**Mailgirl Number Six**

by lizstanton8181

“Here? Now?”

There was disbelief in the girl’s voice, as if she’d misunderstood. As if she’d misheard. As if she’d misinterpreted her new station. It was as if the conversation that had preceded the instruction had been a purely rhetorical exercise, or as if they’d been talking about someone else. She couldn’t possibly comply. Not here. Not now.

Abigail Wagner Williams fought back her annoyance. Of course there’d be hesitation and disbelief, and Abby wasn’t entirely devoid of empathy. The direction of this poor girl’s life had just changed dramatically, and what was about to happen to her – what had already begun happening to her – would have been unthinkable even just sixty minutes earlier. And, even if she had truly and fully understood what her new role was in the company and what would be expected of her, the immediacy of her induction was admittedly startling. Despite that week’s announcements and demonstrations, Abby doubted that the girl had left for work that morning thinking that this could happen to her.

“Here,” Abby responded. “Now.”

As much empathy as Abby may have had, however, she still felt annoyed by the pushback. It shouldn’t have mattered to Casey Campbell whether she undressed here in the middle of Regulatory Compliance or if she undressed downstairs in the basement. Her current coworkers and colleagues were going to see her in all her glory soon enough; there was no gradual easing into the life of a naked mailgirl.

Casey looked to Will Barrow to overrule Abby, and then to Steve Dreisewerd for support. Neither was going to help. Barrow was Director of US Financial’s Human Capital unit, a specialized team within Human Resources that had been tasked first with launching the Mailgirls Program at USF Plaza downtown, and now expanding said program to the company’s back office here in Jersey City; everything that Abby was doing was at his direction. Dreisewerd, a middle manager with all the power and personality one might have expected out of a career compliance officer, was in no position step in even if he’d wanted to.

Casey didn’t bother to seek assistance from the other woman in the room. Mistress Rei, her new supervisor, stood behind Barrow with her hands behind her back, legs ever-so-slightly apart, and chest puffed out. Abby was doing her best to swallow her annoyance at the girl. Mistress Rei made no such effort.

Smartly, though, Casey gave in. She’d already fought the good fight over the course of the preceding hour, exploring any alternatives that she might have had, and she seemed beaten. Meekly, she offered up only an, “Okay.” She glanced nervously over her shoulder, through the glass walls of the conference room, and out into the cubicle farm that lay beyond. Her fellow compliance officers were trying – and failing – to pretend they weren’t doing everything in their power to sneak a peek at what was unfolding here in the room. And as Casey stood, and reached for the lapels of her blazer, Abby could have sworn that what had been a dull murmur in the workplace outside hushed in anticipation.

Historically, the dress code at USF’s Park Place office in Jersey City had been less formal than at the Plaza downtown. But Casey Campbell was still a lawyer by training, and Park Place was still generally representative of USF’s staid, conservative financial services culture. And so it wasn’t out of place for Casey to be wearing a charcoal grey suit jacket and a matching, formal sheath dress. No, she wasn’t wearing pantyhose. Or stockings, as Abby was. But even Abby usually went without when here in Jersey City. And it was only when she went in-town, or when she was entertaining senior staff here at Park Place, that Abby made the effort to don hose.

Casey shed the blazer, and then first glanced nervously over to Abby, and to Barrow immediately after. She looked unsure of what to do with it. Casey was already looking for instruction of how to fold her clothes or where to put them. But neither Abby nor Barrow offered more direction than they already had, and so the girl neatly folded her jacket and draped it over the back of an empty chair.

She was gorgeous, to be sure. Of this first cohort of mailgirl prospects, she was probably the only one that Abby and Barrow both agreed was a good, solid “10.” Five-foot-eight, maybe even five-foot-nine, with long, wavy blonde hair that she let fall loose. She had “high school cheerleader” written all over her, a tidbit that Abby had confirmed while doing her background research. Perfect teeth and a big, happy smile – though, admittedly, not at the moment. Bright blue eyes. And, breasts. The breasts. Not even the bateau neckline could hide the girl’s curves. Abby and Barrow had debated over whether she was a D-cup or a C. She’d been a party girl at one time; Abby was sure of it. Three years of law school and a compliance job in a cubicle farm in New Jersey had managed to stamp most of it out her. Even though Casey had been a no-brainer from the beginning, from a looks standpoint, she was also the one that Abby most worried would be sporting some sort of tramp stamp or tribal tattoo that would could threaten her candidacy.

Balancing herself against the conference table, Casey stepped out of her black pumps, and then bent forward to retrieve them. They were placed neatly side-by-side on the table, the girl taking care to make sure they were perfectly aligned in a transparent attempt to stall what was coming next.

She didn’t look up at Abby or Barrow at this point. Nor did she risk a glance back towards her old desk, her old coworkers, or her old life. Instead, she seemed to focus herself within, calm herself down, and proceed. She reached back over her shoulder with her right hand and unfastened the sleeveless dress at the top of the zipper. One or two quick tugs at the zipper from the top, to get it started, and then she changed positions; she pulled her arm from over her shoulder, twisted it awkwardly behind her back, and then found the zipper once more. All the way down her back, to just above her waist, and the dress began to loosen around her shoulders.

The conference room was almost entirely glass on one side, and exposed to Regulatory Compliance here on the 6th Floor beyond. Abby and Casey were both on the near side – Abby seated towards the head, with Casey now standing towards the foot, near the door. Barrow and Dreisewerd were seated on the other side, across from Abby, with only a single empty chair between them. Mistress Rei, meanwhile, was standing comfortably enough behind Barrow, close to the wall. Casey had spent the better part of the last hour seated at one end of the table, being talked into a job she didn’t want. And so it was therefore natural for her to continue facing the four people in the room, ignoring the rest of Regulatory Compliance and perhaps pretending they weren’t out there.

Abby wasn’t sure what she’d hoped Casey would be wearing beneath her dress, but she found herself mildly disappointed. When the mailgirls program had begun rolling out at the Plaza, women throughout the company confessed to one another they’d worn their best out of fear they’d be forced to undress in front of an audience. Even yesterday, when Abby and Barrow had tapped Theresa Gutteridge here at Park Place, Theresa had been wearing a ridiculous black g-string that Abby doubted was in her regular rotation. Casey, as she slithered out of her dress, revealed a simple and boring bra-and-panty set made of lavender/violet nylon. The wireless bra sported a plunging neckline that lifted Casey’s generous cleavage. And the hip hugger panties had lace trim along the waist and either leg, as well a pretty little bow at the top. Nothing that Casey would have any reason to be embarrassed about, per se. But the set was ordinary and run-of-the mill, something that could have been picked up on clearance just about anywhere, and didn’t do justice to the stunning blonde contained within.

And Casey Campbell was stunning. Abby knew the moment that the dress puddled around her ankles that she’d be the standard against which the rest of Park Place’s mailgirls would be measured. What this girl had been doing in a cubicle, working a 9-to-5 in Jersey City, was – at this moment – baffling. Abby knew her inside and out, though: twenty-eight-years-old, Buffalo native, Binghamton graduate, with a JD from City College. She’d apparently hated the two summers she’d spent at Hobson Morgan McNamara while in law school, and had landed in USF’s Compliance department as a way to use her law degree without necessarily having to be a lawyer. But her true talents, as her now-exposed figure made apparent, had been going to waste here on the 6th Floor.

Casey bent at the waist, gathered her dress, and then folded it neatly. She placed it on the conference table beside her shoes. To her credit, she didn’t default to the uncomfortable “cover-myself-with-my-arms” position both girls had instinctively taken yesterday. And she didn’t hesitate in reaching behind her back for her bra clasp. She wanted to get this over with, yes. But there was also an undercurrent of anger and defiance that Abby detected, which paradoxically only further underlined her potential as a mailgirl.

The truth about the mailgirls program was that it was never about simply delivering the mail. Nor was it even about the perverse and voyeuristic nature of watching a beautiful naked girl dash through one’s place of work. Rather, there was measurable data that showed the impact that the mailgirls program had already had at USF Plaza downtown. Attrition was down. Significantly. Even among women. Employee engagement was up. Significantly. Usage of sick days, vacation time, and even FMLA was down. USF had lost a handful of clients to the negative PR surrounding the “mailgirl issue,” but they’d more than made up for those losses with new business, especially if that new business had the opportunity for an on-site meeting at USF Plaza. The more general productivity gains were a bit less straight forward. And it was only when Barrow began sharing some of the theories and speculations of Mailgirl Number Thirteen – sorry, Mailgirl Number Two, now – that it began to come together for Abby. The dominance and superiority that USF’s employees felt in interacting with the mailgirls at the Plaza had translated into material gains in productivity; in short, feeling superior had a direct and measurable affect in producing superior performance. If Casey fought her new station, if Casey had to be broken – so much the better. While submission was expected and essential for all mailgirls, dominance required domination, and superiority required USF’s non-mailgirl population to claim it.

D’s, Abby told herself as Casey’s bra came off. She was sure of it. It was one of the data points she’d been asked to provide for each candidate, and she’d spent more time over the last few weeks looking at women’s breasts than she would have thought possible for a straight girl. Naked breasts. Fully clothed breasts. Breasts in bras. Breasts in bikini tops. She’d done most of her research on her personal computer, not wanting to get flagged by IT for running afoul of the company’s Internet policy. But she’d also done quite a bit of research on USF’s own mailgirls app, which thoughtfully provided measurements (and photos) for each member of the mailgirl team. As there hadn’t been photos of those girls while dressed, however, Abby still had to make a best guess at what was hiding beneath blouses and blazers here in Jersey City. But now that Casey’s two, perfect round globes had introduced themselves to the room, Abby was certain she’d been right. She glanced across the table, hoping to catch eye contact with Barrow and crow; she was kidding herself, though, if she believed Barrow’s attention was directed anywhere but on the topless blonde.

No tattoos, Abby confirmed as she turned back to Casey, unless they were hiding beneath the hiphuggers. There was a belly-button ring, but that could come out. In fact, Abby jutted her chin towards it, and said, “You’ll need to take out the belly-button piercing.”

“Okay,” the girl agreed, and began fiddling with her navel.

Abby smiled to herself, knowing that she’d just delayed Casey’s final reveal; Barrow and Dreisewerd would have to wait a few moments longer for the panties to come off.

“’Yes, ma’am.’” This from Mistress Rei. She’d let the last one slide, but the corporate dominatrix in her took over this time. It was time for Casey to begin learning her place.

Casey stopped with the jewelry, momentarily, and found Mistress Rei’s gaze. She seemed caught off-guard, but recognized her mistake, and offered up an apologetic, “Yes, ma’am” in Abby’s direction.

“I think ‘Mrs. Williams,’ will do,” Barrow corrected them both.

There it was again. Barrow had offered the same correction to Erin Higgins yesterday. Abby wondered if he was probing. Did he know about the divorce? Was he teasing her? Was he just trying to ask her if she was single? For a mailgirl, the default form of address to her superiors was “sir” for men and “ma’am” for women. But you could have a mailgirl call you “Mr. So-and-So” or “Ms. So-and-So” if you preferred; even “Miss So-and-So” seemed to be making a surprising comeback at the Plaza. Abby didn’t have any particular aversion to “ma’am,” though, so she found herself asking if Barrow had an agenda.

“Yes, sir,” Casey replied. Flustered, she added, “Yes, Mr. Barrow.” And then, “Yes, Mrs. Williams.”

Mrs. Williams. Abby was barely thirty, and had less than two full years on Casey Campbell, which made “Mrs. Williams” sound odd coming out of the blonde’s mouth. It was intended as a sign of deference, and act of submission to a superior, but it they way it landed made Abby feel old. It made her sound like her mother. No, rather, it made her sound like Jon’s mother.

Casey’s hands were now trembling as she returned to her bellybutton ring. The admonishment from Mistress Rei had spooked her, and there was a certain amount of nervousness that she couldn’t seem to shake off. Perhaps it was that she still had to remove her panties. Or perhaps it was that the reality of her situation had begun to make itself apparent. She fumbled with the piercing a moment longer, but nonetheless managed to remove it without too much more delay.
Casey placed the bellybutton ring on the table, beside her bra, dress, and shoes, and then hesitated. To Abby, she began, “Ma’am – Mrs. Williams – should I take the rest of it off, too?”

She meant the rest of her jewelry. But the question was ambiguous, and so Abby offered an impish smile and a comprehensive reply. “It’s all got to come off.”

“Yes, Mrs. Williams.” Casey nodded, and made up her mind that the rest of jewelry would come before her panties. Rings. Watch. A thin, silver necklace. And, finally, with bare breasts framed between her elbows, she took out her earrings.

There’d be no more delay now; Casey had only one final offering for her new masters. She hooked her thumbs into the waistline of her purple panties, and wriggled free. Down her thighs, past her knees, until she was able to step out of them. But, as she went to place them atop the rest of her clothes, she was instructed to give them to Abby, instead.

“I’ll take those,” Abby said, leaning forward and reaching out with one hand. She knew what she sounded like – some sort of lesbian pervert who’d be sniffing Casey’s panties back in her office. She suspected that Barrow had gotten a kick out of her asking the two girls yesterday, and that he was likely chuckling to himself now. But the claiming of a trophy had become an important rite at USF; there were already a good two-dozen-and-some pairs of women’s underwear hanging in the corridor leading to Human Capital on the 18th Floor of the Plaza. Casey’s would be added to those of Mailgirls One through Four here at Park Place, downstairs in HR.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Two**

Mailgirl Number One, the younger of the two Scott sisters, had surrendered her cute little classic bikini to the company sometime the previous Friday morning. Mailgirl Number Two – the other Scott sister, the PhD from Yale, the one who’d been Mailgirl Number Thirteen at the Plaza up until Friday night – already had white lace thong hanging at the Plaza from when she’d originally undressed in front of Barrow back in June. But she’d donated another on Friday, a black one, that she’d stripped out of at the start of her shift that morning. Numbers Three and Four – Erin Higgins from Commercial Loans and Theresa Gutteridge from Estate Planning – had handed their respective shimmery yellow briefs and black thong to Abby yesterday, just as Casey Campbell was doing now. And it would be Abby’s charge to hang Casey’s pair alongside the others later this afternoon.

Casey’s hiphuggers were still warm to the touch, a realization that now made Abby actually feel like some sort of lesbian pervert. After all, while Casey’s underwear was dry to the touch, Abby knew she couldn’t say the same about her own. She was no lesbian. Nor had she ever had any fantasies or any particular curiosity when it came to women. But her current assignment, under Barrow, had clearly struck a nerve over the last few weeks. And whether it was the dominance of her position or the submission of the girls, Abby couldn’t deny that she was getting off on this. Maybe even more than Barrow.

She worried she’d let the genie out of the bottle two weeks ago at the Plaza…

The fact that Casey wasn’t shaved down below excited her more than it should have. As she understood it, a highlight of a girl’s first day – lowlight, probably, from the girl’s perspective – was the first time she was forced to shave in front of an audience. Theresa Gutteridge’s Brazilian had robbed them of that particular spectacle yesterday. But Casey’s whispy little blonde triangle would allow her the opportunity to put on a show later that morning – likely seated on the floor of the shower block, with legs splayed and crotch covered in shaving cream, while a crowd assembled on the far side of the locker’s room’s mirror glass.

Gutteridge, at least, had still had to endure her anal bleaching, a misery that Casey may or may not have been aware awaited her. After the first time, the girls at the Plaza were generally able to take care of that particular chore on their own time, in the relative privacy of a spa or salon. But the girls of Park Place, guinea pigs for USF’s new 24/7 program, would be granted no such luxury.

Abby found herself absentmindedly wondering what Casey’s asshole looked like – a goddess such as this, flawless in just about every way. But it wasn’t as if she could ask to see it. Well, technically, she could – she needed only to give the command. But even as up-close and personal as she’d gotten with the Number Eighteen’s rear end at the Plaza, there were some lines that Abby wasn’t yet ready to cross on her own. And she certainly wasn’t going to ask in front of Barrow. Leave that particular command to Mistress Rei later that morning; leave that to the professional.

Casey was now fully naked in her place of work, in front of an audience of four here in the room, as well as a handful of gawkers outside who’d popped their heads like prairie dogs up over the walls of their cubicles to see for themselves. She had likely had conference calls and Monday morning briefings and birthday parties here in this room. She likely had never imagined herself standing here now, tits out and body on display, utterly humiliated and anticipating two more years of even worse humiliations to come.

Barring some sort of executive’s fantasy or the whims of Human Capital, Casey was unlikely to be allowed any opportunity to wear anything again until September rolled back around two years from now. And yet, just as both girls had done yesterday, she asked about the clothes she’d worn to work that morning.

And, just as he had done yesterday, Barrow responded, “They’ll be donated to charity.” He stopped, pausing for a moment to let that sink in, and then asked, “Do you have any particular charities you’d want them to go to?”

The follow-up question caught Casey off-guard, and she shook her head. “N-n-no. No, sir.”

“Well,” Barrow said smugly, “we know a few good ones. We’ll take care of it for you.” He’d just stripped her bare, stolen her clothes, and made it sound like he was doing her a kindness.

Where Casey’s outfit would end up wasn’t entirely an unfair question, though. Casey had been told, earlier in their conversation, that Barrow would be dispatching his personal secretary and a team of professional movers to Casey’s apartment to collect her things. They’d box up and ship everything that Casey owned – every piece of furniture, every book, every photo album, and every stitch of clothes – up to a third party storage facility north of Paramus. If she broke contract, and forced her way out of her current role, it’d all default over to USF. If she fulfilled her end of her agreement, she’d get it all back two years from now.

Which itself wasn’t entirely true. Mailgirl Number Two had a box of underthings sitting in a storage room down in the subbasement, and similar treasures from the former homes of Mailgirls Three and Four would have arrived here at Park Place that morning. Barrow wouldn’t be content with just the single pair of purple hiphuggers Casey had ceded to Abby here. He intended to share a much more extensive trophy collection with the employees of Park Place in the near future, and Abby was admittedly and inhumanly looking forward to the faces on the girls when they were made aware.

Complicating things, however, was the fact that Casey had a roommate, and they’d all been forced to listen on as Casey had called her and lied to her about what was happening to her, and why some men were coming to pack up her things. Apparently, Casey Campbell had been offered a promotion to go work overseas, and she had to jump at that opportunity immediately or risk losing out on it. They’d talk again soon, and Casey promised to be back within a few weeks to visit – but, for now, could the roommate pretty please make sure she was home when the movers arrived, and make sure they didn’t take anything that didn’t below to Casey?

Abby understood the lie, and Barrow allowed it, but it’d only be a matter of time before the reality of Casey’s new job would be trickle out. Mailgirl photos were now regularly popping up on a social media, and there were only so many times a girl could untag herself before her situation became public knowledge among her friends and family. The elder Scott sister had managed to keep her role as a mailgirl secret from her mother for the entirety of the summer; as Barrow was now employing both of her daughters, however, he’d felt it was the “right thing to do” to inform her of that fact on Monday. In Casey’s case, the more immediate concern was packing up her things, and whatever lie the roommate needed to be told to help Barrow’s assistant accomplish that task was okay by him.

What now, though? Casey was standing uncomfortably by door, in her altogether, and awaiting what was next. But this was no longer Abby’s show – Casey belonged to Mistress Rei now.

The Japanese woman, who despite being a good head shorter than Casey, and beneath the floor Barrow had set for Abby when hunting for mailgirl candidates, had an intimidating presence about her nonetheless. And as much as it may have been Barrow who was running the show, it would be Mistress Rei calling the shots when it came to Casey’s induction into her new role.

“Knees,” she instructed, her English good but heavily accented. “In the corner.” She rounded the table and joined the naked girl by the door.

Casey looked to Dreisewerd in one last desperate plea for rescue. It was a mistake.

“Knees!” Mistress Rei barked again, and grabbed the girl by her long, blonde locks. She literally tugged her to the floor, and Casey had to catch herself with her hands, before rising back up to her knees. She was facing now the corner, with her bare back to Abby and Barrow. “Eyes on the floor.”

Casey did as instructed, even managing to squeak out a, “Yes, ma’am,” along the way, before the sniffles began to break out. She was going to cry.

Mistress Rei wasn’t going to allow it, though. First it was a correction - “Yes, mistress,” – which Casey was forced to parrot back. And then a warning. “No crying,” Mistress Rei ordered, with the threat of punishment going unspoken.

“Yes, mistress.”

If this didn’t already feel like a punishment, Casey could be assured that there worse things her new mistress was ready and willing to do to her.

“It is an honor to be chosen as a mailgirl.”

“Yes, mistress.”

From the little black satchel Mistress Rei had been holding behind her back, she produced a thick, vicious-looking, black metal collar. It was like something fished from the deepest, darkest corners of a bondage-and-discipline fetishist’s imagination. This was no pretty little piece of jewelry – it was ugly, and evil, and affixed with a series of D-rings that Mistress Rei could put into use as she saw fit. And, though Casey wouldn’t have her new mailgirl number inked upon her hip until after she’d showered and shaved, the dog tag hooked upon the collar clearly established her as Number 5. As Mistress Rei clicked the collar around the girl’s neck, Casey Campbell was stripped even of her name.

“Practice,” Mistress Rei began. “’Ma’am, per Human Capital, I am to be called by my mail room number.’”

Mailgirl Number Five visibly shuddered, but held back the sobs that so clearly wanted to escape. “Ma’am, per Human Capital, I am to be called by my mail room number.”

“Again.”

“Ma’am, per Human Capital, I am to be called by my mail room number.”

“Again”

“Ma’am, per Human Capital, I am to be called by my mail room number.”

“Good girl,” Mistress Rei answered, but took hold of the blonde’s hair once more. “Back straight.” She waited for Five to comply.

“Chest out.”

“Hands behind your back. Left wrist in your right hand.”

Pause.

“Knees apart.”

“More.”

“More.”

“Knees” was the shorthand name of one of a good twelve or thirteen positions that USF’s mailgirls were expected to learn and execute on command. “Ankles.” “Hands-and-Knees.” “Elbows-and-Knees.” “Forehead-and-Knees.” “Head-Shoulders-Knees-and-Toes?” Abby didn’t know them all. In those rare moments during the day, though, that Five wasn’t actively engaged in a delivery or some other task, it was this current position, “Knees,” to which she’d default – kneeling, with knees at least shoulder-width apart, arms behind her, and back arched, all while she kept her head down, submissively, and focused on some imaginary spot on the floor in front of her.

Five would be treated to a game of Simon Says, Mailgirls Edition, a bit later that morning, before Mistress Rei allowed her out into the rest of the building. It’d been an hour yesterday of up-and-down, and this-way-and-that, and back-and-forth, before she’d let Three and Four go, to shadow One and Two. Mistress Rei apparently demanded perfection; she’d barked at them, screamed at them, pulled their hair, slapped them around, and even let loose with a riding crop a number of times. Only later did it dawn upon Abby that the exercise was less about the positions themselves, and more about Mistress Rei establishing control and putting her new charges in their place.

Five’s new collar wasn’t the only item that Mistress Rei had brought with her, though. Nor was it the only item that seemed mail-ordered from a BDSM catalog. As Five had the honor of being the first girl recruited that morning, she also had the honor of being forced to wait as Mistress Rei joined Abby and Barrow in recruiting Mailgirl Number Six. Given the order to open her mouth, the naked blonde complied, and was treated to a black, silicone ball gag that her mistress secured around the back of her head. Then, of course, came the black leather blindfold.

Number Five, stripped to skin, gagged and sightless, was left in the corner of the room.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Three**

“Stay,” Mistress Rei instructed, and then turned the others.

The girl offered a muffled and almost comical response. Better safe than sorry, she mewed, “eff, mih-eff.”

Abby stifled a laugh, and met a smile from Barrow.

“To Trade Ops?” Barrow asked, standing.

Mistress Rei began gathering the detritus of Five’s old life – the shoes, the blazer, the dress, the bra, and the jewelry. Abby, meanwhile, was awkwardly filing away Five’s panties in her portfolio; the fact that another girl’s underwear was wedged between her notepad and her tablet was just another sign of how much the world had changed, and how odd these last few weeks had been for Abby, personally.

“Mailgirl Number Six,” Abby nodded.

It was Dreisewerd’s turn now to be confused. “You’re going to leave her here?”

“For now,” Barrow answered. “Mistress Rei will be back to fetch her in a bit.”

“It’s just,” Dreisewerd went on, “we’ve got meetings in here.” He seemed fearful of Barrow, as if any bold line of questioning would result in Dreisewerd himself naked and gagged on the floor beside Five.

“Is she in the way?” Barrow asked.

This, too, confused Dreisewerd. “Well, no. I mean, not exactly…”

“She won’t bother you.” This from Mistress Rei. “She knows better.”

Not for the first time, Abby wondered what she would have done in the girl’s shoes. Five had had a surprising amount of credit card debt, sure. And Abby, on USF’s behalf, had just agreed to pay it off for her. They’d also tripled her base pay over the next two years on top of that, an increase made even more significant by the fact that they’d also be providing her with room and board – taking care of every expense. And, sure, the money would all be paid out in a single lump sum at the end of her contract, and subject to certain penalties that she’d only learn about later. But she’d also be provided with the opportunity to earn some fairly substantial – if demeaning – incentives along the way.

But was any amount of money worth this?

Was any amount of money enough for Abby to subject herself to this sort of treatment?

If left alone like this, would anything have kept Abby from reconsidering, reneging, and hauling ass to the nearest exit?

And yet, Number Three had waited patiently yesterday while Abby, Barrow, and Mistress Rei had ensnared Number Four. And Mistress Rei was confident Number Five would still be here when she returned to fetch her with Number Six.

Barrow exited the conference room first, stopping just long enough to pat the blonde on the head, and shoot Abby an approving look; she’d done good work with this one, he seemed to be telling her. Mistress Rei followed behind, the diminutive Japanese woman not bothering to repeat her instruction to Five and paying her no further attention – for now.

Abby, though, lingered for a moment longer. She stared absently at the bare back of a USF employee who’d woken up this morning, at home, as a midlevel compliance officer. And who’d go to sleep tonight in the basement, here at work, as a naked mailgirl. What could she be thinking? What was it like? How did she feel about herself? About Barrow? About Abby? What was she going to tell her family and friends? How was she going to face her coworkers?

Was a part of her turned on by this?

Was a part of her turned on by this as much as Abby was?

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The very fact that a single mailgirl program could exist anywhere was confirmation to Abby that the world she’d been living in for the past few years had slipped into some other dimension, some sort of alternate reality, some sort of sick fantasy land dreamt up by some unknown pervert. The world had gone off track right around the time that Abby had been graduating from Penn, twenty-two-years-old, full of promise, and oblivious to the deranged revolution then percolating on the far side of the Pacific. First it was Tokyo. Then Osaka. Kyoto. From Kyoto to Seoul, Seoul to Singapore, Singapore to Hong Kong.

A few weeks prior to that morning with Mailgirl Number Five, Abby had been eavesdropping on a conversation between two Employee Relations representatives at USF Plaza. Diane Harris, who earlier that day had had to confiscate a vibrator from a woman on the 32nd Floor, joked that it was like the entire building had been doused with animal pheromones over the past few months. It wasn’t just the mailgirls – behavior and conduct issues of a sexual nature had been popping up all over, among men and women both. It was how Abby felt about the overall mailgirl phenomenon worldwide: it was like the whole world had been doused with those same pheromones over the last few years, and everyone had collectively gone out of their minds.

If she hadn’t lived through it, Abby never would have believed the penetration and staying power the concept achieved in just a few short years. It managed to cross cultural divides, and find footing in Germany, Scandinavia, and Benelux. The United States had been late the party, but there were already a few dozen companies who’d rolled the idea out on the West Coast, and USF was among the vanguard here in the New York Metro region. It had spread like a cancer, and the more and more it transitioned into the mainstream, the more and more it was becoming normalized.

Conservatives had blamed feminists and the Sexual Revolution for providing fertile ground for such an anathema to take root. Abby was willing to concede that there may have been some truth in that argument, as contradictory as a straight line between Women’s Lib and Mailgirls-in-Chains might have been on the surface; for every women’s rights group picketing and protesting a company initiating its own mailgirl program, there was another lined up in support, who viewed a girl’s decision through the lens of a “woman’s right to choose.” Mailgirls were volunteers; at USF, they had to re-affirm their decision to participate in the program each and every morning. And a shocking number of mailgirl alums – most, even - lined up in support of mailgirl programs elsewhere. Despite everything they’d been forced to endure, there was a large percentage of former mailgirls who loudly championed the concept worldwide.

It shouldn’t have surprised Abby that there were men everywhere willing to launch these sorts of initiatives at their own companies. Nor should it have surprised Abby that, among women, there were plenty of masochists, closeted exhibitionists, and bimbos willing to prostitute themselves for the large sums of money that regularly followed mailgirls around. But Barrow, when he’d recruited Abby to help him expand his vision to Park Place, argued that a nineteen-year-old, or a “true” submissive, or an already fully-blossomed nymphomaniac wouldn’t do for what USF was looking for.

“There has to be an element of…almost…” he had said, pausing for dramatic effect, before continuing, “…’schadenfreude’ with our girls.”

Barrow’s argument was the one that held that the superiority the mailgirls instilled in the non-mailgirl staff drove superior performance company-wide. There were plenty of measurable and quantifiable data points that fed the bottom line, but Barrow’s ideal mailgirl was more than just a piece of ass.

“We’re looking for women, not girls,” he explained. It was the only time that Abby had ever heard him use the term “women” in connection to the mailgirl program, and he’d never use it again.

Abby Wagner Williams had gotten mixed up with Human Capital at the recommendation of her boss, Christine Klinger. Barrow’s little team of analysts and technicians would continue to oversee the mailgirl program overall, from Manhattan, even as the program expanded to Jersey City. However, they’d needed someone to help them scout talent at the back office, and Chris had apparently told Barrow there was no one better than the Junior Vice President of Talent Management for Park Place, Princeton, and Paramus. Which was why Abby found herself beckoned over to the Plaza, up to the 18th Floor, through the Hall of Panties, and into Will Barrow’s corner office.

Scouting “talent,” in this context, was not exactly the sort of Talent Management that was written into Abby’s job description. She’d been a management consultant down in DC after Penn, and returned to Philadelphia to pick up an MBA from Wharton with a focus on Human Resources. She’d been recruited by USF after business school to help them redesign career-pathing company-wide from an office at USF Plaza in-town, but that project had ultimately stalled out when USF hired a new Director of Human Resources. Abby was shuffled off to Jersey City and assigned to Chris, and had been commuting back-and-forth over the Hudson from her condo in Chelsea ever since. Annual performance evaluations, talent review sessions, assisting in setting individual and departmental objectives – these were the sorts of things that Abby had been responsible for over the last three years, for USF’s back office in Jersey City and two smaller satellite offices elsewhere in the state.

She was no longer an up-and-comer. Her next step here at USF, with all probability, was to take over Chris’s job at some future point - which was essentially Abby’s job today, but for USF’s entire Northeast region. But Chris was only in her early forties, and likely wasn’t going anywhere in the near future. Abby had taken a couple of recruiting calls outside of USF for a few opportunities back home in Boston, and another down in Philly. But Jon was a Long Island boy, and having success at Pierce & Pierce, so Abby had ultimately decided to stay put. Jon was longer an issue, but the calls had gotten less and less frequent in the last year or so.

As much as Abby’s first instinct was to recoil from the idea of being involved with Human Capital and the mailgirl program, she’d said “yes.” She wasn’t sure she had much of a choice, if she were being honest about it. But it was an opportunity to do something different, as monstrous, sadistic, and maybe even evil as it may have been. With the divorce, she certainly had the time. Getting her mind off of her failed marriage and the financial morass she now found herself in certainly helped, too. And, though she didn’t like to admit it, there was a sick, perverse pleasure in taking her misery out on the poor, unsuspecting mailgirl candidates at Park Place.

The bitch manager who told Abby she didn’t have time to conduct her team’s performance evaluations, and that Abby should just do it herself? On the list. So-and-so was mean to one of her friends in Human Resources? On the list. That girl who passed Abby in the lobby, and just seemed sort of stuck-up? On the list.

Abby would have to have been naive, though, to not suspect that Barrow was sizing her up as a mailgirl candidate, herself. Never in a million years, she told herself then. No matter how much money he offered, or what he tried to hold over her. She’d rather show up jobless, homeless, and penniless on the doorstep of her parents’ house back in Massachusetts than subject herself to the daily humiliations the mailgirls were treated to at the Plaza. And the fact that Jersey City would be piloting a new 24/7 concept – in which the mailgirls were never allowed to get dressed, never allowed to leave the building, never allowed a respite from their exposure and embarrassment – only further cemented her resolve.

All that being said, though, Abby herself couldn’t have better fit the profile that Barrow outlined for her. He didn’t want to go any older than thirty-four or thirty-five, but he also didn’t want to go any younger than twenty-four or so. There was no doubt in his mind that he could fill the roster with perky little twenty-two-year-olds fresh out of college, but that wasn’t what he wanted Abby looking for. He also knew the task would be easier if they were scouting around on the lower ends of the payscale, where the administrative assistants and call center reps could be found. But, no - Barrow wanted her to come back to him with some of the best-and-brightest USF had to offer, junior executives and management-track types, preferably with advanced degrees.

“A JD. Or a Masters,” Barrow had thrown out as examples.

“An MBA?” Abby asked, pointedly.

“Exactly,” Barrow replied.

Girls had to be about or above average height, maybe five-foot-four as a floor and five-foot-nine or five-foot-ten as a ceiling. And, then, the task that really and truly had taken Abby down the rabbit’s hole: Barrow wanted only “8’s, 9’s, and 10’s.” He’d take a “7,” if Abby could build a case, and if there was potential to get her up to an “8” with some diet and exercise.

Abby was thirty years old, an Ivy League graduate with a Wharton MBA, stood five-foot-six, and was capable of admitting that she was good, solid “8.” Maybe even a “9,” on a good day. She was a C-cup, with a good figure, and kept herself in good shape; she was going to the gym more often in the last few months, now that she’d need to “get back out there” and meet someone new. She had shoulder-length red hair, green eyes, and a smile that stretched ear-to-ear when she was happy.

If it weren’t her making the list, she was sure she’d be on it.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Four**

And so Abby’s involvement in the project was also partly self-preservation. Not only would she build up a roster of candidates so perfect that Barrow wouldn’t need to look her way, but she’d also go a step further and provide him with the leverage he needed to assure him that any candidate on that list would have no choice but to say “yes.” Casey Campbell had had a surprising amount of credit debt, for example; insurmountable, even. Theresa Gutteridge had regular instances of including alcoholic beverages on the receipts she submitted for reimbursement - a common enough practice, but one that she could technically be fired over. And Kristen Metkovich, a lesbian, had two instances of sexual harassment filed against her by female team members; Abby had had to “encourage” the second one out of a hesitant so-called victim just last week, but she expected it to pay dividends when presented to Kristen today.

Even Kaitlyn York, one of the recruiters who sat in a cubicle just outside of Abby’s office, and who had a passing resemblance to Olivia Munn. She was on the list. A “9,” for sure. She and Abby were friends, of sorts. Work friends, at least. And the betrayal that Kaitlyn would feel when Abby and Barrow sat down with her would cut Abby to the core. But if it were the choice between Kaitlyn and Abby, Abby was going to nominate Kaitlyn. She didn’t dare leave Kaitlyn off, for fear that Barrow might see her omission as either a glaring error or as an attempt to protect one of her friends.

With midyear reviews behind her, and year-end performance evaluations still a few months away, Abby was able to throw herself into Barrow’s little project. She lived it and breathed it on a daily basis, and it had begun to affect her. She couldn’t ride the subway without rating other passengers – the girls, at least - on a scale from 1 to 10. She couldn’t have a conversation with her friends or coworkers without risking a glance at their chests, and assigning a best guess as to their cup size. She couldn’t walk the halls at Park Place without imagining USF’s female population doing so in the nude. The naked pictures she’d begun looking up online for strictly research purposes had turned into movies, and soft core had transformed into hard core in short order. Abby, who’d watched a dirty movie maybe once or twice in her entire life before that summer, was now pulling up pornography evening after evening; rare was the night that her bedtime routine over the past few weeks didn’t involve a twenty-thirty minute session with her tablet.

It had been Number Two – then still Number Thirteen at the Plaza – who’d set her off initially. Abby had come into the city to provide a report on early progress, and was greeted in the elevator lobby by a naked, masturbating blonde. It was mid-morning, the girl was on her break, and Abby was on the far side of a mirror glass wall, waiting for an elevator to the 18th Floor. True, Thirteen couldn’t see her, nor any of the other voyeurs and lookie-loos gathered in the lobby. But she had to have been aware that there were people out there at given moment. And yet she had one hand propped up against the glass while her other worked furiously, rubbing between her legs, as cold water fell onto her from the showerhead above.

It wasn’t even the first time Abby had caught one of the naked mailgirls masturbating in the locker room; it had become such a common sight that it was almost rare to not see at least one or two girls touching themselves whenever they had the opportunity to do so. Some of it felt forced, though, almost like a stage show. What Thirteen was doing that morning, in contrast, was honest, desperate, and focused, and Abby had been haunted by it for the rest of that day and into the next. She’d been a psychology major in college, and so it wasn’t unusual for her to wonder about what made people tick; what was it that made Thirteen tick? What was she thinking? Was she bothered at all by the audience in the elevator lobby? Was the sex, even just with herself, so good that she’d readily accept the humiliation? Was she fantasizing about some lover, maybe there at the Plaza? Was it a man or a woman? If it was a woman – and many, if not most, of the mailgirls were rumored to be sleeping with one another when off-duty – had she been a lesbian before undressing for USF? Was she thinking about being somewhere else, somewhere more private? Or was the exhibitionism in front of the audience an integral part of what had Thirteen so revved up and turned on?

The image of the mailgirl pawing at her pussy had lingered at the forefront of Abby’s mind well into the following night, when Abby had been forced to find her own relief – albeit behind closed doors, in the privacy of the condo that was slowly bankrupting her. It wasn’t a lesbian fantasy, though. Nor was it even about that particular girl, exactly. The girl’s bare body featured heavily, but it could just as well have been Abby’s own; in the heat of the moment, it was blurred. The company’s power over the mailgirl was a turn-on, but so too was the girl’s own powerlessness; she had been betrayed and embarrassed even by her own body.

Abby, in the aftermath, was embarrassed by what she’d just done. The shame hit her as she worked to catch her breath in the darkness of her bedroom. Her panties were still askew, halfway down her thighs. Her tank top had been discarded midway through, and lay somewhere on the floor beside her bed. She was ashamed at what she just done, and confused about what it had meant.

Thirteen-now-Two wasn’t a typical mailgirl, though, and Abby had been granted an opportunity to get to know her better – through her research notes. Sarah Jane Scott was a twenty-six-year-old doctoral candidate within Yale’s Anthropology Department, one whose previous work had focused on social and cultural issues within groups of women and girls. Her summer at US Financial Plaza had been arranged through Will Barrow, who had apparently been a student of Sarah’s thesis advisor in New Haven, and whose presence had assured both student and teacher that USF wouldn’t descend into the sorts of abuses that had overtaken mailgirl programs elsewhere. Abuses, sure. But, to a point.

Sarah, as Mailgirl Number Thirteen, had documented her life among the mailgirls since June, capturing the sentiments of and insights into the girls’ day-to-day at the Plaza, and had flavored her research with her own analysis and self-examination. They were all miserable, of course – the uptick in engagement and morale company-wide did not extend into the mailgirls locker room. But there was an unmistakable camaraderie that existed among the girls, and almost a culture unto itself. And, being stripped bare of everything that had made them who they had been in their prior lives had allowed them a certain freedom and an opportunity to be honest about who they really were, what excited them, and what they wanted. It allowed them the chance to explore themselves, whether they liked what they found or they did not.

Thirteen had shared her notes with her professor, the professor had shared those notes with Barrow, and Barrow had shared them with Abby. There was restraint and self-censure in the early reports. But the more recent submissions had been filled with very open soul-searching and introspection, confessions that hinted of inner conflict, and anecdotes that were outright pornographic in nature. But it was one throwaway statement, amid an exploration of Thirteen’s sex life prior to that summer, that managed to catch Abby especially off-guard, and stay with her as much as the image of Thirteen in flagrante delicto.

“I had never been an overly sexual person,” Thirteen had written. “I had never been an overly sexual person,” said the girl who’d been fingering herself in the lobby of major financial services firm in downtown New York. “I had never been an overly sexual person,” said the girl who then went on a few paragraphs later, in explicit detail, to describe masturbating on the floor of the locker room within inches of another sweaty, naked, mailgirl.

Abby, too, had never been an overly sexual person. She’d lost her virginity as a senior in high school, and had been just a few more men that Thirteen confessed to. She’d met Jonathan Williams, a few years her senior, at business school, and they’d gotten married when Abby was twenty-six. They’d been hot-and-heavy for a time, but Abby hadn’t thought much about it as their sex life began to wane. It was two or three times a week for a while. Then once or twice. Then, maybe on a Friday or Saturday night, when she didn’t have to get up to go to the gym in the morning. Or, maybe only reserved for a special occasion. It was what happened to all married couples, wasn’t it? It was entirely normal, right?

Jon didn’t think so. He complained about it repeatedly, accused her of never initiating, and had once had the gall to accuse her of suffering from some sort of sexual arousal disorder. Even that hadn’t really phased her, though – wasn’t it common for men to want more sex than women? Wasn’t that a staple of sitcom couples and a trope that played out over and over again in marriages everywhere?

Abby should have worried about it more, though. She should have forced herself to show more of an interest in her husband, to make an effort and perform her marital duties. But, in the moment, she often just wanted to go to sleep after a long day. In the moment, she was stressed about how her career seemed to be going nowhere. In the moment, she just wasn’t all that turned on. But because Abby didn’t share Jon’s libido, Jon had begun sharing a bed with a twenty-three-year-old fitness instructor from Brooklyn.

Abby had never been an overly sexual person. But now that Jon was shacked up with Traci-Spelled-With-An-I out in Bushwick, now that he’d abandoned her to a mortgage that was unfortunately in her name only, now that Abby no longer had an outlet in bed beside her – now, suddenly, Abby had come alive.

It was the mailgirl program at USF, of course. Diane had joked that the whole building had been doused in animal pheromones, but the truth of the matter was that no amount of animal pheromones could have affected as many people as the mailgirls themselves. Among men, it was straightforward – visual creatures that they were, it made sense that a naked girl dashing past would encourage a wave of erections to follow along behind her. Among women, it was more complicated. Thirteen, given her anthropological training, had speculated that the presence of these naked goddesses had inspired competitive juices to begin flowing among the non-mailgirl female population. Abby wasn’t so quick to discard Diane’s theory altogether, though; more than once, while working at the Plaza, she’d been treated to the waft of sex and pussy accompanying a mailgirl on her rounds.

What had Thirteen been dreaming of that morning in the locker room? How had she’d reacted when Barrow had extended her contract and shipped her to Jersey City? What was Casey Campbell – er, Mailgirl Five – thinking right now? What would go through Kristen Metkovich’s head when Abby laid out her new life for her in the middle of Trade Ops? And could any of them be as turned on by all this as Abby found herself, excited about the hunt, anticipating that opportunity to strip another girl bare?

No, Abby had never been an overly sexual person. But that had changed over the last few weeks, after Barrow had tapped her as his right hand. Rare had been the night Abby hadn’t watched a dirty video in bed. Rare had been the night Abby hadn’t had to touch herself to calm her body down, to fall to sleep. And rare, even, had been the day here at Park Place – at least over the last week or so – she hadn’t given in and debased herself by masturbating in her office.

Abby was uncomfortable with all of this, of course, and she was embarrassed by her behavior – even if she hadn’t been caught. It had started at the Plaza, but had developed into a full-blown problem here at Park Place. She was ashamed of herself, of what she’d allowed herself to do, of how far she’d allowed herself to go. Part of it was the power, playing the role of the dominant, and having the fates of these girls in her hand. But part of it was the lack of power, as she identified with these very same girls and the humiliations they were to suffer. It all came together in one big disturbed and demeaning jumble of feelings and fantasies. And the idea that she might be caught had only made that initial orgasm on the stairwell of the 18th Floor that much more intense.

Did Barrow know how much all of this was affecting her? She wondered. If he did, or if he’d seen any change in her, he hadn’t tipped his hand. True, he’d called out her status as a “Mrs.” twice now, which seemed to be about something; Abby hadn’t kept her divorce a secret, but she hadn’t made it public, and she was still wearing her engagement ring and wedding band. But she’d kept her composure around him. She wasn’t so lacking in self-control and self-awareness that she devolved into a trembling, sex-craved monster each and every time she thought about her assignment with the mailgirls. Even if that same self-control and self-awareness hadn’t kept her from masturbating at work, at least occasionally.

Ultimately, Abby had presented a list of thirty-six candidates to Barrow for review. He had tossed out seven for various reasons, but he’d kept twenty-nine. He’d shuffled around her rankings, and had disagreed with her on some of the more subjective assessments she’d made. But he’d also complimented her on the job she’d done for him.

The mailgirls locker room in the basement had been built with twenty-four girls in mind, but Barrow only wanted to go after eighteen girls over the next couple of months. He liked the idea of having an open slot or two to instill a certain level of peril in the company’s female population, and he looked forward to a more ad hoc approach to roping in a new girl. They’d launch with six in September, six more in October, and then a final six in November. And then see where they were at that point.

Twenty-nine candidates, though, had dwindled to twenty-six this past Monday, when three of Abby’s prospects had quit the company after the program was announced at Park Place. Female attrition had gone up at the Plaza, too, when the first few mailgirls were tapped in April. But, weirdly, female attrition there had eventually come down even more significantly than male attrition after that initial spike, and Barrow expected to see that pattern repeat itself in Jersey City. But twenty-six candidates had become twenty-eight when Barrow informed Abby of a last minute audible, and shipped two girls over from his offices in town.

Shipped, in this case, was literal. Girls Numbers One and Two – sisters Sophie, twenty-three, and Sarah, twenty-six – had arrived stuffed into a single pet carrier on the back of a delivery truck that Saturday morning. Stark naked, both, sweaty and disheveled, and sore from having shared such cramped and uncomfortable quarters with one another since late the previous afternoon. They’d spent the night in an un-air conditioned loading dock at the Plaza, and they seemed to be relieved to finally be free of their tiny prison. Even if it was only into the larger prison of the new mailgirls locker room at Park Place.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Five**

Abby had had to come in on Saturday, to sign for the delivery. As the Scott sisters emerged, already inked up as Mailgirls One and Two, Abby was seated in the employee cafeteria, on the far side of the one-way mirror. Mistress Rei was there to greet them, though, and introduce them to their new home. The first allowance both girls were given by their new mistress was the chance to pee.

Peeing girls had certainly never been Abby’s “thing.” Not now, not before. But she wasn’t going to judge, and she recognized she could just look past it. She wondered if it had been Barrow’s kink that kept the mailgirls from being given even that one opportunity for privacy over at the Plaza or here at Park Place. She’d heard of kitty litter boxes and repurposed mop sinks being used by mailgirls elsewhere, though; even if this was a fetish for Barrow, it was apparently a fetish shared by others. He had, because of the 24/7 nature of this new program, given in and allowed a pair of open toilets to be installed around the corner and out of the line-of-sight from the cafeteria. These, however, were a gift only for the girls to use when moving their bowels; otherwise, as both One and Two demonstrated that Saturday morning, the girls were to utilize the row of six, Japanese-style squat toilets directly behind the shower block and visible to the cafeteria beyond.

Unlike the locker room at the Plaza, which had fours showers on either side of room, the locker room at Park Place had a single shower block dead center, up against the mirror glass. It was fitted with just six showerheads, total; if Jersey City ever expanded to a full complement of twenty-four girls, those showers would get crowded. There were three sinks on either side of the shower block, where girls would be expected to comb their hair, brush their teeth, and apply make-up.

Absent were the spanking benches that stood guard on either side of the locker-room entrance at the Plaza. Girls were still very much expected to receive some level of discipline in the locker room, but the benches – along with a set of stockades, a pair of St. Andrew’s crosses, and a few other frightening options – were upstairs in an open courtyard in the building’s East Wing. Abby wasn’t sure how it was going to work in the dead of winter, but she supposed she, at least, would be watching from inside, looking down upon the girls below.

Also missing were the lockers that may or may not have been required for this to accurately be described as a “locker room.” The girls were not dressing and undressing each day, nor did they have any personal items outside of a storage locker up state. The smartphones and lycra armbands the girls were issued when on-duty would be distributed daily by Mistress Rei, with no girl guaranteed to have the same unit or band two days in a row.

But while Park Place didn’t have the spanking benches or lockers of the Plaza, the locker room in the basement here in Jersey City did have a row of sinister-looking eye hooks that stretched from one end of the locker room to the other, lined up in a neat little row on the floor. There were twelve of them in total, thick and menacing, and planted deep.

The look on the two girls’ faces had made Abby snicker cruelly. They’d been promised a dormitory. Instead, they found themselves in a room smaller and tighter than the locker room at USF Plaza. It was a locker room with no lockers, a dormitory with no beds. They went to sleep that night on the hard, tiled floor, each with a short stretch of leash chaining them to a single eye hook on one end of the room.

Barrow had apparently intended to send the elder of the two girls, the famous Mailgirl Number Thirteen, over to Jersey City for some time, and had made all of the arrangements with the university in New Haven on his own. The second sister, though, was a rising second-year dental student out in Los Angeles, who had just happened to fall into Barrow’s lap earlier in the day on Friday, before he’d sprung his trap on the first. Neither were true USF employees, per se, but Barrow believed the program at Park Place would benefit from having an already trained, already broken mailgirl in its initial cohort, to help impart some of the Plaza’s “culture” upon the new recruits. Marie Partee and Jill Johnson, Abby’s prospective numbers five and six, got bumped down the list, and would have to wait until October. With Casey, Abby and Barrow were now up to five, and Kristen Metkovich would round out the first class as Mailgirl Number Six.

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Kristen Metkovich, however, had other ideas. She had an inch or two on Abby, though Abby’s heels help close the gap. She’d been a field hockey star at Lehigh, and still carried herself with an athlete’s confidence seven years after graduation. She made no secret of the fact that she was gay, a fact that that her pantsuit, flats, and short, chin-length bob seemed to underline. She was no lipstick lesbian, to be sure, but was attractive enough to turn heads of both genders all the same. Abby was sure that, once undressed, Kristen would prove herself every bit as feminine as the other mailgirls, and her sexuality would be an interesting wildcard once introduced to her new team.

Any sexual relations with or among the mailgirls was strictly forbidden at the Plaza, and enforced with terminations among the non-mailgirl population and severe punishments for the girls themselves. An entire team in IT had felt Barrow’s wrath when one of them was found ...ing Mailgirl Number Twenty-One – willingly and consentingly on the girl’s part. All the girls themselves, all twenty-four of them, had been punished for Twenty-One’s sins. But, off-hours, there was apparently rampant bisexuality among the girls themselves. They were “letter-carrying lesbians,” lesbians of convenience, using each other to get their rocks off without having to string together random one-night stands or having to explain to a boyfriend what they did for work. In that environment, a practiced hand like Kristen Metkovich could prove popular.

The idea of 24/7 mailgirls was not one that had sprung forth from Barrow. Rather, it had been handed down to him by Senior Management. As Barrow had explained to Abby, he actually preferred the daily rite of the girls undressing for their shifts; he liked that that particular embarrassment was one they had to live through each and every day. Still, he was willing to experiment here in the back office, and he was testing out a handful of other concepts before they decided what the regional programs would look like in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Miami, Houston, and San Francisco.

The squat toilets were a good example. The trough was another: rather then being fed from a dish of their own, mailgirls at Park Place would eat from a communal trough. And, because of the research that Mailgirl Number Thirteen-now-Two had done that summer at the Plaza, the Park Place mailgirls would be given a few hours of relative liberty on Saturday nights (on campus, of course), and be granted some leniency when coupling off for a quick round of pussy-eating with one another. Only during “off hours” - which was really only seven to nine each night – and only in the locker room.

But a veritable buffet of mailgirls was not enticement enough for Kristen Metkovich, apparently.

“No!” she shouted, the moment she caught sight of Abby. “No! ... you!”

It was a perfectly normal reaction; even Mailgirl Number Five had had a few off-color outbursts that morning, before ultimately becoming more subdued. Abby just wished Kristen had waited until they’d gone behind closed doors. Here, out in the open, she had an audience.

Kristen glanced behind Abby, and saw Barrow and Mistress Rei with. But her ire was reserved for Abby.

“This is why you were sniffing around Lauren Zuber, isn’t it?” she asked. Lauren Zuber was the second girl who’d agreed to file a sexual harassment claim against Kristen, with Abby pushing her to do so. Abby might have dismissed a claim as flimsy and petty as Lauren’s if she’d been really-and-truly wearing her Human Resources hat. But, coupled with an equally questionable and similarly marginal claim from another woman, a few months earlier, it fit a narrative that Abby had hoped to exploit in coercing Kristen out of her clothes.

“Do you want to do this here?” Abby asked.

“Is this too public for you?” Kristen seethed. “Or are you going to get me into an office and blackmail me?”

Abby didn’t want a scene. Not a scene like this, at least. USF’s mailgirls were technically volunteers. The dirty secret, though, was that most were given little choice but to volunteer. “Blackmail” was an extreme word for it, but even Barrow’s claim of “incentivizing” the girls didn’t quite capture the menacing nature of the conversation Abby was hoping to have with Kristen.

The brunette didn’t wait for a response. “No,” she repeated. “No. ... you. ... off.” She grabbed a small clutch from her desk and walked in the opposite direction, away from where Abby, Barrow, and Mistress Rei were standing.

“Security?” Mistress Rei asked Barrow softly, loud enough so that only Abby and Barrow could hear.

Barrow shook his head. “Not like this.”

Abby had no choice but to follow. Kristen’s coworkers were now standing up in their cubicles, looking to see what the commotion was. As much as many of them probably hoped to see Kristen in the nude, Abby doubted she’d be able to win their hearts and minds if she got into a full-on shouting match with a girl they worked with on a daily basis. Kristen had friends in this room; Abby did not.

“Kristen, slow down,” Abby called behind her. “We need to talk.”

The girl didn’t turn around. Instead, she flipped Abby the finger. “There’s your ...ing contract.”

Abby had expected things with Mailgirl Number Six to be a bit messier than they had been with Mailgirl Number Five. But she had expected that messiness to come later, when it came time for Kristen to call her partner and tell her she was moving out. This, this head-on conflict, had caught her by surprise.

“I think it’s in your best interest…” This from Barrow, who also appeared to be unnerved about the audience watching the confrontation unfold.

She turned and stopped, and pointed an angry finger in Barrow’s direction. “I know who you are. I know why you’re here.” Pointing to Mistress Rei, she added, “I know why she’s here.”

Back to Barrow, Kristen growled, “... you, too. I know you’re the one pulling the strings here. You’re just having your ginger bitch here do the dirty work. And when she’s done, she’ll hand me off to that other ...ing ... so that I can take a spanking and ask for another.”

“Kristen,” Abby began, trying to reel her back in.

“No, ... this,” Kristen responded, and then turned back towards the door. “I quit.”

Abby couldn’t let her go. If she could just get her alone, without spectators, she could apply some leverage. There were carrots to be offered. And Kristen didn’t yet fully grasp the size of the stick Abby was carrying.

“Kristen,” she called again, but the girl had already pushed through the rear door leading out of Trade Ops. She was on her way up the corridor towards the lobby.

“Security?” Mistress Rei asked Barrow again.

This time, the Director of Human Capital hesitated before he responded. Though Abby was already at the door, and beginning to round out into the corridor, she heard Barrow reply, “No, no. Not like this. We’ve got other options.”

Abby, though, wasn’t going to let Kristen get away that easy.

There were a few other employees here in corridor, but nothing like the row-upon-row of cubicles and desks back in Trade Ops. And so it was time to fire back.

“You’ve got two sexual harassment claims on your record now,” Abby barked after her. “I guarantee we’ll make sure at least one of them turns into criminal charges. You’ll be radioactive.”

“Better to be radioactive out there than sucking dick in here,” Kristen replied. She didn’t slow down. She was wearing flats to Abby’s heels, pants to Abby’s tight-fitting black dress, and had a longer stride on top of all that.

“Your 401K is frozen,” Abby called out. “Benefits are cancelled. And we’ll be applying a clawback on all incentives you’ve received from us to-date.”

“Great,” Kristen snorted. “And you can shove it all up your ass.”

Abby was running out of bullets. Maybe it was time for carrots?

“Name your job,” Abby tried, desperately.

No response.

“Name your figure,” she tried. “On the back end.”

No response.

Abby was huffing and puffing, doing her best to keep up. But Kristen was now rounding the corner into the Main Entrance’s lobby, and she was going to get away.

“Come back!” Abby yelled. “Come back here! Right now!”

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Six**

As Abby turned the corner, she found Kristen waiting for her by the security desk. There was anger written all over her face, but also something that Abby hadn’t seen before. Pity.

“Last chance,” Kristen announced, nodding towards the two security guards seated behind the desk. “Are you going to lock me up? Haul me off into some dungeon? Whip me into shape?”

“No,” Abby answered. “No…I…just…”

“You want a mailgirl?” Kristen asked. “Be a mailgirl.”

It was like Abby had been slapped.

“That’s what this is about, right? You’re doing this for him, but you’re also doing this to save yourself.”

Abby offered an unconvincing shake of her head.

“Walk out with me right now,” Kristen offered. “Walk out with me. Just quit. You know he’s going to ... you in the ass. That’s how this sort of thing plays out every ...ing time. It practically writes itself. You can see it coming from a mile away.”

“No, it’s not. It’s not.”

“It is.”

“No, it’s –“

“It is.” Kristen reached forward, and jammed a finger into Abby’s chest. She then pulled it back, and pointed to herself. “But this? This shit with me? And the other girls? Whoever’s next? Go ... yourself.”

“Ma’am?” This from the security guard, to Abby, as he watched the exchange.

Kristen wasn’t done yet, though. She ignored him, and went on. “No, seriously, go ... yourself. Just go ... yourself. This can’t happen. This can’t happen in the ...ing real world. You can’t just strip and enslave women like this. And ...ing chain them up and whip them. All so a guy like that,” – she pointed back over Abby’s shoulder, to Barrow, who’d managed to catch up – “all so a ...ing asshole like that can jack off to their misery? You’re going to humiliate them and treat them like dogs?”

Abby didn’t have a response.

Kristen was fed up. “... you,” she said, throwing up her hands, and turning back towards the front entrance. She sounded more tired than angry now, resigned to her fate outside Park Place, resigned to fact she knew full well that USF would come after her finances and reputation. “You might as well just be one of his submissive little bitches, on your back and performing for him. Like you have no control.”

And then, she was gone.

It had been a scene, and the whole lobby was frozen in anticipation of how the redhead would react. Someone chuckled softly, and uncomfortably, across the way. There was a nervous cough. Abby had no choice but to return to Barrow.

She joined him, hesitated, but didn’t address what had just unfolded. Instead, she took a deep breath and offered, “On to Marie Partee?”

Barrow sized her up, nodded, and replied, “Yes. Marie Partee.” It looked as if she wanted to reach out, and give her a hug, but he held back.

He was good-looking. Of that, there could be no argument. Tall, dark hair, in good shape. Young; maybe mid-to-late thirties? He was whip-smart, with an MBA of his own. In what was perhaps the understatement of the century, Abby’s boss Chris had warned her that Barrow could be “condescending to women.” Abby had found herself fetching coffee and making copies for him when she’d come to give him updates at the Plaza, and he’d basically evicted her from her own office that week in Park Place – setting up shop and forcing her down the hall to the reception desk. But he also had a power to him, an undeniable magnetism that Abby (and others, it seemed) couldn’t resist; she found herself wanting to please him. Chris had told her, before that first meeting, that she needed to make sure she was well-dressed for him, in a skirt and hose, and Abby had dutifully allowed that instruction to dictate how she’d dressed around him every time since.

The fact that Kristen Metkovich had just escaped, that Abby had failed Will Barrow, was crushing.

He recognized that she wasn’t quite ready to move on to Marie Partee just yet. “No need to fall on your sword,” he offered. “We get a ‘no’ sometimes.”

“No, of course,” Abby responded. “Of course. I know.”

“Why don’t we regroup, lick our wounds, and plan on meeting down in the call center at eleven?” Marie was a team leader for the escalated customer complaints group, with a staff of sixteen under her. At thirty-four, she was among the oldest of Abby’s candidates. But she was single, gorgeous, and took to every assignment she was given with enthusiasm and company spirit. And, as a native of Montreal, she’d be USF’s first Canadian-born mailgirl, one whose work visa Abby and Barrow were hoping to exploit as leverage.

“Sure,” Abby answered. “Makes sense.”

“I’ll have Mistress Rei get started with Number Five a little early,” Barrow continued on. “I’m just going to be in your office, making a couple of calls. Are you coming?”

Abby shook her head. “No, I…” she started, then stopped. Then started again, “No, I think I’m going to go grab a coffee downstairs, and maybe take in the show?” Number Five would have an audience as she was introduced to the locker room for the first time. It came out a little creepy, and certainly had some homosexual undertones to it. But she and Barrow had watched Numbers Three and Four join the ranks from a lunch table together yesterday, so she knew he’d understand that the place she was operating from was one more akin to the pride of ownership. She’d bask in that morning’s success to get over the subsequent failure.

She wasn’t actually going to head to the cafeteria, but it made a believable enough cover – so long as Barrow didn’t invite himself along.

He didn’t. “Call center,” he confirmed. “Eleven.”

“Eleven,” Abby repeated.

He looked past her, out the door, and after Kristen Metkovich. He smiled, and then offered up only, “....”

Abby couldn’t help but laugh a little. In whatever regards Barrow held the whole of her gender, he was never one to speak to bluntly or with such vulgarity. He was doing this for her benefit, and with a mischievous twinkle in his eye.

“...,” Abby agreed.

Barrow turned, headed for the elevators, and gave Abby her leave.

She looked at her smartphone. It was already ten past. She wouldn’t have a lot of time. As Barrow returned to her office, Abby was off to the stairwell, and down into the depths of Park Place.

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Two weeks earlier, Abby Wagner Williams had walked in on someone masturbating in the ladies’ room.

The Junior Vice President of Talent Management for Park Place, Paramus, and Princeton was at USF Plaza for the day, checking in with her direct supervisor, Christine Klinger, and working with Human Capital to stack-rank Abby’s Park Place mailgirl candidates. She was squatting in an open cubicle on the 18th Floor, in Human Resources proper, and surrounded by ER reps and HR strategy analysts; every time Will Barrow called her over to his office in Human Capital, she had the make the trek through the gauntlet of mailgirl panties in the corridor down towards Human Capital. Pink and purple, white and black, satin and lace, bikinis and thongs – a reminder, each time, of how Human Capital had treated twenty-some women here at the Plaza. A reminder, each time, of what Abby had been tasked to do at Park Place.

But Abby stepped out of the cubicle for a few minutes around mid-morning, and headed to the ladies’ room that was tucked around the corner from the elevator banks. As she crossed the 18th Floor’s reception area, she passed an unoccupied mailgirls mat and a silver dog dish that was three-quarters full. The mat was nothing more than a thin layer of foam, no thicker than a standard yoga mat, colored pink and imprinted with the USF logo in one corner. In those moments that a mailgirl wasn’t actively involved in a delivery or some other task, she’d be expected to take her “resting” position – that is, “Knees” – on one of these mats scattered throughout the building. On her knees with her legs spread, hands behind her back, and gazing emptily and submissively at an imaginary spot on the floor. There could be as many as two girls at a time on a particular mat, and Abby had seen a pair of girls holding hands on her last trip into the Plaza. It was vacant at the moment, however, and so Abby was able to make it to the bathroom without the distraction of having to pass a naked girl in what had once been a boring, conservative office.

USF Plaza, though, was far from boring anymore. If Abby needed any further proof of that, the moan that greeted her in the ladies’ room would have sufficed.

It hadn’t been a loud moan, and it had been cut short by the sound of the door as Abby entered. But it had been a moan all the same. The soft inhale-exhale-inhale-exhale panting that followed, and signaled that the moaner was working to catch her breath, was further evidence that Abby had just walked in on someone masturbating in the near stall. The pair of red pumps, visible beneath the stall door, was spread wide and frozen in place.

“Oh!” Abby gasped. And without even thinking about it, amended an “I’m sorry!” and backed out of the ladies’ room.

She immediately kicked herself for doing so, and prayed that Red Pumps hadn’t recognized her voice. She wasn’t at the Plaza often – one day a month prior to her current project, really only once every other week since – and it was reasonable to think she wouldn’t be placed by her “sorry” alone. It had been instinctual, automatic; how was she supposed to have reacted to someone playing with herself in a public bathroom?

Abby, too, was now frozen in place, unsure of what to do next. She should have been making a b-line back to her desk. That’s what she should have done. Instead, she hesitated, stayed quiet, and listened. Red Pumps had let a moan escape before. But she’d just been caught with her hand in the proverbial cookie jar, and so it probably made sense that Abby couldn’t hear anything else from the far side of ladies’ room door.

Curiosity got the best of her, though. She wasn’t going to wait here, and greet Red Pumps as she exited – Abby didn’t want to deal with the awkwardness of the masturbator knowing by whom she’d just been interrupted. Instead, Abby took up position out by the reception desk; she said a quick hello to the receptionist, and then made a show of flicking through her emails on her phone.

Whether Red Pumps had returned to her task-at-hand, or whether she’d simply remained in the ladies’ room to avoid whomever had just caught her, Abby couldn’t be sure. Either way, it was another six or seven minutes before Wendy Brown from Benefits came walking nervously up the hall, red pumps carrying her past Abby and back to her desk. If she suspected Abby had been the one who’d walked in on her, Wendy gave no indication; she even offered a polite “hi” as she saw Abby, and returned to work as if nothing of interest had taken place that morning.

Abby wasn’t sure who she’d been expecting to waltz out of the ladies’ room, but Wendy Brown was a surprise. She had to have been no older than twenty-four or twenty-five. She would have been a little mousey and flat-chested to be tapped for mailgirl duty, but she wasn’t unattractive – rail thin and long straight brown hair. A respectable “6.” What had made a girl like feel the need to get herself off at work?

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Seven**

What had made a girl like that feel the need to get herself off at work?

The ER Reps with whom Abby was sitting had their theories.

“Mind control,” Diane Harris offered.

“Drugs,” Nicole Culberson disagreed. “Aphrodisiacs.”

“Mind control drugs?” Diane joked, and the two laughed.

Abby hadn’t shared the incident with the two women, and wasn’t even a part of their conversation at that point. She was seated in her own cubicle, and Diane and Nicole might not have even remembered she was there. She was theoretically focused on her list of prospects, going back and forth as to whether the leverage she had on Erin Higgins outweighed the sheer, undeniable attractiveness of Casey Campbell, and whether Will Barrow would agree with her assessment. She was eavesdropping on Diane and Nicole, however, as they joked about what had transformed the social and sexual mores of USF Plaza so quickly.

“I mean, it has to be mind control,” Diane laughed. “Women don’t act this way in real life. There’s no other way to explain it.”

“Maybe they’re putting something in the water?” Nicole speculated. “Maybe it was only supposed to be for the mailgirls at first…”

“It’s a theory,” Diane conceded. “Have you stopped and watched recently? There’s two of them – Meredith Ferris from Middle Markets, and what’s-her-name from Asset Management…”

“Amanda Dobson.”

“Right, Amanda Dobson. Two and Three. They’re down there touching themselves in the shower every time they’re on break together, making eye contact and googly eyes at one another.”

Nicole laughed.

Diane went on, “They’re not even gay. At least, they weren’t before. Did you know Meredith was engaged before all this started?”

“That’s too bad,” Nicole responded, genuine empathy evident in her tone. It was obvious that, given her current predicament, Meredith’s wedding had been called off. But Nicole seemed to recover, and whispered, “I heard they’re all sleeping with each other.”

“Like in a big pile?”

The two women both chuckled at this suggestion. Diane said, “But that’s what I mean. God help me, but if you took off my clothes, and sent me running around the building in my birthday suit, I’m not going to suddenly become a lesbian. I’m not going to be all ‘ungh, ungh, ungh’ with myself in the locker room.”

“So you think it’s mind control?”

Diane paused, and answered, “I mean, no, not really. Maybe you’re right? Maybe they’re dosing them with something, and it’s…I don’t know…seeping out their pores into the rest of the building.”

“Maybe they screened for exhibitionists?”

“I don’t know. I mean, I don’t know. Those particular twenty-four girls? Those twenty-four knockouts and visions were all secretly flashers and fetishists? And Will Barrow was able to sniff them out from everyone else here in the building?”

“What they’re doing has to have some effect on them…”

Diane ignored her, and added, “And even that wouldn’t explain what’s going on with everyone else.”

She stopped, and Abby heard her open the drawer to her desk. Diane asked, “Do you want to see what I had to confiscate up on the 32nd Floor this morning?”

“No!” Nicole laughed. But, based on the pause and her ultimate reaction, Nicole clearly stood up and looked over the cubicle wall at Diane’s prize. She shrieked, softly, “No!”

“Yes!” Diane laughed.

“No!” Nicole insisted. “Oh my god! Look at the size of that thing!”

Clearly a sex toy, Abby guessed. Vibrator? Dildo?

“I know!”

“Were they going to use it on a girl?”

“No,” Diane answered. “Do you know Georgeann DiMaggio? In Product?”

“No.”

“Okay. Well, she’s in her fifties. Senior Vice President. Married. Kids. This was just for her. Brought it in from home. And I got a ‘noise complaint’ from the woman in the office next door.”

“Like, during work hours?”

“Nine in the morning!”

The two women laughed a few more minutes, and then seemed to quiet down. After a bit, though, Nicole coughed and spoke up. “If you’re going to bring something like that to work, it’s got to be small. And quiet.” To Abby, it sounded almost like a confession. As in, if Nicole “hypothetically” had thought through the issue herself.

There was hesitation from Diane, Diane apparently having had the same thought Abby had. “Like what?”

“Like, I don’t know…” Nicole began. “…like, I don’t know, one of those little egg things.”

Diane snorted. “’Egg things’?”

“Yeah, you know. They’re little, and rubbery, and they vibrate?”

“No, I’m sorry…”

“It’s like an egg,” Nicole insisted. “It fits in your purse.”

“No, I get it,” Diane answered. “I’ve just never heard of an ‘egg’ before.”

A few beats passed. Nicole, in a whisper that Abby had to strain to hear, offered, “Like this.” The woman clearly had exactly such a device in her own purse, and was now clearly showing it to her counterpart. Abby desperately wanted to see it for herself.

Diane guffawed, and feigned a scandalized gasp. She giggled, and then warned Nicole, “Don’t let me catch you using that here at work.”

“Of course not!” Nicole whispered. But Abby found herself wondering why Nicole had it with her, if not to use it here at work.

“I’ve got my rabbit,” Diane added to the conversation. “But it’s at home.”

Rabbits and eggs. It was like the two women were discussing Easter, and not sex toys. Abby couldn’t believe the direction the conversation was going in. Especially here in Human Resources. Especially between two Employee Relations reps. She stayed quiet, and tried not to inadvertently remind them she was there.

“I’ve got one at home that’s bigger,” Nicole confessed, “and it’s got a little curve to it.” Pause. “You know…” Pause. “…to get in there.”

Diane laughed again. “Like a g-spot one?”

“Yeah.”

“Does Paul know?” Nicole was married. Apparently, to a Paul.

“He knows…” Nicole replied, and then trailed off. There was more to that response, but Nicole had already shared more than she’d intended to.

Diane sighed. “This is what I mean, though. It’s like the whole building has been doused in some sort of animal pheromones.”

The theory landed with Abby. Of course USF hadn’t been dousing its employees with some sort of sex chemical. Of course there wasn’t mind control involved. Of course they weren’t drugging the mailgirls or spiking the water supply. But there was no doubt that, since the roll-out of the program that Spring, there had been an effect on the entire USF population here at the Plaza, mailgirl or not. Abby was glad to know that, with Wendy Brown and Georgeann DiMaggio and even maybe Nicole Culberson, Abby wasn’t alone in being affected by the mailgirls’ presence. ER was dealing with fewer issues around tardiness, or performance, or disability claims. But they apparently had found their hands full when it came to vibrators in the office, blowjobs in the parking garage, and meet-ups in the supply closets.

Thirteen’s research called out that female employees, in particular, had been dressing differently since April. Controlling for the summer weather, she was tracking the rise of hemlines and the drop of necklines. Abby wondered if she, herself, had dressed differently today than she might have a year ago.

She had on a black, relatively tight-fitting pencil dress - not entirely dissimilar from the sleeveless sheath dress she’d strip Casey Campbell of two weeks later. Abby’s had sleeves, though, short as they were, which were hidden away beneath a one-button suit jacket. She’d bought the dress the previous Winter, which potentially invalidated Thirteen’s theory. But she could admit that the hem was a little higher than some of her other dresses, and that maybe it was a little tighter than something she would have worn to Park Place. She had on nude pantyhose, but that had been a conscious decision - she usually wore them when she worked at USF Plaza, even in the summer. Chris’s “heads up” about Barrow’s preferences in women’s work-wear didn’t change that fact. Hidden away was a pink-ish white lace tanga and a matching underwire bra, neither of which she had any intention of exposing in the workplace, even if both were a bit out-of-the-ordinary when compared to what she typically wore to work. But, she liked the confidence she felt when wearing them; she liked feeling sexy when she had to go toe-to-toe with Barrow.

But whether Abby was suffering the effects of animal pheromones, or under the thrall of a mind-controlling puppet master, there was no denying that the mailgirls’ presence at USF was having an affect on her. The last time she’d come to the Plaza, she’d arrived to the sight of Number Thirteen rubbing herself just off the elevator lobby, and she hadn’t been able to forget it. Whenever she caught sight of one of the girls running through Human Resources, or passing her in the halls, she couldn’t help but crane her neck for a better view. The whole thing was like a car wreck that Abby couldn’t look away from. Squeezing her thighs together in her cubicle, she could feel the dampness between her legs, and could tell how much her own pussy ached to be touched.

Again, it wasn’t the mailgirls themselves who were doing this to her. At least, not directly. She could appreciate the female form, of course. And she was comfortable enough in her own sexuality that she could admit the twenty-four girls Barrow had handpicked for the Plaza were beautiful, sexually attractive creatures no one could be faulted for admiring. But it was the concept in its entirety that seemed to do it for her: the dominance and submission, the exhibition and exposure, the embarrassment and humiliation. Not for the first time, Abby wondered if something were broken about her, that such degradation and debasement had the power to get her sexually excited. Had that been what was missing with Jon? Was he not mean enough to her? Or vice versa? Abby took comfort in the fact that, mailgirl and non-mailgirl alike, she didn’t seem to be the only one who found all this weirdly arousing.

As if to illustrate that point, as if to underline the “weirding” effect that the mailgirls had upon her, it was the posterior of Mailgirl Number Eighteen that had sent Abby Wagner Williams over the edge later that same afternoon. Specifically…

“What an asshole!” Alan Bagby announced from around the corner. It wasn’t as if that utterance had never been offered up at the Plaza before. But Abby doubted it had have been called out quite so literally.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Eight**

“What an asshole!” Alan Bagby announced from around the corner. It wasn’t as if that utterance had never been offered up at the Plaza before. But Abby doubted it had have been called out quite so literally.

She was in the copy room inside the Human Capital offices, making duplicates for Barrow for a presentation entirely unrelated to her project at Park Place. They’d had their meeting, they’d shuffled around their list, and they’d decided upon their first class of prospects: Higgins, Gutteridge, Campbell, Metkovich, Partee, and Johnson, with McBride and Ryba held in reserve, in case of a decline or two. But Barrow’s administrative assistant had been tasked with some other job for the afternoon, and so it was Abby who’d been pressed into service doing work that Barrow apparently felt was beneath him. Abby didn’t push back or complain, though; as usual, she wanted to please him, she wanted to make him happy, even if it meant doing a job that was likely beneath her, too.

Human Capital was set apart from the rest of Human Resources, accessible only via the “Hall of Panties” from the reception desk, and the atmosphere was different than Abby felt in Payroll, or Benefits, or Employee Relations. There was definitely an air of testosterone, as Human Capital was unique among its sister teams within Human Resources for employing more men than women. Significantly more men than women. Once you subtracted the mailgirls and their direct supervisor, the only other woman under Barrow was his AA. Two technicians and four analysts, all male, plus Barrow himself, made the program run. And the praise and adulation they’d received for their work had been internalized: these were USF’s heroes and rising stars. Still, the chauvinism, sexism, and unspoken misogyny (“Not that unspoken,” Abby would remark to Chris) were rarely so blatant as what Abby caught sight of as she poked her head out of the copy room, to catch sight of the asshole in question.

“You could eat off it,” joked Mike Moses, one of the analysts, to the laughter of the others.

Bagby, Moses, and a third analyst, Spencer Russell, were gathered menacingly around Mailgirl Number Eighteen – a tall, leggy brunette who had to have been about Abby’s age. If Abby remembered correctly, she was a Brown grad. She was on the floor in front of them, up towards the entrance to Human Capital’s private kitchen, and alongside the trash and recycling bins. Her face was pressed into the carpet, in what Abby believed to be called either the “Forehead” or “Forehead-and-Knees” position. Her knees were apart and her legs spread, and even her normal exposure hadn’t been quite enough for the analysts here in Human Capital; they’d asked her spread her ass cheeks and expose herself even more.

“You realize she shits out of that thing, right?” Abby called down the hall.

She was met with a big, wide smile from Bagby. None of the men looked at all embarrassed about fun they were having at Eighteen’s expense. If anything, they all lit up at the sight of Abby, at the prospect she was joining in.

“Quiet,” Bagby chuckled. “Mailgirls don’t poop. You’ll ruin the illusion.”

“I mean, you should see this thing,” Moses added. “It’s spotless.”

“Did it burn?” Russell asked the girl, referring to the bleach job she’d been subjected to.

“The first time, sir.” The girl’s response was partially muffled in the carpet.

“A lot?”

“Yes, sir.”

Outside of “Feet,” “Knees,” and maybe “Toes,” it was rare for a girl to be asked to take one of the other positions she was still expected to know. Mistress Rei’s counterpart here at the Plaza, one Mistress Zero, might run them through the full gamut every now and then, and might even have asked Eighteen to take this exact posture to inspect that her “uniform” was up to USF’s standards. But this was still likely a very rare humiliation for Eighteen, the men of Human Capital knowing full-well what they were within their rights to order.

“How frequently does she have to do that?” Abby couldn’t help but ask. She was curious.

“How often do you have to do that?” Russell asked the girl.

Eighteen responded, but Abby didn’t catch it. She took another step out of the copier room, but no further; not so close that she was a part of what was going down.

“What did she say?” Abby asked.

“Once a month,” Russell repeated, for Abby’s benefit.

“It’s the first time that burns,” Bagby added. “Because they’re pressed into service right away, they use something that’s a little more harsh.”

Abby shuddered. She couldn’t imagine smearing chemicals in and around something as sensitive as her butthole, especially if they had be qualified by levels of harshness.

“And after that first time?” Abby asked Bagby, but Bagby turned to the girl.

Abby took another step closer. “And after that first time?” she asked again, this time louder, and in Eighteen’s direction.

“It still tingles, ma’am,” the girl answered, her voice still muffled.

Abby cringed, and made an exaggerated show of horror to the three men gathered around Eighteen. Abby, certainly, had no interest in the routine. She shook her head, turned, and went back to the copier.

There were a few more comments, a bit more back-and-forth, and more laughter. Abby did her best to focus on Barrow’s presentation, however, ignoring the naked girl out in the hall and the abuse she was suffering. Her curiosity was piqued, and there was a sadistic little kernel inside of her that was intrigued by just how far Bagby, Moses, and Russell would go. But, as a woman especially, she should have more control than to join in, should she?

The three men all roared at one point, and Abby heard Russell protest, “No, no. I’m not going do that!” She cocked her head, and heard him clarify, “I’m not going to spit on it.”

The “it,” in question, was in no doubt still Eighteen’s exposed asshole. The mailgirls may have been entirely dehumanized here at USF, but they were still treated to the proper pronouns of “she” and “her.”

Abby giggled to herself, and shook her head. They were like a group of schoolyard boys, daring and double-daring one another to see what they could get away with. If they touched “it,” if they stuck anything into “it,” if they did anything blatantly sexual to “it,” they’d be crossing the line, and would have to answer to Barrow. Apparently, spitting on “it” was – at least to Bagby and Moses – still on the right side of that line. It may have even been on the right side of the line for Russell; he just wasn’t going to be the one to do it.

“Abby!”

“No, no, no,” Abby thought to herself, and pretended she hadn’t heard her name shouted from up the hall.

“Abby!” Bagby called out again.

“No!” she shouted back. She didn’t budge from the copier.

“Abby! Abby!”

She steeled herself, and then peeked around the corner. “No,” she said again, forcefully, even through a laugh. “I’m not going spit on her asshole.” Her tone emphasized how ridiculous she found the request.

Bagby gestured in the girl’s direction, and said, “She doesn’t mind.” To the girl, “You don’t mind, do you?”

There was hesitation on the part of the brunette. And, in a less charged environment, Abby might even have felt some sympathy for her as another human being. After all, what choice did the girl really have? She might be able to get out of this in another department, on another floor. But this was Human Capital; there was no higher power to which Eighteen could appeal. The girl answered, “No, sir. I don’t mind, sir.”

“No,” Abby said again. She still had a smile on her face, though, and it was evident that Bagby thought she was at least beginning to entertain the thought. Maybe she was. But she returned to the copier all the same, ignoring the pleas from the hall.

“That’s what they’re here for!” Bagby called after her.

Abby should have resisted. This was like a game now, and even engaging with Bagby meant she was still playing along. Against her better judgment, she leaned back around the corner and offered, “I’m pretty sure that’s not what they’re here for.”

“You think she’s here to deliver the mail?”

There was a teasing condescension in Bagby’s voice, condescension that she could be so naïve as believe that a mailgirl’s role was the deliver the mail. She was working on a project for Barrow. She was here, in the inner circle of Human Capital. She had access to Thirteen’s research. Surely, surely, she knew better than that.

The punch landed. Of course Abby recognized that Eighteen wasn’t naked and prostrate here at in the workplace simply to deliver the mail. There was a reason she was naked. There was a reason she was punished, publicly, on a regular basis. There was a reason she had to eat out of a dog dish and wear a slave collar. None of that was really and truly being done on the behalf of more efficient interoffice communication. Abby had heard Barrow expound upon his views as to what drove the bottom line, of what made a successful mailgirl here at USF. Being demeaned and degraded by her betters? Being teased and tormented by non-mailgirls? Being put her place so that others could find theirs? This was exactly what Eighteen was here for.

Bagby tempted Abby further with the offer of a coffee. And then brought Moses and Russell in for peer pressure, by announcing he’d buy them all – Eighteen included – a round of coffees if Abby gave in. But Abby had already given in, and so this additional “prize” or “thank you” was unnecessary. Still, at least she’d get a free coffee out of debasing another human being.

As Abby joined the three male analysts above and around the naked brunette, she recognized she was now almost as much a part of this little scene as Eighteen herself. Did she wonder if this, on some level - on any level - was wrong? Of course. But she liked being a part of Bagby’s mean little clique, of being accepted by her peers in Human Capital, of being one of the boys. She made a show of swishing saliva around inside her mouth, and caught the anticipatory looks from them all as she did so. And, with one last wicked smile at her co-conspirators, Abby discharged down onto the mailgirl’s back door.

The sound of the impact brought about immediate regret in the redhead. What had she just done?

But that regret didn’t last long. The three men around her cheered in celebration, and it was hard not to get swept up in their enthusiasm.

“Bull’s eye!” Moses whooped.

Abby’s saliva puddled a bit in the pucker, but then began to dribble down between the girl’s legs and to her thighs. Eighteen didn’t make any attempt to wipe it away or clean it off; she knew she would need permission. She didn’t risk wiping it away when she was finally allowed to stand, nor when Bagby stuck a twenty in her armband and sent her off for coffees. She might have cleaned herself off in the service elevator, maybe. Or, maybe she just let it dry naturally. Abby didn’t exactly check when Eighteen returned to Human Capital, and delivered her her coffee in the copier room.

Abby knew it was frowned upon to thank a mailgirl, so she resisted the instinct. She also resisted the urge to apologize, or to make a joke about the whole thing. Instead, she donned her best domineering bitch mask, and simply nodded at the naked girl as she received her coffee.

Eighteen wore a mask of her own. There was no evidence of hate or anger or disgust in Abby’s direction. Instead, the girl wore only an inscrutable Mona Lisa smile, as if she’d found some sort of amusement in the humiliation she’d just suffered. And, as they met eyes for the briefest of instances, Abby knew that amusement was at Abby’s expense. Maybe it was just guilt or paranoia. But, in that moment, it was as if Eighteen could see right through her, and possessed some truth about her that escaped Abby herself. No, Eighteen didn’t seem angry at all. She did, however, seem to know how much Abby was affected by her day at the Plaza, how aroused the redhead truly was.

And Abby was aroused. Not by the sight of another girl’s anus, of course – Abby wasn’t quite that warped. At least, not yet. It was the dominance and submission involved that had her wet, and she wasn’t sure which was affecting her more. Was it the power that Abby felt in owning and humiliating Eighteen? Or was it being owned and humiliated, as imagined vicariously through Eighteen? The two were surprisingly difficult to untangle, and Abby wasn’t sure which disturbed her more. All she was sure of was how sexually stimulating the whole thing had been.

She didn’t dare risk eye contact with Eighteen again as she left Human Capital. The girl had taken up position on a mailgirl mat outside of Barrow’s office, the only deviation from her standard “Knees” pose being the coffee in one hand. Such a rare kindness and luxury in the middle of a shift had likely made the torment she’d just suffered worth it. Abby suspected she’d been treated worse.

Back in the cubicle where Abby was working for the day, she bit her lip and pulled at her hair. She’d caught Wendy Brown masturbating in the ladies’ room that morning. Diane Harris had caught Georgeann DiMaggio with a vibrator. Nicole Culberson likely hadn’t brought her little vibrating egg to work as simply a conversation piece. There were blowjobs happening in the parking garage, sexual encounters taking place in supply closets, and god-knows-what-else being done by god-knows-who god-knows-where here at the Plaza.

Abby would be in good company if she slipped off somewhere to get herself off.

No. No. No. No, of course not. Of course she couldn’t do such a thing. Wendy had been caught. Georgeann had been caught. She’d be caught, too. And, whether or not she’d get caught was beside the point, wasn’t it? Wasn’t there a right-and-wrong when it came to touching yourself at work?

But Abby thought back to the sight of Thirteen masturbating in the shower, downstairs in the elevator lobby. And about how rampant the behavior was among the rest of the mailgirls, almost every chance they got. Why should they be allowed something Abby was denied?

It was tortured logic, and Abby knew it. But, it was enough. It was enough that the decision had been made, and now Abby was only left with a question of where.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Nine**

The ladies’ room, of course. It was the logical choice. She could go into a stall, close the door, and be quicker and quieter than Wendy had been. And she’d be smarter about it than Wendy had been – she’d go downstairs, to the 17th Floor, just to make sure she didn’t run into anyone she knew here in Human Resources. In fact, she didn’t even need to walk up through the rest of Human Resources to the elevators. She could simply take the stairs - the service stairs - which were within eyeshot of her cubicle. No one would even see her sneak out.

As Abby pushed open the thick metal door that led to the stairs, however, she began to see an alternative. Maybe she didn’t need to hide in the ladies’ room after all. Maybe the stairwell would do fine. The door clicked closed behind her, but Abby was frozen in place as she thought this through. Whether to masturbate or not – that decision had been made. But she considered the chances of being caught in the ladies’ room versus being caught in the stairs.

Prior to the introduction of the mailgirls here at the Plaza, no one used the stairs. No one. It was just part of the building’s culture, Abby supposed. That first year she’d been with the company, when she’d worked here in the building every day, the only time she’d seen anyone go into or come out of the door to the stairs was during a fire alarm. She knew that Kaitlyn York had once snuck a quick smoke on the stairs between the 18th and 19th Floors. But, as a general rule, the stairs had been ignored and neglected.

When the mailgirl concept had been adopted at the Plaza, Barrow had granted a few allowances that would have been unthinkable in mailgirl programs elsewhere. Specifically, he allowed the girls to ride the elevators. The service elevators only, and only on those occasions where a delivery required more than a ten story climb or descent. In practice, the greater proportion of interoffice deliveries and memos occurred within a few floors of one another, and so the girls were still on the stairs a lot. But from twenty-four total mailgirls, subtract six due to afternoon breaks. Maybe subtract another six or seven who might be waiting patiently on their mailgirl mats waiting for their next delivery. Subtract another few who might be on the elevators. And then divide by forty-eight floors.

The math worked in Abby’s favor. So too did the fact that any amount of noise echoed up and down the stairwell; she’d have to be quiet herself, but she’d be able to hear anyone coming from above or below in time to get herself together. Even if anyone heard her breathing a little heavy, they’d likely assume the panting belonged to a mailgirl running the stairs. And then, even if anyone caught her, it was almost guaranteed to be a lowly mailgirl – stark naked and in no position to judge.

Her biggest risk was from the 18th Floor itself. Mailgirl Number 18 was still back in Human Capital, and any job between the 8th and the 28th could theoretically bring her rushing through that door. But the way the door opened, into the stairwell, granted Abby some measure of safeguarding against that possibility; if she were in the corner, the open door itself would shield her from exposure – so long as Eighteen didn’t look back behind her after the door closed.

She hesitated for a moment longer, wondering if this were truly a good idea. Of course it wasn’t. Of course it wasn’t! She shouldn’t be doing this. She shouldn’t even be considering this. But…but…if she were going to do this, if she was really and truly going to get herself off at work, she was less likely to be walked in on by a mailgirl here in the stairwell than another woman in the 17th Floor’s ladies room.

Abby ground the butt of her palm into her groin, through her dress, and it was decided. She could do it here, and do it quickly.

She wished she had one of Kaitlyn’s cigarettes. At least then she’d have a plausible reason for being out here, as forbidden as it may have been.

Positioning herself in the corner, with the door to her right, Abby leaned back against the wall and began to tug her dress up her thighs. She cursed her lack of foresight when she got dressed that morning; not only did she have to deal with the tightness of her dress, but she’d also have to contend with her pantyhose, as well. A garter belt and stockings might have been smarter, she told herself – it would have allowed for easier access. Nonetheless, Abby was determined, and so the black pencil dress was bunched at her mid-section, with her hand stuffed unceremoniously into the waist of her panties and pantyhose.

She would have been a sight. Heels. Nude pantyhose. Light pink - almost white – lace panties. Black dress, hiked up to a ridiculous degree. Her suit jacket, naturally. Her long red hair hanging loose. Eyes as wide as dinner plates, looking nervously up and down the stairs. And her right hand working furiously back and forth against her pussy.

The naughtiness of it all, coupled with the fear of being caught, made the whole thing exponentially more exciting. It wouldn’t take long.

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It was in the immediate aftermath that Abby felt most ashamed about what she’d done. Still breathing heavily, still disheveled, still coming down from her orgasm. She had barely broken a sweat – she was thankful of that, at least – but her fingertips were wet and she smelled like pussy. She smelled like mailgirl. She knew what she’d done was wrong, and she felt damaged, dirty, and whorish.

And yet this was now the sixth time she’d gotten herself off at work, since that afternoon two weeks ago in the stairwell.

Abby was on the floor of a storage room on B-2, the sub-basement, a floor down from the call center, the cafeteria, and the mailgirls locker room. Her skirt, as her dress had been that first time, was bunched around her waist, and her legs splayed out with her hand between them. She’d folded her suit jacket and placed it neatly on a nearby open shelf, but her blouse was still on, still buttoned, and now rumpled and partially untucked. She’d left her shoes on, for some unknown reason, and her heels were flat on the floor, her legs bent at the knees. At least today she’d worn stockings and a garter belt instead of pantyhose – she’d had one less layer to contend with as she had dipped her hand into the front of her panties.

After that first time at USF Plaza, Abby had managed to go the better part of a week before she touched herself at work again. That next time - and the time after that, and the time after that - she’d at least been able to do so in the privacy of her own office at Park Place, door closed and securely locked. The anticipation of this week’s induction of Jersey City’s mailgirls had proven too much for her to resist, and she’d talked herself into getting off, getting it over with, and getting on with her day. She’d already “broken the seal,” so to speak, and the risk of being caught in her office was decidedly lower than in the stairwell on the 18th Floor.

But Barrow had claimed Abby’s office for himself that week, and Abby had been bumped down to an open seat at the reception desk in Human Resources. As it wasn’t as if she could ask Barrow for her office back, for a few minutes of privacy, she’d gone the entirety of that Monday being good. Being good, at least, until the moment she walked through the door of her apartment.

Tuesday, though, her excitement had proven impossible to deny, with the ensnaring of Mailgirls Three and Four. Abby knew she’d either have to take care of herself or go home. She briefly flirted with the default of the ladies’ room, even if it meant there was a chance she’d be caught. But then she realized she had access to a storage room in the sub-basement, off-limits to everyone but Barrow, Barrow’s assistant, and Abby herself.

Abby had begun to think of it as the “Treasure Room.” It was where the underthings of girls One and Two had come over the weekend, and where those of Three and Four had arrived that Wednesday morning. In an expansion of the “Hall of Panties” that stood guard outside of Human Capital at the Plaza, and the corresponding trophies that were already now hanging in Human Resources here at Park Plaza, Barrow’s intention was to display each and every pair of underwear his new mailgirls had owned throughout the building. This was a staging grounds, a temporary holding place, until Abby – to whom responsibility for executing Barrow’s vision had fallen – could get to sorting through and framing the girls’ treasures.

The room was mostly empty, occupied by a few metal shelves, boxes of unopened frames, and a single folding table. But it had sufficed in Abby’s moment of need yesterday, and it done the trick again that morning. She wondered if maybe she should have waited until after they’d stripped and enslaved Marie Partee, but she’d had the better part of an hour and had needed something to take her mind of her failure with Kristen Metkovich.

Abby rolled to one side, and used the table to pull herself to her feet. A chair might have been nice. A bed, even better. But the floor had worked in a pinch, and it seemed to work for the mailgirls, so Abby had accepted the hard linoleum as a price she had to pay for a good, private, hiding place. She fixed her panties, tugging them back into place, and shivered at how wet they still were. She pulled her skirt back down, smoothing it and hoping it hadn’t gotten too wrinkled. And then she tucked her shirt back in, hoping – as she had yesterday – that the floor had been clean enough that it wouldn’t leave a hard-to-explain dirt smudge on her back.

Taking a moment longer to collect herself and catch her breath, Abby peeked inside a large cardboard box that was marked with a “4.” Bras. Black bras. White bras. Satin bras. Cotton bras. There’d be lingerie in here somewhere, too – Abby was sure of it. In an attempt to spice up her love life with Jon, and in response to his complaints she wasn’t adventurous enough, Abby herself had picked up a few babydolls and teddies over the last couple of years. More often than not, however, she wore them only once or twice, and then they’d fall into disuse. And she couldn’t justify continuing to spend money on something that she’d take off quickly and discard in a pile on the floor.

Abby laughed a little at the idea Jon had accused her of not being adventurous enough. Abby, who’d just masturbated on the floor of a storage room in the basement of Park Place.

There’d be lingerie here, Abby thought to herself, among Four’s things. And Three’s. Mailgirl Number Two, despite having only temporarily moved down to New York for the summer, had had a shocking number of sexy little things among her belongings.

She wondered what it would be like for someone to sift through her panties, bras, and lingerie like this.

After a moment or two longer, Abby found her suit jacket and then the lights, and exited into dimly lit corridor beyond. She’d need to check her hair and reflection in the ladies’ room down the hall, the one that USF had converted into a fully-functional bathroom for Mistress Rei – shower and all – before she’d head back upstairs.

Mistress Rei was almost every bit as much a captive of the mailgirls program here at Park Place as the girls she oversaw. Just as Abby had signed for the delivery of Mailgirls One and Two over the weekend, she’d had to sign for Mistress Rei two weeks earlier. The crate she’d arrived in had been a little bigger, and she’d been alone, but Mistress Rei had emerged no less naked and crazed as the two sisters. It was hard to believe that that girl, Mailgirl Juu-Shi, could have transformed into Mistress Rei so quickly. But in addition to being a testament to the power of the Plaza’s Mistress Zero, to whom the transformation had been assigned, Abby felt it spoke to the thin line between dominance and submission. The two were two sides of the same coin, and Mailgirl Juu-Shi - despite having recently inked her third consecutive mailgirl contract for a keiretsu in Tokyo – had been sold and shipped to USF, to play the part of governess to a new generation of mailgirls. It made the confusion Abby felt about what was turning her on seem more understandable – the Japanese girl had gone from submissive to dominant overnight.

But, though she was playing the part of dominatrix here in New Jersey, Mistress Rei wasn’t exactly free. Because her charges would be 24/7, she herself was expected to be here nearly 24/7, as well. She’d been given a tiny, makeshift “apartment” here in the sub-basement to live. Consisting of not much more than a bed, a desk, and a closet filled with a wardrobe Mistress Zero had picked out, Mistress Rei’s new “home” wasn’t much. But, Abby thought to herself, it was better than a hard floor and a metal leash upstairs naked in the locker room.

Abby entered the ladies’ room on B-2, and headed to the sinks to wash her hands and fix her hair. There were still two stalls on one side of the rom; a third, however, had been replaced with a shower with a see-through glass door. Abby doubted there were many women who came down here, though, which meant that Mistress Rei likely had the facilities to herself.

Her red hair was out of place, but Abby otherwise looked aglow. As embarrassed and ashamed of her behavior as she might have been, the girl staring back at her in the mirror looked content, happy, and confident. There was little as satisfying as a good orgasm, even if it had been achieved alone, and Abby felt wicked and naughty – in a very good way. Whatever the rest of the morning brought, and whatever the afternoon held in store, Abby felt ready for it. As ready as she could be, at least.

She needed a smoke.

**Mailgirl Number Six, Part Ten**

Barrow found her outside, seated ungraciously on a set of cement stairs leading down from the loading docks behind the building. Abby was on her second cigarette, bummed from Kaitlyn York during a quick trip back up to HR. She was lost in contemplation as the Director of Human Capital joined her, and she almost didn’t notice him at first.

“I didn’t know you smoked,” he remarked, and sat down beside her.

“I don’t,” she replied with a smile, and then took another puff. “It’s just been that kind of day.”

Barrow paused, and then offered, “I wouldn’t get too hung up on Kristen Metkovich. I wouldn’t let her get to you.”

Abby didn’t answer.

“Casey Campbell…” he went on, “should count for two.”

Abby raised an eyebrow. “So then we’re good for the day?”

Barrow chuckled a little. “No, not quite. I’m just telling you, she’s a vision.”

“Are you smitten?” Abby teased.

“Why didn’t we lead with her?”

Abby exhaled, the smoke dissipating in the gentle, late summer breeze. “We had better leverage with the first two. Credit card debt…? I don’t know. I wasn’t sure that’d be enough to entice her.”

“What did she buy? Where did it even all come from…?”

“I don’t know.”

Abby thought about her own situation. She was thirty, divorced, and stuck in a mortgage that would bankrupt her eventually. Jon was gone, and it had been Jon whose money had been tied up at the time of the condo’s purchase; because of that, it was Abby’s name and Abby’s name alone on the bank loan. He’d paid his fair share the first month after he’d taken up residence out in Bushwick with Traci-With-An-I. And he’d eventually done so the second month, after Abby had chased him. Her father had helped out after, but the condo was now on the market and Abby had been looking to downsize. That alone, though, wouldn’t have been enough to sign her life away like Mailgirl Number Three had done.

Barrow reached inside his jacket, and produced a packet of paper that had been stapled and folded in three. He extended it to Abby, and said, unceremoniously, “I have a proposal for you.”

Abby smiled, shook her head, and took another puff. From beneath her, as she’d been sitting on it, she produced a packet of her own. She held it out for Barrow. “I already signed it.”

This clearly caught Barrow of guard. But, he recovered, took the packet, and glanced it over.

“Congratulations,” Abby teased. “You’re buying me out of a one-bedroom walk-up in Chelsea.”

“Am I?”

“The University of Pennsylvania also thanks you for settling the matter of my student loans.”

“That’s generous of me.”

“I’m worth it.”

“We’ll see.”

Abby puckered. That stung. It had been the opportunity for Barrow to compliment her, or to say something nice. Instead, his response was ominous and condescending.

“I guess we will,” Abby sighed. “I’m also in-line for Stephanie’s job, down in Miami.” Stephanie was Chris’s peer for the South Atlantic and Latin American divisions; the job would be a step up from where Abby was today, with the opportunity to travel down to Panama, Rio, and Buenos Aires. More importantly, Miami was over a thousand miles from Jersey City.

“What am I doing with Stephanie?”

“You’ve got twenty-four months to figure that out. I’m sure you’ll think of something.”

“Anything else I should know?”

Abby leaned over, flipped through the pages in Barrow’s hands, and pointed to a dollar figure. “There’s a nice little completion bonus in there, too.”

Barrow whistled sarcastically. “This is getting expensive.”

“I’ve seen the bottom line. I know what a mailgirl is worth to the company.”

Barrow continued to flip through the document, eventually finding the signature he was looking for. Holding up that particular page to Abby, he pointed out, “You understand that, with this, with Power of Attorney, I can go inside and re-write all of this right now?”

Abby shrugged. Of course she did. Of course. She expected the company to ... her over at some point, maybe with the promotion or maybe with the bonus. Or maybe she’d get bullied into a subsequent contract. It was just how these things worked. But there was nothing overly unreasonable in the contract she’d marked up, even if the dollars and cents were on the higher end when compared to the contracts she’d done for girls Three, Four, and Five. And even if Barrow screwed her on half of the things in here, it still meant he’d be honoring the other half.

Abigail Wagner Williams would become Mailgirl Number Six.

For now, though, she extinguished what was left of her cigarette on the stairs beside her.

“Why?” Barrow asked. Why was she doing this? Why had she taken this on?

“It seemed inevitable,” she answered, snark evident in her tone.

Why? Why, exactly? It wasn’t the money. Nor was it the promotion. Nor was it even the fact that she likely didn’t have much of a choice anyways – it was probably either this, or returning broke and broken to her parents’ house in Massachusetts. She wasn’t sure how she’d ever explain this decision to Jim and Angie Wagner. But it was her decision, a decision she’d reached in the ladies’ room down in the sub-basement, a decision that was likely the result of being still drunk on a cocktail of post-orgasmic hormones. There was no denying that she was turned on by all of this, so why not lean in? She was no longer Abigail Wagner, up-and-comer. Nor was she Mrs. Jonathan Williams. It was time to see who Mailgirl Number Six would be.

“Alright…” Barrow said, folding her contract, and tucking it into his jacket. He wasn’t entirely satisfied with her answer, and he knew that there was more swirling around inside her head than she was going to share with him.

“One favor, though,” Abby began.

“Okay.”

“Can I tell people that you blackmailed me into this?”

“I’d prefer that you told people you volunteered.”

“Right, right. I mean, right. But, my parents, maybe?”

Barrow reached into his pocket, and pulled his phone out. He handed it Abby, and asked, “Would this help?”

The moment she saw the image, Abby blanched. She knew what it was, and knew immediately. How had she been so stupid? How could she not have realized there were cameras in the stairwells at USF?

It was clearly her. Red hair, black dress, black suit jacket. She’d kept her clothes on, at least, but that was small comfort. Her dress was around her waist, her legs were spread open, and her hand was buried under her panties and pantyhose. The camera must have been in the opposite corner, and the resolution above-and-beyond what one might have expected out of security footage. They’d likely been installed by Human Capital, to catch a mailgirl red-handed in the act of doing exactly what Abby was doing to herself. It was a video, but Abby didn’t need to press “play” to know Barrow had captured the whole thing.

“Hold on,” Barrow said, leaning over the phone, and swiping to the right. “I’ve got a couple more.”

The next image was no better. It was the interior of Abby’s office, as seen from her desk.

“You hacked the camera on my laptop?”

Barrow nodded absentmindedly. “The angle’s not as good as the stairs, though.” He wasn’t a wolf, who’d trapped her in his jaws. He was simply proud of what he had on her, as if the two of them were discussing a third party. “You can’t see much below the desk, but you can see it on your face.” He swiped right again, and then reached for the phone. “…and here, the audio on the third one is the best…”

Abby pulled Barrow’s phone away from him. “I don’t need to hear,” she said. “I was there.”

She didn’t know what she should have expected. She knew going in that she’d be caught – Wendy had been caught, Georgeann had been caught.

“And you know about the basement, then?”

“No,” he said, shaking it head. “What about the basement?”

“...,” she swore. “Never mind.”

She’d piqued his curiosity, but he didn’t press. At least, not at the moment. “You’re not the only one, if that helps,” he offered. “It’s more men than women, though.”

“You have those on your phone, too?”

“Why? Are you interested?”

Abby sighed. It didn’t matter, did it? She’d already signed on as a mailgirl, and had agreed to humiliate herself over and over, time and time again over the next two years. Based on her recent track record, she’d be doing exactly this, in front of an audience down in the cafeteria, before the end of the week. She was embarrassed, of course. Humiliated. But she was more embarrassed by the fact that Barrow had likely watched this two weeks ago, and had kept silent about it until now.

“You were going to release this if I said no?”

Barrow looked at her blankly, and took back his phone. “Honestly? I was probably going to release it either way.”

Abby couldn’t help herself; she laughed. “Oh god,” she chuckled, wiping away a tear. “What an asshole.”

Barrow laughed along with her, and took the insult in the gentle, joking way it had been offered. Almost as a compliment.

Abby said, “I need another cigarette.”

Mailgirl Number Six, Part Eleven

Abby said, “I need another cigarette.”

This, Barrow could do. From inside is jacket, he pulled a Parliament Light. When she looked at him, mystified, he shrugged. “Kaitlyn told me where to find you.”

Abby took the offered cigarette, and reached for Kaitlyn’s borrowed lighter.

“Though, you really should start thinking about your cardio…”

She scowled at him. “I’ve got a couple more minutes of freedom.”

“You know there’s no smoking in the building, right? And this may be your last time outside for a while.”

On top of everything else, she’d be a prisoner here at Park Place. She took a puff of the cigarette. “Then I better enjoy the fresh air while I can.”

She was resigned. This was not the full-throated confrontation she’d had with Metkovich, nor the bitter back-and-forth she’d had with Mailgirl Number Three yesterday. Abby was licked, and she knew it. Her conversation with Barrow was not an angry one, or a threatening one. Rather, they talked like colleagues, joking as if discussing the fate of Marie Partee, and not Abby Wagner Williams.

As if to drive this point home, Barrow asked bluntly, “When was the last time you got laid?”

Abby stared out across the parking lot.

“I mean, with someone else,” he added.

She stuck her tongue out at him. “I don’t know,” she answered honestly. “Valentine’s Day, maybe? So, seven months or so?”

“Ouch,” Barrow winced.

“Yeah, it wasn’t great.” She didn’t know why she was being this honest. “Why? Are we at this point in the onboarding?”

She ran through the litany of answers she’d be expected to give. “Five-foot-six. A hundred-and-twenty-five. –Ish. Red. Green. May 11th. Thirty-four, twenty-five, thirty-five. Eight. C. Straight. Sixteen. Oral, yes. Anal, no. Never been with a woman…”

“No, no,” Barrow said, throwing up his hands. He stopped, and then added, “We’ll get there. And I’ve got some follow-ups. But, just with the 24/7 thing, and the rules against fraternizing with non-mailgirls…”

“…I’m going to grow my virginity back?” she joked. She stared him down, and asked, “Why? Are you offering?”

Barrow smirked. He may have been ...ing her metaphorically, but he wasn’t going to do so literally. “Talk to me in two years.”

“It’s a date,” she said. She added, “Maybe it’s for the best. It might be good to take a break from men for a little.”

Abby had meant only that it might be good to be single for a little while. Barrow, however, interpreted it a different way. “I hear Number Two has had some practice,” he offered helpfully. “With Number Seven. Or maybe Ten? I don’t know, I can’t keep the numbers straight sometimes. The blonde one, from Legal, with the nose. Michelle Mayer?”

“’Sir, per Human Capital, she is to be called by her mail room number.’”

“So we’re starting with the ‘sir’ already?”

“I don’t know, sir,” she said, half-mockingly. “Do you want me to, sir?”

“It can wait a little longer,” he said, brushing off the fact that she was making fun of it. But then he turned to her, looked her in the eyes, and asked, “Why? Do want to start now?”

He wasn’t asking for her permission to institute the practice, and insist she start calling him “sir” at that very moment. Instead, he seemed to be asking her if calling him “sir” turned her on?

She bit her lip. It did. God help her, it did.

She didn’t answer. And he took her non-answer as answer enough. He looked away, and joked, “Too bad about Kristen Metkovich, though.”

“Too bad about Kristen Metkovich,” Abby parroted back, meaning it on any number of levels. To the point that Barrow had intended to make, though: yes, if she were going to start sleeping women here as a mailgirl, it might have been nice to have someone with a little more practice. She added, “Sir.”

That last “sir” hung in the air uncomfortably, it was clear that the mood had shifted. She was bitter, in her way. She might have been volunteering. She might have drawn up the contract herself, and signed it before Barrow even made the offer. And she might have been turned on by all of this, inside and out. But she likely hadn’t had as much freedom to choose this life as any of those things might have implied; the videos on Barrow’s phone made that clear. If it hadn’t been now, it would have been October, or November, or some other point. As wet as she might have been, she wasn’t looking forward to what lay ahead.

They sat in silence for another minute or so, until Abby finished her cigarette and put it out with the bottom of her shoe.

“Do we want to go find Mistress Rei?” Abby finally asked. Unsure of herself, she repeated, “Do we want to go find Mistress Rei, sir?”

“Do we need Mistress Rei?”

Abby swallowed. No, of course not. Abby knew the drill. She didn’t need the Japanese woman pulling her hair or slapping her around. Not yet, at least. “No, sir” she finally answered.

Abby stood, and turned for the door, but Barrow stopped her. “We can stay here. We can do it here,” he offered. It was classic Barrow – he’d strip her and humiliate her here, out behind the building by the loading docks, and make it sound as if he were doing her a favor. Surely this was better than doing so in the locker room, he seemed to be implying.

“Here? Now?”