

# NEW PLEASURES

CHAPTER ONE



By  
JOHN D

## Credits and License

**Codes:** nose sex flirt voy

Copyright © John D 2012

John D has asserted his right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1998.

This piece of work is fiction and is adult entertainment, and therefore contains material of an adult, explicit nature. If you are under the age required to view this legally in your jurisdiction, or are easily offended by sexual explicit content or language do not continue reading.

The characters in this story are fictitious and any similarity to any persons, alive or dead, places or situations is purely coincidental. The actions described in this story are not endorsed or condoned by the author.

It should be noted that the age of consent in the UK is sixteen and therefore there are no graphic descriptions of any sex act containing characters younger than this age. There may be some characters under the age of sixteen in the book, but any sexual activities they may partake in, are not described in any detail so there are no underage participants in my sex scenes. It is on this basis, that this work is released so that it complies with all relevant legislation, but may not be uploaded to certain websites due to more stringent regulations.

This work is released under the Creative Commons license Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0), the full text of which can be obtained from the Creative Commons website. The story may be freely distributed unmodified and with the foreword and these credits attached. The story may not be reproduced for commercial purposes, or for profit, without explicit permission from the author.

The front cover for this book is by swo81 and is released under the Creative Commons CC BY-NC-SA 2.0 license, but the rights holder does not endorse this work. The link to this image is at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/photoswo/7288978146/in/set-72157629939088446>

## Preface

This story is the fourth instalment of the “Growing Pains” universe: Sixteen year old Andy is transfixed when an exotic dancer comes to stay with his family for a few days and is out of his depth as she flirts shamelessly with him.

This story is set in June 1998, although the Prologue is set ten years later.

The “Growing Pains” universe is a set of stories that centres around the life of Andy Williams and all those who got to know him as he grows up. While everything may not be totally clear, it will be the time the Universe is all released. For a fuller explanation please see my website under “Site and Story Credits.”

I shall try and keep to a regular posting schedule and will upload to StoriesOnline.net, asstr.org and my website. Completed stories will also be uploaded to Amazon Kindle, Smashwords and FirstyFish, where their internal policies permit.

Please provide feedback to me, either by e-mail, Twitter or website review, whether you enjoyed it or not; I like to be told and it is the only payment I ask for.

Kind regards,

John D

**Email:** [johndstories@gmail.com](mailto:johndstories@gmail.com)

**Web link:** <http://www.johndstories.co.uk>

**Twitter:** @johndstories and #johndstories

## Prologue

“Mummmmmmyyyyyyy!” My niece left my side ran the length of the driveway and threw herself into my sisters' arms, who stood in the archway to the little village hall with a broad grin.

“You two aren't very brown!” my pregnant little sister yelled as I walked up the road with a poorly-wrapped box in my hands, and then passed it to her.

“Yeah. Funny that. Given I've been in Reykjavik not the Maldives for the last two weeks, it's too not much of a surprise,” I said as I embraced her, although her head barely reached my chin. My four week Scandinavian tour had been amended by my little sister to include a fortnight looking after her Kafkaesque daughter but I had enjoyed taking her around the Atlantic island, although I wished Rhea could have joined us.

“You said it had a beach,” she replied as we broke still commenting on our lack of appropriate brownness.

“It does but, oh never mind, it's good to see you again. Iceland's great but it isn't home. How are you?”

Rhea looked up at me. “Fine. Had my twelve-week scan last week. It's all good.”

“What did they say? A boy or girl?” I asked and she rolled her eyes.

“Not until twenty weeks, but I'm telling you it's a girl,” she reminded me and I stretched an arm over to her partner to shake his hand.

“You OK?” I asked the anxious, tall, gangly man next to my sister.

“OK thanks. Good flight?”

“Of course! Always is in Business Class; you get the sexiest stewardesses,” I joked and the gentleman smiled weakly. “Although that might just be true of Icelandair. Gorgeous, shapely...”

“Yes spare me the details,” Rhea interrupted and I gave her a grin.

I looked around my diminutive sister. “Where's Mum and Julie?”

Rhea looked up at me. “Julie is still in Japan and is staying there; Mum isn't happy,” she replied quickly and then showed me inside the little village hall, leaving her partner outside.

“So you and Simon, still together?”

“Yes,” Rhea replied smarmily.

“And is he still in the spare room?”

Rhea sighed and giggled. “No. He is in my room as of last night.” I giggled at her and she raised her eyebrows. “No sex, well not last night. But the spare room is full now as I took the liberty of inviting someone you've not seen for awhile,” she admitted as we got to the second set of double doors.

“Who?” I asked and then froze. There were more than a couple of people she could have chosen to invite, but I had guessed who Rhea would have brought down before I saw her sat on her own at the back of the hall. She brought back plenty of vivid good memories but a ton of dark recollections came flooding back instantly at the same time, and I felt my stomach lurch the moment I clapped eyes on her.

“What is she doing here?” I asked the moment my eyes saw her. Obviously the years had changed her slightly but she was still the same person who had hurt me and I had callously and deliberately upset out of pure spite, all those years ago. I felt a spasm of guilt

like I always did when I was reminded about that fateful day.

“She is here because I invited her,” Rhea told me firmly, “to my daughter's fifth birthday party and she's come from the other side of the country to be here today. She should have been with Angela but rearranged it at the last minute.”

“For Izzy's birthday? I don't think so, Rhea,” I replied as dismissively as I could. “Well at least...”

“She's come for you too and is very nervous and scared. She took some tracking down but Simon helped, obviously. She's single too. And, like you, I think she's unhappy in life”

“I'm not unhappy in life, Rhea, what a...”

“You are. Everyone knows it. You have a string of failed relationships; you drink too much. You are always miserable.”

“I do not drink too much and she is not single. You might have forgotten, my little sister, but she got...”

“Yes, I know she did, but it didn't work out,” she interrupted me and she put her arm around my waist.

“Now that's a surprise.” I said coldly. “Out of all the people who I've ever loved, Rhea, why her?”

Rhea leant into my side as I stood staring at her. “Because if it wasn't for you Si and me would be on the streets with a baby, and well, you two always did have something special. She was the only one of your girlfriends who was any good at keeping you happy and you loved her. And to be honest I am fed up you moping round the house all the day feeling sorry for yourself. ”

“Yeah, my house, Rhea”

“OK, it's your house, but it's my home. And it's not good for Izzy and for Si. Ever since you and Amy split and you sold your company and you've been drinking way, way too much. And I'm really worried about you. Mum is too. And Zoe and Ezra don't like coming to the house now because they say it just depresses them to see you like that. They got you out of trouble when you went off the rails at Uni but we're all scared, Andy; we just don't know what to do,” my baby sister said, and looked up at me with tears in her eyes.

“I'm fine, Rhea. Honestly. Anyway since Fi and me sold the business, I'm semi-retired now, and...”

“Oh hark at you, semi-retired,” Rhea interrupted forcefully, mocking my words. “You're 28, not 68. Your business partner didn't retire went she got minted, she is off doing something. Something else. You used to be like her and you need to be like her again.”

“I was never like her.”

“You were. And to do that, you need to be happy again, and at the moment it's clear you're not. You might not like to admit it, but she made you happy,” Rhea said, firmly pointing into the hall.

“Yeah, well, a lot of people made me happy over the years, but a lot people didn't do to me what she did.”

Rhea shrugged and looked up. “And you made her happy and you were hardly blameless when you split, not to mention what happened afterwards.”

I exhaled deeply through my teeth and glared at her. “You know you can be really....”

“Wonderful. Insightful. Awesome. Going to such extreme lengths for her brothers' happiness and well-being?”

“Irritating. Interfering. Stubborn.”

“Oh go on, go speak to her. Please. For me?” Rhea pleaded and her eyes opened wide as she peered up.

“OK, I'll have a chat,” I reasoned and she smiled. “I don't know what good it will do.”

“Oh, and she is staying in the guest bedroom all weekend and you're on the same table for the meal. Oh, and I promised you'd take her for a....and for god's sake don't look at me like that!”

“Well a lot of acrimonious things were done and said, Rhea. You might have forgotten but I doubt if she has, and I certainly haven't.”

“No I haven't forgotten bro, but it was a long time ago. If I can forgive Si for his indiscretions, you can certainly forgive her. What was the bollocks you used to tell me, 'time heals everything' or was it 'water under the bridge'?”

I gave a sigh and looked over at her twiddling her long hair. She watched me and tried to read my thoughts. “You've missed her terribly, just admit it. You've never been truly happy since you split and neither has she. She told me last night. Neither of you have managed to move on, in what, how many years? At least part this weekend on good terms if nothing else but it's up to you. I have given you the choice, but I think you want to talk to her.”

Rhea was right of course but I couldn't just sit down and pretend nothing happened all those years ago. I felt my stomach lurch again as she looked round and I wiped my eyes.

“Si and I split up a few times over the years but we always got back together but as much as we tried not to admit it, there was something special between us. At times I've wanted to, really wanted to never to see him again, but underneath I couldn't be without him. Is it really different with you and her?”

I grunted, she was right of course. But just when did my baby sister understand me better than I did?

Of course, she wasn't always wonderful, insightful or awesome ...

## Chapter I

I know I was lucky to have the teenage years that I had, and there any many men and women who would have happily traded their experiences of growing up with mine. I have met several of them over the years, but my life in Aylesbury was as complicated, exasperating and confusing as much as it was exhilarating and enthralling.

My parents split up when I was seven. My father was a property developer and I hardly remembered him when we left. I am fortunate that I did not witness endless rows and fights between them, but then I am not sure my father was at home often enough for them to occur. He was too preoccupied with his business to be home much and eventually it got too much for Mum who gave him an ultimatum that he did not take seriously.

My mother, two sisters and myself left Staffordshire for a small town thirty miles outside London shortly after the divorce. My mother had purchased a nightclub with a flat on top and it was a shock moving from a leafy six-bedroom house with five acres of land to one that possessed a fire escape and only a window box. I sulked for days after we moved, in the way only a seven-year-old can, but my younger sister, Rhea, soon beat it out of me.

That is not to say that Julie, my elder sibling, appreciated my gloominess but I have always got on better with Rhea than Julie. Rhea is only eighteen months younger than me and was as much of a tomboy as any girl I ever knew. She could climb trees and play football better than most of the boys in her year and along with her staunchly independent personality, confident demeanour and ultra-determined nature earned her a certain, unenviable reputation amongst her teachers and peers of being “trouble.” This did not seem to bother her at all, and instead started to play along with the characterisation given to her and her inability to stay “out of trouble” was to be a hallmark of her entire life.

As I grew up Rhea and I realised that the club was actually a lap dancing club. The female half of the species was becoming interesting rather than irritating and I acquired an interest into the innards of my mothers' business. She was resolute that a twelve year old should not understand the workings of such establishments and with the flat being almost completely self-contained I barely got the chance to sneak a peek inside the venue. However, many of the visitors to the flat were sexy, confident women and both Rhea and I got used to being around them.

I didn't know any different but conversing with the opposite sex, especially young, beautiful women, was never a problem; even though in later years this sometimes occurred with an unwanted erection hiding in my shorts.

Moving away from my friends was hard and I did not make many new ones at my new primary school. Friendship groups at the school were well formed by the time I rolled along in 1989 and I found it hard to make any close friends to replace Euan and Oliver that I had left behind.

It was when I was ten that I met Ray, a calm and quiet boy who was the exact opposite of me. We attended the same Scout group and moved up from Cubs at the same time. His father was a photographer and understandably, he had adopted the art of the camera as one of his personal interests. I was given my fathers' camera when we moved – a Nikon F-501 – that my mother probably would not have trusted a primary school child with if she knew its true value, but then given it was her ex-husbands, maybe she did and just did not care. I was instructed to take good care of it, which I did, and in the Summer Ray and I would regularly go on bike rides around the Chiltern Hills with our cameras.

Being at different schools, the only time Ray and I would regularly meet would be Monday evenings at Scouts. By the time we were twelve, Ray and I would often stay at each

others' houses on Fridays – the host alternating between us most weeks. My younger sister, teased Ray mercilessly about everything but he was fairly short, shy and a bit podgy with freckles covering his nose and Rhea sensed a weakness in his reticent and self-conscious personality that her extroverted, confident nature loved to exploit.

Ray lived in a five bedroom house in a small, leafy village not far from Aylesbury and his father had set up a dark room in the spare bedroom. Ray and I were allowed to use it to develop our films and I tried it with his help a couple of times, but the prints I produced were poor and Ray was far better at it than I was.

It was the Summer of 1994 and I was twelve. Ray had been dropped off by his Dad at around six and my elder sister, Julie, had bought three pizzas from the local pizza restaurant. We had hired Home Alone 2 and Wayne's World from the Blockbuster in the town, and were going to enjoy a good night in. Julie had also, unbeknownst to our mother, invited her boyfriend round to enjoy the pizza (and he probably had plans to enjoy other things as well).

Kevin McCallister had barely touched down in New York City when the proverbial hit the fan. The boiler for the showers in the dressing rooms at club had exploded and our mother appeared from nowhere with a troupe of women via the (normally locked) interconnecting door to the club who needed to get changed in our flat.

To say she was unimpressed with Julie sneakily inviting her boyfriend to the flat would be an understatement and it is one of the few times I have ever seen her lose her temper. When the shouting started, Ray and I slipped unseen upstairs and out of sight, neither of us wishing to get caught in the crossfire between Julie and Mum. It took twenty minutes for the row to end, by which time both Rhea and Julie were in their bedrooms, my mother was downstairs and Ray and I were playing Sensible Soccer on my Atari ST in my bedroom.

I heard her, before I saw her, coming up the stairs. I turned around to see the flash of red in the crack of the door before disappearing out of view. I leaned back in my chair and was treated a glimpse of a scantily clad dancer going into the bathroom.

Ray clearly hadn't noticed as he proudly shouted, "What a goal, right round the 'keeper." I jerked my attention back to the computer game for a moment.

"Did you see that?" I asked him, ignoring the action replay. "The girl."

"What girl?" he replied, a look of confusion on his face. "Did you see that goal?"

I paused the game and pulled open my door from ajar to open and peered round it. It took a few seconds but then she emerged from the bathroom.

What must have been two seconds felt like a lifetime, my introduction to the infinite wonders of the female form that have stayed with me forever.

She elegantly stepped into the corridor oblivious to the two twelve year old boys anxiously watching from the doorway down the hall. She was straightening her skirt as I looked her up and down.

She gained four inches from her heels alone, the delicate glossy black shoes tightening her calves. Her black fishnet stockings criss-crossed over her toned, tanned legs stopping at her jet black garter a few inches from her crotch and the end of a bright scarlet Hawaiian hula skirt that cannot have been more than five inches long. Her black lingerie was clearly visible underneath, but hidden enough to suggest and not reveal its' delights.

Her bare midriff was punctuated with a glistening pierced belly button and then her lacy black bra that hid little and accentuated her cleavage wonderfully. Long, wavy red hair cascaded behind her shoulder that contrasted with her pale skin and black lingerie.

"Wow!" I heard Ray cry out softly behind me as the dancer walked back down the corridor.

Her curvy hips swayed from side to side, her hair and skirt swinging back and forth with the motion. Her long, powerful, elegant strides towards us etched forever in my memory. She smiled as she passed my door, the fear of being caught watching long since evaporated.

“Hiya boys,” she said smiling as she passed, her Scottish voice alluring and welcoming.

I scrambled to the door, as best I could with my rapidly acquired hard-on, to watch the dancer disappear down the stairs.

“I gotta go to the bathroom for a moment,” Ray uttered but I dragged him in the opposite direction.

“Let's go downstairs,” I demanded and bounced down the hall, half dragging my friend with me to the top of the landing.

There was close to fifteen dancers in our front room, getting changed or unchanged. We sat on the top step of the stairs motionless for a few seconds surveying the sight beyond us.

A couple of the dancers were nude nearest the end of the room and we could clearly see their pubic hair, or lack of it. A few were dressed in lingerie or outfits. Black girls, mixed-race, white and one oriental girl. Some tall, some short. Mostly thin except one of the naked girls who was buxom with a full figure.

“Just like I always imagined,” I told Ray in a whisper.

“It's better,” he replied in a low voice and turned the light off at the top of the stairs so we would not be seen by anyone looking up.

We ogled and watched the dancers change for fifteen minutes, spellbound in awe. The red-haired dancer sat down on the couch and I could barely see her, but I began to understand the variance and wonder in the female form more in that quarter-of-an-hour than any biology lesson ever could.

We were lucky in that the downstairs lavatory, at the time, also contained a small shower and it was these facilities that were being used more than the one upstairs. A couple of times we were ready to run back to my bedroom when a naked, or nearly-naked dancer walked towards our viewing platform.

We saw my mother, fully dressed emerge from the club via the interconnecting door and look our way, so we scrambled back up to my bedroom and out of sight; she had been to check on us just before we saw the dancer and didn't want her to make another appearance.

We kept sneaking out for a peek of the changing dancers that night until we were seen and my mother came to have words. I know she didn't believe our excuse of wanting to get a drink but she couldn't disbelieve us and, so consequently, we escaped any punishment or tongue-lashing for our ogling of her employees, although she didn't seem too cross or surprised. I didn't quite understand her leniency at the time but I wasn't going to complain.

The dancer fulfilled all of my fantasies for months afterwards. By no means was she the most attractive girl we saw that night, but she was the most sexy. For me, she defined female perfection in a way I could not explain. Maybe it was the fantastic body, or sexy clothes, or her smile that caused to have so much of an effect on me. I did not know for certain, but for the first time in my life I began to masturbate regularly, and as a result of that beautiful red-haired girl, my organ took plenty of abuse on an almost daily basis.

I found myself almost always horny when I woke up and often when I went to bed, and naturally navigated my thoughts and memories to that blissful Friday night. When my

classmates had managed to find or procure a dirty magazine I found the pictures phony and false instead of alluring and erotic.

Unlike me, Mum and my sisters had never been shy about their bodies and it was not uncommon for any of them to walk naked in the house when getting changed or coming out of the shower. Surprisingly (at least when I told Ray), I did not find this arousing in the slightest; the thought of seeing Julie or my Mum in a sexual sense had always been a scary proposition for me although Rhea and I were not averse to hearing Mum having sex with her boyfriends at night or in the morning.

I found this embarrassing, I never quite knew how to look at Mum afterwards, especially if she was scantily dressed or naked shortly afterwards and Rhea took great delight in teasing my awkwardness outside the earshot of Mum and Julie.

Ray and I talked very little directly about what we witnessed but our memories were there whenever we talked about girls and I desperately wanted a repeat performance. Alas, the shower rooms in the club never did break down again and our lounge was never again converted into an emergency dressing room. At least, not while I was present.

Unfortunately, after that night my mother was no longer keen for my elder sister to look after myself and Rhea, and she started using babysitters again. I resented this greatly but could not really object when a dancer, unfortunately appropriately attired for childcare, would watch us. I longed and hoped for the red-haired dancer would one day come around but she never did. Although, they all wore sensible clothing that left plenty to the imagination, there can surely be few teenagers who grew up being looked after by strippers!

Of course knowing that they were exotic dancers added to their appeal and I fantasised repeatedly. I got used to talking to them before I went to bed, and even got some of them to help with my homework. I was always impressed by how much they actually knew and told Ray that when I was older I would marry a dancer. They were sexy, smart and very pleasant; what more could anyone want?

I was thirteen when my mother started dating Julian, a lawyer in his late twenties from London. It started occasionally at first, but then became more regular when he would turn up after dinner. In hindsight, I probably should have given him more of a chance to fit in to the family and I now realise how hard it can be for adults to relate to teenagers but I disliked him almost immediately and resented him having any control over me.

Ray's elder sister, Jenny, thought it was a protectiveness of my mother coming through but, even now, don't think it was. I liked Mark, her boyfriend before Julian. He never treated me as a child, even though I was only eleven at the time and never tried to be my friend, or my parent. He was just Mark. He came round, cooked curry, beat me at cards, let me drink some of his beer and even ride in his Ford Cosworth Convertible. But it was probably the reason why I liked him, was the reason why my mother ultimately didn't. He was just too easy-going. Julian was the opposite; he was a patronising control freak. He tried to stop me doing anything I wanted to do and the natural rebel in me rose up against it.

My uneasy truce with Julian, if it ever really existed, was broken one evening when I was fourteen. It was a Friday at the end of July and there was a special event on in the club. Consequently, Julian was in the flat, although my mother had long since given up the premise that he was there to babysit and in truth he was simply there to watch the television and screw my mother after she finished work for the night.

I can't remember the exact reason for the disagreement but it started when I got myself a bottle of beer from the fridge. Julie was staying the night at her friends (or more accurately, her boyfriend's) and Rhea was on Guide Camp, as was Paula, my girlfriend from next

door, and so I was the only person in the flat. I had spent the entire day with Ray and his neighbour in Missenden with our cameras, just to be out of the flat and away from him.

"I am the adult," he shouted at me, "and you will do as you are told!" He reached forward to grab my wrist to underline his point but I knocked it away and stormed towards the door, grabbing my camera bag as I went. I replied to his demands that I "will come here" with a suitable expletive and a slam of the front door and set out for the train station to get to Stoke Mandeville – Ray's home village, just to calm down if nothing else.

I felt the uncontrollable rage, the tightness across my shoulders and anger welling up inside of me and I knew if I didn't get away from him I would say or do something I would regret. From past experience, I knew that while I did not often lose my temper, when I did it my hotheaded actions often made things ten times worse with caustic and malicious comments and occasionally destructive and violent behaviour.

I had a few character flaws – an ability to lose my temper spectacularly was one but then I shared this with my younger sister, and to a certain extent, my mother. I also had a shyness around the opposite sex when it came to romance. I could happily chat, laugh, play and even initiate conversation with girls, but I always had a block when it came to asking them out. I missed out on a few dates because of it as I could not pluck up the courage, or was too scared of the rejection.

I had fantasised about murdering him with a kitchen knife, an act that had been fuelled by my reading material at the time, a large number of autobiographies and stories about real-life murderers and while I doubted that I would seriously go through with it and do it, it did no harm to remove myself from Julian and the knives while I was in such a dark, angry mood.

Ray and I had a good chat in his garden. His house had glorious views of the sunset over the hills and I never tired of watching it, but that day's setting sun was aglow with incredible, vivid colours. I finished the film and slid it into a pouch in my camera bag. Ray's dad offered to give me a lift home, but I declined it mostly because I didn't want to get home too quickly and meet Julian again but also did not want to be an inconvenience to Ray's parents.

My train arrived at Aylesbury a little after eleven and I idly wandered the streets of the town. The streets were fairly busy with pubs closing and the clubs starting to get going so I was hardly alone as I picked an indirect route from the station to the Club. Not particularly wanting to start another row with Julian, I elected to come in via the back way and climb the steel fire escape. This led past the kitchen and to the top of the stairs outside my bedroom, where I could come in via the spare key and I could then go into my bedroom without having to walk past him sat on the couch.

There was little light in Exchange Close – the yard at the back of the club - and the moon was not visible over the buildings but I had been in and out of it several times over the years and knew where the pavement was. The rickety old fire escape creaked as I climbed it, but was soon level with the kitchen window and crept up to the locked door at the top. It took me a few attempts to slide the correct key into the Yale lock but it soon swung open and I quietly entered the landing. The door swung back effortlessly and I cushioned it against the palm of my hand to stop it from making a noise as it closed.

Then as I held my breath, I heard it. Squeals and mewing from downstairs over the distinctive tones of Oasis. I tentatively stepped a few steps down and peered underneath the ceiling. I was not prepared for what I saw.

Julian, naked from the waist down was leaning over a naked girl with long blonde hair, that was obviously not my mother. I watched as he buried his face between her legs, and I instinctively reached for my camera, remembering to load a new film first. I was concerned

that the lighting might not be great for such photography but I could hardly load a flash, and did the best I could, somehow managing to hold the camera steady and zoom in despite my hand shaking uncontrollably.

By the time I had finished the film, Julian had impaled the girl on his erect member and then squirted his load over her stomach of the girl, who I recognised as a dancer from the club, and I hurriedly left the stairs for the sanctuary of my bedroom.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ray was kind enough to develop the film the following day. I could hardly send them off to BonusPrint or take them to my local shop and I was not expecting them to come out too clearly anyhow. Ray was good at what he did, and gave me two copies at school on Monday. I asked him to keep one as "insurance" although what I was insuring against I did not know or even want to consider.

Indeed, it took a few days for me to be able to get Julian on his own long enough to show him the photographs. I had rehearsed it my head repeatedly and the exchange between us always ended with Julian reduced to begging and pleading with me, and me issuing an ultimatum. I wondered if I should demand he leave the family but then realised that if I showed my mother the photos he would do that anyway, and in the end decided to demand that he simply leaves me alone.

While I know what I wanted to achieve, I am not sure what I really expected to achieve from the photos but knew I could not do nothing when I had them in my possession. As bravely as I could muster, I threw the two dozen black and white pictures on the table in front of him that following Thursday. He had papers strewn around him and appeared to be preparing for a court case in London the following day.

"What's this?" he asked, dismissively barely tearing his eyes from the page as the photos slid across his legal paperwork. I bit my lip for a moment, trying to pick the right words. In my mind, I had not planned for him to show indifference at the production of the incriminating evidence. Anger and fear yes. Violence even, but not a total lack of interest. He was completely nonplussed by them.

He didn't wait for me to respond and put his paperwork to one side for a moment. His face dropped briefly when he saw the first image and then a smirk flashed across his face.

"You little shit!" he exclaimed his face grinning as he leafed through the first few pictures. I shifted uncomfortably at the table and bit my lip again. I was not prepared for amusement either and half-wanted him to explode into a ball of rage. I knew – or at least I think I knew – what to do.

"I think they came out rather well, especially considering the lighting," I heard myself saying nervously. My heart was pumping furiously and butterflies were fluttering in my stomach. I leant against the back of the chair, for support and my eyes narrowed

"Yeah, very good. I'm sure your mother would be very proud," he sneered in his patronising voice. I felt my insides lurch for a moment, the subject of Mum was something I had tried not to think about. "Sneaking up and filming me, covertly. It's a sick way to get your thrills."

I stared at him, dumbfounded for a moment. "I'm sick?" I asked him incredulously. "You are the one cheating. What would happen if Mum saw these?"

He gathered up the photos in his hand and slid them back across the table at me and then shrugged his shoulders. "Why don't you find out? You go show her those; and why you are there, perhaps you could also explain why you decided to creep up on me and photo me and the lovely Chloe. Listen kid, I'm telling you, you haven't got anything there that can

hurt me”

He looked at my shocked, and puzzled expression and picked up his page from the table.

I thought for a moment and glanced down at the photos that were still on his paperwork. I could see him watching me from behind his document and, for the first time that evening, felt slightly unnerved. Surely I had all the trump cards but why did I feel like I had just been outmanoeuvred? I just didn't understand: if proof of his cheating wouldn't break up his relationship then what power did I have over him?

I felt his smugness from the other end of the room and lent over the chair to pick up the pictures that were sprawled across a couple of his letters

“Of course, I expect your employers would love to see these,” I thought out loud.

“Respected solicitor, big name clients, would love to be represented by someone who screws teenagers.” I saw him put his page down and look at me in my peripheral vision. I was staring at the upturned picture and noticed the grass green logo of his employer in the corner. “I mean, do Feltmann and Co like the idea of employing someone who does that? She's a dancer isn't she? I think I have seen her before. Prostitute too, on the side sometimes.” Julian glared at me but said nothing. “It's all very, very murky” I told him in a serious voice and rubbed my sweaty hands together. I realised that I had found his weakness, the fearful look in his eyes said everything I had hoped for, and I hummed. “Of course, if I have nothing here that can hurt you, what have you to fear?”

Julian jumped up from the table, his chair flying backwards onto the tiled floor. He opened his mouth to speak but nothing came out. His eyes narrowed as he thought and then started in a low menacing voice, “If you think, if you think you can blackmail me...”

I didn't let him finish and simply shook my head. I felt supremely confident across down at him, and perhaps for the first time in my life, I felt invincible.

“No. I know I can blackmail you, if I want to,” I corrected him. “Now you can keep those, I have plenty of copies if I need them. And if you leave me alone, I'll keep them safely locked up.”

I strode out of the room, his eyes boring at the back of my skull as I left.

I knew Julian searched my room when I was at school the following day. I had placed a couple of hairs gently over the cupboard doors with tiny pieces of Blu-Tac and these were broken when I returned after school. It was a trick that Rhea had taught me previously (she also showed me how to get around them with ease but that's another story.) The room had been examined carefully and methodically with everything put back, and I did not think Julian would be able to be so devious, but the proof existed that he had.

I tried to rationalise the conversation over the coming days but couldn't make any sense of it. Julian had steered clear of my presence but I wasn't sure if that was shame, embarrassment, fear or a mixture of all three. I liked the idea that he was scared of me but was rather glad of him not being around me to care too much.

I needed to talk it over with Ray. He had an unerring knack of seeing things in a different light and so, the following weekend, travelled to Stoke Mandeville on the train. Being the hot day it was, both of his sisters were sunbathing and Ray was busy watching the football on television with his Dad. Fortunately it only had a few minutes to go to Full Time and was rather relieved when we escaped to the sanctuary of the garden from the oven that was his front room.

We both sat with a cold drink at the end of the garden and I recounted the conversation with Julian. He looked thoughtful and then told me to wait for a moment while he went inside. He emerged with the set of photographs and we leafed through them.

"It's definitely him. No excuse of it being mistaken identity," Ray said as he passed me the last one.

"Well, it's definitely our flat, and he looks nothing like his brother. No it's totally him but he didn't seem fazed at all. It didn't bother him until I mentioned the legal angle."

"It doesn't make sense," Ray concluded and we had been so engrossed in the photos we had not seen Ray's elder sister come up the garden path.

"Something interesting?" she asked causing us both to jump. Our guilty faces said more than words could have done and she looked down at the images in my hand. "Naughty photos!" she exclaimed, loud enough so that we would panic but not so that anyone else could hear. She giggled at our facial expressions and looked down at the now upturned pictures in my hand.

Ray recovered first and told her that they contained Julian and this caused Jenny to smirk even more. "You been finding naughty photos of your mother," she asked suggestively and then stopped. "That is a little bit freaky, you know?"

"No. I took them.....and they aren't my mother but they are of her boyfriend."

"Oh...Ohhhh," she uttered, the implications of what I had said dawning on her.

"Sit down, and I will tell you." I gestured at the grass and the bikini-clad seventeen year old sat down cross-legged. I desperately needed some perspective on the previous couple of weeks and had known Jenny for as long as I had known Ray. She was very much like Ray but considerably more experienced in the world and would certainly be able to put things into perspective.

I then told her how I had the photos, and what had happened when I confronted Julian. She nodded appreciatively as I recalled my tale and then leafed through the pictures.

"I don't get why your Mum wouldn't be upset with the pictures. It's cheating, right?" I asked and Jenny looked back at one of them, humming in thought.

"Well yes. But maybe no. Maybe your mother and step-dad..." I winced at this but let her continue without correcting her "...have an open relationship, or are swingers. Maybe your mum is happy with it."

I looked at her as if she was mad but let her words sink in for a moment before speaking. "I don't think so. I have never seen Mum bring anyone back, or Julian for that matter."

Jenny smiled but replied to my denial. "Well I don't think they would publicise it. They would have to be discrete. You weren't supposed to see them that night, right? Does Julian have a house of his own?"

"Flat in Little Chalfont" I said without hesitation.

"And does your Mum ever stay there?" Jenny asked

"Sometimes" I admitted. "But not often. I just can't see it. I don't..."

"...want to admit your mother has a sex life?" Jenny continued for me. "She is quite sexy, even at her age."

"But..." I started, unsure of where to finish the sentence but Jenny cut across my unfinished sentence.

"You said yourself, when he saw the photos, he smirked and didn't care when you said you would show them to your mother. He did care when you talked about his employer. He obviously doesn't think your mother would care that he was screwing some dancer. Either that or he is a good actor."

I thought back to that evening and shook my head. "No, I think he was sincere." I told her.

"There was nothing to make me think he wasn't being honest."

"Other than the fact he is a lawyer," Ray added and I agreed with him. Jenny shot him a look and his smirk disappeared.

"Well, maybe you are right," I conceded and Jenny leafed through the photos again.

"He isn't that well endowed," Jenny told me and passed me the last photograph I took on the night.

"Strangely enough, I hadn't looked." My flippant comment however, did have an honest basis and I peered, for the first time, at Julian's manhood.

"And he shaves his pubic hair," Jenny continued.

"So does the girl....," Ray added, "and she IS well endowed."

Jenny and I laughed at Ray peering closely at the photograph. "So what are you going to do?" Jenny asked me as she picked up the images and passed them to me.

"Nothing. Julian isn't being an arse and I have no desire to cause any upset. If he really can fuck other women then there is nothing to be gained from doing anything with them."

"You should give him all the photos and negatives, you know. You had no right to use your camera in that situation."

"Are you kidding?" Ray responded for me. "You heard what he said."

Jenny stopped him. "I'm just saying. You shouldn't keep them."

"I'll think about it," I promised her and downed the remainder of my lemonade.

True to my word I did think about it and spoke at length with Paula, and he did end up with all of the images and negatives. He split up with my mother a few weeks later and when he returned to collect the last of his possessions from the flat, he cornered me in my bedroom. It was an uneasy conversation and I felt a slight degree of sadness I didn't expect. He had become more easy-going and relaxed around me since I had spoken to Paula and Jenny, and had become reasonably bearable. Suffice to say, I had no need to retain the images and knew he would always be scared of them if I didn't give them to him.

I did however inherit his dozen or so books of erotica that he left in the guest bedroom bookshelf unbeknownst to my mother or sisters and I found that by sliding out my bottom drawer of my chest of drawers would leave a three-inch space underneath between the bottom of the drawer and the floor that provided an ample place to hide them.

Since that day, my relationship with my mother improved dramatically. Gone were the rows and arguments and replaced by more adult compromise and negotiation. I hadn't realised that often when I rebelled against Julian, my mother often got involved, and with Julian not being there improved things massively. I began to be treated like an adult far more and I became happier with life in general.

It was a change that Dad also noticed. He had moved up to the Lake District after the divorce and had acquired a sprawling lakeside estate. While I know Mum did not publicise to my sisters and I the financial contribution he made to his children, it was not inconsequential and a lot of the extra-curricular activities that I did were definitely funded directly, or indirectly, by Dad.

Julie, Rhea and I used to spend the half-term breaks in May or June, October and February with him as well as a few days at Christmas and he would often visit us at Easter. He was dating a Spanish divorcee, a few years younger than Mum and while she never outwardly displayed any hostility towards us, she was cold and indifferent around Rhea and myself. I was a little unkind and wondered what a broke Spanish divorcee would

want with a multi-millionaire almost ten years her senior, but Dad was happy.

I had a good week with Dad in October 1996. The weather was pretty good, and we went canoeing and walking together, away from Julie and Rhea. We talked candidly and openly and I felt a connection towards him I had never experienced before. I began to realise what I had missed for the last fourteen years and half-resented him for not doing this sooner.

At the end of the week, he took me to the local town and got me to open an account at the Midland Bank. He promised to pay in a small sum of money on a monthly basis, that he called a stipend, until I finished education in lieu of pocket money. I did not understand why he chose to do this at the time, but he later admitted that he thought that I had gone from "a boy to a man" in the intervening few months and that I could not be truly independent unless I had my own bank account with my own source of income.

Dad's "small sum of money" was not so small to a fourteen year old and he gave me a "pay rise" every birthday. This generosity continued until I left full-time education some seven years later and paid for quite a few of the things I would do in this time.

\* \* \* \* \*

I saw a lot of Ray over that year; our GCSE exams were approaching and we were in a number of classes together, so it made revision and coursework easy. In May Ray split up with his girlfriend Rosie, that sent him into a foul mood for a week. They had been dating for two years and was his first partner so he took it pretty badly.

It was not easy for me either. I had always got on well with Rosie, she was warm and gentle, and we had a mutual friend in Zoe, who went to Grove House Primary School with me. I had known Zoe for years and we had always got on well, despite being complete opposites and our friendship being mostly conducted at school or the odd trip to the town centre. However, as Rosie was often with Zoe, I had to subconsciously choose between Ray and her while at school. My friendship with Zoe was very robust and would easily handle a few weeks of mild avoidance so I chose to spend it with Ray as he nursed his rejection and bruised ego.

My relationship with Paula, who lived above the florist next to the club, ended permanently when her family sold the shop and moved to Bournemouth at the beginning of June. Paula's father had family in Dorset and Paula's grandfather was ill so the family decided that they needed to be closer to the unwell fellow. She had done her GCSE's the year before and was halfway through her A-Levels so she had no final exams to really worry about and announced she was moving and then moved within a week.

To say I was devastated would be an understatement; I saw her every day and we were very close: she was as much a best friend as she was a girlfriend. She worked hard at school and a lot of her work ethic rubbed off on me over the years much to my mother's delight, and our evenings together doing homework was the main reason why I did so well in Maths. Paula was always very patient when helping me, guiding me through the logic and the reasoning. This, of course, gave little Rhea ample ammunition and we were teased relentlessly, especially when we used to be in my room with the door shut, but I never rose to it when Paula was present.

Mum changed the bedroom furniture the previous year in Rhea's and my bedroom as the old bed, desk and cupboards had been there since we had moved in and were looking a little tatty. Unexpectedly, my request for a double bed was granted with Rhea also benefiting from Mum's generosity. I enjoyed spreading out at night and in the morning, but also began to imagine the possibilities with Paula.

In the two years of dating, we had only ever kissed and got naked together, except for a

couple of sessions of mutual masturbation. We spent the sum total of a few nights together when her house needed repairs and she had to stay in my room as well as a few days when she accompanied me to the Lake District to see Dad, but we never went any further. Neither Paula nor I were really ready for that and we were both happy with what we did.

When she left I came home from my first exam, Mathematics, to see her family finish loading up the big wagon that would transport their life to the South coast. Paula was tearful and I had to do all I could to avoid crying myself. I felt an emptiness as we parted; she really was my best friend as well as my girlfriend and I felt a double-loss as the removal lorry carefully drove out of the car park at the back of our property.

Ray and I had our final exams on different days, so when I finished my GCSE Economics on one hot Summer lunchtime in June 1998 I couldn't tempt him to celebrate with me. He had Geography that afternoon and German the following day, so I could hardly blame him for wanting to cram in some last-minute revision. I was slightly, however irrational it was, annoyed at him, but this was mostly because I was still smarting over the loss of Paula. I sauntered home with the intention of grabbing an ice-cold beer from the fridge and playing on the afternoon on Need for Speed 2.

I re-evaluated my plans the moment I entered our hallway at street level. The hot stuffy air and overwhelming heat nearly knocked me back into the road and I spluttered. The difference between the street and my home was extraordinary. The gentle breeze, though barely noticeable, had a significant effect and made the Summer tolerable. I resolved to go inside, to get the beer, drop off my school bag and then head off to the park; the PlayStation could wait until the temperatures dropped twenty degrees or so!

I was not expecting Mum to be in the flat as she was usually at work but not only was she sat on the sofa, but a petite redhead who I recognised was sat opposite talking. She was not Mum's close friend, a teacher who lived on the other side of town called Alicia Wright, but she was certainly familiar and I said seen her many times before.

"Hiya," I called out cheerily as I reached the top of the stairs and walked into the lounge.

"Hiya love," Mum replied and I nodded towards the red-headed girl, racking my brains for her name which had temporarily escaped me.

"Sorry, we'll be gone in twenty minutes. The flat was just a bit more comfortable than the office."

I nodded. "S'ok. It's baking out there. Do you want a drink?"

"Angela, what do you fancy?" Mum asked the petite girl and it instantly clicked in my mind. I surveyed her intently; she certainly had a good figure and an inviting smile.

"Water please," Angela replied and Mum asked for some of the fresh orange juice out of the fridge.

I opened my beer first and downed almost half of it immediately. Its coolness felt so refreshing against the back of my throat and I felt a cold tingle cascade down my stomach with a shiver. I let out a satisfied sigh.

I was in the middle of filling up a glass with Orange Juice when Angela appeared at the kitchen arch.

"Can you make that two waters?" she asked and her eyes narrowed when she saw the small bottle of lager on the table top.

"Do you want one?" I asked pre-empting the question but she shook her head.

"Ya'll right."

"Sure? It's nice on a day like this."

“Better not, how are you?” she asked and I filled another hi-ball glass with cold water from the tap.

“Yeah fine. You?”

“OK. I'm moving flat so everything's all over the place,” she told me nonchalantly as I carried them in on a tray to Mum, putting the drinks on the coffee table.

“Cheers love” Mum said dismissively and returned to her conversation.

“She can stay for as long as she needs to. I think she'll fit right in and obviously we'll do whatever we can to help. I had a friend once, a long time ago mind, that went through...”

I pondered staying and listening to the conversation for a few moments but given that I was expressly prohibited from being involved with the Club I left the room to retrieve the remains of my beer. It didn't sound too interesting anyway.

I finished my refreshing beer and went back to the lounge. I needed to get out of the flat, it was too hot and thought a walk in the park might not be a bad idea. I might meet a couple of people from my classes but at least it wasn't as hot as in my airless abode.

I stopped in my tracks the moment I saw her, sat directly opposite me as I walked in from the dining room. Mum was sat next to her and the red-haired girl had her arm around her.

She was in her early twenties or late teens and had long brown straight hair that reached halfway down her back. She smiled weakly at me and I looked into her brown eyes. She had been crying, her eyes were red and puffy but there still an incredible warmth to her.

She was simply stunningly beautiful, and I felt nervous. Why?

I heard my mother speak but didn't register what she had said. She waited for more, and then the girl spoke in a soft Scottish voice.

“How was your exam?”

I almost panicked when I realised she was talking to me. “Oh yeah, fine.” I sniffed. “I'll be back later,” I told my mum, not taking my eyes off the girl. She was not looking at me anymore and was adjusting the hem on her yellow summer dress. For a moment, I saw a flash of lacy underwear and, using all of my resolve, left the room.

“Be back by five, love.”

I returned four hours later, having met up with a couple of the girls from my Economics exam by chance. We fed the ducks in the park and then chatted over a Coke in a coffee shop before I returned home. I still wondered what had come over me. I never had any problems talking to Paula or any of the girls at school, or even Ray's sister who was very hot and the subject of many private masturbation sessions (although obviously something not discussed with Ray. He afforded me the same courtesy and never talked about my sisters despite the fact that Rhea unintentionally – or probably intentionally - flashed him several times over the years.)

I was both disappointed and excited to find the girl still in the flat when I returned. Mum was busy dishing up spaghetti when I returned and the girl was leaning against the table.

I stopped in the archway of the lounge and acknowledged her presence with a small nod of the head.

“Set the table please,” Mum asked me but I didn't compute her words, instead looking at the girl in the corner.

“Andy!” Mum called out shaking me from my thoughts.

“Sorry, what?”

“Ahhh; is he being all shy?” asked my younger sister in a babyish voice as she sauntered into the room and I went to respond, but the presence of my mother meant I didn't trust myself to say something that I would not get punished for and ignored her comments. I was used to her teasing anyway.

“Set. The. Table. Please” Mum repeated exasperated. I dragged out four forks, the table mats and placed them on the table. The girl and my mother had stopped talking as I entered the room, and it was a bit unnerving.

“How was your exam?” Rhea asked. “Geography wasn't it?”

“Economics,” I corrected her. “It is Ray that does Geography”

Rhea giggled. “How did it go?” she asked as she sat down at the table.

“OK I suppose.” I muttered as I sat down adjacent to her.

“You said it was fine earlier,” said the Scottish voice from the corner of the room.

Mum gestured for the girl to sit at the table and she sat opposite me.

“Well fine....OK.” I muttered as she adjusted herself in her seat.

Rhea was insistent about the exam. She had to finalise her choice of GCSE subjects and was thinking of Geography and Economics as two of her four elective choices. Quite what the exam in 1998 would tell her about her exam in 2000, I was not sure but she seemed genuinely interested in my day.

We had been eating for a few minutes when I felt the slightest of touches on my bare legs. It made me jump at first and I choked.

“Just a piece of strong garlic,” anticipating the question and stared down at the remaining pasta on my plate.

“I used the crusher,” my mother explained taking my explanation as a slight and I continued eating, my eyes not leaving the girl directly opposite. She withdrew her leg immediately but said nothing. Why was she so introvert?

I didn't say too much after that and after Rhea had got bored of interrogating me on my GCSE exam, the girl and my mother began talking. I was hoping that she would reveal something about her, I didn't even know her name, but instead the chatter was mostly limited to television and fashion, and it was my mother that was considerably more talkative than the mystery woman.

Rhea even joined in when they began talking about jewellery, and the girl showed Rhea her silver necklace that she was wearing which contained a little charm of the Loch Ness Monster.

“Where did you get it?” my sister asked. “It's very pretty.”

“My brother works in a town called Dumfries and there is a workshop that makes them for you specially. I have all sorts from there”

“So you asked for this exact design?” Rhea passed the silver chain back to the girl who put it back around her neck.

“It is one of my favourites. I have matching ear-rings, charm bracelet, anklet and...” She froze and flashed a look at my mother. “...and, well, all sorts.”

My attention was drawn to the furtive look and she straightened in her chair, sweeping her long hair back.

“Who's for ice cream?” my mother said changing the subject. I don't think Rhea noticed but I wondered what the girl was set to reveal to cause the change in behaviour.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Honestly Grace, Angela said I could crash on her couch for a few days until we move in,” she implored of my mother. “You don’t need to go to any more trouble for me.” My mother shook her head.

“It’ll be no trouble, Abi. I promised Angela we would look after you, especially after what you have been through.”

“Thanks, but you really don’t need to. As I said earlier, we could be a fortnight without a flat.”

“I know I don’t need to, and it is not a problem. I want you to stay with us. A bit of family life would probably do you good, wouldn’t it?”

“But...” Abi started and Mum wagged her finger at the girl.

“That’s why we have a guest bedroom. It’s yours while you need it. Now that’s the end of it.” My ears pricked up at this. I stood within earshot of the conversation drying the last tumbler but out of sight, listening in on the chatter as best I could. What was it about this girl that intrigued me so much?

“Are you sure your children won’t mind?” she asked, her voice wavering.

“Julie is never in, she is always at her boyfriend’s house. Rhea will be glad of the female company and Andy, well you saw him earlier. Don’t know what you did to him.”

“That’s what I am scared of,” she murmured and Mum shook her head.

“He’s fine. Honestly. Stay for me, please? I’ll feel really bad if you didn’t. Let us look after you,” Mum begged

“Well, if you are sure,” the elegant girl finally conceded. I wondered why it taken so long for my mother to get her own way and it was not often that she didn’t, but then I didn’t know how much the girl knew about Mum. Experience had taught me that the best strategy in those sorts of circumstances was to attempt a negotiated agreement or to generally concede earlier on, and save the energy for the more important arguments. “As long as you let me make a contribution towards upkeep”

Mum scoffed and grinned, “There is no chance love. Look, I’ve known Ikenna and his family for a long time, it’s the least we can do.”

The girl hesitated for a moment. “You said you were short on staff this week. At least let me do a shift or two”

Mum shifted slightly and lowered her voice. “Are you sure you are up to it?”

“Oh yeah, of course. I’ve got to start again some time so that’s, um, that’s not a problem. I’d love to”

“OK. I’ll get Andy to help you in with your belongings,” Mum offered.

“Angela parked it out the back. Is that a problem?” asked the girl and my mother shook her head.

“You might get blocked in, but that won’t be an issue unless you need to leave before 3am.” The girl nodded and grabbed a set of keys from a handbag on the coffee table.

“Andy, can you help Abi bring in some belongings from the car”

“Yeah, sure,” I replied, not too keenly and waited at the top of the stairs.

“I’ve only got a couple of bags,” Abi told Mum. “I can manage.”

“Nonsense,” Mum replied in response and I followed Abi down the stairs towards the front door.

“So, if you don't mind me asking, why are you here?” I asked her as we hit daylight and turned down the road.

She hummed for a moment. “It's, well, something I promised your mother I wouldn't mention.”

“Why?”

She looked at me for a moment and shook her head. “Well I'm going to be working with Grace and where I am due to stay won't be available for a few days.”

“I don't get it, why did my Mum say she would look after you?” I persisted.

“She did?”

“Yes, in the lounge, she would look after you, especially after what you have been through.”

Abi looked behind us and continued walking. “She doesn't need to. I can look after myself,” she replied, her tone of voice sharp and unwavering. “And can't you change the subject?” There was a serious finality in the voice to the request.

“Sure...” I replied, but I didn't know what to say.

Abi beat me to it, and said “Aylesbury looks nice” as we turned into Exchange Road.

“It's all right I suppose. You've never been?”

“Never.”

“I'll show you round tomorrow.” I offered. “All my friends have exams to do, so I'll be kicking my heels” I told her.

“You don't need to do that” she said but I shrugged.

“Offers there, I'll have little else to do.”

She stopped outside an off-license and she asked. “Do you mind?”

“Sure,” I replied and watched her through the window selecting three bottles of wine and then pay for them in cash. Her bag clinking, I held open the door for her.

“You do know that they serve alcohol in the club?” I asked her and she smirked.

“I can't really go down to the club to get a glass of wine to sit in front of the television with, can I?”

“True. And off-license prices are a lot cheaper than what Mum charges,” I added and Abi gave a titter.

Exchange Close was not that well lit and the buildings shaded the yard from most of the natural light but I guided Abi across the tarmac to the eight or so spaces behind the club. The bar manager, Ikenna Asuni was outside emptying a crate of empty bottles into a bin, and the noise echoed off the buildings and made it sound a lot louder than it should have been.

“Evening” I called out and he greeted Abi warmly as we picked our way to Abi's car. Ikenna had been the bar manager at the club for years and Mum had frequently told me he was her most important employee. His family were Ghanian and he ran the club in my mothers' absence. How did he know Abi?

“Is that your Nova?” He asked Abi in his deep voice and she replied that that the little white car was her's. “Susie. She will be arriving soon and she will block you in, unless you move it.”

“I'm not going anywhere tonight but I'll move it if it is in the way.”

“Oh it's fine unless you were going anywhere,” he said waving his hand dismissively. “Oh, and I noticed earlier, your tread on your driver's side rear is a little worn.”

Abi looked at her tyre but the tread was impossible to make out in the available light. “My MOT said it was getting a bit worn a few months ago. I am going to replace it with the spare as that hasn't been touched”

“If you come see me tomorrow afternoon, I will change it for you before I start work.”

Abi shook her head and replied. “That's kind of you but I can change a tyre.”

The bar manager nodded his head towards Abi and said his goodbyes. Strewn across the back seat of her car and in the boot, Abi had one suitcase, four boxes consisting mostly of books, a ghetto blaster, a potted plant, a large toy bear, two coats, three carrier bags and two unopened bottles of Vodka.

“We are so going up the fire escape” I told her looking at the amount of stuff in her car. “Mum hates me using it; she says it is not safe but I am not carrying this round the block. She can piss right off.”

“Well we can leave the books in here. No point carrying them” she said and I heaved one large suitcase from the boot of her car, dropping it onto the tarmac gently.

It took two trips before we had assembled Abi's belongings into the guest bedroom. We left the books in her car, and two of the three carrier bags – that seemed to consist mostly of shoes. As expected we were gently admonished by Mum for using the fire escape and she even threatened to confiscate my key but her objections withered when she saw how much stuff Abi did have.

“I am sure it was less,” Abi admitted to her as I placed her plant on her dressing table. It was a reasonable size and had a number of beautiful red flowers that arced out of the bushy plant.

“Its an Anthurium,” she informed me as I stared at it.

“A what?”

“Anthurium. I love its beautiful flowers and heart-shaped leaves. It was a present from my brother and I just couldn't leave it behind. Not with ... ummm ... him anyway.”

I waited for her to continue but she didn't. She peered at the plant herself, deep in thought for a few moments and then shook herself back to the present.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mum left for work at just gone 8pm, promising to pop back during the evening to make sure Abi was “OK.” Rhea was in the middle of doing her homework on the dining room table, and required my help (or the answers) when completing her algebra. I was a little surprised when Abi sauntered over and explained the principle of balancing equations far better than I could. It wasn't that I didn't know, Abi could explain the principles better and translated my Mathematical explanation to Rhea into a language that my little sister could easily digest.

By the time 9pm rolled around Abi and I were both on the couch. We had been watching some television that Abi had chosen and I was barely paying attention, choosing to read 1984 instead. Ray had lent me the book after I told him that I had enjoyed Animal Farm the previous year and had only just got round to starting it. Abi seemed to be not at ease in my presence in the flat and was certainly tense, but I didn't know who she was, why she was here or what she was doing; and I didn't feel confident enough to ask.

She was cold and kept glancing at me, nervously. “Hiya,” called a cheery voice from the interconnecting door and Mum appeared from behind me. “I've brought you this.”

Mum walked into the room and put a small bottle, no more than six inches high, of cocktail. "Oi, don't I get one?" I asked as I looked up and Mum shot me a disapproving look.

"No," Mum replied coldly and looked at Abi. "We have got them in to try. See what they are like."

Abi thanked her for the drink and I got sent in to retrieve a bottle opener from the kitchen, which riled me even more. She flashed me a nervous smile, but barely said anything to me as Mum disappeared and I settled down with my book.

She finished the small cocktail fairly quickly and I saw her glance a few times towards the kitchen. I guessed she wanted to get herself a glass of wine and I did not know why she did not go and just get it. Was I the reason, I wondered and this annoyed me. If she was going to stay for a couple of weeks then she should at least learn to speak to me.

"Have I offended you?" I asked putting my book to one side for a moment and she looked at me and shook her head. "Well it's just that you have not spoken to me all evening."

"You're reading," she replied defensively.

"OK. Let's play a game?" I told her as Rhea went upstairs. If I had to guess, she probably wanted to ring her boyfriend before going to bed and did not want an audience by using the phone in lounge.

"Err ... well ... you don't have to keep me occupied. You're reading" she floundered.

I put my leather bookmark that I had been twirling around my finger into place and placed the book on the table. "Only 'cos you were watching the box." I zapped the button on the remote control and the adverts flicked off with a "vlip."

She grimaced as the picture disappeared and then turned to face me. "How long have you been reading it?"

"A few days. I meant to leave it until after my exams but started it on Saturday. It's good though."

"Where are you up to?"

"Winston and Julia have had their rendezvous in the Church."

"The rest of the book is very good, you will like it."

I nodded in appreciation at her comments, glad that she had at last spoke some words to me and looked over at the cupboard.

"Board game?" I asked her and Abi flicked her hair back. She was still tense and wooden, unlike the graceful warm smile of earlier.

"Do you play Chess?" Abi asked me and walked over to the stash of games in the corner of the room.

"We have a set here somewhere" and rummaged around, extracting a tatty board and a black bag of wooden pieces that I set up on the dining table.

Abi opened the fridge and took out one of the bottles of wine. "You want some?"

"Cheers," I replied and Abi selected two of our large wine glasses and split two-thirds of the bottle between them.

"White first," she told me and sat down, taking a gulp of the cold white wine. I moved a pawn forward two places and passed play to Abi.

She surveyed the board and did exactly the same move.

"Copying me!" I told her and she dismissed me with her hand. I moved my Knight forward,

which she then copied again.

“Quit copying me!” I laughed and gulped another mouthful of alcohol.

“Well it wasn't a bad move,” she replied defensively and I moved my Knight forward again, so that it could take her Knight if she didn't move it, with my piece protected by my pawn.

“Well I'm not copying that. It's a lousy play.”

I grunted at her and she smirked, moving her pawn forward to threaten my Knight.

“So, tell me, what is it like growing up next to a strip club?” she asked tentatively as I looked over the board.

“It's nothing special. I mean, I don't get to go in, I've been in twice in ten years – and both of them was when the club was closed. I don't get to see the girls, drink the alcohol or anything.” I paused and took her Knight with my Knight that was quickly taken by her Queen.

“As I said, lousy.” She raised her eyebrows and shifted in her seat. “But it is different? Not everyone lives in a large flat in the town centre above a strip club.”

“Yeah, it's different I suppose. We used to live in a large house with a big garden. That was good, but there is so much less space here.”

“There is enough space. It is surprisingly big.” I played my pawn in front of her Queen and she moved her knight forward. I then moved my pawn on the right side forward two and she gave a hollow titter.

“Never have I had check so early in the game,” she gleefully told me and swept a bishop across the board to threaten my King. I growled at her and did the only move I could. I moved my bishop to block her move. Her Queen then moved several spaces across the board to the bottom left of the board and I had to move my Queen to protect my King.

“Check again!” Abi called out and moved a bishop, which she then retreated when I moved my King.

“Say goodbye to your Queen,” I told her and took her Queen with mine, which was subsequently captured by her Bishop.

“Feel better?” she asked playfully.

“Much better” I told her sarcastically. “So about you? Tell me.”

Abi tensed for a moment and made eye contact with me. I could tell there was as much fear and apprehension in her eyes as there was inquisitiveness in mine.

“I'm Scottish,” she told me evasively.

I took a gulp of my wine and lent back. “Is that all there is to tell?”

Abi shifted in her seat and pulled a face. “I know very little about you”

“Like what? You know my name, I don't know your surname. Or your age. Or anything about you. All I know is that you are Scottish, work in the sex industry and have some intimate jewellery.” I replied slightly aggressively.

Abi snorted but before she could respond I added “Oh, and you've read 1984”

“I might not want anyone to know anything about me. Does this bother you?”

I smirked and took another sip of my wine. “A little” I answered honestly, staring at her brown eyes.

“Why? There is nothing about me that you need to know anyway, and in a few days I won't be here.”

I stared at the chessboard thinking of a reply to her question, and idly moved my Rook to threaten her Bishop which she retreated across the board. "Maybe I just want to know who I am spending time with?"

Before I could respond, she answered for me. "Or because you want to know who it is who made you tongue-tied earlier?"

"You noticed then?" I admitted, my face blushing for the first time that evening.

Abi laughed. "Yeah. Yeah, I noticed. Your mum did too."

I bit my lip and looked down at the glass of wine. "Sorry. I didn't mean to"

Abi was smiling at me. "Quite a complement actually. It's been a long time since I've been able to make someone speechless. Out of work anyway. Angela thought it was very sweet actually and your mum said she had never seen you like that."

I blushed. "So it's natural then, for me to want to know who you are. You are staying in the bedroom next to mine"

Abi was still smirking at me and leant forward onto the table. "The young dominant male, scoping out his territory, ready to pounce..."

I gasped at her, and shook my head. "No ... it's just ..."

Abi cut me off by laughing. Her face lit up beautifully, the first time I had seen her magical smile properly since she arrived.

"I've spent most of the last four hours trying to work out where Mum knows you from," I admitted to her and Abi tentatively urged me to continue. "I don't know. For a start we know nobody in Scotland. Mum was born on an RAF base in Germany and my grandparents were English and Czech. My aunt is English and you are not my cousin. My uncle lives in Czechoslovakia. Family connection unlikely, agreed?"

Abi nodded, her face still smiling. "I am not related to you."

"Good. I had worked that bit out. So then I started thinking friend of the family and have been racking my brain for someone who we know who might be in Scotland. Then I remembered Mum's school friend, Annie someone. Now Annie lives in Manchester, but her brother moved to Aberdeen and he had two girls. All very plausible and would certainly explain the fondness Mum showed. Minor problem there though"

Abi raised her eyebrows at me.

"I met them a few years ago and you aren't them. Or one of them"

Abi giggled. "I can honestly say that I met your mother for the first time, a couple of months ago at a Christening."

"A Christening? I don't remember going to a Christening. Whose?" I replied instantly.

Abi smirked. "You weren't there so you wouldn't. And today is the second time I have met her."

I threw my arms up in surrender. "See. And I don't believe for one moment that Mum would invite a new employee to stay in her family home. She likes to keep work and home reasonably separate, so there is something that makes you special."

Abi looked at me. "Which is?"

"I don't know," I told her abruptly waving my arms around. "If I knew how you knew Mum then I'd know what it is."

We were interrupted my Mum returning with two bottles of green cocktail and smiled when she saw Abi and I playing Chess.

"You talking to her now then?" Mum teased and Abi rubbed her leg up and down mine.

"Sort of," I replied and Mum put the two bottles on the table in front of us.

"See you've opened the wine then. How are you feeling?"

"I'm fine," Abi answered her and Mum grinned.

"Whose Christening were you at where you meet Abi?" I asked and Mum grinned.

"Why do you want to know?"

"Because I don't know and she won't tell me."

Mum glanced at Abi and smiled. "Well you will just have to ask nicely." I grunted in annoyance. "But Andy, you look after her. And if you want something to eat, there is a cracking pizza place opposite." Mum put a ten pound note in front of her and gave Abi a look. Abi shook her head but Mum left before Abi could return the cash to her.

"So I've got to look after you and ask nicely. Please," I joked.

"I'll tell you if you tell me why you were tongue-tied."

Abi bit her lip as I awaited for her to respond but when she didn't tell me I continued. "I know there is a kind of aura about you that I can't describe. I felt it the moment I saw you."

Abi blushed and shook her head. "There isn't"

I rubbed my chin in thought. The wine was making me more a lot more candid than I would normally have been and I returned her gaze looking into her eyes. I would not normally have had the courage to be so open but the alcohol was giving me Dutch Courage. "You have...ermm...the most amazing smile. And it's infectious." Abi smiled and I gestured towards her. "You're entire face lights up when you do. There is a genuine warmth there. It's captivating; entrancing almost. It's just perfect."

Abi wiped her right eye with her hand and nodded.

"I've...er...been told bits of me are amazing, but never my smile" she said, her voice still soft and quiet.

"Well, I'm not going to pass comment on those bits of you."

"You would have to see them first," she replied and watched me squirm for a moment.

"So anyway, whose Christening where you at?" I asked, dragging her back to the original subject matter.

"Daniel."

"Daniel? Who the hell is Daniel?"

Abi beamed at me. "You've no idea, have you?"

"No, help me out a bit, please!" I gazed at her and she grinned.

"And miss you trying to guess. Never! Anyway, what do I know about you? I didn't even know your name until lunchtime."

I sighed in frustration. "Oh come on..."

Abi grinned at me and flashed her captivating smile.

"OK. Have you seen the Silence of the Lambs?" I asked.

"Of course, it's a classic."

"Then you will know about the Latin term, quid pro quo."

"Yes. I am well aware of a number of Latin terms."

“You tell me something and I will tell you something, quid pro quo,” I explained.

Abi nodded, “OK. Of course, there are some things I can never tell you.” I sighed a bit and she shrugged. “You said yourself, there is something different which is why I am being treated differently to other new employees. Well it's that and I can't discuss it.”

I stared at the board for a moment and then moved a Pawn two places. Abi responded by castling her Rook and King.

“Why are you here then?” I asked her as I moved another Pawn.

“I am here to work in your mother's club, as you well know. Who is your girlfriend?” Abi took one of my Pawns with her Bishop.

I moved a Pawn forward one and then admitted I did not have a girlfriend any more.

Abi took another one of my Pawns with her Knight and I asked her “who she knew in the club?”

“I have a good friend who works here, and I now know the owner.”

“What good friend?” I asked, and she shook her head.

“My turn ... what happened to your last girlfriend?”

“Why are you obsessed about my girlfriend?” I asked her defensively and moved my Knight to the middle of the board.

“I'm trying to make you blush again. It's cute” she admitted playfully.

I briefly explained Paula's departure. It was only three weeks previous and fortunately the exams took my mind off of it somewhat but I was keen not to dwell too much on it as I missed having her around the flat.

“So where do you wear your intimate jewellery?”

Abi stared at me for a moment, her mouth slightly open.

“Quid pro quo! You are trying to make me blush! It's only fair”

Abi snorted and moved her Knight that I threatened with a Pawn.

“I have necklaces, anklets, bracelets, earrings, a belly button piercing and I want to get my clitoral hood pierced but I haven't yet. You know where the clitoris is?”

I rolled my eyes, and felt my dick stiffen. “Yes, I know where the clitoris is.”

“Well that sets you aside from most of the male population then,” Abi added flippantly and smiled as I shifted uncomfortably in my seat. She drained the last of the wine from her glass and refilled both of our glasses from the last of the bottle.

“Why?”

“Why what?”

“Why have your clitoris pierced?”

“My turn,” she said, dismissing the question and put my King in check again, which I moved. Abi took my Rook and I moved a Pawn out of the way. She took my other Knight and smiled.

“Describe your perfect woman, your fantasy woman.”

“My fantasy woman?”

“Every guy has one. Your perfect woman.” Abi drained her glass after she spoke but kept her gaze fixed on the fidgeting sixteen year old in front of her.

I grinned at her. "I thought I had already described you as perfect. Who else could it be?"

She raised her eyebrows and gestured. "Come on"

I recounted the tale of the dancer coming out of the bedroom and how it became ingrained into my memory, the confident dancer being absolute perfection in my mind.

"So you like strippers then?"

"I didn't say that," I replied sheepishly.

Abi grinned. "You have used the word `perfect` twice this evening to describe two people. One was the exotic dancer you ogled and other was me, a stripper"

"OK, you got me." I admitted and gulped the last of the wine in my glass. "I blame Mum, she keeps introducing me to these women!"

"Another bottle?" Abi asked and retrieved the second bottle of wine from the fridge. The rosé was in a bulbous bottle but she poured two generous glasses of the pink liquid and sat back down to assess my latest chess move – my King towards the centre of the board. She moved her Knight to threaten my Bishop, which I moved. I then threatened to take her Bishop which she moved back to her back row, in two moves but then returned it to be near my King and used her Knight to put me in check.

"How long are you staying here?" I asked her and she shrugged.

"In the flat, a few days hopefully. In Aylesbury, I don't know. A few months, maybe more. We'll see."

Three times I had to move my King and three times Abi placed my King in check before I used my Rook to protect it, which was duly taken by a lowly Pawn.

"It's only a matter of time," Abi told me.

"I know. You are good at this game."

"So, what's the most outrageous thing you have ever done?"

"I clandestinely took photographs of my Mum's boyfriend cheating on her and then blackmailed him with them. Does that count?"

Abi let out a deep breath. "That's, well that's not what I was expecting"

"In a good way or a bad way?"

She thought for a moment and hummed. "A bit of both."

I thought for a moment, and then realised that I had told a complete stranger, and Mum's friend, a secret I had not even told my own mother about. "Yeah, I'm not overly proud of it but Mum doesn't know. Only Ray and his sister know about it so please don't say anything to her."

"I won't," Abi promised but I was not sure if she would keep it.

"Tell me about your last boyfriend." I asked her as we traded pawns and she froze. "You asked me about Paula."

"I, I'm sorry Andy. I can't," Abi told me and wiped her eyes. "It's the thing I can't discuss."

I nodded. So this is why she was here. She split up with her boyfriend and came running to Aylesbury. Well somewhere's loss in Aylesbury's gain, I thought.

Abi stared at the chess board and within two moves it was checkmate.

"You win," I conceded. "Fancy a go on the PlayStation?"

"Sure. Anything so you can win."

"I'll beat you at cards if you want."

Abi smirked. "I don't lose at cards, especially Poker. No PlayStation is fine. I think my brand of Poker isn't appropriate at the moment." I looked at her inquisitively as I packed the chess set away. "Strip Poker," she whispered at me as she got up from the table. I felt my cock tingle at the thought.

"I'd, I'd like that," I admitted and instantly regretted it. I had not drunk this much alcohol for some time and I forgot how much it loosened my tongue.

Abi stood in the archway between the lounge and kitchen and turned her hair framing her smile wonderfully. "I'm sure you would."

\* \* \* \* \*

Abi and I drank all three bottles of wine, and we were still up playing on the PlayStation when Mum returned to the flat at 2am. She didn't say anything in disapproval, despite the empty wine glasses and discarded bottles in the kitchen.

"Aren't you two tired yet?" she asked at us, smiling, as I overtook Abi on the final bend.

"A bit," I replied, slurring my words slightly. She grinned at us leaning as we swerved around obstacles, staring at the screen and walked into the kitchen. Abi pushed me playfully on the couch as I crossed the finish line, milliseconds ahead of her.

"You were so...lucky," she exclaimed. I had beaten her at almost every game we played for most of the evening although my victories were a lot closer as my alcohol consumption had risen.

"So that's ... what ... 27 victories for me, and how many for you?" Abi pouted at my taunting, her face radiant and flushed. "One?"

"Two. I got you on the line a few minutes ago."

"That was a draw, totally."

"Pah!" Abi scoffed and playfully pushed me on the couch.

"I'm off to bed," Mum called out from the corner of the room, a glass of water in her hand. "And don't be too late."

Abi looked at me as I navigated the menu, "I better go as well. I've had a long day."

"One more race?" I pleaded, my fingers over the Start button but she shook her head.

"I'll fall asleep on you," she warned.

"I don't mind," I instinctively replied, speaking before I had thought.

Abi giggled and stood up out of my reach. "I bet you don't. But thanks for this evening. It's been fun. I've, um, really enjoyed it."

"Yeah, me too. Are we going 'round town tomorrow?" I asked her as I switched the games console off. She hesitated and the alcohol gave me a confidence I didn't normally possess. "Come on, you're good company. I'd be bored and lonely otherwise. Please."

Abi blushed and bit her lip.

"Come on, I insist" I said, and a smile flashed across Abi's face and she nodded.

"Yeah, OK."

"One more thing." I asked her as she got to the bottom of the stairs.

"What?" she asked.

"I still don't know your full name."

Abi smiled. "Abigail Isobel Kennedy"

"Well sweet dreams, Abigail. I'll see you tomorrow"

She flashed me her inviting smile, turned on her heels and disappeared. I leant back against the lounge wall and watched her disappear up the stairs.

What had just happened?

\* \* \* \* \*

I had not reset my alarm from the day before and was awoken rudely at 7.45am. My half-asleep, partially-hungover self initially tried swearing at the buzzer before opting for the well rehearsed smack with the eyes closed in the general direction of the noise. Unfortunately, I had only managed to hit "snooze," and so nine minutes later, I was re-awoken by the same headache-inducing sound which stopped the moment my arm extended far enough towards the source of the unwelcome cacophony to knock it onto the carpet.

I eventually emerged from my bedroom at 9am and sauntered downstairs in just my pyjama shorts. I had slept naked – as I always did over the summer, but would not achieve approval if I wandered around naked, especially with Abi in the house (although this was something Rhea did with impunity and knew she would not stop for such a trivial reason.) Mum was at the dining table reading her newspaper when I entered the room and she surveyed me.

"Hangover?" She enquired as I traipsed past her.

"Not really," I told her truthfully. "Probably shouldn't have had quite so much though"

Mum snorted. "I'd say, three bottles of wine between you. Not to mention the cocktails." I tensed and waited for the dressing down I didn't get the night before, but surprisingly, it was not forthcoming.

"It was over five hours," I eventually replied. "And I was celebrating the end of the exams."

"It's fine, you're an adult now. Just don't do it too often, OK?"

"Yeah, I know."

There was silence for a few seconds while I poured myself some cereal, and then she spoke again. "You seem to be getting on well with Abi, well after you opened the wine anyhow."

I froze for a moment. I was getting on well with her, and there some aura about her, I could not explain. I thought I tried to explain it the previous night but had only managed to embarrass myself although I was prepared to chalk my candidness, overconfidence and inappropriateness to the alcohol.

"Yeah, well she's cool." I sat down with my bowl of Shreddies opposite her and she looked over at me.

Mum smirked and put down her paper. "Well it's good to see you smiling again; you've been down since Paula left"

My stomach lurched for a moment at her name and I thought for a moment. "Well, I did spend half my time with her" I reasoned.

"Have you written to her yet?" Mum asked and I nodded.

"Last week, and the week before, and the week before that." Mum shook her head gently.

"It's only natural to be upset when a close friend goes away suddenly." She paused and gazed wistfully into the lounge. "I had it happen to me but you do have to move on."

We sat in silence for a few moments until I spoke. "I know. I still miss her but Abi took my mind off of her. She was good company."

"She is. But she has just had a really tough time, so be good to her. Keep an eye on her for me"

"OK. What happened?"

Mum shook her head and told me that she was not telling me. I grumbled at this but she was resolute. "And I don't want you upsetting her. She is fragile at the moment." My mind flashed back to the previous night. She didn't seem fragile or upset once we opened the wine but then I was hardly experienced with the opposite sex.

"She seemed fine last night after we, um, had a drink."

Mum hummed. "She is a strong girl. That's very obvious but just remember she is still ... vulnerable."

"OK. I get it. I'll be fine, we are only going to look around the town." My mind flashed back to the previous night and I grimaced.

"What?" asked Mum and I shook my head.

"Oh, nothing." I quickly added. I did not want to admit to my mother what we had discussed twelve hours earlier. "I'll take a cup of tea up to Abi," I told her

"No, I'll do it. She might not be decent. And for three bottles of wine, I think water might be better."

\* \* \* \* \*

I showered and got dressed in shorts and T-Shirt. I had managed several games of Need For Speed when Abi appeared. She had had a long chat with Mum, I could hear them talking when I went to the toilet, and I hoped that it was not about the previous night. Mum said nothing when she returned to the lounge and did not look angry so I assumed that my conduct was not discussed.

Abi was as beautiful as ever; her face beamed as she saw my smile and I flicked off the console mid-race.

Abi, was dressed in a short white sleeveless summer dress, filled with large bright pink, bright red and brown flowery patterns. The V-shaped neckline came into the middle of her bust, so her rounded, shapely breasts were partly on display. She wore a necklace, so the pendant nestled at the base of her throat, drawing eye attention to her bust.

The dress finished about half-way between her waist and her knees, but rose as she descended the stairs.

"You look good," Mum told her as she reached the bottom of the stairs.

"Amazing," I added and Mum shot me a knowing look.

"Are you coming back for lunch?" she asked and I looked at Abi who, after consulting the clock on wall shook her head.

"It's 11am now. I won't want anything really till gone three and by then we might as well wait until dinner. What do you think?"

"I'm cool with whatever."

Abi strode over, her heels adding a couple of inches to her height so that she was tall, if not taller than me.

"Are you OK in those heels," I asked Abi as we stepped into the sunshine. The door locked as it swung closed and I turned right past the locked doors of Abi's new place of work.

"I'm fine. I can't work in a lap-dancing club if I can't walk in high heels"

"True." There was an awkward silence for a moment. "Look Abi. I hope I didn't say anything to embarrass you last night. I think I probably had a bit too much to drink."

Abi smiled at me. "What bit?"

I stuttered for a moment but Abi continued. "The bit where you asked to play strip poker with me or the bit where you asked about my clitoris?"

I yelped in embarrassment. "Ahh, well I was actually thinking of the bit where I called you perfect."

"I'd kind of forgotten about that. So what do you want to retract now you are sober?"

"What answer gets me into the least trouble?" I asked and Abi chuckled.

"The truth."

"This street was built at the turn of the century," I teased and she grinned.

"Let me guess, you got drunk, said something that you didn't mean."

I shook my head. "Alcohol always makes me say what I am thinking, irrespective of whether it is a good thing to say"

Abi squeezed my hand and giggled. "I don't totally believe you but maybe I should get you drunk more often."

"Not drunk, just ..."

"Merry then. It had a good effect on you."

I hummed. "You weren't so bad yourself," I replied and Abi sniggered in amusement.

"So what are you doing with me today?" Her voice oozed seduction and charm and I distracted for a moment as carnal thoughts whizzed around my brain. "Your Mum said you were looking forward to taking me out"

"I thought we'd go have a look in the town centre first, then go for a drink and an ice cream at a nice little café that overlooks a park with a lake. Feed the ducks and then wander round the park. I'd like to take you to woods but I doubt we'll have time."

Abi laughed at me as I finished. "I bet you'd like to take me to the woods."

I groaned. "Very good. Wendover Woods. You can see for miles. It's beautiful up there."

"I'll take your word for it."

"No, I want to go up there with my camera again this Summer. We'll take a picnic if you like."

We crossed the road at a break in the traffic, and I led her by the hand across a small car park leading to a small dark alleyway.

"First you want to take me to the woods, and now you are taking me down dark passageways," Abi quipped.

"It leads to the main square," I replied defensively and squeezed her hand gently.

"Aye, and I bet you tell all the girls that." We rounded a corner with a kebab shop on it and saw a bright chink of daylight up ahead.

"See....the main square"

Abi was not too impressed with Aylesbury from a shopping perspective but loved its worldly charm. The Roald Dahl Museum in the centre of the town she was particularly attracted to, having read his books as a child. Apart from a lingerie shop that she dragged

me into there was little to interest her although she did purchase a Happy Anniversary card for her brother.

As we left the town centre, I stopped off at an independent bakers, which was without customers. "Hello Andy," the stout woman from behind the counter called out warmly as she adjusted some bread on display. "What can I get you?"

"Hi. I don't suppose you have any stale bread I can half-inch from you for the ducks?" I asked cheekily.

"Ahhh, coming for freebies. I should have known!" The woman stepped from behind the display noticing Abi for the first time and extending a hand warmly. "Oh. I didn't see you there. I don't think we've met. Sandra"

"Abi."

"I've got some bread that my new assistant dropped on the floor this morning so you can have that. I don't think the ducks will mind."

"Cheers Mrs A" I called out and she disappeared for a moment and returned with a large carrier bag containing two loaves.

"You can have them," she called out as she passed them over to us but I left a couple of coins on the counter. I did not think it was right to take it without contributing to her business in some way; it was something Mum always liked to instil in me that there was no such thing as a free lunch.

"Thanks," I called out as we left and Abi did likewise.

The park was much cooler than the town centre and the lake in the middle attracted all the ducks, swans and geese. We sat down on the only spare bench and I opened the bag passing Abi a large loaf.

Within seconds we were surrounded by hungry, greedy water birds squealing and squawking noisily.

"They ARE hungry," Abi shouted over the din of bird noises. "You'd think they had never been fed"

I broke off bits of crust and tossed them into the water, causing three or four dozen birds to descend on the same point in the water.

"I like coming here, but it can get a bit busy in Summer," I told Abi and she nodded. "It can be so tranquil at other times though."

"I used to have a little park down the bottom of my street," she reminisced. "But not so many ducks"

My thoughts were interrupted by the voice of a little girl a few feet away. "Can we feed the ducks Mummy, please, please," she begged watching Abi and I feed them. I looked across at the source of the pleading and saw a young child no more than four with her mother.

"We haven't got any bread," the mother replied. "Next time."

The young girl looked forlorn but did not create a fuss and looked out over the pond. "Next time," she repeated.

I got up from the bench and walked over to the girl who was no more than ten feet away. "Is it OK?" I said holding out the remainder of my loaf to them and the mother nodded.

The young girl eagerly took the bread and began to pick pieces from it.

"Thank you," the mother said and then prompted the girl to do the same.

"Do you want some of mine?" Abi asked when I sat back down.

"No, you're OK," I said leaning back and stretching out against the warm wooden bench and watching the little girl toss bits of crust into the air. Abi broke up and threw the last of the bread into the water for the assembled pack to fight over.

"You know, it's been years since I came to feed the ducks. No-one has taken me since I was a little girl and I've never had the time to come myself," Abi admitted and leant back against my shoulder so that my arm was around her shoulder and her head rested against the crook of my neck.

I froze for a moment but then pulled her closer to me. I had not cuddled a girl for weeks and I forgot how warm and complete it made me feel. Abi looked up at me and smiled.

"It's be a long time since I've felt so ... calm" she admitted. "I've never had the time to do this. Just sit and watch. It brings back so many memories."

We sat there in near silence for fifteen minutes, before getting up and going to the small café. It was busy, but not full, and I bought Abi and I an ice-cream each and a lemonade. While I was paying Abi went to the toilet and then found a little table in the window with three seats and adjusted the chairs so they looked out over the pond.

"Cheers" she said lifting a small glass of lemonade from the tray and a vanilla ice-cream.

"Cheers" I replied, discarding the tray on the floor and draining half my glass in one gulp.

"Thirsty"

"Very. It's hot"

Abi and I gazed out over the pond and watched two women playing frisbee.

"She isn't wearing a bra," Abi said as a tall blonde woman jumped up to catch the disc.

"I thought that, but didn't want to say anything."

"Clearly no vodka in that lemonade then," Abi teased as I surveyed the multitude of people in front of us.

"Oh shit!" I exclaimed under my breath as I glanced across the park.

"What?" she asked, clearly worried at having heard my expletive.

"It's Jez," I replied annoyed and nodded towards a lanky kid on a skateboard coming up the path to the café. "He thinks he is my friend and he is a right royal pain in the arse."

Abi laughed at me, sucking the last of her lemonade through her straw.

"Let's hope he doesn't see us," I muttered, but it was already too late.

"Andy!" Jez called out the moment he entered the café, his voice carrying to every table. A few people looked over, but he was oblivious to this and sat down on the other chair. "How ya doing?" he asked but didn't wait for an answer. "Jus' 'ad me German exam. Fookin' impossible it was."

He summoned over the assistant and ordered himself a lemonade and looked at us to order another. "We're fine," I told him. "We need to shoot soon."

"So who's this?" he asked pointing his dirty fingernails towards Abi.

"I'm Abi," she said calmly and softly.

"Jez. You from Wales?" he told her and then took the drink from the waitress in return for a couple of coins.

"Scotland," Abi said, somewhat indignantly.

Jez did not seem to notice the tone of Abi's voice. "So watcha upto?"

"Just showin' Abi 'round town," I answered before Abi could.

"Good deed and all that. You new 'round here?" Once again Jez did not wait for an answer and continued. "Yeah, I thought so. Don't trust him though. The guys a total bastard. Ya know he messed wiv me Eye-dro-chloroformic acid in Chemistry so when I dos the experiment it go everywhere. And who gets the rap? Me. Utter bastard!"

I smirked at him as he spoke but Abi replied before I could. "I've had a great day. Come on lets go."

"He's only being nice 'cos he wants to get in ya knickers," Jez called out as got up. Abi smiled at him, her eyes flashing.

"What knickers?" she asked him. "Why would I want to wear them?" She walked out of the café without waiting for a response from the dumbfounded teenager.

"What was all that about?" she asked me as we walked down the ramp.

"I was going to ask you the same question." I countered and put my arm around her. I looked back at an open mouthed Jez in the window of the café and Abi turned and blew him a kiss.

"You're evil," I told her and she leaned in close to me.

"OK. He is a pain in the arse. He tags along, too loud, copies from you. Always borrows money, never pays it back. There is nothing good to say about him."

"So what did you do to him in Chemistry?"

"Nothing. Well nothing really. Teacher told us to get some acid from the back of the room, and he got the wrong one and I didn't tell him. Instead of fizzing nicely, it fizzed rather rapidly. And then it overflowed all over the place. Teach went ballistic, but he blamed me."

Abi nodded. "Why didn't you tell him?"

I dismissed her. "I don't know. I was fourteen. I know I should've, and I suppose he does nobody any harm but he can be irritating and I suppose he had wound me up too much that week, so I sat back and watched. Does that make me an utter bastard?"

Abi grinned and held my hand. "A little. But then we all make mistakes and upset people, especially at fourteen. I should know. I've spent my whole life making them. I suppose we've just got to learn from them and put them right."

I sighed and moved my hand from across her back to her palm. She squeezed it slightly and we walked in silence until we reached the flat door. "So, I meant to ask, are you wearing any knickers or are you just winding him up?"

Abi walked in as I held the door open and waited for it to swing closed.

"Have you had a good day?" She asked, ignoring my question.

I nodded. "Very much so. It's been fun. I've enjoyed myself."

She smiled and wiped her right eye. "Me too, but that's a hell of a question to ask a girl, you know?"

"Well you started it," I told her and she pushed me against the corridor wall, her body touching mine. She grabbed my wrists and slid them down to the hem of her skirt before pushing them up again, riding her skirt up to her waist. My hands felt soft bare skin and I turned my hands to cup her ass. I slid them over, expecting to feel it against some lingerie or G-string but she was bare.

I immediately felt my cock twitch in anticipation and as my hands glided across her silky smooth rear, she tilted her head and planted a long, lingering kiss on my lips. I could taste

the sweetness and sharpness of the lemonade on her lips and felt my body stiffen in expectancy. What was Abi doing? What was she doing to me?

She smiled at me as she pulled her head away and adjusted her summer dress, my hands falling away.

“Why?” I asked, shocked at her brazen behaviour.

“Why didn't you notice?” she asked me softly and I shrugged. “Lots of other guys did, I saw them checking me out as we walked through the town and the park. If you had spent any of today ogling me then you would have noticed. I gave you plenty of opportunity.”

“I-I-I thought we just walking 'round the town” I stammered, not sure what Abi was getting at.

“We were, and I had a great time. I didn't think I necessarily would, so thanks for that,” she said genuinely.

“So what does me not ogling you, mean? Why is it significant?” I asked confused.

“What do you think it means?”

I thought for a moment and sighed, what did it mean? She wanted me to look, or she didn't want me to look? She obviously chose not to wear any knickers to get someone's attention, and if that person was me, why didn't I notice? “I don't know” I eventually said.

“Good,” she said cryptically with a broad smile, flicked her hair back and ascended the stairs dragging her dress up to display her shapely ass as she went. I watched in wonder as she climbed the stairs and disappeared into the flat.

Not for the first time in my life I felt out of my depth, but Abi was in a different league to me.

## **Note from the author**

The “Growing Pains” universe is a set of stories that centres around the life of Andy Williams and all those who got to know him as he grows up. While everything may not be totally clear, it will be the time the Universe is all released. For a fuller explanation please see my website under “Site and Story Credits.”

I shall try and keep to a regular posting schedule and will upload to StoriesOnline.net, asstr.org and my website. Completed stories will also be uploaded to Amazon Kindle, Smashwords and FirstyFish, where their internal policies permit.

The next two stories to be released are:

### **New Pleasures Chapter II**

*Andy meets the delectable Sarah at the bowling alley where the talk of the class is Abi's flirtatious performance with Jez.*

**Excerpt:** “I wanna know right, how this fella gets himself this piece of skirt. She's 18, fit as fuck, awesome chick. Short skirt too; and no fookin' knickers. What bird goes out without her trollies on if she's not goin' to get stuffed right. She was fookin' oozing sex. Massive jugs. Welsh...”

“Scottish”, I replied instantly and everyone turned in my direction.

Jez grinned as I spoke, somewhat satisfied that he got a reaction from me. “What?”

“She is Scottish, not Welsh. And she told you that, but you probably weren't listening, right?”

**To be released on, or before:** 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012

### **New Pleasures Chapter III**

*Abi fights with Andy before going on a picnic with him and his friends in a beautifully romantic and picturesque location. Meanwhile Sarah has some new boots, Rhea teases Jez mercilessly and Andy receives a most unexpected guest.*

**Excerpt:** Abi was happy to explain what happened in a lap-dancing club and Ray, Donna and Sarah were eager to listen. Sarah kept fidgeting in her seat, so much so that her short denim skirt had risen up. I could see her underwear perfectly – a lacy pale pink G-String that was only just covering her labia.

Over her mons, the G-String ruffled and it was clear that she trimmed or shaved her pubic hair. I tore my eyes away, feeling guilty at looking but Sarah leant back revealing even more. I felt my dick stiffen and pulled my hand over my lap. Did she want me to look, and if so, why? I felt a little self-conscious and in an effort to do something other than look at Sarah's barely covered pussy, I rummaged around for the second bottle of wine that I had opened for myself earlier, and poured the remainder into the empty cups.

**To be released on, or before:** 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012