

The
Au Naturel Girls

By
John D



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Credits and License

Codes: MF, exhibitionism, viol, minimal sex

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Note from the author

Inspiration for a story can come from many strange places and none more so than this one. I asked a question of a forum I am a member of about a grammatical construct and used a sentence to illustrate it. I was then asked what the rest of the story was, so I wrote a 4,000 word erotic tale to satisfy the questions – a prudish girl finding out her new boyfriend was a nudist by turning up one day at his house unannounced and finding freedom. I have added that story at the very end of the book; it's certainly no masterpiece and was written overnight when I had had a little too much whisky – but it is a reasonable giggle!

So the thought process went like this – imagine that there was a naturist house of young ladies who had a rather intolerant young man hoisted upon them, how would he and they react?

It also got me thinking and wondered if there were people who lived in Britain with other nudists as “nudist houses” - surely there must be a community out there. There is also a little bit of a personal interest, as my wife has consented to us going to a naturist village this Summer for our family holiday (if anyone is going to La Jenny in Bordeaux for the week starting Bank Holiday Monday in August say “hi” to a pasty-white and slightly nervous British family!) as it is something I have always wanted to do and she is prepared to humour me (she is exceptionally brave and tolerant!) So apologies to real nudists and naturists if they think I have misrepresented you; I certainly didn't mean to if I have and have always admired your lifestyle so I have tried to be respectful!

I would like to thank my wife for her understanding while writing all of my stories; she laughs at me as I can leap up from doing anything (well, almost anything) to scribble something away for “processing” later.

I would especially like to thank Turbo, Gary and Louise for proof-reading this book and pointing out any errors I had made. Please note that the book is written in British English, so “apologise”, “dialled”, “colour”, etc are not spelling errors.

This eBook, has been released to be freely downloaded and I would ask my readers to drop me a line and let me know what you think of the story; I cannot hope to improve as an author if the readers don't tell me where I succeeded and where I failed! I can happily accept criticism, but I do need feedback. **So please, even if you hated every word, I still do like to be told; I am a big boy, I can take criticism!**

Kind regards, thank you for reading and until next time,
John D

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Chapter I

“What ya havin’?” A voice bellowed across the pub. The source of the drunken cacophony groaned when the intended recipient failed to hear him and answer, and he put his hands to his mouth. “Oi, Adam. You deaf tosser, what ya havin’?” Two heads turned to look at the overweight man at the bar and he shrugged. “The Old Goat’s off.”

A tall, black-haired gentleman, dressed in a garish blue and white football shirt got up from the table and sauntered over, surveying the pictures on the pumps and muttering to himself.

“Yeah, fuckin’ hurry up mate. Game’s gonna kick off in an hour,” the rotund man joked and Adam pointed to another beer being offered, before the two of them carried three drinks and a small assortment of bar snacks to the table containing a third gentleman.

Adam’s two friends, looked very similar – overweight, shaved head and wearing bright football shirts but Adam turned to the gentleman who had bought his drink. “So, what’s this march ya on, Carl?” Adam asked and drank a gulp of his beer.

“S’over Manchester way. It’s tomorrow, you know the effin’ Council have stopped some playgroups usin’ the local ‘alls ‘cause they ain’t got enough Darkies and Mussies using ‘em. Some do-gooder from the Council came ‘round and counted ‘em. Said it twere’n’t equal or owt. But they give all the ‘all time to some filthy Mosque thing.”

“Sounds fuckin’ outrageous,” the third member replied and Carl nodded.

“T’is. James. Ya know what we sayin’? This country is going to fuckin’ dogs. All those ethnics comin’ in, feckin’ awful. Local branch wants a rally down there. Gonna tell those Council people where to fuck off ‘cause good British, good white British people ain’t standing for it, no more.”

Adam bit his lip and nodded. “But ya ain’t get arrested, right?”

Carl shrugged. “Dain’t care if I do. Some fuckin’ lefties’ll be there, trying to ‘cause shit, but last time we kicked their fuckin’ ‘eads before pigs turned up,” Carl boasted drunkenly. “Fuckin’ Communist cunts. Should fuck off back to Russia, dain’t want ‘em round ‘ere.” Adam took another gulp and Carl looked at him. “Ya gonna come? Can pick ya up on way through.”

Adam stretched. “Rioting’s not my thing,” he said instantly. “I ain’t forgiven ya yet for getting me nicked at Deepdale.”

Carl pursed his lips together and sneered. “Twas fuckin’ last year. And twas me who ended up in Court. Got banned for three effin’ years, fuckin’ judge, who does he think he is?”

“A judge,” James teased.

“Yeah, and I bet he was a effin’ Tangerine,” he moaned, alleging that the Judge Malloy supported his team’s bitter rivals. “Anyway, I got in the other week, banning order’s means jack shit when ya buy tickets in cash.”

“Ya get caught ...” James muttered.

“I ain’t gonna get caught,” Carl interrupted. “And we ain’t going rioting. Just a peaceful demo.”

Adam sniggered and nursed his pint. “I’m movin’ into my new gaff tomorrow. Gotta be out of my current place by Thursday ‘cause got to give the keys back.”

“Shit, yeah,” Jamie muttered. “Repairs done?”

“Yeah. Been there today, all looks well nice. Two bedroom and massive lounge. Big telly and PlayStation gonna be sweet. All brand new.”

“Some students, weren't it?”

Adam nodded. “Yeah, totally wrecked the place. It's taken three months to get it all sorted, landlord's paid a bloody fortune but it looks like the dog's whatnots.”

Carl snorted. “Fuckin' students. I 'ate fuckin' students. Lazy, dirty, workshy bastards,” he ranted as the young barmaid collected their empty glasses from the tables. Adam looked at her apologetically as she rolled her eyes and took the glasses, gently shaking her head as she went.

Carl took a handful of peanuts and threw a couple in the air, catching them with his mouth and nodding towards a teenager at the bar. “Ya wanna join us, love? For game?”

The girl shook her head and tugged her jumper down. “No,” she replied derisively and Carl shrugged. “Waiting for someone.”

“Fuckin' lesbian that one. Or a fuckin' student.” His two companions looked at each other as he leant back in his chair “Waiting for her girlfriend the muff muncher, you'll see.” Carl was almost disappointed when she embraced a tall man and they retired to another part of the pub. “Where's ya new lodges?”

Adam gave a vague description, moving his hands around wildly to illustrate the roads and he took a swig of his beer. “Love to see it. Ya going well,” James told him.

“It's work,” Adam replied non-specifically. “Got pay rise with that promotion. It's 'ard work but I can afford bigger than a tiny flat now.”

The three men remained in the pub all afternoon, watching the football on the “big screen” before falling out of the pub and looking up at the November sky; it was threatening to rain and Adam pulled his coat tighter. “Let's see ya new place,” James asked and Adam checked his pockets for the keys.

“Yeah OK. It's only a ten minute walk,” Adam told them and strode confidently down the road in the twilight. “Opposite direction to you two cunts though.”

James snorted. “Teri be glad of that. Says you two always swear and stuff when ya come 'round.”

Carl grunted and held his hands out. “Ya gotta sort that bitch out Jamie. She'll be stopping ya playing football soon.”

“Yeah,” Adam agreed. “Since the wedding she's been running ya life.”

James shook his head. “Nah,” he dismissively said. “And ya two singletons, ya wouldn't know would ya?”

“She's bad news for ya,” Carl told him and James puffed up. “She ain't giving ya shit.”

“Just 'cos ya ain't getting any at the mo, don't reckon I ain't getting any.”

Carl raised his eyebrows. “Ya married mate, ya ain't getting owt either.” He jabbed his finger into the chest of his friend and Adam patted him on the shoulder.

“You did say that last week in pub,” Adam said with a grin. “Said you hadn't had any for months.”

“Well it's the baby,” James replied. “She is too tired.”

“Always a fuckin' excuse with birds. Bang out of order.” James snorted and went to reply when a loud noise descended upon them. There was a siren as a fire engine, followed by a second shot past them. “Bet it is a student set fire to a tree or owt. I fuckin' hate

students. Nasty, dirty little fuckers,” Carl ranted. “Best thing could 'appen to this town is if those two Universities burn down.” James laughed and Carl looked at him seriously. “With all the fuckin' students inside.”

Carl vaguely checked over his shoulder and sneered, walking out in the middle of the road to get to a traffic island as there was a loud car horn and the screeching of car tyres as brakes were hastily applied. The drunken Carl leapt out of the way as the battered vehicle missed him by inches and he gripped the bollard. “You OK?” James called out and Carl nodded, his ashen face shocked.

“You,” he bellowed as the car door opened. “What the fuck were you doing?”

Carl wiped his reddening face, his shoulders slanted back and expression sparkling with anger. His eyes nearly popped out of his sockets when a black girl, dressed in garish clothes got out and gripped her car. “Me?” She shouted. “You stepped out into the road. You trying to get yourself killed?”

Carl's face burned a deeper red. “Me? Listen Thicklips, this is my fuckin' country and you come over here and ya think ya can drive like shit. Well fuck you. You should have ya license taken off you, filthy Wog.”

The girl stared at him open mouthed and Carl started walking towards her. “Get away from me,” she shrieked and looked at Adam and James watching the scene unfold. “Stop him.”

“Carl,” James called. “Don't start owt?”

“What's he doing? Get away from me?”

Carl opened his arms out and glared at her. “Or what? Come on then, nigger? You want to kill me, come on then. Should string you up.” He reached a couple of yards from the car and the girl jumped back into her vehicle, turning the key in the ignition as fast as she could.

“Mate,” Adam called but Carl was focused on the car, throwing his hands against the back window and hitting it hard.

“You ain't even said sorry, fuckin' cunt.” The girl's Ford Fiesta refused to start first time and Carl pushed his hand through his jacket and smacked the back passenger window to a cracking sound. “Fuckin' go home, ya nasty nigger cunt,” he yelled. The car fired itself into life and the girl dropped the clutch and the tyres span, just as Carl punched a dent in the side and then kicked it as it snaked off down the road. “Fuckin' dirty whore.” He turned to see his two companions, watching him in shock. “Did you see that?” He shouted in annoyance. “The effin' cheek of it.”

“Yeah,” Adam muttered and spoke to James under his breath. “He must be having a really shit day.”

James shook his head. “Prob'ly,” he drunkenly muttered. “He gonna get 'imself locked up soon.” Adam quietly agreed and they crossed the road to join their drunken friend. Adam guided them, in silence, down the road and around the corner into a small cul-de-sac.

“This road is proper quiet, no students or kids or owt 'round here.”

Carl grinned. “Fuckin' 'oped not. That flat ya in now, students fuckin' everywhere.”

“Yeah,” Adam muttered and looked up to see a small crowd of people at the end of the road. “What the ...?” Concerned, he ran down it, to see not one, but two fire engines next to his new house.

“What's going on?” He called out and pushed past a small throng of people.

A fireman put his arm out as he reached the penultimate house. “No further please, sir?”

"What's going on?"

"Number 24, sir. It looks like a chip pan left unattended."

Adam stared open-mouthed. "But I am number 22," he muttered and the fireman shrugged.

"I'm sorry. It did spread, sir. But we stopped it before it did too much damage."

"Shit," Adam swore, sobering up quickly. "I better ring my landlord."

* * * * *

"Sarah, how are you love?" The slight girl was hugged by her mother and she tucked her brown hair behind her ears.

"I'm fine," the girl replied and smiled at her mother fussing over her clothes.

"It's not warm enough to just wear a T-Shirt you know. It's November, and you are not eating enough, I can tell. Look at the state of you. You need to get a proper Sunday roast inside of you."

"Mum, I am fine," Sarah barked in an exasperated voice. "And it is fine, honestly. I only had to drive a mile to get here, even if the ring road was chocca."

"But if you break down ..."

"If I break down, I could trek," Sarah teased. "Through the snow and ice that we don't have, and struggle through the Arctic Winds Lancaster is not famous for, to a phone box and call the AA. Or I could just use my mobile. Or walk home. Or even scrounge a lift of a passing malevolent being..."

Anne Dayton scowled at her daughter's witticisms. "Yes OK. But you should have a coat at least."

"I'm twenty-three not three," Sarah moaned and walked into the large lounge containing her father and brother. "Happy birthday, Liam," she cooed at her sixteen year old brother, and passed the teenager a small gift-wrapped present and card. "Sorry about the wrapping, Tabitha's been in hospital."

Her father looked up. "How is she?"

"Ahh she's fine now. Just quite a lot of sickness so she was dehydrated. Doctor said baby is OK and they discharged her yesterday but it was a bit mean to ask her to do wrapping after all she went through. Especially after she did my marking. And I can't wrap presents."

Her brother surveyed the poorly wrapped gift and scowled at it. "You've covered it in sellotape."

"Yeah, I know. How else do you get paper stuck on to things?"

He sighed and tried to peel away at the red paper and then looked back at her. "No seriously, ya covered it in tape. There's no way into it."

They laughed at his confused face and Sarah sighed, pointing at his garish red shirt. "Who the fuck got you that disgusting thing?"

"Oi," called a fatherly voice. "Don't use that language." Sarah muttered an apology and then looked expectantly at her brother, expecting an answer to her question. "Olivia," the female voice of Anne Dayton said from behind them and Sarah screwed up her face.

"It better be for a bet, bro. It's proper disgusting." Sarah sat down on the couch and looked at her mother. "And what've I gotta do to get a drink 'round here?"

Anne sighed. "Tea or coffee?"

"White wine, please."

"You're driving."

"Oh you noticed," Sarah replied with a smirk. "That big blue thing outside your house, there was me thinking it would just blend in and you wouldn't notice."

"Don't be facetious," her mother warned and Sarah grinned.

"Why not; always been told to do what I do best," she said with a gleam in her eye. "I can have one."

"You can have a small one," her mother told her. "When we get the Fish 'n' Chips."

"I could have two and walk back."

"Not without a coat," her mother snapped. "Now, tea or coffee?"

Sarah sighed and asked for a cup of tea, and then turned back her brother, still unable to get into the present and was resorting to using the tip on a discarded ballpoint pen to get some leverage on the tape. She looked at his shirt, it was bright red with a dragon on the front and flames at the hem; it was as garish as a Hawaiian shirt but considerably more tasteless in her opinion. "So why has Olivia got you dressed up as a muppet?"

"Oh leave him alone," her father told her. "And I have a bone to pick with you, missy. What was wrong with Alicia?"

Sarah hummed. "Alicia, Alicia," she muttered as she thought and pursed her lips. "Oh the girl who wanted to live with us?"

"Yes her. You know that I now have every single flat, house and room rented out bar one."

Sarah squirmed. "Yeah, well. She wasn't right."

"Why?"

"Cause she wouldn't have fit in. We didn't feel comfortable."

Her father and landlord sighed. "You can't keep rejecting everyone. That's the fifth one. And you know in the contract you only have a veto for the first two months. It's been since Mary left in August. You can't keep the room open for her until she returns."

"Yeah I know, Dad. But she wasn't right. She just was creepy. And all churchy."

"Yes, and you would do well to visit the church a bit more often, young lady. There is nothing wrong with being a god-fearing member of Society. If you want to live with two other people then live in a three-bedroom house not a four."

Sarah sighed. "We like our house, it's the right size, the garden isn't overlooked. It's just that you haven't found someone appropriate."

He raised his hand over his receding hairline and shook his head. "Well any other house I'd be putting people in it. I run thirty properties and it's only your bloody house that I have trouble with."

Sarah licked her lips and batted her eyelids. "Yeah, I know Dad. But it's three girls on their own. We're vulnerable and we want to feel OK in our own home."

There was a loud swear word uttered as Liam's hand slipped and he poked the pen into his palm. A trickle of blood ran down his hand and he looked at Sarah. "Did you really need to use all this bloody tape?"

Sarah ignored him and turned back to her father who shook his head. "That's why I am being lenient with ya and because it's my property, but I need to get someone in. You can't look for another Mary. Now I 'aven't been forcing anyone onto you but if you don't like the

people I have found then you need to be looking for yourself. I need that room filled to get one-hundred percent occupancy.”

Sarah sighed. Her mother passed her a cup of tea and she looked at her son, passing him a pair of scissors as he swore at the small package. “Did you say Tabitha was out of hospital?”

Sarah smiled. “Yeah, yesterday. Doctors reckon she'll be fine, and she's off work for another week. But she is due to go onto maternity soon.”

“And that's another thing. How did that happen?” Her father demanded.

Sarah cocked her head to one side. “Would you like me to draw you a diagram?” Sarah pulled out her hands, inserting her middle finger into a hole made by her thumb and forefinger in her other hand and looking at her father with a silly grin.

There was muted laughter as her father shook his head at the giggling daughter. “You know what I mean. Your house is immoral. Mary arrested last year for indecency. Natasha ...”

“Natalie,” Sarah interrupted. “You keep calling her Natasha, it's Natalie.”

“Well her, and tell her she owes me for November.” Sarah grunted and fished in her handbag, passing a cheque over to her father.

“She said sorry, work were late paying her.”

He grunted and looked at her. “As I was saying, Mary getting cautioned, Natalie going naked in those art classes. Not to mention Tabitha, single girl gets knocked up on a one-night stand. You said she was single and not interested in setting down with a guy.”

“She's not,” Sarah said tersely. “But that night she wanted it. She is an adult now, she had her 21st Birthday a few months ago. Her choice. But, because she is pregnant, she is very vulnerable which is why we don't want anyone moving in. They have to be sound”

“It's her culture,” her father replied sharply. “Programmed to have kids every fifteen minutes. I'm not havin' a rented house full of kids.”

Sarah uncrossed her arms and gestured towards her father. “What are you on about? She was born in Wolverhampton. There might be bugger all to do there but having kids is not a cultural thing.”

“She's ... ya know,” her father squirmed.

“Black,” Sarah finished for him with a fierce scowl.

“And it'll be the state that pays for it. She'll claim no end of benefits, you'll see,” he ranted.

“...and breathe,” Sarah said with a frown. “See you have been reading the Daily Mail again.” She turned to her mother. “I thought the Doctor told him to avoid it along with coffee and alcohol 'cause of his blood pressure. It'll do him no good.” Her father went to reply when Sarah interrupted him. “Remember, it's the paper that supported Hitler.”

“You keep saying that,” he moaned. “And it's better that that left-wing rubbish you read,” he told her and Sarah sighed.

“The Independent. Yeah, really left-wing. You should see our staff room at work, full of Trots all pouring over the Indy,” she said with a scowl. “We sing the Communist Worker's Song before we start work in the morning, bow down towards Russia. And we got a grant from our Labour Council to do it and fly the Red Flag.”

The middle-aged man shook his head and went to reply when there was a cry from the corner of the sofa. “Ah-ha,” Liam called out and he prised open the small gift his sister had bought him. “A digital camera,” he said loudly and put his arms out to hug his sister. “Ahh

wow!”

“Get away from me,” Sarah cried. “You'll get blood on my T-Shirt.”

“Sorry.”

Sarah sipped at her tea and her mother touched her on the knee. “How was Parents' Evening, love.”

“Ahh fine. One parent thought I was pushing their son too hard by insisting that he can read and write at the age of nine. And another thought I was holding them back by not teaching them Quantum Mechanics, but apart from that, OK.”

Her mother smiled. “I told you, you'd be OK.”

“It's very different doing it on your own. Scared me a bit, but the early parents were fine. All the kids said that they liked Miss Dayton apparently apart from Luke who thinks I am scary.”

“You are scary,” Liam teased as he poured over the hand-held device and Sarah finished her tea. “I would hate to be taught by you.”

“I don't mind teaching you dress sense,” Sarah replied instantly. “God, there were geeks at Uni who wouldn't be seen dead in that.”

Liam sighed. “I like it. Olivia bought it for me.”

“Well she is just making sure that no other girl wants you,” Sarah spluttered and looked across at her mother. “Now are we going to get Birthday Fish 'n' Chips or what?”

“Yeah, sure,” her father replied and reached up for his wallet on the fireplace next to his chair. He stretched and heard a ringing sound. “Oh, it's my 'phone, one moment,” he muttered and located the device. “George Dayton,” he abruptly answered the ringing mobile 'phone. “On fire. OK I'll be with you shortly.”

* * * * *

“Hiya,” Sarah called out the moment she closed the front door to their terraced house. “How's the patient?”

“I'm fine,” a pregnant girl muttered from the sofa. “Liam like his camera?”

“Oh yeah,” Sarah replied airily as Sarah sauntered into the lounge. “One of Dad's houses is on fire, so we had Fish 'n' Chips and ... er ... that was it really. Dad wants us to take anyone but I told him, no.”

The pregnant girl looked up in surprise as Sarah closed the door. Their front room was lit only by a couple of wall lights, the flickering of the fire and a slight crack in the curtains. The threadbare two-person couch underneath the window was occupied by Tabitha who sat up as Sarah came into the room and flicked off the television. “Just crap on,” she muttered.

Sarah looked at the pregnant girl. At five foot ten inches tall, she was a couple of inches taller than her but Tabitha was much bigger, even after considering the pregnancy bump. Sarah was slight and thin whereas Tabitha was well built and almost stocky.

Sarah envied her house mate, and although her own breasts were not small, Tabitha's large bosom had grown immensely during her pregnancy to now be a 38F. Tabitha patted the chair next to her. “What happens if your Dad does decide to put someone in here?”

Sarah took a deep breath. “Oh I don't know. It would be good if we could find someone. Failing that, we will just have to muddle through.” Sarah kicked off her shoes and socks and looked up at the pregnant girl on the couch as she slid her jeans and panties down to her ankles. “Mean, they will get a proper shock if he picks anyone, won't they?”

The naked Tabitha smirked. "Yeah. That girl he sent 'round a couple of days ago. She was awful. Could tell she wouldn't want to live with naturists."

Sarah smiled as she removed her top and sat down next to Tabitha. "Before I get comfortable, do you need a drink?" Tabitha pointed at a full glass of water on the table and Sarah smiled. "Good, listening to the Doctor. Yeah, Dad asked me about her. But she wouldn't have coped with us, let alone Nat."

"Well she is as much exhibitionist as she is naturist. She would have loved to make her feel uncomfortable if she started preaching. You know that."

"Dad mentioned that. Nat's art modelling and stuff, says our house is immoral."

Tabitha smiled. "It is immoral."

Sarah giggled and allowed Tabitha to get herself comfortable by leaning back and putting her legs across hers. She glanced down at her stubble gracing her pubis and Tabitha looked pleadingly at the young teacher. "You couldn't tomorrow, you know."

Sarah smiled and nodded. "Yeah. I think I can," she said with a grin.

"Yeah, 'cause it's a service the nurses don't offer," Tabitha complained. "And I do like it nice and smooth."

"Sure," Sarah said and then looked at the television. "Anyway, where is this film you promised me?"

Tabitha picked up the two remote controls and turned the television back on, before flicking the DVD player into life.

"Saturday nights are just awesome," she announced and ran her hands along the legs and thigh of the black girl as the DVD span up.

"I've put something saucy in. That OK?" Tabitha offered and Sarah nodded knowing exactly what Tabitha meant.

Chapter II

George Dayton pulled up at the house in Elm Park Road in his executive salon. He spotted the frustrated figure of Adam, sat on the garden wall and smoothed his jacket as he got out of the car.

"Hiya," Adam called out to him and George nodded. There were a few people milling around but his property was in darkness and silent.

"What's happened?"

Adam sighed. "They reckon the guys next door put a chip pan on and didn't turn it off and then they went out," Adam said calmly to groans from his landlord. "And their kitchen caught fire, which is in the corner and it just took hold and it's gutted the back of mine. Well yours."

George shook his head in disgust and reached into his jacket pocket taking out a torch.

"Can we get in?"

"Fire Brigade said not to until the Building Inspector comes but feck knows when that'll be."

"Well we can get 'round the back can't we?"

Adam nodded. "Yeah but I ain't been to see it."

The landlord flicked on his torch and looked walked over to the gate by the side of the semi-detached house, pushing it open and walking through it. The smell of charred wood and smoke hung in the air and George swore when he saw the back of the property. "Hell, this is a lot of work here."

"Yeah I guessed that," Adam replied as he caught up. The entire of the house in the bottom right was charred black and three of the windows had melted. It was clear that the fire had burnt most of the downstairs plus the smoke damage and George sighed.

"Only just finished doing this up after those bastards wrecked it," he muttered and Adam pursed his lips. "Did you have anything moved in?"

"No," Adam muttered. "Thank fuck. Was moving in tomorrow." George hummed and swung the torch from one part of the house to the other and rubbed his eyes in frustration. "Look, can I stay in the flat for the time being? I know I signed on to take this on yesterday but I can't move in here, with it in this state."

The landlord sighed. "No. No you can't, not like this. There's weeks of work here. You'd be within your rights to cancel the agreement." He looked at the young man staring at the property

Adam bit his lip and hummed. "So me flat. That been taken?"

George screwed up his face. "Sorry. The couple I showed 'round this morning took it. I signed the agreement a few hours ago." He rubbed his brow and looked at the property again scarcely illuminated by the feint light of the torch.

"Ahh shit," Adam cried out. "Cause I got to get out of there by Thursday and got nowhere to go. I ain't movin' back in with my parents. Ya dain't got anywhere free?"

George sighed. "Yeah, umm, OK. Look it's only a room in a house share on the other side of Lancaster but it's all I got. It's normally seventy quid a week but I can let you have it at half price if you still want to move into the house when it's done up," he told him. "Plus bills that you sort out, I don't get involved in that."

"A room? I got loads of stuff in my flat," Adam told him morosely.

"Sorry," the landlord muttered. "I got 100% occupancy bar this room. It's a house full of girls ..." George paused and waited for the objection and shook his head. "Yeah sorry, I know. But it's a house full of girls, they're OK."

"Yeah, if that's all what's available," Adam muttered. "I'll chuck some stuff, well most of me stuff, in storage."

"He surveyed the house again and shrugged. "Yeah sorry, I'm just waiting for some house sales to go through but they are occupied. I think the next free property is after Christmas. Loads in June obviously when the students go home."

Adam bit his lip and nodded. "Ahh well, it'll beat going back with my parents."

"Yeah," George muttered, distracted for a moment. "How are they?"

"Yeah, they're fine. Dad's working too hard and Ivy, well she is shacked up with a right lazy bastard."

George snorted and scribbled a number on a piece of paper. "This is the house phone number, if you want to have a butchers or to meet the girls. They are a nice bunch but just a bit crazy." Adam gave a nervous laugh and the landlord smiled. "They're OK. Bloody awkward but I'll draw up the paperwork tomorrow. Come to the office at ten and I'll give you keys."

Adam nodded and shook his hand. "Cheers. Owe you one."

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"Ahh, there you are. I have a little surprise for you," the landlord called as he came back up the driveway from getting his Sunday papers from the newsagent and saw his daughter getting out of her car outside his house.

"What?" Sarah asked, stooping to pick up the bottle of wine from the front seat. "What's up?"

"I have someone who will be staying in the spare bedroom," he told her with a smile. "One of my tenants."

Sarah shook her head and stared at him wide-eyed. "Oh no. No, no, no, no, no! Dad you promised. Who?" She barked.

"Adam," came the response with a terse look.

"Adam. A guy called Adam?"

"Well Adam is a boys name," he told her with a smirk. "Now I know ..."

"Why would you do this?" Sarah shouted in the street, her arms gesturing wildly. Her father unlocked his front door and scowled at her. "Why would you put a guy in with us? We had this conversation yesterday."

"I do not want to continue this conversation outside," he warned her. "I will not discuss my business with the street." Sarah threw her hands down to her sides and strode into the house.

"Who is he and why?" She shouted as she crossed the threshold.

"He was due to move into a house, it burnt down yesterday so I said he could rent the room off me."

"Well can't he live somewhere else?" Sarah asked, her voice sharp and snappy.

"No," her father replied instantly. "I have near 100% occupancy. I told you that. Anyway you know him, he's a nice lad."

"I don't know anyone called Adam," Sarah sneered and crossed her arms glaring at her father.

"Yes you do know him. Remember that twentieth wedding anniversary we went to few years ago. You were in College I think. Or School. Stuart and Louise, the garage owner. You know, my old school friend. He is their son."

Sarah screwed up her face. "At that posh pub near the hospital?"

"Yeah, that's the one. He's a nice guy."

"He threw up in the flower beds and made a pass at every girl there, didn't he?" The landlord shrugged.

"I can't remember."

"Black hair, tall, wore a green shirt. He was with a podgy girl and they got absolutely hammered."

The landlord sighed and pursed his lips. "Well he might've done, I don't know."

"So, let's be honest, you know nothing about him. He might not be a nice guy, he might be a killer or a rapist or anything."

"Don't be silly, Sarah. You are acting like one of your pupils. He's a nice lad, always pays his rent on time," he told her. "Unlike your friends." Sarah winced and the landlord shook his head and walked into the front room.

"Yeah, 'cause rapists never pay their debts do they?" Sarah spat back, continuing the argument. "If only all those murderers like Ian Huntley and Moira Hindley. If only they'd have paid their rent on time, they'd have not have committed any sex crimes." Her father's expression changed at Sarah's sarcasm. "And I don't want anyone I don't know moving in to the room above me."

"Well that's the problem," her father told her. "Someone you don't know. Everyone is someone you don't know. Now I do know Adam and I know his family. He is a good lad, he won't cause any trouble. And I knew you wouldn't like it, but I gave you ample opportunity to find someone you wanted and you didn't. So I have found someone suitable for you."

Sarah rubbed her face and held out her hands at her father. "He is not suitable. He is a he, for a start. If he was a she we might be talking but being a he is bad. Very bad."

"Yeah, and if you are as vulnerable as you say you are then having a guy in the house is better than all you girls. What happens if you get a break-in?"

"I can look after myself," Sarah hissed. "I looked after myself when I was at Uni and I can do so again. I certainly don't need some guy to be around."

"Well it is my last word on the subject," her father told her for the second time. "He has a six month contract starting from Wednesday."

"Wednesday," Sarah wailed. "And six months. You promised me. You promised me that we would have a veto."

"And you promised me that you would have it filled by the end of September," her father replied. "So I have. And it's signed so it is final."

Sarah crossed her arms. "This is bang out of order. Utterly, bang out of order."

"No Sarah," he father said. "What is bang out of order is you and your friends refusing to co-operate with me. Now I have been very patient, but I run a business. You wanted to live away from home, I don't charge you girls much rent, even with four of you but I still got costs and the like. Now, he will be moving in and you will make him welcome."

Sarah puffed. "I will not," she told him and pushed past him into the kitchen, her face etched with anger and frustration.

"Sarah, you are 23, for Christ's sake. You're making more fuss than the couple of Queens I got sharing that flat up in Hala."

Sarah snorted and threw open the door where her mother was preparing dinner. "Dad is such a ..."

"Cheese!" Cried her brother and Sarah swore as the pocket digital camera flashed in her eyes. "This is brilliant," he cried and darted into the lounge.

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"Cheers," Adam muttered as he raised the full pint to his lips and sat back in the sofa watching the football out of the corner of his eye.

"Supermarket has 'em on offer," his father muttered, offering him some peanuts from a small tray. The small television in the corner of the small house flickered and Stuart Hodson got up and banged the top of the ageing CRT set.

"Not time for a new telly then?"

The grey-haired man snorted. "With bloody Ivy and her useless boyfriend leaching off me, where'm I going find money for a new telly."

"Still unemployed?" Adam asked as the television flickered back to life and the pitch returned.

"Both of 'em. Messing around all day. She's been told she needs to do some training down the job centre, proper angry 'bout it as she says she got a trade but she ain't got a job yet so it's worth doing. He's got away with it 'cos he's got a bad back. He's takin' liberties."

"Well chuck 'em out then," Adam replied. "I moved out when I was eighteen."

Stuart Hodson's face flickered and he sniffed. "Yeah, well, ya always had more goin' for you than Ivy."

Adam nodded and turned his attention back to the football. "And you're too soft for your own good," Adam teased.

"Too feckin' right," his father replied. "That Brad, he makes a hundred quid a week off the benefits but I see nowt. And Lou only gets a tenner off him. And the thieving little shit was at me beer earlier," he grumbled and Adam shook his head.

"Chuck 'im out. Tell 'im to go live with his folks. Or pay his way."

"Yeah I will. I should do, I mean." He looked at his son and mimicked his daughters pleading voice. "But Ivy loves him."

"But there are loads of jobs around. There's one that's going opposite our place," Adam told him.

"Well I tried," Stuart moaned. "But she's obsessed. She ain't gonna get an 'airdressing placement so she should just do whatever but she did the course so she's obsessed. It's feckin' stupid." He took a swig of his beer and stretched, swearing at the referee on the television. "That's a dive. Referee's effin' blind."

Adam gave a coy smile and watched as the player blasted the free kick into the resulting stand which resulted in "justice" being muttered. The door to the front room opened and he saw his sister looking in. "Mum says do you want another beer?"

Adam grunted and nodded which his father copied and the fair-haired girl returned holding two cans of chilled lager. "Carl passes his regards," Adam told her as she passed him his

drink.

Ivy giggled and wrapped her hair around her ear. "Did he?" Adam passed her his empty can and turned his gaze towards the television. "That's sweet," she shrilled, and adjusted her tracksuit.

Adam looked at his father who waited for his daughter to bounce out of the room before speaking. "She better not get involved with him again."

Adam sighed. "Yeah," he muttered in a low voice. "Well she loves Brad. She only went out with her exes when Brad played away, didn't she?"

"Well, he's a weird lad. Never knew what she saw in him." He waited for Adam to puff and looked at him. "I know he's ya friend but ..."

"I know he's a bit of a character. I mean, he took Ivy to his gun club on a date. I can't believe he did that. Or taking her down to the footie. But he's just ... Carl." Stuart glanced over and took a handful of the peanuts. "And Carl has a job. A flat. Prospects."

Stuart snorted. "Prospects of getting his head kicked in," came the response. "He's just a weird ..." He trailed off as the ball was played through the middle of the defence and his attention turned to the screen. "Round the 'keeper," he cried and then erupted with cheers at the well taken goal.

Adam had never really known what to make of Brad: he looked like he was a stereotypical Australian – always dressed in T-Shirts, flip-flops and shorts with long dirty blonde hair. He looked like a "dude" from the low-budget films from the nineties, but he was laid back and had his arm around his girlfriend.

They shamelessly kissed at the dinner table and Stuart shook his head. "Hey, Brad. I meant to tell ya, there is a job at our place. Entry level, just cleaning machinery and stuff, but it pays 'bove minimum wage."

Brad moved his eyes, but not his head towards Adam. "'Sit involve movin', like?" He asked in his Merseyside accent. "Cos me back. It's agony."

Adam took a deep breath and licked his lips. "Yeah, but not too much."

Brad adjusted himself and moved his hand below the table, still clearly touching Ivy, and looked into Adam's eyes. "I dain't want somethin' that's gonna fuck me back up."

Adam took a deep breath and was interrupted by Ivy. "I heard your new flat burnt down."

All eyes turned to Adam who nodded. "Yeah. But I've got a room in a house on the other side of Bowerham Road."

"Oh it's posh up there," his mother chimed as she passed plates of dinner to everyone at the table. "That'll be costin' ya."

"Yeah, it looks nice enough, 's'only for a few weeks. 'Til after Christmas. And not too much. Storage'll cost me a small fortune."

Ivy smiled and looked into the eyes of her partner, busily slipping his hand inside her tracksuit trousers. "Brad," she whispered and licked her lips. "Later."

"You could live here," Louise cooed as she sat down and passed her husband the gravy. "I always said there'll be a bed for you here."

Adam rubbed his nose. "My old room your en suite now, want me to sleep in the shower?"

His mother laughed. "The other bedroom's big enough for a single and a double bed. We got a spare single in the loft. An airbed or something, isn't that right, love?"

Adam spluttered as she looked inquisitively at her husband. "I don't think Ivy and Brad

would want to share a room with me.”

“Ohh ... it'll be fine,” the lady responded. “Save you a bit of money.”

Adam waited for his sister and Brad to stare at him, horror etched upon their faces when he responded. “I've signed for it now, it's cheap, just while my new house is sorted.”

Ivy breathed out dramatically, and Adam couldn't help wonder if he should have strung out her concern for a bit longer.”

Chapter III

"Nat. Tab," Sarah called, the moment she opened the door. "Anyone home?"

"In here," the booming voice of Tabitha answered from the lounge and Sarah turned right through a door at the foot of the stairs.

"Ahh, we have a problem," she called out as she kicked off her shoes across the tiled hallway so they landed against the wall in heap. "You'll never guess what my stupid, pig-headed ... shit, Nat, are you OK?"

Sarah paused as she looked down at the couch and saw her curvy house mate sobbing on the sofa, her head in her hands. Tabitha was consoling her with her arms around the brunette who wiped her eyes and looked up. "He dumped me," she said by way of an explanation.

"What, Ryan? Nah. Shit, your serious. What did he do that for? You were going fine, weren't you?"

Natalie's face screwed up as she burst into tears and jerked her hands forward. "I don't know. He just said that we weren't going anywhere, and he didn't love me anymore."

"Fuck. The bastard. Two years, right?"

"I know." Natalie looked at her hands and shook her head. "And then he said, we can just be friends. Friends with benefits 'cause he liked the sex."

"I hope you told him no," Sarah told her and Natalie smiled through her tears.

"I kicked him in the balls," Natalie replied with a grin. "Twice. I think he took that as a 'no' cause he just screamed abuse at me."

"Men. You just can't trust 'em," Tabitha replied and rubbed her rotund belly. "You better be a young lady."

Sarah gave an involuntary smile at Tabitha talking to her unborn child and then snapped out of her thoughts when Natalie spoke to her.

"You were saying," Tabitha asked and Sarah stopped for a moment and thought. "When you came in?"

"Oh yeah. My Dad. My stupid, stupid Dad has arranged for someone to live with us."

"What?" Her two companions shouted in earnest. "Who?"

"Adam."

"Adam. But Adam's a boys name."

"Yes, Tab. I know. I said that."

"But we, you know. Live our life of freedom and stuff."

"Yes, I know." Sarah replied in an annoyed tone. "I fuckin' know that. I don't want him just ogling us, but what can we do?"

"So what can we do?" Tabitha asked and Sarah shrugged.

"I dunno. It's in the contract," the teacher replied to a howl of annoyance from Tabitha.

"It says we have a veto. We agreed to a veto if one of us leaves."

"Yes, for the first two months. I've been through this with him and he is not budging. Says he has a legal right and has costs to meet."

"I'd rather have that Alice or even that druggie than a guy."

"Me too," Sarah replied instantly "But he just wouldn't listen. It's some guy who's moving out of his flat into one that's just gone up in smoke."

"Shit," Natalie cried. "Is he all right?"

"Yeah. Well Dad didn't say he wasn't," Sarah told the room. "Didn't ask. I mean, I guess he ain't in the burns unit 'cause he signed for the room. I was told is his new place is chargrilled and we are the only place he can stay."

"I don't like it," Tabitha replied. "I am pregnant."

"Yeah, I tried that."

"And vulnerable."

"And that," Sarah interrupted triumphantly. "He's said he is moving in and that's that."

"So what do we do now? I don't want to wear clothes ... " Natalie trailed off and took a deep breath.

Sarah sighed. "I guess it marks the end of our naturism for a few months," she declared in a concerned voice.

"Yeah, 'cause he will be proper freaked out by it all," the vivacious Natalie added. "Ryan was always well freaked out when I'd wander 'round his house starkers."

"He lived with four other guys – three of whom were nerdy singletons," Sarah told her friend. "He probably didn't want them lusting over you."

"Well that's as maybe. But I don't want those restrictions in my house. I want to be able to run around with nothing on, if I want to. I certainly don't want some guy constantly staring at me as if I am some zoo exhibit."

Tabitha sniffed. "We can't choose, can we? If he is moving in, then we just got to see what happens, right?"

Sarah snorted. "Sometimes, I fuckin' hate my family," she moaned. "Dad is bang out of order."

* * * * *

"Birds? A house of whining, screaming women?" Carl asked over his pint of beer.

"Yeah, tell me about it. I've nicked our van at work and dumped all me shit I don't need in storage. I got it again tomorrow afternoon to move in," Adam moaned, nursing his pint.

"Ahh they'll be moaning about the telly and music and the toilet. Women are fuckin' obsessed with the toilet. So what if the seat is up, why can't the lazy cunts just get their hand and put it down. We don't moan when they leave it down, do we?"

Adam shrugged. "Yeah, that Molly who I lived with for a few weeks, she went mental at stupid things. Like using the fridge for beer and having a wank in the shower."

Carl screwed up his face. "Ya gonna get fuckin' mithered to fuck ain't ya?"

Adam took a gulp of his beer. "Yeah, but I ain't got much of a choice. I ain't going back 'ome. Ivy's trying to get knocked up and I ain't listening to her all night." Carl smiled, he remembered the charms of Adam's youngest sister very well and Adam glared at him grinning. "Yeah, stop it, mate."

"Sorry," Carl muttered and stared out of the pub window to look at the puddles forming. "She's a hot piece."

Adam rolled his eyes and changed the subject. "How was that march ya were on?"

"Protest," Carl replied. "Good. Some Unite Against rubbish were there but they got their

'eads kicked in. Proper good, we had some Union leader at the back of the Supermarket and he was in a proper bad way once we'd finished with 'im."

Adam sighed and Carl scowled at him. "Ya gonna be on Crimewatch then?"

Carl guffawed. "Fuck no. I ain't messin' him up in front of cameras. I ain't stupid but we got another protest two weeks time. Bradford."

"Why?" Adam asked finishing the last of his beer.

"Ahh, some Pakis want to build a mosque next to a Church. They can fuck off if they think their dirty shit should be next to God's Church."

Adam gave a titter. "Didn't have you down as a church-goer."

Carl sneered. "It's all flower arranging and hymns and shit. I ain't going to that bollocks ever. But it's the principle of it ain't it? Church of England and our heritage next to some filthy Paki place. It ain't 'appening. It needs burning down."

Adam sighed and got up. "I gotta go and pack last few bits." Carl downed the last of this drink and stretched his legs.

"Last night," he teased. "Before you move in. I betya they ain't gonna have beer in the fridge."

"Yeah, and they ain't got Cable or Sky; I checked with the landlord. So no sports."

"Well it's birds ain't it. It'll be Jane Austen dramas and cookery shit," Carl muttered in response. "They'll be on your case all fuckin' day."

"Ahh well, I'll just have to give 'em the Adam Charm won't I?"

"Nah. Yah need to lay down the law mate. Tell those fuckin' birds to stop with the shit. It ain't natural anyway, bet they lez up and have gay friends. Last thing you want is a load of queers coming 'round every day, sniffing your keks and shit."

Adam shrugged. "I've been told by James to be charming. First night, thought some drinks and a takeaway maybe."

Carl sneered. "Fancy an Indian before ya pack?"

"Ahh go on then."

* * * * *

"Natalie, close the door," the stout gentleman told her and he watched his assistant shut his office door, faded and downtrodden before turning and sitting down on a worn chair.

"All right, Jeff. You wanted to see me?"

"Yes," he said brusquely and rubbed his face. "Just so-es you know, we are getting rid of four of our vehicles," he told her and rubbed his brow. "We haven't had the bookings and it seems silly to 'ave 'em in the yard, costing money."

Natalie nodded. "Four? Christ, we only discussed two."

Jeff wiped his eyes. "Yes I know. But we got a good offer and Taylors, up in Kendal, they offered us some money for 'em and well, we can't keep having coaches idle."

Natalie nodded. "They get some trade from the Lakes," she replied, somewhat philosophically. "And we are a bit far out here."

He puffed in agreement. "Ya not wrong there. And the two Theatre groups losing funding from the Government 'asn't 'elped. I mean, they were good for so many trips."

"Fuckin' Tories," Natalie muttered. "So which four are going?"

“Coaches 26 to 29.”

“The new ones?” Natalie cried out. “We only got them two years ago. I thought we were going to ditch the bangers.”

Jeff squirmed. “I got a good price for 'em,” he told her. “They wanted the new ones and I got a good deal. Now, Rufus, Steve, Toby and Paul all need to be told that their coaches are going to Kendal,” he announced. “Can ya handle that today please.”

“Me?” Natalie spluttered. “You want me to do it?”

Jeff nodded. “I got an important meeting,” he responded immediately. “I got a meeting in town.”

Natalie scowled at him briefly; it wasn't usual for him to be evasive and certainly the dismissal of four of their employees was an event she expected the owner and manager to do. “Are you sure ...?” She trailed off and Jeff nodded.

“Natalie, you'll be fine. Now, I got to go and speak to the Bank.” Natalie's face dropped and he pushed both hands down on the table. “It's fine. Just a yearly review meeting, the banks love 'em,” he told her. “But if I miss it then they start asking questions. And I know Rufus, and Toby and Paul. Well they all live closer to Kendal than Lancaster, and I know Taylor's are looking for drivers, so it'll suit them.”

“Right OK,” Natalie muttered and Jeff slid four piles of paper over to her.

“You're my Operations Manager,” he told her with a grin. “Since Dave left I need you to do these sorts of things for me.”

“Right,” Natalie muttered and he tapped the top of the papers.

“You'll need these. Be good to 'em. But I am sure they won't mind.”

* * * * *

“Dad,” Sarah cooed and sidled up to her father. “Look, I know we've said some stuff but we've had a chat and we think Alicia mightn't be so bad after all.”

Her father sighed and looked at her as he put his breakfast bowl in the sink. “He is moving in, it is too late.”

“But Dad I was thinking.”

“No,” came the response.

“But Dad, listen. That girl who was at your party, Wren or something, she is in one of your houses. Why doesn't she move in with us and let this Adam guy move in with her friends.”

George crossed his arms. “Because they don't know Adam...”

“Neither do we,” Sarah replied. “And Tabitha...”

“And I've told you, that is the end of it. Now was there a reason to you being here 'cause I reckon your new house mate might need some help moving in.”

“Do not call him that,” Sarah spat as she scowled at the grinning face of her father. “He is not my house mate.”

“He is,” the middle-aged man replied softly. “Now how would you like it, your house burnt down?” Sarah's scowl deepened and she shrugged. “I don't think he wants to live with you girls any more than you want him to live with you but he is homeless and had to put half his stuff into storage so he could probably do without you getting bitchy with him.”

Sarah groaned. “I am never bitchy.”

Her father raised his eyebrows. “Yes, you do. Now I know it's not ideal but, needs must.

And you never know, you might actually like him.”

“I won't,” Sarah said instantly and he looked at her.

“Now, I'm sorry Sarah, I have to go to work. And when you get home Adam will probably be there.”

Sarah grunted and looked up from the kitchen table; it was not often she had breakfast at her parent's house, even though it was en route to her primary school where she worked but she had made an exception with the hope of talking her father out of his decision. “But ... he better be house trained,” she snapped. “And tolerant.”

“Tolerant?” Her father asked. “Why?”

Sarah screwed up her face. “Why do you think, Dad?”

“Well Tabitha better not play the race card just because she doesn't like the look of him. I had a guy do that last year with me,” he stopped and thought for a moment. “Weird guy, he was gay as well. Said I was discriminating against him for being a homo and a darkie just 'cause I wanted my rent paid.”

“Homo and a darkie?” Sarah asked incredulously but her father didn't see the disbelieving look she gave him.

“Yeah, now listen. Her kind are always doing that, that girl better not play the race card with him. He's a good bloke, nice guy. Just please, be nice to him. For me, 'cause I could really so without this agro.”

Sarah bit her tongue and glared at her father as he left the room. She glanced over at her brother and he just shrugged with a smile. “He'll find out your secret sooner rather than later,” he warned her.

“Yeah well. Just not yet, OK. It's fine, loads of people are comfortable with it, but you know how much of a conservative prude he can be.”

Liam smiled. “Well he didn't mind me going out with that girl from the Uni last year,” he boasted. “The French one.”

Sarah leant across and looked at him. “Yes, but he might have a problem with the drink, the weed and not to mention the orgies.” Liam grinned in reminiscence and she sighed. “Or maybe not. Who knows how his fuckin' mind works, you might get away with those, but I know your other secrets too. Remember, Olivia told me when she was pissed and I know he will proper freak if he finds out about them. About that night. Or should I say ... those nights.”

Liam's eyes widened and he shook his head. “You promised not to say anything.” Sarah tutted. “Anyway, it was Olivia's idea. She encouraged me. She likes to ...” Liam blushed and sniffed, “and it's fun I s'pose.”

Sarah giggled. “It's OK. I won't. Just so unexpected that's all.” Liam watched as she placed her bowl on the worktop by the sink and hugged him goodbye before she strode out of the house and into her ten-year old car. The radio blared on the moment she started the ignition and she swore at it before turning off and heading for the small primary school where she worked.

Lenbury Road School was in a sleepy village on the coast and the drive took her twenty miles in almost unbroken countryside past the river estuary. She was lucky to have been given the job, as a Newly Qualified Teacher the first appointment was often tricky to get but she had worked at neighbouring schools as a supply teacher and then in March got the full-time Year 4 teaching position on a temporary basis when the incumbent was involved in a serious car accident.

The previous teacher was nearing retirement and the high-speed collision had left her with multiple broken bones. While Sarah was not hoping that the experienced Mrs Parsons would not return, she was aware that if she was unable to come back then the job she was doing would most likely be confirmed on a permanent basis.

Sarah, or Miss Dayton, was liked by almost all of her class. She made lessons fun and interesting, her youthful enthusiasm and idealistic naivety not dulled by years in the teaching profession, the endless initiatives and pointless bureaucracy.

She had persuaded her friends to spend some of their Easter break turning an abandoned piece of land into an allotment and on the return to school in late-April her class grew a multitude of vegetables that they planned, watered and then harvested in time for the Harvest Festival. The class project had involved everyone and bought her considerable praise from the headteacher.

Sarah liked her job but the day dragged; she knew Adam had taken a day off work to move into their house and Tabitha was home alone. She wanted to be there not at work, ensuring that her house mate was OK. Even some of the children noticed Sarah was a little distracted and one of her more challenging pupils was able to hide coats belonging to five of the girls before she spotted him acting strangely in the playground and had to tell him to return them.

Sarah had a decision herself to make; she knew that if swallowed her pride a bit and made an effort then she could make Adam feel welcome, even though he wasn't. It was what her Dad would have wanted but it wasn't what she wanted; she wanted him out of the house.

She thought as she drove back, perhaps her father was right; how would she feel if she was in that situation? Perhaps, Adam wouldn't be so bad. Perhaps, they could still lead their nudism lifestyle with him around although they had agreed to remain clothed in the flat until they felt comfortable around him.

While they all, and Natalie especially, had no qualms about being seen naked by men, their house was their sanctuary and as such they had to feel secure and safe. Adam being present, especially if he was clothed, would be violating their sanctum.

* * * * *

"Adam," he said introducing himself to a black girl sat on the couch. "I'm here to move in." Tabitha nodded and looked over at him. "I did ring but there wasn't an answer."

"Oh that was you," she muttered. "Nat thought it was her ex. You should have rung the mobile," she said in an accusatory tone and Adam scowled slightly. "I'm Tabitha," she said without emotion and got up from the chair. "Sarah and Natalie aren't due back 'til six."

"Fine, OK" he muttered and scowled; he had not expected the lack of friendliness from the girl and took a deep breath rubbing his hands. "I got a bike. I was told there is a shed or something here that isn't used."

Tabitha walked over to him and glanced over at the open door. "Shut the door, and I will show you 'round," she barked. Adam felt like he was being chastised for being a naughty schoolboy: leaving the door open when he shouldn't and just closed it. Tabitha strode down the hall and opened a varnished wooden door on the right hand side, next to the lounge. "The dining room."

The small room contained a large dining table, a small pile of towels and a sideboard which Tabitha showed contained knives and forks. A small alcohol fridge stood in the corner and Tabitha shook her head when Adam clapped eyes on it. "I got some beers," he told her. "In the van."

The rotund lady walked through the dining room, and came to another door which opened

back out in the hallway and walked through an arch into the kitchen. "We clean up the night we cook things," she told him as he looked around the compact and elongated room. She pointed out where all the cooking pans were and opened the fridge, telling him that the "blue milk" was hers. She shooed him back; there was barely room for two people to pass in the kitchen and pointed to a hook above head level containing a key. "For the shed," she told him. "It is empty."

Tabitha strode down the tiled hallway, and then up the stairs opposite the lounge. The first floor contained a bathroom with a "lid down" toilet and both her room and Sarah's. The dark landing continued around until it reached another set of stairs which she walked up and pointed to a room over the front with an open door. "My room?"

"Yes," Tabitha said curtly. "I go to bed around ten so no loud music or loud TV and games."

"Yeah, fine," Adam muttered and scowled at her: he didn't think Tabitha could have been less welcoming if she had tried and he looked into the room. The single bed was alongside the sloping roof and there was a wardrobe and desk in the corner. If he was going to stay for a period of time then he might consider changing the walls from purple to something more neutral but he could live with it for a few weeks.

He turned around to thank Tabitha but she was already going downstairs and he opened the wardrobe and chest of drawers beneath it. He could fit all of his stuff in it, but it would be a squeeze. He was just thankful most of his gear was in storage.

Adam didn't ask, nor was he offered any help, but Tabitha was sat back in front of the television and she didn't look like she was too strong to him. It only took Adam ten minutes to cart his suitcase and eight boxes into his room before he returned back to the van.

Tabitha had not said another word to him.

* * * * *

By the time she had arrived home there were no spaces outside her house and Sarah had to park on the next street, a not unusual occurrence. She practically ran past all the parked cars to the royal blue door that signified her home. She unlocked it, it was quiet, and there were no new cars on the street, and crept inside the house.

Tabitha was in the lounge watching television and she looked in. "Is he here?"

Tabitha nodded. "Yeah, didn't say much. He's in his room. And he is using the shed at the back for his bike. Only just got back from dropping the van off."

"What's he like?"

"He didn't say much," Tabitha replied and swept her black braided hair back. "He just carried several boxes in and filled the fridge up with beer. Sarah groaned and she glanced behind her as she heard movement. "Oh and he wondered why we kept our dressing gowns by the front door as he went out."

Sarah hummed. "What did you say?"

"Not much," Tabitha replied as the front door closed and the Scottish member of their trio poked her head around the lounge door.

"So what's the wee pervert like then?" Natalie asked as she took her coat off and Sarah shrugged.

"I dunno. Shall we go knock on his door and ask?"

Tabitha shook her head and took a gulp from her glass of water. "No. Let's hope he just keeps himself to himself. He seemed a bit shy."

The floorboards above them creaked and they watched the door in silence as Adam appeared, his black hair untidy and his T-Shirt stained.

He looked at the three girls and smiled. "Hi. I'm Adam," he muttered and nervously held out his hand to Natalie. She didn't take it and he just sighed. "Look, I know this is proper difficult for y'all and, er, well it's a bit weird for me too. I ain't lived with a load of birds before and well it thought would be cool if we chill. Watch a film or something. Or play on my PlayStation 'cause I saw you ain't got one, it's upstairs in a box but I got some decent games and stuff. And we could grab a few beers, a curry in as I know a great take-out and relax, ya know, 'cos I've had a shit day and I want to just chill."

Tabitha looked at him in silence and groaned. "I'm pregnant," she muttered, pointing at her stomach. "I'm not drinking."

"You're pregnant?" Adam said in surprise. "Oh I just thought that," his voice trailed off as Tabitha glared at him. "Dain't matter. Well have a few beers and a curry and put your feet up."

"Alcohol," Tabitha said firmly. "I can't have any beer. And I need to watch what I eat," the black girl snapped.

"Yeah but that's a myth ain't it?"

Sarah groaned and put her head in her hands. "No. It isn't."

"Ahh well just lemonade then. But a Vindaloo or a Phaal or for you girls a Tikka Masala or owt. Hey, you lot should love that," he said gesturing towards Tabitha.

Sarah's eyes flew open and she glared at Adam, who clearly had no idea he may have offended them as he looked expectantly at the scowling girls. "I'll go do us that Mushroom Rissotto," Natalie offered and pushed past Adam into the kitchen.

"A mushroom what? I'm grabbing an Indian," he told her. "Anyone fancy a beer?"

Sarah reached for her mobile and swore under her breath; it would be a very long six months.

Chapter IV

“What?” Adam asked tired and still bleary-eyed.

“I am merely asking,” Sarah said in a sanctimonious voice oozing with fake sincerity, “what the purpose of that bag of peanuts was last night? After we went upstairs, you were here playing on the willy substitute and shooting fuck knows what with ya takeaway and ya had peanuts. Why?”

Adam groaned, and scratched his testicles through the blue dressing gown. “Err ... to go with the beer.”

“You mean the beer that was in the beer can there, there, there, there, there and there.” Sarah pointed to eight discarded lager cans on the table and looked at him. “The cans that have stunk out the lounge all night of stale beer. Not to mention the takeaway cartons left there. Do you think we want to have our lounge smelling of curry and cheap lager?”

“Yeah OK, chill. It's a couple of cans, for god's sake,” Adam said derisively and Sarah clenched her fists. “I'll move 'em. I always clean up in the morning. It's not a problem.”

Sarah sighed loudly. “It is a problem. So I ask again, what is the point of the effin' peanuts?”

Adam hummed and held out his hands. “I don't get it.”

“Because normally, I would think you eat peanuts, but you seem to scattered them to the four corners of the fucking room,” Sarah snapped. “What is it? Is your mouth not big enough for a peanut this big?” Sarah's fingers moved millimetres apart and Adam looked at her in shock.

Adam screwed his face up. “Oh. You always miss a couple when you chuck them up in the air,” he said defensively. “But I'll clean it up before I go to work.”

“But I shouldn't find them the following morning. You clean up ya shit from the night before. We have outside bins for that and that and the twenty-two peanuts I found this morning.”

Adam chortled in disbelief. “Seriously, you counted them? Fuckin' 'ell. Carl warned me about t'is. It's bang out of order, a few cans and I'll clear 'em up for fucks sake.”

Sarah's scowl deepened and she pointed to a pile of peanuts on the small fireplace. “They need to go in the bin,” she said firmly. “We like to keep the house tidy.” Adam groaned and Sarah crossed her arms. “If you are going to live with us do try and be house-trained.”

“Oh for fucks sake,” Adam muttered.

“We dain't want to live with an untidy little shit.”

“Oh fuck off,” Adam snapped. “Leave me alone.” He snatched at the small pile of rubbish he had left in front of the television and stuffing into the white carrier bag his takeaway was delivered in.

“Me fuck off? This is our house, and we don't want you here,” Sarah replied back angrily. “But if you have to be here, then show us some respect.”

“Well I didn't want to move in here either,” Adam snapped. “And to be living with you lot. But I had no fucking choice.”

Sarah went to reply but she glanced at the clock and swore, pushing past her new house mate with as much force as she could muster to get herself some breakfast.

Adam swore after her as he was bundled against the wall, calling her a “fuckin' witch” and glared after her, holding the carrier bag. He waited for a minute for her to finish in the

kitchen before going to make himself some porridge and a cup of tea. He was beginning to hate Sarah, and Tabitha had made it perfectly clear the night before how much she disliked him; that only left Natalie and she didn't appear overly friendly.

He picked up his phone and texted Carl before leaving for work at the alarms factory where he was a supervisor. He had had a bad start to the day and just hoped it could only get better.

It didn't, two of his members of staff phoned in ill and then one of the machines broke so Adam spent most of the day not worrying about his little problem; he reasoned, that if the girls didn't like him then he would just stay out of their way and just live his life on his own.

Of course, the house was very small and Adam was used to having an entire flat and not just a box room to himself but if they didn't like him there was little he could do about it.

Adam opened the door to the sound of loud voices from the lounge and walked into the kitchen to get himself a drink. Although it wasn't a long walk to his employer he had sweated in his coat and wanted refreshment when he got home. He rubbed his hands on his dirty sweatshirt and walked back into the corridor, and then into the dining room.

He knew he would probably not be appreciated in the front room and took his half-drunk pint of water to sit down at the dining table, yawning. He just wanted five minutes peace and quiet to read his newspaper.

He was interrupted by the curvy Natalie, who grunted the moment she saw him. "Don't tell me you buy that shit," she said forcefully as she looked at the front page.

"What's wrong with it?" Adam asked as he sat down. "So it isn't the Guardian or the Times or whatever you read, but it's a solid decent paper."

"It's," Natalie stopped and rubbed her eyes. "It's a foul paper," she told him forcefully in a highly pronounced Scottish accent.

"It's just a newspaper," he sneered. "And, oh for fucks sake, can I do anything right?" He muttered and walked out of the room, coming face to face with Tabitha and a friend.

"You," her friend screamed. "He was with the one who attacked me in my car," she shrieked. "It was him."

"It wasn't," Adam said immediately. "It was Carl. I had nothing to do with it."

"He hit my car and did loads of damage," the girl shrieked. "He called me all sorts of names. Horrible names."

"No wonder he didn't want to move in," Natalie said behind him. "Bloody racist in our house."

"I am not a racist," Adam said quickly and rubbed his hands. "I ..."

"You watched your friend walk out in the road and then attack my car while you sat back and cheered him on," the girl said firmly. "You encouraged him do a racist attack."

"Accessory," Tabitha chimed.

"I didn't and ..." Adam started. "We didn't know he was going to do that. And you did try to kill him."

"He walked out into the road," she shouted. "He was lucky I didn't kill 'im."

"Bollocks," Adam cried. "You messed up and nearly hit him. He was a bit angry, probably said some things he shouldn't have. But you were being a shit driver 'cause ya a ..."

"A what?" Tabitha asked forcefully. "So she's a shit driver. Is it 'cause she is black, she is a shit driver. Or because she is a woman?"

Adam shrugged, "she nearly killed a good friend of mine by her not paying attention to the road. Carl was out of order, but so were you."

The girl gasped and Adam felt his pockets; he had left his mobile phone somewhere. He saw it on top of his newspaper on the dining room table and strode in to get it as it vibrated.

"Arranging to go to the next BNP meeting?" Tabitha asked and Adam swore, grabbing the phone and pushing past her towards the front door.

With a snarl, Natalie picked up Adam's discarded newspaper and threw it into the bin. "Fucking twat," she muttered in annoyance as Adam slammed the front door.

He had been a resident for all of 24 hours and already he was feeling annoyed and angry. Why did the Sarah girl have to "go ballistic" at him in the morning; it was hardly as though she was going to be there all day to smell the remnants of his curry, and he was going to clear up before going to work even before she said anything.

Sarah hadn't accepted that it was the way he liked to keep his house clean and tidy. He would always clean up before going to work, and in the four years he had rented from Sarah's dad he had never had to speak to him about his rented property being in an inappropriate state; why couldn't Sarah understand that?

As for Tabitha accusing him of being a racist; well that was well out of order. He was in charge of two ethnic minorities at work and he never had any problems with them. Of course, Carl was a bit of a lad and he did have a small issue with certain sections of society, but that was just Carl. Tabitha didn't know him.

Natalie's problem with him was his newspaper – why should she object to the Daily Express? Sure, it might not have been her favourite paper, but it was hardly along the lines of the Daily Sport that was littered with nudity.

Adam tutted to himself; their problem with him was purely because he was a man and they just didn't want him around. He idly kicked at a pebble and watched as it bounced along the pavement and then made a satisfying ping on a lamp-post.

In true Beckham style, Adam looked up and brought his hand out in front of him, jumped onto his left foot, while his right swung around in an elaborate arc and struck the pebble to watch it fly off down the road, bounce once and hit a parked taxi.

Adam smiled briefly but then on seeing the taxi driver get out of his car, ran down a path to his left going into a house estate. He heard the Asian voice shouting at him and Adam sprinted down the alleyway, turned left and ran up the hill.

He didn't stop running for a couple of minutes and then looked up; it was at the end of the road where James lived and shrugged, looking back. He had no desire to see the girls any time soon and crossed the road to knock on his friend's door.

Teri answered with a raised eyebrow. "He's feeding the baby," she said the moment she saw him. "And don't go dragging him off to the pub."

Adam raised a smile. "I won't Teri. How are you?"

Teri looked behind her and stroked her long golden hair back, whispering. "Fine. He's been in a row at work. Told his manager to 'do one' so he's got a disciplinary on Monday. If he loses that job, we're fucked."

Adam wiped his nose and lowered his voice. "But she's been on at him, right? I mean, he's had loads of trouble with her."

"Yeah, I know. But she's the manager. I fuckin' told him to button it. When I was at the tailors, I l'ated my boss, but just had to do what he said. Except wear short skirts, no

kickers, he was taking the piss there.” Adam smirked at Teri's familiar tale.

“Love,” a voice called. “Close the door, you're letting the heat out. I ain't payin' to heat the fuckin' street.”

Teri opened the door and allowed Adam into the hallway and he padded down the sparsely decorated room and turned into the lounge. “Hiya mate.”

James smiled, his baby asleep on his paunch and he nodded towards the spare mismatched chair in his living room. “Whatcha doing here?” James asked. “The birds chucked ya out.”

“They are doing my fuckin' head in,” Adam ranted and Teri appeared in the doorway behind him. “Moanin' about a few lager cans and some takeaway, my newspaper. And that bird who nearly ran Carl over, she appeared in the flat as a friend of one of them and starts givin' me earache.”

James grinned. “Well you will live with 'em. Nuttin' but trouble birds, ain't that right love.”

Teri crossed her arms and looked at Adam. “I think you should make an effort to get on,” she told him. “You can't always choose all the people you have to spend time with – colleagues, housemates, managers.” She looked at her husband who scowled at her.

“You know she's been a right unreasonable cow to me.”

“She's your manager, you dumb ass,” Teri spat back and turned to Adam, ignoring the protestations of her husband. “What's 'appened?”

“Oh, I left a takeaway box in the lounge and a couple of cans,” he told her with a straight face. “And one of them kicked off at me this morning, even though I always clean me house 'fore I go to work. And one of their friends had a set-to with Carl last week and I'm getting the blame for it.”

Teri rubbed her nose and glanced at her husband. “Go easy on them. You need to live by their rules 'cause ya movin' into their house. So be nice to them, and make up. You gotta live with 'em for months, you'll be grateful you made the effort.” Adam snorted and Teri sat down on another chair. “Make a big gesture. Ya gotta live with 'em. Ya want aggro for six months?”

“Hell no,” Adam replied and rubbed his hands through his hair.

* * * * *

Adam looked around the supermarket shelves for inspiration; he had finished at lunchtime on the Friday as the machine was still not fixed and his workforce could do little more until a new part arrived from Germany on Monday.

The owner was annoyed but not overly worried – Friday was never the most productive day of the working week and Adam gleefully left the small factory to walk down to the Supermarket on the city ring road.

Teri had nagged at him all that evening and she was right, of sorts. He did need to get on with the girls while he lived there and her suggestion of cooking them a nice meal was a good one. He thought about looking in the cupboards to see what they ate but decided that the best thing was to cook a slap-up roast dinner; everyone liked roasted beef or lamb.

He picked up a suitably sized joint of beef along with a bag of potatoes, carrots, sweetcorn, frozen Yorkshire puddings and a giant cheesecake. He added a large bottle of wine and spent just under twenty pounds for his “getting to know the girls” meal.

He looked at his basket and wondered whether he should worry about a starter, such as a prawn cocktail but decided against it; he didn't need to do a posh meal, just make an

effort.

The potatoes were cut up into randomly sized chunks and went into the oven on a baking tray the moment he arrived in the house and then he took advantage of the absence of his house mates to load up his games console to shoot some terrorists. He was so preoccupied, Adam forgot to put the beef in, until he glanced at the clock, swore and ran into the kitchen to throw the joint into the oven.

Tabitha was the first to arrive and looked at Adam suspiciously as he stopped her going into the kitchen. "Just a small surprise," he told her and shut the door.

"But I want a drink?"

"Tea, Coffee, Juice or Water?" Adam said with a cheeriness in his voice and Tabitha screwed up her face.

"What's got into you?"

"Nuttin'" Adam squeaked. "I am just being nice. Go put your feet up, what do ya want?"

"Tea," Tabitha replied tersely and Adam returned from the kitchen with a cup of tea and a biscuit.

He threw the sweetcorn and carrots into boiling water as Sarah came through the door and Natalie was not far behind her, looking stressed. "It's a surprise," he called and the two girls rolled their eyes.

"I bet it's burgers," Natalie whispered.

"Better not be," Sarah whispered back and Adam scowled.

"It is not burgers. Do you want to come to the dining room?" Natalie giggled as she did and retrieved knives and forks from the drawer along with place mats.

Adam arrived with the wine and four wine glasses being held by their stems and put them down on the table. Tabitha sighed. "I am pregnant."

"Yes I know," Adam replied as he poured the drink.

"Well I can't drink. I told you that on Wednesday."

"You were serious?" Adam asked in a surprised voice. "Not even at the weekend."

"No," Sarah replied for her house mate. "Tab doesn't drink. She is pregnant."

Adam sighed and poured the white wine into three of the glasses before returning to the kitchen. His beef was very red in the middle but he liked it half-raw and sliced it so the girls got the meat cooked, or slightly pink.

The potatoes had been in for a few minutes too long, but Adam didn't mind and put the boiled carrots, sweetcorn and Yorkshire puddings on the plate and carried them in to the room.

Tabitha looked at Sarah. "I'm vegetarian," she told Adam as he sat down and pushed the meat to the side of her plate.

"You're what?" Adam cried out in incredulity.

Tabitha sighed and wiped her face. "I am a vegetarian. I don't eat meat. Is that a problem?"

"Why?" Adam asked with a screwed up face.

"Because it's healthier," Tabitha told him and Adam snorted.

"I am as well," Sarah muttered and looked apologetically at Adam. "Sorry, well, you didn't

ask. Didn't you think the lack of meat in the fridge was a giveaway?"

"Adam sniffed. "Well no, why would I think that? What ... I mean why would I think that? Why would I imagine you might be vegetarian?"

Tabitha sighed. "Because it's wrong to eat animals," she told him.

"Boll-locks," Adam cried and wiped his hands over his eyes. "If animals weren't meant to be eaten then why are they made of meat?" He smiled at Sarah and Tabitha who shook their heads.

"But the vegetables are very nice," Sarah added.

Tabitha pushed her plate away and looked at him. "All the meat juices have gone everywhere. I can't eat this."

"Well don't then," Adam snapped in a quiet voice and Tabitha got up from the table.

"Don't be so rude," she said. "If you had asked I would have told you."

Adam took a deep breath and shook his head. "Just my luck to be living with some veggies who don't tell me. D'ya not think it might've been a good idea to fuckin' mention it."

Sarah jumped up and went to speak but Natalie raised her hand as the two girls left the room to mutterings of discontent. "We didn't know you'd be planning this." She smiled at him and licked her lips as some juices ran down her chin. "It is well cooked, and it beats cooking in the evening to have it all done for you. Thank you. It is appreciated."

"Your friends don't think that," he muttered. "Ya know, I was told to try and make an effort, so I do and they throw it back in my face. Well fuck 'em."

Natalie put her knife and fork down and looked across to the exasperated man. "It's hard for all of us, ya know. We certainly wouldn't have chosen to live with you and you wouldn't have chosen us. But we have to so let's try and get through the next few months without killing each other, eh?"

Adam put a piece of blood red beef into his mouth and sighed. "They need to stop being bitches. D'ya reckon they're on the blob," he asked and Natalie launched an overcooked roast potato towards him.

"No," she cried and pointed her knife towards him. Adam muttered an apology and Natalie shook her head. "And how is Tabitha going to have periods, eh?"

Chapter V

"I want him out," Tabitha told Sarah with crossed arms. "He is just simply not appropriate to live with us."

"Yeah, I know," Sarah snapped and then apologised as she shook her head. "I'm sorry, I know. I tried talking to my Dad. Told him, Adam living with us was as appropriate as bacon sandwiches at the Middle East peace talks but he just said we will have to make do."

Tabitha sighed. "But he is a racist. And he is so intolerant. And I daren't tell him our secret, can you imagine what the response would be if he found out?"

Natalie sighed and looked across. "I agree. He is a fuckin' nightmare. We can't be ourselves with him around; he has to grow up or go."

"Yeah. Preaching to the converted," she told them. "But we can't make him go. He won't go and Dad has no interest in making him go."

"We could all try and make him uncomfortable," Tabitha suggested. "Or making this a beer-free zone."

"He has a right to eat his takeaways or drink his beer in the house. As long as he tidies up after himself," Natalie told them. "We can't stop him doing that."

"Yeah I know," Sarah muttered. "But I just want him out really. He's just so ... male."

Natalie shrugged and put her head back on the mismatched chair. "Be honest, the male gender has done little to endear themselves to either of us recently," she admitted. "Except maybe Tab who hasn't had too much of a problem getting friendly." Sarah and Tabitha looked at each other and chuckled.

"Nah, but 'e's just the worst kind of guy. He is just so house-untrained," Sarah replied. "He ain't a geek who is shit scared of girls. He fancies 'imself. An intolerant fuckwit."

"Ok, so we gonna do?"

Sarah sighed. "I gotta talk to Dad again. He can't stay 'ere. It ain't on and wonder if we can get someone to fill in."

"There gotta be some nudists who 'ave to live with textiles," Natalie muttered. "Not everyone can live like us, or Jack and friends. There got to be someone."

Tabitha looked at Sarah and nodded. "Long as dey don't mind," she said in her ethnic drawl. "'bout baby when she comes."

Sarah rubbed her nose and stretched out. "So where is the little runt?"

"Workin'. Wiv his Dad," Natalie muttered. "He's in later."

Sarah nodded and bit her lip. "I'll talk to Dad, see what he can do."

"And if he says no?" Tabitha asked and Natalie grinned.

"If he says no then I say we just start to live our life. There's three of us, one of him."

Sarah nodded. "Ya ain't gonna make him house trained."

"Or not a racist," Tabitha added.

"Or not a chauvinistic, sexist pig."

"Yeah, I know," Natalie said with a shrug. "I know this but if he has to stay then we need to offer an olive branch."

Sarah sighed. "I'll go see me Dad. I'll do my best on him. He might budge," she said

hopefully. "He might be pig-headed or he might be reasonable. Let's hope."

* * * * *

The stocky frame of Adam's father shouted across the small garage at him as he walked through the open doors and passed a car on the ramps. "All right Adam, how ya doing?"

Adam grunted and wiped his eyes. "Tired," he replied with a sleepy look and retrieved a set of grubby navy blue overalls from the wall. "Was nicely in the land of nod."

"Yeah well, that Troy. He wants ditching, I just haven't got 'round to doing it but every week he has a day off for one reason or t'other. It's not on. Reckon he was out last night on the piss."

"Well it was Friday night." Adam gave a theatrical yawn and stretched. "So where do you want me?"

Adam heard a shout from behind him and spun around to see his father's long-standing assistant bellowing. "Hey, Diane wants to know. Tea or Coffee?"

"Alright Danny. Tea. Black. No sugar," Adam called back and then asked his father about Diane.

"Ahh, lovely little eighteen year old. I ditched the Paki girl as she had 'er hand in the till. Can't trust 'em."

"Shit Dad. What did the Police say?"

"Don't get me started on the effing cops. Useless bunch of ... whatever. But you might remember Diane. Ivy's friend from Guides or whatever it was."

"No I don't," Adam muttered and looked up to see a stick-thin girl totter down the steps to the garage holding a tray of drinks, dressed in white top that was accentuating her figure and a short tartan skirt. "Not been here long?" Adam asked under his breath and his father smiled.

"No. Third day. But she is good with the customers."

"How long before she is changing the oil on a motor?"

Stuart Hodson laughed heartily as he watched the girl approach them shaking her long, blonde hair back. "I have left the biscuits in there as you ain't washed your hands," she told them quietly and looked at the young man watching her. "You must be Adam, right?"

"Yeah," he squeaked and took his drink from the tray. He watched closely as she backed away with the empty tray and her rear swung seductively as she walked. "She's nice."

"Cracking piece of eye candy," Danny spluttered and Adam grinned.

"Yah not wrong there." Adam was given a small hatchback to change the brakes on and then do an oil change on a battered Fiesta before lunchtime. Although he wasn't a trained mechanic, he had worked in his father's garage since he was fourteen from time to time and could easily do basic car maintenance tasks without too much help or supervision.

Although Adam liked his weekends, he was always willing to help his father's business and it was not unusual for him to do a Saturday shift if his father was short staffed.

Stuart popped out at lunchtime and returned with four meals from the local fast food restaurant that drew scorn from Diane as they came into her reception. "It's not healthy," she moaned as Stuart passed her a large burger, chips and fizzy drink.

"Ahh well. We've been working hard," Adam said truthfully and took a giant gulp of the cool lemonade. "When are we gonna get you to do something on the cars?"

Diane shrieked and looked at the owner of the garage. "I can't do mechanic stuff," she

moaned in a high pitched voice and showed her perfectly manicured nails. "I'd break a nail."

Adam suppressed a smile. "Ahhh," he goaded and took a bite of his burger with his dirty hands. "They'll grow back."

Danny stretched and idly flicked on the television, looking at the fixtures on Ceefax. "Ahh shit. We're at Stoke," he moaned.

"Well you will support a rubbish team," Adam replied and Danny raised eyebrows.

"Hey, when you are in the top flight," he started, to a sneer in response from the young man.

"Not for long. Ya going down," Adam taunted. "Hell I reckon Preston'll beat Blackburn now."

"You guys never change," Stuart said with a smile and looked at Diane. "That OK? You didn't say what you wanted."

Diane looked at her half-eaten chicken burger and nodded. "It's just a lot for me."

"A lot?" Adam cried. "It's tiny."

"Well it's a lot. I don't want to put on weight." Adam bit his lip as he looked down at his slight paunch and then finished the last of his meal.

"I got an old lady coming in to say that her wheels need checking and Mr Graham said he was going to come in for a new exhaust this afternoon. Are you OK with the exhaust?" Stuart looked towards his son who muttered as he stretched his legs out in front of him.

"Yeah. That's fine. I changed Carl's in the Summer."

"Hey, what's this all about you being shackled up with a house of birds?" Danny asked with a grin.

Adam took a deep breath and hummed. "Yeah well. That's not my choice. My new digs burnt down before I moved in so it's that or sharing a room with Ivy and her boyfriend."

"Yeah. We are having words with her about him," Stuart told him. "They both needs to get jobs. I ain't supporting both of 'em while she tries to get knocked up."

Adam looked at Danny who shrugged; he had clearly heard most of the familial trouble first-hand over the previous few months. "I got a floor," Danny offered. "It can't be worse than living with an 'ouse full."

Diane sniffed. "I don't reckon they want to live with Adam any more than he wants to live with them," she suggested to howls of derision from the three men.

"I ain't a problem to me," Adam told her. "It's them with a problem." Stuart marked the end of the discussion by calling time on their lunch break and ushering his employees back to work. It took them all afternoon, but by four all the cars been collected and Stuart suggested that they close up for the day. He gave four banknotes to his son and a slightly bigger bundles to Danny and Diane for their weekly employment and locked up.

"I'd love to take you out one night. A film, a meal, whatever you fancy," Adam offered to Diane as she walked down the row of parked cars to her scooter at the end.

Diane licked her lips and gave a brief smile. "That's so sweet, but you aren't really my type."

"Oh OK, no problem," Adam said instantly and she touched him on the arm.

"I mean, you're a nice guy but you aren't my type and you are a bit old for me, really."

Adam sniffed; he was 23. When did that become too old to date an eighteen year old?

* * * * *

“Dad,” Sarah said sweetly as she entered his small offices in the town centre.

“The answer is no,” he told her, not looking up from his computer.

“You don’t know what I was going to ask,” Sarah replied with an annoyed tone to her voice.

George pressed a button on his keyboard and put both hands behind his head, leaning back on the chair. “Sorry love.”

Sarah’s scowl left her face and she put down one of the two coffee cups in her hand as well as a muffin in front of her father. “Vanilla latte, extra shot plus a blueberry muffin.”

“My favourite,” he said with a smirk. “You must be really serious.”

Sarah sat down in her chair and rubbed her hands together. “The girls,” she started. “They are worried.”

“The answer is no.”

“I haven’t finished,” Sarah snapped and stared at the desk for a moment. “Tabitha is scared. Her friend was subject to a racist attack a couple of weeks ago and Adam was with the attacker. She doesn’t feel comfortable in her own home. And she is pregnant so her being nervous is no good for the baby.”

George shook his head and sighed. “I’ve known the Hodsons for a long time. Stuart keeps my cars on the road and Adam is a good lad. Now if his friend got caught up in it all then that’s his friend but there is no problem with Adam. And anyway, all the minorities are always claiming discrimination or racism for everything. I wouldn’t read too much into it.”

Sarah puffed and sipped at her coffee. “But listen. We don’t want him there. They have begged me to come and talk to you but we don’t know what to do. I mean, he even cooked a Roast Beef dinner for two vegetarians.”

George laughed. “He’s tried to be nice then. And anyway I’ve told you to stop that before. You aren’t even a proper vegetarian as you eat fish.”

Sarah glared at him. “Oh don’t start this again. I am a pescetarian but vegetarian is easier to explain.” He threw up his hands and she grinned. “Anyway, it’s my choice. I just don’t feel comfortable eating something that was once a farm animal. But Adam isn’t right for us.”

“Because he eats meat. Now listen Sarah, you are a grown woman now, but I think teaching all those kids has meant you are acting silly. You need to grow up and just get on with him. He isn’t that bad.”

Sarah interjected. “But ...”

“But I am a very busy man, I have two properties to look at, as well as getting more quotes for restoring a fire-wrecked house, I will not discuss Adam living with you anymore.”

Sarah pursed her lips together and tapped the side of her head with her fingers. “Right,” she muttered and pushed her chair away with the backs of her legs as she stood up, grabbing the coffee and then the uneaten Blueberry muffin. “I’ll ‘ave that back then.”

“Oi,” he cried. “I was looking forward to that.” Sarah didn’t reply and stormed out of the first floor office and out into Lancaster throwing the drink and cake into a nearby bin; why wouldn’t her father just listen to her?

She stormed off towards her car parked in the supermarket car park. “What did he say?”

Natalie asked the moment Sarah opened the door to the lounge.

"Nothing. He said no."

Natalie wiped her mouth. "If he can't go then I vote we just be ourselves. This was a Nudist house last week and it can be a Nudist house next week."

"But ..." Sarah started and Natalie folded her arms.

"Why should we be the ones to change? I don't like wearing clothes around my own house. I want to be like it used to be."

"She's right," Tabitha said instantly. "We worried about what he would think but we shouldn't. We should be ourselves."

"I am worried about his reaction. I don't want to be a freak show. I don't want him watching us, or bringing his mates 'round," Sarah muttered. "Can you imagine that, every day different blokes drooling over us?"

"Maybe we could try talking to him?" Natalie suggested but Sarah shook her head. "No seriously. Explain to him why we go naked. At home, and, well whenever we can. And tell him we want him to do it, or at least respect our choice to do so."

Sarah shook her head. "No. We dain't need to explain anything to him. This is our house. We live our life as we want to. He needs to live by our rules. If we are naturist then he needs to be as well." Natalie shrugged and then with a smile, Sarah took her T-Shirt off to reveal her lacy bra.

"Turn the heating up," she asked Natalie who leant over to touch the thermostat up to where it was the week before.

Tabitha, still in her pyjamas, hooked her hands underneath her rotund belly and took her pink top off, throwing it onto the floor. "Ya better be right about this," she asked Sarah who had just finished getting naked and she looked up at the undressing girls.

"I hope so," she replied and leant back with her legs outstretched. "Fresh air to all of me. Shall we watch a film?"

Natalie smiled and watched as Sarah and Tabitha settled down on the large couch and she got up to get everyone a drink.

They watched the television in almost silence, it was a powerful film that they had all seen before many times and although it was several years old it still brought tears to their eyes.

The door slammed shut as the film finished and Sarah shivered in shock. She felt her heart quicken and she nodded towards Natalie, spread out on the chair, her vivacious body on display. "Stay calm," she whispered and watched the door as a body opened it.

"What the fuck?"

Chapter VI

"I knew it. A bunch of dykes." There was silence as Adam looked at all three of them. "Well I don't mind watch—"

"We're naturists," Natalie interrupted sharply with a scowl.

"What?"

Natalie looked at the confused man and shook her head. "We are naturists. We like to live without clothes."

Adam gulped. "You mean ...?" He started and his throat felt dry. "All the time?"

The naked Sarah coughed and he tore his eyes away from her pert breasts and radiant skin, covering his crotch with his hands. "All the time. That's the reason we didn't want you here."

"As well as the bathroom habits, the farting, the mates, leaving the kitchen in a mess, the racism, sexism—"

"Tabs," Natalie cooed gently and put her hand on the thigh of the ranting woman. "Ssssh."

"But why?" Adam asked and Sarah looked at both of her female house mates.

"All over tan works for me, and it is so much freer and nicer."

"Freer and nicer," parroted the bemused man and Sarah grinned.

"Yeah, freer and nicer. Air gets everywhere. Clothes are so restricting."

Natalie licked her lips and rubbed her hands together. "Clothes are a barrier to be assembled when you are frightened of the people you meet. Society demands it out of religious intolerance and I reject that being imposed upon me. We want freedom."

Sarah waited for Natalie to finish and then sighed. "Yeah, and we hate washing. And ironing. It's shit."

Tabitha laughed and stroked the leg of her friend. "She can't iron. But then I've seen ya shirt ya did the other day. Ya shit at it as well."

"But why were you dressed when I came?" Adam pressed against the stiffening member in his trousers as he looked at the three naked women before him. "Have you been lez-ing up?"

Natalie groaned. "Naturism isn't a sexual thing. And we were dressed as we didn't know you but we aren't suppressing it anymore."

Adam. "No, I can see that," he muttered as he looked directly between Natalie's outstretched legs.

"And we aren't naked for you to ogle us every day," she warned him as she watched his eyes move about her body. "I ain't gonna watch ya licking ya lips and stroking ya-self."

"No," Adam replied and shook his head. "I mean, sure. I don't get it. I mean, I don't care. Fuckin' birds wandering around without any keks on, I ain't gonna mind." He looked at Sarah's model-like figure and smiled. "If ya want to."

Sarah looked over at Natalie and grinned. "Well if we are naked," Sarah said coyly. "And this is a naturist house. Then so should you be."

Adam's heart raced and his mind whirred. "Ahh well ... it's a bit ... I don't fookin' ... what?" He stammered and spluttered in shock.

Natalie looked at her companions. "He doesn't think he will measure up," she told him, her thumb and her finger an inch apart and raised her eyebrows. "No wonder he is embarrassed."

Adam scowled and shook his head. "Ahh well ... there is no doubt about that now, is there?"

"Really?" Natalie said with a sultry look and watched as Adam's eyes barely left her large bosom and slightly overweight body. He stared at the curvy girl and then snapped out of his trance.

"No," he replied quickly. "I am not scared of it, I just ... oh God," he snapped and rubbed his eyes. "I think I am dreaming. I have moved into a house of nudist girls and they ..." he trailed off and the girls looked at each other. "That's it. This is a dream."

Sarah laughed. "You aren't. But this is our house, it was a naked house before and we are making it so. If you want to live with us then live like us please and leave your dressing gown by the door and live with our rules."

"I ain't wandering around starkers!" Adam cried. "And what about visitors?" Adam squeaked.

"Some of our visitors join us when they come, others don't. But we do warn each other when people are coming and sometimes we have to cover up."

Natalie's eyes bored into Adam who sat there and sniffed. "It'd mean that we'd be happier if you joined us," she told him and cocked her head to one side. "I'd be happier."

"I am going to have a shower," he told them. "And I am sure this is an April's Fools Joke."

The girls watched the dirty mechanic leave the room in a trance and strip off in the small bathroom as the water went tepid and then hot in the cubicle. He stepped in and closed his eyes, allowing the warm water to wash away the dirt from the day.

His mint shower gel tingled as he ran it over his body and he groaned as he stretched his legs. It was manual work in the garage and his muscles needed to rest. What he wanted was a takeaway and a few beers in front of his games console.

A few minutes in the shower, Adam returned to the bright pink bathroom and slippery wooden floor, grabbing one of his four towels and rubbing it over his body, flicking drops of water onto the wooden panelling.

What were the motives of the girls' behaviour? Were they trying to get him embarrassed and move out, as if that was the case then they were not going to succeed; putting three sexy women naked in a house with him was a lot more pleasant than three bitchy, nagging women who the smiling, giggling naked girls seemed to have replaced.

Maybe it was a hidden camera stunt or that he was going to go downstairs naked and they all be dressed and then they use that as proof he needed to go. He sighed and walked up to his room; his towel wrapped around his waist and rubbed between his legs to dry his thighs.

Of course there was a nervousness there. Not a single girl had seen him naked for months and his dates of late had fizzled into apathy and rejection. He needed to stop worrying; three girls wanted him to be naked and he reached for his dressing gown.

He would play them at their game, but on his terms, he thought as he swung the gown over his shoulders and walked towards his bedroom door.

* * * * *

Sarah looked up as Adam entered the room, dressed in his blue dressing gown. "That

better be coming off," she told him with a smirk. "And you better be naked."

"Only if you take it off," he replied with a grin, his heart fluttering. Tabitha's eyes widened and she gripped Sarah's hand.

"I'll do it," Natalie offered, got up from her small couch and walked over to Adam, running her hands around his fleecy garment and untying the knot while maintaining eye contact with him. She licked her lips and slid her hands inside and gripped his waist, while she allowed his dressing gown to slip off his shoulders.

Adam gasped as the garment came free, and he felt his knees wobble slightly; Adam was not a prude but he wasn't comfortable with being completely naked in front of the three baying girls – at least not in a non-sexual sense. Natalie ran her hands back around his waist and smiled at him, catching the navy gown and turned to Sarah. "Yep, he's properly attired now."

"See, I said I had nothing to be afraid of," he told them, his cock slightly engorged and Natalie glanced down with a wry grin at it quickly filled and rose to its six inch length. He instinctively put his hands across his crotch; he had never been naked with so many women before and his cheeks went red.

Her hands glided across his waist and she whispered into her ear. "I'm sure you don't, but naturism isn't about boasting." She touched his hands and moved them to one side. "Or about being embarrassed about your body."

"OK can we get something to eat now," Adam pleaded. "I'm starving. Been at work all day. I was thinking of a takeout."

Natalie gave a wry grin. "Sure, I was thinkin' of enchiladas. Tab? Sarah?"

Tabitha nodded. "Go easy on the chilli," Sarah begged and Natalie smiled.

"Sure."

"Hey, aren't enchil-whatnot. They got beef or chicken in 'em."

Natalie rolled her eyes and shook her head. "Not with beans in them, they don't. You don't have to get protein from meat."

"Ahh right."

"You can come and help me," Natalie suggested and Adam waited, but Natalie pinched his buttocks and pushed him towards the door. "I'll show you how to do make a proper vegetarian meal. One day, you might actually date someone who is a veggie."

Adam sighed. "But you aren't a vegetarian."

Natalie turned in the doorway with raised eyebrows. "Who said anything about me?" She licked her lips and gestured him towards her, as she walked into the kitchen. Adam took the hint and joined her a few moments later. She passed him a pink apron and he hesitated.

"It's pink. I ain't one of t'ose nancy boy cross dressing faggots."

"Suit yourself." Natalie sighed and wiped her nose, before washing her hands and taking an onion, four carrots, four cans and some chilli powder out of the cupboard. "Get a frying pan out," she told him as she tied a pink apron around her body and passed him the oil.

As the oil heated in the pan she cut the onion into slices and began grating the carrot. Adam cried out as the onion dropped into the pan, the oil spitting and catching him on his extended cock and he turned away in agony.

"I did warn you," Natalie told him with a smirk and dropped the carrot into the pan. "I got no sympathy for ya."

"Ahh fuck, shit, bollocks, fuck, fuck, fuck," Adam swore, his hands clasped to the end of abused member and Natalie stirred the vegetables in the sizzling pan and then turned down the heat.

"Let's see it," she asked and Adam shook his head. She knelt down in front of him and prised his hands away.

"It's burned red raw," he moaned. "Fucking cooking in the buff. Fuckin' stupid."

Natalie rolled her eyes and turned his cock over in her hand. "Fuckin' stupid cookin' in the buff," she mimicked. "You mean, fuckin' stupid cookin' in the buff with no apron on. And honestly there's nothing there."

"It's burnt off," he cried and looked down as Natalie stared at his member.

"It's fine. Now will you wear the apron?"

"Huhn," he grunted nasally. Adam scowled and then smiled. "Hey love, while you are down there ..."

"Natalie looked up. "Sure. But like every animal in the zoo. I bite." Adam backed away and took the spare apron, wrapping it around him. "Much better," Natalie cooed and added a splash of water to the pan. "Open those, please."

Adam picked up the four cans and shrugged. "These aren't beans," he said. "These are ..."

"They are Cannellini Beans and lentils," she told him. "And two tins of tinned tomatoes."

"What the fuck are Canny-what-not beans? Can ya have these on toast 'cause there's no sauce?"

Natalie sighed. "No."

"Then they aren't beans, are they?"

"There is more to beans than just baked beans ya know," she told him and added the opened cans to the large pan. "Your diet is awful." Adam watched as she stirred in some chilli powder and then passed him a small block of cheese and told him to add a handful to a small pot of natural yoghurt from the fridge. Natalie allowed the sauce to thicken and glanced over at him. "You don't seem to be too disturbed by us being naked."

Adam smiled at her, looking at her breasts easily visible from the side of the apron. "Well I ain't really. I still think this might be a joke. I mean girls never want to get their tits out unless they're tanked up on Baccardi Breezers or owt, ya know, so to have three of ya wandering 'round all day starkers ... well it ain't normal is it? But I ain't complaining."

Natalie turned to him with a grin. "I ain't got my tits out."

Adam smiled and pulled her apron away from her body. "Really," he said with a mischievous smirk. "Is that so?"

"Do you mind?" Natalie licked her lips and raised her eyebrows. "So what if I like wandering around naked?"

"I ain't complaining."

Natalie snorted. "I'm not naked for you to get off on."

Adam smiled. "Yeah, but it's good. I mean I dain't like stick thin girls. Need to have a bit of flesh on the bone. Sarah's nice but she needs a couple of burgers in her 'cos ya can see 'er ribcage and that ain't right. Tabitha's a bit big really, but ya nice. A few extra pounds but cuddly."

Natalie sighed. "I guess I should take that as a compliment. I think."

Adam nodded and watched as she took a tortilla and filled it full of the vegetarian chilli and placed it on an oven-proof dish. She filled a second and then encouraged Adam to do the same as they filled the brown ceramic container with their dinner. She spooned over the last of the chilli over the eight tortillas and then put the yoghurt-cheese mixture on top.

"I'll just go tell Sarah and Tab they got two minutes," she told him as she placed the meal under the grill and asked him to put some rocket, cucumber and tomatoes on the plates.

Natalie returned sixty seconds later to find Adam rummaging around in the fridge. "There is so much green stuff in here," he moaned and Natalie reached past him to pick out a small bag.

"This is rocket," she told him and took out four plates. She cut up a tomato each and watched as Adam chopped up the cucumber and she added a small amount of red onion and then a small handful of rocket.

"These'll be done now," she told him and pulled out the oven gloves to remove the sizzling enchiladas from the grill. "Mind out."

Adam swung his body out of the way and Natalie dished up the first two enchiladas to the first plate and added another two to the second. "Take them to Sarah and Tab," she told him and Adam happily took the two plates next door to the small dining room.

Sarah and Tabitha, sat on the wooden chairs with a small towel on the seat, smiled as he came in. "Pink suits him, doesn't it Tab," Sarah teased. "Exploring his inner feminine side."

"Ahh well," Adam said as he put the plates down. "Natalie made me fry up some stuff and I didn't have it on."

"Ouch," Sarah cried. "Ya can't do cooking without an apron," she warned him and raised her eyebrows. "Can you?"

"No," Adam admitted and returned to the kitchen to get the other two plates as Natalie poured four glasses of squash that she carried in on a tray.

"Cheers Nat," Tabitha said as she shovelled a mouthful of her dinner into her mouth. "T'is nice as ever."

"Ahh well, I had help," the Scottish girl replied and passed Adam a small towel from the side table. "I get 'em from work when they over-ordered," she explained and watched as Adam happily slipped out of the apron.

Adam put the towel over the seat and thanked her, taking a gulp of the tropical squash and then cut off a bite of the Mexican dinner. "Needs more chilli," he muttered and Sarah shook her head.

"I'll be sweating cobs tonight with this."

Tabitha laughed and put her hand on Sarah's. "Ya always sweat loads at night as ya have a blanket and a duvet."

"It's November. It's Lancaster. Of course I want a blanket," Sarah replied with a smile. "My bits'll get cold."

Tabitha smirked. "Should cuddle up to someone then." Sarah groaned took a sip of her drink.

"Where've you been today?" Sarah asked Adam, changing the subject.

"Been working at me Dad's," Adam replied airily. "He needed an extra pair of hands."

Natalie smiled. "Dirty work? You came in filthy."

Adam nodded. "Was under cars all day. Course I'm gonna be dirty. Worse ways to spend

a Saturday though. Earned enough to pay the rent this week in one day. And it's all cash-in-and. And I like messin' with the cars."

Natalie looked at him. "So why ain't you got a car then if you like working with 'em?"

"Cause I like my bike. In Summer I go everywhere on it. Normally I'd go to work but I only work up top of the road so it ain't worth it while I'm here."

"Dangerous though, ain't it?" Natalie asked and Sarah nodded.

"I'd hate to be on a bike," Tabitha agreed. "So easy to get killed."

"I've only come off once. Last December, but that's what the leathers are for. Bike needed some work on it after it ended up on it's side and I needed new bike gear but that was it; no broken bones. I wasn't going fast mind but it was icy."

"See," Tabitha told him. "If you were in a car."

"Cars cost so much more," Adam answered. "And no sense of freedom on the open road."

Natalie smiled. "My car costs a small fortune," she told him. "Always stuff needs doing. MOT after Christmas and I know it's gonna be expensive."

The girls conversed quite freely with the young man and for the first time since he had arrived, Adam was beginning to feel at home. The nakedness was no longer an issue and he almost didn't notice Tabitha's pendulous, big breasts or Natalie's shaved mons when she got up; he had stopped looking.

He was certainly at ease with his nudity and had forgotten about his sense of dress when some enchilada dropped off of his fork and landed in his pubic hair. He squealed in pain and Natalie told him to lean over with a grin. "Shall we get him a bib?"

Tabitha laughed heartily at Adam's embarrassment but he shrugged it off, and even offered to wash up as they finished. "Cheers," Sarah replied and Natalie watched their two house mates quickly left the room.

"Normally those that cook don't do the washing up," she told him with a grin.

"But ..."

"But you offered. And Sarah and Tabitha are awful at getting away with it."

"Ah right. Well, it don't matter," he told her and got up with the dishes.

"Hey," Natalie called and jumped up. "You wash, I'll put away."

Adam smiled and walked into the kitchen running the hot water and filling the plastic bowl in the sink with hot water, adding a generous squirt of lemon washing-up liquid to the swirling and steaming liquid.

He shook his hands in the water and allowed a copious amounts of bubbles to form as Natalie brought in glasses and cups from the lounge. She cocked her head and glanced out of the window as she pulled up the rubbish sack from the bin. "Need to get something on," she told him.

"What to preserve your modesty," he taunted and she nodded. Adam took a handful of bubbles and placed the first one on her left nipple. Natalie laughed as he repeated it and then put another set on her mons. "See, perfect."

She rolled her eyes and looked up at the window. "We aren't overlooked here, but next door can see our back door if he is up at the window and I don't like him seeing us. He is just fourteen and a right horny little shit."

Adam watched as Natalie unlocked the back door and wandered into the yard to deposit the rubbish in the outside bin with a grin; she was walking around the garden naked.

“The bubbles blew away,” Natalie moaned as she hopped back inside the house and ran her cold hands over Adam's buttocks. “Like the imagination though,” she told him and picked up some bubbles and ran her hands over his ass cheeks.

Adam raised his eyebrows; a playful Natalie was a definite improvement on the short-tempered bitchiness he had seen in the previous few days and smiled at her. “Happy now?”

“Oh yes,” she told him as she picked up the first washed glass and dried it on the tea-towel before putting it away in a cupboard. “You don't seem that freaked out by us.”

Adam shrugged. “I like naked women,” he said with a grin and Natalie flicked his back with the tartan tea-towel. He was certainly enjoying the company of Natalie and happily talked as he washed and she dried.

Natalie put the last plate away and watched as Adam put the washing up cloth away on the side. She smiled and held out her hands, hugging the young man and pushed her body close to his.

He gave a sharp intake of breath as her firm bosom brushed against his chest hair and his expanding manhood rubbed against her shaved mons. “Thank you,” she whispered in her ear. “Nice having someone to help.”

“Ya know, we could go out. It is a Saturday night. Go for a drink, onto a club. Some dancin' an' all.”

Natalie smiled and looked into his eyes as she broke their hug but held onto his hands. “I've warmed to you, but not that much,” she told him with a grin.

“Oh OK, sure.” Adam muttered at his second rejection of the day. “But I just thought ...”

“We are very touchy-feely,” Natalie answered his unsaid question. “Like hugs and the like. But I am not going to be easy to seduce just 'cause I ain't got my clothes on.”

Adam nodded and let go of Natalie's hands. “Sure. But I ...”

“I would love to cuddle up and watch a film,” she told him with a smile. “Might even open a bottle of wine, Sarah and Tab have gone upstairs so we got the lounge to ourselves. What d'ya reckon?”

Adam nodded. “Sure.”

* * * * *

Adam's eyes barely left the screen; he was the first one up and had set up his games console but he heard footsteps outside. The lounge door opened and he was aware that someone was in his peripheral vision but his eyes remained glued to the cross-hairs. “They're right,” the voice said.

“Eh?” Adam grunted as his gun fired off towards the terrorists and he darted back behind the cargo box he was using as shelter.

“A naked girl comes into the room and the gamer just ignores her.” Adam glanced over to see Tabitha with her arms crossed over her bosom and he turned his attention back to the screen, swearing as he did.

“Been fuckin' shot,” he moaned. Tabitha sat down in the chair and picked up the laptop, turning it on as Sarah walked into the room. Adam's eyes darted away from the burning buildings and watched as the attractive girl with the shaven crotch walked past him.

“Stop smirking,” she told him and clipped him over the back the head. His attention turned back to the screen just in time to see his character shot and some taunting words appearing on the screen.

“What ya do that for?” Adam moaned and Sarah grinned.

“Do what?”

“Make me lose.”

Sarah snorted. “And why aren't you naked?”

Adam looked down at his shorts and shrugged. “It seemed, well weird.”

“Get 'em off,” Sarah told him and rubbed her hands. Adam felt his member stiffen in his shorts and blushed.

“I'd ... um. Well I'd rather not.”

“Fucking get 'em off,” Sarah taunted. “Or are you shy?”

“I'm not shy,” Adam retorted. “I just, well, would rather wait a few moments.”

“It means he's got a stiffy,” Tabitha told her and Sarah peered over her shoulder, ignoring her clothed house mate.

“The dirty floosie,” she muttered as she scanned Tabitha's screen. “You wouldn't think it to look at her, but those legs must have been opened more times than a porn stars.”

Tabitha looked over at her. “D'ya have to read my private conversations on Facebook?”

“Oh, it's just Mary,” Sarah replied. “I want to know what she is up to as well.”

“She is being Mary,” came the terse response.

“Who's Mary?” Adam asked as he turned off his game.

Sarah and Tabitha looked at each other but Sarah was the first to speak. “The girl who used to live in your room. She was a bit adventurous.”

Tabitha took a deep breath and typed onto the screen. “She was, well is, my best friend.”

Adam looked up at Sarah wince and stretched his arms out. “Is Natalie in the kitchen?”

“Yeah.”

“I wanna see if she wants to go to the pub,” he asked and got up. “Give you some peace and quiet.”

“Err ... Adam. Shorts?”

Adam groaned and looked at her; it was certainly a less daunting proposition that the night before – he had been naked and it was OK then so why was he being reluctant now?

He sighed and slid down his shorts, his erection catching on the waistband and bobbing free. He threw the navy shorts at Sarah who smirked and left the room. Natalie smiled when Adam came into the kitchen, stirring her hot chocolate as she gently poured the hot milk into the powder.

“You were asleep,” Adam told her. “When I got up. I didn't want to knock on and wake you.”

Natalie's eyes narrowed. “How do you know I was asleep?”

“You snore,” came the response and Natalie gasped in faux-annoyance and flicked the spoon at his naked body. “I thought we might go out for lunch. If you aren't doing anything,” Adam asked with a nervous tinge to his voice.

She smiled again, and looked up at him, staring at her breasts. “OK,” she told him. “Where to?”

Adam hummed. “Well I thought the little Irish pub, go get some breakfast and then a drink,

maybe.”

The big-breasted girl gave a nervous laugh and smiled, touching him on the arm. “That’ll be cool. I’ll just go and get ready.”

“Don’t be too long; it’s 11am already,” he gave her in response and Natalie’s smile disappeared and she leant into his personal space.

“I’ve got all day,” she whispered and took her drink from the side, swinging her hips as she walked into the corridor that ran the length of the house, past the dining room. She turned when she got alongside the lounge door and looked back at Adam admiring her body.

“Adam,” she called. “You need to get ready too.”

Adam shrugged his head and looked down. “Oh ... sh ... yeah!”

“Easy to forget you are naked, isn’t it?” Natalie teased with a smile and then looked into the lounge. “Girls, do you want anything from town?”

It took Natalie ten minutes longer than Adam to get ready but by midday, they were both walking down the road their little house stood on. She looked over at him and Adam smiled, holding out his hand.

“Errr ... I am not a little girl who needs help crossing the road,” Natalie told him and he grunted.

“Yeah, sorry. Just thought it would be, ya know.”

Natalie sniffed and took his offered hand with a grin. “You seem happy to be living with us now that we are naked.”

Adam gave a nervous laugh. “You ain’t been getting at me. I left a beer can in the room last night after we watched the film and Sarah dain’t shout at me when she came down. And ya smiling at me. Not shouting at me for owt.”

Natalie sniffed. “We feel at home without clothes on. We can be ... free!”

“Well take it from me, ya a fuckin’ moody bitch with ‘em on.”

Natalie squeezed his hand. “Are you always this much of a charmer?”

“I’m just sayin’ that ya nice when ya got ya keks off. But that’s fine, ‘cos you wander round in the buff. Just don’t get dressed.” Natalie squeezed his hand harder causing Adam to squeal in pain. “That fuckin’ hurts,” he moaned and Natalie grunted an approval in return. “Did anyone tell you that ya fuckin’ crazy?”

“All the time,” Natalie told him with a smile. “But I thought we were here to have a drink and something to eat?”

“We are.”

“Good. So it doesn’t matter if your luncheon companion is a bit crazy ‘cause it ain’t a date, right?”

Adam nodded and smiled. “No.”

“Good,” Natalie told him. “I’ve just come out of a long relationship and I don’t want another. And you most definitely ain’t my type.”

Chapter VII

Adam hesitated in the doorway as Natalie crossed her arms. "Well get 'em off then."

"I've only just got in," he muttered as he looked around the room of naked girls watching him. Sarah was tapping away on her phone and looked up at him.

"Well? I'm not answering you until I see skin."

Adam sighed and pulled off his sweatshirt and then his grubby jeans as Natalie's eyes flicked towards his bobbing erection. While he soon got used to being around his house mates without getting sexually aroused, the initial sight of the three girls caused a rush of blood to his anatomy.

Adam was still not completely comfortable with the idea of naturism or being naked around his house mates but three expectant faces had turned from the television to the doorway as he awaited for the answer to his question. With his clothes deposited in a pile and discarded, he crossed his arms, his firm member jutting into the room and looked at Sarah. "Happy now?"

Sarah nodded towards Natalie with a smirk and looked back down at her calculator app on her smart-phone. "OK, with three of us, it's one twenty a month," she told him. "So with four it'll be a hundred, say."

Natalie sighed. "Less bill money, I'll take that."

Adam "You want me to pay you a ton a month or does everyone pay something so it evens out?"

Sarah turned the screen off on her phone and rubbed her nose. "I pay for everything and come after peeps for my money."

"She earns more than us," Tabitha told him. "She can afford to pay for it – the gas, 'leccy, phone, TV, food."

Adam reached for his wallet and tutted. "I need to go to the bank, or will a cheque do?"

"You have on-line banking, right?" Natalie asked him and Adam nodded. "Well just set up a standing order to go from your account to Sarah's."

"Oh right, how do I that?"

Natalie sighed and shook her head, reaching for her laptop and powering it on. She had to hold the on button for a few seconds and wiggle the power button until it flickered into life and waited for the five minutes for it to boot into her desktop. "Just go to your bank," she told him and Adam left the room to retrieve his security device that allowed him to sign into his bank account.

Natalie cooed at him when the account summary came up. "You're richer than Sarah," she whispered and Adam blushed.

"That's ... private," he told her and Natalie pointed into the corner and then on another button.

"Sarah, what's your account details?" Sarah reached into a small drawer and took out her chequebook, passing it to Natalie who typed in the numbers on the bottom of the cheque. Adam watched as she set the date for the following day and then every month to send one hundred pounds and passed the warm laptop onto Adam's unprotected groin. "Done."

"Done?"

"Yeah, and don't forget, when we chuck you out to cancel it," Natalie warned him. "Or else

you'll be paying Sarah every month until you do.”

“Oh ... right,” Adam murmured and watched Natalie log off his account with the computer still on his knee. “Can I check the footy scores?”

“Sure,” Natalie muttered and Adam clicked on a button to open a new “tab” on the browser. He spluttered when it loaded – the software had listed the most browsed to websites and he glanced over at Natalie. “How many porn sites do you go to?”

Natalie blushed and looked at Sarah and Tabitha laughing loudly instead of watching the television. “That's private,” she cried and reached for the laptop.

“NudeDating.com?” he told her and Natalie's scowl deepened.

“That's private,” she repeated as she snatched the laptop from him. “I didn't announce that you had two grand in your account and twelve in savings.” She looked at Sarah and shook her head. “Sorry. I didn't mean to say that.”

Adam snorted. “Shall we do dinner?”

Natalie nodded sheepishly and got up. “I don't need any help,” she told him forcefully. “I really don't.”

“Yeah, but I want to,” he admitted and used a table to pull himself to his feet waiting for Natalie to leave the room before closing the door behind him. “So, Nude Dating ...”

“I don't want to talk about it,” she snapped. “It's not your business.” Adam sighed and she turned around the moment she reached the kitchen. “Well, wash your hands then if you are helping.”

Adam rolled his eyes and pumped the soap onto his hands as Natalie threw open the cupboard door. He washed his hands under the cold water and dried them on a tea towel, before sliding his half-wet hands onto Natalie's flanks. “OK. You annoyed with me?”

“Yes,” Natalie barked, not turning around to face him and pulling his hands off. “But I'm sorry for telling Sarah how much money you've got.”

“S'ok,” Adam told her nonchalantly. “So the Adult Forums. What's that all about?”

“Will you leave my Internet history alone,” Natalie told him and slammed down a pan onto the worktop. “And I am not talking about the porn sites either, OK? Just leave it.”

Adam waited for a few seconds and then asked in a patronising voice. “Does Natalie get lonely?” Natalie sniffed, and pulled out a handful of tomatoes from the fridge, throwing them onto a baking tray and slamming them into the oven. “Does she?” Natalie ignored him as he leant against the counter. “Go through a lot of batteries, do you?”

Natalie picked up some vegetarian sausages from the fridge and slid them out of the packet onto the pan and drizzled them with oil, turning the pan on. “Shut up Adam, you're not funny.”

“I'm just asking,” he said defensively. “Cause there were five, six adult sites. My computer, I've chucked it in storage, well it has three in the favourites.”

“Well bully for you,” Natalie shouted and spun round to face him, raising her hands up.

“OK, so I get lonely and bored and desperate sometimes, is that what you wanted to know? And yes I have had one date from that site, it was in Preston last week and it was a total disaster. He wanted a stripper not a nudist. Now I don't want to discuss this with you.”

Adam bit his lip as Natalie waved a spatula in her hand he watched as she turned to butcher some mushrooms with a knife. “I didn't mean to ... well I wasn't sayin'”

“You were.”

"I wasn't, I mean I offered to take you to the pub last week and you weren't interested. You don't have to be lonely."

Natalie shook her head. "It's not about you. OK it's hard to go from a long-term two-year relationship to nothing, it takes some adjustment. I don't want a relationship and I don't want to not be in a relationship. It's hard and you wouldn't understand. Now piss off and let me do dinner in peace."

Adam cleared his throat. "Well, if it helps, I've been there too and know it's shit. And I've been bored too." Adam put his hand on Natalie's arm and rubbed her wrist. "I mean, there's no reason for you to be single, you're a nice girl. I quite like spending time with you. When you ain't bitchin' at me, of course."

"I do not bitch at people."

Adam snorted and Natalie passed him an apron as she wrapped one around herself. She pulled out eight eggs and told him that if was staying in the kitchen to fry them up two at a time while she hauled the toaster from the cupboard. "So what are you lookin' for. In a guy?"

"Are you going to drop this?" Adam shook his head and Natalie sighed before pondering. "Not you," she said firmly.

"Is that it?" Adam asked with a grin. "Cause I wouldn't have ya anyway."

"Oh no?" Natalie enquired as she dropped two slices of bread into the toaster. "Really?"

"It's the bitchiness," Adam said with a straight face. "Can't stand it."

Natalie slapped him over the forearm and she looked at him. "OK, reasonably tall 'cause I ain't standing over him on a date, someone kind, good sense of humour, accepts nudism and makes me laugh," she said. "And someone I can enjoy myself with."

"Is that it?"

"Well if he's got a massive cock and millions in the bank, it's a bonus, ya know, but I just want someone good to love and to love me. Now can we drop this?" Natalie asked as she wiped her eye. "Cause I really don't want to talk about me with you. I don't know you well enough to be discussing my love life with you."

Adam hummed and opened the first egg into the sizzling frying pan. "OK," he muttered and then swore as the yolk broke. "Cause I tried the Internet dating for awhile but it wasn't good for me either."

Natalie smiled. "What happened?"

"Just loads of really crappy dates and just not my type."

"What do you want? Let me guess big tits."

Adam chuckled. "No, well I like curvy women, someone with all lumps and bumps in the right places." Natalie sighed, shaking her head with a smirk on her face. "Want a bird to stand up for herself, good cook obviously. Doesn't bitch or nag."

"Well that's a contradiction," Natalie replied. "Stand up for herself but doesn't bitch or nag."

"No it isn't," Adam said instantly. "Ya can be independent without being bitchy. And just to be honest, doesn't cheat. And obviously big tits, big bank balance, all very good."

Natalie watched as he moved two cooked eggs to a plate and broke two more over the pan to start cooking. "I got a friend who sounds just like that," she told him with a grin. "I wonder whether Bella would be up for it?"

"Bella?"

"Yeah, one of my cleaners. She's a lovely girl," Natalie said pursing her lips together. She looked at him with a smirk. "Just tryin' to work out if you are her type."

Natalie pulled open the oven and took out the grilled tomatoes, putting two on each plate before dropping the hot baking plate into the sink. "Her type?"

"Yeah, well she's curvy, great sense of humour, always up for a laugh. I'll see when she's free."

"Oh right. I'm not sure about the whole dating thing," Adam admitted but Natalie just giggled.

"Oh you'll be fine with Bella," she promised. "Go call Sarah and Tabs," Natalie ordered as she began to dish up a vegetarian fry-up for them all.

* * * * *

"Monopoly," Adam suggested holding up the game.

"Is that a great idea?" Sarah asked. "I had to referee the two of you playing games on Wednesday."

"Yeah well vowless is not a word," he told her. "She made that up."

"And Paris, you can't have places or names," Natalie added. "Ya playing loose with the rules too."

"I was not," Adam defiantly told her. "But Scrabble, I'm a bit new to it. And you kept changin' the rules."

"I did not," Natalie argued.

"Hey, I got some marking to do," Sarah suggested and Natalie shook her head. "Fancy doing that?"

"Not your bloody marking again."

Sarah hummed. "Well Tabs is at her friends and Jack said he would only do the marking if I will help his girlfriend write letters to get her PPI back. So if you two don't want to do it, I'll venture out into the cold to Jack's."

"You could do your own marking," Adam suggested and Sarah scowled in derision.

"Don't be bloody ridiculous." Sarah grabbed a small bag of paper and sauntered towards the door. "No-one wants to do their own marking."

"OK then, what do you want to do?" Adam asked putting the Monopoly down.

"I don't know," Natalie cried.

"How about going on the bike," Adam suggested. "Just down the road to a small pub or just on the open road."

"No," Natalie said forcefully. "Totally not."

"Well, we did pub on Monday, Scrabble and cards on Wednesday, games console yesterday. So what would you want to do?"

Natalie groaned. "We could do our own thing," Natalie muttered and Adam shook his head.

"No," he said and shook his head. "I'll ... umm ... well I'll be bored."

Natalie shook her head and groaned. "Honestly," she huffed and Adam picked up a DVD case. "Film?"

Natalie groaned and waved her arms around. "I want to go out."

"Pub? We could go on the bike." Natalie waved her arms in a furious gesture. "Cinema?"

“To see what? That's nothin' worth seeing.”

Adam yawned and stretched “Clubbin’?”

“No, it's expensive,” she moaned and then looked at him. “I just want a walk.”

“A walk? It's pitch black and raining.”

“Yeah, I know,” Natalie muttered defensively and stretched .”OK, if you don't want to.”

“No, I'm fine. OK, let's go for a walk. In the wind. And the rain. And the darkness.”

Natalie sighed and threw herself back down onto the couch. “Well if you are going to be like that.”

“You'll stay at home and jill off to Internet porn.” Natalie's eyes narrowed and Adam looked sheepish. “Umm ... sorry, I didn't mean to say that.”

“Too fucking right,” she snapped. “It's bang out of order.”

“Yeah, I said sorry.”

Natalie glanced down at the carpet and tutted. “OK. Let's go for a walk,” she said and got up from the chair, walking over the door in the corner of the room. “And we can stop off at the pub if you like,” she promised, her eyes twinkling. “For you to buy me a drink to say sorry.”

* * * * *

Natalie giggled and she shook her head as Adam finished putting his bike back together. She had watched him from her room that overlooked the garden as she meticulously cleaned it and grinned; he had been four hours and taken all of his Saturday afternoon.

She had been a bit surprised and how much Adam had slotted into their house once they revealed their love of naturism to him. He seemed genuinely content with wandering about the house naked and was certainly as “touchy-feely” with her as she was with everyone else. She allowed him to spend most of his evenings with her, and was beginning to enjoy his company. He was becoming an acceptable house mate.

She still had to correct him when he put his clothes out to dry all over the lounge (he had also not separated coloured clothes and white clothes so that his white boxer shorts and shirt were an off-grey but he didn't seem to care). She had moved them to an airer in the corner of the dining room so they were not in the way, much to Adam's annoyance when he couldn't find them.

Natalie had also shouted at him for leaving the toilet in a “disgusting state” but apart from that he was settling into the house. He was still a meat-eater but had started eating with the rest of them (at a significant saving to himself) and the fact that he didn't have to cook was such an advantage he was willing to forgo his daily bout of unhealthy processed meat.

He had been nagging her all week to go out on his bike with him but she had flatly refused: Adam may have been a good rider, she didn't know, but she was too nervous and scared to be on a bike. It just seemed so unstable and she much preferred the safety of her battered maroon hatchback.

Natalie watched as Adam started the blue bike and it roared into life. She shook her head, she had been tidying her room and idly watching her house mate as he did “maintenance and stuff” on his bike – it had not been ridden much in the previous few weeks and he was certainly missing it, but he lived ten minutes walk from his work, and said by the time he had taken it all round Lancaster's ring road and one way system it was quicker to walk.

She watched as he snapped his helmet over his head, donned his gloves and wheeled his bike out of the garden to roar it into the street.

It took Natalie another thirty minutes to finish, by which time it was nearly dinner time and she idled down the stairs to meet Tabitha and Sarah. "That bike's loud," Tabitha moaned as Natalie came into the room.

"Ahh, ya just don't like the idea of going wild on a throbbing machine," Sarah teased.

"It's a death-trap," Tabitha replied instantly. "It's loud and it smells horrible." The two girls looked at the pregnant woman who shrugged. "Kitchen winda was open."

"He can give me a ride," Sarah murmured seductively and then looked at Natalie who just shrugged.

"I dain't want anythin' to do with it," she told them. "He's offered me plenty of rides and I don't like bikes. Give me four wheels any day."

The back door slammed shut and they looked towards the door to the lounge for Adam to enter. "Feels good," he muttered as he unzipped his leathers. "First proper spin for a while."

"You spun it?" Sarah asked with a grin. "And I thought."

"No ... I didn't spin it," Adam replied instantly. "Just went up to the Trough and back down through Caton and Halton."

"Ahh, he's been to the gay dogging spot," Natalie teased and watched incredulity creep across Adam's face. "Ya know. You, single man, leathers, big ... throbbing ..."

"What the fuck are you on about?" Natalie's eyebrows flickered up and he shrugged. "I ain't a shirt-lifter if that's what you mean?"

"The man, he does protest too much," Sarah replied, goading the stripping man who shook his head.

"I ain't some sort of poof," he said firmly. "I've 'ad fuckin' loads of birds in me time."

Natalie snorted and quickly got up, grabbing the hand of the nearly naked man. "You can help me cook," she told him tersely. "Come on stud, I got a pink apron for you."

Adam groaned and finished removing his clothes, folding his motorcycle kit in the corner of the room before being led to the kitchen. As much as it pained him, Adam decided to wear the apron after the first time he had "helped" Natalie cook and she had him frying up some onion and garlic. She took a dozen carrots with a few parsnips from a bag and sliced them before throwing them into boiling water. She glanced around, and ensuring that Adam was not watching, she took a thirteenth carrot and slid up behind her house-mate. He looked back at her as one hand cupped his chest. She nibbled his ear and he grunted. "What's got into you?"

Natalie sighed and press her crotch against his rear. "Big boy," she cooed and slid her hand down his chest. "Tell me you want it."

Adam reached around and Natalie, barely able to keep a straight face, poked his anus with the carrot. "You want it," she teased as Adam jumped away from her waving the orange vegetable. "Come on, beg for it."

"You fuckin' crazy," he shouted back and she burst out laughing, before offering it to him, waving it in front of his face. He backed away, scowling and she threw it into the bin with a giggle.

"Oh come on," she snapped, beckoning him back to the oven. "It's just a joke. Just lighten up will you?"

"It's not a joke," he replied and she raised her eyebrows. "It's bang out of order."

"Oh would it really matter if I did think you were gay? No, it's not a problem and I don't. I

just don't see why you think it's a problem.”

“Well it's just weird,” Adam spat back in response and Natalie took a deep breath. “Fuckin' eeeuuuhh,” he muttered, contorting his face as expressed disapproval.

Natalie shook her head and looked at him. “Can you make a roux for me, macho-hetero-man.”

Adam shrugged. “What's a roux?”

“Well can you make me a pint of stock?” Natalie asked in an annoyed tone and passed him a vegetable stock cube while she made a flour and butter roux before adding the vegetable stock and milk. Adam just watched as she drained the vegetables, mixed in the sauce and then transferred to a baking dish.

Natalie kissed him on the cheek as she closed the oven door. “You do look sexy in a pink apron,” she teased. “I got some pink things in my room you might like to try on.” Adam's eyes sparkled as she burst out laughing and pulled the kettle to her. “Tea?”

Natalie made them all a cup of tea and then took out the meal from the oven, dishing up the vegetarian dish onto four plates. Adam enjoyed the meal – Natalie's Parsnip and Carrot Bake was a lot better than he expected and she passed yoghurts around after dinner to everyone.

Sarah took the plates and stacked them in the kitchen, promising to do them later and idly wandered into the room. “Film?”

“I'm not in the mood,” Tabitha replied and Adam hesitated, he wondered whether he could put his game on. “Pub?”

“I don't fancy going out,” Sarah replied and stretched her legs. “A game?”

“How about Twister?” Adam asked with a smile.

The naked girls looked at him and Sarah giggled. “Strip Poker?”

“We could watch Saturday night telly?” Tabitha suggested and Sarah looked over to Natalie.

“Actually could I have a massage?”

Natalie smiled and rubbed her eyes. “Yeah sure. But you can run up and get my oils and table.” Sarah leapt up from the chair and strode over to the door. “You know where they are, don't you?”

“Yeah,” came the dismissive response from the stairs.

“Massage? Are you a massage parlour ...”

“Be fuckin' careful how you finish that sentence,” Natalie warned him and Adam froze. “No, I do not do massages professionally but I have been taught how to do them properly.”

“Oh right.”

“It was a night course. And no, I am not a whore.”

“OK. I was just ask ... well you know what I mean,” he replied and watched as Sarah bounded into the room carrying a giant case and a small box.

“Move,” Natalie told him and Adam curled up his legs on the chair and watched as Natalie unzipped the case and removed a folded up table that went to be six foot in length and three foot high with bright blue padding on top. She pulled a coffee table towards her and opened a box which had a multitude of trays on it and looked at her house mate. “Tired?”

Sarah nodded and looked at her friend who picked up a small bottle and poured some

straw-coloured oil into it. She then rifled through her trays and selected two small bottles, each adding a handful of drips to the mixture which was then sealed with a lid containing a pump and she shook it gently.

“Is it OK?” Sarah asked and Natalie helped her onto the massage table which creaked gently. Adam watched transfixed as Tabitha put a chill-out CD on the battered music box in the corner and Natalie turned off the main light, using just the reading lights for illumination.

She pumped the container a couple of times and rubbed the oil into her hands, her eyes meeting those of Adam and then deftly ran her hands over the naked back of Sarah. Tabitha had closed her eyes and was leaning back in the chair, enjoying the aromas that wafted gently through the room and sank into the foam cushion, listening to the music.

Adam's eyes darted around the room and Natalie beckoned him up, pumping a small amount of oil into Adam's hands and then moving down to Sarah's buttocks and well-toned legs. She took Sarah's left leg and gently glided her oily hands down it until she reached the back of her knee.

Adam licked his lips and repeated the action, his hands quivering as they touched Sarah's soft skin and firmly rippled it as his hands careered down her legs.

Natalie smiled and repeated the actions, slowly and gently gliding her hands over the naked girl's body while encouraging the same motions from Adam who was considerably more reticent. Sarah made gentle grunting sounds from time-to-time, but seemed to be dozing and considerably relaxed.

Natalie smiled at Adam as her fingers darted over Sarah's buttocks and Adam did his best to repeat the fast actions but allowed Natalie to intervene and do the stroke properly.

“Turn over,” Natalie muttered whispering to Sarah who sighed, and allowed Natalie to support her as she turned to face the ceiling. Adam was given a generous portion of oil and Natalie slid her hands over Sarah's chest, grinning at Adam who didn't manage to hide his delight at putting his oily hands on the young teacher's orbs.

Sarah mewed as Natalie stroked her firm body and barely noticed that her male house-mate was openly fondling her bosom. Natalie rolled her eyes at him and nodded towards her thighs, which he gleefully glided down to, happily looking at Sarah's shaved mons and tidy slit.

“You're enjoying this,” Natalie whispered to him but Sarah heard and grinned.

“Yeah, it's wonderful,” she replied to her misunderstanding and sank into the massage table a bit more.

Natalie licked her lips and grabbed hold of Sarah's thighs, shooing Adam away. He watched open-mouthed as Natalie got closer and closer to her pussy, her hands brushing against Sarah's labia. He felt his rod stiffen even more and waited for the inevitable touching but neither Sarah or Natalie went any further and he was almost disappointed when Natalie called time on the massage.

Sarah lay on the table for a few moments, savouring the relaxed state while Natalie left to get a drink of water, returning to find Sarah glassy-eyed and getting off the massage chair. “I'm going to bed,” she explained and looked at her pregnant house-mate. “Night Tab, and Nat, thank you. I really needed that.”

Natalie looked at her massage bottle and held it out to Tabitha. “Sure you don't want one?” Tabitha shook her head and stretched her weary legs. “No, thanks. I am off to bed too. It's ...”

"It's OK," Natalie replied. "I know the pregnancy makes you tired."

Tabitha nodded and used the arm of the chair for leverage, padding out into the hallway. "Night," the two girls called as they walked up to bed.

Adam grinned. "Does that offer apply to me?"

Natalie smiled. "Go on, I suppose so," she teased and helped Adam onto the massage table. It creaked more ominously as he put his face into the cut out hole.

"Is this thing OK with my weight."

Natalie clicked her joints and hummed. "Yeah. It's OK to 20-odd stone," she told him and took a generous portion of the oil in her hand and rubbed her hands together, taking a deep breath and touching her male house-mate, pressing firmly on his tense muscles.

He purred at her touch and she ran her hands over his back, circling his pressure points and using a variety of strokes that had him mewling and groaning appreciatively at her touch.

He jolted when she gripped his buttocks and tensed up. "Don't be silly," she told him and Adam slowly relaxed his muscles. They firmed up again and Natalie groaned. "Adam?"

"Sorry," he muttered from within the mattress. "Sorry, it's just ... umm ... I get nervous when touched there."

She tutted and poured a generous portion of oil on his hands, gripping and massaging his globes and thighs. He wondered if she was going to push against his bud for a giggle, but she obviously decided against it as he hands swept over his back.

"Turn over," she instructed and watched as Adam twisted his legs around and then turned over. She grinned at him and told him to close his eyes, which he did and her hands started to wander, pressing down on his muscles and then his small beer belly.

Adam grunted and licked his lips as she did; her touch was confident and firm but not too strong. She skated around his erect cock, and stroked his legs, her fingers twisting as her hands moved down his muscular legs. He purred as she walked around the table and repeated her firm actions with his other leg and then shook the bottle. "Only a little bit left," she muttered. "Shame to waste it."

Adam opened his eyes and watched as she poured the oil on her hands and she pointed towards him, watching as he sank back down and gripped both hands around his shaft.

Adam gasped as she slid both hands up and down his cock, her oily hands making his pink rod glisten in the half-light. He pursed his lips and sighed; Natalie was excellent as her hands rubbed his cock as if she was trying to start a fire and then pulled the skin downwards, exposing his purple glans at the top of his cock.

She deftly touched the head, already moist from his pre-cum and then covered in peach kernel oil. He gasped again, swore in intense satisfaction and held his breath.

Natalie giggled as she pumped his shaft, pouring the last of the oil over his genitals and then sliding her hands over the aromatic liquid.

Her palm glided over Adam's testicles and he groaned appreciatively as her other hand oscillated over his cock, the movement slick and effortless. Adam grunted and then cried out. "Oh Nat," he muttered and Natalie allowed her finger to touch his perineum, pressing down firmly on his nerves while her other hand brought him to orgasm.

He reached the point of no return and breathed out forcefully with a whimper. He gripped the side of the table, his legs quivering and shaking as Natalie pumped him harder and harder until a firm jet of semen shot out of the tip of his cock and landed on his stomach.

Four more spurts of decreasing intensity gave a line of semen from his belly button to his pubic hair and he laid motionless as he savoured the moment. Natalie pulled out a tissue and wiped her hands before looking at Adam. "No, I don't want anything in return," she told him as his eyes glistened. "Nothing."

"Wow, that was, wow!" Natalie smiled and cocked her head. "You should work in a massage parlour," he teased and Natalie rolled her eyes.

Natalie licked her lips and yawned. "It's not a normal service I offer," she told him. "Certainly not to non-boyfriends." She hesitated and looked into his grateful eyes. "But you've been good fun this week. But you ain't getting a hand job every massage, ya hear me?"

Adam nodded and smiled. "Yeah thanks."

* * * * *

"Come on Sis," Liam implored of his sister as he sat down in the living room.

"No 'cause you still owe me from last week," Sarah replied and slouched a bit further in the chair.

"I'll do your marking for you," Liam replied. "Tomorrow."

Sarah snorted. "Yeah, and what are you going to spend twenty quid on?" Liam hesitated and Sarah shook her head. "I'm getting worried about you. Getting into debt."

"It's not like that," Liam cried and crossed his arms. "It's Olivia and me, our first anniversary and I want to take her out and show her a good time."

"So this is for the restaurant?" Sarah asked, cocking her head and Liam hesitated before agreeing with her. "So what is it for?"

"The restaurant," Liam answered quickly and Sarah shook her head. "Oh come on, please. I need it."

Sarah scratched the top of her legs and watched her brother's eye line. "Tell me why you need it."

"The restaurant," Liam implored and his eyes crossed the room as a naked Natalie wandered in.

"Oh hiya Liam, you havin' a cuppa?"

"No, he's not stopping," Sarah replied and crossed her arms. "He is here to get money from me."

"Oh, what for?"

"We are getting to that."

Liam's eyes traced Natalie's curves and he stared up at her. "I want to take a girl to a restaurant," he started and Natalie giggled.

"Ahh ... what would Olivia say?"

Liam smirked as Natalie left the room, looking back to his sister. Sarah reached into her handbag and took out two ten pound notes, putting them on the table. "You can have them when you tell me the truth," she told him and Liam shook his head.

"I have done," he whined and Sarah's eyes shot up. "OK. I want to get some vodka for us, OK?"

Sarah snorted and Liam held out his hands. "Liam, this has to stop."

"No, it's fine. We only get smashed on special occasions and anyway I've been sober for

ages. Olivia has the house to herself and we are going out to the restaurant, which I have the money for, but I want a drink when I get back.”

Sarah shook her head and passed him the money. “I want it back,” she told him firmly and watched the teenager pocket the money, smirking at her.

“Cheers.”

“And I haven't forgotten the marking,” she told him as he got up. “I got a weeks worth I was going to do tonight. All for you.”

Liam groaned. “I'm sure teachers aren't supposed to dump their marking on other people.”

“I call it outsourcing,” Sarah told him seriously. “If it's good enough for my bank it's good enough for me.”

* * * * *

Natalie picked up his empty plate and passed it to Sarah. “You off out then.”

Adam squirmed in his chair. “Yeah, I know we were supposed to be watching a film but Carl's working every other night this week,” Adam said with a shrug. “And I know you got feck all to do for the rest of the week.”

Natalie stacked the plate and grunted, walking out of the dining room and into the kitchen. She returned with her arms crossed over her bosom and watched as Adam drained his glass of beer. “What are you up to?” She asked Sarah and Tabitha who looked at each other as Adam slipped away from the table. “Because I have been stood up.”

“Hey!” Adam called. “I've not stood you up, I've just suggested we rearrange it when I am not busy.”

“You weren't busy today when we arranged it,” Natalie spat back. “I was looking forward to going to the cinema.”

Adam threw his arms down to his side. “OK. I'll tell Carl that I can't if you are going to be like that.”

“No. You go and drink beer with your racist friend,” Natalie told him, sweeping her hair back. “I know when I am not wanted.” Adam spluttered and Natalie just looked at her friends. “I don't suppose I could join you for the evening?”

“If you really want to ...” Sarah started and looked at Tabitha. “I've got some marking to do. I set some homework and s'pose I better tell them how badly they've done,” she teased with a grin.

Adam looked at her again and she waved him away dismissively. “Go on. I don't want to spend it with you now anyway.”

“Well Carl said I could spend the night ...” Adam muttered as Natalie puffed dramatically. Adam shook his head and rubbed the bridge of his nose before leaving the room to get dressed; Natalie was certainly being moodier than usual in the previous few days – despite his adoption of their naturist ideals and the closeness that the two of them had forged. What was wrong with the bloody woman?

He left the house and strode towards the pub, wondering about Natalie's motives. He knew the girls did not want him living with them and supposed their adoption of the naturist lifestyle was to make him feel uncomfortable. If so, it was doomed to failure; what guy would seriously not like looking at naked women?

Sarah was model-like, toned with a flawless body and he never tired of seeing her hips swaying from side-to-side as she walked. She was sexy. Natalie was more so, she may have been carrying a few extra pounds (as was he), but her body was shapely and had

interesting curves which was what he found most alluring in a woman.

Carl was waiting for Adam as he entered the pub and he nodded towards a pint of beer waiting for him at his table. "Fuckin' 'ell. Ya late. Ya turning into a fuckin' bird."

Adam snorted and scratched his throat. "It's the 'ormones in the water," he replied with a grin. "I'll not be able to drive or owt," he said with a grin and Carl guffawed at his friend's sexism and let out a burp to the disgust of the table next to him. "Students?" He asked the young men who nodded and he snorted.

"Ya dirty fuckers," he told them. "And fuckin' skivers. Always want money to spend it on cheap beer and filthy girls."

Adam shrugged at their surprised faces and he groaned at his angry friend. "Shall we just ... move?" He suggested and Carl downed the last of his drink before looking towards the barmaid and held his glass up.

"Same again, love."

He got up and slapped a five pound note on the counter and passed his beer glass to the young redhead filling a clean glass with the local brewery's beer. Adam watched in almost silence, he knew Carl needed to work on his temper and would get him into trouble by association unless he was careful. It had happened once before, and he knew it would happen again.

Carl threw himself down onto the seat and took a long sip of his drink, emitting an exaggerated and dramatic sigh as it flooded his gullet. He nodded towards him. "How's work?"

"Ahh fine," Adam replied, still only a third of the way through his drink. "Got to get a couple of new people in, fired a couple."

"The darkies right? Hand in the till? Can't trust the cunts."

A tortured look came over Adam's face. "No. Local lads. Never in work on time." He was about to point out that the ethnic minorities and Eastern European workers at his company were honest and reliable but thought better of it. He didn't want to upset Carl.

Carl shook his head and finished his pint. "I'm only working this week 'cos the effin' niggers at our place dain't come to work. I ain't going to Deepdale on Saturday 'cause one of the Polish lads he ain't in. Some bullshit about his kid having cancer."

Adam rubbed his cheek. "One of my lads is getting divorced and his kid has leukaemia. It's tearing him up, proper destroying the poor man."

Carl snorted. "Yeah well, one of that Polish lot getting cancer, well one less of the bastards. But his son ain't, I know his kid ain't. He's just a work-shy lazy cunt."

Adam licked his lips and got up from the table. "Just going to the bog," he muttered and walked over to the small toilets. Carl was being too offensive and Adam felt uncomfortable.

He was used to his effortless racism, and while he didn't share many of Carl's views, he would listen to them, but his attitude towards a child who was suffering from cancer was simply too much. Adam wondered what he should do; his attitude and behaviour had been getting more and more extreme since he had started going on the marches but knew he wouldn't listen to any voice trying to moderate him.

Adam didn't know what to do for the best. If he confronted Carl about his attitude, then his wild friend would kick off and maybe start a fight, but he wasn't comfortable gloating and revelling in the fact that a young child might be seriously ill.

Adam washed his hands and rubbed them on the back of his trousers; he had no option

but to try and talk some sense into Carl.

He heard raised voices from the other side of the pub and he wasn't surprised when he saw Carl shouting as he walked around the bar. Carl was standing aggressively, shouting at the students and took a step towards them when he slipped on the wet floor and fell back, crashing into the table and sliding off of the flimsy furniture on the floor. Adam ran over and knelt down beside his friend who was crying out in pain. "I'll get the fucker," Carl shouted and started getting to his feet when the barmaid arrived.

"You can get out," she told him, looking at the broken table.

"He hit me," Carl lied and pointed a finger at the student who protested vehemently.

"Carl, you're drunk," she told him. "Go home."

Carl swayed and looked at her in the eyes. "I ain't," he grunted. "I ain't. Only had five or six."

"You've had enough," he was told firmly and she looked at Adam. "Get him 'ome. And don't come back today."

Adam nodded and got up from the chair to point towards the door. Carl shook his head and pointed at the smiling student. "I'm gonna fuckin' get you. I'll fuckin' 'ave you."

"I'm shaking in my boots," came the response.

"Come on," Adam muttered, tugging on his friend's arm but Carl pushed it away as they strode towards the front door of the pub. Carl fell down the step as he landed onto the street.

"Let's look at that wound?" Adam offered. "It looks nasty."

"It's fine," Carl scoffed, dismissing him and felt the back of his head, bringing his bloodied fingers in front of his face and gently shaking his head. "It hurts, but it's fine. Let's go get Jamie and beat that fucker right up."

Adam stared at his friend's incandescent expression. "No," he said firmly. "You need to get some medical attention."

"Like fuck. I need ..."

"To got to the 'ospital."

"I fuckin' do not," Carl shouted and gestured wildly at his friend. "I fuckin' do not need to see any quack."

"Carl. Listen, you have just hit your head," Adam told him.

"I wanna kick that fuck into next ..."

Adam grabbed hold of Carl as he tried to enter the pub who swung wildly at his friend. Adam moved out of the way of the wild swing and pushed him up against the pub wall.

"Don't fuck with me Carl," Adam spat. "You're pissing me off."

Carl's head swayed slightly. "You what?"

"Oh the constant going on, just chill. Or get laid."

Carl sneered and pushed Adam away. "I'm nobbing some bird, so fuck off. I only fight for us British. Us English people against scum." Adam shook his head and let go of Carl who threw his arms out in front of him and waved his finger towards his friend. "You should come on a march. Fight for ya country."

Adam sighed and went to speak when Carl groaned and rubbed his forehead. "Are we going to the hospital?" Carl shook his head and Adam pointed down the street. "Go home

then.”

Adam had to spend the following three hours, as Carl sobered up sitting on the couch, to make sure that the bang to his head didn't have him collapsing. Carl wasn't tired, just angry about everything and in the end Adam put on a film as Carl ranted about his gun license being revoked; he simply didn't want to listen to Carl's prejudices any more.

He didn't get to walk home until nearly midnight, and it was then a thirty minute walk across the town centre as Adam wearily trekked past the beggars, the drunken students and the copulating couple of teenagers in a back alley he used.

Adam closed the front door quietly and put his coat on the hook. It was late and there was barely a sound in the house; everyone must be in bed. He glanced up the stairs and noticed a slither of light coming from under the lounge door; the girls were always leaving lights on.

He walked to the door, and opened it, expecting it to be empty and gasped in shock.

Impaled on the end of a strap-on dildo attached to Tabitha's waist was Sarah, who was grunting lustfully in the throws of her orgasm. Tabitha rammed the black rubber phallus deep into her house mate.

“What the ...?”

The two naked girls spun their heads to look at the door to see Adam standing there, his cheeks red and his face shocked. “Adam,” Sarah cried from the couch. “Ahh ... shit.”

Chapter VIII

"You two muff munchers?" Adam cried. "You mean you two. Do you, you know?"

Tabitha groaned and got up from the chair, using both of the arms for leverage to pull her bulk up. "I'm going to bed," she told her partner and the Sarah nodded, watching the thick eight-inch long sex toy, glistening in the half-light, swing between Tabitha's legs.

Adam winced; it looked massive. No wonder the girls said he wouldn't measure up if they thought that was normal.

"I'll be up shortly," Sarah promised and turned to Adam as Tabitha left the room. "We are in love, yes," Sarah said firmly. "And we didn't want you to know, it's not any of your business."

"Well I didn't mean to find out, you were just doing it as I walked in."

"You weren't supposed to be home," Sarah thundered. "Staying at Carl's?"

"He had an accident and got very annoying," Adam told her and then grunted, staring at the primary teacher's erect nipples. "But I had no idea. You two don't look like lesbians."

"Well I am sorry we weren't wearing dungarees to make it obvious for you," Sarah quipped. "We blend in so well."

Adam nodded, his eyes now focused on the skirting-board. "Yeah, ya hide it, real well. I mean which one of you is the butch one? It's her I guess, it must be."

Sarah crossed her arms. "Is your entire life ruled by stereotypes?"

"No," Adam replied indignantly. "But it is weird. I can't be expected to see that when you hide it like that."

Sarah sighed and she glared at him. "No it isn't weird."

"But she's pregnant. That baby isn't yours, is it?" Adam thought for a moment and then shook his head. "Well what I mean is ..."

"I know what you meant," Sarah snapped with her arms crossed. "And no, I had nothing to do with the baby. Well, I was there at conception but that's a different story."

"Ahh wow, a threesome," Adam muttered and then smiled with a glint in his eye.

"Not a fucking chance," Sarah spat in annoyed tone and Adam held up his hands in a mock surrender motion.

"I wasn't suggesting, owt?"

Sarah cocked her head to one side and gave a grin. "Well actually, I mean Tabitha loves to use her strap-on. If you want a threesome, I'm sure she could find somewhere to put it."

Adam shook his head. "Oh no," he spluttered and Sarah licked her lips, before running her hands over eyes.

"Now I want you to promise not to tell anyone."

Adam grunted. "Why?"

"Cos we don't want anyone to know, why the fuck do you think?"

"Is Natalie a muff-muncher too?"

Sarah sighed and stared at him. "Will you stop calling me that?" She glared angrily at him who shrugged and pulled a moue. "Cause, neither Tab or I have a muff, as you can well see. We are nudists, we shave and you still call me a muff-muncher."

“OK, is Natalie a dyke also?”

Sarah groaned. “That’s her business.”

“She is, all three of you get it on, don’t you? I’ve moved in with a bunch of raving ...”

“Don’t even think of finishing that sentence,” Sarah interrupted and waved her finger towards him. “No, Natalie is not in a relationship with us, and her sex life is her business, not yours. As you well know. Not for the want of trying, I can see. Now I don’t want you to tell anyone.”

“OK,” Adam said with an air of indifference. “No-one I know will care.”

“Especially my Dad,” Sarah pleaded. “I mean it no-one. I don’t want him to be told by you or by you mouthing off to your Dad and it getting back. No one, ya hear?”

Adam closed his eyes and nodded. “Yeah, of course. But surely, my silence should be rewarded and ...” He tailed off with a smirk on his face and Sarah scowled at him furiously. “OK maybe not. Maybe you just never met the right guy. Perhaps if you ...”

“Adam, you ain’t gonna convert me. I like women. I love Tabitha.”

“OK. OK,” Adam said dismissively. “But if you two want to lez up, don’t mind me.”

Sarah rolled her eyes. “Good night, Adam,” the young teacher said firmly and left the room, leaving a slightly tipsy man staring after her bare ass.

* * * * *

Natalie glared at him, standing in the kitchen doorway. “Yes, Adam. I know.”

“Ohh,” he muttered. “It’s just. Well they don’t.”

Natalie sighed , clearly exasperated. “Is this really a problem for you?”

“No,” Adam cried. “I’m not ... you know.” He writhed a little and looked at her with a longing look. “I just didn’t ... well it’s not ...”

“It’s affected your speech,” Natalie teased and pushed past him to get to the kettle. “Are you embarrassed?”

Adam spluttered and picked up his drink. “No,” he said quickly and loudly. “It’s just ... ya know.”

She glanced at him and shook her head with a wry smile. “It’s not anything to be ashamed of. It’s very sexy, don’t you think?”

Adam puffed out and grabbed his toast from the side, taking a big bite out of it. “Oh yeah. I told Sarah, I didn’t mind, ya know ... if she wanted to.” He made a gesture with his hands and Natalie shook her head.

“You wanted to watch?” She waited for Adam to protest and smiled at him. “Of course you do. Dirty little basket.”

He shrugged, blushing. “If she was going to offer.”

Natalie shook her head and poured hot water into a bright red cup containing a tea bag. “They aren’t in love with other just so they can have sex for men.”

“Hey ...” Adam interrupted. “If they want to do girl-on-girl ...”

“Do girl-on-girl?” Natalie’s eyes sparkled and she glared at him. “They may make love, or even have sex, but they do not do girl-on-girl,” she hissed. “This is them living their life, not acting out a porn scene.”

Adam rolled his eyes. “I didn’t say that,” he replied with an annoyed tone and met the

voluptuous girl's eyes.

"They are in love, Sarah and Tabitha has found their soulmates, and occasionally, they have sex. Well every fucking night, don't you hear them when you go to the bathroom?"

"Not often," Adam replied instantly and shrugged. "I mean, the odd time but then I guess they got jillin' off."

Natalie sighed and shook her head. "Ya so fuckin' naïve. Jillin' off doesn't often produce banging headboards, well not like they do anyway. Sarah and Tab have both found the person they want to spend their lives with, just 'cause they are the same sex doesn't make that any more intense or real for them." Adam nodded and she raised her eyebrows. "I know you might find that hard to believe but it's true. I've not seen a couple more into each other than those two."

Adam nodded at her seriousness and she snorted. "So how is your racist friend, the one that you ran off to instead of watching a film with me and having a massage?"

Adam snarled. "You didn't say anything about a massage." Natalie shrugged and he continued. "Carl's Carl: he kicked off in the pub as his gun license is being reviewed by the Cops," Adam muttered. "So he ain't happy."

Natalie shook her head. "He's the last person that should have weapons," she told him firmly. "Although if we had proper gun control in this country."

"He only uses it as his gun club over Morecambe way," Adam interrupted. "And I know you don't like him but it's not as though he shoots people. It's just the Police picking on 'im 'cause he is in the anti-immigrant rallies and his football conviction."

Natalie sighed and looked at him. "Do you believe that?" Adam nodded and Natalie looked at him. "Really? You would trust him with a gun."

Adam hesitated and crossed his arms. "Yeah, I think so. I mean, he's not going to go toto in Morecambe and start shooting women and children or owt; he's sound in the head. Ya just got something against him."

Natalie shook her head, sniffed and pushed past him. "Off to work," she said tersely.

"Is this still about last night," Adam shouted after her, but Natalie ignored him and went into the lounge. "Moody witch," he said under his breath about the naked Scottish girl and strode upstairs to get ready for work.

* * * * *

"It's not as stupid as it sounds," Adam told him as he took a sip of his drink.

"It's fuckin' mental," James replied as Adam grinned. "But ya a fuckin' lucky cunt. I mean, livin' with three girls, that's shit, but three nudists. Ahh man, and you got promotion. I want to buy some of that lucky heather you got."

Adam laughed out loud and James looked at him. "They are a bit moody at times."

"Yeah, time of the month," James spat back. "I reckon Teri's lasts for 27 days each month."

"Yeah, Tabitha doesn't like me too much, I can tell that. Sarah's OK and Natalie's a bitch at times, but pretty cool other times. But I tell ya, ya hardly notice them in the buff after a couple of days. It's just normal."

James watched Adam out of the corner of his eye as he drank half of his beer and shook his head as he swallowed. "Ya doin' it too?"

"They made me," Adam muttered in defence and waited for James to take a deep breath.

"I don't know how ya do it," he said airily.

Sensing further questions, Adam changed the subject. "What happened at work?"

"Ahh, well I went for the disciplinary and got done, so I appealed, I told you that, right?"

"Yeah, ya did."

"Yeah, well the union 'elped me and said that as the manager who I offended did the disciplinary it wasn't fair so they moaned at the company who agreed, chucked me on another disciplinary and I got off. One person's word 'gainst 'nother."

"Oh, that's good. So you got off?"

"Better. Manager got a bollocking and moved onto 'nother store. I got a bit of compo as well for hurt feelings."

Adam laughed and James shrugged his shoulders. "Teri's still pissed at me, but we got a new sofa out of it. Comes tomorra, so she's shouldn't be too pissed off all told."

"And you call me lucky?" Adam muttered.

"What's ya work like?"

"Ahh good. Still running the factory, had to let someone go 'cause they on the fiddle but not too bad. The Old Man, he wants his son to take over 'ventually but he ain't ready yet and the Old Man ain't got the 'ealth to stick around too much, so I'm just running the workshop. It's cool."

James snorted and finished the rest of his pint. "Another?"

"Yeah, in a minute. Is Carl not joining us?"

"Nah, he's over gun club, 'fore the cops take his license off of him."

Adam yawned and finished his pint of beer. "Sorry, tired," he muttered. "Busy day at work."

James snorted. "Girls not wearing you out?" He teased and Adam shook his head.

"I fuckin' wish. Glad that we got Christmas comin' up. Need a break."

"Ahh, Teri said if you want to come over, ya welcome."

"Going over to see family," Adam replied instantly. "But tell her, cheers."

"You want that pint now?" James asked and Adam nodded.

"Yeah, Old Goat or Bomber please."

"Sure," James said and gathered the two empty pint glasses. Adam watched his overweight friend walk up to the bar and politely catch the barmaid's eye.

It occurred to him that his two friends – James and Carl – was so different and a night at the local pub with James had been civilised, watching the football game before having a good chat. Why did Carl always seem to get himself into trouble?

"She's nice," Jamie said as he sat back down and nodded towards the student barmaid.

"She's doing Biology at the Uni."

"Oh right," Adam said, taking a sip of the beer.

"And she said, she had to chuck you out last week." Adam spluttered into his pint and looked at Jamie grinning at him. "Carl, right?"

"Yeah," Adam sighed. "Yeah, it was Carl."

Chapter IX

“Misteltoe?” Adam asked as he entered the kitchen to see a nearly-naked Sarah and a completely naked Tabitha kissing.

“It’s OK,” Sarah said as she broke the kiss, her sheer negligee riding up as she swung around. “We aren’t stopping. Just doing the breakfast.”

Adam pursed his lips and rubbed his nose. “I can give you two some space,” he told her and Sarah looked back.

“We are fine.”

“I spoke to Natalie,” Adam admitted. “She got to her parent’s at eleven thirty last night.” Tabitha and Sarah looked at each other and Adam continued. “Said the roads weren’t quite as clear as she hoped.”

Sarah licked her lips and smiled. “Well it was Christmas Eve,” she muttered and ran her hands through Adam’s chest hair. “Shall we open presents.”

“I want my breakfast,” he muttered but Sarah dragged Adam into the lounge as Tabitha poured three bowls of corn flakes and made three cups of tea. The Christmas tree, purchased by Sarah a few days previously was sparsely decorated. Tabitha was off to her friend’s house for Christmas dinner and Sarah were going to have dinner with her family while Natalie left at lunchtime on Christmas Eve to drive to Scotland and Adam was planning to walk to his family’s house, so no-one really saw the point in having much of a tree.

Sarah had purchased it from a local garden centre for a couple of pounds as the holidays approached and she had gleefully erected it in the corner of the room with a handful of baubles. Adam watched as she moved the chair in front of the tree and beamed at the handful of presents underneath it. “It makes the room look Christmassy,” she told him and Adam didn’t have the heart to disagree; one three foot tree and six red baubles did not make a room look “Christmassy” in his opinion.

“Yeah,” he muttered and sat down on a towel in the chair as Sarah pulled out the presents. “I’ve already given Natalie hers to take up to Scotland,” he told her and Sarah scowled.

“Why didn’t I think of that?”

Adam shrugged and had Sarah pass him two packages as Tabitha gave him a bowl of orange cereal floating in a sea of milk, followed by an impossibly strong cup of tea. “Cheers,” he muttered as Sarah put three presents on the chair for Tabitha and six on her chair.

“You first,” Sarah excitedly told Tabitha as she sat down around the small pile of gifts and took a sip of her drink.

Tabitha glanced up at the expectant face of Sarah and unwrapped the biggest present – a giant cuddly toy from Natalie. Sarah wrapped her arms around the three-foot high bear and then watched as she unwrapped Nelson Mandela’s autobiography from Adam. Tabitha glanced up at him as he nervously ate his cereal. “Thanks,” she said genuinely. “That’s um ... cool.”

Adam breathed a sigh of relief as she smiled at him and then she nervously unwrapped the smallest present, cooing as she did. “Oh Sarah, thank you,” she said, removing a gold chain from a box and holding it under the light, before wrapping it around her wrist. She looked down at her partner and held her hands out, hugging and then kissing her girlfriend. “It’s beautiful,” she cooed. “Wonderful.”

Sarah was next to unwrap her gifts, getting two bottles of wine and a box of chocolates from her school, followed by two tickets to see a comedian in Preston from Adam, a sex toy from Natalie, and a silk dress from Tabitha. She beamed at her “haul” and felt the dress against her skin before standing up and putting the red garment on, replacing the sheer nightdress she was wearing.

Adam licked his lips, the dress showed off Sarah's cleavage nicely and whereas he barely noticed her breasts when she was wandering around naked, the shortness of the dress and cut of the garment, made her look sexier and he felt his loins stir. “Very nice,” he muttered tactfully as he finished his tea and leant forward to open a two foot wide box.

Sarah's eyes sparkled and he unwrapped an Indian cookery set from Sarah and Tabitha – containing spices, bowls and sauces. “We thought it is something you could do with Natalie. Get her to teach you how to cook a proper curry.”

“Instead of always buying them,” Tabitha added.

“Be healthier,” Sarah told him and Adam smiled, thanking them both. Natalie's present felt light and he tore off the gold wrapping. There was a post-it note wrapped around a DVD and he read it out loud.

“You said you wanted to watch. Love, Nat.” He tore off the note and laughed – it was a lesbian porn film and Sarah burst into hysterics.

“Can we borrow this?” Sarah teased and Adam laughed.

“Maybe later,” he promised and took the DVD back. “When I've finished with it.”

Sarah giggled at his expression. “Finished, eh?”

* * * * *

Sarah grinned as her brother took a swig of his beer, leaning against the wall. “So where's the love of ya life,” she teased. “She's not been 'round all day. Expected at least a phone call.”

Liam grinned. “Well ... I sort of haven't told Mum yet but I'm going 'round Boxing Day.” He hesitated and Sarah tapped the brickwork.

“Parents going out?”

“Oh yes,” Liam replied in a silly voice, copying an advertisement on the television with a grin. “House to ourselves all afternoon and evening.”

“You do know you are going straight to Hell,” Sarah teased.

“Of course, wouldn't have it any other way,” he replied nonchalantly and then looked at his sister. “Don't tell me you didn't do things you didn't want Mum and Dad to know about when you were a teenager?”

Sarah shrugged. “I do things now that I don't want Mum and Dad to know about.”

“I know. I've seen, remember.”

Sarah laughed and looked into the eyes of her brother. “But you are happy, aren't you?”

Liam nodded and Sarah cocked her head to one side. “Yes,” he said quickly. “Very.”

Sarah looked at his expression and he took another swig of his drink. “You sure?”

“Yes. It's fun and Olivia, well she likes it too.”

Sarah touched Liam on the arm and wrapped her arms around him. “Well as long as ya happy,” she told him. “And Olivia is.”

“Yes,” Liam replied exasperated.

"Well I do worry about you. You just seem too young and I don't want you to go off the rails. Remember ..."

"You have important exams coming up," he finished for her and Sarah licked her lips and nodded.

"Well yes."

"Honestly, I'll be fine," he told her. "Really fine." He looked at his sister glaring at him and he grunted. "OK, so I drink a bit more than I should but I'm top of me class for most of me subjects now," he said firmly.

"Except English," Sarah teased. "Me? You mean 'my'."

"Oh ... whatever. But since 'Livia and I," he said with a flourish and waited for his sister to approve of his grammar. "Since we've been together, I've just been relaxed and school's easier."

Sarah licked her lips and rubbed her hands. "Well if you're sure."

"Yeah. I am. Olivia's parents are never there, it seems really weird the relationship they have and even when I've stayed the night, her Mum's often not there in the morning, so it's good Olivia has someone." He waited for Sarah to respond but his sister just took another swig of her drink.

"So what's it like without Mary?"

"Good," Sarah murmured. "No I mean it. Tabitha's a bit cut up at times, but Mary and I didn't always get on, well I thought she led Tab astray."

"You sound almost jealous."

"I s'pose I was," Sarah muttered. "Tab and I shared intimate moments but Mary was always around to spend fun-time with my lover. It was like having a third person. I think Tab needed her more than she needed me at times and Mary not being there has brought Tab and I, real close."

"Where is she? It is Christmas and all that?"

"We spent the morning together but her friend invited her 'round for an African Christmas and she agreed so I am here and she is there," Sarah answered with a detached tone.

The two siblings were interrupted by a sound behind them and opened the door to the conservatory. "Ahh, there you are, wine?"

"I'll have a top up," Sarah replied and held out her glass to her father.

"What ya doing out there?"

"Just chattin'," Sarah blurted out quickly. "I hardly ever see him, he's always with that Olivia."

Liam blushed. "Yeah, don't we know it. He's hardly in his own bed," her father said with a smile.

"Ya know young men, out there sowing their oats," Sarah said with a smirk and Liam blushed a little more.

"Yeah well as long as there is crop failure. We don't want that girl of yours getting up the duff, do we?" Liam did his best to rearrange his face and got a funny look from his father as he trundled back into the house, jabbing his sister as he caught up with her.

"You and your big mouth," he hissed and Sarah took another sip of her wine.

"What's on the box?" Sarah asked as she dropped down into the chair in the lounge and picked up a TV guide. "Or we could watch my Eddie Izzard DVD," she replied and

rummaged around for her Christmas present from her brother. "He is so funny."

"Isn't he the queer? Like Julian what-not?"

Sarah snorted and picked up the case. "He's funny."

"He's a freak show," her father replied and picked up his beer. Sarah shook her head and threw the TV guide to her father.

"Well you find something to watch. Something without gay people in it," she thundered and looked at her brother with a strained expression. "There must be something the Daily Mail won't object to."

* * * * *

Natalie straightened Adam's tie and cocked her head. "Hey, he almost looks presentable."

"I'm not sure about this," Adam moaned. "I mean, I ain't been on a blind date for ages."

Natalie rolled her eyes. "Yeah, well Bella's a nice girl. Bit unlucky in life."

"Like how?"

"Just ... unlucky. You'll be fine," she sighed and cocked her head. "Now remember, don't mention anything about porn, wanking, toilet habits, football, Carl, driving," Adam groaned. "Right, it's that attitude you need to work on. Praise her. All women like praise."

"I have been on dates before," he told her and she rubbed her hands.

"And look where it got you." Natalie looked at her watch and hummed. "You better go."

"What? I've got loads of time. It's only down the road. Two minutes tops"

"You are not going on your bike," she told her forcefully.

"Why?"

"Because it's down the road and you will want to wear your leathers and then have to faff about. Just take a taxi. It's five quid for fucks sake."

Adam shook his head when there was a knock at the door and Natalie looked at him.

"Your taxi."

"What?"

"Well don't be late. We shan't be waiting up for you," Natalie teased and watched as Adam left the lounge. She waited for the door to close and Sarah shook her head at Natalie.

"You are either up to something to extremely nice," she told her Scottish friend. "And I haven't worked out witch."

"Oh," Natalie murmured in annoyance. "You have a cynical mind."

Chapter X

“Bella?” Adam asked a girl holding a red rose outside the small Chinese restaurant in the town centre and she nodded.

“Adam?” she asked with a girly giggle and held her hand out for Adam to take.

“Shall we?” Adam asked, and when she nodded chivalrously opened the door to the bright restaurant. “We have a reservation, name of Adam Hodson,” he asked the waitress who ushered them to a small table in the window of the eerily quiet restaurant.

“Bloody quiet,” his date muttered and Adam shrugged.

“Tween Christmas and New Year,” he told her with a grin and took her coat to put on the coat-stand behind him. Bella's eyes twinkled as he sat down and he looked her up and down.

Bella was a big girl; not fat, or at least not very fat but big. She had long brown hair that stretched below her shoulders and sparkling brown eyes, as well as a cheeky smile that oozed playfulness rather than seduction. Adam's eyes glanced down to her cleavage, Bella was big-breasted and she shook her head as his eyes flicked down. “40FF,” she announced loudly and shrugged. “Every guy wants to know how big me assets are.”

Adam spluttered and passed her a menu; her breasts was almost straining at the tight lycra like red material of her red dress that was emblazoned with a red heart in the middle. “I wasn't going to ask,” Adam admitted truthfully.

Bella spluttered. “Yeah right. Ya were,” she said confidently. “But ya know I don't ask how big ya cock is on a first date. But you ask how big my tits are.” Adam stared open mouthed at the girl who laughed as she spoke and then buried her face into the menu.

Adam could smell alcohol on her breath and knew that she had been drinking before meeting him but scanned the menu and waited for his date to make her mind. Bella was too busy moaning about the injustices in life. “Cause, if I shag a hundred blokes it's all slut this and loose cow. But if you shagged a hundred lasses, it's well done mate, jack the lad and all that. It ain't right.”

Adam peered at her over the top of the menu. “What dya want love?”

“Love?” Bella giggled and looked at the list. “Pint of lager.”

Adam ordered two pints of beer and sat back as they ordered when the drinks came. Bella took one sip and then continued drinking, downing two thirds of her drink in one go.

“Thirsty?”

“Drier than a Nun's chuff my throat,” Bella announced and sighed. “Did twelve coaches today. Me back's killin'.” She stretched in her chair, and leant forward and she pushed her bum into the corner her seat, affording Adam an excellent view down the top of her dress. “Hey, you've barely touched it.”

“Yeah,” Adam told her. “I was ummm ... well I ain't planning to do a session tonight.”

Bella snorted and held onto her glass. “So Nat says you got a bike and work in a factory.”

“Yeah,” Adam told her. “We make security products – alarms and stuff.” He waited for a moment and looked at her. “Nat said you worked on the coaches.”

“Yeah, as a cleaner. Crap job but pays the bills.”

Adam shrugged and she rubbed her eyes, finishing the last of her beer and ordering another one when the waiter asked what they wanted to order. “So go on,” he told her.

“What else?”

Bella shrugged. “No boyfriends for six months. Last one Pete. He was a dirty bugger.” Adam looked around the small restaurant and was a little embarrassed as two women turned to look in his direction at him and his date, who was bellowing instead of chatting. “Always wanted it up the shitter. I mean I ain't gonna get knocked up back there, but it ain't right doing it in public.”

Adam gasped and she snorted. “I mean, I've had a few one-night stands since then, who hasn't? Ya know everything they say about black blokes is true.”

Adam nodded. “Right?”

“Yeah, and men with big feet.” She giggled as a few people turned to look at the obscene girl. She drank half the glass of beer, her hands shaking and put the drink down.

“However, that Pete, he nicked from me. Stole money from my purse. And he was always banging on 'bout me and callin' me stuff. Mean, I fixed his car for him. Paid tons of money to get some belt fixed or owt and he fucks off.”

She took a few more gulps of her drink and put it down on the table with a start. “And as for work. Well Nat is a right demanding cow. She always on at me as well. I've 'ad to stay behind for six nights this month and I ain't had any extra cash for it. She's a mean fuckin' bitch and I know she's ya friend and all that, but fuck me, she could screw over a Jew.”

Adam pursed his lips and Bella clicked her fingers at the waiter. “Same again, love,” she told him and finished her pint of beer and passed him the glass.

The waiter clicked his heels together. “Certainly Madam,” he told her and Bella leant forward and look into Adam's eyes, passing wind loudly as she did.

“Hey, better out than in,” she said with a smirk. “Ahh dain't tell me that ya ain't dropped one in public.”

Adam blushed and she rocked back on her chair, giggling. “Once or twice,” he admitted and Bella thanked the waiter as he put a third drink in front of her.

Adam was a little surprised when their starter arrived so quickly but Bella tucked into the meal, shovelling the spring rolls into her mouth and washing them down with a pint of beer.

She staggered to the toilet and returned a few minutes, sitting down and clapping her hands. “Oi,” she yelled across the restaurant and held out her glass as Adam slid down in his chair. “Same again, Pedro.”

Bella was loud as she openly discussed private matters candidly and without any measure of discretion. Adam was getting embarrassed and already had heard how her previous boyfriend never made her climax; it was too much information to broadcast around the small restaurant on a first date.

Adam rolled his eyes and was, again, surprised how quickly his meal arrived. They seemed to have been served before most of the other diners and Bella picked up the chopsticks. “I am well good with these,” she told him and sized up a piece of beef on her plate.

She brought the two sticks either side of the meat and raised it higher, before one of the sticks slipped and she managed to flick a piece of beef across the dining area so it hit a woman a few feet away. “Sorry,” Bella called out. “Got a faulty chopstick.”

Adam held his hand over his mouth, laughing at Bella who giggled at the annoyed face of the woman. “Faulty chopstick?” Bella nodded. He picked up the chopstick and drove it into a piece of beef, holding it up as if it was a lollipop stick. “See?”

Bella tried to do the same but she drove her stick into the meat and then brought it up to

her face, flicking the stick with a flourish. The grey piece of meat left her stick and Adam, desperate to catch it, knocked the waiter into the unoccupied table next to him. "Sorry," Adam muttered as the young waiter got to his feet and Bella burst into uncontrollable laughter.

For the first time, Adam was enjoying himself and Bella smiled at him as she swapped her chopstick for a fork and began stuffing the food into her mouth. She certainly had a bit of trouble with her hand-to-eye coordination and Adam finished long before she did.

"Need slash," she told him as she got up and Adam watched as she staggered towards the toilets at the bottom of the restaurant. Adam shook his head and stretched; Bella wasn't an awful date companion but she was far from being good girlfriend material. She was too drunk to really know what she was like and whereas Adam was still technically sober enough to drive, Bella would probably still be over the legal limit the following morning.

Bella stumbled out of the toilets and pulled her dress down, grabbing hold of the sides of the material and tugging forcefully. Adam heard the tear from six yards away and Bella shrieked. Her dress had torn where the straps met the dress and it was falling down to her ankles. "Aaaagghhhh."

A dozen faces turned to see Bella frantically scrambling to pull her dress around her pendulous bosom back up towards her neck but the garment, already having been charitably stretched around her bust was not an easy fit and the waitress had to guide Bella back to the toilet so she could make herself presentable.

"I think sir, it is time to take your companion home," the waiter told Adam with a solemn look.

"Yeah," Adam muttered and looked at him. "Blind date, you know."

He nodded and clicked his fingers. "The bill please, for Mr Hodson." Within seconds a bill for over ninety pounds was given to him and Adam grunted; Bella had drunk a lot and begrudgingly put his credit card down on the paper.

Bella arrived just as he had finished putting in his PIN into the keypad and scoffed. "I was just hoping for a last drinky," she shouted. "Or a pudding."

He spluttered. "I think we've had enough," he told her firmly and she adjusted her dress, straining the safety pin she had repaired her dress with.

"Fuckin' tightarse," she screeched and looked at him. "One drinky?"

Adam coughed and shook his head. "You've had enough," he told her and held out her coat. Bella snorted and stomped through the restaurant, her short dress riding up as she took long strides swaying into two other tables and nearly knocking over a drink.

Adam blushed as she snatched the coat from him and he opened the door. Bella slipped the moment she hit the cold air and her left leg swung out in front of her, throwing her against the restaurant glass and causing a couple in the window to jump as Bella slid down the window. Adam caught her before she hit the ground and she grunted in reply. "Let's get you home," he told her and Bella shook her head.

"Pub. Few more. Bet I can dweenk you under the table." She burped and Adam sighed.

"Another time," he said firmly and watched the buxom girl grab hold of his arm. "Where do you live? Nat said it was close to the town centre."

Bella zigzagged across the path and swung her arm out into the road. "That direction," she shouted across the square. "I live over there." A few people stopped to see the drunk girl screeching into the road and Adam grabbed her as she started walking in front of a double-decker bus. Bella stopped and Adam had to push her across the ring road, the loud

sound of the bus's horn echoing around the historic architecture. "Fuck off," she shouted as Adam released his grip on her shoulder, and waved towards the bus making it's way down the street.

"You nearly got yourself killed," Adam moaned and she laughed.

"Hey, I know a trick," she told him and grabbed her purse from her handbag, extracting a bank note and putting it behind her back. Her hands ruffled her skirt and she brought her hands back empty. "See," she said and then put her hands behind her back and pulled out the five pounds note.

She stumbled into a low wall as they crossed the canal and Adam shook her head. "Ya knickers," he told her. "Ya just put it into ya knickers."

Ahh," Bella cried and slid her hands under her skirt to reveal a pair of black knickers which she threw into her bag. She repeated her trick and Adam shook his head; he wasn't sure where Bella had hidden the bank note but she giggled and Adam laughed at her smile. "See ya can laugh," she slurred and turned into a small set of maisonette-style houses.

She ran down a slight slope and Adam followed as she tripped but kept her footing and fell against a brown door. She looked in her handbag for keys but the door was opened by a teenager with long blonde hair and Bella looked up. "You pissed again Auntie?"

Adam hesitated; Bella hadn't mentioned a niece but what was she doing there? "Come in?" Bella told the hovering man. "Get your fuckin' arse in here. Coffee? Vodka? Beer?"

"Coffee," Adam replied and closed the door behind him; the flat smelt slightly musty but he walked into a small dark room where the teenager picked up an electronic book reader and looked at Bella.

"Alfie went to bed at seven, Dia at seven thirty. Both are fine. Not heard a peep out of them."

"Alfie? Dia?" Adam muttered and Bella shrugged walking into to the kitchen and asking him if he wanted milk or sugar.

"My cousins," the girl told him as gathered her possessions into her arms. "They are good kids." she said and hesitated.

"Adam."

"Lucy," she told him.

Bella returned with a cup of steaming coffee and a massive glass of pale yellow liquid, which looked like wine. "Alfie and Dia?" Adam asked

"Ahh well, they me kids," she told him.

"You didn't mention it," he told her and she swayed as she sat down before taking a big gulp. Bella turned to Lucy as she put her shoes on her feet.

"Yeah well, they are good kids, dya reckon they'll like Adam?"

Adam's eyes widened as she spoke and Lucy pursed her lips together and nodded. "They didn't like that Pete bloke."

Bella snorted. "Well they better like this boyfriend," she said firmly and Adam suppressed the urge to shout out; what was this girl playing at? They had had one meal, and one date, and even that had not gone well. She was being a bit premature about him being her girlfriend.

While Adam did not dislike Bella and she was certainly a curvy and independent woman, the thought of being a father to two kids who weren't his own, was something not to be undertaken lightly. It wasn't something he wanted to leap into and Bella seemed so

certain.

Lucy looked at Adam who shrugged at her and shook his head but Bella was drinking the wine and did not notice.

"I better be off now," Lucy said and got up, smiling at Adam. He hesitated; Lucy may have looked sixteen or seventeen but she seemed a far more attractive proposition than his date; he wondered if it was really bad form to ask for someone else's phone number while on a date and decided that it probably was.

Bella stumbled to her feet and hugged her niece, thanking her for babysitting in a drunken voice and cursed when her dress slipped. "I better get changed," she muttered and slipped inside her bathroom.

Adam drank his coffee, looking at a picture of two toddlers on the television; how had he managed to get himself into the situation he found himself in? He had to tell Bella that they had no future; he simply did not find her behaviour sexy or was comfortable with her outrageous antics.

His musings was interrupted by Bella as she stumbled out of the bathroom, her bathrobe loosely hanging over her shoulders and she staggered back into the room. Adam glanced at her tattoo covering the right hand side of her slightly distended belly and she glanced down. "Yeah OK, I'm pregnant too," she muttered.

"Pregnant," Adam asked and she held onto the back of a chair. "After what you've drunk tonight?"

Bella sneered. "Oh sound like my mother," she snapped and looked at him putting his coat back on. "You going?"

"Yeah," Adam said. "It's late and well you've 'ad a few too many."

Bella gripped onto the chair and swayed slightly. "I've not," she cried and burped loudly. "Shit, maybe." Adam glanced into her glazed eyes and pursed his lips together.

"Well OK, I'll see ya," he told her and she held out her arms.

"At least hug goodbye," she slurred and Adam watched her stumble across the room. "Thank-oo for a nize-night," she babbled as she came across her room and stopped, burping a few feet from him. She held out her arms and then belched, followed by a giant heave and a flood of vomit left her mouth.

Adam leapt out of the way but he was too late, his trousers were covered by the warm liquid being forcibly expelled from the pregnant woman. "Ahhh ... shit," he cried out loudly and Bella stared at him, mumbling an apology.

Adam shook his head and opened the door, running out of the flat and not stopping until he was at least half-a-mile away from the drunken woman. He could smell the putrid liquid on his legs, the warm vomit decidedly cold in the December air. He tried hard not to think about the puke that was coating his legs but it was hard not to.

A few people turned their noses up at him as he walked and ran down the road towards his house. The light was on when he got home and Natalie shouted when he closed the door. "How was it? What the hell happened to you?" Natalie squealed with a smirk on her face, appearing naked at the door to the lounge.

"What does it look like? I have never, ever been on a worse date before." Natalie suppressed a smile and nodded. "And that includes the double date with Carl."

"Not good then. You had too many?"

"Fuckin' Bella had too many," Adam spat back. "Oh, and you didn't mention the kids, or the

pregnancy.” Adam grunted and stripped off his shoes and trousers, putting them into a discarded plastic bag by the hall. “I need a shower. Oh, and please, no more dates from your friends. They're crazy.”

* * * * *

“She forgiven then?” Sarah asked as she went to leave the room.

Adam looked at Natalie. “Yeah. Sort of. She's promised to make good on the date front.”

Natalie cocked her head. “He is getting a date from me tomorrow at a restaurant.” Sarah murmured with raised eyebrows but Adam didn't notice and Sarah left to retrieve the popcorn from the microwave in the kitchen.

“Not the Chinese restaurant. Hell I ain't going there again, I'd be banned.”

Natalie burst out laughing. “You should have worked her out,” she said with a splutter. “Nice girl, likes her booze, drinks when nervous.”

“Hell, that date cost me ninety quid in the restaurant. A fiver on the taxi, and a new suit.” Natalie sighed at his moaning and crossed her arms.

“Honestly. One date goes wrong and this is what we get.”

“Well. I ain't having anything more to do with dating your friends.”

Natalie sniffed. “It's Lancashire girls,” she told him. “They're feckin' crazy.”

“Yeah, well the Scottish girls aren't much better,” he grumbled. Natalie shook her head and turned the fire on in the front room. Sarah joined them with two big bags of microwave popcorn on a serving tray. “Sweet for you two,” she said passing the bag to Natalie and Adam curled up on the sofa. Natalie swore as she took the bag. “Ahh yeah, they are hot,” she warned needlessly. “They've just come from the microwave.”

Sarah threw herself into the chair, bouncing a little as the springs adjusted to her slim body and she picked up the wine from the floor, topping her glass up. Tabitha, sat on the other chair took a handful of “butter” popcorn and looked at her partner. “Should you be drinking?”

“Yeah, it's fine,” Sarah said dismissively.”

“It's just that you had a bit at Christmas, and a bit more yesterday. And New Year is coming. Give ya body a rest,” Tabitha calmly told Sarah who shrugged off her concern.

“What are we watching?” Natalie asked. “It's not My Summer Of Love again?”

“My Summer of Love?” Adam asked. “Doesn't sound too bad. Does it have, ya know, in it?”

Natalie chortled at her house mate who she was leaning against and snorted. “Sex scenes. The odd one. It's about a lesbian and then an incestuous triangle.”

“It's not,” Sarah cried out. “That's a very short-sighted look at what is an excellent film.”

“I get it,” Adam said with a grin. “It's a film for muff munchers.”

Sarah punched him on the arm. “Will you stop calling me that. I am not a muff muncher.” She turned to Natalie and took a deep breath. “We are watching Cashback. I was recommended it by a guy at school. A guy on teaching training who said I would enjoy it.”

She passed Natalie the box and Adam whistled at the front cover – containing a near-naked woman. “Looks good,” he replied and then cocked his head. “Romantic comedy. Oh man,” he called out and Natalie moved her hand on the other side of her flanks to where Adam's pubis bone was underneath her and pinched the skin.

"Stop moanin'," she told him and watched as Tabitha flicked the television into life with the remote control and the film started. Adam couldn't object to all of it – there were many scenes of nudity and nakedness but the film contained little swearing, no violence and, as he could make out, was a rambling plot that was too subtle for his tastes.

Adam did however, have the naked and curvy Natalie lying on top of him and his hand over her shoulder had rested on her bosom, which she didn't object to and buried her head into his chest as she settled to get comfortable.

Natalie sighed as the film tailed off into the credits. "That was amazing," she cried.

"Were we watching the same film?" Adam asked and Natalie dug her shoulder into his crotch as she got up causing him to exclaim loudly.

"Sorry," she muttered and she looked over at Sarah pouring the last of the wine into her glass. "Does it hurt?"

"Yes, you just put all your piggin' weight on my wedding tackle. Of course, it bloody hurts." Natalie shook her head and looked down at him.

"Do you need me to kiss it better?" Natalie asked with a grin. Adam gulped and nodded.

"Yeah. That'll be cool," he muttered and Natalie reached down to kiss the top of his erect cock. He groaned as she did and Natalie looked at him out of the corner of his eye.

She swirled her tongue around the glans and he pushed himself into the springy mattress as Natalie withdrew to a grunt of annoyance from the young man. "Oi," he cried.

"What?" Natalie asked and he looked at her. "I said a kiss."

"Yeah, but ..." Adam's protestations faded and he looked at her. "It still hurts, it needs more kissing."

"I think he wants a blow-job," Sarah said, stating the obvious.

"Then he should bloody ask for one," Natalie muttered getting up from the sofa and picking up the empty popcorn bag.

"Natalie," Adam asked with a smirk. "Can I have a blow-job?"

Natalie snorted. "Not a fucking chance," she replied. "I don't do blow-jobs. For anyone."

Adam pushed himself into the chair and Sarah giggled. "Do you want to watch that lesbian DVD we got you?" Adam grunted and Sarah staggered to her feet. "Alone?"

Adam watched Sarah drunkenly totter out of the room and Tabitha adjusted herself before hauling her pregnant body to her feet. "She's had too much," she muttered. "Good night, Adam."

"Yeah," Adam responded dreamily. "Night."

* * * * *

"Quit? Already," Adam gave a wry grin. "So Diane fecked off."

"Yeah. But don't worry, I got a new bird to do it. And she has tits like Jordan and she's well sharp. She'll have our regulars wrapped around 'er little finger."

"Yeah Dad, is this a brothel or a garage?"

"Hey, ya get serviced either way," Danny called out from the other side of the rusty van.

"I heard you are very experienced on that." Danny spluttered and Adam looked at his father who had returned to the vehicle. "Anyway, cheers Dad. I'll catch you in the near year."

“Yeah, sure,” he replied, gesturing at his son and glancing down at the bottle of Irish Whiskey he had left behind – a present from a supplier to the workshop supervisor that was not going to be enjoyed by the young man. “Have a good night.”

“Will do,” came the response as he disappeared around the corner and towards the restaurant.

“I thought I was going to be stood up again,” Natalie cooed and he shook his head.

“How could I stand ya up?”

Natalie raised her eyebrows at him and he opened the door for her. “Table for two. Name of Hodson,” he told the waiter and he scanned the page.

“Sorry sir, when did you make the booking.”

He turned to Natalie who was grinning at him. “Try Porter, Natalie Porter,” she told the waiter and turned to Adam. “What you thought I would make it under your name?”

Adam shook his head and took Natalie's coat, hanging it up on the coat-stand before being shown to the small two person table in the corner of the restaurant next to a small open fire.

Natalie grinned as he sat down and she picked up the menu, scanning it for a few moments and then looking at him. “I know what I want.”

“That was quick,” he replied instantly and idly glanced down the A4 card. Natalie didn't answer but got up telling her date that she was going to the toilet and left him alone for a few moments. When she returned, she ordered the biggest steak on the menu along with Adam and he grinned at her. “Does it show that we are carnivores living with vegetarians?”

Natalie laughed and waited for the waiter to leave. She looked at him and gulped. “So, tell me, what's ya life story? I know nothing about you?”

“Yeah and I know nothing about you too, 'cept you work as a manager in a coach company.”

“Assistant Manager,” Natalie corrected him and then raised her eyebrows. “You first.”

Adam hummed. “At school, then college, left to go work in a factory and been there ever since. What else's there to tell. Used to work in my Dad's garage, still do sometimes.”

“What's the thing with Carl.”

“Ahh Carl. Yeah well Carl was in my school year and we're friends. He was, umm, well he was screwing my sister recently.”

“Christ,” Natalie muttered. “Proper little scrote.”

“Nah, she's just lonely at times, and, well, she knows Carl.”

“And you're still friends with him after taking advantage of ya sister?”

Adam snorted. “I reckon Ivy took advantage of him as well ya know. She's no angel.”

Natalie shook her head and looked at him. “What about the other guy, um, Jamie?”

“Jamie was on the same football team as my brother and 'e was injured so spent a lot of time on the sidelines and we'd chat.”

Natalie smirked. “No friends from work?”

“A few, but it stays at work really. A couple of guys left, moved to Australia and ...” Adam trailed off as the waiter arrived with their drinks. “You?”

“I go to massage classes with a girl called Ruby, she works part-time on the coaches as a

cleaner. But other than that, I dain't want to do to too much with 'em as I'm a manager and it blurs responsibility and impairs judgement."

Adam laughed but Natalie was serious and sipped her wine. "What about you? You're Scottish I get that bit."

"There's nothing," she said tersely. "Nothing to tell."

"There must be, you heard my life, what 'bout yours?"

Natalie sniffed and looked up at the ceiling before taking a deep gulp of her wine. "I was born in a town, now infamous," she told him. "Dunblane."

"Dunblane?" Adam asked. "Oh the shooting at the ... er ... primary school. But that was ..."

"When I was eight," Natalie finished for him. "I had just turned eight." Adam put his hands together and rested his chin on his fingers, listening to the girl, who was staring into the condiments. "We saw – him. The monster, he was scary. We heard the shots - in the gym and in the playground. We saw ..."

Her voice trailed off and she rubbed her eyes with the ball of her hand, sighing as she did. "You mean, it was your school."

Natalie nodded and bit the nail on her thumb. "Yeah, it was my school. It was our street and people I know died. Kids died. We saw ... them, I saw a community ... my community torn apart." She took a deep breath and looked up from the salt cellar. "I don't tell many people," she admitted. "It's not something I want to talk about."

"But ..."

"But it's why I hate guns. Really hate guns. Especially in the hands of nutters," she said forcefully. "Cos I've seen what happens. It's devastating and a lot of people's lives were fucked as a result of what that monster did. Dangerous people shouldn't have guns."

Adam waited for Natalie to continue, but she just stared at the salt and remained silent. "But Carl ..."

"He is Adam. Really, he is." She slowly shook her head and looked up at him. "It's pent-up anger, eventually it has to come out. Look at him, you said yourself. He is always got a grudge against someone."

Adam sighed and took Natalie's hands in his own. "I know, but ..."

"No buts, Adam. I've seen what happens. And the guy in Cumbria. And Hungerford. And all sorts. It starts with someone thinking the world is skewed against them. The world is unfair, they are being targeted. And it spirals out of control. You do see that?"

Adam twisted his face and nodded. "Yeah, I can see Carl is a bit excitable at times, ya know." He shrugged and took a sip of his wine before returning his hand to Natalie's. "We all do, but he's harmless, he thinks he is doing right."

"And you agree?" Natalie asked withdrawing her hands.

Adam sighed. "I s'pose I don't. Or maybe I did, and I've just seen things differently now. Five years ago, I might have agreed with him on so many things. Now, we barely agree on the football. But that doesn't make him wrong or me right."

Natalie's eyes narrowed. "He is wrong."

Adam shrugged. "I'm sure there are parts of the country where certain people do get shafted. And I bet sometimes the Muslim or the Black or the whatever community gets a better deal. But, ya know, I just think he goes over the top."

"Well that's the point," Natalie said triumphantly. "He goes over the top. He isn't harmless, he's dangerous." Adam shook his head and Natalie sighed. "I don't want to tell you who you should be friends with, but Carl he's ... he's not right in the head, baby. He needs help."

Adam sniffed. "He's just a bit BNP-like. You are on the other side ... I've seen you with the Guardian."

Natalie shook her head. "It's a far better paper than the shit you read." She waited for the inevitable protestations and cleared her throat. "The Express," Natalie said calmly. "They did a hatchet job on the Dunblane survivors when they got to eighteen. Said they were party animals and posted stuff from social networks. They humiliated people who, when they were mere bairns, watched their classmates murdered in cold blood. So no, I don't like the Express."

"Oh," Adam replied tersely. "Sorry," he muttered and she stroked the back of his hands. "Didn't know."

Natalie looked up and smiled at him. "How did we get onto this," she asked. "It's not something I want to talk about."

"No," Adam muttered and looked at her. "So how's work?"

"Shit," Natalie replied and shrugged. "We got people leaving and they ain't being replaced. How the hell am I supposed to run dozens of coaches if I ain't got the staff? Bloody ridiculous."

Adam sighed and she shrugged. "We could talk about football?"

"I hate football," Natalie replied with a snort. "What do we have in common?"

"Nudism," he told her. "We both practice that."

Natalie smiled. "You only do it under duress."

"Well," Adam muttered. "I have sort of got to like it. It's fun." Natalie spluttered and she looked up at him.

"Only 'cause you get to look at naked women?"

Adam shrugged. "Isn't that, what is called in the trade, a fucking advantage?" Natalie laughed and bit her lip, smiling at her date. "You know what I really want to do," Adam told her. "Is after our meal go up the local. You don't need a ticket if you are getting in 'fore ten. Have a few drinks and see the New Year in with ya."

She sniffed. "Ya tellin' me that getting pissed is the only way we can spend time with each other?"

Adam sighed. "No. But I want to see you pissed," he said smiling at her with a grin. "I think you'll be funny."

* * * * *

Liam squawked as he was pulled back by Sarah and she pushed him up against a brick wall in the pub. "What the 'ell are you doing here?"

"Olivia and me, just a quiet drink," Liam replied and shifted.

"On New Year's Eve," Sarah thundered and crossed her arms, staring at her brother. "How dya get served?"

Liam bit his lip and shifted on the spot. "Well, ya know."

"No, I don't know."

"It's ... well ... I look eighteen."

"You don't," Sarah said and she waited for her brother to protest. "You got ID'd going into a 12A at the cinema last year."

Liam sighed and shrugged. "Well I look eighteen now. It must be Olivia's influence."

Sarah shook her head and hauled him back as he tried to leave. "Tell me."

He sighed. "OK. You are not to tell Mum and Dad."

"I'll be the judge of that," Sarah said firmly and he grunted.

"Oh come on, don't tell me you didn't sneak off for a crafty drink before you hit eighteen?"

Sarah begrudgingly agreed with him and he took out a student identity card. "Giving 'em away at the Uni in Freshers Week. All I needed was a photo which was easy and there you go."

"You dishonest, fraudulent ..." Sarah spat back as she looked at the ID card containing the photograph of her brother claiming he was a first year student at the University. "You ..."

"Clever, huh? It was Olivia's idea."

"Clever? This is fraud," Sarah told him. "You could do time for it, you stupid boy."

"Time? Prison? Don't be ridiculous," Liam muttered and snatched the card back.

"You two, go home," Sarah told him and Liam shook his head.

"What's up honey-bun," Liam's beau cried as she came up to him. "Oh hello Sarah, how's work?"

"You two shouldn't be here – you are sixteen and you are seventeen," she replied, and pointed to them both in turn. "Go home before I tell the publican and he chucks you out."

"Oh Sarah," Liam snapped, annoyed at his sister and scowling. "Just let us have a few."

Sarah shook her head. "Can't you do what normal sixteen year olds do?"

"What, get drunk in the park and graffiti on the play equipment?" Olivia quipped. "We just came in for a couple of drinks, enjoy the live band and go to my place after midnight."

"Midnight?"

"Yeah, my Mum's out and my Dad's in London. His teenage mistress is at home from College," she snapped.

"Yeah, and at least if we stay we are drinking responsibly," Liam added. "Cause the barman ain't gonna like it if we get too pissed, is he?"

Sarah shook her head and sighed; as much as it pained her, her brother was right. If they stayed then she could keep an eye on them, but there was something about her brother that didn't look right. He looked fidgety and anxious.

"No," she said. "Go home."

Olivia sighed. "OK, come on then," she muttered to Liam. "I'll get the guys from dancing and football 'round," she said looking at Sarah. "We've got plenty of booze in the cupboard. We can have a drunken orgy."

Sarah shook her head and watched as her brother left, holding hands, with his girlfriend and idled off down the road towards her house. She turned back and went to the bar. "Two triples," she ordered, passing a twenty-pound note to the barmaid. "Vodka with a dash of Coke."

Sarah went and sat back in the chair with her friends. "I'm gonna kill my brother one day,"

she muttered and downed the first one without even pausing for breath.

Chapter XI

"I can't believe you talked me into this," Natalie cried as she downed a single vodka shot. "I could've been at home, being middle-aged. I'm 23 not 18."

Adam laughed and took his vodka downing it and turning his shot glass upside down. "What dya fancy next?"

Natalie looked up and down her set of glasses and picked the blended whisky which Adam matched from his set, they clinked it together and downed them.

Natalie coughed, looking at him and tilting her head back up towards the ceiling. "Ah fuck," she cried.

"Tequila," Adam suggested pointing to the end shot in his row of five drinks and Natalie shook her head.

"Give me minute," she begged and took deep breaths, tapping the table.

Adam smirked. "You know the rules," he teased. Natalie sighed and grunted picking the tequila and downing it. They proceeded to drink all five of the spirits followed by a jug of cocktail and Natalie was alternating between spinning around, falling into people and chatting loudly with Adam.

They spilled out of the pub at two in the morning, Natalie falling into the road, and Adam had to grab her. She smiled at him, knocking her head to one side. "You saved me," she shouted playfully and gripped Adam's hand, zigzagging down the road towards their house.

"Your drunk," Adam told the inebriated girl and Natalie shook her head.

"I'm not," she started and then burped. "OK, 'es I am." She giggled and jumped over a puddle, landing in it and soaking the bottom of her trousers.

"You are so pissed," Adam said with a grin. "You are gonna have such a hangover tomorrow."

Natalie tutted in annoyance and pulled Adam around a corner into their road. "This way silly," she tutted and Adam shook his head.

"Was going to cross," he told her and Natalie skipped into the side street to reach the other pavement. "Has anyone ever told you that you are crazy?" he told her and Natalie nodded, pulling out keys and throwing them up the air. They missed the drain by inches and Adam shook his head, allowing the drunken girl to unlock the front door and fall into the house.

"Get your clothes off," she told him before she had even closed the door and Adam smiled, kicking off his trainers.

"Not the first drunken girl to have told me that," he teased and Natalie looked at him, unbuttoning his shirt. "Easy tiger," he muttered but Natalie shook her head and leant in to kiss him, pushing him back against the wall. She was panting, her hands, frantically playing with his belt as their tongues explored each other's mouth and she felt Adam's cold hands reach the waistband of her jeans, sliding them down with her underwear caught inside his thumbs.

"Fuck this," she muttered and kicked off her jeans, dragging the naked man up the stairs by the hand.

"Nat," he muttered, but there was no response from the curvy Scottish girl as she unlocked her bedroom door and threw off her top, followed by her bra.

Adam hesitated and she kissed him again, allowing his hands to wander over her flanks and her smooth rear. She reached around to touch his arse, pulling him towards her and then slipped her hand between them to stroke his cock. He sighed, and she broke the kiss, looking into his eyes with a smile.

“Come here,” she breathed passionately, throwing him onto her double bed with purple bedding and climbed on top of him, eagerly wrapping her lips around his member, and presenting her moist opening to Adam. Natalie purred as his lips touched hers, his tongue sliding down her slickness. Natalie groaned in heavenly appreciation and ran her tongue along the tip of Adam's glans.

He grunted, his body tensing up and she slid a finger into her mouth and then traced the wet digit down his cock and past his testicles, pressing against his perineum. She felt Adam's legs tense and quiver as her mouth sucked on the head of his cock, swishing the very tip with her tongue and massaging the glans with her lips.

He inhaled sharply as her mouth danced over his sensitive organ and grunted, but Natalie pressed her own loins back into his face, demanding that he resume his own oral duties. Adam flicked her clitoris with his tongue, feeling the Scottish girl's thighs quiver against his ears, and her pressing his face into her mattress.

He gasped for air, sucking in her musky scent and slid his tongue along her crevice, poking at her hole before sucking on her pearl again.

She grunted, moving her hair out of the way as she slid down his shaft with her mouth, rolling her tongue around his manhood as she slid up and down. She could feel an intense build up of excitement in her loins, crying out as Adam lapped at her button.

She squealed, her muscles shaking and her body trembling as it neared release. She gasped, took a deep breath and cried out, the sounds of orgasm echoing in the room.

She slouched forward, Adam's erect cock lying underneath her chin, as she bucked and rocked back, forcing Adam's tongue further into her hole, and across her perineum.

She gasped in delight as his tongue flicked her bud, gripping the duvet and nasally grunting into Adam's thighs. “Ah shit, ahh yeah, ahh ...”

She trailed off, her voice being replaced by higher pitched grunting and squealing as Adam flicked her anus and she drove her loins into his face, so his tongue went back to her clitoris. Adam wrapped his arms around her thighs and steadied her frantic motions before sucking on her pearl.

He moved his hands and took her breasts in his hands, squeezing them gently and rubbing her nipple between his thumb and forefinger. Natalie exploded into passionate, animal-like cries, banging the bed in lust and gripping the head of her partner between the thighs. “Ahhh shit,” she yelled and tensed her entire body, as she held her breath; the powerful climax cascading through her body.

She squealed loudly, gasping for air and slouched forward, resting for a moment. She put her hand between her legs to stop Adam lavishing more attention on her hypersensitive genitals and took deep breaths.

Adam waited for her to turn around and she kneeled on the bed, looking around to see him. “Ya got a condom?”

Adam nodded and reached for his keys but Natalie shook her head and reached into her drawer, selecting a brightly coloured packet and ripped it open, twisting her body so she could press the teat and slide it down Adam's appendage. He looked into her eyes, and she smiled at him, blowing him a kiss, before twisting her body back into the “doggy” position and guiding Adam into her waiting orifice.

Adam sighed. "Oh Nat," he cried as he gently pushed in, causing her to gasp. She tilted her body downwards and groaned loudly as Adam's gentle thrusting rubbed alongside her vaginal wall. Natalie slid a hand along the bed and touched her clitoris, rubbing it in circles as Adam began to build up a rhythm, taking long, drawn out strokes into the Scottish girl and gripping the top of her thighs to leverage his cock deep into her.

Natalie was hollering and crying out, her body being pounded by Adam, gleefully ramming his sheathed cock into her. Natalie was seeing stars, her body delirious with the first sex she had had for over two months and panted desperately as her breathing became ragged.

She felt Adam's fingers grip on the top of her thighs and his cock twitch inside of her, filling the condom and he groaned loudly as his thrusting slowed to a gentle pace. Natalie closed her eyes, savouring the last sparks of lustful energy from her loins and sighed in satisfaction.

They remained attached for a few moments until Natalie slid forward and grabbed some tissues, kissing the mouth of her partner and rubbing his chest hair. She put the tissues in his hand giggling and blew him a kiss. She got down from the bed and walked over to the door.

"Where you going?" Adam asked.

"Toilet," she replied with a smirk and returned a few moments later to see the used condom in her bin and Adam hesitating. "Get into bed," she told him firmly and opened the duvet for him to climb in and curled her hand over his body.

"Natalie," he whispered.

"What?"

"That was great," he told her. "You were great."

Natalie giggled and squeezed Adam a bit tighter, before gently drifting off to sleep.

It took the light streaming in through the crack in her curtains to wake her, and she rubbed his eyes, looking over at her partner in her bed. "Oh shit," she cried as she squeezed the furrowed brow on her forehead.

Adam stirred and opened his eyes, squawking as he rubbed his eyes. "Ahh shit," he mumbled. "Did we, ya know?"

Natalie looked over at the door and squinted as her eyes adjusted to the pathetic January light that streamed through the gap in her curtains. She focused around the bin and saw a condom draped over the side of the plastic bucket. She threw her head back onto the pillow and closed her eyes. "Fuck. We did."

Adam groaned as he moved his legs and then stretched his muscles. "Christ," he muttered and put his hands over his warm partner. "Well I think it was nice."

Natalie removed his hand from her waist and brushed against his erect cock. He sighed and she pulled the covers from her body and stumbled out of her bed, grabbing hold of an abandoned T-Shirt and scrambling to her feet. Adam sighed and pushed himself into the bed.

Natalie gripped hold of the banister rail as she went down the stairs to use the toilet and then fell into the lounge at the bottom of the stairs. "Sarah's pissed as well," Tabitha muttered as Natalie threw herself into the sofa.

"I'she?" Natalie mumbled. "Twas New Year."

Tabitha snarled and got up, offering the hungover Scottish girl a glass of water which was

gratefully accepted. Tabitha returned from the kitchen with two tablets and a pint of water which Natalie gratefully took. "You heard us?" Natalie asked and Tabitha smiled. "Was blind drunk," the hungover girl muttered as she swallowed the two tablets.

"What about the rest of your senses?" Tabitha asked with a grin and Natalie groaned rubbing her eyes.

"Yeah, I know. You know I get horny when I get smashed."

Tabitha snorted. "So does Sarah. But she can't be getting that pissed when she is a mother." Tabitha rubbed her belly and looked at Natalie. "We are pregnant and she forgets that."

Natalie pursed her lips together and nodded. "Maybe. Twas New Year though."

Tabitha sighed. "Well I was tee-total all night," she told her. "I was at my friend's house and I was fine. She's just being irresponsible. It has to stop."

Natalie rubbed her eyes as she sat sipping the water. "I feel so shit. I have so fucked things up. I can't believe what I did last night."

"With Adam?"

Natalie nodded. "I don't want to be sleeping with him," she admitted. "It will just fuck everything up."

* * * * *

"This 'as to stop," Tabitha shouted at her partner. "You can't keep getting pissed every night. We are having a baby."

Sarah sighed as she woke. "Oh Tabs, please, stop it."

Tabitha put a glass of water down on her bedside table and shook her head. "I mean it." Sarah groaned as she sat up and rubbed her forehead. "Hangover?"

Sarah blinked and nodded. "A bit."

"I ain't bringing a baby up in a house with a drunk," Tabitha spat and crossed her arms over her breasts. "And to come in at 3am and begging for sex."

Sarah grunted and took a sip of the ice-cold water. "What?" She murmured and Tabitha wiped her eyes.

"You came into my room at 3am in the morning and started mouthing off. 'You're horny, you want it.' Woke me up, woke the baby up. How selfish can you be?"

Sarah sniffed and took another gulp of the water; her throat was like sandpaper. "Ahh ... sorry."

Tabitha sat down on the bed and looked at her partner. "What happened?"

Sarah shrugged. "It was New Year," Sarah muttered. "And I just had a few too many."

Tabitha looked at the dirty clothes on the floor, and shook her head. "Vomit stains?"

"Ahh yeah, well when I hit the fresh air, it just all came up," she explained, still speaking in a quiet, croaky voice.

"Sarah, you have responsibilities now. Please promise me you ain't gonna be getting pissed every night when we have the baby," the black girl implored of her partner. "You know I hate alcohol."

Sarah rubbed her eyes. "I told ya. I ain't gonna be like ya father. I like a few but I don't get drunk every night." Tabitha sniffed and held Sarah's hand. "And I have never hit you," she added and Tabitha nodded.

Tabitha ran her hands through Sarah's hair. "Yeah, but don't forget your new responsibilities."

Sarah sighed. "And what about yours," she said quickly and closed her eyes as Tabitha's eyes sparkled.

"What about mine?"

"Nothing," Sarah murmured.

"No, spit it out."

Sarah took a deep breath. "What about the father? He has a right to know."

There was a deathly silence and Tabitha shook her head. "We agreed," she cried out and held Sarah's hand tightly. "We agreed not to tell him."

"Well I think we should," Sarah admitted and then winced as she felt her forehead. "I really think we should."

Tabitha looked down at her swollen belly and wiped a tear from her cheek. "No. I dain't want anyone involved," she said firmly and sat back against the wall. "He might get the authorities involved and I'm not going through Social Services again. Not after what my Ma went through."

Sarah took another gulp of water. "Right, if that's what you want," Sarah quietly mumbled. "But I think you are wrong." Tabitha didn't wait to hear anything else and slammed the door behind her.

* * * * *

"I get it," Adam muttered with an exasperated tone.

"Well as long as you do," Natalie replied firmly. "I mean I like you. A bit. Well quite a bit now you're not being a total prick but I ain't wanting a serious relationship, I said that."

"I didn't say I wanted a serious relationship," he snapped and exhaled deeply as he shook his head. "I get it. I wasn't asking you out, I just asking if you wanted to go for lunch."

"Yeah, and I ain't wanting to sleep with you."

"I didn't say you did."

"Yeah 'cause it was a silly mistake."

"You said pleasurable aberration earlier," Adam teased and watch Natalie's face drop. "It doesn't matter, I'm sure I ain't your first one night stand, and I won't be ya last. I'm not gonna fall deeply in love with ya over one night."

Natalie scowled at Adam as his attempts to placate her made tactless suggestions.

"Good," she added tersely. "'Cause I dain't sleep with people I live with."

Adam snorted. "You'd make a shit wife then," he joked and rubbed his hands together. "Ya fancy that lunch then, now we're cool."

The naked Natalie shook her head. "Sorry, I can't. I still feel shit, and to be honest, I can't afford it." Adam looked at her and she shrugged. "I've just had Christmas and last night. I'm not made of money."

"On me?"

Natalie gulped. "No," she said firmly. "Not after last night. I ain't havin' ya takin' me out after last night."

"Why?"

"Because, no," Natalie snapped and Adam shrugged.

"OK, I'll go out on my bike then," he told her sharply and snatched at his empty cup on the side. Sarah watched as Adam strode out of the room and turned to her Scottish friend, rubbing her forehead.

"Not your type?"

Natalie took a deep breath and exhaled. "Oh I don't know. I don't think so. Not with friends like Carl," she said, leaning back.

Sarah snorted, looking up from her laptop. "Whatever he says, I think he likes ya."

"Feckin' hope not. Why da say that?"

"Something he said at Christmas," Sarah told her. "He was speaking about you to his family on Christmas Day."

"Yeah, that proves nothing," Natalie replied and Sarah shrugged.

"If ya say so."

* * * * *

Sarah knocked stoutly on the bedroom door of Natalie and shouted through it. "Uncle Si is coming round," she cried and scooted off downstairs.

Adam grunted, vaguely overhearing the excited shrill of his house mate and stretched out in his bed, yawning. It was late in the morning, but it was still a holiday and he no intention of using up his last day of holiday in getting up early.

He turned over again and buried his face into his pillow but it was no good, he was awake and nothing he could do could stop his body from feeling not tired enough to sleep.

Adam could feel his morning erection pressing against the firm mattress and adjusted his body to get more comfortable but he sighed and got out of bed; he needed a wee anyway.

He grabbed the book on the side, an erotic thriller Sarah had leant him and opened his bedroom door, walking down the stairs to the bathroom. Adam shut the door and leant against the cool tiled wall. "Dead puppies, dead puppies, dead puppies, dead puppies," he muttered and looked at his erection. "Ah come on! What do you want from me? Ann Widdecombe naked on a cold day." He closed his eyes and tried to visualise it before eventually giving up and lying "Superman" across the white toilet, his hands holding onto the pink wall and his feet lying on the edge of the bath.

"I fuckin' hate you at times," Adam moaned to his penis as he opened the bathroom door and sauntered downstairs.

"Adam," a female voice called from the lounge. "D'ya hear me earlier?"

Adam opened the door and stepped in. "Yeah, I 'eard ya, it's eleven o' clock. Who ..."

Adam was interrupted by a loud shriek from his right and he turned to see a middle-aged couple, along with a little girl and a clothed Sarah. They were all wearing clothes. He swore and his hands shot to his crotch. "Ahh, sorry."

The girl cocked her head to look at the cover of the book. "Mummy, why is his willy standing up?" The young girl asked and Adam went red.

"I'll go get dressed," he muttered and shut the door.

"Sorry, he's a nudist," Sarah explained as Adam took deep breaths. "We're used to him but sometimes he forgets when we have guests 'round. I'll just go check he's OK."

Sarah opened the door and cocked her head to one side, looking at the naked man,

holding his head in his hands. "Wish you'd have warned me," he hissed and Sarah burst into silent laughter.

"Oh, Adam, you've just scared the religious branch of the family," she whispered. "And I did warn you. But what did you think of covering yourself with that." She pointed at the book and Adam glanced at the cover – a naked woman holding a whip – and she giggled. "And what makes you think I wanted to see you in all your glory?"

Adam looked down at his, now deflated, manhood and sighed. "Could have done with you five minutes ago," he said wistfully and grabbed his dressing gown. "I'm going out on my bike."

Adam hurried up the stairs and quickly got dressed in his motorcycle leathers, leaving the madhouse he called home behind for a few hours and drove up to Windermere.

The Lake District was shut; it was the close season, but Adam loved sitting by the lake and looking out over the peaceful water, watching the wildlife and the odd boat.

It was cold, and he had a journey of an hour to get back – with ice-cold air being blown in his face as his bike hit 80mph on the motorway, but there was a sense of adventure and freedom, as well as a big adrenaline rush, every time he used his bike. It was the ultimate escapism: genuine escape from his troubles.

It was tea-time before Adam arrived back at the house and he tentatively opened the back door. Sarah coughed from behind the kitchen worktops and Adam jumped. "Just filling up the washer," she told him. "And yes they have gone."

"Ahh right, yes," Adam muttered and she grabbed her cup of tea. "You being naked and all."

"Yes, and they have come from my parents, stayed the night there on their way back to Berwick."

"Right."

"So they ain't gonna tell my parents and it ain't gonna get back to yours."

"Oh, wasn't bothered if ... well you know."

Sarah shook her head and sauntered into the lounge as Adam took off his motorcycle boots. "Look Sarah, I'm sorry," Adam muttered as he caught up with her in the living room. "I didn't mean to, I didn't know."

Sarah looked at Natalie with a smirk. "He's sorry, frightening my poor relatives," she teased. "Well you can say your sorry," Sarah replied with a cheeky look upon her face. "By doing some marking for me."

"Marking?" Adam asked and Sarah sat down in "her" chair.

"Yeah," Sarah muttered. "Well I set the homework to be in before Christmas and they did it all. I reckon I should have it marked and it is new term tomorrow."

"And you haven't done it?" Adam enquired and Natalie looked round at her.

"No. So I was thinking Nat can you do the science, Adam the Maths and I'll do the English. They are ..."

"Why can't I do the Maths?" Natalie asked and Sarah looked at her incredulously.

"If you really want to," Sarah replied. "But I thought that ..."

"I got a First in my Maths degree," Natalie finished for her. "I guess that should count for something."

"Oh yeah," Sarah cried. "I sort of forgot that."

Natalie picked up a stack of papers and Sarah passed her a “marking scheme,” which was more the correct answers scribbled on the back of a letter from her bank. “And after this we can watch the film?”

“Yeah. It's all about a man who goes around flashing himself,” Sarah said peering at a DVD box. “Oh, and his name is Adam Hodson. And would you believe it, it's a documentary.”

* * * * *

“Watch shit?” Adam asked incredulously. “You don't know the fucking 'alf of it. Soaps 'alf the night, never get to go on my chuffin' games. And the films. We had St Trinians on the other night.”

“I've seen that,” James muttered. “Not too bad, but girls in school uniforms, very nice.”

Adam and Carl glared at him. “Just when did you become a woman?” Carl spat. “Liking St Trinians? You'll be liking Dirty Dancing or shit like that soon.”

Adam passed his two friends a bottle of beer each in the small lounge and walked over to the bookshelf. “I have one here that they made me watch on Christmas Day, where is it?”

James took a huge swig of the beer and picked up a crisp from the side. “What is it?”

“Cashback,” Adam said proudly and passed Carl a DVD case with a naked woman on the front.

“Doesn't look too bad,” Jamie muttered and Adam glared at him.

“It's essentially a love story with nudity,” Adam told them. “About a guy who can stop time and it's fuckin' student shit. No guns, no weapons. Nothing. Bit of nudity and that's it.”

Carl passed it to James who read the back. “It doesn't sound too bad,” he replied and Adam snatched it from him and opened the box.

“It's empty. They've left it in,” he muttered and fired up the DVD player. “I'm just going for a slash, I'll show you five minutes of it 'fore the footy. It's slushy as fuck,” Adam moaned and left the room to pass some of his four bottles of export lager.

He was expecting to see the title screen or the anti-piracy labels when he returned but saw Carl and James glued to the screen, staring intently at the television. “What the ... What's this?”

“It's what you put on,” James replied and Adam squinted. There was a double bed in the middle of a bedroom with a creased duvet and Adam shook his head. “It's just come on, but it's home made or amateur porn I reckon,” James added rhetorically.

“Well, I don't know,” Adam told them and went to turn it off to howls of protest from his guests. He sighed, grabbed his beer; he didn't recognise the room on the video and guessed one of his house-mates had been watching it and forgot to eject it.

He wondered who it was: all three of them could be porn lovers at heart but he didn't know who he thought it was most likely to be. “Is anything gonna happen?” James moaned and Adam shook his attention back to the screen and the wobbly camera.

A shadow emerged onto the screen and the naked legs of a large black woman appeared walking towards the bed.

“It's Tabitha,” Adam cried and looked at Carl smiling. “It's Tabitha ... and fuckin' hell. Sarah.”

“What the fuck 'as the bitch got 'tween her legs?”

“It's a strap-on,” Carl told her. “It's what dykes use.” He turned to Adam. “You dain't tell me

you were shackled up with some dykes.”

Adam took a deep breath and sighed. “Yeah, well, I dain't think ya wanted to know.”

“Fuck,” James cried as the naked Sarah kissed Tabitha – who was clearly pregnant but with her belly considerably less pronounced than it was currently. She moved down the black girl, kissing her neck and then taking the engorged nipples between her lips and sucking gently.

“Is she gonna fuck that nigger or what?” Carl cried and told Adam to “fast forward to the heavy shit.”

Adam shook his head; he was having issues with his friends watching the home made lesbian pornography of two of his house mates, and while he didn't put it on deliberately the continued broadcast of it would be seen as an intrusion by the two girls concerned.

“I'm not sure we should be watching this,” Adam told them and Carl scoffed.

“Shut fuck up. I wanna see that stuck up cow get shafted by that thing.”

Adam shook his head. “I don't think that ...”

“No you fuckin' don't do you?” Carl spat aggressively. “Those bitches are out and they left the DVD out for us to watch. Why else do you fuckin' think that it's been left in the player? Those whores want us to watch.”

“And look at the size of that thing?” James muttered as the rubber dong bounced around underneath Sarah as she moved her hips sucking on the nipple of her pregnant lover.

Adam took a gulp of his beer; no matter what Carl said there was no way that the girls had planned for them to watch their private videos and the fact that it had been left out was purely an oversight on the part of Sarah or Tabitha: they would surely not have consented to him showing their most private DVDs to Carl and James. “Shall we put the game on?”

“Shut up,” Carl barked and slipped his hand inside his trousers. Adam closed his eyes, he didn't want to see that. He glanced at James breathing labouredly and awkwardly and then watched back on the screen; Sarah was between the legs of her lesbian lover and Tabitha was groaning in an exaggerated manner.

Carl was openly playing with himself and Adam felt a stiffening of his member although had no inclination to masturbate in front of his two friends; he knew that they would happily do so but he was more restrained.

The loud grunting and groaning of Tabitha echoed around the small room as Sarah gleefully sucked and probed Tabitha's loins with her tongue before looking up and kissing her lover's nipples.

Sarah guided the rubber phallus into Tabitha and flicked on a switch. A low buzzing became audible and James snorted. “Fuckin' vibrator in there.”

Carl gasped, his hand a blur over his cock and he grunted. “Go on, fuck that lazy nigger. Fuck her, fuck her dirty slut ass,” he cried and then sighed, his cum spilling out into the palm of his hand.

Adam froze. “Can we put the game on now?” He asked, not sure when the girls would be home and saw in horror as the lounge door opened. Sarah took a second to take in the scene and he face dropped immediately.

“You fuckin' bastard,” Sarah cried the moment she realised and saw what was playing on the screen. She glanced over to the Carl and James wiping their cocks in their hands with tissue and looked at Adam. “So this is what you planned to do? That's private.”

“Hey love ...” Carl cried out with a smile on his face. “Ya left it out for us to watch.”

"I did not," Sarah yelled and flicked the television off. "It is private."

"I didn't want to put it on," Adam told her and she crossed her arms, glaring at him. "It was in the player."

"What's up?" Tabitha asked as she came into the room.

"These three were jerking off to our home made videos." Tabitha's eyes widened and Adam protested; he had not touched his cock and he had not been "jerking off."

"You showed them our videos?" Tabitha asked, wiping her eyes. "Our private videos?" She shook her head and looked into the guilty face of Adam.

"Hey, listen peaches," Carl cried. "Ya left the video out, but course we gonna watch you getting fucked by that cock. Why d'ya leave it awt if you dain't want us to see it?"

"We didn't," Sarah cried. "I must have forgotten to put it away."

"Ahh well ... you dain't look too bad, love. Of course ya need to feel what a real man is like. Not a fake cock from your dyke-friend here." He smiled at Sarah and she looked at him disdainfully. "I can go again, cure you off your ..."

Adam closed his eyes and waited but Tabitha sniffed and ran out of the room. Sarah glared at him. "You got ten seconds to get these cunts out of my house before I get the bread knife," she warned Adam.

"Yeah love, but ..."

"Nine seconds," Sarah barked over the top of them and crossed her arms.

"Adam, tell the bitch we dain't need to go."

"Actually, Carl ..." Adam started and Carl shook his head.

"Ya fuckin' pussy whipped," he cried and Carl hiked his trousers up.

"Seven."

"Shut the fuck up," Carl barked and Sarah left the room, returning with a four inch blade. James and Carl departed quickly and Sarah slammed the front door, turning to face Adam.

"I didn't want to show them," he started and Sarah shook her head holding the knife out. "They reckoned you had left it there to tease us. And they wanted to see it"

"I don't care," Sarah barked. "You just have to say 'no' them."

Adam shook his head. "You don't say no to Carl," he replied, his eyes fixed on the blade. "Now can you put that down please?"

Sarah threw the weapon onto the shoe rack and ran up the stairs to comfort Tabitha.

Chapter XII

“Get out of my room,” the tall girl screamed. “Get out and don't come back.”

“Ivy, come on girl. Let's just talk 'bout it.”

“You shafted that slut. And you got her pregnant. Where's my baby?”

“I've tried, hun, you know I have. But maybe ya just barren.”

“Barren,” Ivy screeched and threw the nearest object to hand – his can of deodorant which bounced off his head. “Get out of my room, get out of this house.”

“Oww,” he cried. “Baby, lets talk. 'Cause I was thinking. If ya can't get knocked up and Evie can, then why don't we find a flat, settle down together, all three of us, well four of us.”

Ivy fizzed and she took a deep breath, picking up a discarded cup and hauling it towards him. “Settle down, you stupid cunt,” she screamed at her ex-partner, now drenched in cold tea. “Get out.”

“But ...”

“Get out,” she yelled and threw a few clothes towards him that he frantically gathered and ran down the stairs as she launched two shoes and a book his way. He slammed the door on the way out of the house and she collapsed next to her door, crying profusely.

Why did her partner need to do that to her?

* * * * *

Sarah pushed past Adam ignoring him as he reached for the cereal. “I'm sorry,” he said. “I didn't know what was in there. If you go leaving your stuff in the player then it might get watched,” he said.

Sarah shook her head and reached out slapping him across the face. “How could you? Show our private, intimate videos to your friends. It's bad enough you watching them,” she muttered and Adam rubbed his face.

“Don't need to hit me,” he shouted and picked up the milk splashing some on the worktop as he filled his breakfast bowl. “I said, I'm sorry, OK?”

“No,” Sarah screeched. “Not OK.” Adam shook his head and opened the door to the dining room and sat at the table. “You were playing with yourselves; it was disgusting.”

Adam ignored her, and shovelled a spoonful of cereal into his mouth as Tabitha took her breakfast and got up from the table. “Not staying in here with him.”

“No, me neither,” Natalie said, looking at Adam in the eye and shaking her head.

“Look, I said I am sorry. We had a couple of beers, Carl put it on, we thought you might have left it there to tempt us. I mean, you lot are exhibitionists, aren't you?”

Tabitha sneered and closed her eyes. “Is he for real?”

“Yes, you wander around with nothing on, so what am I to think.”

Natalie leant over the chair and waved her finger towards her ex-lover. “Nudism isn't a sexual thing. I fuckin' told you that before. Just 'cause we like to be liberated doesn't make us porn stars.”

Adam sniffed and Sarah shook her head. “Come on Tabs, let's go out.”

Adam threw his hands up in the air but all three of the girls left him alone. “Where we going?” Tabitha asked and Natalie looked at them.

"I gotta go to work," she told them. "I got one cleaner off, one receptionist and ... ahhh."

"You'll be driving them next," Sarah teased with a grin and watched as the curvaceous girl wandered up the stairs. "You OK?"

Natalie nodded, rubbing her belly and sighed. "Can we go to the park? It's just down the road and I want some fresh air."

Sarah nodded and sighed. "Yeah, come on," she said and took her lover's hand. "Get dressed and we can feed the ducks."

Tabitha smiled and quickly threw some clothes on before getting to Sarah's car and driving across town to the small park on the edge of the town in the shadow of the imposing memorial.

Sarah shivered as she ran around her parked car and opened the door for her partner who laughed at her. "Morning m'lady," Sarah said with a grin. "The park, as requested." Tabitha gripped the side of the car with both hands and dragged herself up.

"I am not an invalid," Tabitha moaned as Sarah went to help her.

"Yeah, just pregnant."

Sarah pulled the bread from the back seat and shut the door, locking it with her key and holding out her hand for Tabitha to take. "This is what it should be like," Tabitha said with a grin. "Just the two of us in the park."

"Yeah, we've argued a bit recently," Sarah admitted and swung her arm, and that of her partner. "But I still love you."

Tabitha smiled and then rubbed her eyes. "You'll make me cry," she muttered. "Being sappy like that. It's the hormones." Sarah reached the small pond and sat down on the bench, looking at her partner. "Can we have the bread?"

Sarah put it in Tabitha's lap, and then glanced around her; it was quiet, and she reached over and pulled Tabitha towards her. Tabitha squealed as she did but their mouths met and Sarah pushed her tongue into her partner.

Tabitha's hands wandered over the pert body of Sarah and she wrapped her arms around her. "Sarah," she gently chastised. "What's got over you."

"Nothing," Sarah replied coyly. "But I want to show that I love you," she whispered and wrapped her hands around her busty partner's body. "Cause I do."

* * * * *

"There's an Englishman, a Froggy, a Taffy and a Nigger in a hot air balloon," Carl started and took a swig of his beer. "And it's losing height so the Froggy chucks over some wine and says, 'we have loads of wine in France, I don't need it.' So the Taffy chucks over some sheep and says 'we have fuck loads of 'em in Wales, don't need them.' But they are still going down so the Englishman picks up the nigger and says 'we have loads of those fuckers in England.'"

Tabitha, wrapped in a dressing gown, swung on the door frame scowling at Carl and looked at Adam. "Are you staying in?" She asked tersely and Adam looked at Carl who took another swig.

"And what if we are? It's his fucking house too."

Tabitha scowled and shook her head. "No, we are off to the pub," Adam replied.

"No, straight up. It's ya house too. Bitch can't tell ya what to do." Tabitha winced as Carl spoke and touched her belly.

"You OK?" Adam asked and she nodded.

"Fine," she muttered. "Be better when the filth is out of my house."

"Filth?" Carl cried, finishing his can of beer. "I proper English love. It's you who's filth. And I seen you in video dyking it up. It's sick."

Adam groaned. "Come on Carl, let's go to the pub."

"Nah, I ain't having thicklips 'ere tellin' me what to do." He walked up to her, his arms outstretched looking into her face.

"Carl," Adam barked but Tabitha shook her head. "Leave her alone."

"Yah gonna hit a pregnant woman? Well go on then."

"No, Carl is not going to hit anyone, are you Carl?" Adam pleaded and grabbed his shoes. "Now let's leave Tabitha in peace and get to the pub." Carl stared at Tabitha and shook his head as Adam pushed him into the hallway.

"Will you learn to calm down?" Adam pleaded as Carl grunted and they left for the pub.

"Tab really ain't all that bad."

"Yah fuckin' pussy-whipped," came the inevitable response.

* * * * *

Natalie strode to the front door and wrapped her body in a dressing gown before opening it. She had not done so the previous day and scared a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses, which on reflection had not been such a bad thing but out of habit she was used to wrapping herself up until she knew the visitor was comfortable with nudism.

She was greeted by the sight of a crying girl – no more than 20 – and stared intently at her. "Yes?"

"Does Adam live here?"

"Errr ... yes, but he's gone out."

"I need to see him."

Natalie wrapped the dressing gown around her tighter. "He's out," she said tersely. "And you are?" Natalie took a deep breath expecting to hear how this girl had had relations with her house mate when the girl sniffed and coughed.

"Ivy."

Natalie paused and thought. "Oh, his sister. Come in, but he will be awhile."

The girl sniffed and looked at Natalie as she moved out of the way to allow her to pass.

"You Natalie?"

Natalie nodded. "Why, he been mouthing off 'bout me?"

Ivy shook her head. "No. No he was speakin' 'bout you at Christmas, said you were very nice," Ivy said with a coy look. "I think he likes you."

Natalie hesitated, Sarah and Tabitha were in the front room and she knocked on the door.

"Vistors," she called out but Ivy didn't realise and opened the door to the lounge.

"Oh sorry," she cried when she saw the naked Sarah and Tabitha scramble, and Natalie quickly closed the door.

"Didn't Adam mention it?" Natalie asked and Ivy shook her head.

"No."

"We are nudists. Well Adam is as well while is here, but we are annoyed with him so he

has stormed off to the pub. Tea?"

Natalie guided Ivy to the kitchen and flicked the switch on the kettle. "What's he done?"

"He showed private sex videos that we'd made to his friends," Natalie said without emotion.

"Oh my God, my brother's been in a sex video. The dirty rat."

Natalie sighed. "No, videos that Sarah and Tab made, but he wasn't. He found them and showed them to his friends."

"Ewwww," Ivy cried and watched Natalie pour water into four cups. "That's pretty nasty."

"Yeah, I know. Tell me about it. So what do you need him for?"

Ivy took a deep breath and thanked Natalie as she passed her a cup of tea. "Brad and I, we split up and I've 'ad a row with my Dad and I just wanted some advice, I guess."

Natalie guided Ivy to the dining room and told her to make herself comfortable while she dropped off two cups of tea in the lounge and returned to see Ivy sitting down on a chair. "That OK?" Natalie asked and Ivy nodded.

"I'm not interrupting anything am I?"

Natalie choked as she took a sip of the hot tea. "Nah, it's OK."

"Ya sure?"

"Fine," Natalie said with a smirk. "So why did you split up with your boyfriend?"

"He was cheating on me," Ivy replied. "I mean, I always knew he was cheating on me, but I could live with it as he said he loved me, but he got this girl pregnant."

Natalie hesitated for a moment. "Not a black girl called Tabitha?"

Ivy shook her head. "No, a French girl called Evie at the University. Well he got her pregnant, and we'd been trying for a bab-by and it ain't been happening for us." Natalie took a slurp of her drink and watched the teenager wipe her eyes. "And then he says we can get a place of our own and this Evie can move in, be like a threesome."

"Bastard," Natalie muttered and Ivy nodded.

"Yeah, he is. So he's moved out, into her room at Uni, he text'd me saying that he was better off without me. I chucked him out but Dad's on at me know 'bout getting a job."

Natalie pursed her lips, desperate to agree with Ivy's father. "And I do want one, but it's not easy. I mean, there ain't that many hairdressing jobs in Lancaster. I've been looking, and there was one but it's only 25 hours."

Natalie smiled. "Isn't that enough?"

"Hell, it'll only be seven hundred quid a month, if that."

"Yes, but ya could move out on that."

"Move out?"

Natalie shrugged. "I ain't lived at home since I was seventeen. I got out as soon as I could."

"My parents aren't bad," Ivy interrupted.

"Neither were mine, really good people, professional and stuff, but I wanted to be independent. Live my own life. I can't do that attached to their apron strings."

Ivy's eyes darted around the room. "But seven hundred ..."

"Seven hundred pounds say. You won't pay much tax and what you lose in tax you'll gain

in tax credit. Rent on these rooms, couple hundred a month and there are cheaper places. Food is a hundred a month, and bills are less than a hundred a month. That still leaves ya seventy-odd quid a week to do what you want.”

Ivy gulped and looked at the table cloth. “But I'd need to find other people to live with, right?”

Natalie shook her head. “You think we chose Adam?” Ivy laughed nervously. “I knew Sarah who knew Tabitha but I didn't know her or Mary, who used to live with us, but she knew Tabitha. So when we agreed to move in, I didn't know half the people I lived with but it worked out. It doesn't always.”

“But you were all nudists?” Ivy asked. “Right?”

“Yeah,” Natalie sighed. “We are all nudists.”

“So how did you get into that?”

“As I said I knew Sarah, we went to Uni together and when we moved in together, we just started wandering out with nothing on. It seemed right, and it sort of evolved from there.”

Ivy purred as she smiled. “Adam must love it here.”

Natalie licked her lips. “I think he is sort of looking forward to leaving. He, ummm, well, he wants his own space I think and we've been bitching at him all week 'cause of him watching the DVD.”

“I'd cut his what-not off,” Ivy muttered and Natalie nodded.

“I think Sarah has thought of it.”

“Pity, 'cause he did say he did like you.” Ivy put her empty cup down and Natalie stretched out.

“As I said, he is definitely in the dog 'ouse at the moment.”

“So if I wanted to move out, who do I need to speak to?”

Natalie smiled. “Just get a wage slip to prove your income and speak to a landlord. Our landlord is Sarah's Dad.”

“Yeah we know him. He's sort of a family friend.”

“Yeah, well you arrange it with him. Normally ya meet the people in the house and then pay for a month up front at least as a deposit – protects against damage and non-payment – and then just move in at start of the contract. It's simple really.”

Ivy smiled. “And that way, I won't have my Dad telling me what to do?”

Natalie shook her head. “Ahh parents, they still do that,” she admitted with a grin. “But they can't use the fact that you are living under their roof.”

Ivy paused for a moment, looking at the confident girl in front of her. “What's it like living with ya brother?” She asked.

Natalie froze. “Why?”

“Well Adam is getting a two bedroom house and he dain't need two bedrooms. And ...”

Natalie grinned. “I can't tell ya that, I dunno. But I like living away from my family. It's better that way. Dya want ya brother to see ya after ya been shagging and come downstairs having heard it all?” Ivy pursed her lips and Natalie sighed. “I lived on nine hundred for a term, seven hundred a month is easy compared to that. If you were my sister, I'd tell you to go for it, even if it's only 25 hours a week, or 20, or whatever, you might get promotion or do extra hours eventually. And it's experience. Employers love experience. And most of

all, it's freedom, it's getting out of the family home.”

Ivy smiled and got up. “Thanks, it's been good.”

Natalie looked at her. “Well Adam shouldn't be too long. I mean he's been gone for an hour, he can't be there too long without being thrown out. He's gone with Carl.”

“Carl,” Ivy asked, looking surprised. “Yeah, he was such a weird character.”

“Yeah,” Natalie muttered. “Scary.”

“Oh God yeah. Did Adam tell you I dated him for awhile? He took me to a football match and then to a gun club. It was the last straw really, so I dumped him. And the sex was awful, just pump and squirt, if you know what I mean.”

Natalie nodded, not quite sure what to say but Ivy beckoned her into her arms and gave her a hug. “Thanks for the tea and the chat. It's what I needed,” Ivy confided.

“Don't want to wait for Adam?” Natalie said with a smile.

Ivy shook her head. “No need. I wish I had a big sister, like you,” Ivy mused and grabbed her coat from the back of the chair. “I'll leave ya-lone.”

Natalie watched the girl leave the room, and then shut the door moments before Adam arrived. “Was that Ivy?”

Natalie chuckled. “Yeah, she came to see you, but all she wanted was sisterly advice.”

“Sisterly?” Adam asked and Natalie nodded.

“Yeah, and I'm not talking to you,” she told him and walked into the front room, leaving Adam on his own in the hallway. “You brought Carl back into our house.”

Adam sighed. “He stopped off on his way home from work, that's all. For a beer.”

Chapter XIII

"Five grand," Sarah whispered and looked up as Adam opened the door.

"Pardon?" Adam asked and Sarah scowled towards him.

"I wasn't talking to you."

"Sorry," Adam muttered, dismissing the teacher with an abrupt tone and leaving the room.

Sarah watched him leave and then returned back to Natalie. "£250 to African Aid and another grand to build a mosque in Manchester. A further £250 to Let's Fight Racism and £1000 towards a Lesbian Student Advisory Service. Joined Greenpeace and a dozen other charities, £500 to Multicultural projects in Glasgow and tickets to see a gay, erotic show. Loads of places. It's five grand in total but this has been declined now. I really wanted to order a blow-up black pregnant sex doll for him."

"Sarah," Natalie said looking up from the floor towards the gleeful primary school teacher holding a credit card in her hand. "What are you like?"

"It's fine. Just don't tell Tab, you know what she is like."

"Oh come on, Sarah. They'll trace you."

"Ahh no. I was reading about it all last week. I have a system called Tor when I boot off this CD, it hides me on the Internet. We've got a Computer Science student in and he was telling me about it. It's utterly foolproof."

Natalie rolled her eyes and shook her head. "You'll go to hell or prison. Or both."

"Good," Sarah replied with a grin. "I hate cold weather." She closed the laptop lid and slid it under the table before putting the credit card back into the wallet. "That should teach 'im, the nasty little bastard," Sarah told her friend. Natalie grinned, and shook her head as Sarah left the room. "I gotta shoot. Mum and Dad want to have a word with me. I hope it's about inheritance," she said almost gleefully and closed the door.

Sarah swore at the cold, wintry air the moment she left the house and pulled her coat tightly. It was freezing and she shuffled along the pavement until she reached her car, climbing in and turning the key in the ignition.

There was the smallest amount of life from the engine and she groaned as she looked at her dashboard; she had left the lights on. "Fuck," she cried and slammed her hands against the steering wheel. "Useless bastard," she shouted and got out, slamming the car door; she would get Natalie to give her a bump start in the morning but instead she needed to be at her parent's house eight minutes ago. With the cold wind swirling around her, Sarah started walking a brisk pace the half-an-hour journey to the familial home.

George looked up from his newspaper as Sarah entered the lounge. "You're late," he grumbled and Sarah rubbed her nose.

"Yeah sorry. The car wouldn't start. I left the lights on overnight. And it's snowy and icy."

He drank the last few dregs of his tea and then looked at her with a steely expression.

"You wanted to see me?"

Her father nodded and then gave a snort. "Mrs Bridges on the end of the street. She said she saw you in the park last week."

"Me?"

"Yes, you. And she said she saw you holding hands with that black girl you live with."

"Tabitha?" Sarah asked and then nodded. "Yeah ... and?"

"Sarah, love. Is there anything you wish to tell us?" Anne Dayton simpered. "Because she told us that the girl was umm ... well she was umm ..."

"Kissing you," her father told her firmly.

Sarah bit her lips, her hands shaking. The subject of her sexuality had never been discussed at home and her parents still thought she was single. "So you know then?"

"Well, yes." George folded his paper and threw it onto the floor in disgust. "And to be honest if that girl is getting all emotional 'cause of the pregnancy then she needs to leave. There is no need for her to be dragging you into that."

Sarah rolled her eyes. "What are you on about?"

"What that girl is doing." Her father added and Sarah looked at her parents staring intently at her. "Mrs Bridges said that she was forcing herself onto you and that you were resisting."

"She is not making me do anything," Sarah told them and sighed. "And this is not something I want to discuss."

"Well I do," her father snapped. "I will not have my daughter being abused ..."

"I am not being abused," Sarah spat back and her mother looked up from her seat on the sofa.

"It's OK dear. You can tell us. We only want to help you."

"I am not being abused," Sarah said firmly. "I am fine. Is this all you wanted to speak to me about?" She rubbed her hands nervously and gave a weak smile.

She waited at her two parents looking at each other and turned to leave. "I've not finished with you yet," she was told firmly and Sarah spun around.

"Oh what now?"

"Well what is bloody hell is going on then?"

Sarah took a deep breath and looked at her mother. "Tabitha is my partner, OK? We are going out."

"You're a lesbian?" George cried and ran his hands over his hand, sighing dramatically. "You can't be a dyke. You've had boyfriends. Is it that Tabitha forcing herself on you, making you be a dyke."

Sarah shook her head in disgust. "No, she isn't forcing me at all." Sarah looked at the frowning face of her father. "And yes I know I've had boyfriends. But now I've got a girlfriend."

"But ..." Her father stammered, staring open mouthed at his flamboyant daughter.

"Are you sure, darling?" Her mother asked and Sarah sighed.

"I mean you read about it all the time but it's normally just a phase. You'll grow out of it," her father told her and Sarah crossed her arms.

"I am 23. I've been having girlfriends since I was seventeen. It's rather a long phase, don't you think?"

George stared at the arm of the chair and sniffed. "No, that isn't true. I met your boyfriend when you were at Uni. That tall lad with blonde hair."

Sarah groaned loudly. "Oliver? For God's sake Dad, Oli wasn't my boyfriend."

"You said ..."

"I know what I said. But he just helped me with my Maths," she told him forcefully. "Do you really think I would have gone out with him? Bloody hell, he was a nice enough guy but utterly hopeless with girls. I'm sure he was a virgin anyway, some of the things he used to come out with."

George took a deep breath. "Just 'cause one of your boyfriends wasn't brilliant doesn't mean you have to turn gay. Perhaps if you found a nice guy he would change your mind."

Sarah glared at him. "I have not turned gay," she told him with righteous indignation. "And I do not have a problem," she thundered angrily. "Being lesbian is not something I choose to do. It's a not a fuckin' lifestyle choice. I can't decide who I will fall in love with."

"So why are you gay then?"

"I was born that way," Sarah spat back. "And yes, those boyfriends when I was sixteen didn't do it for me, and I thought it was just because they were nerdy but it made sense when I met Rita when I was seventeen. And then Tab at Uni. So I've always wanted to settle down with a girl, it's in my DNA."

"So it's my fault now. My genes that's made you ... one of those."

Sarah looked at her mother, dabbing her eyes, and then back to her father. "One of those?" She thundered. "One of those? I s'pose then it's also your fault that I am a nudist as well."

"A nudist?" Anne squeaked. "You mean ...?"

"Yes, I do. Or more to point I don't. It's one of the reasons why we vetoed people coming into the house. Tabitha, Natalie, Mary, me, it's who we are."

Her mother looked at George. "And you put that guy in there."

"Adam?" He asked. "Oh my God. I told you to make him feel welcome. What's he gonna think?"

Sarah gave a wry smile though her stressed face. "Yeah, well, he's used to us wandering about nekkid. He even joins in but that's 'cause Nat makes him." She smiled at the serious faces of her parents and wiped her eyes.

"So you run around naked all day?" Her mother asked breathlessly. "It's not right doing that in front of other people."

"Not all day, the parents get well annoyed about teaching kids in the nude, although I'd quite like a naturist school." She looked at the wide-eyed look of her mother. "Anyway, didn't Adam and Eve wander around naked?"

"Eve didn't lie with her sister," her father thundered before Sarah could continue. "It's about time you came back to Church and stopped living in sin. Find a nice lad and just be normal."

Sarah screwed up her face. "I ain't going back to Church and being normal," she told them, gesturing forcefully with her hands. "And who cares about living in sin. If it's true, it's me that's facing the devil for living a life of happiness."

"Happiness. It won't last. Gay people never stay together. It won't last, you watch."

Sarah screwed up her face. "What a stupid thing to say. Is it 'cause Tabitha is black that you have a problem with? If it was Natalie would you care as much?"

George spluttered. "Well it's just ... her culture is very different from ours. Mixed race never works, their culture is just too different."

"Her culture?" Sarah spluttered. "She is from Wolverhampton."

“And she is pregnant,” her mother told her.

“Obviously she doesn't dislike men that much,” her father added.

Sarah folded her arms and looked at her fidgeting father. “She does. Well, she likes sex - who doesn't?” She smiled at the face her father pulled and Sarah cocked her head to one side. “I was there at the conception. Nice lad, but Tabitha strung him on something awful 'til she got knocked up.” Anne looked at Sarah who gave a snort. “And when the baby is born, I am going to adopt with her. Have parental rights.”

“You what?” George spat. “Why?”

“Cause I want to be it's mother too.”

“But you won't, will you? I thought you knew about these things,” he muttered patronisingly and Sarah sneered in annoyance.

“It takes more than donating a piece of DNA to be a parent.” She waited for her father to look to object and then muttered. “But then no-one told you, obviously.”

George's face went from red to purple and he waved his finger towards the sneering daughter. “How dare you ...”

“How dare I?” Sarah shouted. “How dare I? You've found out that I have a girlfriend, something I have long since agonised over telling you and then make me feel wrong for it. Saying that it is someone's fault. So what if I don't fancy boys? I am still your daughter.” A few tears welled up in her eyes and she looked longingly at her mother. “And I have found someone who makes me happy. Found someone who loves me, but that isn't good enough for you, is it?”

Her mother got up to put her arms around the tearful primary school teacher but Sarah pushed her away. “Don't,” she barked and stared at her father. “This isn't a phase. This isn't a passing fancy. This is me. And you act disappointed. You always act disappointed at what I've achieved. You wanted a businesswoman and what you got was a teacher. You've been disappointed in me since I chose not to follow in your footsteps.”

Her father said nothing and Sarah shook her head, running out of the room. “Wait,” her mother called but the young woman was haring off down the street before either of her parents could reach their front door.

* * * * *

“What do you mean, she quit?”

“Couldn't handle it,” Adam's father muttered. “Something about all the swearing. Said she was going to take me to an Employment Tribunal.”

Adam smiled. “She can't. She's not been around long enough.” His father looked at him and he shrugged. “I work as a supervisor; I have to know about employment law as we can get done. And it costs a fuckin' fortune.”

“Yeah, I know and I ain't got hundreds of thousands to stuff down some lawyer's underpants on a 'No Win No Fee' malarkey so I offered her five hundred to fuck off and she took it.”

“You gave her five hundred quid? Fuckin' 'ell Dad.”

“Yeah well, I ain't wanting to get fucked over by some smart-ass lawyer. And those types, well they are always after summat for nothing, eh?”

Adam grinned. “So how's the family?”

“Fine, Ivy thought she was pregnant last week but she wasn't. Just as well with what

happened to Brad, you know they split?"

Adam gave a grin. "Yeah. I heard. Has she got a job yet?"

"No, but she an interview next week. Proper excited 'bout it."

"'Bout time," Adam muttered and bit his lip. "Not going to get her working in your office, answering ya phone if she dain't get it?"

The balding owner laughed heartily. "You must be fuckin' joking. I'd have no customers left." He downed the last of the tea and looked across his near-empty garage. "Mind you I ain't got many today anyway."

"It's the snow," Adam said unhelpfully. "Ain't no-one moving about in this."

"Yeah, I've done a nice trade in winter tyres this week but it's just dropped off. A couple of replacement brakes and Mrs Gregory with a 'weird sound coming from the engine' but that's it. Danny's picked a good week to be in the Caribbean."

"Ya sound jealous," he teased, finishing the last of his tea and doing up his overalls. It was freezing in the open garage and had enjoyed the last few minutes of warmth he got in the sanctuary of the office before opening the door and walking down the steps. "Yah need better heaters," he told him as he rubbed his hands.

"Cost a bloody fortune," he was told and looked at a battered car in front of him. "Can't believe Mr Daniels keeps this thing on the road."

The icy wind swirled around the street outside and ruffled a few posters at the back of the garage as his father drove a small Micro onto the ramp and the two men started looking underneath it. It took them half-an-hour to change the exhaust and they got a couple of people passing with minor problems but Adam got to spend most of the day talking casually to his father.

The conversation was relaxed, and could have come from the two of them in front of a roaring fire in a country pub but they had to settle for Indian tea instead of Indian Pale Ale, and relative the warmth of the office.

Adam had told his Dad about Carl and his father had advised him to distance himself from the young racist telling him "no good will come of that lad." Adam wanted to disagree but in his heart of hearts couldn't: Carl's behaviour was becoming increasingly erratic and he knew it.

By mid-afternoon, Stuart grunted and shook his head. "Yeah let's go home," he told his son. "Been here all afternoon and no-one else's coming." He stretched his legs as he got up and helped his Dad lock up before walking up the hill towards his house.

Natalie was alone in the lounge when he arrived and poked his head around the door. "Afternoon." She was staring at the television in thought and ignored him as he cleared his throat. "You can turn it on ya know?" Natalie shook her head, not looking at him and grunted. "Tea?"

"No," she muttered and shook her head.

"You OK?"

"No," Natalie mumbled. "But I ain't speaking to you."

He came into the room and sat down next to her on the couch. "Is this still 'cause of me and the videos?"

Natalie took a deep breath and looked at him, getting to her feet. "I said I ain't speaking to you," she snapped.

He wiped his nose and raised his eyebrows. "OK," he muttered and looked at a piece of

A4 paper discarded on the side. "MOT Fail?" He read out on top of the paper. "What's wrong with your wheels?"

Natalie shook her head. "Nothing. I am walking to work that's all for awhile."

Adam glanced down at the paper. "Brake pads. Oh that's umm, well that's easily ..."

Natalie snatched the paper from him. "Can't you learn to leave other people's things alone?"

Adam groaned. "Moody cow," he muttered angrily.

* * * * *

"What's up?" A naked Tabitha asked, looking up from her book as Sarah fell into her bedroom. Sarah wiped her eyes and threw herself onto the double bed alongside her partner and stared up at the pregnant girl, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"Mum and Dad know," she told her. "We were spotted in the park ... kissing." Sarah wiped her face and looked into the gaze of her lover who pursed her lips.

"Well it had to happen eventually," Tabitha soothed and stroked the arm of the distressed girl. "How did they take it?"

"Badly," Sarah replied. "Kept saying that it was someone's fault and Dad said it was a phase."

"Ya know how some people act. I ain't been home for two years after what me brothers said."

"Yes, but I knew my Dad could be bad but I expected better. Liam was OK with it and he is sixteen, hell fifteen when he knew. Why is my immature sixteen year-old brat fine with me being a lesbian naturist and my parents can't 'andle it? Surely they should be grown up about it."

"It's a shock," Tabitha told her and Sarah nodded. "But it's for the best, right?"

Sarah shook her head. "They kept saying there was something wrong with me. With us? I mean, I thought Adam was fairly bad at first in the way in dealt with it, but my own parents." Her phone buzzed and she ignored it.

"Aren't you going to get that?" Tabitha asked and Sarah shook her head.

"No," Sarah spat and Tabitha picked up the phone. Sarah snatched it from her and threw it across the room. "I ain't speaking to them."

"Sarah babes, chill."

"No, they were nasty and horrible to me. I don't want to speak to them."

"You can't run away from them," Tabitha told her. "Or ignore them."

"Hell yes," Sarah spat back. "You said yourself, you ain't been home for two years."

"Sarah," Tabitha called firmly.

"No. And if you are so keen on talking to people when are you going to tell Ian about little one?"

"That's different," Tabitha muttered and Sarah shook her head.

"No it ain't. It's no different. You dropped Ian the day you found out you were pregnant. And when he came to find out what he had done wrong you avoided him. He e-mailed me a couple of months ago asking if you were OK 'cause he ain't seen you or heard from you."

"Well I didn't love him. He did what I needed him to do and then ..."

"You strang him along, letting him get smitten until you were pregnant. And it had to be him 'cause you wanted the clever genes. He knew nothing and you ran away from him. So don't fuckin' lecture me on getting away from people 'cause you're a hypocrite."

Tabitha snorted. "That's different, and so selfish, your parents are probably worried whereas ..."

"Fuck 'em," Sarah said. "And you are always selfish. We are vegetarian in this house 'cause of you."

"I don't ask people to not eat meat 'cause of me," Tabitha replied angrily and Sarah snorted.

"No, but you impose it 'cause we eat together. I love prawns and fish but I don't have 'em 'cause you say we can't. I can't drink in the house 'cause you don't like it. Hell, you getting pregnant was a you thing."

"We agreed," Tabitha implored.

"You agreed. We agreed we would want to at some point, and you went out and screwed Ian that night. And every fuckin' night just about for six months. It was you, wanting kids. Not caring about us, or it, or anything."

Tabitha glared at her. "If that's what you think then maybe we shouldn't be together."

Sarah snorted and grabbed her phone on the floor, opening the door. "Where you going?"

"Out," Sarah shouted. "To get away from you." She slammed Tabitha's bedroom door and stormed out of the house into the heavy snow of Lancaster.

Chapter XIV

"Where's Sarah?" A naked Adam asked as Tabitha sauntered into the dining room. She had just arrived home from her friend's house at the other end of the street and scowled at the man crouched over their dining table with newspaper spread out and a dirty piece of machinery being cleaned by him.

"She's not here, she's gone somewhere else," Tabitha said gruffly. "Where's Nat?"

"She's not home," Adam replied. "It's just me."

Tabitha snorted. "And that better be getting cleaned up," she warned.

Adam groaned but didn't look up. "It's just some plugs," he told her and then put the small item down. "I told 'im to change 'em but Carl's a tight-arse."

"He's a racist," Tabitha spat back and began to sift through a pile of pregnancy magazines on the sideboard.

"Oh don't start this again," Adam replied in a scornful tone, putting the last of the spark plugs back into a small cardboard box and screwing the newspaper into a ball.

"He is," Tabitha told him looking up. "I heard him and you are just as bad. I can't help it that I have to live with you but I don't need to speak to you."

Adam shook his head at her and sighed, walking out of the room with the scrunched up newspaper. What could he do to make the girls forgive him? Sure, the watching of her private pornographic films was a bit disrespectful but it was mostly Carl. Surely it was time for the girls to move on and see past that? Not that it mattered too much, he had been to see the house a few days previous and saw most of the work had been completed. He was a couple of weeks away from getting the keys back.

He threw the newspaper into the bin in the kitchen and walked upstairs to use the bathroom; the girls would only moan at him if he used the kitchen tap to wash his hands. "Adam," a voice bellowed as he turned on the taps and lathered his blackened hands with soap. Adam ignored it, it would only be Tabitha complaining that he had spilt a drop of grease on the table. "Adam." He waited. "Adam," the distressed voice called.

Adam lathered inside his fingers as best he could and rinsed his hands. He heard Tabitha again and groaned, walking out of the bathroom to the top of the stairs. "What is it?"

Tabitha appeared, panting at the bottom and looked up. "It's coming," she squealed. "My waters ..."

"What's coming?" Adam asked, his face still scowling. "Oh shit, the baby? It can't be, you ain't due?"

"Adam, it's coming," Tabitha cried. "Help me, please."

"But you ain't due. Stop it," Adam told her with panic in his eyes.

"I can't stop it," Tabitha snapped and then screwed up her face and gripped the banister. "I can't."

"Just keep your legs together," Adam told her. "The baby can't come out if ya legs are together."

"I can't keep my legs together," Tabitha barked. "Get me to the Hospital."

"Hospital, yes. Right, fuck. Shit. Ambulance," Adam ranted and picked up his mobile from his pocket. "No, it'll never get anywhere near here in the snow." He ran down the stairs and peered out of the front door, oblivious of his naked state. Tabitha looked at him as he

smiled. "We could go on the bike."

"I'm not going on the bike," she told him and he shook his head.

"It'll be fine. I've only come off once before. OK that was in the snow and ice but I'll be careful this time."

"I ain't goin' on a bike," she shouted and took a number of quick breaths. "Get me an ambulance."

"We can be at Lancaster Royal in ten minutes," Adam offered and Tabitha glared at him. "Fuck's sake," he muttered and dialled the number for the emergency services as Tabitha walked into the lounge and lay on the sofa. "Shit. Woman. She's about to drop," he panted.

"Ambulance, sir?" The voice asked and Adam grunted.

"Yeah. Ambulance," he said to the operator and the phone rang again as he was put through to a control centre.

"Woman. About to drop," he repeated as a cheerful female voice came on the line.

"Excuse me sir."

"Woman. Going to drop. Need ambulance to maternity."

"Can I take your address please?"

"Ahh shit. It's ... Tabitha what's our address?" Adam asked as his jittery hands held his mobile as his mind went blank. Tabitha reached up and snatched the phone from him and spoke to the woman at the end of line. Adam watched for a moment and then reached onto the table for Tabitha's mobile, dialling "Sarah."

The phone rang and went to voice-mail, so Adam swore, dialling it again with the phone going straight to the answering service; Sarah clearly didn't want to speak to Tabitha, but she needed to speak to him. "Sarah, you stupid girl. Answer your fucking phone. Tabitha is about to drop," he left as a message.

Tabitha gave a cry and threw her arms out, passing Adam his mobile back. "Go get my bag," she told him.

"What dya want ya 'andbag for?" Adam asked. "Ya about to drop one and ..."

"My maternity bag," Tabitha yelled. "It's in my room on the floor."

"What's a maternity bag?"

Tabitha panted and gripped the side of the chair. She started trying to regulate her breaths and closed her eyes. "It's a hold-all with ma shit in, ya dumb fuck. Just get it."

Adam tutted and left the room, bounding up the stairs to Tabitha's bedroom, opening the unlocked door and picking up a pink hold-all from the floor. He sprinted upstairs to throw on a T-shirt and a pair of jogging bottoms; if paramedics were coming he should at least be clothed. Tabitha was still squealing when he returned and he hesitated. "Sure you don't want to go by bike?"

"Adam, shut up," Tabitha cried and panted. "Just shut up."

"OK," Adam muttered and watched Tabitha take deep breaths. "Do you want some water, or owt? Or do you want to get naked, 'cause the baby'll get trapped in ya knickers?"

Tabitha stared at him and gulped. "Ambulance'll be here soon," she told him and wiped her eyes. "Where's Sarah?"

"I left a message," Adam told her. There was a knock at the door, and he ran down the hall to let in two paramedics. "She's in the lounge, there."

He looked at the curtains twitching around the little street as his neighbours frantically tried to look and see why the ambulance had arrived at their house, and almost wished that he hadn't got dressed, but closed the door and walked down the hallway to the living room.

The paramedic beckoned Tabitha to stand and asked if she was OK to walk to the ambulance. "I'm fine," Tabitha replied breathlessly.

"Have you had any complications during pregnancy?"

"In hospital for dehydration," Tabitha told her and then panted a bit. "In hospital a few weeks back."

"Right, let's get you to maternity," Tabitha was told and she looked at Adam.

"Can you grab me bag?"

Adam nodded and carried Tabitha's bag out to the waiting ambulance. Tabitha shut the door behind her and Adam touched his pockets for the keys. "You got your keys?"

"No," Tabitha cried and Adam hesitated.

"I'm locked out then," he moaned and the paramedic looked at him.

"I think your friend might need some support," she told him firmly and Adam rubbed his eyes.

"Tabitha, she won't want me."

"Adam, shut up," Tabitha cried. "And carry the bag." The paramedic smiled and sat next to the pregnant girl as the ambulance whirred into life and drove down the little street through the snow.

Adam watched in silence, his heart beating fast as Tabitha squealed again and then looked up at the top of the ambulance. "You OK?" The paramedic asked and Tabitha nodded.

"Hey, just as well you'd only just come home," Adam told her smiling. "Any other time of the day you'd be going to the hospital naked." The paramedic looked at him and Adam smiled. "She's a nudist. Always running around without her keks on."

The paramedic held on to Tabitha's hand as she screwed her face up and her body tensed. She groaned loudly. "Ah shit," she cried.

"She ain't gonna like drop here, is she?"

"Adam," Tabitha yelled. "Fucking shut up, ya fucking ... oh, ahhh shit!"

There was a bump in the road and the ambulance stopped, pulling up slowly. The paramedic shouted to the driver who replied that they were at the hospital and she jumped down, helping Tabitha into a wheelchair that was wheeled to the maternity ward.

Adam followed a few steps behind as she was taken to a small whitewashed room with a bed in the middle and a couple of chairs dotted around the spartan delivery suite. Tabitha stripped the moment she arrived as the midwife came into the room holding a gown in her hands. "Are we OK to call you Tabitha, dear?" The young lady asked and Tabitha nodded.

"Are you coming in?" The midwife asked Adam hovering in the door and still holding the pink hold-all. She looked at Tabitha who nodded.

"I'm just bringing this," Adam told the midwife.

Tabitha lay on the bed naked and stared across at her house-mate. "Don't leave me," Tabitha pleaded as Adam hesitated at the door of the delivery suite. "Please."

The midwife watched Adam tentatively come into the room and pull up a padded brown

chair. "I'm not ..."

"It doesn't matter," the midwife told him, her face lighting up as she smiled. Adam pulled out his mobile and sent a text to the landlord asking him to "Tell Sarah, Tab droppin. Bring key. I locked out. Adam."

Tabitha gripped Adam's hand and squeezed as she cried, her body tensing and her head thrown back. "Ahhh, that hurts," Adam moaned and Tabitha looked at him panting and grabbed the "gas and air" to take a few breaths.

"It fucking hurts me more," the black girl replied, her eyes glazed. The midwife offered encouragement to Tabitha who hollered mercilessly into the delivery suite.

"Yeah, but, it's not my fault," Adam told her and the midwife looked up. "We aren't together," he said as an explanation. "In fact, she's lez-zes up, she ain't into men. A bit, 'cause she got knocked up but it ain't me 'cause I dain't know her at that point but ..."

"Adam, shut the fuck up," she warned him and screamed again crying out into the plain delivery suite. Adam reached for the mask and offered it to Tabitha who shook her head as tears swelled in her eyes. Adam took a lungful of it and rolled his eyes

He felt slightly dizzy, preoccupied and not completely aware of what was happening. He felt in a dream, a daze and utterly distracted. "It's good," he muttered and Tabitha snatched it from him.

"S'mine."

"Can you make Tabitha a bit more comfortable?" Adam was asked by the midwife as she touched Tabitha between the legs. He was passed a cool tissue, moist but not wet. He looked at Tabitha and wiped her brow and then the sides of her face. "You are nearly fully dilated," she was told.

"Is that good?" Adam asked and the midwife nodded.

"Yeah, that's good," she said with a smirk and looked at Tabitha. "Did you go to ante-natal?"

"Yes, me and my partner."

"But not me," Adam added and the midwife smiled. "That's her lesbian partner, but she's not here."

"Yeah, I got that. Could you make her comfortable please? Is OK, Tabitha?"

"You want me to?" Adam asked. Tabitha nodded and then started screaming again, her fingers grabbing Adam's hand and clamping down hard on his bony wrist.

Adam took a deep breath and sopped the glistening body of Tabitha, her large breasts glowing with a radiant sheen as he dragged the soft tissue over her.

She sighed as he did and the midwife looked at her. "Did you think about any birthing positions?"

Tabitha nodded. "I wanted to be supported by my partner." She looked at Adam who rolled his eyes.

"Me?"

"Well you are her birthing partner," the midwife replied and Tabitha shuffled down the bed and then told the anxious man to sit behind her.

Adam leant against the metal headboard and had Tabitha leaning against his chest. He instinctively put his hands under her armpits and she crossed her arms to grip him as she squealed again. "Do you need any more pain relief?"

Tabitha panted and shook her head. "How long does this take?" Adam asked and the midwife stared back.

"Anything from ten minutes to four days."

"Four days?" Adam cried and the young midwife smiled. He hugged Tabitha and his hands touched her large breasts which caused him to recoil instantly. "You dain't look old 'nough to be a nurse," he told her and she smiled. "Ya only look a teenager."

"I am only nineteen," the girl replied with a smile. "I'm twenty tomorrow."

"Oh happy birthday. For tomorrow," Adam mumbled and Tabitha gripped his hand again, oblivious to the flirting Adam was trying to do with the student midwife. "How many babies have you had?"

"A few," the midwife muttered, staring at Tabitha and watching as she screamed loudly into the delivery suite. Adam panted, Tabitha was a dead weight when she leant back on his chest and he wasn't too comfortable but he guessed Tabitha was in more pain. "You're doing well," the midwife told her. "Really well."

"Yeah," Adam muttered as the midwife looked at him. "Really well."

"Adam," Tabitha hissed.

"Yeah, I know. Shut it. But I couldn't do it." The midwife sniggered at Adam but Tabitha tensed up and screamed, tears streaming down her face.

"It hurts," she cried. "It really hurts."

"Yeah, but you're doing well," Adam told her and held her tightly as Tabitha's body launched itself into another contraction. Tabitha slid down the bed slightly, embedding her head into his stomach and gripped the bed, yelling as another wave of pain engulfed her.

Adam did his best to comfort and encourage her as her contractions got more painful and the scared woman gripped his hands and cried uncontrollably.

"I can see it's head," the midwife told her after a particularly painful contraction. "Keep going, deep breaths, ride the contractions."

Tabitha panted and yelled as her body tensed. "Ride the contractions," Adam parroted. "Deep breaths. Do you want the gas?" He didn't wait for Tabitha to reply, grabbing the face mask and putting it over her face the moment her contraction stopped.

She gasped as she took a few lungfuls but her respite was short, her body strained as another contraction hit her. "It's coming," she was told.

"Ya hear that," Adam told her cheerfully. "Nearly a mother. How cool is that?"

The midwife shook her head as Tabitha's body rested for a few moments. "Nearly there, few more pushes Tabitha."

"Nearly there," Adam told her and squeezed her. "Nearly there."

"Adam shut the ... ahhhh Christ," Tabitha shouted and her face screwed up, as tears flowed down her cheeks. "I can't do this."

"But you are doing it," Adam replied instantly. "Nearly there. You heard the midwife," he said reassuringly. "Nearly there."

Tabitha shook her head. "I can't, I just can't."

"You're nearly there," the midwife replied and pressed a button on the wall. A few moments later, another couple of midwives entered and the young nurse detailed Tabitha's state.

Tabitha screeched in the middle of it, and the nurse cried out. "It's here."

Tears streamed down Tabitha's face as she saw her little baby for the first time, a screaming, bloody mess being picked up and placed on her stomach. "Oh Tabitha, what a beautiful boy," Adam cooed.

"It's a girl," she said instantly and looked at the crying mess. "It's my girl. It's ..." Tabitha sniffed and Adam held her tightly, wiping his own eyes. He had not expected to be affected by the birth of Tabitha's daughter but he found himself almost overcome with emotion.

"She's ... beautiful."

Tabitha turned her head and nodded. "Yes, she is, isn't she?" Adam stared at the baby, remaining still and in thought. He was still cuddling Tabitha but it seemed so powerful to be watching the new baby's first moments in the world. He was awestruck.

"Do you want to cut the umbilical cord?" The midwife asked after a few minutes, and Adam shook his head.

"Me?"

"Yes, you. Come on, you've done nothing all evening." Adam pushed his bum to back of the bed and managed to navigate his legs out from behind Tabitha. He took the scissors from the blonde midwife and looked at the purple tube coming out of the baby resting on Tabitha. Adam took a couple of deep breaths and stared between Tabitha's legs.

"Between the clamps."

The door burst open and evening turned to see the soaking wet Sarah came rushing in to the maternity suite. "Tab, I'm sorry," she cried. "Oh my God," she said and clamped her hand to her mouth. "I've missed it."

Adam held out the scissors to Sarah. "You could cut the cord." Sarah looked across at Tabitha who nodded as she advanced towards the bed. "Partner," Adam explained quite needlessly to the midwife. "She's the one she sleeps with." The midwife shook her head and guided Sarah over to cut through the tough cord with the sharp implement.

Sarah wiped her eyes and stared at the mixed race baby crying on Tabitha's stomach, smiling involuntarily. She sniffed. "She's so perfect."

Tabitha looked up and nodded. "I know."

Adam backed slowly towards the door and quietly left the suite as the two lovers were overcome with emotion, before knocking on the door to interrupt the tearful couple. "Hey Sarah, can I have your front door key?"

"Sure," Sarah cried and threw her keys towards Adam. "And Adam, thanks."

"Yeah, no problem."

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Natalie shook Adam awake. "So what did she have?"

"Huh?" Adam said sleepily. "Oh, a baby."

Natalie shook Adam again and then slapped him hard across the cheeks that caused him to groan. "Was it a girl, like the scan said?"

"Oi," Adam cried. "I thought you weren't speaking to me?"

"Yeah, well. I want to know."

"It's a girl," Adam told her and she sat down on his bed.

"Why didn't you phone me?"

Adam sniffed. "Cos you weren't speaking to me," he told her. "Remember?"

"Well I would have spoken to you for that," she snapped back. She pursed her lips and raised her eyebrows. "And anyway, you've been a bastard," she told him firmly and looked him in the eye before getting up and closing the door to his bedroom.

By the time Adam got out of bed, Natalie had left the house and he showered before throwing on some clothes and heading into the town centre. He wanted to get the baby a little gift before visiting hours, and walked into the baby shop in the centre of Lancaster; there was a lot of choice on clothes, accessories and other baby paraphernalia. He wondered if Tabitha would really need all of the stuff they claimed she would but selected three dresses from their "Summer" collection and put them in a gift bag with a card.

The local hospital was far bigger than he imagined or remembered but the staff pointed him down a corridor when he asked for "Tabitha and baby," and he poked his head into each ward, one at a time.

Adam looked into the fifth "new baby" ward and saw Natalie sat down in the corner with Sarah and Tabitha. "Are you going in?" A midwife asked a loitering Adam who grunted: he hadn't expected Natalie to be there. "You're in the way."

"Sorry," he muttered in response and Sarah turned to see him. She smiled when she caught sight of the young man and beckoned him to get a chair. "Hi," he breathed and saw Natalie glaring at him. "How is she?"

Tabitha bit her lip and smiled. "She's fine. Have a look."

Adam leant over a small plastic cot and smiled when he saw the mixed race baby asleep and wrapped in blankets. "Whatcha callin' her?"

"Lara," came the response. "Lara Sarah Kwame."

"It's a nice name."

Tabitha looked at Sarah. "Yeah well, if it was a boy then we would have given it a middle name of Adam," she told him. "I couldn't have done it without you. Thank you."

Sarah sighed as Adam blushed. "All I did was nick your bloody Gas and Air."

"Oi," Sarah cried. "No swearing in front of the little one. You watch your effin' mouth."

Adam chortled at Sarah who cocked her head to one side. "But thank you, we really mean that. You might be a right bastard at times but you have a soft side."

Adam went a shade redder and put a small bag on the bed. "A small present," he announced. "For the baby."

Tabitha and Sarah exchanged glances. "It better not be a motorcycle helmet, cause she is not, most definitely not, going on your bike," Sarah said with a grin.

"Cheers," Tabitha said with a smile and picked up the bag, taking out a card and passing it to Sarah to open and put above her bed. She pulled out a gift bag and opened it tentatively. "They are beautiful," she cried and she took out three dresses and then turned to look at Adam. "But size one to two years."

"Yeah," Adam squeaked. "Well you're a big ... well you've got ..." Adam gestured with his hands and Tabitha giggled, staring at him with an expectant look. "Well your baby ... it ain't gonna be small, is it?"

Sarah looked at Natalie. "Please tell me that his tact isn't what attracted you to him?"

"No," Adam replied. "She's still in a mood with me. But it's OK. I move out next week."

"Good," replied Natalie instantly. "Can't wait."

“Natalie,” Sarah cried out in chastisement but Natalie just crossed her arms.

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Natalie looked at Adam standing in the doorway. “Pardon?”

“I can fix your car,” he offered. “On Sundays, the Garage is closed but Dad has given me a set of keys.” He spun an oversized key ring around his finger.

Natalie crossed her arms. “I don't want to ...”

“What Natalie?” Adam raised his arms out and she sucked in air through her teeth.

“Actually accept my help?”

The Scottish girl hummed. “Yeah, well, I s'pose.”

“Look, I said I am sorry. Tabitha's forgiven me, she said so and they were her bloody videos. I've said I'm sorry.”

Natalie sniffed and rubbed her nose. “Ya were perv-ing over her and ...”

“OK, I'm not perfect,” Adam told her. “We were bang out of order, but it was just a fucked up situation. You might not see it, but we had a few to drink and it came on. I fucked but I'm only 'uman for Christ's sake.”

Natalie sighed and crossed her arms across her breasts. “It was really intrusive and nasty to do. And to show it to that friend of yours and play with yourself. It's gross.”

“I know. Sorry,” Adam said in a somewhat annoyed voice. “But I wasn't knocking one out. It was Carl.”

Natalie's scowl loosened. “Yeah, but he is your mate. You let him.”

Adam sighed. “Yeah well in it's the past now, ain't it. And if you want to fix your car, we can do.”

Natalie closed her eyes and looked up at him. “So how much do you reckon me car will cost to fix?”

“Forty quid,” Adam told her. “Ya got to do all of 'em, right?” Natalie nodded and Adam gave her a grin. “Sarah told me. But it's always labour that knocks up the price. I've got me Dad to get 'em from his dealer ready for us.”

Natalie took a deep breath and glared at him. “How did you know I'd be happy to let you do it?”

Adam shrugged. “I kind of figured that you would want the car done on the cheap.” Natalie went to interrupt and Adam smirked. “And I guessed that you being a tight-arsed Scot you would put your wallet before your principles and bitchiness.”

Natalie gasped and threw a cushion at the ducking, naked man. He watched it hit the wall behind him and grinned. “Finished? 'Cause we got a car to fix. If you want to, that is.”

“What? Today?”

“Today is Sunday,” Adam replied and jangled the keys. “Unless you want to pay dealer rates.”

Natalie pulled herself up and walked over to the door, pushing past the naked Adam who eyed her naked hips and pert ass as it wandered past him. “Don't even think about what you are thinking,” she told him and Adam chased her up the stairs to get dressed.

Natalie was reluctant to drive her car as “the brakes are fucked” but Adam persuaded her that they had enough life in them to drive down to the garage which he unlocked when he arrived and drove the car into the yard. “Get yourself overalls then,” he told her and

pointed to a set hung up on the back wall.

Natalie moaned as she took a greasy blue set off the peg as it was "cold."

"From fuckin' Scotland," he replied. "Fuckin' snows up there."

Natalie grumbled at him as he slung a cleaner set on and zipped them up. He pulled out a old-looking jack and passed it over to the girl watching him. "We'll need that," he told her and grabbed a tool off the back wall. "And that."

"Do you know how to do this?" Natalie asked nervously. "Cause I don't want to press my brakes and they fuck up."

"Sure," he replied. "They ain't gonna fuck up."

"Yeah well, that's a fuckin' easy promise to make," she told him and ran her hands through her hair. "But ..."

"Love, loosen your wheel nuts on the passenger side."

"What? You aren't gonna do it."

"I'm going to get your new pads. Just loosen your nuts."

Natalie sighed and picked up the tool, peering around it and fitting it over the first wheel nut, pressing down. "Is it anti-clockwise or clockwise," she shouted into the store room when the nut didn't budge.

"Anti," came the response and Natalie swore at her car wheel. She fitted the brace back on the nut and pressed down with her entire weight but the wheel nut would not budge.

Adam returned to her swearing and he looked at her. "Come here," he muttered and extended the tool by six foot before fitting the tool back on the wheel nut. "Try now."

Natalie grunted and pressed down with the nut turning effortlessly. "Fuckin' ... err," she muttered.

Adam watched as she loosened all of the wheel nuts and he then took the jack to lift up the car. It didn't take long before the car was raised by a few inches and he shortened the tool to remove all the wheel nuts.

Natalie watched in horror as her wheel was removed and set down next to the Scottish girl. He pulled out a small tool and unbolted the callipers before fastening them to the top of the wheel with a wire. "Got ya keys?" Adam asked and Natalie looked at him. "I need to reset the piston on the brake pads, which is a shite-site easier if the brake reservoir is uncapped, which is under the bonnet, which you have the keys for," he explained.

"Oh," she muttered and passed him the keys. "Sorry."

"S'ok. You ain't ever done any maintenance on ya car, right?" Natalie shook her head and Adam walked around to open the bonnet, before unscrewing the cap for the brake fluid.

"Push that piston," he told her and waited for Natalie to tentatively push a small metal bullet in, before Adam rescrewed the cap on, but left the bonnet open.

He unclipped the worn brake pads and passed them to Natalie who held them out in front of her. "It's not a bomb," Adam told her and Natalie sighed. "You can chuck 'em."

"But ..."

"But they ain't no good," she was told firmly and Adam took the first of the pads and slotted them into the callipers before refixing it to the wheel. Natalie watched spell-bound as he fastened the brakes, then the wheel and lowered the car, before tightening the wheel nuts firmly.

"Other side now," he told her and walked around the car. He got Natalie to do far more of

the work and just guided and supervised her as she unclipped the callipers and slid the old pad out. She listened as he gently advised and encouraged her, sitting next to her as she put the new brake pads in.

"Hello?" A voice called and Adam looked up to see a middle-aged lady walk in alongside the car. "Hello. Oh thank God someone's open. I need a new battery."

Adam rubbed his nose. "I'm sorry. We are not open," he said calmly and she looked at him.

"Oh. It's just my car wouldn't start and my son had to jump start my car. Could you not have a quick look? Please."

Adam looked at the blonde-haired woman, cocking her head to one side and Natalie rubbed his hand. "Go have a look," she told him. "I'll put my wheel back on."

"Oh thank you, love," the woman murmured at Natalie, and looked at Adam. "If you wouldn't mind."

Adam pushed the car into the garage alongside Natalie's vehicle and opened the bonnet, taking a battery tester from the back of the garage and putting the two probes on the battery. "How long have you had the battery, it's dead."

"Oh," the lady hummed. "I've never replaced it."

Adam took a screwdriver and spanner from his pocket and loosened the battery connectors before "checking the water level." He glanced over at Natalie lowering her car on the jack and their eyes met. She smiled at him and he looked back at the car battery. "We can replace it," he told her.

"How much is that?"

"Under a hundred, if we have 'em in."

The lady nodded and sighed. "Go on then." Adam walked over to the store room and returned with a brand new battery, an identical size as the current battery which he removed from the car by unscrewing a clamp. The new battery sat on the tray and he reconnected the terminals as Natalie sidled up him. "My car's done," she whispered and he told her to start the lady's car.

It fired up instantly and Adam told Natalie to shut it off while he connected the clamp. "Of course," he told her as Natalie passed the keys back to the woman. "If the alternator's gone, then the battery won't charge but it'll probably be the battery. They never last too long. And it's an original."

"Thanks," she said as he lowered the bonnet. "You are a real life saver." The car owner smiled. "Oh, I'll just go pay your boss."

Adam turned to look at the office and saw Natalie leaning against the wall with a grin. "Oh she's not my boss," he told her quickly. "She's my girl ... my fr ... it's complicated."

"Oh," she muttered and Adam apologised, guiding her to the office, pulling out a sales receipt page and scanning a price list on the side of the table. "Errr ... that'll be ninety two pounds then please."

The lady counted out ten ten pounds notes as Adam wrote out the sales docket and found the drawer locked. "Keep the change," she told him as he passed her the receipt. "You've saved my life today, nowhere was open."

"Oh thank you very much," Adam replied and slid all ten notes through the crack in the drawer.

Natalie watched the lady start her car, back out of the garage and drive away. "Can we go

now, or do you want me to be a mechanic?"

"Hell yes," he said with a grin. "And you do look good in those overalls."

Natalie laughed. "You're weird," she told him. "But thanks for getting me the new pads."

"And fitting them," Adam continued but Natalie looked at him.

"I fitted 'em myself," she replied. "If you want a job doing, I gotta do it me-self," she teased as she removed the overalls. "And I helped you on the battery."

Adam shook his head: there was no pleasing some people!

Chapter XV

“Sarah,” Anne called and held out her hands to hug her daughter. “Sarah, how are you?”

“I’m fine,” Sarah said frostily. “Tabitha had a little girl, by the way.”

“A girl? Ahh, well, we got Adam’s text message but we didn’t know any more. How is she?”

“She’s fine,” Sarah muttered and held her coffee tightly, looking around the empty coffee shop. “Keeping us awake half the night, but fine.” There was silence for a minute as Sarah looked at her mother. “Well, you wanted to see me?”

“Sarah, I’m sorry if you think we are angry or disappointed with you, we aren’t.”

“Dad is.”

“Dad isn’t,” Anne responded quickly. “He was shocked, we both were.” Sarah sighed and her mother stared at her. “You’re his little girl, he sometimes forgets you might be an adult, but you mean the world to him. And he thinks the world of you. And yes, he’s a bit stuck in his ways and he isn’t good with things he doesn’t understand, but he loves you, and no matter what happens, you can’t change that.”

Sarah stared into the bubbles on top of her latte and glanced up. “He was so disappointed when he found out.”

Anne sighed. “Well maybe a bit. He doesn’t understand. Or more to the point, he didn’t understand. You live in a different world to us at times. He’s not comfortable with the idea of you not marrying a nice guy and settling down to start a family and the like. He didn’t get it.”

“He thought I was doing wrong,” Sarah replied instantly. “And he has always been prejudiced. He doesn’t like Tabitha, he never has done. He just doesn’t get it.”

Anne sighed. “He likes Tabitha if she makes his little girl happy.” Anne looked at her daughter and frowned at her. “Honestly, believe me. And he will love you and accept whatever you choose to do with your life. And be proud of you.”

Sarah took a deep breath and tapped the side of her cup. “He ... he wishes I wasn’t a primary school teacher.”

Anne shook her head. “Not at all. You think that ‘cause he tried to steer you towards business, but the day you got your first job, and we had that meal in that restaurant to celebrate, he didn’t shut up about you in the car on the way home. He was made up, Sarah. And you having a girlfriend instead of a boyfriend, isn’t going to change that. For either of us.” Anne dabbed at her eyes and looked at her daughter. “Do you really think that you having a Tabitha instead of a Terry for a partner is going to undo 23 years of affection and love? Really?”

Sarah shrugged. “Well ...”

“It’s such a silly, minor thing,” Anne told her. “He doesn’t care, but he does care if he thinks you don’t love him.”

“Then why isn’t he here?”

“Would you have met me if he was going to be here?” Sarah shrugged. “Now come ‘round for dinner on Sunday,” her mother told her. “Please.”

Sarah groaned. “If I have to.”

“You don’t have to,” Anne told her. “But we’d want you to. And bring Tabitha as well.”

Sarah snickered. “You must be joking.”

Anne stared at her daughter. "Your father will be on his best behaviour," she told her. "Cause there isn't many times when I don't get my own way, is there?"

"No," Sarah begrudgingly admitted.

"Now come give me a hug," Anne asked. "I hate it when we argue." Sarah sniffed and got up to embrace her mother.

* * * * *

Adam squinted at the naked girl standing with her arms crossed. "Pardon?"

"A massage," Natalie promised. "All set up in my room."

"A massage?" Adam asked and leapt to his feet. "What's this for?"

"A thank you," Natalie told him. "And, well, I was a bit of a bitch with you at the hospital." She held out her hand and looked seductively into his eyes. "I guess if Sarah and Tabitha can forgive you and they were their videos then I shouldn't ..."

"Be so pig-headed?"

Natalie screwed up her face. "Do you want a massage or not?"

Adam nodded and touched her on the arm. "Of course." She opened the door to her room and guided the naked man into a calm sanctuary, full of flickering candles and the gentle scent of peaches and lavender. Some soft instrumental music was playing in the background. Natalie guided him onto the bench and poured a generous portion of oil in her hands.

She breathed out with every stroke along his back and Adam sighed with every touch. Adam felt relaxed and almost fell asleep at every motion Natalie made. She had a wonderfully gentle touch that was quite unexpected in someone so prickly and determined.

For Adam, Natalie's unexpected warmth presented a new problem for him. He guessed that if he asked her out somewhere then she would almost certainly come, she had admitted she was lonely before, but after her antics of the previous month he was unsure if he wanted to spend too much time with her.

He liked her, she was the closest he had come to his "ideal woman" but her behaviour with him about the videos had him wondering. Could he be with someone who could be like that?

If nothing else, with massages like the one he had received, friendship was the least he would want and smiled as her hands darted in between his shoulders. "That's lovely," he muttered in appreciation.

She gestured for him to turn over and sat down next to him taking his arm and rubbing her oily fingers over it. "You leave tomorrow," Natalie cooed and pressed down hard on his arms and adjusted herself. "You gonna come back and see us."

Adam smirked. "Well I might. Just to see the naked chicks." Natalie groaned and squeezed his biceps that made him squeal. "I wanna see you, take you out somewhere next week."

Natalie pursed her lips and continued the massage. "You do, do you?"

"Yeah," Adam said nervously. "And I was gonna book a small restaurant near where I work. Cinema first and then meal. Was thinking of Wednesday, so don't arrange owt."

Natalie sniffed. "What if I don't want to go?" she asked. "What if I didn't want to do that?"

Adam spluttered. "You always moan you ain't got anything to do. You always moan you are lonely. I don't think I'm gonna get a 'no' from you, am I?"

Natalie stopped massaging him and stared at her house mate. "You what?" She asked

fiercely.

“Oh come on. Now Tab and Sarah have the little one, you'll be bored right? So I thought it'd be cool to spend a bit of time with each other. Go for a meal, go for a film. I can show my new place,” he said with a giggle. “I got a double bed and a ...”

“Fuck you,” Natalie cried interrupting him and jumped to her feet. She glared at him, before shaking her head.

“What? Oh come on Natalie?”

“How dare you. I am not some easy hussy for you to pick up,” she thundered. “I thought you weren't like that.”

“I never said ...” Adam trailed off and looked at Natalie standing over him. “Chill love. What's got into you?”

“Nothing,” she yelled. “I just don't like ...”

“Hey, it's not ya time of the month is it?”

Natalie groaned and picked up one of the candles that lined her room. She shook it over his crotch and watched as Adam's eyes widened and then he made a loud cry.

“No,” Natalie cried. “I am not on my period. And you were going to get a very happy finish if you weren't such a cock.”

Adam wasn't listening; he had his hands glued to his abused member and scrambling to his feet to put some cold water on his burning penis. “Fuckin' cow,” he screamed. Natalie watched him leave the room and sighed; the evening could have been so different and she just locked the door to her room, sinking down behind her door and bursting into tears.

* * * * *

Sarah passed him the keys to his new flat with a grin. “I've cleaned it. Well actually Tabitha cleaned most of it 'cause she's on maternity, I polished the tables.”

Adam smiled. “Tables? Oh, the umm, tiny dining table.”

“Yeah. But it needed three squirts,” Sarah told him and she cocked her head.

“Thanks, you didn't need to.”

“Ahh, we wanted to. Cause when we come and visit I know how clean it should be.” Adam held out his arm to take cuddle the clothed woman. “I suppose it's the least we could do, you were ummm ... well you were there for Tab when she needed you.”

“I did nothing,” Adam blurted out. “Well I flirted with the midwife. She was hot. And only nineteen.”

Sarah licked her lips and rubbed her eye with the ball of her palm. “You haven't changed. Well actually I s'pose you have. I think you are more ... house trained.”

“House trained?”

“Yeah, 'cause you put the toilet lid down now. And no peanuts last night on the floor.”

Adam shrugged. “No but seriously. Tab said she couldn't have done it with you. It means so much to both of us.”

Adam pursed his lips. “I really didn't do much. And it was such an intense thing to be involved in. It was so ...” He gestured with his hands and Sarah nodded.

“I know,” Sarah muttered. “It's amazing. I keep checking she is OK. She's so little and defenceless.”

Adam smiled and looked at himself. “I guess I better get dressed and loaded onto the van.

Give ya, yar house back.”

“Yeah, OK,” Sarah muttered and watched as Adam ran up the stairs. She walked into the front room and sat down on the chair, relaxing her tired muscles; she wished Tabitha was there to curl up with, but her partner was seeing her friend and she just wanted to say goodbye to Adam.

She looked up at the ceiling and heard Adam's footsteps: she really should help him and pulled herself to her feet. “Want a hand?”

Adam shook his head. “I've only got a few things. Most o'me stuff's in storage,” he breathed out, struggling with a heavy box and Sarah kindly opened the front door.

It took Adam only a few minutes to put everything except his bike (he was coming back for that) on the van and Sarah took the opportunity to change into something more comfortable. As Adam loaded the last of his boxes on the van, the naked (except a pair of stockings, a dressing gown and a clip in her hair) Sarah watched as he closed the front door. “Want a cuppa?”

“Yeah, go on.”

Sarah wrapped her dressing down around her tighter as a draught from the street swirled around her thighs and Adam grinned. “Stop it,” she told him and looked back as Adam ogled her from behind.

“Sorry,” he mumbled. “I would have wanted Natalie to be here to say goodbye,” he moaned as they walked towards the kitchen. “Tabitha and you forgave me. And Nat and me, we had some good times. And I wanted one last look of her naked before I leave.”

Sarah crossed her arms as she flicked the kettle switch. “Natalie: ahh well, she's pissed off with you. But she does have to work.” Adam sneered but Sarah looked at him. “It might be a Saturday but you work on some Saturdays.”

“Well I didn't even get a goodbye when she went out this morning.”

“Well that's Nat for you. She is annoyed.”

“Yeah but I still don't know what I did wrong.”

Sarah sighed. “She told me that you asked her out on a date to go do what you wanted and expected her to stay the night and have sex with you.”

Adam stared at her open mouthed. “I never said the sex. I told her I had a 'double bed' and was going to tell her that I had a single bed in the spare bedroom when she shouted at me and poured hot candle wax on my crotch.”

Sarah groaned. “Well she thinks you only asked her out because you think she's lonely. And it's Nat, she is too proud to relent. She is annoyed with you as it was your last night here and she wanted to make it special. So until you make a move, or she gets bored and forgets why she had the grudge in the first place she'll be annoyed.” Sarah poured hot water into two cups and dropped a tea bag in each. “But she is shit in the morning and she just hared off to work. They've not replaced a couple of people who've left so Nat is covering. She was probably late as she always is.” Sarah dropped a bit of milk into the tea and then squeezed the tea-bag with the spoon before passing it to her companion.

“Cheers,” Adam muttered and took a sip. “I don't know,” he mumbled. “She seems like hard work.”

“She will be,” Sarah told him. “And she is. But she is a great girl.”

Adam hummed. “Yeah, she is,” he muttered. He stopped looking wistfully at the back door and looked at Sarah. “It's been a weird few months.”

Sarah sniffed. "But not unenjoyable?"

"No, very ..."

"Enlightening," Sarah suggested with a smirk.

"Yeah, I'd say that."

Sarah grinned. "Learned how to deliver a baby?"

Adam chortled. "I did nothing. I told you that."

"I know, all you did was to play with Tab's tits, tell the midwife that Tab was a lesbian and chat her up."

"Exactly," Adam said with flourish.

Sarah pursed her lips together. "You do yourself a disservice," she told him. "I mean, you were probably a pain in the arse but that's 'cos you're Adam, but Tab said you were great, and she needed someone."

Adam sighed. "And what about you and Tabitha?" Adam asked as he drank from the cup.

"What about us?"

Adam smiled. "It's hurting you. Ya gutted ya weren't there."

Sarah shrugged. "Mebbe."

Adam looked at her as she pulled her gown closer. "It is, isn't it?"

Sarah nodded. "Yeah. I think Tab has forgiven me, I didn't do it on purpose but I feel so annoyed with myself."

Adam nodded his head slowly in agreement. "Well, what happens next?"

"Tab is going to move into my room and Tab's room is going to be the nursery. And well, I shall be Lara's other mum."

"What about the father? The real, I mean biological, parent."

Sarah snorted. "He doesn't know. Tab didn't want to tell him and I see why. She has me, she doesn't need him. But I'd feel happier if he knew."

"And you aren't going to cement your relationship?"

"How?" Sarah asked. "We have a kid and ..."

Adam touched his ring finger on his left hand and smirked. "February 29th on Wednesday. The PA in our office is going to ask her boyfriend."

"What? You mean, marriage?" Sarah stared at the worktop and shook her head from side to side. "You're serious, aren't you?"

"Well it seems as though the next step."

She sighed. "Tab would be touched, well made up even." She turned and scowled. "Just when did you start understanding women?"

Adam sighed and picked up the van keys from the side. "I have this way with them."

"Well," Sarah replied with a smirk. "If you are so perfect then maybe you would have not fucked things up with Natalie."

"Yeah, don't remind me," Adam muttered and held out his arms to the almost naked girl, hugging her tightly. "I'd say thanks for having me, but I reckon it was under duress."

"Yeah, it was," Sarah confessed. "But you knew that. And once we got to know you, you were OK I s'pose. Pity about your friends."

"Ahh yes, well I have said sorry," Adam muttered. "And if it makes you feel any better, his credit card was cloned and they racked up thousands of pounds of charges. He's having real trouble."

Sarah's face brightened. "What with the bank?"

"All the call centres for his bank are in India. Or Wales. He can't understand the accent." Sarah laughed as Adam smiled and he put his front door key on the worktop. "I told ya dad I would drop it off here as I hear you got someone coming to look 'round?"

"Yeah, next week I think. Natalie's arranged it, some girl she knows."

"Oh, a women," Adam asked. "I put you off men then."

"I was already off men," Sarah replied and hesitated. "But I think you put Nat off men, we are ready to welcome her into the sisterhood." Adam chuckled at Sarah's facial expression and she continued. "Pity 'cause you are both so alike."

"We're not," Adam replied and she smirked.

"You are, it's her birthday on Wednesday; it only comes around once every four years. Make sure you wish her 'Happy Birthday'," Sarah told him. "It'll be well received," she promised. "Even if it is just by text."

"I don't ..." Adam trailed off as Sarah raised her eyebrows. "Actually, can I keep this key for a little while longer," he asked. "Til her birthday on Wednesday?"

Sarah sighed. "Yeah OK, but no sneaking into the house to ogle naked women," she said with a smirk. "You hear me?"

"Of course not," Adam said with a steely glance and left the house, waving goodbye to the teacher. It only took him twenty minutes to unpack all of his gear at the other end and he walked around the small house. It was a two-bedroom "two-up, two-down" property but it was big enough for what he needed, and the entire house had been refitted due to the smoke damage.

He swore when he saw the time on the new clock in the kitchen: his chat with Sarah had dragged on longer than he thought and he needed to get the van back to work.

Locking the door behind him, he sprinted down the small path and jumped into the van, the wheels spinning as he slapped it into gear and sped off down the road, arriving at work through the rush hour traffic only ten minutes late.

"I need it one evening," he said as he threw the keys back to the warehouse supervisor. "I still gotta get me shit out of storage."

"Sure," came the response from the gruff manager. "Tuesday OK?"

"Yeah, fine. Oh, and he's a tenner for the diesel," he told him, passing him a banknote and deliberately not checking to see whether it went in his pocket or in petty cash.

He had promised Carl he would meet them for a beer and set off towards their local. Carl was waiting for him and swore when he came into the small inn. "What fuckin' time do ya call this?"

Adam grumbled an apology and got himself, and Carl, a pint of beer sitting down on the chair opposite. "How's things?"

"As the fuckin' cunts took me gun license," Carl snapped. "So I've been chucked out of the gun club."

"Ahh shit," Adam sighed and Carl shook his head, clearly drunk with glazed eyes and an aggressive posture.

"Those fuckin' do-gooding liberal cunts," he yelled. "Fuckin' queers the lot of 'em. And when I rang up to kick off, some fuckin' Paki cunt answered the phone."

Adam shifted in his seat and scowled at the angry man shouting and ranting. "What happened?"

"Yeah well that's the stupid thing. That fuckin' dirty Paki goes and rings up the local cop shop and I get two police bitches arrive at my door to caution me for using racist language. I told 'em it's my fuckin' property and they can fuck off out of it but they just rabbitted on like fuckin' old women. I tell ya, this country's going to the effin' dogs."

"Oi," a fierce voice called from behind Carl. "One more swear word out of you and you are barred," the barmaid told him and pointing at the drunk Preston fan.

Carl turned his head to face her. "Listen love, I'm just havin'a quiet drink."

"Ya not," she told him. "Ya shouting. Your shouting foul and abusive language 'round my pub. Have a quiet drink or piss off."

Carl swore under his breath and looked at Adam. "Dya hear that?"

"Every word," Adam told him tersely. "But if you shout and swear down the phone at them, they probably will take a dim view."

"Ya what?" Carl shouted. "Some fuckin' dirty Paki gets me bollocked off the Police and ya thinks it's my fault? I tell ya, they are fuckin' bang out of order taking my guns. I need me guns. They're me guns. Ya understand?"

Adam rubbed his eyes. "Yes I understand that they are ya guns."

"And some chuffin' cunt of a Police Chief Cunt-stable decides I can't 'ave 'em and they take 'em. We need a fuckin' revolution in this country. Kick out all the poofs, the Pakis, the niggers, the Commie bastards, the bleeding-heart fucking liberals. Burn the fuckers to the stake or rip their fuckin' ..."

"You. Get out," the barmaid shouted and Carl looked at her.

"No," he told her and she cocked her head to one side.

"I warned you. Get out. And don't come back."

"Carl, come on," Adam pleaded.

"No," Carl shouted and grabbed his pint. "T'is my fuckin' local," the skinhead screeched and Adam looked at the barmaid apologetically.

"Carl, come on," Adam said firmly. "Before the Police come and arrest you."

Carl sneered and shook his head. "Police ain't gonna arrest me."

Adam pushed his almost untouched pint of beer to the centre of the table and got up. "I ain't getting arrested again with you," he told him. "Not again."

"Ya what? Ya fuckin' pussy," the drunken man shouted. "It's bein' with those gals and that nigger."

Adam shook his head. "Yeah, it's living with three girls, one black girl, two lesbians that's made me realise what a total cunt you are," Adam said with a grin. "All this mouthing off, it's just fuckin' pathetic."

Carl stared at him, stunned and shocked, looking around the pub at everyone watching him. "I said get out," the barmaid said to Carl, who shook his head.

"Jamie told me. You lived with fuckin' nudists, dain't ya? Always lezzing up."

Adam froze and looked at the barmaid with a quizzical expression on her face. "I didn't do

any lezzing up,” he told him with a grin. “But yeah, I've been a nudist for three months while I lived with the girls 'cause they wanted me to and they felt happier if I didn't wear any clothes when they didn't. And ya know what, it was fun, at times. Experiencing someone else's culture and beliefs. OK, yeah, there was times when living with them was a pain but on the whole, they were cool. And they aren't as fucked up as you.” Carl sneered and Adam held out his hands. “Now the barmaid has told you to fuck off, so I think you should.”

Adam waited for a split second, and smiled towards the student barmaid grinning at him. She returned his smile as he walked out of the pub and strode away from the tavern. He felt a hand push him on the shoulder and Carl standing behind him. “What the fuck was that all about? You've gone fuckin' soft Adam, living with that fat nigger and that Scottish slut...”

Adam didn't allow Carl to finish the sentence, smashing his fist into the face of his friend with as much force as he could muster and watching the man stumble against a wall. He grabbed hold of him by the throat, pushing him into the brick house behind him. “Don't you ever call her that, ya hear me.”

Carl gulped and struggled to get free but Adam pushed him onto the ground. He scrambled back to his feet and backed away. “You've gone too far,” Carl mumbled and Adam snorted watching Carl turn and flee in the opposite direction.

Without pausing he added Carl's number to his block list on his mobile and dialled James; he just had to tell him what happened.

* * * * *

Liam rubbed his hands and closed his eyes, taking a deep breath and exhaling fully. He could feel his heart beating as if it was out of his chest and he felt weak with fear and hunger. He blew through his pressed palms and walked into the lounge.

“Mum. Dad,” he squeaked and looked at both of them watching the television.

Anne looked over at him. “Come in, love.”

“Ummm ...” Liam sniffed and stared, not moving from the sanctuary of the doorway.

“You going out?” She asked he shifted his weight from one leg to the other.

“Ummm ... I got something to tell you.”

His father tore his eyes from the film and looked over at him. “You better not have got that girl of yours up the duff,” he told him gruffly.

Liam shook his head and took a deep breath. “No. I umm ... well Olivia and I ... we are both ...”

“Both what dear? What's up?” His mother looked at him concerned at the hesitancy of her son and he pulled a tortured face.

“We're bi,” he blurted out and looked at his parents.

“Buying what?”

“Bi,” Liam repeated, his mouth dry.

“Buy?” The balding man asked. “What's buy?”

Liam took a deep breath and rubbed his eyes. “We are both bisexual. We sleep with guys and girls.”

There was a moment's silence and George looked at his son. “Ya what?” He snapped. “You've been ...”

Liam rubbed his nose and took a deep breath. "I have had sex with other guys as well as Olivia and other girls."

"You cheated on Olivia?" His mother cried. "Oh, she will be so ..."

"No, we did it together, we did things together. It's just that she did it with a girl and I did it with ... well a guy."

"What sort of girl wants to go out with a nancy that fancies other boys?" George thundered.

Liam threw his arms out in front of him and shook his head violently. "It's not like that."

"And if she is with girls then she doesn't like you."

"She does," Liam cried. "It's what we both want. It's what we enjoy."

"I bet she doesn't know what's going on," the balding man cried as he shifted to the edge of his seat and looked at his son. "If she knew you were ... doing things with other boys, well she'd drop you."

"She encouraged me," Liam blurted out. "She was there. We ... it is what we both want."

"Fine mess we've made," George said to his wife. "We've got a daughter who's shackled up with another girl and a son who's messing around with other guys. What's going on with those two?"

Liam rubbed his eyes and shook his head. "It's what I want. It's what Olivia wants. Why is this a problem for you if we are happy?"

"It's just a phase," his father thundered. "But you need to snap out of it. Not having a son of mine being a nancy boy."

"It's not a phase," Liam cried.

"Sit da-rne," his father snapped and Liam threw his body into a chair. "You better start telling me what's going on, 'cause it sounds like you're making a right pigs ear of your life."

"What the hell's going on?" Sarah asked as she wandered into the front room and took her coat off. "I get invited 'round for Sunday dinner and all hell is breaking loose."

"This is your fault," her father thundered. "Putting ideas into his head."

Sarah looked at her brother and shook her head. "Oh you told him about the gay sex."

"Yes," George Dayton thundered. "Yes, he has."

"Oh and I guess from your expression, he's also come clean on the drug-filled orgies."

Liam stared at his sister open mouthed as his father growled behind him. "Mum, can I help you make dinner?" she muttered and wisely left the room, followed by her distraught mother.

* * * * *

Natalie rubbed her eyes as she opened the front door and called to her friends; the house was empty. She had been warned by Sarah that they were probably going to be taking the baby to see her family with her partner and that she should get her own tea.

The house was eerily quiet as Natalie shut the door and traipsed through to the kitchen to get herself a drink; her birthday cards lined up in the lounge where she sat down and idly flicked on the television.

Sarah had, very originally, got her a "sixth" birthday card, which as her birthday only came 'round every four years was accurate, although the children's cartoon that adorned it was quite unnecessary. Her friends and her had arranged to go out on the Friday together so after the obligatory phone conversation with her family she wearily went upstairs to get

unchanged and to listen to her music to unwind.

Natalie felt it before she had even closed the door, someone had been in her room; something was amiss and she looked around the small bedroom expecting to find someone. Natalie didn't like being home alone as it always made her a bit nervous but she felt the hairs on the back of her head stand on end.

"Huuuh-huhhn." She spun around to see Adam in the doorway, leaning against the frame. "Hello," he said in a posh accent. Natalie scowled, looking at his dark hair and mischievous grin while he was dressed in a smart suit.

"What the hell ...?" Adam raised his eyebrows at her and he nodded towards her wardrobe.

"Open it," he told her firmly. "Cause I am taking you out. Birthday."

Natalie glared at him. "You what?"

"Taking you out, for your birthday," he told her. "It's not every day, or indeed every year for you. I know it fits." Natalie smiled at him and opened the wardrobe door to see a beautiful dress. She turned to him and shook her head.

"Sorry, but it'll take more than a dress and a meal for us to have what we could have had. I'd rather ..."

Adam's eyes dropped to the threadbare carpet. "Rather not spend it with me 'cause you thought I was demanding sex? I wasn't Nat, I promise."

Natalie pursed her lips together and nodded. "I guess. I think we are just too different. I mean, I got to like you but ... I don't like what you do, or your friends and ..."

"I ain't seeing Carl no more," Adam told her and she smiled.

"Good."

"No. I ain't sharing his views and we 'ad a bit of a row. Got kicked out of the Crown and I umm ... sort of punched him when he had a go at Tabitha and you. He was a proper twat." Natalie sighed as he spoke angrily. "But I do like you. I ... err ... well I liked spending it with you. It's been a fun few months. I don't want it to end."

Natalie stared at him and twitched. "I'm sorry, it's just that ..."

"I know, I know."

"You don't know," Natalie snapped. "That's the problem. You see me as just a girl, the same as all the others, but I am not. If I'm annoyed, it's because I'm on my period or because of something petty. You've planned my birthday for me, my dress, a meal. You've even got Sarah and Tab out of the way, right?"

Adam nodded. "Well, they were happy to leave us."

"Us," Natalie shrieked. "You didn't ask what I wanted to do, you just planned it. You had no idea what I wanted to do so you decided instead of asking. No idea what I am feeling. And I know you meant well but I am my own person and I don't like being organised." Adam went to speak but Natalie pushed him on the shoulder. "I got made redundant today, on my birthday. I go at the end of next month. Oh, and I'm a thousand pounds overdrawn, I owe Sarah a hundred for the bills, I got two grand on my credit card and ..." She gave a dramatic sigh and squeezed her nose. "I got a car that needs a new exhaust, it's making a horrible sound and ..." Natalie tailed off and sniffed back some tears, her hands going to her face. "I don't want this."

"I had no idea," Adam said tersely and put his arm on Natalie's forearm. "Come on," he muttered. "You can talk about it and ..."

Natalie swung her arm around to shake off Adam's hand and she glared at him. "Please," she cried. "Just leave me alone," she hissed. "I don't need ... this. I told you I've just got out of a relationship and I certainly don't need another one. You're a nice guy, Adam, but no. I just want to be alone, today. OK?"

Adam tried to take her hands again but she pushed him away and ran down the stairs, leaving a startled Adam and the dress in her room. Adam swore at himself, following her down the stairs but she was out of the front door before he could reach her. He swore and picked up his phone, selecting a number in his address book.

Surely, it would have been easier if Natalie had just asked for help?

Chapter XVI

"Mum," Sarah cried as she burst into the lounge. "Oh hi Dad, where's Mum?"

"What is it, love?" The concerned face of Anne Dayton looked up from the doorway to the dining room to see their daughter holding baby Lara in a basket and put it down at the feet of her worried mother.

"Fine. Can you look after Lara please?"

"What?"

"It's only for two hours. Tabitha's been for a check-up and I'm meeting her." Anne looked down at the sleeping baby in the basket, still undisturbed by the swinging her daughter had just inflicted upon it in the wicker travelling cot.

"Are you alright dear?"

"I'm fine, I'm fine. There are spare nappies and stuff in this bag, two bottles and two cartons of milk. And a spare change of clothes. You remember how to change a nappy?" Anne scowled at Sarah as she slid off a backpack and nodded towards her. "Sure?"

"I'm fine. What is going on?"

"I'm doing something I should have done awhile ago."

"What is it?" Anne asked but her daughter had gone. The front door closed and she turned to her husband, who had put his newspaper down and watched as his daughter ran past the lounge window.

There was a whimper by her feet and she looked down to see baby Lara stretching and opening her eyes.

"Well you said," George Dayton muttered, but his wife sneered.

"I am doing dinner," she told him and passed him the bag. "Bond with your grand-daughter. And don't forget to support its head."

George hissed and protested but got little sympathy from his wife. He undid the bag and got the baby out of the cot, supporting the mixed-race infant by its head. Lara looked up into George's eyes and he rocked it slowly, smiling involuntarily.

Lara spluttered and cried, the loud cacophony coming from such a small baby and George yelled into the kitchen. "It's crying."

"I can hear. Give it something to eat," Anne told him. "It's about dinner time."

George grumbled and put the baby down on the floor while he fished around in the bag before extracting a carton of milk and a bottle. He rubbed his nose and shook the milk before trying to open the top.

It split where he was not expecting it and spilt it over him and the carpet. He swore loudly but managed to fill the bottle and glanced over at the crying baby, holding the bottle up. The baby's mouth closed around the bottle and George smiled as a few bubbles rose to the surface as Lara ingested the milk.

"You haven't warmed it up," Anne shrieked as she came into the room. "And hold the poor thing."

"Does it need to be warm?" George asked and Anne shook her head.

"Yes. I'll get some hot water, stop feeding it cold milk. Honestly ..." Anne chastised her husband and strode into the dining room, towards the kitchen to retrieve a jug of hot water.

George received screaming for him removing the bottle and put it to one side. "I don't know what she is moaning about," he cooed as he picked up the baby. "You want cool milk, don't you?"

Lara's mouth opened wider as she screamed into the room, belched and covered the front of her "grand-father" in vomit.

* * * * *

Carl ripped the underwear off the blonde woman who was pushed up against the rough seats in the back of the minibus. He glanced up at the window; he did not want to be disturbed and kissed the rotund woman. "Ya got more tats," he told her as she hiked up her shirt above the paunch.

She grunted and nodded. "Yeah. Down Stoke way. Come on, 'fore Richard sees us."

Carl snorted and peeled his trousers down, taking out his erect cock. Mary cooed at him and blew him a kiss as she gripped his rigid member, pumping it slightly with a smile.

"Richard, he can't get it up," she told him for the fourth week in a row. Carl grinned as she slid his cock towards her hairy crotch and he gripped the back of the seat to gain leverage to thrust his hips forward.

Mary's moistening hole willingly accepted Carl's member and she grunted as he pushed forward, closing her eyes. She pushed her fingers down her overweight body and let them rest at the top of her slit. From her angle, lay down across the back seat, and Carl's position of leaning against the back seat, she was able to slide her fingers around her clitoris with ease.

Carl grunted and moved his left hand to grope her breasts. Mary looked up at him and groaned. "What ya gonna do to that Paki scum?"

"Fuckin' beat 'em up," Carl told her and rammed his cock against Mary. She swore and sneered.

"And rape 'em?"

"Show the dirty fuckers what a real man is like," Carl replied and squeezed Mary's breast.

"Yeah?"

Carl's rhythm speeded up and he looked out of the back of the minibus, picturing himself screwing a reluctant Asian girl who writhed underneath him. Mary slid down the seat slightly and pushed her legs as high as her body would allow.

Carl closed his eyes and groaned, matching the nasal sounds Mary was making. She squealed and told him to "hurry the fuck up." Carl felt his testicles begin to tighten and felt an urge from within him. He tensed his internal muscles, and increased his speed.

"Oh shit," he cried and gripped the back of the worn fabric, looking up at the clouds making lazy shapes in the sky. Carl screwed up his face as he felt the unbearable pressure in his loins. Mary squirmed and he grunted as the first wave of semen squirted down his cock and pumped into the overweight adulteress.

Mary looked up at her partner with lustful eyes and caressed his back as his body tingled and spewed three more waves of semen into his cheating partner. She grunted and wriggled away as Carl mewed appreciatively. "Get cleaned up," she told him clinically. She passed him a tissue and he wiped his cock, watching her as she mopped up the dripping deposit from her loins.

Carl smiled uncomfortably and looked around the minibus. "Ya sure no-one can see us."

"Bit fuckin' late," she warned him and fastened her clothes again. "I parked it 'ere for a

reason. Now fuck off 'fore ya seen. Go kick some Paki brains in.”

Carl nodded and smiled nervously. “Sure.” He stepped off of the minibus and closed the door behind him; Mary said she wanted to allow her lover chance to leave the area before she disembarked and watched as Carl looked up and down the street. He could hear shouting and sirens to his left and smiled as he started walking towards it.

Someone was going to get their heads kicked in and the anti-fascist brigade rarely stood a chance. There was a deathly silence as he walked down the road, the terraced houses bereft of life and energy and he smiled; the Police had warned there would be trouble but they were chronically outnumbered. His group of assorted militants had the run of the streets of the Northern town, beating up gays, ethnic minorities and left-wingers. It was if Nazi England was born for just a few hours.

Carl knew it wouldn't last. The Police would arrive in minutes in strength and then they would melt away into the countryside but it was good while it lasted. After viciously bashing in the face of a Muslim student, Carl had sought the wife of Richard, their imperious leader, and taken her for their usual embrace in the back of Richard's minibus. Now sated, he was eager to do a bit more breaking of bones before the Police stopped their party.

“Ow,” he cried as he felt himself bundled to the side and down an alleyway and up against a wall. He brought his fists up, ready to smash them into the side of a Communist when he saw the familiar face of Eric.

“Where you off to?”

“Checking van,” Carl grunted and the fat face of Eric sneered.

“Richard wants ya.”

Carl looked at him intently, trying to read him for clues - surely Richard didn't know about his secret liaisons with Mary? “Sure,” Carl said without thinking. “Where is he?”

“Over there,” Eric muttered and pointed to an adjacent primary school. “Away from pigs.” Carl watched Eric as he backed away, swinging his shoulder around. It still hurt from where Eric piled onto him in the alleyway against the wall but he walked down the alleyway and jumped over the low fence into the driveway of the primary school.

“Richard,” Carl called out as he walked to the end of the small drive and past the empty car parking spaces. The small school, grey and foreboding surrounded him and he started walking around it.

His heart was beating fast; Richard didn't want to meet him on an abandoned playground to wish him well; this was going to end in a fight and Carl checked his pockets for his knuckle-duster. The playground was empty but he looked and saw three figures, standing with their arms crossed on the edge of the small field.

The field was lined with trees and although the school was overlooked on every side, the small grassy area was completely shielded. Carl gulped. “Richard,” he called with inappropriate gaiety. “Ya wanted me.”

Richard cleared his throat and watched as the man tentatively approached him. He was over 6ft 4in in height and glared at Carl with thick-set eyes. “How long ya been fucking my wife?”

Carl gulped and licked his lips. “Listen mate, I dunno what ...”

“I fuckin' saw ya. In Preston. In Darwen and now.”

Carl pursed his lips together and glanced away. “A couple of times,” he said tersely. “She wants it.”

Richard sniffed and looked at the nervous man watching for a reaction. "The slut might want it. But a fellow soldier. A warrior. A brother. It's worse than a fuckin' wog doin' her."

Carl held his hands out. "It was just a one off," he cried and Richard shook his head slowly. "Ya a traitor," he told him. "Ya fuckin' the wives."

Carl shook his head. "No just Mary."

He sneered. "Well the lads want to give ya a hidin'."

Carl shrugged. "Prob'ly deserve it," he replied, knowing that he was going to get a battering no matter what happened. He reached into his pocket and felt for his weapon: he didn't want to use it against his brothers-in-arms, but they would leave him no choice.

"But ya young," Richard told him with a wry sneer and rubbed his hands together. "I should fuck ya up."

Carl bit his lip and watched Richard look at his two companions, nodding slowly. Richard walked forward, his eyes fixed Carl who retreated slowly in fear. "Let's shake on it?"

"I ... I am not ..." Carl stammered, but Richard held his muscular arm out and pointed his hand towards Carl. Carl looked at Richard and tentatively moved his hand to embrace Richard's olive branch. Carl's eyes were fixed on Richard's and their hands met and they shook firmly.

Richard patted Carl on the shoulder with his free hand. "Ya fuck my wife ..." he started and watched Carl's eyes as his left arm swung wildly and smashed a blade into the side of Carl. He squeezed the fingers of the racist as his arm came in for a second and third time. "Ya fuck my wife, ya gonna die," he told him and push him to the ground. He stood over him, his face smiling and plunged the knife into Carl's body.

Carl gasped as he was pushed away and felt his bleeding side to his body. He staggered back and shook his head. "Ya stabbed ..." He breathlessly whispered.

"Yeah, over there is Gary. He's already dead. What?" He laughed and looked at the wide-eyed man. "You didn't really think you were the only fuckin' guy she'd screw."

"But ..." Carl muttered and felt his legs give away, collapsing onto the floor. Richard passed his knife to one of his companions who wiped it on a towel and placed it back into a holder.

"And my wife," he told the dying man as he advanced towards him. "She gonna have a very bad road crash tonight." He looked at his two companions watching the scene and smiled at them. "Chuck his body in the sand-pit with that other cheating cunt."

* * * * *

Liam looked across at Olivia lay on the bed and she grinned. "At least they know," she told him and he shrugged.

"Dad was proper pissed off with me. Kept saying girls didn't want nancy boys."

"I don't want a nancy boy, but to see you sucking on another guy, it was amazing," she told him. "Real hot. And I know you only did it at first 'cause you were off your tits on ... well whatever ... but you weren't the last two times."

"Yeah, I know," Liam muttered. "And he went fuckin' mental on that as well. Sarah told 'im 'bout the drugs and he just lost it. I mean it's not hard stuff like crack or heroin but 'e weren't interested."

Olivia smiled at her partner and stretched her legs. "I got a couple of lines left," she said proudly and then stroked his arm. "Dad's not back 'til the weekend and Mum's at her boyfriend's house," he told him. "We got all night and tomorrow if we wag school."

Liam smiled. "Just the two of us."

Olivia grinned. "You don't get away that easily," she teased. "I reckon Brad and Evie would come over," she told him. "They're bored and you know what Coke does to us."

Liam laughed. "Well it makes me well interested," he told her as he turned over on her double bed and put his hand over her, touching the hem of her skirt. "Get 'em over," he told her, his eyes sparkling.

Olivia picked up her phone and paused. "Does your Dad know where you are?"

Liam scoffed. "Fuck no." Olivia rolled her eyes and Liam scowled. "We had another row, he thinks I need to 'man up.'" Olivia ran her hands over Liam's bare chest and he looked at her. "I told him that we are into submission games and he just lost it. So fuck 'im."

"You need to let him know you are here," Olivia suggested and Liam shook his head. "Please."

Liam snorted. "I'll send him a photo later," he said with a grin.

"Liam," Olivia pleaded and looked at him.

"He thinks he can rule my life," the teenager ranted. "He needs to learn to stay the fuck out of my life. Keeps thinking that I should be like him and that me being bi or a bottom or whatever is a problem."

"Pissing him off isn't the best way to get his acceptance," Olivia told him and slid her hands into his trousers. "Just ring him before we start, I'll feel better. And if I am relaxed then I am so much hornier," she teased and passed Liam her mobile phone. "Otherwise he could turn up when you're high and it'll be well fucked up."

* * * * *

"I've looked everywhere for you," he said behind Natalie sat down on the path alongside the River Lune. "You don't make my life easy."

Natalie glanced behind her. "I wasn't trying to be found."

"What ya thinking?" Natalie stroked her forehead and said nothing. She felt movement behind her and the heavy coat of Adam being wrapped around her shoulders. "It's cold out here."

"Is it?" Natalie asked and focused on the river. "I hadn't noticed."

Adam took her hand in his and looked at her. "What ya thinking?"

"You wouldn't understand."

"Try," he told her and looked up at the moonlit sky. "Well I reckon you're worried, it's natural." He waited for Natalie to speak but when she didn't he cleared his throat. "Can I tell you a story?"

Natalie looked at him out of the corner of her eye and rubbed the bridge of her nose. "If you must."

"My Mum beat Cancer a few years back, we don't talk about it much but Dad was proper cut up about it at the time, and they supported each other through it. Mum didn't tell me or my elder brother, or sister, or anyone. They just tried to deal with it. Thought they were protecting us. Thing is, Eddie – sneaky little fuck that he is – he found out Mum was going to the 'ospital with Dad and we thought she was going to die when he found out she was seeing some oncy-o-logist. We knew some of what was going on, but not all of it. And that scared us. I had no-one to talk to and I dain't want to lose one of me parents when I was 12. All they needed to do was to talk to us instead of hiding it, but they just dealt with all on their own, and got stressed 'bout it, and we had no idea what was going on."

She glanced over and pursed her lips. "So, I get it. I should talk. I just don't know what to say. It's my problem. And I am not sure if I want to talk to you anyway."

"Yeah well, I was always told ..."

"A problem shared is a problem halved. Only that's bollocks isn't it? I ain't giving you fifteen hundred quids of debt so it ain't halved."

"Yeah, but we can fix any car problems, all you need to do is ask." Natalie snorted at him and Adam took a deep breath while rubbing his hands together. "And you ain't the first person to lose their job?"

"I know ... recession and all that. Fucking Tory cuts."

"Well actually," Adam started. "If the Labour Government..." He trailed off as Natalie glared at him and he shrugged. "Yeah, well, there are people who are losing jobs but they get by," he told her airily.

"It's all right for you. Look I ain't been out of work since I was sixteen. Even at Uni I had a part-time job. I've been with the coaches since I was in my third year and been running that place since I graduated. I might have been an Operations Manager but I did everything." Adam waited for her to speak and she wiped her eyes. "Bloody First in Maths and I all I get is some crappy job. And I can't even keep that," she cried.

Adam gulped; he had only ever seen Natalie angry or happy: vulnerable was a whole new emotion and he bit his lip. "Look, I know you'll be proper annoyed with me for interfering, 'specially after what you said, but I phoned up my boss when you stormed out and he told me to tell you to arrange to come for an interview." Adam scratched his nose and clenched his shaking hands together.

Natalie turned her head and looked at him. "Pardon?"

Adam shifted uncomfortably. "Yeah, well, he's slowing down and he wants someone between the factory floor supervisor, the logistics guys and warehouse shit and himself – a sort of Operations Manager. And he has put out the ad, only got 'weak cunts' and 'bullshiting fuckwits' so I think you might be in with a chance."

"Hang on," Natalie scowled. "You actually want me to be your boss, right?"

Adam's face twitched. "Well, yes and well, I think it might be a nightmare, but I think you'd be good at it. And ..." Adam shrugged as Natalie glared at him. "Well problem halved and all that bollocks."

Natalie smiled through her tears and sighed, shaking her head. "Operations Manager. What does your company do?"

Adam squeezed her. "We make alarms and security systems. Put together in the workshop, or factory. Stored in the warehouse, shipped all around the world. There's a Sales Team but they are based in some offices away from us in the town centre, and there is a helpdesk based there." He looked at her face. "They'll have their own manager."

"Why don't you apply for it?"

Adam sighed. "I'm no good at that shit. I'm a workshop guy. I like dealing with people not numbers." He watched Natalie twitch and continued. "and anyway, the Old Man wants someone bright and I'm not a Uni person, I've only just been promoted."

Natalie tapped him on the knee. "Sounds like a big promotion. I won't get it," she told him. "But ..."

"But he is expecting you to make an appointment to see him. He likes strong characters and ..."

“And?” Natalie asked and Adam shook his head.

“Nah, well ... ummm ... you get the idea.”

Natalie looked back over the river and squinted in the darkness. “I want to go home.”

“Sure, umm, do you want something to eat?”

Natalie shook her head. “No. I know you meant well but I've had a really shit day and I just want to go to bed.”

“Oh right ...” Adam said smirking.

“Alone,” Natalie told him seriously and he started the long walk back with her to her home.

“But you can have your coat back.”

“I'm fine,” Adam lied, his teeth chattering and body shivering. “Honestly, I'm fine, you keep it until I walk you back.”

Natalie sighed. “You ain't comin' to bed with me.”

“Yes, I know,” Adam groaned. “Dya think I only think 'bout sex?”

“Yes,” she said. “But thank you, I think.”

Chapter XVII

"Tabitha," Sarah cried and held out her arms at the girl emerging from the hospital.

"Where's Lara?"

"Mum's got her." Sarah dragged Tabitha towards her and embraced her, hugging her tightly. "You OK?"

"It's just a check-up," Tabitha reminded her and Sarah nodded, her heart beating quickly. She puffed and rubbed her hands, looking at her partner. "Are you OK? You look on edge."

"Me. No. I'm fine, just been to town. I'm fine. Why wouldn't I be? I'm not on edge, why would I be on edge?" Sarah ranted.

Tabitha gripped Sarah's hand and stopped her from walking into the road. "Right, what's up?"

Sarah was shaken from her daydreaming by a truck going past her and looked at Tabitha. "I'm fine," she dismissed her partner airily. "Of course I am fine."

Tabitha scowled and rubbed the back of Sarah's hand. "You are tetchy. I'm fine, babe. Just want to get Lara and snuggle up in bed with ..."

Sarah pulled her towards a small park on the other side of the main road and Tabitha howled in protest as Sarah led her across the busy thoroughfare with scant consideration for the traffic that passed inches from them.

Tabitha wrenched her hand from Sarah's as they reached the pavement on the other side of the road and crossed her arms. "Right, what is going on? You are acting weird."

"I am not weird," Sarah replied, bouncing up and down, and grabbed Tabitha's hand, dragging her into the tiny park. She looked around and stopped on the grass, kneeling down in the twilight and looking into her partner's eyes. "Tabitha, will you marry me?" Sarah reached into her pocket and pulled out a diamond ring, slipping it onto the Black girl's finger.

Sarah looked expectantly, the moist earth soaking into her trousers and her hands trembling as she held out the ring case. "Marriage?"

Sarah bit her lip and nodded. "It's February 29th, I am allowed to ask."

"But ... wow."

Sarah smiled as Tabitha took the £750 ring and tilted it, watching it sparkle in the sunlight. "So, is that a yes. Are we engaged?" Sarah asked impatiently.

Tabitha nodded and wiped her eyes, sniffing. "It's ... um ... so unexpected."

Sarah giggled and slipped the ring onto Tabitha's ring finger, her face ablaze with glee. "Is that a yes?"

"What will your folks think?"

"I don't care," Sarah said honestly. "I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Marry me, Tabs. Please?"

Tabitha sniffed and nodded, wiping her eyes. "Yes."

Sarah beamed and Tabitha gestured for Sarah to get up from the mud, glancing at the muddy knees. Sarah threw her arms around her fiancée, hugging her tightly.

Tabitha was nearly thrown into the rose bushes as Sarah spun her around and then nearly

bounced on the spot as they broke their embrace. "I got to tell Nat," she cried.

"Can we get my daughter first?" Tabitha pleaded and Sarah sighed.

"I s'pose so," she teased and grabbed her partner by the wrist running back down towards the main road.

"Hey Dad," she cried out as she burst into his house and looked at her father mopping his shirt. "Surely, you're old enough to not spill shit down you," she teased and watched as her father turned around with a snarl. "Hey Dad. We're engaged," she said triumphantly. "Look."

Liam laughed from the couch. "Hey, if it's the bride's family that pays, does that mean you have to go half each?"

Sarah grunted from the side of the room. "So who pays for your gay Civil Partnership then?"

Liam scowled. "I am not gay," he said firmly. "Actually Olivia and I were thinking the other day of getting engaged ourselves." George's eyes widened and Liam shrugged. "But congrats sis."

"Yeah," George said, getting up and holding his arms out. "Congratulations."

* * * * *

Natalie stretched her feet under her desk and looked over at the whiteboard hanging in her office – she had never had an office before all to herself and then at the two walls covered with posters. If she stretched out her hands, she couldn't touch both sides of her desk at the same time – it was a big desk and Natalie Porter felt she had arrived.

She leant to her right, hooking her middle finger over the wood and then pushed her body onto the surface, desperately trying to touch the other side at the same time when there was a knock on the door. "In," she cried, sitting up straight in her chair and she saw the face of Adam in the doorway.

"Nat, you wanted the attendance sheets for last week," he told her, passing them to his new Operations Manager. Natalie grinned and smiled back at him.

"Actually I wanted them to go to Jo for the weekly report," Natalie replied in a business-like tone and she flicked through a few of them. "But I'll pass them on once I've had a read."

Adam loitered and looked at her. "How is it?"

Natalie lowered her voice, as if she was being bugged covertly and looked at her ex-house mate and work colleague. "Really good. Mr Rogers has been brilliant, and I've got dozens of ideas to improve the admin 'round here. Proper positive stuff. I need to talk to you 'bout some of them," she told him and Adam grinned.

"How about dinner?" Adam asked rubbing his shaking hands and Natalie shook her head. "On you 'cause you're earning fuck loads more than me." Natalie licked her lips and sighed. "But we never did have your birthday meal, did we?"

"No we didn't ... but I've been told to invite you tomorrow to the house after work. Sarah and Tab want to see you again and Sarah's cookin'."

"Me?"

"Yeah, I can't believe it either but cha wanted," Natalie waved her hand in a circle as a dismissive gesture and her eyes narrowed. "Why was Tom absent or late every day last week?"

"Ahhh. Yes, we ... he's ..." Adam gulped and sniffed. "He's got some home trouble, ya know. It's hard for him and ..."

"And he doesn't need any trouble at work?" Natalie enquired of the nervous supervisor.

"Exactly."

Natalie smiled and looked at him. "Tell him I completely understand," she said with a smile. "And if he is late or absent one more time, he won't have any work to worry about." Adam nodded and Natalie took a deep breath with a shrug. She nodded towards him and gestured him to leave which Adam was happy enough to do.

* * * * *

"Liam, Olivia," a female voice cried and the young man adjusted his trousers and opened his girlfriend's door. "Hello, Mrs Marshall," Liam called and walked to the balcony overlooking their winding staircase.

"What's up Mum?" Olivia cried, coming up behind her boyfriend and squeezing her hands around his waist.

"I'm ... ummm ... going out for night," the elegant woman told her. "Your father should have been home but he is staying in London. His mistress must be obliging," she said tersely and looked up the stairs. "Is Liam staying the night?"

"Ummm ... yeah," Olivia replied with a coy smirk.

"Cause he stayed last night and the night before and the night before."

Olivia adjusted her facial expression and looked at her mother wrapping a scarf around her. "Yeah, well, he ummm ... helps with my homework."

"Yeah well," her mother replied with a snort. "If he stays much more then he might as well move in and get his own toothbrush."

Olivia beamed. "Oh Mum, that's great. I've told him to move into my room. You don't mind?" She asked and squeezed Liam, not waiting for a response. "Come on, let's go and get some clothes from your house," she cried and her mother looked up the stairs at her excitable teenage daughter.

"Look Olivia, I think we need to ..." Her voice trailed off as her phone vibrated as she answered it immediately.

"Yes Troy. I'm coming. Five minutes. Yeah, sorry. OK. No, it won't. OK. Of course I'm not. Yes, I know the rules. OK bye." She looked back up the stairs and shook her head, closing the door behind her as she left.

"What was all that about?"

"Mum. She is Troy's sex slave." Olivia waited for Liam to call out in exclamation and she squeezed his waist a bit harder. "She thinks I don't know that bit, but he's where I get me Coke from. And the other gear." Liam turned to look at her and she shook her head. "No, I don't."

"What?"

"I know what you are thinking, I don't do mother-daughter things for Troy and I won't. I get it from him as I get it cheap."

Liam bit his lip and let out a deep breath. "I wasn't saying that. I was going to ask if your Dad knows about Troy."

"Oh yes. And Mum knows about Poppy. But acceptance is cheaper than a divorce," Olivia replied and kissed him on the cheek.

"Cheaper?"

"Yeah, ya see, marriage is just an alliance of convenience really."

"No it isn't," Liam cried out and Olivia smirked at him.

"It is, well it is the way Mum and Dad do it."

Liam sighed and thought for a moment. "But us, me and you?"

Olivia smirked. "We are not a relationship of convenience. And I don't think ya Dad will want you to marry me."

Liam shrugged and sniffed. "But if I was to ask, what would you do?"

Olivia grinned and kissed him on the lips. "I would, most definitely, take advantage of you while you were down there," she said with a grin. "Now come on, let's get some stuff from your house, you heard Mum, move in to my room. This is going to be so cool."

* * * * *

"Come on," Sarah cried the moment Adam swung on the door frame and looked into the front room. "Strip."

"Strip?" Adam muttered and walked into the room. "I already have done."

"I wouldn't let him in the house until I could see his cock," Natalie told her from behind him.

"Yes, and when are you goin' to get your tits out," Adam asked and Natalie gasped.

"Is that a way to talk to your boss?" Adam scowled and Natalie tapped him on the bridge of his nose. "Sexual harassment and all that?"

"Yeah well, I'll take my chances on that one," he snapped in response.

Adam watched Natalie leave the room to go upstairs and he flounced down on the sofa next to Sarah. "Not going too well then?"

"Ahh she is a feckin' nightmare at times," Adam moaned throwing his head back and looking up at the ceiling. "She is very organised and a bit of a hard-nosed cow which is exactly what the Old Man wanted but she's sacked four people in three weeks, no sorry, two and a half weeks. And I've had to give one of my staff a warning."

"Shit," Sarah muttered and Adam looked at her.

"Yah see. The Old Man reckons Sun's shining from every one of her holes but she is so ... ruthless. I got a guy, he's 30, kid's got Leukaemia and his wife is divorcing him, so really fucked up in the head. I told him not to worry about being late and stuff and I'll settle up the hours with him later in the year as I don't really want 'im on the machines when he is distracted but she's kicked off on one. Today, I've just given him a written warning 'cause the vicious one checked his record. That's not to mention with-holding Sam's bonus or ..."

Adam trailed off when he saw Natalie emerge from the hallway, holding her shoes. She glared at him and he sniffed. "You think I'm a 'feckin' nightmare'?"

"Ahhh, well Nat ..." Adam started and Natalie crossed her arms. "Ya shouldn't have been listenin'"

"I was undoing my shoes," Natalie spat. "Just so ya know two of the four left because they were stealin'. The PA left 'cause I found out she was going getting her nails done on company time. Tom's not got anything agreed with the company about flexible working," she told him and Adam shook his head.

"He agreed it with me, six weeks ago."

"Then why the fuck don't HR know?"

"Cause they know fuck all."

Natalie shook her head and wiped her eyes. "They know fuck all 'cause people like you tell

'em fuck all."

Adam grunted. "Yeah well me giving him a warning, it didn't go down too well. And I feel like a bastard, it's not why I became a supervisor to pick on good guys with sick kids."

Natalie screwed up her face and took a deep breath. "I am not employed to be popular with your staff but if I had known, if you had told me, things would have been different."

"And Sam?"

"Oh and Sam's bonus has been with-held 'cause I caught him in the bogs with a porn mag knocking one out which ..."

"Eewww," Sarah cried and Adam shook his head.

"Yeah, he does that. But that's his choice and he does it in his lunch hour."

"He was doing it in the Ladies at 5pm," Natalie hissed back. "But I do not need to justify myself to you or to your staff. I am your boss ..."

"Don't I fuckin' know it," Adam snapped and then muttered an apology.

"I see you have a problem, with women telling you what to do," Natalie replied coldly.

"But ..."

"Just let me manage my team," Adam told her. "You were brought in 'cause the Old Man ..."

"Mr Rogers," Natalie corrected him and Adam nodded.

"Yeah, well, he wants to stand back a bit, he's not got the health he used to have so he wants to slow down a bit, so you've been brought in and the likes of Dave and Nathan promoted so there are managers and people organising the place when 'e's not there. I don't need to be controlled."

Natalie's scowl deepened. "It's my job."

"No, Natalie. It's my job to run the factory, get the 'larms made. I got staff to organise and yeah, I may answer to you. As does the QA manager and the warehouse and stuff, but that factory was fine two months ago and it's fine now. I don't need to be watched and ..."

Natalie took a deep breath. "It's my job," she said slowly and calmly. "To make sure all of the areas under my remit are working to the best of their ability."

"We are making more alarms, more security systems, more everything with two less staff than I should 'ave, thanks to you. How much more efficient do we need to be?"

Natalie blinked and wiped away the tears filling in her eyes. "I'm sorry if you think I am being a bitch. But I need to get to grips with the teams I control ... and I could do with a bit more support."

"More support?" Adam cried. "I could do with you not over-ruling me. Everyone thinks the same, you need to chill."

Sarah tapped Adam on the knee. "Hey, if you two want to fight," she started and waggled an outstretched finger towards Adam.

"No, I don't," Adam murmured and Natalie licked her lips. "Not at all."

Sarah looked towards Natalie who shook her head and undid the white blouse underneath her business suit. "Getting changed," she said quietly and shut the door on her way out.

"Nice one," Sarah hissed. "You've upset her."

"Now there's a fuckin' surprise," Adam responded sharply and exhaled sharply. "I don't mean to upset her, and she's probably doin' a crackin' job at her level but she is treading

on too many toes at my level. I just feel ...” Adam tailed off and shrugged.

“Ahhh ... side-lined. Impotent.”

“Well yes.”

“Insignificant. Unimportant. Pathetic. Spurious.”

“Yes, thank you Sarah.”

“Unrequired. Violated,” Sarah said gleefully. “Powerless. Over-ruled.”

“Have you finished?”

Sarah's face twitched and she grinned. “It's natural. New boss ... new job, everyone's settling in. Ya know I'm getting a new headmaster at the end of the year and things change. He might be a twat, or he might be great.”

“Yeah well, I think she thinks that I am too relaxed or just inefficient. I dunno, it's just gettin' to me 'cause I didn't think she'd be like that.”

“And you still ain't taken 'er out for her birthday?”

“No, but I daren't now although she said no when I asked.”

Sarah put her drink down and gestured Adam to get to his feet. “Come on, help me dish up.”

“Dish up? You ain't cooked nuttin’”

“Slow cooker,” Sarah cockily responded and Adam grinned.

“Yes, you are aren't you?” The naked Sarah leapt to her feet, her hand striking the hairy backside of her ex-housemate and pushed him towards the cool kitchen. “How's Tab?”

“Ahh, she's fine. She's bathing Lara,” came the response and Adam smiled.

“Still struggle to see you two as parents.”

Sarah pursed her lips together and sighed. “I struggle to see how you have fucked things up with Natalie so much and so often.”

Adam snorted and Sarah flicked the switch on the kettle before reaching down for the cous-cous out of the cupboard. Her arms outstretched, he saw her bosom rise and feel a tingle in his loins: Sarah was still sexy, however unattainable she might be.

He blew air through his lips and pulled a white oval appliance towards him, dishing up five plates of Sarah's Bean Stew as directed while Sarah added the cous-cous to the plates.

“Go easy on her,” Sarah whispered as he got ready to take the plates into the dining room.

“She go easy on me,” Sarah was told and Adam carried two hot plates out of the kitchen. He nearly dropped them when he came face-to-face with Ivy, naked.

“What the fuck?” Adam cried and Ivy smirked.

“Sorry,” she said and shook her golden hair free so that it dropped to her pert bosom and slim frame. “Didn't you know?”

“Ivy is sleeping in your old room,” Sarah whispered in Adam's ear. “She likes naturism, right?”

Ivy nodded. “Yeah, and Tabby, Sarah and Nat are so much fun. I can't believe you argued with them, bro?”

Adam looked at his naked sister, his eyes wandering past her belly button and Sarah muttered in his ear, about him being a “dirty old pervert.”

“Oi,” Adam called out, shaking his attention back to the present. “I'm not old.” He opened

the door to the dining room with the back of his hand and put the two hot dinners on the table and turned around to see the naked behind of his younger sister through the open doorway going into the kitchen. "I've not seen her naked since she was, like ten."

"Has she changed then?" Sarah teased but Adam didn't respond as a naked Tabitha, and equally undressed Natalie entered the room.

"You didn't tell me Ivy was living with you," Adam spat at Natalie who sighed.

"She moved in on Monday."

He sat down and allowed Sarah to pour some white wine in his glass and watched the mother sit down. "Where's Lara?"

"Asleep," Tabitha replied and put a baby alarm on the side. "She's been fed." Adam raised his eyebrows at her and she smiled. "I know what you are thinking." Adam sniffed and suppressed a smile as Tabitha nodded. "Yes, I was out of milk yesterday and did express a squirt in my coffee."

"Tabs," Sarah cried as she sat down. "You dirty cow."

"What?" Tabitha asked and Sarah shook her head. She raised her glass and cleared her throat. "We are gathered here today," she started with mock seriousness, "to see if our project, to house train Adam, has worked." Adam laughed at her and Sarah nodded towards his glass. "Nah, it's good to see ya 'cause you've not been to see us."

"Been busy," he muttered. "New boss, she's a right cow." He shovelled a big piece of the stew into his mouth and glanced over at Natalie.

"It's all right," Natalie said with a smirk. "I've locked his clothes in my bedroom. He ain't havin' 'em back and he can't stay the night."

"What?"

"I'll lend you a dress to go home in," Sarah teased and Adam grunted.

"I don't think it will fit," Ivy muttered. "Adam's a bit ... well ... fat, I s'pose."

Adam ignored his sister and looked at Natalie. "Why?"

"Until you apologise."

"She is a manager and you will respect her au-thori-tie," Sarah said in a silly voice and Adam sighed. She looked at Natalie and Adam glaring at each other and shook her head. "Can't you two just make up?"

"Certainly, the moment he grows up."

Adam rolled his eyes and pushed his empty plate away. "Oh, for fuck's sake. I'm sorry I said what I said. But it's what me and a few others think. Ya a fuckin' control freak."

Natalie put her fork on the plate and cocked her head. "I'm not a control ..."

Sarah closed her eyes and groaned. "Can't you end this argument?"

"No," Natalie said forcefully. "I respect him as a supervisor, but he needs to realise that I have responsibilities and I need to make everything more efficient and if I could trust him to work with me instead of against me, it would be so much easier."

"I got an idea," Sarah said cheerily. "I could bang you feckin' 'eads together, just as my Dad used to threaten me with, or ..." She trailed off as she looked at the two scornful faces of her two dinner companions.

"Or what?"

"Well this is obvious what it's about."

“Yeah it's about her not understanding ...”

“No, it's just frustration.” She pointed at Natalie and raised her eyebrows. “You wanted Adam that night and he was a prick, or you thought he was a prick. But you still want him as you imagined he should have been. This is all about you taking your frustration out on him for not being your ideal date.”

Natalie went to protest but she turned to Adam. “And you, you still want her, admit it, despite her being your boss. So this is all fuckin' lustful frustration and you just need to fuck yourselves silly and get it out of ya system, like you did on New Year. Or agree that you two ain't gonna get it on. But I don't want this silliness spilling out all over my dinner.”

Tabitha burst out laughing which was a cue for stifled giggling around the table and Adam looked at Sarah. “I've offered to take her out for dinner but I've been knocked back.”

“Ya beneath her now,” Ivy teased. “She's too good for ya.”

Sarah looked at Natalie who shrugged. “Yeah, well. It'll be weird,” she said defensively. “He's so ... Adam. He's moved out, God only knows what his place is like now.” Sarah held her hands out collecting the dirty plates and smirked at Natalie who gave a laboured sigh. “OK, take me out for my birthday,” she told the naked man.

“Don't do me a favour,” he replied and got a kick under the table from Sarah. He glanced towards her. “Sorry. Tomorrow, OK?”

Natalie sniffed. “Sure. I'll take the dress with me to work and get changed. Nice place though. Not an Indian.”

“I'll take my shirt and trousers,” he replied stoically. “How about the Japanese on the ring-road?”

“But you are not to tell anyone that we are going out to a restaurant,” she told him quickly and he sighed. “Well, it won't look too good, will it?”

“I don't think it'll matter,” Tabitha replied. “One of the managers at my place was knocking off half the checkout girls, no-one cared.”

Natalie bit her lip in thought and then looked up and Adam nodding. “It can be our little secret,” he teased and Natalie's face changed.

“I'll tell you what, I'll give you a massage after tea, to make up.” Adam smiled at the curvaceous girl and nodded.

“Yeah, cheers. I've missed them.”

“Good, 'cause I've been to a new massage class,” Natalie announced. “I can now do Turkish Massage,” she said with a smile on her face. “And I need someone to try it on.”

“Don't you need a sauna for that?” Sarah asked and Natalie shook her head.

“Nah, not the way I'm going to do it,” she was told and the teacher shook her head as she left the room, carrying five dirty plates into the kitchen.

Epilogue

“What?” James asked. “You never said nothing 'bout no getting keks off.”

Teri shook her head. “I said it was OK.”

“But it's ...”

“Natalie's idea,” Adam told him and took off his dressing gown to reveal a flowery apron. “It's her thing.”

“Why do you have to go out with wild girls?” James asked with a snort and Teri unbuttoned his shirt. “I can't believe you didn't tell me about this.”

“Why?” Teri asked. “You mean to tell me you wouldn't've come? Your best friend, and all that. It's his house warming.” James grumbled and Teri glared at him. “It's our first night without the kid so just shut your mouth, OK?”

Adam blushed and hovered, putting his dressing gown on the peg and opening the door to the kitchen-cum-dining room. Tabitha and Sarah were sat at the table talking to Natalie as pans vibrated on the gas cooker, as their dinner simmered.

Adam kissed the naked Natalie on the cheek. “Dish up, love?”

Natalie nodded and got up from the chair, embracing Teri and a very anxious James as they came in and gestured towards the table that had six chairs crammed around it. “Adam, you better do the introductions.”

Adam watched James, covering his manhood, sit down quickly and look around the room; he was nervous and uncomfortable but clearly slightly entertained by the idea of a naked dinner. “OK, this is James, my friend and his long-suffering wife, Teri.” The two guests mumbled greetings towards Sarah and Tabitha who Adam introduced as “my old house mates, who have a kid and are engaged.”

Sarah cocked her head towards James. “He knows about us,” she said and looked at his wife. “We had a sort of a disagreement.”

James fidgeted in his chair and looked towards Adam. “Any chance of a beer?”

“Sure, Adam replied and opened the fridge as Teri asked Sarah what indiscretions her husband had been up to.

“He was knocking one out to some home made porn Tab and I made,” Sarah told her as Adam and Teri looked at each other, expecting a response from Teri. “We caught them.”

“The filthy fuckin' bastard,” Teri cried and hit her husband that elicited a vocal yell of pain. “Is this true?”

James screwed up his face. “Sort of. Well it was Carl.”

“Did you have your hands on your ... equipment?” Teri asked in an exasperated voice, and James nodded sheepishly. She stared at him wide-eyed and snorted. “Have you apologised to the young ladies?” James shook his head and she crossed her arms. “Well?”

James blushed as Sarah only just managed to suppress the urge to smile, covering her mouth with her hand. “Yeah, sorry.”

Teri glared at him. “You are sorry for what?”

“OK, I am sorry for having a wank over your private videos.”

Teri shook her head and crossed her arms. “Flaming disgusting,” she thundered and

looked over at Adam. "And I s'pose you were involved as well."

"Red or white?" Adam asked, changing the subject and holding out two bottles of wine.

Natalie, stirring the dinner, looked around to see Teri. "Yes he was, but he has been dealt with."

"Yes, thank you," Adam cried. "I am not a child." He put the wine on the table, took the rice, stirred it before putting it in the sieve over the sink, allowing the cloudy water to drain out of the food. Natalie passed him a kettle of freshly boiled water and he poured it over the rice, washing it liberally.

"Are you going to be OK?" Adam asked Tabitha. "With ..." He trailed off and pointed at his chest with random hand movements and the young mother screwed up her face, looking at Natalie. "Well ... you know." He waited and when he didn't get a response. "Your tits."

Sarah sighed. "Do you mean, as her titties are full of milk will they fall in the dinner?"

Tabitha groaned. "They are big," she told him and held them up.

"She doesn't just fail the pencil test, she fails the remote control test," Sarah added and took a banana from the fruit bowl and put it under one of Tabitha's breasts.

Adam creased into hysterical laughter and shook his head. "I was thinking of the spices and the milk and baby Lara."

"She'll be fine," Tabitha replied, extracting the fruit from her breasts and passing it to her lover who couldn't get it to fit under her pert bosom and put it to one side.

The rice was joined on the candle heaters in the centre of the table by a Lamb Rogan Josh, a Chicken Tikka and a Vegetable Vindaloo – all placed in the metal bowls and put on top of the tea candles sitting on the heater. Adam pointed out the vegetarian dish as Natalie brought over a number of sauces, popadoms, bhajjis and naan breads, as all the diners started dishing up their meal onto the mismatched plates laid out on the dining table.

"Wow," Teri muttered. "There's a lot of food here. You do all this?"

Natalie smiled. "Adam and me did. He got an Indian cookery set for Christmas," she said looking at her house mates. "The burners, bowls, some of the sauces."

"It was to make Natalie and Adam spend time with each other," Sarah injected. "I think it worked."

Natalie grinned. "It did," Adam told them. "And I am very grateful." Natalie pursed her lips and blew him a kiss.

"So you were all house mates?" Teri asked and Tabitha nodded.

"But Adam's left and Nat'll be leaving soon."

Natalie looked up. "Will I?"

Sarah nodded. "Oh you spend two nights a week here, by the Summer you'll be spending every night here and then you'll move out."

Natalie hummed. "That's really ..." She stopped and looked at the her house mate. "I only spend Fridays and Saturdays here. And if we go for a drink after work. Treating my boyfriend's house as a crash pad is a long way from moving in with him."

Sarah sighed. "Sorry, it's just ... well we can see it." She rubbed the back of Tabitha's hand and smiled. "We both can, and we're happy for you."

There was silence as Natalie looked at Sarah, rubbing the bridge of her nose. Adam exhaled and looked at the two lesbian partners. "How's the wedding planning?" Adam

enquired, deliberately changing the subject, as he shovelled some curry into his mouth.

“Good,” Sarah said instantly and squeezed Tabitha's hands. “Really good. But there is so much going on. We sent invites out yesterday and that was fun, as I hadn't told the religious wing of our family about Tabitha.”

“That's bad if they are going to cause problems,” Teri uttered and Sarah nodded talking a mouthful of the vegetarian food.

“Yeah ...” Sarah started and then stopped, panting. “Fuckin' hell,” she shrieked and downed her full wine glass, breathing out dramatically. “What the fuck's in that?”

Natalie gasped. “Oh shit. Yeah, ummm ... it's sort of a vindaloo. I forgot you don't like spicy food.” Sarah panted, leapt up and grabbed a glass, filling it with water and leaning over the sink, panting wildly.

Neither Adam nor James could resist looking as the young teacher downed the pint of water, her body bent over and her rear on display to the room. “Hey love, nice arse,” James called and then cried out in pain.

* * * * *

“Mr Fox,” the nurse said gently, shaking him by the arm. Carl groaned and opened his eyes, squinting in the bright light. “I'll turn the lights down,” she told him and reached over to the switch to reduce the brightness. Carl sighed and rubbed his eyes. “Where am I?”

The nurse smiled. “You were attacked, at a rally. You were stabbed.”

Carl blinked and sniffed. “Richard. Yeah, the bastard.”

The nurse continued to watch as Carl righted himself and sat back on the head board. She passed him a remote control to amend the angle of the bed and he thanked her, opening his eyes.

She moved the table up the bed and placed a dinner tray on it, looking at him. “Do you need any help?”

Carl groaned and screwed up his face as he adjusted himself and the nurse held out her hands to support him. “Do you need me to tell anyone you are here?”

Carl sniffed and slowly allowed his eyes to come into focus. “No,” he muttered. “There's no-one.”

She pursed her lips together. “Really? I don't believe that.” She paused for a moment and gave a wry smile. “You've just come out of theatre,” she told him. “You were very lucky.”

“I got stabbed,” Carl groaned. “That ain't lucky.”

“It missed most of the important bits of you,” she said and started filling in a chart.

Carl allowed his eyes to focus on the nurse and squinted. “Zenka?”

The nurse smiled “Ss-denka,” she told him glancing at her name badge and signed the bottom of the page. “I'm from Prague.”

Carl shifted uncomfortably and she looked at him. “But you know I was on ...” he said hoarsely and she nodded.

“Yeah, I know. But it doesn't matter. I am paid to treat everyone,” she told him firmly. “Even if they no likey me.”

Carl took a deep breath and cried out as he did, clutching his front. “I ain't part of them no more,” he muttered painfully and the nurse smiled. “It ain't for me.”

She smiled. “Doctor Marquez, he operated on you, he coming to see yaar soon.” She left

the pause hanging in the air. "He save yaar life." Carl's thoughts were interrupted by a knock on the door and the nurse opened it gesturing a Policeman into the room.

"Mr Fox," a Policeman in uniform asked. "Is it OK to take a statement?"

* * * * *

"Hi Dad," Adam called and looked around the empty garage. "Dad!"

Stuart appeared from the office, adjusting his overalls and looked at his son. "Oh hiya Adam, what's up?"

Adam pulled out a present from his bag and passed it over to his father. "Happy birthday," he called out and Stuart grinned.

"Ahh cheers, ya didn't have to. Where are you off to? Dressed up like that."

Adam nodded towards the car where Natalie was waiting. "Wedding, we got a wedding to go to. Old house mates."

"Oh right. That's where Ivy is today?" Adam nodded and saw movement in the office.

"Who's ya new lass in the office?"

"Ahh, yeah, she's wonderful," Stuart enthused. "Super organised, and was 'elping me under a motor the other week." Adam looked around his father and gasped.

"Bella," he cried, and the buxom girl blushed.

"Adam, what are you doing here?"

"You two know each other?" Stuart enquired and Adam nodded.

"We had a date," he told him. "Just one."

Bella bit her lip and shrugged. "I got nervous, drank loads, split my dress in the restaurant and threw up over him. I was a bit of a gobby cow."

Adam nodded as Stuart laughed heartily. "Look Dad, Bella. I gotta shoot. Happy sixtieth," he called out.

"Fuck off," came the response and Adam sat back in the passenger seat.

* * * * *

"Will you straighten your tie?" Natalie asked exasperated and tugged at Adam's shirt collar. "You look like a piggin' teenager."

"Will you stop nagging?" Adam told her and slid his hands down his curvy partner's silk-clad flanks. "It's not about me, it's about the brides and the bridesmaids, and so on."

Natalie shook her head and tottered over to see Sarah descending down the majestic staircases of the country manor house. "You look lovely," Natalie cooed and called Adam over. "Sorry we are a bit late, we had to drop something off in town."

"She means she can't read a map," Adam told her. "She was nearly pushing her car out of the mud in her red silk dress." Sarah gave a nervous laugh and looked her two bickering friends.

"Dropping the present off took twenty minutes."

"Five."

"Twenty."

"Five," Adam repeated with a raised voice. "And getting lost added an hour to a journey."

"An hour? Fuck off. Ten minutes more like."

Sarah crossed her arms, her elegant, understated white dress shimmering in the light. "Finished? 'Cause you are an hour early."

Natalie nodded and looked up to see her landlord traversing the stairs behind Sarah. She fished in her handbag and pulled out a tatty envelope. "Rent money," she cried and held it out to George Dayton.

The balding man grinned. "Cheers Natalie." He turned to Sarah and kissed her on the cheek. "Guests aren't riving for another hour, I'm just going for a walk, get some fresh air."

Sarah waited for him to leave and grinned at Natalie. "Giving his daughter away in a lesbian ceremony isn't doin' it for him," she said honestly and squinted as he walked out into the spring sunshine.

"So which one of you has the best man?" Adam asked Sarah who crossed her arms and scowled, shaking her head.

"I'm sorry," Natalie muttered. "He's still a tit."

"No, but there has to be a best man in a marriage ceremony."

"It's civil partnership," Sarah told him quickly. "But I have the best man, it's my brother Liam."

Adam shrugged and looked at his girlfriend smoothing out her red dress. "And you are Tab's bridesmaid or Sarah's?"

Sarah touched Adam on the arm. "Is this whole gay marriage thing a bit confusing for you?"

"Yes. Why aren't you both wearing big long wedding dresses. Like that Kate-whatnot off the telly."

"Kate whatnot?" Sarah asked and Natalie rolled her eyes.

"Kate Middleton?"

"Yeah, her."

"Because it would look silly. So we both have very understated wedding dresses that match the red theme of the wedding." Adam looked at her body hugging white dress with the red trim and giggled.

"There was me thinking you were going to have a nude wedding."

Sarah looked at Natalie. "We sort of thought of it," she said sheepishly. "But Dad said no and Mum just broke down. And I'd have to explain to the religious end of the family."

"Yeah, where are they?" Adam asked. "I wanted to keep my distance after ..."

"After you flashed them? They rang me up to say I was committing sin lying with another girl and they were not going to watch me enter the kingdom of Satan."

"Oh," Adam murmured and she shrugged.

"I don't care. Fuckin' nutjobs anyway. Dad's a bit cut up about it though. And I got a bit pissed couple of nights ago and sent them an e-mail which mightn't have helped relations."

Adam laughed and looked around the room. "Very nice place."

Sarah pursed her lips and nodded. "Hey Nat, have you got time for a chat?"

Natalie sniffed and looked at Adam. "Alone?"

Sarah screwed up her face apologetically and rubbed her hands. "Please."

Natalie leant in to kiss Adam on the cheek. "It means piss off," she told him and watched

Adam walk into the garden.

Adam took a walk around the grounds, not meeting Sarah's father and ended up sitting on the low wall and looking out over the meadow. It gave him time to think as he watched a bird of prey on the wing, idly circling the fields searching for it's dinner. Adam pondered the previous six months: it had certainly been a roller-coaster. He had lost a friend in Carl but gained two with his temporary house mates and had ensnared the lovely Natalie as well.

Natalie was not an "easy" girlfriend, and while she was not high maintenance with regards to monetary spend, she could be demanding with his time and his energy. Most of all, Natalie made him smile, and once they had worked out their problems at work, it all became much easier.

In essence, Adam was truly happy for the first time in years. He heard his name and saw Natalie standing at the foot of the path. "There you are," she called. "Come on."

"Sarah OK?"

Natalie smiled and walked up to him, shaking her brunette hair out of her face. "Yeah, she's just a bit nervous," Natalie muttered. "It's a big step."

Adam jumped down from the wall and smoothed out his trousers. "Ready?"

"Yeah, let's get in the hall. Peeps will be arriving soon." Adam held out his hand and Natalie took it, beaming into the eyes of her boyfriend as they navigated their way back to the main house.

"It's a bit posh," Adam whispered as they filed into the giant hall and took their seats at the front. "I feel like I should be a servant not a guest."

Natalie suppressed a laugh and squeezed his hand. "Should be posh," she muttered back. "Sarah's dad has coughed for the lot."

"Christ," Adam whispered back. "Must be settin' him back a bit."

"Yeah, and ya know the house I live in, well he is giving it to Sarah and Tab as a wedding gift."

"Oh, do you want to move in with me then."

Natalie screwed her face up. "No. I'll just pay rent to Sarah not George but Sarah doesn't know about it, so don't tell her. It's for when they have any more kids, it's a nice family home. Four bedrooms, nice area."

"But you could move in."

Natalie looked at him and smiled. "I sort of have, haven't I? I mean I spend three nights a week at least. But I like my own space."

"Oh," Adam muttered. "It's just ..."

"You want me to?" Natalie asked, finishing the sentence for him.

"Well, yes," Adam told her.

"Well I like my own space. When the rental agreement comes 'round in three months I might think about it."

"It would be ..."

"Sssshhh," Natalie hissed and they stood up as Sarah and Tabitha both walked down the aisle, being led in by a big black woman and Sarah's father.

"Who's she?" Adam whispered.

"Her ma, who do you think?"

Adam didn't get a chance to respond as the registrar, a middle-aged man, coughed and started speaking. He called on the Best Man to provide the rings, and Liam, sat next to Natalie got up.

It was an informal ceremony, but still intimate and loving, and Sarah tripped over her lines on more than one occasion through nervousness. Natalie kept dabbing her eyes and squeezing the hand of Adam as the ceremony unfolded.

The two lovers had to put their bouquets down when they were told they could kiss, the two girls hugging and then embracing in front of their families. "They're a bit full-on," Adam whispered.

"They're in love," Natalie whispered back. "It means everything to them."

Adam pursed his lips and the couple disappeared behind a curtain to sign a registrar before posing for photographs. The next twenty minutes was taken up with every combination of photographs – the Kwame family, the Dayton family, the house mates, Sarah with the teachers, the wedding party and just the two of them. Adam was glad he wasn't in many of them and just stayed at the back talking to Liam and one of Sarah's colleagues, who thought very highly of the newly-married teacher.

"Flowers!" Sarah cried as the photographer packed away his camera and she grabbed Tabitha. "Come on. Girls behind us." She sighed. "No, not you Mum. Unless you want to get married again."

"Not at these prices," the voice of her husband called from the crowd.

Sarah looked behind her and then at her partner. "You first," she said holding onto her posy of red roses and Tab looked back.

"Both together."

They giggled, held out the flowers in front of them and threw them up into the air, arcing back towards the dozen guests.

Natalie shrieked, Sarah's bundle of flowers was clearing everyone and was coming down towards her at the back. She stepped back and as the women in front of her jumped, they just brushed the flowers and it landed in her hands. She turned to Adam, holding it aloft, grinning. "Well come on then, propose," she told him.

"Would you say yes?"

"Would I fuck," Natalie said instantly and laughed. "But I am next to get married."

Liam patted Adam on the back. "Your days of freedom are over, buddy," he teased and Natalie laughed; emerging from the scrum of women attempting to catch Tabitha's bouquet was Olivia, holding it aloft proudly.

"Unlucky," Adam replied and Olivia's eyes narrowed.

"Liam. I would say yes," she told him and pursed her lips. "Whenever you're ready."

Adam looked at Natalie staring at him. "Why are Lancashire girls so crazy?"

Additional Story: Lucy gets a shock

Codes: MF, nudism

(If you don't know why this is here then you didn't read the Note from the Author at the front of the book; you naughty boy/girl! Basically, this is the short story that sparked the idea for the book)

Lucy skipped as she walked down the tree-lined avenue towards her boyfriend's small house and had to check her directions; she had only been there once before and it had been dark then. Since that time Jack had expressly forbidden her from going back, saying that he lived in a dangerous part of the town and that she would be at risk if she visited.

Lucy didn't feel in any danger. The road was well lit and although the Sun had long since disappeared below the horizon, being replaced with a fearsome wind in the night sky, there were enough cars and people about to make her feel safe. She had thought of ringing him and asking him to meet her at the bus stop but that would have spoilt the surprise – it was his birthday in three days and although their relationship was new, she wanted to treat him. She wanted him to not expect her and then offer him a present, and a night of lustful satisfaction.

She felt a warm glow as she remembered how they had met, two lonely pairs of eyes glancing at each other over the dance floor in the Student Union nightclub. He looked rugged but appealing and she had watched as he walked around the sweaty, writhing masses of drunken students and sat down next to her in the seat vacated by her friend who was now just a few feet in front of them doing wild pelvic thrusts to the music.

He had smoothly introduced himself, told her that she looked lovely and offered to buy her a drink. Lucy felt under a spell, few people ever came up to her to talk to her, she was “too flat-chested” for men to take a real interest in her, and gleefully accepted his charm.

Jack enticed the girl onto the dance floor and plied her with drinks, causing her classmates to look on enviously. It was unheard of for the diminutive girl “to pull” and they not find anyone to even dance with but despite the obvious attempts at ensnaring attention, they had not managed it with ever shortening skirts or increasing cleavage.

Lucy was whisked away at the end of the night, barely able to stand up and leaning on her date, into the town centre and then guided back to her house. Jack had taken the opportunity to wrap his arm around her and although he certainly felt her left breast as she walked, made no moves on the drunken girl. Lucy was too drunk to notice and if it wasn't for her address on her provisional driving license, Jack would have had no idea of where to take her.

Jack had calmly deposited the girl with Nina, her red-headed house mate, who had had to be raised from her bed, and left his phone number on a piece of paper in her purse. She had been too paralysed to notice that evening and he'd wondered if she'd notice as he had idled back to his house a mile and a half away.

Lucy had rung his mobile, and ended up arranging to meet him in the small Irish pub for a late lunch the following day, which they had ended up with Jack taking her to feed the ducks at the nearby pond. She warmed to him; he was kind and calm with her and certainly arranged to meet him again as he seemed genuinely interested in her.

Their trip to the cinema ended up with them at her house in bed and for the following month they had met every other day on campus, in town or at her house but she had only been to his house once, but had not been inside.

Lucy had not had a proper boyfriend since she'd had left the small town of Worcester to go

to University and found the new relationship exhilarating. She loved finding out about her partner, his likes and dislikes. He was enchanted by her tattoos on her waist and she was thrilled he loved her back massages.

She was still reluctant about being naked around him. She was only a 34A cup size and most of her friends were much bigger. Although she used to “fill out” with “chicken fillets” and padded underwear, she didn’t want him to see the real her, no matter what he said about liking all of her. Men lied and if breast size was not important then why was Jordan so popular?

Due to her self-image, their carnal activities were conservative and conducted with Lucy retaining a degree of coverage, whether it be her nightie, top or bra. She just couldn’t be naked, much to her new partner’s frustration.

Lucy held the present in her hand; she had three days without lectures and she knew Jack was similarly unoccupied. They could have two nights together and she could meet his house mates. He talked a bit about them but she had never actually met them.

She’d written the directions down when they had had to visit him a couple of weeks ago and she looked up to see number 32, a terraced house with a battered Fiesta in the drive. Lucy smiled and strode up to the house, knocking loudly; she could hear music from inside and bit her lip. Jack would be surprised to see her.

There were footsteps behind the door and Lucy steadied herself, ready to throw her arms around Jack and kiss him on the lips, to slide her hands over his body and grin expectantly at him. She waited and watched as the door opened.

There were two shrieks, one from a shocked and unprepared Lucy, the other from a large naked girl standing in the hallway, faced with not her boyfriend but the shocked face of a stranger.

“What is it?” Jack asked, appearing from the lounge and Lucy’s eyes widened, he was naked as well. “Lucy?”

“Jack?” Lucy called and stared at his unclothed body. “What the hell ...?” Lucy didn’t quite know how to finish when a third naked person arrived from behind Jack, a completely flat-chested diminutive girl with freckles and a long brown hair.

“What is it? It’s cold, come back to the warm,” she cooed and Lucy shook her head slowly.

“No wonder you never wanted me to come here,” Lucy started and threw her present – a bottle of whisky – at her boyfriend’s feet. “You were cheating on me all along!”

“No!” Jack cried out but Lucy had turned on her heels. Without thinking the muscular student pushed past his house mate and ran down the end of the drive, still naked in the icy wind. “Lucy, come here!”

Lucy turned out of the driveway and started walking down the street when Jack caught up with her. She pushed his hand away as it touched her arm and carried on walking but he was insistent. “Lucy, it isn’t what it looks like.”

“Oh come on,” she scoffed. “What else is there? You naked with a couple of girls?”

Jack took a deep breath and gave a shiver. “Can we go inside please, it’s cold.”

“No,” Lucy said firmly. “I’ve got nothing to say to you.”

Jack took a deep breath. “Well I’ve got something to say to you. To show you. Please.” He looked at her with imploring eyes and Lucy shook her head, going to move away from him. “I’ll keep following you until you talk to me,” he told her. “And it is fucking freezing out here. It being November and in Lancashire, after all.”

"Well you shouldn't be naked then," Lucy barked back. "And screwing those girls!"

"I'm not. Please Lucy. Come back for five minutes, I want to explain. And you can ask the girls, I am not cheating on you. But I do have something to tell you," he pleaded again, shivering.

Lucy took a deep breath and suppressed a titter at his shrivelled appendage.

"OK," she muttered and Jack put his icy arm around her. There was a toot of a passing car horn. Even for a town that consisted mostly of students, the sight of a naked man escorting his clothed girlfriend was not a common sight.

As they walked in, Lucy saw the girls were sitting in the warm lounge, silently watching them. She gasped in shock as she saw another naked woman sat in the armchair, her features well defined by the flickering from the fire burning brightly. "Take a seat," Jack offered and Lucy screwed up her face.

"I'd rather not," she said and Jack closed the door to the lounge and then persuaded her to sit down. He knelt down next to her and looked at her in the eye.

"I am not a cheat. I'm a nudist," he told her, his heart beating furiously and licking his lips. He took Lucy's cold hand in his and looked into her eyes. "I promise I have not touched my fellow house mates, but we live together in the nude. All day, and that is why I never wanted you to come here. But I never touch them."

Lucy grunted and went to speak but Jack took her hand to his mouth and kissed her hand. "We met last year and found we all wanted a nudist lifestyle," the chubby girl told her and they looked at Jack and then Lucy.

He introduced the chubby girl as Theresa who grinned back and offered Lucy a drink. She stammered, not quite sure what to say and Jack nodded. "Glass of wine please," he asked and then introduced the small-breasted girl as Olivia and the obscenely beautiful woman sitting in the corner as Lynda. "There is Robert as well but he is at his girlfriend's pad, he's coming over later."

Theresa returned with a glass of wine for Lucy and she took a huge gulp. "Why didn't you tell me?" Lucy asked and Jack shrugged.

"It is not easy to tell someone you live in the nude. I do my essays wearing nothing, I write text messages and e-mails to you naked. Hell I even cook and eat naked. It's not easy when you first meet someone, I scared my last two girlfriends away by being a 'bit unusual'," he told her, making his point with hand gestures. "I didn't want to scare you away."

Lucy bit her lip and Lynda looked across. "My boyfriend didn't like it, so we don't date any more. I would've thought he would've wanted to spend all day looking at my body but he said 'no it wasn't right' and that was that."

Lucy nodded and gulped the rest of the wine in her glass which Theresa refilled. "I'm sorry," Lucy muttered. "I shouldn't have accused you."

Jack forced a brief smile. "No, I wouldn't cheat on you. But you see why I couldn't tell you." Lucy ran her hands through her hair and looked at her partner with a smile. "You see why when I said I don't mind what size breasts you have, I mean it."

Lucy spluttered. "Well ..."

"The human body is nice, no matter what. I'd love to see all of you," he told her and Lucy took another gulp of wine.

"I can't," she muttered and Olivia looked up from the floor, her legs crossed.

“Well I am a 32AA,” Olivia said. “And I don’t have a problem.”

The well endowed Lynda laughed, she leant back in the threadbare chair and smiled at her friend. “It’s why she doesn’t wear a bikini.”

“Got nothing to put in it. Even Jack has more up there than I do,” she quipped, glancing at the pectoral muscles of the well built student. Olivia brought her hands through her short hair and looked at Lucy. “I got called a guy the other day.”

Lucy bit her lip and went bright red, the sight of the naked bodies excited, repulsed and shocked her at the same time. She needed to get out of the room to think, and her eyes meeting Jack’s imploringly. “I umm, I ...”

Lynda took a deep breath. “We know you are scared and embarrassed,” she said. “Jack’s told us and been worried about you.”

Lucy’s eyes sparkled and she turned to her boyfriend. “You’ve been talking about me?”

Jack spluttered and rubbed his nose. “I’ve been worried about you,” he admitted. “I mean, I really like you and you don’t seem happy with your body at all and I can’t see why. I like it. It just doesn’t seem right, so I asked them, what issues they had. With self-esteem and all that.”

Lucy gasped, how could her boyfriend talk about her behind her back? “I do not have self-esteem issues,” she thundered and waved her finger in Jack’s face. “I just choose not to undress for you to see.”

Jack bit his lip and Lynda spoke. “Prove it.”

“Pardon,” Jack and Lucy said in unison.

“Prove it. If you have no self-esteem issues with your body join us. Everyone who comes here does. This is the nudist’s house, be a nudist.”

“Come on,” Lucy replied and took another gulp of the wine as Theresa interjected.

“Be fair, we only date nudists or people happy with the lifestyle. We can’t expect Lucy to yield to us if she’s not comfortable.”

Lynda snarled. “Damn you and your clothing optional ideals! It’s nudism babe, because people are nude, not badly dressed. And Jack is dating her, so she should be happy with us going around starkers.”

Jack stopped the well repeated argument and Olivia looked up from the floor. “You have more going on than me,” she told her.

There was a pause as Lucy digested this and Lynda chuckled. “You’re such a prude,” she told her and looked at Jack with a grin. “I warned you. You need to go out with nudists or girls from Essex.”

Jack shushed the elegant girl, leaning back in the chair to display her body and squeezed Lucy’s hand. “It’s up to you. If you don’t feel comfortable then it’s fine.”

Lynda snorted. “Of course she won’t.”

Lucy sighed and slowly got up, her head spinning. “OK, Lynda, I will, just to show you.”

Jack noticed the swaying and inwardly groaned; Lucy got very tipsy if she ingested alcohol too quickly and counted the two drinks in just a few minutes and knew that her inhibitions were lowered. He thought about stopping her; she wouldn’t be doing it if she was completely sober but wondered if it would do her good. In the end, he watched as his girlfriend took off her shoes and socks, slid out of her jeans and then removed her jumper and blouse to be standing in just her underwear.

There was silence, as she slowly unpeeled her unadventurous white knickers to reveal her trimmed bush and then hesitated. "I can't," she muttered and Jack put his arms around her to hug her tightly.

"S'ok," he muttered. "Just relax."

Lucy whispered in his ear. "I just can't take it off, it is, I just can't." Jack smiled and rubbed Lucy's back, gently unclipping the bra strap and pulling the garment off as they parted from their hug.

Lucy gasped and immediately covered herself up, swearing at her boyfriend who just smiled.

"You're naked," he told her. "You've done it."

Lucy shook her head and reached down to get some clothing, any garment but Jack tutted and moved them out of her reach into the corner of the room. "You do have nice breasts," Olivia told her, "and I love the tattoos, the star and is that a cuckoo?"

Lucy sniffed and huddled into the chair. "Come on," Jack told her and held out his hand. "Shall we go to the privacy of my bedroom." Lucy nodded and leapt up, facing her boyfriend and away from his house mates. "Before you go, I want you to flash yourself to them."

Lucy gasped and scowled. "No," she muttered. "Please Jack," she cried and wiped her eyes with her right hand before returning them across her chest.

"It will do you good," Jack told her firmly and Lucy shook her head.

"I just want to go upstairs," she told him. In the end Jack brought the girl into his arms, kissed her, his cock filling with blood and poking her trimmed pubic hair and then she turned to leave the room.

Lucy pushed Jack onto the bed the moment they reached his bedroom and stared at him with concupiscent eyes. "I can't believe you spend all day with nothing on," she told him and brought her hands away from her breasts, holding them outstretched. "This is me."

Jack cooed at her smooth orbs, they may only have been an "A" cup but she looked lovely and sexy. "I wish you would have let me see all of you earlier," he told her and Lucy bit her lip.

"But Lynda's breasts are like out here," Lucy replied and did a highly exaggerated motion with her hands to indicate that they were like a "H" cup.

"I don't think so," Jack replied disdainfully and then pulled his girlfriend onto the bed alongside him. "But I don't want to talk about her, I want to put my mouth on your lips."

Lucy smiled and puckered up, but Jack slid down the bed and parted her legs gently, kissing the top of her thigh. "Oh very funny," Lucy replied, she had not let Jack go down on her because it was "dirty" but Jack didn't stop, kissing and caressing the inside of her thighs with his lips.

She sighed and rolled her lip between her teeth, Jack was being gentle but careful as his mouth darted over her thighs, and labia. She half-wanted to stop him but it felt nice, and she was feeling adventurous. She felt her resolve crumbling especially when his hands caressed her smooth body, gliding over her silky skin. He touched her petite breasts and rolled the nipple around in his fingers.

Lucy gasped and then groaned, Jack's tongue had reached her moistening crevice. She wanted to close her legs, but it felt too good. Her boyfriend was doing something "dirty" and she was enjoying it; what was wrong with her?

Jack was gently and careful, slowly running his tongue over her crack and flicking it over her clitoral hood before lapping gently at her hole. Lucy cried out, she felt awash with a tension, a powerful itch that she rarely experienced.

Jack sucked and kissed her clitoral hood, his tongue delving into her ridges to slide over her hiding pearl and Lucy cried out, groaning loudly. Her previous beaus had never touched her like that and she pushed her body into the mattress. Jack withdrew his hands and pushed Lucy's legs further apart before sliding a finger along her lubricated crack and into her sex.

Lucy sighed and groaned the moment Jack touched her, the oral assault on her clitoris combined with the gentle touch of his finger that was exploring her insides made her body tingle. She gasped as she held her breath before panting and crying out, Jack was sucking on her engorged clitoris and she screwed her face up, her loins electric with tension.

Lucy screwed up her hands, she could feel the elusive feeling building inside of her. She had only experienced an orgasm a few times with her partner, her general malaise towards foreplay not helping in her achieving them, but she dug her nails onto the bed as the expectation grew inside of her. She could feel it, it was there.

Lucy closed her eyes and emitted a barrage of impassioned mews. Jack was swivelling his fingers in and out of her moistened hole and using his thumb to rub against her anus, it was an experience like nothing she had ever experienced and she groaned and held her breath with a cry.

Jack felt her legs start to twitch. He rotated his fingers so his knuckle was at the back of her sex and as he ran his tongue as fast as he could over her button pressed against the inside of her wall with his quivering fingers.

Lucy waited, holding on for as long as she could, she wanted to savour this moment, but it was no good. With a grunt and a groan, it came. Lucy came.

Waves of decadent pleasure swept over her as her vaginal muscles tightened, her thighs shuddered, her fingers dug into the the lumpy mattress and her body shook; the intense eruption, starting from her pelvis enveloped her and pushed her into the bed.

She screeched, her head back and her body shaking, as Jack didn't let up, frantically whirring away at her G-Spot. "It's ... oh fuck," Lucy cried out and glanced down panting at her boyfriend between her legs. She pulled his face up and he slid up the bed, his leaking cock sliding effortlessly down her moist slit.

She looked lustfully at him, and nodded, waiting as Jack's expectant member glided into his willing lover. She groaned as he impaled her, his hands sweeping her legs back. Lucy looked at him as he slowly withdrew and then came forward again, he was building up a slow rhythm and Lucy moved her hips in time with her partner.

Jack was incredibly horny, he liked watching his partner orgasm and loved the taste of a woman. Lucy was sweet and succulent and he drove his cock as far as it would go.

Lucy gratefully kissed him, his phallus pounding into her womanhood frenetically. Lucy gave nasal groans, and sighs and broke from their kissing to pant. Jack lowered his head and kissed her neck.

He grunted, he was near. He closed his eyes and gripped his girlfriend's shoulders, pushing her deep into the bed, before grunting.

He prolonged it as best he could, desperately slowing down and holding on to his climax, but their motions proved too much and Jack cried out, filling the unprotected Lucy with his seed.

They stayed there as Jack rocked back and forth, eager to tease the last of the

aftershocks from his loins and slumped against her, panting furiously.

“Wow,” Jack said with a grin and kissed his girlfriend. “Thanks.”

Lucy smiled and resumed kissing him. “Thanks too, ahh that was cool.”

They stayed panting for a few moments before Jack slowly withdrew his semen covered cock and reached for some tissues. Lucy giggled as she cleaned herself up and then threw the tissue in the corner of the room into a makeshift bin.

“Can I borrow a T-Shirt?”

“What for?”

Lucy lowered her voice. “Because everywhere is just gooeey,” she muttered. “I don’t want people to see that as I walk to the bathroom.”

Jack laughed and opened the door, pushing his freshly-orgasmed girl into the landing outside his room. “You’re fine, we see everything in this house.”

“Jack,” she implored and then hissed at him, catching the sight of another guy with a red-haired girl behind him. Lucy gasped, coming up the stairs with Robert, as naked as the day she was born, was her house mate. “Oh shit, hi Nina,” Lucy muttered and Jack smiled.

“Ahh yes, that’s something else I forgot to mention,” he said with a smile and Lucy slapped him on the arm.

Nina and Robert darted into the adjacent bedroom and Lucy, stunned, cleaned herself up in the bathroom. In less than hour, she had discovered her boyfriend and best friend both liked spending their waking hours naked, and allowed her boyfriend to stick his face and tongue in her “dirty” place. What had happened to her?

A few moments after leaving the bathroom and hearing Robert and Nina start what they had just finished coming through the wafer-thin walls, made them decide to be sociable in the lounge, just as Lynda was getting out a game.

“I s’pose that means I can be a nudist at your house now?” Jack teased as she sauntered in and Lucy bit her lip; she still wasn’t totally comfortable with it but the sight of Olivia with her tiny breasts being bold and confident had certainly impressed upon her that maybe Jack wasn’t too wrong: she shouldn’t be ashamed of her body.

“Maybe,” Lucy replied and eyed her clothes in the corner of the room, she wondered if she wanted them? Sure, it felt weird to be naked in the spartan lounge with four mismatched chairs and a roaring fire, but she felt freer and more at ease with herself. It wasn’t uncomfortable and she settled down next to her partner.

Perhaps if Nina wanted to be naked at their flat she should join them. Of course there was so many things they couldn’t do naked: she wouldn’t want to fry an egg with nothing on, but using the table tennis net across their dining table was doable naked, and Nina’s large chest would certainly inhibit vigorous movement. Lucy smiled, she could save on most of her washing by being naked and that wouldn’t be a bad thing. Yes, nudism could work for her.

“Game?” Lynda asked as the two lovers sat down and Lucy nodded silently, still in thought.

“Excellent,” Olivia replied and turned off the television as Theresa put her book down.

“Where’s Tony?”

“He rang, he is running late,” she replied. “He’ll join us later.” Lucy turned to look at Lynda fishing around in a cupboard.

“Twister?” Lynda asked with a mischievous glint in her eye.

“Perfect,” Lucy found herself saying and Jack beamed at her. Maybe nudism wasn’t so much of a shock to her after all.

The End

So you managed to read the end of the book. Congratulations.

Please, please drop me a line even if it is just to say that it was no good; I do try and respond in person to every e-mail I get and it is the only reason why I write. I do like to read any of the feedback I receive and do take note of comments made.

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* * * * *

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