

VALENTINE'S GIFT



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Where they burn books, ultimately they burn bodies- Heinrich Heine

Valentine's Gift

Part 1

We watched Bethany as she seated a two-top in the dark formal dining room a few tables away. Like many young women she had too much product in her hair, too much makeup on her face, and the formal dress she wore would have been fine if it wasn't a size too small. Meg, her aunt and my former girlfriend, was waiting on

me.

I paused for a moment to let Bethany walk back to her hostess station at the entrance. “She’s just a kid,” I said. I tried to tell myself it didn’t worry me; it did.

“She knows what it means to go out with you,” Meg told me. She’d watched with growing concern as months turned to years and no young man who’d never appreciate the gift claimed Bethany’s cherry. “And she’s getting too old to dream.”

The request had been as unusual as my relationship with Meg, but I’d long since given up on the idea of a normal romance. I don’t know if there is a normal relationship anywhere but syrupy romance novels anyway. I’ve seen a few white picket fences in my time, not many, but I’ve never had use for one.

“She doesn’t need me,” I said.

“She could get fucked in five minutes. She’s wants passion,” Meg said. She was close to begging. “As a favor... for old times?”

I toyed with the small candle on my table, running my finger through its flame just fast enough not to get burned. I’d already decided to do it, but it was good to know the poker face still worked. “As a favor. You’re paying for dinner, and this one, too,” I said, standing. The restaurant was Noix; small and upscale it had a little niche in the heart of downtown Walnut Creek.

“Make sure we have this table, Valentine’s Day, 8:30. Go over the rules with her again. I’ll call you tomorrow to go over the details.”

Meg hurried after me as I walked out.

“You’re going to be gentle with her, aren’t you?”

Meg asked.

“No,” I told her without looking back.

“Wait.”

I turned.

“It’s just... she has body issues,” Meg said.

At twenty-one Bethany had held her baby fat longer than most of her peers, but she was far from obese, and that little bit of extra padding was over decidedly womanly curves. By twenty-four she’ll be a beauty if she discovers sex can be more fun than Haagen Dazs. I could see that. I don’t know why Meg couldn’t. Sometimes we get too close to see things clearly, or maybe it was just nerves. It’s not every aunt who arranges her niece’s deflowering. “Did I ever make you feel bad about yourself?” I asked, then walked away in peace.

I picked Bethany up as appointed on Valentine’s Day, depositing a single red rose in her hand and telling her to hurry. Her dress was red, brand new, the sizing still in it, doubtless from Ross or some other discount

clothing outlet. The material was too heavy, too red, and this time ridiculously tight. To complete the look she'd opted for matching red lipstick and pumps with ludicrously high heels, and as a topper-seamed red stockings. At least there were no ostrich feathers.

"You're gorgeous," I said, putting my hand on her soft hip. We'd work on how to dress later.

"Thanks," she told me, grinning, the hint of a blush on her cheeks.

"Do you have an overcoat?"

"I'm not cold."

"I didn't ask if you were cold," I snapped, raising my hand to her pointed little chin.

"I'm sorry... I didn't know we'd started."

"This isn't a game. We don't start and stop. Meg should have explained that to you."

"She did."

"Now show me your coats," I told her, menacing her with a gentle voice. She had a nice beige raincoat, better than I expected. "Put it on. It'll make for a dramatic reveal."

Bethany had never been in a Porsche before. I wasn't crass enough to ask, but she was obviously impressed. In a previous life I'd despised Porsches, though everyone had to respect their engineering. It's hard to

hang the engine out behind the rear wheels of a car and make it turn well. If the engine's up front and you corner too hard it plows or slides. Let your foot off the gas and it comes back under control. If you put it at the back and take your foot off the accelerator the engine acts like a pendulum and the car spins on the weight's tangent, leaving the driver nothing to do but pray. That's why auto makers abandoned the rear engine design decades ago, every one except Porsche, which somehow manages to defy physics and make its cars corner- even if they were a tad less forgiving to the aggressive driver.

No, the problem with Porsches has always been their styling. And let's get something straight here. Porsche has always been a one model car company regardless of the many names they stuck on that bodywork at any particular time- and that bodywork has been hideous. For 40 years you could see the Volkswagen Beetle they started with hiding underneath a sheet metal shell- a shape originally proposed by one A. Hitler, whose later design for the entire world would be viewed as somewhat lacking. For decades Porsches possessed all the passion and charm of a Prussian geology teacher, but a couple of years ago they changed things ever so slightly. They gave their creation's hips and nose a little tweak. They stopped trying to hide what it was- instead

letting you see the beauty of the machine beneath, and everything changed. If you'll excuse the mixed metaphors, the beetle grew into a beautiful butterfly. It's what Bethany would become when she stopped using food as anxiety medication. That's something I could teach her.

Half an hour later we were sitting in Noix. It was packed, but Meg was treating us like royalty, and she was prepared. I'd come by the previous night to go over the plan and give her what she'd need for her niece after dinner. I did my best to make small talk with Bethany, and despite our age difference I think I put her at ease. She was a good if somewhat self-conscious conversationalist, and she was obviously intelligent, though not educated, and shy- things I fully expected from Meg's description.

"May I?" Bethany asked, looking at the bubbles exploding on the surface of her champagne.

I nodded.

She picked up her glass. It was a rule I imposed before ordering it. She'd have to ask before every sip. I didn't want her drunk, or even buzzed, not for the night I had planned. I wanted her to have just enough to take the edge off and not a drop more, and stone cold sober when she made her decision. I abstained completely.

I let Bethany order for herself. I'm not an ogre. My only request was that she leave room for desert, the souffle flambe I told Meg about when we were conspiring the night before- it takes 45 minutes to prepare and I didn't want spend too long in the restaurant. That's enough time to give a virgin cold feet, and Meg, ever on the ball, brought it out five minutes after our plates were cleared. The staff put on a show, lowered lights and provided a sparkler backdrop to the cool blue frame licking the delicate bronze pastry, and all too soon, for Bethany anyway, who was becoming noticeably nervous, we were staring at a pair of mints on an empty table. "It's time," I told her and signaled to Meg who escorted her to the employee's restroom to prepare her while I went to wait in the lobby.

When they appeared a few minutes later, Meg had a large plastic bag looped over her arm and was guiding a nervous looking Bethany by the shoulders, her coat wrapped around her, sleeves empty, tied at the waist. Meg parked Bethany and handed me the bag. Inside I found exactly what I expected, Bethany's new dress and underwear- discount Frederick's of Hollywood type stuff, only not as good, over-embellished and ultra frilly, one hundred percent nylon, chemically softened and almost greasy to the touch.

“Are you seeing your beau tonight?” I asked Meg.

“We’re having a late dinner.”

“Do you want the stockings and garter belt?” I asked, pulling them out. “They’re not very good, I’m afraid.” Bethany blushed.

“That’s so thoughtful. I’ll think of you every time I wear them.”

“You do that. Here,” I said, handing her the bag, “take it all. Give what you don’t want to Good Will.”

“Thanks. I got a present for you, too. Bethany has it... You’ll find it soon enough.” Then she turned to her niece. “You do still have it, don’t you?”

Bethany nodded, her bright red lips pressed tightly together, looking even thinner than usual.

“Well, don’t you loose it.” Meg gave me a peck on the cheek. “Enjoy,” she whispered.

A few minutes later Bethany and I were walking down Main Street, my hand around her hip.

“Where are we going?” Bethany asked when it became obvious we weren’t headed for the car.

“Someplace special,” I said.

Like most small cities Walnut Creek’s downtown proper is quite small and we were soon out of it, crossing Ygnacio Valley Road, and passing a strange mix of mid-rise speculation built office buildings and

older single story cinder block structures housing kitchen remodelers and car customizers. The offices across the street, at one point of what was optimistically called the ‘Golden Triangle,’ were supposed to house scores of brokers and bankers lured there by politicians selling the city as the region’s new financial hub. It was a nice try, but a flawed idea. The few remaining power players in those industries on the left coast had no reason to move 30 miles inland of San Francisco where they’ve been for a century.

The white elephants still manage enough tenancy to keep the wrecking balls away, and there’s eternal hope that maybe things will change, but little Walnut Creek will never be San Francisco, or even Oakland, and I wouldn’t want it to be. There’s a charm to old low rise commerce, occupied by businesses with workers that actually do things with their own hands, things you can see. I don’t over romanticize blue collar workers- I don’t romanticize much, at least not in its modern connotation.

True romance is rampant and untethered, nearly animalistic, honest. That’s the kind of romance I craved as I steered Bethany off the sidewalk and around one of the dirty concrete columns supporting the elevated BART tracks so that we could only be seen from the less used Pringle Avenue.

I pulled my handkerchief out and wiped her mouth, removing the offending lipstick with three or four good swipes. “There,” I said. “Now you don’t look like a little girl playing dress-up,” leaving the tiniest hint of offense written on her face that vanished when I reached for her coat’s belt. As per my instructions Meg had drawn it together right to Bethany’s neck to give her a sense of security, but only secured it with the belt, which I released. Bethany took a deep breath as it fell open and cool air flowed over the bare skin underneath-soft, smooth, untouched by any man. I let my hands roam over her wide hips, feeling the bone, fat, and muscle beneath.

I raised one hand to find a large firm breast high on her chest, a small rock hard nipple in its center. I brushed it with my fingers twice, then reached down with my other hand, spreading her hot vertical lips, putting a finger on each side of her hard little button and manipulating the wet flesh slowly. Bethany was breathing loudly. I silenced her by pressing my lips to hers, letting my tongue explore her mouth slowly. I thought about taking her right there- more than thought about it, had to tear myself away from that virgin flesh nearly any man would have killed for, leaving poor Bethany panting, frustrated, and unconcerned that her

coat was open.

I drew my fingers across the hard fabric, leaving two dark trails across her shoulder before slowly drawing her coat together again, not as high as Meg. I left her upper chest exposed so that anyone who looked could see the outlines of her collarbones and guess she was naked underneath. Then I retied the belt and we continued our journey silently down Main Street, listening to the traffic and the sound her heels on the sidewalk. By the time we got to Parkside Bethany had guessed where we were going. Her eyes were filled with the giant Single Oak Hotel across the street, a nearly block sized spec building that replaced an arcade, plumbing supply store, and a few elderly homes twenty years earlier. It had seen several owners come and founder before being bought by a chain with enough cash and know-how to keep its doors open. And though I already had a room there, just for a moment I considered taking her to the far less elegant Motel 6 next door, letting her stand rigid its lobby's harsh fluorescent light while I registered.

As we waited for the light to change, the Cadillac dealer at our backs, Bethany took a deep breath, the Champagne's alcohol now completely out of her system. "My breasts," she confessed quietly. "One is smaller than the other. I thought you should know

because you only touched one.”

“Left is bigger than the right in about 90% of women,” I told her. “About the same percentage have their left eye higher than their right.”

“I never noticed that,” she said.

“Because you never looked. People aren’t symmetrical. It makes us interesting.”

The light turned green and I guided her into the crosswalk, through the hotel’s large porte-cochère, then into the lobby. The Single Oak is the nicest hotel in town, but at three stars there’s room for improvement. The atrium is beautiful. The floors are dramatic to the point of theatrical, though I’m afraid they appeal more to the opera than classical music fan, if you know what I mean. But Bethany’s heels sounded wonderful on that chess board granite floor in the lobby- sharp, assertive, determined, even if Bethany herself seemed to be wavering. In retrospect maybe it was a bit too obvious she had nothing on beneath that coat. She was the very definition of a novice, but there weren’t many people around. Of those who did see her I’m sure some assumed she was a prostitute, others the loser in a Valentine’s bet. It wouldn’t matter in twenty minutes.

A few moments later we were alone in the elevator. As soon as the doors closed I spun Bethany towards me and saw that deer in the headlights look in her eyes that

I always love, but there was too much of it. When a new sub looks like she's about to panic it pays to inflict a sensation or give her a task. "Take off your shoes," I ordered. That did the trick. I could see the gears in her head starting to spin. It took a few seconds for the message to trickle down from her head to her feet, but when it did her shoes came off quickly, revealing freshly polished nails in her all red theme. "Good girl," I told her as she sank more than two inches.

The elevator arrived at our floor with the strained tone of a sick electronic bell. As soon as the doors opened I ushered Bethany into the hallway.

"My shoes," she said.

"You won't need them," I told her as the doors rolled shut behind us.

"But..."

I took my hands off her and started heading down the hall towards our room. Bethany looked to the closed elevator once then realized her situation and hurried after me. By the time she caught up I'd already swiped the key card and had the door open. If she'd been tardy I would have closed the door behind me and left her in the hall for five minutes to teach her a lesson.

Part 2

The instant the door closes I pull the belt from its loops. “Let me take your coat,” I say. Bethany stiffens as I slip it from her shoulders, and just like that she’s naked, except for the hinged handcuffs securing her wrists behind her. In her right hand she holds the rose I gave her, gently so as not to drive the multitude of tiny thorns along its stem into her delicate fingers. In her left is Meg’s gift to me, a long flexible riding crop, tipped with a leather slapper in the form of a heart. I take them both, let the rose drop, then spin Bethany to me. She’s drawing long slow breaths, getting a good look at the crop she’s been holding for the last half hour for the first time.

“Your aunt knows me too well,” I say, running the crop’s business end across Bethany’s breasts, large and relaxed under gravity’s pull. They’re creamy white, with wide light mahogany areolae surrounding prominent nipples hardening rapidly in the cool air. Despite her confession they were nearly identical in size. I put the heart’s little notch against her right nipple and play with it gently. “I bet you can hardly wait to have this biting into that soft virgin flesh,” I say. “I bet you’ll mark beautifully.”

Bethany bites her lower lip. I don’t think she knows she’s doing it.

“But we’re not going to start with this,” I say, tossing the crop onto the queen sized bed almost ten feet away. The room is a suite, with a large open area which will give me room to set up the equipment. I can’t say the décor does anything for me, a kind of modern-traditional-deco-nouveau blender melange with baroque details. “What do you think?” I ask. “It’s not the Mark Hopkins, or even the Claremont, but it is convenient.” I spin Bethany again, grab her by her fleshy upper arms, and propel her to the large window overlooking Main Street, the elevated BART tracks beyond, and Mount Diablo in the distance, visible as a shadow topped with tiny twinkling radio tower beacons against the dark purple sky. I push Bethany against the window flattening her breasts. I try to imagine the cold, the sensation of her nipples tightening even more.

A BART train heads west. We’re too high for drivers on Main to see without craning their necks, but anyone on the train can probably just make out a naked woman in the window with a double take. Bethany squirms a little, but I hold her fast.

“It’s not too late,” I whisper. “It can all still be a mystery when you wake up tomorrow morning. You can still be outside with them- all those nothing people going nowhere. I can call your aunt. She can bring you some clothes and take you home. Just say so.”

Seconds tick by. Bethany remains silent.

“Have it your way,” I whisper. “Press that pretty nose of yours against the glass and spread your legs... further. Now don’t move.”

When I checked in I brought one large gray nylon suitcase with me containing all the things we’d need. I have a pair, but one would contain everything needed for an overnight stay. I put in on the coffee table and unzip it.

“The glass is cold,” Bethany complains.

“Yes, it is,” I tell her, approaching from behind with the head harness. I grab her hair, pull her head back until she almost loses balance, and slip it on. It’s a heavy collar topped with a series of straps that wrap around the head with a built in ball gag, and a blindfold in the form of two padded leather disks. I secure it top down, giving her one last chance to tell me she wants out, but her mouth is already open, waiting for the ball.

It’s not the first time I’ve done this. Bethany’s aunt, and several other beautiful young ladies, have worn this very same harness, so even though it has more than half a dozen buckles to give each wearer a truly custom fit, I get them all adjusted and secure in less than a minute, checking to make sure Bethany’s truly blinded, and that the ball is inserted far enough to keep her jaw open and tongue down. I then methodically tighten all the straps

so she can feel the squeeze on her head, just tight enough so as not to cause pain. I leave the collar a bit looser. She can't feel like she's about to be choked. A newly blindfolded and gagged sub can panic easily; you have to be careful.

"It's too late, now," I tell her, looping the ring at the front of the collar in my finger, guiding her to the end of the bed. I push her back until she hits it, loses her balance, and sits involuntarily. I use the collar to keep her from going onto her back, something which could be painful with her arms pinioned.

I draw the curtains. If we have attracted an audience it's time to end the show. I remove the metal tubing from the suitcase and start assembling the stockade. It's a bondage device in the form a frame that holds a person ass up on their knees and elbows, ideal for non-nonsense punishment or sex. Designed for discreet travel it breaks down and fits in a single suitcase with room to spare for other toys. It goes together in minutes in the large open area in front of the bed on the gaudy two-tone carpet. Horizontal tubes that lay flat on the floor have cuffs for each ankle and wrist. A vertical tube rises and holds the victim's neck just above their elbows via a half moon metal neck rest, with an automatic locking carabiner to clip to their collar so they can't raise their head. Another vertical tube rises

further back and holds a horizontal cross bar at the subject's hips, keeping them from lowering their ass or moving it forward. It's all quite adjustable, and incredibly strong even though its assembled with hand fasteners.

Bethany goes into it like a lamb, offering no resistance as I guide her, securing first her ankles, then her neck. Finally I removed her handcuffs and guide her wrists into position. The bars only needs a few adjustments before she's immobilized to my satisfaction. I don't think she's having second thoughts. Her nipples are rock hard at the tips of her hanging breasts, and her slit is beginning to shine. But if she is it doesn't make any difference if she is. She'll be a woman before she's released.

I pull out the last accessory I brought for the stockade. It's a flexible arm I attach to the hip rest. Next I add something to it I know she'll like, the eroscillator, which, as their advertising says, is the only vibrator recommended by Dr. Ruth Westheimer. I part Bethany's vertical lips and position its tiny bronze head close to her still hidden clitoris. I plug the machine- and being particularly heavy duty it is plugged in- no chance of batteries getting weak at that critical moment- into the foot switch for more convenient control, and plug that into the wall. A test elicits a tiny hum from the

machine- and more than that from Bethany. Oh, she's ready. She's been ready for years.

Meg's gift comes as a complete surprise, swung to bring its little black heart onto Bethany's belly with a sharp crack. As she jumps and yelps into her gag I step on the vibrator's switch for two or three seconds. The crop comes down again as soon as I release the switch. And so I alternate, pain and pleasure, neither in the extreme, hitting nearly every inch of her exposed skin just hard enough to leave a light pink mark that will vanish by morning. Before long Bethany looks like the wallpaper in a Las Vegas motel's honeymoon suite. She's panting, trembling, not quite able to bring herself to orgasm with the little tastes of vibration I'm giving her. That's about to change. I dial Meg's number on my iPhone.

"Hello?"

"There's somebody here who has something to tell you," I say, putting the phone to Bethany's head, holding it so the more or less steady stream of drool falling from her ball gag onto the carpet doesn't wet the mouthpiece.

I step on the vibrator's pedal and hold it.

Ten seconds go by, then twenty. Bethany is struggling, whimpering, not wanting it to happen but willing it at the same time. And all at once she can't

resist.

I knew it was either going to be very quiet or very loud. It's the latter. Bethany comes like a choking seal who's swallowed a squeak toy, quite unladylike, complete with clenched fists, curled toes, and creaking leather as she struggles against the unbearable pleasure. When it subsides I lift my foot and the room falls silent except for my captive's panting and sniffing.

"Bethany? Bethany?" Her aunt's voice is soft and tinny through the phone's little speaker.

I bring the phone to my ear. "She's all tied up," I say; I've been wanting to use that line for years. "I'll send you some pictures later."

"Don't you dare," Meg says. I hang up.

I bend over and whisper in Bethany's ear. "Isn't that right?" I caress her breasts, hot and wet with sweat, then retrieve a tissue, a condom, and the injector.

"Blow," I say, holding the tissue to her nose and wiping it.

I'm not sure she's ready for the little plastic lube injector, but I am. My erection is threatening to rip through a pair of very expensive trousers. The device is a thin hollow plastic tube filled with heavy lubricant, open at one blunt end, a plunger at the other- you get the idea. Don't get me wrong, Bethany's own lubricant is running down her inner thighs. She's open; she's

never been so ready for a man in her life. But that's not where lube's going.

She freezes when the injector touches her anus. I insert it slowly, all the way to the T-shaped cross bar that stops over-insertion and gives you something to hang on to- the plunger can be a bit stiff with the heavy lube. And you can just use it like a syringe, but there is a smoother way to do it, an expert way if you will. By holding the plunger still and withdrawing the body it leaves the entire passage evenly lubricated. There's no guess work in how fast to withdraw the body as you try to push the plunger in at the same speed.

Bethany struggles a little at the unfamiliar feeling as I lower my trousers and unroll the condom on an erection that's waited far too long. She starts when I grab her wide hips and press the tip of my erection against her anus, mumbling a muffled complaint into the gag which becomes quite alarmed when I begin to push. She's clearly not expecting to be deflowered like this, but it's not like I'm giving her a choice. Even with the lube it's a tight, tight fit. I press in slowly, her distressed pleadings diminish then fall silent as I bottom out, as she comes to grips with her first fucking. I give her a moment to stretch then start pumping- out slowly, in just a bit faster. She caps every thrust with a terribly unladylike little grunt as she grudgingly accepts her

fate.

What Bethany hasn't yet learned is that this isn't about my pleasure alone. I move my knee and activate the eroscillator's switch. This elicits an immediate reaction. She squeals and pulls at her bonds. Clearly she doesn't want to associate the ass fucking with pleasure, but she has no choice. I won't let her be a martyr. In just a minutes she's moaning quietly, passionately, in time with my strokes which have grown ever faster, ever rougher. I manage to hold back until I feel her struggle beneath me, feel the waves of orgasm course through her body then I have to let go. I close my eyes and grit my teeth. I gasp, then moan, throbbing, feeling my ejaculate splash back against me in the condom's rubber. I take tiny strokes to ease the sensation but even that becomes too much and I have to stop. I fall against Bethany's smooth back, panting, eyes closed.

I'm shrinking, spent. I pull out quickly, leaving the condom sticking obscenely out of Bethany's tight little rosebud. As I come to my senses I release the eroscillator's switch before she can come again. I like my subs to have orgasms, but too many can spoil them.

After a minute I catch my breath and zip up, get my phone, and turn on its camera. I fill the screen with Bethany's condom punctuated ass and take the picture, sending it to Meg with the subject line, 'Wish you were

her.’ Then I go to the bathroom to wash my face.

Part 3

I take the pill, swallowing it without water. It takes several attempts, but finally goes down like a piece of rusty metal. I look at myself in the mirror. My face is red and moist. I feel... I feel... I have to get out. I have to get some air. Bethany may be the one bound and gagged but when I look in the mirror I have the horrible feeling she’s the one enslaving me. It’s not the first time I’ve had that feeling. It’s not the first time it’s been true. Ask Meg.

“I’m taking a walk,” I tell her. “If the maid comes in tell her we don’t need the turn down service.” I can’t help laughing at my own joke.

Bethany doesn’t think it’s so funny. She mumbles a nearly panicked protest into the gag and pulls at her bonds as I leave. It’s not a particularly safe thing to do. In the world of safe and sane BDSM you never leave a sub bound or gagged and alone, but what’s a world without some risk? And I won’t be gone long. There is a story I’ve heard half a dozen times at San Francisco S&M clubs, possibly apocryphal, of John Phillips

leaving Michelle tied naked to a bed for a weekend while he did overdubs on Dedicated to the One I Love, and his family turned out all right.

That's always a hard picture for me to paint in my mind. It seems so long ago. I know bondage has been around for centuries, but it seems so modern that even when I see pictures taken at the dawn of the photographic age of naked women bound there's a disconnect, as if it can't be real. I guess we all like to think we discovered that sex can be about something more (or less) than procreation, that we were the first humans to apply our creativity and intellect to the mating instinct.

There's a police car parked by the Taco Bell across the street from the hotel, its radar pointed north down North Main. It must be a slow night, he's resorted to catching drivers whose senses are adjusted to freeway speed only a block from the 680 off-ramp on a road almost as wide as the freeway. I think I'd kill myself if I was a cop in a small, nearly crime free town, writing tickets for 40 in a 35 zone, or handling barking dog complaints.

"Hey," I say, looking right at the cop car. "I've got a girl bound and gagged in my room upstairs... She's a virgin. She was a virgin, anyway." But he's too far

away to hear, and would doubtless draw the wrong conclusion anyway. Never tempt a bored cop. I begin to move, turning, walking around the corner, under the freeway, the dirty underpass reverberating eerily in sympathy with the tire noise above, and end up in an older part of Walnut Creek punctuated with a few new condo developments. I often walk at night, getting lost in mile after mile of single story suburbia, every house the same, every house different, either stunned by the glory or it all, or racked by its profanity.

I remember one warm summer night under a full moon, it must have been after midnight, I was looking for a shortcut between San Miguel and Walnut Boulevard. I walked down a poorly paved unlit two lane road with no sidewalks and stopped at a cluster of three ranch houses built right next to each other. One, with a little retaining wall out front, caught my eye.

“What kind of monsters lives there?” I asked out loud, to no one. I don’t know why I asked it. I just did. They were perfectly normal houses. To my surprise, though, I got an answer. An older full sized white van drove up from the opposite direction. A man in a wheelchair was lowered by a noisy lift that was doubtless dripping hydraulic fluid. He was accompanied by a beautiful young woman with long straight black hair that seemed to vanish in the darkness

against alabaster skin that reflected every hint of moonlight. She was wearing a denim miniskirt, her long shapely legs almost glowing in the night. She was probably the man's daughter, maybe his caretaker. By the way they treated each other I knew they weren't a couple.

He went up the ramp into the house without turning on a single light, the buzz of his wheelchair's motor fading into the background behind the crickets. The girl followed, but turned back when they got to the door. She walked briskly to the van, retrieved something small, then stopped when she saw me. She wasn't scared or startled, just a bit surprised to see someone standing across the street. "Nice night," I said easily, smiling, believing my original question wrong- until she raised her pert little nose a little and walked back to the house without a word. Maybe she thought I couldn't afford a car, or maybe there was some other deal breaker I'll never know the answer to. It's too bad. And maybe I shouldn't judge. I didn't know her any better than she knew me, but she looked like she could have used some passion.

"Thank you," I said after the door closed, because I had my answer, but I wasn't talking to her, and never would again. It's funny how things like that stick with you; that was year's ago now, shortly after I broke up

with Meg. It still makes me melancholy to think about it, and I can think about it for hours when walking.

There isn't time to take a long walk, though. As a matter of fact I've been gone too long already and I'm walking back as fast as I can without breaking into a jog. It's only been about fifteen minutes but it feel like hours. I'm overcome with guilt. I'm appalled that I took such a risk. There could have been a fire. Bethany could have vomited and choked because of the gag. A crazed intruder could have gotten in and done God knows what. Sometimes I do leave when things get too close too fast. That's a character fault I'll probably never break, but I always return. That's an asset.

And there's another reason to return. The Viagra is beginning to work.

The elevator ride is hell. I just about jump out when the doors open on our floor.

The hallway to our suite is warm and still, almost exactly like I left it. There's only one change. Bethany's shoes are by the door. The staff is pretty sharp. I like that.

I open the door quietly. Bethany is still in the stockade just like I left her. She's breathing. She's relaxed, almost comfortable. 'It's time to take back control,' I think as I banish the doubts to the dark places

in the corners of my mind.

Part 4

“Honey, I’m home,” I say, then slam the door.

Bethany tries to speak through her gag.

“Did anyone come by while I was gone?” I ask, knowing full well that whoever deposited the shoes probably knocked.

Her mumbles become emphatic, even angry.

“Hush, child,” I tell her, maybe a bit too patronizingly, but it was that or laugh out loud. I put my hands on her warm round cheeks, half a dozen pink fading pink hearts still visible on them. “If anyone had come in they would have seen you were mine,” I say, giving the condom, still protruding from her ass like a limp rubber tail, a little tug.

I haven’t been able to make out a word she’s uttered through that gag, until now. “Bastard,” isn’t clear, or loud, but is discernible. If she had a little more training I would have gotten out my cane and taught her to mind her manners, but like any good government knows you have to take freedom in small increments or you’ll breed resentment and revolt.

I pull on the condom. It stretches and I knot the end.

Then with a bit more effort it stretches like bubblegum before finally popping out. I let it sail across the room with a little flourish. It's a perfect backboard shot, bouncing off the wall and into the wastepaper basket below. "Two points," I tell Bethany with a swat to the ass. Some days you've just got it.

I release the carabiner holding her collar to the stockade, then unbuckle the head harness and slide it from her head. Her hair is a mess, her face marked from the straps. Bethany blinks at the light as I kneel in front of her, press my nose to hers.

"Well, you got what you wanted. Do you want me to call Meg to come pick you up?"

"You wouldn't dare," she says.

"Then kiss me."

Considering I'd fucked her no more than half an hour earlier, and in the ass, she was a bit shy about the kiss, but she soon put real energy into it- then her tongue. I had to keep one hand on the floor to keep from falling into her, but I could play with her dangling breasts with the other. They were nearly perfectly conical under gravity's pull. Fondling gently at first, I added a bit more effort until I was working them like two pointed udders, grabbing a handful of soft flesh and stroking down firmly one at a time until I came to the firm terminus and gave first gentle, then firm pinches to

her adorable nipples. I was expecting a bit of resentment, but it only seemed to make her hungrier. As I pull my head back I give her tits a ‘Three Stooges’ two with one slap and stand.

I shed my clothes slowly, letting Bethany watch through her peripheral vision, pausing to press the eroscillator switch several times, teasing her with it, and with me.

“So how did you imagine it would be?” I ask.

“What does that matter now?” The girl has backbone. I like that. Her eyes are on me as I twirl the crop between my fingers. She jumps at the high pitched whistle. She hasn’t expected me to swing it so viciously. It’s close, but doesn’t make contact.

“Last chance, I’ve been patient because you’re not much more than a child. From now on I’m treating you like a woman. Kiss it,” I tell her, offering her the black leather heart at the end of the crop. She does. “Go on, tell me.”

“On the bed... on my back, my hands tied behind me... maybe after a spanking.”

I chuckle. “What a naive little bitch you are. Is that all you could come up with?”

“My aunt didn’t go into details. Did you expect her too?”

The backbone is back. The crop lands on her ass

with a crack that reverberates off the walls and a yelp that opens Bethany's eyes wide. That heart will be red. That one will last for two or three days. I kneel next to her. "You're getting two more of those as a reminder, but not now," I whisper in her ear. "This," I say, shaking the stockade, "is the only things that separates us from the animals, the only thing that turns sex into something greater than pigs and cattle experience. You stand at the pinnacle of evolution. You're God's greatest creation. Now use that massive hominid brain of yours, your God given intelligence, and tell me- what else did you imagine when you thought about me fucking you? What else excited you?"

"I thought maybe you'd have me keep my shoes on, that I'd... wrap my legs around you."

It's a start, not a good start, but a start. I can build on that. "You see, it's up to you to make it a transcendent experience. I can't do it alone," I tell her.

"So far, so good," she said. No need for a taste of the crop with that one.

I release all her restraints. "On the bed, on your back," I order.

Bethany scrambles to the bed, jiggling admirably.

"Center yourself. Now put your hands behind your back, cross your wrists." As she complies I tell her, "Those are tied there. You can't move them no matter

how hard you try. Understand?”

Bethany nods.

“Now spread your legs... wider. Bend your knees a little. There, that’s good,” I tell her as she readies herself for mounting. “It’s a good position for fucking.” I run the crop’s heart across her belly, up to her breasts, nearly flattened under their own weight, “but it doesn’t present the tits well. I believe I owe you two more for an earlier infraction, don’t I?”

“Yes.”

“Yes, sir,” I correct quietly.

“Yes, sir,” she says.

“You’ll get them,” I say, putting the crop’s leather heart tip to her lips, “...soon. Kiss it,” I order.

Again she does.

I run a fingertip slowly from her lips, down her neck, over her sternum and then lower. I let it sink into her belly button and pause, pressing gently. Bethany shivers and I begin to move it again. “When did you shave?” I ask. She’s done a good job, no cuts, no stubble, no irritation.

“Yesterday.”

“Keep it moisturized. It won’t itch as much later,” I advise. “Now thank me.”

“Thank you, sir,” Bethany whispers.

We’ll work on volume later. Training takes time.

Perfection takes a lot of time. I spread Bethany's sex wide with two fingers, revealing the pink inside. She takes a deep breath as I slide the crop's shaft through its valley, twisting it slowly, making it glisten with her juices from the heart to the wound leather grip. I hold it close for her to see, then rub it under her nose so she can smell her own excitement. "Open," I order, placing the wet shaft between her teeth. "Hold this. Don't you dare put any marks in it."

I get her shoes from across the room. Maybe they're not as bad as I originally thought. The shape is a bit vulgar- there's too much cut away at the top; the heels are too high; they're a bit too red, but they are lined. I slip them on her feet and have a Cinderella moment. They aren't too tight, which surprises me.

"Open," I tell Bethany, and grab the crop from her mouth. "It's time. Now don't move or its back into the stockade for a lot more than two." Her eyes widen as I raise the little heart to near the ceiling. I target the sensitive fatty bulge women carry on their inner thighs that they're always self conscious about, the ones that provide that nice soft landing when mounting, the ones that jiggle so nicely when swatted. The crop cuts the air with a sharp whistle. Bethany tenses but holds. The black heart misses her pouting lower lips by an inch and cuts into her left thigh with satisfying crack. "Good

girl,” I tell her as I move around the bed. “Now just one more.” I let her wait, then give her a matching mark on her right thigh.

From the foot of the bed I can see I’ve done a good job. They’re perfectly book-ended so one would meet the other were she to press her legs together, and they color match- a nice happy pink that will darken over then next few hours, but right now they’re almost the exact shade of her open sex. “We won’t need this for a while,” I tell her, tossing the crop away, climbing onto the bed.

There’s no reason to see if she’s virgo intacta. It’s not a good indicator, and it won’t make any difference in moments. I set against her opening and press, mounting her quickly, using my body weight to fall balls deep in one thrust. Bethany lets out a guttural sound, half gasp, half choking. Her eyes widen yet again. Her mouth opens. I don’t see any more as I lower myself onto her. I don’t arch my back. I don’t crane my neck. There’s no need for face to face intimacy. It’s not that I’m a pig, well maybe I am, but I want Bethany to learn that if you violate the rules a little, if you don’t commit yourself to one truth and let nature take its course it’s... liberating, but neither of us care right now. Our eyes are closed. She’s soft, even pneumatic as she takes my weight.

The pain, the shock, from being penetrated so suddenly gives way to passion, to pleasure. Bethany sounds like a squeak toy as I pump into her. She's still tense, probably having just figured out that I'm not wearing a condom, but it's a rare treat and sometimes you have to indulge. How often do you get a virgin? She's safe. There's nothing wrong with condom sex, but I'd be a bad daddy if I didn't let her know what it feels like to be fucked flesh on flesh given the opportunity.

Bethany wraps her legs around me like a vice. I have to pound to assert my authority, raising her hips off the bed and slamming them against the mattress, bouncing them off, establishing a rhythm. But soon it's a blur. My mind is going as I approach release. Now I'm not the kind of man who generally cares if my partner comes. My job is to fuck her, and orgasm or not, no woman I've ever been with doesn't know she's been fucked when I'm done. Her job is to learn to let go and come when I do or before. If she fails she's required to masturbate with sticky fingers when I'm done, and ask permission before coming. It's not that I have a terribly long kind streak in me. Orgasms are training tools. It's easier to train a woman to accept sex on demand if she comes every time. That's win-win, and I don't apologize for occasionally taking the easy road if it suits my purpose.

I sense Bethany is on the threshold and dig deeper. Despite her death grip on my hips I'm stabbing her so hard now I nearly pop out with every thrust. The passion is threatening to overcome her. She's about to break. "Don't you dare hug me, bitch," I hiss, not to be mean or to frighten, but because my eyes are rolling back in my head and I can't unclench my teeth.

She replies by releasing her grip on my hips, gasping, and letting out a low crying moan as she comes. I ravage her like a rag doll. In moments it's time. I grip her ass with both hands and pull her to me, planting my seed deep inside as I let go, punctuating my spasms with little half strokes before I begin to fade, to soften, to regain control of my body and mind.

It's over.

I lie limp on top of her. We both pant. We're both covered with sweat. I don't know how long I lie there. My back is cold when I pull my limp penis from Bethany's still snug sex.

"You're hands are no longer tied," I tell her, kicking her shoes to the floor, helping her slide between the sheets, and turning off the lights. I pull her to me spoon fashion. "Not a word," I tell her. "Think about it for as long as you like, but not a word until morning." I take a heavy breast in my hand and drift off the sleep.

I have her again about 3:00 in the morning.

Bethany's half asleep but spreads her legs willingly. I pump in and out slowly, lazily, letting her know there are moods to love making- all part of the breaking in process. I don't remember dismounting before I drift off again.

Part 5

I'm dressed before Bethany awakes. I've been out and back for a paper. I don't read it, though. I watch her sleep. She looks like the hostess Meg pointed out in Noix a couple of weeks ago, almost adolescent, quite innocent, until she opens her eyes and there's recognition, a hint of guilt, or maybe just a new self awareness that comes with womanhood.

"Breakfast is on the way," I tell her.

"May I..." she starts, looking at the bathroom, then hesitates, uncertain of whether to ask.

"Leave the door open," I tell her, "and take a quick shower, as hot as you can stand."

I scan the paper as she attends to herself and sigh. The Times, like most local papers, has taken a hit in recent years. It's shrunk by half, maybe more, and the little local reporting left has taken on a distinctive blog-

like flavor as the line between news and opinion, never sharp, blurs even more, with even the hardest news often reduced to a series of reconstituted bullet points at best, talking points at worst. There's a difference between knowing your enemy and becoming him. I think about writing a letter to the editor, but it would probably just end up in the online edition.

When the water stops I tell Bethany, "Don't dry. Come out here." Pink skinned, soaking wet, hair flattened like a wet spaniel, she pads out, leaving a few footprints behind her on the carpet before they fade towards the center of the room. She seems to notice last night's toys -the stockade, crop, head harness, and eroscillator- for the first time since waking, still laying on the floor where they were discarded. "Sit on the edge of the bed. Spread your legs as widely as you can while keeping your toes on the carpet and lean all the way back," I tell her.

There's no need for Viagra now. I almost falter and take her again right there, but I'm working to a plan and stick to it. "Play with your breasts. Make your nipples hard for me." Bethany strokes her spreading breasts gently. "Don't close your eyes," I tell her. "Look at the ceiling." It's time to teach her that even though sex is in the mind you don't have to lock out the world.

Sometimes being in tune with something larger than ourselves can heighten the experience. ‘Was it good for you, too?’ is the question of a cretin if you don’t already know the answer.

This is a difficult lesson when you’ve been taught by sentimentalized movies, romance novels, and paint by number pornography to internalize every feeling. It’s why blindfolded and bound submissives orgasm so easily, why it’s often good to treat them with them, but it can also make them lazy if it’s all they know, and I’m determined that Bethany will know more after a single day with me than some people learn in a lifetime.

It takes a minute or two, but Bethany’s breathing deepens, then her nipples harden. When her eyes flutter and she has to struggle to keep them open I know she’s ready. I put the paper aside and go to her, kneeling between her legs. The two hearts framing her sex are gorgeous, upside down as she’s on her back, having faded to a dull pink just a hue or two brighter than that raised by the hot water. I spread Bethany’s sex with my thumbs. She tenses slightly as my tongue touches her. She’s not expecting this, but a sub has to learn to accept pleasure graciously. I’m as gentle as I dare be. It’s a sure bet the pimple faced kids who didn’t fuck her didn’t go down on her either. I barely touch her to start, teasing the lengths of her lips and all around a bulging

clitoral hood until the little lady finally makes a tenuous experience. Too much is never a good thing in this area, so I stimulate around her until I sense she's ready, then I introduce Bethany to the gentle pleasure of the hummer, which slowly induces a soft rolling orgasm capped with deep breaths and sighs. I withdraw, still holding her open, savoring her taste and scent while still fighting the urge to drop my pants and fuck her even harder than last night.

I think I would have given in if it weren't for the knock on the door. Bethany jumps. I grab her by the hands and pull her from the bed. I kiss her hard, covering her face with her own juices, then nearly fling her into the comfy chair by the window.

"Don't move," I order, as I pull the bedspread, wipe my face with it, then drape it over the stockade. That might be a little too much for the suburban sensibilities of the hotel staff, but I leave the other toys where they lay as I go to the door.

There's a look of terror on Bethany's face as I touch the handle. She's gripping the chair's armrests so tightly her fingertips are white. I'm impressed with her obedience. I'm sure Meg would have run for the bathroom if she thought I was going to open the door for a stranger with her naked during our first encounter.

"Cross you legs," I tell Bethany. "Cover your breasts

with your hands... There, everything's concealed; you're a lady," I say, swinging the door open.

Part 6

The little room service man smiles without a word. I point to the coffee table next to Bethany's chair and he pushes the cart in. I think he's from South America, maybe Peruvian. Regardless, he's a consummate professional. He sees the stockade's outline under the spread and the scattered toys, but doesn't comment. He looks Bethany in the eye and nowhere else when he gets close. "Just leave it," I tell him as he puts the tray on the coffee table. I haven't moved from the door and slip him a twenty as he leaves.

"You made his day," I tell Bethany after I close the door. "I'm sure a naked white woman is quite an exotic sight in his eyes."

Bethany is blushing bright red, unsure whether to be angry or furious.

I don't let her decide. "Uncover yourself," I order.

She's about to come back with something smart when she sees my eyes dart to Bethany's gift. Her hands come down instantly.

"Now spread your legs as far as comfortable. When

we're alone you don't hide yourself from me. There's no need for obscene displays, but you're mine. You show yourself to please me. Understand?"

Bethany nods.

"I take mine black," I say, and that breaks the spell. She pours the coffee as I pull a second chair around.

We eat, croissants and coffee. The meal is nearly silent, by design. There's a lot to sink in. It's Bethany who finally speaks. "Last night... you didn't use a condom."

"No, I didn't," I say.

"Did you think about..." she says, stopping.

"I had myself tested after my last breakup. I didn't suspect anything. I was merely being considerate of my next girl," I told her. "That's you."

"No, it's not that."

"Then what?"

"Did you ever think about pregnancy?"

"I can't get pregnant," I tell her, "but thanks for asking."

"What about me?" she asks.

"You can get pregnant," I tell her, standing, moving behind her, "if you're lucky." I reach around and cup her breasts. "Don't you want children? You'd certainly have quite a story to tell your firstborn about last night."

“But...”

“Didn’t anyone warn you about men?” I ask, and just from the feel of her skin I know she doesn’t want to answer. “You’re not in the garden anymore,” I tell her. “Now get on your knees.” I guide her to an empty spot on the carpet and help her to kneel. I stand in front of her, my crotch an inch from her face. There’s one more level of virginity I want from her. “Have you ever given a blow job?” I ask.

“No.”

“Do you know how?”

She nods.

I unzip my trousers and press an erect tip to Bethany’s lips. She remains motionless, breathing through her nose slowly. I enjoy the sensation of her warm breath on my penis. There’s no need to pressure or punish her. She’s not being willful. I know its more intimidating than lying back and spreading her legs.

“Close your eyes. Don’t pretend you aren’t excited. I can smell it.”

Bethany takes the tip tentatively between her lips, but doesn’t open her mouth.

“Reach down,” I tell her. “Open yourself with your left hand. Touch yourself with your right. You won’t need them for anything else.” I often don’t allow women to pleasure themselves when they should be

concentrating on pleasing me, but I don't want Bethany developing any bad habits. Too many women are lazy when it comes to the art of fellatio. They try to get their hands involved, which is the candy maker's shortcut of adding caramel to every creation because it's cheap and sweet. A real blow job, mouth only, is like good chocolate. It doesn't need anything else.

Bethany opens her mouth and moves over my erection slowly, carefully. I haven't washed since last night, and as she tastes her own stale flavor I know she's reliving all the warnings she ever had about men, the ones she knew she always knew she was destined to ignore. Her start is tentative, but she knows what to do. I'm sure she'd practiced, if not on a dildo then a banana or a pickle. It only takes a minute for her to develop a rhythm, and soon she's giving a convincing blow job for a beginner. As a matter of fact I can only think of one pointer. "Use your tongue... back and forth as fast as you can."

Before long Bethany is lost in the rhythm, in the reality of kneeling before a man for his pleasure, the man she craves without knowing why. She's hypnotized, machine-like. Her eyes are open, unfocused, and I'm not far behind, approaching that moment every dom loves and hates, that brief moment when he loses himself in passion and the roles shift, but

they never reverse completely, at least not with me. At the first sign of spasm I withdraw accompanied by a near comical hollow popping sound. I let two sticky ropes of hot semen splash against Bethany's face before forcing myself back into a surprised mouth still frozen in a perfect 'o.' She nearly gags as I splash the back of her throat, but she instantly teaches herself to angle the shaft so as not to choke her. Deep throat it isn't, but it's a damn good blow job for a first timer. Bethany sucks like a woman possessed, coaxing out virtually every drop. I pull out, still semi-erect, and smile, because I've been watching, and Bethany hasn't swallowed, not once.

She looks up eyes wide, mouth full, the taste and texture surprising, slightly unpleasant. The look of confusion on her face is priceless. She's stopped masturbating and I know she hasn't come. I know she's not sure if she wants to anymore. It doesn't matter.

"Put your hands behind your head," I order.

Bethany's hands rise slowly.

I know what she's thinking. She doesn't want those sticky fingers in her freshly washed hair, but in it they go, and as she interlocks them I order, "Swallow."

She hesitates. I whip my penis across her face once, then again before putting a finger under her chin.

"Now," I say, and she does, her face registering a

mixture of disgust and elation. I zip up and pull out my iPhone for one more picture. “Cover your breasts,” I tell her. Bethany’s face will be in this one and I don’t want any accidental distribution to cause undo embarrassment.

If we’re careful we can still have some privacy. It won’t last long. In ten to thirty years digital technology will eliminate it entirely, for most of us anyway. Google has become an online directory of anyone who’s ever ended up in front of a camera naked, and that’s how they’ll make it acceptable- appealing to the base appetites of the proles, but it will move on to other things, like medical records then genetic codes- the tools of control are going digital. We already see body scanners at airports, a mandatory strip search of everyone who has the audacity to want to travel, sold to us under the banner of ‘security,’ made acceptable by technology and the promise that you can’t see the people who strip, see, and judge you naked, when in reality all it means is their privacy is protected, not yours.

I frame Bethany from the waist up, her hands discretely covering her nipples, and snap the photo. I’ll send it to Meg from the elevator. “Clean up here; pack it all away and meet me in the lobby. You have ten minutes before I leave. And one more thing.”

Bethany looks at me expectantly, but doesn't speak.
"Don't you dare wipe your face."

Two or three people are checking out ahead of me. As I finish paying Bethany comes up behind me carrying the suitcase wearing her jacket and shoes. "Are you sure you got everything?" I ask.

She nods. She's blushing furiously, and it's the blush that's attracting attention, not the nearly invisible semen drying on her face she's convinced everyone can see.

"Let's go." I spin on my heel and head for the door. I can tell by the sound of her heels on the granite that she's lugging the case. I don't tell her it has wheels.

We pass under the BART tracks before she figures it out for herself, giving me a dirty look that will garner her a spanking on our next date.

"I did think about it," I say.

"About what?" Bethany asks.

"There's a morning after pill in your coat pocket. Take it when you get home if you don't want to play baby roulette. If you do, so much the better."

"Really?" she says.

I quicken my pace. Men don't have an actual biological clock, but that doesn't mean we don't look in the mirror and think. I don't want to explain.

Bethany has a hard time keeping up. I never pull

more than ten feet away from her, but I judge by her heels' sound on the concrete. I don't look back, and I don't say anything else until we get to the parking garage on Main Street. Meg's car is on the ground level. Even in Walnut Creek you don't leave a Porsche in a parking garage overnight so we arranged to swap.

I put the case in the trunk and give Bethany a kiss on the forehead. "This is where we part," I say.

"Aren't you giving me a ride?" she asks.

"No. You're doing the long walk- of shame or pride depending on what you find in it... That's something I can't help you with. It's not as easy as popping a cherry."

There's a look of confusion on Bethany's face, as if she doesn't know what to say, but there's more.

"And one more thing," I continue. "As of right now you're released. Your virginity will always be mine, but you owe me no allegiance. You're a free woman."

Bethany's eyes open wide.

"Wait," I say, before she can tear up or yell, "I'm not rejecting you. I'm giving you your freedom to make a decision. I'm going to call you sometime today. If I get voicemail I'll never call back, never answer if you change your mind and try to call me. If you answer you're mine until I decide to release you. Freedom... slavery- they've always been choices, and if you look

carefully you can find one hiding inside the other. In the end it doesn't matter what you decide- not to anyone other than you... and me, but that won't make your choice any easier."

I get in and drive away. I glance in the rear-view without turning my head. Bethany is watching the car, her face neutral. I've taken that knife under the ribs often enough to know the pain of parting like an old shoe, but not so often that I won't risk it all for that biochemical cocktail we call love. I'll even drive a piece of crap car like Meg's- for a few miles, anyway.

The end

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(with credit to Titivillus- for his usual contributions)

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About the author

J. Manque is a writer based near San Francisco, California. He's currently working on a million word magnum opus about life and politics in the 1990s. It will likely be released as three or four novels. The first, tentatively entitled *Love on Concrete*, is scheduled for release in print and eBook form soon. Here's a brief synopsis-

In the late summer of 1994 an act of civil disobedience triggers a chance meeting between an amateur dominatrix and an IT specialist, resulting in an intense psychological wrestling match that mirrors the politics of change of the mid 1990s. It ends with a torrid confrontation in a rundown motel in Reno's dirty heat hours before the 'Republican Revolution' changes America in ways that are still echoing through the world today. In between the two explore the dark shadows of the human psyche reflected in aspects of sexuality never discussed among friends, but always lurking just out of sight in a dark world of sodium vapor lights and diesel choked streets- in short, our world.

-if you'd like to be informed when it's released, or when other J. Manque writings become available, online or in print, you can become a Twitter follower- twitter.com/jmanque

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