**Saturday Night School Ch. 06**

Ronni held her phone up to Charlie's face like an accusation. Charlie gazed at the picture on her screen, and his first, completely inappropriate thought was, "Cody took a pretty good picture!"

Both his and Michelle's faces were captured in profile and clearly visible. Michelle had her back against the pillar at the train station, and Charlie pushed against her. Cody had captured the moment of their kiss, their eyes closed, their mouths pressed together. Not a chaste kiss, not a friendly kiss. This was a kiss with desire behind it.

He must have zoomed in on our faces, Charlie thought. How long did he have his camera on us, anyway?

"Cody sent you that picture?" he asked Ronni.

"Yes. Did you know he saw you?" Ronni pulled the phone back and stabbed at the screen with her finger. "So he took that picture on Saturday. That means while I was shopping for a prom dress, you were out with Michelle. Then I sent you a picture of the dress. Here's your response." She read from her phone: "Hey Ronni, looks great. You're going to look amazing." Ronni lifted her eyes, glaring at him. "Were you actually still with Michelle when you wrote this?"

Charlie felt a throb of pain from the side of his head. "I just saw Cody in the bathroom. He had one of his football buddies punch me in the head."

"What?" The change of subject caught her by surprise. "Why? Because you kissed Michelle?"

"I think so..." Charlie leaned against a table and rubbed his head.

Ronni nodded. "Because she said she would go to the prom with Glenn. You were kissing Glenn's date. So now, what? The whole football team is your enemy?"

"Maybe..."

"Charlie... please just be honest with me. I was glad that you asked me to the prom, and I thought it would be fun to go with you. But I can find someone else to go with. I really don't want to find out a week before that you're taking Michelle instead."

"I wouldn't do that to you, Ronni."

"You wouldn't? What if she insisted? Do you really think she couldn't get you to take her? You'd drop me in a minute." Ronni shook her head. "What happened, Charlie? We talked about this before. You said you'd gone out with her a few times, but it was over. Then Cody sends me this picture, and it clearly isn't over. What happened?" She looked up at him imploringly. "Just tell me, Charlie. I need the truth from you, okay?"

"The truth..." Charlie whispered under his breath. He glanced down at his hands, tangled together in front of him. For a moment, he wrestled with indecision. He met her gaze, her eyes watching him, waiting for him.

He gave her the truth.

He started with how he glimpsed someone passing outside the A/V room, on a Saturday when no one should have been there. Ronni's eyes widened when Charlie described catching Michelle walking naked through the school. He tried to explain how Michelle's initial embarrassment had turned into a peculiar companionship, how he had escorted her on her nude stroll through the school, how they'd even gone outside to the parking lot. He left out a lot of the details, in particular the sex, and Ronni seemed to notice the gaps in his story but didn't press him.

How easily I tell Michelle's secrets, Charlie thought with a surge of guilt, but he went on to describe the Second Michelle incident. How she'd appeared naked in the A/V room, a few Saturdays later, after undressing by his car and sliding her clothes through his car window so she couldn't get to them again. Again, he left out the sex, and kept Daryl's role to a minimum. He skipped Third Michelle entirely, but tried to explain how his secret encounters with Michelle combined with the apparent social chasm between them at school had caused him to feel dissatisfied with his life, and that had prompted him to invite Ronni to the prom.

He described his conversation with Michelle on the bleachers, and his belief that it had ended things between them. But then he described how Michelle had come with him to Jefferson University for his film school interview, and how it had ended with her undressing in the train on the way back.

Ronni listened intently, asking few questions. The home room bell rang, but Charlie ignored it, and Ronni didn't show any intention of leaving until he was done with his story. He reached the kiss in the train station, and how he had discovered Cody on the opposite platform, recording them with his phone.

"Cody isn't going to show the picture to Glenn... but he did threaten me to stay away from Michelle. And Michelle told me she still wants to go to the prom with Glenn." Charlie threw up his hands. "So... all that stuff that happened on Saturday, her taking off her clothes in the train, her kissing me in the train station... none of it has really changed anything."

Ronni didn't speak at first, but just sat quietly with her hands in her lap, a thoughtful look on her face. Charlie suddenly felt terrified that he'd just made a big mistake. He'd given up Michelle's secret and now Ronni, feeling slighted, would tell everyone at the school.

"Ronni... he spoke urgently. "You can't tell anyone any of this."

"I won't," she said quickly. "It's just... it's not what I expected." She looked up at Charlie with a sly grin on her face. It caught him by surprise.

"I know." Charlie looked away, nervously pushing his fingers through his hair. "It's a weird situation. Definitely. I mean... it was just by chance that I caught her that first time. She has this thing that turns her on... this fetish... and because I was the one who caught her doing it... and I'm the only one who knows about it... now I'm a part of it."

"She likes the thrill of being naked out in public, and now she likes having you there to witness her do it," Ronni murmured.

"Yeah. Right."

"Because she knows you like to see her doing it. You like to watch her while she streaks."

"Uh..."

"Oh, don't pretend. Just about every boy in this school would like to see Michelle Santos naked. You're no different."

"I'm not pretending anything," Charlie said. "I'm just not going to speak for Michelle. You'd have to ask her why she likes having me there."

Ronni look thoughtful for a moment. "I know a place," she murmured.

"What place?"

"A place where Michelle could be outside. Where you and her could walk around and no one would care."

"Walk around?" Charlie struggled to understand what she was suggesting. "You mean where Michelle could... um..."

"Where she could walk around naked," Ronni said matter-of-factly. "Outside. And you could take her there and be with her and Cody and Glenn would never know."

"Where?"

"Have you ever been to Greenholt Gardens?"

"Yes..." Charlie said slowly. "We had a class picnic there in seventh grade." He remembered green paths that wound through flower beds and groves of trees. An artificial pond filled with koi. A wide green field where some of the boys had tossed around a football.

"My brother works there," Ronni said. "He's like the night watchman. There's a restaurant there called The Shamrock, that's open until 10 or 11, and after it closes, my brother says its just him. This big, beautiful garden, and it's totally empty, all night long."

"Except for your brother," Charlie said.

"Right." Ronni smiled. "But I'm pretty sure he wouldn't mind."

Charlie shook his head. "Thanks for the thought. But I didn't tell you all this looking for your help. I just felt like I owed you the truth of this thing I'm mixed up in with Michelle. If it's too much, if you want to go with someone else to the prom, then I totally understand."

Ronni leaned forward in her chair. "We're going to the prom together as friends, right?"

"Yeah."

"So that's why I want to help you with Michelle. Because we're friends." Ronni gazed up at him.

"Okay. But you know, I can't even tell her we had this conversation. It's just between us, okay?"

"I know, Charlie." Ronni pantomimed turning a key at the corner of her mouth, then smiled. "You can trust me." She leaned back in her chair again and crossed her hands in her lap.

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Charlie had trouble concentrating as lunch approached. He kept an eye out for Michelle in the halls but didn't see her, and started to wonder if she hadn't come to school that day. Maybe she'd skipped school for some reason. He thought about texting her, now that he had her number saved in his phone, but couldn't think of what to say.

The lunch bell rang and he walked towards the cafeteria with grim expectations. She wouldn't be there. He'd asked her to lunch spontaneously, after a long day, and she probably didn't even remember she'd agreed to it. It made sense that she would forget. If she was even in school at all.

Charlie pushed through the doors into the cafeteria. He stepped to the side, out of the way of the steady stream of people entering behind him, and stood with his back against the wall. He scanned the cafeteria, and found Michelle immediately. She was sitting at a table by herself, almost in the center of cafeteria. He could only see the back of her head, but he knew it was her. His heart bounced in his chest.

This is it, he thought. I'm going to walk over and sit right in front of her, and everyone's going to see us together, and everyone's going to know that we're a couple. Maybe in a weirder way than they can ever understand... but it's the truth. Michelle Santos and I are a couple.

Even in his thoughts, it sounded unbelievable.

Charlie took a step towards Michelle. Just one step and then he froze in place.

He could see a group approaching Michelle's table, flowing inevitably towards her. Vampire Vanessa, flanked by two more cheerleaders, Sandy and Tina. Behind them, Cody and Glenn Mack and Ryan Fender. Ryan Fender, most likely the source of the punch that had made Charlie's head spin that morning. Cody, the guy who had ordered the punch. More of Michelle's friends, a procession of them, headed for her table.

He could see Michelle perk up as Vanessa called out to her. Charlie was too far away to hear, but he could see Michelle raise her head, and could see her smiling and nodding to the approaching group. Vanessa set down her tray next to Michelle, and Sandy and Tina did the same. Cody and Glenn were already grabbing another table and moving it next to Michelle's. A long table for them all to sit.

I can't do it, Charlie thought. If it was just her alone, maybe I could. But I can't sit with all her friends. I just don't belong there.

He realized then that it was just a fantasy, the idea that he could bring their fling into the daylight. Seeing her, surrounded by her friends, he understood that what he and Michelle shared in private could never be revealed to the world. It was a secret link between them, a bond meant for empty schools and empty trains. Michelle had been alone before with her secret impulses; now he had joined her in her hidden life, and she wasn't alone anymore. Nevertheless, her secret still separated the two of them from everyone else.

He gazed at Michelle, surrounded by her circle of friends. Enjoy her, he thought to them. Talk to her, have fun with her, even go to the prom with her. But you'll never truly know her. Not like I do. You've never seen her face as filled with life as I have.

He would talk to her later, sometime when he could speak to her alone. Maybe he would spend his lunch brainstorming a way to present Ronni's Greenholt Gardens offer to her. Of course, first he would have to gently break the news to her that he had told Ronni everything, and that was a conversation he wasn't looking forward to.

Or maybe he'd leave Ronni out of it and think of something else he and Michelle could do together. Maybe they could just get together and drive, leave Pine Hills behind and drive for miles and miles. Find someplace else to be for an evening, someplace where no one knew them. Someplace far from Cody and Glenn and all the rest of them.

Charlie let his eyes linger on Michelle one last time as he turned to leave the cafeteria. Was it a fair exchange? To give up any public association with Michelle in exchange for the private life he shared with her? Resigning himself to watching her from the other side of the cafeteria, from the other side of the hallway, from his camera perch at the top of the bleachers, knowing that later when she was alone with him she would be naked and beautiful in his arms? Was he satisfied with that deal?

Yes, he decided. It was enough. More than he ever hoped for.

He turned and walked out of the cafeteria.

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As he walked away, uncertain where he was going, Charlie moved to the side of the hallway to avoid the flow of students that headed into the cafeteria. He was almost at the end of the hall when he stopped abruptly.

Michelle! It was Michelle! He saw her walking right towards him, part of the stream of students walking to lunch. So that girl he'd just seen in the cafeteria, sitting with Cody and Glenn and Vampire Vanessa... That wasn't Michelle at all! He'd made a mistake, misidentified some other girl with long dark hair. What a dummy!

He raised his hand to Michelle, smiling, about to greet her.

The instant before he spoke, he realized he was wrong. It wasn't Michelle walking towards him. He vaguely recognized this dark-haired girl; she was a sophomore, and Charlie didn't know her name. She didn't even really look like Michelle. Charlie's hand wilted to his side. How could he have made that mistake? Was it a matter of his eyes seeing what he wanted to see?

Charlie stopped, putting his back against the wall, watching the dark-haired girl as she passed by him. A stranger, she didn't notice him, didn't look at him. She just walked right by as if he wasn't there.

He turned, no longer looking at the dark-haired girl, now looking at the cafeteria door as it opened and closed. He was shaking his head without noticing what he was doing. "No." He spoke out loud. "No. It's not enough."

He couldn't go back to walking past Michelle and pretending he didn't know her. He didn't want just the secret part of her life.

He wanted all of it.

"Shit," he swore softly, squeezing his hands into fists, knowing what he had to do. "Come on, Charlie. If you're gonna go, then go. Don't keep her waiting." He took a deep breath. "She's worth it." He felt like he could repeat those three words over and over again, like a mantra, to keep his resolve firm. He left the wall and went back into the cafeteria.

He didn't go directly towards Michelle. The whole idea was that they were going to have lunch together, so he needed to buy himself a lunch. He went to one of the refrigerated bins and grabbed a pre-packaged chicken salad sandwich, then grabbed a bottle of Sprite. He didn't even feel hungry; the sandwich and soda were more like props. He stood in line at the register and handed the cashier a twenty. He almost walked away without his change.

He walked along the edge of the cafeteria, eyeing the group that now took up three tables in the middle of the cafeteria. He could see Michelle's profile clearly now, sitting right in the middle of the group. She was smiling, talking to Vanessa. She wore a thin-strapped blue dress that left her shoulders mostly bare. What was it Greg Arden had said once, in this same cafeteria? "That Michelle Santos always has something on..."

Charlie changed course, heading directly for that cluster of three tables with his sandwich and his Sprite. He approached from an angle that was just behind Michelle's peripheral vision, so she didn't see him coming towards her, and she wasn't likely to notice him until he was right up at her table.

No one paid him any attention until he was almost right behind Michelle, and it was Tina who noticed him first. She sat across from Michelle, and she glanced up at him as he approached. At first, her eyes dropped back down, showing little interest, and then something clicked in her mind and she looked back up at him, now very interested. She grinned, glancing between him and Michelle.

Charlie stood awkwardly, surveying the group. Vanessa sat to Michelle's left, and Sandy to her right. Tina sat across from Sandy, and Glenn sat across from Vanessa. In between Sandy and Glenn, across from Michelle, a chair sat empty.

His seat. Michelle had saved it for him.

Charlie saw the faces looking up at him, the different reactions to his presence. Vanessa looked startled, Glenn looked puzzled. Sandy's face matched Tina's, a grin of delighted interest. Cody looked annoyed and Ryan Fender almost looked impressed.

Michelle looked up at him and she had the most beautiful smile he had ever seen. She didn't say anything, only pointed at the empty seat across from her.

As Charlie circled the cluster of tables, heading for that empty seat, he heard Cody say, "THAT'S who you were saving the seat for?"

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Charlie sat with Michelle's friends expecting to be eyed suspiciously as an outsider, particularly after the way Cody had treated him earlier that day. But Cody mostly kept his thoughts to himself (aside from a few barbed comments) and Charlie was surprised to find that most of Michelle's friends were friendly to him. Vanessa, who more than anyone else must have realized what Charlie's presence meant for Michelle, made a clear effort to engage him in the conversation, and Sandy and Tina kept smiling at him and giggling.

He expected some animosity from Glenn; after all, weren't they rivals for the same girl? But Glenn was actually very friendly towards him, first asking questions about a highlight reel Charlie had edited together for the football team and then becoming very interested when Charlie mentioned pursuing a career in film. As they discussed different films, Charlie found to his astonishment that he was beginning to like Glenn. The tall football player actually seemed like a pretty cool guy.

Maybe Glenn didn't see him as a rival for Michelle. It made sense. Glenn didn't know about the kiss in the train station; Cody had intentionally kept that information from him. And he was still taking Michelle to the prom. Maybe Glenn just saw Charlie as one of Michelle's odd friends, maybe a means to get closer to her.

Maybe a guy like Glenn wouldn't see Charlie as a rival anyway. Glenn was tall, handsome, athletic. What did he have to fear from a quiet loner like Charlie?

Michelle acted shy, speaking very little, only slipping in a comment now and then. Whenever Charlie glanced in her direction, she always seemed to be peeking at him, and she always had the same little smile on her lips.

"You've barely touched your sandwich," she observed as lunch period came near to ending.

"Oh. Yeah," he said, looking down at his sandwich with three bites out of it. "I'll save it for later."

She nodded, her eyes twinkling. The same little smile.

Glenn got to his feet. "Better get to class," he said. "What do you have now, Charlie?"

"Video 3."

"Awesome. I'll see you around then." Glenn clapped him on the shoulder, before turning to leave with Cody and a few of the other football players.

Charlie stood, uncertain how Michelle would say goodbye to him in public. He felt slightly disappointed when she only waved at him and said, "Bye, Charlie!" before flitting away with her circle of friends. That disappointment was somewhat tempered when several of the other cheerleaders also said goodbye to him, including Vanessa, who gave him an assessing look before turning away.

He lingered behind, watching the group of girls as they left the cafeteria, in particular watching Michelle, her blue dress clinging to her perfect figure as she walked out the door. The lunch group had dispersed; Charlie had arrived alone, and he would leave alone.

That was fine. He had done it! Lunch with Michelle, out where everyone could see, and it couldn't have gone better. Charlie felt like he was floating as he walked to his next class. He felt like smiling and saying hi to everyone he passed.

His good mood lasted all through the afternoon, up to the point where he walked to his car after school and discovered all of his tires had been slashed.

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He would have preferred that Daryl not get involved, but it was impossible to hide his slashed tires from the security guard, especially when he had his car jacked up with a stack of tires next to it. Charlie had found a nearby place called Discount Tire Warehouse, and after Charlie explained his predicament over the phone, the sales manager agreed to deliver four slightly worn replacement tires to the school parking lot. Unfortunately, Charlie couldn't afford the labor to have the tires changed, so he was stuck doing that himself.

"Who the hell did this?" the guard fumed. "I'm not going to let this kind of thing happen in my parking lot."

Charlie tried to evade the question, but Daryl wouldn't drop it. Finally, Charlie told him, "I had lunch with Michelle today in the cafeteria. I think I probably made someone jealous."

"Who?" Daryl looked at him intently. "You have an idea?"

"I don't know for sure..." Charlie said. "You don't have to worry about it. It's my problem."

"The hell I don't have to worry about it. I'm the security guard. It happened in my parking lot. That means it involves me. You have any idea who it was, even just a notion, you tell me. I'll find 'em and make 'em admit it."

Charlie held up his hands. "I don't know. Someone who's pissed that I'm hanging out with Michelle. That's my best theory, and unfortunately it doesn't narrow it down much. Lots of guys like Michelle."

Daryl scowled. "All right. All right. Maybe that's all I got to go on. But maybe it's enough." He nodded to himself and muttered, "Maybe it's more than enough." The guard dropped the subject, although the stony scowl never left his face as he helped Charlie change the four tires.

Charlie finally made it home three hours after school let out. He could see that his mom's car wasn't there, which was a relief. She would have asked why he was at school so late, and he had no idea how he would have explained to her that someone had intentionally flattened all his tires.

"Just an act of random vandalism, mom," he murmured to himself as he unlocked the front door. "Could have been anyone."

She probably would have insisted on calling the police.

As it was, he doubted she would notice his car had different tires. The discount replacement tires he bought were used and already showed some wear. They wouldn't stand out like new tires would have. And his mom was not the most observant person.

He noticed the message light blinking on the answering machine. He pressed the button and heard his mom's voice. "I'm gonna be late, Charlie..." she said. "We're doing an inventory of one of the storerooms and I need to cover a swing shift. See you later tonight, okay?"

Charlie went to the kitchen to cook himself some dinner. He was just starting the microwave when his phone rang. He glanced at the name on the screen. Michelle. The first time she'd ever called him.

He walked to the living room and answered the call. "Hello?"

"Charlie?" Michelle's voice.

"Yeah. Hi."

"Are you okay? Are you still at the school?"

"No." Charlie sat down in a chair. "I'm at home."

"I heard about your tires. I'm so sorry that happened to you."

"Do you know who it was?" Charlie asked.

Michelle hesitated. "I got mad at him," she said.

"Cody?"

"Vanessa and I yelled at him. He said he didn't do it... but I know he had something to do with it. Charlie... he's going to pay you back for the damage. How much was it?"

"He's going to pay me back?" Charlie thought he must have misheard.

"He is. How much?"

"Um... about $250 for four tires. Four used tires."

"Ok. I'll get the money from him and give it to you."

"Wow," Charlie said. "Thanks, Michelle. What did you say to him? You must have really let him have it."

"Well..." she said, "Vanessa was with me."

"Right. He's dating Vanessa. I forgot about that."

"Mm... I don't know that they're really dating..." Michelle said. Her voice sounded subdued.

"Okay. But they're going to the prom together. That kind of means they're dating, right?"

"No... I mean, I don't know." Michelle paused. "Charlie, I need to tell you something."

"What?"

"I hope you won't be mad."

Charlie sat up in his chair. "What is it?"

"When I talked to Cody... I had to tell him that there's nothing between you and me. I told him you and I are just friends. I mean, that I just see you as a friend."

Charlie held the phone to his ear, his body motionless. "Is that true?" he asked. "Do you just see me as a friend?"

"No..." she said softly. "It's not true. You're not just a friend."

"Then why'd you say it to him?"

"So he'll leave you alone."

Charlie scowled. "So you're going to let him win."

"No..." She paused. "It's just none of his business. He thinks it's his business, he thinks he's being a good friend to Glenn. But I don't belong to Glenn or anybody."

"So then why didn't you tell him to stay out of it?"

"Because..." She hesitated. "I just don't know if that'll work. I mean, I don't think he'll stay out of it. Glenn is his friend..." She sighed. "Please, Charlie... just until prom, okay? I told Glenn I would go with him. I mean... I still hope I'll see you... outside of school.... but at school, can we just be friends?"

Charlie closed his eyes. "So back to walking past you pretending I don't know you."

"Um, friends say hi to each other, you know. I'm not asking you to pretend you don't know me." Michelle paused, then continued in a softer voice, "I just... I don't want Cody watching us. Following us, to see what we're doing. I don't want him taking any more pictures... because... what if he catches me? And what if he takes a picture of me?"

"Oh..." Charlie nodded slowly. "Like outside."

"Yeah," she whispered. "Outside. Like what if he takes a picture and shows it to everyone? He almost caught us on Saturday. I had just put my dress back on when he saw us."

"Right," Charlie said, thinking that he had been the one to put her dress back on. Michelle had showed every intention of stepping out of the train while still completely naked. That would have presented an interesting picture for Cody to take. "I see what you're saying. So... you think we're going to have more... adventures?"

"Well... I'm having fun. Aren't you?"

"Yeah." Charlie suddenly thought of Ronni. He needed to tell Michelle that Ronni knew what they'd been doing. But it didn't seem like the right time to tell her. "Okay. Just friends at school. Outside of school..."

"Bonnie and Clyde," she said.

"Our secret life of crime."

She giggled. "Yeah."

"You know, Daryl was pretty mad about the tire thing. I told him I didn't know for sure who did it. But he seemed pretty set on figuring out who it was."

"Oh. Well... if Cody pays you back, do you think you could talk to Daryl and get him to drop it?"

"Maybe," Charlie said. "I can try. He is the security guard, though."

"Yeah. What about your mom? What did she say?"

"I'm not going to tell her, to be honest. She's not home yet, anyway. She's working late."

"Oh? How late?"

"She's covering a second shift at work. She won't be home until past 11."

"Oh, really..." Michelle murmured. "Are you all by yourself?"

"Yeah, I'm home by myself." Charlie abruptly realized the tone of the conversation had changed. He sat up straighter in his chair. "Why?"

"Let me come over."

"You want to?"

"I want to make it up to you. For telling Cody that you and I are just friends. I felt like I had to say it, but I'm sorry I said it and I want to make it up to you."

"It's fine. I get why you said it."

"I want to make it up to you anyway." Her voice was low and sultry, like a purr. "Should I come over?"

Charlie licked his lips. "Do you remember where I live?"

"I can find it. See you soon." She disconnected before he could say anything else.

Charlie set his phone on the armrest and leaned back in his chair. He'd come home while the sun was still up, but now it was dusk and he hadn't turned on any lights so he sat in a rapidly darkening house. He could feel his heart beating in his chest as he anticipated Michelle's arrival.

He thought, "When she gets here... we're going to have sex." It wasn't even wishful thinking. He was pretty sure he could treat it as a fact. Every time he'd been with her, they'd ended up having sex.

Then he thought, "That was the first time I've ever talked to her on the phone." Which was so strange to think about that he thought for sure it must be wrong. How could it be that they'd never talked on the phone before?

He roused himself from his chair and went around the house turning on lights, trying to give the house a warm glow. He remembered that he had microwaved a mini-pizza for himself, so he took it out and put in a second mini-pizza for Michelle. He took out two cans of Sprite and set them on the table.

What else to do? He thought about turning on the TV but felt too restless to sit and watch it. He paced back and forth through the house, tidying things here and there. The microwave beeped, so he took Michelle's pizza out and sat it on a spot at the table with her Sprite. He put his own pizza on the table across from hers. Not exactly a romantic candlelight dinner, but at least if she was hungry she'd have something to eat.

A timid knock came from the front door. Charlie walked quickly to the door and pulled it open. "Hi," he said.

"Hi," Michelle said. She stepped inside. Charlie admired the short tan summer dress she was wearing, dotted with a pattern of tiny red flowers. It fit her loosely, coming down to just above her knees, and he could tell by the way it draped over her breasts that she wasn't wearing a bra underneath. He could easily make out the points of her nipples against the fabric. She wore brown sandals, which she kicked off beside the door. She set her purse down as well.

"Still here by yourself?" she asked.

"Yeah."

"Good." She reached down to the hem of her dress and in a single fluid motion pulled it up, tugging the fabric over her arms and head until it came loose in her hands. She was naked underneath. She balled up the dress and handed it to him. "Will you put this in your room?"

Charlie gaped down at her exposed body for a moment, then realized she was standing in the open doorway. He hastened to close the door, pulling her in by her shoulder. He peeked out the door to see if anyone had seen, but no one was outside. "Wow," he breathed. "Not wasting any time, are you?"

"No." Michelle walked into the living room and stood there, looking around. "You don't mind, do you?"

"No." Charlie's eyes lingered on her perfect ass. "Not at all."

As if she could feel his eyes on her body, she looked over her shoulder, smiling. "I'm usually like this when we're alone, right? You're probably used to it."

"I wouldn't exactly say I'm used to it..." Charlie said. "Um... I'll go put your dress in my bedroom, then."

"Okay." Michelle carefully lowered herself onto the couch, perching on the edge of the cushion for a moment before slowly settling back. He noticed her hands rubbing her upper legs in that habit of hers.

Charlie quickly went up the stairs and entered his room. He draped her dress over his desk chair and then came back down, taking the stairs two at a time.

Michelle looked up at him as he entered the living room. She sat in the middle of the couch, her legs together and her hands on her knees. Charlie thought she looked nervous, sitting as if she shared the couch with two enormous invisible men on either side.

"Um... so I don't know if you're hungry..." he said, "but I cooked you a pizza for dinner... it's on the kitchen table, if you want it..."

She nodded. "Ok. I haven't had dinner." She rose to her feet.

Charlie started walking towards the kitchen. He glanced over his shoulder but Michelle still stood in front of the couch, gazing at him. "I made one for myself, too," he said. "I mean... I made one for myself before I knew you were coming... and I haven't eaten it yet. It's on the table, too."

Michelle just stood there, watching him.

"Aren't you coming?" he asked.

"Charlie..." Michelle said softly. "You haven't even kissed me yet."

He blinked at her for a moment, surprised. Then he came to her and embraced her. His arms circled her waist, touching her warm skin. He could smell the perfume on her. His lips found hers, and he kissed her softly, conscious of her breasts which pressed against his chest. He kissed her again, harder this time, and allowed his hand to rise up and press against the cushion of her left breast, the nipple hard against his palm.

"I guess sometimes I forget I'm allowed to kiss you," he murmured, their heads tilted and leaning against each other.

"I'm sorry," she said. "Are you sure you're all right with me being like this? It's not weird, is it?"

"That you're naked?"

"Yeah." She leaned against him, her arms loosely wrapped around his shoulders.

"It's fine. My mom's not coming back until late tonight." He lightly stroked her nipple with his finger, playing with it. It occurred to him that not only was she nude in his house, but very likely he was free to touch her body however he liked, whenever he liked. His erection surged to life, swelling against the front of his pants. He thought about reaching between her legs, to test his theory, but he didn't want to push her too far too fast. "Come on." He looped his arm behind her waist. "I need your help to fulfill this fantasy of mine. It involves me watching a beautiful naked woman eat a pizza."

She laughed and let herself be pulled towards the kitchen.

The dinner looked pathetic when he saw it, an empty table with just the two cheese pizzas on paper plates. He hadn't even cut them into slices. "I know it's not much..." he said, embarrassed. "I can see what else we have..."

"No, no. It's great! I love pizza." She approached the table. "Which one is mine?"

"That one is hotter. Let me cut it into slices."

"No! You sit." Michelle took his arm and guided him to a chair. "I'll cut them for us. Where's your silverware?"

Charlie sat down and pointed to the silverware drawer. He watched Michelle as she swayed over to the drawer and found a knife. She walked back and leaned over the table, her breasts wiggling as she vigorously cut his pizza into quarters. After it was done, she stood up straight, her arms behind her back.

"Where's your cups?" she asked.

"Cups? That cabinet, right there." He pointed. She spun and walked to the cabinet. He watched her stretch up and pull out two glass tumblers. She took them to the refrigerator and filled them with ice. Returning to him, she sat a glass down by his plate and a glass by hers. She took his Sprite and opened it, filling his glass until the bubbles threatened to overflow the top. Once again, she stood up straight and put her arms behind her back, her body displayed to him from head to toe.

"Do you need anything else?" she asked. With her naked body right there in front of his eyes, it was hard not to react to the double entendre in her question.

"Not right now..." he managed to say. His erection felt like it was going to rip through his pants.

"Bon Appetit!" She smiled.

"Thanks," he said, picking up a piece. "Uh... you, too." She stood and watched him until he lifted his pizza and took a bite, then sat down in front of her own pizza and started to cut it. He couldn't help watching her breasts dance as she moved the knife back and forth.

"You seemed to get along with everyone at lunch today," Michelle remarked.

"Yeah," Charlie said. "I guess so. Even Glenn. I thought he'd give me shit about sitting by you, but he seemed okay."

"Yeah, Glenn is nice."

"Cody told me he wasn't going to tell Glenn about seeing us at the train station. So Glenn doesn't know."

Michelle shrugged. "He doesn't need to. It's not his business."

"He likes you, though."

"It's still not his business." She opened her own Sprite and filled her glass.

"Does Vanessa know?" Charlie asked. "About us and the train station?"

Michelle shook her head. "No. I don't know how to tell her without telling her everything. She'll ask questions, and she'll know that I'm holding things back."

"Right." Charlie took a bite of his pizza. Michelle hadn't touched hers.

A car could be heard driving by outside. Michelle tensed, looking towards the front of the house.

"Don't worry," Charlie said. "We still have a few hours before my mom comes home."

Michelle laughed nervously. "Can you imagine what she would think of me if she saw me like this?"

"You're fine," he soothed her. "Relax."

Michelle reached for her pizza, took a tiny bite of the tip and then set it back down. "Do you think you'll sit with us in the cafeteria from now on?" she asked.

Charlie brooded on her question before answering, "No, I don't think so."

"No?" She looked up at him.

"We're going to be just friends at school, right?"

"Yeah," she said softly. "But friends eat lunch together."

"I know..." he said. "But I don't think I'm a very good actor."

"Actor?"

"Yeah. You know... sitting at a table with all those people, putting on a show like I just wanna be your friend." Charlie shrugged. "I don't think I can do it."

Michelle looked to the side, gazing at a painting of a dog running in a field that hung on the wall. Her fingers traced the edge of the table. "You think they won't believe you?" she asked.

"Nah. I mean, really, who would?" Charlie glanced at the painting, not sure what it was about it that held her attention. "What guy just wants to be friends with you?"

"Because guys think I have a nice body," she murmured. "Is that what you mean?"

"Um... well, you do have a nice body... obviously..."

"So you're worried that everyone at the table is going to know you want to fuck me?" Michelle still had her eyes to the side, avoiding his eyes.

"No. That's not what I'm saying."

"You think everyone's going to know that you DO fuck me?"

"No, no." Charlie took a breath. "I'm not just talking about... sex. I'm talking about everything. I can't sit at the table and act like we don't have all this between us. It's going to be really obvious to everyone that you mean much more to me than just a friend. I think Vanessa is already pretty wise to us."

Michelle finally moved her eyes to Charlie. "Yeah," she said softly, smiling. "I think she is." A car honked outside, and she flinched, turning to look in that direction.

"Just the neighbor across the street," Charlie said. "His car beeps when he puts on the alarm. I hear it all the time."

Michelle nodded. Despite her obvious anxiety that she might be caught, she still seemed devoted to remaining nude. She'd barely touched her pizza, while Charlie had mostly just the crusts left.

He pushed back his chair and stood. She looked up at him, watching as he came to kneel beside her.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

He reached out and touched her right breast, gently caressing it. "I don't want you to be nervous," he told her. "Just relax, and eat your dinner. My mom's not coming home for hours. It's just you and me." He circled her nipple with his finger, and she took a slow breath, accepting his touch.

She picked up a slice of pizza and took a bite, chewing it quietly while he leaned down and took her nipple in his mouth. He peeked up at her but her eyes were closed. She sighed as he ran his tongue around the tip of her nipple, then gently sucked on it.

Charlie's hand slid over her flat tummy, stroking her groomed line of pubic hair, finding the wet spot between her thighs. He nudged her legs with the back of his hand, urging them apart, and she obediently acquiesced, separating them to the sides of the chair. He traced her slit with his fingers, her slickness leaving a shine on his fingertips. His finger slipped into the cleft at the top of her pussy, pressing against the thin veil over her clit.

"Charlie..." she breathed.

He lifted his mouth from her breast to ask her, "Are you finished with your dinner?"

"No..."

"Go ahead and finish."

She nodded. Her trembling hand brought the slice of pizza up to her mouth and she took another small bite as Charlie pushed his finger into her pussy. He explored her with his fingers while his mouth returned to her nipple, his tongue swirling around the hard tip, nudging it in a circle. He could see her face, her eyes closed, her lips parted. She struggled to continue eating, clearly distracted by her body's reaction to his manipulations.

His earlier instinct had been correct; she was naked in his house, offering her body to be touched by him however he wanted. It turned him on immensely to have such unrestrained access to her beautiful body, and he understood that this was a turn-on to her as well, to leave herself so deliciously vulnerable, completely naked, to accept his mouth on her breasts, his fingers in her pussy, while she pretended to eat her dinner as if nothing was out of the ordinary.

He had an outrageous thought that made his erection throb, a test to see if she had truly surrendered her whole body to him. He reached under her leg, pulling it up towards her. His other hand slid down over her pussy, continuing lower. She took a sharp breath as his finger tip slid against her asshole. He waited to see if she would object, but she just took another small bite of pizza. He wriggled his fingertip against that opening, toying with it while he watched her face. She struggled with the fragment of pizza in her mouth, clearly distracted by what he was doing.

"Oh my god, Charlie..." she gasped. "What would your mom think if she walked in right now? What would she think of me?"

He murmured, "She would think maybe you let me get away with a little too much." He leaned in close to Michelle's ear, his finger pressed against her asshole. "It's all my influence. Isn't that what we decided we'll tell everyone, if we ever got caught? I'm the one that's doing this. You're just doing it because you like to please me. Isn't that what we'll say?"

"Ohh..." she moaned.

He pulled his finger away. Now he used both hands to grip her knees and pull her legs wide apart. "What are you doing now?" she asked.

"Having you for dessert." He gazed at her glistening pussy, then leaned forward and pressed his lips at the tip of her crevice, just below her strip of pubic hair. He held her legs up, angling her pussy towards him so he could put his mouth on it. He breathed in the tangy scent of her desire, savored the taste of her juice on his tongue as he ran his mouth up and down her slit. Michelle leaned her head back, a slice of pizza dangling forgotten in her hand, her body writhing as he slid his tongue into her.

He could feel her hips tensing as he hunted for her clit. His tongue swirled, pressing urgently against her sensitive nub, and she shivered underneath him. Outside, a car drove by, and Michelle asked, "Did your mom just drive up?" Despite her concern, she kept her legs splayed open and made no effort to push his head out from between her legs.

Charlie lifted his head. "Don't worry..." he said. "When she walks in, just say, 'Hi, my name is Michelle, it's nice to meet you.' "

"Ohhh.... don't tease me," she sighed. "Ohh.. that feels good..."

Charlie teased her anyway, but with his mouth and tongue, grinding his tongue against her clit until she was thrusting her pelvis up towards him, then pulling away, leaving her desperate for more. She was so wet that he knew his cock would enter her effortlessly, and finally he couldn't restrain himself any longer. He slid his hands under her ass and lifted her off her chair, setting her at the edge the table. He unzipped his pants and pulled his hard cock free. It only took a moment to position the swollen head at the opening to her pussy, and then it was just a matter of leaning forward to plunge it inside her.

Charlie moved slowly, pulling out, pushing back in, enjoying the feel of her warm pussy yielding to his cock. Michelle had her eyes closed, lost in the sensation of their joining. She draped her arms around his neck, holding him loosely, her head against his shoulder, her hair tickling his face.

"Charlie..." she spoke urgently. "Let's go up to your room... to your bed..."

Charlie felt reluctant to stop. "You want to?"

"Charlie..." she breathed. "Please... can we go upstairs?"

"Okay." He pushed in once more and held himself there, giving himself a moment to experience the exquisite sensation of her warm pussy squeezing his cock. Then he pulled out. He started to put himself away, but Michelle reached out and took hold of his shaft in her small hand.

"You don't need to put it back," she said. "You're going to take off all your clothes anyway, right?"

So they walked up the stairs, naked Michelle leading the way, her perfect ass bobbing right in front of his eyes while his erect cock jutted out towards her as if straining to touch her. When they reached his room, he had no sooner turned on the light when she was on her knees taking him into her mouth. Her lips slid up and down his shaft while he closed and locked the door. His mom wouldn't be home until 11 o'clock... but better safe than sorry. He doubted he would be paying any attention to the sound of a car pulling into the driveway.

Michelle pulled off his cock for a moment, smiling and licking her lips. "I can taste myself," she said.

"Probably you would if you kissed me, too," Charlie said.

She giggled. "I'll try that in a minute." She kissed the tip of his penis and let it slip once again between her lips. He pulled off his shirt and tossed it on the floor. She helped him pull off his pants, then allowed him to sit on the bed before lowering her mouth on his cock again.

Charlie closed his eyes, enjoying the feel of her tongue as it slid around his shaft like a snake winding around a tree branch. He leaned back on his elbows, settling onto his bed. Her dark hair fell across his lap and he could feel strands of her hair flowing over his balls as she bobbed up and down. He struggled to restrain himself from thrusting up into her mouth, matching her rhythm, pushing up as far as he could until her lips touched the base of his shaft. He couldn't imagine that his entire cock could fit into her mouth. He felt sure that if he tried, he would choke her.

Michelle let him pop out of her mouth and she paused to catch her breath, her chin resting against the head of his penis. With her eyes closed, she began to climb onto the bed, her warm body sliding against his, his cock dragging between her breasts and down her belly. She hovered above him on her hands and knees, and with her eyes still closed, reached down for his cock and fed the head of it into her waiting pussy. Sighing, she sank down onto him.

With a contented smile on her face, she began to move up and down on him. Charlie lay there, barely moving, letting her pleasure herself on his erection. She shifted her hips as she slid up, grinding her clit against his shaft, and he could tell that every time she eased down onto him, it moved her closer and closer to a climax. It didn't take long. She came suddenly, gasping and trembling, before collapsing on top of him. He could feel the sweat on her back as he embraced her.

It was his turn. He gripped her by the hips and began to move her on his cock, pushing her down onto it as he thrust into her, then holding her in place as he pulled out. He had restrained himself before, but now he surrendered to the urgency of his need, roughly driving into her, try to get as deep into her as he could. He forced a gasping cry out of Michelle with each hard thrust.

Finally, he pushed her down onto his cock and held her there, deep inside her, and he came. He could feel himself pulsing inside her, filling her, and he felt her on top of him, her weight resting against him like a blanket; down below, her pussy enveloped him, squeezing him. He smelled the sweet scent of her perfume mingled with the musk of her sweat and her sex, and he breathed it in deeply. He wrapped his arms around her and held her close, and felt like they could remain that way forever.

"You give me the most amazing orgasms," she murmured.

Charlie said nothing. He wished he could attribute it to his sexual prowess, but he knew that it had more to do with the charge she got from walking around naked. She was primed to have a tremendous orgasm before he ever even entered her.

She shifted on top of him. "I'm going to take a shower, okay?"

"Okay."

"You want to join me?"

He did. He rinsed off quickly in the shower spray and stole a few kisses from Michelle before leaving her to finish showering on her own. Returning to his room, he quickly dried off and put on his clothes. Michelle's dress still hung over his desk chair and he eyed it for a minute, listening to the sound of the water cascading in the shower. He picked the dress off his chair and brought it to the bed. He stowed it in his private spot in the boxspring, where he already had a small collection of her clothes.

Walking swiftly down the stairs, Charlie kept his ears perked, but he didn't hear anything. His mom was still out, and the first floor of the house remained empty. Charlie walked to the kitchen. He cleaned up the paper plates and put the other dishes in the sink.

From upstairs, he heard the shower turn off. He took his can of Sprite, which still had a little bit at the bottom, and leaned against the frame of the door to the kitchen. He sipped his drink and waited. After a few minutes, Michelle came slowly down the stairs. She was still naked, her hair wet and her skin glowing from the shower. She took each step tentatively, peering around like a wary cat.

"We're still alone," Charlie said, and took a sip from his can.

"Is my dress in your room somewhere?" Michelle asked. "I couldn't find it."

Charlie finished the last bit of Sprite in the can, and tossed it into the recycling bin. "What dress?" he asked.

Michelle stared at him for a moment. Then she looked down at herself. "Oh," she said softly. "Right."

"My mom's not home for another three hours," Charlie said. "Want to find something to watch on TV?"

Michelle fidgeted with her wet hair. "Okay."

She followed him into the living room. He sat on the couch and picked up the remote. He touched a button and the TV turned on.

"Charlie..." Michelle said nervously, glancing towards the front door. "You'll walk me to my car, when it's time to go, won't you? I parked around the corner. I didn't park in front of your house."

Charlie realized with a surge of excitement that she thought she was expected to walk naked back to her car. "Sure," he said. "Yeah, I'll walk you back to your car." He would return her dress, of course. He wouldn't make her walk naked all that way.

Would he?

He marveled at her willingness to go along with what he told her. Just like that, she had accepted that her dress was no longer available to her, that she had to remain naked, that she even had to walk to her car naked. He'd give the dress back, when the time came. He'd even help her put it on, like he had on the train. Until then, let her believe she had a nude walk in her future. It probably excited her as much as it excited him.

He would give her the dress back. Maybe. Probably he would.

"What do you want to watch?" he asked.

Michelle came over to the couch and took the seat next to him. "Anything," she said. She didn't stay upright for long, quickly leaning over until she was lying across his lap with her legs folded to the side. He put his arm around her, casually reaching down to fondle her breast. She accepted his petting without complaint.

Charlie flipped through the channels. He found the movie "Mean Girls" and left it on that channel after Michelle remarked, "Oh, I like this movie!" Charlie didn't care; he could have watched anything. He had a naked girl draped across his lap and felt pretty confident that he could let his hands wander wherever he wanted across her body. He fondled her breasts for a few minute, and when he finally let his hand drift lower, her only response was to open her legs wider so he'd have easier access between them.

"I'm lying on something hard, but I'm not sure what it is," she teased as she pressed her hand against the growing erection in his pants. She undid his zipper and let his cock out. While they watched TV, she stroked it lightly with her fingernails.

"Do your parents know you're here?" Charlie asked.

"Not specifically," Michelle said. "I told them I had a school thing."

Charlie chuckled, glancing down at her hand on his cock. "Oh, okay. So this is a 'school thing.' "

She smiled. "In a way." She shrugged, moving her hand up and down. "It's fine. I've been pretty busy senior year. My mom's used to me missing dinner."

Charlie slipped his finger into her pussy, noting that she was still wet. His cock was fully erect, and it seemed more and more likely that their sex had a sequel on the way. He gazed at Michelle's body, fresh and clean from her shower. He could smell the lingering fragrance of body wash on her skin.

She was going to need to take a second shower.

A door slammed from the kitchen. His mom called out, "Charlie! I'm home!"

Michelle bolted upright. She stared at Charlie with her mouth open, panic showing clearly on her face. Charlie shoved his erection back into his pants, and it was a miracle that he didn't catch himself in his zipper as he quickly pulled it up.

Michelle scrambled to her feet, her eyes darting around the room, looking for a place to hide. She looked toward the stairs that led to the second floor. Charlie stood quickly and caught her arm. If she tried to go up the stairs while his mom was in the kitchen, she would be clearly visible. But she couldn't stay in the living room either. His mom would walk in any second.

Where to hide her?

Charlie glanced at the front door. Michelle's purse and sandals still sat where she had tossed them, right next to the door. Charlie went in that direction, tugging Michelle's arm, and she followed.

He picked up her purse and sandals and pushed them into her arms. "Charlie!" she pleaded. "Where do I go? Where's my dress?"

From the kitchen: "Charlie! I'm home! Are you here? I saw your car!"

He didn't have time. So he did the first thing he could think of. He pulled open the front door.

Michelle's eyes were wide. "Charlie! Out there?"

"Just for a minute. Let me just say hi to her, and then I'll make up some reason to come outside." He put his hand on Michelle's back, urging her out the door.

Michelle took an uncertain step out onto the front porch. She turned to look back at him, and he couldn't help but admire the way her naked body looked in the glow of the porch light, with the street and the night sky behind her.

"Just a few minutes," he said. He caught a glimpse of her stunned expression just before he closed the door.

"Charlie?" his mom called again.

"I'm here!" he called back. He headed for the kitchen.

**Saturday Night School Ch. 07**

by[**jessica\_tang\_vonharper**](https://www.literotica.com/stories/memberpage.php?uid=2603107&page=submissions)©

Charlie was almost to the kitchen when he stopped suddenly. He looked back towards the front door.

The porch light was on. Michelle was standing on the front porch naked, under a bright white bulb. He might as well have left her on a stage lit up with a spotlight.

He took a step towards the switch for the porch light, but hesitated again.

His mom had just come in through the garage door. She'd seen the porch light was on when she drove up. If he turned it off now, would she notice it was off? She'd see the dark front windows. Would she wonder why the light was now off? Would she look outside?

He shook his head sharply. He'd figure that out if it happened. For now, he needed to give Michelle some shadows to hide in. He swiftly crossed the room to the front door and flipped the switch off. The porch light went out.

"Charlie!" his mom called from the kitchen. "Come in here!"

"Just a sec!" Charlie called back. He would need a reason to go outside for a few minutes. Something left in his car, maybe. Michelle's dress was still hidden up in his bedroom. Was it small enough that he could bundle it up, hide it as a bulge in his pocket? Hide it in a bag? How could he explain it if his mom caught him smuggling a stray dress out of his room?

What, mom? This dress? Oh, it belongs to the naked girl outside. I'll go deliver it to her.

Charlie shook his head. He would bring Michelle one of his jackets instead. If she zipped it up, she would show a lot of leg but all her important parts would be covered.

Charlie entered the kitchen. Mrs. Tucker stood at the counter cutting a slice of chocolate cream pie into halves. "Hey, Charlie." She smiled at him. "You gotta have a taste of this pie. It's the best. Ed brought it in."

"You're home early?" Charlie tried to sound casual.

"Yeah. It went fast. But Marsha said she'd still pay us for the full shift. Did you eat?"

"I made a pizza."

"Oh, good. Let's sit at the table and have some dessert. This pie is amazing." Mrs. Tucker carried the two slices of pie to the table.

"Umm... sure." Charlie cleared his throat. "But I need to run out to my car for a minute..."

"First take a bite. You gotta try the pie. It's so good."

Charlie glanced anxiously over his shoulder, imagining Michelle shivering, crouched naked on their welcome mat just outside the front door. "I better just run out to my car," he said. "While I remember. If I don't do it right away, I'll forget."

Mrs. Tucker chuckled. "Right. And then you'll be in bed about to sleep, and all of a sudden it'll hit you, that thing you forgot to do. Happens to me all the time."

Charlie couldn't stop himself from imagining that scenario. Cozy in bed, about to sleep. Thinking, was there something I've forgotten? All of a sudden... oh my god! Michelle is still naked outside! He would scramble down the stairs, unlock the door, find her still sitting naked on his front porch, waiting for him. She'd probably never talk to him again.

But what if he came out around midnight, stammering apologies, and she stood there naked, waiting patiently on the front porch with a smile on her face. What if she stood out there for hours, obediently waiting, willing to stand there naked and wait for him for as long as it took, without any concern for who saw her?

Awful. How could he contemplate such a thing? He needed to rescue her as soon as possible. "I'll be right back," he said, and left the room before his mom could argue.

He went to the hall closet and found an oversized black hoodie which he hadn't worn in a while. It zipped in the front, and he thought it was big enough that Michelle could lose herself in it. He put it on and walked swiftly to the door, expecting his mom would appear at any moment to say something else to delay him. But she stayed in the kitchen, and Charlie quickly pulled open the front door and stepped out. He closed the door quietly behind him.

Michelle sat a few feet from the door, just under the main living room window, which thankfully always had the curtains closed. She had her knees pulled up to her chest, her arms wrapped around her knees. The shadow of the porch railing crossed over her body, obscuring her somewhat from view.

"Hey," Charlie whispered. "You okay?"

"Yeah," she whispered back. She stretched her legs out and slowly rose to her feet, while Charlie quickly removed the hoodie. He offered it to her and she took it from his hand.

"I was sitting here," she murmured, slipping her arms into the hoodie, "trying to decide whether you put me out the front door on purpose."

"I'm sorry..." he said. "No one saw you, did they?"

"No one. But I'm glad you turned out the light." She left the hoodie barely clinging to her shoulders and made no effort to zip it closed, so that the front of her body was still completely exposed. Charlie had imagined that she would huddle under the dark fabric like a shapeless blob with lovely long legs. But apparently she wasn't in any hurry to cover up.

At least the hoodie could be closed quickly if someone appeared.

She faced the street. "On purpose like a test," she said. "To see if I would let you put me outside like this. And I did let you. But it wasn't on purpose, was it? It was just the first thing you thought of to do."

"I know. Not my best plan." Charlie gazed at Michelle's front, knowing that he could reach out and pull the sides of the hoodie together and zip it up, knowing she would accept that from him. Yet his hands remained at his side. He looked back up at her face. "I didn't leave you out here long, right? And you had me put your dress in my room. You could have left it with your other things by the front door. It would have fit in your purse."

Michelle touched her finger against her throat, sliding it down over her skin until she traced the inside edge of her breast. "What dress?" she said softly. Her eyes were fixed on the empty street as she distractedly fingered her hard nipple.

Charlie knew the longer they waited, the greater the chance they would get caught. "Where did you park?"

She pointed to the right. "That way. Just around the corner."

"Let's start walking. Let me go first, I'll make sure the coast is clear." Charlie walked up the path, looking up and down the street at the sidewalks. He didn't see anyone walking or driving. He looked back at Michelle and was momentarily stunned by how visible she was.

"Anyone looking out their window can see this," he thought, looking at the dark circles of her nipples and the dark line of her pubic hair, clearly visible against her light skin in the glow of the street light. Was she really as exposed as she appeared? Or did it just look that way to him because he knew she was naked? Would an observer imagine her with clothes, simply because they didn't expect to see a naked girl standing on a front porch? Charlie waved Michelle over, and she crossed the front yard.

"Do you know I've fantasized about something like this happening to me?" Michelle spoke as she stood on the sidewalk, looking up and down the street. "I mean, where some situation puts me outside naked, and it's not my fault but there I am, outside, naked." She peeked down at herself. "I guess I like the idea that it's not by my choice. Like an accident."

"Like someone forces you to go outside naked?"

"Well... not really like that." She glanced at him. "Although, that's kind of what just happened, right?"

"Yeah..." Charlie shifted uncomfortably. "Sorry."

Michelle just shrugged. She hooked her arm around Charlie's and pressed up against his side as they started walking. "You know what this is like? You know how in romantic comedies, the guy and the girl are in bed, and then the girl's big jealous boyfriend unexpectedly shows up and the guy has to escape without his clothes?"

"Yeah, right."

"Like in 'The Pink Envelope'. Do you know that movie?"

"No... I haven't seen that one."

"Kate Hudson. I forget the actor's name. He's handsome though." Michelle looked up at the starry sky. "I used to fantasize that I would be showering in the girl's locker room, and the fire alarm would go off. All the other girls would throw on clothes before they evacuated, but I'd panic and run out naked. The only one. Or I'd try to get dressed and a fireman would run in before I could, and yell at me that I need to leave immediately. So I would, I'd just run outside naked. Is that a weird fantasy?"

Charlie glanced at Michelle's nude body, and imagined a fireman leading her out to the parking lot, her body still wet and gleaming from the shower. "It's a pretty hot idea," he said truthfully.

"I have a lot of weird fantasies like that," Michelle said, encouraged by his response. "I have one where I'm at a fancy party and some crooks come in to do a robbery. They have guns and they tell everyone to put everything they have into a bag. Clothes and everything. They start with me, and make me take off all my clothes and put them in the bag. Then the police suddenly arrive, and the crooks run away with the bag, and the police chase them, and I'm left there, naked with all these people in fancy dresses and tuxedos."

"No one else takes off their clothes?"

"No. Because the crooks start with me, so I'm the only one. And maybe the police take me aside and question me and make me identify the men who did it, but no one thinks to give me anything to wear."

"Or maybe they do think of it, but they decide they like the view instead."

"Maybe. But what can I do? When I ask if I can have my clothes back, they just say, 'nuh-uh... it's evidence!' "

"So does anyone help you? Or do all those rich people in their fancy clothes leave you naked the whole night?"

"Oh, someone helps me eventually. It's my fantasy, so I guess they leave me naked just long enough to be exciting." She squeezed his arm. "Want to hear another?"

"Sure."

"There's a hypnotist who comes to the school to do a show. He asks for a volunteer... eek!" She froze, clutching Charlie's arm tightly. It took a moment for him to see what she had seen: a man turning the corner ahead of them, walking a small Scottish terrier.

Charlie looked closer. The man was short and stooped over, with a gray beard and a head of scraggly silver hair. He wore dark-rimmed glasses and a brown coat. Charlie didn't recognize him.

Michelle scrambled for the front of the hoodie, trying to pull it closed, but her left arm was hooked around Charlie's arm, and when she tried to raise her right arm too quickly, her purse slipped off her right shoulder. She caught her purse on her elbow, but leaned to the side, causing the hoodie to fall open even more.

"Don't worry about it," Charlie whispered to her. "He doesn't know me. We'll just go with our story, everything will be fine."

"Story? What story?" Michelle whispered back desperately.

"Shh. Here he comes." Charlie continued walking forward, and Michelle stayed with him, the hoodie still completely open, her naked body clearly visible. The man had definitely noticed. He gaped openly at Michelle as she approached. His glasses were apparently very effective at letting him see clearly at night, and his eyes were wide as he examined Michelle's body. The terrier was too busy sniffing a shrub to notice them.

"Hi!" Charlie greeted the man.

The man hesitated for a moment, looking between them. "Hi..." he said in a gravelly voice.

Charlie gestured at Michelle and shrugged apologetically. "We were at my house, thinking we had it all to ourselves for a few hours, but my parents came home unexpectedly. Katie here had to escape out the back before they could catch us, and she didn't even have a chance to get dressed."

The man furrowed his brow, absorbing this story. He turned to Michelle, looking her up and down. "His folks don't like ye?" he rumbled.

"Oh, they hate me!" Michelle told the man earnestly. "I'm glad they didn't catch me." She gazed tragically at Charlie. "They think I'm not good enough for their son."

"Oh... that's tough." The man's eyes dipped towards Michelle's body, and she stood patiently while he studied her breasts. The man's dog tugged vigorously at the leash, and the man looked down for a moment. He returned his eyes to Michelle. "Fruit bouquet," he said.

"What?"

"You should send his parents a fruit bouquet. They got em now. They cuts up the fruit and makes 'em look just like flowers."

"Oh. Okay."

"Everyone likes em. Fruit bouquets. I promise ye, it'll make em like ye."

Michelle nodded. "Okay. I'll try that."

"Good idea," Charlie said.

The man gazed at Michelle seriously. "Fruit bouquet. Better than bein' thrown out bare ass, right?"

"Right. Fruit bouquet. Got it." Michelle waved her fingers. "Good night."

They walked away from the man. Charlie could tell that Michelle was struggling to hold back her laughter, and he reached over and squeezed her arm in warning. "Wait until we're around the corner," he muttered.

"Oh my god!" she whispered back. "I can't believe that just happened!" She covered her mouth, giggles escaping through her fingers.

"He bought it," Charlie growled. "He bought it and you're going to blow it by laughing."

"I was naked right in front of him and all he could say was fruit bouquet! Oh my god!"

"Just around the corner," Charlie said. "Then you can laugh all you want."

"I'm sorry... I just... I can't help it!" He could feel her body pressed against his side, shaking with silent laughter. "Getting caught... and then... and then that..."

As they reached the corner, Charlie caught sight of Michelle's car, sitting in the shadows of a willow tree's dangling branches. It almost looked like she'd intentionally parked in the darkest spot on the street, a gap in the staggered coverage of the street lights. Charlie wondered if she had considered the possibility that she might be returning to her car naked when she selected her parking spot.

"I'm sorry." Michelle wiped a tear from her eye with the sleeve of the hoodie. "It's just... my heart gets going so fast when someone sees me... and afterwards... I feel so energized... I just don't know what to do with myself..."

"He wasn't shy about getting a look at your breasts, was he?" Charlie said, and she again dissolved into gales of laughter.

"Oh my god! He was staring right at them! But what could I say? It's not like I can say 'eyes up here, buddy', not when I look like this!" Her foot caught the edge of the sidewalk and she almost fell over. Charlie caught her around the waist, but if anything, her near fall only made her laugh harder.

"Take a deep breath," Charlie said to her. "People are going to hear you and think we've been drinking."

"I'm all right. Just let me..." She breathed in deeply, her breasts heaving. "I'm okay..." She reached into her purse and rummaged for her car keys.

Charlie pulled her close and gently squeezed her breast. Michelle paused the hunt for her keys, closing her eyes and smiling. "Mmm," she murmured. "That feels nice."

"I know why he was staring at these," Charlie said as he fondled her. "You have a perfect pair."

"Thank you," she said. "Ah, here they are." She pulled out her car keys and pressed the button to unlock the car.

Charlie turned her to face him and leaned down for a kiss. Michelle eagerly accepted the kiss, wrapping her arms around his neck. Charlie continued to play with her breasts, stroking and flicking her hard nipples as they kissed. He reached between her legs and cupped her pussy, sliding a finger inside her. She was wet with the excitement of walking outside naked and bit her lower lip to keep from moaning as he pushed three fingers deep into her.

Charlie broke the kiss and stepped away from her, although he kept his hand between her legs and continued stroking her pussy. Michelle leaned back against her car with her eyes closed, the pleasure clearly visible on her face. Fluttering eyelashes, mouth open, her bottom lip trembling. She lifted her right foot onto her tiptoes, separating her legs, giving him more access.

"Just friends, right?" he murmured as his finger moved against her clit.

"...what?"

"At school. You told Cody we're just friends?"

"Ohh!"

"I guess that means I can't touch your pussy like this at school." Charlie smiled. "I mean, I could... but Cody might get suspicious that we're more than just friends, right?"

"Oh, Charlie," Michelle moaned softly, her eyes still closed. She gasped suddenly as his manipulations provoked a wave of ecstasy through her body. "Ohh... you can touch me if you want... at school... my pussy... ohh... I don't care about Cody..."

"I can?"

"Anything, Charlie... anything you want..."

She's just really turned on, he thought. She's just saying whatever comes into her mind. Maybe it turns her on to say it.

Then he thought, I want to be inside her.

He had just started to pull his zipper down when a door slammed off to their right. Someone leaving their house. Down the street, the headlights flashed on a parked car as someone unlocked it with their key fob. Michelle straightened and quickly pulled the hoodie closed. Charlie took his hands away from his zipper.

"We keep getting interrupted." He scowled. Now they could see a man walking to the parked car, a dim shadow barely visible in the distance.

Michelle took slow, deep breaths, her legs now pressed tightly together. "It's all right. I should go anyway." She leaned forward and gave Charlie a quick kiss on the lips. "Can I have this hoodie?"

"Sure," he said. "You mean... to keep?"

She just laughed and went around to the other side of her car. She pulled open the door. "Good night, Charlie."

"Good night," he said. "Um... thanks for coming over."

She laughed again.

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When Charlie walked back into the kitchen, he found his mom still sitting at the table, with the two pieces of pie waiting untouched. She had brewed a pot of coffee, which she claimed she could drink at any hour without affecting her ability to fall asleep. The small kitchen TV was on, and she was watching some police show where two detectives were questioning someone.

She looked up. "Oh, there you are. I thought you'd forgotten that I brought you dessert."

"Nah. Thanks." He sat and took a bite of his pie. "Hey. Pretty good." He nodded his approval.

"I thought you'd like it. I'll tell Ed. He brought it in." She turned her attention back to the show.

Charlie pretended to watch the show as well, but he couldn't focus on it. His mind kept returning to Michelle. What a crazy day. Ambushed in the bathroom by Cody's goon squad before the start of school. Talking to Ronni, telling her everything. Lunch with Michelle. His tires slashed at the end of the day. Then finally, Michelle again, naked in his house, making love to him in his bedroom.

He still needed to tell Michelle that Ronni knew everything. Definitely a conversation he wasn't looking forward to. Michelle wouldn't be happy that he had shared her secrets. But if he didn't warn Michelle and Ronni let it slip to Michelle that she knew, Michelle would feel completely betrayed.

Mrs. Tucker stood to refill her coffee from the pot. She paused by the sink and leaned down to take a closer look at something. "Charlie?"

"Yeah?"

Mrs. Tucker lifted a glass from the sink. She pointed to a red splotch on the rim. "This looks like lipstick. What do you think?"

"Ah." Charlie grimaced inside.

"Lipstick?"

"Yeah. Probably."

"Did you have a girl over here tonight?"

"Uh... yeah."

Mrs. Tucker set the glass back in the sink. She leaned back against the counter, her arms crossed in front of her. "Was it Ronni?"

"No," he said. "Michelle."

"Oh, so now there's a Michelle." She set the glass back in the sink. "Wasn't it Ronni that you were taking to the prom?"

"Yeah. I'm taking Ronni to the prom."

"So then... who's Michelle?"

"She's... um... someone else."

"Someone else." Mrs. Tucker pursed her lips. "Well, Charlie, I'd like to make a new rule. From now on, I don't want any lady visitors in the house unless I've met them first. Okay?"

"Okay."

She took a sip of her coffee. "I'm going to move to my chair in the living room. Want to finish watching the rest in there?"

"No... I think I'm going to go upstairs."

"All right."

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Charlie could still smell the scent of Michelle on his bed as he lay there, staring at the ceiling. He had her dress hidden under his bed, and thought about taking it out and looking at it. A new addition to his growing collection of Michelle's discarded clothing. No underwear this time. She hadn't bothered to wear any.

Now she had his hoodie, officially making the flow of clothing a two-way street.

He considered texting her, and even reached for his phone. He would write: "Just checking that you made it home ok." It was a legitimate thing to say. Really, he just wanted to say something, anything, to get a text back from her.

He started to type his message, but then remembered that her parents didn't know she had come over to his house. He didn't want to get her in trouble if they accidentally intercepted the text. He deleted the message, then let his arm fall to his side, the phone spilling from his fingers.

The scent of her, lingering in the air. He breathed it in, remembered her on top of him, their bodies moving together. His penis swelled, swiftly growing as if eager to finally enjoy the second round of sex it had been expecting.

He undid the front of his pants, letting his erection loose. He gripped it in his fingers, squeezing it. Slowly, he began to stroke himself, pretending it was Michelle's pussy sliding up and down his shaft. His body reacted as he thought of her.

He imagined walking with her at Greenholt Gardens. A Sunday afternoon, when the other visitors to the garden still wore their church clothes, but Michelle would be naked, of course; her body glowing in the warm sunlight, her dark hair cascading down her bare back. Standing together in front of a patchwork of flowers, his hand casually pressed against her ass as she admired the blooming colors. Standing behind her, hugging her, squeezing her breasts. At some point, they'd surrender to their passions, and fuck right there in the path, oblivious to the other people who walked back and forth around them...

His fantasy became more and more lurid the closer he came to climaxing, and finally he reached that peak, gripping his cock tightly as a stream of cum launched onto his bare stomach. Charlie closed his eyes, breathing deeply. He pictured Michelle, lying naked in her bed, somewhere out there wherever she lived, a vibrator in her hand, getting herself off just as he did. He imagined both of them had been touching themselves at the same time, and maybe she climaxed just as he did. Maybe far apart but together they had finished what had been interrupted.

Maybe now he would text her. "I was just thinking of you," he would say.

She would respond, "Did you cum a lot?"

He would say, "Yes, a lot. What about you?"

She would say, "Yes. You give me the most amazing orgasms. Even when you're not here."

Ha! That would be an interesting conversation for her parents to find on her phone later.

Charlie sat up on his bed and cleaned himself off. He glanced at his phone, but the screen was black. Maybe she wasn't even home yet. He didn't have any idea how far away she lived.

He put on his bathrobe and went across the hall to take another shower. A long hot one. He needed time to think.

He was standing under the shower head, letting the water massage his neck and shoulders, when he suddenly realized the answer to the Ronni/Michelle dilemma. A way to tell Michelle that Ronni knew about her nude adventures, without Michelle feeling betrayed. If he could just work out the details, it would be the perfect solution.

It all depended on Ronni. If Ronni was sincere about being his friend and wanting to help him. And if he could just get her to buy into his plan.

Charlie quickly finished his shower, and rushed back to his room in his bathrobe. He sat down at his desk and turned on the computer. For a moment, he stared at the blank document in front of him. Then he started to type.

\*\*\*

The next morning, Charlie stopped at Starbucks for a large coffee on the way to school. It had been a long night without much sleep, but he was happy with what he'd accomplished.

He caught sight of Michelle in the hallway after home room. She walked with Vanessa and Tina, and at first he thought that she was wearing the same black hoodie she'd driven off with the night before, over a white boho dress. He almost stopped walking as he wondered what possible message she could be sending him by wearing his hoodie in front of the whole school.

But as she came closer, he realized it was a smaller black jacket. It didn't really even look like his hoodie.

"Hi, Charlie," she said as they passed each other.

"Hi," he said back. He wanted to show her what he'd worked on the night before, but definitely not in front of her friends. Anyways, he needed to talk to Ronni first.

He sent Ronni a text to meet him in the AV room at lunch time. She didn't text back, but when he arrived at the room, she was waiting for him.

"Hey," she greeted him as he walked in. "I heard about your tires. What an awful thing. I can't believe they did that."

Charlie leaned against a table. "You heard about that?"

"Yeah." She shrugged. "There's some gossip going around."

"Does the gossip say who did it?"

"Not really. Football players. No one specific." She paused. "The rumor is that Glenn was eating lunch with Michelle yesterday, he got up to buy something, and you sat down in his seat while he was gone. Then you refused to move when he came back. Glenn's friends were mad that you were rude to him, so they slashed your tires in retribution."

"What!" Charlie couldn't believe that the rumor mill had turned him into the bad guy. "Are you serious? People are saying that?"

"Yeah. I heard it this morning in home room."

"I wasn't rude to Glenn," Charlie protested. "I sat next to him. We talked about movies. I didn't take his seat."

"Well... people like to embellish things, I guess," Ronni said. "But you must have done something to make someone mad at you."

"Cody." Charlie spoke the name with distaste. "Michelle said it was Cody."

"No surprise. He did it because you sat with Michelle at lunchtime?"

"I'm sure. He threatened me in the morning to stay away from Michelle.

Obviously, I didn't listen. I had lunch with her and he was sitting right there."

"And your tires paid the price." Ronni nodded. "Are you going to tell anyone it was him?"

"No. Actually, Michelle says he's going to pay me back the cost of the new tires. So I guess I'll just let it go."

"Wait, what?" Ronni squinted. "Did you say he's going to pay you back?"

"Michelle talked to him. Michelle and Vanessa. He's dating Vanessa, so I think she has some influence on him."

"Wow. Well... that's good, I guess."

"Yup." Charlie glanced down at the folder he held in his arm, then took a quick look behind him, making sure that no one else was around. He continued in a lower voice, "Hey, I've been thinking about what you said yesterday. About Greenholt Gardens?"

"Oh... yeah."

"It got me thinking. You said no one is there at night, right? It's completely empty?"

"Just my brother."

"Right. So what would your brother think about us shooting a short film there?"

"A film?" Ronni frowned. "Like what kind of film? You mean for a class?"

"No. Just for the experience of it." Charlie held up the folder. "I wrote a screenplay. Will you read it?"

"Okay." Ronni held out her hand, and Charlie gave her the folder. Ronni opened it and leaned over the stack of papers inside.

"You don't have to read it now," Charlie said.

"I want to," she said. "But will you do me a favor?"

"Sure."

"Go to the cafeteria and get me a slice of pizza? I like Hawaiian. And maybe an iced tea?"

"Sure." Charlie watched her anxiously as she started reading the first page of the script. "Um... I'll be right back."

When he returned, carrying two slices of pizza, an iced tea for her and a Sprite for himself, Ronni was already past the halfway point in his script. She looked up at him over the top of her glasses and gave him a crooked smile. "The Gwen character is played by Michelle, I take it?"

"Yeah. I haven't asked her yet... but, yeah."

"So you're going to ask her to do nude scenes in a film? Do you think she'll agree?"

"I don't know," Charlie said. "She might."

Ronni held out her hand for the iced tea, and Charlie passed it to her. Ronni sipped from the straw as she returned to reading the script. Charlie set the pizza slices down on the table, and it struck him that he had provided the same meal to Michelle the night before. Only that had been pepperoni, and this was Hawaiian.

And Michelle had eaten hers naked while he licked her pussy.

Charlie sat down in a chair and opened his bottle of Sprite. He took a bite of pizza and washed it down with a swig from his soda. He gazed at Ronni, watching her eyes moving back and forth behind her glasses as she read.

When she reached the end, she shuffled the pages back into a neat stack."I like it," she said. "Good dialogue. I like the surrealism of it, and how you're never sure if Gwen is real or not. It has a David Lynch feel to me."

"Yeah, that's kind of what I was going for."

She held up the title page. " 'Anything You Want'? That's really the title?"

"Um... no, probably not. Just the best I could think of at the time."

"It's a little generic." She put the title page back and closed the folder. "It could be a good movie. But I guess that's not really the point, is it?" Ronni leaned back in her chair. "It's really about Michelle, right?"

Charlie didn't bother to deny it. "Yes."

"You want to film her naked. You want her to stand outside, naked, in the gardens, and you want to film it."

Charlie looked down at the floor. "I was talking to her the other day about pursuing a career in film," he said. "She told me if I ever needed an actress for one of my film projects, she would do it. She said she would even do a nude scene, if I needed her to. I don't know, maybe she was just talking, maybe she'll say no when she reads the script..."

"But you think she'll say yes." Ronni looked down at the script. "You wrote this script just for her. Including the nudity. You think she wants to do a nude scene in one of your films."

"I don't know." Charlie shook his head. "I mean, she doesn't have to be nude if she doesn't want to. I could rewrite that part so she's wearing a short dress or something..."

"What about the Max and Ingrid characters? How are you going to cast them?"

"I guess I'll recruit from the theater department. Allison Hayes as Ingrid, maybe?

"Sure," Ronni said. "I could see her in the role. But whoever it is, Michelle's going to be naked in front of them. So you better make sure Michelle approves."

"If Michelle even agrees to be in it."

"Right. That's your first step."

Charlie nodded. "I'll ask Michelle. Will you ask your brother?"

"I'll ask my brother." She offered the folder back to him. "It could be a good short film, Charlie."

"Keep it. That's your copy."

Ronni smiled, returning the folder to her lap. "And what title do I get in the credits, if I help you with this?"

"Assistant Director? Script Supervisor?" Charlie looked at her thoughtfully. "Would you ever consider playing Ingrid?"

"Hell no!" Ronni said. "I like the sound of 'Producer', personally."

"Producer it is," Charlie said. "Thanks, Ronni."

Ronni held up her iced tea in a mock salute. "No problem. Let's go make a film with your nudist girlfriend." She took a sip from her straw.

\*\*\*

Charlie met Michelle later that day, in the same AV room. She gave him the $250 from Cody, a stack of twelve crisp twenty-dollar bills and one ten. He gave her a folder.

"What's this?" she asked, opening the folder and looking at the pages inside.

"A screenplay. I wrote a short film."

"You did? Can I read it?"

"Of course," Charlie said. "Actually, I thought you might play one of the characters. A character named Gwen."

She smiled. "You want me to be in one of your movies? Sure, I'd love to."

"Maybe you should read it first."

"Okay." She flipped through the papers. "I don't know if I can right now, though. Can I take it with me and give it back to you later?"

"Sure. But just don't show it to anyone, okay?"

"Okay!" She took a step closer to him. "I've been turned on all day thinking about last night," she whispered. "Walking to my car that way, talking to that man... and the whole time he could see everything... oh my gosh..."

"Yeah. Mr. Fruit Bouquet?"

"Fruit bouquet! Right!" She giggled.

Charlie pointed at the folder. "The movie is set at Greenholt Gardens. Have you ever been there?"

"Oh, sure, I've been there. It's a beautiful place. We had our class picnic there in seventh grade, don't you remember?"

"Yeah, I remember. Well, it turns out the night watchman at Greenholt Gardens is Ronni's brother. He's the only one there at night. So I'm trying to find out if he'll let us film there. We'd have the whole garden to ourselves."

Michelle looked down at the folder. "Did you show this to Ronni already?"

"Ronni told me her brother works at the garden. She also told me the garden is pretty much empty at night. So I wrote a screenplay and I intentionally used the garden as a setting. Because we'd be able to go there at night. After it's closed. When it's empty." He gazed at her, wondering if she understood what he was implying. "Ronni's going to ask her brother if it's okay."

"So Ronni's going to help with the movie?"

"I don't know," Charlie said. "I haven't planned anything yet. I just want you to read this, to see what you think." He hesitated. "Honestly, Michelle... I wrote this screenplay around Greenholt Gardens, but I also wrote it around you. I wanted to write something you might want to be in. If you don't like it... I mean, if you don't like it, then that's fine. I'll just write something else."

"Ok, now I'm really curious to read it." Michelle lifted the folder and peaked in at the first page.

"You know, my mom could tell you were there last night."

"Oh?" She looked up.

"You left the red imprint of your lips on a glass."

"Oops. She noticed that? What did she say?"

"Nothing. Just that I shouldn't be having girls over that if she hasn't met them. She didn't make a big deal out of it."

"Has she met Ronni?" Michelle asked.

"No... Ronni's never been to my house."

"I see." She smiled slightly. "Well, a bit of lipstick isn't so bad, right? Could've been worse. Considering I was sitting naked on your front porch for half an hour."

"Oh, it wasn't that long! It was probably like... five minutes?"

She shrugged. "I don't know. I didn't have a watch. Or anything else. It felt like a long time."

He gazed at her, not sure whether to smile or apologize. Instead, he slipped his arms around her waist. He leaned forward and kissed her.

"Charlie!" she whispered, glancing around quickly to make sure they were alone.

"I wanted to see what it was like to kiss you with your clothes on," he murmured, grinning.

"Shh!" She looked around again. Confirming that they were still as alone as they'd been during their entire conversation, she turned back to him and, smiling, gave him another kiss.

The bell rang. Charlie squeezed Michelle before releasing her. "Read it, okay?"

"I will," she said. "I promise."

\*\*\*

Charlie's phone rang just as he pulled into his driveway. Michelle's number. He turned off his car and answered. "Hi."

"Hi, Charlie," Michelle said. "I read your movie."

"Did you like it?"

"You want me to play Gwen, right?"

"Yeah."

"She's naked a lot."

"Yeah. She is."

"I don't know, Charlie... do you think it's a good idea? Who's going to see the movie when it's done?"

"No one has to see it," he said. "We could put it away and never let anyone watch it."

Michelle sighed. "I don't know. Honestly, I'm not sure if I even understand what's happening in the movie. Why is Gwen there? The three of them are outside, Gwen is naked but Max and Ingrid don't even say anything. Is she supposed to be a nudist or something?"

"No, no... Gwen isn't real. She's more like a representation of Max and Ingrid's sexual tension."

"Huh?"

"So Max and Ingrid first meet and have a conversation. Gwen comes by, sort of floating around, sometimes joining in their conversation, sometimes just walking near them. Because Max and Ingrid are attracted to each other, but they've just met. Later, they see each other again, and Gwen reappears, but now she's more flirty, and she lets Max and Ingrid strip off some of her clothing... so even though Max and Ingrid are still just casually talking, they're showing their growing attraction to each other through Gwen."

"But doesn't Ingrid think it's weird that Max is taking off Gwen's shirt?"

"No, because Gwen isn't real. She's not really a person. She's like their emotions, their hidden feelings for each other."

"If she's not real, then how can they talk to her? They talk to her, and she talks back, and they both hear it."

"It's meant to be surreal. Have you seen any of David Lynch's films?"

"I have no idea who that is."

Charlie thought for a moment. "What about Greek mythology? Zeus, Apollo?"

"Uh huh."

"Think of Gwen as Aphrodite. Gwen is the Goddess of Love. She's helping Max and Ingrid fall in love, and as they fall in love, Gwen wears less and less, until finally she's naked. When she's naked, that shows that Max and Ingrid are so attracted to each other that they want to make love to each other, even though neither of them has been able to clearly convey it to the other.

Michelle was silent for a moment. "Okay..." she said finally. "I'll do it. I'll play Gwen."

"You will?"

"And you can show it to whoever you want, when it's done. I'm still confused about what's happening in the movie, but I can tell that you have a vision. You're an artist. I want to help you with your art, in any way I can."

The earnest tone in her voice caught Charlie by surprise and he suddenly remembered that the movie wasn't supposed to be art, it wasn't supposed to be anything at all. It was a sham, just an excuse to get Michelle naked in Greenholt Gardens. He started to speak, intending to tell her just that, but now it seemed like a lowlife thing to admit. She was offering to help him achieve a vision; how could he admit to her that his only real vision had been to watch her walking naked through a pretty garden?

"Thanks," he mumbled. "But, you know, if you're not comfortable... if you want to wear something, like a dress...I can rewrite it..."

"No. If you want Gwen to be naked, I'll be naked," she said firmly. She paused. "I told you I would, remember? On Saturday. I said if you wanted me to do a nude scene in one of your movies, I would do it."

"Yeah. I remember."

"Who's going to play the other characters?" Michelle tried to sound nonchalant, but Charlie could tell she was anxious to hear the answer. She knew she would be nude in front of the other two actors.

"I don't know yet," Charlie said. "I haven't asked anyone. Let's not worry about that until we hear from Ronni's brother. If he says no, none of this is going to happen anyway."

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But Ronni's brother said yes. Ronni brought the word on Wednesday. "Nick says it's okay to film there," she said. "I told him we would stop by tomorrow at 11:30 PM to look around. Can you make it?"

"I can be there. I'll ask Michelle if she can make it."

"It's late, I know, but that's when it's empty. Any earlier and we might run into the staff from the restaurant."

Charlie knew his mom wouldn't care if he was out that late, especially if he told her he was working on a film project. But he wasn't sure about Michelle. He called her after school and told her the news. "We'll just meet Ronni's brother Nick and check out the garden. No filming, just seeing what we have to work with, so I can put together a storyboard. Can you make it?"

"I think so," Michelle said. "It is late... but it should be okay."

"I was thinking," Charlie said, "after Ronni goes home, and her brother gets to his work... we'll have some time alone in the garden..." He trailed off, hoping she understood what he was suggesting.

"Okay," she said softly. "Ronni is leaving early?"

"She can't stay out too late. She says she's leaving at midnight."

"So after midnight, it'll just be you and me. No one else will be in the gardens?"

"Nick will be around, but he mostly guards the front entrance. He has to work."

"Okay. Wow. The whole garden to ourselves."

"What if I pick you up at your house, around 10:30?"

"Oh, I don't know if that's a good idea," Michelle said quickly. "I mean... I can't really tell my parents what I'm doing, right? If I tell them I'm in a movie, they'll want to see it when it's done. And a guy picking me up at 10:30 at night? A guy they don't know? They won't go for that either."

"Okay..."

"I'll drive to your place and leave my car there. Then you can drive us. Okay?"

"Okay. But what if my mom is home?"

"What do you mean?"

"She'll want to meet you."

"She will?" Michelle sounded surprised. "Um... I wasn't thinking of going inside your house... do you want me to meet your mom?"

"Sure. I mean, not in a super formal kind of way. Just like, here's Michelle, I'm spending a lot of time with her these days, so you might as well know what she looks like, like that."

"Uh huh. Okay."

"It's not a big deal," Charlie said. "You sound nervous. Don't worry, my mom is super cool."

"I'm fine."

"It's not like she made a big deal about you being over on Monday. She just said she wants to meet you the next time you come over."

"Okay." Michelle was quiet for a moment. "Does she know anything about me?"

"Well... no. Not really."

"I guess there's not much about me that's appropriate to tell her," Michelle said. "Not much about us. You can't even show her the script of the movie we're making together. She'll see that I'm naked through the whole thing."

It was a good point. Charlie promised himself that he would make a new version of the script, a cleaned-up version, with all references to Gwen's nudity removed. Just in case it fell into the hands of someone who wasn't involved in the production, like his mom. Or Michelle's parents, for that matter. "You just have to promise me one thing, when you meet her," he told Michelle.

"You want me to keep my clothes on?" she asked innocently.

"Oh, no, you can take your clothes off if you want to," Charlie said. "Just don't bring her one of those damn fruit bouquets."

Michelle laughed.

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Charlie told his mom about his plans over dinner on Thursday. Meatloaf, like most Thursdays. He told her that he had a short film he wanted to make, and Ronni's brother Nick was going to let him film it at Greenholt Gardens. He explained that he wanted to meet Nick and Ronni that night after the gardens closed, so they could walk around and plan the film. As he expected, his mom wasn't overly concerned.

"It's a beautiful place," she said. "Are you going to do all your filming at night? Won't it be too dark?"

"The place gets busy in the day. At night, it's empty." He shrugged. "I don't know. I hope lighting won't be a problem."

"You can borrow that work light from the garage."

"Yeah. That might help." He took a sip from his water glass, then casually added, "Michelle's going to drop by later. I'm giving her a ride to the gardens."

Mrs. Tucker looked at him. "Michelle who was here Monday?"

"Yeah."

"Is she helping with the film?"

"I'm hoping she'll be one of the actresses," he said. "Anyhow, she's going to leave her car here, and we'll both go in my car."

"I wish you had warned me we'd have company. I would've bought a dessert."

"She's just going to be here for a second. Probably she won't even come inside. She's just leaving her car here so we can go in one car. It's not a big deal."

"Fine." She poked a piece of meatloaf with her fork and ate it. She chewed it slowly. "You like her?" she asked.

Charlie hesitated for just a moment. "Yeah," he admitted.

Mrs. Tucker nodded. "I won't embarrass you. Promise."

At 10:30, Charlie sat on the porch, scanning the street for Michelle's car. His mom was inside, supposedly watching television. The curb in front of the house was empty, and Michelle could easily have parked there. But he suspected she would park further away and it didn't surprise him at all when he saw her walking up the sidewalk. But her outfit did surprise him.

She looked like she had been to a job interview. She had on a black pencil skirt and a clingy long-sleeve white sweater, along with black stockings and heels. Pendant earrings dangled from her ears, and her make-up was impeccable, her lips a deep red. She carried a black leather purse on her shoulder.

"Wow," he said. "You look amazing."

"Thanks!"

"Did you just come from something where you had to dress up?"

She cocked her head and gave him a look of disdain. "No," she said coolly. "I wanted to look nice for our date."

He almost said, "What date?" but caught himself in time. It seemed like the wrong thing to say, although he was still puzzled by why she thought their plans constituted a date. They would go to Greenholt Gardens, meet Ronni and Nick, walk around looking for places to film the movie. That wasn't a date, that was working on a project. It was true that he hoped to have some time alone with Michelle in the gardens later on that night, but she didn't need to be well-dressed for that. In fact, he hoped she wouldn't be dressed at all.

Instead he said, "You look gorgeous. Seriously."

"Thanks," she said again. She looked up toward his house.

Maybe she was dressed up because she was going to meet his mom? If that was the case, she clearly didn't know his mom. Mrs. Tucker wouldn't have thought any less of Michelle if she'd shown up in a ripped t-shirt and a dirty pair of jeans. Clothes just weren't that important to his mother; she seemed to prize comfort in her own clothing choices more than anything. Anyhow, it seemed like a bit of overkill for Michelle to dress up so nicely for an encounter that would likely last less than five minutes.

"Come on," he said. "Let's go tell my mom we're going."

He opened the front door and stepped inside. Michelle stepped in after him. "Mom?" Charlie called. "Michelle's here. We're about to leave."

Mrs. Tucker appeared from the doorway to the kitchen. "Wait! Let me say hello first." She walked over, smiling. "My goodness, Michelle. You're even prettier in real life than in your yearbook photo."

"Hi, Mrs. Tucker," Michelle chirped. "Thank you so much! It's nice to meet you." She offered her hand and Mrs. Tucker clasped it, holding it for a moment.

"Do you want to come in the living room for a bit?" Mrs. Tucker asked. "I can make some coffee. Or hot cocoa?"

"We need to get going, mom," Charlie said.

"Right," Mrs. Tucker said. "The film. Are you interested in film, too, Michelle? Are you an aspiring actress?"

"No... I just told Charlie I would help him," Michelle said. "I've never acted in anything before."

"Are you and Charlie in the same classes?"

"Not this year." Michelle glanced at Charlie. "We've been in a few classes together, over the years. Right? Like eighth grade English..."

"Yeah," Charlie confirmed. "Michelle and I have gone to the same school since the seventh grade."

The ghost of a smile flickered on Michelle's face. "But it's only this year that we figured out we share some of the same interests."

"Yeah. Well, we should probably get going," Charlie said quickly, before his mom could ask any more questions.

"Nice to meet you, Michelle," Mrs. Tucker said. "Don't stay up too late, you two."

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It didn't take as long as Charlie expected to drive to Greenholt Gardens, and they mostly hit green lights as they drove along the dark streets. Michelle was in a cheerful mood, and Charlie found he barely had to make any effort to keep her talking. Maybe she was feeling relieved after meeting his mother, or maybe she was feeling excited at the idea that she might streak through the garden later that night. Whatever the reason, she chattered energetically next to him while they drove.

They talked about movies, comparing the movies they'd seen and the ones they liked. Michelle was surprised to hear that Charlie seldom saw movies in the theaters.

"I get busy on the weekends," he said. "Sometimes the guys invite me, but I usually have a reason to say no, and lately they don't ask as much."

"But you want to be a director, don't you? It seems like you should love seeing movies."

"I do love movies," he said. "I just don't go to the movie theater."

When they arrived at the parking lot at Greenholt Gardens, the time was just past 11 PM. The parking lot was empty except for two cars, a blue Nissan sedan and a black pick-up. "We're pretty early," Charlie said as he pulled in next to the Nissan. "I told Ronni we'd meet her here at 11:30."

"Is one of these her car?" Michelle asked.

"I don't know. I hope so. No one else is supposed to be here." He peered out his window, looking for anyone standing near the closed-up entrance to the gardens. It occurred to him suddenly that maybe the reason Michelle had dressed up so nicely was because they were meeting Ronni. Could that be the reason, and nothing to do with meeting his mother? Ronni was still his date to the prom, and as far as Michelle knew, Ronni didn't know anything about their secret affair. Did Michelle feel threatened by Ronni?

"There she is," Michelle said, pointing out the window.

Charlie followed Michelle's finger and saw a dark figure in the shadows, propping open a door which Charlie hadn't noticed before. The figure started to walk in their direction, and when she stepped into the light, Charlie recognized Ronni. He opened his car door and stepped out. He heard Michelle doing the same on the other side of the car.

"Hey!" Ronni said. "You made it." She waited for them on the sidewalk.

"Yeah. We're a little early," Charlie said. He opened the back door and retrieved the screenplay from the back seat.

"It's fine," Ronni said. "We'll just have to stay away from the area near the restaurant for a while. Hi, Michelle."

"Hi," Michelle said.

"Thanks for setting this up with your brother," Charlie said to Ronni.

"No problem," she replied. "Like I said, I think this film could turn out pretty good. I think it'll be interesting to work on." She looked at Michelle. "Thanks for agreeing to be in it."

"Oh... sure."

"My brother's inside. You should go ahead and strip. Just leave your clothes in the car."

Michelle blinked. "What?"

"I told my brother he'd get to see a naked girl. It's a big part of how I got him to agree to this. I told him our film has nude scenes, and one of the cheerleaders from school has agreed to do them. I told him he's welcome to gawk at that pretty naked cheerleader as much as he likes." Ronni gazed at Michelle. "So you need to strip."

Michelle was stunned. "I said I would..." she started to say, "I mean, I'd said I'd be in the film... I told Charlie..." She looked anxiously around the empty parking lot. "Out here?"

"I want to introduce you to my brother, and I think it'll be fun if you walk in already naked. It'll give him a thrill." Ronni shrugged. "He has a boring job, he could use some excitement."

Michelle looked around the parking lot again. She nervously pushed her hair back with her fingers and looked back at Ronni.

"It's a great outfit, Michelle" Ronni said. "You look really nice. But now you need to take off those nice clothes and leave them in the car. You can't come in while you're wearing them." Her voice was quiet but firm.

Charlie looked between Ronni and Michelle. He was astonished that Ronni would give Michelle such an outrageous order. Yet he also noticed that Michelle hadn't said no. He wished Michelle would look at him, so he could gaze into her eyes and try to read what she was feeling. He tried to project his thoughts towards her: You don't have to do this, Michelle, if you don't want to. You don't have to do this.

He didn't speak the words aloud, because he remembered what Michelle said to him earlier in the week, when he was walking her to her car. How she fantasized about being put outside naked in a way that wasn't by her choice. He knew Michelle didn't have to do what Ronni was telling her to do, but he also wanted to let Michelle have the illusion that she didn't have a choice, if that's the way she wanted to see it in her mind.

He hoped this whole thing wasn't a huge mistake.

Michelle caught her left sleeve with her right hand. She pulled her left arm into her sweater. Her right arm followed, and she squirmed out of the tight garment, pulling it over her head. Underneath, she wore a lacy sky blue bra. She turned towards Charlie, but it was only to hold out the sweater to him. He took it and held it in his hand.

He looked at her bra. She wore that for me, he thought. She thought she would undress for me, out there in the gardens, and she wore that bra, and probably a matching pair of panties, so that she would look sexy while she performed a striptease for me.

Now it seemed that the bra and panties would remain outside the gardens with the rest of her clothes.

Michelle was fumbling with the zipper on the back of her skirt, so Charlie stepped forward and slid the zipper down for her. He slid the skirt down her legs and she stepped out of it. As expected, her silky blue panties matched her bra. Her black stockings stopped at mid-thigh, with tiny black bows at the top.

Ronni gazed at Michelle's legs. "You should leave on your stockings and heels," she said. "My brother will think they're sexy. But take off your bra and panties."

Michelle nodded. She reached behind her back and unclipped her bra. She pulled it off her body, freeing her breasts, and Charlie thought he saw Ronni's eyes widen slightly behind her glasses. Perhaps Ronni hadn't fully grasped until that moment that Michelle was really going to do it, she was going to leave her clothes behind and spend the rest of the evening naked. Michelle twisted at the waist and held out the bra to Charlie. He caught the thin garment as it dangled from her fingers.

Michelle leaned over, pushing her panties down her legs, and Charlie caught a glimpse of her pussy as she crouched. She straightened, leaving the flimsy panties at her ankles, then stepped out of them. Charlie stepped forward to pick them up, but Michelle was faster. She knelt down and plucked the panties off the ground, offering them to Charlie, also offering a view between her legs which she left carelessly apart. He added the panties to the ball of her clothing in his hands.

Michelle stood and turned to face Ronni, now dressed exactly as Ronni had requested; completely naked, except for black stockings and black heels. Ronni took a step back, looking at Michelle from head to toe. The corner of her mouth quirked up. "Wow," she murmured. "The camera is going to freaking love you."

"Can I meet your brother now?" Michelle asked. She swayed nervously, her fingers touching the tops of her stockings.

Ronni stared at her for a moment. Then she laughed softly to herself and turned away. "Yeah." She waved Michelle forward. "Come on in."

"I'll put these in the car." Charlie walked to the back of his car and opened the trunk. Gently, he set Michelle's clothes and purse inside. As he pushed the trunk closed, he allowed himself a moment to appreciate the strange scene in front of him. Ronni and Michelle, standing next to each other under the white glow of the exterior light poles. Ronni, the junior from the AV crew, wearing jeans, a loose t-shirt and her usual dark-rimmed glasses. Michelle, the senior cheerleader, wearing nothing but stockings and heels. It was a strange juxtaposition.

"Ready?" Ronni asked.

"Yeah." Charlie walked around the car and hopped onto the sidewalk. Ronni had already started towards the propped door, leaving Michelle to wait for Charlie. Charlie reached out and caught Michelle's hand as they followed Ronni. Her hand felt cold in his grasp, and she clenched his fingers tightly as they entered through the door.

They stood in a small storage room, with a second closed door in front of them. Ronni opened the second door a crack, letting in a dim yellow glow. "Do you mind closing the outside door, Charlie?" she asked.

Charlie used his foot to shift the rock that Ronni had used to prop the door and the door swung shut. Ronni pulled open the second door, and they walked into a dark area which appeared to be a kitchen. They could hear the sound of a television from somewhere. Charlie could see a large industrial sink, a grill, a tall refrigerator with a glass door which was stocked with soda bottles and beer. He could see a cash register in front of a window. The window opened to another, larger room, where the lights were on, and Charlie could see tables and chairs in that room. He realized they stood in the back of the snack bar.

"This way," Ronni said, and led them through another door to the seating area. A large flatscreen TV was attached to the wall at the other end of the room, tuned to a late night talk show. They could see the back of a young man with short dark hair, sitting in a chair watching the TV.

"Nick," Ronni said. "They're here."

The man looked around. He saw Ronni first and got to his feet. "Cool," he said. "Did they... whaaa?" This last drawn out syllable came as Nick noticed Michelle. He gaped at her with his mouth open.

Ronni burst out laughing at the look on his face. Michelle released Charlie's hand and stepped forward, letting the light fall on her. She showed no sign of embarrassment as she stood with her legs slightly apart and her arms at her sides, her body displayed for Ronni's brother. Charlie also stepped further into the room, although he might as well have been invisible for all the attention he got. Nick was completely focused on Michelle.

When Ronni stopped laughing, she waved at Michelle. "Nick, meet Michelle. Michelle, Nick."

"Hi," Nick said weakly.

Michelle stepped towards Nick, and Charlie suddenly remembered the way she'd said goodbye to Daryl during one of their previous adventures. He watched as she walked right up to Nick and slid her arms around his neck, pressing her naked body against him. "Hi, Nick. It's so nice to meet you." She rose and pressed a long kiss on his lips. Just as Daryl had, Nick hesitated for a moment, uncertain what to with his hands, before pressing them against her back and returning her embrace.

"Jesus, Charlie," Ronni muttered from next to him as they watched Michelle kiss Nick. Charlie remembered that Michelle had once confessed to him that she fantasized about kissing a stranger while she was naked. Now she was taking the opportunity to experience this fantasy again.

"I told her once I thought it would be hot if she was naked kissing a stranger," Charlie explained, trying to make it seem like she only did it to please him.

"That's not a stranger," Ronni replied. "That's my brother."

"Well," Charlie murmured, "you said you wanted him to have a thrill."

Michelle finally ended the kiss. She smiled at Nick, then stepped back to stand next to Charlie. She took Charlie's hand again.

"...and this is Charlie," Ronni said.

Nick acknowledged Charlie with a nod, still stunned by the kiss. "You said you were just going to look around today," he told Ronni. "You said you weren't going to film anything."

"We're not filming anything," Ronni said.

"Then why is she like that?" He stared at Michelle.

Before Ronni could answer, Michelle spoke up. "Ronni thought I should be naked when you met me," she said matter-of-factly. "She said you could use a little excitement."

"She said that?" Nick stared at his sister. Ronni burst out laughing again. She couldn't deny that she'd said that, although it implied that she'd also asked Michelle to give Nick that long kiss, when actually the kiss had been all Michelle's doing. Instead of confirming or denying Michelle's statement, Ronni chose instead just to laugh.

"Fine," Nick said to Michelle. "You surprised me. Now, how about you put your clothes back on?"

A moment of awkward silence followed this request. Ronni glanced towards Michelle for her response. Charlie had locked all of Michelle's clothes in the trunk of his car, and Michelle had watched him do it, her lack of protest indicating that she intended to be naked all the time she was in the garden. Charlie finally spoke up. "She's good."

Nick raised his eyebrows. "You're going to stay like that?" he asked Michelle.

She nodded, bouncing her heels up and down. Her body already quivered with giddy energy. "Is it okay?" she asked.

"Uh... yeah. I mean, I knew your movie had nude scenes... I just didn't think..." Nick shrugged. "Yeah. I'm not going to complain if you want to stay like that. Just... you probably should stay away from Shamrock. The restaurant. Sometimes the cooks and the wait staff hang around there pretty late."

"Okay," Michelle said. "We'll be careful."

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The first time Charlie discovered Michelle streaking through the school, he had convinced her to venture outside to the school's parking lot. He remembered how she stood naked under the night sky, her arms in the air, proclaiming how she felt so free.

Charlie could only imagine how she felt now as they stepped out the doorway of the snack bar and saw Greenholt Gardens stretched out in front of them. They stood directly in front of the wide green field called the Concert Meadow, with the stone stage surrounded by rows of bench seating visible at the far end of the field. A long lily pond bordered the meadow to the left, and a sign pointed out the start of the "Brook Walk", a path along the trickling brook which fed the pond. Other signs showed the ways to the different gardens: the Japanese garden and the Tropical garden to the left; the Rose garden and the Oak garden to the right. The Shamrock restaurant also lay to the right, so they would avoid the gardens in that direction.

Michelle swayed with restless energy and her fingers slid back and forth across the top of her stockings, tracing the area on her thighs where the stockings ended and her complete nudity began. It was clear that she was extremely stimulated. "Are we really the only ones here?" she asked breathlessly.

"We should be," Nick said. "I'm the only guard at night. If anyone else is here, they're trespassing."

"Does that happen?" Charlie asked. "Trespassers?"

"I've been patrolling this place for a few months now, and I've only caught someone sneaking in once," Nick said. "That time, it was a bunch of junior high kids who wanted to toss around a glow-in-the-dark frisbee. I just told them they couldn't be here, and they left."

"It's so beautiful at night," Michelle murmured.

Nick smiled. "Let's walk around. I'm due to walk a patrol anyway. I'll show you guys around."

"You have the screenplay, right, Charlie?" Ronni asked. Charlie had the screenplay clearly visible in his hand but he suspected Ronni's real purpose for asking was to remind him that this visit was supposed to be for scouting film locations. He held up the screenplay for her to see, and she nodded.

"This way," Nick said. "Have you ever been to the Japanese garden?"

As they walked, Ronni pulled out her own copy of the script and began to talk to Charlie about the different scenes. While talking to Ronni and looking at her script, Charlie found that he was falling behind Michelle, and soon he realized that he was walking with Ronni while Michelle had pulled ahead and was walking beside Nick. Charlie felt a surge of jealousy, watching Ronni's brother talking with Michelle. He gazed at Michelle's naked back, her perfect rear end swaying in front of them.

His girlfriend, walking next to a man she had just met, naked and undoubtedly turned on. Could Nick tell how turned on she was? Michelle, his girlfriend, walking next to a man she had just kissed on the lips. What if Nick tried to touch her? What if he reached for her breast? Would she let him? Would Charlie try to stop him?

Michelle, his girlfriend. But was she really his girlfriend? He'd never asked her to be his girlfriend. She had told Cody they were just friends.

"You're clearly distracted," Ronni murmured to him. "I doubt you've heard a word I've said."

"Sorry." Charlie forced his eyes away from Michelle's ass. He made himself focus on Ronni's words, and hoped that Ronni hadn't noticed the erection that was trying to break out of his pants.

They reached the Japanese garden, and stepped onto a network of simple wooden bridges that traversed a koi pond. A circular island held a wooden pavilion that resembled a Shinto temple. Lights disguised as red lanterns criss-crossed above their heads, casting glowing red reflections on the water.

Charlie was gratified when Michelle flew to his side and took his hand. "Oh my god! Charlie! Isn't this so beautiful?" She gazed in awe at the serene garden. "Have you ever been here at night before?"

"No, never," Charlie said.

"See those benches on the island?" Ronni pointed. "That's pretty good light. What do you think about filming the first scene there?"

"Uh... yeah. Let's take a look."

They followed the wooden bridges to the island with the pavilion and walked to an area that had been set up with wooden tables and benches for people to sit and eat. It was a beautiful location, and Charlie moved around, imagining how he could set up his shots so that the pond and the lanterns would be visible behind the actors. He would need to enhance the light, but thought he could do it in a soft way that left the scenery still visible.

Ronni pulled out her phone and took some test video footage. At first she just filmed the tables and the scenery, but afterwards insisted she also needed to have some footage of Michelle. Michelle was clearly apprehensive, reluctant to have video of her nude body saved on Ronni's phone. But despite her nervousness, Michelle stood where Ronni asked, in the positions Ronni requested, and let Ronni record her.

They left the Japanese garden and circled through the Tropical garden. Although they could see shadowy areas on either side, Nick kept them on a path that was relatively well-lit. "I don't check every inch of this place," he explained. "Too many dark, winding paths. If anything's out there in the dark, keeping quiet, keeping to themselves, I'm not going to worry about them."

"Do you think anything is really out there?" Michelle asked, peering into the trees.

Nick grinned. "Could be. I've seen some deer."

"Let's head back to the snack bar," Ronni said. "Mom and dad want me home soon."

"Yeah, right." Nick turned them in that direction.

They reached the start of the Concert Meadow, with the snack bar visible ahead of them. Ronni turned to Charlie. "Will you walk me out to my car?" she asked.

Charlie glanced at Michelle, reluctant to leave her alone with Nick. But he also didn't want Ronni to walk out to the parking lot by herself. "I'll be back in a minute," he told Michelle.

Michelle's eyes flickered towards Nick. "Okay," she said.

"Don't accidentally lock yourself out," Nick said, and chuckled. As Ronni led the way to the snack bar, Charlie glanced over his shoulder and saw Nick standing in front of Michelle, her bare breasts jutting out at him, almost touching him. He was saying something to her, something that made her smile.

"You don't have to worry about Nick," Ronni murmured. "He's not going to try anything."

"Right."

"Nick won't. But I can't promise anything about Michelle. She already kissed him, and that was after they just met." Ronni leaned forward and whispered, "Jesus, Charlie. I mean, did you see her? She's dripping, like literally dripping. The inside of her stockings are soaked."

"Yeah. I know," he said as they entered the snack bar. "I could see it while you were filming her."

"That's right." Ronni shook her head in amazement. "Everyone could see it. She must have known, right? That we could all see how turned on she was?"

"I don't know..." Charlie didn't want to think about it.

They walked through the kitchen and the store room, and Ronni pushed the rock back into place with her foot to prop the outside door. Instead of walking outside, she turned to face Charlie.

"You know why I made her strip outside, don't you?" she asked, her eyes glittering.

The question surprised him, but as he met Ronni's gaze, the answer seemed obvious. "Because you wanted to get even with her," he said.

"Yes!" Ronni said. "Because you asked me first! And then she came to you in the middle of the cafeteria and tried to get you to drop me! This beautiful senior cheerleader, acting like she can just take whoever she likes, no matter if they've already agreed to go with someone else... it just wasn't nice. It wasn't nice." Ronni looked down. "So you're right. I wanted to get even. I wanted her to stand in front of me feeling exposed and humiliated. But she didn't even hesitate. She took her clothes off, right out in the public parking lot, just like that."

"It shocked her when you asked her to do it..."

"Yes, I could tell. She was shocked. But then she did it, and she barely argued. She took off all her clothes just because I asked her to." Ronni looked at Charlie. "I wondered why she trusted me so much. But the truth is, she doesn't trust me. It's you that she trusts. She trusts you a lot, doesn't she?"

"Yes, I think so."

"And you trust me. Right? If you didn't trust me, you wouldn't have let her take off her clothes like that."

"Right."

Ronni reached for her phone. She accessed the camera and pulled up the videos she had taken in the Japanese garden. "Here. I'm deleting all the videos I shot of her. The nude videos. Okay? Will you tell her I deleted them?"

"I'll tell her."

Ronni held up her phone. "See? All gone."

"Okay. I'll tell her."

Ronni pulled her car keys out of her pocket and jingled them in her hands. She looked pensive, and Charlie expected her to have something else to say about Michelle. Instead, she abruptly clutched her fingers around her car keys, squeezing them tightly. "Well, I should get home. Bye!" She stepped forward and gave Charlie a hug, which he returned after a moment's surprise. As she released him, she paused to look up at him. "She does like you," she told him softly. "I can tell."

He nodded, saying nothing.

"See you tomorrow," she said.

"See you."

He watched her get into her car, the blue sedan, and waited until she pulled out of the parking lot. Then he moved the rock back and let the door swing shut.

He walked back through the snack bar, his feet dragging like bags of sand as he anticipated seeing Nick and Michelle again. When Ronni asked him to walk her to her car, it had seemed like a normal, reasonable thing to do, and he'd agreed to it without much thought. But now it seemed extremely irresponsible for him to leave Michelle alone with a man they barely knew while she was naked and visibly aroused. He wondered with dread what Nick and Michelle would be doing when he found them. Kissing? Sitting in a chair, making out? Maybe even having sex? He felt like he'd left them alone long enough that anything could be happening.

What would he do if they were having sex? Turn and leave, exit the garden and drive away? Sit and wait for them to be done, trying not to watch? Did he have any right to feel possessive of Michelle when he so often assisted in displaying her body to the world?

He tormented himself with these thoughts until he stepped out of the snack bar and saw Michelle on the Concert Meadow. She was alone and Nick was nowhere to be seen. She'd shed her high heels and turned in aimless circles on the grass in just her stockinged feet. She had her arms out and her face pointed to the sky, a beatific smile on her lips. She didn't notice him at first, but caught sight of him during one of her twirls. As soon as she saw him, she smiled and headed towards him.

"Where's Nick?" he asked.

"He had to work," she said. "He's in the monitor room." Before Charlie could say another word, she had her arms wrapped around him and kissed him furiously.

"What's the monitor room?" he asked between kisses.

"The security room with all the monitors," she breathed as she pulled his hand to her breast. "So he can see what's on the cameras."

"Cameras?" Charlie peered to the side as he fondled her breast. Michelle continued to kiss the line of his jaw down to his neck, her body pressed against him.

"He asked if I wanted to see the monitor room," Michelle said. "It's not a lot of monitors. They don't have have cameras everywhere. Just around the main areas." Her hands went to the front of his pants, unsnapping them. "Charlie," she whispered urgently. "I'm pretty close to having a complete freak-out right now, thinking about all the insane things I've done tonight. When Ronni asked me to strip in the parking lot and leave my clothes in the car... oh my god. Do you know what I imagined? I imagined following her through that door into the garden and all these people would be waiting in there, like a set-up. Waiting to yell surprise and laugh at me while I stood there naked. It seemed like such a real possibility ... I started to really feel scared it was going to happen... but then I took my clothes off anyway! I took them off anyway! Oh my god... that feeling of following her through that door..." Michelle's body trembled with adrenaline. "I'm on the verge of having a freak-out, Charlie, but first I want you to fuck the hell out of me. I'm so fucking horny right now and I need you to fuck me." Her hand went down his jeans, finding his cock and clutching it in her hand.

He let her push him towards a stone table until he leaned against the edge. She pulled down the front of his jeans, stroking his cock as it came free. He slid up onto the table, and she pulled his jeans down to his knees.

"Are you sure he can't see us on a monitor?" Charlie asked as Michelle climbed up onto the table and straddled him.

"Oh, he can. He definitely can." Michelle gasped as she sank down onto his cock. "Ohhh! I'm sure he's watching us right now. He's seen me naked all night... now I want him to see what I look like when I'm riding your cock." She began to bounce up and down on him. "Oh god!"

Charlie struggled to comprehend what she had just said. But then she leaned over him, her hungry mouth finding his, her body continuing to move against him, and very soon he stopped caring about cameras entirely.

**Saturday Night School Ch. 08**

Afterwards, they fled into the gardens.

They raced across the meadow on bare feet, hand in hand, first running under the night sky but swiftly cutting to the left and seeking refuge in the shadows of the trees. In the course of their love-making, Michelle had pulled off Charlie's clothes, and now he walked beside her just as naked as she was, his clothes bundled in the crook of his arm like a football. He peeked at her, and reflected that, for once, he was actually more naked than she was. She, at least, still wore her stockings.

The night air felt cool on his skin. Charlie looked up at the tree branches that stretched above his head, picking out the occasional glint of a star through the ceiling of leaves. He felt a wary vigilance, walking through the garden with no clothes on, concerned that at any moment they would turn the corner and find someone waiting to catch them. Yet he also thought he understood something of the thrill Michelle felt when she walked outside naked.

His gaze lingered on her body, her skin speckled with the moonlight that slipped through the tree cover. He recalled how she had undressed outside in the parking lot, passing him her garments one by one, and afterwards he had locked the stack of clothing in the trunk of his car. Since that point, she had been nude, without any means of getting dressed again, completely trusting in Charlie to return her clothing to her at some undefined point in the future.

She was nude when they walked into Greenholt Gardens. She was nude when she met Ronni's brother Nick for the first time. She was nude while Nick gave them a tour of the gardens, and when Ronni had to leave and asked Charlie to walk her back to her car, Michelle remained behind, chatting with Nick, still nude.

Michelle appeared very comfortable being naked, even while the rest of them wore clothes, but that didn't mean she was unaffected by the experience. Charlie learned just how much it had affected her when he returned from saying goodbye to Ronni and found Michelle spinning in place in the meadow. Michelle had flung herself at him, greedy with desire, and he'd been quickly divested of his own clothing. He and Michelle had made love on a picnic bench just outside the snack bar, in full view of one of the security cameras.

Charlie pointed out that Nick could be watching them on the security camera, and Michelle was not only aware of the possibility, she was excited by it. She wanted to put on a show for Nick, to show him what she looked like with Charlie's cock inside her. She and Charlie had sex in several positions, and Charlie could tell that Michelle was always aware of that watching camera and the view she offered it.

Until they both climaxed. Michelle tried not to cry out when she came, but she couldn't stop herself completely, and her faint shrieks mingled with the distant calls of night birds. Charlie pulled free and painted a streak of cum along the top of her left stocking. They held each other, sweating and breathing hard, and Charlie could tell the spell was broken. Instead of putting on a show for the camera, now Michelle wanted to flee from it. So Charlie quickly gathered his clothes and they ran for the darkness. They only left behind their shoes, his sneakers and Michelle's heels, which still sat side by side under the concrete table.

They found the pathway known as the Brook Path, which followed the trickling brook that fed the garden's lily pond. The path led uphill, a dark and winding trail with occasional stone steps that took them higher and higher. To their left, they could see the shadowy line of the brook, and could hear the trickle of the water. To their right, the trees and ferns of the Tropical Garden grew thick and high, leaning over them. Charlie could hear small creatures hiding in the darkness, scurrying through the carpet of loose leaves, rustling the low branches.

Michelle gazed into the darkness. "It's a little scary, isn't it?" she remarked.

"Yeah," Charlie agreed. "But I don't think we'll get in too much trouble if we get caught. It'll be really embarrassing, definitely, but I'm sure we're not the first couple to sneak into the garden looking to be alone."

"I'm not so worried about getting caught," Michelle said. "I'm more worried about getting eaten by a bear. Or murdered by a serial killer with an axe."

Charlie tried to smile, but as he looked out at the darkness of the garden, it was impossible to completely dismiss those possibilities. "It's kind of a horror movie trope, right? The teenagers have sex, and then the killer gets them... like punishing them for being immoral..."

"Then we're in big trouble," Michelle said gravely. "We've been so immoral tonight."

Charlie chuckled and slipped his arm around her waist. He pulled her close, enjoying the feel of her skin. "If an axe murderer gets me," he said, "my last words will be, 'Completely worth it!'"

She laughed. "That's what your last words will be?" She stretched up to kiss him. Down below, he felt her fingers circling his cock, squeezing it gently. Her breasts gently bumped against his chest. She murmured, "I think my last words will be, 'Help! An axe murderer!'"

"Don't worry," he told her. "I'll make sure it takes him a long time to kill me, so you have time to escape."

"So sweet!" Michelle smiled and kissed him again. Her hand continued to casually clutch his penis, and he could feel it hardening between her fingers. She tugged on it gently for a moment, and when she let go, Charlie could feel his cock pointing at a higher angle than before.

Now if they got caught, he had the added shock bonus of a visible erection.

They reached an intersection where the Brook Path crossed a wider grassy trail. The grassy trail led to a wooden bridge on their right, traversing the brook. A light pole stood next to the bridge, bathing the intersection in a white glow. A wood bench painted dark brown sat under the light pole.

Michelle walked directly towards the far-left corner of the intersection, and at first Charlie couldn't figure out why. She bent over and manipulated some long metal thing that jutted out of the ground, and Charlie realized that it was a faucet just before water sprayed out of the spout onto the grass. Michelle turned the water off and looked up at him. "I'm going to clean off," she said.

"Okay."

Michelle leaned over and caught the top of one of her stockings. She slowly worked it down her leg and finally tugged it off her foot. "Will you keep track of these for me?" She held the rolled-up stocking out towards Charlie. "Do you have someplace you can keep them?"

"Sure." Charlie plucked the stocking out of her hand and stuck it into the front pocket of his jeans. He did the same thing with her other stocking.

Michelle turned on the water and cupped her hands underneath the spray. "It's cold!" she moaned. Nevertheless, she squatted next to the faucet and splashed water onto her legs, cleaning off the sticky evidence of their immorality.

Charlie looked around the dark garden, feeling vulnerable in his state of nakedness. "Maybe I should put my clothes on..."

"Not yet," Michelle said.

"No?"

"Go sit on that bench. I'll join you in a second."

Charlie thought about mentioning that the bench was positioned right under the light, and he would be clearly visible sitting there. But of course, Michelle already knew that, and didn't care. He walked over and sat down on the bench, placing his bundle of clothes next to him.

Naked in Greenholt Gardens. Charlie looked around, checking carefully to make sure no one was watching them. He didn't see anyone, but couldn't help feeling like he was on display. Maybe someone lurked in the shadows, watching them. The white light from the bulb overhead took away his night vision, and prevented him from penetrating the darkness off the trail.

Michelle turned off the faucet and walked towards him, her body wet and gleaming in the glow of the overhead light. Charlie watched her careful, swaying walk; the contrast of her shining body against the background of dark foliage gave her approach a dreamlike quality. Perhaps that was all this was. Just a dream, and he would wake up any minute to find the whole night had been conjured up by his overactive imagination.

"What now?" he asked.

"Now I want to give you a blow job." She lowered herself to her knees in front of him.

"You do? I mean... do you think this is a safe place?"

She already had his cock in her hand, stroking it as she rested her elbow on his leg. "Imagine walking by this bench, in the daylight when the garden is open and full of people," she murmured. "We'll see this bench and remember that I gave you a blow job here. We'll always remember." She leaned over and kissed the head of his penis.

Charlie felt himself rapidly stiffening under her attentions. He could feel her tongue swirling around his swollen head and he leaned back, his nervousness quickly overcome by the pleasure she was giving him. "We'll call this bench the Blow Job Bench," he whispered.

She lifted her head and made a face. "Eww. No."

"Sorry." He laughed.

"We just need to take advantage of this opportunity," she said. "Who knows when we'll get the chance to do something like this again?" She leaned over and her mouth enveloped his cock.

"Yeah," he sighed, and for the next several minutes, he didn't say a word. He slouched against the back of the bench, watching Michelle's head bob in his lap. Part of him wanted to close his eyes and focus on the sensations she was causing, but he couldn't bring himself to detach completely from the world around them. His eyes continued to scan their surroundings, on the lookout for any unexpected spectators.

As Michelle continued her earnest work, Charlie started to wonder what he would do if he saw someone approaching. He knew realistically that he would probably warn Michelle and they would retreat into the garden to hide, but he also felt aroused by the idea of not doing anything, of letting Michelle continue sliding her lips up and down his cock while he casually waved to the hypothetical approaching stranger. The thought of it excited him tremendously.

He glanced down at Michelle. He expected at any moment that she would abandon her oral manipulations in order to climb into his lap and take advantage of his extremely hard erection, but she seemed determined to make him climax only with her mouth. Her head bobbed tirelessly, rhythmically. His hands tangled in her hair, and they played with the illusion that he was moving her up and down on his shaft, fucking her mouth, although in reality she still retained most of the control.

"We'll remember this bench," he whispered to her. "Whenever I see it, I'll think about how beautiful you look now, naked and on your knees, sucking my dick. I'll think about how you did such a good job that I came in your mouth. I think every time I see this bench from now on, it's going to get me hard again, just remembering how this feels right now, and I'll remember how sexy and beautiful you looked, with my dick in your mouth..."

She made a low groaning sound, and for the first time, he noticed that one of her hands had disappeared down below, and she was almost certainly fingering herself. He continued whispering to her. "Maybe someday, we'll be here in the day, when it's busy, and I'll remember how good this felt, and I'll just have to feel it again. Would you do that for me, Michelle? If I ask for you to do this again, even if it's daylight and people are walking by, will you take off all your clothes so I can watch you naked and on your knees, just like this, sucking my dick? Would you do that in front of all the people?"

She moaned again, clearly turned on by the outrageous scenario he was describing. Her shoulder quivered as her hand moved rapidly between her legs. Charlie felt himself getting very close. He tried to continue his dirty talk, but now he could barely manage a rhythmic patter, "Ahhh... Michelle... ohhh, Michelle... you're so good... ohh, you're so good..."

Finally, he threw back his head, closed his eyes and came. Her hand circled his cock, milking it for every drop, while her mouth waited above to lick it clean.

He opened his eyes, and she climbed onto the bench to press next to him. "Thank you..." he said.

"You're welcome." She leaned her head on his shoulder, her long hair falling down his front as if to clothe him. "Is there any on my face?"

He glanced at her. "No."

"Good." She touched her chin anyway, tracing it with her finger. "I thought about just letting it go on the ground... but then we'd have to figure out how to clean it up anyway, right? We couldn't just leave it. Not when we're guests here."

"Yeah..."

"There wasn't much, anyway. Not like before."

Charlie put his arm around Michelle and pulled her against him. For the first time that night, he noticed the chill of the night air against his skin, but where Michelle pressed against him, he felt warm. The world around them had become a dream again, the milky light cast by the lamp above their heads making a circle of light around them, like an island floating in a sea of darkness. Their lone bench sat along a piece of grassy path that disappeared into blackness in either direction. They were both naked, which was surreal in itself. Naked under the night sky.

We're not the only island, he thought. In the distance, he could see another lamp, casting its own circle of light, illuminating its own piece of the garden. Why did they bother? Lighting up such tiny bits of the garden and leaving all the rest to the night?

Michelle's breathing felt slow and steady against his side, and her head nestled against his shoulder. He thought for a minute that she had fallen asleep. "I wish we could stay here forever," he murmured, reminding her with those same words that they could do no such thing.

"I know," she sighed. "It's probably so late though."

"You want to head back to the car?"

"Let's go a little bit further."

"Okay."

"Did you want to get dressed?"

He did. As he pulled on his clothes, he felt the strangeness of their relationship, that she would stand there, completely naked, watching him as he dressed, and she would remain naked, as if the practice of wearing clothes was something that only applied to him. He could have offered her his shirt, but he didn't, and he knew she would have said no if he did. She had willingly surrendered her clothes before entering the garden, and he knew she intended to be naked the whole time they were there.

"Okay," he said. "I'm ready."

They followed the brook path further up the hill, until finally the path veered away from the brook, and Charlie could see a fence in the distance delineating the border of Greenholt Gardens. The brook itself continued past the fence, towards the mountains, and Charlie wondered if he could look it up on a map and find out where it went.

Their eyes adapted to the darkness, and they consciously avoided the illuminated areas, choosing instead to retain their night vision. They picked a meandering path back down to the Japanese garden, and skirted wide around it, seeing the glowing red lanterns peeking through the trees.

Michelle held his hand as they walked towards the entrance to the gardens and the concrete table where they had made love earlier. "Charlie," she said. "This was better than the school. I'm so glad you found this place."

"You never did have your freak-out," he observed.

"What?"

"When I came back from walking Ronni to her car. You said you were on the verge of having a complete freak-out."

"Oh." She shrugged. "I probably still will. Later. I'm trying not to think about all of it right now." She waved at their surroundings. "Why waste this worrying? If I'm dead, I'm dead. Nothing I can do about it now."

"What do you mean, if you're dead?"

"You know... if Ronni tells everyone. Or if her brother tells everyone. My reputation at school. Actually, my reputation everywhere."

"I don't think Ronni will tell anyone," Charlie said quietly.

"Maybe she won't. But I don't know for sure." Michelle paused. "She has pictures of me. Videos."

"She deleted them."

"She did?"

"I watched her. She showed me that she deleted them."

"When?"

"Just before she left."

"Oh!" Michelle nodded thoughtfully. "Well, that's good, I guess."

The path turned and Charlie could see the courtyard at the entrance of Greenholt Gardens. He could see that unforgettable table, with their shoes still sitting underneath it, and on the slope above the table, the snack bar. He froze. "I think I know what you mean," he said in a low voice. "About having a freak-out."

"Are you about to have one right now?"

He pointed towards the table. "We just had sex on top of that table. Actually, all around that table, in a bunch of different positions. We didn't hold back. And you said that Nick could see us the whole time."

"Uh-huh. On the security monitor."

"That's pretty embarrassing, isn't it? We had sex right where he could see it. And now we have to go talk to him and pretend like nothing's weird."

"I know," Michelle said.

"And he's Ronni's brother. And we just met him tonight."

"I know." Michelle held out her arms. "And I'm still naked."

"That's true." Charlie glanced down at her nude body. When they said goodbye to Nick, would the security guard even be thinking about the sex he had witnessed? Or would he be too distracted by Michelle standing naked right in front of him?

"Do we need to talk to him?" Michelle asked. "We could just go without saying anything."

"Yeah, we could," Charlie said. "Do you want to?"

Michelle's hands touched the top of her legs. "No," she admitted nervously. "We should go tell him we're leaving. He knows what I'm like by now. No point in trying to be modest after everything else that's happened tonight."

Charlie looked at the snack bar. He could see a dim light through the windows. "You think he's in the snack bar?"

"He's probably in the monitor room," Michelle said. "Come on... I'll show you where it is."

Michelle started up the path, and Charlie reluctantly followed. He felt as if someone was watching him as soon as they stepped out into the courtyard, and he looked around for the camera. He immediately noticed a black half-sphere hanging under the edge of one of the buildings. That was almost certainly where the camera was hidden, and he could feel it watching them like a dark eye. He imagined Nick, sitting in his monitor room, tracking Michelle's approach on a screen. Leaning towards the screen, studying the curves of her nude body as she came closer and closer.

They stopped by the table to get their shoes. Michelle carefully stepped into her heels, growing about four inches as she did so. Charlie had to sit and pull on his socks first. Michelle leaned her hip against the edge of the table and watched him. "Almost ready?" she asked as he yanked on his sneakers.

He stood. "Ready. Where to now?"

"Follow me." Michelle led the way up the slope.

They walked past the door to the snack bar and headed towards the locked front gate of the garden, a tall dark wall of metal with wheels bolted to the bottom. A semi-circle indentation in the cement showed the path that the wheels took when the gate was rolled open during business hours. The gate was closed and locked with a thick chain, yet Michelle seemed to be heading right towards it. Just as Charlie was about to ask her where she was going, she turned sharply to the right and stood in front of a closed brown door. She knocked.

After a few seconds, the door opened and Nick stood in the doorway. He held a coffee mug in his hand. "Hey!" he greeted them. "You're done looking around?"

Behind Nick, Charlie could see a black chair sitting in front of a messy desk, and just in front of the desk, a wall of monitors. Charlie counted twelve, in three rows of four, each displaying the feed from a different camera. "Yeah," he said to Nick. "Thanks for letting us look around this place at night. We're about to head out, just wanted to let you know."

"The garden is so beautiful," Michelle said earnestly.

"Hey, no problem." Nick grinned. "Did you have any trouble? You didn't accidentally crush any plants, right?"

"No," Charlie said. "We stayed on the paths."

"You didn't leave any signs you were there?"

"No," Michelle said softly. "We cleaned up after ourselves." Her eyes met Charlie's and he could see a mischievous twinkle in them.

"Great," Nick said. "I don't love this job but I don't want to be fired from it, either."

"No one will even be able to tell we were here," Charlie assured him.

"Great, great." Nick looked at his watch. "You guys need to leave right away? I'm due for a break. Want to hang out in the snack bar for a bit? We can grab some drinks from the coolers, they don't care."

Charlie and Michelle looked at each other, and Charlie shrugged to let her know he was fine either way. Michelle turned back to Nick and smiled. "No rush," she said. "We can hang out."

"Let's go." Nick walked over to the desk and grabbed a set of keys. Charlie took the opportunity to scan the monitors, trying to make a quick inventory of which sections of the gardens had cameras on them. He noticed that one of the monitors had a dark screen, as if it was broken or had been turned off. He only had that quick glimpse before Nick turned around and blocked his view, but Charlie was pretty sure he knew which monitor had been turned off.

Nick closed the door to the monitor room and locked it. He did so without thinking; probably he had to lock the door every time he left that room. As they started towards the snack bar, Nick looked at Michelle. "So, have you been nude this whole time?"

"Yes."

"Wow." Nick grinned. "I mean, Ronni told me that she was working on a student film with a nude scene. I pictured you wearing a robe or something, and just taking it off for the nude scene. I sure didn't expect this. Are you a nudist or something?

"Not at all," Michelle answered in a cheerful voice. "I just thought, if I'm going to have to be nude for the film... I should get used to it, don't you think? And what better way to get used to it, than just to jump right in and do it?" She spoke so calmly that Charlie wondered if she had been expecting someone to ask such a question and had an answer prepared.

"That make sense, I guess," Nick said. "So, this is your first time experimenting with being a nudist?

"Yeah..."

"Are you used to it now?"

"Not quite yet." She gave him a tiny smile. "I probably just need some more time."

They reached the snack bar and Nick unlocked it. He pulled the door open. "After you," he said, and held the door while Michelle and Charlie entered. "Go on back, grab what you want from the cooler. Just none of the alcohol, please." Nick sat down and picked up the remote for the TV. He turned it on and started flipping through the channels.

"You want anything?" Charlie asked Michelle.

"I need to see what they have," she said. "I'll come back with you."

"Nick?"

"Just a coke," Nick said.

Charlie walked with Michelle past the cash register and through the door into the kitchen. He opened the tall refrigerator and pulled out a bottle of Sprite for himself, plus a Coke for Nick. "Anything look good?" he asked Michelle.

"Brrr." She stood in front of the open cooler, letting the cold air stream over her bare skin. "That's cold!"

"You don't have to stand right in front of it."

"Here. Feel." She took his hand and brought it to her hard nipple.

"Definitely cold," he said, squeezing the tip of her nipple between his fingers. "Hey, did you notice that one of Nick's monitors was off?"

Michelle reached into the cooler and pulled out a raspberry iced tea Snapple. "No, I didn't notice. Why was it off?"

"I think he turned it off. It was the monitor showing that stone table. I don't think he watched us after all."

"No?"

"No. Maybe he turned it off when he saw what we were doing. He didn't want to watch us."

Michelle considered this as she tried to open her Snapple. "I'm actually really happy, if that's true. You saw how I was out there. I was getting really carried away." She held out the Snapple. "Can you open this for me?"

Charlie released her nipple to take the bottle from her. He gripped it with his hand and tried to turn it, and thought for a moment that the cap would defeat him as well. Then it made an audible popping noise and he twisted it loose. He gave the drink back to her. "It does give us a little less to be embarrassed about," he said.

"Maybe."

They returned to the dining area of the snack bar and took seats at the table with Nick. Charlie took the seat at the opposite side of the table from Nick, leaving the chair between them for Michelle. Nick had found a late-night talk show where the host was engaged in an awkward interview with Aubrey Plaza, and they watched for a few minutes while they sipped their drinks.

"If one of the bosses walked in right now, I'd be fired for sure," Nick said, eyeing Michelle's body. "It'd be hard to explain this one." Michelle didn't seem at all self-conscious when he looked at her, and that was gradually making him bolder about looking.

"Is that a possibility?" Charlie wanted to know. "Has anyone ever dropped in on you this late, unexpectedly?"

"Oh, it's definitely a possibility," Nick said ominously, but then he grinned. "It hasn't happened yet, though. They don't need to check on me in person. They have other ways to make sure I'm really working. Like I have to keep moving the mouse on the computer in the monitor room, or it shows me as 'Idle' at the main security office. And when I do a patrol around the gardens, they have me test my card access on each of the gates. It saves the time I put in my card, so they know when I did the patrol."

"Are you serious?" Michelle said. "What happens if you don't do a patrol on time?"

"If I'm really overdue, they'll call. If I don't answer the phone, they'd probably send someone. You know, like maybe I need help or something." Nick shrugged. "This job kind of sucks. It's not very exciting. I look forward to the patrols, because at least I get to walk around the gardens."

"I can imagine," Michelle said. "I think I'd be so bored if I had this job."

Nick held up his Coke. "Well, here's a toast to you, Michelle. Tonight definitely hasn't been boring."

Michelle smiled and touched her Snapple to the side of his Coke.

They continued to chat, the conversation turning to Pine Hills High School. It turned out that Nick was three years older, and had been a senior during their ninth-grade year. They had all shared the same high school campus for that one year, but he didn't remember either of them. He did remember Michelle's older sister Mirella, who was a junior that year and also a cheerleader. "Yeah, when I picture her in my head, I can see the resemblance," Nick said. "She was really pretty, too. What's she doing these days?"

"She works at Macy's," Michelle said. "She still lives at home."

"She has a boyfriend?"

"Yeah."

"Figures." Nick grinned.

Nick changed the channel. He seemed to know all the late night programs, and Charlie wondered how many hours a night he spent watching TV in the snack bar. They settled on an old episode of "The Twilight Zone", which Charlie had seen before, and for a while Charlie exchanged favorite Twilight Zone episode plots with Nick. Michelle had never seen the Twilight Zone, and didn't have much to say, although she seemed to want to laugh at a lot of what they were saying.

"I just have to say something to you guys," Nick said all of a sudden, "and I hope this doesn't make you uncomfortable, Michelle..." He glanced at her, but she just waited patiently for him to continue. "I just gotta say this... there's something so fucking hot about having a beautiful, naked woman sitting right next to me, and, like, just casually talking about TV and stuff. We're just sitting around, watching TV, and you're there, drinking your drink, kicking back like you're not even worried, and we're talking about all this stuff, and every time I look at you, I'm like, damn, she's naked! I'm having a conversation with a naked woman and she's got the best body I've ever seen and it's right there in front of me! Sorry, am I making you feel self-conscious?"

"No," Michelle said. "I mean, not any more self-conscious than I already felt." She laughed.

"You don't seem self-conscious at all," Nick said. "What's your movie about, anyway?"

"It's about two people, Max and Ingrid, who are falling in love," Charlie said. "But they're hiding their feelings from each other. Whenever they talk, another woman Gwen is with them, but she's actually a representation of their hidden attraction."

"I'm going to play Gwen," Michelle said.

"What's it called?" Nick asked.

"It's called: 'Anything You Want' ", Charlie said. "At least, that's what I'm calling it right now. I might pick a different title later."

" 'Anything You Want'?" Nick looked thoughtful. "Can I read the script?"

"Sure," Charlie said. "Ronni has a copy she can show you." He hesitated. "You know what? Actually, you can take mine." He had his copy of the screenplay folded up in his back pocket. He passed it to Nick. "Maybe you can read it if you get bored later tonight."

"Cool," Nick said. "Thanks."

They only made it halfway through the Twilight Zone episode when Nick abruptly stood. "Sorry, I need to do my circuit of the gardens. I'm overdue, actually, and it's like I told you, I have to swipe my card or the company starts to wonder what's going on."

"That's cool, we should probably get going anyway," Charlie said. "What is it, almost two in the morning?"

"Almost," Nick said. He watched Michelle as she stood. "You have clothes to put on?" he asked her.

"Yes," she said. "In the car." She took three steps closer to Nick, stopping just within his reach. Her palms pressed flat against her upper legs and she looked up at him intently. "Nick... I want to tell you something before we go. It's something you've probably already figured out, but I just want to say it out loud. I'm not this way because I'm trying to get ready for that nude scene in Charlie's movie. That's not the real reason..." Her hands had started to move on her legs in her usual nervous gesture. "The real reason..." She struggled to find the right words.

The left side of Nick's mouth twitched up in a half grin. "It's all right. You don't have to say it. I think I get it." He paused. "This isn't the first time, is it?"

"No," she admitted. "We did this at the school. On the weekend, when no one was there."

"You were with Charlie?"

"Yeah. We walked all around. Even outside."

"Nice," he said. "Well, no one's ever here either, not at night. Come back any time. Sunday thru Thursday. I don't work the weekends. Just tell Ronni you're coming, she'll give me the message."

"Thank you, Nick." Michelle moved closer to him. "Well... good night!" She brought her hands up, reaching for him, and this time Nick knew what to expect. He opened his arms and let her slip in close to him. Pressing her body close to him, Michelle stretched up to kiss him softly on the mouth. Nick let his hands rest on her hips as she kissed him.

She broke the kiss, and Charlie heard her whisper, "Thank you for not telling." Nick nodded and Michelle pulled away, stepping back to stand beside Charlie.

"Good night, Nick. Appreciate you letting us in here," Charlie said, offering his hand.

Nick reached out and shook Charlie's hand distractedly. "No problem," he said. "Good night."

Charlie held Michelle's hand as they walked out the way they came. They stepped out into the parking lot, still empty except for Charlie's car and Nick's pick-up truck. "I'll get your clothes out of the trunk," Charlie said.

"Oh, that's all right," Michelle said, walking straight to his car. "Hardly anyone's going to be up this late."

Charlie slowed. "You're going to keep going? How long? Until I drop you off at your car?"

"Why not? I'm small, I'll mostly be hidden inside your car, and anyways, it's dark. No one's going to notice me." She stopped in front of Charlie's car and gazed for a moment at all of the empty parking spaces, and beyond them, the silent road that led past the garden. Her eyes dropped to look down at her body. In a quiet voice, she said, "It's hard for me to stop sometimes."

"It is?"

"I really like this feeling of not caring. Maybe I get too used to it. It's hard to have to get dressed again." She looked out at the empty parking lot. "I get this feeling like I want to wait until the very last minute. The very last second. Like I'm about to walk into a crowded room and I'll pull a dress over my head just as I'm opening the door." She paused. "No, more like I want to wait until I'm a second too late. After the door is already open. I want that rush of being a second too late."

"All right," Charlie said. "Hop in. You're right, no one will see you in my car in the dark..."

"You decide, Charlie," Michelle said.

"What?"

"I want to give the decision to you. Should I get dressed now, or do you want me to stay like this while you drive me to my car? I want you to tell me what to do." She stood and watched him, waiting for his answer. He could tell that she was serious.

"I'll get your clothes," he said. He walked to the trunk and popped it open. The stack of her clothes sat where he had left it. He picked up the stack and brought it to her.

Michelle didn't argue and she didn't ask why. She obediently took her clothes and sat them down by her feet, then put them on one by one. The sky-blue pair of panties and the sky-blue bra. The clingy white sweater. The tight black skirt. Everything but her stockings, which Charlie still had, one in each of his front pockets. After she was dressed, Charlie walked over to his car and opened the passenger door for her. Michelle held out her hand for him to hold as she carefully lowered herself onto the passenger seat. She moved one foot into the car, then the other. Once she was safely inside, Charlie shut the door.

He circled around the back of the car to the driver's seat, and as he walked, he remembered the heart she had drawn him, after the Saturday he called the Second Michelle. He had left her in his car for no more than five minutes, and when he returned, she was gone, leaving behind just a simple heart drawn on a piece of paper.

Now he imagined it would happen again. Circling around the car, he would open the driver's side door and she would be gone. In her place, another heart drawn on a piece of paper.

He opened the door and she was still there, sitting in his car in her white sweater and black skirt. She was there, of course she was. But it still seemed like a miracle to see her.

That was the Second Michelle, when she had left the heart in his car. What Michelle was he on now? Sixth? Seventh? When had he stopped counting?

He closed his door and started the car. "1:51," Michelle read the digital clock on his dashboard. "Did you think we would be out so late?"

"Yeah, I thought it would be something like this."

"Will your mom say anything when you get home?" Michelle asked.

"I doubt my mom will even wake up," Charlie said. "What about you? You're not in trouble, are you?"

"No. My parents think I'm at Vanessa's house."

"They do?" Charlie frowned. "So you're driving to Vanessa's house after I drop you off at your car?"

"No. Vanessa doesn't know I'm doing this, either. I'll just go home, and if anyone asks, I'll tell them I didn't feel like sleeping at Vanessa's after all. I'll say I have a stomachache or something." She shrugged. "The benefit of never getting into trouble. When I do need to lie, my mom and dad usually believe me."

"What if they called Vanessa asking for you? And she doesn't even know you're supposed to be at her house?"

"She'd cover for me anyway. I know she would. But she'd be mad, and she'd definitely want to know what the hell I was up to." Michelle sighed. "I'll need to come up with a better excuse, if we're going to keep doing these late nights at Greenholt Gardens."

Charlie thought of his own mother. He hadn't considered for a moment telling her anything but the truth; he even brought Michelle inside to meet her. I'm a secret, Charlie thought. From Michelle's friends, from her family. Charlie wondered if Michelle would ever introduce him to her parents. He decided he wasn't in any great hurry for that to happen.

They reached Michelle's car, parked in the same dark spot where she'd parked before. Charlie pulled up to the curb behind her car and turned off his headlights. He turned off the engine and the abrupt cessation of noise made the darkness seem very quiet.

"I'm just going to throw an idea out there..." Charlie spoke in a low voice, but he was clearly audible in the silent car.

"Uh huh?"

"Your parents think you're at Vanessa's house. All night."

"Uh huh."

"Do you maybe want to spend the night at my house?" He watched her, trying to gauge her reaction to the suggestion. "I mean, you don't have to sleep in my room. Unless you want to. But we also have an extra bedroom. With a bed. You could sleep there."

"I don't think so, Charlie." She spoke softly. "Not tonight. Okay?"

He shrugged, as if it didn't matter to him. "Sure. It was just a thought."

"I just met your mom a few hours ago. I don't think I'm ready to be sitting across the breakfast table from her."

"I know."

"It's a nice thought, though."

The silence returned. Charlie turned his head and studied Michelle's profile for a moment against the glass window. "Okay," he said. "Well... good night." He reached for her to kiss her goodbye, and she leaned into him, returning his kiss without hesitation. A final taste of the passion they had shared that night.

"Good night," she whispered breathlessly, untangling herself from his arms. "We're going to be so tired tomorrow."

"Completely worth it," he said, and she laughed.

He watched her as she walked to her car, and it occurred to him that if he had decided the other way and told her to keep her clothes in the trunk, she would be walking to her car naked right then. In fact, she was ready and willing to do exactly that before they left Greenholt Gardens. She would have sat in his passenger seat naked for the whole drive and then she would have hopped out of his car and walked to her own without a thought.

I'm not the secret, Charlie thought. This is the secret. Michelle stripping in a parking lot. Michelle walking naked through the gardens. Michelle sitting naked between two fully-dressed men, watching TV.

He reminded himself to keep his perspective. They were playing a risky game, and he had to let Michelle handle her side of it her way. Even if it meant her parents thought she was with Vanessa all night instead of with him.

Michelle's lights turned on. A moment later, her car pulled away and drove down the street, becoming just a pair of red taillights dwindling in the distance.

"Now four people know our secret," Charlie murmured. "Five, actually. I forgot Daryl." How many people did it take to learn a secret before it wasn't a secret any longer? Charlie realized he would soon be adding two more: the two actors who would play the parts of Max and Ingrid. He would need to recruit them carefully. He would need to make sure they would be discrete.

Charlie started his car and pulled the steering wheel to the right to make a sharp U-turn. He turned left at the corner and slowly drove the short distance to his house. He thought about Michelle and the way she had looked just moments before, walking to her car dressed in her clingy white sweater and black skirt. "At least she didn't leave any of her clothes behind this time," Charlie mused as he pulled into the driveway.

Then he remembered the stockings in his pockets.

**Saturday Night School Ch. 09**

"Do you really think I should make this film?" Charlie asked Ronni at lunch the next day.

Ronni considered the question. "I think it's a good script," she said. "And you're thinking about a career in film, right? I think it would be a good experience for you. Why? Are you thinking about dropping it?"

They sat at a table at the far side of the cafeteria. Ronni had been waiting outside his 4th period class when he emerged after the lunch bell rang. She asked if he wanted to get lunch, and he agreed. He had a few questions he wanted to ask her. In particular, he wondered how much of the night before Nick had described to her.

Charlie hadn't seen Michelle at all that morning. He was getting close to sending her a text and asking her if she had skipped school. Not that it mattered; he wanted to give her some space at school anyway, so having lunch with her wasn't an option for him even if she was there. Although he did want to ask her what she planned to do over the weekend.

"Yeah, I am," he told Ronni. "I keep thinking about what I need to do to make the film, and I already see all these problems that I'm going to have to solve."

"We're going to have to solve," Ronni corrected. "Producer, remember?"

"Right. We're going to have to solve. Our location is a garden where we can only film after 11 PM on weekdays. So, we need three actors who can be available late at night. I can't even be sure that Michelle is going to commit to that; she had to lie to her parents to be there last night, and afterwards she had to sneak into her house at three in the morning. On top of that, if I'm going to film it as written, with the nudity, I'll need the actors playing Max and Ingrid to be discrete. I don't want them coming to school and blabbing about the nude scene."

"Yes, we definitely have some hurdles to work around."

"There's also the possibility the movie will never be shown to anyone. I told Michelle that if she decided she was uncomfortable with her scene, we would never show anyone the film. Which is fine for her, but how do I convince the other two actors to commit to a film that might not even be shown to anyone?"

"And to do it for free, of course." Ronni grinned. "We don't have a budget to pay anyone. Although Nick might let them swipe drinks and chips from the snack bar."

"I mean, what do you think? Is the film good enough to be worth all this trouble?" Charlie stirred his mashed potatoes with his fork. "Or is it a lot of effort for nothing?"

"We'll never know how good it can be unless we try and make it," Ronni said. "It's a good script. Original idea, good dialogue. So we'll try to film it how you've written it. If we run into problems, we'll figure out how to work around them. I'm pretty sure that's how filmmaking is supposed to go."

"You really think it's a good enough script?"

"Sure. Even Nick liked it. He read the copy you gave him. He said he couldn't stop thinking about it."

"Really?"

"Yeah. He said so this morning. He wanted to talk to me about it and he kept asking what I thought the film was about. He said that if he'd read the script before he met Michelle, he would have interpreted it one way, but meeting Michelle made him think about it in a completely different way." Ronni leaned against the table. "Let's just think about who would be good to play Max and Ingrid. We can talk to them, tell them when and where we want to film, and maybe they'll say no, maybe they'll say yes. One thing I know about theater kids is they like to get cast in things. We're asking them to be the stars of this film. They might go for it, no matter if it's late at night. Have you heard anything from that Apex film program you interviewed for?"

"No, nothing yet."

"Doesn't matter. When we talk to our Max and Ingrid, you make it clear to them that this isn't a Pine Hills school project. You tell them it's a project for Jefferson University. It'll make it seem next-level. It'll also remove any expectations they might have that the film will be shown to anyone at this school."

Charlie nodded. "Good idea. I could see them accepting that."

"As for discretion... I don't know think we can ever be 100% sure that our Max and Ingrid aren't going to come to school and talk about Michelle doing a nude scene. That's just a risk she's going to have to accept, if she's going to do it. She either has to be okay with people knowing, or she has to be ready to deny it." Ronni shrugged. "Let's face it, she took the same risk with me. I haven't told anyone I saw her walking around naked last night. And if we're dealing with theater kids, they probably won't be as inclined to talk about it as others might. They would know how to separate an actress from her role."

Behind Ronni, towards the middle of the cafeteria, Charlie saw Vampire Vanessa sitting down at a table with several other girls. Charlie peered at the group of them, trying to pick out Michelle.

Ronni noticed his distraction and shot a quick glance over her shoulder. "If you're looking for Michelle, I don't think she came in today."

"You don't think so? How do you know?"

"My locker's not far from hers. I see her sometimes between classes. But I haven't seen her today at all."

"Just a sec." Charlie pulled out his phone. He found Michelle's name and sent her a quick text: "You in school today?"

A minute later, his phone buzzed. He read the message: "Home sick. I'll tell you later."

"She says she's home sick," Charlie told Ronni. "You think she's really sick? Or just tired?"

"You could ask her."

"No. She said she'd talk to me later. I don't want to say too much in a text. Anyone could read it." Charlie leaned over his phone. He sent a quick message: "Feel better!" A few seconds later, he received another message from her. No words, just a pink heart emoji.

"You're worried her parents will find out about last night?"

Charlie nodded. "She told them she was at Vanessa's house. Honestly, I don't think they even know I exist."

"Seriously?"

"Seriously. I think Michelle has lied to her parents every time she's been to see me. She's always told them she's doing something else."

"That's kind of weird."

"Yeah. I have to admit, I never thought I'd be anyone's secret boyfriend." Charlie grimaced. "Actually, that reminds me of something I have to do tonight."

"What?"

"My mom really wants to read my script. So I need to write a clean version of it. No nudity."

"How are you going to do that?" Ronni asked.

"I'll just switch it so that Gwen is wearing conservative clothes at the beginning of the film, and as Max and Ingrid get to know each other, Gwen will switch to brighter colors and shorter dresses. Same basic concept, really. Just less drastic." He frowned as Ronni started to laugh. "Is that funny?"

"It's just not quite as interesting to do it that way, is it?" Ronni tried unsuccessfully to suppress her grin. "Sorry... I'm just thinking about last night. I definitely had to change some of my preconceptions about Michelle. It's one thing for you to tell me stories about her... but my gosh, she didn't hold back last night, did she?"

"No, I guess she didn't."

"My brother wanted to look at my yearbook from last year, to see her picture. He said he didn't see her wearing anything, the whole night. She came in naked and she left naked. He was pretty amazed by the whole thing."

"Yeah. She got dressed in the parking lot before we left."

Ronni leaned forward. "The first time I read your script, I was skeptical. I thought, is this just his way of getting her to be nude on camera? But after last night, I really think she's not going to have a problem doing those scenes. In fact, I think she's going to be amazing in them. Do you think she can act?"

"Well... she's pretty good at lying to her parents, apparently."

Ronni grinned. "That's true."

"When I finish writing a clean version of the script, I'll give you a copy. In case your parents want to see it."

Ronni shook her head. "That's okay. I don't have a problem showing them the real script, if they want to read it. But they probably won't even ask."

"No?"

"We agreed my title is producer, right? I don't think my parents have any idea what a producer does. They just know I'm not writing, directing or acting. To them, that means I'm not really doing anything, just helping you out on your project. I told them I'll be going to Greenholt late at night to help with the filming, but it's not such a big deal for me, because Nick works there. I'm just hanging out with my brother while he's at work."

Charlie's thoughts strayed towards the adventures of the previous night. The garden paths, the starry sky, Michelle's body in the moonlight. "When do you think Nick will be cool about us coming by again?" he asked, trying to sound nonchalant.

Ronni leaned against the table, stirring her drink with her straw so that the ice clinked together. "How about we find some actors first?" she suggested. "Let's make our wish list. Who do you want to talk about first - Max or Ingrid?"

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As soon as he came home, Charlie went upstairs and started working on the clean version of the script. He knew his mom would ask to read it that evening, and he didn't want to be scrambling to finish it.

He kept his phone by his computer as he worked, glancing at it frequently to see if Michelle had sent him a text. The rewrite didn't take very long, and he didn't need to change very much. The fact that none of the characters acknowledged Gwen's nudity worked in his favor. Aside from altering a few descriptions of Gwen, he didn't need to change much of the dialogue.

He saved the finished document and glanced at his phone again. Friday night. It was Friday night, he had a girlfriend, and yet he was all alone, with no idea what she was doing. He picked up his phone and wrote a quick text to Michelle: "Whatcha up to?"

He put the phone down and looked out the window at the sky. His phone rang a minute later. He picked it up and answered. "Hey."

"I'm just at home," Michelle said. "What about you?"

"At home. I just finished writing a clean version of my script. My mom wants to read it and I don't want to show her a version with nudity in it."

"You took out the nudity?"

"Yeah. In this version, you start off wearing a conservative dark-colored dress that covers your arms and legs. With each new scene, your dresses become shorter and the colors become brighter. By the time it reaches the last scene, you're not nude, you're just in a short sexy dress. Here, let me read it to you." Charlie turned to his computer and clicked down to the beginning of the last scene. He read, "Gwen is wearing a short, tight dress that clings to her body. The dress is bright pink."

"Bright pink?"

"Yeah. That's what I wrote." He gazed at the line on the screen, tempted to change the color of the dress to yellow, but then he shook his head dismissively. "Anyways, it doesn't matter. It's just to show my mom. It's not like you have to run out and buy a new dress just for this scene. "

"I know," she said matter-of-factly. "Because in the actual script, I'm naked."

"Ah. Right."

"Are you done with that clean version?" she asked. "Can you send it to me?"

"Yeah, sure. I can send it. I'll send it right now."

"Thanks."

Charlie opened up his e-mail and created a new message to Michelle. "You weren't in school today?" he asked, as he looked for the document to attach to the message.

"No. It's kind of funny, actually. You know how I told you I was going to sneak into my house last night, and if my mom or dad caught me, I would tell them I was at Vanessa's house and had to leave because I wasn't feeling well?"

"Yeah."

"Well, they caught me. That is, my mom did. She was wide awake when I came home, sitting in the kitchen. So I told her my stomach hurt and that's why I came home. She believed me, but I guess I overdid it because the next morning she insisted I had to stay home from school. To be honest, I was tired from last night anyway, so I didn't give her much of an argument. But since I stayed home from school, now I'm stuck at home tonight. My mom doesn't want me to go out."

"You had plans tonight?"

"Uh huh. The cheer team is making an appearance at the spring alumni dinner. I had to tell Vanessa I couldn't make it. And that was an awkward conversation, because I couldn't tell her why I was pretending to be sick, so I had to tell her I really was sick. I felt so bad lying to her. She was so concerned and wanted to take care of me and I felt like the worst friend ever."

"Maybe you could tell her that you felt sick last night, but it passed quickly, it's just your mom is being cautious..."

"That's pretty much what I said. I kept reassuring her. No, no, I feel fine now. No, no, it's just my mom. She won't let me go out. Stay home from school on Friday, stay home Friday night, that's the rule, right? But still, Vanessa was trying to give me all this advice about how to feel better."

"It's not like you could tell her the truth."

"No. I never could. But I hate having to lie to everyone. And I hate sitting at home perfectly healthy instead of being with the cheer team like I'm supposed to."

"Are you doing anything tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow night?"

"Yeah."

"Nothing too important," Michelle said. "Why?"

"Let's go out. Let's do something."

For a moment, Charlie heard silence in his ear, and the sound of his own breathing. "Okay," Michelle finally answered. "What did you have in mind?"

Charlie realized he didn't have anything in mind. If he was honest with himself, he hadn't really expected her to say yes. Where would he take her? He didn't have much experience with actual dating. "Let's get out of Pine Hills," he suggested. "We'll just get in my car and drive north for a while. You know how there's all those little towns you pass through. We'll go for a while, and then look for someplace to get dinner, in one of those towns."

"So, no particular place in mind? We're just going to drive until we get tired of driving?"

"Yeah," Charlie said. "Drive until we're someplace where no one knows us."

Michelle didn't speak for a moment, and Charlie knew that she understood the significance of his words. Someplace where no one would recognize them. That way, they wouldn't be seen by anyone from the high school, and no one would spread rumors about them being together.

And if Michelle felt like doing something risky, she could do so with the knowledge that no one would know who she was.

"It'd be nice to get out of this town for a bit," she said.

"Yeah, it will." Charlie leaned back in his chair, gazing out the window at the darkening sky. We'll drive until we get tired of driving, he thought to himself, and maybe we'll never get tired of driving. We'll drive and drive through the night and we'll just leave this place far behind.

"When should I pick you up?" he asked.

"How about 6:30? Just pick me up at the school."

"The school?"

"Yeah. That's where I'll be. I have some spirit squad stuff to do in the athletic center. Are you going to do any editing in the AV room?"

"Huh... you know what's funny? I haven't even thought about going to work in the editing bay this weekend."

"Is that funny?"

"Yeah! For me, it is, anyway. I'm always in there on the weekend. There's always something I need to work on." He considered what footage he had on the editing bay computer. "Yeah, I'll be there editing."

"You will? So maybe at 6:30, I can just meet you at your car?"

"Sure. That'll work." He paused. "I'll have my window rolled up this time."

"What?"

"You know... when I left my window open? And you put your clothes through the opening?"

"Oh..." Michelle sounded embarrassed. She spoke quickly, "I wasn't going to..."

"Yeah, I know, I didn't really mean..."

"It was just kind of an impulsive thing that time..."

"I know. I know. Just a joke. Sorry."

She laughed nervously. "Okay."

"6:30, then."

"6:30," she confirmed.

He expected that to be the end of the conversation, but it wasn't. Michelle was stuck at home with nothing to do, and Charlie was alone in his house with nothing to do, and they talked on the phone until the sky turned dark and moon rose high above the trees.

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Daryl stopped by the editing bay the next day. "Did you hear back from that film program at Jefferson?" the security guard asked.

"Not yet," Charlie said.

"Got my fingers crossed for you. So, you let me know when you hear, okay?" Daryl grinned. "I just walked through the athletic center. Saw your girl in there. She's painting signs with a few of the other cheerleaders."

"Yeah, she told me she'd be here. We're going out later."

"You're taking her out? Where you going?"

"I don't know. Dinner. We'll find someplace."

"Someplace?" Daryl looked at him sternly. "Treat her right, Charlie. Don't take that one for granted."

"I won't."

Daryl went on his way and Charlie turned back to the editing computer. He tried to focus on what he was doing, but the clock in the corner of the screen frequently drew his attention. Charlie knew he had a tendency to lose track of time while he was working, and he didn't want it to happen this time. He watched the numbers on the clock count up slowly to 4:00 PM, then to 5:00 PM.

Daryl came by shortly after 5:00 PM. "You still here, Charlie?"

"Yeah. Still working."

"I thought you and Michelle would leave together."

"Yeah, that's what we planned." Charlie frowned. "Why?"

"I went by the athletic center and it's all quiet now. All the cheerleaders are gone."

"Really?" Charlie checked the clock again. He still had more than an hour until 6:30. "Is her car still here?"

"I don't know, I didn't look. I don't know if I remember which is hers, anyway. A bunch of cars are still here."

"We're supposed to meet at 6:30."

"Oh." Daryl shrugged. "I guess she's somewhere, then. Or she left and she'll be back."

"Probably." But Charlie felt anxious. He wanted to get up from his seat and check the parking lot, to see if her car was still there. But what would that say to Daryl? That Charlie thought Michelle might not show up for their date?

6:30 was more than an hour away anyway. Charlie told himself he would focus on his work. He would keep doing what he was doing, and he would keep checking the clock. At 6:30, he would go outside to his car, and Michelle would be there.

Or maybe she wouldn't. Maybe he would find a heart drawn on a paper, sitting in the front seat.

Either way, he didn't need to worry about it until 6:30.

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At 6:15, he started saving his work and closing the windows on his computer. At 6:20, he shut down the computer. He leaned back in his chair and stared at his phone, gazing at the numbers on the display, waiting for them to say 6:30.

At 6:25, he got up and walked outside.

Michelle waited for him, leaning against his car. She wore a dark jacket with the sleeves rolled up to her elbows, and underneath, a loose grey shirt that flared around her hips. Tight black leggings accentuated her long legs, and she wore open-toed tan heels that wrapped around her ankles.

"Wow," he said. "You look amazing."

She smiled. "So do you!"

"Me? I look the same as always."

"No." Michelle glanced at his button-up shirt and dark jeans, nodding in approval. "I can tell. You spent some time getting ready for tonight."

"Well..." Charlie didn't know what to say. He might've put on slightly nicer clothes than usual, but Michelle looked like she was about to stroll down the runway at a fashion show. He wondered if that's where she had disappeared to for the last hour. Maybe she wanted to find someplace to get dressed.

Michelle walked around the back of the car to the passenger side. "Let's leave this town behind," she said. "If we don't go now, we might be stuck here forever."

"We better go then." Charlie unlocked the car and they both climbed in. He put his key in the ignition, but then took a moment to lean over and kiss her. "Have I told you that I love the way you smell?" he murmured.

She laughed. "I smell?"

"Are you wearing a perfume?"

"Yes. Do you like it?"

"Yeah," he said. "The scent reminds me of you."

"Victoria's Secret. Breathless. That's the name of the perfume." She put her hand on his shoulder, nudging him back into his seat. "Come on. Start the car. Let's get going before our old friend Daryl comes walking by and wonders what we're doing."

Charlie turned the key, and his car rumbled to life. He reversed out of the parking space much faster than he normally did, and had to jam his foot on the brake just in time to keep them from hitting the wall of the school. Michelle laughed. Charlie put the car in drive and swerved out, cutting through a row of parking spaces and curving around the side of the school. Michelle turned on the radio to a top 40 station. Charlie recognize the song that started to play, but he didn't know the title or the artist.

They left the school and turned right. Charlie picked a winding path through the neighborhood until finally reaching Benham Road. From there, they just needed to drive straight, following the road north until it took them out of Pine Hills.

The neighborhood gave way to a commercial area. They drove past several blocks of enormous stores, flat rectangles like gigantic fallen monoliths, surrounded by lines of parking spaces that radiated out like spokes. The buildings all looked identical, the only difference being the glowing store names attached to the top. Target. Sports Chalet. Home Depot. Charlie noticed Macy's on their left and pointed it out. "Isn't that where your sister works?" he asked.

"Uh huh. My older sister Mirella."

"Maybe she's working there right now."

"I think she is, actually," Michelle said. "She's had trouble getting people to work Saturday nights. She usually works mornings, but I think she had to go in tonight, because they were short-staffed. She was mad. She already had plans with her friends and she had to cancel on them."

"That's too bad. No one wants to work Saturday night, huh?"

"No," Michelle said quietly. "It's all right. In a few months, I'll be there, too. I'll help her on Saturdays."

They passed more and more empty stretches of land as they continued north, and the road shrank from three lanes in each direction to two. Charlie didn't know when they officially passed the line that marked the city limits of Pine Hills. The road became darker and stoplights became rare. They passed few buildings now, and instead to either side the headlights illuminated rolling hills covered in tall grass.

A Chainsmokers song played on the radio, and Michelle sang along to it softly, trying to keep her voice hidden below the singers. "I need you, I need you, I need you right now... I need you right now... so don't let me, don't let me, don't let me down..." She reached down and turned the volume higher, and Charlie watched her out of the corner of his eye as she swayed in her seat to the music.

They passed a sign that said, "Welcome to Pebelton", and soon after stopped at the first red light they'd seen in miles. Pebelton was not a large place, just a few intersections, with a strip mall that seemed to be the center of commerce for the town. Charlie pointed out the few restaurants he could see, but Michelle shook her head. "Not yet," she said. "Let's keep going."

They kept going. They passed out of Pebelton, then followed the road to Harlatheria, or as Michelle called it, "Hardly-There-ia." A song came on the radio as they entered the city limits, and the song was only halfway done when they emerged out the other side. Past Harlatheria, they drove through six or seven miles of emptiness, finally reaching the city of Duckrock.

"Oh! I know that place!" Michelle pointed out the left window at a large neon sign that read "HAPS BBQ". "Have you ever been there?"

"No," Charlie said. "Have you?"

"A couple times. When we'd drive out this way, my mom and dad liked to stop there."

"Is it good?"

"I loved it when I was a kid. Do you like barbecue food?"

"Sure. Barbecue sounds good. Is that where we want to have dinner?"

Michelle just smiled, which Charlie interpreted to mean that she approved of the choice. He moved into the turn lane and turned left into the parking lot. Haps shared the same parking lot with several other stores and restaurants, but the majority of the cars in the lot were gathered near the BBQ restaurant's front door. Most of the stores looked closed. Charlie kept driving past the other parked cars, deeper into the lot, until he found a space in a dark corner, not so far from the other cars to be conspicuous, but far enough to give them some privacy.

The headlights illuminated a field of carefully-groomed green grass that neighbored the parking lot, almost like a small golf course, or a well-managed city park. Charlie turned off the headlights, letting the darkness envelop them. He turned to Michelle, his eyes quickly adjusting to the dimness. He could see her profile, barely illuminated by the glow of the headlights passing on the highway. "Well," he said, "here we are."

He leaned towards her to steal another kiss before they headed into the restaurant. This time, she rose to meet him, her lips pressing against his, her mouth opening for his tongue. Her hand slid behind his shoulder, pulling herself towards him.

Charlie's cock felt like a steel rod in his pants. He hadn't even realized he was getting erect until it was already straining insistently against the fabric. His heart beat rapidly in his chest as Michelle's presence overwhelmed his senses. The scent of her, the feel of her body under his hands, the taste of her in his mouth. He was surprised at the nervous anticipation that suddenly took hold of him, but it didn't take him very long to realize where it came from.

Maybe he had told himself that he wanted to get Michelle out of town to avoid any unexpected run-ins with her circle of friends, or that it would be a spontaneous adventure to head north without a particular destination in mind, just driving until they found a place that they liked. But now that they found themselves in a dark parking lot, thirty miles away from anyone they knew, Charlie could feel that Bonnie-and-Clyde tension thrumming between them. She was expecting him to challenge her, to push her past her limits out here where nobody knew them, and she was clearly excited by the thought of it.

He was excited by it, too. His erection made that pretty obvious.

We could forget the restaurant, he thought. Stay in the car and fuck instead. Fuck until they steamed up the car windows. He didn't know if she would, but maybe if he got a hand inside her panties, pushed those leggings down her thighs. He could just keep going and see if she stopped him.

Yet that seemed a crude way to start their evening. He didn't bring Michelle all the way out to Duckrock to fuck her in a parked car. He wanted to spend time with her. To talk to her.

He gave her another kiss and then shifted away from her, reaching to unlock his door. "Ready?" he asked, with his hand on the door handle.

She smiled. "Sure." She took a moment to check herself in the visor mirror, which gave Charlie enough time to walk around and open her door for her. She stepped out of the car and took hold of his arm as he closed the car door behind her. They began walking to the restaurant.

"What do you think this is?" Charlie asked, nodding towards the green field next to the parking lot. "It looks like a park, but where do those stairs go?" He pointed at a set of wide stairs on the other side of the field, leading up the hillside. A lamppost illuminated the bottom of the stairs, and he could see more lampposts following the stairs as they curved up.

"You've never stopped in Duckrock before?" Michelle asked.

"Not that I can remember. We've driven through it a few times..."

"So you've never actually seen the Duck Rock?"

"The Duck Rock?"

Michelle laughed. "Why do you think the city is called Duckrock? It's named after an actual giant rock that looks like a duck. That's where those stairs go. This is Duckrock Park and up that hill, you can get a view of the rock."

"You're kidding."

"No, it's true! It's a great big rock."

"Does it really look like a duck?"

"It does! It looks like a duck." Michelle pulled on his arm, tugging him to the side. "Come on. We're not in a rush. Let's go look."

"Are we allowed to? Maybe the park is closed." Charlie peered at the empty stretch of green and the stairs in the distance.

"You need to see the Duck Rock," Michelle said. "Come on." She stepped over the small wall that separated the parking lot from the park, and Charlie followed her.

They strolled over the grass, walking straight toward the stairs. Charlie could make out another smaller parking lot right next to the main road, undoubtedly Duckrock Park's dedicated lot. He could also see that this smaller parking lot was empty and closed off with a chain, which increased his anxiety that the park was closed. He kept his misgivings to himself, but kept an eye out for any authority figures.

Just before they reached the bottom of the stairs, they heard voices and laughter coming from above them. Charlie slowed and pulled Michelle to the side. He watched the stairs, waiting to see who would descend.

After less than a minute, a boy and two girls came walking down, laughing and joking with each other. They looked like they were in their early teens, eighth or ninth grade maybe, and clearly they weren't worried about getting caught in the park after closing. Maybe it was just one of the things to do in Duckrock on a Saturday night, to climb up the stairs, look down at the lights of the city, and maybe take another look at the peculiar rock that gave this place its silly name.

Michelle took Charlie's arm and tugged him towards the stairs. The three kids noticed them and glanced in their direction as they passed. The two girls dismissed their presence almost immediately, while the boy took a lingering look at Michelle before turning away. As Charlie and Michelle started up the stairs, they could hear the loud laughter of the trio echoing through the park.

"How far does it go up?" Charlie asked as they took their time ascending the steps. The city of Duckrock occupied a long valley, and the sides of the valley rose up to a fair height.

"Not far at all," Michelle said. They passed another descending couple, this time a man and a woman in their thirties. The width of the steps had narrowed so Charlie slowed and moved behind Michelle to give the other couple room to pass. The man and the woman smiled and said "Hi!" as they walked by. Charlie got the impression they were also on a date. The woman wore a pretty burgundy dress that fluttered around her feet as she came down the stairs. The man wore dark slacks and a leather jacket over a crisp blue shirt.

Right after passing the junior high kids, Charlie felt very much like an adult. He had a beautiful girl on his arm, they were out on a date, he would take her to a restaurant to have dinner that he would pay for himself. But after passing the man and woman in their thirties, he abruptly felt like a kid again.

He didn't immediately increase his pace to resume his spot beside Michelle, instead taking the opportunity to gaze at her legs as she ascended the steps in front of him. Her black leggings clung to her like a second skin and the open toes of her heels allowed him to see dark red nail polish on her toes. "I like those shoes you're wearing," he said.

"Thanks!"

"Actually, I like everything you're wearing. You look really beautiful tonight."

She smiled at him over her shoulder. "Thanks. You're sweet."

"Sorry if I'm underdressed. I haven't had much of a need to dress up in my life, so I don't have a lot of those kind of clothes. Like ninety percent of my clothes are jeans and t-shirts."

"You look fine. Why do you think you're underdressed?"

"Oh... I don't know. That couple we just passed, I guess." Charlie increased his pace so he was walking beside Michelle again.

"They did look nice," she said. "I loved her dress. Oh, here it is!"

The stairs ended and they stepped onto a dirt path that circled a flat hilltop. They appeared to be alone. The center of the hilltop contained a flat field of the same short grass as in the park below. Charlie could see lampposts along the perimeter of the circle and benches to their left where visitors could sit and admire the view of the city and highway. However, Charlie couldn't see any rocks on the hilltop, duck-shaped or otherwise.

"Where's the rock?" he asked.

"Over there. See the railing?" Michelle pointed at stretch of black railing along the back side of the hilltop. Charlie and Michelle followed the path around until they reached the railing. Charlie leaned against it, looking down the hill. He could see the rock now. It was a chunk of dark rock about the size of a double-decker bus, nestled at the bottom of a shallow valley. The rock had been rigged with landscape lighting, directed beams of light which illuminated portions of the stony surface.

"Well?" asked Michelle.

"I can see it," Charlie said. "Yeah. There's the head, kind of looking down... there's the wings, and the tail feathers. It looks like a duck, all right."

"Told you."

They gazed at the enormous rock for a few minutes, then continued around the path until they reached the view of the city. They sat on one of the benches and looked down at the cars driving back and forth on the highway.

"I've never been up here at night before," Michelle said. "I think I like the view from this side better than the view of the Duck."

"It's nice," Charlie said. He looked down at the highway, tracing the path they had followed as they entered the town. He could see the Mcdonald's they had passed, and a few blocks further, the 7-11. Right below them, he found the left turn they had made to reach Haps BBQ. He could see the dark parking lot and even picked out his car sitting by itself.

He glanced at Michelle, admiring her profile. The breeze played with her hair, making the strands dance around her ear. She had pendent earrings that resembled tiny wind chimes.

He looked down at her dark jacket and her grey shirt. The neckline was cut just low enough that he could see the initial swell of her breasts. He didn't know much about clothing brands but what she wore looked expensive. "Is that a shirt?" he asked. "Or is it considered a dress?"

"Hmm? Oh, this? It's a shirt. It's just long."

"Is that what you were wearing today at the school?"

She giggled. "No, I wasn't wearing this! I was painting signs at the school. I wouldn't paint in this." She looked down at herself. "I changed. I drove home in between and changed."

"Oh, okay." Charlie watched a semi-truck on the highway below as it drove through the town. He could hear the sound of its motor echoing through the valley, a low rumble. "I didn't change. I was wearing this while I was editing. I came to the editing bay around two and worked for a few hours. Actually, right up until I came out to meet you."

She turned to look at him. "You look fine. Do you still feel like you're underdressed?"

"Nah...it's fine. I'm just talking."

"Or maybe it's not that you're underdressed," she said coyly. "Maybe it's that you think I'm overdressed?" She held his eyes for a moment, smiling, then bent over and fiddled with a strap on her heel. She undid the strap and pulled the shoe from her foot, then removed her other shoe the same way. She put both shoes to the side, setting them on the ground next to each other, then touched her bare feet to the ground. "Is that better? Do we match now?"

He doubted they could ever truly match. He was a teenager in a rumpled shirt and jeans, and she still looked like a super-model. Just now she was a super-model with her shoes off. "We're closer to matching," he told her. "But you shouldn't walk around barefoot. You might step on something sharp."

She nodded. "Good point. I should probably keep my shoes." She stood up in front of the bench. "Something else, then." She hiked up the bottom of her shirt until she found the top of her leggings. Without hesitating, she pushed the leggings down her hips and to her knees. She sat back down on the bench and peeled the leggings off her legs, pulling one foot free and then the other. Charlie could see a thin line of blue fabric tangled with the bunched-up fabric in her hand, and he understood she had removed her panties along with the leggings.

She set the ball of fabric between them on the bench and leaned over to put her shoes back on. She slid her right foot back into place followed by her left foot, then leaned over further to fasten the straps around her ankles. Charlie glanced over his shoulder, scanning the hilltop to make sure that they were still alone. Probably Michelle had done the same thing, a few minutes before, without him noticing. She would have checked for strangers before starting to undress. Wouldn't she?

"Is that better? Are we at the same level of dress now?" Michelle leaned against the bench, carelessly leaving her grey shirt hiked up in the front and her legs slightly apart, so that Charlie could see strands of her pubic hair visible just under the edge of the shirt. He could tell that she was aware of the city stretching out below them, and the cars passing back and forth on the highway. He could see by the excitement in her eyes that she felt like she was showing her pussy to the entire city.

It wasn't exactly true. They were high enough up that anyone looking at them would need a telescope to make out any details. Besides that, they sat in the shadows between the light posts, obscured by the night. It was very unlikely that anyone below could see anything. Nevertheless, Charlie felt himself becoming aroused by her display.

"I don't know," he said, pretending to examine her critically.

"Oh?"

He shook his head. "I can't be sure... but I think you might still be a little overdressed."

"I see." Michelle looked down at her shirt. "You think so?"

"Maybe. I'm not sure."

She stood up. "Okay." Michelle slipped off her black jacket, carefully folded it and set it on the bench. Turning to face Charlie, she looked down at him as her fingers caught the bottom of her shirt. She held his gaze as she tugged the flimsy garment up her body and over her head.

Her shirt dangled from her hand as she stood naked in front of him, wearing only her heels. It didn't surprise him that she wasn't wearing a bra; he had already guessed that much by the way her chest had shifted under her shirt when she breathed. Even in the dim light, her skin glowed against the dark night, the lights of the city twinkling behind her. "What about now?" she breathed, swinging her shirt back and forth in her hand. "Am I dressed casually enough to match you now?"

"Hmm," he said, gazing at her nude body while he pretended to consider the question. "You know, I'm still not sure. I might have to think about it for a bit."

"Of course," she said, tilting her head. "Take your time." She stood patiently in front of him, as if she would wait there quietly until he allowed her to move. He enjoyed the view she presented, but also knew that anyone coming up the stairway would immediately see her when they reached the hilltop.

"Why don't you sit down again?" he suggested.

"Okay." Michelle took a moment to lean forward and carefully drape her shirt over the back of the bench. Her breasts swayed close enough to Charlie that he could have easily caught them in his palms, but he resisted the temptation. Michelle turned and lowered herself back onto the bench, grimacing slightly when her bare skin touched the cold wood.

She sat more forward than before, perched on the front of the bench with her back straight. Her hands clutched the front edge of the bench, holding it as if she was in danger of falling off. She left her legs apart, and Charlie leaned forward to witness the deliberate view of her pussy that she offered the world below them.

They sat there, as if simply enjoying the night air. Charlie took a quick glance toward the stairs, confirming that no one was walking up who might catch Michelle in her vulnerable state. They were all alone for the moment, but the fact that they'd seen five people coming down the stairs while they were walking up gave a clear indication that the Duck Rock had its share of visitors after dark. The longer Michelle remained naked, the greater the chance that someone would catch her.

Charlie looked at Michelle, and he could tell that she was affecting an air of nonchalance. She stretched, bringing her arms up to comb her hair back from her face, calmly looking down at the city. She acted as if she would be perfectly comfortable sitting in that same position for the rest of the evening, with her legs apart and her pussy lewdly exposed to the city.

Despite her calm facade, he could tell that she was filled with nervous excitement. He could see the way her breasts quivered with her uneven breathing, and the way her fingers couldn't keep still, tracing tiny circles on her thighs. With every second that passed as they sat silently looking down at the city, the chance that someone would come up the stairs and see her became more and more likely. Charlie knew he could call an end to it at any time. He could ask her to put her shirt

Charlie frowned. Over the steady drone of traffic coming from the highway and the rustle of the wind through the trees, he thought he heard the sound of voices, a faint tickle of sound that he suspected might be in his imagination. The more he listened for it, the more the sound eluded him. He decided he was manufacturing phantom voices out of the ambient sounds of the hills, just his tension combining with the power of suggestion.

Then he thought he heard laughter. A man's laughter. Then a higher voice, a woman's voice, saying something indiscernible, and now the woman laughed. Voices from a distance. Charlie peered down towards the park and the shopping center, looking for a group of walking figures. Maybe a group coming out of the BBQ restaurant, walking to their car, their voices echoing over the hillside. He scanned the parking lot but didn't see anyone.

Michelle looked anxiously over her shoulder at the top of the stairs. The voices were becoming louder, clearer. Charlie could make out the back and forth of a conversation. He picked out three distinct voices, a man and two women. No, now he heard a fourth voice, another man. At least four people, talking loudly, and they were all coming up the stairs.

"I really haven't come up here for so long," a woman said.

"A lot more stairs than I remember," a man complained, and the group laughed.

Michelle turned to glance nervously at Charlie, her bottom lip caught between her teeth. He knew that the group of visitors would reach the top of the hill in a few minutes, and Michelle didn't have much time to put her shirt back on. Yet she still waited for him, continuing to play their game where they pretended her complete nudity was at the same level of dress as his button-up shirt and jeans. She didn't even dare to close her legs, remaining in that same vulnerable position with her feet apart and her pussy clearly exposed.

Charlie looked past her, towards the stairs. No one had yet reached the top, but he could hear the voices coming closer and closer. He turned to Michelle and she met his eyes expectantly, anticipating that he would speak. But instead, Charlie found himself reaching for her, sliding one arm behind her back, bringing his other hand to her breast as he leaned forward to kiss her. Michelle whimpered helplessly as she opened her mouth to his kiss, caught between her fear of being seen by the approaching strangers and her excitement at the risk they were taking.

"Almost there," one of the women said.

"Thank god," said the complaining man, to more laughter.

"I can see the top," said the other man, whose voice was a baritone to the complaining man's tenor.

Michelle gasped softly as Charlie squeezed her breast. He tugged on her nipple, pulling on the tip, rolling it between his fingers. Her skin felt so soft and smooth under his hands and the scent of her filled his senses. He kissed her again and she returned his kiss fiercely. The erection in his jeans felt enormous; he wanted to take her hand and put it there, to let her feel how turned on he was.

"Finally!" The complaining man's voice came from the top of the stairs.

"It looks nicer," the first woman said. "They're taking better care of it."

"Where's the duck?" asked the complaining man.

"I thought you'd been here before!"

"Not in a while. Is it over there?"

"No, it's on the other side," said the second woman. "See the railing?"

Charlie reached down and pressed his hand between Michelle's legs. He traced his fingers up and down her slit and felt her trembling in his arms. Out of the corner of his eye, he could see four figures strolling from the top of the stairs to the view of the giant stone duck. How far away were they? Fifty feet? Charlie wondered if they would come to see the view of the city after they saw the duck.

He slid his finger into Michelle's pussy.

"Where?" asked the man.

"Down there!" said the woman. "You don't see it? It's right there!"

"You know what?" Charlie murmured to Michelle, moving his finger inside her. "I don't feel underdressed anymore, so that's good. But I'm not sure if you should go to the restaurant looking like this."

"No?"

"No. They might have one of those 'No Shirt No Service' policies. You know?"

"Ohhh. Uh-huh. Do you think so?"

"Maybe. I think you should put your dress back on. You know. Just in case."

"It's not a dress. It's a long shirt."

"Right. Then you should put your long shirt back on."

Michelle nodded. "Okay. If you think so."

Charlie cupped her pussy a last time before extracting his hand. Despite the close proximity of the strangers who were audibly discussing the Duck Rock behind them, Michelle didn't rush. She reached back and plucked her shirt from the bench, then pulled it over her head. It didn't take long for her to wiggle into it. She tugged it down over her hips.

The shirt was long enough to make a satisfactory dress, although it exposed a good amount of her long legs. Charlie suspected that Michelle had anticipated removing her leggings at some point in the evening and had dressed with that in mind. "Ready?" he asked.

Michelle picked up her discarded leggings and pushed them into her purse. "Yeah," she said. "Let's head back down." She stood and Charlie stood a moment later. He glanced at the four strangers over by the railing while Michelle put on her jacket.

Two men, two women. Maybe in their mid-twenties. All of them leaned against the back railing, looking down at the duck-shaped rock and idly chatting. Charlie wondered if any of them had noticed the couple kissing on the far bench. It didn't seem like any of them had.

As he and Michelle walked along the path towards the stairs, one of the men saw them passing. The man smiled affably and waved at them. Both Charlie and Michelle returned the wave.

"I don't think they saw anything," Charlie murmured to Michelle as they descended the stairs. "They just wanted to see the duck."

"Uh-huh. I think you're right."

"We were on the other side, sitting on a bench away from the light. I don't think they noticed us."

"Uh-huh."

"We got away with it!"

That made Michelle laugh. "Another bank robbed, eh, Clyde?"

"Yep. Good job, Bonnie!"

She laughed again.

They had almost reached the bottom of the stairs. Charlie felt like he was flying down them. "Wow," he said to Michelle. "I'm on such a high right now."

She grinned. "I know. The rush... I feel it, too."

"It's not just the almost-getting-caught." He knew he was talking fast. "It's everything! Saturday night... being with you... and it's such a beautiful night! Isn't it? Doesn't everything seem really perfect right now?"

She just laughed and took hold of his arm. "You're cute," she said. They walked through the park, towards the lights of the restaurant.

"Remember what you said, the other night?" Charlie asked. "About the door?"

Michelle shook her head. "What did I say?"

"After the Gardens. You talked about if you were standing naked in front of a door, just about to walk into a crowded room. You said you would wait until the last second to put your dress on, just before the door opened. Then you thought about it, and you said, no, you would open the door first and then put your dress on."

"I said that?"

"Yeah."

"I don't remember. I don't think I was talking about real life. I'm not sure what I meant."

Charlie glanced at her. I know what you meant, he almost said. I know what you meant, because we just did it. The door started to open, and instead of letting you get dressed, I reached for your body, and it was amazing.

He almost said it, but he didn't. Maybe he was overthinking things. Maybe trying to explain why it was amazing only made it less amazing. If Michelle didn't remember what she'd said about the door, she probably wouldn't understand how he was trying to connect the two things. It would just sound like he was babbling.

Instead, he said, "I'm having fun. Are you?"

That earned him a smile. "Yeah, Charlie. That was pretty crazy."

Charlie let his eyes wander down her body, reminded of the fact that she wore nothing underneath her short dress. He thought he could see the poke of her nipples against the fabric of her shirt. "Hey," he said, suddenly concerned. "Do you think that guy could see I had a hard-on?"

Michelle laughed. "You mean the guy who waved at us?"

"Yeah. We left pretty fast. It didn't have time to go down. I'm pretty sure I was at least ninety percent hard when we walked by him."

Michelle glanced at the front of his pants. "Well," she said slyly. "It's pretty easy to tell you're hard right now."

Charlie stopped to check. She was right. He had a clear bulge in the front of his jeans. A second later, Michelle's hand was there, her fingers lightly stroking the outline of his cock.

"That's not going to make it go down," Charlie murmured.

"No, I suppose not," Michelle murmured back, smiling up at him with a teasing glint in her eyes. "Do you want to give it a few minutes? Before we go in the restaurant?"

"A few minutes to do what?"

She grinned and gave him a final squeeze before pulling her hand away. "A few minutes for you to think about whatever it is guys think about when they want it to go down."

Charlie had no idea what he was supposed to think about. Maybe just the fear of walking into the restaurant with a visible erection was enough. "Let's just go," he told her. "It'll go down while we're walking."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah. Let's go."

They continued on their path towards the restaurant. Charlie's prediction was at least partially correct. By the time they stepped onto the asphalt of the parking lot, he could feel his erection starting to wane, and it continued to soften as they approached the restaurant. Nevertheless, he felt like he was still at least fifty percent hard when they pushed open the large wood doors at the entrance to Hap's BBQ. Charlie snuck a look down, hoping that the lump at the front of his pants wasn't as noticeable as it seemed.

He glanced at Michelle, and found even more to worry about. Outside, her shirt had seemed to be a daring but adequate dress. But in the bright interior of the restaurant, where he could get a better look, the shirt-dress seemed scandalously short. She looked like she could expose herself just by lifting her arms in the air. On top of that, he could clearly see the tiny bumps where the shirt fell against her nipples.

Everyone's going to know she's naked under there, he thought. Or would they? Was it only obvious to him because he already knew?

"You've never been here, right?" Michelle asked.

"No. Never."

"It's just like a cafeteria," she said. "You pick whatever table you want. Then you stand in the line and get your food, you pay for it, and then you bring it to your table. There's no waiters or waitresses."

"Okay," Charlie said. "Well, want to find a place to sit first? I'll come back and get our food. Do you know what you want?"

"Just get a bunch of things and we'll share."

"Do you want anything in particular?"

"No," she said. "You pick. Anything you want."

The food lines and cashier filled the space in the middle of the restaurant, with dining areas to either the left or right. Neither direction seemed any better than the other, so they picked left. The interior of the restaurant was surprisingly vast, and Charlie had to resist his impulse to stop and stare at the sprawl of tables that seemed to be laid out with a disdain for symmetry. He took hold of Michelle's hand and they plunged purposefully through the tables, walking as if they knew where they were going.

They could see smaller rectangular sections split off from the main room by half-walls decorated with cowboy memorabilia. Charlie turned into a section which looked half-filled, only to find an opening to another space that that was even emptier. He led them to a circular booth in the corner. It looked like it was meant to hold a party of six, or even eight, but Charlie took it anyway. He liked that it allowed them to sit next to each other. "Is this good?"

"Perfect," Michelle said as she slid into the seat. The tables had white tablecloths with a sheet of paper covering the top of the table. Charlie supposed the paper helped to keep spills from getting on the tablecloths. Their round table had a round sheet of paper covering it, and Charlie wondered if they had a supply of paper covers to match every shape of table in the restaurant.

"I'll go stand in the line," Charlie said. "Do you want anything to drink?"

"Just water." Michelle already had her phone out and was reading a message someone had sent her.

"Ok... be right back." Charlie started back towards the barbecue lines. Just before he turned the corner, he glanced back at Michelle, catching her as she was stretching out of her seat to slip off her black jacket. Her shirt pulled against her front, momentarily molding itself against her breasts like a second skin. Charlie felt his erection stirring again and he quickly turned away.

He followed the same path in reverse to get back to the front of the restaurant, where he discovered he had his choice of two lines to stand in. Both of them stretched nearly to the front door of the restaurant. One curved to the left and one curved to the right, so he picked the one that curved to the left, even though it was slightly longer. As he waited, he thought about sending a message to Michelle's phone. He pulled out his own phone and considered what to say.

"I looked back at you as I was leaving," he typed. "I can't believe how beautiful you are. You're so perfect." He gazed at the words on his screen. Then he added, "Why are you even with me?" He read the message, then found the delete key and quickly erased it. No, he wasn't going to send her that.

He gazed at the screen for a moment. His finger picked out a new message, almost moving by itself. "I love you, Michelle." He stared at the words on the screen, wondering how he could have dared to write them. He felt jittery just having them typed and ready to send, almost certain that his finger would slip and touch the send button by mistake. He found the delete key and watched the words disappear.

Instead, he sent the message, "Long line."

A few seconds passed. Then her response came, a sad-face emoji followed by, "Is it moving at least?"

He typed back, "Yes." The line was moving at a good pace. It seemed like the employees had an efficient system of getting orders together which kept things moving. He typed, "Five people in front of me and then I'll be able to order."

She sent back a smiling emoji.

"All good there?" he typed.

"Yes. Just trying to look busy. Like I'm texting my boyfriend." She followed this with another smiling emoji.

He couldn't decide how to respond to that, and still hadn't sent anything back when the line moved up enough for him to put in his order. He put his phone back in his pocket and ordered something called the "three meat family meal" which came with three meat choices and two sides, plus bread. He picked the chicken, pulled pork and tri-tip, figuring Michelle must like at least one of those. For the sides, he picked steamed vegetables and potato salad. His choices were methodically put on plates and added to his tray as he moved down the line.

The cashier totaled up the order, then asked if he wanted anything to drink. He ordered a water for Michelle and a Sprite for himself. The water came as a bottled water, but the Sprite came as an empty cup which he would have to fill himself.

Charlie absently handed the cashier two twenty-dollar bills as he considered Michelle's text. Texting her boyfriend. That's what she'd said. But she hadn't said he was her boyfriend. She said she was trying to look "like" she was texting her boyfriend. As if she was just pretending he was her boyfriend when she was texting him. So what did that make him?

Charlie lifted up his tray. "Your change, sir!" the cashier reminded him. Charlie muttered an apology as he set the tray back down and took his change from the cashier. He was still thinking about Michelle as he went to the drink station and filled his cup with Sprite.

Michelle smiled when he came into view, bearing the tray of food. He set the tray down. "I just picked one of their family meals," he said. "Hope it's okay..."

"It looks great," she said. "Come sit down."

Charlie slid into the seat. As he shifted to be closer to Michelle, a flash of bare skin caught his eye and he glanced down towards the seat. Michelle's shirt was now carelessly bunched up around her waist, leaving her bottom half nude. "Michelle..." he breathed, shocked but instinctively keeping his voice low.

"What's wrong?" she asked, feigning innocence as she turned slightly and propped one knee up on the seat, giving him a clear view of her pussy. Charlie stared down at it for a moment, then swiftly looked around to make sure no one had noticed them.

Fortunately, the tablecloth was long enough that Michelle's lower half was blocked from view. Unless someone stood right in front of their table and leaned forward, they wouldn't have an angle to view her nudity. Charlie checked the nearby tables. Two booths were occupied; an elderly woman sat in one, facing the opposite direction, and the other held three teenagers dressed all in black, a boy and two girls. One of the girls had really short hair while the other had really long hair. The boy was somewhere in the middle. The girls had multiple piercings in their ears and the boy had black gauges stretching quarter-sized holes in his lobes. They seemed absorbed by their food and conversation.

Charlie turned back to Michelle. "Nothing's wrong," he said, leaning forward to kiss her. He reached between her legs and slid his hand against her pussy as she sighed into his kiss. He could feel her wetness on his fingers. She moved her legs further apart, opening herself to his touch. Her hand slid behind his neck, pulling him close.

Charlie kissed his way along her jaw, taking the opportunity to flick his eyes to the side and double-check that no one watched them. The old woman still had her back to them, and the three goths were all looking at something on one of their phones. No one paid Charlie and Michelle any attention. Charlie's cock had sprung back to full length and he shifted in his seat, adjusting it so it went down the leg of his jeans.

He kissed her again, his need for her palpable, drawing him towards her. In a restaurant filled with patrons, her long shirt was hiked up to her waist and he had his fingers moving in and out of her wet pussy. The daring of it gave him such a rush that he found himself wondering how far they could take it. What if he put his hand under her shirt and fondled her bare breast? Would anyone notice? Would anyone care? He could free his cock from the tight confines of his jeans and let her stroke it under the table. Or even have her lie down on the curved seat so he could make love to her, moving his cock in and out of her, forgetting everything but their own desire.

Nothing seemed impossible. He had a reckless moment where it seemed like they could do anything and everything, free of any laws or rules. As if the world around them was just a dream and they were the lucid dreamers, doing whatever they liked before dawn woke them up.

He took another quick look at the nearby tables. The three goths, check. They were still looking at their phones. And really, only the long-haired girl sat in a seat with an angle to see them. The octogenarian, check. She was leaning over her food, absorbed in her careful tiny bites of chicken.

Then Charlie noticed two employees, a man and a woman, coming into view on the other side of the seating section. Both of them wore the magenta shirt/black pants uniforms of Hap's BBQ. The female employee, probably in her early twenties, looked in their direction. She pointed at them.

"Shit," Charlie swore, swiftly pulling away from Michelle.

"What?" Michelle asked, but Charlie didn't need to answer. Michelle followed his eyes and saw the male employee, who was walking grimly towards them. She quickly brought her legs back together and tried to smooth her shirt back over her thighs. "Did someone complain?" she murmured.

"Maybe. I don't know." Charlie pretended like he hadn't noticed the approach of the male employee. He casually lifted his drink and sipped from the straw.

"Excuse me, sir." The man was standing right next to their table, looming over them.

Charlie looked up. "Hi."

"Hi." The man's eyes flickered quickly towards Michelle, and Charlie had to fight the impulse to check on her and see how much skin she was showing. The man returned his eyes to meet Charlie's. "Sir, I've brought you a new cup."

"What?" Charlie blinked.

"A new cup." The man held out a plastic cup. "You took the wrong cup, sir. This is the cup for your drink."

Charlie stared at the cup in the man's hand, then looked at the cup he had just been sipping from. "What's wrong with the cup I have?" he asked.

"You took the wrong cup," the man repeated. He pointed at Charlie's cup. "Sorry, sir. You accidentally took our tip cup. That's the cup by the register that we use for tips."

"I did?" Charlie turned the cup on the table. Now he could see a bright red sign taped to the cup he'd been drinking out of, a sign that read "TIP PLEASE THANK YOU". He popped the top off his cup and peeked in. At the bottom of the cup, he could see a dark layer of quarters, nickels and pennies, swimming underneath the Sprite.

"I can fill your new cup for you, if you like, sir," the man said. "Is it Sprite you're drinking?"

"Yeah." Charlie felt light-headed and vaguely nauseous as he realized he'd been sipping out of a cup filled with dirty change. "I mean, no. I can fill it up myself."

The man plucked the tip cup off the table and left the empty cup in its place. "Very sorry, sir. Please let me know if there's anything else I can do for you."

"Right. I mean... sorry. I guess I wasn't paying attention and grabbed the wrong cup..."

"Sure. It's no problem." The man nodded to them. "Enjoy your meal." He turned and walked away.

"Oh my god!" Michelle said, as soon as the man was out of earshot. "You stole their tip cup!"

Charlie breathed out slowly. He looked at her, checking her shirt. She had pulled the edge of the tablecloth towards her to cover her lap, but hadn't been able to tuck the back of her shirt underneath her, and Charlie could still see a triangle of bare thigh above the red seat cushion. To him, it looked obvious that she had her bare bottom touching the cushion. Maybe it only looked that way to him because he knew it was true.

He reached over and tickled her bit of exposed skin with his finger. "I can't believe I put soda in their tip cup." He shook his head, grimacing. "And drank out of it. What the hell is wrong with me?"

"They looked kind of alike. Same shape. Different color though. You never noticed the big sign taped to it?"

"No. I should have. But I didn't."

She giggled. "At least that's all it was. I thought we were getting kicked out for public indecency."

"Me, too." He made a face. "I'm going to go fill my new cup. I need to wash this taste out of my mouth."

"Okay." Even though they had just nearly been caught, Michelle was already tugging her shirt back above her waist. "Don't steal anything else. Next time they come over looking for you, I'm not going to bother covering up."

"Okay, Bonnie." He could hear her giggling as he walked away.

Charlie ventured back to the middle of the restaurant and filled the new cup with more Sprite. Michelle was already eating when he returned. She had a forkful of chicken and smiled as she slipped it in her mouth.

"I started without you," she said. "Don't worry. I saved you some of everything."

"Thanks." Charlie set down his drink and slid back into the seat. Michelle immediately reached for the cup and turned it in a circle.

"No thievery this time," she said. "Good! Maybe they won't bother us anymore."

"At least not for stealing." Charlie reached under the table and stroked her leg. "There's still the public indecency though."

She shook her head dismissively. "Oh, I'm not worried about that. No one can really see anything. The benefit of long tablecloths."

"That's true." Charlie looked at the tablecloth thoughtfully. Michelle had removed the plates of food from the tray and had them arranged around the table. She had even made a place setting for him, with a knife and fork sitting on a paper napkin.

"Eat something." She pushed the plate of food closer to him.

"Okay." Charlie took a quick look around to make sure no one was watching. Then he leaned away from her, lifting the edge of the tablecloth and ducking underneath it. He slid down, crouching, and his shoulder bumped against her leg. He could see the bottom of the table, the whole thing supported by one central cylinder that was bolted to the floor.

"Charlie? What are you..." Michelle abruptly fell silent as she must have realized what he intended. Charlie double-checked the length of the tablecloth, making sure that he was hidden underneath the table. The tablecloth didn't quite touch the floor, but it was long enough that he doubted anyone could see him. He shifted his position over slightly so he had a line of sight directly between Michelle's knees. He could see the line of her pussy, right in front of him, just under the edge of the tablecloth.

He decided to play a game, to see how close he could get his finger to her pussy without touching either leg. He slowly moved his hand forward, keeping it in that space between her legs, until finally the space became too narrow and he grazed her inner thigh. He kept his hand moving forward anyway, until his finger encountered the soft wetness of her pussy. He pushed his finger into her, sliding it in and out a few times. She didn't make a sound but her legs moved restlessly as he fingered her.

He brought his hand back down to her knee, pushing on it gently, and Michelle obediently opened her legs wider, sliding forward on her seat. He kissed her right knee, then her left knee. Slowly, he kissed his way up the inside of her left thigh, working his way up her leg. Michelle squirmed in anticipation as he came closer and closer to the place where her legs met. She slid even further down in her seat.

He reached her pussy and pressed a long kiss against it. Her legs clinched around his head as he pushed his tongue into her, tasting the tang of her arousal. Her hand touched the top of his head, stroking his hair as he licked her slowly from bottom to top. He could hear her uneven breathing as the tip of his tongue teased the area around her clit.

Her legs trembled as she opened them wider, granting him more access between them. Her upper body leaned forward against the table, and she lifted one hand above the table while the other remained tangled in his hair. It turned him on immensely to realize that she feigned normal behavior for the benefit of the other patrons, most likely continuing to eat little bites of food, while below the waist she was completely naked, her legs splayed apart and her pussy served to him like his own personal dish to taste and savor.

It became his goal to disrupt her facade. He swirled his tongue over her clit in a particular way that made her legs tremble and just above his head, Michelle's fork clattered on the table. It pleased him immensely to know that he had just caused her to drop her fork. He could picture her in his mind, as if he sat at a nearby table watching her. Methodically eating her food, acting as if nothing was out of the ordinary, only every now and then she would freeze, or tense up, or maybe her eyes would close and her mouth would hang open for a moment. Maybe she would bite her lip to keep from making a noise. He wanted to make her betray herself, to give her such an intensity of pleasure that she would be unable to control her reaction.

He slid his hand up the front of her shirt, finding her breast and caressing it. Her nipple was hard between his fingers. He wondered if anyone was looking at that moment. Could they see the movement under her shirt, the outline of his fingers against the fabric as they squeezed her soft mound?

He wanted to make her moan. He wanted her body to shake with an orgasm in the middle of the restaurant. The thought of it made him fiercely hard.

She rose up, unconsciously pushing her hips towards him, pressing herself against his face while his tongue toyed mercilessly with her sensitive little button. He remembered watching her use her vibrator, the one she called Hoppity, and he tried to think of himself as a living Hoppity, a tool for her pleasure. His mouth was her personal sex toy, and he would get her off or stay under the table all night trying.

Suddenly she was pushing him away. "Come back up," she whispered. "No one's looking right now."

"I want to make you cum," he said.

"You already did. I just came."

"You did?"

"Yes! Just now. I had to be quiet about it. But it was a good one." She took a slow breath. "Come back up. No one's watching."

"Pass me a fork," he said.

"What?"

"A fork. If anyone sees me coming out from under the table, I'll pretend I just dropped a fork and went under to get it."

"Oh my god. You're silly." But she passed him the fork anyway. He managed to turn around under the table and climbed back through the narrow gap into his seat. He looked around quickly, but didn't need to use the fork excuse. No one had noticed.

Michelle pushed food towards him. "Time to eat for real," she said. "It's getting cold."

Charlie took a moment to wipe his face with a napkin. He picked up his fork and poked a slice of tri-tip. It was still sufficiently warm, and tasted delicious. "It's good," he told her between bites.

"Better than me?"

"Heh. No, not that good."

Michelle smiled. "We used to always come here, when we drove through. The food was always good."

Charlie realized he was hungrier than he thought. Michelle ate as well, but barely took one bite to his two. They talked about Michelle missing school the previous day, and Charlie's lunch with Ronni. He tried to summarize the conversation he had with Ronni about the movie.

"Have you asked anyone to do the other roles yet?" Michelle wanted to know.

"No. I have an idea who I'm going to ask. You know Allison Hayes?"

"Charlie..." Michelle spoke hesitantly. "Can I ask you for a favor?"

"Of course."

"When you try to get other actors... and they want to read the script... can you give them that new version you just wrote? The version without the nude scene?"

"Umm... yeah. I guess I could."

"Charlie... I'm sorry. I just don't know if I can do it. The scene, I mean."

"Really?" Charlie was surprised.

"If it was just you, I'd be fine," she said. "I think Nick is all right, and Ronni, too. But I don't know about any of the others. I don't know if they're going to keep it a secret. They might tell anyone at school who'll listen that I'm naked in a film, and can you imagine what people would say? I don't know if I can handle that being all over the school."

"Right." Charlie shrugged. "Sure, Michelle. Whatever you want. We can do the other version. It's no problem at all." He paused, considering the script. "Did you notice the different clothes you're supposed to wear for each scene, in the clean version? It doesn't have to be exactly what I wrote, but..."

"Oh, I can take care of the outfits." She waved dismissively. "Don't worry about that part of it."

"Cool." Charlie watched a group of four women turn the corner carrying trays of food. The women slid into the booth on the other side of the goths.

Michelle watched them as well. "I know it won't be exactly how you pictured the movie. But it'll still be all right, won't it?"

"Sure, it'll be fine."

"You still want to make the movie, right?"

Did he? It was like an echo of the conversation he'd had with Ronni the day before. "Yeah," he said. "I still want to."

"Good." She smiled. "Do you think we could go back to the Gardens again? Sometime this week?"

"Sure. We just have to ask Ronni and Nick. What will you tell your parents?"

"I can tell them the truth now. I've been asked to be an actress in a movie, and it films late at night. I'll show them the script if they want to see it. The PG script. No nude scene, right? So they'll be fine with it. If they have any questions, I'll have them talk to Ronni. She'll vouch for the movie."

"Yeah. I'm sure she will."

"Just let me know what day we can go." Michelle picked up her water and took a sip, glancing at the table of four women. She seemed preoccupied with them; Charlie noticed she was frequently glancing in that direction. Her shirt had drifted lower while they ate and now the bottom of it fell over her lap, so she wasn't quite as exposed as before. Not that it mattered; none of the four women appeared to be looking in their direction, and Michelle's lower half was blocked by the table. Charlie wasn't quite sure what was making her so anxious.

The realization hit him a moment later that Michelle had to be planning something. She wasn't looking at the other tables because of what she was doing. She was looking at them thinking about what she intended to do. Maybe she was waiting for the right opportunity, the open window when no one was looking.

He should have suspected that Michelle would be looking for an opportunity to reciprocate his previous escapade under the table. Nevertheless, it surprised him when she suddenly dropped down and slid under the tablecloth. He had enough experience with Michelle that he knew to keep quiet, careful to avoid calling any attention to her sudden descent. He glanced around, to see if anyone had noticed, but Michelle had picked the perfect moment to disappear.

A minute later and her hand slipped out from under the tablecloth, setting her folded-up shirt next to him. So now she was naked under the table, and he felt her fingers on the front of his jeans. Much easier for him to flip up the bottom of her shirt than for her to undo the snap and zipper of his jeans, yet she still somehow managed to tug his boxers down and pull out his erect cock.

Now it was his turn to pretend like nothing was happening, poking at the remaining barbecue food with his fork while below the table Michelle's tongue was licking up and down his shaft. He wondered if she had felt the same mix of excitement and fear that he was feeling. Her mouth enveloped the head of his cock while her fingers toyed with his balls, gently cupping them. She fell into a rhythm as she sucked on him, her lips sliding back and forth on his shaft, her head bobbing up and down in his lap. Did she intend to take him all the way? Would he fill her mouth with his cum? Could he really have an orgasm in the middle of a restaurant, with a bunch of strangers sitting less than twenty feet away? That seemed like Michelle's intention.

After a couple minutes of her hot mouth kissing and sucking on his cock, Charlie knew the answer was a definite yes. Michelle was quite capable of making him climax in the middle of a crowded restaurant. He couldn't always tell what she was doing under there but it was driving him wild. He'd feel something soft, wet, her lips maybe, or her tongue, running along the bottom of his cock or exploring the swollen head. Then her mouth would envelop him and her lips would slide up and down his shaft, urging him to erupt.

In her enthusiasm, she bobbed to the end of his cock and the top of her head banged loudly against the bottom of the table, hard enough that all of the plates and silverware on the table rattled. Charlie's eyes widened as suddenly everyone in the near vicinity turned to look in his direction, checking to see what had caused the sound. Even the old lady turned around in her seat to peer at him.

Charlie was mortified. A sea of eyes, all staring right at him, and how many of them could tell that just below the tablecloth his jeans were undone and his erect cock was sitting in his girlfriend's mouth? Did they notice that Michelle was conspicuously missing? "Dropped a plate," he said. "Don't worry. Nothing broke." He tried to force a smile, but only succeeded in looking guiltier. It didn't help that he could hear Michelle under the table trying to control her giggling. He prayed that no one else could hear her.

The eyes started to turn away, to his relief. Probably they had only been staring at him for a few seconds, but it felt like an eternity. His erection was fading, a victim of his anxiety, and he tucked it back into his boxer shorts before Michelle could reach for it again. With one hand below the table, he gestured for her to come back up.

He could feel her bump his knees, and guessed that she was trying to put her shirt back on. He put his hand under the table and held it flat, a warning for her to wait for his signal. He watched the other customers, waiting for an opportunity. Finally, he found a moment when no one seemed to be looking at them, and urgently flapped his hand to beckon Michelle back up.

She understood his signal and slipped out from under the tablecloth. He was glad to see she was successful in putting her shirt back on, although it looked a little crooked around her shoulders. She held a fork in her hand. "Found my fork!" she announced. "The one I dropped!" She grinned at Charlie.

"Oh." He looked at the fork. "Uh... great."

Michelle slid in close to him, her body pressing against his side. "I'm sad," she purred. "I wanted to make you cum."

He shook his head, his eyes still watching the other tables. "I don't think I can," he whispered. "Not after that."

"Aww." She pouted. "It would have been so naughty."

"Maybe next time," he said. "Should we get out of here? Are we done eating?"

"Of course not!" she grinned. "Dessert! This time it's my treat." She picked up her purse and slid out of the seat. Charlie watched her walk away, the bottom of her shirt just barely covering her ass. He knew she was going to attract some looks.

He waited for her return, and the longer she took, the more convinced he became that her departing words had been a sexual innuendo, foreshadowing a scandalous act to come. Dessert? Her treat? What did that mean? Would she return wearing something even more revealing? A transparent dress? A silk slip? A body stocking? Would she drop into his lap and announce that she was his dessert?

When she turned the corner, still in her grey shirt and now carrying a giant hot fudge sundae, he wasn't sure if he was relieved or disappointed. She brought two spoons and offered him one before she set the sundae down on the table. She slid into the seat, moving until she was close enough that he could smell her perfume, moving still closer until her side touched his.

Sharing an ice cream sundae. It was almost a cliché. A Norman Rockwell painting. Young love, taking turns spooning scoops of ice cream. Am I your boyfriend? He sent the thought in her direction, unable to speak it out loud. Are we together? Is this love? And if it isn't, then what is it?

He couldn't speak the words. Maybe it didn't matter. Just as long as she was with him. He took another spoonful of ice cream.

**Saturday Night School Ch. 10**

They didn't talk very much on the drive back to Pine Hills. The radio was on and the road was dark except for the long reach of the headlights stretching ahead of them. Sometimes he heard Michelle singing along to the music, her voice a low whisper under the vocals. She still wore her grey shirt with nothing underneath. Standing next to his car in the parking lot, he'd played with the idea of pulling that grey shirt off her and making her ride the whole way home naked. She had met his gaze, waiting for him to open the car door for her, and he suspected that she had known what he was thinking. Maybe she even wanted him to do it.

But he just pulled the door open and she climbed into his car. He closed the door behind her. Why hadn't he stripped her? He considered the question as he walked around to the driver's side. His heart was beating fast and his cock was more than halfway erect. He wanted her to be naked. So why didn't he strip her?

He pulled onto the highway, thinking that he still could. He could ask her to take her shirt off, and she most likely would. His cock was now close to fully erect. If he asked, she would toss her shirt in the back seat and ride all the way home naked. She would even let him reach over and feel her body while he drove.

So why didn't he tell her to take off her shirt?

Because of that look in her eyes. That look she gave him as he walked to her side of the car, the look that urged him to do something reckless. That look that said she was ready and willing to play. He had seen that look in her eyes and he had reacted to it, and in fact, he was playing with her. He was playing with her by making her behave. He would make her keep her clothes on for now.

It would make it even sweeter when he finally did strip her.

They passed through Pebelton. Four miles back to Pine Hills, and then what? Her car was by the school, but he didn't want to fool around with her there. Not with Daryl still on duty. Greenholt Gardens was off limits since Nick didn't work on Saturday. Maybe he could take her home? Sneak her in again and make love in his bedroom? He mulled it over and although it seemed a little tame, he couldn't think of a better idea.

"I want to show you someplace," Michelle said.

"Where?"

"I'll give you directions when we get close. It's a place I like to go."

"Okay."

She didn't offer anything more, and he didn't ask any questions, only followed the road patiently to Pine Hills. A mile away from the city limits, she spoke again, "Take the next right."

He slowed. Ahead, he saw a turn branch off from the highway and curve to the right. He put on his blinker and followed it.

"When we get to the bottom, turn right."

The road they were on intersected a second road. Charlie turned right. It took him a minute to remember when he'd been on this road before. He recalled that it drove up a bit, then down, curving left and right, until it reached a small lake with a campground. He had gone camping there a few times when he was in elementary school.

But Michelle wasn't interested in driving to the campground. After a couple minutes of uphill driving, she said, "Take the next right turn."

Charlie saw a light pole on the corner of the next intersection, illuminating his next turn. He turned right. He saw another light pole in the distance, and as he travelled around the next curve, he could see a line of lights going up the hill, marking the path of the road. They passed through a dense forest of pine trees, following the road as it slowly curved to the left and then to the right. Through a break in the trees, Charlie could see a long, narrow bridge ahead, crossing over a shallow ravine. The bridge had lights leaning over the span, with a light pole about every twenty feet. Charlie could see a slow river passing underneath. On the other side of the bridge, the road disappeared around another curve, heading further uphill.

"Here we are," Michelle said. She pointed to the left, just before they reached the bridge. "You can park there, on the side. It doesn't look like you can, but people park there."

"Okay." No one was parked there now. Charlie pulled off the road onto a flat stretch of dirt. The car bounced on the uneven surface. He pulled in front of a tall tree and put the car in park, leaving the engine running.

"Have you ever been here before?" Michelle asked.

"I don't think so."

"It's called the Hanson Bridge. This road is Hanson Road."

"You come here?" he asked.

"Uh-huh."

"When? In the day?"

"No," she said. "Mostly at night. I like the way it's all lit up."

"You come here by yourself?"

"Uh-huh. Don't worry. I don't usually get out of my car. I just drive over the bridge, and look at it. Honestly, I'm pretty obsessed with it."

"Really?" Charlie leaned back and looked at the bridge through a gap in the tree. "There is something striking about it, isn't there. It's so long and thin. And the lighting is interesting. I wonder why they decided to use those smaller kinds of lights?" Charlie thought it would make a good location to film a scene. A young couple, taking an evening walk from one side of the bridge to the other. Stopping in the middle to lean against the railing and look down at the river. He thought it would make a great setting. The camera would love it. But what film would it be in? "I wonder why they built a fancy bridge like this way out here?"

"I guess someone was inspired. Anyways, people come out here to hike along the river. There's a trail. They park right here."

"Have you done that? Hiked along the river?"

"Uh-huh. That's how I first found out about the bridge. I came here a couple times with Kyle."

"Who's Kyle?"

"My ex. He graduated last year."

"Oh." The only thing Charlie could think to respond. Kyle? Who was Kyle? Had she ever mentioned him before? Charlie couldn't put a face to the name. A senior the year before. His picture would be in the yearbook. Charlie would almost certainly look him up later.

Why did he feel so surprised? Of course Michelle had ex-boyfriends. She was Michelle. Guys chased after her, guys asked her out. Just because they hadn't talked about any of the other guys she'd dated, it didn't mean there weren't any. She hadn't been a virgin when he'd first made love to her. For that matter, he hadn't been a virgin either.

A low rumble in the distance announced an approaching truck, and a moment later Charlie saw it through the trees, coming downhill towards the bridge. It towed a wide trailer with an open top. Charlie couldn't tell what it was hauling. The semi-truck rumbled across the bridge and passed loudly behind them.

"This road leads to a quarry or something," Michelle said. "Trucks are always going back and forth, hauling rocks. One time, we got stuck behind one of those trucks, and a rock popped out of the back and hit Kyle's windshield. It made a crack like a bullet hit the glass. Kyle was so mad."

Charlie had already formed an image of Kyle. Tall, blonde, driving an expensive car. A gleaming white BMW convertible, something like that. "Did the quarry pay to replace his windshield?" Charlie asked.

"Mm. I don't know." Michelle shrugged, flicking her hair back. "Do you want to take a closer look at the bridge? I mean, like walk over it?"

"Sure."

Charlie turned off the engine and stepped out of the car. He could hear the buzzing and chirping of insects from the trees around them. Michelle didn't wait for him to open her door; she was already out, and Charlie watched her gently close the door behind her. Maybe she did it quietly out of respect to the forest. He closed his own door the same way, so that it didn't make a sound as it latched.

Michelle led the way, gracefully managing her heels on the bumpy ground. They reached the road and Charlie took her hand as they walked along the side of the road towards the bridge. Gradually they found themselves drifting towards the center of the road, as if the asphalt path existed just for them. The night was so quiet that Charlie felt he would hear the sound of an approaching vehicle long before it reached them.

They crossed the threshold of the bridge, the line where the railings began and the glowing overhead lights formed an archway of smoldering orange. Michelle drifted towards the railing now, and Charlie followed her, still holding her hand. She touched the railing with her fingers, peeking over to look at the water. "I've seen deer before," she remarked. "I've seen them coming up to this river to drink. And one time, when I was driving on the road to get here, I had to slow down almost to a stop, because three deer were standing right in the road. A daddy deer, a mommy deer, and a baby deer. They didn't even care that I was driving at them. They walked just as slow as they wanted to."

"I guess this place belongs to them more than it does us."

Michelle smiled and nodded. "You're right." She traced the railing with her fingers as they walked. The bridge had a gradual arc; a car was unlikely to even notice it, but Charlie felt the uphill climb. The cool night air felt good in his lungs and he took a deep breath.

At the midpoint of the bridge, Michelle stopped and leaned against the railing, looking down at the water flowing underneath them. The dim light of the bridge glimmered against the water surface. Charlie leaned next to her, following the path of the water until it disappeared outside of the bridge's glow. He could see pine trees leaning over the water in the distance like silent sentries.

"Isn't it pretty?" she asked.

"Yeah."

"I haven't crossed this bridge at night in a while." She squeezed his hand. "It's not something I'd do alone."

"Not since Kyle?" Charlie ventured.

"Oh, it hasn't been that long. I think I came up here with Vanessa a few months ago. Vanessa and some others." Michelle turned to face him. She still held his hand in one of hers, and now, with her other hand, she reached down and caught the bottom of her shirt. She tugged her shirt up, rolling the fabric in her hand as she went, until she'd pulled it up past her breasts. She pulled her arms free of the sleeves and let the shirt hang from her neck like a scarf, leaving her body completely exposed. She lifted Charlie's hand and pressed it to her bare breast, an invitation he gladly accepted. He squeezed gently, feeling her hard nipple poking between his fingers.

One hand quickly became two and Michelle swayed in place as he squeezed and fondled her breasts. "Do you know, I've always wanted to walk across this bridge naked," she whispered dreamily. "From one side to the other, with nothing on. It's one of my fantasies."

"You're naked right now," Charlie murmured.

She smiled. "Not all the way. I still have my shirt on."

Charlie regarded the flimsy grey cloth circling her neck. He reached for it, intending to pull it over her head, but she quickly caught it and held it in place.

"No, don't take it off!" she said. "Not now. Don't you hear?"

He frowned, listening. Now that she'd pointed it out, he could hear a distant sound, a low rumble. The tone changed slightly, now higher. A shift of gears. Another truck coming, from the same direction as the first.

Michelle was already putting her arms back in her sleeves, although she wasn't in any rush. "They pass back and forth constantly," she said. "No matter what time, day or night. I don't think I've ever crossed this bridge without one of those trucks going by." She tugged the dress into place.

When the truck rumbled over the bridge half a minute later, Michelle stood leaning against the railing and Charlie stood just behind her, partially blocking the view of her with his body. Michelle didn't look at the truck, but chose instead to gaze wistfully at the river. Charlie couldn't help himself; he glanced up as it passed, trying to see the driver. He couldn't see through the light reflected on the windshield. The driver didn't see them either, or at least didn't react to them. The truck shot by without slowing, causing the bridge to vibrate. The clamor as it passed was deafening, but the noise quickly faded into the distance.

"See?" Michelle said. "That's why I can't... oh!" She was caught by surprise as Charlie immediately pulled her dress back up and cupped her pussy from behind.

"Sorry," he said. "But it sounds like we don't have a lot of time until that next truck comes." He pulled her hips away from the railing with one hand while he undid his zipper with the other. His fingers found his cock and pulled it free. He bent his knees, guiding the head of his cock towards Michelle's waiting pussy, pushing into her, filling her. She let out a long, low gasp, pushing back against him, urging him deeper. She leaned against the railing on one elbow, and as he began to move inside her, she used her other hand to pull her shirt over her head. She tossed it to the sidewalk.

Charlie clutched her hips, thrusting into her, and her body matched his motion, meeting every thrust. They found a rhythm, pulling apart and coming together, pulling apart, coming together, again and again. Michelle didn't restrain herself; her cries of pleasure rang out across the river and echoed through the trees.

Charlie ran his hands over her bare back, intoxicated by the feel of her skin. They moved to a rhythm that beat faster and faster, and each time he pushed deep inside her, in that brief moment when he felt her warmth clutching his throbbing cock, he felt himself ascending, nearing that peak of ecstasy. So close. He was so close.

They heard the distant growl of an approaching truck at the same time. It was louder than before, and had undoubtedly been audible for a short time, but they'd been too distracted to notice. Michelle immediately pulled off of him and scrambled to pick up her discarded shirt. Charlie tried to shove his erection back down his jeans.

The truck turned the corner just as Michelle finished pulling her shirt down her body, and Charlie and Michelle quickly moved into their 'innocent' pose, standing side by side at the railing, pretending to look at the river. Like the first two trucks, this truck was hauling a heavy load, and the bridge shook as it passed. Once again, the driver didn't appear to take any notice of them. The truck disappeared down the road.

Charlie was already reaching for her shirt, even while the reek of oil and gasoline still lingered around them. He pulled it up and over her head, then let it drop by their feet. This time he pushed Michelle up towards one of the light posts, putting her back to it. She reached up and gripped the light post with both hands. He lifted one of her legs, holding it to the side, and quickly freed his cock. Kissing her deeply, he slid his cock back into her.

They barely had two minutes before they heard the next truck. This one was coming from the other direction. Charlie was close to climaxing again, and even after he heard the truck, he continued to thrust into her several more times. Michelle always talked about the thrill of Not-Caring, and at that moment, he wanted to Not-Care, to keep fucking her even while the truck passed by. Michelle made no move to pull away from him, and he thought she was probably considering the same thing. Or maybe she was leaving the choice up to him.

Reluctantly, he pulled out of her and stepped away. Michelle reached for her shirt, and Charlie tucked his erection back in his jeans. They stood at the railing until the truck rumbled by. "Frustrating," he muttered to her.

"I know." She took his hand. "Come on. I know somewhere else we can go."

"Where?"

"I'll show you."

They walked back across the bridge towards the car, and Charlie expected they would get in and drive somewhere. Instead, Michelle led him into the trees, onto a trail that followed the river as it flowed downstream. The trail was smooth and showed evidence of frequent use, so that even in the dim light they had no difficulty finding their way.

They heard another truck coming, and turned to watch. The bridge was visible through the line of trees that separated the trail from the river. After a half a minute, the truck roared past, its lights flashing as it crossed the bridge. It was headed downhill. They could hear the sound of it fading into the distance.

Charlie turned to face Michelle, considering her in her loose grey shirt. They were hidden by the trees, and far enough away from the road that passing vehicles had little chance of seeing them. Given those facts, it seemed silly for Michelle to still be wearing clothes. He stepped towards her, and she must have had the same thought, because she raised her arms in the air. He slipped her shirt up and over her head, leaving her naked except for her heels. They left the shirt hanging from a tree branch as they continued down the trail.

After a short distance, the trail opened onto a clearing. The river curved to the right, and the sandy sediment deposited by the water over time had formed a crescent of gradually sloping shoreline lined with sticks and branches. Instead of pine trees, the clearing was filled with scraggly green grass.

They stepped out into the open space of the clearing. Charlie looked up at the stars, which shone brightly in the darkness. He could even see the cloudy streak that was the milky way. Michelle held his hand as they walked to the water's edge, where the river lapped against the shore. Charlie looked upriver, confirming that the bridge was still visible in the distance. He imagined standing where he was, looking at the bridge and seeing the Charlie and Michelle from fifteen minutes earlier, with Michelle naked and clutching the railing, and Charlie just behind her, fucking her. How much would he have been able to see?

Probably not much. He could have guessed what was happening, but they were too far away to make out any details. He wouldn't have been able to make out the faces. At least, he didn't think so.

He reached for Michelle, embracing her and kissing her. His hands slid over her nude body as he pulled her close.

"This is a good place, isn't it?" she murmured.

"Yeah." He touched her breast, fondling it. She kissed him as her hands moved to the front of his pants, undoing the zipper.

Another truck drove over the bridge, but neither of them paid any attention to it. Charlie pressed his fingers against her pussy, finding her still very wet. He slid his finger deep inside her as he kissed her.

"Have you ever been naked here before?" he asked softly, wondering if Kyle had introduced her to this place.

Michelle didn't answer for a moment. "I lost my virginity here," she admitted.

Her virginity? With who? With Kyle? Charlie wanted to ask more questions. But Michelle was stroking his cock, coaxing it into an enormous erection, and he decided questions could wait. They moved away from the water, towards the grass, and Charlie discarded his own clothing as they went. He lay down in the grass, pulling Michelle on top of him, and she happily lowered herself onto his cock. Finally, they were able to finish what they had started on the bridge, making love slowly, trying to make it last as long as possible. When she reached her climax, he surrendered to his as well; her sweaty body collapsed trembling on top of him while his cock pulsed inside her, filling her.

After they disentangled themselves, they walked to the edge of the river and washed themselves in the cold water. Michelle showed Charlie a flat rock where they could both sit, and they huddled together, keeping each other warm as the night air dried them off. Michelle wore Charlie's shirt draped over her shoulders and he had his arm around her waist. They could see the bridge in the distance and counted the trucks that rumbled back and forth.

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Darren Mickels was in Charlie's Theater Tech class, and it was easy for Charlie and Ronni to pull him aside after the class was dismissed. Charlie had worked on several productions where Darren had a role, and knew that Darren took acting very seriously. Darren had short, dark hair and a smile that was close to a smirk. He was thin and had an easy stride when he walked, as if he never had to hurry.

Darren listened attentively as they pitched their project, then took a few minutes to leaf through the script. Charlie knew that Darren had a bit of an ego, and sometimes overacted to make his performance stand out from the rest of the show. But he seemed like he'd be a good fit for the role of Max.

"Late night shooting," Darren said thoughtfully. "It's cool that you have Greenholt Gardens. How many days, do you think?"

Charlie and Ronni exchanged a glance. "Probably three," Charlie said. "Not more than four."

"Hmm." Darren nodded, considering. "Do you have anyone for the other roles?"

"No one yet for Ingrid," Charlie said. "Michelle Santos has agreed to play Gwen."

Darren perked up. "Michelle Santos? Really?" He looked impressed. "She's gorgeous. Is she interested in acting?"

Charlie shrugged. "Yeah. She said she'd do it."

Darren grinned slyly, looking between Charlie and Ronni. "So that's all that was going on? You're all just working on a film together?"

"What do you mean?" Charlie frowned.

"Oh, you know... there's some rumors going around..." Darren paused, then waved his hand, dismissing the subject. "It doesn't matter. We all know how this school loves to spread stories." He leafed to the end of the script and skimmed the last couple pages. "I'm pretty sure I can do this part for you. Let me read through the script, and I'll let you know my thoughts. Then we can talk about what days you want to shoot."

"That's great!" Ronni said. "We were really hoping you would say yes."

Darren looked up, grinning widely. "Sure. It sounds like it'll be fun." He nodded to Charlie. "Tell you what. Just make sure I look half as good in the film as Michelle Santos is going to look." He smirked. "I have the feeling she's going to steal the whole show."

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The Ingrid role was not as easy to fill. First, they went to Allison Hayes. Allison had dominated the theater productions in the last two years, starring in two of the shows and having prominent roles in two others. She was slim and blonde, with features like a Barbie doll. She loved to act, and had undeniable talent.

But she said no to their pitch. Senior year, no time, and besides that, she didn't want to be out so late. Charlie was disappointed, but mentally crossed her name off the list.

Second choice: Jennifer Addish. A junior, and a friend of Ronni's. Jennifer was shorter than Allison, with long brown hair and a bright smile. She was active in the theater, having been cast in most of the productions for the previous year, and she was also a fairly talented make-up artist. According to Ronni, Jennifer would spend entire Sundays looking up make-up tutorials on Youtube and trying them out.

But Jennifer also said no. "Sorry, Ronni, but my parents would kill me if I was out that late on a weekday," Jennifer said. "You sure you can't make it earlier?"

Ronni exchanged a look with Charlie. "I don't know if they'll let us film at the garden any earlier. We're basically trying to take advantage of my brother working there at night."

"Well, if you change the time, maybe I could do it," Jennifer said. "But I can't do it that late."

Charlie mentally marked Jennifer as a 'maybe'.

They moved on to their third choice: Kim Mink. Senior. They found her after school, sitting at her usual green bench outside the auditorium. Kim always looked stressed out - the way she was slumped on the bench, she would have looked natural with a cigarette dangling from her fingers. But Kim didn't smoke, so instead she held a venti cup from Starbucks. Kim had long dark hair that always fell around her face. Her father was Jewish and her mother was Japanese, and her Japanese heritage showed a little around her eyes.

Charlie knew that Kim considered herself an artist. She was mostly interested in drawing and painting, but dabbled in theater as well. When Charlie and Ronni explained that they were trying to make a film for the Apex film program, and wanted to shoot late at night at Greenholt Gardens, Kim just shrugged and asked to look at the script.

" 'Anything You Want'?" Kim read the title page. She took a sip of her latte.

"I might change the name," Charlie said.

"Nah, it's fine." Kim opened to the first page and started to read.

"We're hoping you can play Ingrid," Ronni said.

"Sure. I see her name right here. Ingrid." Kim pointed at the first page. Her eyes moved swiftly over the page and she flipped to the second. "Apex film program, huh? I looked into that, too. But I didn't end up applying. Glad to hear you got in. It sounds like a good program."

"Thanks," Charlie said, resisting the urge to tell her he hadn't definitely been accepted yet. "Yeah, I'm excited about it."

"Sure. I looked into it, but it wasn't for me. I want to get somewhere further from Pine Hills next year. The bay area, maybe, or somewhere on the east coast?" Kim flipped another page. Charlie couldn't tell if she was reading the pages, or just skimming through them. She seemed to be moving through the script too fast to be reading every line.

"Darren Mickels has said he'll play Max," Ronni said. "And Michelle Santos for Gwen."

"Sure. Those are good choices." Kim sipped her latte as she read. Charlie and Ronni sat next to her and waited patiently while she went through every page.

Finally, Kim flipped over the last page. "It's pretty good," she said, shuffling the pages into a neat stack "You want me to be Ingrid?"

"Yeah," Charlie said.

"All right." She handed the script back to Ronni. "I'll be in your film."

"You don't mind that we're filming so late at night?" Ronni asked.

"Not at all. I'm up anyway." She shrugged. "Who needs sleep?" Kim took a long sip of her latte.

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So, Kim Mink would be their Ingrid, and Darren Mickels would be their Max. Charlie called Michelle's phone later that evening. She didn't answer, but sent back a text that read "5 mins."

Five minutes later, his phone rang, and Michelle chirped, "Hi, Charlie!"

"Hey! I wanted to tell you some good news. Ronni and I managed to find actors to play Max and Ingrid."

"Really? Who?"

"Darren Mickels for Max, Kim Mink for Ingrid. Do you know them?"

"I know them. You didn't show them the script with the nude scenes, did you?"

"No. I showed them the other one."

"Whew." She paused. "Do you know when you want to work on it? I mean, at Greenholt Gardens?"

"Ronni and I are talking about it," Charlie said. "We thought we might try to get everyone there on Thursday?"

"Thursday. Another Thursday."

"Yeah, I mean, it gets harder to coordinate, the more people we have. I haven't asked Darren or Kim about Thursday yet. But Ronni says she can make it, and Nick is fine with that day. What about you? Are you busy Thursday night?"

"No, I can make it on Thursday," Michelle said. "But... do you think Nick would be okay if we came by tomorrow, too? Just you and me, without the others?"

Charlie hesitated. "You mean, to walk around?"

"Uh-huh. Walk around. Like before."

"I'll ask him," Charlie said. "I'll let you know."

The next day, Charlie asked Darren and Kim If they could come to Greenholt Gardens on Thursday night. Both of them agreed to be there. Charlie texted Nick and told him everyone had agreed to film on Thursday. He also asked if he and Michelle could come by later. Nick said yes.

"Should I pick you up?" Charlie asked Michelle.

"I'll come by your house," she said. "Like last time. I'll leave my car there."

Charlie didn't argue with her. That evening, he was surprised when she arrived around 7 o'clock, a few hours earlier than he expected her. It was Charlie's turn to cook dinner, and he had made spaghetti. Fortunately, he made a lot of it, enough for Michelle to have a plate. Charlie's mom was ecstatic to have her son's potential girlfriend over for dinner.

"I wish you had warned me we'd have company," Mrs. Tucker scolded Charlie, as they ate spaghetti. "I'd have made a dessert."

"We have creamsicles," Charlie mumbled.

His mom looked indignant but before she could speak, Michelle chimed in, "I love creamsicles!" So, after dinner, Mrs. Tucker went to the living room to watch TV while Charlie and Michelle ate creamsicles in the kitchen. Afterwards, Michelle insisted on rinsing the dishes and putting them in the dishwasher, while Charlie worked on storyboards for the film.

He watched her from behind as she stood at the sink. She wore a black dress that hung loosely against her body, and small black boots. The dress came to her knees, but became sheer for the bottom two inches. He could also see additional black straps over her shoulder, indicating a black bra. Did she have matching black panties underneath? Or nothing at all? When would he learn the answer?

At 10:30, they said goodbye to Mrs. Tucker and stepped out of the house. "Don't be too late!" she called after them, and Charlie assured her they would only stay at the gardens for an hour or so. He texted Nick that they were on their way, and Nick texted back saying it was all clear.

Charlie felt some anticipation as they drove. He kept glancing at Michelle, expecting that at any moment she would be undressing. He even considered the idea that he would glance at her and find her already undressed, having stealthily slipped out of her garments while his attention was on the road.

She was still fully clothed when they pulled into the parking lot for Greenholt Gardens. Charlie parked next to Nick's pick-up truck, which was the only other vehicle in the parking lot. He turned off his car, and took out his phone intending to send Nick another text. But Michelle exclaimed, "There he is!" and Charlie looked up to see Nick propping open the door for them to enter.

Charlie opened the car door and stepped out, and saw that Michelle was doing the same. He started walking towards Nick to say hello, but Michelle stopped in front of the car. "Just a sec!" she called out to them. She quickly tugged her dress over her head and tossed it carelessly onto the sidewalk. She was in her underwear, and Charlie could see that she was indeed wearing black panties to match her black bra.

"Wow," Nick said under his breath. Charlie echoed his sentiments. Even though he'd expected Michelle to strip before they entered the gardens, it still shocked him that she did it so casually out in the open.

He watched her as she reached back to unsnap her bra. "I'll put your stuff in the car," he offered as she pulled the bra away from her breasts.

"Oh, that's okay. You don't have to bother." Michelle tossed the bra over her shoulder, where it landed in a tangle in a parking space. Next, she slid her panties down her legs until they dropped in a circle around her boots. She stepped out of them and left them where they lay as she walked towards the two guys.

Nick watched her approach. "You're just leaving your clothes on the sidewalk there?" he asked. "They might be gone when you come back out."

Michelle shrugged. "It's a possibility." She stepped in close to Nick and pressed her body against him. "Hello!" she greeted him, just before stretching up and giving him a long kiss.

"Hey, Michelle," Nick murmured when she broke the kiss and slipped out of his arms. "My favorite nudist." He grinned weakly at Charlie. "Hi, Charlie." They entered the gardens through the propped door, and Charlie pulled it closed behind them.

The evening passed in much the same way as their previous night at Greenholt Gardens, except that this time they made no pretense at working on a film. Charlie led Michelle naked out into the gardens, and they made love in the Japanese garden under the light of the red lanterns. Afterwards, Charlie put his clothes back on and Michelle remained naked, and they met Nick in the snack bar, where they sipped drinks from the cooler and watched late night TV. Michelle sat even less modestly than before, stretching one leg to the side so that her pussy was clearly visible.

When it came time to leave, Michelle gave Nick another hug and kiss, and he walked them to the door. Charlie stepped out first, and immediately noticed that Michelle's clothes were gone. Someone or something had taken them. Michelle stepped out behind him and hesitated, looking down at the sidewalk. She didn't say a word, but resumed walking, passing Charlie on her way to the car. The bright lights of the parking lot illuminated her nude body as she headed towards the passenger side, acting as if her missing clothes had never existed.

Nick barked a laugh. "Michelle!" he called to her. "Come back. I picked up your things and brought them inside. I just wanted to see your face when you saw that they were gone." He laughed again, shaking his head. Clearly, he had expected more of a reaction from her. He disappeared through the door and returned with a neat stack of Michelle's clothes.

"Charlie will take them," Michelle said. Charlie accepted the clothes from Nick and said goodbye and thanks. Returning to the car, he handed Michelle her bra and panties but kept the dress. Michelle smiled and leaned against the front of the car to slip on her panties. Charlie tossed her dress into the back seat.

They drove back to Michelle's car while she sat in the front passenger seat in her bra and panties. They saw very few cars on the road at that time of night. As usual, Michelle had parked around the corner from his house, in that dark spot away from the street lights. He parked behind her and turned off the engine.

Their eyes slowly adjusted to the dark. Michelle unbuckled her seat belt but remained in her seat. "My mom and dad helped me buy that car at the end of last summer," she said.

"Wow. Nice parents."

"Yeah. My mom was tired of driving me around. Right after I got it, Mirella, my sister, her car broke down, so she asked me to drive her back and forth to work, for about a week. She worked evenings, so I picked her up from Macy's late at night, like more than an hour after the store closed." Michelle paused. "Not many people would be around that late, around those stores. The parking lots were always almost completely empty. I was driving through the parking lot and I noticed this trash bin, that was in the corner of the parking lot, away from everything. One of those big green bins with the lids, and I noticed the lid wasn't locked. I thought to myself, what if I walked up to that bin, took off all my clothes and tossed them into the bin? And just walked away?" She looked at Charlie. "Is that crazy?"

"Maybe a little..."

She laughed. "I know. I'm crazy. But once I thought about it, I couldn't stop thinking about it. The idea was so exciting to me. That's how my mind works, I get obsessed. It's the same reason I always think about crossing that bridge." She looked down at herself, her finger tracing the line of her panties where it crossed her leg. "So I made a plan. I put a change of clothes in my car, older stuff I didn't care about. When I got in my car to get my sister that night, I changed into the old clothes. Then I drove to Macy's early, and I parked near the trash bin. I got out of my car, walked to the bin, took everything off and threw it all away. I walked naked back to my car, got in, and put on the original outfit. Then I drove to the employee exit of the store and waited for my sister."

"Wow."

She smiled. "There's actually a point to the story. Ever since that day, I've kept my car stocked with spare clothes. I'm always prepared. If I see an opportunity and get a crazy impulse to do something, I always have a spare outfit to put on." She touched his arm. "You've asked me before, if I have clothes in my car, and I always tease you and don't answer, because I like to pretend I don't. But I always do, and I do now." She leaned forward and kissed his lips. "You don't ever need to worry about me, okay? And you can keep that dress. At least for today. I don't need it."

She turned and popped open her door. As she shifted to climb out of the car, Charlie suddenly said, "Michelle."

She paused. "Yes?"

"That dress. Is that what you were wearing when you left your house?"

"No. I wore something different. That's what I mean. I still have those other clothes, in my car."

"Okay," Charlie said. "Good night. Better go before someone sees you."

She flashed a smile at him and stepped out of the car. He watched her walking in her bra and panties to her own car. She unlocked the door and slipped inside. Her car started. He waited until she drove away before starting his own car up again.

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On Thursday, they had to follow a different method to get to Greenholt Gardens. Michelle didn't stop by his house; she went directly to the gardens. Charlie drove by himself, with all the video equipment he had checked out of the A/V room in his back seat. Darren and Kim each arrived separately. The parking lot was conspicuously full for a time when the garden was closed.

Even Nick was nervous, looking out at all the cars. "It looks like I'm having a party," he said. "You're not going to be here too long, right?"

"We all have school tomorrow," Charlie said. "We won't be long."

For the early scenes, Michelle was supposed to dress conservatively, and she arrived in a dark blue dress with long sleeves. Nick came by to help them set up, and he eyed Michelle while helping Charlie set up the lights. "I've mostly seen her with her clothes off," he whispered to Charlie, "but she looks pretty damn good with them on, too, doesn't she?"

"Shhh." Charlie glanced at Darren and Kim, but the two actors were practicing lines and hadn't heard. He turned his attention toward Michelle. Nick was right, she did look damn good, maybe too good. She was supposed to look chaste, to symbolize the initial reservations Max and Ingrid had towards each other. But Michelle's dress was a little too tight, clinging to her curves, emphasizing her bosom.

Kim had her long hair up in a bun and wore a dressy blouse and skirt which gave her a polished look. Darren was also dressed up in a long sleeve shirt and crisply ironed slacks. Charlie surveyed his three actors and decided they matched each other pretty well. They would look natural sitting at a table together in a garden, at a country club, or maybe a cocktail party.

Darren and Kim treated each other like two well-acquainted professionals, bantering back and forth, dropping cryptic references to previous experiences in the theater department. Kim had a latte in her hand which she was sipping like a cocktail. Michelle joined them at the table which would be the setting of the first scene, and the two actors focused on her.

Michelle was in good spirits; she laughed easily at whatever Darren and Kim said to her. Charlie tried to eavesdrop on their conversation, but kept getting distracted by all the setup he and Ronni had to do. He could tell that the two actors looked at Michelle as a mystery to solve; neither of them understood why she was there, and they were both curious to know the answer. Why would a senior cheerleader with no previous interest in acting suddenly decide to be in a random film project? What was her connection to the project? Michelle wasn't giving them anything, to their mild frustration.

"All right, everyone," Ronni told them. "Let's get started."

For the next hour, they worked on the first scene. Charlie had them go through the entire scene several times while he filmed from one angle, then he moved the camera to a different angle and had them go through the scene several more times. He had them repeat particular lines while filming close-ups. Ronni monitored the shot list, checking off the shots one by one.

"I wish we had more time," Charlie muttered to Ronni.

"I know," Ronni replied. "Me too. But I think you're getting enough to put this scene together."

"Yeah, maybe." He didn't have any choice. It was past midnight, and he couldn't keep his cast for much longer than he already had. "All right, let's call it a night."

He thanked the cast and let them know they were done. Kim immediately gathered her things and headed for the parking lot, explaining that she was late for another commitment. Darren lingered, ostensibly to help put away the equipment, although he seemed more interested in sitting and chatting with Michelle.

Charlie listened in on their conversation, scowling as Darren offered to meet with Michelle sometime to practice their lines. "Maybe after school?" Darren suggested.

Michelle suggested that they should find a time when Kim was also available, because if they were practicing lines, then shouldn't Kim be there, too? "Of course," Darren agreed, but now he didn't sound quite as enthusiastic.

Finally, Darren stood. "I should get going," he announced loudly. He looked at Michelle. "Walk you to your car?"

"No, that's okay," Michelle said. "I need to wait for Ronni."

Darren nodded. "Okay then. Good night, all! See you bright and early at school tomorrow!" He turned and strolled confidently towards the snack bar and the parking lot.

Michelle watched him out of the corner of her eye, waiting until he disappeared through the door of the snack bar. "Whew!" she said. "So glad he's finally gone!" She reached behind her back and tugged down the zipper to her dress. Swiftly, she peeled the dress down her body, tugging her hands out of the sleeves so that they were turned inside out. She pushed down her undergarments at the same time, and in less than a minute had stripped down to her bare skin.

Ronni blinked at her. "I'm really not used to you doing that."

Michelle shrugged and grinned. She bundled her clothes into a ball and set them on a table. "Tell me what I can do to help."

"That's all right. We got it." Charlie zipped up one of the camera bags. "You didn't give him much time to get to his car, you know. He's probably still walking through the snack bar. He might be looking out the window at you right now."

Michelle shook her head. "Oh, don't try to scare me." She stepped up to one of the lights and studied it, finally locating the switch and turning it off.

"Careful," Ronni warned. "Those lights get pretty hot."

Charlie jumped up. "Yeah, let them cool down for a bit." He walked over to Michelle, who smiled and took a step away from the light. She stood with her hands behind her back, gazing at him expectantly.

He couldn't help but look down at her body. Why had she stripped? He hadn't expected to do anything with her that night, other than work on the film. Did she expect another nude walk through the gardens? More time watching TV with Nick in the snack bar? Or had she just decided she wanted to be naked?

"Um... do you want to unplug those extension cords and roll them up?" Charlie pointed at two long orange cords which led to one of the outside outlets. Michelle nodded happily and darted away to do as he asked.

Nick came down from the security room to help them pack up. He lifted his eyebrows at Michelle's nudity but didn't comment on it. With all four of them working, it took no time at all to get all the equipment bagged up.

Ronni glanced at Michelle before turning to Charlie. "I need to go home," she said. "I can help you carry this stuff to your car, but then I gotta leave."

"We can take it all in one trip," Michelle suggested. "If Nick helps. I need to head home, too. Let's all walk together." She reached down and picked up one of the camera bags, hoisting it on her bare shoulder. "Oh, Charlie..." she said. "Do you mind putting my clothes in one of the bags? So I don't have to carry them? They won't fit in my purse."

"Oh... sure." He picked her clothes off the table and pushed them into the bag he was holding. Nick picked up the two remaining bags, and they walked as a group to the snack bar.

Charlie opened the door to the outside first, and he took a moment to prop the door open with the big rock that sat nearby for that purpose. It wasn't until Michelle was already outside that he realized that his first move should have been to scan the parking lot and warn Michelle if Darren was still around. Fortunately, the only four cars in the parking lot belonged to the four of them that remained.

Charlie popped open his trunk, and Nick helped load the equipment inside. Michelle gave Charlie the bag she was carrying, and he found space for it in the trunk. "Good night!" she announced. "I'm going to head home." She walked over to Nick and gave him his usual goodbye kiss, then turned to Charlie and gave him an even longer kiss. She even walked up to Ronni to give the smaller girl a hug and a kiss on the cheek, and the shock on Ronni's face was clearly visible.

"See you!" Michelle sauntered over to her car and opened the door. She was affecting an air of indifference towards the fact that she was still completely nude, but Charlie knew her well enough to recognize that she was actually very thrilled by what she was doing. She climbed in and started her car, leaving her door open.

Charlie closed his trunk and said good night to Nick and Ronni. He was well aware that Michelle's clothes remained in one of the bags in his trunk, and he knew Ronni also remembered, because she gave him an incredulous look. But neither of them said anything. Ronni got into her car and Charlie got into his, and Michelle seemed to be waiting for them. As soon as they both had their cars started, Michelle closed her door and put her car in reverse. Michelle's car was the first one to leave the parking lot, and by the time Charlie pulled out onto the road, Michelle's car was gone.

His phone rang as he drove. He picked it up, expecting Michelle, but it was Ronni.

"Hey," he answered.

"Her clothes are in your trunk. You know that, right?"

"Yes," he said. "She did it intentionally."

"So she's out there driving and she's still completely naked. I mean... is she going to be all right?"

"Yeah. She has extra clothes in her car. She was just putting on an act for us. Pretending like it didn't matter that she wasn't wearing anything. Like she didn't have to care."

"Well, she convinced me," Ronni said. "Geez, Charlie. She's quite an outlier, isn't she? Even after you told me about her... I never expected she'd get so comfortable so fast being naked at the gardens in front of us. She's really into the whole nudist thing, huh? She strips off her clothes like it's nothing."

"Yeah. I don't know. Maybe she's just happy to have a place where she can be herself?"

"Hah! Yup. Her naked self." Ronni chuckled. "Yes, she does seem to be happy about that."

Charlie changed the subject. "How do you think we did tonight?" he asked. "Do you think we made good progress on the film?"

"I think so. You'll have to watch the footage to see. But yeah, you probably have enough to edit that first scene." Ronni paused, and Charlie could hear the click-click-click of her turn signal as she made a turn. "I'd like to say we could finish in two more nights of filming. But probably more like three."

"Probably three. You're right."

"Get some sleep, Charlie. Maybe tomorrow we can eat lunch in the A/V room and look at what we got?"

"Sure, sounds good."

"Charlie?"

"Yeah?"

"Be sure to take Michelle's bra and panties out of that camera bag before you check it back into the A/V closet tomorrow. Okay?"

"Oh. Yeah, right."

"Good night, Charlie."

"G'night." He disconnected the call.

When he finally arrived home, it was close to two in the morning, and he should have gone straight to bed. Instead, he was at his computer, uploading the footage from one of the cameras. He watched a close-up of Michelle, in that tight blue dress that clung to her body, her face turned up towards the light, a smile on her perfect lips. He knew that when he had the footage uploaded to the editing computer, he would edit it all together to tell the story he had written, a story where Max and Ingrid were the main characters and Gwen was the ethereal symbol of their attraction. But he also knew that in his heart, this film was about Michelle and no one else.

He rewound Michelle's scene to the beginning and watched it again.

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Charlie passed Michelle in the school hallway the next morning. She waved. "Having a good day?" she asked.

"Tired," he replied, and she laughed.

Charlie struggled to get through his morning classes. He nodded off during his Euro Lit class when the teacher had them watch the first half of "Sense and Sensibility" in a dark classroom. During lunch, he met Ronni in the A/V room and they uploaded the previous night's footage onto the computer in the editing bay. They watched some of the clips and agreed most of the shots looked pretty good. The sound wasn't as crisp as Charlie wanted, but he expected he could fix that later by having the actors re-record some of their lines.

"Any plans this weekend?" Ronni asked. "Doing anything fun?"

"I'll be here tomorrow, probably," Charlie said. "Editing. I don't have anything else planned."

"You're not going to see Michelle?"

"Probably I will. But we don't have anything planned."

"Better hurry and ask her," Ronni said. "The day is half over already."

Charlie didn't respond, pretending to be focused on the editing software. He hid the panic that suddenly bloomed inside of him. Should he have asked Michelle out already? Did she already have plans? When was he supposed to schedule something with her? He hadn't ever had a girlfriend before, he didn't know how it was supposed to work.

Where would he take her, anyway? He felt like he'd already used up his best option, the weekend before. Could he take her to dinner? A movie? Maybe just an invitation to his house. Or would she think that was boring?

He waited until the end of lunch before trying to contact Michelle. Ronni left for her class, and Charlie slipped into a stall in the restroom. He sent a quick text to Michelle: "Busy?"

She wrote back. "Class is starting. What's up?"

He wrote, "What are you doing tonight?"

A pause before her response came back. "Family thing. Call you later?"

He frowned. He wrote back, "Ok." The bell rang and he had to jog to his next class.

He kept checking his phone through his afternoon classes, looking for something from Michelle, but nothing came. Not a big deal. She was in her own classes, after all. The final bell signaled that school was out for the weekend, and Charlie walked to his car. He set his phone on the passenger seat and took his time starting the car, in case Michelle called.

I'll call her when I get home, he thought. If she hasn't called me by then.

He drove home and pulled into the driveway. On his way in, he checked the mail and found a large envelope addressed to him. The envelope showed the seal for Jefferson University. He couldn't wait; he ripped open the envelope and peeked inside. It contained a packet of documents, and at the very top of the packet he could see a cover letter.

The cover letter was addressed to him. It read, "We are happy to inform you that you've been accepted into the Apex Film Program..."

He closed the envelope and clutched it in his hands. "Wow," he breathed. "I got in. I actually got in!"

He rushed through the front door and into the living room, where he emptied the contents of the envelope onto the living room table. He could see forms to fill out, a pamphlet describing the program in detail, a page showing the photos and listing the credentials for all the professors.

Charlie seized his phone. Now he had a real reason to call Michelle, and he wasn't going to wait another minute. He went to his contact list and found her name. Just as he was about to press the call button, the phone buzzed in his hand. Michelle's name appeared on the caller ID.

He answered the call. "Michelle!"

"Hi, Charlie." Michelle spoke rapidly. "Here's the thing. My grandparents are coming over for dinner tonight, and my mom really wants me to be there. So I really have to be there. She wanted to have a family dinner with my grandparents like we used to, but then Mirella said she has to work, and Marie is complaining because she wanted to go to her friend's house, and they're all going back and forth, and if I tell my mom I want to go out instead, she's really going to be upset. And she's really going to want to know where I'm going and what I'm doing."

It took a moment for Charlie to remember why she was explaining this to him. "Oh. Yeah, it sounds like you should be there for dinner," he said. "Hey, do you want to hear some good news?"

"What?"

"I'm in! I was accepted to the Apex film program."

"You were! That's awesome, Charlie! I knew you would be! Congratulations!"

"Thanks! They sent a letter in the mail."

"Yay! I'm so glad for you! Does your mom know yet?"

"No," he said. "She's still at work. I just opened the letter barely five minutes ago."

"I bet she'll be happy."

"Oh, definitely. She'll want to go out and celebrate."

"Yes, you should celebrate!" Michelle said. "You and your mom can celebrate tonight. Then tomorrow, you and I should do something to celebrate."

"Like what?"

"Anything you want. You decide." She hesitated. "The only thing is, I told Vanessa that I would go shopping with her in the afternoon... but maybe you and I can meet later?"

"Sure."

"I don't want to cancel on her again. She already thinks I'm acting flaky and there's so much I'm not telling her right now. She doesn't even know about the movie we're working on."

"It's fine. We can meet later. What should we do?"

"Anything you want." This time she said it in a sultry whisper, and Charlie felt a tingle go down his spine. He knew she wasn't just talking about picking a favorite restaurant or a special dessert place. She was offering herself as the award for his accomplishment, and leaving it to him to decide what he would do with her, and where. Charlie had no doubt that if he asked her to sneak into his house and spend the evening in his bed, she would agree to it. But he also knew that he wouldn't waste her offer on anything so tame, and maybe she knew it as well.

He felt his blood stirring as he considered possibilities. Anything you want, she said. What did he want? Had he developed a taste for the forbidden because of his contact with her? Had her fetish invaded his desires, an arousal born of seeing her aroused? Or had he always been this way, deep down, and she had just brought it to the surface?

"Here's what I want us to do to celebrate," Charlie said, and he told her what he wanted.

When he finished speaking, she was silent for a moment. "Charlie..." she spoke quietly. "I don't know if I can do that. I mean... it might be too much."

"I know."

"I think it's going too far. Isn't it?"

"It is. You're right," he said. "I was just getting carried away. How about this, what if you hang out with Vanessa on Saturday, and we'll do something on Sunday? You have any plans on Sunday?"

"No. I'm free on Sunday."

"I'll call you. We'll do something together Sunday afternoon to celebrate. We can get ice cream or something."

"Okay."

"That'll leave you free to hang out with Vanessa, for as late as you want Saturday night. So you won't have to rush."

"Okay."

"I'll call you. We'll figure it out."

"Sunday?"

"Right. Sunday."

They talked for a few minutes more, about Jefferson University and what college life would be like for him, until Michelle had to leave to help fix dinner. Mrs. Tucker came home soon after, and as predicted, she was overjoyed when she heard of Charlie's acceptance into the film program. That night, they went out to Olive Garden to celebrate.

"What about Michelle?" Mrs. Tucker asked in the car. "Do you think she'd want to join us?"

"She can't make it tonight," Charlie said. "But it's fine. We're going to get together and do something this weekend."

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Charlie drove to the school the next day to do some work in the editing bay. He was surprised to find Ronni waiting for him when he arrived.

"What are you doing here on a Saturday?" he asked her as he unlocked the green door to get into the school.

"I came by to see if you were working on the film," she said. "I was just about to text you to see how it was going. The film's been in my head a lot lately."

"I'm just about to start on it," Charlie said. "Come on in."

For the next few hours, Ronni sat with him in the editing bay as they looked at the footage from the cameras and organized it into useable pieces. Charlie usually worked by himself, but he had to admit that the editing went quicker with Ronni there. She had a sharp and organized mind and kept notes on the different clips and where the pieces would fit into the film.

Daryl dropped by and looked surprised to find Charlie with a new girl. Charlie introduced Ronni to the security guard and explained that he was working with Ronni on a short film. Daryl grinned, and Charlie suspected that Daryl wasn't buying that his relationship with Ronni was completely platonic. Charlie knew that Daryl was going to tease him about being a player the next time the guard caught him alone.

Charlie showed Daryl some of the footage they had edited together. Although Michelle was clearly recognizable on the screen, Daryl didn't say a word. He nodded his approval when the clip ended. "Looks good," he said. "I think you got some good actors in there. Show me the whole thing when it's done?"

"Sure," Charlie said.

"I gotta keep walking," Daryl said. "Don't stay too late."

Charlie didn't intend to. He had plans for later.

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He ate alone that night, in a Gozerburger restaurant twenty miles west of Pine Hills. He had a gozerburger with cheese, a large fries, a large Sprite. Afterwards, he walked to a Starbucks in the same strip mall and sat for a while, sipping a large coffee while he prepared a shot list for the next filming session at Greenholt Gardens. He watched people come and go, and as the hour grew late, he saw more and more empty seats around him.

It was all just killing time. He had told his mother that he would be out on a date with Michelle that night, celebrating his acceptance into the Apex film program, and now he had to fake like that's what he was doing. In reality, Michelle was out spending time with Vanessa and her other friends. She had gone shopping with them, and probably afterwards they had gone somewhere for dinner.

Just after 11 o'clock, Charlie gathered his things and returned to his car. He pulled onto the highway, heading back to Pine Hills. At first, he had the radio on, tuned to a local pop music station, but after a few miles, the music got on his nerves and he turned it off. The miles passed in silence.

Charlie drove past the sign that let him know he was entering the city limits of Pine Hills. Instead of remaining on the road as it curved to the southeast towards his neighborhood, he took a left and headed north. After a mile, he found Benham Road and turned onto it. His eyes slid over the same landmarks he had passed the week before, when he had driven north on the same road with Michelle. The houses, the intersections, the gradual shift from residential properties to commercial.

When Charlie finally saw the glowing letters of the Macy's sign in the distance, he looked down at the clock on his dashboard and saw it was approaching midnight. The store looked dark; Charlie knew it closed at 10:00 PM on Saturdays. The lights were on in the parking lot but he only saw three cars parked there, close to the store. Maybe a cleaning crew. Charlie moved into the left turn lane and turned onto the street that ran adjacent to the store.

He kept the speedometer at exactly 25 miles per hour. Any slower and he might draw attention. As his car approached the next intersection, he scanned the corner of the parking lot for a dumpster or trash bin. He saw something there, but it looked like some kind of electrical box. At the corner, he turned right, continuing his circuit around the Macy's.

At the next corner of the parking lot, he could see a wall of concrete blocks enclosing a rectangle, with one side of the rectangle left open. Inside the enclosed space, he could see a dark shape sitting in the darkness. The wall was tall enough to hide the dark shape from the view of the street, and as he drove closer, Charlie caught a glimpse of the corner of the shape before it disappeared from view behind the wall. It was a green trash bin with a black lid. This was it. He was sure of it.

Charlie turned left and entered the parking lot. The lot was completely empty in this area, but Charlie avoided the temptation to cut straight across over the lines. Instead he carefully wound his way over to the green trash bin. He pulled into a spot in the shadows, about forty feet from the bin, and turned off his engine.

Charlie checked the time. Five minutes to midnight. He looked at Macy's through his rear-view mirror. The main entrance to the department store was located on the other side of the building. This side looked like it was used for unloading trucks. The three cars he had seen in the lot were on the other side of the building, hidden from view.

He checked his phone for messages. Nothing. He pulled the lever to recline his seat, leaning back but not so far that he couldn't keep an eye around him. He reached over and opened his glove compartment, rummaging around until he found a small bottle. He pulled it out and closed the glove compartment.

Charlie slowly undid his zipper. He reached in and found his cock. It was already partially erect and stiffening rapidly in his fingers as he pulled it out of his zipper hole. After taking a quick look around to make sure the coast was still clear, Charlie opened the bottle and dribbled some lubricant onto his palm. He reached down and started to rub it over his cock.

The time on his dashboard had reached midnight. Charlie watched it as he stroked himself. 12:01. 12:02.

A car appeared in the distance, driving along the same road that he had arrived on earlier. Charlie tucked the bottle of lubricant under the seat and watched the car. It turned, and now the headlights were pointed at him, driving towards him. Charlie couldn't identify the car because of the brightness of the headlights. He watched warily, ready to shove his cock back into his pants if he saw police lights on top of the car.

The car turned into the parking lot, and he saw it from the side. It was Michelle's car. Charlie relaxed. His hand found his cock again, and he stroked it back to hardness as he watched her driving through the parking lot.

She didn't drive in his direction, but instead headed for the adjacent side of the lot. "Where are you going, darling," Charlie murmured. "No, no, no. That's too far. Are you crazy? That's way too far." Michelle pulled into a parking space at the edge of the parking lot, at least a hundred feet away. Instead of picking a spot in the shadows, as Charlie had, Michelle parked almost directly under a lamppost. He was astonished that she had parked so far away. He felt a nervous flutter in his stomach when he considered the distance.

The door to her car opened and Michelle stepped out. Charlie stared at what she was wearing. She looked like she was dressed for church. She had on a white dress that became sheer lace as it crossed over her shoulders. The dress came to her knees. She wore matching white heels on her feet. Michelle stood next to her car, looking around. She carefully avoided looking at Charlie's car, as if she pretended it wasn't there.

After a moment's hesitation, Michelle closed her car door. She opened it and closed it a second time, probably making sure she hadn't accidentally locked it, then turned towards the concrete structure containing the trash bin. She began to walk across the parking lot towards the bin.

Charlie gripped his cock in his hand, watching her intently. The tap of her heels against the asphalt was audible as she came closer and closer to the bin. She knew he was there, sitting in his car, but she didn't look at him. It was like the game they had played, that first day in the girl's locker room, where she pretended he was invisible.

Michelle reached the trash bin. She tried to lift up the black lid and flip it over, but struggled with the weight and awkward leverage. After two tries, she gave up and left it closed. She turned, looking over her left shoulder at the Macy's but standing so that her front faced towards his car. Her dark hair fell over her right shoulder, black against the white dress. She reached back between her shoulder blades and he knew that she was undoing a zipper.

Charlie stroked his erection, watching her. The top of her dress, which had clung to her curves before, now came loose, and she slipped the fabric off her shoulders, demurely drawing it down her body. He could see her bra now, white and lacy and hinting at the shape of the breasts underneath. She looked like a bride undressing on her wedding night.

Now she pushed the dress over her hips, and he could see that her white panties matched her bra. She bent over and tugged the dress down to her feet, then stepped daintily out of it. In her bra and panties, she held up that beautiful white dress, letting it dangle in her left hand. With her right hand, she lifted up the top of the trash bin. She tossed the dress in and it disappeared into the darkness.

Was her heart beating fast now? Did she look around at the empty parking lot, feeling her vulnerability, perhaps savoring it? Half-naked, wearing only her underwear, her dress gone forever in the shadowy abyss of the bin. And now he watched as she reached between her breasts to undo a clasp there. Her bra came loose and her breasts were revealed. The bra went into the bin as well.

She slid her panties down her legs and he could see the dark line of her pubic hair. She stood up straight, still facing him, the panties balled up in her hand. He admired her nude body as she tossed the panties into the trash. Now she was naked, her beautiful clothes tossed away like rubbish.

But she wasn't done. She removed her heels, one at a time, and tossed them into the trash as well. For a lingering moment, she posed next to the trash bin, naked and barefoot, pushing her hair back with her fingers, pretending to look at the store while offering him a long look at her body. She turned, and now he saw her in profile as she faced her car. Maybe she was realizing how far away she had parked, and how long a walk she had ahead of her. Her first steps were tentative, but once she started walking, she moved with deliberate slowness, as if taking a casual stroll under the stars.

Charlie picked up the bottle of lubricant and squirted some onto his palm. He rubbed it liberally onto his cock, urging it to greater rigidity. Tossing the bottle onto the floor of the car, he quietly opened his car door and slipped out. His hard cock still jutted out from his zipper, gleaming with the coat of oil he had just applied. He looked for Michelle; she was almost a third of the way to her car. He walked after her, his pace slightly faster than hers. He wanted to catch up with her but didn't want to rush.

He fell into line behind her, closing the gap between them. His eyes admired her long legs, her perfect ass, the tiny protrusion of labia visible at the top of her thigh gap. Rising higher to her graceful back, the way her dark hair flowed between her shoulder blades like a stroke of calligraphy. She walked a straight path toward her car, heedless of the lampposts and where they cast their light. More than once she walked through a pool of light as bright as the day and her nude body was clearly displayed. Charlie circled around these bright spots, unwilling to put his erection on display in the same way. He didn't want to tuck it back into his pants; he liked the way it pointed towards Michelle, as if straining to reach her.

His shoes tapped on the asphalt. He made no effort to keep his steps silent, and Michelle must have heard the rhythm of his walking behind her, coming closer and closer. She kept her eyes forward, making no acknowledgement of his presence, until the moment she stepped into the glowing circle of light cast by the lamppost next to her car. Suddenly she stopped; she whirled to face him. Charlie was ten feet away, still in the darkness, and he also stopped. Their eyes met.

Charlie slowly walked towards her, closing the distance between them. He could feel the cool air on the hot skin of his cock as it throbbed with the desire to press against her. It would be the first part of him to slide against her skin, to go between her legs, to enter her.

He crossed the threshold of the light, and now his body was also illuminated, caught in the bright glow of the lamppost. Michelle reached out and caught his cock in her fingers. She squeezed it while leaning forward to press her lips against his mouth. Charlie groaned, returning her kiss, consumed by the feel of her fingers gripping his shaft.

Michelle backed up, step by step, towards her car, and Charlie followed her without even realizing it, tugged by his cock, knowing only that he wanted to remain near her. Her calves hit the front bumper of the car, but instead of stopping, she let herself drop lightly onto the hood. She climbed up onto the car, releasing his erection so she could support herself with her hands. Pulling herself further up the hood, she brought her feet up and let her legs fall carelessly open. She watched him, waiting to see what he would do. Her dark eyes dropped to gaze at his erection.

Charlie reached down and caught hold of her ankles. He pulled them up, off the car, and pulled her legs towards him, around him. Michelle didn't resist; she let herself be pulled down the hood of the car, her pussy being pulled towards his waiting cock. He leaned forward, the head of his penis pressing against her glistening slit. Perhaps it was the lube he had spread liberally onto his shaft, or perhaps it was her own arousal that allowed him to slide so easily into her. He went in too quickly, faster than he had intended, and heard her gasp in shock. The entire length of his cock was suddenly buried deep inside her. He started to pull out, but her legs clutched tightly around his waist and tried to bring him in deeper still.

He clutched her hips, lifting her bottom off the car to give him a better angle. The sight of her underneath him, her naked body splayed across the car, and the outrageous realization that they were having sex in the middle of the Macy's parking lot made Charlie delirious with desire. He didn't hold back, knowing that the longer they took, the greater the chance that they would get caught. They fucked furiously against each other like animals, Michelle matching his rhythm thrust for thrust. Her fingers dug into his shoulders and he could feel her nails even through his shirt.

She came first, her back arching, her eyelashes fluttering towards the night sky. Her hair made a dark fan against the red paint of her car. For a moment, he felt the illusion that she lay on red silk sheets, that he was making love to her on a bed that somehow sat in the middle of the parking lot. Afterwards he would sprawl next to her, he would hold her, and they would lay together naked on those red sheets, watching the moths flit around the streetlight above them. They would lay together, waiting for the sunrise, and the next morning cars would arrive and park around their bed, shoppers would walk by where they still lay intertwined.

The ecstasy rose like a shriek within him, an irresistible force, and suddenly he was flooding inside her, his essence connected to hers in the surge that erupted from his cock. Her legs clutched around his waist, squeezing him tightly, holding him deep inside her while she milked him for every drop.

He leaned over her body, breathing hard. His cock was still inside her, warm in the sheath of her pussy. The cloud of arousal lingered over his awareness, making him feel like his feet had detached from the earth. He was floating above Michelle, looking down at her. Michelle, his Michelle. The flush in her cheeks looked so lovely, the way her lips were slightly parted. He would use softer lighting if he could, to capture how beautiful she looked at that moment, diffused lighting, so his own shadow wouldn't be visible on her skin...

The sense of urgency came back to him all at once and his surroundings clicked back into acute focus. He rose quickly, pulling out of Michelle, and looked around anxiously while he shoved his penis back into his pants. Although he didn't see anyone and the parking lot looked as empty as when he had arrived, he suddenly felt as if eyes watched from all around them, a sea of spectators to their scandalous act.

He gave Michelle his hand and helped her down from the car. Neither of them spoke a word. Michelle hurried over to the driver's door. Her clothes were lost in the dark depths of the trash bin, so the car was her only way to cover herself. Charlie watched her climb into the driver's seat and close the door. He was taking small steps backwards, instinctively moving out of the circle of light into the shadows.

Michelle turned on her engine. He waited for her headlights to come on, but her car started moving while they were still off, and he understood that she didn't want to put a spotlight on him while he was crossing the parking lot. He turned and walked briskly to his own car, listening to the sound of hers as she cut across the parking lot towards the exit.

By the time he reached his car, Michelle was driving into the distance. Charlie climbed in quickly and turned on his car. He also left his lights off when he started driving, suddenly certain that someone was watching his car and trying to take down the license plate. He pulled out onto the street and intentionally drove in the opposite direction from the way Michelle went. If the police were going to chase him, he'd at least make sure Michelle got away. Bonnie and Clyde.

Besides, he didn't want to accidentally pass the spot where she'd pulled over to get dressed. He liked to imagine her speeding through Pine Hills, still naked behind the wheel, his cum leaking out of her onto the seat.

He flicked on the headlights. The police never materialized, and as Charlie drove north, picking streets at random, he changed from being a criminal fleeing a crime scene to just another teenager driving around late at night on the weekend. He turned his car east, not quite sure where he was but knowing he would eventually cross a familiar road.

His phone buzzed. A text message. It was from Michelle.

"Congrats on getting into the film program!" And she had put an emoji blowing a kiss. He smiled.

The light ahead of him turned red and he slowed to a stop. He picked up his phone to send a message back. He thought for a moment, then quickly typed, "I love you, Michelle". His finger hovered over the Send button.

The light turned green before he could press the button. He set the phone down and drove.

What if he sent it, and she didn't send anything back? They had just shared an unbelievable experience. Michelle had said they could do anything he wanted, and he had asked her to fulfill a crazy public sex fantasy. And she had done it. Naked in the parking lot of the store where her sister worked, where she intended to work after graduation, fucking out in the open on the hood of her car. An incredible experience, a memory that would turn him on every time he thought of it for the rest of his life.

Why take the chance of ruining this high by sending a text that she might not return?

At the next red light, he picked up his phone and quickly deleted the message. The light turned green, and he set his phone down and kept driving.

He was lucky for the rest of the drive home. Almost all of the lights were green.