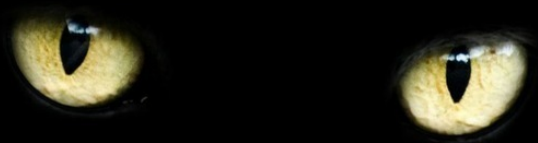


Colin Palmer
Steven

Crazy on You



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Steven. Crazy on You

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Аннотация

In the deepest, darkest jungles of South America, legends are born. Could this handsome young man from a normal Australian family be one of these legends come to life? The truth is terrifying...

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Steven Crazy on You

Colin Palmer

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Chapter One

“The Beast Within...”

The soft thud of wood connecting with flesh, human flesh, was immediately dulled by the sharp crack of breaking bones. Blood danced a merry stream down her now shattered face and silenced the imperceptible moans she had involuntarily uttered up unto that point. She'd never had a chance to scream. The sound of gargling and bubbles of bloody froth escaped from her now unrecognizable mouth and nose. Her once bright blue eyes were wide open but no longer capable of sight and the fear they displayed moments before was now clouded over and speckled with her own blood.

She lay on her back in the sandy dunes. Her once white dress bunched up to her partially exposed breasts. Her underwear ripped, lay to one side of her youthful tanned hips. The blood that stained her clothing, her body, and the droplets on the bleached white sand up to 10 feet from her still form stood out starkly against their background, almost appearing luminescent and testimony to the force with which she had been struck. And struck not just once or twice, the coroner said later, but at least 30 to 40 times. The stains on the sand faded quickly,

in time with her own internal life ardour.

The aroma was oppressive but it did not emanate from her. A face looked down at hers, contorted and grotesque, teeth bared and snarling like a wild animal, yet soundlessly, waiting for more signs of refusal. *It* squatted over her still body, the mallet handle raised, waiting, waiting. The aroma permeating the air in the immediate area was sickly sweet but *it* didn't seem to notice. And she was unable anymore. Still *it* waited, the mallet handle swaying in time with each breath. One of her unseeing eyes twitched, in death, but still threateningly. The handle rose and fell again, and again, and again...

Chapter Two

“Aunt Bec”

“Do you want to come to the beach with us?” The tiny voice was filled with wonder, and a compassion only the young and innocent exude. After a moments hesitation, “Auntie Bec, do you?” she repeated, accompanied this time by tugging on her sleeve.

Auntie Bec looked out over the verandah of her sisters’ home, watching the waves rolling in toward the beach in their inexorable goal of crashing to the shore. It was late summer and still warm. She was dressed in shorts, sandals and a light blouse, one sleeve of which right now was apparently being flapped in the inevitable sea breeze. She had one leg crooked under her body as she sat and the smooth softly tanned skin belied her age, as did the radiant but sad features on her face. Her sadness slipped away like the night.

“Oh, I’m sorry Hon.” She turned to face her young niece and the smile was as bright and genuine as a summer day. “What did you say sweetie?”.

“Mom said we can go down the beach; are you *ever* gonna come with us?”.

She emphasised the word ‘ever’ with a mock exasperation just like she had seen her Mom and her Aunt do many times before.

Becs’ vivid blue eyes lost their focus and once again, saw a time when she was young and innocent and oblivious to the horrors of the real world. Right now, she wished she could go back to that time and share the wonders of life once again with her youngest niece, in fact, with all of her family. She faced the ocean again, her eyes wide and unseeing, and her niece shrugged her shoulders and walked away.

She had seen her Aunt do this many times before as well and knew, even at the tender age of five (‘nearly six’ she’d have corrected), that it would be useless to try and get her attention away from the sea. What she didn’t understand was why her Aunt could sit out there, look at the beautiful blue ocean and the white sand and not want to actually go and play in it. It was so much fun, except when the waves knocked her over, or if it was really windy and the sand hurt her legs. Maybe Aunt Bec had been on the beach on a really windy day? She almost turned to go back but, one glance at her Aunt sitting there, looking lost, and she grabbed the screen door and ran inside to grab her towel and her body

board instead.

“Auntie Bec’s not coming Mom” she yelled.

“You okay Beccy?”

A pretty face framed by the same blonde hair and similar piercing blue eyes looked along the verandah. She was older than Bec by nearly eight years but she looked 20 years older. The family resemblance was marked, they could never be anything other than sisters but the look in their eyes were different. They had been through the same pain, but had dealt with it in their own individual ways, and truth be known, Bec probably had the worst of it ‘coz she’d had nobody to depend on. April had been married when they had all found out the truth, so she, at least, had her husband and three children to help her recover. Dad never got over his daughters loss and passed away a year after it had happened. Mom had died over 9 years ago, so as a family, tragedy looked to be a curse. A curse hopefully over now. But Beccy still took it hardest. After all, it was she that had found out the truth. Accidentally, but almost to her peril as well. So April and her husband had taken Bec into their home, because that’s what families do. As soon as she heard her daughters’ voice booming throughout the house she had poked her head out through the french doors leading from the lounge to the verandah.

“Bec?” No response. “We’re just taking the kids down the beach for awhile. Bec?”

Beccy slowly turned to look down at her sister. Her eyes softened, a trace of wetness and appreciation showing at the same time. She nodded. She watched as they all crossed the road, holding hands, April and her youngest skipping and almost pulling them all off balance, their load of towels and body boards, buckets and spades making them appear like a clown act at the circus. Their laughter rang back at her and she thought she saw April glance back at her guiltily. She stood then, rested one hand on the balustrade, and waved. None of them saw her but she waved again, a solitary tear slipped slowly down her cheek

Chapter Three

“Steven”

He was fifteen, not quite had enough of school but damn closeto it. It was boring. It wasted those summer days when the beach beckoned, the swell coming in like they had just rolled across from the other side of the world. Not that he wanted the swells to be big, he was no “weed”. That was the name they used for surfies. All of them blonde. I reckon some of them deliberately bleached their hair as well, he thought, because the sun just wouldn’t do enough of a job on ‘em. But they get the chicks in that’s for sure. Every damn sheila that wanted to be known, that wanted to be a somebody, was a surfie mole. Only the virgins, and probably the really intelligent chicks (one and the same some would say), didn’t have anything to do with the surfies. And you had to like beer as well. He didn’t like beer.

Beer makes ya sick he thought as he gazed absentmindedly out the window at the school yard. A lone magpie waddled and hopped along the newly mowed grass, picking up insects to left and right just like a chicken feeds. Roast magpie he thought and conjured up thoughts of it being served at Sunday lunch with the

baked potatoes and pumpkin and the peas and gravy.

“Steven, do you wanta leg?” his mother would say, standing poised over the kitchen table, the carving knife in one hand looking twice as big as the poor magpie sitting in the baking dish. “Steven?” his mother would say again, “Steven?”. Steven Terence Antony Gerald Smith; he was quite proud of his name really, his parents having overloaded him with christian names obviously to make up for the simplicity and commonness of the family name. Still, his initials meant that the other guys called him ‘Staggers’ while his friends (“Do I have any?”) called him Stag. But his mother continued to call him Steven. “Steven, Steven?” God, she was so insistent. He awoke with a start.

“Steven, what are you staring at? I’ve asked you three times for an example and you just sit there ignoring me.”

Her big brown eyes were looking at him pleadingly to help her out. He shook his head, looked slightly down and raised his eyes up at her within the same movement, knowing that the sadness he portrayed to her would melt her little heart.

“I’m really sorry Miss Hartley”. As he spoke he dropped his eyes and his head a little further to feign an even sadder attitude. “A snake got the little ducklings last night at ‘ome and when I saw

the maggie outside it just reminded me, that's all."

Triumph! She placed a hand on his head and the other on his arm and he felt the sharp heat of her breast at it brushed almost imperceptibly against his shoulder. She softly sighed in his ear.

"I'm really sorry Steven, is there anything I can do for you?"

A quick head job would help he thought. "No, it's okay, I'm sorry for the interruption Miss Hartley". He looked straight at her cleavage before raising his eyes to meet hers. He had deep, dark eyes, and ever since he was a toddler he knew he could exert some sort of power over some, no, most women. And 'though he hated it growing up he learnt to use it to his advantage. "Oh isn't he just absolutely adorable", he had heard it many times. It was also easier because of the total opposite look of his older, much older, brother. They doted on him like he was Jesus Christ but they would ignore his brother. Some in fact would recoil at their first sight of him. As he got older he began to appreciate that being adorable sometimes had its benefits. Mrs Harris from next door, a stunning woman in her mid-twentys, used to come over to see his mother and would sweep him up into her arms. When you were 12 years old this wasn't exactly a cool thing; but he would bury his head into her bosom and more than once he could see down her blouse, or her husbands' shirt tied at the midriff (why do woman wear their

husbands' clothes he often wondered?) when she wasn't wearing a bra. He would gaze in wonder at the size of the exposed breast and the way her nipples would almost instantly become erect as he contacted them. Did I say contact he thought? Mashed is more like it, but she was in the main, oblivious to the fact that she was crushing his head to her with one hand while cooing sweet insanities about how gorgeous he was. He didn't care. He could gaze for an eternity at those breasts. He wasn't a big boy so Mrs Harris had no trouble lifting him, and she would probably be still doing it if they had not upped and moved away with surprising suddenness.

He recalled hearing some loud arguments between Mrs Harris and her husband a number of days in a row just before they moved. Once, he even snuck over the fence and listened beside one of their windows. He sat shaking like a leaf, frightened only because their volume meant that whatever they were arguing about was deadly serious. He recalled Mr Harris calling his wife a slut and demanding to know how many others there had been, and it was a couple of years before he knew what was meant by that. Mrs Harris cried a lot and Stag thought it was mean of Mr Harris to make her cry. They argued on for a couple more minutes before all of a sudden it seemed to him, they were producing the noises his mother and father did late at night when they thought he and his brother were asleep. Having sex. He believed then that sex

was a load of crock perpetrated to undermine the sleep pattern of adults so that they could get up and yell at their kids the next day, just because *they* were tired. If only he knew then what he knew now, he would have slipped up the tree beside the fence and had a peek through the window. Just to see those magnificent breasts completely exposed, together at the same time instead of catching a peek down her top. These days he knew there was more to the female form than just tits.

He could make out the lace of Miss Hartleys' bra through her blouse, but maintained his eye contact with her after raising his head. "Can we have a talk about it later, after class?" He asked in the most innocent voice he could muster.

Once again, he had learnt that eyes and appearance weren't everything. He had learnt a lot in his still very informative young years. If you couldn't back up the looks with the right combination of words and tone, if your delivery was to brash or the words wrong then you may as well look like Aunt Martha for all it would achieve (Aunt Martha had been dead for about 10 years now). He hit the nail on the head this time, Miss Hartleys' face turning even sadder as she nodded.

"Of course Steven, but you really should be talking to your parents about these things...". Her voice trailed off and he automatically responded.

“You know we don’t talk, not the way you can Miss Hartley, you’re much more understanding and anyway, Dad is never home and Mum is always too busy”.

She nodded again in assent.

“Alright, 3 o’clock in the music room, ok? Now please, try to keep your attention inside the classroom. You may be an excellent student (the volume of her voice raised so that most of the class would recognise an admonishment) but that does not mean you are precluded from classroom activities”.

She smiled a quick secret smile at him before turning away so that he would understand that she did not seriously mean what she had said and that it was for the benefit of the rest of the class. He watched as she walked back between the desks, her nice hips and thighs swaying slightly but most of his attention focused on her arse, contained by the firmness of the mid-thigh length skirt she wore. She had one nice posterior, that’s for sure.

Peter Gillespie was an arsehole, and he sat beside Steven in English. One day you and I are going to try and kill each other Steven often thought. Gilly leaned over toward Steven and whispered with a malevolent grin. “Sticky fingers, sticky fingers, Staggers is gonna get sticky fingers”.

“Yeah, and stick your own up ya arse”. Steven didn’t even bother looking at him. He knew the leering voice would be backed up by a leering face.

“Everybody knows Staggers is trying to root Miss Hartley” said the leering voice.

“What, so someone told you? That’s the only way you’d know you moron”. Steven knew there would be no reply. Gilly knew better than to encourage Stevens’ sarcasm and besides, Miss Hartley had reached the front and turned back to face them.

“You’re the moron Staggers. We all heard, ‘you’re much more understanding Miss Hartley” he mimicked.

Steven snuck a glance at Gilly this time, not so much surprised at what he said but that he actually chose to say it when he did. He frowned heavily and glared at him, hoping he would get the point that being a moron didn’t absolve him from having to think. Miss Hartley didn’t like her ‘young adults’ talking in class. Steven liked the way she described and treated them like adults, but attractive as she was and regardless of her manner toward them, when it came to being the teacher she did not like them misbehaving. Her reaction was swift, as Steven knew it would be.

“Mr Gillespie, perhaps you would like to explain your rudeness to Mr Reinfeldt”. Mr Reinfeldt, the deputy principal and one not backwards in using the cane when it was needed.

“It wasn’t me Miss Hartley, it was Stag, er, Steven”.

She looked at Steven, the disappointment in her eyes only just misplaced by her disapproval.

“You should know better Steven”.

He took heart that her voice softened somewhat but the disapproval was still evident. She was nothing if not predictable about her behavioural standards. She wanted to treat them like adults but she also expected them to behave accordingly, which wasn’t always easy when you are fifteen. Steven looked down and knew that he wasn’t about to let Gilly spoil his day.

“Miss Hartley, I’m sorry, I was just asking him what the question was that I had missed before”.

She visibly softened and Steven hoped the rest of the class didn’t see it.

“Onomatopoeia” she spoke so softly “give me some examples of onomatopoeia”.

“Squelch, bang, splash, crash, click, crunch, um...” Steven hated it when he reached the end of a roll.

“Excellent Steven” she smiled.

Steven smiled to himself but then grimaced when he heard Gilly whisper.

“Smartarse!”

The three o'clock bell went as he was making his way across from the math's block to the music rooms. Kids were streaming out from classrooms, first formers who still enjoyed school, they always seemed to get the fun practical subjects to end their days on before going home to mom and milk and cookies. Out of the corner of his eye he noted that there were some bigger kids coming from his left, well bigger than first formers anyway. He didn't take much notice, thinking about Miss Hartley and keeping his appointment with her. As always, and much to his chagrin, he noticed that he wasn't much taller than most of the other kids now milling past him, and then Gillys' voice cut across their excited, incessant and inane chatter.

“Staggers got sticky fingers”.

Steven stopped, and two or three of the kids ran into him. He turned to look at Gilly, and saw Steve Shaw and Ian Brady fanned out on either side of him. Gilly and Brady were wearing silly lopsided grins as if they knew something he didn't. Snake looked concerned (that's Shaws' nickname because he had this nervous habit with his tongue. He and Snake actually got on quite well mainly because they always seemed to be placed together. They always seemed to do that, as if it was the easiest way, put them in alphabetical order. Whenever they had to form any sort of queue he was always directly behind Snake.) His tongue was doing its bit at a hundred miles an hour, and Steven knew that the speed was relative to the amount of nervousness being experienced by Snake at any given time.

“How ya goin' Snake?” he ignored the other two.

Snake looked toward Gilly and damn if his tongue didn't start working at closer to two hundred miles an hour. Now Steven was worried.

“Leth juth go Gilly” said Snake.

As a consequence of his habit Snake lisped and he was now lisping badly. Steven worried a bit more and thought

it was premature for Gilly and he to begin killing each other even though he knew it was bound to happen sooner or later. Gilly was just one of these mean kids who for no reason other than he was bigger (and dopier) than most his age, liked to play the bully. What happened next would go down in school history.

Brady would recount to others that he didn't see Staggers move, but he'd decked Gilly with one punch. Snake would just nod in agreement, happy he wasn't the only witness probably.

Steven knew that it was all just blind fool luck, that if Gilly intended to bash him, then he didn't stand a chance especially as Brady and Snake were obviously there to assist. He saw red fury and just stepped forward and struck in the general vicinity of Gillys' face. It was a punch that Mike Tyson would have been proud of, striking Gilly immediately under the nose and above the top lip. Steven stood there above Gilly, not knowing really how Gilly came to be on the ground at his feet, oblivious to Snake and Brady standing there open mouthed. Even Snakes' tongue seemed unable to move, also stunned at the speed of the event. Steven held up both arms and formed peace signs.

"Luv ya's, luv ya's all." And then he turned and ran.

He stopped running when he hit the top floor of the music block and then walked slowly toward the open door where he knew Miss Hartley was waiting. He heard voices and knew that she was there probably talking to one of the other of her 'gifted' children.

Steven used the time to draw in some deep breaths, check that his shirt was still tucked in, and then he realized that there was blood on his right hand. He was reaching into his pocket for a hanky when he realized that the blood might be his and not from Gilly's face. He looked closely at his fist and saw a small incision on his middle knuckle, the blood just slowly welling into it. He held the hanky tight on top of it but every time he pulled it away the blood would ooze slowly again. He wrapped the hanky around it tightly and then placed the bulk of it into a ball in the palm of his hand and curled his fingers around it. He hoped it would look normal or at least innocuous.

He stood in the doorway and surveyed the room, chairs in a semicircular pattern with music stands in front of and between each two chairs. Posters of musical instruments and composers adorned the walls. Miss Hartley was across the room kneeling in front of a young female first former explaining something about the recorder to her. He looked past her out of the far windows and heard the noises of the street as kids left for home, in buses, on bikes, in cars with their mums or

in groups on foot on their way to the local servo take away. He saw the top of the milk bar across the road, which was out of bounds to school kids until three p.m. on school days, and knew that there would be fifty kids in there by now, buying lollies and milkshakes and whatever else they could afford with what they didn't spend at tuck shop.

Miss Hartley rose and the girl smiled at her, tucked her recorder and a sheet of music under her arm and jumped up and started walking toward the door. Steven didn't see her until she was immediately in front of him. He smiled at her, made a mental note that she would be cute one day, and stepped in and to one side to let her pass. She stopped when she reached him and turned back to her teacher.

“Thanks heaps Miss Hartley”.

She didn't so much say it as chorus it, like she was still in class with 20 other kids saying the same thing all together.

“That's okay Rebecca – just keep practising.”

Steven closed the door after her. He turned around and was startled as Miss Hartley was only a few feet from and moving toward him, an arm coming up as if she was about to grab him. He was just about to throw his arms around her when

she spoke.

“I think that should stay open, school policy you know”. She said it so personally that he didn’t feel offended but he still backed up against the door and said “No”, and held up his hand with the bloody handkerchief. Her eyes opened wide when she saw the blood and he felt powerfully mischievous at her concern. “What have you done?” She was so concerned that she forgot about the door. “What happened”? She reached for his hand now instead of grabbing the door handle and he let her lead him to the closest chair.

“It’s okay, I just scratched a knuckle playing football.”

She unwound the hanky anyway, the bleeding had ceased and the blood welling into the cut had started to congeal, but it still looked worse than what it really was.

“Let’s get you down to the infirmary” she said.

“No, really, it’s okay.”

He felt himself getting excited as she continued to express her concern at his well being. She was standing and leaning forward toward him, her eyes intent on studying the cut. Her blouse could do nothing to defy gravity so he enjoyed the unobstructed

view of her white lace bra cupping her small breasts. He felt himself sigh uncontrollably, and she looked quickly at his face, her concern still quite apparent.

“Are you sure you’re alright?”.

“Yes, I’m absolutely on top of the world” he said without a trace of a lie.

“Well, okay then, but you make sure you have your mother look at that when you get home”, he was nodding before she finished. “Now, tell me about your ducklings”.

She stood and moved the chair from beside him so that she was sitting in front of him now. He had no idea why she always did that, but she would sit down directly in front of him. He supposed it was something they train them to do to make it more personal or something, or to make the kid feel more at ease, whatever, it didn’t matter, but since his first ‘counseling’ session with her at the beginning of last year she had always done it. The big difference was he hadn’t noticed any other teacher doing it except Miss Hartley who was young, attractive and always wore skirts. He recalled that first session when she sat down and crossed her legs, he could immediately see straight up her skirt to a pair of pink panties. From that day on he was in love with her. The strangest thing was that she never seem to realize he could

see or was even looking up her skirt. It was no problem for him to “arrange” the extra counseling as she was his teacher in English and Music and was always willing to provide assistance.

Today though, today was the best yet though it did not start out that way. She sat with her legs straight out in front of her. Worse still, she clasped her hands in her lap which meant he could not hope to see a damn thing. They shared some inane conversation about ducks, he willing her to cross her legs, never understanding why she did not see him continually glancing down to them. He was becoming jittery and impatient and he was pushing the discussion without really thinking about what he was saying, knowing that the longer he kept going the more likely the chance of her doing it. Once she lifted her hands slightly and sat back in her chair, lifting her right foot slightly off the ground. He leaned forward expecting her to cross her legs finally but instead she leaned forward also and her foot came back into contact with the floor. Again, he sighed audibly. When he did this she leaned back again and this time, lifted her right leg with no pretence other than to cross them.

As she lifted her leg the door to the classroom opened and Mr Reinfeldt entered announcing loudly “Miss Hartley!”

Her reaction was to hesitate with her leg up and then instead of going through with the movement, she moved it instead to the

right, thereby parting her legs and granting all Steven's wishes for the next ten Christmas' at once. For that split second before her right leg came down followed by her left to stand up and face Mr Reinfeldt, Steven stared into her open crotch, silky black panties stretched across what he dreamt was his idea of heaven, even wisps of downy light brown hair peeking out in a few places. Steven spent many hours thinking about that second in his life, how imprinted it became on his mind, how vivid it had been considering the short length of time it actually took to occur. It was the first and only time he had seen her in anything but light coloured panties and it took his breath away and gave him an instant erection.

He didn't always see anything at every counseling session but the expectation and thrill when he did was incomparable to this time. He could even see where her buttocks began to sensually curve out but it was the sense of what lay behind that black veil that always remained with him. He didn't want to stand as his erection lay uncomfortably obvious, at least sitting he was able to hide it with his hands.

Reinfeldt was not happy. "Smith here has been fighting"

Erection gone. Steven knew he was in trouble now. He looked down and smiled as he saw that he had placed his hanky back into his pocket sometime while he and Miss Hartley

had been talking.

“When?” she demanded.

Steven looked up at her with a curious frown, this was a different voice than what he was used to. Reinfeldt must have also been taken by surprise because he visibly stepped back.

“Some first formers reported that three bigger boys were fighting with a younger boy as they were leaving school.”

“Nonsense, it could have been anybody, and besides, Steven arrived here before the bell and the first formers would not have left the classroom until the bell went off”.

To Steven it wasn't accurate but he liked it. He supposed as Miss Hartley had the other little girl with her when he arrived she might have thought that he had been there waiting since the bell.

“That's right Mr Reinfeldt, it weren't me fighting, I had an appointment here with Miss Hartley and I'm never late, and if I been fighting I would have been late”.

It sounded like crap and he wished he hadn't said it,

but he didn't really care anymore because he realized that he had got far more than he could have ever hoped for this afternoon anyway. Miss Hartley turned back to face Reinfeldt and Steven looked at her profile, trying to switch on some sort of x-ray vision so that he could see her standing there in those black panties. He thought he could make out her panty line as she shifted weight from one leg to the other.

"Mr Reinfeldt, it would also be preferable if you knocked before entering my classroom".

Steven beamed with pleasure, obviously she believed him.

Reinfeldt squinted at Steven.

"If I find out that it was you, it will be the cane, not for fighting, for lying, and (turning to Miss Hartley) it is this schools' policy that after school assistance is conducted with open doors".

He turned to leave feeling that he had just had the last word.

"It was a confidential counseling session Mr Reinfeldt not just assistance with school work, and how would you feel if Mr Murray our esteemed Principal held his personal interviews with you with his door wide open for anybody to walk

past to see and hear what was going on?”

Steven was impressed. Reinfeldt obviously was not.

“Well we may just take this up with Mr Murray Miss Hartley”.

He strode out the door. And left it open of course. Miss Hartley looked around at Steven, a little smile playing at the edge of her lips.

“Well, did you like that?”

“Wouldn’t have missed it for the world Miss Hartley”, and Steven knew what he was talking about.

Funnily enough, from that time on at school, Gilly was almost friendly with Steven, well courteous most times. Steven often caught him looking at him when he thought he wasn’t being observed. The look was almost always the same, a strange sense of studious interest or curiosity mixed with a little annoyance. And he called him Stag. Steven wasn’t fooled one bit though, he knew that deep down, Gilly had been severely embarrassed before not only two of his mates, but also in front of what Gilly perceived, was all the first formers, as if Steven had arranged for them to be there as witnesses.

Gilly wasn't a total fool, he now knew what Steven was capable of but he also harboured half a belief that it may have just been blind fool luck (Steven knew this as a certainty but there was no way in the world he was going to let on to anybody, especially Gilly). Gilly was going to play this game a little more careful from now on, study his opponent a little more, get to know him better, maybe even befriend him if he had to. But when the time was right, he would plan it down to the most trivial detail before striking. And strike he would, he told himself every day.

The most perplexing thing for Gilly was Stevens' reluctance to boast or even casually mention the incident to anybody. Gilly himself wanted to discuss it with Steven because he wanted to be sure in his own mind that Steven wasn't some black belt in Judo, or Aikido, or some such thing. Gilly waited oh so patiently for Steven to mention something whenever one of the other kids asked him how he had done the deed but every time, Steven brushed them off or shrugged his shoulders as an answer. Even Snake and Brady said that Steven wasn't saying anything different whenever Gilly wasn't around. And of course, after a couple of days, nobody talked about it anymore because it was old news.

To Steven, this was the coolest thing he could do. He let people think whatever they wanted to about how he managed to deck Gilly. He wasn't going to add or take away from it knowing full

well that they would eventually come to their own conclusions that he was in fact something more than he was ever going to let on about. That was the cool thing, you achieve something by sheer luck and you get turned into a legend by basically acting ignorant.

Even some of the teachers looked at Steven now with a little bit more respect (Reinfeldt wasn't one of them). Steven showed no interest and absolutely no aptitude for mathematics and old Mr Temple (the boys called him Shirley, but not to his face of course) had given up a year ago trying to get him to do anything positive about it.

“Steven, would you like to give me an answer to this equation?”

Temple asked him in class the very next day. Steven was shocked, Temple had hardly said two words to him in class in almost a year, and now here he was asking him to act as if he was a normal member of the class. Steven looked at Temple and saw a glint of hope in his eyes. He shook his head and wondered how in hell punching somebody one day made him any different in maths the next but there was Temple, looking expectant and hopeful.

“Ah, Mr Temple, if you could just move away from

in front of the board?. I'm sorry Mr Temple..."

Mr Temple resumed normality almost immediately, totally oblivious that he had placed such high hopes onto Steven just because he had slugged a bully yesterday when nobody had expected him of being capable of such actions. Temple realized he had clutched at straws, he knew Steven to be bright but as they say, you can't lead a dead horse to water. Or was that flogging a dead horse? Whatever, it didn't matter anymore, the boy was just as dumb as the Gillespie kid that he had punched. His attention in an instant, was on his more favoured students, knowing that the right answer was but seconds away.

Steven graduated from High School with excellent results. He excelled at athletics and ball games such as softball and cricket and got high distinctions for English (of course), Geography, Social Studies and History, distinctions for Science ("it was rigged"!) and Technical Drawing, and a pass for Maths. Such was the education system at the time, because Steven sat for advanced classes, his maths exams were marked according to his student rating. He couldn't fail even if he didn't answer one single question! You just went down a level as far as your mark was concerned (or two levels in Stevens' case). Steven was not amused to discover this fact as he knew he would have done the same for geography and probably tech drawing as well, and that

way he would have had more time to do the things he wanted to do, like English, or girls.

He always maintained a bevy of girlfriends throughout school, they all thought he was cute and because of his slightly smaller than average statue, they probably believed he was quite innocent as well. Two or three of them knew better than that and if they talked as much as most girls seemed to, then more than likely quite a few other girls probably knew as well.

That Glenda Archer, she was a honey, tall and slim with beautiful blonde hair and blue eyes, but a surfie chick. He recalled first seeing her one Saturday night sitting on the brick fence around the Catholic Church with about six other girls and a couple of weeds hanging around them like flies, but there was something about Glenda that made him look twice.

He and a couple of friends had just come from the local servo where they had scoffed hamburgers and chips to satisfy the hunger perpetrated from sharing a bottle of Blackberry Nip. They had pooled their resources and got one of the other kids' elder brothers to buy them the bottle (\$3.95 plus the buck he pocketed as his, for expenses) from the local bottle shop. They had sunk the contents quite quickly behind the aforementioned church fence with all intentions of going on to the teenagers dance in the church hall next door

but hunger had seen them go off to the servo first. And now, on their return, (minus Harry who had raced off to the toilet at the first sight of his burger) was this smorgasbord of girls with only a couple of weeds to deal with first.

“Oy, surfs up guys.” Steven said this as his way of introduction. Hardly any of them looked. Except Glenda that is. The weeds were doing their best to impress a few of the girls, and they didn’t let the presence of Steven and Hardy bother them for a second.

Brad Hardy was one guy Steven had time for. His parents were rich, he had an elder brother that played in a band and best of all, he had an elder sister who took an interest in Steven whenever he went over to visit. She had left school about two years ago and was either 19 or 20 when Steven first met her. Brad introduced him as Stag and Steven then spent a very fruitful five minutes explaining his name to her. He managed to progress onto english, and then social studies when he found out she was doing political science and law at uni. All in all, after being initially greeted as just a young friend of her little brother, she now found herself taken in by this somewhat precocious little man. He had a charisma that she could not firstly identify, and then realized afterwards that he portrayed himself as a boy when his mind and his eyes were that of a man.

Sarah Hardy, as most young woman her age did, wore short skirts almost exclusively during summer. And this first time that Steven met her she had little else on either except a bikini top. She stepped upstairs after saying “nice to meet you Steven” (very, very few, if any girls Steven met, liked to call him Stag) “we’ll catch up sometime and talk about federation”.

“Anytime” Steven told her as he watched her disappear upstairs, disappointed that she was going but elated at getting a glimpse up her skirt even if only to see that she was wearing bikini pants underneath and not knickers.

One afternoon, Steven and Brad were playing pool in the back rumpus room, while Sarah was sunning herself in the backyard, lying face down with her bikini top undone. Steven had seen better bottoms but the view wasn’t bad all the same; very few boys his age would see her as being anything other than an attractive and extremely desirable older woman. Steven bided his time, losing more often than winning against Brad as his mind was on something else. Steven knew she would have to turn over sooner or later and he wasn’t going to miss it.

About the fourth or fifth game, the phone began to ring. Brad started for it (the phone was in the kitchen) and Sarah turned her head, heard Brad saying “I’ll get it” and then rolled over onto her left side to face the house and Steven;

without making any attempt to do her top up or cover herself in any way. As she propped herself up onto her left elbow, she looked directly at Steven.

“Like ‘em little man? I know you’ve been watching me”.

He stood there almost awestruck but answered immediately with his usual aplomb.

“Yeah, not bad at all” as if he seen hundreds of them.

She must have sensed the pitch of his voice was slightly higher than normal, the giveaway that he wasn’t as composed as he was trying to portray, so she reached up with her left hand and started rolling her right nipple (both of which were already erect Steven had noticed) between her thumb and forefinger.

“It’s Mum for you Sarah,” Brad called from the kitchen as he headed back to the games room.

She pouted exaggeratedly at Steven and reached for her top. She sat up and turned just as Brad reentered the games room.

“Sarah?” he called again

“I’m coming” she shouted.

Steven couldn't help but think that he would like to help her do just that.

"She's going the other way" he told Brad as he came up beside him. Steven watched her rump disappear out of sight through the sliding door into the dining room. Brad was more intent on seeing where the game stood to take any interest in what his sister was up to, but he did give Steven a sideways look as he remained standing at the doorway.

"You perving on Sarah?" he said.

"She has nice tits" was Stevens' reply.

"You should come over on some Fridays or Saturday nights when she brings a guy home" said Brad, and Steven looked at him in a new light.

"You sly perv, checking out you your own sister. How?"

"You'll see, I'll give you a call the next time".

Brad liked Steven and was only too eager to share everything with him. He didn't have many friends, and even though Steven used him as much as everybody else because his

family was well off, he didn't mind because at least Steven was blasé about it. Brad could handle that, at least Steven didn't directly ask for anything from him as other so called friends had done in the past.

Brad and Steven now stood in front of the girls, most of whom were perched on the church fence. Glenda was still eyeing off Steven and he realized quickly that what set her apart was her apparent maturity compared to the girls around her.

"How's the dance goin'?" Steven asked, walking directly up to stand in front of her.

"S'okay. Hey, you've been drinking! Got any more?"

Her enthusiasm to share something from him made Steven smile – he thought he knew how to get somewhere with her now.

"No, but let's go down and get some?"

He invited her with an exaggerated flourish, holding out his arm as an open gesture for her to lead off. Steven glanced behind and saw Brad standing back, uncomfortable in the presence of girls but warmed by the alcohol in his belly.

“So, lead off Stag” she said.

She dropped her legs off the wall and looped her arm through the crook of his elbow pulling him slightly off balance. He fell a bit further against her than he would have normally, probably because of the alcohol but mainly because she had addressed him as Stag.

“My, you are a forward young thing” Steven told her.

They fell into step, her arm rested comfortably in his, their shoulders touching and their hips brushing against each other as they walked.

“Hey, Glenda where ya goin’?”

Glenda looked back over her shoulder, stopped and turned around, swiveling Steven around with her.

“C’mon Cass” she yelled back and noticed Brad for the first time. “What d’ya want?”

“He’s with me, ok.” Steven replied instead. He made it a statement not a question as he knew he needed Brad to buy the booze. “Cassie is it?” said Steven, “this is Brad, I’m Steven.”

They were both ignored as she rocketed past Brad, and up to Glenda, where she stood on her toes and whispered something in her ear. Steven then realized that Glenda was the same height as he was, or close enough to it, and that was something he hadn't noticed before.

“Oh c'mon Cass, it's okay. Do you listen to everything your mother tells you?”

Cassie evidently didn't, because she mulled it over for at least half a second before grabbing Glenda's other arm.

“Ok, let's go then, you too” she said back over her shoulder to Brad.

Steven shot Brad a 'you're in like Flynn' look, and Brad needed no more encouragement to step forward and catch them up. The alcohol in him made him braver than ever and he grabbed Cassie by the trailing arm so that they were all walking down the street arm in arm. Only Cassie looked uncomfortable, but Steven knew a couple of quick shots of Blackberry Nip would relax her. They shared another bottle (an obliging passerby having agreed to buy it for Glenda “for her Mum to cook with”) in the park beside the river, laughing and carrying on, mucking around climbing the monkeys bars, and taking turns

to push each other on the swings. Steven managed to avoid most of the drink, but made sure the girls got more than their fair share.

He was a bit concerned about Brad, who seemed to be drinking too much when he needed to be in control of his faculties, but he was coming out of his shell and having fun, so Steven let him be, after giving one frown in his direction when he had taken a particularly deep shot out of the bottle.

Steven and Glenda melted into one of the little picnic huts, after Brad and Cassie ran off down to the beach. These were the type of huts that were divided into four, a solid brick wall between them so that on two sides, they were completely blocked from view. They sat nursing the bottle between them, and Glenda was very tipsy and being quite physical with Steven, though their conversations had been little other than fun small talk.

Steven just leaned over and kissed her while she was still talking. She appeared startled but she already had one arm over his shoulder and the other in his hands. She hesitantly responded by tightening her arm around him and crushing her lips back against his. Steven leaned backward to release his arms and slid one around her waist, not wanting to break the kiss. She cuddled in tighter though, and slightly parted her lips so Steven began teasing her with his tongue. They

both fell back to lean against the wall behind them, at the same time Glenda opened her mouth and began to wildly devour his tongue. Steven gently placed his free hand under the hem of her skirt and brought it down on her bare leg. Glenda clutched him tighter, so Steven began sliding his hand slowly half way up and down her thigh, moving ever so slowly toward her inner thighs. She closed her thighs against his hand the first time he went a bit higher but her lips and mouth, and now her tongue, were playing a different tune to Steven so he put pressure against her outer leg and she slowly parted her thighs to allow him to slide his hand higher.

They made out that way for some time, Steven ever aware that Brad and Cassie could come back at any time and spoil the moment. Glenda opened her eyes and looked at him, the pleasure evident on her face. She leaned forward to kiss him again. She was no longer thrusting at his hand but sort of maintaining the pressure and rotating her hips against him now. Steven felt one of her hands slide down off his shoulder into his lap, the contact even through his jeans made him involuntarily shudder.

“One day we’ll deal with that.” She whispered at him and Steven opened his eyes to look at her again. As their eyes met she grasped him through his jeans and gave him a little smile and a little squeeze down there. “Know what I mean?” she asked, quickly kissing him again before he could

answer. “God, my first ever orgasm, I am so wet, that was unbelievable!”

The words were just tumbling out of her mouth now as she removed his hand from between her legs. Steven looked down as she adjusted her panties to cover herself. “I am so saturated” she half whispered, half giggled. She drew her skirt down and threw her arms around him again, kissing him hard on the lips. “You’re not saying much.”

Steven responded by putting one hand down directly onto her upper thighs this time, comfortable with their physical contact. His other arm was still around her waist and he pulled her closer and likewise, kissed her hard on the mouth. He was still stunned at the speed of all that had just occurred.

“When?” was all he could say, breathless and a bit befuddled.

“You haven’t said hardly a word since we sat down” she said.

“I mean when are we going to deal with this?” He glanced down toward his groin as he spoke. Glenda giggled again, but this time she jumped up and bounded over the table, her blonde hair trailing off behind her.

“C’mom” she yelled back at him “let’s go find the other two”.

“Hey, but when?” he yelled at her fleeing back.

Glenda stopped and turned around about five metres from him by now. She cocked her head to one side, and looked at him smiling.

“When I’m ready Steven”.

He hated that, all of a sudden he was Steven now.

“What’s wrong with now?” he mumbled frowning heavily at her.

She stopped smiling. “You’re serious aren’t you, our friends are just over there somewhere, I’ve only just met you, it’s late, and you expect me to give you a hand job or go down on you or something, here in the middle of the park?”.

“I was thinking more of fucking you.”

Steven said it without thinking; he was angry at her attitude, angry that she had let him give her an orgasm, her first apparently, angry that they seemed to be getting on so well, and angry that she was standing there looking incredibly desirable, wet and willing, he with the biggest hard on he could ever

remember having, and she was refusing to do anything except walk away. Glenda was in fact, now walking slowly back toward him. She stopped about a meter away.

“I don’t know if I’m ready for that” she said softly.

Her puzzled look making Steven boil a bit more.

“Fine, so it’s okay for me to get into your knickers and get you off but all I get in return is you running away telling me to wait”. Steven was not amused and in no mood to discuss anything. He felt he deserved something in return for giving her a moment she would probably remember all of her life. He yelled straight into her face, “You’re a fucking prick teaser Glenda, ya know that?”

Involuntary tears sprang into her eyes as the words lashed her. She couldn’t understand how this cute looking boy who she had just gone further with than anybody else could all of a sudden be turning on her. All she had wanted to do was go off and find Cass, to share what had been a momentous event in her life and then come back and cuddle up with him under the stars and dream of how she was going to tell her other friends that she was going steady with an older boy. And now here was that same boy standing there yelling at her so loud that everybody for two blocks could hear. She did all she could do, all that her young mind would allow through the fear numbing her brain, she turned

and ran. She could hear him as she ran toward the road out of the park.

“Come back and finish what you’ve started you fucking bitch.”

All she could remember was his face, a monstrous mask of hatred, screaming at her.

Chapter Four

“New Job”

“You cannot begin to understand the where’s and why for’s of it all young man, so just do what everybody else does and start at the beginning”.

He was elderly, stately, gray hair still thick on top, and if not for a pronounced stoop, was probably once very tall. He had a kindly voice that made you think of grandfathers as portrayed in movies. You know the ones, whenever you visited them they had everything planned for you so that you didn’t get bored having to listen to the grown ups talk. And at night, that would sit you on their knee and tell you stories in a soft mellow voice, that eventually swayed you off to sleep.

“I do understand Mr Wellesley, but as you can see by my Resume, I am more qualified than most to start at least at assistant level. I done all the courses, I have accumulated that much work experience over six months and you...”.

“Slow down boy, I’ve heard it all before, and as I have previously explained to you (his shoulders stooped

some more as if somebody had just added another twenty pound weight onto his back), I promote from within my own ranks, I develop my own talent, and reward those that not only have the ability, but also the perseverance, and you do not have the time up to demonstrate that to me yet. Show a bit of loyalty lad, and I can guarantee you that your talent will get you to where you believe you should be. ‘Do you remember that ad campaign for Mallow Mints?’ the old man continued, ‘well that ad came from this agency (he was oblivious to Steven now, just droning on without waiting for a reply or any indication of assent at all) from a young fellow, not unlike yourself, who gave us the inspiration for that campaign in if I recall correctly, the first month he began working for us. He didn’t have the experience to produce the final result as we all know it now, but he had the original concept and we followed it through religiously and outrageously successfully as well, I might add. But he got too big for his boots, he thought he was the bees knees of advertising geniuses, but that was the only success that he had in over two years here. An’ when he finally quit because I wouldn’t give him his own team of assistants, he was still living off the memory of that one campaign. Now just imagine the losses this Agency would have incurred if I had promoted him to what he wanted to be, and a lot of others around here thought he could be at the time too, but he didn’t achieve anything else except waste time with insignificant, and in some cases idiotic ideas. It was if his

whole imagination and life had been exhausted in that one and only original concept. And that is not what I need from you Steven, or anybody else that works for me either. So now, come along and we'll introduce you to the crowd".

Before Steven could say another word, the diatribe had rendered him speechless anyway, Wellesley was standing at the office door, beckoning for him to follow. Steven had already seen the young secretary (he assumed) that had ushered him into the office earlier, but she, apart from Wellesley, had been the only other one there. It was a hive of activity now, 25 people in small groups clustered around computers mainly, but some individuals making coffee or doodling on white boards. The secretary was there, she was very young actually, Steven guessed probably no more than 18, plain but nice, below average looks and dressed very conservatively for her age. She was blushing, and Steven realized it was because he was standing there looking her up and down.

"I'm, I'm... sorry." He stammered deliberately, trying to look equally embarrassed. "Please, I'm sorry, call me Stag." And then he walked away from her, having seen the puzzlement written all over her face about his name, knowing it would lead to more curiosity and desire to talk to him later. "One down, several to go" he thought, "and I've only been here an hour."

He smiled to himself as he wiped the boyish grin and replaced it with his lost doleful look, knowing it would appeal to far more of the others and expected by them as well, seeing he was the new kid on the block. He caught up to Wellesley as he'd turned back toward him on arriving at the first group sitting around a monitor. There were three of them, two guys and a girl, the girl was obviously interrupted scanning something into the computer as she sat there holding the scanner up in her left hand looking at the monitor but glancing at Steven as he approached. Wellesley had already mentioned Stevens' name to them, and the guy to the left of the girl stood up as Steven arrived.

"Harry," the man standing, "Monica and Marc" he gestured at the others.

"Stag" Steven replied taking the hand firmly. Marc also stood and they shook hands, the expected quizzical look only on Wellesley's face. "Steven is my real name but everybody, mostly everybody calls me Stag" Steven explained to them all.

"Well, then, this is your work group for now Steven, you don't mind if I keep calling you that do you" said Wellesley, "they will introduce you to everybody else but for now I want you to sit in and listen and learn", and with that his

shoulders slumped, and he turned and simply walked off.

Steven watched him go, then turned back to the trio. Marc looked at him.

“Grab a chair Stag, we is having ourselves a problem”.

Harry turned out to be quite brilliant, mid 30's, a lot of experience and background, always dressed like an absolute dag, cord jeans, no belt, sand shoes, a t-shirt in summer covered by assorted flannelette shirts in winter, and an old army green jacket and a moth eaten Rabbitohs beanie on really cold days.

“You play?” Harry had asked Steven one day.

“Used to, and a closet South Sydney supporter as well, from the good old days in the late sixties early seventies”.

Harry seemed to believe that made Steven alright, not that many people would admit to being a Rabbitohs' supporter anymore, closet or otherwise. On that first morning, Harry ran Steven through the ropes, and Steven was smart enough to listen and learn, like he was being paid to do at that time.

“Monica? She's a dyke man.” This was his reply

to Stevens question at a smoko break. “But a good dyke you understand. She ain’t the best at having original ideas, but she is a whiz with freehand, and anything we can come up with she just makes it come alive on the computer man. But don’t go thinkin’ you can convert her or anythin’ man, ‘coz she is dyke through and through, even lives with her girlfriend and let me tell ya, she’s the one that wears the pants in that duo, if you get my drift. So don’t go stirring her up ‘coz she’s a part of the team that plays hard and wins. That’s us, me Marc and her, we’re all brothers!”

At that, he laughed. His laughter ended abruptly in a coughing spasm, a sickening uncontrollable wet cough that made Steven almost retch.

“Gotta give up these damn smokes man” Harry said, and hurtled the half butt off the landing into the street.

Steven saw the glistening eyes and felt his pain, but didn’t know what to do. Sickness and death was fairly foreign to him, personally.

“What, what about Marc?” It was all he could think of to say. Harry looked directly at Steven who recognized a ‘thanks for not mentioning it look’.

“Yeah, Marc, he’s quiet ain’t he?” Harry wiped his face on his sleeve and continued. “He’s one of those guys who is always thinking, quiet as a church mouse until something clicks in his head. An’ then try and shut ‘im up man, once he gets going the idea just formulates itself, sometimes as it’s coming out of his mouth I swear. But he’s like me man, runnin’ out of time, in his forties, you didn’t think he’s was that old did ya (he said after seeing Stevens’ surprised look), and beginning to get exhausted at the amount we have to produce now. Wellesley obviously thinks you have the goods, that’s why he put you with us and not one of the other groups. Consider yourself privileged”.

“I am” Steven said honestly.

Work was great, Steven did learn a lot, not only from Harry but also Monica. She was good, very good, and Steven let her know he thought that without appearing to be patronising. He fitted in well with all three of them and even got around the office a bit to see how all the others worked (and to check out the available talent). He had lunch with Kate a couple of times, she was very difficult to talk to but he eventually got her talking freely enough about most things, other than herself anyway. One time he even touched her softly on the cheek with his hand when they had been talking about a sad event on TV and she had just looked at him with those big puppy dog

eyes and nestled her cheek against the palm of his hand. Steven asked her to go out that night and she responded yes immediately, even though it was still accompanied by her normal stuttering whenever she was nervous, which with Steven, was always.

Another girl in the office really took his fancy. Debbie was a lathesome blonde who reminded him a little of Glenda from his school days. She had bright baby blue eyes and always wore form fitting clothes, which he appreciated greatly.

But it was Monica who had Steven perplexed. Homosexuality was not a new topic to him – he had visited Sydney and the Gold Coast enough to recognise the male versions but lesbianism was something that both excited and interested him, and Monica represented all of that. He became quite chummy with her, and after some time she began responding to him more in line with what he was used to from women, but always with an aloofness that made him more determined. Near the end of one work day, she turned to him.

“What do you see in Kate?”

They had been driving a particular train of thought on a new campaign for the past few hours and the question pretty much arrived out of the blue. Marc and Harry looked at each other, then looked at Steven. Steven thought he saw Harry

shake his head imperceptibly.

“What do you see in her?” Steven responded.

“She’s naive and innocent and not your type at all but you just see her as a conquest to be had” she replied matter of factly.

“Yeah, but what do you see in her?” he repeated.

“She’s nice Steve, so why don’t you just leave her be”.

Monica did not hide her homosexuality but she did not openly discuss it either.

“Am I poaching on your territory?”

Stevens’ question initiated the beginning of one of Harry’s coughing fits that saw him get up and leave for the toilet immediately, with Marc following to make sure he was alright.

“You think you know it all don’t you?” Monica finally spoke after waiting for Steven to look back at her. “Let me tell you, that from all of the people around here and probably elsewhere, I know how you tick more than anybody else does,

and you have a lot to learn about women and sexuality Steven”.

“So who’s going to teach me? You?”

Steven said it with more than a touch of sarcasm. Monica’s eyes softened a little and she appeared to focus past Steven for a second. She returned her gaze directly at him.

“Steven, I have been a lesbian for all of my adult life, and probably a fair portion of time before that. It doesn’t mean I am any the less intelligent or observant, and it does not qualify me as an expert in anything, but what I do know is that you are preying on poor Kate, and she is being taken in by you hook, line and sinker. She’s naive and gullible Steven”.

He listened, shook his head a couple of times as if to clear it, and frowned heavily at her.

“I don’t know what you’re saying...” he began...

“You know exactly what I mean” she cut in abruptly. Steven shook his head again and then his eyes widened when she added “come over my house tonight, me and Di wanna talk to you”.

It was a direction and Steven was bewildered, but she

obviously considered the discussion over as she turned her attention back to the computer. He started to speak but she shook her head at him, and then Harry and Marc were back. Harry looked at him and pulled a face from behind Monica. Monica responded by flinging her head back and collecting him straight in the solar plexus.

“I saw your reflection in the screen” she answered.

“Be careful” is all Harry said later, when Steven told him about the invitation.

“Of what?”

“Maybe your luck’s in man, maybe she has been discussing you with Di and they’ve decided to teach you a lesson the only way dykes can, I dunno man but just be careful”.

“Oh, so I should take more than one condom!” Steven laughed.

“Look Katie, I’m really sorry about tonight but we are all going to Monicas’ to work on this ad” Steven told her. “But hey look, it’s Friday tomorrow, maybe you’d like to go to the drive-in or something?”

“Okay, yes of course, work is important, I do understand.

I, I'm not sure about tomorrow, you know, I don't think that the drive-in is such a great idea, I think..."

"It's okay Katie, I don't expect anything from you, there is a great double feature on that I'd like to see and if I had your company, well, then it would be even better." Steven smiled sweetly at her.

She dropped her eyes again but then raised her head and said defiantly, "Yes okay then, I suppose it will be alright."

"Thanks for understanding Kate, tomorrow then, pick you up at six thirty, okay?" and he turned as she nodded, and simply walked away.

That night Steven arrived at Monicas' townhouse complex. 'No security' he shook his head disgustingly. He approached the door and looked through the unfrosted glass in the frame beside it, noticing the hallway leading to a living area, and a hat rack with coats and hats arranged rather neatly. A row of casuals and running shoes lay parallel to the wall below the rack, and an umbrella leant almost up against the glass. The soft volume of Pink Floyd was playing somewhere. He knocked gently and heard Monicas' voice.

"Can you get the door Di, it will be Steven".

He heard footsteps coming down the stairs out of view, but obviously near to the front door. The door suddenly opened and Steven looked into two of the bluest eyes he had ever seen. They were dancing merrily and Steven smiled at her.

“Hi, Diane isn’t it, I’m Steven.”

Her voice shocked him back to normalcy. It was a beautiful voice to match the eyes, but her words didn’t match.

“I don’t know what she sees in you, but I ‘spose you had better come in.” The eyes were still dancing and now full of mirth as well as she stepped back for him to enter.

“After you” he said.

He followed her down the short hallway. She was dressed in a shortish floral summer dress and had nice tanned legs, and overall a nice body, Steven noticed. She appeared to move her hips with a bit more flourish even as Steven was thinking about her but then she stopped suddenly and turned to face him.

“So, finished checking me over now, or would you like me down to my birthday suit so you can see it all?”

Her voice was hard and Steven was startled to see that her face was beautiful even though the eyes were now set like flints.

“Diane, I would love to see you naked” her brashness had fueled him up.

“You’re exactly like Monica said you’d be, a right asshole, a smart mouthed asshole.”

Steven was totally baffled by the venom in the voice of this angel.

“What have I ever done to you?”

It was the only thing he could think of to say and he wished he hadn’t almost immediately.

“It is you and the likes of you that are making women stronger everyday you asshole” the absolute hatred in her eyes as well as her voice made Steven take two step backwards. “You think you can just keep treating us like shit as long as you can get what you want when you want it, head jobs on demand, a quick fuck while we’re up against the sink doing the dishes...”

“Diane!” Monicas voice cut her off in mid-tirade, and Steven

looked at her with, he hoped, a level of appreciation that bordered on worship. Monica walked up behind Diane and put her arms around her shoulders. "It's alright Baby" she cooed almost. "C'mon, how is he going to listen to us if you intend assaulting him every time he comes and visits? He's here as my guest Babe, please let's start off on the right foot at least." She was turning Diane away from Steven as she spoke. "Give me a hand in the kitchen will you" and then to Steven, "Would you like a drink?"

He just nodded, still dumbfounded by the attack and not knowing what to do about anything at that point. They disappeared around the corner through the dining room, and Steven heard glasses clinking, and realized he hadn't told Monica what he would like. He stepped off to follow and then stopped and thought better of it, taking a seat on the pappasan chair, that he noticed immediately was perfectly positioned to receive the stereo effect from the speakers. He loved 'Floyd', and tried to forget the pure viciousness from Diane while mellowing to the strains of the music. Monica was back in what seemed like moments with a glass of white wine. She handed it to him and Steven offered her a questioning look.

"I'm sorry Steven..." she hesitated when she saw him frown, and then smile broadly at her. "What's the matter?" she asked.

“I never thought I’d see the day, you in a skirt, my God, wait until they hear about this at work”. Steven wondered how he hadn’t noticed earlier, but was reminded instantly.

“Maybe I should have just let her fly off at you, you are an arsehole”.

She was angry, and it showed. She stalked off back to the kitchen leaving Steven alone again, wide eyed, and now thinking about what was going on rather than listening to the music anymore. Monica looked stunning in a dress, like a beautiful woman should look, and Steven wanted to tell her that and apologise. He stood up and walked around to the dining room. In the kitchen, the girls had embraced and had their heads resting on each others shoulder. They were oblivious to him. Monica ran her hand down the back of Di’s head, soothing, like a Mother would do to a hurt child. And then he saw the chicken! It lay, cooked, sitting in the baking dish, and had obviously just come out of the oven. But its position reminded Steven so much of a recollection from many years ago, when he’d been imagining his Mother offering him a piece of baked magpie. He burst into laughter and the girls turned immediately and saw him.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t, I wasn’t laughing at you two.” He could see the predicament he was now in becoming worse. Some quick talking was required. “I’d come in to say sorry and I didn’t

want to interrupt, but I saw the chicken there with its legs up and it reminded me of something from school. Maybe I should come back some other time.” The second part resulted from his assessment that his first sentence sounded absolutely ridiculous. “Look, I am sorry, I was looking forward to this, I don’t know what’s going on and I don’t want to spoil anything so how about I just go for now”.

“Wait, Steven” it was Diane’s voice that stopped him as he began to turn away. “Let’s just forget it and start again. We’ll (she looked at Monica as she said it) explain everything in a minute, but why don’t you just go through the music and put something on you like, and dinner will be soon”. Her voice was liltingly beautiful, still being forced, almost patronising, but more sincere than at any other time in the last five minutes that he had been here.

“I like Floyd, it’s fine” and then “okay, I’m going” as Monica frowned at him heavily. ‘Should have realized that I was being given a hint’ he thought to himself as he walked over to the records and tapes.

Dinner turned out to be a quiet affair with only a little small talk to interrupt the sounds of the music, and the occasional scratch of cutlery on china and chink of a wine glass. Both Di and Monica appeared to be deep in thought and

Steven was content to savor home cooking and ignore the obvious silence. As Monica rose to clear the plates from the main course, Steven gave her a genuine glance of appreciation.

“Thanks, that was great, but why do I feel like I am the lamb being fattened up for market?”.

“It’s not that at all Steven. Me and Di often sit and discuss people, and since you have come to work with me, I guess that you have been one of our topics of conversation”.

“Yeah, ok, but what about?”

Steven sat there his eyes moving between the two of them so quickly that it was almost like he was shaking his head. His look was one of utter confusion. Diane all of a sudden smiled broadly at him, she really was beautiful. Then she started laughing, and her laugh gathered momentum so much that Monica also started, and the infectious nature of genuine laughter meant that Steven, confused as all hell as he still was, joined in as well. All three took some minutes to calm down after the initial outburst, either or all of them threatening to start again, at anything remotely silly or otherwise, like looking at each other, or lifting a wine glass or the left over food on plates, hilarious things like that. Diane was wiping tears from her eyes with her napkin when she looked directly at him.

“I am sorry about before, I guess I got a bee in my bonnet about nothing in particular (‘yeah right, nothing’ thought Steven), but I can see now what Monica has been telling me, and that is that you have the potential, with a little bit of help anyway.”

She stopped and they all sat there looking at each other. Once again, Stevens’ head began the shaking thing as he looked between the two of them.

“What, the potential for what?” He was becoming frustrated, and the just past humour had faded totally. Monica stood up.

“Di, clear the table hon will you, and you and I will adjoin to the lounge” she indicated to Steven to bring his drink.

“Not until I know what the fuck you two are talking about”. Steven barely had control of his temper now, and his words were harsh. Monica moved around the table and put a hand on his shoulder.

“Just come with me Steven and use the patience I see you use for other things for this right now” she said softly. Her placating voice and the continued pressure of her hand on his shoulder calmed Steven almost immediately, but Monica

still recognized the tinge of venom in his reply.

“Ok, ok, I don’t know which one of you is worse yet”. He was trying to show some humour, somehow trying to recreate the hilarity of a couple of minutes previously but it fell flat, the sarcasm was too thinly veiled and he knew it. “I’m sorry alright, let’s go”.

Monica brought the bottle with her, even though it was almost empty. She emptied it now, sharing the contents between her own and Stevens’ glass. She sat down in the middle of the lounge room floor.

“Bring the other bottle with you Hon” she called out to Di in the kitchen.

Steven sat on the floor without being directed, his legs at right angles to Monicas’, feet nearly touching. He leaned back onto the chair behind him.

“Sorry Mon, I wasn’t trying to embarrass you, but you do have nice legs.”

“Ok already” she said.

As she spoke, she leaned over and cuffed him softly

on the shoulder. Her blush was evident but dissipating rapidly, then reinstated again when Di walked in and sat down opposite Steven. She sat cross legged on the floor with her dress stretched across her thighs and made no effort to cover herself, obviously comfortable with being in her own home and with Stevens' presence as well now he thought. Steven noted the black knickers stretched across her crotch and realized that not only was Diane beautiful but incredibly desirable as well. He was becoming uncomfortable with this situation and the silence and managed to show it by looking everywhere except at Diane.

“You can look all you want Steven, just don't touch”.

The shock of the words made Stevens' slightly intoxicated brain begin to swoon – he couldn't even tell who had said it.

“What, look at, touch what?” The confusion once more in his voice was joined by an almost sheer terror, terror that these two knew exactly what he was thinking and exactly how he wanted to react but couldn't. Diane said nothing but ran her fingers softly up between her legs. Steven was transfixed, watching her index finger pressing lightly, touching herself through the filmy material of her panties. He realized with a start that he was sitting there wide eyed and that it had been Monica telling him to look only. He tore his eyes away and looked at the amusement in Diane's face (or was it pleasure he thought). The anger and

frustration welled up once more, and he started to get up, his eyes still staring at Dianas face. “I have no idea what you two are up to, but I’ve had enough of your prick teasing and I’m out of here”.

The anger was evident in his voice but the only reaction from either girl was a soft “don’t go” from Monica. He looked at her and realized that since Diane’s arrival back in the lounge room he had not even as much as given her a sideways glance, even though she had been the only one to have actually spoken to him. He recognized even through his anger, that Monica was sincere and also saw this in her face, as well as something else, something he couldn’t quite identify.

“What the fuck are you doing to me?” He tried to sound angry still, but it came out almost pleading. “What do you want, if I don’t start getting straight answers I will Mon, I’ll go and you and I somehow will have to face each other in the morning at work, and it won’t be me that is embarrassed or stressed, it will be you, I just want you two to stop playing games and come clean, just what the fuck do you want from me?”

Monica sat looking at him, almost sad, he swiveled his head slightly to look at Diane, and was relieved to see that she had covered herself and was also looking at least a bit concerned. That was it he thought, the look on Mons’ face was one of concern, but for who he thought, for him, or for herself,

or for Diane?

“Sit down please Steven and we’ll tell you, well, try to explain it to you anyway, please?” she pleaded.

Diane also now. “Yes, please sit Steven, I’m sorry, Mon keeps telling me I’m such a bitch sometimes, and maybe I went to far.”

“Christ, if I hear one more please I will go” he tried jokingly. “So, what is it you want?” He sat as he spoke and then looked at the pair of them and added, “Are you trying to get to know me before a menage-au-trois or what, aargh... sorry”. He realized it was definitely the wrong thing to say when both girls looked at each other and then at him, plain and utter contempt at his words on their faces. “Look I’m sorry, I said that much earlier and I meant it, I still do, I just want to know what you want. I find you both desirable, Mon you know you perplex me like no woman I have ever met before in my life and you are cute as well and that combination attracts me to you, and Diane, well you are just the most beautiful woman I have ever met and I think you are both extremely lucky to have each other; I’m extremely envious of you both. If this thing that you are trying to do to me has anything to do with sex or sexuality, then it’s my turn to say please, please let’s stop beating around the bush and get on with it. If it doesn’t have anything to do with sex, then just stop teasing me, the pair of you.”

Steven believed for just about the first time in his life, he had spoken deliberately without stray or ambiguous thoughts crossing his mind to interfere. Trouble was, he now sat there looking at the pair of them wondering what the hell he had said. He realized the frustration of the evening had caused him to lose some of his natural mental agility, and now wondered how much more he was likely to lose as a result of events to come.

Diane leaned forward, her right hand holding her skirt hem down between her thighs. She reached out with her left and grabbed the top of Steven's right shoe and waggled it back and forth.

"I am sorry Steven, I mean it. Mon has told me so much about you, and I've been very unfair to you, and very wicked too". Her eyes sparkled in jest then returned to being serious. Steven saw that her eyes were a darker blue but just for that moment when she had smiled – they had returned to their lighter shade. She glanced quickly at Monica and continued. "You are the first guy that Monica in her whole life has found attractive, but you are such a prick to women she is having a lot of trouble coming to terms with that attraction."

Steven stared at Diane, he didn't dare look at Monica. He was still unsure of where this was going now and wasn't even sure

he wanted to know. Diane took his silence and wide eyed stare to mean he was still confused.

“Steven, I think you’re cute too, in fact under other circumstances I could probably be attracted to you as well, but I see the traits that Mon has told me about, the good and the bad, and understand her confusion. And thank you for telling me I’m beautiful” her eyes lightened and sparkled again “but the reason we asked you over tonight has nothing to do with sex, directly anyway. I am bi, you know, I like men as well as woman, but, let’s just say that previous experiences have made me, for the time being anyway, exclusively homosexual. Meeting you has done nothing but reinforce that, but Mon, she is a lesbian, always has been and always will be, up until you dropped into her life anyway.”

Steven began fidgeting, he was getting very uncomfortable with this. He’d been trying for the truth for some time and now it was here, he wasn’t sure he wanted to know more.

“So...”

Diane cut him off with a wave of her hand, her right hand which meant her dress rode up again but she was ecstatic to see that Steven didn’t even seem to notice, his big dark eyes remained fixed on her face.

“Let me finish, okay?” and began again without waiting for a sign of consent. “Neither of us is looking for a relationship with you, other than as friends anyway, but I feel (he glanced at Monica and was surprised to see her looking almost comfortable with the conversation as if they were talking about work or the weather) that this is a possible chance for Mon to see that she could have a straight relationship, if she found the right person. You obviously have a lot of the attributes (“yeah, I’ve gotta dick” he thought.), but the biggest problem appears to be that you think you are Gods’ gift to women, and you treat them like shit whether you know it or not.” She stopped talking and looked lovingly and expectantly at him.

Steven was dumbfounded but somehow managed to ignore the look on Dianas face (“God she’s gorgeous”), and began by looking at Monicas legs, so close to his own still. He realized that he was still angry because of the continuous simmering he had been undergoing since his arrival was not sure he could be completely in control of what he wanted to say. He stared at Monicas legs without seeing them, not wanting to look at either of their faces. He remembered Louise and (“Shit what was her name? Right, Margaret”) from college, another Debbie, not the one from work now, and Glenda so long ago at school, and wondered that maybe he was missing something, maybe he had

the wrong attitude as all of them had gone away in a lot of pain, but wasn't that just a normal part of breaking up? Yeah, he had treated them like Goddesses, all of them, and wasn't it them that had done the wrong thing, not him. That's why HE had left them. "Janey, hmm, I'd almost forgotten about her, great lips and a great mouth and she knew how to use it too, and I don't mean talking, though she did her fair bit of that at the end".

He forced himself to look at Monica's face and the look of concern was back. He suddenly realized he had spoken out loud though not enough for them to understand his words. He was thankful for that!

"You okay Steven?"

The concern literally dripped from her lips or so he believed.

"Fuck you and all of you," his head swiveling again from one girl to the other. He sprang to his feet and nearly tripped backwards into the pappasan chair. "You know what I think, I think you just want to try a man, make someone subservient to the pair of you so you can both have it. You're probably having trouble with your relationship so you (this to Mon) concoct this crap to try and get me to share your bitch with you so she won't leave you, and you think because I'm not a big guy and because I'm good with women that you can control me, well

think again you dyke bitches, I ain't here to do your bidding and I am not the barstard you're making me out to be...".

The pause for a breath and the realisation that he had no control over what he was saying made Steven look everywhere, embarrassed and angry altogether at the same time. He flew over the top of their legs, and almost ran up the hallway towards the door. He heard one of their voices calling him from behind and thought "if you want me come after me" and then he was out the door into a cool Brisbane evening. He walked down the drive and heard his name again, so one, or both, had at least come to the door.

"C'mon" he muttered to himself.

He heard the sound of fast approaching footsteps on concrete, bare feet he smugly thought, so they had come after him and quickly as well. Don't let anybody tell me I don't know women, he thought satisfyingly. He whirled as the footsteps neared with all intent of presenting his angry face, even though he actually felt elated at having won, they were crawling after him, as usual, as per normal. He turned expecting Monica, after all this was supposed to be her big deal, her night, but instead he was stunned to see Diane slowing up now that he had stopped, tears pouring from her eyes almost comic in their volume. He remained impassive. The anger had settled but he was still seething from

the adrenaline, from the whole lousy night really.

“What do you want Diane?” he said quietly.

He did not move, even though he felt like rushing up to her and cradling her in his arms as she wept. “Fuck them still” he thought “make them work for it”. He noticed again that Diane was incredibly beautiful even though her mascara ran down her cheeks from the tears, and probably at some stage, having wiped her eyes with the back of her hand as she ran after him. Some of her hair wisped across the front of her face, and the desire to reach out and touch her was too great, even for his self control. At the touch of his hand, she looked up at him, those blue eyes piercing into his, and he was astonished again to see that they were as hard as flints.

“Gotcha, you fucking prick!” She hissed at him through clenched teeth and she turned and walked away. And once again she put an extra flourish into the movement of her hips and even glanced seductively at him over her shoulder, her face a grim mask of triumph, not a look of invitation. Steven saw through his haze of absolute hatred, saw this bitch prancing away from him and saw Monica silhouetted in the doorway. Monica said something to Diane as she passed, and then she was moving toward Steven, her head held high, now looking uncomfortable wearing a dress as it swished against her legs. He turned and

walked away toward the gate.

“Steven? Steven? Please, Steven?”

She gasped as she drew alongside, and then finally in front facing him, making him stop. The exasperation in her voice appeared genuine, as had the concern Steven recalled. But he knew it had been bullshit, a setup all the time.

“Let me go Mon, let me go home and let’s just forget this happened, and tomorrow maybe, we’ll try to work together again, but I doubt that will be too successful so soon.”

He looked at her with his face steeled to receive the Diane treatment, but instead she stepped forward and put her hands on his upper arms. She looked intently into his face, her concern sickened him.

“What do you want Mon?”

His eyes searched her face, and she did not resist when he put his arms up and swept her against his body. He felt her arms go around him, but they did not hold him, and that stopped him from moving his face down and trying to kiss her. He could feel his hard on pressing against her belly, but as she also sensed it, she moved her lower body away from him and then he knew,

that she was just trying to make it up to him, as difficult as it was for her. Mon felt him relax away from her, released her hold and they parted. They stood looking at each other and Steven realized with some sympathy that this night was NOT supposed to turn out this way at all, for any of them, but especially for Monica.

“Walk with me to the station”.

He said as a statement and she turned and stepped out beside him along the footpath. They walked in silence for a little way, he conscious of her right there beside him, wanting to put his arm around her but knowing he wanted to do it only as an automatic gesture, in this case a useless one, and she conscious of her attire and the disappointment of what had transpired. Neither wanted to be the first to break the silence but each wanted to say something, something sincere that may help to repair the damage. Steven was still angry, but more so at Diane than at Monica.

“Is she always that vicious”? There was a considerable pause as Monica sort for a reply. “I don’t know that I deserved any of it. After all, what did I do to either of you, or anybody else for that matter?” he offered again.

He stopped when she paused in silence again, and she also stopped and turned to face him.

“Look Steven, I can’t apologise for Diane but I am sorry, and (the concerned look again) the explanation she gave well, it was true mostly, but she really doesn’t know you to be able to say what she did, so for that I’m sorry”.

“Why should you be sorry, she said it, not you”.

“Yes, but she has a preconceived opinion based on what I’ve told her about you, so it IS my fault. Oh Steven, I really am sorry, it wasn’t supposed to turn out like this!”

“Well what was it supposed to turn out like, you know, was I supposed to sit there and be lectured until I became a goody goody or something, what”?

“Let’s not go through it all now. But I want you to know that I do find you attractive, which is confusing to me, and no, I don’t want to sleep with you, but you have to understand where Diane is coming from, and then maybe you’ll understand her behaviour.”

Steven lost all interest in Diane all of a sudden.

“You are attracted to me but you don’t want to do anything about it because you are a lesbian?”

“Steven, I really don’t want to go into that right now, we’ll, we’ll get together again, and this time because you know what it’s about, this time we’ll discuss it properly but I want to tell you about Diane alright”.

Steven reluctantly agreed.

“Next time; can we do it down the back bar of the Anglers Arms, somewhere a bit more public you know?” he grinned at her. “Alright, tell me about Diane”.

They began to walk again side by side, and this time Monica relaxed enough to allow her hips to rub against Steven’s, each time their steps did not coincide.

“She really is beautiful isn’t she”. She began with a statement that regardless of what had transpired, Steven could not argue with. “We met about four years ago, at Zargos’ in Lismore, she had just separated from her husband and was intent on drinking herself into oblivion.”

Steven knew Zargos’.

“So she was a les... you know, gay then?” he asked.

“No, Zargos’ is not a gay club. That’s a fallacy created by its

popularity, you know, straights go in and find a few gay people so they instantly label it a gay club, and they tell others that weren't able to get in and then it snowballs from there. Anyway, Diane, she was by herself near the ladies, just sitting there all by herself, and she was nursing a drink as if she had just crawled out of it, and actually might have, oh Steven, you should have seen the way she looked!"

Monica stopped dead and Steven swiveled around in surprise. They were facing each other and Steven could see that her eyes were brimming with tears, not enough yet to spill over, but tears all the same. He put his arm around her this time, and gave her the sort of hug he hoped she would see as a friendly and sympathetic one, and nothing else.

"Go on, what happened?" he urged.

Monica dropped her head onto his shoulder as they walked, and they went up the stairs into the railway station. Steven steered her to one of the benches, and she began again as they seated themselves. Steven still had his arm draped across her shoulders, and she did not appear uncomfortable with his continued physical contact.

"She was married for twelve months, just over in fact, because she told us about her anniversary. She and her husband, Mick,

had been going out since high school and though he drank a bit, she said he hadn't been physical with her, up until about six months after the wedding. Fancy knowing somebody so well for nearly seven years and then suddenly they change, well I know it couldn't have happened like that, she is still so so naive in some ways that maybe she just didn't see the warning signs, you know, the indicators that something was wrong with him?"

She glanced at Steven as she said this and he just nodded at her and then shrugged his shoulders.

"So what did he do that was so bad, how could it have made her so bitter that she acts the way she does now; he hit her right?"

"He more than hit her Steven, but let me tell it in order okay, so that you can understand it properly. What time does the train come?"

"Don't worry, every 20 minutes until midnight so you've plenty of time to get your message through to me".

Steven was curious, but he thought she was starting to lecture him a bit. He pictured Diane sitting on the lounge room floor again, her dress hitched up and those black panties framing her crotch. Once again he felt his erection looming, but Monica was only sitting back against his shoulder and was oblivious

to the forming bulge in his jeans. She began to talk again, and moved her left arm to sit along the top of his right thigh. Steven's eyes looped skywards as he thought 'that helps', but tried to concentrate in what she was saying again.

“...got drunk a bit when they were going out, more so than some of the other kids at school, but not that you would think he had a problem or anything, or so she reckoned. And no one else apparently mentioned it either, so it was just one of those things that nobody recognized. They got married just like everybody thought they would, just as they knew they would. Di's parents liked Mick, and his really doted on her of course, and everybody assumed it was one of those marriages that was meant to be. But after they left school, Mick got an apprenticeship with his Dad, a plumber I think, and he used to go out with his mates every afternoon for a drink before going home, so sometimes Di would hardly see him all week, and when she did, he'd always had a few, you know, enough to make him outgoing, but not drunk.”

Steven nodded, he had seen it often enough, people thinking they were just drinking socially, but really not able to get through the night unless they had a couple under their belt first. He was not a drinker, not a teetotaler either, he had a drink, one or two with Harry and Marc after work two or three times a month, and he didn't mind sharing a bottle of wine with dinner.

“Yeah I know, go on” he said quietly.

“Anyway, apart from petty jealousy because of the amount of time he spent with his mates, they never really had a problem with anything, or so she said. They moved in together in his last year of his apprenticeship, got a little flat and she did the girl thing and waited for him to come home every night. And he did come home every night, usually early, which she said surprised her because she expected him like ...well, after dark, when he'd had enough with his mates down the pub. But as time went on, he got a bit later, and a bit later, and was coming home a just a little bit tipsier every time. But still everything was okay, they still got on famously, he loved her and they didn't argue about anything seriously. Money was good because they both worked and they did all the things that a young couple in love would do”.

Monica hesitated and looked around at Steven as she heard the approaching train. Steven looked at his watch and told her once again to “go on”.

“What time is it?”

“Plenty of time” he said” two more trains until midnight”.

She waited for the train to stop, and they both watched as several people got off, some with shopping bags. “Thursday night

shopping” Steven thought. The train disappeared into the dark. They were alone again, only the slight traffic noise from the main road, and the odd vehicle in a closer street disturbed the night, and the sound of a too loud TV from the block of flats across from the station. Steven wondered how amazing it was that sounds traveled so crisply in the night.

“Anyway, one night, she must have just said the wrong thing at the wrong time, he might have had a little bit too much and all that, but whatever it is that she said made him all of sudden up and yell at her, calling her all sorts of names, and then he just walked out. He came home pretty late, because she found him asleep the next morning on the couch. He apologised to her and they made up, you know how it goes?” She looked back over her shoulder at him as she asked the question. She went on again straight away when she saw him nod. “That night he came home early with a bunch of flowers, apologised again, sweet talked her into bed, and then took off down the pub, all within about half an hour. She was very distraught, because from that night on, he didn’t start coming home until after closing time, and he was always dark at her, but he didn’t yell or anything, at least until again, she must have said the wrong thing, because he just up and whacked her one across the face.”

“Some guys just don’t know when they’ve got it good” Steven said.

“Di was a mental wreck, it was affecting her at work, and in desperation, she tried to talk to her parents, but they simply wouldn’t believe her! So she went to see Micks parents who had, as I said, really doted her. They didn’t believe her either. All they ever saw was the perfect son and the perfect daughter-in-law. Micks Dad even told her that it must have been something she had done and that she had to sort herself out if there was something wrong. And she believed that, so she worked hard to be good to him and ignore what was going on, and then a week or so later, on their first anniversary, he had booked them into this motel up the Tweed. They traveled up after work, everything seemed to be going just fine, they had a romantic dinner and went out to a club further up the coast.”

The sound of another train halted her.

“Last one?” she asked.

Steven held up one finger to signify one more to go after this one, and stayed silent so that she would continue.

“I don’t know what club they went to, but it sounded like one of those sleazy mens clubs that have table dancing and that sort of stuff, not the place you take your wife to on your wedding anniversary anyway. Mick loved it, the girls swinging

their crotches at him, and at Di too, apparently. You know, like most couples, they had discussed sexual fantasies, and one of Micks was the two women in bed at one time. Di was pretty naive, as I said, and she probably said the wrong thing to him at some stage when they were discussing their fantasies, because, as it turns out, that's exactly why he had taken her there, to try and pick up another girl. Diane freaked, but she had drunk enough to get silly. She pushed the girl off the table and jumped up and began dancing for Mick, and as it turns out, for most of the other patrons as well. They yelled and cheered her as she turned back to Mick, who she says, was smiling at her and yelling for her to take her dress off. She said she reached down and swigged the rest of her glass of beer, and three or four pairs of hands massaged her legs and backside at the same time. When she stood back up again, she started dancing, lifting her dress up now, higher each time. And Mick was in front of her, still egging her on. She got the dress up in front of her eyes at one stage and probably due to the alcohol and heat in that club she began to faint, or something like that she said. She woke up in the car the next day, parked in front of their motel room. She says she recalled her knickers being taking off and someone going down on her, and then someone on top of her and a dick being shoved into her mouth, and even though it was all at the same time, she still thought it was Mick. She thought he had taken her out of there back to the motel, but it wasn't until she felt a very bad pain at something that she opened her eyes and realized that she

was lying face down, because she really had to stretch her head back to look forward. She saw Mick leaning on a tree, and then she felt a man inside her and looked down and saw some guy she didn't know underneath her, and he was telling her she was a great fuck, or something really romantic like that, and then she realized that the pain was coming from someone behind her, trying to stick himself up her backside. There were hands all over her, on her hips and legs, and her head, and when she screamed she remembered Mick coming over and putting his dick into her mouth, and that was the last thing she knew before waking up in the car in the morning."

Monica paused and looked over her shoulder at Steven who returned her look with a wide eyed stare.

"My God" was all he could say.

"Yeah, but that ain't the end of it. She was mostly naked, Mick had just put her dress over her, she couldn't find her bra or knickers, or even her shoes, so she just put her dress on and went into the motel room. Mick was in there alright, in the bed pumping in and out of some poor girl he'd picked up somewhere. Di said he looked at her standing in the door way, and without losing a stroke, had asked her to come and join them. I met her two days after that and she hasn't seen Mick again since".

“So, did she jump into bed with them?”

Steven asked and regretted saying it immediately. Monica sat up abruptly and turned to him.

“You fucking idiot, what a stupid question, honestly Steven, like I told you before, I can’t believe that someone hasn’t told you that your smart mouth will get you into trouble one day.” She was almost yelling at him.

“Sorry, I’m sorry Mon, but what did she do then, you know after seeing him?”

Steven thought this was the most unbelievable story he had ever heard and he wanted the whole story up to the present. He thought he could hear a train in the distance.

“Quick what happened then?” he urged.

“She apparently ran off, gathered herself together as much as she could and caught a bus back home. She grabbed her clothes and other personal things and was living in a motel room. My girlfriend and I took her home and looked after her for a few days, and when she got better, she started having a, you know, relationship with my girlfriend. We all got on well, we all, to some degree hated men, but Diane more than either of us. Then when

Liv, my girlfriend, moved to Sydney, me and Di more or less started, too, more than just friendship. She looked after me I guess, like, dinner ready when I got home, the house neat and tidy and the washing done, stuff like that. She did that for over a month before we started sleeping together, and in all that time, she never heard from Mick or his parents”.

The train was getting close. Monica grabbed Stevens’ hands and stood up. He stood up with her, and she looked gravely up into his eyes.

“Diane and I may not be in love with each other, but in our own way, we love and need each other, and she is adamant that I should not get involved with men ever, even though she herself is attracted to them still.”

She leaned forward and as Steven saw her lips moving toward his, he clutched her quickly to him and kissed her deeply. It was quick but meaningful. She crushed her lips hard against his, and he felt her arms go quickly around his back and pull him ever so briefly against her body. And then they parted, and she turned and was walking, almost running from him. Steven saw the train pull up as she disappeared down the stairs and he jumped into the closest carriage as soon as the doors opened. He leaned against the doors when they closed and as the train started to pull away he peered through the darkness up the street to try and catch a last

glimpse of her. He saw nothing but empty streets.

Chapter Five

“The Capitulation of Katie”

At work the next day Steven was in early and, as usual, Kate was there, always one of the first. Steven had not slept well and was too preoccupied to notice Kate. She startled him.

“Good Morning Steven, did it go well?”

“Huh, sorry?”

He looked up at her as if she was some magician that had somehow just appeared beside him.

“Work last night at Monicas’, that’s what you said...”

“Oh yeah great” Steven grasped the line of the conversation “it went okay but we probably didn’t achieve what we wanted to” he lied. Maybe that wasn’t so far from the truth he thought.

“Look, about tonight, we didn’t finish, so we might be working again tonight. Yeah I know it’s Friday and we were going to the drive-in, but let’s have lunch today and I’ll tell you all about it

okay?”

She couldn't hide her disappointment but she replied brightly enough.

“Lunch is fine, I'll come get you”.

“NO!” He said it so harshly that she visibly jumped. “Sorry, I didn't mean to startle you, it's just well, I don't know when I'll be going so can you just flex a bit until I come get you?”

“Sure Steven, anytime is fine, unless Mr Wellesley has me doing some dictation in the office or something”.

She was backing away as she spoke, and Steven saw she was uncomfortable. She turned and almost ran back to the office. He watched her disappear and then realized that, whatever Monica and Diane had done to him last night, meant that he and Kate were never going to do anything other than pass pleasantries in the office, and that, he would explain to her at lunch. But maybe that is exactly what they wanted him to do, so no goddammit, he wasn't going to change his life to suit a couple of dykes. He got up out of his chair and went to follow Kate, but Wellesley arrived and waved at Steven as he went into the office. Steven waved back and sat back heavily into his chair again. “Lunch time I'll tell her” he said softly to his monitor. It

hummed back at him.

Monica said nothing to Steven at all on her arrival at work, in fact, it seemed to Steven that she treated him exactly the same as the first couple of weeks that he had started there. Harry was different though, and he had obviously told Marc as well as. They were both eager to hear how it had gone the night before.

“So, spill the beans” Harry said when Monica drifted off for a coffee.

Marc’s eyes were lit up looking at him as well, obviously dying to hear something juicy.

“Nothing happened at all” Steven said.

“Bullshit, look at you man!” said Harry. “You look like you’ve just been through World War Three, so come on and don’t spare the details”.

“Honest, absolutely nothing happened, I just drank a little too much wine and I feel like shit so just lay off will ya?”

The quiet fury in his voice convinced them both to leave well enough alone. None of them passed a word between each other all morning, even though Mon was the most ‘normal’ of them

all. At about one o'clock, Steven stood up and stretched, and told them he was going to grab a bite to eat with Kate. Monica didn't even look up from her monitor but he knew she was watching him as he wandered over to Kate, who sat looking at him approaching as if World War 3 was about to start.

"Ready?" was all Steven offered her.

She bit her bottom lip and just nodded and began to stand. They ate at a small coffee shop overlooking the river. Steven surprised himself by having no interest in sharing idle chit chat laced with his normal sexual innuendo. He heard Kate prattle on about the office and Mr Wellesley, all the time primly eating her sandwich and drinking her lemon squash and using her napkin after every bite or sip. His eyes casually followed the napkin as she returned it to her lap one time and realized that the table top was glass. She placed her napkin neatly onto her left thigh, and Steven suddenly recognized that her could see up her skirt, just glimpsing her knickers through the tinted glass tabletop. He recalled what Monica had said to him about staying away from Kate and his decision became automatic. Under the pretense of looking at his hands on the edge of the table, Steven focused through the glass to Kates crotch.

"Kate?" He hesitated, studying her shiny red panties, only just barely visible between her closed thighs. He looked up at her face

then and nearly changed his mind but pussy was pussy he thought. "Why don't we still go out tonight? That double feature is on at the drive-in and I still want to see it and I would be privileged if you would accompany me. And I guess I'd be using you 'coz you have a car and I don't but I really would like to do it with you." He used the ambiguity knowing she wouldn't understand it anyway but if she was that naive that she couldn't see his ulterior motive, that wasn't his problem.

"I don't know Steven. My Mum usually doesn't like me going out alone" but her voice betrayed her real desire. She really wanted to go out with him, if only to know that SHE could go out with a guy like Steven.

"Okay, I understand. Why don't you just tell her that you're meeting a group of us from work or something, and that we are having a farewell drink for somebody?"

She was shaking her head before he was even finished.

"I can't lie to her like that".

"Alright then, some other time" Steven looked at her crotch again "well, we had better get back to work".

"I... I think if I tell her, maybe, that I'm going to a girlfriends'

place, well, that may be okay” she said slowly. “It wouldn’t be so much of a lie would it?”

She looked so serious that Steven stood up, placed some money on the table to cover the check, and then grasped her hand to help her up from the chair. He got a better glimpse as she swiveled in the chair to get up and then he placed his arm around her waist.

“It will be our little secret, if that’s the way you want it?” and he led her from the cafe, his fingers playing with the waistband of her skirt.

The afternoon dragged, not because the quartet weren’t productive, just that conversation was virtually nonexistent. Only once was Mon and Steven alone for a few seconds, just before knock off time.

She hissed at him.

“Are you going out with her?”

“Kate? NO! Gimme a break will you? I remember what you said, and stop acting the jealous bitch will you ‘coz it confuses me.” She stared at him seriously and he couldn’t resist being sarcastic. “Confused, because I don’t know if you are jealous

over her, or me”. With that he stood up, switched off his terminal and walked away.

Steven waited at the roadside and saw Kates little orange Honda come around the corner. He had a pillow and a light blanket tucked under one arm, and a bottle of coke in his hand. He saw her face through the windshield as she pulled in beside him, and could see her almost glowing features as if she had just won lotto or something. He waved hi at her and opened the door. He threw the pillow and blanket into the back seat and then jumped into the front, placing the coke at his feet so it wouldn't roll around. He turned and grasped the seat belt, and then turned back. She was still looking at him, all smiles and radiant.

“I did it” she said, “I told mum I was just going out with Debbie from work and she didn't say anything!”

She almost sang it in triumph.

“Good for you” Steven said.

He leaned over and kissed her on the cheek. She blushed and turned away immediately.

“What was that for?” she said quietly.

“Just saying congratulations, that’s all”.

“I... we’d better go” she said, moving the shifter to low and accelerating away.

She was wearing an ankle length navy blue dress, with lace around the collar and at the ends of the short sleeves, and he had seen her cream cardigan on the back seat.

“You don’t think it will be cold do you?” she asked innocently, eyes intently watching the road.

“Nope, and if it is, I promise I’ll share my blanket with you”. He watched as she blushed again. Maybe she isn’t as naive and innocent as people think Steven thought. “I’m sorry, I hope I didn’t embarrass you, you know what I really mean. We’re just two friends who will share a blanket if it gets to cold, that’s all” and smiled to himself as he saw her nodding in agreement.

“Drive behind the cafeteria” Steven instructed her. He saw her glance. “There isn’t so many kids going back and forward to the shop or the loos back here” was his immediate explanation, and he took her raised eyebrows, and then a nod, as assent.

“Like a swig?” He offered her the coke first as soon as they had parked and the speaker put in place. “I’m sorry I didn’t bring

a cup". She took the bottle and had a tentative sip and her eyes opened wide in surprise. "Southern Comfort".

He smiled as she took another small sip before handing it back. She sat rigidly through the first half of the movie while Steven half reclined his seat. He let his hand rest on the gearshift, sipping from the bottle occasionally. He offered it to her again and noted approvingly that she took a longer swig this time before handing it back. He briefly closed his hands around hers holding the bottle before taking it and when she didn't try to pull away, he grasped it gently and lowered them onto her lap. They sat there for the remainder of the movie that way, Steven surreptitiously moving his fingers along her thigh every now and again when it coincided with something on the screen. At the interval, he let her hand go, and asked if she wanted some popcorn or anything else from the cafeteria. She said no softly, but at least she turned her head and looked at him when she answered. Steven waited in the line at the cafeteria with two choc top ice-creams and thought she, Kate that is, wasn't bad looking at all really, just dowdy and very, very conservative. He noticed all the youngsters everywhere "yuk" he thought to himself.

"Beg your pardon" he heard a voice say.

The cashier was directly in front of him, her name tag identifying her as 'Abby'. He flashed her one of his winning

smiles.

“I’m really sorry... Abby. I was just thinking, here it is Friday night and a spunk like you is stuck taking money of fools like me”.

She raised an all knowing eyebrow at him, and cocked her head to one side as if considering whether she should take him seriously or not.

“It’s not ‘alf bad actually, I clean up and can be at the Club by ten-thirty and don’t ‘ave to be back ‘ere until six-thirty tomorrow night”.

Steven took the obvious offer.

“I’m by myself, so what club would that be”?

She put his change into his hand and slid her index finger along his palm.

“Yeah, well I don’t do this regular you understand, meet guys here I mean, but you know the Jet Club, well it’s there, see ya maybe”.

Then she was turning to the next person in the line. Steven

glanced at her as he walked away from the cashier's desk, and even in her issue brown uniform dress, he could see the makings of a nice body. He took the picture of her shoulder length blonde hair, and cheeky smiling brown eyes with him as he walked back to the car. Kate still sat rigidly behind the steering wheel, just like she had from the moment they'd arrived almost two hours earlier. Doesn't matter if she does or if she doesn't now, Steven thought as he opened the door, I can't lose.

"I... I almost thought you weren't..." she started.

"I wouldn't want to be anywhere else" Steven smiled at her, and reached out his hand holding the cone for her.

"Thank you, I do really like these, but you shouldn't have.." she started off again.

"It's alright, everybody likes 'em". Steven was starting to get a bit annoyed with the way Kate almost stuttered out every thing that she said to him. He reached out and cupped her chin in his hand and she grabbed his wrist, her eyes a little frightened. He turned her head to face him. "Kate, relax! I don't bite and I'm not going to do anything to you. Wanna sit in the back seat"?

He stretched himself between the front seats and into the back without waiting for her answer then tilted the passenger seat

forward against the dash to afford himself an uninterrupted view of the screen once more. He could see the variables going on in her head, and when she pursed her lips tightly together, he thought that it was over. There be no way she'd move from the safe haven of that steering wheel, or the pedals under her feet, the gearshift by her left hand, *THE* drivers' seat. She lowered her gaze as the lights dimmed for the ads before the start of the movie.

"At least pass me the Coke" he asked.

He heard her say "Where did you put it"?

It was so soft and tingling with nerves he almost didn't recognise it as her voice.

"The coke, oh, at the base of my seat".

They both almost collided heads, she as she moved suddenly to look for it, and he, because he thought she wasn't going to get it.

"I found it... oh!" She exclaimed as she realized that he was leaning up beside her, almost kissing distance if that's what she had wanted. Instead he sat back again, and patted the seat beside him.

“C’mon then”.

She clutched tightly at the neck of the bottle, and once again, that lengthy hesitation before she acted. He held out his hand when he saw that she was now going to join him, but instead she offered him the coke bottle.

“I was trying to help you” he said softly. He took the bottle and placed it by his side without taking his eyes from hers. He knew that even without being able to see her eyes, she was looking at him and the light from screen would make his own eyes visible to her. “C’mon” he offered again.

She lifted her left leg and then almost swiveled herself around her seat, and only took his hand as she alighted onto the back seat. Her momentum pulled them together but this time without hesitation, she bent forwards and away from him and hit the lever on the base of the drivers’ seat to fold forward as he had done. He still clutched her hand though and when she sat back, he held it firmly, pulling her to him. She shifted slightly in the seat until their hips contacted and then he put their hands down to rest once again on her thigh.

He did not look at her, he watched the opening credits on the screen. Steven stretched out his right leg and rested his foot up against the gearshift, placed the coke bottle between his thighs

with his left hand and undid the lid. He offered her a drink without taking his eyes off the screen or releasing her hand, and when she reached to take the bottle from him he felt her left breast crush into his upper arm. Her nipple was erect and it felt hot against his arm and Steven felt an almost imperceptible tremor flood her body. She moved away from him quickly and drank sparingly once more. She took another drink, a longer one.

“Like it”?

“What... I what”? was all she could stammer back.

“The drink. Are you comfortable”?

Steven looked back at the screen again, knowing she was less nervous when he wasn't looking at her.

“I'm fine, thank you” she replied.

“Look, when you are more comfortable, later on, do you think I could, well, you know, put my arm around you?” Steven asked turning his head slightly toward her “you know, when it gets a bit chilly, it's so nice snuggling up with someone you really like!”

“But, the blanket...”

“Great idea, yeah, we’ll put the blanket over us too. Are you cold now?” He looked directly at her this time. She was looking straight ahead at the screen but her head was shaking no! “It’s okay, I told you I won’t do anything you don’t want me to. Relax!”

He grasped her hand a bit tighter in his, and jiggled it a little higher on her thigh. She turned her head to him now, and whispered.

“I’m... I’m sorry Steven, it’s just I am nervous, and it’s just, with my mum and all, I’ve just never been out with a boy before, and I will try to relax, I’m really sorry, I don’t want to spoil things, between you and me, and my Mum, well...”. Her voice trailed off and Steven wasn’t sorry she finished but he gleaned enough from what she’d said.

“How old are you Katie?”

“What, well, what are you doing?”

Steven had released her hand and put his arm around her shoulders. She sat uncomfortably rigid, staring straight ahead.

“Katie, I know it’s not polite to ask how old a girl is but after what you just said about your mum and all, I wanted to let you know that everything is okay, we’re friends. When’s your

birthday?”

He felt her shoulders relax against his arm and he softly rested his fingers against the skin of her upper arm, moving them ever so slowly so that she would get used to their physical contact.

“Um, February 18th, I’m a Pisces”.

She smiled at him with a visible effort to calm herself down.

“Yep, so next year that means you will turn...? Steven framed the question for her.

“I’ll be twenty-two next year” she almost whispered.

“Gee, I’m sorry I wasn’t around for your twenty-first party; did you have a big one”?

Steven was surprised. He didn’t believe she could be a day over about 18 or 19, at most. She started talking about her birthday party, obviously happy to talk about something that was special to her. While she babbled, Steven brought his left hand over and took both of her hands and rested them in her lap.

She didn’t appear to notice “and me and a couple of other girls had this bottle of Asti out the back where Mum wouldn’t

see us...”

Steven started caressing his fingers against her hands, his eyes never left hers as he appeared to listen intently to her nonstop recitation. Whenever she paused he would cock his head slightly and raise his eyebrows as if to say “go on”, and she would. It probably lasted only two or three minutes and she relaxed to a stage where she was responding to his caresses, and was also tentatively using her own fingers to caress his hand in return. On the next pause Steven let her hands go, raised his to the side of her face and began caressing her cheek.

“Go on”.

She smiled at him, half closed her eyes and rocked her head softly against his fingers. “That feels so nice Steven” she murmured.

He guided her slightly forward and when she closed her eyes completely he leaned forward as well until his lips came softly into contact with her cheek. Her eyes fluttered but didn’t open so he kept kissing her, softly, from the side of her face to each closed eye, then slowly down to the tip of her nose. Her body rolled into him and her head lolled back slightly so he kissed her top lip, then around her mouth before placing his lips directly over hers. The kiss was ever so soft, and Steven felt his erection

growing in his jeans. She kept her lips together as she tentatively kissed back. He felt her arm come over his shoulder, her hand to the back of his neck and she pulled him in tighter to her as her lips opened ever so slightly.

Steven suddenly pulled away from her, his arm stayed behind her back but he grabbed her right arm with his left so that she wouldn't let him go.

"I'm sorry Kate, I've wanted to do that for so long, and I said that I wouldn't do anything you weren't comfortable with".

Kate smiled, her eyes almost glowing in the dark. Once again he pulled her to him and she responded vigorously, kissing him hard, and accepting his tongue without hesitation. Their tongues were intertwining and his erection was now painfully uncomfortable in his jeans. He dropped his arm onto her thighs and then moved his hand over them, massaging her softly, ever so slowly raising the hem of her dress to a reachable length. It seemed to Steven that she never wanted to let his tongue go, because when he retracted his, hers would just come snaking out and plunder his mouth until he responded in kind.

The hem of dress was now almost to her knees and would go no further as the weight of her legs trapped it against the seat. Steven finally pulled away from her lips but still kept his face within an inch of hers. Her eyes opened and her face lit up again.

Steven thought her eyes were a little glazed. He kissed her softly again and placed his hand down onto her bare calves. She looked at him smiling and radiant.

“I have to lift your legs up over mine so I can hold you closer, it’s getting a bit too uncomfortable” he smiled back at her.

“Okay” was all she murmured back, her eyes never left his.

She lifted her legs for him but at the same time pulled his head back to kiss. He swung her legs over his own, but as Steven knew, that meant her body had to compensate. She began to slide down the seat, firstly holding on tighter to him to arrest her movement and then moving herself along the seat to allow his body to be more beside hers, and her own to be more or less, lying straight along the back seat. The arm he had around her shoulders was now propping him up, so that he wouldn’t be lying on top of her and he put his hand behind the back of her head. She reached up smiling at him and pulled his head down to meet her own again. Steven crushed his lips against hers, almost in triumph, as he had seen that he’d successfully pulled her dress above her knees when she moved.

Their tongues danced together again and Steven’s left hand began fondling her exposed thighs, slowly and softly at first, then higher and higher as she did not resist. Little moans escaped

from her lips and once he thought she even moaned his name. He turned her head into the seat a little, and kissed her ear and the side of neck. His left hand, restricted by their physical position could only slide up her right side, and he did so until he felt the waist band of panties. Kate responded strongly to his kisses on her neck and face, and she let a long sigh go as he began tracing his fingers along the waistband of her panties. Her thighs remained bonded together, even though she rocked her legs side to side sometimes in response to his caresses. His erection pressed hard into her left thigh and when she rocked he almost moaned himself. He slid his hand down her right leg and the next time she rocked he lifted it by the ankle and placed it down onto the floor. She moaned and rocked back at him, lifting her leg to put it back together with the other but still pulling his face harder against hers. He slid his hand up onto her inner thighs and her reaction completely surprised him, to the point where he almost stopped.

She uttered “Oh my God”, and lifted her hips so that the pressure of his hand came into contact with the swell of her pubis. Her grip on his head tightened. He wanted to look down so badly and see her down there, to know what kind of knickers she wore. He felt them, they were the same satiny type she had worn to lunch with him yesterday but he didn't think they would be red this time. She had a red sweater on when they had shared lunch, so the colour of the knickers matched. Steven thought they

would be blue to match the dress, or white to match the lace trimming. She was kissing his face and lips, and when they got caught in a big tongue kiss again, he began fingering her through her knickers.

She was so wet that Steven was reminded of beautiful blonde Glenda, so many years ago when he was at school. That bitch had let him finger her off until SHE had an orgasm and then just left him totally frustrated. No way that he was ever going to let that happen to him again.

The crotch of her panties was soaked. The smell of her sex permeated the car and hung heaviest right under his nose it seemed. He slipped his fingers under her knickers and she gyrated wildly against his hand. Her moans were loud and excited and there was no pretense, she wanted him, he thought.

He somehow managed to get her left leg onto the seat back, her legs spread wantonly. She appeared almost desperate. He quickly kissed down and she swiveled her hips as if she wanted his lips on hers, down there. He happily saw her knickers were blue, the satiny type as he had felt. She was still bucking her hips at him as he settled his tongue onto her, teasing. With her hand behind his head and the thrusts of her hips, she was almost mashing herself against his face.

He reached down and undid his jeans with one hand. Kate thrashed her head from side to side and was moaning and whispering.

“Don’t stop, oh God please don’t stop.”

He started kissing his way up her body but kept his fingers inside her. He managed to unbutton the top half of her dress and immediately began kissing around her matching blue satiny bra. The girl likes her lingerie and so do I, he thought. He sucked at her erect nipple through her bra and when he bit it softly, she gyrated her hips harder against his hand.

He had the other nipple in his fingers and he gently squeezed it at the same time as he nipped the other and was rewarded with “oh Christ” from her lips, in between moans. He plunged himself into her and began half thrusting, going deeper each time when she suddenly stiffened under him, her legs trying to come back together, impossible now with his body between them of course, and in fact, forcing him deeper again. Steven had been watching himself enter her, and now he looked up and saw her wide-eyed stare. The hand that had been holding her own knickers was now pushing at his hip, and the other that had been behind his head was now pushing his shoulder. Stevens’ rage was immediate and his twisted features frightened Kate so much that revulsion made her act.

She started hitting him with both hands, around the shoulders at first just trying to snap him out of it but when he kept snarling unintelligible mutterings at her, she began using her nails, and when that was ineffective she went for his neck and face. He seemed to light up in an even greater rage and leaned forward with one fist directly onto her chin. Casual as his reaction appeared, the contact had enough force to make her head spin.

Her hands dropped to her face and she covered her eyes and prepared to wait for him to finish. And Steven looked as if that was exactly what he was trying to do; he was still inside her and he pistoned into her so hard that she gasped as their bodies connected, the feeling inside her was thankfully numb to his presence. But she was wrong. As soon as she failed to react, Steven punched her again. This time she didn't see it coming with her hands cowering over her face. The force clamped her mouth together and she almost severed her tongue with her own teeth. She stifled a scream with her hands and felt the warm blood rushing into her mouth. She began gagging as Steven connected once again, flush onto the point of her nose this time.

And then he came. Kate was totally still, unconscious now, her legs languished outward from her body, her head lolled off to one side, blood streaming down onto the seat from the side of her mouth, as Steven rammed and felt himself pouring into her. He

arched his back and closed his eyes tightly. He pulled out of her while he was still coming, and slid up and over her body with his knees now pressing against her underarms. He splashed the last of his come against her bra, some also spurted as far as her chin, then he lowered his still pumping erection to rest between her breasts. He used his hands to press her breasts together so he could slip up and down in her cleavage, using her own sweat and semen for lubrication.

“Why don’t you look now you cock sucking, prick teasing bitch” he hissed between clenched teeth.

He raised one hand from her breast to backhand her, but his position unbalanced him and he was forced to elbow her hard into the side of her temple instead. Kate was now beyond caring. Kate had just experienced her first, and last, full act of sexual intercourse. Steven slapped her again, and then slumped over her still body, his face pressed against the side glass. When his breath returned, he grabbed the blanket and threw it over her still form, wiping himself on one corner of the blanket before pulling up his jeans and redressing himself. He grabbed the coke bottle and slumped into the drivers’ seat. After a bit of searching he let the seat back a little more and swung his legs under the steering wheel. He wound the window down slowly and removed the speaker but found he couldn’t reach the post to replace it.

“Stupid fucking women drivers” he muttered to himself.

He leaned out the window and plonked the speaker on top of the post. He started the car and drove out, back toward the city, only putting on the headlights once he'd reached the road proper.

The music was loud, and there was a line at the door, Friday night was only second to Saturday as the busiest in the club scene. Steven glanced at his watch, and saw it was 15 minutes past midnight, so it was Saturday morning already. He got up to the door a couple of minutes later, where a doorman looked him up and down and appeared about to say something.

“Abby told me I could get in like this, okay?” he spoke first, and the guy just nodded and lost all interest in him.

Steven wended his way through the foyer where throngs of people were chatting loudly, or waiting at the cloakroom to deposit or pick up articles. Suddenly a hand grasped at his shoulder and Steven spun around and saw Abby and her dancing eyes.

“I'd didn't think you'd come” she said up close to his ear.

Her breath was warm, and Steven nuzzled into her hair

to reply.

“I thought I’d rather be here with you than alone, sitting at the drive-in”.

She nodded at him then grasped his hand. “C’mon” and she led him into the club. He looked her up and down under the flashing multicolored lights as she towed him through the crowd, obviously knowing where she was heading. Abby now wore a tight short dress with lots of tassels, that looked almost 1920's in design, but as her backside danced from side to side he thought it looked damned good and certainly better than her sad drive-in uniform. That same backside now perched itself and its cute owner into a near empty booth at what must be the rear of the DJ box because the music, though still loud, was a little more muted. A couple were snogging heavily on the opposite side of the booth and oblivious to their presence.

Steven saw a glimpse of white underwear as Abby swiveled her legs around and further into the booth. She pulled his hand, and he sat down heavily beside her, and with little encouragement, closer to her again. She cupped her hands to his ear.

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