**Perfectly Logical**

by Joe Doe

**Perfectly Logical Part 1**

Abdul had a way about him, a sort of oily street Arab charm that made his cheerful sexism and sly ways less offensive to me than they might otherwise be. Like many of his ilk he was a natural salesman, with a talent for making the unthinkable perfectly acceptable.

He was constantly hitting on me, and failing miserably turned his attention to my students, until I made it clear that my rich collection of daddy’s girls was both off limits and well out of his league. Still, I had few complaints, as he was an excellent tour guide. He seemed to know not only his country but also everyone in his country. Everyone liked him, and he knew where all the best food and shopping were. I knew he was steering my students towards spending more on the cheap glazed ceramics and jewelry then they should, but what of it? The girls on this tour had money to burn, and as they would never think of tipping him it seemed only fair that he make his money some other way.

The subject of the slave market came up gradually. He mentioned it first as historical oddity, but after gauging our reaction and extracting solemn promises from all of us he confided that it was not all together a thing of the past. “It is a place Western women cannot go,” he said. “Not even the richest, or the smartest, or the most powerful. But I know away in.”

My spoiled students, used to getting everything they wanted, DEMANDED that he tell them, but he demurred. Still, over the next several days the hints continued. “The harem of the Arabian nights is real, fair ladies. Imagine the stories you could tell your friends! No, no. Abdul says too much. Let us get some pastries instead.”

“... the cookies,” Brittany said.

“Yeah, tell us about the slave market,” Taylor said. “Are the girls hot?”

“They’re as hot as YOU, Taylor,” Sara sniped.

“Indeed they are most beautiful,” Abdul said, suavely diffusing the catfight. “Some of the most beautiful women on the continent, or any continent, are sold there. But enough. It is time for our jellab.”

The jellab was indeed delicious. There was no more mention of the slave market that day, despite the girl’s insistence. When the next day the subject arose again, Abdul finally let the shoe drop.

“I could get you into the market,” he said. “Possibly. There is one way. But for another time.”

“Tell us NOW,” Sara said.

“Yeah! You said Westerners weren’t allowed.”

Abdul nodded. “You would not be going as Westerners. I would bring you in as slaves.”

After the long buildup the suggestion seemed perfectly logical; indeed, I think some of the girls had thought of it themselves. I certainly had. They insisted on going immediately, but again Abdul demurred, taking us to watch a goat auction instead.

“It is not unlike other chattel sales,” he said, his subtext lost on no one. “With the men in the bleachers bidding as the goods are paraded before them. Of course the two-legged animals walk up the steps of the auction block. The men can see them better that way.”

And so it went. Everything he told us was outrageous, of course. But it was presented so gradually, and the information revealed so sparingly, that it never completely shocked. Like a frog in a pan of cool water, he simply raised the temperature one degree each day.

By the time Abdul finally agreed to take us to market, even I was relieved that the long tease was finally over. Abdul had hinted for several days “the goods must be seen,” noting that “goats for sale wear nothing.” It wasn’t shocking when he was talking about goats. And after several days it somehow didn’t seem shocking when it wasn’t a goat.

So when he took us to a courtyard a few block from our hotel and ordered the girls to strip, no one objected, despite the presence of several Abdul’s “brothers, my most trusted assistants.”

Each girl was given a garbage bag and told to put their clothes and personal property inside. “Your valuables will be handled carefully,” Abdul promised. “But you can bring nothing into the slave market. You must be as naked as a goat, or horse, or any other animal being vended there.”

“They sell goats there, too?” Stephanie said, shrugging her bra off her shoulders to reveal her perky, lovely breasts. “Ewww!”

“Yes, and camels and cows as well,” Abdul said.

“Moo-moo, Brittany,” Jessica sniped. “You’ll fit right in.”

“In a market one animal is much the same as the other.”

As the men tossed the garbage bags containing their clothes onto the donkey cart, I took a moment to look the girls over. They were young and beautiful, to be sure. A group of spoiled little rich girls on an exotic tour, dressed in their overpriced Abercombie & Fitch outfits and their stylish Gucci sandals. I must say I felt more than a little amused as I watched them stuff their Victoria’s Secret silk lingerie and the tasteful diamond pendants and bracelets their moonstruck boyfriends or their doting daddies had given them into the trash bags.

There was a bit of a delay with Jessica, as she wanted to keep her earrings.

“DUH!” Brittany said, tweaking Jessica’s earlobe with her finger. “Uh, like slave girls shop at Tiffany’s!”

“Maybe she got them on E-bay!” Taylor said, laughing as she slid her panties down her long legs and used one foot to casually dangle them over the garbage bag at her feet before dropping them in with the rest of her clothes.

“Way to spread your legs, Taylor,” Brittany said sarcastically. “Like, you just gave garbage-bag-guy a total beaver shot.”

“Oooh, don’t be gross,” Taylor said. “He’s not a GUY. He’s like... the garbage-bag-guy.”

I had been a bit surprised at how casually the girls had stripped in front of the men, but Taylor’s dismissive comment explained their cool indifference. The robed, masked men around us were not, in their eyes, men at all, but servants. It was no different than sunbathing in front of the pool boy.

Almost. I watched as Sara wiggled her underpants over her shapely bottom, bending over to pull them off her feet one at a time. The man behind her tapped the whip in his palm impatiently, loving running his fingers over the lashes as he eyed her curvaceous bare cheeks. The keffiyeh over his mouth covered most of the smile on his face, but the way his fingers teased the wicked black lash spoke volumes.

“Everything off, ladies,” Abdul said, in a voice both encouraging and insistent. “The day is only getting hotter, and we don’t want to burn your fair white skin.”

At this sage warning Sandra and several of the other girls who still had their purses pulled out tubes of sunscreen which they slathered all over their naked bodies before handing the cream to the girls whose purses were already bagged.

“Passports and cellphones too, ladies,” Abdul said, eying Miyako, who still clutching her cellphone and passport as she nervously bit her lip.

“Can’t we keep our passports?” Miyako asked.

“Slave girls don’t have passports,” Abdul replied. “Don’t worry, my little Japanese cherry blossom. We will get your titles prepared as soon as we get you to market.”

“Titles?” I said, a bit confused. “You mean, like royalty?”

“That’s cool!” Brittany said, overhearing me. “I’ll be a Princess!”

“Princess Pea-brain,” Jessica shot back.

“Not exactly,” Abdul said, dropping his voice as he turned to answer my question. “The girls need to have some sort of legal identification before we bring them into the marketplace, if nothing else as a mere precaution in case there is an ownership dispute. After all, it’s not a naked slave girl can pull out her driver’s license.”

Like everything else Abdul said the fact, when presented by itself, made perfect sense. “So it’s a document that keeps them safe?” I said, assuring myself with his explanation.

“Precisely. It has fingerprints and photographs so the girl can be clearly identified.”

“Photographs?” I said. “But they’re naked!”

“Not to worry. These photographs will be printed on the legal forms we will use to bring them to market, not their Facebook pages. They would only be used in the event of a conveyance.”

“A conveyance?”

“Yes, a transfer of title,” he said, using the same casual tone of voice he used when bargaining for coffee in the marketplace.

I swallowed hard, looking out at the girls. Miyako and a few of the more bashful girls were still stripping, but most of the girls were already naked.

Absolutely, 100%, stark naked.

There was a brief dispute as Abigail asked if she could keep the cheap plastic beads she had bought at the market that morning from one of Abdul’s friends, arguing that they were local. To my surprise, Abdul agreed, saying they shiny multicolored bead string “was the sort of cheap trinket a foolish slave girl might prize.”

“I paid $75 American for these!” Abigail protested.

“They’re not worth 75 cents,” Miyako replied, looking very sad as the man snatched the bag containing her clothes and precious passport out of her hands and unceremoniously threw it through the air to another man who dumped it onto the donkey cart. The donkey brayed. “They beads are worthless; that’s why he’s letting you keep them.”

I watched as Alice, unabashed by her nakedness, casually explained the dry stonewall technique used to form the ancient barriers that formed the courtyard, which clearly identified that they were now in an ancient part of the city. The girls, used to be naked together in the locker room, chatted amicably, seemingly oblivious to the swarthy men ogling their naked bodies. It was like they did not exist. I realized that this was a naughty adventure to them, a prank, all part of the tour, like getting drunk on the minibar at their four star hotel or making fun of the women in their burqas.

"Here is your bag, Professor," Abdul said, casually handing me a garbage bag. The plastic bag was ordinary enough: dark brown with a tie built in. "You may place your things in here," Abdul said simply. "Purse and passport too."

"Place MY things?" I said, not understanding as I looked into the black pit of the bag.

Sensing my confusion, Abdul smiled. “Did you wish to abandon your students?” he asked, feigning confusion.

“Of course not,” I said. “I’d never do that.”

“Precisely. We agreed that those who wanted to visit our slave market would have to do so in the guise of slaves, did we not?”

“Yes,” I replied. Abdul was smiling, toying with me like a hungry cat toying with a cornered mouse. I had shot him down when he asked me out, and now it was time for payback. We both knew where this was going, but he took his time, drawing out the tension as he tightened the noose around my neck.

“I am certain as their chaperone you are duty bound to keep a close watch on the students in your charge, are you not?” he said.

“Yes, of course,” I agreed, not liking one bit where this logic was taking me, but helpless to deny the facts as he presented them.

“And so to fulfill your duty you must go in the guise of a slave,” he said, “if you do not wish to abandon your charges, that is.”

“I don’t want to abandon anyone, but...”

“Indeed. How do goats go to market? Do they wear lovely silk blouses and glasses, like you are wearing now?”

“No,” I said.

“What do they wear?”

“Nothing,” I said.

“So what do you have to do?”

My heart beating like a trip hammer I replied. “I have to strip naked and put all my clothes into the garbage bag.”

“Excellent. Do so.”

“Come on, Professor, let’s get going!” Brittany said.

“Yeah, you’re slower than Miayko!” Abigail added.

Nervously I took off my gray blazer, too warm for the climate, but good for separating myself from my more casually dressed students. "Shoes too?" I asked, hoping he might grant me some pardon even as I knew he would grant none.

"Everything" Abdul replied. “That is why we must hurry. You will be put to market barefoot, and the cities paving stones are already growing hotter in the morning sun.”

“We’re walking?” I said. “Is the slave market that close?” I said.

It was quite bizarre really, but the casualness of my tone belied my breathless apprehension as I quickly stripped myself naked in front of a man who had unsuccessfully asked me out on a date so many times that I had lost count.

“It is not far,” he said, “but the streets are crowded and this is a large group.”

“A large naked group,” I said, pulling my slip over my head. “What if we get separated?”

“This is not my first trip to the slave market, Professor,” he said, smiling suavely. “Rest assured I will not lose any of you.”

At that moment I looked over my shoulder as I learned precisely how we were to be kept together. One of the men had slipped a collar around Brittany’s neck, and was sealing it shut with a couple of quick spins of an Allen Wrench.

“She will be quite secure,” Abdul said. “The collar comes off easily, but only if you have the precise tool.”