**Pretty Naked**

by *Joshua Woode*

I haven't been naked all that much. Not really. I mean, not where other people could see me. Of course I'm naked in the shower and in my room and stuff, like everybody. It's different when you're naked in other places, with other people. I remember those times, all of them. Now that I'm ten, I write about them in my diary, even the ones that happened when I was little. Is that weird? I dunno. What I know is that people mostly seem to think I'm pretty only when I'm naked. It's kind of annoying, but I guess I'm used to it now.

**The Nice Man Fixing The Sink**

When I was five years old, I guess I didn't really think about being naked. My Dad said that he sometimes had to chase me around the house to get me to put clothes on, but I don't remember that. The first naked thing I remember is when I came into the kitchen for breakfast and there was a man there fixing the sink.

Mom was working, like always. And Dad was in his office upstairs on the phone, like always. Seems like a lot of my naked times happened when they were busy with other stuff. Like always.

Anyway, it was hot that morning so I took off my pajamas. I took my blanket everyplace back then, so when I went to the kitchen looking for breakfast I was holding it and dragging it along. The man fixing the sink was laying on the floor with his head inside the cabinet, and he was saying bad words. I'd heard most of them already from Daddy talking to people on the phone, but this man knew some different ones. He had on blue pants and a blue shirt and the shirt had a tag on it that said "Frank."

I was proud that I could read a little then, so I said "Hi Frank." The man started to sit up and he hit his head on the cabinet and he said more bad words. Then he pulled his head out and looked at me. That's the part I remember the most, how he looked at me. His eyes were big, and brown, and then he blinked, and looked around, and looked back at me, like he didn't know what to do. I guess most grownups don't really look at you when you're little. Frank looked at me really hard, like I was the only thing there was. It gave me this warm feeling in my tummy. Maybe that's how come I like remembering it.

We could hear my Dad talking on the phone. Frank sat on the floor so we were about the same amount of tall. He kinda coughed and then he said, "Well... hello there." I just said, "Hi." He looked some more and then he said, "What's your name, princess?" It was nice how he called me "princess." Dad did too sometimes. I said, "Sarah."

I was holding my blanket in front of me and Frank was looking at it. He said, "That's a very nice blanket, Sarah." I said, "Ahuh." He looked around again. Then he said. "Can I see it?" I handed it to him. But he didn't really look at the blanket. He was looking more at me. After a minute he said, "You're a very pretty girl, Sarah." I liked when he said that. Dad told me I was pretty also but Dads are supposed to say that even if you're not, so it's a lot nicer when somebody else says it. I smiled and Frank smiled back. Frank's face looked kinda red.

After a minute, Frank said, "You're naked." I thought that was sort of strange. I mean, I knew I was, so I just said "Ahuh." Maybe that was the first time that those things got connected for me. 'You're pretty. You're naked.' Like, I was pretty cuz I was naked. I dunno.

Frank coughed again, and his face got more red. He said, "Maybe you should go tell your father that you're awake, princess." That seemed to make sense so I started to go, but then I had to go back. "Can I have my blanket, mister?" I said. He looked down like he didn't remember that he had it. "Oh... of course. Here you go, princess." I went to Dad's office and he told me to go get dressed. I almost told him, "Frank thinks I'm pretty when I'm naked, Daddy." But I didn't.

The Nice Lady at the Store

When I was seven Daddy took us on vacation to the beach. I had to get new bathing suits. Mom was working (again) so Dad took me to the store. We went to big store with lots of clothes in it, and there was a giant rack of suits.

It was really hard to see what size would fit me. Dad looked helpless and said that I had to try them on to be sure. I never did that in a store before, so I didn't know how. Dad found a lady salesperson and asked if she could help.

She was an older lady and she smelled nice and had a pretty smile. Comfy, sort of. She said, "One piece or two, sweetheart?" I liked that she asked me and not Dad. I said "Two!" Dad made a face and said, "One." I made a face too. Dad finally rolled his eyes and said, "Maybe one of each?"

The lady laughed and picked out a bunch of suits, all kinds and colors. She took my hand and we went in the back to where there were these tiny rooms to change in. She opened the door to one of them and I stepped inside, holding the bundle of suits. The lady looked around. There was nobody else there. I guess I looked unsure so she said, "Do you need some help, young lady?" It made me feel more grownup up for her to call me that, but I still wasn't sure, so I nodded. She stepped into the room with me and closed the door behind her.

"Let's have your shoes off first, sweetheart." I sat on the little seat and pulled off my sneakers. The room was really small, so she said, "I think this will be easier if you stand up on the bench. What's your name, dear?" I told her I was Sarah and I managed to get up on the bench. She said, "Lift your arms, Sarah." I did and she pulled my dress over my head. I was embarrassed, but she just smiled. It was a kinda like being with my Mom, so it didn't feel weird. She hung my dress on a little hook on the wall. Then she looked back at the door and lifted up her head to look over the wall.

Her face seemed a little sad when she said, "My two girls are all grown up now. I miss the time when they were your age." I thought that was neat.

I was surprised when she took down my underpants. She didn't say anything, she just did it. All the way down to my feet, and she tapped each foot for me to lift it. She picked them up and hung them with my dress. It felt my face get hot. She touched my cheek. "Aren't you just the prettiest little thing. No need to be shy, sweetheart, we're all girls here." That made me feel a little better. I noticed that she only said I was pretty once I was naked.

There were six suits to try on, three one-piece and three bikinis. We did the bikinis first, but just the bottoms since she said I didn't have to worry about the tops fitting "yet." I didn't have anything on top that they had to fit around. After I put on each one, she wiggled her finger under the leg part to see how tight it was. "These need to be just right, Sarah. Too tight or too loose and you'll be displaying your charms to the world." I wasn't too sure what she meant by "charms." She had me squat down in them too, and one of them was so big on me that you could see everything, so then I understood. One of the two-piece suits was so tight that it went right up inside me. She could hardly get her finger in between the suit and my kitty. I remember she said something weird about how boys might like that one, but that it wasn't proper. When we found one that fit, she showed me how to use my fingers to fix the back part over my butt cuz she said they always creep up. She helped me get dressed and told Dad that I was the nicest little girl she'd ever met. I felt really special.

Every time I put on a bathing suit after that, I think about that lady. And I always put my fingers under the leg part to make sure my charms aren't gonna be on display.

**My Gymnastics Coach**

I started gymnastics when I was 8. Dad said it would be good for me to burn off my extra energy. I guess I ran around the house a lot and did what he called "bouncing off the walls."

The teacher in the first class I took said I was "promising" and should get a real coach. I don't remember promising her anything, but anyways. That was scary but also exciting, so Dad took me to a real gym where they had girls that went to meets all over the place. I wasn't sure I'd fit in but the coach seemed nice and Dad said I could stop if I didn't like it.

The first time I went to a class there, we were just warming up when Coach Harkins said, "Sarah, let me see you in my office, please." I remember the other girls giggled some and looked at each other and whispered. When I got to the coach's office I figured out why.

He closed the door and sat down and he said, "Sarah, this is your first time at serious gym, isn't it?" I nodded. I was nervous. I was afraid maybe he changed his mind already and wouldn't let me stay. "Well, then I guess it's understandable." He just looked at me for a few seconds. Then he said, "Sarah, in a serious gym, you don't wear underpants under your leotard."

I was so embarrassed. Nobody ever explained that to me. I guess my first teacher wasn't serious enough to know that. I said I was sorry and that I wouldn't wear them next time. I felt like a total dork. He said, "That's fine, Sarah. Now you know. Let's have them off for today's class."

I wasn't sure what he meant, so I said, "Have them off?"

He looked at me like my Dad does sometimes when he thinks I'm being dumb. "Yes, Sarah. Take off your things and then put your leotard back on without your underpants."

I looked around the room and there wasn't anyplace to change. "Ummm... where can I go?" I asked.

He shook his head. "Just do it here. We need to get back to class. Hurry up now."

I was blushing like mad. I already felt so stupid and I didn't want to get kicked out on my first day so I thought I had to do it. I guess I wasn't fast enough though. He got mad. "Are you an athlete or a baby, Sarah? Girls in my gym are athletes, and they take things seriously, and they do as they're told because they want to win."

When I got my leotard off he held out his hand, so I gave it to him. I turned my back to him before I took off my underpants, but then I realized that I had to get my leotard from him. I turned back around and he was just holding it.

"You can't be shy about your body if you're an athlete, Sarah." I held out my hand for my leotard but he still just held it. "I'm your coach, and it's important that I be able to see you, to see how the muscles and bones are developing."

I didn't know what to say so I just stood there. He said, "Let's see a bridge, Sarah." I looked at my leotard in his hands. He shook his head. My knees were shaking but I managed to bend over backwards and put my hands on the floor behind me.

"Lift your hips. Extend." His voice wasn't loud but I could tell he was still mad, so I pushed my butt up higher. That made my front stick right out. I heard his chair move and then he was standing over me. His finger made a line down my tummy and over my hip and down my leg. "Nice form, Sarah. You have promise." I was trembling from holding the bridge. Finally he said, "You're a very pretty girl, Sarah. But you need to know that pretty doesn't buy you anything here. It's hard work and dedication that will get you ahead. Don't question me and you'll do well. Now walk it over."

I barely managed to pull my hips up over my head, flip my legs and stand back up on the other side. I was breathing hard but I was relieved that he was smiling. He handed me back my leotard and I put it on as fast as I could. The other girls were still giggling at me when we went back. So embarrassing.

I thought about telling Dad what happened on the way home in the car, but he was on the phone the whole time. Besides me feeling like a complete idiot.

For the next few months, the coach would take me aside before class and check to see if I remembered not to wear underpants. He had me pull the front of my leotard out of the way to prove it. The other girls laughed every time.

**Doctor Cooper**

When I was nine, my Dad took me to the doctor for my checkup. Mom usually took me, but she was working that day. When we got there, Dad was on the phone and Doctor Cooper tried to ask him if he was going to stay with me in the exam room. Dad stopped his phone call just long enough to ask the doctor if it was ok if I went in by myself, cuz he was busy and besides he didn't want to embarrass me, whatever that meant. The doctor said that was ok and Dad went right back to the phone.

I went to Doctor Cooper since I was a baby and he was really nice. He had me sit up on the table and asked me all kinds of questions about school and gymnastics and stuff at home and what I was eating and how I was sleeping and if started my period yet. I didn't of course and I thought that was a little weird since I thought that didn't happen til you were a lot older, but he said some girls start even before nine so I had to know about it. Mom had talked to me a little, but it's just so weird and gross that I couldn't even listen. It was easier with Doctor Cooper even though he's a man.

He said that this time would be different cuz he needed to check me all over. Before when I came with Mom I just had to take my shirt off, so I did that. But Doctor Cooper said, "Everything off this time, Sarah." He smiled and was writing on his clipboard and I took off my shorts. When he looked up again, he just said, "Everything means everything. Underpants too." I felt myself turn red but he smiled again. "I know it's embarrassing, but you're getting to be a big girl now. Your Dad understands that also. We don't need to tell him about the embarrassing parts, do we?"

I shook my head and for once I was glad that Dad was on the phone. Bad enough to be naked with the doctor. He helped me down off the table and I took off my panties. I kinda stood there holding them in front of me, but he held out his hand so I had to give them to him. "There we go. Just relax, sweetheart."

He had me get up on the scale and he did my weight and height. Then I had to walk back and forth, and bend over so he could see the bones in my back. He said that I was in really good shape from gymnastics and he asked me all about if I has any injuries or anything. After a while I almost forgot I was naked.

Then I got back up on the table and he did all the listening and thumping stuff. Then he had be lay down and he did the poking and prodding part, all the way down my tummy. His hands are so big. I remember how they looked when he started to move my legs. He said, "Relax, Sarah. We're going to have you in frog legs for a bit." I didn't know what that meant so he showed me. I had to tuck my feet up next to my butt and let my knees go out to the sides flat on the table. I was like totally... open... down there. My face was burning hot.

Doctor Cooper just looked at me like that for a minute. Finally he said, "You are a very pretty girl, Sarah. You know that, don't you?" I nodded a little. Figures that he said it when I was the most naked ever.

He started doing poking and feeling down there and I looked away. It felt weird. My bottom moved when he touched around where I pee from. He said, "Do you touch down here, Sarah?" It was confusing. I said, "No. I mean. I... wash?" He just said, "That's fine, sweetheart. Now grab your knees with your hands, please."

That was the most embarrassing part of all. He put slippery stuff on me and he stuck his finger right up my butt. I could feel it wiggling around in there. It seemed like it went on for a long time. Weirdest. Thing. Ever.

When that was done, he talked to me for a while about periods and stuff. I'm not sure why I had to be naked for that part. I guess I paid attention more to what he was saying since I didn't want to think about how I had no clothes on. Finally he patted my leg and said that I was a good girl and that everything looked great.

I got up from the table and the doctor handed me a tissue. He said, "You may want to wipe a little before you get dressed, Sarah. It's totally normal, don't worry. It's a sign of you getting older." I took the tissue but I was confused again. I started to wipe my nose. He laughed and said, "No no, dear. Your vagina." I couldn't believe it. I turned around and wiped down there and the tissue was gooey.

I must have looked worried. He said, "Do you understand what's happened, Sarah?"

I had to say, "Not really."

He smiled. "You know how babies are made?" I nodded, but he went on. "The penis goes into the vagina. The vagina gets slippery so this can happen more easily. Your body is starting to get ready for that. It's totally natural, and nothing to worry about. You can ask your Mom to talk to you about it." Hah. As if. Finally he handed me my underpants and I could get dressed.

I stared out the car window the whole way home while Dad was talking on the phone. It was weird, but I actually wished that he'd been in there with me, with the doctor. Maybe it would have been different if he'd been there, even if it was the most embarrassing thing ever.

**My Friend's Sister**

After like a year at gymnastics finally the other girls stopped teasing me. I was getting better and that must have helped. There were other younger girls there now too so I wasn't the newest.

This girl Naomi and me got to be friends and she invited me to sleep over. She has a sister who's 13. Becca's in gymnastics too. She's awesome and was like third in States the year before. My friend and her got along pretty good except my friend was always mad since all her clothes were hand-me-downs. But her sister had a bunch of cool stuff to hand down. I was even sort of jealous.

Naomi and Becca slept in the same bedroom so I guess they got used to not being shy with each other. My friend and me went to a movie and when we got back Becca was sitting in their room with a towel around her bottom and nothing on top, brushing her hair. She just said, "Hi Sarah," like it was totally normal. I couldn't help looking at her boobs. They weren't big but I thought they were nice. I hoped mine would be like that and not like my Mom's which are ginormous. I can't imagine doing gymnastics with boobs like my Mom's.

I'm a little taller than Naomi, and her sister said she had a leotard that maybe I could wear. I couldn't believe how nice she was being. The leotard was really pretty and she said I should try it on. I started to go to the bathroom and they gave me this funny look. I felt like I was being a baby so I decided to just try it on there. When I got it on, Becca did the finger thing in the legs like the lady in the store did with the bathing suits. She tugged on it some and then said, "Perfect!" I said thank you like ten times I think.

Naomi went to take a shower. Becca helped me take off the leotard. I looked around for my underpants and I saw that she was sitting on them. I asked her to give them to me, but she just grinned. "I think you're the best girl at your age at the gym, Sarah. Don't you dare tell my sister I said that." We both giggled. I felt really proud. Then she said, "I think you're the prettiest, too."

I just said, "No way." I knew I was red. I felt really naked, but with how she was looking at me somehow I felt pretty too.

She said, "Yes way." And then she just did it. It was scary and I didn't know what to do but she's so cool and she was so nice that I didn't think I could stop it without making her hate me and besides, it made me feel strange and warm and shaky all over.

She stood up and came over to me and pushed me down on the bed with her hand. I looked up at her and she was still smiling. She said, "Let me. You'll like it." She laid down next to me and she kissed me, right on the mouth. Then she did it again, and pushed her tongue against my lips. I knew a little about kissing but I never did it before. She poked me with her tongue again and I opened my mouth and she pushed it inside. I was breathing fast and she just kept kissing and kissing.

Her hand was on my tummy and I felt it go down between my legs. She put her leg over mine and pulled my knees apart with it. I started to squirm and tried to pull away. She looked down at me and said, "Let me." I shook my head a little cuz I was scared. Her hand was right there, between my legs, moving around. It was feeling warmer and I remembered what the doctor said. Her finger went between and I felt it slip and slide there. She said, "You're wet. Let me." Her voice was really strong and her hand was really strong and her leg pulled mine farther apart and I was open and her fingers were all over it, like everyplace at once, and she started kissing me again.

Her bare chest was pressing against mine. I felt her boobs on me and was ashamed because I was totally flat. It was weird but mine were pointed and hers were too. The towel was off her bottom and she was rubbing against my hip. It was soft and she was slippery too. She took both my wrists in one of her hands and held my arms against the bed over my head and she moved so she was on top of me and kissed me more. She had her other hand down between us and it was pressing on me and her weight was on top of it so it was pushing my bottom into the bed. She started kissing down my neck and on my chest. I wiggled more and I didn't know what was happening and I tried to say "Don't."

Becca looked up and she said, "You're wet. You like it. Do you really want me to stop?" I closed my eyes. She was this amazing girl and I wanted her to like me so much and it didn't feel bad even though it was scary. I shook my head no a little. She said, "So let me." I nodded a little and tried to relax. She let my wrists go. I felt her lick my chest and then kiss my tummy. She slid down so she was on the floor and she pulled my legs so my bottom was at the edge of the bed. Then I felt something warm and wet between my legs. So weird. I looked down and she was actually kissing me there. I couldn't believe it. I tried to close my legs. She pinched my thigh hard and I squealed a little. She looked up at me and she said, "Let me, Sarah. Open your legs and let me." She pushed my knees open and then held my hips and she started kissing and licking there like mad. I heard my breath go out and then I was panting and it was so confusing. My bottom danced all over and she just kept doing it and doing it til I squeezed her head with my legs and I felt my insides squeezing and squeezing and everything was warm tingles and my eyes went all hazy.

After a minute she crawled up beside me and held me. She said, "I told you you'd like it." I was staring at ceiling and didn't know what to think. She kissed my cheek and handed me my underpants. My knees were shaking but I got a tissue and wiped before I put them on and by the time my friend got back from the shower I was dressed in my pajamas.

Naomi looked at me and then at her sister and then at me again and she giggled. She said, "Did you let her?" I looked down. Naomi giggled again. "I knew Becca liked you." I guess to them it was just a thing. I laughed too and everything was ok after that.

When we had the lights out, we talked and talked for hours. They told me the stuff I needed to know if I wanted to go to States. Stuff about Coach Harkins and how he picked the girls that got to go. Stuff that sounded weird and gross. I knew Becca had gone to States, so I had to ask her if she did that stuff. She said, "Ya. He let me do it."

**Coach Harkins, Again**

I wanted to go to States. Of course I did. It's a big deal and if you do well there you might get noticed by a coach for the national team even. I worked harder than ever in class, and I thought and thought about what Becca told me. And what Becca did. I was confused about all of it.

But I wanted to go. The more I thought about it, I figured out that most of all I wanted to go so that Daddy would pay attention to me. That maybe I'd be more important to him than his stupid phone. And Coach had seen me anyways. He said I couldn't be shy if I wanted to be an athlete. So I went to see him after class.

"What can I do for you, Sarah?" He was doing something on his computer and didn't even look at me.

I swallowed. "I want to go to States, Coach." My voice sounded small to me.

He looked up. "I see." He just looked for another minute. "And?"

"And I think I'm ready. I've been working really hard. Becca said I was the best girl my age."

"Becca said that, did she? When did she become the coach, I wonder."

I looked down. He smiled a little. He wasn't mean, really. He just wanted us to do our best. "Sarah. You have talent, no doubt. And I see that you've been working. I'm just not sure that you have the necessary level of dedication to get to the next level."

That made me mad. I looked him right in the eye. Then I stripped off my leotard and handed it to him.

He shrugged. "Yes, Sarah. I already know that you're pretty. A very pretty girl." He watched me again for a minute. "But you know what matters at this gym is what you do, not how you look."

It was hard but I made myself keep looking at him. I said, "What do I need to do?"

He put his fingers together in front of him. Then he said, "Let's see a bridge, Sarah."

It was like the first time. I bent over backwards and pushed my hips up as much as I could. He got up and stood over me. His finger traced down my chest and tummy. But this time it didn't go to the side and over my hip. It went right down the middle and between my legs. He moved it there, over and through and around and... inside... a little... and back out, and back in a little more.

"You're wet, pretty Sarah. Naked, and wet. If I know Becca, she's had you naked and wet too." My face was red from being upside down, but I felt it get even redder. "Walk it over, Sarah," he said at last. I flipped and stepped out of the bridge. It was a lot easier for me to do that now.

"Your form is better, I'll give you that." He took a towel from the pile and folded it up. Then he dropped it on the floor at his feet. He looked at me and raised his eyebrows, like he was waiting.

I was nervous. I said, "Becca told me... she said... to get to go to States..."

Coach reached over and touched my cheek. "It's ok, Sarah. Pretty Sarah. Becca is a very dedicated athlete. She knows what it takes to achieve her goals. She takes what she wants, without shame. Perhaps you know that. I helped to teach her this. That's what I expect of my girls."

I bit my lip. I was breathing hard. I got on my knees. On the towel that he put there for my knees.

Coach Harkins laid his hand on my head. "First time, Sarah? I'm guessing that it is."

I nodded.

He smiled. "Then we'll take it slow this time."

I didn't like how he said "this time." I remember the sound of his belt jingling when he undid it.

I'd seen my Dad's a few times but it was never... you know. It was always small and funny-looking. Coach was so much bigger, red and angry-looking. I looked up at him, unsure.

"One hand around the bottom part. Then your mouth. Just the end. You do the moving, up and down, nice and easy. This time. Your other hand, underneath. Hold them gently. Show me how you can focus."

It was weird. And gross. But not as gross as I thought. It was clean and warm and just tasted like skin until it started leaking and then I thought I was done but he shook his head and pulled me forward again.

"Just like your routines, Sarah. The finish is critical. The finish is what the judges will remember most when they're scoring you. You have to stick the landing. Finish strong."

At the end I tried. I really really tried. It was just too much. I coughed and choked and I pulled back and it went everyplace. All over me and in my hair and on my face and chest. He didn't look too happy.

"Use the towel, Sarah. Get cleaned up. Not a great finish, was it?" I shook my head. I felt like a dork and like a baby and I thought I'd never get to States.

Coach handed me my leotard and put his hand on my shoulder. "But we know how to improve, don't we?" I looked up and nodded. "How do we improve, Sarah?"

I knew the answer cuz he asked us this every day in class. I said, "Practice."

"That's my girl. States are two months away. Come and see me after class every Tuesday."

By the time States came around, I was ready.

**Finally, Daddy**

I took second in the beam and fourth on the horse at States. Coach said it was the best he'd seen anybody do in their first big meet. I was so proud. Becca hugged me tight and that gave me major cred with the older girls. I was like a star to the younger ones.

My Mom brought me and watched the meet. She even took time off from work. She never did that for anything, so it made me happy. I think she was really proud of me too.

Mom dropped me at home and had to go straight to work. I ran to find my Dad. He was in his office. On the phone. He smiled when I came in and waved. I waved my medals at him. He held up his finger and started talking again.

I couldn't help it. I got so mad. And sad. And more mad.

I said, "Daddy..." I was half shouting and half crying at the same time. He put his hand over his phone. "Sarah, honey, I'll just be a minute, I promise."

"No Daddy. Not in a minute. Now." He shook his head at me and shrugged his shoulders like there was nothing he could do.

I'm not sure what came over me. I said, "Daddy... am I pretty?" Loud enough that he couldn't ignore me.

He looked away from the phone for a second. "What, honey? Oh... yes, sure you are." Then back to the phone. "Oh. No, sorry Phil. I was talking to my daughter." He turned away from me.

That just made me madder. He only said what a Dad has to say.

I'm not sure what came over me, really. Before I really thought about it, I'd stripped off everything. I tapped Dad on the shoulder. "Daddy. I said. Am. I. Pretty."

Dad looked really surprised. His face got red. To the phone, he said, "Ummm... I'm sorry, Phil. I'll have to call you back in a few minutes. Family situation here. You understand." He pushed the button on his phone but didn't put it down.

"Sarah... What are you doing? I'm sorry, princess. How did your... thing... go? Please... put your clothes on, sweetheart. This is... strange."

"My 'thing' was the State Gymnastics Championships, Daddy. It was my first big meet. I've been training for it for almost two years. And I was great. I almost won on the beam. Coach Harkins said I was amazing."

Dad swallowed. He looked down. "Oh God, Sarah... I'm so sorry. I've been so busy... I should have been there... but please, sweety... why did you..."

"Am I pretty, Daddy? Answer me."

He swallowed again and looked up. He hadn't seen me naked in a long long time. Finally he said, "Yes, princess. You're so pretty. You're... beautiful." I felt like he meant it this time. For once, he was really looking at me.

I rushed him and hugged his waist. I was crying and I think he was even crying too. I hugged and hugged til I felt a little better. He petted my hair. "I'm so sorry, Sarah. I've been awful, haven't I?"

I nodded a little. My cheek was pressed against his pants.

"And you are, sweetheart. You are the prettiest girl in the world." He cleared his throat. "Now, Sarah... you really should... you know..."

"You don't even know what I did, Daddy. What I did, so that I could make you proud of me."

He didn't say anything. He was running his fingers through my hair. It felt wonderful.

"I want you to know, Daddy. What I did. What I did for you."

He said, "Sarah, I don't know what you mean. You need to get dressed, sweetheart."

But I didn't want to get dressed. I knew what I wanted. I tugged at Daddy's zipper. I felt him go tense.

"Sarah?"

I pulled it down and wiggled my hand inside.

"Sarah. Stop that." He didn't say it very loudly.

I looked up at him. His face was really confused.

I knew what to say. "Let me, Daddy. You hurt me. Really bad. So let me."

I had to say it a few more times before he finally let me.