**Rita & Rhiannon's Bet Ch. 01**

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**Rita and Rhiannon's Bet -- Another Telling of *Rita's Bet*

Chapter One**

I began to get a sinking feeling in my stomach as I rounded the corner that November Saturday evening in my high school senior year. Even so, my steps did not slow as I aimed myself toward a house on the right that I knew quite well: Rhiannon's house. The night was a bit chilly, but my varsity sweater provided enough warmth for me during my short walk. The cool air felt good as it chilled the skin above my taut knee socks and crept slowly up under the pleated skirt of my cheer uniform toward my thighs.

Rhiannon and I had been friends since first grade. We were in class together almost every year in grade school. Those years that we were not we were still inseparable on the playground. And in junior high school, when recess was a thing of the past, we were together almost every day after school and on weekends.

Rhi and Ri. Rhiannon and Rita.

But as our freshman year of high school rushed by a cloud suddenly descended on us. Enrollment in the district had been slowly and steadily increasing each year for the decade past and the bond issue to fund a new high school had passed three years previous. That shining new edifice, its bathroom stalls still free of graffiti and all its light bulbs presumably working, would be ready for its first classes the following fall.

Rhiannon and I hadn't thought this would affect us. We lived only two blocks from each other. Just take a right out my front door and walk a block to where my neighborhood ends at county highway 117, a two-lane, increasingly busier thoroughfare. Cross the highway, walk one block, make a left and Rhiannon's house is the second on the right.

What separated us was the decision by the local school board to use county highway 117 as the boundary between the two high schools' service areas. Shocked and disappointed, we learned that I would spend my last three years at our current high school while Rhiannon would attend the new school.

Sure, when we were separated at the beginning of that sophomore year we tried to stay in touch and got together when we could. But with academics and clubs and sports and other activities we slowly, and I suppose inevitably, receded from each other, our relationship becoming increasingly tenuous.

One girlish enthusiasm we shared from our first meeting in childhood was what we then considered the swanky, to-die-for excitement and thrill of being a cheerleader. We both wanted to be one someday, and many of our play encounters found us jumping in the air trying to see how high we could fly and how wide we could spread our legs while shaking imaginary pom-poms.

That last year we were together in school, freshman year, the first thing Rhi and I did was audition for spots on the cheerleading squad, vowing not to participate if the other didn't make the team. Well, for reasons no one ever had the inclination or obligation to explain to me I was selected and Rhiannon was not.

Talk about a dark cloud. My heart broke for her. And my promise to Rhi pressed on me like the weight of the world. How could I not honor my agreement with Rhi? But how could I pass up the chance to pursue the dream and goal I had entertained since my knees were covered with scabs? Finally I sat down with Rhi and told her how much I wanted to cheer. Could she ever forgive me if I went ahead and accepted the spot on the squad?

As I walked along the dark sidewalk in front of the house next to Rhi's I could still hear her voice clearly in my mind, and I imagined I could hear it in my ears.

"Sure, Rita," I heard her voice say. "Sure go ahead. I wouldn't want you to miss out on your dream." I could hear her heavy emphasis on the words 'you' and 'your.' Now, seventeen years later, I would know exactly a girl's feelings hearing that sentence spoken in that way. But then I was far too immature to understand her meaning. Instead I heard only the surface words: the sweet parole that set me free. All else was dismissed unnoticed in the swelling of sheer joy her permission had unleashed in me.

The rest of the year went by, but even I began to notice by February how distant Rhi had become toward me. When I asked her what was the matter she would smile and tell me, 'Nothing, Rita. Nothing at all.'

I don't know that my soul really accepted that evaluation, but in that chilly, third quarter of the academic year any association with our broken cheerleading deal in September had receded too far into the past for me to link it to whatever might be bothering her. I was a cheerleader, she was not, and those two facts had now become just a part of our lives and our experiences at school.

My sinking feeling came from the eight or ten cars parked in front of Rhiannon's house and farther down the street. I knew the reason for their presence, and that knowledge sparked a knot of trepidation in my gut. Others, the older and eighteen year old cheer squad and football team members, were to be present.

I had timed my departure from home to arrive at Rhi's front door at exactly the appointed hour: eight in the evening. From all those years of experience I knew well by now exactly how long it took for me to walk from my house to Rhi's. At right on the dot I was ringing her doorbell, after having mounted the two steps from the sidewalk to the Paulson's walk, and then the three steps up to the small porch at their front door. I rang the bell and waited, the sight of those cars again tickling at my apprehension nerve.

While I waited a moment for the door to open a recent memory came to mind, and it came in spite of the unease that I was feeling since turning the corner. The memory made me smile. It was just a couple weeks ago, a week or two into November. I was in the convenience store and suddenly there she was two aisles over. I'd not seen Rhi for months, not since the summer in fact. But it was good to see her and I immediately made my way in her direction.

I came at her from the side and slightly from the back, she examining the choices displayed on the magazine rack. I gave her bottom a little spank. She looked up, a smile starting on her face. When her eyes met mine the smile faded and she said, "Oh, hi, Rita."

Her demeanor left no doubt she wasn't excited to see me. I guessed that we really had taken different forks in the road after freshman year, and that we were now far down sundered and increasingly divergent paths. I tried to make some small talk, tried to engage her in a conversation about how our respective senior years were going. But no dice.

She answered my questions monosyllabically or with as few words as would suffice, her body still mostly turned toward the Newsweeks, Times, Guns & Ammos, and Seventeens. She asked a couple questions of her own, but I could tell her heart was not in it.

I made a last stab before withdrawing. I knew that after that disastrous, strained freshmen year she had hit her new school and immediately had made the cheer squad. 'Mission accomplished,' I had thought when I'd heard the news. She was off on her own adventure, her own childhood wish fulfillment quest. I had sincerely hoped it would be good for her.

"So, still with the cheer squad?" I asked.

"Um, yeah," she said, her eyes avoiding mine. I didn't really have to ask: her varsity jacket told me the tale. I was not wearing mine that day.

"I made co-captain this year," I said, trying to make the statement matter of fact, not wanting to seem like I was rubbing my success in her face in case her own experience had not taken her to such lofty heights.

"Wow, good for you," she said, real warmness and enthusiasm in her voice for the first time. She turned more toward me displaying the front of her jacket: the varsity letter, the words 'Cheerleader' and 'Co-captain' in wooly script. "Me too. I'm co-captain this year too."

I leaned into her for a hug saying, "I'm so happy for you, Rhi." I was glad when she hesitated only an instant before returning the embrace, although not as tightly as I would have liked.

We pulled back and looked in each other's eyes. "All those years ago," I said, giving my head a sentimental shake.

Rhiannon seemed to retreat some back into her distracted state, but not entirely. I could tell I had made a connection and she seemed to engage more. Her eyes met mine and she even smiled a little."Yeah, all those years ago," she said, some enthusiasm warming her voice.

I really couldn't think of anything else to say, and couldn't bear to torture her any longer if this really was the chore for her it seemed to be.

"Well," I said. I wasn't sure how to withdraw. "See you," I offered. Lame.

"Yeah, see you," Rhi returned.

I paid for my purchases and exited the store. I beeped the car open, put my two bags in the back, and was standing next to my car, my back to the store, fumbling a bit to isolate the ignition key before I climbed in.

Suddenly I felt a spank on my own bottom. Thenarms were around my shoulders squeezing me in an embrace, and Rhiannon's head and hair were tight against mine. I knew her scent and breathed it in, relished it.

"Hey girlfriend," she said, real sparkle in her voice. "I guess I was a little distracted in there. Sorry."

"It's ok," I offered. "We all have those days," I said, turning and cupping her cheek with the palm of my hand. "Rhi it was really good to see you. Remember all those days we spent all afternoon playing cheerleaders? Well, I guess we've both arrived."

She brightened. "Both made co-captain," she said. "One to cross off the ol' bucket list."

I laughed at her joke, glad to see her in a good mood.

She got serious for a moment. "Hey, we need to get together," she said. "Our birthdays were a couple weeks ago."

"Ta-da!" I enthused. "Eighteen at last!" We had been born three days apart, her on October 30th and me on November 2nd.

"Well, we need to celebrate," Rhiannon said. And we were soon into planning our night out. I felt on top of the world.

I was never much into drinking and I was glad to discover Rhi had not gotten into it either. We ended up going out that Saturday evening. Of course we were not old enough to enter any licensed establishment, and not being too interested in alcohol abuse neither of us had the fake ID needed for that activity. But we hung out, went here and there, drove around laughing, and we ended up back at my house.

I opened a bottle of wine, snatched from the pantry, and we toasted our birthdays while watching a movie in my room. Our low alcohol tolerance was clearly evident: both of us got a little snockered by sharing a bottle of wine.

"You know what we need to do?" Rhiannon asked me at the conclusion of the movie.

"What, Girlfriend?" I asked in return.

"We've got to do something wild." Rhi said.

"I'm listening," I said.

She thought for a few moments, but I got the sense she knew where she was going. That was fine with me since I had no clue where to take this. I just knew I wanted Rhi and Ri to be together again. The Dynamic Duo.

"Ok," Rhi said, and her face colored. "Remember seventh and eighth grade?" she asked, her voice lowering.

"Sure. What about it?" I asked.

"Remember how we used to play strip poker?" she asked.

Now my face took on the same reddish color Rhiannon's was exhibiting. We had been twelve and thirteen in those two grades. Both of us had been starting to sense insistent feelings from 'down there': the promise and potential for enormous pleasure, curiosity and an unfocused longing filling our minds. We shared the news of the tickle we both felt in our stomachs: not just the curiosity of seeing another person naked, but the thrill of having to strip for another.

We had always used the word 'strip', rather than a synonym like 'disrobe' or 'unveil' or 'undress.' Although not invariably. Sometimes we would a play a game in which no clothes came off until the end of the game and the loser was obliged to strip from scratch. On those occasions if I were the loser Rhi would take particular delight in loudly ordering: "Ok, Rita, you lost. Peel!"

It didn't matter yet at that age that our eyes would take in the nude body of someone of our own sex, or that our revealing of our own nudity would be just to the eyes of another girl. We just knew that we wanted to experience that thrill. The prospect and anticipation of that thrill was mixed up somehow with those blurry waves of desire we were both experiencing.

So for the last couple months of seventh grade, through the ensuing summer, through eighth grade and the summer before high school we dealt the cards on a regular basis whenever we had her house or my house to ourselves for an hour or two.

The thrill had been everything my adolescent, just barely pubescent brain had hoped for. My stomach roiled with anticipation every time, both and either over the prospect of our game ending with me nude and blushing, or me giggling in triumph as Rhi was obligated to model her birthday suit.

And the night after every one of those games my hand was in my panties under the covers as that potential for pleasure I had sensed became a powerful and mind-numbing reality.

"Oh, do I ever remember," I said smiling. "These little fingers never got such a workout as they did at night after those games." I wiggled the fore and middle fingers of both my hands at her.

She laughed. "I know exactly what you mean," she said.

"So, should I find a deck of cards?" I asked.

Rhiannon shrugged her shoulders and nodded her head. "Yeah, why don't we give it a try again. Are you game?"

Was I ever! I remembered how close I had felt to Rhi all those years ago, the two of us sharing the intimacy of revealing our developing bodies to each other. "I'll be right back," I said.

I descended the stairs and made my way down the hall to the kitchen. My mood was light, made that way by this opportunity to share closeness and familiarity again with Rhiannon. I thought that perhaps this experience might reset our relationship: take us back to seventh and eighth grade. That it might take us back to a time before we went to our separate high schools and on our separate ways. Maybe it would give us a second chance to align our paths with each other.

I found a deck of cards in the first kitchen drawer I checked, but it was a pinochle deck. Two drawers later however I found my treasure, and I turned and trotted out of the kitchen with a glad bounce in my step. I made a detour through the dining and living rooms just to see if my parents were home.

The hour was still fairly early, just a little after midnight, and I was not surprised to find them still out. Rhiannon had a younger brother and three younger sisters which, although the youngest was now twelve, still kept her parents pretty homebound. But I am an only and it has been years since my parents have had to stay in or get a sitter on my account. They take advantage of their freedom. They have close friends (just how close is a question I have recently begun to consider) and are seldom home before two or three o'clock on a Saturday night.

I came through the door and held up the fruit of my search: a deck of bicycle-back poker cards.

Rhiannon and I settled onto my bed and we took a quick inventory of what we were wearing: making sure we were even and the game was fair, just as we had as giggling middle schoolers. Six losing hands stood between either of us and our birthday suit.

I saw Rhiannon look to one side toward my closet, the folding doors halfway open. I followed her gaze and saw what I was sure had drawn her interest. At the back of my clothes closet, partly obscured by shoes and a few other odds and ends, was a wooden paddle. Rhiannon's eyes found mine again. She looked around as if she thought there might be prying ears that would overhear her next suggestion. "Want to make the game a little more interesting?" she asked.

"Yes," I said, my voice hushed and almost breathless. I answered immediately, as if I were in a trance. I knew I should ask first what 'more interesting' meant, but I knew Rhi would have to explain anyway. And considering the object that had drawn her gaze it didn't seem a great leap to suppose what she had in mind. I knew that whatever she suggested it would bring us closer: it would be a secret only we would share.

She took the couple of steps over to my closet. She bent down, reached to the back, and came out with the paddle in her hand. As she moved back to the bed she hefted it.

"Loser gets her ass smacked," Rhiannon said, a bit of a smile on her face. "A little butt warming for being the loser." She smacked the paddle's hard surface menacingly against the palm of one hand.

I think I gulped! But my mind raced back to a time about fifteen months in the past.

 **Chapter Two**

It was the end of the summer, our vacation cheer practices were coming to a conclusion, the school year, my junior year, just over a week from commencing. I was at my locker after cheer practice pulling up my jeans when Charlotte, a varsity cheerleader last year and one of the newly-elected varsity co-captains for the coming year, was suddenly pushing the door of my locker closed.

My first two years I had been a junior varsity cheerleader. I was now about to start my junior year, and I would soon discover whether I would continue with one of the junior varsity squads or be promoted to the varsity. Everyone knew the competition to advance would be fierce this year. The varsity football cheer squad, the choice and prestigious crew that everyone wanted a place on, consisted of fifteen girls. Usually about half of them left at the end of their senior year creating that many openings on the next year's squad. But the previous spring only four girls from that squad had graduated. As a result, only four openings were in need of filling this year, greatly increasing everyone's odds of staying JV or getting a spot on one of the less exalted squads.

Charlotte leaned with her back against the now closed locker door, and she seemed to be coolly appraising me.

"You know how to cheer, Selwyn. You know the moves and the cheers. But the thing is: you really put yourself out there. You're a spark plug," she said.

"Well, thanks, Charlotte," I said, blushing a little and feeling a rush of pride. "You know, I always..."

"Shut up," Charlotte said. I was a bit confused but I obeyed immediately.

"There are four openings for the varsity football squad this year," she said. My heart began to race. "You're our first choice to fill one of them." Just whom the pronoun 'our' referred to went unexplained, but I assumed some consensus among the eleven girls about to begin their senior years was in play.

"Oh, gosh, Charlotte," I said, and I was surprised I managed to get the words out: my throat was tight with pride and excitement. "I can't tell you how...."

"Shut up," Charlotte said again. "You know where DeeDee lives?" she asked. I just nodded my head. "Tonight. Midnight. Be there. Don't say a word to anyone." She leaned toward me and whispered a few more instructions in my ear. Then she was gone.

I don't know how I kept from fainting, but as I finished zipping and buttoning my jeans my excitement knew no bounds. I knew I was being summoned for an initiation. Everyone knew that every girl who was accepted onto a varsity cheer squad was initiated by the returning members. There were rumors. But none of the younger girls knew for sure what the initiation entailed: whether it was standard, or changed from time to time, or was planned special for each girl. The belief seemed pretty generally held that the initiation for the football squad was especially intense and challenging.

In about eight hours I would find out.

The dashboard clock read eight minutes before midnight when I parked my car down the street from DeeDee's house, across the street from the neighborhood park and exactly opposite the swing set. I looked back toward DeeDee's house, the front porch light just visible about one hundred yards away down the deserted street. I took a deep breath and did what I had to, squirming around in the driver's seat as I pulled off my shoes and socks, unbuttoned and pulled off my shirt, opened my belt and unbuttoned and unzipped my jeans and pulled them down my legs. I blew out a nervous lungful of air and then reached behind my back. I unhooked my bra and pulled it down my arms and off. Then I scooted my hips upward and pulled my panties down and off.

There. That covered most of the instructions Charlotte had given me: where precisely to park and to show up on DeeDee's front porch at the stroke of midnight ("And don't be late," she had said.) without a stitch on ("Not panties. Not shoes or socks. Nada."). I cautiously opened the car door and took a careful look in every direction. Convinced that the immediate vicinity was free of any peeping eyes at this late hour I crept out of the car. I put my bundled clothes on the driver's seat. As instructed, I put my keys under the driver's seat and then closed the door unlocked.

I immediately began to run down the street toward DeeDee's. The feel of the cool late summer night air on my bare skin was refreshing and actually quite pleasant. I ran down the middle of the street, the better to see what my bare feet might be stepping on. My arms tightly encircled my boobs to keep them from bouncing, and I was half bent over, prepared to dash behind a car or tree at the first glimpse of headlights approaching.

When I slowed and stepped onto DeeDee's front porch I was panting, but not from effort: the short run was nothing compared to the exertions we all had regularly been expending at practices. I decided my breathless condition must be from some mental state. Fear? Nervousness? Being for the first time ever outside, nude, and separated from my clothing by quite some distance?

I rang the bell, seeking to be admitted as soon as possible since I was standing almost under the porch light that seemed like an impossibly bright beacon. Immediately I could hear footsteps inside approaching the door. Then more than one person was at the other side of the portal.

"Yes?" I heard Charlotte's voice ask.

I hushed my voice and said, "It's me! Rita! Let me in!"

"I'm afraid I can't do that," said Charlotte's disembodied voice.

My eyes flew wide in panic. "What?!" I said, almost forgetting to mute my voice.

I heard Charlotte's voice inside, apparently speaking to someone else. "What time is it?" her voice asked. There was a muffled reply I couldn't catch.

"Sorry," Charlotte said. "You were told to show up at midnight."

"Right! Well, I'm here!" I said. I was now checking the street, trying to see any pedestrians or cars that might be approaching, and I had suddenly begun to feel a little chill.

"Ah, but you didn't," Charlotte said. "The time is 11:56. The door will open only at midnight and remain open for sixty seconds."

Great. I scanned the street again and said, "Shit. Whatever."

Standing there I felt exposed like I had never before in my life. At the side of the yard, about twenty feet away, was a large willow tree of some sort with long thin branches covered with small oval leaves, the branches draping down to the ground from the top of the tree. I scampered over to it, went around to the unlit side, and melted into the concealing branches. I hoped it provided all the cover I needed, but I immediately noticed that speckles of light dotted my too white skin: light from the porch lamp filtered through the tree's leaves and branches. I realized that it wouldn't be hard to spot me were someone looking.

But feeling safe enough and sufficiently obscured I settled down to wait for the door to open.

I sensed an approaching presence before I heard a sound, but it was soon obvious to me that someone was walking down the dark street and was close. Whoever it was came to a stop at the curb right in front of me. He or she could not have been more than fifteen feet away. I couldn't actually see the person without sticking by head out, and I didn't dare do that.

"Well?" I heard a man's voice say. "What are you gonna do? Are you gonna piss? Shit? C'mon let it out."

What?! OK, someone had spotted me, but what in the fuck was he talking about? Why would he want me to pee or poop? Did he think I was standing here stark naked amid these tree branches because I needed a place to relieve myself?

"C'mon," the man said again, the impatience in his voice more obvious. "Are you gonna squeeze out a log or not?"

I had no idea what to do or say. I began to open my mouth, seeking the right words to explain why I was standing there in the middle of the night and as naked as the day I was born.

Just as I was about to offer some lame, still unformed explanation the man spoke again. "You are just the damned stupidest dog I've ever run into in my life. Would do your business so I can go back to bed?"

It was only then that I heard the shake of a leash and the light tinkle of aluminum tags on the dog's collar. I let out my breath with relief, the breath that a moment before had contained words that would have revealed me.

There was a noise to my side and I looked over in time to see the front door opening, not stopping until it was as wide as it would go. For the first time I took a peak around the tree branches toward the street and saw an exasperated middle-aged man with a small dog at the end of the leash he held. I could understand his impatience: a dog that small had to be the wife's, but here he was at zero dark thirty o'clock, a pajama top tucked hastily into jeans on which the fly was half open, waiting for the animal to do its business.

The man was looking at the door, I suppose wondering why the front door of the house he now stood before had just seemingly opened on its own and now stood gaping. I was acutely aware that the sixty seconds I had to get in that door were rapidly passing.

The man scratched his head. Then he gave the leash a tug and he and the dog continued down the street a few feet. But they stopped again directly in front of DeeDee's house, nothing but a naked expanse of lawn between the man and the canine object of his annoyance and the front door.

The dog was now hunching its back and backing up, putting its bottom right down to the curb.

Shit! Both literally and figuratively!

There was no way the dog could finish taking its crap and the two of them could proceed far enough down the street before my quickly waning window of opportunity (and the front door) closed.

I made a couple of tentative motions to round the tree and dash to the door, but I lost all my steam each time. Finally I knew it was either make my dash right now or watch that door close and spend another year as a JV cheerleader.

I held my breath (I have no idea why) and got my feet moving. I gathered up my boobs in my arms and dashed out from behind the tree and into that glaring porch light. In my peripheral vision I saw the man glance up, a startled look on his face, as I covered the distance to the door. As I scurried my bare ass in through the entry portal I was actually a little pleased to hear a whistle that sounded like one of awe and a single word, "Damn!"

What the heck, I was certain I had made that man's midnight dog walking chore more interesting and rewarding. I even wondered if his sleeping wife might not be in for a little wooden surprise when he got back. Could my bare butt be ***that*** good looking?

As soon as I was in the door one of the girls pushed it closed behind me. "Four seconds to spare," she said. "Try not to think about that old fart whacking off thinking about your ass." Thanks. Now I knew I'd never be free of that mental image.

I slowed myself to a walk as I came to the entryway into the living room. I assumed that DeeDee's parents were away somewhere. Charlotte and DeeDee were standing near the far end of the room in front of a mantle and fireplace. The girl who had closed the door entered the room behind me. I did a quick count and discovered that only ten girls were present. With four openings on the fifteen girl squad I had expected all eleven of them to be here, but I didn't bother to wonder about the missing girl.

The girls, all in their cheer uniforms, quickly rearranged themselves to make a U stretching from in front of the left side of the fireplace toward me, curving back near the entryway and ending before the right corner of that fireplace. Since it seemed what was intended I walked forward to a point in front of the hearth and turned around, the soles of my feet on the cool flagstones of an apron that extended two or three feet out from the fireplace.

They seemed like they were trying to be serious, but instead were having trouble holding in snickers. One of them let out a little 'bark-bark' noise and we all dissolved into laughter.

As everyone settled down Charlotte looked at me and said, "That's the first time anything like that has happened. I'll bet he's plugging the wife right now." We all had another giggle. Then Charlotte said, "How about you drop your load there?"

She was speaking to me. "I'm sorry," I said. "Do what?"

"Let your boobs go, we want to have a look," Charlotte said.

I flushed but took my arms down to my sides. My boobs will fit into either a DD or an E cup, depending. When I used to play strip poker with Rhiannon at the end of seventh grade and through eighth they had already been feeling a little confined in a C cup. One of the things that had been a side attraction of playing strip poker with Rhiannon at that age was that we could compare the development of our bodies on a regular basis. We had played quite a lot for over a year, but then near the beginning of freshman year Rhiannon had lost interest and declined my invitations to play. I had wondered about that.

"Mama Mia!" one of the girls exclaimed. "I knew they were big, but I had no idea."

I had been self-conscious about my boobs in middle school and the first years of high school. Now at East there were finally perhaps a dozen or more girls with boobs as large as mine, and that took some of the attention away from me. I was grateful for that since from fifth grade until high school I had always had the biggest boobs of any of the girls in my classes and the scrutiny got to be oppressive at times. I still held onto that self-consciousness, but to a much lesser degree. Still, the semesters when I had physical education it happened to be my last class of the day. So those days, and after cheer practice, I always elected to shower when I arrived back home.

Suddenly one of the girls observed, "No more beard on that clam."

"Yeah," said DeeDee. "No whiskers on that biscuit." Then I couldn't keep up with whom the observations were coming from.

"Cape Horn has been clearcut."

"There's a nice clear view of mount pleasant."

"I can see happy valley!"

"Yeah, no trouble finding that bone yard!"

"Hey, Rita, you forgot the lettuce on you tuna taco."

Charlotte ended it with, "That's one bald snake charmer, there Rita."

Their eyes were all glued to my crotch. I had obeyed to the letter the other of Charlotte's instructions: "And make sure there isn't a hair on your body below your neck." I felt crimson and heat spread all across my face. This had been the first time I had ever shaved my pubic hair. In fact, I had never so much as trimmed it before, and the absence of that cover made me feel especially bare and exposed. The fact that it had the undivided attention of ten pairs of eyes ramped up my embarrassment considerably.

"Well, let's see how well you can follow directions," DeeDee said.

"Huh?" I asked, not at all sure what she might want me to do.

Charlotte supplied, "Lay down on the coffee table."

I moved to the low table in front of the couch. The surface was bare and I sat hesitantly on it. DeeDee made a motion with her hand: it hanging limply by its wrist and pushing the back of her hand and fingers at me, wagging the hand. I got the idea and tentatively lay back on the surface of the table, ending with my head at one end, my hips at the other, and my legs bent at the knee with my bare feet flat on the floor past the end of the table.

DeeDee stood past my legs where I could look up at her. She put her index fingers together at her waist and then slowly and deliberating moved them apart, farther and farther to either side. I got the idea immediately. My face must have taken on the color of a beet, and I had never, at least to that point, felt such deep embarrassment.

I opened my legs until they were as wide as they could go and formed a straight line. Even though these were other girls and team mates my mortification was immense. But I wanted not to have to be told to spread them wider.

They all gathered around DeeDee, their eyes now on my wide open and exposed vulva.

"What do you think?" DeeDee asked Charlotte who stood next to her. She spoke in an appraising way.

"No bad," Charlotte evaluated. Then they both bent down and leaned in, their faces not two feet from the most private part of my body. DeeDee produced a flashlight from somewhere and switched it on. She trained the strong light onto my privates. "Hmmmm," she said. "Why don't you girls have a look."

DeeDee and Charlotte withdrew and the other girls took turns using the flashlight to make the same inspection DeeDee and Charlotte had. No one ever touched me at all. I heard a lot of "hmmmmm"s, but no words. I mostly looked up at the ceiling. But then I felt a chill near the center of all this attention. The eleventh girl, Audra, had come in from somewhere and was making her inspection, some coolness from the outside air coming off her uniform.

"So what do you think, Audra?" DeeDee asked.

"Well, I think she might have missed a few." This observation was met with general agreement. My face and head by now felt so hot with embarrassment I thought an explosion might be imminent, like an overheated thermometer might burst in a cartoon. But I was sure I'd gotten them all.

Audra was pointing. "Yeah, you see way down there." I think she might have been indicating a point near the very back of my vulva.

Charlotte nodded her head. "Yeah, I saw them too," she said.

"Well," another of the girls said, "maybe they're just butt hairs."

"I guess," said DeeDee, "but butt hairs are supposed to go too."

I couldn't believe my privates were being talked about in such graphic and objective detail.

"I don't know," Charlotte said, a magnanimous tone to her voice. "I think they're butt hairs. But what do you say? Think we can probably let her slide for a few butt hairs. Don't you think?"

There were general sounds of agreement all around, and with that DeeDee extended her hand. I grabbed it and she pulled me up while saying. "Congratulations, you're halfway home."

I waited, the only one nude in the middle of eleven girls in their cheer uniforms. I had an instinct to gather up my boobs with my arms just for the sake of covering something but thought better of it, having been told not to. Presently all the little side discussions about my privates came to a conclusion and Charlotte was talking to me.

"Are you ready for the last part of your initiation?" she asked.

 **Chapter Three**

"I guess so," I answered. I had no way of knowing if I was or wasn't since I had no idea what was still in store for me.

DeeDee walked up to me and my eyes grew wide as I saw the paddle that she held in her hands. It was the same one that Rhiannon, sitting on my bed, now held in hers. After initiations at the beginning of senior year I had been the co-captain entrusted with its keeping until it was time to hand it on at the end of the year. And that, of course, is how it came to be leaning against the back wall of my closet for Rhiannon to discover.

The paddle was perhaps a foot and a half long and four inches wide, excluding the handle. It had EAST painted on it in alternating navy blue and scarlet letters - epsilon, alpha, sigma, tau: stylized as uppercase Greek characters.

"Sorry, Honey," DeeDee said, "it hurts like hell, but we all had to go through it. This has been part of the initiation for decades" She tapped the paddle against the palm of her hand, as Rhiannon had just done and as I had done when facing the new initiates this year. DeeDee said by way of explanation, "Don't know where it came from. It's been handed down for forever I guess."

DeeDee pointed out years scratched or carved into the handle. The earliest was 1961.

"You willing?" Charlotte asked. I wasn't sure. My stomach was in knots as I tried to imaging the pain a piece of wood like that could inflict on a bare ass. I had never been spanked or paddled as a child and had not the remotest idea what a piece of wood applied with force to the buttocks might feel like.

"OK," I said, but heard my voice barely squeaking out. That wasn't alright. "I'm fine with it. Whatever it takes," I said in a much firmer voice.

"OK, Patty, you're first." DeeDee said. She held out her hand to me and I saw there was a die in it. "Roll the die on the coffee table. It will show how many swats Patty gives you. You know, you're getting off easy. Most years when there are only seven or eight girls staying each girl gets the roll of a pair of dice. But we thought this year since there are eleven of us swinging the lumber we would limit each girl to one."

I can't say as I felt terribly relieved over that news. I took the die over to the coffee table and let it fall from my cupped hand. It clattered on the table top for a moment before coming to rest and showing a four.

I followed each of Charlotte's instructions as she gave them. "OK, stand in front of the fireplace with your toes up against the stone apron. Now reach forward and grab the mantle with both hands." The stone apron was about two and a half feet deep and I had to lean forward to grab the mantle. My boobs swung beneath my chest. The position naturally made my butt stick out in back: an inviting target.

"OK," DeeDee said. "Patty's going to give you four. Every time you lose contact with the mantle or the floor you get an extra." I nodded my head at her to indicate my understanding. She withdrew and I waited for Patty's first swat to fall, my buttocks clenching and unclenching.

I registered the sound first, an intense slapping noise. Then the pain finished its journey from my butt cheeks to my brain and I sucked in breath. The second came and the sound was the same but the pain doubled. I could feel heat invading my ass cheeks. With the third crack my boobs began to sway under me and I let out a little "mmmm" sound as the accumulating pain was beginning to catch up to me. Patty's fourth swat was her last and she took advantage. The paddle landed with such force that I let out a little screech of pain. But I managed through it all to keep my hands and feet where they were supposed to be.

Patty came up behind me and gave my shoulder a squeeze and said, "You did good, Rita."

It wasn't until sometime later that I learned that the girls evaluated each other afterward, and those who the others felt did not swing hard enough had to strip and take their own paddling.

Audra was next. I took my time making the trip to the coffee table and back. I knew I would be glad of the break between each girl as my paddling progressed. The die showed a two and I sent up a little thank you to the god of the dice.

I took up my position again and Audra stepped up behind me. When the paddle landed it was as if I had never felt one before, as if Patty had not even taken a turn. The pain washed over me and I bowed my back in, twisting my torso. When the second came I felt nothing at all until a tsunami of agony filled my mind. Again I twisted my body and bounced up and down on my toes, my boobs wobbling. I settled myself and then pushed back from the mantle. I paused to make sure they understood I was not moving out of position because of the pain but because Audra's turn was over. She also gave me words of encouragement and an arm around my shoulder.

I stalled as long as I could, rubbing my backside and flexing my legs. Then I was reminded by DeeDee that it was time to roll the die and that Rachel was next. Again I dropped the die and observed as it came to rest showing a five.

Was there no one on this die?! I ambled back over to the hearth and again assumed the prescribed position and waited. After the first swat I bowed my head down as deeply as it would go. The second made me bend my knees and lower myself to the point that I could barely keep contact with the mantle. I came up again and thought to prepare myself but Rachel swung for the fences before I expected. The crack was as loud as all the rest, but unprepared as I was my right knee bent taking my right foot back and off the floor and I knew I had earned myself an extra swat. Rachel took her last two prescribed swats and then the extra one very deliberately, pausing long between each and letting my anticipation come to a boil before she swung. The pain accumulated in my bottom, and by the time she had completed her whacks tears were thick in the corners of my eyes.

How many different ways can I describe having my ass smacked by a paddle? Eight more girls took their turns. I never again let my hands or feet wander in spite of the overwhelming aching agony.

Laura and her six strokes came next, and by the time she was done those tears that had been accumulating sprang free and ran down next to my nose and down my cheeks.

Next I rolled the die for Yolanda and found myself staring at another six. Like most of the others Yolanda would tap the paddle against my backside before hauling back and swinging the paddle forward and into contact with my ass. I could feel how my buttocks were being flattened each time, to spring back and begin to radiate new pain. When Yolanda had finished my tears were flowing freely and I was sobbing.

Each of the girls, after she had finished her turn, gave my shoulder a squeeze, put an arm around my shoulder, or hugged me. They each had encouraging words. "Good job." "You're so brave." "I was crying a lot harder when I got my swats." "You're getting closer to the end."

While Andrea took her three swings and then Dallas her five I thought my fingers would leave depressions in the wood of the mantle, I was gripping that tightly so as not to let go. I had come close on many of the swats to lifting my feet and earning an extra wallop, but during these two turns I learned to dig my toes into the carpet as a substitute. I hoped I would never again have occasion to apply my newly discovered knowledge.

Finally after Dallas was done I got a bit of a break. Between each girl I had always hesitated, rubbing my flaming ass and stretching, anything to give myself a respite. But DeeDee or Charlotte, always the co-captains and traffic cops, would soon tell me it was time to roll the die and get back to business. But this time I was allowed about five minutes. I just assumed they did this at some point on all the girls' initiation paddlings. During these minutes for the first time I noticed a wall mirror hanging in one corner of the room. I turned my back to it and looked over my shoulder.

My eyes bugged out when I saw the deep red beacon my ass had become. From the tops of my thighs, just below where they met my buttocks, to just above the top of my ass crack the skin was a severe looking fire engine red. Some stripes, likely from the edges of the paddle when not applied perfectly squarely, added some visual interest. I know I had found the swats that hit near the top of my ass to be a lot more painful than the ones that hit lower, perhaps because the skin was tighter up above while below the fatter nature of the cheek could better absorb the shock.

DeeDee noticed what I was doing and said, "Sorry you saw that already. I meant to take the mirror down before we started. It's better if you don't see the damage until it's over." I didn't say anything, but I suspected she was right.

Finally I said, "Let's get this over with," and, quieting my sniffles as best as I could, picked up the die and dropped it. Finally a one showed its shy face and I silently exulted. Veronica was next and I was able to easily withstand her one swat, although she tried to make it hard enough to do for several.

At last a light seemed to be gleaming at the end of the tunnel. Just three more girls were left. Teresa would go next, and then the co-captains would put the finishing touches on my bottom.

I rolled again and Teresa had four swings at my ass. I got into position and couldn't help thinking about the glowing state of my bottom. By the time I had endured her smacks to my ass my tears were flowing again and I had resumed my miserable sobbing, but now my breath was coming shallow and fast. As I pushed myself away from the mantle I hoped I had only two more agonizing swats to endure, but I knew it could be as many as twelve.

The die said DeeDee had three swings at me. I took my position again. I couldn't reach the mantle with my head so I put my hands right next to each other, my arms touching, and I was able to bury my face between my upper arms. DeeDee made solid contact with my ass three times, all of them in that lower fleshy part that, in spite of the tormenting and excruciating pain, took the impact better than higher up.

By the time she was done my vision was entirely blurry: my eyes so filled with tears, my nose clogged with snot. I smiled anyway as I wiped my tears to show my courage and at the knowledge that I would have to endure no more than six more.

I bent double, my hands on my knees, as I slowed my breathing. When I was finally somewhat back in order I advanced to the coffee table and picked up the die. Thinking 'one, one, one' I dropped it from my hand and when it came to rest I saw an X in my blurry vision and knew I had five more to endure.

Without any encouragement I paced over to the mantle and got into position. When Charlotte's first whack hit my ass I finally lifted my face, which had again been buried in my upper arms, and put it to the ceiling and screamed. After each of the first four swats Charlotte came up to me, put her arm around my shoulder and her head close to mine. She would tell me how many were left and then ask me if I was ready for the next.

The same sequence was repeated four more times. Charlotte swung the paddle in a tight, fast arc, and the wood flattened my butt. My grip on the mantle would become as strong as a vice, my toes would dig into the carpet, my face would look to the ceiling and I would scream out. When my scream ended I would breathe hard and deep for a while. Then Charlotte would be next to me and the whole process would start again.

Finally her last stroke fell, and after I managed to silence myself I went to my knees on the stone fireplace apron, the flagstones cool to my knees' touch. The girls were around me in an instant shaking my shoulders and ruffling my hair. After a minute I was able to get to my feet aided by many hands. Then the girls were embracing me, laughing and cheering for me. Many a 'congratulations' and 'you made it' were flung my way.

Soon the celebration settled down and the comments became those that were in the nature of memories. Only DeeDee and Charlotte had been varsity since sophomore year. All the other nine girls here tonight had gone through this a year ago. They told many stories and revived many memories: how many one or another girl had been obliged to endure, how many extra swats some of the girls had gotten for letting go of the mantle or lifting a foot. I gathered that under the pair of dice system a girl could typically expect to get anywhere from forty to sixty. When I worked it out later I discovered I had endured forty-five, including the one extra swat from Rachel.

Apparently I was somewhat remarkable. No one, to anyone's knowledge (and certainly not last year), had gone through the whole paddling while getting only one additional smack. It was laughingly recalled that Veronica had earned seventeen additional whacks the previous year, so many more than anyone else that everyone began to suspect she was enjoying the paddling. At this observation Veronica smiled and blushed but didn't say anything.

A dull and constant ache was settling into my backside. I was assured that my bottom didn't look any worse than any other girl's ever had, and was less colorful than many. Still, I knew it would not be back to normal for many days. I was right. By the next morning my ass was entirely scarlet with streaks of purple where the lines from the paddle edge occasionally crossed my bottom, and there was some bruising, mostly around the edges of the area that had been under attack. Two weeks passed before my bottom was back entirely to its original pink color.

I was aware suddenly that we as a group were all moving toward the hallway and the front door. The thought had not entered my mind yet that I still had to make my way nude (and now with a flaming red butt) back to my car. Just getting through the mortifying inspection of the shave job on my privates and the paddling had been my only immediate goals. Anything beyond those events had fled from my mind.

Dallas was now opening the door and that wide expanse of lit lawn was before me, seen through the frame of the door. They all stood around me, telling me how they would see me at practice the next afternoon, and waiting for me to make my move.

This time there were no false starts. I just decided to take my chances without looking. I really couldn't see far, or with any certainty, down the dark street anyway. Again I doubled over slightly as a leaped off the porch, my boobs held tight to my chest by my arms.

It had to be somewhere near two o'clock and the street was utterly deserted. A short time later I arrived at my car. I opened the driver's side door, ready to get my clothes on and get home. When I looked at the front seat, though, they were not to be found. I couldn't see them on the floor on either side. Had I left them on back seat? I didn't think so, and a quick look confirmed that they were not anywhere in the car.

Then a truly alarming thought caused adrenaline to pour into my veins and my heart to race. My keys! I quickly bent down and in a panic felt under the seat. I was instantly relieved and comforted when my hand settled on them and recognized their shape. I pulled them out from under the seat and held them up before my eyes, just to confirm to myself that they were really in my hand. A giggle of relief escaped my lips.

Now that I had the keys I checked the trunk for my clothes. I was disappointed, but not surprised, to find them absent. However, sitting squarely in the middle of the trunk, dimly lit by the single bulb of the trunk light, sat a large navy blue E, trimmed with a scarlet border. My varsity letter! I gathered it up and walked to the front of the car. As I did so I suddenly remembered Audra: how she had joined the celebration after the others and how she felt cool as if she had just come in from outside. Obviously she had taken my clothes and I supposed they would be returned to me tomorrow.

With nothing else to do I took another look around for spying eyes and without thinking settled into the driver's seat. I grayed out for a moment and immense pain flared up from my poor abused, but now fully initiated, varsity butt. I was several seconds in mastering the pain, but once the worst of it had passed the coolness of the seat actually felt fine.

My drive home was uneventful. I saw only a dozen or so cars, but I drove with my window down. The cool air had my nipples pointing the way the whole time, but the air felt good and I propped my elbow on the sill of my lowered window affecting nonchalance. Not a stark raving nude girl driving home, just a girl wearing perhaps a strapless dress or a tube top, leaving her shoulders bare.

When I arrived home I parked my car at the side of the garage, and glancing around for spectators. Finding none I dashed to the side door, keyed it open casually and walked in. It was a Saturday and my parents were almost never home this early on a Saturday night.

Unconcerned, I padded around the kitchen nude and poured and drank two tall glasses of water. Then I sauntered down the hall, occasionally rubbing my battered bottom, and stopping to look at the mail on the hallway table. Finally I hopped up the stairs and made my way to my room and closed the door soundly. I tossed my prized letter on my dresser with a smile.

"Is that you dear?" I heard my mother's voice ask loudly so she would be heard from my parents' room. I hadn't yet turned on the overhead light. Only the lamp on my night table provided a feeble illumination. Again that almost painful jolt of adrenaline hit my system.

Holy shit! If she or my dad had seen me come through the door buck naked, my pussy as hairless as a xoloitzcuintli, and with my ass on fire they would have never let me out of their sight again before I was ready to file for social security!

I quickly pulled on a pair of panties, my ass reminding me of its tender state, and slipped a night shirt over my head and into place. As I expected my mother tapped lightly on my door, opened it enough to admit her head and shoulders, and smiled at me.

My ass was on the edge of the bed sending me complaints, but at least it was out of sight.

"Have a fun night?" she asked.

"Great, Mom," I answered, "it was a blast. We were hanging out at DeeDee's." You know what the detective stories say: 'The closer you stay to the truth, the better.'

My night table lamp was within arm's reach. I had left it on and now reached over and turned it off. Hopefully my mom would get the message that I didn't want any mom and daughter bonding talks tonight. She smiled at me again.

"OK" she said. "Goodnight my angel." She blew me a kiss, withdrew, and the door closed.

I arranged myself under the covers, lying on my stomach, my least favorite sleeping position.

Yeah. Did you mean the angel who two hours before had been lying on a coffee table, her legs spread wide, while almost a dozen people closely examined her sphinx kitten-like privates with a flashlight? Or did you mean the angel with the flaming red, agonized, paddle-smacked bottom? Oh wait. They're one and the same angel. But as I snuggled into the pillow I smiled and thought: no, this angel, the one with the varsity letter and a place on the holy of holies: the football cheer squad.

I let out a satisfied sigh and settled my body into the softness of my bed.

**Chapter Four**

It was the same bed I now sat on, Rhiannon looking at me with a questioning look. All these recollections had flashed through my mind in an instant, but Rhiannon could tell I have been lost in thought or memory however briefly.

"You too?" Rhiannon asked.

"Me too what?" I asked in return.

"You know what I'm asking about, Rita," she said, and did I note just a hint of impatience at my reticence? "You got your ass roasted at initiation too? Didn't you?"

I could feel myself color, dropped my eyes and nodded my head. Then I realized that the initiation for the West football team cheer squad must be about the same as East's. After all it was only three years ago that some of the East cheer leaders would have migrated to West, taking the East traditions with them. They would have had to procure and christen their own paddle, but I supposed the general outline had remained the same.

I told Rhiannon my story in abbreviated fashion: my enforced hundred yard midnight streak, my absurd encounter with the dog walker, my inspection, my paddling, my naked drive home, and the near naked close encounter with my mom.

"Ouch!" Rhiannon exclaimed. "It sounds pretty much the same as mine." And she proceeded to tell me her story which was similar to mine, but not identical.

She, of course, had been initiated into the varsity the same year as me. We had a laugh when we realized that we had both been initiated the same Saturday night. She had been required to give her extra set of car keys to one of the cheer co-captains. She was to follow her instructions to the letter and told she was going to be watched.

While I was parking my car near DeeDee's, Rhiannon had been parking hers in the lot of one of the recreation department's ball fields. She had been told to park at the end of the lot near a huge, old tree, and right at the base of the light pole there. As I stripped in my car, she was standing outside hers as required and stripping, the glare of one of the lot's two sodium vapor lights brightly illuminating her sordid performance from directly above. She had been incredibly thankful that no one happened to be around the lot or field at the time. She locked both of the car doors. Then she put all of her clothing and her car keys into her car's trunk and closed the trunk top solidly. Then she was to wait: nude, and with no access to her car or clothing. She was told she could go as far as under the tree, but no farther.

I tried to imagine how exposed she must have felt. I had felt extreme unease at having been out at night on a dark and deserted street, a hundred yards from my clothing sitting on the front seat in my car. But Rhiannon had been nude, having stripped under what amounted to stage lights, and now stood outside, her clothes and car keys impossible even to retrieve, her car's doors locked.

Just as she slammed her trunk closed the whine of car tires on the nearby pavement made her duck down behind her car on the side away from the road. When the car had passed she made a dash for the darkness at the far side of the tree's immense trunk.

And so there she waited for what seemed like hours (but turned out to be about thirty minutes). The lot and the tree were on a bend in the road and a few times per minute a car would drive by on the nearby road. As the cars came from the two directions Rhiannon had to shift her position behind the wide tree trunk to keep out of the headlight beams.

For cars coming toward and past the lot from the lot's far end she could easily wait on that gloomy and concealing side of the tree. For a car moving in that direction the road curved to the left at the end of the lot, just about even with Rhiannon's tree.

The problem was cars coming from the other direction. As they approached from their route, nearing what would be for them a curve to the right, their headlight beams lit that otherwise shaded space Rhiannon could use to conceal herself. She was then obliged to avoid those spotlights by edging around the tree. But the more she crept in that direction the closer she came to entering the glare of the sodium vapor light and a point where she could be seen by cars from the other direction. When cars came from both directions, as they did several times, Rhiannon had to find a spot between her two positions, partly exposed in from both sides, press her body against the tree trunk as tightly as she could, and remain totally motionless and hope both cars' drivers were more concerned with watching the road than a stately old tree off to the side. Apparently they were all attentive, eyes-on-the-road drivers.

After fifteen or twenty minutes a car turned into the lot and pulled into a parking space at about the middle of the lot. Rhiannon peaked around the tree but could not tell who might be in the car, whether or not it was her teammates. She had hesitated, thinking it must be them. She had been waiting, nude and exposed, for what seemed an eternity. She was just about to step out from her place of concealment when all four of the car's doors opened simultaneously and out stepped six high school boys, five of whom she recognized from her school. Shit! What stories would she have had to live down starting at eight o'clock in the morning on the first day of school had they waited five more seconds to exit their car?

The kids wandered over to the ball field and under the curved shell of the backstop. Lighters sparked and the sweet and pungent odor from their joints soon wafted her way. They were mostly quiet, passing a joint or two around. She could hear murmured conversation but could not recognize words.

Then the headlights of a car dimly lit the dark side of the tree, their illumination quickly growing as the car they were on closed the distance toward Rhiannon's tree. She edged around toward the lit side of the tree, but in that position she was even more exposed to the backstop than she was to the road for cars coming the other way. Again she stayed absolutely still. She pretended the backstop was a tyrannosaurus rex whose vision reacted only to movement, and she hoped the same principle might work with reefer-addled stoners.

The car swept around the curve and on its way and her side of the tree was dark again. She crept slowly back around -- no sudden movements -- into the shadows.

"Holy shit!" one of the boys exclaimed, and Rhiannon had no trouble understanding their words now.

"What the fuck's a matter with you?" one of the others asked.

"Over by that tree! I just saw a naked girl! I swear it!" the first boy said.

Rhiannon said she could imagine all of them craning their necks to get a good look in her direction. She didn't dare peek out. She couldn't even know if they had decided to come over and see if there was any truth to their buddy's claim: wouldn't know until it was way too late.

There was an extended silence, and she didn't relax until she heard another voice say, "Enough loco weed for you, Prince Albert."

Another five minutes or so passed. She heard the giggles over by the backstop grow louder and more numerous.

"Hey, Rhiannon!" a voice shouted. It was loud and split the night air, coming from some distance away but not the direction of the backstop. She looked around the other side of the tree, the one away from the boys, and could see down the length of the parking lot and the street in front of it. Across the street from the far end of the parking lot sat a blue car. The doors were all open and a gaggle of girls in cheer outfits were standing around it or sitting on the hood or back. She had seen the car before, when she had pulled into the lot. It had been sitting there the whole time at a distance of maybe seventy or eighty yards

"Rhiannon!" one of the girls screamed again. Rhiannon stepped out and made herself visible to them, the tree trunk still between her naked body and the backstop and the now red-rimmed eyes near it.

"Rhiannon!" the shout came again. "You've got exactly thirty seconds to get in this car or we're out of here without you. So get your entirely and completely bare fucking naked body in gear and get over here!"

She hesitated for only a second before bolting into the clear toward the safety and shelter of the car. There was a ten yard dash across grass to the edge of the parking lot. Then she had to slow to a careful and wincing walk to cross a portion of the parking lot since the surface was of gravel and stone and even her shoes had been denied her. Then after she had carefully stepped past the sharp and annoying stones she reached the other side. From there it was all well-lit paved sidewalk or road surface and she turned on the afterburners.

From the time she had left the shelter of the tree she had put her hands up to her face, just leaving a small vertical opening to see through. She didn't care if the boys saw her bush or ass or tits, just as long as they couldn't see her face.

The boys had exited the backstop, no doubt their curiosity aroused by the words "entirely and completely bare fucking naked body". They were now standing by their car and trying to discover what was up. "You see?" said a loud and frustrated sounding voice. "I told we shoulda gone an' checked it out!"

There were other voices with other comments, some about her body, some the stoners grumbling about their missed opportunity for late night, all-naked-all-the-time entertainment. Rhiannon didn't hear the comments, just concentrated on the quickly dwindling distance remaining to the concealing interior of the car.

As she climbed in she heard one last comment: "Hey, I know a Rhiannon." Then she was in the backseat wedged between two girls as the car sped away.

They went to one of the girls' houses. Rhiannon was ushered in. She told me she had the same feeling of extreme exposure as the only naked person amid eight uniformed girls

They spent a few minutes gabbing, the girls who had been in the car filling in the ones who had remained back at the house about the utterly hilarious goings on at the ball field. When all of the stories had been told the girls settled down.

Rhiannon had three tasks to perform. First the girls blindfolded her and made extra sure she could not see past the edges of the covering. Then, one of the girls guiding from the back with her hands on Rhiannon's shoulders and another pulling her hands from the front, they led her to the bathroom. She felt the cool tile on the soles of her feet and got a strong whiff of methane.

Rhiannon had smiled inwardly. Even without ever having gone through an initiation she knew about this trick: take a blindfolded person into the bathroom, have them kneel down at the toilet and tell them to reach in and grab what they find in the bowl. Then the unwitting victim would be told to squeeze it and let it ooze out through their fingers. Oh, and be sure to set the stage beforehand by having some people go into the john and rip some farts, just for atmosphere and to get the initiate's mental image factory working overtime.

But Rhiannon didn't let on that she knew about the trick. She knelt at the porcelain throne, reached into the toilet bowl and grabbed the pealed banana she knew the girls had put there, making a disgusted face and ewuu-icky sounds just to not let on that she knew what was up. She noted that they had even broken off the ends for extra authenticity. On command she squeezed hard and let on that she relished the feel of the mashed up banana as it seeped through her fingers.

Rhiannon showed a big smile and asked, "C'mon you guy. You didn't really think I was going to fall for that one, did you?" She made a show of bringing her hand up to her face and sticking her tongue out to lick at the banana goo with great bravado. One of the girls managed to get out a panicked "Rhiannon!" before the tip of Rhiannon's tongue made contact with the shit that covered her palm.

Half an hour, half a tube of toothpaste, and half a bottle of Listerine later Rhiannon had recovered sufficiently that the girls could all gather in the living room.

While I had lain on the coffee table to display the shaving I had previously accomplished, Rhiannon had been obliged to sit at the edge to make a show of shaving herself: her second task. A towel was under her ass, a bowl of warm water nearby. The other girls watched intently as Rhiannon snipped away at her pubic hair, the loose hairs falling onto a towel on the floor. Then she spread extra wide and wet the disposable razor and began to run the blade smoothly through her stubble. She had blushed a bit as she had been obliged to open and move and stretch her outer lips to get at all the hairs she could find. When she was finished she got the same flashlight-aided inspection I had.

Her initiation ended with a paddling, similar to mine. The differences: Rhiannon had to bend over and not lose contact with a chair. Each of the eight girls rolled a pair of dice. But the result was the same: Rhiannon told me she had gotten the lumber laid on her butt sixty-two times. By the time she was done her ass was in agony: her description sounded like mine only worse, and she reported it had taken two weeks to heal. I couldn't imagine getting the paddling I had and then taking seventeen more. Impossible!

When she was done and fully initiated Rhiannon was driven back to her car, given her extra car keys, and she was able to dress and go home, now a full varsity member.

Sitting on my bed Rhiannon and I looked at each other. I don't know what she was thinking, but I felt very close to her, having shared almost the same experience for the same purpose.

"So, how many times are you willing to get your butt smacked, Girlfriend? I asked.

She got a thoughtful look. "How about ten smacks for every piece of clothing the winner has left at the end of the game?" she suggested.

"Fine by me," I returned. Unless one of us ran into some monumentally bad luck it seemed that the penalty would be no more than ten or twenty or thirty smacks. Compared to our initiations it seemed a walk in the park.

Call me evil if you have to, but smacking a bare bottom is something that I have come to discover appeals to me. At the beginning of the present school year I was a returning varsity member. Only the four of us who had been initiated the year before were retuning squad members, so we had eleven new members to initiate. I had gotten to know to one degree or another all the girls who had been selected. I'm a pretty easy person: I tend to like people, and a person has to be incredibly disagreeable for me to not like them. These girls were no different. They were all pleasant and I genuinely liked all of them.

I don't see myself as a whip cracking (or paddle swinging) femdom at all. But still, when it came time to initiate the new girls I really enjoyed the experience. As with my class, each girl was initiated individually. Just before graduation at the end of last year DeeDee had passed the paddle on to me when the graduating girls had selected me and another as the next year's co-captains. And when each girl's bare bottoms was in front of me I swung hard and enjoyed the job. It gave me a sexual charge that needed attention when I returned home. Is that terrible? Well, whether it is or not that was my experience and my reaction to having the paddle in my hands and applying it to another girl's bare bottom.

I looked at Rhiannon now and realized that as much as I liked her and wanted to resume our friendship, her bare butt would make an inviting target. I would find it satisfying and, well, just plain fun, not to mention a hot and sexy jolt, to lay some wood on her ass. I would relish the experience of her, nude and I hope disappointed at losing and nervous about her fate, obligated to bend over and present her ass for warming. I knew I would watch with interest and satisfaction as her butt grew redder with each swat.

"So deal," Rhiannon said, impatiently. "I hate to say this Rita but I'm looking forward to winning and getting you bent over and have your bare butt to smack."

"You took the words right out of my mouth, Rhi," I said. This was ideal for me. Knowing that she was so looking forward to warming my buns would make every swing I took with the paddle that much more satisfying.

I dealt the cards and the game began. It was not a long game. I lost a couple hands immediately, but then Rhiannon started losing. Soon she was sitting across the bed from me in her bra and panties, I only barefoot. I felt relief that this seemed likely to end the way I wanted it to. I gave her a superior and condescending look and dealt another hand, which she also lost.

When she took off her bra I did an appraisal of the boobs she revealed to me. When we had played years go in middle school her breasts had been just budding, and by the time we played our last game around the end of summer vacation before freshman year she had been a good and full A cup. Now I could see she had, like me, become no slouch in the boob department. I supposed she had a healthy and round C cup to boast.

Her face had gone a bit red, and she put her hands, fingers splayed, to her chest to cover her breasts.

"You haven't seen these in a while," she said.

"You look great!" I said with complete honesty. I also noted some admiration in my voice. My body was lusher than Rhiannon's, wider and rounder hips and larger and more generous breasts. But I liked Rhiannon's body better than my own: I thought my boobs too big even though they were proportional to everything else. And Rhiannon's body seemed better balanced, sleeker and more functional: a more compact package in which no one element dominated or drew attention away from the other parts or the whole.

"Thanks, Rita," she said. "Well, I guess we might as well get this over with," she continued, seemingly realistic about how the game would end. She picked up the cards, shuffled and dealt again. She won two hands and I was soon out of my shirt and jeans and had only my bra and panties left. I felt the first twinges of anxiety.

After the next hand though Rhiannon revealed a pair of fives to my pair of nines. She sighed, resigned, and then she stood and pulled her panties down and off. She did a little stylized pose: one knee bent above pointed toes, and a hand on her hip and the other hand in the air, her panties dangling from a finger. Her face took on some extra color.

I looked her up and down with real appreciation. Her body, between thirteen then and eighteen now, had become that of a woman. Her hips were narrower than mine, but still had an appealing swell to them that had not been there five years before. I already mentioned that her breasts had grown from buds to the full, lush, and sensual bosom of a young but mature lady. Her dark hair fell about her shoulders. I noted that she kept her pubic hair in a neat little triangle above and completely bared below. Frankly, I was not surprised to feel the first stirrings of arousal. But Rhiannon broke the spell before I could pursue the thoughts developing in my mind.

"Well," she said with a little shrug of resignation in her voice, "I guess I have a good hard paddling coming. Twenty hard cracks in my immediate future?"

She had calculated correctly: I had lost four hands and had two pieces of clothing left. But I heard her words and knew immediately the meaning: she had just extended her permission to swing away, to not hold back and make this only a little perfunctory paddling, but to see how red I could make her ass and how many tears I could get leaking from her eyes in the space of the wagered twenty smacks. Was she issuing a challenge?

Falling into the narrative she seemed to be advancing I smiled at her with what I hoped was a look of satisfaction and superiority: the look one who has the upper hand uses toward someone obligated to submit.

**Chapter Five**

Here is the other version of *Rita's Bet* that I had mentioned I was working on. When I had first though about the premise for *Rita's Bet* I was undecided about where to take the story. There were two possibilities that appealed to me. While writing the first idea (published as *Rita's Bet*) I decided to write the second premise too when I finished, and this is that story.

This story follows the same two main characters as *Rita's Bet*, Rita and Rhiannon, and essentially the same broad plot outline. You will notice the first chapter in this story as mostly identical to the first chapter of *Rita's Bet*. However, near the end of this first chapter this version of the story diverges from the first version. The plot of this version rejoins the plot of the first version near the end of the last chapter.

This story is considerably longer than the first version of *Rita*, and many of the character motivations are different from the first version. Also, this version fills in some of Rita's and Rhiannon's immediately relevant backgrounds. There is also a third major character, Lena, who makes her appearance in chapter five, and she drives the story the rest of the way.

As I mentioned at the foreword to *Rita's Bet*, I love comments and observations about my stories.

However, once again: I don't really have an interest in hearing about how a chapter is submitted in what you feel is the wrong category. And I don't really care to bother with comments from burgeoning junior lawyers who just have to tell me all about the dire potential legal consequences of the action in the story -- just enjoy the story (or don't) for what it is. I also don't have an interest in hearing from unfortunate boys whose woman done him wrong at some point in his life and now he just has to lash out and vent his anger at women in general and find an excuse to call them skanks or whores. And for those who like to post with the hope of influencing the story line -- my stories, including this one, are finished before I start submitting them.

But your comments and observations on the literary aspects of the story (and especially in this case the differences between the two versions of the story), plot, character, mood, foreshadowing, etc, are all welcome and eagerly addressed and responded to, whether posted in the comment section or sent privately

Please enjoy the story. It is presented in eight chapters.

**Rita and Rhiannon's Bet -- Another Telling of *Rita's Bet*

Chapter Five**

Rhiannon took a few steps to the foot of my bed and faced it. She moved close, her knees and lower thighs against the headboard, and deliberately bent at the waist. She continued to lower herself until her forearms rested flat on the surface of the bed, her face barely above them. This position put her head and shoulders below the level of her hips, and her ass jutted out in a vulgar way.

I stepped directly behind her and found all of Rhiannon exposed to my eyes, her lower lips, secreted below her buttocks but still visible, plump and fat, red and engorged and exhibiting a little moisture. After I moved a bit to one side I rubbed the paddle on Rhiannon's bottom and tapped it lightly a few times. Then I pulled back the paddle, as far back and up as I could reach and brought it forward with all my strength. The crack surprised me with its volume, and I put my hand to my mouth in surprise and amusement. A red patch immediately sprang up from Rhiannon's ass where the paddle had hit. Rhiannon hadn't made any sound or said any word.

A feeling of self-consciousness filled me. The sound had been loud and filled the room, and I couldn't image how people had not heard it two blocks away. But I realized that the sound could hardly travel past these walls, and I settled into my happy and erotic task, feeling my excitement growing with each loud smack. Before that first smack was the only time I touched Rhiannon's butt before smacking her. I never again rubbed the paddle on her backside before swinging. I also varied the timing between my deliveries. It turned me on to know that Rhiannon could have no idea when a blow might fall.

As I proceeded Rhiannon's ass became progressively pink, then red, then took on a deeper red. The paddle covered a large expanse of her ass and so drew out the color quite evenly. And the size of the paddle made it possible to land a smack across both cheeks. The paddle, when it impacted Rhiannon's ass, made the same sharp but oddly heavy and muffled sound I remembered from my own initiation and from dealing out the initiation paddling to the new girls this year.

Rhiannon made no sound for the first four or five swats. Then she started to respond to each whack with a reactive sound that started just barely audible but grew by the end of the paddling to barely controlled grunts. At a couple points I gave Rhiannon three hard swats in quick succession. At those points the sounds she made became more panicky and rose in volume with each smack as the pain accumulated quickly and dramatically. When I stopped one of these quick series Rhiannon breathed in and out very rapidly trying to regain composure she had perhaps come close to losing. And those were the points in the paddling I enjoyed best: when my victim was close to losing it under the pain of the ass smacks I was delivering to her.

The last series of quickly administered smacks brought me to eighteen. Rhiannon's ass was a deep red and her breathing was shallow and fast, her grunts seeming to my ears to be taking on a tone of anxiety. I think she was hoping I might just continue with the last two and be done. But I stopped and let her calm herself a bit. Then I very deliberately added two more whacks, delivered as hard as I could make them, and we were done.

Rhiannon lay still for many moments. I took the opportunity to move directly behind her again and I noted immediately the change in her sex: her vulva had become a darker color and more full and swollen. The fluid that leaked from it could not be missed. Then she suddenly came to her feet, her hands on her ass and rubbing. She faced me and while I had heard no actual sobs I saw now that her eyes were wet and red and her cheeks streaked with tears. She had the look of the chastened: like someone who had been required to submit to an unpleasant and painful punishment and now felt humiliated and subjugated. I remembered how we had danced around how this would go beforehand: how Rhiannon had sent signals that she wanted her ass roasted and how I had played into that desire. But I was unsure if the look she displayed now was part of that fantasy sham or was real, or some combination of the two.

She had held her head, chin up, seeming to want to show her punisher she was unbroken, and she regarded me with that look for about five seconds. Then she broke our eye contact and walked around the bed to her clothes. She pulled on her socks and underwear, then her shirt and jeans and shoes without a word. When she was dressed she made for the door, not looking in my direction.

I put a hand inside the crook of her elbow and stopped her, confused and unsure what to say. After a second I managed, "Rhi, I had a great time with you tonight." I reached in and gave her a kiss on one cheek.

Rhiannon made a motion to leave, but without warning she wheeled around and she was up against me, one hand at the back of my neck and the other at my chin. Her mouth was on mine, her lips loose and her tongue prying at mine. Her tongue slipped into my mouth and began to enthusiastically explore. I had been entirely unprepared for this and it took a moment for me to know what to do. Then I just went with what my body felt. I leaned into her kiss and let my tongue enjoy intertwining with hers. I had done this for just a few seconds, Rhiannon had just elicited this reaction from me and the kiss had lasted perhaps a total of ten or fifteen seconds, when she suddenly broke it. She turned and was out the door and gone in a couple of seconds.

My mouth and body missed her and I felt a hard pang of regret that the kiss had not gone on forever. Then I heard her footsteps on the stairs descending, and a few seconds after the front door closing with a thump.

A backed up to my bed and sat down, dazed. My face felt hot and I was breathing deeply. I knew I was turned on. I sat like that for some minutes. Then I stood and began to get undressed for bed. I took off my shirt and bra, taking a few moments to cup my breasts and play at my nipples after they were bare. Then I took off my skirt. I thought about leaving my panties on for sleep, but then I thought how I wanted to be nude. I pulled them down, and I noted how the crotch came away from my vulva in a sticky and reluctant fashion.

Pulling back the bedspread I got into my bed and pulled the covers tight just under my chin. After a few minutes, as my body heat began to accumulate and warm my cocoon, I reached a hand down between my legs and felt a sloppy, sodden wetness there that I had seldom felt before. I began to work my fingers around, playing with my inner lips. Then I stopped and very deliberately withdrew my hand. I decided I wasn't going to take my excitement any further on my own. Snuggling my head into my pillow I went in search of what I hoped would be clarifying slumber.

The phone on my night table was ringing. Groggy and disoriented I pushed myself up on an elbow. I think it had rung several times before I became aware of it. I blinked my eyes stupidly, drowsy, sleep glue making them seem sticky, and looked at the phone for another ring and then reached out slowly to pick up the receiver. As I did this I looked at the clock next to the phone: 8:53.

I brought the receiver to my mouth and ear and said, "Um, what?" I'd had no idea whom it might be. This was in the days before the telephone would tell you in advance the identity of every caller. You had to live your life dangerously and pick up the phone for just *anyone*!

"Get over here!" It was Rhiannon's voice, insistent. "Hurry."

"What?" I asked, still foggy and unable to comprehend much. I at least knew it was Sunday morning, and pretty early by my Sunday morning standards.

"Come over now, Girlfriend," Rhiannon demanded again.

"But," I began.

"Look, I did a Ferris Buehler this morning," Rhiannon said. Then she took on the voice of a young Matthew Broderick and said, "Worst performance of my entire career, but they never doubted it for a second. Incredible!" Resuming her normal voice she said. "My family just went out to church and I convinced my mom I was too sick to go. We've got about three hours, so get your ass over here!"

Then she hung up.

I wasn't at all sure why she wanted me there, but there was no way I wasn't going. I hopped from bed. My clothes from last night were on the floor and I gathered them together and stuffed them in the hamper that was already almost full to overflowing. Then I pulled on some fresh underwear and climbed into a skirt and top.

I exited my room, moving as quietly as I could. My folks would not be up before noon. I had no idea when they had come in last night, certainly after I was off to sleep. Church was not on the family agenda.

At the bottom of the stairs I slipped on shoes and exited into a sunny and refreshingly cool morning, closing the door quietly behind me. I made a right and walked the block to the highway. Then I walked quickly down the street on the other side for one block. I rounded the corner to my left and made for the second house on the right.

Once on the porch I rang the bell and pounded the knocker once. In just a couple seconds the door opened. Rhiannon was nude, but she was not cowering shyly behind the door. Instead she stood in the wide opening between the door and the door frame. Her one hand was up near the top of the door, and her other hand in the same position on the door frame. In between the door and the frame she stood gloriously nude, open to my eyes and the eyes of anyone who might be passing on the street behind me. No one was, but I got the feeling she had not stopped to check before opening the door.

Rhiannon's one knee was bent, her foot up on its toes. She smiled at me and then giggled and twisted her hips back and forth. Only then did she step back from the door and let me in.

She turned and lead the way up the stairs to her room. As I looked up toward her I saw that her ass was still a heavy red from her paddling and I smiled to myself. When I was in her room she closed the door firmly. Before I could say anything we were both sitting on the bed and Rhiannon was talking.

"Same bet as last night?" she asked.

"Um, yeah, sure, I guess," I said. Then I pointed out the obvious. "You don't have any clothes on, Rhi." I whispered this last part, like I was passing on information of which she might be unaware.

Rhiannon bounced off the bed and put her hand into a contained on her dresser. "How many pieces do you have on?" she asked. I told her six after doing a quick inventory. Then she came back and sat down. She put down six pennies on the bedspread.

"I'm not going to bother putting anything on," she said. That was fine with me. She looked fabulous, and I could feel the first stirrings of desire inside me. "You lose clothes and I lose coins. Whoever's is gone first loses. Same payoff as last night."

"Shit," I said. "I didn't bring my paddle."

Again Rhiannon got up, went to her closet, and she reached up onto a high shelf. She came back with a paddle that was almost identical to the one I kept, although hers was far newer looking. "I'm the keeper of the paddle for our squad too," she said. She was tapping the polished wood surface against the palm of her hand.

"OK?" she asked.

Before I could respond she picked up the deck of cards already sitting on her bed and began to deal. I was sure I'd feel very bad for her if she lost and had to get her ass hammered again. More hard wood applied to a bottom as red and sensitive as hers would be utter agony. I smiled at the prospect: shame on me. Those first stirrings of arousal, lit by Rhiannon's nudity, now swelled with the thought of the possibility that she might have to again submit to me, have to bend over and present her already ruby ass for more swats administered by yours truly.

But the game went quite differently from last night's. We stayed even for the first four hands. Then she lost another and had a single penny left. I quite distinctly felt my pussy gush with lubrication. But then I lost two in a row and it was done. I took off my bra, my breasts revealed to Rhiannon's appreciative eye. Then after the last hand Rhiannon gave a little cheer of triumph and smiled as I pulled my panties off.

I was a bit disappointed: a repeat of last night's result would have been fine with me. But I let out a sigh and made sure to take this in the direction Rhiannon had last night. "Ten hard cracks?" I asked.

"Oh, Girlfriend, you have no idea how hard," Rhiannon said, smiling and laughing.

I took the same position over the end of her bed she had taken over the end of mine about eight hours earlier. Aware of Rhiannon's movements I was sure she took the same opportunity I had to go directly behind me and have an unobstructed look at the goods. I felt myself get a bit lightheaded at the thought and knew the evidence of my increased arousal would be plain to her eyes.

Rhi didn't tap at all on my bottom with the paddle. Suddenly a hard smack sounded as the paddle unexpectedly made hard contact with my ass. But Rhi didn't stop, didn't give out the paddling deliberately as I had. Instead, ten hard smacks fell on my ass, she only taking long enough between each to reach back for plenty of swinging room. The whole event took less than twenty seconds.

I had felt pain like that before during my initiation, although that agony had been distributed over a longer span of time. Even though this involved only ten impacts on my ass it was much more painfully intense. With the swats coming so fast and unrelentingly the pain didn't double each time; rather, it seemed to increase exponentially with each loud smack. For the last six I gave out loud, sharp screams, and just a few more beyond ten would have had me screaming at the top of my lungs.

I stayed in the same position for some time, I don't know how long, as I felt the pain move through and suffuse my body and mind. My consciousness became an expanse of white nothing, as if I were inside a snow globe after a vigorous shake. The experience seemed like a dam had suddenly opened, the pain a huge deluge of water that rushed into a lake; then the water finding its new level and beginning to even out. Finally, when those sensations were distributed around my body, my ass now just the hot and sore focal point, I pulled myself up over the footboard and crawled toward the head of the bed until my body was entirely on the surface of the mattress.

Rhiannon came up behind me -- I was still on my front -- put her hands on my hips and turned me over. She brought her face down and it was lost in my breasts, her kisses and licks driving me wild with desire. I gathered up my breasts and offered them to her. She played at them briefly and then her head moved south, briefly toying with my navel. Then Rhiannon's lips and tongue were nipping all around my sex, placing little kisses and licks randomly, but always with the purpose of moving closer to her target.

When I couldn't stand the teasing anymore I reached down and guided her to where I wanted her attentions. She let out a little giggle, as if she had gotten from me the urgency she had been trying to elicit.

Then the light and teasing kisses, licks and nips were gone. Her tongue was flat on me, wiggling, burying itself forcefully between my labia. The tip of her tongue began to push into me, then it stopped, and her whole tongue was slowly and with delightful pressure riding directly up my sex toward my clit. When she reached that goal I was suddenly over the top. I began to groan and buck my hips and an orgasm more intense than any I had ever felt was on me. Tears leaked from my eyes and my breathing was ragged as the waves of pleasure overwhelmed me.

When I recovered I looked down to see Rhiannon looking up at me from between my legs, a big smile on her face. "You're easy," she said.

I flushed in embarrassment. I thought back to the first time I had given a boy and handjob. It had been during that confused freshman year. We had found ourselves alone outside at a party in the spring, and neither of us had any idea whether or not we liked each other. But there was some sort of undefined attraction and we had been spending time with each other. In the middle of kissing he had loosened his pants and then a boner was suddenly before me. He put my hand on it and, really just for the sake of having the experience, I began to pump it. My hand had not been in contact with it for more than three seconds when thick squirts of cum had started shooting from it. I hadn't really thought anything about it, but the boy had been ashamed of how quickly he had cum. He thanked me for my attentions, but begged me not to tell anyone how quickly he had cum. I promised I would not say a word, and I never did.

But now I felt a bit like him: ashamed at having been so quick on the trigger. I gave Rhiannon a shame-faced smile and covered my face with my hands.

When I looked again I found Rhiannon above me. Her knees straddled my torso and she was walking on them up toward my head. I had never been with a woman before, but I knew immediately what was expected and what was about to happen. Rhi stopped with her pussy some inches above my face. From this new angle I had a view, as I had the previous night, of her bare, shaven sex. I reached up with my hands around her thighs and put my palms firmly on her buttocks. I pulled her down toward me. As her sex came close I pushed my chin up and extended my tongue. I licked the length of her vulva before I began to squirm my tongue into her moist and hot folds.

I heard Rhiannon's reaction to my ministrations: a low but insistent moaning. Her breathing deepened and I could feel a gush of moisture and a doubling of her heat. She began to move her hips back and forth and I pulled her down toward me more tightly as I concentrated my attentions on her clitoris. I sucked her small nub into my mouth, rolling it around a bit with my tongue. Then I very deliberately flicked the tip of my tongue over the little sprout. Rhiannon's moaning took on a higher pitched urgency. As I burrowed with my tongue I felt the surprisingly hard nub of her clit as folds of flesh moved to allow access. Her clit's hard core was exposed. When I pushed my tongue against this hardness, so surprising after all the soft folds and creases discovered along the way, Rhiannon was over the top and she became stationary. Only very small flicking motions with her hips betrayed her struggle to pull from my tongue's contact every ounce and wave of pleasure.

I kept my tongue entirely still and allowed Rhiannon to use the contact as she pleased, and the contractions in her vagina were easily apparent to me even with my mouth inches away. In a few moments her muscles relaxed and she settled onto my face more heavily before pulling herself up and off.

She swung a leg over my face and moved her body to the edge of the bed and sat there. I was a little surprised. I had thought we might share a kiss after our mutual attentions to each other and the satisfaction and pleasure we had each imparted to the other. I wondered as I discovered my surprise turning into a feeling of relief.

All of this had been quite unexpected. Even twelve hours ago I never could have imagined the experiences Rhi and I had recently shared: last night's and this morning's paddlings, and the pleasure we had gifted to each other. We both seemed to enjoy playing the dominant role of dealing out a bare-bottomed paddling. Don't lovers do these sorts of things? Share their kinks? But the realization was dawning in me that I wasn't at all sure that Rhiannon was my lover or that I wanted her to fulfill that role.

The experiences of these recent hours had been unique and enjoyable, but I was beginning to grasp that Rhiannon was not essential to them: I could have those experiences with anyone, for that matter even a boy.

I had been lost in these thoughts and had not heard or felt Rhiannon get up from the bed. Suddenly she was above me again, but this time standing over my upturned face which was near the edge of the bed.

"C'mon," she said. "I'm hungry. Let's go get something to eat." She had her bra on and was now stepping into her panties.

I smiled at her. "Good idea," I said. We both dressed, made a trip to the bathroom together for a quick wash up, and then made for the door.

**Chapter Six**

We drove a half mile or so to the local Denny's. Had I known that the conversation we had over this breakfast would have so much import I might have somehow better prepared for it.

After we placed our breakfast orders we sipped our coffees, and I saw that Rhiannon's eyes were on me almost constantly. This seemed like a good time to try to straighten up some long ago business: something that had been bothering me since just after I had run into Rhiannon at the convenience store.

"Hey, Rhi," I hesitantly began. She renewed her gaze, her eyebrows rising in expectation. "You know a few years ago? You know, when we were freshmen?"

"You're just consumed with guilt," Rhiannon supplied to my amazement. She let out a little laugh. "What you did really sucked," she continued. "And, you know, it hurt me a lot. But it's water under the bridge, Rita. I was pretty much a mess for the rest of that year, at least in relation to you and me, but I got over it. Really"

"Are you sure?" I asked.

"Hey, there are no problems between us, Girlfriend," Rhiannon said. "I'm sort of sorry we had to be separated after that year because if we had seen more of each other sophomore year we would have been back together. I got it behind me by then. I fact, you know, if the situation had been reversed, there is no way I could have resisted taking that place on the squad."

I was surprised and delighted to discover that a subject that had made my stomach do slow turns whenever I thought about it had been resolved so easily. Never would I have imagined a resolution like this.

"Still," I said, "I want to tell you how sorry I am," I said. "I know I hurt you, and I really didn't want to. I've never wanted to be anything but your friend."

"Well, that's exactly the way I feel," Rhiannon said. "Even now," she added.

The thought struck me then that both my last comment and hers seemed a trifle odd given that we had within the previous hour had our faces buried in each other's pussy. Just then the waitperson came with our breakfast plates, one in each hand. The comments hung in the air.

When our waitperson had completed her tasks and freshened out coffees Rhiannon looked up at me and smiled. "Hey, Rita, I'm sort of," she said hesitantly, and then trailed off.

I thought I would try to fill out her thought, as she had completed mine a few moments ago. "You're just not sure we're a couple of lesbo dykes who are gonna be sucking each other's pussies on a regular basis and finding true love together?"

She laughed loud enough that the general conversation around us seemed to fade a little in reaction to the outburst. She looked at me. "I really like you, Rita," she said, "and I hope we can be friends again. I'd really like to get together every now and then like we did this morning. And last night," she added.

"But you're not looking for a relationship," I supplied. Rhi nodded her head with some hesitation. I suppose she wasn't sure if she was disappointing me or dashing my romantic hopes. "Well, that's fine, Rhi, because I feel the same way. I really enjoyed last night and this morning, but after you got done cumming all over my face this morning I realized that, well I don't know how to put it; I guess I feel the same way you do."

Her hesitation was gone and she broadened her smile. She reached out with her hands to cover mine and squeezed them. Then we turned our attention to our breakfasts. I found that between the calories I had expended this morning and the general relief I was feeling that neither of us would be left hurting from our encounter that I had worked up an appetite. I was famished. My breakfast called to me and I ate with abandon, giving the meal all my attention until my plate was mostly empty.

Rhiannon seemingly felt the same way, deeply engrossed in her meal. Finally we both looked up from our plates to find we were gazing at each other.

Rhiannon was masticating some egg, and in between chews she said, "Besides, you know Rita how it would look: we're each co-captains of our cheer squads. I don't think we can be lovers and maintain a healthy rivalry at the same time."

"You're probably right," I said. "The homecoming game is coming up this Thursday, and I don't know if it would be good for a relationship between us when we clean your clocks."

"Oh, I know, I know," Rhiannon said, more than a trace of mocking in her voice. "You guys are going down in a big way, and I just couldn't stand to sit my pussy down on such a disappointed looking face. I don't suppose you'd care to put your ass where your mouth is?"

I understood her meaning immediately. Our initiations. I thought back to the previous summer, and how I had helped initiate the new girls onto our squad. I had felt a little guilt at the pleasure I had taken swatting their asses, but that guilt had been overwhelmed by the rush I had felt. I suppose that's why they call it a 'guilty pleasure', but this was a lot better than chocolate.

The sensation had been one of being on top of the world, a feeling of superiority and dominance. I wielded the paddle, swinging it with abandon, and my poor victim was entirely subordinate, obliged to grit her teeth and shed her tears, to find strategies to keep her body and limbs from moving out of position so as not to accrue additional smacks. The feeling was intoxicating. I had the sense of being in command, exhilarated and elated.

My eyes found Rhiannon's and I understood the look I saw there. I was as certain as I could be that the same thoughts were passing through her mind, that she'd had the same experience when initiating her new girls. I sensed a challenge and a threat: I knew what would come out of this was one of us submitting to the other. I knew that one of us would have the experience of visiting on the other deep humiliation and embarrassment and would enjoy every second of the experience. The other would have to submit to a shaming experience that would deflate her ego and strip her of all her dignity.

Great! What could be more perfect!

The desire to come out of a bet on the homecoming game on top was a deeply and passionately desired goal, a source of erotic energy. And the feeling was intensified exponentially by the dread of defeat: placing myself at risk of being the loser and on the receiving end. How sweet it would be to emerge from our wager the victor.

A smile emerged on my face and my mind began to work and contrive. I thought back to our experiences of the night before and earlier this morning. I thought of how I had used Rhiannon's mouth for my pleasure and how I had paddled her ass with abandon. In both instances I was taking my satisfaction without regard to her feelings. And I knew that I had sensed the same feeling from behind me as Rhiannon had laid the paddle on my ass and as she had pressed herself into my face.

We weren't lovers. We might be friends. We were definitely opponents looking at an opportunity to make fantasies of power and control real, willing to use the other as the object of the dominance and superiority we each craved to win and wield.

"An initiation," I said. Rhiannon looked at me a bit uncertainly. "An initiation. The loser gets the initiation paddle."

A look of understanding and agreement passed over Rhiannon's face. She seemed to know exactly what I was talking about and where I was coming from. "You're on," she said.

The waitperson was back then to refresh our coffees again, and by the time we had drained our cups our bet had taken shape.

We were both on our own for the coming weekend. Rhiannon's family and my parents were off to visit their respective relatives for the long Thanksgiving weekend, we forced to remain behind because of our cheerleading commitments. The loser would walk to the winner's home on the Saturday evening following the game, and would bend over and present their ass for a paddling. And until the end of the game neither of us would know who would be on the receiving end or how much that poor unfortunate would be getting.

We decided we would let the final score determine the loser's payoff: a swat for every point the winner's team scored and three swats for every point the loser's team lost by. The best case situation for the loser would be if her team lost on a safety two to nothing: eight swats, two for the winning team's two points and two times three, or six more, for the two points the loser's team lost by.

When we had settled on this a moment of hesitation fell over me and the fire in my stomach cooled, but the feeling was just transitory. In a minute my zeal was rekindled. I saw Rhiannon - poor unfortunate loser that she would soon be, who had risked too much and now faced paying the price -- sheepishly making her way to my basement.

At the bottom of the stairs she would see scarlet and navy uniforms, both football and cheer. We had decided that the winner would enjoy the experience so much more if the loser were paying off in front of males as well, if the winner got to share the spoils of the victory she'd achieved with her friends and teammates.

But we also decided that all of this might just not be right for some of the younger kids. We were our squads' co-captains, older and aware of some responsibility to our younger charges. We didn't feel quite right exposing them to something like this. Besides, it would reveal to those who'd not been initiated yet just what part of the initiation entailed. The varsity members were sworn to secrecy, had honored that commitment, and we wanted to preserve the suspense and mystery of one of the squad's rites.

So we decided only football team and cheer squad members who had reached the magic age of eighteen would be invited as the loser's audience. That meant four of my squad mates and about a dozen or so football players would attend if Rhiannon lost. The numbers worked out almost identically from Rhiannon's side. And in Rhiannon would walk, a wisp of gold and white. I hoped she would seem nervous, and in my fantasies she was actually shivering, as she perceived for the first time the magnitude of the embarrassment and humiliation she faced because of her misplaced faith in her school's players.

We were about to put our jackets on and leave when out of nowhere a blur of gold and white was sitting next to Rhiannon. I wasn't surprised at the gold and white colors on her jacket, but the girl who shoved Rhiannon to the side with a push of her hip had hair every bit as starkly white as the pale color of her jacket's lettering. The platinum blonde of her tresses, the short style ending around her neck, seemed frigid and brittle.

The girl leaned into Rhiannon and gave her a short smooch on the cheek. "Who's this?" she asked. She didn't look at me, just jerked a thumb in my direction when she asked the question. I was surprised she asked it right off rather than greeting Rhiannon with any words first.

"This is my friend, Rita," Rhiannon said. "We go back a long way."

"First grade," I interjected.

"This is Lena, our other co-captain" Rhiannon continued, completing the introduction. I stuck out my hand toward Lena, and Rhiannon finished her thought. "Rita's a co-captain on the East cheer squad."

Lena's hand, which she had begun to extend to me, shot back and out of reach.

"Rhi!" Lena said, disbelief in her voice. "That's the enemy! How can you be sitting here drinking coffee with her just a few days before the big game?"

"Well," Rhiannon began.

"Forget it!" Lena said, her voice not loud but containing unexpected, and to me unexplainable, vehemence. "I was gonna have a coffee with you, but not with her sitting right there. Later!"

With that Lena was gone, another blur of gold and white.

Rhiannon looked at me and rolled her eyes, as I turned my head to watch Lena stomp her way to the exit and out.

"What was that all about?" I asked, turning again to face Rhiannon, I'm sure a perplexed look gracing my face.

"Lena takes this whole school rivalry thing maybe a step or two too far," Rhiannon offered.

"Ya think?" I asked. Rhiannon's evaluation seemed accurate enough. In a way it was also prophetic. I was to discover just how much so in a few days, but I felt no sense of foreboding sitting in the sun-washed restaurant interior.

Rhiannon gave me a sheepish little embarrassed smile. She put a finger to the side of her head and circled her ear with it and crossed her eyes at the same time.

"Imagine how she'd go off if she found out we were sucking each other's pussies this morning," I observed.

Rhiannon cracked up. She took a look out the window and I followed her gaze. A car, Lena's severe and bleak hairdo near the steering wheel, drove past on its way to the parking lot exit.

"Weird," I said.

After we had given Lena a chance to get a ways down the road we took our bill to the cashier, paid and left.

As we drove back to our neighborhood we decided that we would not get together or phone each other again that week, decided that our next meeting would be when one of us showed up at the other's house to pay off her lost bet the following Saturday night.

Thanksgiving Day was cool but far from cold. Low clouds progressed across the sky in a manner that could not be called stately because they were far too undistinguished. Their pace might be described as sluggish and their look as lugubrious. But as cheerless and mournful as they looked they held in the warmth nicely. When the sun would briefly flash through a thin fissure between cloud masses the gridiron scene took on a wintry look.

The inharmonious nature of the scene entertained me: when the sun flashed out for a momentary appearance I shivered because the tableau of players, goal posts, fans, and bleachers took on the bright-edged look of objects seen on a day in deep winter. Then when the solar spotlight shuffled back behind the intervening canopy of cloud I felt the warmth of the light breeze again.

What can I tell you about the game? Well, this was the last game of the season for both teams, and offense had reigned supreme for both of the squads all season long. Out of eight games that each team had played so far our team had lost four and West had lost three. And the score of all those games had been quite sizable. In none of the games either team had played that season had less than fifty points been scored by both squads, but no game had been won by more than eight points.

As good as our offenses had been, both of our teams featured struggling defenses. So when one of our teams caught a lucky break or two on defense then they would win that game. Both of our teams had averaged over thirty points per game. Rhiannon and I had considered this when negotiating our bet. I had mentioned this to her: that the loser was likely to get quite a butt warming considering how high scoring our games had been that year. She had nodded her head enthusiastically, her eyes lighting up and a smile crossing her face at the possibility of dealing out all those swats.

We had three seniors, our quarterback, a running back, and a wide receiver, all of whom had made the all-state team the previous year and were shoo-ins this year too.

West kicked off to us to open the game. On the first drive our all-state quarterback was sacked. In fact, he was knocked unconscious and had to be taken to the hospital to be checked for a concussion. Two drives later our all-state running back was upended at full speed and had to be helped off the field between two teammates since he could put no weight on his left leg at all. For the rest of the game our all-state wide receiver rambled all over the field, mostly wide open, while the second string quarterback could not place the ball within ten yards of him.

With no running game and no passing game and a defense that spluttered, the events of that afternoon were not pretty to watch. At least not for me and our side. We cheered like we were far ahead, cheered as if the 44 to 0 tally on the scoreboard with thirty seconds left in the game would be a snap to overcome with the right encouragement from the cheer squad.

I'm not at all bad in math so, even while I made a determined effort to put multiplication tables far from my mind, instinctually I was able to work out in some back, unoccupied corner of my brain that forty-four times three is one hundred thirty two, and adding another forty-four to that makes one hundred seventy-six. As I perceived this calculation I was watching the ball slip from the grasp of our quarterback to be picked up by a West defender who raced with the ball to the end zone for one last touchdown. The numbers on the scoreboard changed to display a final score of 50 to 0. The officials didn't even bother to stop the clock or prepare for an extra point and both teams left the field, those in gold and white uniforms receiving the adulation of the partisans in their stands, and those in navy and scarlet walking dejectedly toward the field house.

As I walked along with all the others in that same direction that corner of my mind was busy again. Unbidden, it helpfully calculated for me that fifty times three is one hundred fifty, and that fifty more added to that makes two hundred. Shit.