically the company controls them for every second they're on duty? That seems a bit, um...Nazi-like doesn't it?"  
  
A thin smile appeared on Barbara's face. "I don't think so. The goal is to maximize efficiency. It's a difficult job but they are compensated well and they all voluntarily signed up for it. And now that our training program has been established they have a full six weeks to decide if they really want to do this before the financial penalties for quitting kick in." Barbara didn't mention that it also helped limit public criticism for the oppressive contracts that were nearly impossible to get out of.  
  
Barbara turned to us again as we knelt at her feet. "I've got one more position to show you," she said to the men and I felt another wave of arousal pulse through me as I knew what was coming next. "Inspection position, girls," she ordered.  
  
I rose to my feet, spread my legs to shoulder width, lifted up on my toes and locked my hands behind my head. Diana stared at me wide-eyed for a few moments then followed my lead.  
  
"Holy shit!" the first guy laughed.   
  
"Would you like to inspect these girls 'uniforms' to make sure they are up to company standards?" Barbara asked the two visitors.  
  
"Go ahead," the second guy said to the first with a laugh. "I'm in deep enough shit with the wife as it is for even considering starting a Mailgirls program at our company."  
  
The first guy jumped out of his seat and walked toward us. "So what am I looking for anyway," he said to Barbara with a cheeky grin.  
  
"Make sure each mailgirl is properly groomed," Barbara replied. "All body hair below the neck must be shaved with no stubble showing. Makeup must not be excessive or smudged or running. No excessive perspiration. No excessive perfume smell or body odor. Their hair must not be covering their breasts."  
  
The man walked up to me and began slowly circling, his eyes poring over every inch of my body. My thoughts went back to that very first inspection and the orgasm that Barbara had induced onstage in front of several hundred DDE managers and supervisors. I'd gone through many inspections since then but there was something about standing naked in this boardroom being humiliated in front of DDE's elite that was sending a powerful surge of excitement through my body. After two full years as a mailgirl I knew I was hooked on these feelings of naked vulnerability, humiliation, and powerlessness that frequently left me in a heightened state of arousal. Unlike those early days though I'd learned to control this sexual excitement, to allow it to flow through me like an electrical current without igniting an orgasm, at least not until I wanted one. I admit I was tempted at that moment to just surrender to these feelings and allow myself to climax in front of these powerful men and women but I knew I'd regret it later. Using my breath and my mind I slowly began bringing myself back from the brink, dialing my arousal down until it became a pleasant buzz flowing through my body.   
  
After finishing with me the man slowly began circling Diana and I wondered how she was holding up. Once upon a time I would've been surprised that Barbara would risk putting the lead actress in her movie through this type of humiliation, but nothing she did surprised me anymore. She obviously felt comfortable that she had Diana securely on the hook and wouldn't lose her or knew that she would get off on this like I did. Barbara never left anything to chance. She wouldn't have allowed this to happen unless she was already confident about how Diana would react to it.  
  
"Well?" Barbara asked after the man had finally finished examining every inch of our nude bodies,  
  
"Their uniforms look pretty damn flawless to me," the man laughed.  
  
"Congratulations girls, you passed," Barbara said. "Return to your standing positions."  
  
The man returned to his seat and joined his friend who was smiling and shaking his head. "I've got to say this is by far the least boring corporate meeting I've ever attended," he said with a laugh.  
  
"I'm sure it is," Barbara responded. "Our Mailgirls program has made this the most exciting, vibrant, and dynamic work environment in the country. And you can have a similar work environment if you decide to move your headquarters to Wildwood. You won't find a more Mailgirls-friendly place anywhere else."  
  
Barbara turned now and looked at me, a smile spreading across on her face. "How would the two of you like to have Mailgirl 9 join us later for lunch?"  
  
"Sure," the first guy said. "How about the other girl? The actress?"  
  
"That might be a bit much for her on her first day." Barbara glanced at her watch. "We've got a couple of hours until then so let's let the two of them continue with Diana's orientation tour. I'll summon Nine for lunch when its time."  
  
Barbara walked up to me now until she was just inches away and stared into my face. "Afterwards Nine and I will have our own bit of business to discuss concerning her future."

**STAIRWELL TO HEAVEN**  
  
I led Diana out of Conference Room A and we began walking back through the floor toward the exit to the stairs. I turned to check on her and noticed her face was very flushed. "Are you okay?" I asked quietly.  
  
"Mm hmm," she muttered through tight lips, nodding her head. She didn't seem okay but I didn't press it as we continued our naked journey past the tenth floor "norms" wearing their expensive business clothes and their condescending smirks.  
  
We entered the stairwell and had only gone down a few steps when I heard Diana say, "Wait!" I turned to her and saw her staring at me with wide eyes. Then, without speaking, she pressed her back against the wall, closed her eyes, thrust her right hand between her legs and began furiously rubbing her pussy as her left hand began kneading her tits.   
  
I looked on in shock and awe as Diana masturbated in front of me with an intensity I'd rarely seen before. I looked up nervously at the tenth floor door above us and then down to the one below leading onto the ninth floor. Although it was mostly mailgirls who used these stairs, norms looking to get in a little exercise would also occasionally show up on them. I had no idea what would happen if one of them came through a door right now and caught Diana rubbing one out in the stairwell but I doubted it would go well with Barbara for either of us.  
  
Thankfully it didn't take long before Diana's body jerked several times and a moan escaped her clenched lips despite her best efforts to suppress it. I was worried for a moment that she might lose her balance so I moved quickly up the stairs to grab her. She placed her arms around me and I felt the warmth of her skin against mine as another spasm rocked her body.   
  
I continued to hold Diana tightly as her breathing began to slow and I felt her body becoming limp. "Let's go down to the next landing," I whispered. She nodded and grasped the handrail as I slowly walked her down the stairs. When we reached the landing I gently lowered her to the floor. Diana placed her back against the wall, then pressed her knees against her chest and wrapped her arms around her legs. I let her sit there and decompress for several minutes but started worrying when she didn't say anything. She finally started to speak without looking up. "Holy f\*ck," she said as she rocked back and forth. "I can't believe I just did that."  
  
"Are you okay?"  
  
"Yeah. But...wow. That was so intense." She sat silently again for a few moments before looking up into my face. "You must think I'm nuts, right?"  
  
I shook my head. "No, I don't. I know this job can get your, um...juices flowing."  
  
"I don't know, I probably am kind of nuts right now, but thanks for that anyway," she replied.   
  
Diana lowered her head and began rocking again. "You know, when I was standing there naked in front of all those corporate suits and they were treating me like I was nothing even though I'm going to be starring in their movie, I kept thinking I should be so f\*cking angry about it. Instead all I felt was...horny. And when that asshole came up and started inspecting my body I got even hornier. If that had gone on much longer I would have f\*cking come right there in front of them, I know I would have. Is that weird, Danica? Is there something wrong with me?"  
  
"I don't think so," I replied. "At least I hope not since I feel like that all the time. The more humiliating things are for me the more turned on I get. Even on a normal day I have this low level buzz going through my body pretty much all the time."  
  
"You're lucky then, I guess. Unless you'd rather not be in a constant state of arousal which doesn't sound like it would suck to me."  
  
"That's just it, I don't know if I do or not. Sometimes I feel like I could live like this forever and other times I'm worried that might actually happen. I'm afraid I'll become trapped in this bizarre fantasy world that I can't control or escape from."  
  
"You can always quit when your contract is up, right? I mean, you're not a slave."  
  
"No, I'm not a slave." Not yet anyway, I thought to myself. But a slave is exactly what Barbara intended to make me and so far she'd always gotten everything she'd ever put her mind to getting. Not for the first time I wondered whether I'd already gone past the point of no return without knowing it.  
  
"I heard somewhere that you're naked all the time, even away from work. Is that true?"  
  
"Yeah, it is."  
  
"Is that by choice?" she asked.  
  
"More or less. Barbara Anderson is encouraging me to do it. I think her ultimate goal is to force mailgirls to stay nude all of the time, 24 hours a day, and I'm her guinea pig." I was a little surprised I was talking about this to someone I'd just met, although I definitely wasn't about to go into detail about the steps Barbara had taken to "encourage" me to remain nude. This was more than I'd told any of the other mailgirls, though, other than Anna and Kelly. For some reason I felt an instant connection with Diana. Maybe it was because I felt like I knew her on some level because I'd seen her grow up on television. But that was Ellie Bixby I'd seen growing up, I reminded myself, not Diana Clarkson. They weren't really the same person.   
  
"So when was the last time you wore clothes?" she asked.  
  
"A few months ago when my mom was in town."   
  
I'd been talking to my mom regularly on the phone but when she insisted on coming to visit I didn't know what to expect when I told Barbara about it. I thought she might force me to stay naked and humiliate myself in front of my mom but she hadn't done that. Instead she'd given me the week off of work and permission to wear Anna's clothes.   
  
It was great seeing Mom again but at times there had also been an uncomfortable silence between us. We never talked about my job as a mailgirl, or the nature of my relationship with Anna, or how we'd come to be living in such an expensive condo. I think she decided there were some things she'd just rather not know and that was okay with me. There were things I knew I couldn't tell her. Maybe someday, but not now.  
  
"So what was it like wearing clothes after all that time?" Diana asked.  
  
"Weird. Constrictive. To be honest I was glad when I could take them off again."  
  
"God, what a life you're living! It's unimaginable to me, although I'm definitely starting to get a taste."  
  
"Could you ever imagine yourself doing something like this full time?" I asked. "I mean, not just playing a part in a movie but full time in real life?" I don't know why I asked her that. I guess maybe I was looking for some validation from her for the choices I'd made in my life.  
  
Diana was silent for a moment. "I have imagined it, Danica. I've imagined it a lot."  
  
"Really?"  
  
"Oh yeah. You know when I said that if this movie flops I might have to become a full time mailgirl? I was kind of joking but also kind of wasn't, if that makes any sense. When my agent first called and told me they were interested in me for this role I told him no f\*cking way. But then I went online to do some research. I watched your video when you were onstage with Barbara and I found tons of pictures and videos of naked DDE mailgirls running around in front of clothed workers."   
  
Diana stopped rocking and looked up at me. "Normally I wouldn't be telling someone I barely know all of this, but since you just watched me masturbate I figure why the hell not? Danica, I really got off on seeing those pictures and videos and started fantasizing about what it would be like to be one of those girls. Thinking about being forced to work naked in front of a bunch of clothed people became a huge turn on. I spent many a masturbation session fantasizing about it. And I've got to say that so far the reality has lived up to the fantasy for me."  
  
"I noticed."  
  
"Yeah, I'm sure you did," she smiled. "But then I guess that shows just how pathetic my life is right now that I'm excited about about pretending to be a lowly mailgirl for awhile." She suddenly looked up at me guiltily. "I'm so sorry, Danica, that really came out wrong. I didn't mean that you..."  
  
"That's okay, Diana," I said to her. "I am just a lowly mailgirl."  
  
Diana shook her head. "No, you're not. I'm not in any position to be condescending toward anyone, much less someone as beautiful and smart as you are." She sat quietly for a few moments before speaking again. "Danica, my life really sucks right now. I just got out of an abusive relationship, I'm suing my own f\*cking father, and I feel like I'm already washed up as an actress and nobody wants me anymore. And I'm just twenty-two!" she said in a half laugh, half sob. She wiped a tear from her eye. "I know, First World problems, right? Poor little Hollywood actress. I'm sure the last thing you needed today was an invitation to a pity party."  
  
I sat down next to Diana and put an arm around her. "Pity party, table for two," I said as Diana choked back a laugh. "Hey, I'm in a pretty weird place myself right now," I said to her. "I'm involved in one dying relationship while also caught up in another one that's...God, I don't even know how to begin to describe that relationship. And my Mailgirls contract is coming to an end at the end of the week, so there's that."  
  
Diana turned and looked at me. "You mean you might not be here after this week?"  
  
"I don't know. I really don't know what's going to happen."  
  
"You haven't decided yet if you're going to stay or leave?"  
  
"It's complicated, Diana," I said. "I may not have any choice but to leave. I may also not have any choice but to stay." A puzzled look came across her face. "Don't ask me to explain," I laughed. "Like I said, it's complicated."  
  
As I sat there holding Diana I suddenly realized how much I'd been craving this kind of simple human contact that didn't involve head games, orders, constraints, or role playing. Just skin on skin, warmth on warmth. I thought about the weird confluence of events that had led me to this place and this moment with this girl I barely knew. I thought about my future and wondered when I'd be able to experience a moment like this again.  
  
I took a quick glance at my MMU and sighed. "We really need to get moving, Diana. Everything we do is logged and if we spend too much time here someone's going to notice and ask questions." And by "someone" I meant "Barbara."  
  
"Always on the leash, huh?" Diana said.  
  
"Always." I got up on my feet and held out my hand to Diana. She smiled at me as I helped her up and then leaned in and gave me a kiss on the cheek. It was one of those moments in life that seem small at the time but, through time and circumstance, become forever etched in your memory.  
  
What I couldn't have known in that moment, though, was that Barbara's leash would become a nearly unbreakable chain by the end of the day.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48**

**BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE**  
"Kneel," Barbara ordered as I entered her office. I sank to my knees as four sets of eyes stared down at me.   
  
"I wish I could get my people at City Hall to do that," a woman laughed and I recognized her immediately. It was Joyce Cooper, the mayor of Wildwood. I'd met her once before when Barbara had taken me to her home for a meeting when she was still a city councilwoman. Barbara had promised to help push Joyce over the top in her mayoral race if she would commit to helping pass Mailgirls-friendly laws in the large suburb. Both had kept their promises. Also in the room were the two unfamiliar men I'd seen earlier in Conference Room A in the tower. I soon learned their names were Bill and Ted and I couldn't help but think of an old Keanu Reeves movie.   
  
I'd been on the third floor of the south wing when Anna had shown up to replace me in leading Diana on her naked "orientation tour" of DDE headquarters. Almost immediately after her arrival my MMU had summoned me here to Barbara's office on the ninth floor of the tower. Now the meeting resumed as I knelt submissively on the floor, my nude body on display to these power players as they discussed a multi-million dollar deal.   
  
Bill and Ted, I would discover, had founded a high tech startup that had recently gone public. After a successful initial public offering of their stock they were flush with cash and looking to build a new headquarters from the ground up after having outgrown their old corporate offices. Joyce and Barbara were trying to sell them on Wildwood as their new home and, of course, they would need mailgirls in order to take their business to the next level according to Barbara.  
  
"So how many mailgirls do you think we would need to start off with if we decided to go that direction?" Bill asked, his eyes quickly glancing at my tits before turning his attention back to Barbara. He was the one who had performed the "inspection" on Diana and me in the earlier meeting.  
  
"Probably eight to ten for starters," Barbara said. "Once you find out how much they help improve productivity and morale you'll want to add more though."  
  
"And you guys hire and train them here?"  
  
"Yes we do. That helps insure consistency in the training and quality of mailgirls."  
  
"And then you put the girls up for bid after their training, right?"  
  
"We put their contracts up for bid," Barbara replied as if there was really a difference. You buy the contract you buy the girl.  
  
"Okay, but what if we wanted to hire one of our own employees to be a mailgirl," Bill asked. "Would we still have to bid on them after their training?"  
  
"No, not in that case." Barbara answered. "You can sign an employee who has worked for you for more than six months to a Mailgirls contract and you'll have the right of first refusal on the contract. We'll still train them but they're yours afterwards if you want them."  
  
"So it would actually be cheaper for us to hire from within then, right?" Bill asked.  
  
"That's right," Barbara said.  
  
"So then why wouldn't we hire all of our mailgirls from within our organization?" Bill asked.  
  
"You obviously can if you want," Barbara replied. "I will say that we draw from a much larger pool of qualified applicants which would probably give you a better selection of girls to choose from, but that would be your choice."  
  
"Wouldn't it be humiliating to have our own employees working naked in front of their friends and colleagues?" Ted asked Bill.  
  
"That would be part of the fun," Bill grinned mischievously. "I can think of a few I'd like to sign up for the job. One in particular." Bill and Ted looked at each other and then broke out laughing. "Staci," they both said almost simultaneously.   
  
"So what if we had an especially, um...'qualified' employee we'd like to recruit to become a mailgirl. Could we offer additional money and benefits beyond what's normally in the standard contract as an enticement to get her to sign on?" Bill asked Barbara.  
  
"Of course," she replied. I had no idea who this Staci was but I felt sorry for her knowing the full court press these two were going to put on her to get her to become a nude company slave.  
  
"You know, I still have a hard time believing all of this is legal," Ted stated. "Buying and selling mailgirls on an open market. Forcing employees to work naked."  
  
"There are lots of businesses where nudity is a requirement for employment," Barbara responded. "Strip clubs, for instance. And pro athletes are traded and sold all the time to other teams. We're not breaking any new ground here legally, it's just that the combination of nudity and the buying and selling of employee contracts has never been done like this before in a corporate setting. We are pushing the boundaries of labor and contractual law, but we know where those boundaries are. That's why it's important for DDE to monitor all North American licensees to make sure they are complying with local, state, and federal laws. There are a lot of people who'd love to find an excuse to snuff out the Mailgirls industry while it's still in its infancy."  
  
"Will they be able to?" Ted asked.  
  
"No, they won't," Barbara replied confidently. "And as the industry grows and matures it will become increasingly difficult for them to try."  
  
"If we do this I don't want to end up spending a lot of money on legal fees to defend it," Bill said. "Having naked mailgirls sounds great and all but if we're getting dragged into court over it then it wouldn't be worth it."  
  
"DDE and Hiromoto Industries have a joint legal defense fund," Barbara replied. "We'll provide legal assistance to all licensees if needed, provided they've followed the provisions of the licensing agreement and aren't flagrantly violating labor or sexual harassment laws. If a licensee gets caught demanding blow jobs from mailgirls then we'll pull their license and they're on their own."  
  
It was always disconcerting to me to hear mailgirls discussed in this type of corporate-speak and legalese as if we were just another commodity being produced for consumption rather than real people. I also knew that Barbara intended to push and expand those boundaries she was talking about to the point where mailgirls would become virtual slaves. I was living proof of how far she'd already gotten toward that goal.  
  
"That new construction going on down the road. Is that a company you lured here with your Mailgirls program?" Bill asked.  
  
"Yes it is," Barbara replied.  
  
"They weren't lured here only by Barbara's mailgirls," Joyce interjected with a hint of annoyance in her voice. She'd been quiet up to now because the focus had been on mailgirls rather than the relocation of the company headquarters to her city. "There's also Wildwood's young, well-educated workforce, relatively cheap land, and the generous tax break the city is willing to negotiate with you. Let's not forget that, Barbara."  
  
"Of course not, mayor," Barbara smiled. "Wildwood offers the complete package." She glanced at her watch. "What do you say we break for lunch? There's a bar a few blocks away that I think you'll like. It's a burgers and wings place if that's okay."  
  
"That'll work," Bill said as Ted nodded in agreement.  
  
"I've got to get back to the office," Joyce said. "I'll talk to you gentlemen some more before you leave town." They all rose and shook hands. Joyce gave me a sly smile as she passed by without speaking.   
  
"Come, Nine," Barbara ordered. "Leave your MMU on my desk. You won't need it." I rose to my feet.  
  
"Is she coming with us like that?" Ted asked.  
  
"Of course," Barbara smiled as she looked at me with a gleam in her eye. "Unless the two of you object?"   
  
"No!" they both said in unison.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48b**

**NAKED LUNCH**  
"Are we going to take a car or walk?" Bill asked as we exited DDE headquarters into a beautiful spring day.   
  
"It's so nice out I thought we'd walk," Barbara said. "It's only a few blocks."  
  
Our path took us south of DDE headquarters, the opposite direction of my daily nude walk home to the condo. I followed several steps behind Barbara with my arms at my side and my eyes lowered to the ground. This area was a business and shopping district and with each passing block the number of pedestrians grew. I could feel their stares, hear their laughs and comments, and with each step my nervousness about what lay ahead increased.   
  
"So this is legal?" Ted asked. "For her to walk around naked in public like this?"  
  
"Yeah, it is now," Barbara replied. "There's a new city law that allows registered mailgirls to be nude in public while they're on duty. They have to be wearing an ID necklace like Nine's with a scannable RFID chip. They're also only allowed to enter businesses that have signed agreements with us and we're working on that. This bar we're going to today is one that has signed on with us."  
  
Even though it was a clear sunny day there was still a hint of chill in the spring air raising goosebumps on my bare skin and hardening my nipples. As we walked down that busy sidewalk it suddenly occurred to me that this was the fulfillment of one of Barbara's visions. She had once told me that someday she'd be allowed to walk openly down city streets with me following naked and collared and that I would kneel on the floor next to her table as she ate in a public restaurant. A sudden surge of humiliation and arousal coursed through my body as I realized today was that day! It had seemed like such a crazy fantasy at the time but it had taken less than two years for Barbara to make it happen.  
  
When we reached the entrance to the restaurant I recognized it immediately. It was a sports bar that was a popular after work hangout for DDE employees. I'd been here a few times with friends during my days as an up-and-coming management trainee working in the company's marketing department. I couldn't have imagined in my wildest dreams back then that I would someday enter these doors stark naked.  
  
The bar's hostess stared at me wide-eyed as we approached her stand. "Table for four, please," Barbara said to her.  
  
"Um, I don't think she's allowed..."  
  
"She's a licensed mailgirl and we have an agreement with the owner," Barbara interrupted.  
  
"Um, okay...I'll have to talk to my manager." As she walked away I glanced around. We were standing in the bar area with about a dozen big screen TV sets mounted around the room showing ESPN and other sports channels. The bar area was about half full with a lunchtime crowd of shoppers and local business people. So far only a few of them had noticed me but as they told their friends I saw more and more heads turning my way. I lowered my eyes again as the conflicting emotions of shame and excitement raced through me.   
  
The hostess returned with a lumpy thirtyish looking guy wearing a tie and white shirt with the bar's logo on it that was sloppily tucked into a pair of black pants. An astonished grin broke out on his face when saw me. "Holy shit, you're Mailgirl 9!" he said. "I've been playing the crap out of your character in 'Gangsta 4!'" I wasn't really sure how to respond to that so I just nodded uncomfortably.   
  
The manager took out his smart phone, snapped a selfie with me, and then punched open an app. "Sorry," he said, "but I'm supposed to verify that you're a licensed mailgirl even though I know you are." He held the phone up to my collar and I heard it beep. "All good," the man smiled. "Take them to their table," he said to the hostess.  
  
The hostess stared at him with an incredulous look on her face, then finally picked up four menus.  
  
"We'll only need three of those," Barbara said. "Nine here won't be ordering anything."  
  
The hostess led us through the bar toward the restaurant area as customers and employees gawked. When we reached an empty table toward the rear she placed the menus on it and stood back to watch. Bill and Ted sat down on one side of the table while Barbara took a seat opposite them. I stood quietly waiting for instructions as I felt every eye in the house on me. "Kneel," Barbara ordered. I'd known this was coming but it was still no less humiliating. I knelt down on the hardwood floor with my knees spread at shoulder width. I placed hands on my thighs and arched my back slightly placing my breasts on prominent display, then lowered my gaze to the floor to complete the submissive posture.  
  
"Wow, um... okay then," I heard the hostess say above me sounding completely flustered by what she was seeing. "Teri will be your waitress. Enjoy your meal." As she walked away I heard astonished gasps and laughter from the surrounding tables. This was without doubt the most humiliating situation I'd been in since that day on stage when Barbara had managed to induce me into an involuntarily orgasm in front of several hundred people without ever touching me. I felt my arousal climbing rapidly as I closed my eyes and tried to still my mind.   
  
"You're really going to make her kneel on the floor while we eat?" Ted asked.  
  
"Mailgirls aren't allowed to sit on furniture while in uniform," Barbara responded. "Not in the office building, not anywhere. This is their required resting position."  
  
"This is so awesome," Bill laughed. "Will we be able to do this with our mailgirls?"  
  
"Of course," Barbara said. "As long as the restaurant has signed a Mailgirls agreement."  
  
"How many have signed so far?" Ted asked.   
  
"This is the first. There are others that are interested but are waiting to see how things go here. There's no doubt in my mind that business will boom here when word gets around about Nine's appearance today." This made me wonder if Barbara planned on making this a regular thing for me to help boost business and encourage other restaurants sign up. Just thinking about it caused another surge of arousal to course through my body that I immediately tried to dial down with limited success.  
  
I heard footsteps approaching and looked up briefly to see a very pretty blonde waitress. "Hi, my name is Teri and I'll be your server today. Can I get you some drinks to start out with?" She didn't seem surprised by my appearance and I'm guessing that her manager had tipped her off about what was going on. She went through her spiel about the daily specials and Barbara and the two men put in their drink orders. "And what about her," she asked looking at me.  
  
"Nine won't be eating today," Barbara replied. "She would like a bowl of milk though."  
  
"A bowl of milk?" Teri asked sounding a little nonplussed for the first time.  
  
"Yes," Barbara said. "You can place it down in front of her on the floor."  
  
"Um, okay. I'll be right back with your drinks."  
  
I had no doubt what Barbara was trying to do now. She knew that humiliation was a huge turn on for me so she was dialing it up to eleven. Her intent was to orchestrate an orgasm in front of all these people just like she had that day on stage! I tried to fight it off but my usual mantras and breathing were having only limited success. My entire body felt electrified. It wouldn't take much to push me over the edge.  
  
Teri soon returned with beers for the two men and a glass of wine for Barbara. Then she placed a clear glass bowl of milk on the floor in front of me. I heard snickering coming from surrounding tables as I stared down at it. "Have a drink, Nine," Barbara said. I picked up the bowl with both hands and began lifting it to my mouth. "No hands," Barbara ordered. "Put it back on the floor." I glanced up at her and saw the excitement in her eyes and knew she was determined to push me past the brink.  
  
I placed the bowl back onto the floor in front of me and noticed that Teri, our server, had remained at our table watching me. I felt dozens of eyes on me as I took a deep breath to try once again to control my nervous excitement. I lowered myself down onto my elbows and was forced to use my right hand to control my hair to keep it from spilling down into the bowl. As my head dipped down toward the bowl my feet rose into the air to balance myself and I knew that anyone sitting behind me was getting a hell of a view. My entire body was trembling in shame and excitement as I began to lick the milk.  
  
"Meow," I heard a male voice say nearby.  
  
"Here kitty, kitty," said another.  
  
The remarks and laughter were still ringing in my ears as I returned to my kneeling position. Red faced with shame I was at the very brink of an orgasm, but before I could go into my ritual for bringing myself back from the edge I felt Barbara's hand stroking my hair. "Good girl, Nine," she said. Then I felt her thumb lightly caressing my inner ear and earlobe which she knew was an erogenous zone for me. Almost immediately a moan escaped my lips as a spasm rocked my body. Then another.   
  
Applause broke out around me. "I'll have what she's having," a female voice said as the restaurant exploded with laughter.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48c**

**GROUND ZERO**  
About ninety minutes later I found myself back on my knees in Barbara's office, the events of the lunch still vivid in my mind. Like similar humiliations that Barbara had put me through over the past two years it was generating an avalanche of complex and conflicting emotions. As shameful and degrading as the experience had been I couldn't deny that at some level it had also been tremendously thrilling. Who does what I had just done? Who lives like that?   
  
One thing I knew for a certainty was that my life under Barbara's control was never boring or uneventful. My experiences as a mailgirl felt like they had been chaotically splashed across my memory from a palette of vivid colors while those from my previous life tended to blend into muted tones. But could I continue to live like this without eventually surrendering my individuality and identity completely? Would there ever be a path back from that place if I did? On the other hand could I ever return to being just another "norm" spinning on a hamster wheel chasing a prize that wouldn't necessarily make me any happier even if I caught it? After two years of this I still felt as confused as ever about what I really wanted.   
  
"What did you think of Teri?" Barbara asked from behind her desk. We were alone now, Bill and Ted having returned to their hotel after lunch. She'd been ignoring me while working quietly on her laptop so the sudden question startled me out of my thoughts.  
  
"Ma'am?"  
  
"Teri. Our waitress at lunch. She was very pretty wasn't she?"  
  
"Yes ma'am, she was."  
  
"You probably couldn't see her face but you should have seen how she looked at you," Barbara chuckled. "Almost like she wished she could trade places with you. I handed her a Mailgirls business card as we left. I'm willing to bet we hear from her in the next week. Two weeks tops."  
  
"Yes ma'am." Barbara was seldom wrong about these things so I wouldn't have bet against her.  
  
Barbara got up now, walked to the front of her desk and sat on the edge of it looking down on me. "It's time for us to talk about your future, Danica," she said.  
  
"Yes ma'am," I replied as a surge of nervous energy coursed through me. This was a moment I'd been thinking about for a very long time and now it was here.  
  
"Your submissive speech requirements are lifted for this conversation, Danica. No need to call me ma'am. We can speak as equals."  
  
"Okay." I noticed that her concept of speaking as "equals" didn't include allowing me to put on clothes or get off of my knees.  
  
"Do you know why I put you through that today at lunch?" she asked me.  
  
"To show off to your clients?"  
  
Barbara smiled. "Yeah, that's part of it. I do think that was a selling point for them today, especially for Bill who is the real decision maker between the two. Can you think of another reason?"  
  
"Because you once told me that you'd be able to do that one day. Make me walk naked and collared behind you on city streets and kneel naked beside you in a restaurant. You wanted to show me that you'd made it happen."  
  
"That's right, Danica," Barbara replied. "Very good. I wanted you to see that when I tell you my plans for you that they aren't idle talk or fanciful wish casting. I can and will make them happen."  
  
That's exactly what frightened me about getting locked into a new contract with Barbara. She did have a track record of making outlandish sounding plans come to pass. Without leaving myself a way out if things got too crazy then I'd be as powerless to control my future as a leaf on a fast moving stream. But then again I'd just had an orgasm in a crowded restaurant and I was worried about my future getting too crazy? My crazy future was already here.  
  
Barbara waited for a minute expecting a response but when I didn't provide one she continued. "That brings me to the third reason, Danica. I wanted you to have a taste of what your life will be like from now on. I know I wasn't honest with you about what your true role would be when you signed your original contract but I promise you that won't be the case now. I'm going to tell you exactly what your role will be in the future."  
  
"Okay," I replied, not entirely sure I really wanted to know.  
  
"It's time for you to move on from your submissive playacting with Anna," she said. "You're ready for the real thing. No more amateur theater. From now on you'll be my personal mailgirl, Danica. All day, every day."  
  
"So what exactly does that mean, being your 'personal mailgirl?'"  
  
"It means moving into my home and taking care of the cooking and cleaning and anything else I ask you to do for me. At work it means making pickups and deliveries only for me. It means always being available to serve me in my office, in meetings, dining out with potential clients, or whatever else I'm doing. It means full and total obedience to me at all times, Danica, twenty-four hours a day."  
  
"So what you're actually saying is I'll be your personal slave."  
  
Barbara shook her head. "You'll be much more than that, Danica. I'm at the forefront of one of the great social experiments of our time and you're going to be my partner."  
  
"Your partner?" I scoffed. "A slave isn't a partner! And listen to yourself, Barbara. At the forefront of a great social experiment? God, you're such a f\*cking egomaniac!" As soon as the words were out of my mouth I knew I'd gone too far and braced myself for the inevitable backlash. Instead Barbara just smiled.  
  
"That's okay, Danica. I gave you permission to speak freely and I want you to. You won't be punished for it, I promise. Let's clear the air and get everything out in the open."  
  
"Alright then. If I move in with you then what happens to Anna?"  
  
"She can stay in the condo until her contract is up. After that she can run off with Ben or do whatever the hell she wants to do."  
  
I looked up at her in shock. "You know about..."  
  
"Yes," Barbara interrupted. "I know about Ben Hostler. Who do you think arranged for their secret little romance?"  
  
My shock turned to anger. "So Ben's just a f\*cking plant you're using to entrap Anna?"   
  
Barbara shook her head. "Relax. Ben knows nothing about it. We've never spoken or met. It was time for Anna to move on from you so I've been looking for a good match for her. I checked around and Ben's name came up. He's supposed to be a nice guy and I thought he'd be good for her."  
  
I was confused now. "If he's not a plant then how..."  
  
"All it took was a whisper by someone in his ear that she was interested in him and another whisper in Anna's ear that he was interested in her and the two of them found each other," Barbara said. "It wasn't that difficult."  
  
"You're such a manipulative bitch, Barbara! Everyone is just a pawn to be moved around your chessboard."  
  
"That's not true, Danica. There are also more powerful pieces that need to be moved around my board as well," Barbara said with a sarcastic smirk.  
  
"Everything's just a game for you isn't it, even though you're playing with people's lives. So I suppose you think this is your leverage over me to get me to sign a new contract? Threatening to go after Anna for violating her contract because she's seeing Ben?"  
  
Barbara laughed. "Is that what you think?"  
  
"Of course I do."  
  
"If that's how you thought I'd get you to sign a new contract then you're wrong. Not only would that be simplistic and crude, it probably wouldn't have worked anyway."  
  
All along I'd thought that Barbara planned to use punishing Anna as leverage to get me to sign a new contract. Anna and I had talked it over and she made me promise that I wouldn't allow Barbara to use her to bully me into it, that she would handle whatever Barbara threw her way.  
  
"Danica, I like Anna a lot," Barbara said. "That's the truth. I don't want to hurt her, I want to help her. That story I told you about how I grew up as an unwanted orphan wasn't bullshit. I was abused as a child myself so I can relate to Anna in ways you'll never understand. She's a sweet girl and I would never do anything to harm her."  
  
My head was spinning now and my game plan for this meeting was totally out the window. If Anna wasn't Barbara's leverage then what the hell was? "So you're not going to interfere with Anna and Ben getting together?" I asked skeptically.   
  
Barbara shook her head. "Just tell Anna to keep it discreet. I don't give a damn if they hook up as long as it's not at the condo. And no public displays of affection where they might be seen. Once her contract is up and she's no longer a mailgirl they can bang each other in the food court of the Sunset Mall for all I care."  
  
Barbara had remained sitting on the edge of her desk through all of this but now stood up, kicked her heels off, and kneeled on the floor facing me. This wasn't the first time she'd done this but it still came as a shock.  
  
"I know you think I'm a narcissistic, manipulative bitch, and you're probably right to a degree," she said to me, her eyes locked onto mine. "You may not believe this, Danica, but I'm well aware of my faults and weaknesses. I do see many things that others don't but I also have my blindspots like everyone else. I'm not omniscient. If you're with me you may see and hear and interpret things in ways that I can't. I need your help, Danica. I can't do this alone. I want you to be my partner in this great adventure."  
  
"So you think this is a great adventure for me? To be your personal slave?"  
  
"You're a true submissive, Danica, so, yes, I do believe all of this is an adventure for you. I also know you're a very ambitious person. I realize that sounds contradictory, to be both submissive and ambitious, but that's not necessarily true. People are often impelled by complex and seemingly contradictory drives."  
  
"So you think that helping you form a class of nude slave girls is something I aspire to, Barbara? You think that's where my ambitions lie?"  
  
"I do think you see the inherent beauty in what we're doing, Danica. DDE really is a more vibrant, exciting, and productive environment since we've started the Mailgirls program. There's no reason we can't bring that energy to society as a whole."  
  
"And what about the inherent dangers to the girls, Barbara? You talk about how you were abused as a child but aren't you putting mailgirls into a situation where they can potentially be physically and sexually abuse?"  
  
Barbara shrugged. "It's an imperfect world, Danica, and there's always going to be that danger no matter the environment. Nobody in this world is ever really safe, but I've used my power to protect the girls as best I can. I'll continue to do that by enforcing strict standards in how DDE and our licensees treat mailgirls."  
  
I laughed bitterly at that. "You've used your power to protect the girls? Barbara, you whipped me! Twice! And tied me up and locked me in your closet! You're such a f\*cking hypocrite!"  
  
"Am I?" she replied in a calm voice. "I think you know that you and I have a personal relationship that goes way beyond being boss and mailgirl. I wouldn't have done that if I thought you didn't want it or couldn't handle it. You know that was consensual, Danica. And, full disclosure, I'll probably do it again in the future."  
  
"Okay, so my role as your 'partner' in all of this is to be a naked little slave girl and spybot that obediently follows you around and gets whipped whenever she gets out of line?" I retorted petulantly.  
  
Barbara sighed and shook her head. "That's not what I'm saying and you know it, Danica. You're too smart for this."  
  
"Am I?"  
  
"I wouldn't want you if you weren't. You're extraordinarily beautiful, Danica, but we have a lot of beautiful mailgirls who don't fascinate me the way you do. It's not just your beauty or your servitude I need, it's your intelligence. Others may see you as just a lowly mailgirl but I know better."  
  
Barbara reached out now with her right hand and began gently caressing my cheek. "Danica, when you're in my home you'll have full access to my library. I want you to learn and grow. I want to teach you. You'll be both a servant and a partner in helping me accomplish great things. You're going to be at ground zero of a cultural earthquake that will transform society." I felt my heart thumping in my chest as I listened to these words that both thrilled and terrified me; words that seemed to dance on the ledge between genius and madness.   
  
Barbara leaned in and planted a warm, wet kiss on my lips. When she pulled away I saw an intensity in her eyes that forced me to look down to the floor. She gently lifted my chin until I met her gaze once again. "Danica, I'm going to allow you to fully explore and experience your dual natures of submission and ambition. No one else in this world can do that for you like I can, my love. No one."   
  
As Barbara spoke I realized that she had just battered all of the defenses I had spent months preparing for this meeting like a Sherman tank rolling through a picket fence. At that moment I could visualize the life she was offering and I wanted it. I wanted to be her slave, her lover, her partner. I wanted to help her bend the world to her will. I wanted all of it. I was ready to give myself completely to her. If in that moment she had placed the contract in front of me I would have signed it without hesitation, I know in my heart of hearts I would have. But she didn't.   
  
Maybe this moment was so important to her that she didn't fully trust her powers of persuasion and wanted to hedge her bet. Maybe she mistook my delay in responding to her as doubt. Maybe she had inadvertently led me into one of those blindspots she had just talked about. For whatever reason - and for perhaps the first since I'd known her - Barbara failed to properly read me or understand where my head was at. And in that failure she let the moment pass and overplayed her hand.  
  
And that would change everything. For both of us.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48d**

**SLAVE**  
Barbara's words swirled through my head as I knelt silently in front of her. Two words in particular kept assailing my thoughts again and again: "my love." Had Barbara just professed her love for me? And if she had what did that mean for our future? When she used the word "partner" did it mean more than just helping her advance her goals?  
  
Those two words sent me spiraling down a rabbit hole of chaos and confusion. I became so lost in thought about the potential implications of those words that it was only later in thinking back to this meeting that I realized that Barbara had said something else to me during the time I was contemplating their meaning. To this day I don't know what it was, but whatever she said to me hadn't registered and I'd remained silent, failing to respond to her. Shortly after that Barbara removed her hand from my cheek, stared at me for a few seconds, then quietly rose to her feet and returned to her desk.  
  
I looked up at her as she removed a small stack of papers from a drawer and placed it on her desk. My new contract, I thought to myself. At that point I still planned on signing it and a nervous excitement surged through my body as I realized I was actually going to surrender to her and live the life she had just described to me. Then I saw her take out a second stack of papers and place it next to the first.   
  
Barbara looked down on me as I knelt naked before her as I had so many times before. I immediately sensed the change in her mood as she began to speak. "Danica, I have two contracts here," she said to me. "Before you leave this office today you're going to sign one of them."   
  
The personal, intimate tone that she'd been using before was gone now and had been replaced by her businesslike "my way or the highway" attitude. My heart sank as I realized that she was no longer trying to persuade me; she was dictating the terms of my surrender.  
  
"Two contracts?" I asked puzzled. "Why two?"  
  
"Because I want to give you the opportunity to sign a fair contract first before we move on to discussing the second one."  
  
I took a deep breath to steady myself. "Okay, so what exactly do you consider fair?" I asked knowing that the words "fair" and "Mailgirls contract" seldom belonged within shouting distance of each other in the same sentence.  
  
"It's the current standard two-year deal. $50,000 bonus up front plus $75,000 per year with another $50,000 completion bonus for a total of $250,000 over the life of the contract. In this case, though, the contract is exclusive to DDE so it couldn't be put up for bid to other companies."  
  
The pay was certainly fair since it was meant to entice beautiful young women into the program, but the devil was always in the details. "And what about the penalties?" I asked.  
  
"Failure to complete the contract means repaying the bonus at 19.9% interest compounded weekly plus an additional $75,000 penalty to help the company defray the costs of having to replace you." At that usurious interest rate the amount required to repay it would add up fast. Combined with the additional $75,000 penalty it would require a huge financial hit to get out of it. I knew DDE also included a clause in their contracts that made it extremely difficult to reduce these penalties even through bankruptcy. If a mailgirl saved and invested her original $50,000 bonus it would help mitigate some of that but few ever did. Almost all mailgirls spent their bonus money paying off bills or buying stuff.   
  
The completion bonus at the end of the contract represented the carrot aspect of the carrot and stick approach used to make it as difficult as possible to leave the program. Each day the interest a mailgirl owed would increase while bringing her one day closer to that completion bonus. As a result, no matter how much a mailgirl might want to quit, hardly anyone ever did. Once signed the only realistic way out of the contract was to reach the end of it.  
  
"God, Barbara, if you think that contract's fair then I'd hate to see the second one," I said to her.  
  
"Yes you would, Danica. And I want you to know that this contract I'm offering you is probably one of the last of its kind. We only offered these high salaried contracts because we thought it would be difficult to find enough qualified women to do this job if we didn't. That's proven to be false."  
  
"So you're going to cut pay in future contracts?" I asked already guessing the answer.  
  
"Of course," she replied. "We have a lot more applicants than job openings so why keep paying exorbitant salaries to unskilled labor just to run around as naked couriers when we don't have to?"  
  
Unskilled labor? The condescension was practically dripping from her words now. "What about all this crap you've been pitching to the media about how much we increase the bottom line and help improve productivity?" I asked.  
  
"That's all true, Danica. That's no reason, though, not to tweak the contracts to try to find the sweet spot of pay and penalties that will maximize profits while still maintaining a sufficient flow of qualified and motivated mailgirls."  
  
I was pretty sure that Barbara's "sweet spot" for Mailgirl pay was zero if she could find some way to get away with it. "So you're going to put mailgirls through all of this humiliating and degrading bullshit and not even pay them much for it?"  
  
Barbara shrugged. "It's still more money than most of these girls would otherwise be earning, but it's a simple matter of supply and demand. DDE isn't a charity. We have to turn a profit while keeping our shareholders happy. You're an MBA, Danica, you know that."   
  
I did know that, in theory anyway. Yet when this calculus was applied to real people in the real world, especially with a group treated as poorly as mailgirls were, it didn't really seem fair to me.  
  
"So what's in the second contract?" I asked.  
  
"Let's just say it's much worse than this one and leave it at that."  
  
"You're not going to tell me?"  
  
"No Danica, I'm not. Not unless you reject this one, and I strongly recommend that you don't."  
  
"Well if I don't want to sign this one then what the hell makes you think I'll sign a much worse one? You think you have the leverage to make me sign it?" My irritation at her hardball tactics was continuing to grow.  
  
"I know I do, Danica, but I'd rather it not come to that."  
  
"And this supposed leverage has nothing to do with Anna?"  
  
"Nothing."  
  
Whatever spell Barbara had woven over me earlier had completely dissipated now and my defenses were on full alert. Was she trying to bluff me or did she really have some way to force me to sign the second one if I rejected the first? And how much worse would the second contract be if that happened? "How long do I have to decide?" I asked.  
  
Barbara glanced at her watch. "I'll give you ten minutes, Danica. After that the first contract will be permanently withdrawn and the only option will be for you to sign the second one."  
  
I'd witnessed Barbara using these bare knuckled negotiating tactics many times before but my anger began boiling over now seeing her use them on me just minutes after she'd supposedly professed her love. How naive I'd been to believe that I would ever be anything to her other than a little puppet forced to dance on her stage! "I've got a third option for you, Barbara. How about you go f\*ck yourself!"   
  
A startled look came across her face that she quickly tried to mask. Maybe she realized for the first time that she'd overplayed her hand, but I knew her well enough to know that she wouldn't back down now. I also knew that I couldn't either. For better or worse I'd just gone all in and would have to see all of the cards turned over.  
  
Barbara silently picked up the first contract and dumped it into a wastebasket next to her desk. Then she placed her smartphone on the desk where the contract had been sitting. She punched the face of it several times with her index finger, then sat down in her chair and stared at me with a mixture of sadness and anger. Moments later I heard a recording of my voice coming from the phone. I was momentarily puzzled about what this was until I heard another voice emerge from the speaker. I reeled back in shock as I realized where this was from: it was a recording of one of my secret phone calls with Mariko in that little room in the east wing!

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48e**

I was rocked by an overwhelming feeling of helplessness and despair as I listened to my voice as I told Mariko about a virtual reality headset I'd heard was being secretly developed by DDE. Barbara let the recording run for a couple of minutes before shutting it off. "I have hours of these conversations, Danica. Most of it is worthless gossip but this is the one that will hang you if it gets out."  
  
"W-where..."  
  
"Where did I get this? Where do you think? I got it from Hiromoto."  
  
My shock turned to anger. Hiromoto! That bastard had sold me out! Of course he had, you stupid, stupid girl. How could you have ever have placed your trust in a Japanese gangster? What a foolish, naive little girl you are, Danica!  
  
"A prototype of that VR headset was stolen not long after that call," Barbara said coldly. "Guess where it ended up? In Japan. Hiromoto secretly sold it to another company that is using it to jumpstart its own VR development program."  
  
"I didn't steal it, Barbara. I swear I didn't. I would never do that!"  
  
"It doesn't matter if you did or didn't, Danica. That call makes you complicit in corporate espionage. Your contract has a confidentiality agreement in it that allows us to sue you to recover damages from disclosing proprietary secrets and in this case that could amount to millions. You could also be subject to criminal prosecution."  
  
I was having trouble breathing now as the enormity of the situation hit me. This was the leverage that Barbara held over me and it went far beyond whatever I'd imagined she might have. She owns me now, I thought to myself in despair. She absolutely owns me!   
  
"You know, I guessed what Hiromoto's game was fairly early on," Barbara continued. "I knew he couldn't be earning enough money from Mailgirls licensing to turn a profit from it and he's not one to do anything unless it helps enrich him. I couldn't figure it out until I realized that mailgirls are the only employees other than upper management who have access to every area of the DDE complex. After that I had a pretty good idea what he was up to. He was using his Mailgirls program to gain inside information and steal technology from his licensees. It didn't take me long after that to find that little room in the east wing."  
  
God, I was so stupid to have ever thought that I could get away with this without Barbara finding out. And now I was trapped! "How long have you known about this?" I asked, my voice barely above a whisper.  
  
"I figured it out about a month or so after expanding our Mailgirls program from the tower to the rest of the complex."  
  
"Wait a minute, you knew about Hiromoto's spying before I started doing it and you let me do it anyway?"  
  
"I wasn't after you originally when I allowed the spying to continue," Barbara said. "I wanted to nail someone else. But you went to them on your own and got caught up in it. Once you did I had my leverage on you."  
  
"Who were you trying to nail?"  
  
"I'll give you a little hint. Kelly just signed an identical version of this second contract this morning."  
  
Kelly! I knew there had to be someone else spying for Hiromoto besides me. She's the one who must have stolen the VR prototype. I knew she hated Barbara but I couldn't believe she'd go that far. I was willing to pass information on to Hiromoto but I would never have stolen anything.  
  
"Why would you have Kelly sign a new contract?" I asked. "I thought you wanted her gone."  
  
"I changed my mind," Barbara replied with a thin smile. "I decided I'd rather torture her for awhile by making her do the same job for a lot less money, because money is ultimately all Kelly gives a shit about. Eventually I'll sell her to another company, but she's going to remain a mailgirl for a very long time."   
  
Earlier Barbara had been charismatic, persuasive and affectionate, but now she was revealing her ugly, vindictive side. Her mercurial nature had always kept me on edge but her sudden transformation from my lover into my blackmailer in just the space of a few minutes was startling even by her standards. Any desire I had to live out her fantasies was gone now.  
  
"Does anyone else know about these recordings, Barbara?" I asked.  
  
"No one. And they won't if you sign the contract."  
  
"So you'd really allow the company to sue me or throw me in jail if I don't? You know that you'd lose me forever if you did that, Barbara."  
  
"I know, Danica. I don't want to but I will if it comes to that. If you walk out that door I'll turn the recordings over to corporate security and it will be out of my hands after that."  
  
I frantically searched my mind for an escape route from this trap but I couldn't see one. The company had me dead to rights if they wanted to pursue legal action against me.   
  
"How long has Hiromoto known that you knew about his spying?" I asked.  
  
"Since last summer. I confronted him about it after the VR prototype was stolen."   
  
"Last summer? But I've been talking to Mariko all that time since then. Did she know that you were on to what was going on?"  
  
"Of course," Barbara replied. "Mariko's been a part of every conversation I've ever had with Hiromoto. She acts as the interpreter for us."  
  
Another wave of despair washed over me as I realized that Mariko had also betrayed me! She'd allowed me to continue spying for her without warning me that Barbara already knew about it! There's no one I could trust anymore. No one. I realized at last just how far over my head I'd been in these shark infested waters. I never, ever stood a chance.  
  
But then something Barbara had said struck me. Why would Hiromoto need an interpreter? I knew from my one experience with the man - watching him whip Mariko in his office - that he was fluent in English. Is it possible that Barbara didn't know this? Was this something that Hiromoto normally kept hidden? And if so, why did he speak English in front of me? Was it because I was just a naked mailgirl and not worthy enough to bother hiding it from?  
  
I'd have to return to these questions later because I still had the matter at hand to deal with. "So what's in the second contract?" I asked.  
  
$50,000 per year but with no bonuses. There's also no penalty for quitting."  
  
I wasn't quite sure what to make of that. "I don't get it. Other than the crappy pay and no bonuses it sounds like what I've been asking for. I want to keep working as a mailgirl with no strings attached if I ever decide to walk away. So what's the catch?"  
  
"The catch is there's no expiration date on it. The knowledge that I have these recordings should be sufficient motivation to keep you from ever quitting, and you're going to keep making those calls to Mariko so I'll always have fresh evidence against you."   
  
Barbara placed her hands and elbows on her desk and leaned toward me, her eyes locked onto mine. "You're going to remain a mailgirl for as long as I want you to be one, Danica. You're going to be my mailgirl and you're going to live the life I described to you earlier."  
  
Anger swept through me again and I had to resist the urge to call her bluff, to just get up and walk out the door. I knew I couldn't do that though. Not yet. I had to do what she asked for now and hope that in time an escape path from this trap would reveal itself. I resolved then and there, though, that if the opportunity for payback ever presented itself I would take it. Some way, somehow, I was going to make Barbara pay for this.  
  
I rose to my feet without asking permission and walked to the desk. "Give me a pen," I said angrily. She wordlessly pulled one out of a drawer and slid it across the desk toward me.  
  
Unlike with my original contract I read this one carefully, page by page, making sure there were no hidden surprises. "What does this mean, that I'll be on call 24 hours a day?" I asked after reading a clause in it I'd never seen before.  
  
"It means you'll be contractually obligated to remain in uniform at all times even when off duty."  
  
"I'm already naked all the time now, Barbara."  
  
"Yes, but up until now it's been voluntary. After this it won't be. You'll have to ask my permission to dress, which I don't plan on giving."   
  
I soon found another clause that frightened me. "So you can sell me any time you want to another company?" I asked her.  
  
"That's right."  
  
"Do you plan on it?"  
  
"Not unless you give me reason to," she responded. The implied threat was obvious. If I became too troublesome or disobedient she would sell me off to someone else.  
  
Barbara appeared tense as she watched me read the contract. When I finally reached the end of it I looked up at her. "You know Barbara, you had me. I was willing to sign a new contract and be everything you wanted me to be if you'd just kept your god damn mouth shut."  
  
"Danica, I know you're angry now, but in time..."  
  
"No Barbara, I won't get over this in time!" I spit out angrily. "If you want a slave I'll be your slave but that's it. I won't be your partner and I won't be your lover. If you order me to clean your house or follow you around like a dog I'll do that. If you order me to f\*ck you, I'll do that, too. And if you want to tie me up and whip me I won't resist. But know this, Barbara, none of that will be consensual. Not any more."  
  
I scrawled my name at the bottom of the contract, then, without permission to leave, I turned and began walking toward the door.  
  
"Danica, wait!" Barbara called out in a desperate tone I'd never heard in her voice before. I stopped and turned back to her.  
  
"No!" I hissed. "I'm not Danica to you anymore. I'm Nine. I'll never be Danica to you ever again. Ma'am."

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48f**

**LOST**  
I felt the MMU on my arm vibrate indicating that I was back on duty and available as I wandered aimlessly through the ninth floor in a daze, barely able to process what had just happened in Barbara's office. I was required to go kneel on the closest Mailgirls mat until I was called out but at that moment I couldn't bear the thought of having people staring at me so I headed for the stairs instead. It was the only place in the complex where a mailgirl could have any semblance of privacy.  
  
I entered the stairwell and walked down several flights until all of the feelings of hurt, anger, and betrayal churning inside of me flooded to the surface and could no longer be contained. I sat down on a stair in between the sixth and seventh floor and began sobbing uncontrollably.   
  
It wasn't Hiromoto's cynical double-crossing or Barbara's manipulations that hurt the most; they were scorpions, after all, and it was my own damn fault for allowing myself to get in range of their venomous tails. It wasn't even Mariko's apparent betrayal, although that had shocked me. No, it was a deep disappointment in my own actions and decisions that left me feeling so angry and hurt. I'd made so many mistakes over the past two years that I didn't know if I could even trust myself anymore.   
  
I'm the author of my own misfortune, I told myself. I'm the one who signed that terrible contract without really reading or understanding it. I'm the one who allowed Barbara to systematically strip me of my clothes, my identity, my belongings, and my freedom. I'm the one who opened myself up to being sued or arrested by divulging proprietary information to a foreign company. If I was trapped then it was in a prison of my own construction. Barbara had supplied the blueprints and materials but I'd built it myself, brick by brick.  
  
I felt so lost and alone now, untethered from the real world where even something as simple as picking out an outfit to wear or making plans for my free time had become completely foreign to me. The crazy part is that I'd been ready to voluntarily surrender all of my freedom to Barbara until her actions had snapped me out of whatever spell she had me under. There was no longer any doubt in my mind that I really was a submissive, at least to some degree, but there had to be limits to it, didn't there? And now there were none. Barbara owned me. I was going to be her naked slave for as long as she wanted.  
  
My crying jag was interrupted by a vibration on my arm as my MMU alerted me to a pickup order on the fifth floor of the tower. I thought briefly about ignoring it, the demerits be damned, but I couldn't. I was so conditioned to reacting immediately to every tug of this electronic leash that it was nearly impossible for me to resist it now. Blubbering about my situation wasn't going to change anything anyway so I wiped my eyes, got back on my feet and went to work.  
  
My delivery pickup on the fifth floor took me to the second floor of the south wing. From there I was summoned to the next floor down which led me across the central courtyard to the fourth floor of the north wing. After two years as a mailgirl my body thrived on movement and getting back to this routine helped me regain my equilibrium. My mind went on autopilot - focused only on my next delivery, my next deadline, the fastest route to my next destination - allowing me to temporarily block out the mess I'd gotten myself into.  
  
The familiar feelings of arousal also returned as they always did, even after two years of this. I was always conscious that I was a naked woman in a sea of clothed "norms" and this never failed to turn me on. I'd discovered that I was every bit as much an exhibitionist as I was a submissive.  
  
At one point I passed Kelly going in the opposite direction on a set of stairs in the south wing. She glanced up at me as she climbed then lowered her eyes in shame as we passed without speaking. I suppose I should have been mad at her for stealing that VR headset which left me so vulnerable, but I wasn't. She was as trapped as I was now and we were both going need each other over the coming months to get through this. And it's not as if I was an innocent lamb in this mess either. Would Hiromoto have found out about the VR project in the first place if I hadn't told Mariko about it? There was no way of knowing but it didn't really matter. I was as guilty as Kelly in its theft.  
  
My shift was scheduled to end at six p.m. but a mailgirl never knows for sure when it really ends. The company can always add additional unpaid overtime hours based on accumulated demerits so a mailgirl has to keep working until the status message on her MMU updates to OFF DUTY. Only then is she allowed to retrieve her clothes from security, have the metal collar unlocked and removed, and be allowed to leave the building. Whenever one of DDE's games or movies was in "crunch time" to meet a release deadline that always meant long hours for us mailgirls. Things were relatively quiet at DDE right now though so I got the OFF DUTY message right at six o'clock. I had no clothes to retrieve and my collar was permanently attached but at least that meant I could get the hell out of here.  
  
I headed immediately for the Mailgirls locker room hoping to find Anna there. Since Barbara didn't allow me to have any possessions, including a key to the condo, that meant I sometimes had a long wait for Anna to escort me home if she was assigned overtime while I wasn't.  
  
Thankfully I found Anna in the showers next to Diana who had survived her "walk of shame" and the first day of training. Kelly was also there washing the funk off after a day of running the mail in the nude. She looked as shell-shocked by the events of the day as I felt. I hung my MMU and its strap up on my wall hook and headed straight into the shower area toward Kelly. "You and me need to talk," I said to her.  
  
Kelly looked at me guiltily. "Yeah, I think we do," she said. "Where?"  
  
"Hooligans," I replied. It was an Irish pub where Kelly and I used to meet every Friday night when we first started working the tower together as DDE's only mailgirls. Kelly, with her auburn hair and mischievous smile, was of Irish descent and loved bitching about Barbara over a pint of Guinness during those sessions. That seemed so long ago now and a much simpler time.  
  
"They're not going to let you in naked," she said. "Probably not anyway."  
  
"I'll borrow some clothes from Anna." As far as I was concerned I was still operating under my original contract which didn't expire until midnight on Friday so there was nothing to prevent me from dressing away from work.  
  
Anna had been listening in to our conversation and spoke up now. "Nine, I have not given you permission to..."  
  
"We're not playing that stupid game anymore, Anna," I snapped at her. "And call me Danica from now on."  
  
A look of surprise and then relief washed over her face. "Oh thank god, Danica," she said. "I'm so sick of it!"  
  
"I think you should come, too," I said to her. "You need to know what's going on."  
  
"Okay," Anna nodded.  
  
"Can I come?" Diana asked. My first inclination was to tell her no. This was going to be a conversation between Kelly, Anna, and me that would involve private information and I'd only just met her. But as I looked at the beautiful actress I felt like we'd made an immediate connection today. For whatever reason I instinctively liked and trusted her.  
  
"Sure. Why not?" I replied. "You might as well find out exactly what you've gotten yourself into. You're not in Kansas anymore, Ellie Bixby."

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 48g**

**HOOLIGANS**  
About an hour later the four of us met in the parking lot of Hooligans. I'd ridden there with Anna who was driving my old car and, for the first time since my mom's visit months earlier, I wasn't naked. I had on a tan dress composed of a soft stretchy fabric that clung tightly to the curves of my body. It had a plunging U-shaped neckline that showed off quite a bit of cleavage and a hemline that covered my ass and not a whole lot else. Beneath the dress I was bare. On my feet I wore a pair of open-toed heels with leather straps and around my neck was the metal collar with the number "9" stamped on a plate in front. That latter accessory was a permanent fixture courtesy of Barbara and was almost impossible to remove without the key.  
  
I'd picked the dress and heels out of Anna's closet since I no longer owned any clothes of my own. It felt weird to be wearing something on my body but I knew I looked hot in this dress. I felt sexier than if I'd been completely nude. Heads turned throughout the pub as we walked through the door. Even fully clothed the four of us drew attention. We found an empty table and sat down.  
  
Since it was a Monday evening the bar was relatively quiet so there was no waitress on duty like there normally would be later in the week. A good looking bartender came around the bar and approached our table. He looked to be in his mid-twenties with dark hair, blue eyes, a fashionably stubbled beard and a body that looked like it had been chiseled in a gym. "Wow, this my lucky night," he smiled. "What can I do for you gorgeous ladies?"  
  
"We're here for drinks and some girl talk," I said to him. "Can you help us out?"  
  
"I can help you out with the drinks part of that equation. I'm gonna need to see some ID's though." I knew this was going to be a problem for both me and Anna. My identification cards were all locked up in Barbara's safe in the condo and Anna wasn't twenty-one yet.   
  
"I don't have any ID on me but I'm twenty-seven," I said.  
  
"Hey I believe you, but the last bartender got fired after the bar was fined because he served some underage minors, so I've gotta see ID's. Sorry."  
  
I was really in the mood to drink tonight and didn't want to go somewhere else where we'd probably have the same problem anyway. "Have you ever heard of Mailgirl 9?" I asked him.  
  
"From the video game? Sure. I don't really play it but my roomie does."  
  
"I'm Mailgirl 9," I said. "I'm a mailgirl at DDE and that character was based on me." I pointed to the number 9 on my metal collar. "This is my ID," I said, then pulled down the front of my dress to reveal my tits to him, "and these are my ID's."  
  
The bartender rocked his head back in laughter. "Okay, I think I can accept that." Then he looked around the table. "Are all of you DDE mailgirls?" Anna, Kelly, and Diana all nodded in the affirmative. A mischievous grin spread across his face. "Alright I'm gonna need to see all of your ID's."  
  
"Show him your ID's, Anna," I said to her. She looked at me and rolled her eyes, then unbuttoned her blouse and flashed her bare tits at the bartender.   
  
"You know I do have a driver's license I can show you," Kelly said to the man when he turned to her.   
  
"How can I be certain that it's not fake?" he grinned.  
  
Kelly let out an exaggerated sigh although I knew she was amused by the situation. "Well I can promise you these aren't fake," she said as she lifted up her shirt. Diana laughed as she unbuttoned her blouse and gave him an eyeful of her perfect pair when it was her turn.  
  
"Damn, I'm gonna have to get a job at DDE," the bartender said shaking his head. "What can I get you ladies?"  
  
A few minutes later we had our drinks but the mood at the table had turned somber again as everyone knew something was going on with me. "So what happened in Barbara's office today?" Anna asked.  
  
"Should we really be talking in front of her?" Kelly asked eyeing Diana suspiciously. "Nothing personal but you're a new tango and I don't know you."  
  
"I promise you I won't tell anyone about anything that's said here, but if you if you want me to leave I will," Diana said.  
  
"No," I said to her. I told Kelly about the movie, Diana's role in it, and her background.  
  
"The Bixby Girls? I never watched that show," Kelly said after I'd finished. "But if you trust her, Danica, then guess I will, too. I just don't want to see this stuff I think we're about to discuss end up on TMZ."  
  
"I'm not famous enough any more for TMZ to give a shit about me," Diana replied defensively.  
  
"They might once your pussy shaving videos start showing up online courtesy of the Gangsta geeks," Kelly said.  
  
"I do trust her," I told Kelly. "She can stay."   
  
Diana gave me a smile. "Thanks."  
  
I took a sip from my vodka tonic and wondered how much I should tell them. Everything, I decided. I would tell them everything. So I began to speak. After I'd finished the table was quiet. Anna was the first to break the silence.  
  
"So you've been spying for Hiromoto? Why would you do that?"  
  
"Mariko offered me Hiromoto's protection from Barbara if I provided him information and I believed her. It turned out to be total bullshit."  
  
"Did you steal that VR headset?" Anna asked.  
  
"No," I said shaking my head. "I would never do that. I just gave them information that I figured Hiromoto might use for insider trading or something." I glanced over at Kelly who was staring down into her pint of Guinness. I wasn't going to tell them about my suspicions that Kelly had done it, but it turned out I didn't have to.  
  
"I stole it," Kelly said looking up from her pint. "And now I'm f\*cked, Danica. We both are. Barbara can sue the shit out of us and have us locked up if she wants." Kelly choked back a sob and brushed a tear from her eye. "I'm so sorry, Danica, that's the second time I've screwed you over. You must hate me."  
  
I did want to hate her, but I couldn't. "Why did you do it Kelly?" I asked quietly.  
  
"Why the hell do I do anything, Danica? For money. Mariko offered me ten thousand bucks to steal it and deliver it to that Hiromoto tech in the east wing."   
  
"So how long were you spying for them before that?" I asked.  
  
"Mariko recruited me not long after that meeting in Barbara's office where she assigned us numbers. You know, the one where she basically told me to shut the f\*ck up and stay out of her sight or else. I got a pickup order from that room in the east wing about a week or so after that. The Hiromoto tech was there and handed me the phone with Mariko on the other end. I hated Barbara so much that she didn't need to twist my arm much."  
  
"So does Barbara have security footage to prove that you took it?" I asked.  
  
Kelly shook her head. "No, I was careful about that. After I handed it off to the Hiromoto tech I talked to Mariko about it on the phone. Barbara has the recording of that." God, they have everything on us from those phone calls with Mariko, I thought to myself. We're so screwed.  
  
"She told me you signed a new contract today. Is that true?" I asked her.  
  
"Yeah. The bitch called me into her office first thing this morning and played the recording. I had no choice. It's for less than half the money I'm making now and with no expiration date. I figure I'm stuck working as a mailgirl now until the statute of limitations runs out on the VR theft."  
  
"How long is that?"   
  
Kelly shrugged. "Who the hell knows? Quite a few years, I'm sure."   
  
Barbara really did have us dead to rights, I thought to myself despondently. I couldn't see any way out of this.  
  
"I'm afraid I have some bad news for you," I said turning to Anna. "Barbara knows about you and Ben."  
  
"What?" Anna replied in shock, the color draining from her face. "How?"  
  
"Barbara says she set the whole thing up, supposedly to help you move on from me. She claims Ben doesn't know anything about it and she doesn't care if you two hook up as long you're discreet about it."  
  
"And you believe her?"  
  
"God no, Anna. I don't believe anything that comes out of her mouth anymore. I'd stay the hell away from Ben if I were you until your contract is up."  
  
"But that's three months!" Anna protested. "And you'll be moving in with Barbara so I won't even have you!"  
  
"Yeah, it's three months, Anna. So what? What the hell do you have to complain about? Kelly and I are going to be stuck in this shit show for years!" That came out much more harshly than I intended but I guess my nerves were frayed from everything that had happened that day. I glanced over at Diana who had a look of wide-eyed horror on her face as she listened to all of this.  
  
"Can I ask a stupid question?" Diana said. "Who the hell are Hiromoto and Mariko?"  
  
I filled her in on Hiromoto's background and told her the story of the trip Kelly and I had made to his headquarters in Tokyo. I even told her the story about watching him whip Mariko on the 14th floor. This was also the first time that Kelly and Anna had heard it.  
  
Diana's eyes were the size of saucers by the time I finished. "Jesus, what the hell have I gotten myself into here?" she said. "Blackmail, whippings, Japanese gangsters, corporate espionage? What the f\*ck, Danica? I'm going to call my agent tonight and see if I can get out of this!"  
  
"I wouldn't if I were you," I told her. "You really don't want to screw with Barbara. She'll eat you and your agent for breakfast. Just do the movie and then get the hell out."  
  
"You also promised to keep your f\*cking mouth shut about what you heard here tonight," Kelly warned her. "Did you sign a contract with Barbara?" Diana nodded. "Well then you might want to take another look at the fine print in it, Bixby girl. You'll want to make sure you really can leave after the movie." A look of panic came across Diana's face as Kelly spoke.  
  
It was Anna's turn to speak up. "We've got to do something," she said to me. "You and Kelly should go to the media or the police or something and tell them what's going on!"  
  
"The media?" Kelly snorted derisively. "Do you remember how much media exposure Linda got when she ran to that feminist group for help? Where's she at now, Anna? Right back here running the mail in her birthday suit. And what the hell are we supposed to tell the police? That me and Danica got caught in corporate espionage and now the company is being mean to us by making us stay mailgirls forever? I'm sure the two of us will look smoking hot in our mugshots."  
  
"We have to do something," Anna replied desperately. "Barbara can't just keep getting away with this!"  
  
"From where I sit she probably can keep getting away with it," Kelly retorted. "We're fighting her with wooden spears while she's got nukes."  
  
"We'll figure something out," I said without enough conviction to convince even myself of it.  
  
We all sat in miserable silence for a time until we were interrupted by a voice behind me. "Are you mailgirls having fun on your girls night out?" I turned to see the bartender standing there. I guess he figured out the answer by the death glares he got from the four of us. "Um, yeah, not so much it looks like. I just wanted to check and see if you ladies wanted another round."   
  
"Yeah, I think we do," I said.  
  
It wouldn't be our last round of the night.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 49**

**WEDNESDAY**  
The sun was just coming up over the horizon as Anna and I walked hand in hand together into the DDE employee lobby to begin our mailgirl shift.  
  
Tanisha, the security guard working the Mailgirls desk, gave me an odd look as I approached. "I almost didn't recognize you with your clothes on Nine," she smirked. "Is this a new thing?"  
  
"Yes, ma'am," I replied although I knew it was likely to be a very temporary "thing." I was wearing a simple cotton dress with sandals which was a departure from the many previous months when I'd walk to work naked a step behind Anna as part of the dominant/submissive roleplaying that Barbara demanded of us. She had used Anna as her surrogate to get me accustomed to my role as a submissive until the day came when she would take over the dominant role herself. That day was nearly at hand now and I was about to become her personal mailgirl/slave. The refusal to play Barbara's game for these final few days was our small act of defiance, as futile as that gesture might be.  
  
Yesterday had been miserable for me. I'd shown up to work still feeling the aftereffects of my drinking session at Hooligan's the night before and racked up more demerits in one day than I usually did in a week. At least I wasn't feeling hung over today but I remained an emotional train wreck, still reeling from that fateful meeting in Barbara's office on Monday.  
  
I stripped and handed my clothes and sandals to Tanisha to be locked up and she strapped an MMU to my arm. Anna did the same and also had a metal collar displaying the number "1" locked onto her neck. Our nudity, the electronic leashes in the form of the MMU's, and our metal collars were meant to remind us, and everyone else, of our status as company slaves. Once stripped of any sense of dignity and normalcy the two of us headed up the stairs to the Mailgirls locker room to begin our preparations for the day.   
  
Diana and Kelly were already there when we arrived. We exchanged some small talk but there wasn't much beyond that to say to each other. Nothing had really been resolved on Monday night other than the promise that the four of us would keep our eyes and ears open for anything we might be able to use as ammunition against Barbara.   
  
The remainder of Diana's training had been reassigned to Anna so I'd be working a normal shift today, not that the word "normal" could ever really describe mailgirl duties. I'm not sure why Diana had originally been assigned to me on Monday. Most likely it was just another of the head games that Barbara loved to play with me. Maybe she somehow knew that I'd once been a "Bixby Girls" fan and wanted show me that she even had the power to strip and humiliate one of the icons of my youth. That might even be why she hired Diana for the role in the first place. "Who the f\*ck knows?" I muttered under my breath. I'd grown tired of trying to unravel the reasons behind Barbara's torturous plots and schemes.  
  
I went through my daily ritual of preparing for my shift in front of the unseen audience on the other side of the mirror, a process that made me feel like a combination of entertainer and zoo animal. My body held no mysteries for anyone employed at DDE but I still felt the inevitable stirrings of arousal knowing I was about to put it on display once again for hundreds of clothed people. I'd never become jaded about my constant public nudity and I was actually grateful for that small gift since it appeared now there would be no end in sight to it.  
  
My morning started out fairly routinely as I made my pickups and deliveries. I was familiar now with every inch of DDE's vast complex just as its inhabitants were familiar with every inch of my body. In my role as a lowly servant girl the best that I could usually hope for these days in an interaction with a norm was that it would be brief and businesslike. More likely, though, it would involve some combination of rudeness, condescension, or undisguised lust as they demonstrated their superiority over me. For my part, I had come to accept this degradation with submissive deference.  
  
At one point during the morning, while kneeling on a Mailgirls mat between runs, I overheard someone say that a team from Hiromoto Industries had arrived this morning to finalize the extension of their Mailgirls deal with DDE. Anger surged through me as I thought about Mr. Hiromoto's betrayal and Mariko's apparent complicity in it. I couldn't help but wonder if they were here, though, or if I would see or talk to Mariko. I wasn't sure I even wanted to anymore or what good could come of it if I did.  
  
If there was one thing the drinking session at Hooligan's had done, though, was help diminish my feelings of being adrift and alone. Kelly, Anna, and I had re-established the bond that had once been so strong when we were the only mailgirls working together in the tower. Diana, even though we'd just met, also felt like a part of my "crew" now, even managing to win Kelly over by the end of the night.   
  
And although Lin's current duties and responsibilities had kept the two of us from talking much lately I knew she was another person I could trust. She once told me that she'd kept working naked even after being promoted to lead programmer of the upcoming "Mailgirl 9" game out of solidarity with me, although I was pretty sure it was mostly because she got off on it. Her job didn't require the same rules and restrictions as being a mailgirl so she was still the same filterless chatterbox as always, never shy about letting her bosses and co-workers know her opinions even as they stared at her bare tits. I resolved to try to find a way to talk to her by the end of the week. After that I'd be totally under Barbara's thumb and it would become much more difficult.  
  
Although I was friendly with other mailgirls, I now considered Anna, Kelly, Lin, and Diana to be my inner circle, people I could trust in the days to come. The meeting with Barbara had snapped me out of whatever spell I'd been under and I'd finally come to understand that the life that she had planned for me was a path of self destruction. But did this realization happen too late to matter? If there was a way out I just couldn't see it.  
  
My morning runs continued, up stairs and down, through corridors, past cubicles and offices. DDE's Mailgirls program, after two full years, had become a well-oiled machine and I was just one of its cogs.   
  
The program had taken over the actual mailroom now so every package or piece of mail coming into or leaving the complex was handled by a mailgirl. There were currently thirty mailgirls serving more than three thousand employees working in the vast complex, not to mention a growing number of tangos who would be auctioned off to other licensees at the end of their six weeks of training.  
  
Information now flowed far more swiftly and efficiently throughout the complex than it ever had before while the company's productivity, morale, profits, and stock price had never been higher. Employee turnover, among both men and women, was at an all-time low. The presence of beautiful nude women in an otherwise normal business environment now seemed so natural and organic to most DDE employees that they couldn't imagine working somewhere without that. The surprising success of the Mailgirls program at DDE had caught the eye of corporate America and resistance to a concept that had once seemed so outlandish was slowly fading.   
  
The gap between the "norms" and the mailgirls had also never been greater. As Barbara had predicted, both groups had, for the most part, internalized their roles as masters and slaves. While inappropriate touching and sexual contact was still strictly forbidden - and there had been incidents that had cost employees their jobs - there was a growing debate at the highest levels about what the company might be able to legally get away with. Could mailgirls be forced to assume even more sexually provocative positions than they already were? Could a mailgirl be requested to "voluntarily" masturbate in front of employees since no contact would take place? Could "light" corporal punishment and bondage (spankings, paddlings, handcuffs, leashes) as punishment for disobedience and excessive demerits be written into future contracts? Just how far could they go in debasing and humiliating mailgirls and get away with it? Company lawyers had already begun researching these and other thorny legal questions.  
  
There was also the question of what to do about mailgirls when they were away from work. While they were on the job virtually every step they took and everything they did - from bathroom breaks to the amount and type of food they were allowed to eat - was carefully monitored and controlled by the company. Away from work, however, mailgirls reverted back to being "real people." They could dress as they pleased, eat and drink too much, say whatever they wanted, and otherwise act as equals to anyone else. More and more executives at the top of DDE were finding this "problematic" since it undermined the company's emerging caste system with mailgirls at the bottom as its servant class.  
  
Although fraternization between norms and mailgirls away from work was strictly prohibited, in reality it was something that was nearly impossible for DDE to enforce. Most of the company's youthful workforce lived in Wildwood near the DDE complex so it was inevitable that norms and mailgirls would run into each other out there in the real world and interact and converse as normal human beings. There was a growing thought in upper management that being a mailgirl needed to be a 24/7 commitment. They obviously couldn't be forced to work all day every day but their "dress code" and manner of addressing their superiors (everyone else) must be strictly enforced at all times. In other words, mailgirls must be required to remain naked and subservient even when off duty. Barbara, of course, fully encouraged this idea. Although there was still quite a bit of debate about how the logistics of this would work, the consensus was moving toward making that happen.  
  
At 12:15 my MMU vibrated alerting me to my thirty minute lunch break. I took a quick shower to wash the morning sweat and grime off and then went to the employee cafeteria to eat my meal alone on the floor surrounded by norms. This was something that Barbara had ordered long ago because of my disobedience and I wondered if it would continue after becoming her full time pet. I actually hoped that it would if for no other reason than to have some time alone away from her.  
  
After lunch I went back to work and was just finishing my third delivery of the afternoon when my MMU buzzed with another summons. I glanced at it to check the location and then glanced again to make sure I had read it right.   
  
I was being summoned to that little room in the east wing. Hiromoto's secret room.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 49b**

**MARIKO**  
As I entered the room I found Mariko there waiting for me along with Hideki, the Hiromoto technician. It was the first time I'd seen her since Tokyo nearly two years earlier. She bowed her head in greeting and smiled at me. "Hello Danica. I am very pleased to see you again," she said in her formal, methodical English.  
  
I didn't really know how to respond so I said nothing. In a way I was glad to see her so I could get some answers but I couldn't help but feel an overwhelming sense of betrayal over the release of our phone conversations to Barbara. Mariko spoke a few words in Japanese to Hideki who then turned and exited the room leaving the two of us alone together. Without speaking she removed her heels and then pulled her black business dress up over her head and placed it on a nearby desk.  
  
"What are you doing?" I asked.  
  
"I sense you are angry with me and I wish that we speak together as equals. We cannot do that if I am dressed and you are not." Mariko continued stripping until she was completely nude, then knelt down on the floor before me. She was displaying the same uncommon grace and humility that I'd seen in Tokyo no matter the circumstances. My anger began dissipating as a result of this humble gesture.   
  
"Please? Will you join me?" she asked. I knelt on the floor facing her. "I wish you to speak freely, Danica. I will answer your questions as best I can." The scent of her delicate perfume wafted in the air and I remembered my first impression of her in that parking garage in Tokyo. Two years later she was still the most beautiful and intoxicating woman I'd ever met.   
  
There was still much to be resolved though and I wasn't going to leave this room without getting some answers. "Mariko, you knew that Barbara had found out about my spying and you let me keep doing it anyway."  
  
"Yes."  
  
"Why?"  
  
"What would you have done had I warned you, Danica?"  
  
"I would have stopped!" I said.  
  
"That is why I did not tell you," Mariko explained. "You would have lost Mr. Hiromoto's protection if you had done so."  
  
"What protection? He gave those damn recordings to Barbara. She used them to blackmail me into signing a terrible contract and now I'm stuck as her personal slave!"  
  
A look of concern came over Mariko's face. "Please tell me everything that has happened since we last spoke," she said. I told her the whole story of my meeting with Barbara on Monday and her plan to strip me of what little freedom I had left.   
  
Mariko remained silent for a few moments after I'd finished as if contemplating her next words. "Danica, please remember that when you first contacted me from this room and asked for help I counseled you to leave Barbara and the company immediately. You chose not to take my advice. I did not wish you to get involved with Mr. Hiromoto in this."  
  
"I know, but that would've wrecked me financially. You're the one who told me I would have Hiromoto's protection if I gave him information. Was that a lie, Mariko?  
  
"No."  
  
"Then why the hell did he screw me over?"  
  
"He did not," Mariko replied. "Mr. Hiromoto gave those recordings to Barbara because he considered them inconsequential."  
  
"Inconsequential? They're evidence that I committed a crime! And he made it worse by having Kelly steal the VR headset."  
  
"They are inconsequential because Mr. Hiromoto believes that Barbara would never allow the company to hear them. That would risk the future of her Mailgirls program and she cannot allow that to happen." This had occurred to me as well but I couldn't risk calling Barbara's bluff because the consequences if I was wrong were so high. Those tapes were anything but inconsequential to me.  
  
"I would never have gotten involved in this if I'd known his plan was to steal technology from DDE," I said.  
  
"What did you believe Mr. Hiromoto was going to do with the information you provided?" Mariko asked.  
  
"I don't know. Insider trading or something."  
  
"And is that not also illegal?"  
  
"Of course it is. Listen, Mariko, I didn't have any illusions that Hiromoto was going to use the stuff I told him for altruistic reasons. Believe me, I've had a guilty conscience about this for a long time. But I never would have agreed to steal proprietary technology for him."  
  
"That is why you were not asked to do it. Your friend Kelly had no such reservations."  
  
"Did Hiromoto know about DDE's VIrtual Reality program before I told you about it?" I asked her.  
  
"No."  
  
"So how did you guys know this prototype even existed because I didn't tell you that. I didn't even know about it myself."  
  
Mariko was silent for a minute as if wrestling with the decision about how much to tell me. She finally spoke. "Hideki was asked to look for information involving this program and he discovered the existence of this prototype and where it was kept."  
  
Hideki! Suddenly I understood the full brilliance of Hiromoto's corporate spying scheme. Mailgirls Tracking Units, also known as MTU's, were located throughout the complex to track mailgirls' movements via the MMU's strapped to their arms. The contract with Hiromoto allowed only his technicians to service these units, allegedly for proprietary reasons. These MTU's were all over the place hanging from ceilings and walls which allowed Hiromoto's techs access to virtually every room in the DDE complex. So Hiromoto not only had mailgirls to supply information but also had his own men on the ground here to help verify this information and coordinate any plans of action. Hiromoto probably used this information for insider trading, technology theft, and maybe even to blackmail executives.   
  
"God, Mariko, this whole damn Mailgirls thing is just a scam by Hiromoto to rip off his licensees, isn't it?"   
  
Mariko lowered her eyes to the floor. "Our Mailgirls program does provide real benefits to businesses but I am afraid Mr. Hiromoto has also used it for his own purposes. I wish that were not so."  
  
"Why do you do it then?" I asked. "Why are you helping him?"  
  
"I do it to protect the girls, Danica. I fear that in many places mailgirls would soon become sex slaves if I did not. Mr. Hiromoto uses his power to prevent this, but only as long as I am providing information that may help enrich him."  
  
So mailgirls like me are nothing more than bargaining chips to get Mariko to do his bidding for him, I thought to myself. What a sick bastard. We were many things to many people, but real, living, breathing human beings seemed to be far down the list.  
  
There was something else I was curious about. "What about Linda?" I asked. "The girl who quit and went to that feminist group to sue DDE. Did Hiromoto buy her off to get the lawsuit dropped?"  
  
"Linda belonged to Mr. Hiromoto all along," Mariko replied.  
  
"What do you mean?"  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto knew there would be many challenges to his Mailgirls program in America so he believed it would be useful to discredit his opponents as quickly as possible. He used his contacts in this country to find an actress who would play a role for him in doing this."  
  
"So Linda is just an actress who was hired to discredit the UAW?"  
  
"Yes," Mariko replied.   
  
The brilliance of this was stunning. Knowing that there would be legal challenges to the Mailgirls program Hiromoto had planted Linda into the UAW only to have her recant at a time of his choosing and then scorch the feminist organization and its famous attorney on her way out. It had thrown the opposition to the Mailgirls program into disarray. As much as I hated to, I had to admit a little grudging respect for the man. He was playing a very long game and was clearly a master of it.  
  
"Did Barbara know about any of this?" I asked.  
  
"No. Mr. Hiromoto did not need or want Barbara's assistance in this."

**Confessions of a Mailgirl Part 49c**

It was at this point I think I finally realized the full depth of the mess I was in. I was caught between a crazy woman who wanted to turn me into her slave and a cunning, ruthless Yakuza who was using me for his own twisted purposes. I closed my eyes and wished I could just disappear someplace where no one knew me. Somewhere I could just start all over again.   
  
"I should have listened to you, Mariko," I said quietly. "I should have just gotten into my car and driven as far away from this place as I could before it was too late."  
  
"I understand why you did not, Danica," Mariko said. "I must admit that protecting my girls is not the only reason I have not left Mr. Hiromoto. The life of a mailgirl has a certain allure to women like us. It is difficult for me to imagine returning now to a normal life. It is why I still work mailgirls shifts when I am able though I am not required to do so."  
  
"I suppose that's true," I replied. "I know there's a part of me who still wants to surrender to Barbara even after everything she's done."  
  
"Do you remember Aiko?" Mariko asked.  
  
"Yes, of course." Aiko was the mailgirl that Kelly and I had interviewed in Mariko's office in Tokyo. She was the one who Kelly had followed around the next day on her rounds.  
  
"After Aiko completed her contract I placed her into a good job in the accounting department as she requested. It was the field she had been trained in at the university. Six months later she came to me and begged to be allowed to return to being a mailgirl."  
  
"She did? Why?"  
  
"She said she could not bear the thought of another day chained to a desk and encumbered by clothing. A normal job had become slavery to her while being a mailgirl was freedom."  
  
"And you let her come back?"  
  
"Yes. She has been a loyal worker and may remain a mailgirl as long as she desires."  
  
I understood Aiko's feelings. Even now I still felt the strong gravitational pull of this crazy life. If I ever did manage to gain my freedom I wondered if someday I might also find myself begging Barbara to return to it. But there was really no choice for me anymore. I would rather have the option of begging to return to this life than being trapped in it with no way out.  
  
"Mariko, I have to get out," I said to her. "If I don't do it now I may never be able to."  
  
"I understand," Mariko responded. "Mr. Hiromoto is not a good man but he has not lasted this long by betraying those who fulfill their agreements with him. You have done as asked so if you wish to leave he will assist you."  
  
I looked at her, stunned. For the first time in days I began to feel hope again. "Really? He will? Is Hiromoto in town with you?"  
  
"No," she replied shaking her head. "He is too old now for long journeys. I am here only with a company lawyer to finalize the agreement with DDE."  
  
"So when can he pull me out?"  
  
"Any time after the new contract with DDE is signed. Not before."  
  
"When will that happen?"  
  
"Everything should be completed by Friday. Mr. Hiromoto is only willing to do this once the new contract is signed with DDE."  
  
"What about Kelly?" I asked. "Can he get her out, too?"  
  
"Yes."  
  
"And there are others..."  
  
"No," Mariko interrupted. "You and Kelly have been useful to Mr. Hiromoto. The others have not. He will not help them. Only the two of you."  
  
"How is he going to do it?" I asked.  
  
Mariko smiled. "I cannot tell you that. I can only say that Barbara thinks of herself as a master of the game, but she has not been on the playing field with Mr. Hiromoto before."  
  
"What does that mean?"  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto believes that once the new contract is signed with DDE his Mailgirls program here can safely continue without Barbara. She is not as indispensable as she believes she is."  
  
"So what will happen to her? He won't hurt her will he?"  
  
"No, he will not physically harm her. But you must understand that Mr. Hiromoto intends to ruthlessly destroy her ego and her hubris."  
  
"Really? Why?" This was suddenly starting to sound very personal between Hiromoto and Barbara. It occurred to me that he had very little interest in me, it was Barbara he was after.  
  
"Barbara bypassed me and demanded to deal only with Mr. Hiromoto in negotiating the original contract. She presumed to be be his equal and that was a foolish mistake."   
  
Hearing this reminded me of the time I had bypassed the chain of command to bring Lin to Barbara and had received a whipping as punishment. Had Barbara made the same mistake with Hiromoto? Was she about to receive her own figurative whipping for her arrogance?  
  
I also thought about something else. "Barbara said you were there during the negotiations as his interpreter. Is that true?"  
  
"Yes."  
  
"So Barbara doesn't know he speaks English?"  
  
"No," Mariko replied. "Very few people do. He keeps it secret because he believes it gives him an advantage when dealing with English speakers. He only spoke it to you because he considered you inconsequential." There was that word again. Inconsequential.  
  
The more I heard about Hiromoto the more it reaffirmed my original opinion after watching him whip Mariko: the man is a misogynistic asshole. It was obvious that his original intent for his Mailgirls program was simply to humiliate and debase women for his own pleasure. It was probably only later that he figured out he could also use mailgirls as spies.  
  
I was almost starting to feel sorry for Barbara after hearing all of this. "Mariko, I don't know that I actually want to see Hiromoto destroy Barbara or anything like that. Is there another way?"  
  
Mariko shook her head. "That is the only way out. You may delay that day if you desire, Danica. You can keep playing the game as long as you wish knowing that you can get out whenever you choose."  
  
I thought about this and once again I felt the bizarre allure of this life tightening around my will like an invisible bond. I couldn't deny that playing the role of Barbara's slave for awhile still held a perverse appeal to me. If I knew I had a way out why not keep playing her game for awhile? Now that she was taking it to an even deeper level than ever before it would be exciting to experience that for at least a little while, wouldn't it?  
  
Fortunately I was able to put a halt to these thoughts before I got sucked too deeply back into Barbara's destructive vortex. No, Danica, you can't do this again, I told myself. Every time you've been given a set of options you've always chosen the path that leads deeper into Barbara's trap. Stop it! You can't trust Hiromoto to keep up his bargain forever. And he is a very old man so what happens if he dies or has a stroke?   
  
It had taken me two years but I'd finally learned my lesson. I knew what I had to do.  
  
"I want out now, Mariko," I said to her. "Burn Barbara to the ground if you have to."

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 49d**

**FRIDAY**  
I glanced nervously at the clock on the wall as I stood naked in Tom Condell's office waiting to be released after delivering a packet to him. It was 4:27 pm and I hadn't heard anything from Mariko since our meeting on Wednesday. I'd thought everything would be resolved by today but now I realized she'd only said that Hiromoto would get me out after DDE had signed the new contract. I'd assumed that would happen immediately but now I knew it could have meant tomorrow or next week or next month or next year. Or had something gone wrong with the negotiations? What would happen if they fell through?  
  
"I bet you think you're hot shit don't you?" I glanced up and saw Condell's eyes roaming up and down my body.  
  
"Sir?"  
  
"Mailgirl F\*cking Nine. Everyone knows who you are and you're going to be the star of your own game so you think you're hot shit, don't you?"  
  
"No sir." Condell was a greasy asshole and I always hated coming to his office.  
  
"You are a fine piece of ass, I'll give you that," Condell sneered. "But that's all you are. They can make all the games and movies they want about mailgirls but you'll still just be naked eye candy for us real employees."  
  
"Yes sir," I replied, my head bowed slightly and my gaze submissively directed toward the floor. There was a time when these types of condescending insults would have upset me but they no longer did. It's not just that I'd gotten used to them, but I'd spent two years attempting to emulate Mariko's preternatural grace and humility. Although I'd made great strides, seeing her the other day reminded me of how far I had yet to go. I would not allow the likes of Condell to make me lose my composure, I told myself. I wouldn't give him that satisfaction.  
  
"Stupid bitch," Condell muttered after failing to get a reaction from me. "I'm done with you. Get out."  
  
"Thank you sir."  
  
I exited Condell's office into a sea of cubicles. I was surrounded by fully clothed norms all doing whatever it was that they did in that little world they inhabited. I'd once been one of them, sitting in my cubicle, striving to one day have my own office in the tower. It all seemed so banal now, that life. Whatever came next, assuming Hiromoto kept his promise, I knew I didn't want to return to it. Not in that way anyway, slaving to move from one cage to a larger, more gilded cage. I wanted now to live on the edges, not in the grey world in between. I longed to either surrender myself and become a slave to a powerful person or to become that powerful person myself. Barbara called these desires my dual natures and I wrestled with both of them, allowing neither to take complete control. So far.  
  
Since I had no current instructions I found the Mailgirls mat and knelt on it. It was located in a spot to provide maximum exposure and I felt the eyes poring over my body. Even now, after all this time, that still gave me a thrill. Even now, I felt myself becoming wet and longed to reach between my legs and give them all a real show.  
  
I thought about Barbara and Hiromoto. As corrupt and manipulative as they were I couldn't help but feel some degree of admiration for their ability to move through this world as predators rather than prey. What would it be like, I wondered, to be the hunter rather than the hunted? To swim through dangerous waters as the shark rather than the meal? Would it be possible to live such a life without without being corrupt and manipulative or were those essential qualities required to survive amongst other predators?聽  
  
Mariko had assured me that Hiromoto would make quick work of Barbara when the time came, but I wasn't so sure of it. She was not one to be underestimated even against someone like Hiromoto. Perhaps she was anticipating what was coming her way and had a counter for it. In a way I hoped she did, even if that wasn't in my best interests. Despite everything she had done I still had feelings for her that I didn't have for Hiromoto. When those two alphas entered the cage together I wasn't entirely sure which one I wanted to emerge from it.  
  
My thoughts were interrupted by the vibration of the MMU on my arm and my heart raced when I saw the destination. I leapt to my feet and moved quickly down corridors, through doorways, and up stairs until I reached it. I opened the door and entered Conference Room 1A on the tenth floor of the tower. I immediately saw Kelly there kneeling naked on the floor. She glanced up at me nervously, unsure about what was going on. I hadn't told her or anyone else about my meeting with Mariko. She had warned me not to.  
  
Seated around the table were Dan Evans, the CEO of DumpsterDawg Enterprises, several company lawyers, Mariko, and a Japanese man I assumed was the Hiromoto lawyer. And, of course, Barbara was there.  
  
She glanced at me and gestured to the floor with her head. "Kneel," she commanded. I took my place on the floor next to Kelly.  
  
Mariko smiled at me and began to speak. "I have requested that the two of you, as the original mailgirls, be present at the signing of the new contract between our two companies. Mr. Evans has graciously accepted this request."  
  
"Thank you, sir. Thank you, ma'am." I reached over and took hold of Kelly's hand.  
  
The players were all in place. The endgame had arrived.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50**

**A BRIEF CELEBRATION**  
Dan Evans stood at the end of the conference table with pen in hand to sign the new contract extending DDE's North American Mailgirls partnership with Hiromoto Industries for another five years. A company photographer who'd been summoned to the room snapped pictures as Evans inked his signature onto the paperwork, then handed the pen to Mariko who did the same. Then the two of them posed together for more pictures as the others in the room broke into applause.  
  
Kelly and I watched all of this from our knees, the naked embodiment of what all of the dry language and legalese in the contact actually produced in the real world. We'd been stripped of our clothes, our names, and most of our rights as employees, and the goal was to create many more like us over the coming years.  
  
After a round of handshakes and some small talk, Evans turned to Mariko. "I'm pretty sure the lawyers still have some mop up duty left to do on the paperwork so how about joining me and Barbara in my office? I've got some champagne on ice to celebrate the occasion."  
  
Mariko smiled and bowed her head slightly. "Thank you Mr. Evans," she replied in her accented and formal English. "I would be most pleased to join you. Perhaps we can also invite these two mailgirls so that they may serve us?"  
  
Evans turned and looked down on us. "Sure. Great idea."  
  
Barbara also gave us a look but it was hard to tell what she was thinking. I hadn't seen her since that fateful meeting on Monday and now I felt a flood of conflicting emotions. Despite everything, I still had strong feelings for her and felt guilty knowing that I'd asked Mariko to bring her down. She'd left me no choice though, I told myself. This is the only way out, not only for me but for Kelly. The die had been cast so there was no turning back now anyway.聽  
  
Kelly and I followed Dan, Barbara, and Mariko out of the conference room onto the tenth floor of the tower. This was the home of the company's top executives and had once seemed like a magical place to me that must be filled with extraordinary people. I'd been here enough now as a mailgirl though to know the truth: the people here weren't particularly special. There were some intelligent, highly productive people working on this floor but there were also fools, sycophants, and insufferable assholes. They may wear more expensive clothes and make more money but they weren't necessarily smarter or harder working than the people doing the less glamorous grunt work elsewhere that was vital to DDE's success.  
  
The sight of a couple of naked, collared women obediently following behind their elite corporate masters would have once created shock waves on this floor, but now it barely caused a ripple. In just two short years Barbara had thoroughly changed the culture here at DDE, turning something that had once been unthinkable into an organic part of their business environment. This represented a preview of the seismic cultural shift that Barbara hoped would spread throughout American society.  
  
The five of us entered Dan Evans' office, a large luxurious suite befitting the CEO of a multi-billion dollar company. On the right side of the office near a large window overlooking the city was a leather sofa and chair surrounding a coffee table. Barbara and Mariko settled onto the sofa while Evans took a seat in the chair. I'd been carrying Barbara's laptop bag and placed it onto the floor next to her. "Pour the three of us champagne," she ordered.  
  
"Yes, ma'am."  
  
On a nearby bar a bottle of Dom Perignon was chilling in an ice bucket. Kelly popped the cork and poured the expensive champagne as I held the glasses. After serving them we were ordered back onto our knees. Once again I took Kelly's hand into mine. "Here's to a long and successful partnership," Dan Evans said as the three of them raised their glasses, clinked them together, and took a sip.  
  
"It's a shame Mr. Hiromoto couldn't make it," Dan said to Mariko. "I was looking forward to meeting him."  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto sends his regrets he could not come," Mariko replied. "At his age he no longer desires to make such long journeys."  
  
"Yeah, I don't blame him. How old is he now, if you don't mind my asking?"  
  
"He is 72 now.  
  
Wow! And he still works full time?"  
  
"Yes," Mariko replied. "Mr. Hiromoto has no desire to retire to a life of tending his garden."  
  
"He's still as strong as an ox," Barbara interjected. I remembered my lone meeting with the man when I witnessed him whipping Mariko in his office. The man did seem remarkably fit for his age.  
  
"Yes, he remains in very good health," Mariko said. She took another small sip of her champagne and then placed the glass on the coffee table. "Please excuse me but there is a subject I am required to bring to your attention. I have been compelled by Mr. Hiromoto to pass on a request from him once our negotiations had concluded."  
  
"Sure," Dan said. "What is it?"  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto requests that Ms. Anderson sign a two year Mailgirls contract."  
  
"Um...what?" Dan laughed, not quite sure of what he'd just heard. "Is that a joke?" Barbara simply stared at Mariko with a puzzled look on her face.  
  
"No, it is not," Mariko assured him. "He believes Barbara would be a more authentic spokesperson for his program in the future if she has served as a mailgirl." I felt Kelly's hand squeeze mine and I glanced over at her. She had a smirk on her face.  
  
"He's serious then?" Dan replied. "Mr. Hiromoto really wants Barbara to work as a mailgirl for two years?"  
  
"Yes. He wishes to purchase Barbara's contract and bring her to Tokyo to work for him." Kelly squeezed my hand again as a stunned look came over Dan's face.  
  
Barbara had been uncharacteristically quiet but she finally spoke up. "Mariko, please pass my apologies on to Mr. Hiromoto but I simply cannot work as a mailgirl in Tokyo or anywhere else. I have many duties here that go well beyond my work in the Mailgirls program."  
  
"I understand," Mariko replied, then opened her stylish handbag and retrieved her smartphone from it. "Mr. Hiromoto has provided me with a video that he believes may help persuade Ms. Anderson that becoming a mailgirl is the best course of action. I am afraid my phone has a very small screen. Is there perhaps a way to project this onto a larger screen?"  
  
"Sure. Let me see your phone, Mariko," Dan said. His tone remained polite but I could tell he was becoming perturbed by the direction of this conversation. Barbara, for her part, wasn't showing any emotion but I could tell the wheels were turning in her head trying to figure out what Mariko was up to.  
  
Dan spent a couple of minutes with Mariko's phone before handing it back to her. "I've downloaded and set up an app you can use to play it on the TV," he said pointing to a large flat screen television on the wall opposite the sofa. "Just select the video file and hit play." Then he got up from his chair, retrieved a remote from his desk and turned the TV on.  
  
"Thank you, Mr. Evans," Mariko smiled. Seconds later a video began playing on the flat screen. It took me a couple of seconds to realize what I was seeing but when I did I reeled with shock. How in the hell did Mariko get this?

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50b**

**ENDGAME**  
"What the f\*ck is this?" Dan Evans asked as he stared at the television screen. On it was a video of Barbara putting a ball gag into my mouth as she prepared to whip me as I knelt naked on her floor. I knew exactly what this was now: it had been filmed on the day that I'd brought LIn to her office without permission.  
  
"Please, Mr. Hiromoto would like for you both to see this. I will answer your questions afterwards," Mariko said to them.  
  
We all watched in silence as Barbara methodically whipped both of my feet, then turned her attention to my ass cheeks. I looked up at Barbara and her face was flushed with anger. She didn't know this tape existed, I thought to myself. She hadn't seen this coming!   
  
After the video had finally ended Evans turned to Barbara. "What the f\*ck, Barbara? You taped yourself whipping Nine?"  
  
"No Dan, I didn't." Barbara replied curtly. "From that angle it had to have come from the MTU in my office. They must have a camera in it." The MTU's were the units bolted to the walls and ceilings throughout the complex used to track the movement of mailgirls. Evans immediately glanced up at the MTU in his own office.  
  
"Jesus, Mariko, you've got cameras in these things to spy on us?" he said angrily.  
  
"Only in a few units," Mariko replied calmly. "Mr. Hiromoto ordered them to insure that the mailgirls are not mistreated. He was very shocked, of course, when he saw this."  
  
"Why? Doesn't he like my whipping technique?" Barbara retorted with angry sarcasm. "I suppose I haven't mastered the art of the riding crop like he has."  
  
Mariko smiled. "Mr. Hiromoto understands you were whipping your mailgirl for presuming she could bring a matter to you that should have been handled by subordinates. He believes you were right to whip such an insolent woman." I suddenly realized why Mariko had shown this to Barbara. It was intended as a message to her about her own insolence in demanding to deal directly with Hiromoto rather than with Mariko.   
  
Barbara also got the message. "Please tell Mr. Hiromoto that if I have offended him in any way that I humbly apologize."  
  
"Thank you, Barbara, but you may tell him yourself when you come to Tokyo to serve as a mailgirl."  
  
Barbara let out a curt laugh. "That's not going to happen, Mariko."  
  
"You're damned right it's not!" Evans said angrily as he took his cell phone out of his pocket. "I'm going to call Pete and tell him to rip up this goddamn contract. Putting cameras in these MTU's without our permission is absolutely unacceptable, Mariko. No wonder you insisted on allowing only your own techs to service these things."  
  
"Please, Mr. Evans, I have one more video to show you," Mariko replied calmly. "You may rip up the contract after that if you choose."  
  
Dan stared at Mariko for a minute as if deciding before placing his phone on the coffee table. "Alright then, let's see it. But after that you and your goddamn Mailgirls program are leaving this property for good." Evans was seething with anger and I'd never seen him like this before. Normally he was a pretty relaxed guy.  
  
Mariko smiled and nodded politely to him, then used her phone to start the next video. It took a few seconds for it to begin but when it did it shocked me to my core. Kelly began squeezing my hand again as the two of us stared dumbfounded at the images on the television. The video had obviously been filmed in this office and on the screen we saw a very naked Dan Evans, sporting a very firm erection, kneeling on the floor. He leaned forward onto his forearms and placed his head on the carpet. Then a fully clothed Barbara began whipping his ass with her riding crop.  
  
Evans leapt to his feet, grabbed the remote and pointed it at the television. As the screen turned black he turned to Mariko.   
  
"Blackmail? That's what Hiromoto's game is? He's wants to f\*cking blackmail me?" he shouted furiously. I looked at Barbara and all of the color had drained from her face.  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto insisted I not show this video until our negotiations had been completed," Mariko replied calmly. "He wanted to assure you that our continued partnership would be bound by a fair contract."  
  
"Fair?" Dan replied, spitting the word out angrily as he began pacing around the room. "What the hell do you people know about fair? I should've known better than to get involved with the likes of you Japanese gangsters. What the hell does Hiromoto want anyway?"  
  
"He only asks that Barbara sign a Mailgirls contract."  
  
Dan stared at Mariko for a moment, then turned to Barbara. "You have to do it then if that's what he wants!"  
  
"No Dan, I don't," she replied, appearing to have regained her composure.  
  
"Yes you do, Barbara!" Evans said to her with a mix of anger and desperation in his voice. "My wife and I got married when we were both young and broke. I don't have a pre-nuptial agreement with her so if she divorces me she'll take me for millions. Hundreds of millions! I can't allow this video to get out!"  
  
"That's not going to happen, Dan. Sit your ass down and we'll work this out." The commanding tone had returned to Barbara's voice now. Dan stared at her for a few seconds then did as he was told. She thinks she knows how to get out of this, I thought to myself.   
  
"Dan, I have audio recordings implicating Mariko and Hiromoto in corporate espionage," Barbara said. "They don't dare release that video."  
  
"What the hell are you talking about?" Evans asked.   
  
Barbara looked over at me and Kelly. "They were using these two mailgirls as spies. Number Two there is the one who stole the VR headset," she said referring to Kelly.  
  
"Damn it Barbara, what kind of vipers nest did you invite into our company? How long have you known about this?"  
  
"Quite awhile, Dan. I wanted to handle it quietly so it wouldn't affect the future of our Mailgirls program."  
  
"You and your goddamn Mailgirls program! I never should have let you talk me into this, Barbara."  
  
"If you have evidence of this corporate espionage I would very much like to hear it, Barbara," Mariko said. Her calm demeanor hadn't changed during any of this.   
  
"You know I have it, Mariko."  
  
"Then perhaps you would allow Mr. Evans to hear it."  
  
Barbara pulled out her phone and as she scrolled through it a confused look came over her face. She placed the phone down, then pulled her laptop out of her bag. After several minutes on it she angrily closed it. "You hacked me," she said to Mariko.  
  
"What are you talking about?" Dan asked her. "What's going on?"  
  
Barbara turned to him. "I had hours of phone conversations of these two revealing company secrets to Mariko. I had copies of the files on my phone, my laptop, and uploaded to the company cloud. They're all gone now. We've been hacked."  
  
"Oh my god!" Evans said as he ran his fingers through his hair. "This is all your damn fault, Barbara, so you've got to fix this! You've got to become a mailgirl if that's what they want. We can't let that video get out!"  
  
"No!" she replied firmly. "They still can't release that video. That's evidence in itself that they've been spying on their own clients with hidden cameras. If that gets out it will destroy their program. They'd never sign another licensee and the ones they have now would pull out."  
  
"We don't know that for sure, Barbara!" Evans responded with a tone of pure desperation in his voice.   
  
"Yes we do, Dan. Grow a pair, will you? Hiromoto's not foolish enough to sabotage his own Mailgirls program. This is all just a bluff." Then she turned Mariko. "Please tell Mr. Hiromoto that I humbly apologize if I have offended him but I must respectfully decline his invitation to become a mailgirl."  
  
Mariko nodded. "I will do as you wish, Barbara."  
  
Oh my god, I thought to myself, that's it then? Barbara's going to weasel her way out of this? She'd taken everything that Hiromoto had thrown at her and had fought him to a stalemate! My prospects of getting out suddenly felt like they were crashing to the ground. Then Mariko spoke again.  
  
"There is just one more matter that Mr. Hiromoto would like some information on, please."  
  
"What is it?" Barbara asked coldly.  
  
"He would like to know how the $500,000 he gave you has been spent." Barbara blinked a couple of times but didn't respond.   
  
"What the hell is she talking about now?" Evans asked. "What $500,000?"  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto gave Barbara $500,000 which was intended to help promote his Mailgirls program in North America," Mariko explained to him. "He transferred this money into a Cayman Islands account as she requested. He would now like some documentation that shows how this money was spent."  
  
"I don't know anything about that money," Dan said. "It's the first I've heard of it."  
  
"That money was given to me under the table," Barbara said in a calm, defiant voice. "It was a gratuity for my help in arranging this partnership. That's how business is done over there, Dan."  
  
"A gratuity?" Evans said to her sharply. "You mean a bribe don't you?"  
  
"Call it whatever you want, but once again Hiromoto can't make this public without also implicating himself in it."  
  
"Ah, but this transaction was not under the table," Mariko said. "It was recorded in our books as a business expense. I have a copy of the relevant page to show you." Mariko pulled a folded sheet of paper out of her bag and handed it to Barbara. Her face turned pale as she read it. "As you can see it was properly recorded and included in our tax returns. So may I assume this payment did not make it into DDE's books?"  
  
"No it did not," Dan said. He was starting to pull himself together now as he directed his anger toward Barbara. "What did you do with the money, Barbara?"  
  
"I used it to pay off my condo, Dan," she replied brusquely. Once again I could almost see the wheels turning in her head as she searched for a way out of this new trap.  
  
"What is the correct legal term for improperly taking company funds for one's own personal use, Mr. Evans?" Mariko asked. "Embezzlement?"  
  
"Yeah, I believe so," he replied. "What would you call it, Barbara?"  
  
"This is a setup, Dan," she replied anxiously, looking more and more like a wounded animal backed into a corner. "They're trying to entrap me."  
  
"Yeah, and they're doing a damn good job of it, too," Dan said as he continued to reassert control. He sees a way out of this mess by offering Barbara's head on a platter to Hiromoto, I thought to myself.  
  
"Perhaps there is a way this can be resolved, Mr. Evans," Mariko said. "It is my understanding that Barbara has had two mailgirls living in this condo. I am certain Mr. Hiromoto will see this as an acceptable use of his money to support the Mailgirls program. If Barbara signs over the title to Hiromoto Industries then I believe we can correct this issue."  
  
"You want me to sign over my condo to Hiromoto?" Barbara asked bitterly. "That's your price?"  
  
"Yes," Mariko replied. "I believe $500,000 is fair market value for this condo. Of course your accountants will need to amend your company books to add this transaction which was inadvertently overlooked two years ago. And perhaps there will be a small penalty that DDE must pay to your IRS. I believe this would be a minor matter though."  
  
Barbara glared at Mariko. "Fine. I'll do it if that's what Mr. Hiromoto wants." My heart began sinking again. Was Mariko about to sell me out for the price of a condo?  
  
"Ah, excellent!" Mariko replied brightly. "We will take care of this matter right after your Mailgirls contract has been signed."  
  
"No!" Barbara replied shaking her head violently. "I will not!"  
  
"Yes you will!" Dan said to her angrily. "Barbara, you got me and my company into this f\*cking mess so now you're going to get us out of it! If you don't do whatever the hell Hiromoto wants you to do I'll have you arrested and charged with embezzlement!"  
  
"No!" Barbara replied stubbornly, then turned to Mariko. "I earned that money for everything I've done to sell Hiromoto's program here in this country when no one else was willing to touch it. You know that, Mariko. If he wants my condo to punish me for my so-called insolence then he can have it. But that's all. After that we're even as far as I'm concerned."  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto is willing to pay fair market value for your condo to keep you out of jail," Mariko said to her. "He is doing this as a favor because of the work you have done promoting his program, but it does not make you even with him. Barbara, I must tell you that he has ordered me not to return to Tokyo without your signed Mailgirls contract in hand. If you will not do this for him then he will withdraw this favor and insist that your theft of his money be dealt with."  
  
Kelly was squeezing my hand so hard now I was afraid she might break it. I was scarcely able to breathe myself still not certain of the outcome of this epic match. Then I saw a look of resignation come across Barbara's face as she closed her eyes and took a deep breath. I knew then it was over. Checkmate!  
  
Mariko took a stack of papers from her bag and placed it in front of Barbara along with a pen. "It is a standard two year Mailgirls contract," she said. "You are familiar with the language but you may look it over, of course."  
  
Barbara opened her eyes and stared at it for awhile, then picked up the pen. I glanced over and saw a look of transcendent joy on Kelly's face as I wrested my hand from her iron grip. For my part I felt no joy, only sadness that it had come to this. I knew Barbara had this coming, but as her world was crashing down on her I felt only compassion for this woman who had been such a big part of my life these past two years.  
  
Barbara flicked through the pages then, without hesitation, signed her name on the last page. Then she looked up at Mariko and spoke. "There's something I'd like you to tell Mr. Hiromoto for me."  
  
"Yes, of course," Mariko replied.  
  
"Tell him, 'Well played.'"

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50c**

**TANGO**  
Barbara stood naked in the middle of the office with hands clasped behind her back, legs spread at shoulder width, back arched, and gaze lowered submissively to the floor. She was in the mailgirl standing position waiting for further instructions from a superior. Barbara's beautifully proportioned and fit body would soon go on display to anyone in the building who wanted to see it, and I knew everyone was going to want to see it. Barbara's formidable reputation within the company guaranteed that.  
  
Dan Evans had ordered her to strip almost immediately after signing the contract which was standard procedure for new mailgirls. He seemed to relish it, though, being understandably bitter about the opening created through Barbara's Mailgirls program that had allowed Hiromoto's tentacles to reach into his business to ensnare him.  
  
"You know, Mariko, I'd hate for us to send Mr. Hiromoto a poorly trained mailgirl," he said. "I think we should put Barbara through the full six weeks of training before we ship her to Tokyo." The long knives were out now for Barbara and Evans clearly intended to humiliate her as much as possible.  
  
"Yes, I believe that would be satisfactory to Mr. Hiromoto," Mariko replied. I searched Barbara's face for a reaction but she was now wearing a stoic expression like a mask to hide her true feelings. There would be no weeping, screaming, or gnashing of teeth for her. Whatever emotions she was experiencing right now she was determined to keep hidden.  
  
"Inspection position, tango!" Evans barked and Barbara placed her hands behind her head and rose up onto her toes. He slowly circled her inspecting every inch of her body. "Good enough, I suppose," he said finally. "Now get down on your knees." Barbara quickly complied. Beside me Kelly's joy over Barbara's downfall remained undiminished.  
  
"That's a good look for you, Barbara," Evans said in a mocking tone as he stared down at her. Then he turned to Mariko. "Okay, we've done what you wanted so now I would like to ask Mr. Hiromoto to destroy those videos and all copies of them."  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto only desires a long and profitable relationship with you, Mr. Evans. He does not wish for these videos to see the light of day so he assures you that he will keep them in a very safe place. He is old fashioned and does not trust computers or the internet so they will be kept in a place where hackers may never reach them." This was obviously meant as both a dig at Barbara and a warning that DDE's own hackers wouldn't be able to get to them.  
  
"Alright," Evans replied resignedly. "I suppose it wouldn't do any good to waste time arguing about it. So are we done here then?"   
  
"I apologize but there are still a few small matters left to resolve."  
  
"What matters?"  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto would like your assurances that Ms. Anderson will be allowed to return to her current position after her Mailgirls contract has expired."  
  
"Not a chance," Evans responded sharply.   
  
"I'm afraid Mr. Hiromoto insists."  
  
Evans glared at Mariko. "So I suppose these 'requests' are going to be a regular thing now that Hiromoto thinks he has me by the balls?"  
  
"No, Mr. Evans. Once these small matters are resolved today you will be free to run your company without interference."  
  
"This is not a small matter, Mariko. I don't ever want Barbara back here as anything other than a mailgirl."   
  
Mariko didn't respond but patiently waited for Evans to speak again. Her silence spoke volumes, though, making it clear that Hiromoto's "requests" were not negotiable. He quickly got the message.   
  
"Oh, Christ," Evans swore under his breath. "Alright, Mariko, once Barbara has finished serving Mr. Hiromoto she can have her old job back. I can't promise you she'll have the same power and influence though."  
  
I glanced over again at Barbara but her expression still hadn't changed. What will happen in Tokyo, I wondered? Will she be just another mailgirl or will she get special attention from Hiromoto? Will he bring her up to the 14th floor for regular whippings like he did with Mariko?  
  
At that moment Barbara lifted her gaze from the carpet and her eyes locked onto mine. Normally I would've immediately averted my eyes but this time I didn't. We're considered equals now, I thought, and that seemed strange to me. It was as if the world had shifted off its axis. I continued to hold her gaze seeing no pain or betrayal in those eyes, only resolve. In that moment I knew that Barbara would not return from Tokyo a broken woman. Far from it. It had taken a master in Hiromoto to defeat her and whatever mistakes she had made she would learn from them. If Dan Evans thought he could prevent her from regaining power and influence he was sorely mistaken.  
  
I finally broke eye contact and lowered my eyes to the floor. Even now in this moment of defeat and humiliation she still radiated an aura of confidence. Staring into her eyes for too long was like staring into the sun.  
  
In the background I heard Mariko and Dan discussing Donna Haverly and I turned my attention back to their conversation. "What's wrong with Haverly?" Dan asked.  
  
"Mr. Hiromoto does not believe she is the proper person to be the face of his Mailgirls program in North America," Mariko replied.  
  
"Okay, I suppose he has someone else in mind?"  
  
"Yes, he does."  
  
"Who?"  
  
"Mr. Evans, you have a quite famous mailgirl with a masters degree in business kneeling on your floor."  
  
Evans looked over at me. "What? You mean Nine? You want me to make her my Director of Mailgirls?"  
  
"Yes. Mr. Hiromoto believes she would be ideal for this position." I was shocked by this latest turn. Did I even want the job?  
  
"She's a goddamn corporate spy," Dan muttered, but he knew he had no real choice in the matter. Not as long as Hiromoto had that tape of him naked and being whipped by Barbara. How long had that been going on anyway, I wondered? At least two years, I guessed.   
  
I remembered meeting Dan for the first time as I served as a naked cocktail waitress in the executive lounge. That had been my very first day as a mailgirl and he'd told me the story about how DumpsterDawg Enterprises had gotten its name. It had struck me as strange that Barbara seemed to be very much in control when the two of them were together even though he was her boss. Now I knew why.  
  
I looked up to see him staring at me. "Alright," he said. "The job is hers if she wants it."  
  
I did want it, I suddenly realized. I wanted it very much. The thought of running the most controversial business program in history excited me. But would I really be in control? Wouldn't I just go from being Barbara's puppet to being Hiromoto's? Perhaps, but at least he would be half a world away and I had Mariko between us as a buffer.   
  
"I'll take the job but only if there's no more spying," I said to Mariko. "Not here or at any of our licensees. I won't be a part of that anymore."  
  
Mariko smiled at me. "I have already convinced Mr. Hiromoto that Mailgirls has grown to the point where it will become profitable on its own and further spying or technology theft would only put the program at risk. He has agreed with me on this. There will be no more spying."  
  
"What about the new contract I just signed with Barbara?" I asked.  
  
"I am sure Mr. Evans would be happy to release you from it."  
  
"Of course I'd be 'happy' to do that," Dan replied sarcastically.   
  
"And Kelly's new contract?"  
  
"Yes, her contract, too," he said.  
  
"Can I say something, sir?" Kelly spoke up. Dan nodded. "I want a new Mailgirls contract with full pay and bonuses and no penalties for leaving. I want to be able to keep working as a mailgirl for as long as I want and be able to quit whenever I want."  
  
Dan sighed. "You'll have to ask our new Director of Mailgirls about that," he said pointing at me.  
  
"Why Kelly?" I asked. "I thought you wanted out of here?"  
  
"That was when Barbara was in charge. I'm thinking now that my new boss will be a whole lot less psycho," she said casting shade at Barbara. "Besides, who's going to hire me now as a managerial candidate after being a mailgirl? My MBA is barely worth the paper it's printed on anymore and I don't want to get stuck running a Cinnabon at the mall. Where else am I going to make this kind of money?"  
  
This was classic Kelly. It was always about the money with her. "Okay Kell, we'll talk about a new contract presuming I really do have the job."  
  
"If Hiromoto wants you it's yours," Dan said. "He obviously calls the shots around here now. You can have Donna Haverly's office on the seventh floor."  
  
"I want Barbara's office, sir," I said, the words surprising even me as they left my mouth. It felt weird making demands of the company CEO as I knelt naked on his carpet. It was as if I'd fallen into an alternative universe where the meek really had inherited the earth.   
  
"Barbara was the Executive VP of Public Relations and you're just going to be a director of naked delivery girls," he responded. "Your office will be on the seventh floor, not the ninth."  
  
"With all due respect sir, I plan on growing our North American operations significantly and I'll need that seventh floor office for an assistant." If there's one thing I'd learned from Barbara it was to boldly go after what you want, and I wanted her office. I didn't really know if it was intended as a "f\*ck you" to her or as simply a way to stake out my turf, but I wanted it.   
  
Dan laughed bitterly. "Alright, I can see now how this is going to go. You think you can hold my balls to the fire too, right? If you want Barbara's office and an assistant I'll give them to you. But if you or your friend Kelly here ever utters a single word to anyone about what you saw on that video I'll destroy both of you and that's a promise. The same goes for you, Mariko. If I so much as hear a rumor floating around about that video's existence then all holy hell will break loose. Fair warning."  
  
"No one here will ever speak of it," Mariko replied politely but I sensed the undercurrent in it. It was meant as a warning to Kelly and me to keep our mouths shut.  
  
"So are we done here?" Dan asked.   
  
"Yes," Mariko said. "I would like to speak to Danica privately for a few moments though if I may."  
  
"Sure. You can use my office since you apparently own it now." Dan lifted up his half full glass of champagne. "To our Mailgirls partners in crime," he said bitterly, then drained the glass in one swig. He put the glass down on the coffee table then walked over to where Barbara had left her clothing after stripping. He picked up her clothes and shoes and stuffed them into a leather Mailgirls pouch used for deliveries. "Hey Two, I've got a job for you," he said referring to Kelly. She climbed to her feet and walked over to him.  
  
"Take Barbara's clothes down to security to be locked up. I'm going to call HR and have them stay open late to make sure she gets processed tonight. Hell, I'll even take her contract down there myself. I don't want to give her any chance to scheme her way out of this."  
  
"Yes sir," Kelly said, barely able to contain her glee. She took the pouch and exited the room.   
  
Evans walked over now to Barbara. "On your feet, tango!" Barbara immediately rose up and assumed the standing position. "After we're done in HR I want you to go to security and get your collar and MMU. I know it's Friday afternoon and most people have already gone home by now, but there are always people working late in the gaming departments who might need a mailgirl. I want you working until at least midnight tonight. Then I expect you back here first thing Monday morning for your 'walk of shame.' I'm really looking forward to seeing that."  
  
"Yes sir." Barbara replied with her gaze lowered to the floor, still refusing to give Evans the satisfaction of seeing her true feelings.  
  
"So get moving, tango. Chop chop!"  
  
Barbara glanced at me one last time as she turned toward the door and her new life as a mailgirl.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50d**

**AMBITION AND SUBMISSION**  
"I think my new boss hates me," I said, talking about Dan Evans. Mariko and I were alone now in his office. Like the other day she'd once again assumed a kneeling position facing me, but this time had kept her clothes on.  
  
"He fears you and the knowledge you possess," Mariko said. "Perhaps you can gain his trust over time. Perhaps not. Sometimes being feared can be useful."  
  
I thought about what it meant having that knowledge. It had to scare the shit out of Evans knowing that video was out there and that Kelly and I had seen it. "Do you have any more video of the two of them playing, um... whip the CEO? Or was that it?"   
  
"Oh no. We have much more. They were very enthusiastic about playing that game."   
  
"Well I guess that shows you never really know what goes on behind closed doors," I said. "Unless you have a hidden spy camera, of course."  
  
"Yes, that is true," Mariko laughed.  
  
"So what's going to happen to Barbara in Tokyo? Will Hiromoto whip her like he does you?"  
  
"I do not know what Mr. Hiromoto has planned for her. I only know that he demanded that I bring her back to Tokyo as a mailgirl."  
  
"So Mr. Hiromoto was so pissed off about Barbara wanting to deal directly with him instead of you that he spent two years plotting to turn her into a mailgirl?"  
  
"It was not as difficult to ensnare Barbara as you may believe," Mariko said. "Mr. Hiromoto could have sprung the trap long ago but he needed her in place to help nurture his Mailgirls program here. Her obsession with you and her belief that she was smarter than everyone else left her blind to the danger."  
  
I thought back to my meeting with Barbara last Monday before everything had gone off the rails. She had talked about having blindspots and needing me as a partner to help her overcome that. Maybe she'd sensed that she was missing something. It turned out that what she was missing was a threat from her "partner" in Tokyo.  
  
"So Hiromoto doesn't think she's needed anymore?" I asked.  
  
"He believes that Mailgirls can survive here without her now and she has become expendable."  
  
"Then why does he want her back here in two years?"  
  
"Barbara has been a valuable asset to Mr. Hiromoto. Because of this he has decided to provide her with the gift of humility and then return her to DDE in the hopes she will become even more valuable in the future."   
  
The "gift of humility?" I guess that's one way of putting it. "So what about me?" I asked. "Am I also at risk of receiving one of Mr. Hiromoto's 'gifts' if I don't follow all of his marching orders?"  
  
Mariko shook her head. "Mr. Hiromoto cares little about the Mailgirls program or how you run it. He only cares about what it can offer him. Until now it was information, but in the future he expects to earn profits. If you expand the program as you promised to Mr. Evans then you need not fear any interference from Mr. Hiromoto."  
  
"I hope I can actually do that. I may have gone a little overboard in making that promise."  
  
"I have much faith in you, Danica. I sensed you were special from our very first meeting. This is why I risked taking you up to meet Mr. Hiromoto. I would not have done this with Kelly."  
  
"I don't know, Mariko. I've spent the last two years as just a lowly mailgirl and now I'm suddenly in charge of the whole program in North America? What do I do? Do I just follow Barbara's plan?"  
  
"You must find your own way, Danica. I will assist you as best I can but you must understand that I cannot hold your hand. We have many more programs around the world now. I have recently signed a new partner in Rio de Janeiro who will soon begin promoting Mailgirls in South America."  
  
"Are you still in that little office on the fifth floor?" I asked remembering how surprised I'd been to see the size of it considering the international notoriety of the program she was running.  
  
"Yes," Mariko replied. "Mr. Hiromoto has not yet rewarded my efforts with a larger office. However I do have an assistant now to help me."'  
  
"So are you jealous that I'm going to have a much bigger office than you and my own assistant?" I joked.  
  
"Oh yes! Very much so!" she laughed.  
  
Something else occurred to me that I needed to ask about. "Anna and I have been living in Barbara's condo so what's going to happen to us now that Mr. Hiromoto is going to own it?"  
  
"I believe Mr. Hiromoto would allow this condo to be used as the residence for DDE's Director of Mailgirls if you wish to remain in it," she said.  
  
"Yes I would. I like it there." That would give me another few months with Anna anyway, although I knew she'd probably move out once her contract expired. She was becoming more independent with each passing day.  
  
I had to ask Mariko about the elephant in the room. "What's going to happen when Barbara comes back? Will she take over control of Mailgirls again?"  
  
"You must answer that question for yourself, Danica. You have two years to prepare for her return. Will you allow her to take Mailgirls from you?"  
  
"No, I won't," I replied with more confidence than I actually felt. I had no doubt that Barbara would want to regain control over both the Mailgirls program and me when she returned. Would I be strong enough to prevent that from happening?  
  
I thought about the task ahead of me. Should I continue to take Mailgirls in the direction that Barbara had envisioned? Should I chart a course that was less harsh and demanding for the girls? There was a growing consensus among upper management that their mailgirls should become full time company slaves. Would I be able to resist doing that? Did I even want to?  
  
What I did know for a certainty was that after spending two years of my life immersed in this crazy program I really did believe in the value of it. I'd seen first-hand the tangible, real-world benefits of it for DDE. I also believed there were even some benefits in it for mailgirls as well.  
  
Defying the cultural taboo against public nudity had proven to be exciting and arousing to many mailgirls, myself included. It's difficult to describe the feeling of being forced to work naked in a normal business environment where everyone else is fully clothed. We were living outside of the societal norms that constrained most people and the fact that we weren't even allowed the option of clothes or modesty only intensified the experience. I know this created many different and sometimes conflicting emotions in mailgirls, but boredom was never one of them.  
  
Many mailgirls also talked about the odd sense of freedom they felt while doing this job, as strange as that sounds. In a stressful world where people are constantly bombarded by noise and distractions from every direction there's something liberating about having your life literally stripped down to its bare essence. Every second of a mailgirl's duty day was governed by the MMU strapped to her arm and this helped to free her mind of any distractions and allowed her to focus only on the task at hand.   
  
There were times I was able to reach a hypnotic state where my mind was cleared of everything but placing one foot in front of the other again and again and again until reaching my destination. It became a form of moving meditation for me and over time I learned to crave the calm, empty mind this movement induced along with the awareness of feeling nothing against my bare skin but air.  
  
Of course being a mailgirl was no path to enlightenment and it definitely wasn't all rainbows and unicorns. Far from it. There was an undeniable dark side to the life: the humiliation, the degradation, the fear of being forced into sexual slavery. And every mailgirl reacted to it differently. Some, like Becca, seemed born to the job and thrived in it while others, like Stephanie, had been coerced into the life and dreamed of the day they could escape from it. Most mailgirls were somewhere on the spectrum between those two extremes.  
  
And now I'd been handed a job that effectively gave me control of these women's lives. The thought of having that type of responsibility felt more than a little overwhelming. I knew there was a fine line between servitude and slavery and it had become blurrier over time. The Mailgirls program constantly danced along the edge of that line and I would do my best to keep it from crossing over it.  
  
Or would I? My own submissive compulsions had taken me to the very edge of voluntarily submitting to a life of slavery before turning away from it at the last moment. Even now I still felt the pull of those compulsions like a riptide threatening to drag me out to sea. When Barbara returned would I be able to resist her once again? Would she finally be able to finish what she had started? The prospect of her eventual return felt both terrifying and exciting to me.  
  
Mariko remained silent as I struggled with these thoughts. As I looked at her I realized that her beauty and quiet humility helped mask a hidden reservoir of strength deep within her. She had taken on both Barbara Anderson and Dan Evans today without blinking. Even while Barbara was probing her defenses and Dan was angrily going off on her she had maintained her unflappable composure, never once raising her voice or showing the slightest sign of distress or doubt. Although she'd always presented herself as just a simple messenger for Mr. Hiromoto I believed now that she wielded far more power than she ever let on.  
  
I want to be this woman, I decided. I want to become Mariko. I'll learn to obtain and wield power with the same quiet composure and confidence. I'll become a master of the great game and subtly bend the world to my will as she does. I'll shed my clothes and work as a mailgirl whenever I feel the need to scratch that itch. I've just been given the perfect job to nurture and feed both of my competing natures of ambition and submissiveness and I'll fight to keep it. And when Barbara returns I'll be ready for her.  
  
A sense of calmness came over me now as I understood what I had to do. "I'm ready, Mariko," I said to her. "Whatever comes next I'll be ready for it."  
  
Mariko smiled at me. "Yes, Danica. Your future is yours to create."  
  
For the first time in a long time I really believed that.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50e**

**EPILOGUE**  
A black sedan pulled up in front of the exclusive restaurant on the outskirts of Tokyo. A valet walked up and opened the passenger side door, then held out his hand to help the old man out of the car. The old man shook his head and grunted indicating he didn't want any help, then exited the vehicle in a surprisingly spry manner for a man his age.  
  
The valet shut the door then opened the rear door. He once again offered his hand to the passenger but this time the offer was accepted. He assisted a nude woman wearing a steel collar around her neck out of the vehicle; then a second woman emerged from it, also nude and collared. Ayee, the old man has brought both of his whores tonight, the valet thought to himself. What it must be like to have such unfathomable wealth and power! He walked quickly to the restaurant door and opened it for the old man and his two naked slaves.   
  
Mr. Hiromoto entered the building with Mariko and Barbara following behind, their eyes dutifully lowered to the floor. The restaurant staff was accustomed to him showing up with one of his mailgirls, but bringing both at once was unusual. It was even more of a spectacle for the restaurant's patrons and the nude women created quite a stir as they were led to Hiromoto's table.  
  
Hiromoto took his seat, then spoke a brief command. Mariko and Barbara obediently knelt down on the floor beside him facing each other. It did not take long for Hiromoto's meal to arrive since he was a valued customer and always ate the same thing. The two mailgirls were given only a single bowl of water to share placed on the floor between them. Each took turns bending down and licking from the bowl before settling back into their kneeling position.   
  
Mariko glanced up briefly at the beautiful nude woman kneeling in front of her. Barbara has come far since her arrival in Tokyo, Mariko mused. That had been nearly two years ago now and she hadn't known what to expect from her at the time, but Barbara had fulfilled her duties as a mailgirl without complaint or self-pity. She had taken it upon herself to begin studying Japanese during her humiliating six weeks of "training" at DDE and after just six months in Tokyo had become quite fluent in the language. It hadn't taken Barbara long after that for her to discover the truth: it wasn't Mariko who was Hiromoto's puppet but the opposite.  
  
Mariko's thoughts flashed back now to her first meeting with Danica and her remarkable decision to take the girl up to witness her whipping by Hiromoto. She still didn't know exactly why she had done that. Perhaps it was Danica's stunning beauty and the intelligence she sensed behind those extraordinary green eyes. Perhaps it was because she reminded Mariko of a younger, more innocent, more naive version of herself despite the fact that Danica was only a year younger than she was. Whatever the reason, Mariko had wanted Danica to witness what she was willing to endure to in order to gain what she wanted.  
  
Afterwards they had retreated to Mariko's office and she had not been completely honest with Danica in telling her the story about how she had become Hiromoto's personal whipping girl. It wasn't Hiromoto who had originally summoned Mariko to his office to ask her to run his Mailgirls program, Mariko had been the one to request the meeting. It had taken all of her strength to summon the courage to do so.  
  
"Why should I allow you to run the program?" Hiromoto had asked. "What can you offer me?"  
  
"No one sees or hears more than the lowly mailgirl," Mariko had said to him. "She goes everywhere and is seen by all, yet remains invisible."  
  
Hiromoto had understood immediately what she was offering him: information. Information about who was scheming against him, or negligent in their duties, or stealing from him, or spying for his competitors, or screwing a co-worker's wife. Information that could give him the upper hand against those in his company who might try to sabotage his plans. Business was a competitive bloodsport in Japan and knowledge was power to its players. Mariko understood the value of what she was offering to Hiromoto and he did also.  
  
In return Mariko had asked Hiromoto to allow her to run the Mailgirls program and use his power to protect her girls. He had agreed to this with one provision: if the mailgirls were not to suffer for their failures then Mariko must take their place. She would be whipped for each demerit her girls received. Mariko had reluctantly agreed.  
  
So Mariko began feeding information to Hiromoto and he'd lived up to his promise by firing a number of workers, including several top executives, who had been physically and sexually abusing the mailgirls. Mariko dutifully absorbed his whippings and afterwards he would allow her to kneel naked on the floor of his office to recover. At first Hiromoto said little to her, but over time his trust in Mariko grew and he began to talk.   
  
For all his status, it turned out that Hiromoto was a lonely man who trusted almost no one. Maybe it was because he believed Mariko posed no threat to him that he began telling her stories about his rise from the streets of Tokyo to the top floor of an office building bearing his name. He used Mariko to help unburden himself of his past the way that others might use a psychiatrist or a priest. Mariko listened quietly, absorbing every word of it knowing that she was being given masters courses in the art of manipulation and the accumulation of wealth and power.  
  
It was during one of these sessions that Mariko had humbly suggested that perhaps Mr. Hiromoto could license his Mailgirls program to other companies in order to gain information from them. He had agreed to this and gave her the responsibility of selling the program, negotiating the contracts, and secretly setting up the spy networks within those companies. In return he taught her how to profit from the inside information she was obtaining and Mariko began slowly building her own wealth and power.  
  
She also learned over time how to subtly manipulate the information she was giving to Hiromoto in order to protect those she favored and punish those she did not. Careers soon began rising and falling based on the words she whispered into Mr. Hiromoto's ear.  
  
Mariko then began using this subtle power to benefit her own girls. She had always given preference to university graduates when hiring mailgirls and as they completed their contracts she helped the best and brightest of them obtain entry level management positions. From there she used her influence over Hiromoto to aid their ascent through the management ranks and slowly began building a power base within the company of women who were absolutely loyal to her.  
  
There was no one who had ever worked for Mariko though quite like Barbara Anderson. She thought back to Barbara's first meeting with Mr. Hiromoto and her presumptuous insistence on negotiating their partnership with him rather than Mariko. It was only because he was intrigued by Barbara's beauty and confidence that Hiromoto agreed to it, and over the course of the negotiations had become equally fascinated and infuriated with the woman. He pretended to speak no English and Mariko had often needed to tone down his insulting and condescending remarks while translating them to Barbara. After the deal was signed Hiromoto had said to Mariko, "I want you to bring that woman here as a mailgirl. Make it happen." And Mariko had made it happen.  
  
It was Mariko who had set up the $500,000 bribe to Barbara which she then put on their books as a promotional expense paid to DDE. It was Mariko who had given the recordings of her conversations with Danica and Kelly to Barbara and then set up the hack to steal them back. And it was Mariko who had instructed Hideki to secretly place video cameras inside the MTUs in Barbara's and Dan Evans' offices. Those cameras had produced a treasure trove of blackmail material and guaranteed that Evans would remain in thrall to Mariko for as long as she wanted. Hiromoto had played no role in any of the plotting, but then it hadn't been necessary. Mariko had learned her lessons well from him.

**Confessions of a Mailgirl - Part 50F**

It was not long after the conclusion of the negotiations with Barbara that Mariko had first begun noticing a change in Hiromoto. He'd always had a razor sharp mind but now he began to occasionally forget names or struggle to find a word. It had been a minor issue at first but over time it became more pronounced. Although Hiromoto remained remarkably fit and healthy for a man his age it eventually became obvious to Mariko that his mind was fading.   
  
Hiromoto understood what was happening to him and took steps to prevent it from getting out to the rest of the company knowing that the sharks would start circling if it did. He began isolating himself on the 14th floor becoming a virtual hermit there. His paranoia also grew and he trusted no one but his personal secretary and Mariko to come into his office. His bodyguards and driver also knew what was happening but they were too loyal and too fearful of the man to tell anyone. Hiromoto was able to mask his problem in brief conversations so any required interactions with his senior executives were kept short. He would mostly just listen and grunt out blunt responses which wasn't terribly different from the way he'd always spoken to them anyway.  
  
One day Mariko had humbly suggested to Mr. Hiromoto the idea of sending a lowly mailgirl such as herself to deliver his instructions to senior management in order to relieve himself of this tedious burden. So Mariko began representing Hiromoto at executive board meetings and other high level management discussions. She soon learned she could subtly nudge the company in directions she desired by introducing elements of her own agenda and passing them off as Hiromoto's ideas. It was a dangerous game but Mariko became so skilled at it that she gradually became the de facto CEO of Hiromoto Industries without anyone realizing it.   
  
She'd been able to get away with this by humbly relaying Mr. Hiromoto's "instructions" from her knees as she knelt naked before those very important managers and executives. None of them would ever suspect that a lowly mailgirl could be anything other than a simple messenger used by Mr. Hiromoto to express his wishes. It was for this reason that Mariko had also chosen to remain in her small fifth floor office and allow herself to be mocked by her colleagues as she continued working mailgirls shifts whenever possible. In reality Mariko was no submissive but she had mastered playing the role of one.  
  
But now rumors were circulating throughout the company about Hiromoto's deteriorating mental health and Mariko knew she could not maintain this fiction for much longer. She'd known this day would come so had spent the last two years quietly pulling strings to line up Hiromoto's heir apparent from among the ranks of his senior executives. The man she had chosen very much looked the part of a powerful executive with his expensively tailored suits, handsome features, and smooth manner. In reality, though, he was a shallow and vain man with a laundry list of dirty secrets that she could easily exploit. It would not be difficult for Mariko to manipulate this man which was why he'd been chosen.  
  
Mariko's thoughts returned to Barbara. This would be her final week in Tokyo before returning to America and DDE. She'd always known that Barbara was an extremely bright, perceptive woman but had become even more impressed by her over the past two years. Barbara's arrogance had been her downfall but she was far too smart to repeat the same mistakes in the future. Mariko realized she could easily become a very dangerous foe which was why she had chosen to make her an ally instead.   
  
Over the past year Mariko had taken Barbara into her confidence and revealed everything to her; then the two of them had mapped out a path together for her to replace Dan Evans as the head of DDE within a year of her return. Barbara was going to become the first former mailgirl to run a major corporation and this would represent a significant symbolic boost to the legitimacy of Mailgirls.  
  
Mariko had also closely monitored Danica's progress over the past two years as she grew into her new role. She was now the face of the Mailgirls program in North America and had become a very effective and media savvy spokesperson for it. The successful release of the "Mailgirl 9" game had also helped to cement her status as the world's most famous mailgirl.   
  
Then there had been the surprising success of the movie "The Mailgirl." Although it generated only modest box earnings during its release - mainly due to a large theater chain buckling under to feminist protests and refusing to show it - it had found its audience after being released on DVD and streaming video. The film had turned out to be a funny and sexy romp and its romanticized depiction of life as a mailgirl had caused waves of young women to apply to become one. The success of the game and the movie had brought Mailgirls into the cultural mainstream around the world.   
  
While Barbara had built the foundation for Mailgirls in North America, Danica had successfully taken it to the next level. Her fame and articulate defense of her program made her a frequent guest of cable news shows and helped generate public support as DDE successfully fought off court challenges and anti-Mailgirls legislation in Congress. She'd also helped push through favorable local laws in several cities similar to the Mailgirls-friendly laws that Wildwood had on its books. The fact that Wildwood was booming economically and hadn't turned into the modern day Sodom and Gomorrah its critics had predicted had helped her cause. There were now over forty Mailgirls licensees in the U.S. and Canada, most of them on the West Coast and in the Northeast, with more prospective clients in the pipeline. The Mailgirls partnership between DDE and Hiromoto Industries had become a profitable one for both companies.  
  
Danica had also continued to push the boundaries of her Mailgirls program, introducing contracts that forced mailgirls to maintain their roles as submissive nude servants twenty-four hours a day, whether on duty or not. She'd also built a dormitory in the basement of DDE's complex to house her mailgirls (which some critics likened to a prison), and new language had been added to Mailgirls contracts allowing for corporal punishment in the form of spankings for excessive demerits. The sale of Mailgirls contracts at DDE headquarters was also starting to look more and more like the slave auctions they actually were and representatives from licensees flew in from around the country to inspect and bid on these beautiful, naked, subservient women.  
  
Danica's enthusiasm for pushing these boundaries might have surprised some but it hadn't surprised Mariko. Unlike Mariko, Danica was a true submissive. At some level, whether consciously or subconsciously, she must have known that she might be building her own cage in preparation for Barbara's return. There was a darkness within her that often led her to tread dangerous paths toward the precipice of complete surrender.  
  
Barbara also knew this, of course, and was still as obsessed as ever with possessing the girl. Danica had become a valuable asset so, for awhile, Mariko had considered protecting her from Barbara. Ultimately, though, she'd decided against it. Danica was no longer the naive girl she'd once been and her submissive tendencies didn't necessarily define her. She had proven herself to be ambitious, intelligent, and resourceful and Mariko believed that she now had the skills and knowledge to handle Barbara if she truly wanted to retain her freedom.   
  
But Danica was driven by such complex and unpredictable forces that even Mariko was uncertain about the outcome of Barbara's return. Danica had begun sharing her condo with the actress Diana Clarkson and the potential influence of this new lover added yet another wild card to the mix. Mariko had decided to simply allow the dynamic between Barbara and Danica to play itself out without any interference from her.  
  
Mariko also had another reason for staying out of it: this would be an important test for Danica. Her impressive performance over the past two years had revealed her potential to Mariko and she now believed that Danica herself might one day be prepared to run DDE. She wasn't ready for that yet but Mariko believed in the old maxim that fire strengthens steel. If Danica could withstand the intense heat of Barbara's return it would prove she was a worthy candidate to someday replace Barbara if Mariko decided that needed to happen. If not, she would most likely end up as Barbara's slave.  
  
Danica still wore that metal collar stamped with the number "9" around her neck even while fully clothed. To Mariko this represented the dichotomy within her, but she believed now that only one of Danica's two personas would survive Barbara's return to DDE. She would emerge from the fire as either Danica Peterson or Mailgirl 9; she could not be both.  
  
Mariko's thoughts were interrupted by the touch of Hiromoto's hand as he began stroking her hair. The old man removed a small piece of chicken from his plate and held it to her lips as a treat. Mariko took the meat into her mouth and looked up adoringly at her "master." The other diners around her snickered at this shameful display of weakness and submission to such a powerful man.  
  
Mariko swallowed the meat, then her eyes met Barbara's and a slight, knowing smile came across each of their faces. The two of them understood something that those around them did not and could not.  
  
The future belonged to these lowly naked mailgirls.   
  
THE END