

Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25

*Can't Wait
Any Longer*

Day 15 of Book I

*(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)*

Part One of Six

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I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"

R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Megan watched the red numbers of her digital alarm clock turn. She: turned off her alarm, she slipped out of bed, and started her morning routine.

She had: long dark blond hair, an inverted triangle shaped face, and her dark blue eyes often appeared plum. Her long celestial nose fit her facial shape. Because of her over critical judgment of her looks, she felt her nose gave her an average appearance. She believed her nose was ruined in an NCAA woman's volleyball tournament. The consequence of staying on the court created a permanent left bend from the middle of her nose downward. She disliked her noses natural bump just above her nostrils. She felt the way her nostrils curved up and out were unappealing. Just above her nostrils was a natural facial line leading from her nose to her high cheekbones. Underneath these cheekbones were very noticeable dimples. At this moment her dimples, which brightened her face, were just lines outside her long thin lips. Her long chin with its rounded point were clearly visible. Her long jawline was just as noticeable.

While brushing her natural straight teeth and viewing her reflection in the mirror she wondered what Christopher would think of her sleeping in the nude or walking around her houseboat naked.

Her dimples flashed.

She; spit out her toothpaste, washed out her mouth, turned on the water of the sink, she double checked her dark blond eyebrows, she plucked out a long hair, her dark blue almost plum eyes blinked, she focused, and checked her straight teeth one last time.

She turned, looked at her nude reflection in the full length mirror attached to the head door. She was: six feet tall, had an athletic body, long legs, and small breasts. Her toned body and girl muscles were created by participating in athletics and hard work. It was obvious she

took aerobic exercise and eating correctly seriously. She felt: her breasts were too small, her large areolas were too big, her nipples were too long, and felt her uneven breasts made them look horrendous. She hated how her right one was slightly larger than her left one. In reality, because of their round shape, this size difference was difficult to notice. She turned to her side. She admired her long legs. She was aware both men and lesbians found her backside appealing.

She again faced forward. She decided, in the next few days she would shave her legs and trim her dark blond pubic hair into a landing strip. She disliked her pubic hair when it became stuck in her underwear or would stick out wearing swimsuits. She glanced at her breasts. Because of self exploration she knew her breasts were a key to her arousal. She often wondered what it would feel like to have a man kiss them or suck on them. She was in no mood for self exploration. However; she felt an anxiety any time she imagined her wedding night. At one time she imagined this wedding night to be with Christopher.

Her dimples flashed.

Over the last thirteen days she canceled two dates with Christopher. She felt it would be unfair to go on a date without knowing what she felt about their relationship. Throughout these thirteen days she came to the conclusion it was best if they stopped seeing one another.

On the previous Sunday she helped her Sister-in-Law Nicole with her garden and her house plants. Throughout the day Nicole shared her wisdom and life experience.

Based upon what Nicole revealed, Megan believed her relationship with Christopher lacked the romantic love her Brother Jimmy and her Sister-in-law Nicole shared.

Nicole confessed how difficult it was for Jimmy and herself to remain virgins until their wedding night. Nicole emphasized sex was one of the major ways they expressed their love to one another. This caused Megan to face the reality, the reason it was easy for Christopher and herself to remain virgins, was because they lacked a connection.

This caused Megan to question if Christopher cared about romance.

Nicole shared her belief potential spouses needed to discuss their sexual expectations before getting married. Nicole felt, especially if both were virgins, couples had the mistaken belief sex would be magical without putting in the effort. Nicole believed the church was accidentally spreading this idea by encouraging people to remain virgins. As a leader in her church, it was Nicole's experience if a spouse expressed their sexual desires and the other was shocked by them; the one shocked often convinced themselves they could change the others minds after getting married. During this discussion Megan pointed out her belief both Christian and secular couples fell victim to this pattern. Nicole agreed.

Nicole and Megan felt the church was doing a subpar job talking about sexual issues and often took a way to rigid view on what should be pleasurable. They appreciated how secular sources were willing to discuss sex but believed secular sources were way too dismissive of the consequences of sex.

Nicole confided, without giving names, many wives she counseled had miserable sex lives. Nicole believed the reason was their unwillingness to discuss their bedroom disappointments with their spouses. Nicole pointed out; often times the husband or wife would believe their sex lives were great while the other was disappointed. She felt miscommunication by either the man or the woman was a problem. Nicole believed, what was even worse, was no communication and an assumption the other spouse was sexually fulfilled.

She went on to say, Jimmy and herself needed to work at having a fulfilling sex life; Nicole reaffirmed the importance of communication.

Megan wanted a fulfilling sex life with a husband. She took being a virgin seriously but wanted to be with a guy who could communicate sexually. Based upon Megan's sexual research couples often times ran into sexual difficulties. She wanted to avoid these difficulties by marrying a man who would discuss his desires and needs; as well as listen and respect her needs and desires.

An added bonus would be a man who would understand her fetishes. She was under the persuasion a man would never like everything she liked. She felt it would be terribly unloving to pressure a future husband to indulge in anything he disliked. Just as she hoped, if there was something she disliked he would respect her wishes. She hoped a future husband would: try and understand her sexual needs, would never ridicule her desires, and would still respect her.

Ashleigh was a key in helping Megan decide if she should continue to date Christopher. On the previous Monday they went bowling and ate at a Chinese restaurant. It was more fun to bowl with Ashleigh; even though Ashleigh was clearly the better bowler. Ashleigh was more willing to help Megan than Christopher was. Ashleigh bought her more bowling supplies and pointed out some good bowling balls to add to her arsenal. At the Chinese restaurant, Ashleigh helped Megan by flipping over the paper place mat and made a chart of positives and negatives. The truth of this chart was obvious to Megan. On the surface the positives outweighed the negatives. What was impossible for Megan to ignore was how the negatives could turn a relationship into a curse. These included: their differing views on communication, the uncertainty of Christopher's beliefs, the obvious differences in sexual expectations, and how uncomfortable Megan felt in discussing her sexual desires with him.

It was impossible to shake the hurt she felt when he believed she was a lesbian because she wore jeans. She would have understood if he heard the rumors she was a closeted bisexual and questioned her. What she disliked was his passive aggressive approach to these rumors. To believe she was a closeted bisexual because she wore jeans seemed ignorant. There were many people who complimented her. Many of these people believed she appeared feminine in the very outfit he criticized.

She believed, if a husband communicated in a more appropriate manner, she would have been willing to only wear jeans in the privacy of their home. The nagging question was, if he was taken aback by her wearing jeans, what would he think of her wearing a more risque outfit? And what would he think of her having fetishes?

She disliked the growing feeling of disconnect between them. A huge red flag was his belief things were going well. This of course was another step in her decision. She wondered why he felt things were going great?

The difficult part was breaking up with him. She knew how hurt she felt when she liked a guy and he only considered her a friend. She always believed if she found a man who loved her and was willing to express this to her; she would feel the same. It was both hurtful and surprising to be void of this feeling. What she feared was the possibility she would never find a man who loved her.

Another nagging question; would she ever find a moral guy who would understand her fetishes. She worried a man who liked fetishes would be more likely to cheat. She knew this was hypocritical because she indulged in fetishes. She hoped with all of her heart she would

end up with a guy who would never cheat on her. She would rather go through a divorce than find out she was cheated on.

Her dimples flashed.

She concluded sex with Christopher would be boring and it was highly likely he would believe it was just fine.

She: stepped away from the full length mirror, opened the door, stepped out of the head, and into her suite.

Her plans were: to write in her journal, pray, captain her morning charter, then Jake and herself would fully clean her charter, she would have lunch with Christopher, make a trip to the hardware store, return to her charter finish cleaning, get caught up on paperwork, she would call the Y to see if she needed to cover an aerobics class, and after she would talk to Julie about the playoff loss; she correctly assumed Julie needed encouragement after her poor performance. Julie was replaced as a pitcher in the third inning.

Megan believed Julie would feel responsible for the loss and would be disappointed in her performance.

Julie placed the vibrator on the bed and laid there.

Her body was unable to take another round. The cycle of arousal to orgasm kept her from facing the day. At this moment she could have cared less about walking Nikita or going to track. Walking Nikita and participating in sports were reasons to look forward to the day. Until yesterday she was participating in both softball and track. For the first time in her life she wanted to skip track. The only time she missed practice was due to a medical issue. Even then, if she was hurt she watched; unless her mother dragged her to the doctor. All she wanted to do was: spread out her three ring binders, click onto her website, watch porn clips people sent her, and masturbate as many times as her body could endure. This was her way of avoiding the emotions related to: the softball game, the rumors spreading around school, the temptation to get her GED, the growing compulsion to have sex, the troubles she was having with the Snob Club, observing one of her best friends slowly kill herself with an eating disorder, the complete boredom of school, and the growing pressure of her business adventures.

Her plan: was to casually get dressed, call Ashleigh and tell her she was unable to walk Nikita, go downstairs and convince her parents she was sick. She incorrectly assumed her Momma would understand and let her skip walking Nikita and school.

There was a knock on the door and her Momma spoke loudly, "Y'all will be late walking Nikita."

Julie quickly: shoved her toy and lube under her pillow, she pulled her sleep shirt down, shoved her panties under her covers, she closed the three ring binder, she shoved it under the other pillow, and moaned, "I ain't feeling well."

Both Nicole and Julie knew this was a lie.

Nicole responded with, "If Y'all were sick I'd allow you to stay home. Part of playing sports is loosing. What about the dawg Y'all love so much? Isn't Ashleigh counting on Y'all?"

"That ain't fair."

Nicole matter of fact, "Life ain't fair. Part of playing sports is receiving the attention when Y'all ain't the hero."

"I guess."

With a more compassionate tone, "What about the track team? Ain't they counting on Y'all?"

"Why would they want me on their team?"

In a sarcastic tone she very rarely heard from her Mother, "Ain't it nice to feel sorry for one's self?"

"I ain't feeling sorry for myself."

"What do Y'all call it?"

Julie heard her Daddy walk up the stairs. He never went upstairs because the only other bedroom was her Sister's.

He used what she called his drill sergeant voice, "Y'all better get your ass up and walk the dawg. If not I'll pick Y'all up and dump Y'all on the front lawn."

Ester loved this idea. It took her eleven years and four months to understand to keep the joy of such an event to herself. She quietly changed chairs at the kitchen table. She could now observe the front door.

Still in his sergeant voice, "Part of playing is loosing. Y'all have real life responsibilities."

She sat up and yelled, "I'll be down in a minute."

Nicole with a tone stated, "No dilly dallying. Y'all are running late."

"Yes Ma'am."

She sat on the edge of her bed wishing she would have won the game.

This is when she heard her Daddy, "I'm proud of Y'all if you win or loose. Quitting is something I ain't ever putting up with. Never forget Y'all carry the name of a Steward."

She stood up, "Yes Sir."

What sealed the deal, "Since Y'all are running late I'll drive Y'all to the yacht."

This would be the fourth time he drove her.

Still demanding, "Just place the bike in the bed of the pick-up-truck."

There was only one answer, "Yes Sir."

She heard her Momma say, "We're expecting Y'all down here within the next ten minutes."

"Yes Ma'am."

Through the door she could hear them mumbling to one another. She was annoyed she was unable to understand what they said.

She grabbed the three ringed binder and placed it on the bookshelf with the others. She took her toy and lube and locked it in a lock box; she hid this lock box in her closet and the key in her desk. A place she felt Ester would never find it. While in the closet she quickly selected an athletic outfit and headed to the shower.

While taking her shower she considered: dropping out, getting her GED, withdrawing enough money from a few of her bank accounts, use her fake ID's, and disappear. What stopped her from fulfilling this plan was the love she felt toward her family. She would miss her real friends. A painful lesson was learning what a true friend was.

*A*shleigh was tired of being on vacation but she liked sleeping in.

Since Monday she would get up when Julie arrived. Once Julie left she would lightly sleep on the couch. When Nikita was back she would sleep soundly on the couch for about a couple hours. Ashleigh was already on the couch. She was getting concerned. It was unlike Julie to be running late. She was considering calling her. After watching the playoff game the night before she understood why Julie was struggling and would understand if she canceled. The worst part was a waiting Nikita. On Sundays and holidays Ashleigh took Nikita for a walk around the same time as Julie; Ashleigh did so to avoid Nikita's displeasure.

Nikita was confused. This was the time Strong Scent arrived or Best Friend took her for a "walk." She was laying in front of the door. She was making whimpering noises in the hope Strong Scent would hear her.

Another reason Ashleigh was restless was her concern on how well Brittany was doing. She heard good reports from both Haley and Bob but Ashleigh wanted to see for herself.

Bob leaving for work early was a concern for her.

An added work concern was the progress of the listening devices the company was designing for the Navy. She wanted Captain to test them before presenting them to the Navy. She could call Captain at any time and he would make time for her. After observing him captain the yacht she believed he was an expert.

A big concern was the possible takeover of a medical device company named *Criti-Medical*. She disliked everything she read and heard about this Wisconsin medical device company. She even felt the name was lame. She believed her Brother's Company, and the one she was a Vice President off, was great at: manufacturing, distribution, and custom design. Ashleigh was well aware Bob knew the owner of the company, talked with the CEO, and knew a couple of the board members. She had the nagging feeling there was a personal reason Bob wanted to fix this company.

She believed with all her heart buying this company was a mistake. Both Bob and herself read reports on quality issues; the CEO claimed they were correcting these issues. Ashleigh strongly believed their shipping and production schedule were huge signs of disorganization. Bob, Ashleigh, and many of their trusted employees believed this was a contributing factor to their technical issues. Both Bob and Ashleigh disliked how little they produced for three weeks but on the last week eighty-five to ninety percent of their product was built and sent out. This was a red flag for Ashleigh. Bob believed they could fix it. Ashleigh doubted this company could make the adjustments Bob would insist on. She strongly felt management would do everything possible to keep things the way they were.

The idea *Renewed Mastery* would get involved and keep everything; "*the way it had always been done*" was insane to Ashleigh. The reputation of *Renewed Mastery* and her Brother were one of fixers. When *Renewed Mastery* purchased a company they were committed to the long haul but the company being purchased had to adapt and change. This was the reason she felt it was a mistake leaving the company in Wisconsin. She believed the only way to fix this company was to micro manage everything; something both Bob and Ashleigh disliked. The only time either one completely took over was when it was absolutely necessary. They both hated doing so. This was a major factor on why Ashleigh hoped Bob would avoid buying the company.

Underlining all of this was the list of everyday functions she was overseeing. This was the major factor on why she was no longer enjoying her vacation.

The two weeks with her family seemed to fly by; especially the week touring Key West. Touring Key West on the yacht was especially enjoyable. She felt a let down when her family left on Saturday. The last time she felt this let down was after a vacation with her Brother when she was a teenager. Her current vacation took another dip after bowling and treating Megan for Chinese. She enjoyed: going shopping on her own, she enjoyed the yacht's pool, the walks by herself, the extended time helping Captain with his model railroad, walking Nikita, reviewing Bob's book with Valerie and Susan, going to lunch with Susan, and the time volunteering at the community center. All of the fun was tempered with the nagging idea she should go back to work.

A consistent concern was her pregnant sister. She hoped her sister would make good decisions. Ashleigh felt Felicia changed as the vacation progressed. She believed Megan, Ma, and Nicole were awesome influences on her. She felt confident her best friends Annette and Iris would be there for her. She knew: Hannah, Julie, Zoe, and Monica planned on keeping in contact with both Annette and Felicia on Facebook. Ashleigh could see the potential of this new media.

Bob was paranoid about this new type of media. He believed this form of media would be intrusive and used for evil purposes. Ashleigh could see Bob's point of view, she hoped he was wrong, but could see the potential of this type of website being a negative.

Anytime she thought of her pregnant sister Felicia she was grateful she never ended up pregnant or with an STD. She was more determined than ever to wait until she was married to have sex again. She understood this would become more difficult when she started to date again. She believed: purposeful dating, masturbation, good friends, fellowship, and prayer kept her from having sex. She no longer was fighting the temptation to have a one night stand or to have a friend with benefits. She believed purposeful dating was figuring out if she wanted to marry the man she was dating. She knew if she casually dated it was highly likely she would engage in sloppy sex. She believed masturbation was keeping her centered. Unlike when she was sexually active she no longer needed to masturbate every day. She felt as long as she maintained friendships she would avoid craving a partner. The most important aspect to abstaining was prayer. She believed without prayer and having good relationships she would have likely jumped into a romantic relationship. With Eastbank being an overall small community and with her being a leader in the community she knew having a fling or a "Friend" would be a mistake. This was an encouragement to avoiding sex.

One of the benefits of being single was the confidence she was gaining. She believed she was learning more about who she was. More important, she felt she was connecting to God in a way she never did before. God was in her life ever since Victoria led her to Christ; lately her relationship with Jesus felt different.

She appreciated the space her Brother gave her. She felt she could be her own person while feeling some security she was living with family. She reminded herself she should start looking to purchase a condo or a small house. She convinced herself her brother needed her at the yacht. The least thing she wanted was for him to fall for some gold digging woman.

She was hoping Sergeant Marcus Taylor would ask her out. Since moving to Florida she was asked out on numerous occasions but she always politely declined. He was the only one she could imagine herself marrying.

On the previous Tuesday a woman from the YMCA asked her out. Ashleigh believed this woman discounted Megan was a lesbian but believed she was bisexual. Ashleigh found it

interesting on how many lesbians discounted the idea Megan was a lesbian, but if a woman was attracted to Megan; they wanted to believe she was in the closet.

Having sex with a woman seemed awkward to Ashleigh. She wondered what the point would be. She felt having sex with a woman was like having endless foreplay without the wonderful ending. Ashleigh loved foreplay. She hoped the guy she married was into foreplay and was a giving partner. She desired a guy who was great at oral sex. As much as she enjoyed receiving good oral sex she was astounded any guy would go down on a woman. She wondered why her third lover enjoyed giving her oral sex. She performed oral sex on the three men she had sex with because she was trying to please them. She could never imagine going down on a woman. She even found the idea of touching a woman's breasts awkward. The only thing she wondered about was kissing another woman and what it would feel like for a woman to touch her. She instinctively knew she would be the worst lover for a woman. She would be reluctant to touch this partner, would never give this partner head, and would make this partner wear a strap on. Ashleigh couldn't fathom having sex without penetration.

Ashleigh felt it was a good idea for Megan to brake it off with Christopher. If her brother was single she would have encourage Bob and Megan to date one another. She admired Susan to much to implement this plan. Susan was better than any of the gold diggers who threw themselves at her brother. She was still unsure they would end up together (this was her justification for postponing looking for a condo).

While debating if she should start getting ready for work her cell phone rang: she sat up, grabbed her Blackberry Phone, looked at the display, and it was Haley. Unlike the past few days she was actually calling instead of sending a text message. Ashleigh was unsure about the growing popularity of texting. She liked the fact her phone had a little keyboard on it. Because of texting she envisioned a day when people would have difficulty talking to one another.

Ashleigh answered, "What's the matter?"

"I don't want you to be alarmed."

She answered, "Sure."

"Bob is having a meeting with the board of Criti-Medical."

"I'll be in."

"No."

"What do you mean no?"

"You should stay on vacation."

"Why didn't Bob tell me?"

"It was set up late yesterday."

Ashleigh made a face.

"He should have told me."

"He wants you to finish your vacation."

She was already up and walking toward her suite.

Nikita ignored Best friend, she was waited for Strong Scent; she whimpered and put her head down.

"This just ended the vacation."

"It shouldn't."

"The CEO of that company is lying to us."

Haley acknowledged this, "I agree."

"I want to be involved with everything. He's not going to do this takeover without me."

"Not a bad idea. But..."

Ashleigh interrupted, "But what?"

Ashleigh opened the door to her suite, shut the door, and headed toward her walk in closet. She was thinking about what to wear. Her plan was to look as intimidating as possible while appearing professional.

Haley suggested, "Why not just show up for the meeting and go back on vacation?"

Ashleigh in a stern voice answered, "My vacation is over. Tell Bob I'll be in before the meeting."

Haley sighed, "Okay."

Ashleigh pictured her eye roll.

While browsing her suits she asked, "How's Brittany?"

"She's a pistol."

"A good one or a bad one?"

Haley answered, "I believe a good one."

"Good."

Ashleigh hung up the phone.

She was down to two suits. Depending on the color of her blouse and the accessories would decide on the suit she would select.

Haley then texted her the time of the meeting.

Ashleigh internally criticized herself for never asking Haley what time the meeting would start. She immediately reminded herself, it was at the time she assumed it would be, but she still felt she should have asked.

She hated terrible communication.

Julie easily lifted her bike out of the back of the pick-up-truck (she easily did so because she was strong for a young woman and because of how light the bike was). She: set it down next to her and shut the tailgate. With a growing frustration she pulled on her sports bra. It temporarily fit properly.

She mumbled, "I hate my boobs."

She walked her bike around the truck, spotted the passenger side window roll down, when she reached it she heard her Daddy say, "I'm proud of you."

She stopped and asked, "Why?"

"Y'all are planning on walking the dawg?"

She would have been sarcastic to anyone else but answered, "Yes sir."

"The test of a warrior is getting up when Y'all have been knocked down."

She knew her Daddy was trying to encourage her. It meant a great deal to her, but she was far from feeling it.

"I ain't wanting to do anything."

"Do Y'all believe I want to go to work everyday? Or wanted to go to battle everyday?"

"No sir."

He smiled, "See how smart Y'all are."

"Yes sir."

This is when they heard Nikita howl.

Julie looked toward the yacht and smiled.

She heard her Daddy say, "The dawg ain't caring if Y'all won the game last night or not. Imagine if Y'all didn't walk her?"

Julie again wanted to be sarcastic, but it was her Daddy, "Yes sir."

"I know Y'all look forward to walking the dawg. As Y'all are seeing she looks forward to it."

She smiled, "Yes Daddy."

"I have to get to work."

She stepped away from the truck.

The window went up and he drove away.

She again yanked on her sports bra and again mumbled, "I hate my boobs."

She started to cry, this was the least place she wanted to cry, it just happened.

Julie was frustrated her breasts were: growing larger, were growing out, were turning upward, and she was frustrated with the growth of her areolas. The last time she was brave enough to measure her aerosols they were an inch and a quarter in circumference. It was obvious they were growing faster than her breasts were growing outward. While masturbating in front of a mirror she observed her breasts: tighten, her aerosols puffed up, they pointed upward, and her breasts became very hard. There was little doubt she fell into the category of having "torpedo" or "banana" shaped breasts. She worried her breasts would be as large as her Momma. The least thing she wanted were double D breasts that were shaped like a torpedo. She wished they would have stayed a C, her aerosols would have stopped growing, and her breasts would have remained a circular shape.

After talking to Annette she went online to see how many famous actresses had "torpedo tits" or "banana boobs." Like Annette mentioned, her type of breasts would have been all the rage during the nineteen fifties and early sixties. It was no longer fashionable to make ones breasts look this way. A few pornographic websites even had a specific category labeled "torpedo tits". There was a comfort in knowing other women had boobs like hers but she wished they looked more "normal."

Her breasts were one of the reasons she was wearing a lime green over sized cowl neck sweatshirt. Underneath the sweatshirt she was wearing a sports bra, an orange cross-back tee, and over it a lime green scoopneck tee. She was grateful layering was in. Matching her top she was wearing a very tight pair of yoga knee shorts. On both sides of these shorts were lime green strips. These shorts highlighted her tight buttock and her long legs. She chose these shorts because they were tight for biking and she was out growing all of her pairs of pants. She was thankful she purchased Capri style pants and athletic wear over the last couple months. She was wearing brand new white and coral New Balance running shoes. She needed to buy new shoes because they were getting tight.

Her greatest frustration with her current growth spurt was how uncomfortable she felt in her own skin. In the last week she tripped more times than she could ever remember. She was tired of dropping things. She stubbed her toes repeatedly. She hated feeling so tired; she disliked sleep as it was. The worst was how often she was bumping her head. This started a few weeks prior when she slammed her head against a shelf in her walk in closet.

This new growth spurt was causing her to crave sex. She admitted to herself she was a chronic masturbator. When Julie discussed masturbation with other girls and the adult women in her life they claimed masturbating kept them from having sex. Julie was feeling the

more she masturbated the more she was craving sex. Even though, rumors were flying around she was sleeping around, she was still a virgin. She really disliked the nickname Fingerpainter.

Remaining a virgin was a struggle. There were five guys she was willing to have sex with. None of these guys were popular and none of them attended a sex party. She disliked most of the popular guys attitudes and she would never have sex with a guy who claimed to have been with her.

Having kids at school believe she was sleeping around was hurtful.

She heard Nikita.

She: looked up at the yacht, brushed away her tears, she pushed her bike onto the first pier of the marina, she quickly went on it, and biked to the yacht's wooden pier.

She could have easily passed for a college athlete or an athletic model. This was easy to deduce because she was over six feet tall and her maturing rectangular shaped face. Her beautiful greenish blue eyes gave her a more mature appearance. The facial features which helped her pass as older were: her complexion, her naturally winged shaped dark eyebrows, her long thick wavy hair, and her roman style nose. Her roman style nose complimented her long skinny lips. Julie had similar dimples as her Auntie Megan but hers were smaller and less noticeable. When she smiled the top row of her straight teeth were visible. How Julie differed from others in her family was her wider jawline and her high forehead. She tried to hide her forehead with her naturally thick brunette hair. The only time she exposed her high forehead was during physical activity. She kept hair ties in her pockets so she could put her hair into a pony tail.

She locked her bike. She adjusted her bra again. She hoped her Momma would take her shopping after track. She slid her backpack over her shoulder, carrying her keys she headed up the stairs, she used her personal yacht key to open the door and entered the yacht. Like everyday Nikita was there to greet her.

This brightened her day.

Her Daddy was correct, no matter what, Nikita looked forward to her walks. In many ways Julie liked Nikita over people. All she ever wanted was to be was a kindergarten teacher. She understood she needed to be willing to teach at all levels but she wanted to teach at a primary school level. Since walking Nikita her second choice was to be a veterinarian. She wanted to be veterinarian because animals were never influenced by rumors. Her Momma suggested becoming one anytime Julie raved about walking Nikita or read about dogs. Julie was well aware the reason her Momma was encouraging her to become a veterinarian was to avoid getting a family dog. No matter if this was the cause of her Momma's advice; Julie felt it was good advice.

Julie was surprised by how quiet the yacht was. She correctly reasoned Bob left for work and Ashleigh was in her suite. Glancing down at Nikita, she felt terribly guilty for being late.

"I'm sorry."

Nikita was excited Strong Scent was here. Nikita showed how much she liked Strong Scent by exposing her underside. Nikita enjoyed Strong Scent's touch. She: quickly went on all fours, followed Strong Scent into the galley, they stopped at what was called Nikita's closet, watched Julie grab the thing that picked up her markings, followed Strong Scent to where human food was kept, was listening for a noise Nikita understood, watched Strong Scent play

with the papers on the refrigerator; this excited Nikita because the next thing would be the leash. She watched Julie open her backpack and take out the leash.

The papers on the refrigerator were maps. The only way Julie's Mother would agree to walking Nikita was if Julie mapped out the route she took Nikita. At the beginning there were three maps. Now there were four main maps with one long route and numerous shorter routes all written on the long route. As an example: one of the maps she often used was titled *The Beach*. The long route of this map: started at Marina, went across *Bluff Beach Parkway*, went south along the beach, all the way down to the inlet, paralleled the inlet, and up *Bluff Beach Parkway*. To be more accurate there were about eight to ten different routes along this big route she could take. An example of a diversion from the long route, she would run to the lighthouse play fetch with Nikita and then run back to the marina by heading north along the beach. She had this shorter version highlighted and marked with a letter.

Of these four large maps two went south and two went north. One was titled *The Beach*, the second going south was titled *Mansions*, the third going north was titled *The Lookout*, and the last one going north was titled *The Neighborhood*. Both of these northern routes went along the preserve. The one titled *The Lookout* went north on *Bluff Beach Parkway*; this meant the whole route was surrounded by the preserve.

She selected the map titled *Neighborhood*. This route went north along the *Eastbank River* and the preserve, it crossed the walking bridge over the river, and continued into the neighborhood west of the *Eastbank River*. This route went in a rectangular pattern with the long sides going in a north and south direction. The rectangle would take her back to the walking bridge, she would cross the *Eastbank River* over the bridge, and run south along the river back to the marina. This was the first time since the incident at the lookout she selected a northern map.

Ashleigh and Julie worked on these maps together and updated it as they went along. Between the two of them they convinced Nicole this was more accurate and would be better for everyone. Nicole agreed because of how important walking Nikita was to Julie. Julie had to promise whatever route she picked at her house was the one she picked at the yacht. There were numerous times Nicole called Ashleigh to see what route Julie selected at the yacht.

Julie always maintained the route she selected. One of the reason is because she believed in promises. A secondary reason, she believed there were days when she would see police officers parked near one of her routes. Julie knew there was the possibility her Daddy or Momma asked the police to check up on her. She never wanted her Momma to stop her from walking Nikita.

Nikita obeyed the command, "Sit."

She was excited the leash was hooked onto her.

She easily listened to the command, "Come."

They stopped at the main door.

Julie stepped over to one of the tables in what was called the dancing hall. Julie glanced at: the neon signs, the records hanging on the wall, and posters. She loved this room and how Mr. Bob would exchange the memorabilia on the wall. She: set down the popper scooper, set her backpack on one of the tall chairs, slipped off her sweatshirt, hung it on one of the chairs, felt bad when Nikita started to whimper, because she was running late she left her backpack on the chair. In frustration she reached underneath her shirt, made an attempt at adjusting her bra, she hoped this would keep it in place, turned, and led Nikita out of the yacht.

She led Nikita to where she would leave her markings.

Nikita: watched Strong Scent pick up her markings, she followed Strong Scent to where she would drop the markings into the thing with all the smells, then walk around this thing, she watched Strong Scent lean the thing that picked up her markings against the fence, they followed the fence to the river, and they stepped through the small gap between the river and the fence. Strong Scent commanded Nikita to sit. Nikita: sat down, wagged her tail, and observed Strong Scent play with her fur; this excited Nikita.

When Strong Scent was done playing with her fur Nikita heard her favorite command, "Lets Fly."

Nikita remembered this way. She liked running on the grass and liked the river. She would glance at the preserve. She would protect Strong Scent if she sensed them.

Julie enjoyed running along the river and over the river on the walking bridge. On the west side of the bridge she would cross the street into a large residential neighborhood. She always crossed here because there was a wide crosswalk and there were stop signs on either side of the crosswalk. She would run toward *Crossway Avenue*, depending on how much time she had, before reaching *Crossway Avenue* she would turn North. She would run up to three miles. On one of these streets she would turn east until she reached the street that paralleled the *Eastbank River*. She would run south on this street until she reached the crosswalk to the walking bridge. Where she would turn east, cross at the large crosswalk, cross the river on the walking bridge, and head south to the yacht.

On this route she never let Nikita run without a leash. In the past she would play fetch with Nikita between the large fence of the Marina and the preserve. While running along the *Eastbank River* she decided she would never play fetch with Nikita next to the preserve again. Instead she would play fetch with her by the marina mailboxes or across the street from the marina.

Many high school students lived in this large neighborhood. Somewhere in this neighborhood Earnest Jankowski lived; she was unsure of exactly where his house was. She hoped she would see him run to his house. She suspected he was already done with his run. Today; she would pass Burt Atterly's house. She knew where Leslie and Tiffany lived. By design their houses were in the center of the rectangle. A few girls from her volleyball team, track team, and softball team lived in this neighborhood. None of her close friends lived in this neighborhood. Like many students, Julie was grateful the high school was a few blocks from where she turned east toward the walking bridge. Many students, this sometimes included Julie, would skip out of school, cross this bridge, and go to the lookout. Since the incident at the lookout she avoided doing anything along the beach and the preserve.

She was enjoying the run with Nikita. She was annoyed whenever she needed to adjust her sports bra. It was obvious her mother would need to measure her again and take her bra shopping. She hated this process but knew this was life until her breast stopped growing.

She was running west when she spotted William's dark green extended cab pick-up-truck parked at a house. Most of the guys in her school accepted her refusals. William was an exception. He believed she was obligated to have sex with him. Within the last three to four weeks he was becoming more aggressive. What concerned Julie was he came from a very powerful Floridian family; many of his family members were lawyers and government officials. His friend Gregory stepped out of his house and into the pick-up-truck. It was Lawrence who was sitting next to William in the front seat who pointed at Julie. Like William,

Lawrence came from old money. Gregory was on the swim team. Lawrence was on the golf and Tennis team. Williams was the President of Student council.

Julie was certain William's friend Gregory would back anything he wanted. She was unsure about Lawrence. He hung out with them but never said anything to her or anything bad about her. This was a plus with this group of guys. To avoid trouble she immediately turned north (right); this was the first time she ever went off the map. She ran three blocks and turned east (right) for three blocks, and turned north (left). Her plan was to go north until she reached the road with the walking bridge, where she would turn east (right). She would run as fast as she could and run directly onto the walking bridge. To her annoyance, when she turned east (right) she spotted the pick-up-truck waiting for her.

She was preparing herself for the worst. She hoped, all they would do was ridicule her and act childish. All three were in excellent shape. She felt she could take on each one of these young men individually; at least enough to get away. Taking on three young men was a different matter. She was determined to give them a battle. Julie was taller than Gregory and Lawrence. William was one of the tallest guys in school.

What gave her confidence was Nikita. Based upon Nikita's behavior at the preserve and how Nikita protected Ashleigh; Julie wanted to believe Nikita would be a force unto herself. She wanted to believe they would have enough sense to leave her alone. Then again they were teenagers.

She was smart enough to run across the street instead of running directly passed the truck. Once across the street she picked up the pace.

Out of the corner of her eye she observed the truck pace her. She looked forward trying to ignore them. As she was running she was planning multiple escape routes. She understood she needed to avoid being grabbed and dragged.

It was obvious the windows of the pick-up-truck were down.

Gregory yelled, "I'd love to cum on your tits."

William yelled, "I'd make her jerk my cock and I'd cum all over her face."

She heard laughter.

Julie held back tears.

Julie would never voluntarily touch any of these guys. They knew this. At the last two sex parties she attended she gave a total of three guys handjobs. At the last party she attended, she gave one guy a boob job, and allowed him to finish on her boobs. She did so because Pamela and Marissa made fun of his small cock. She correctly assumed they chose to ridicule him because a friend of his invited him and not the members of the "Snob Club". Since giving this guy a boob job, William made it known he should have the right to cum on her face. Julie enjoyed teasing a guy's cock and it was a turn on for her to watch a guy ejaculate but she would never purposely allow a guy to cum on her face. The guys she gave handjobs to were always guys who were picked on. This was one of the reasons Julie was called a tease. She no longer attended these sex parties. She was grateful she never had sex with any guy at these parties.

William yelled, "I've heard Y'all like it up the ass. I'd love to bend Y'all over and stick my eight inch cock up your hole. I bet she'd love it."

She noticed only two of the three guys laughing.

This comment frightened her. A sexual act she had no interest in ever trying was anal sex. Based upon her research she knew a person had to prepare for it and to avoid a painful

experience both partners needed to be careful. She wanted to yell a series of insults but she remained silent and began running at a faster pace.

Nikita disliked these humans intent. She slowed down and turned to face these humans. Julie yelled at Nikita and yanked her forward. This slowed her down. Her athletic ability stopped her from falling forward.

In an angry tone William shouted, "Y'all need to get in here and suck my fucking cock."

She disliked his tone. The least thing she wanted was to suck on his eight inch cock. Many of the girls who went to these parties chose to be with him; partly because of his looks, partly because of his wealth, partly because he was popular, and because they were fascinated with his big cock. The least thing she wanted was for William to be the first guy she ever gave oral sex too. She read too many true life sexual accounts on how oral sex with a big guy could be miserable.

Gregory yelled, "We've been hearing how Y'all are great at sucking cock."

William added, "From what we're understanding you'd love doing all three of us at once."

Nikita sensed they wanted to harm Strong Scent. She growled and bristled.

Julie yanked on Nikita and commanded her forward.

William shouted, "I bet Y'all would blow the dawg."

Gregory cheered this on.

She did hear Lawrence say, "We don't have time for this."

She heard William say something to Lawrence but it was unclear on what he said.

Suggesting she would blow a dog was awful hurtful. She increased her pace.

She heard William ask his friends, "Who's dawg is it anyway?"

She was unsure of which one answered but she heard, "Mr. Bob's sister."

William yelled, "I bet Y'all are doing both Mr. Bob and his sister."

Gregory added, "I bet she sucks Mr. Bob's old dick."

This infuriated Julie. This was the first time she ever heard either of these rumors.

William yelled, "It's a benefit to any girl when they have a sugar daddy."

Gregory added, "I bet it's why she's such a fucking tease."

Lawrence tried, "We ain't knowing if she's doing Mr. Bob."

William ignored his friend.

Gregory seemed to speak with some knowledge of how having a sugar Momma worked, "Nothing better than to tease the old fuckers. Y'all get more money this way."

William shouted, "Instead of fucking an old guy like him. Let me ride Y'all."

William and Gregory laughed.

Lawrence mentioned, "There are other gals willing to fuck Y'all. Lets leave her alone?"

She heard William respond and Lawrence respond but was unable to hear the conversation.

Julie appreciated Lawrence trying.

She hated the fact she needed to adjust her bra; she was grateful they missed this maneuver. There were only three blocks left until she reached the walking bridge. She knew crossing the road would be a challenge. If necessary she would dash through a yard and look for a person leaving their house. She wished she had her backpack with her, in it was her cellphone. She decided to purchase an arm strap for her phone.

She was able to get Nikita to run faster.

William was angry on how fast she was running, "Y'all should ride my big eight inch cock. Ride it cowgirl style so I can watch those big titties bounce."

Gregory stated, "No. Since she likes dawgs bend her over and do it dogie style. I bet the slut whore would love it."

William said in a tone Julie disliked, "I'd have access to her asshole."

Gregory yelled, "You teasing cunt."

Gregory and William laughed.

Julie held back the tears.

Nikita stopped.

Julie yanked her, managed to continue running, and commanded her forward.

She recognized crossing the road would be a problem. At the next block she would turn north (left), she decided she would run in a zig zag pattern, and if necessary head to the high school or home.

He: gunned the gas, pulled to the right, stopped the truck, jumped out of the truck, and crossed the road. William and Lawrence were in front of her and Lawrence was stepping around the truck to block her from running backwards.

William yelled, "Y'all are fucking me today."

Gregory yelled as he stepped onto the curb, "I bet when she's jilling in the bathroom she's thinking about riding all of us at once."

Julie stopped on a dime and turned sideways. Her plan was to back up to the house behind her. She hoped someone would be there. She believed this would give Nikita an advantage.

Nikita yanked on the chain. Her focus was William. She sensed he intended the most harm.

Julie yelled, "Nikita will protect me. She'll bite your balls off."

Nikita's head was down, her tail was down, her eyes were glaring, and she bristled. She could sense these human males meant Strong Scent harm. She was tapping into her ancestral DNA. Her ancestors were taught to defend human women and children when the human men left the territory.

Gregory said, "Y'all make the dawg heal."

Julie glared at him, "I'm planning on letting her go."

William answered, "I'll run back to my truck and shoot the dawg."

Julie answered, "Your balls will be bitten off first."

Nikita was showing her teeth and was yanking on the leash.

Julie managed to hold in her fear, "It wouldn't be wise of Y'all to step any closer."

William gave her a look, "Why?"

Again Nikita yanked on the lease. These young men should have been grateful of Julie's strength.

Julie yelled, "My Grandfather is Captain."

She spotted Lawrence's face show concern and ask, "Captain is your Grandfather?"

Gregory and William gazed at Lawrence.

In a tone, "My last name is Steward."

Lawrence yelled in a very apologetic tone, "I didn't know Y'all were part of them Steward's."

She gave him a stupid look, but answered, "What Y'all think?"

William asked, "Who gives a fuck?"

Julie squinted.

Lawrence became demanding. He now knew exactly what to do, "Let's go."

William looked at him, "What?"

Lawrence grabbed William and mumbled something to him.

Julie heard William say, "I don't care. Y'all know who my family is?"

Lawrence stood in front and said, "We're leaving."

William looked at him.

Lawrence said very sternly, "I ain't touching her."

Lawrence turned to Julie, "I ain't a part of this. I ain't liking how they're treating Y'all."

Julie answered, "If Y'all leave I won't tell my family what happened here."

Before William could say anything Lawrence pushed him, "Get in the truck. We ain't ever bothering Julie again."

Gregory realizing who her family was stated, "He's right."

Nikita aggressively yanked on the leash.

They should have appreciated her strength.

Gregory was backing up to the truck and stated, "We'all were joking."

"If Y'all leave me alone I'll forget this happened."

William was beside himself.

Lawrence looked at him, "I'll walk to school."

Gregory stopped and answered, "I'll go with him."

Julie could tell William was angry.

William commanded, "Get in the truck."

This is when an older lady stepped out of the house behind Julie, "Young lady is there trouble brewing?"

Julie answered, "Ask the boys."

William in an angry tone yelled, "We're leaving."

"Sonny. It'd be a good idea."

Nikita sensed the men were leaving. Julie commanded her to sit. Nikita did so, her tail was wagging, she wanted to greet the human woman making noises.

"Youngin' Y'all okay?"

"Yes Ma'am."

"Is she a husky? Y'all don't see many of them around these parts."

Julie yelled, "I'm walking it for a friend."

"She looks like a good dawg."

"Yes Ma'am. She's great."

While tearing she pet Nikita.

Nikita could feel the love and appreciation in Julie's touch.

"Y'all be safe."

"I will."

The lady stepped back into the house.

Julie: took a deep breath, held back tears, and commanded: "Lets Fly."

This was Nikita's favorite command.

She ran at a full sprint. It was one thing to prepare to be attacked, it was a different feeling when it was a possibility. As she ran, the pain of being called a: slut, whore, bitch, and

how she was teased rattled her. The idea she would sleep with Mr. Bob angered her a great deal. There were three older men she believed would never be inappropriate to a woman, these were: her grandfather, her Daddy, and Mr. Bob.

What was so hurtful she was a virgin. But the school believed she was sleeping with both guys and gals. She was happy to cross the walking bridge and head south to the marina.

She would ask Ashleigh to drive her to school.

April 25th, Can't Wait Any Longer *Part One of Six*

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Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25
Can't Wait
Any Longer

Day 15 of Book I

*(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)*

Part Two of Six

Authored By: R. P. Voght

Posted on ashleighandmegan.com on:
February 28, 2026

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I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"
R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Julie felt an overwhelming amount of relief when she stepped into the yacht. She immediately started to cry. While crying: she shut the door, stooped down, removed the leash, stood up, and stepped over to where her backpack was.

Julie clung to the backpack and wept.

Nikita sensed Strong Scent was upset. She followed her to the chair.

Julie knelt down and pet her.

Nikita licked her tears.

Nikita's collar jangled.

Julie heard from the galley, "I'm assuming it's you."

Julie sucked in all the tears, wiped the tears from her face, and stood up.

This is when Nikita went running to her bowl.

Julie answered, "Yes Ma'am."

"You can use my shower."

"Yes Ma'am."

Based upon Ashleigh's tone Julie surmised she was in what Julie termed: her Vice President mood.

Julie opened her backpack. She quickly took out a mirror and tissue. She removed all evidence she had cried. She took a deep breath. When she felt confident is when she stepped into the galley.

Ashleigh was standing in the middle of the galley reading a stack of stapled papers. Based upon the papers folded over Julie guessed Ashleigh was on the fifth page. This was clearly the reason Ashleigh never appeared in the hall.

Julie immediately noticed Ashleigh was wearing a brand new tailored woman's suit. Julie felt this suit was: bold, boyish, slightly gangster, but on Ashleigh it appeared feminine. She was wearing: a heather carbon pinstriped vest, underneath she was wearing a strawberry colored three-quarter sleeve shirt, it was very neatly tucked in, her traditional woman's trouser matched the color and stripe of the vest, when the vest moved Julie spotted a strawberry colored thin belt, she was wearing strawberry colored high healed shoes, she was wearing a red tie with very small white polka dots; Julie believed Mr. Bob wore this tie once. Her long blond hair was pinned, slicked back, and in a bun. She was wearing light makeup but with red lipstick; bold for Ashleigh. She matched this with: simple gold earrings, a matching gold chain attached to one of the pockets of her vest, and an expensive watch with a red band. Julie surmised this was a brand new watch. Julie spotted the matching suit coat hanging off one of the kitchen chairs. On the table was a matching heather carbon striped newsboy hat. Julie wondered how long Ashleigh would wear the high healed shoes.

Julie was surprised Ashleigh was wearing this outfit because of how the vest and shirt revealed her breasts. Julie was jealous on how Ashleigh could easily conceal or enhance them. She wished her breasts were Ashleigh's size and shape. There was no doubt Ashleigh's vacation was over. Julie wondered what Mr. Bob would feel about Ashleigh cutting her vacation short.

Julie found herself asking, "Is your vacation over?"

Ashleigh looked up and in a serious tone answered, "If you could shower and get ready. I need to get going."

"Yes Ma'am."

Ashleigh spotting Julie's disappointed body language, "We'll talk on the way. I really need to get to work."

"Yes Ma'am."

Julie turned around and headed toward Ashleigh's suite.

Ashleigh called out, "Julie."

She turned, "Yes Ma'am."

"No getting yourself off today."

They looked at one another. Julie found Ashleigh's approach refreshing: there was no ridicule, no sexual pass about it, and it was honest.

"Yes Ma'am."

Ashleigh nodded her head and went back to reading the report.

Because of the respect Julie felt toward Ashleigh she hurried to the shower and restrained herself. This was difficult because she loved enjoying herself in Ashleigh's large bathtub.

Ashleigh closely observed Julie step to her suite. Based upon Julie's body language Ashleigh believed something traumatic happened to her.

When Julie stepped into the suite, Ashleigh turned toward Nikita and asked, "Girl what happened?"

Nikita tilted her head. She could sense Best Friend was concerned. She approached Ashleigh.

"Go to your spot."

Nikita listened.

Ashleigh set the papers on the table and stepped to Nikita's closet.

Nikita looked up and was about to run over.

Ashleigh commanded, "Stay."

Nikita listened but her tail was a weapon and she made dog noises.

Ashleigh stated, "Don't act like you aren't spoiled."

Nikita replied with her own dog noises.

Ashleigh: opened the door, took out a bone, Ashleigh shut the door, walked the bone to Nikita, this focused Nikita, Ashleigh shook her head, set the bone down, Nikita laid down, Nikita greedily munched on the bone, Ashleigh picked up the papers from the table, and was quickly engrossed in the paperwork.

She angrily adjusted her shoes and proclaimed, "I hate shoes!"

The reason she was standing was because of her shoes. She was concerned if she took them off she would never wear them again. If it was up to her she would never wear a pair of shoes ever again; she knew this was an unrealistic expectation. She changed her mind: she reached down, slipped them off, set them on a nearby kitchen table chair, pulled the chair next to it out, and sat down.

Ashleigh glanced at the suite door. She correctly believed Julie looked up to her; Ashleigh felt this was an admiration thing. If Ashleigh felt there was anything sexual to this crush she would have been concerned. The least thing she wanted was for a teenage girl to make a pass at her. It was bad enough a woman at the Y bluntly asked her out on a date and recently another was going out of her way to flirt with her. The idea of having sex with another woman was both awkward and pointless. Ashleigh felt it was like having hours of foreplay without the penetration at the end. She correctly believed she was being hit on because of the rumors she was bisexual.

She turned her attention back to the shipping report. She appreciated Haley sending the report to her.

Ashleigh was alarmed at the logistics issues *Criti-Medical* was having. It was obvious for the first three weeks of the month very little shipped; but in the last week and a half of the month at least ninety-five percent of all the product was shipped. Both Bob and Ashleigh believed this was the cause of so much of their problems. Bob believed they could easily fix this problem. This report convinced Ashleigh they should avoid purchasing this company. She felt this report confirmed her feelings of mistrust for the leadership of the company.

A frustration for Ashleigh was her brother seemed to be discounting her analysis. Overall she felt Bob was a great judge in character. The exception was his first business partner. She believed he was making a similar mistake by believing: the investors, the owner, the CEO, the President, and everyone in management.

She hoped she could convince Bob to avoid purchasing this company.

She heard Nikita's collar jangle, she looked up, watched Nikita run to the suite door, and spotted Julie step out of her suite. Ashleigh glanced at her wrist watch. She was impressed Julie held to her promise. Ashleigh: stood up, walked to the end of the table, pulled out a different chair with her laptop bag on it, quickly placed this paperwork in a sleeve of the bag, slipped on her hat, grabbed her shoes, walked around the table, slipped on her coat, stepped over to the China cabinet, glanced into her purse, she spotted her keys, grabbed them, she

swung her purse over her shoulder, and adjusted everything. She spent extra time primping herself.

When Julie reached the galley, Ashleigh asked, "How's the hat?"

Julie smiled, "Good touch."

Julie concerned asked, "How do I look?"

Julie was wearing a conservative looking yellow cuffed button shirt, underneath she was wearing what Ashleigh believed was a yellow colored tank, and underneath the tank she was wearing a very supportive bra. She matched this with a pair of: vintage colored blue Capri five pocket styled jeans, with contrasting detailing on the hem and pockets, a wide waistband, and a banded two button hem. She: was wearing light makeup, had simple yellow earrings in, her long brunette hair was slightly brushed, her bangs were over her forehead, she was wearing a new black belt, a new pair of dark blue gladiator sandals, and her backpack hung over her shoulders.

Ashleigh was astounded on how mature she looked. Ashleigh believed her mature look came from her rectangular face shape, her winged eyebrows, her beautiful greenish-blue eyes, and her height. It was obvious to Ashleigh she was growing taller and her breasts were enlarging. Ashleigh was envious of the height but was grateful her boobs were nothing like Julie's.

With Ashleigh being five foot one the least thing she wanted was huge breasts. She always felt her breasts were perfect for her petite frame. They looked larger than they were, she liked their even round shape, and she could highlight or conceal them. What she always wanted was to be five inches taller.

"You look good. Why?"

Julie held back tears. Julie feared she looked like a slut. She wanted to discuss the hurt she felt on being called a whore. She was unsure of how to do this. There were five adult women she knew she could talk to about sex: her mother, Auntie Megan, Auntie Diane, Auntie Sam, and Ashleigh. The three she was most likely to talk to were her: mother, Megan, and Ashleigh. She worried if she told them of what she was going through they would look down upon her and believe she was a slut too.

She answered, "I'm growing taller again."

Ashleigh smiled, "You can't stop it."

Julie rolled her eyes and in joking matter, "Y'all know of a doctor who could stop it?"

Nikita holding the bone in her mouth followed Best Friend and Strong Scent.

Ashleigh allowed Nikita to bring the bone.

Ashleigh became serious, "God has decided for you to be tall. It'll help you playing volleyball."

"Yes Ma'am."

Ashleigh looked at her, "What's the matter?"

Ashleigh: opened the door, Nikita went running down the stairs, turned around, looked up the steps, set the bone down, and sat down. Julie stepped out and stepped down a couple steps. Ashleigh: stepped out, locked the door, turned around, Julie let her pass her; she watched Ashleigh make her way down the stairs.

Julie stated, "I wish my boobs would stop growing."

She held back tears.

She added, "Guys make comments."

Ashleigh said, "They said things about me."

"They did?"

Ashleigh decided to be honest, "I slept with my boyfriend because I loved him. After he went around telling everybody. Soon I was known as the easy lay."

This hit Julie.

"What did Y'all do?"

They stepped off the steps, made a right, stepped off the yacht, and onto the wooden pier.

When they passed Nikita she reached down and picked up the bone. Nikita was excited. She walked next to Best Friend.

"My impulse was to sleep around."

"Why didn't Y'all?"

"Victoria told me if I slept around I was exactly what they said I was. I'm glad I didn't."

"What's it like?"

"Being called a slut or having sex?"

Julie answered, "Both."

"It really hurt being called a slut. I mean. I loved the guy. The worst part was knowing I wasn't one but no matter what I said people wouldn't believe me. I'm sure people still believe I slept with half of the guys at school. I even heard I slept with the musicians at Bob's club."

They stopped at the end of the wooden pier. While standing on the concrete pier Julie unlocked her bike.

Nikita growled at the bike.

Ashleigh forced Nikita to sit.

Julie walked around Ashleigh and they were now shoulder to shoulder.

Julie was unsure of how to ask the follow up question. She was grateful Ashleigh explained.

"There was no way Bob ever allowed anyone the opportunity to hurt me."

In a very serious tone Ashleigh stated, "The bouncers would have killed anyone who touched me."

This made Julie smile. Julie correctly assumed Ashleigh was flirty all her life. She imagined Ashleigh as a young girl melting the hearts of the toughest of men.

She asked, "Bouncers of the club? Or the bodyguards of the musicians?"

Ashleigh stopped and looked up at her, "I never thought about that."

Julie smiled.

"Most likely both."

Ashleigh smiled, "Thinking about it. I believe some of the musicians I met would have kicked someone's ass too."

Julie asked, "Like who?"

Ashleigh touched Julie, "You know I never name names. It would have most likely have been any number of the country singers. Like you guys say down here. They would have defended my honor."

Julie respected this, "Yes Ma'am."

"Musicians from all types of music were good to me."

She became serious, "There were others I just knew to stay away from. I have to say. Looking back on it. The wives and girlfriends who were on tour seemed to mother me."

Julie could picture this.
When they reached the end of the first pier they turned and headed toward the garages.
Ashleigh was honest, "Looking back on things. I'm surprised nothing bad happened to me."

Julie nodded her head.
They waved at Barbara who drove passed them.
Julie mentioned, "She's cool."
Ashleigh smiled, "They both are."
"Stan loves to talk."
Ashleigh mentioned, "I love it when they sort of argue but don't argue. You know what I mean?"

"Yes Ma'am."
Ashleigh mentioned, "Their accents are hilarious."
Julie found this funny. Every local talked about how fast Ashleigh talked and her strong Midwestern accent. Julie no longer had difficulty understanding Ashleigh's strong southeastern Wisconsin accent.

Julie simply said, "It is."
Ashleigh was silent for a few steps.
"I've slept with three guys. The first guy I slept with. The one who told everyone I was easy. Sex with him was horrible."

"Why?"
"He must have thought because he was big he didn't have to do anything. He was in such a hurry he used his dick like a jack hammer."
"Oh."

Ashleigh added, "I know there are a lot of women who want to be with a guy who's big. I'm one of the few who prefers below average. But I don't think I'd want to be with a micro penis."

This was the first time Julie ever heard a woman openly confess they preferred a small penis.

"Why?"
"First I'm smaller down there."
This struck Julie. It never occurred to her women were different sizes. All at once this made sense.

"The best guy I ever slept with was smaller. He went out of his way to make up for his size. He was the first guy I ever had sex with where it didn't hurt. The first guy was a horrible lover. The second guy tried. But the third guy taught me how important foreplay was."

There was a pause.
Ashleigh added, "Just because a guy is small doesn't mean he'll be a good lover. I had a friend who broke up with a guy because he was small."

Julie asked, "Why?"
"He kept wanted her to tell her how big it was. He didn't care about foreplay. And because he was small she never felt it. For me. If I had to choose I'd choose the small guy. It was so painful having sex with the first two guys I'm afraid of having sex with a real big guy."

She paused and stopped walking.

Ashleigh stated very serious, "No matter what his size. Effort means a lot."

Julie asked, "Did you give them blow jobs?"

Ashleigh blushed.

Julie waited.

Ashleigh stopped, "I'm trusting you."

"I ain't saying anything to anyone."

"I didn't even try with the first guy. I did with the second guy and I threw up on him."

"Because of the taste?"

"He never warned me."

"Oh."

"It surprised me. I hated the texture."

"Oh."

This was the very reason Julie never performed oral on any guy. Plus, it was just as easy to get a venereal disease from giving a guy a blow job as having sex.

They stared at one another and then started walking again.

"After that I promised myself I would never go down on a guy again."

She made a face.

"I changed my mind with my last boyfriend because he was so nice to me. Plus it was smaller so I didn't mind so much."

"How big was he?"

"About four and half inches."

This seemed small to Julie.

"I'd prefer a little bigger. I'll never do it if he's over six inches long. The small guy was the only guy I had an orgasm with while he was inside."

Julie made a face, "He was?"

"Because he touched me while he was in."

Julie stated, "Makes sense."

Ashleigh added, "He was willing to try a variety of positions. There was one I really liked."

"Which one?"

Ashleigh reached into her purse and hit the button to the garage door opener.

They looked at one another as the garage door opened.

"I don't know if I should tell you."

"Why not?"

"No one at school talks about this."

"Why not ask your mom?"

"She bought me a book with drawings."

"She did?"

"Honest."

Ashleigh made a face, "Look up the crossed keys and the butterfly. My favorite with a guy who's smaller is the Nirvana."

Julie confirmed, "It's like missionary but your legs are together?"

Ashleigh winked.

Ashleigh asked her to wait outside of the garage. Julie watched Ashleigh lead Nikita into the Yellow Sport Edition Jeep. Julie loved the flower trim and the pin stripping. Soon the Jeep was backed out of the garage. Julie attached her bike to a brand new bike rack. Before

the bike rack Julie would set it in the back of the Jeep. Julie believed the only reason Ashleigh bought the bike rack was due to driving her to school. Julie admired the quality of this bike rack.

While attaching the bike to the rack she spotted Ashleigh reach up to the driver side visor and hit the garage door opening. Immediately the garage started to close.

Ashleigh: turned on her radio, set it to auxiliary, pulled her Ipod out of her purse, plugged it in with the cord she left in the Jeep, and selected a mix playlist she made a couple days earlier.

Nikita watched Strong Scent.

A classic Johnny Cash song started to play.

When Julie secured the bike to the rack Nikita growled.

"Do you have to growl at her bike every time?"

Nikita listened for a noise she knew.

Julie quickly rushed to the passenger side and stepped into the Jeep. The seat was already as far back as it could go.

They looked at one another and smiled.

Ashleigh lifted up the parking brake and put the Jeep into neutral.

Ashleigh picked up a pair of old athletic shoes she kept in her car, she checked it for bugs and spiders, then slipped them on, "I hate shoes."

Julie said in a joking matter, "There's a lot of people who don't like shoes But they really like feet."

Ashleigh gave her a look.

Julie blushed.

Julie was unwilling to tell Ashleigh how she knew guys liked feet.

This was a red flag for Ashleigh. This was the first time she considered the idea Julie was sexually active. She was reluctant to ask Julie if she was indeed having sex and how she knew about foot fetishes.

Julie could tell Ashleigh was reluctant to talk about this. Julie found Ashleigh being skittish fascinating. She would look for the opportunity to bring up the subject.

Julie continuing the original conversation by asking, "Ain't you missing sex?"

Ashleigh slipped on her shoes and looked at Julie. Because of Julie's look Ashleigh decided she would both answer her questions and try and convince Julie to wait or to stop having sex.

"It's much more difficult to wait after having sex."

Ashleigh looked at Julie, "You aren't thinking about having sex?"

Julie lied, "No. I don't even have a boyfriend."

Ashleigh being blunt stated, "You don't need a boyfriend to sleep with a guy."

Julie hated the fact she blushed.

Ashleigh answered the blush, "My suggestion is to wait. It's not like the movies. Often times it's anti climatic and it takes work for it to be good."

Julie looked down.

Ashleigh gently touched Julie's leg.

When Julie turned toward Ashleigh, Ashleigh answered, "It's been difficult waiting. I've had the desire to have a friend with benefits or a one night stand."

They looked at one another.

"I just don't want all that drama."

Julie stated, "Who says there has to be drama?"

Ashleigh answered honestly, "My heart does."

This hit Julie.

Ashleigh asked, "Is someone pressuring you to have sex?"

Julie lied, "No. I'm just curious."

"Think about what my sister is going through."

Julie thought about the discussion she had with Felicia on Facebook. Julie felt Felicia was struggling with everything and was being plagued with regret. What Julie admired was Felicia's dedication to having the baby and doing the correct thing. It was obvious to Julie, Felicia was having trouble deciding if she wanted to keep it or give it up for adoption. Julie never wanted to go through this.

Ashleigh stated, "It's normal to be curious. I wanted to have it when I was your age. I heard people telling me how I should wait. I did it anyway. I could blame the guys I slept with but I wanted to have sex. I justified having sex because I felt I loved them. Being honest I was just as curious about sex as they were. Out of the three guys I was with. Only one was dedicated to making sure I came or not."

"Only one?"

"Like I said before. Without my last boyfriend I wouldn't know what real foreplay is like."

Julie was unable to stop herself and asked, "Did any of the three like your feet?"

Ashleigh said with a tone, "My last boyfriend."

Julie found this interesting, "He did?"

Ashleigh rolled her eyes.

A person who owned a houseboat on the third pier hit his horn. Ashleigh and Julie turned and looked at this guy.

Ashleigh raised her hand and yelled, "Sorry."

The driver of the car waved his hand.

Ashleigh: turned around, released the parking brake, hit the clutch and brake, started the engine, and headed down the row of garages.

As always Julie was impressed with how she drove a manual transmission.

Julie decided to ask, "Doesn't Mr. Bob want Y'all to stay on vacation?"

Ashleigh, facing forward stated sternly, "Mr. Bob needs me to go to work today."

Julie wanted to know why.

Ashleigh reached over and gently touched her arm, "I'm trusting you."

"Yes Ma'am."

"Mr. Bob is considering buying a medical device company."

Julie asked, "Y'all don't like the idea."

"No."

"Will Mr. Bob buy it?"

"I hope not. But I'm sure he will. So I need to be there for when he does."

"Y'all are trying to convince him not to buy it?"

"You didn't hear it from me."

Julie asked, "What company?"

"It's a company in Wisconsin."

Julie promised herself she would look up Wisconsin medical companies. What she would look for was a company looking to sell, having financial trouble, or legal trouble.

They reached the entrance of the marina. Ashleigh quickly looked both ways and turned north (left) on *Bluff Beach Parkway*. This road went through the preserve and at the end of the preserve the road turned into a sideways T (the flat part of the T was parallel of the ocean). The road going west (left) was named *Swamp Road*.

At this intersection is when Julie was unable to restrain herself from asking, "Your last boyfriend was into feet?"

Ashleigh looked at her, "You don't want to hear about this?"

Julie smiled and nodded her head.

"Why?"

Julie answered in a half truth, "Just curious."

Ashleigh thought about it.

Julie begged, "I ain't telling anyone."

"Maybe I shouldn't tell you."

"Why? Y'all should hear what we talk about at school."

Ashleigh sighed.

She put the Jeep into gear and made a left handed turn. Julie again admired how Ashleigh drove a manual transmission vehicle.

Ashleigh said with some animation, "I'm not into feet. He was."

Julie found this interesting, "Yeah?"

Ashleigh rolled her eyes, "Whenever I was barefoot he would stare at my feet."

"He did?"

"He stared at them like guys stare at your boobs."

With a face, "He did?"

"He begged me to give him a footjob."

Julie eager, "Did you?"

"He thought it was the greatest thing in the world. I still don't understand it."

Julie laughed.

"It ain't funny."

Ashleigh blushed.

Julie laughed more.

Ashleigh ended up laughing as well.

Julie asked with a smile, "Did it make a mess?"

They then laughed some more.

Ashleigh became serious and answered, "I made him clean it up."

This calmed Julie down. The mess created by a guy ejaculating was a concern for Julie. She found it to be a huge turn on to watch a guy ejaculate but the clean up was something different. Plus, she witnessed guys being disrespectful. She disliked any pornographic scene where a guy was disrespectful. She hoped this would never happen to her.

They were silent for a while.

After weaving their way through the neighborhoods they were a block away from the school.

Julie again felt the need to ask, "Did Y'all like it?"

"No."

Julie asked in an adult manner, "Then why did Y'all give him one?"

Because Julie was being mature Ashleigh decided to answer the question.

Ashleigh with a very serious tone, "I let him because he was a great lover. I could have cared less one way or another. It wasn't something I was into or ever would be. But I didn't mind because he cared about me and did things I liked. More important he cleaned up the mess. If he complained once I wouldn't have ever done it again."

Julie answered, "Makes sense."

Ashleigh felt the need to say, "If one of the other guys asked. I'd have said no and probably hid my feet."

This made sense to Julie.

Ashleigh on purpose changed subjects, "Your Mom confirmed you'll be getting your drivers license over the summer."

"First I'll need to take a written test to get my permit. Here in Florida they make you keep a permit for a year. During the year I'll need to drive fifty hours of behind-the-wheel experience with ten of them being at night. After the year is when I'm able take my drivers test."

Ashleigh answered, "That's cool."

Julie asked, "Y'all want to teach me how to drive manual?"

"I'll teach you when you get the permit."

"Yes Ma'am."

"I hope Y'all will walk Nikita?"

The word walk caused Nikita to poke her nose up front.

Julie pet her, "You are such a good girl."

Nikita loved the attention.

Julie answered over Nikita, "I'll walk her until I go to college."

Ashleigh smiled.

She commanded, "Nikita lay down."

Nikita did lay on the back seat. In a few minutes she was again sitting looking out the window.

Julie observed Ashleigh use the clutch.

Ashleigh asked, "Why doesn't your Dad teach you?"

"None of our cars have manual. It was Daddy's idea you teach me. He says If we had one he'd teach me."

"Why does he want me to teach you?"

"He says everyone should be in the knowing on how to drive manual. Especially a gal."

They looked at one another.

Ashleigh stated, "You have a good Dad."

"Yes Ma'am."

"I'll teach you."

Julie hated to ask, "Jeff would like to drive manual too."

Ashleigh gave her a look.

"Since he's been dating Bette I ain't believing he has a crush on Y'all."

"I'm not taking any chances."

Julie understood this.

"Is it going well?"

"I'm thinking he's in love with her. Even if he ain't willing to admit it."

Ashleigh said, "She's a good girl."

"Momma says the same."

They reached the bike rack of the High School.

Julie became somber.

Ashleigh reached out, "It'll be alright."

"I let the team down."

"Bob always says. You can't change yesterday. You can only do better today to make tomorrow better."

Julie gave a half smile.

"I don't want to go in today."

"You'll have to face it tomorrow."

Julie looked at Ashleigh.

"It's something I learned in treatment. A person can drink or take drugs to avoid facing things. But sooner or later you have to face it anyway."

Julie nodded her head and stepped out of the Jeep.

This upset Nikita because Strong Scent usually pet her before leaving moving territory.

Ashleigh pet Nikita as Julie took off the bike.

Ashleigh told Nikita, "You'll see her tomorrow."

In the rear view mirror she spotted Julie slowly push the bike to the rack.

Once she knew for sure Julie reached the bike rack she pulled out of the High School's parking lot.

While driving to work she contemplated what she would say to her brother and what her actions should be in the meeting.

Julie was trying to ignore everyone.

Before locking her bike she looked for William, his friends, and his truck. She spotted the truck but was relieved none of the guys were around. She believed neither one of his friends would touch her; Williams was another matter. She felt she had the training to really hurt him if he tried something. The fights she had with girls were different. This morning seemed to prove this.

After securing the bike she: made sure her backpack was in order, zippered her backpack closed, swung it over her shoulder, and stood up. She spotted Belinda and Mindy-Lynn approach her.

Since softball started Belinda and Mindy-Lynn were hanging out together. Julie considered them to be friends. Not as close as Hannah and Zoe but Julie liked them. She wondered if they still liked her. She questioned their friendship because of how she played the night before and the rumors.

When they reached one another they timidly greeted one another

Belinda in her New Jersey accent said, "U's okay."

"I guess."

Mindy-Lynn said, "It ain't your fault."

Julie answered, "I let everyone down."

Mindy-Lynn stated, "We all played horrible. We could've helped Y'all out there."

"I was the pitcher."

Belinda mentioned, "Every pitcher has a bad game. When you went to shortstop you calmed everyone down."

Mindy-Lynn added, "You made some great plays."

Julie smiled then held back tears, "It wasn't enough."

Belinda trying to be positive stated, "We have next year."

Mindy-Lynn added, "If you dwell on the last game how are Y'all able to play well in the next game?"

Julie answered, "It ain't fair using my own words against me."

The girls giggled and then became somber again.

Belinda said, "I'm looking forward to playing with U's next year."

Mindy-Lynn glared at Julie

Julie answered, "I'll be there."

The two girls smiled.

Belinda said with determination in her voice, "We's better kick Boca Raton's ass next year."

Both Julie and Mindy-Lynn smiled at the way she pronounced Boca Raton. It amazed the locals on how often people from the rest of the country butchered the name of this town.

This encourage Julie, "We will. We'll win it all next year."

This excited Mindy-Lynn, "There's the Julie we'all know."

They heard the first warning bell.

Belinda asked as they headed into the building, "I's hear U's are pretty smart."

Julie blurted without thinking, "It's a rumor."

All three gave one another looks. They all wished Julie would have said anything else.

Belinda asked, "I's heard U are taking accounting?"

"Yes."

"Would U mind helping me?"

Mindy-Lynn added, "I'm needing help."

Julie smiled, "I'd love too."

Together they stepped into the high school.

They decided they would meet in the library after lunch. With the second warning bell they separated and headed to their lockers.

*A*shleigh opened the glass doors of *Renewed Mastery* and stepped into the lobby area.

She inspected the walls. The walls of this lobby were painted into thirds. The three sections were: a coastal beach, an old time sailing ship, and a marina. She specifically looked at the progress of the coastal beach. This artist was taking his time but it was worth the wait. Ashleigh was excited to see he finished the large sea turtle crawling out of the water. She admired the job the woman artist did on the island. She liked the added touch of whales swimming off to the side. She then glanced over at the dock. She found it interesting on how the bird was completed before the dock was. The dock was close to being finished. Overall she loved this wall and the lobby.

As she walked through, she made a note of a sales woman moving a chair to sit with other salespeople. Like always there were people filling out applications. She noticed an

attractive young man sitting in a single chair with an art portfolio leaning up against the chair. Based upon how he was dressed she assumed he was from the Midwest. He dressed neat, had on nice pair of black pants, a black vest, a red button shirt, a black tie, and black hat with a red band. She spotted the red hair under the hat and liked his green eyes. He was biting his nails. She found it interesting how he just stopped, looked at his fingers, took a deep breath, and sat very proper in his chair. She felt every artist who sat in the lobby: always chose a single chair, were fascinated with the walls, or they focused on 3d art work that was sold in the displays, and they always appeared nervous.

Nikita turned, stopped, and wanted his attention. Her tail was wagging and waited. This surprised Ashleigh. Nikita never acted this way with anyone sitting in this area.

Her tail became a weapon.

He asked, "What's her name?"

"Nikita."

"Like the song?"

Ashleigh smiled, "It's where I got the name from."

"May I pet her?"

Ashleigh smiled, "Nikita sit."

She did so, her tail was a weapon. She liked this male human.

He allowed her to sniff him.

She could sense he liked her. She was happy they greeted one another.

"Is she a husky?"

"Siberian."

He stated, "She's a beautiful dog."

Ashleigh asked, "Is this the first time showing your artwork?"

He made a face, "Second."

"Who's seeing you?"

"Leah."

Andrea was all ears. She could tell they had the same accents.

"Are you from the Milwaukee area?"

"Close. I grew up in Washington county."

"I know where that is."

He smiled.

"Unless I get the job here. I'm planning on moving to Upper Michigan."

"Why there?"

"My Mom is from up there. A lot of my paintings are from there."

"Did you bring them with you?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I was told to bring my illustrations."

Ashleigh smiled, "Makes sense. Before you leave. Why not visit the art gallery. Some call it the Museum. If you get hired on you'll have a place to sell your paintings."

"I've heard that."

She glanced at her watch, "I have to go."

He smiled, "Oh sure."

In a respectful way he eyeballed her.

They heard the buzzer of the door.

Nikita went straight for the door.

Ashleigh looked at the young man, "Good luck."

He said very serious, "Luck has very little to do with it."

Ashleigh liked this but focused on the door and opened it.

Ashleigh missed a woman applicant who was eyeballing Ashleigh. This out of town thirty-something woman was unaware Ashleigh was the vice-president. After studying Ashleigh she came to the conclusion Ashleigh was straight. She reminded herself what it was like to fall for a straight women or trying to have a relationship with a "bi-curious" woman. She wished she could meet a young lesbian who looked and dressed like Ashleigh.

Ashleigh and Nikita stepped into the main office area of the building.

Andrea was quick to greet Nikita.

Ashleigh felt this was a good sign. When Andrea moved slow, there was a high probability she was in an argument with her boyfriend. Everyone Andrea knew wanted her to fully break it off with him. Their on again off again relationship was clearly hurting Andrea both physically and emotionally. It frustrated Ashleigh when it looked like she would completely break it off and within a week they would be back together. Yet, Andrea refused to allow her boyfriend to move into the house she purchased for herself and her sister.

Andrea was one of their best employees. Bob, Haley, Gracie, and Ashleigh were looking for a new position for her. They were being selective because of how good she was in her current role. Anytime they breached the subject with Andrea she was resisted to the idea. Ashleigh, Haley, and Gracie felt this was due to a lack of confidence and this job gave her a sense of stability. Only a few employees knew she was one of the highest paid secretaries in the company.

Bob gladly approved of every raise.

Another sign she was doing well was how she was dressed. Her long blond hair was in a nice wave, she was wearing an appropriate amount of makeup, she was wearing handmade dangling earrings (given to her from one of the artists in the building), she was wearing a honey beige short sleeved tuxedo shirt, a heather colored pencil skirt, and new metallic colored gemstone dress sandals; Ashleigh liked the gemstones.

This reminded her.

Ashleigh said, "Hold onto her."

"Yes Ma'am."

Andrea took Nikita's leash.

Ashleigh set everything but her strawberry colored high healed shoes onto Andrea's L shaped desk.

"I forgot to put these on."

Andrea was surprised Ashleigh would wear the type of shoes she was putting on.

When she slipped them on she was taller.

Andrea mentioned, "They match the suit."

"They do?"

Ashleigh restrained herself from reaching out to Andrea. Many times when she did so Andrea flinched.

Ashleigh asked, "How do I look?"

Andrea felt this suit was very boyish.

She answered honestly, "You look professional."

"Good."

Once Ashleigh's shoes were secured she asked, "May I have Nikita back?"

"Yes Ma'am."

Nikita hoped she would receive a treat. Sometimes she received one from Woman with the Noise and sometimes not.

Ashleigh took the leash.

Andrea asked, "Ma'am."

"Yes."

"Ain't Y'all on vacation?"

Ashleigh slipped onto her shoulder: the bag she brought in everyday, her purse, and her laptop bag.

Ashleigh answered, "It ended today."

Andrea made a face.

In response to this facial expression Ashleigh asked, "Why are you asking?"

"If Y'all don't mind me saying?"

"Go ahead."

"I ain't sure Mr. Bob will like the idea."

Ashleigh answered, "I wouldn't be in here today if I didn't feel Mr. Bob would give me permission to stay."

For the first time knowing Ashleigh she felt she gave a deceptive answer; an answer a politician would use.

Andrea folded her arms under her small breasts and shifted her long athletic body.

She asked very carefully, "I ain't in trouble for allowing Y'all in?"

"Why would you get in trouble for that? The guys in the shack asked me the same thing."

Ashleigh annoyed stared, "I'm a vice president."

"Yes Ma'am."

With a tone added, "You won't get into trouble for allowing me in. As vice president I'm deciding I should be in today."

This was the blunt Ashleigh, Andrea admired.

She answered, "Yes Ma'am."

"If Mr. Bob asks you. You tell him I decided to show up today."

"Yes Ma'am."

Ashleigh turned and her heel snagged on the carpet. She made a noise. She wanted to throw the shoes across the room. She was able to get her feet secured.

What she did was turn toward Andrea and asked, "You know what I don't like?"

With concern, "No Ma'am."

"Shoes."

"They ain't always the easiest things are they?"

"No there not."

Ashleigh calmed herself.

"Thank-you."

"Y'all are welcome."

Andrea winked.

Ashleigh smiled and winked back. Ashleigh headed toward her office.

For one of the few times when people spotted Ms. Ashleigh they turned and headed in the opposite direction. Ashleigh pretended she never noticed.

This disappointed Nikita a great deal. One of the reasons she liked Work Territory is all of the people who greeted her. Nikita sensed Woman with the Funny Smells. This human: gave her treats, greeted her, gave her water, made noises at her, took her for walks, and took her out to make markings.

She sensed a new female human near Woman with Many Smells.

When Ashleigh passed the long wall of the hallway and was in the open area she spotted Brittany standing alongside of the Haley's desk.

Haley briefly looked at the letter inside of an envelope, she handed it back to Brittany, and suggested, "This is customer service. Have it go to Sally."

This is when Brittany spotted Ashleigh.

Haley followed Brittany's look.

Ashleigh spotted Haley whisper something to Brittany. Brittany stood for a second. She was fascinated to see Nikita. She focused. Brittany: turned, opened the glass doors to the office, and went to her desk. Ashleigh noticed a mail cart next to Brittany's desk.

Ashleigh stepped up to Haley's desk and asked, "Is she doing mail?"

"Well Hi."

"Hello."

Haley pushed a button on her panel, took off her headset, and stepped down to a very excited Nikita.

Nikita liked Woman with Many Smells. For Nikita it was a long time since she greeted Woman with Funny Smells. Nikita was so excited she dropped her bone.

Ashleigh demanded Nikita sit and calm her down.

Nikita made dog noises and was fidgety.

After extra petting and sooth talking Haley calmed Nikita down. Then she gave Nikita a treat.

Ashleigh believing everything would be alright took Nikita's leash off, led her into the office area, and told her to go to her spot.

Haley and Ashleigh watched Nikita walk right to her spot and start chewing on the bone Ashleigh let her bring (her spot was on a rug next Ashleigh's desk under the right window in the office area).

Haley commented, "She just started taking care of the mail."

"You didn't have to ask?"

"Nope. I gave her the same list you gave Julie. With the necessary changes."

"How's she doing?"

"You found a polite spitfire."

Ashleigh observed Nikita sit up.

"Exactly."

"Has she read any of Bob's manuscripts?"

"She wasn't suppose too. But she is stubborn like someone else I know."

"Mr. Bob is stubborn."

Haley gave Ashleigh a look.

Nikita and Ashleigh studied one another.

Ashleigh stated, "She's wearing a nice dress."

"She always wears dresses."

Ashleigh asked still watching her dog, "Hows her baby?"

"He's a cutie. Her Mom arrived over the weekend. She's excited to be watching her grandson."

"What about the jack ass?"

Haley winked.

Ashleigh smiled and asked, "Bob must like her?"

"A lot more than he likes accountants."

An exasperated Ashleigh asked, "Did he fire another one?"

"The guy decided production should use cheaper boxes."

"Not again."

"That isn't the worst of it."

Ashleigh sighed and made a face; her body language screaming frustration.

"He started to rearrange the production schedule."

"Why? What made him think that was a good idea?"

Ashleigh gave a face and raised her arms in the air, "To cut costs!"

"You guessed it."

Ashleigh asked, "Did he ask anyone about it?"

"Nope."

Ashleigh asked, "Was the mess fixed?"

"Quickly."

"Is Gracie looking for another one?"

"Yup. Oh."

"What?"

"She hired a really nice assistant."

"What's her name?"

"Jenny-Lou."

"Local?"

"Southern. But I don't believe she grew up here. She has a different accent than the locals."

Nikita went running over to Brittany and immediately laid on her back.

Brittany pet her.

Haley remarked, "Looks like she has a new friend."

"Looks like it."

Haley added, "If that dog doesn't like someone be leering of that person."

Ashleigh nodded her head in agreement.

"Another college graduate with a degree in counseling?"

"I think she might have a degree in HR."

Ashleigh asked, "Hows April doing?"

Haley smiled, "She's appreciating the apprenticeship."

"I'm glad."

"She looks a lot like Megan."

"Most of the women in the family look similar and everyone in that family is tall."

Haley asked, "Are any out of shape?"

"Not if they are younger than fifty."

Ashleigh focused, "She's doing well?"

"I believe she gave you a thank-you card."

Ashleigh watched Brittany tell Nikita to go back to her spot. Nikita sat down and looked at her. Haley stopped talking when Ashleigh stepped up to the glass wall tapped on the window and pointed at Nikita's spot.

Nikita went to her spot.

Ashleigh believed Brittany was impressed but felt sorry for Nikita.

Ashleigh tried to pretend she was indifferent to the greeting card but she felt this was sweet.

She focused and asked, "So when is this meeting?"

"In four hours."

Haley purposely redirected the conversation, "Brittany made a print out of all your posted notes."

"What?"

"She organized them and hung the sheets on the clipboard."

"Maybe I wanted to look at the..."

Haley interrupted, "She put each days worth in a plastic sleeve."

"Oh."

"She does have a strong accent."

"I know."

Haley said, "So. You're going back on vacation after the meeting?"

"Nope."

"A brother won't be happy about it."

Ashleigh turned to her, "I don't care."

Haley knew she cared a great deal.

"I better check on those sheets."

"If you have any questions ask."

"I will."

Haley stated, "Wait one second."

Haley hit a button.

Ashleigh watched and listened to Haley answer a phone call. She moved the call to Bob's desk. Then told Bob who it was. Bob took the call. Haley made sure he received it. She hit a button and looked at Ashleigh.

Haley mentioned, "It looks like we'll be buying another company?"

Ashleigh stated, "I've been trying to convince him not too."

Haley had a concerned look, "Why?"

"I'm feeling it will be a disaster."

"It's a fairly big company."

Ashleigh mentioned, "I'm just not sure they'll be able to handle the changes we'll want to make."

Haley answered, "Both of you are good at training people."

"This will be a challenge."

"Let's hope everyone is up for the challenge."

"Let's hope."

Ashleigh caught a look of concern. She brushed this aside. Ashleigh: turned, opened the glass door, and stepped into the office.

Ashleigh heard Nikita's chain jangle. She looked over and Nikita was sitting up in her spot and her tail was wagging.

Brittany knew what Nikita looked like because of the paintings, drawings, and photo's of Nikita scattered throughout the company. They were in cubicles, on walls, and on trinkets. Brittany adored the paperweight on Ms. Ashleigh's desk. The reason she liked it was the engraved message on the bottom. Brittany believed Nikita was the unofficial mascot of the whole company. Even with this knowledge it surprised her to see Ms. Ashleigh walking a dog down the hallway.

There was an unofficial list of pets employees of the office and art area were allowed to keep. The evidence of this practice were the pet gates in front of cubicle entrances. Employees policed this on their own because no one wanted pets to be banned from the site. Ms. Ashleigh, Mr. Bob, and Gracie all mentioned they would ban pets if a person was hurt. The unofficial list of animals not to bring in where: snakes, scorpions, spiders, mice, rats, and anything that could really harm people. Respect was always given to anyone who was allergic to animals; Gracie and Ashleigh handled this in many different ways. The animals Brittany spotted included: many had fish (no one went over a ten gallon tank), someone had a hamster, a few people had caged parakeets, a small lizard, a frog, a turtle, an artist had a cockatoo (he was a popular painted item and was tied down while in the building), two seeing eye dogs, and customer service had a cat.

Two ladies from Customer Service found the cat and her litter of kittens while sitting outside eating lunch. Ashleigh and Haley took these animals to the vet. As soon as the kittens were big enough they were easily adopted out. The Mother Cat adopted the ladies in the customer service department. Like the cockatoo and Nikita; this cat was a subject of many sketches, paintings, and photographs.

Brittany took a look at how Ashleigh was dressed and wondered if she was indeed bisexual. As a Christian she was against this type of lifestyle but at no time did she believe someone should be treated horribly. She believed if Jesus could change and turn her life around he could certainly change anyone's life. She would never forget how Ashleigh, Megan, and Nicole treated her.

She was forever grateful for her current job.

Haley handed her the envelope, "This is customer service. Have it go to Sally."

"Yes Ma'am."

Brittany was about to mention how Mr. Bob would be angry Ms. Ashleigh was showing up.

Haley whispered, "Why not go into the office."

Brittany answered, "Yes Ma'am."

She felt the toughest part of her job was understanding all of these northern folks. The worst part was how fast they talked. She specifically felt people from Wisconsin talked fast. She believed the HR director named Gracie had the craziest Midwestern accent. Everyone in the office was surprised these two were friends. What no one understood both grew up on a farm. They grew different crops and dealt with different animals, but there was an

understanding between the two. The other common bond was both worked really hard to get to college and move away from the country; both wondered if they made a mistake.

Brittany went to her desk and placed the envelope into the mail cart. A cart she received permission to take for just their area. She felt better if she collected the mail twice a day. She did more trips if she was looking for something specific. Brittany felt better if she handled Ms. Ashleigh and Mr. Bob's mail. One of the reasons she felt this way was Mr. Bob being the author Mr. Heart. She would do everything in her power to make sure no one discovered Mr. Bob was Mr. Heart. She took this seriously because Mr. Bob asked her too.

She felt people sticking posted notes on Ms. Ashleigh's monitor was a disaster waiting to happen. She was happy to collect them, type them out, and place the notes in plastic sealed bags. She wanted to stop people from putting posted notes on her monitor but she was unsure if she should or not.

She looked up when she heard Ashleigh say, "Go to your spot."

Ashleigh nodded her head.

Brittany returned in kind.

Nikita went running to her spot.

Brittany felt it was a very beautiful dog, a dog breed she never was in contact with before; she wondered if it was wise to have a dog like this in Florida. She understood the love an owner could have for a pet. She could tell Nikita was in great shape and was well taken care off. She worried about the heat of summer. She knew the dog could easily overheat.

She was studying the dog.

Nikita lifted her head and sniffed this human female. She sensed this human spent a lot of time with many different animals. Other animals marked her as friendly. Nikita sensed this female human cared about her. She sat up. It was difficult for Nikita to stay at her spot.

Brittany looked through the glass. She observed Haley and Ms. Ashleigh having an intense conversation. She could tell Ashleigh was paying attention to Nikita and herself.

Brittany was unable to help herself, "Nikita?"

Nikita was unsure of what she said.

"Come?"

This she understood and ran over to Friendly Female. Nikita was unable to understand the noises Friendly Female were making but she felt so comfortable with her she laid on her back. She wanted this woman to pet her belly.

Brittany enjoyed talking and petting Nikita.

When she felt she wasted enough time she commanded, "Y'all go back to your spot."

Nikita sat up and listened for a noise she understood.

"Y'all will get me in trouble."

Nikita tilted her head.

"Get, back to your spot."

Nikita cocked her head and looked at her.

"Y'all seem to be such a good dawg. I ain't understanding why Y'all ain't listening."

This is when Ashleigh knocked on the glass wall and pointed to her spot.

Nikita understood this. She quickly went back to her spot and focused on her bone. She was keeping an eye on Friendly Human. Nikita believed Friendly Human was now part of "Office" territory.

Brittany made a face.

"Y'all only listen to Ms. Ashleigh?"

Nikita tilted her head and listened for a noise she understood. She liked Friendly Human but was enjoying the bone.

This is when Ashleigh stepped through the glass door.

Brittany stated, "Hi Ms. Ashleigh."

There was no doubt Brittany had the strongest southern accent she ever heard.

"Hi. You doing well?"

Brittany guessed at what Ashleigh said, "Yes Ma'am."

Brittany forgot how fast Ashleigh talked.

Ashleigh stopped at her desk and stated, "I hate shoes."

"Ma'am. I didn't catch what Y'all were saying?"

Ashleigh set her things on her computer chair. She purposely talked slower, "I hate shoes."

Brittany caught sight of her shoes because Ashleigh placed her hand on her desk and was rubbing her foot.

"Them be some tall heals."

"I don't normally wear shoes like this."

"I sees Y'all have shoes under your desk."

Ashleigh needed to pay close attention to understand what she said.

"They wouldn't match the outfit."

"If Y'all don't mind me saying?"

"Go ahead."

"With the type of pants Y'all are wearing who will see them?"

Ashleigh answered, "I should have worn flats."

Brittany made a face and answered, "Maybe a shorter heal. Something between them flats and the heals."

Ashleigh: set her foot down, adjusted her suit, and said, "I need to look confident and persuasive."

"By wearing heals?"

"You don't feel they help?"

Brittany asked, "I ain't getting in trouble for speaking my mind?"

Ashleigh answered honestly and pointed to her desk, "In here. All I want is people to speak their mind."

They studied one another.

Brittany broke the silence by saying, "Y'all ain't needing to prove anything around here."

This touched Ashleigh a great deal.

"Why do you say that?"

Brittany again guessed at what Ashleigh said.

She answered, "I'm surprised Y'all ain't aware."

"Of what?"

"Y'all don't act like other Yankees. The people here like Y'all the way you are."

It was impossible to keep all of her emotion in; a few tears dropped.

"Thank-you."

Brittany answered, "It's the truth."

Ashleigh demanded, "I need to make sure the people attending the meeting know I mean business. I don't trust them."

Brittany smiled, "Ain't Y'all a whipper snapper."

Ashleigh smiled. She was looking forward to hearing Brittany and her Brother's conversations.

Ashleigh answered with a smile, "My Florida Mom says this about me."

Brittany wondered what this meant.

Ashleigh stated out of respect and affection, "She's a smart lady."

Ashleigh then stated, "I heard you started to read one of Bob's manuscripts?"

"Yes Ma'am. I started reading *The Pirate*."

"You like it?"

Brittany asked, "I reckon he's sweet on someone?"

"Why would say that?"

At first Brittany felt she was being interrogated; by reading Ashleigh's body language she felt this was an honest question.

"I ain't in the knowing who he's sweet on. But if Y'all are asking me. Based upon what I've read so far he's smitten. I reckon it ain't anyone working here."

"Why would feel that?"

"On account the person he's written about just ain't fitting anyone who works here. But it's as plain as day this story is based upon someone he knows."

Ashleigh was glad someone else felt the same way. She felt the lead female was Megan. Bob always denied he put his love interests into his stories. Ashleigh believed every love interest, this was especially true of Shelly. His biggest selling book was obviously about their relationship. Worse, Ashleigh could easily pick out who she was in everyone one of his books. She was always a different character but everyone one of these characters were similar to who she was at the time. She wanted to believe this was subconscious but there was the high probability he knew exactly what he was doing.

Ashleigh answered, "I'm feeling the same thing."

Brittany was shocked to be validated.

They smiled at one another.

Ms. Ashleigh asked, "I understand you typed out my posted notes?"

"Yes Ma'am. They're under your keyboard."

"Thanks."

"Y'all are welcome."

Bob stepped out of his office.

"Why are you here?"

Ashleigh bluntly answered, "My vacation is over."

"You have a few more days?"

"Not if the plan is to purchase *Criti-Medical*."

"I was planning on it."

"Why?"

"There are a lot of good people working there. Once we turn it around the investment will be worth it."

"I don't think we can turn this around."

"Why?"

She turned and grabbed her laptop and said, "Let me show you."

Bob turned around followed Ashleigh into his office. He shut it behind him. This was the first time Brittany ever witnessed him shut the door when an individual woman entered his office.

Brittany: watched, listened, and took mental notes of their brief conversation. She discounted the perverted incest rumor. She recognized Mr. Bob valued Ashleigh's opinion. She believed Haley and Nicole when they suggested their relationships was more like one of a father and daughter with a brother and sister feel to it.

She adored Mr. Bob's office. An office she cleaned the day before. She felt the cleaning crew was doing a subpar job. It was her opinion his office should be as immaculate as a king; especially because of how he treated everyone. She felt Bob was overconfident at times, was sometimes difficult, was smart, expected change quickly, was honest (sometimes to honest), was eccentric, demanding, and was kind. She strongly believed he cared for everyone in the company. She felt he disliked firing anyone; it was the reason for many of their policies. The balance to this thinking; she correctly believed it was a mistake to cross him or someone he cared about. Growing up in Georgia she respected this a great deal.

Brittany heard Nikita's collar jangle. She turned to look at Nikita.

Nikita was on all fours her tail was wagging. It was obvious Nikita was seeing if she could receive attention.

"Y'all stay."

Nikita new this noise and sat down.

Brittany smiled at her.

Brittany focused on the mail.

She looked over at Nikita, "Y'all a last name would help."

Nikita sat up and wagged her tail.

"My. My."

She opened the envelope and placed it in a pile for Ms. Ashleigh.

April 25th, Can't Wait Any Longer

Part Two of Six

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Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25

*Can't Wait
Any Longer*

Day 15 of Book I

*(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)*

Part Three of Six

Authored By: R. P. Voght

*Posted on ashleighandmegan.com on:
April 5, 2026*

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I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"

R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Julie opened her locker. Her impulse was: to shove everything from her locker into her backpack, leave the building, clear out all of her bank accounts, and move to the Caribbean. What kept her from doing so was: her Mother, her family, her true friends, walking Nikita, and her love of playing sports. The toughest part of her day was talking to her softball teammates. She appreciated their encouragement but felt unworthy to receive it.

She: slipped her backpack off her shoulder, set it in on the edge of her locker, removed a book from her locker, placed this book into her backpack, became frustrated when she dropped the next book; she was thankful it dropped back into the locker. She absolutely hated feeling uncoordinated. She hated the feeling her body was fighting against her.

She crunched her teeth together when her bra slipped out of place. She shifted her body so others were unable to see what she what she was about to do and angrily yanked her bra into place.

She survived her first class by reading and highlighting the *Wall Street Journal*. She was frustrated the paper never mentioned *Renewed Mastery* purchasing another company. Once she had access to the internet she would research the company *Criti-Medical*. In her second class she turned in an assignment; an assignment she finished three months prior. While in class she wrote a detailed business plan on how to handle her business affairs. She then read a computer magazine. She purchased this magazine for two articles. One was about web design and the other was about a simulator that helped teach people how to drive. She wondered if her laptop could handle this program. She would ask Burt and Bradly if this was possible.

If the next class was just as boring as the last two she planned on getting a hall pass and getting herself off. This would relieve the stress and boredom she was feeling. She was debating if she do so in the girls bathroom or behind a set of isolated stairs in the corner of the school. A near by wall made it impossible to look behind these stairs unless you were purposefully going behind them. Based upon how dusty it was behind these stairs people rarely went behind these steps.

While closing her backpack she heard pig noises and kids laughing.

She stood back and spotted a dejected looking Brenda being picked on. Julie wondered why none of Brenda's friends were with her. It was Monique's idea to have a friend of Brenda's always around her. Brenda was just trying to get out of the hallway. Following her was: Pamela, Kendall, Tiffany, and Marissa; the girl Julie twisted into a pretzel.

With Julie believing in living a healthy lifestyle she was concerned for Brenda; there were long term consequences for how large Brenda was. Julie believed the teasing she endured only increased her unhealthy habits. Julie believed there were other overweight people in school who were far more deserving of the teasing (Julie disapproved of anyone being teased). Julie never understood why Brenda was singled out. Julie believed if she lost up to a hundred pounds: she would be an attractive curvy woman, she would avoid health issues, guys would be attracted to her, her self confidence would improve, and she could even be a curvy model.

She believed this because of Brenda's long oblong shaped face, her long beautiful blond hair, her soft brown eyes, her long nose that came to a small button, and her classic Hollywood shaped lips. She had large breasts and large hips; because she was overweight both her legs and hips were larger than what they should have been. If she would loose weight her breasts would have been perfect for her frame. Her bone structure would never allow her to be thin. She was wearing a very nice embroidered denim dress, sea turtle earrings, had a sea turtle pin attached to the top of her dress, she was carrying a matching purse with sea turtle embroidery on it, and she was wearing new shoes. She always wore the right amount of makeup and often times wore very feminine looking hats.

Julie focused as she swung her backpack over her shoulder and shut her locker door. Julie's impulse was to flip Pamela onto the hallway floor.

Pamela was five nine, had very dark hair, green eyes, a long nose, high forehead, blended cheeks, luscious lips, and thick eye brows. Julie disliked how she strutted when she walked: her hips swiveled, she made her long legs appear longer than they were, and somehow made her average sized butt look noticeable. What helped Pamela show off her backside was her khaki colored cargo mini skirt. What pushed up her small boobs was a red cut off the shoulder scallop top with lace.

All of the girls in the Snob Club, besides Amanda, dressed in a way announcing to the world they were willing to have sex. This annoyed Julie because they were the ones who started the rumors she was a slut. These girls had sex with multiple guys and would have sex with girls just to appear more popular with the guys; she had video to prove it.

It was her friend Jennie who gave her the nickname Fingerpainter. She felt the best way to combat the teasing was just to acknowledge she enjoyed masturbating. An example was the previous week Zoe proclaimed Julie was a chronic masturbator. The reason Julie never became angry at Zoe was she said it a matter of fact way; her tone was a combination of everyone does it and one of indifference. Julie surprised all the girls at Hannah's house by

stated, "I guess I am." This opened up a very positive conversation about masturbation and sex. There was a lot of blushing and giggling but it was sincere and without malice. Hannah and Monique suggested in a very caring way Julie should never get off at school. Julie made it through two days without masturbating at school.

Julie was surprised when Brenda stopped and turned around and commanded, "Stop it."

The girls laughed at her.

Pamela, who was the leader of the Snob Club, stated, "Who and what herd?"

Marissa added, "Or piglets."

The girls laughed.

Julie stepped beside Brenda, "I'll help."

Brenda was unsure of this. The last couple months Hannah and Zoe were trying to convince Brenda, Julie had changed. Brenda was aware Julie was spending time with her group of friends. Julie made a point to ask Brenda over to her house twice. Because Julie had once belonged to the Snob Club, and there were kids outside of this group who teased her; Brenda was reluctant to give Julie a chance.

Pamela in her snarky tone stated, "Look it's traitor."

Julie was blunt, "Y'all ain't real friends."

They all glared at Julie.

Tiffany answered, "I made the mistake of feeling Y'all were my friend."

Kendall added, "Y'all are just a kill joy."

Julie answered, "If Y'all weren't so childish I would still be hanging out with Y'all."

Pamela gave a face, "If Y'all were smart you'd hang out with us anyway."

Julie stepped up to Pamela, "Brenda is a much better friend than any of Y'all are."

Brenda stood there shocked.

The kids in the hallway started to pay attention.

Pamela sneered, "Y'all should know who Y'all are talking too."

"Spoiled brats."

This caught everyone's attention.

Kendall sneered, "We ain't the whore of the school."

Julie turned toward her, "I'm a virgin."

Marissa snarled, "U's expect us to believe that?"

Julie glared and answered, "Yes."

With a snarky tone Pamela answered, "This comes from the girl who can't make it through the day without rubbing herself off."

Brenda wanted to say a list of things but was afraid too. Her accomplishment was just standing there.

Julie answered, "It ain't like Y'all don't touch yourselves."

Kendall replied with a face, "We don't have to because guys want to be with us."

Tiffany added, "Every guy wants to be with us."

Julie answered, "So what?"

Pamela replied, "For being so smart Y'all are really dumb."

Julie tried, "None of this matters."

Kendall made a face, "Miss Kill Joy is about to lecture us again."

Julie looked over at Brenda and in a stern but caring voice suggested, "Go to your class."

Brenda nodded, gripped her bag, and headed down the hallway. Zoe happened to be walking on the other end of the hallway. She eagerly waved Brenda over to her and escorted her to class.

Pamela was about to chase after her.

Julie stepped in front, "Where are Y'all going?"

"Step out of my way."

Julie glared at her, "No I ain't."

A teacher stepped up them, "Y'all get to class."

Pamela's behavior immediately changed, "We're having a friendly chat. We'll be getting a move on. We wouldn't want our grades to suffer."

Julie and the teacher watched them turn and go the other direction.

Both the teacher and Julie rolled their eyes.

The teacher asked, "Y'all all right?"

Julie answered, "Yes Ma'am."

"Get a move on."

Julie obeyed and went to class.

Walking to class she thought about all the reasons why she hated school. She then reminded herself why she should finish. Without sports, her Mom, and walking Nikita she would have dropped out, taken her GED, and applied for college.

When the hallway was just about empty she yanked on her bra; she hoped it would stay. She stepped into class just as the bell rang. Currently; the two most annoying things in her life were her growing breasts and school.

Brittany was proof reading an email Ashleigh wanted double checked. This was an easy task after changing all of the three ringed binders for the meeting with *Criti-Medical*. Brittany was instrumental in getting the printing department the updated copies, she helped the printing department print these copies, and helped them get the copies into the conference room.

Brittany was five foot five. Her naturally straight long brunette hair was pinned up; she put the ends of her hair into a wave. She had light green eyes, a rectangular shaped face, her forehead had a heart shaped peak, she had a square chin, medium sized boobs, and a nice padded rear end. She had a wide appealing smile. Her upper lip was skinny but a very puffy lower lip. She wore very light makeup. She was currently wearing a dark purple drapeneck dress with rose and purple flower print: it ended below her knees. She felt it covered her rear end and was professional for working in an office. She was wearing a simple cross necklace, a couple bracelets, dangling purple earrings, and matching purple heeled sandals.

She spotted Mr. Bob open the main glass door and step into their office area.

He approached her desk, "Brittany."

"Yes Sir."

"I want you to attend the meeting we're having with *Criti-Medical*."

She was surprised at this.

"Sir I ain't dressed for a business meeting."

Bob smiled, "Your constantly one of the most professionally dressed women in this company."

This meant a great deal to her. She shopped at: thrift stores, department stores, and clearance racks. Many of the ladies associated with the executive offices were shopping at higher end department stores. She was paid well but she was trying to save up money for a house or condo. She felt it would be irresponsible to spend a lot of money on clothes.

Ashleigh, who was sitting at her desk, was paying attention to their conversation without making it obvious.

"Thank-you sir."

"I'd like you to write down everything you feel."

She gave him a look, "What are Y'all meaning?"

"Just what I said. I want you to write down everything you feel."

"Is this a business meeting?"

He smiled, "Yes it is."

She made a face, "Are Y'all wanting me to write down what people are saying?"

"If that is what you want."

She gave him a face.

Bob tried clarifying, "I don't care what you write. Just write down everything you feel is important."

Ashleigh turned and said, "So. If you don't like the CEO write it down. If you like or don't like how we're doing something write it down."

Bob added, "I don't want any ass kissing."

Brittany made a face, "Sir. Why do Y'all swear?"

He pushed up his glasses, "Ass isn't a swear."

Ashleigh rolled here eyes.

"My Momma declares it is."

"God used it in the Bible."

Brittany glared at him, "I don't believe Y'all are using the word in the same context."

He smiled.

Ashleigh liked the fact Brittany could stand up for herself and was willing to challenge her Brother.

Very serious he spoke, "I want you to watch everything and write down everything you feel."

"Yes sir."

Ashleigh added, "Don't edit it."

Brittany was surprised at this.

Bob pushed up his glasses and said, "Thank-you for the reminder."

Ashleigh facing her computer answered, "No problem."

Bob pushed up his glasses.

"I want two versions. One in your handwriting. I want this version to be handed to me right after the meeting. Then I want a typed version where you've had time to think about the meeting."

"Yes sir."

"Any questions?"

"Anything?"

"It doesn't even have to be business related. Whatever you feel is important write it down."

Her eyes focused. She spotted the famous Floridian lawyer Mr. Shelby being escorted by Haley. Haley opened the glass door for: Mr. Shelby, a female attorney, and three associates.

Mr. Bob and Mr. Shelby smiled at one another.

Brittany concluded they were friends for a long time when they smiled at one another.

In his Floridian accent Mr. Shelby asked, "How's my Yankee friend?"

Bob answered, "How's my southern aristocrat lawyer?"

Everyone was shocked when the two of them laughed.

Bob motioned, "Come into my office. Ashleigh; I'd appreciate you stepping in as well."

Ashleigh stood up, adjusted her outfit, took a mirror out of her desk drawer, inspected her face, turned, and asked Brittany, "Do I look alright?"

"Yes Ma'am."

Ashleigh: placed her mirror into her desk, shut the drawer, grabbed a legal pad of yellow lined paper from off her desk, grabbed a pen from a pen holder an employee made her, and stepped into the office. The noise from this office flooded the room when she opened it and it was cut off when Ashleigh shut the door.

Brittany focused on the Email made one change and sent it back to Ashleigh.

A few minutes later an associate stepped out of the office and politely shut the door. Brittany concluded the meeting had turned serious with how quiet it was in the office.

This assistant stepped over to Brittany's desk and asked in a professional manner, "Are Y'all Brittany Harris."

She answered in her strong Georgia accent, "It was my married name. Around these parts I go by Morris."

"Yes Ma'am."

He said serious, "I'm presenting you on behalf of your lawyer Mr. Flint a draft of Y'all divorce papers. He'd like Y'all to review it and sign it."

Brittany in shock asked, "What am I all signing?"

"It's a draft of Y'all divorce papers. And there is paperwork to process Y'all name change once the divorce is final."

Brittany looked at him, "Mr. Flint works for Mr. Shelby?"

"Yes Ma'am."

In a worried tone, "But I've only paid twenty-five dollars for a phone call?"

"I ain't in the liberty of telling Y'all how the rest of the bill has been paid for. I'd say Y'all have good friends."

She suppressed her tears.

The assistant continued, "I'm to remind Y'all about your scheduled visit with Mr. Flint next week."

"I ain't forgotten."

"Good."

"If Y'all have any questions call Mr. Flint."

"Yes sir."

"Y'all have any questions for me at this time?"

"No sir."

He had her sign a paper saying she accepted the paperwork.

He gave her a copy and took the signed sheet back into Bob's office. Once the assistant stepped into Bob's office Brittany: stood up, as a southern lady made her way into the woman's restroom, she cried, she prayed, and before a woman would step into the restroom she took over her emotions. As a lady she: washed her face, reapplied the small amount of makeup she wore, made herself look lady like, went back to her desk, took a few seconds to mentally prepared herself for the meeting, grabbed everything she believed she needed, and headed to the Orange Conference Room.

She liked how all of the conference rooms were named by color. Mr. Bob felt differently and was having a company wide conference room naming contest. Brittany had made up three different lists, she would have to decide which one she would submit by Friday. Ashleigh and Haley would select the five best submissions. Then there would be a vote on which of these five would win; in case of a tie Mr. Bob selected the winner. Brittany believed Ashleigh and Haley would have an influence on which one Mr. Bob selected; even if both Ashleigh and Haley believed they had very little influence.

When she reached the Orange Conference room she: took a long deep breath, calmed her nerves, focused on the task at hand, said a silent prayer, and stepped inside.

Ashleigh was sitting to the right of Bob. Bob was sitting at the head of the table; he had the table all to himself. There were fourteen other tables put together in a tight rectangle; they were back to back and lined evenly with the head table. The outlets on top of these tables were plugged into floor outlets underneath the tables. These brand new tables were set up in the middle of a long rectangular shaped conference room.

These were brand new tables. These were very similar to a dozen tables *Renewed Mastery* received from the closed New Jersey office. Haley and Ashleigh convinced Bob to order brand new versions of these tables for the other meeting rooms. They ordered maintenance to fix the old tables and place them in the back corner of the conference room nicknamed the Classroom. There were three differences between these old tables and new tables. The cosmetic difference was, the border around the two outlets on top of the older tables were square, where as the border around the new tables were oval. More important to *Renewed Mastery* employees, the newer tables were easier to take down, roll, and were a higher quality.

Behind Ashleigh, were a row of windows; if the blinds were opened a person would have viewed the parking lot. In the front of the room (left of Ashleigh) attached to the wall and near the door was a land line business phone. Left of this phone mounted on the wall was the largest flat screen TV currently made; anyone who was into sports wanted this TV and the mount. Directly under the TV on a shelf (the shelf was attached to the mount) there was a DVD player and a plug in station; the cords of this station were neatly placed next to the station. Below this TV, sitting on the floor was a long cabinet, on top of this cabinet was a satellite box and camera, the cords were neatly taped against the wall, and were connected to the TV. Inside of this cabinet were all the supplies to keep a meeting running and everything needed to keep the electronics working. In the corner just passed the cabinet was an easel, a wooden podium, a mike stand, and a mike attached to the stand (they could easily be moved).

Hanging on the inside wall just passed the door was a very large dry eraser board with markers, an eraser, and cleaner on the shelf of this board. Above this board was a hand made

battery operated wooden clock with roman numerals (a clock *Renewed Mastery* sold). About a foot beyond the dry eraser board was another short wall. Hanging on this wall was a three sectional painting of an ocean beach. In the left side corner was a medium sized refrigerator filled with water. Right of the refrigerator was a table with: pastries, snacks, fresh coffee in tall coffee pots, a variety of creamers, napkins, small plates, and two small refrigerators. These were filled with: soft drinks, orange juice, yogurt, and other refrigerated snacks.

In front of Ashleigh was: a sign with her name on it, a bottled water, a couple pens, a yellow legal pad of paper, a stack of posted notes, and her laptop was plugged into one of the outlets attached to the table. Sitting to the right of Ashleigh was: their lawyer Mr. Shelby, a lawyer from his office named Ms. Fox, their assistants, Alex from research, a person from accounting, Alex their top engineer, an assistant to Alex, Jimmy who was the vice president of production, Pete the warehouse manager, the HR Manager Gracie, two production people Bob admired, a woman who was a lead in the painting department, the customer service manager, and Brittany. On the opposite side representing *Criti-Medical* were: the owner, his personal lawyer, the CEO, his personal lawyer, two Vice Presidents, the President of Sales, the three board members, and their lawyers.

In front of every person were two three ringed binders and a sign with a person's name on it. Haley and Brittany put together these three ringed binders during Ashleigh's vacation. Ashleigh made changes after arriving this morning. Ashleigh and Bob felt Brittany and the printing department did an excellent job of having the changes made and placed into the three ringed binders before the meeting started. Neither Ashleigh nor Bob liked to work this way; they both believed in preparation and planning. Ashleigh was planning on personally thanking everyone involved and handing out gift cards to a popular regional grocery store. The only reason this was last minute was because of Ashleigh being on vacation.

Currently there was a lot of small talk. Many on both sides wondered why Mr. Bob invited so many employees from *Renewed Mastery*.

Ashleigh glanced over and spotted Brittany writing something down.

Brittany was unsure of what she was doing. She started by writing down quick notes about the people sitting at the table. She was still struggling to understand all the different accents represented in this room. Because of working with Haley, Bob, and Ashleigh she was starting to understand the Wisconsin accent. She found the strong New Jersey accent both interesting and sometimes difficult. What was fascinating to her was how Gracie's Minnesota accent was different from the Southeastern Wisconsin accent. The worst thing about any Midwestern person was how fast they talked. She agreed with many of her southern colleagues who found the way Wisconsin people pronounced their T's and C's were funny. What was difficult about Gracie was her D's and her verbal cadence.

Brittany became focused on the owner of *Criti-Medical* and the board members; the name on the sign in front of the owner read, "Mr. Clark." After listening to him for only a few minutes she wrote, "*He's upset about something. Someone has been pissing down his leg.*" She went on to write, "*I believe the board members have knots in their knickers.*"

She was about to cross off theses statement because they were far from professional. She glanced over at Ashleigh, who was jotting down her own notes. She glanced over at Mr. Bob and he reassured her by a quick approving nod. She acted as if she never spotting this.

She decided she would continue to write freely but would make the printed copy more professional.

Ashleigh wrote about the owner and the board members as well, *"He's trying to hide the fact he's upset. It's obvious he was surprised by the information we've been sending him and what Bob's been telling him. The board members are just as pissed off as the owner is."*

Mr. Shelby found Ashleigh's note taking fascinating. Based upon what she was writing he believed she was as smart as a whip with a ton of street smarts. If she was a private detective or wanted to be a lawyer he would have hired her.

Ashleigh was about to show Bob a few of her notes but Bob shook his head. Ashleigh nodded her head.

Brittany made a quick note, *"I believe Ms. Fox is a tough gal. I'd bet my bottom dollar Ms. Fox and Mr. Shelby are related."*

Two thoughts she kept to herself. The first, being impressed there were normal folks sitting on their side of the table. The second, like many of the people attending the meeting, she wondered why Mr. Bob would invite herself and these folks to this meeting.

Bob glanced at the clock on the wall.

He announced, "Let's get started."

The CEO, Mr. Mike McBumble of *Criti-Medical* questioned within a statement, "I was under the impression this was a closed meeting."

Everyone knew exactly what he implied.

Ashleigh smiled when Bob sarcastically asked, "Oh, What do you mean?"

His lawyer spoke, "With the sensitive nature of a company seeking equity I'd assume only those involved in financing would be involved."

Bob answered, "I invited these people into this meeting because they will be impacted by this merger. More important. I'll find their input advantages later in this process. I want them to be on the ground floor of this decision."

Ashleigh caught Brittany's look, Ashleigh winked, then became serious.

Immediately; Mr. Mike McBumble the CEO, stated, "Merger? I was under the pretense this was about equity?"

Brittany and Ashleigh in their notes wondered if this guy: ever exercised, mentioned how they felt he had a giant ego, and believed he liked his ass kissed; they mentioned this because they knew Mr. Bob disliked ass kissing.

The CEO pointed, "You lied to us."

This irritated Ashleigh a great deal.

Bob looked at him and answered, "I never lied to Mr. Clark. I barely discussed anything with you. You had one conversation with me. A conversation that aroused my suspicions."

One of the two Vice Presidents spoke up, "I was led to believe you were just investing in our company and would allow us to run the company."

Brittany was quickly writing down on how upset the board members were anytime Mr. McBumble or his staff said anything.

Ashleigh was one hundred percent shocked anyone would believe this nonsense.

Bob calmly answered, "I never agreed to anything. The only thing I promised was to look into your affairs."

Mr. Mike McBumble advanced his assumption, "I told you I was looking for investors."

Bob pushed up his glasses and leaned on the table, "I never discussed with you what I was intending. Let's not forget Mr. Clark approached me about the affairs of the company. He asked for my input. In the one conversation we engaged in you kept mentioning financing. You were all about making *Criti-Medical* bigger and better. You were all about increasing sales. This is when I made the assessment you lost focus of the original intent of *Criti-Medical*."

Mr. Mike McBumble stated, "Why would an increase in sales cause there to be a lack of focus? Isn't that the goal?"

Ashleigh was looking forward to her brother's answer; along with everyone on her side of the table.

Bob pushed up his glasses and put his arms on the table.

"At one time the name *Criti-Medical* was about innovation and had a great reputation. It was once thought of as a good small company in Wisconsin. When Mr. Clark asked me to look into the affairs of *Criti-Medical* I was honestly upset he believed there were problems."

McBumble asked, "What problems? The company just needs investors."

Bob took a breath and added, "During our one conversation I told you I'm not a person who invests in companies. I'm a person who wants to make anything I acquire better. In one way I'm considered to be old fashioned. I believe in the long hall. I want to remind you none of the companies I own are publicly traded. In our one conversation I told you this. I told you I was never going to just be an investor. So now you're implying I'm the one lying when I never once promised to be an investor. It's obvious your upset because we're all here discussing a merger."

With a sneer Mr. McBumble stated, "I didn't approach you until my dear old Uncle did."

Bob simply answered, "I want to remind you. It'd be impossible for any of this to be happening without permission from Mr. Clark and the board."

Mike McBumble looked over at his Uncle and glanced down at the table. The board members and their lawyers were glaring at him.

He stated, "Why you sell it to him?"

Bob pushed up his glasses and answered, "*Criti-Medical* has made an excellent product but the company has been miss manged since Mr. Clark has stepped down from being the CEO. I believe *Renewed Mastery* is capable of turning *Criti-Medical* around. This is why I invited the employees I did invite to this meeting. This acquisition will affect everyone on this staff."

He looked down the table at his employees, "This is why I'm wanting you to suffer through this get together."

They all snickered. Brittany looked over at Ashleigh. Ashleigh, even though she hated the idea of Bob buying this company, was proud of her brother. She winked at Brittany. They smiled at one another.

An annoyed Mr. Mike McBumble stood up and pounded his finger on the table and proclaimed, "I've been a highly successful CEO."

Bob answered with a matter of fact tone "Successful is hardly the term I'd use."

Everyone glared at Bob's bluntness.

McBumble responded, "Since I've been the CEO. I've increased our profits, increased sales, and expanded our name. I'm making this company bigger and bolder. Our name is widely known in the industry. This..."

Bob interrupted, "If profits were the only standard maybe someone could make this illogical claim the company has been highly successful. But if an investor or a person involved is to believe highly successful means being the best and being the top. Then any logical person would have to disagree with your assessment. My team believes you've over extended the company, made promises you can't keep, and never improving your product. While managing to treat employees poorly. Your biggest mistake was going public."

Mr. Mike McBumble stated, "Going public has improved this company. It's the reason the company has made profits and is now a winning company."

Bob answered, "If you believe second place and lying to yourself is winning."

Mr. Mike McBumble stated, "We work diligently and have a great reputation."

Bob answered bluntly, "*Criti-Medical* was known to have a reliable product. It was great for someone who owned a dentist office or a private office. Four years ago it was the top in tech for the price point. It's fallen behind while you ignore the advancements in medical devices. In a year your product will be the model T of medical devices. Your investors were willing to sell to me because of this fear."

Mr. Mike McBumble glared at the board members.

One of their lawyers stated, "We agree."

McBumble's lawyer pulled at his suit.

As McBumble sat down he stated, "You should all be happy with the increased sales."

Bob answered, "Instead of focusing on new sales and increasing the brand you should have focused on the lawsuits you've created."

Mr. Mike McBumble glared at Bob.

Bob answered the glare, "The lawsuits based upon the promises never delivered upon. And how about the discrepancies in what month product is actually being shipped. Instead of fixing your production problems you are focused on reaching a number to please your investors."

Silence.

Bob pushed up his glasses.

He continued, "The board, Mr. Clark, and I will admit at one time *Criti-Medical* was the top earner in the market you were in. The lack of innovation and the way you've treated past employees have just about ruined the company. If it wasn't for how good you made the product. You'd have gone bankrupt years ago."

Mr. Mike McBumble stated, "We treat our employees great."

Mr. Clark stated with a sneer, "That's not what I've heard."

One of the Vice Presidents sneered, "Who said we're treating employees subpar?"

Ms. Fox answered, "One of your top engineers."

Mr. Mike McBumble answered, "If you're referring to Phoenix Speerman. He was always a difficult employee. Not only was he a difficult employee he betrayed our company."

Ms. Fox stated, "An ex-employee who is now the star witness in all of your lawsuits."

Mr. Mike McBumble became defensive, "He's just bitter because we wouldn't take his suggestions. He declared in a publication. While he was still working for us. Our product was outdated. He claimed I was an inept CEO and was short sided. I'd say. If you look at profits and the increase of sales I'm a highly successful CEO."

He turned to the board, "I've been an great benefit to all of you."

He again stood up, buttoned his suit coat, "We don't make the most expensive product. But it's tried and true. You won't find a better product at our price point. I plead with. Don't sell to this guy. We all know his reputation in the state of Wisconsin. At the very least don't sell to him."

Again Mr. Mike McBumble's lawyer yanked on his suit.

He again sat down.

Brittany wrote at this moment, "*He's proud of himself? He's as useful as a screen door on a submarine.*"

Bob looked down the table, "Alex. What's your research showed?"

Alex looked over toward Ashleigh and asked, "Is the research I gave you in one of these binders?"

Ashleigh being five foot one had to stand up and hold the binder up, "Open the three ringed binder to the section labeled *Research*."

She stated, "The section Mr. Alex is referring to is on page fifteen, titled *Outdated*."

Many of the people sitting at the table opened to this section.

Mr. Mike McBumble asked, "Who's this guy?"

Bob defended his friend and employee, "He started working with me before I started *Renewed Mastery*. He is the manager of all our labs. He's a great engineer. He's honest. I have full trust in whatever he says. Plus. More important to this conversation. Because I bought everyone of your products. Alex and my staff are familiar with *Criti-Medical* products."

The CEO moaned.

The board members, their lawyers, Mr. Clark, and his lawyer glared at him.

Bob looked over at Alex, "If you could briefly answer this question. What has your research showed?"

Alex nodded his head in appreciation.

Bob did in return.

Everyone sitting on the *Renewed Mastery* side of the table were encouraged.

Alex answered very seriously, "It's my conclusion the only reason any of the *Criti-Medical* products are being sold is because of it's past reputation and the price. I'd give it a year and all of their products will be outdated."

Ms. Fox asked, in her southern aristocratic voice, "Sir. Why have you drawn this conclusion? I might add. A conclusion our team agrees with."

"I'm basing it on the newest tech being developed. At one time their medical devices were top of the line. With the advances in wireless technically *Criti-Medical* will in a short time be a dinosaur. In my opinion. The company has been so focused on increasing sales and relied on their past successes they're about to be obsolete. If *Criti-Medical* wants to advance they have to address many issues. A very serious issue. One that has started within the last four months but is a result of the companies push out more product is a handful of wrongful death lawsuits. A bigger problem is their cost cutting move to cut back on customer service and training staff."

Brittany and Ashleigh noted in their notes Mr. Clark's hurt look.

A Vice President protested, "Our product is of a high standard. Our products have been around since eighty-three. We have a reputation of being safe."

Mr. Mike McBumble mentioned, "Our company can't be held liable for how customers have mishandled our product."

Mr. Shelby in his southern aristocratic, voice answered, "Based upon recent claims I would no longer proclaim those type of statements."

The CEO, his lawyer, and a couple board members all glanced at one another.

Brittany wrote down a simple statement, "*They're acting like snakes when someone lifts up a rock.*"

An associate of Ms. Fox took out of his suitcase a stack of stapled papers.

Ms. Fox spoke in an aristocratic southern bell voice, "My associate is handing over a list of law suites filled against your company in the last five years. Ninety percent are related to breach of contract. As Mr. Alex has pointed out. In the last four months there have been a handful of wrongful death lawsuits. I have personally suggested to my client to forgo the purchase of your company."

A Vice President busted out in anger, "With the way the world is today who isn't getting sued? What medical device company doesn't have a lawsuit from time to time?"

Mr. Clark without looking at the list asked his Nephew, "You told me this was taken care off? You said it was a small hiccup."

His lawyer tapped him.

Mr. Clark reluctantly restrained himself.

Bob answered, "Maybe the hiccup is having your Nephew as the CEO."

Mike McBumble snapped, "Your sister is a Vice President."

Bob stood up and spoke with his hands, "My Sister is competent. I'm able to trust my sister. Unlike a certain person who is trying to sell the company."

The CEO shot up from his chair and pointed, "That's a lie!"

Mr. Clark stood up and blurted out, "Is it?"

Mr. Clark's lawyer gently put a hand on him. The lawyer turned toward the nephew, "It's come to our attention you've been reaching out to a variety of investors and other medical device companies. We believe based upon the research given to us. The reason you've been pushing sales is to have someone buy the company and then sell it off. From what I've learned you want a large percentage of the sale."

The Nephew lied, "I'd never sell off the company. I've just been looking for investors."

The lawyer for the owner was about to speak.

Mr. Shelby asked in his southern accent, "Sir May I question Mr. Mike McBumble?"

The lawyer for the owner waved his arm, "Be my guest."

Mr. Shelby stood up, adjusted his vest, and asked, "Mr. Mike McBumble is it true you are part owner of *Tower Medical Supplies*?"

He immediately sat down and turned to his lawyer.

His lawyer in a serious tone answered, "He doesn't have to answer the question."

Mr. Shelby turned toward Ms. Fox, "You may present your evidence."

Ms. Fox: turned toward her associate.

He pulled out a stack of folders. Enough for Mr. Clark, the board members, and all the lawyers to receive two.

She took one and personally sent it across the table, "Listed in this folder is the affidavit proving Mr. Mike McBumble is a founding member of *Tower Medical Supplies*. As well as a the proof he's invested in three other companies all selling parts to *Criti-Medical*."

Mr. Mike McBumble said, "I don't see what the harm is."

Bob interrupted, "Pete."

Everyone besides Mr. Shelby and Ashleigh were surprised Bob would call upon Pete.

Mr. Shelby sat down.

Ashleigh observed: Ms Fox lean over and whisper to Mr. Shelby, Mr. Shelby smiled and winked. Ms. Fox gave a facial expression and turned toward Pete.

Brittany was so into what was happening she forgot about taking notes.

Pete answered, "Yes Sir."

Bob stated, "Pete is a trusted employee. He was recently promoted to Head of Logistics and Warehousing. This position oversees all logistics and warehousing of the whole company not just in this location."

Pete answered, "Thank-you sir."

Bob asked him a simple question, "Would you find it acceptable if our inventory was off by three million dollars?"

A hush fell over the meeting room.

Pete looked at Bob and answered, "No sir. Y'all know I wouldn't allow it."

Bob pushed up his glasses.

He said, "You are a man of integrity."

"Yes Mr. Bob."

He sat down. Other employees smiled or nodded at him. He humbly accepted their complements.

Ashleigh wished this would stop Bob from acquiring the company.

The owner glared at Bob.

Ms. Fox added, "Mr. Clark. Without a physical inventory we've estimated your company is missing over two to three million dollars in inventory. There is the possibility this amount is greater."

Mr. Clark was clearly angry. He was unable to keep in his emotion, "I invented these products to save lives. I never would have believed you were a thief."

The nephew became angry, "You lack vision."

The owner answered, "But stealing and making a bad product is better?"

The Nephew, Mr. Mike McBumble pointed and stood up, "You never seemed to mind as long as we were making profits every month."

"That's wrong. If I only cared about profits I would have never asked Mr. Waller to look into the affairs of my company."

Mr. Clark held in tears.

He said simply, "I trusted you."

Mr. Mike McBumble pointed, "I'd have made you millions of dollars. Instead you went to Him. I never wanted you to involve him. You go behind my back..."

The Uncle was furious, "Don't you finish the sentence."

Bob asked Mr. McBumble, "Why are you so against Mr. Clark from approaching me?"

Mr. McBumble's lawyer grabbed Mr. Mike McBumble by the suit coat and pulled him down.

This is when Bob and Mr. Clark sat down.

Bob pushed up his glasses turned toward Mr. Clark, "May I suggest firing your nephew?"

Mr. Clark answered, "I believe that was the agreement."

Mr. Mike McBumble asked, "What agreement?"

Bob answered, "Two things I can't stand is incompetence and dishonesty. Before I purchase any company I like to conduct extensive research. Your Uncle approached me knowing my research is stellar. I had no interest in owning the company but I strongly believe *Renewed Mastery* and the people sitting on my side of the table can fix a once great small manufacturer. As a favor to your Uncle he wants our companies to merge. With *Renewed Mastery* taking over all operations of *Criti-Medical*. I have three conditions. One you will be fired, the other is your Uncle will fully retire, and the board will be disbanded. As I have already discussed with Mr. Clark and all of the board members they will be compensated well. Once all the paperwork is signed *Renewed Mastery* will own all the stock shares and *Criti-Medical* will again be a privately owned company. On the other hand. I will pay bottom dollar for your shares and give you a fair severance package. If it was up to me I'd have you arrested."

Mr. Mike McBumble declared his ignorance, "What happens if I don't agree?"

Mr. Shelby spoke, "If you don't take the generous severance package and allow my client to buy out your shares I'll have no choice to give this stack of papers."

He nodded to an assistant.

The assistant pulled out a stack of papers, "Well. Let me explain the situation. I will send this paperwork to the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the FDA, and I'm sure the IRS will be interested in this acquired knowledge."

The assistant placed this stack and the papers to sign over his shares, in front of Mr. McBumble.

Ms. Fox added, "Once it's signed. Mr. Bob Waller is the private owner of *Criti-Medical*."

His lawyer asked, "What about Mr. Clark and the Board Members?"

Mr. Shelby stated, "My friend this is why this here meeting was called. In a short few minutes all of the paperwork will be signed and Mr. Robert Waller will become the owner of *Criti-Medical*."

He looked at Bob and said, "Mr. Waller still has the option of not signing."

Bob pushed up his glasses.

He turned to Mr. Clark, "You agree with firing your nephew?"

"Yes."

Ashleigh cringed. She cringed but would support her brother.

Brittany spotted this. On purpose avoided writing this down.

Mr. McBumble's lawyer demanded, "Isn't this blackmail?"

Mr. Shelby answered, "My law firm would never be a part of such unscrupulous tactics. Instead. I'd view this as a blessing. This will bless all those who have and will sign *Criti-Medical* over to Mr. Waller. It will be a blessing to your client because he will avoid the unpleasantness of prison."

Mr. Clark demanded, "Sign it."

His lawyer quickly scanning the paperwork Mr. Shelby promised to send over to the government agencies he mentioned. He made it through three pages of the twenty-eight. He stopped leaned over and whispered to his client.

Bob stated, "It's a better severance package than you deserve."

Mr. Clark demanded, "Don't fight this."

He was about to refuse. His lawyer leaned over and whispered to him.

Brittany looked over at Ashleigh in surprise. Ashleigh rolled her eyes and lifted her shoulders and hands. Brittany took this to mean she had witnessed this many times before.

Bob said, "I'll have security escort you out of the building."

Ashleigh and Brittany gave one another looks and smiled. There was no official security. Instead they had a bunch of ex-military employees who would protect Mr. Bob and Ms. Ashleigh, other employees, and the company without question.

Bob yelled, "Billy-Joe and Bubba."

Billy-Joe worked in maintenance and Bubba worked in the warehouse. Both worked out, both were ex-military, and both had the expertise to easily subdue anyone.

Ashleigh and Brittany smiled.

The CEO pointed, "This isn't the end of me."

The lawyer whispered to him. They looked at one another. After, they were escorted out of the building, where a taxi took them back to their hotel.

Mr. Clark gave a facial expression and honestly said, "I trust you won't sell it off like my Nephew was about too."

Bob answered, "The reason I'm about to sign the paperwork Ms. Fox's assistant just passed me is because of the people who work for you or have worked for your company. I personally know you started this company to benefit people while making a living. I respect that."

Ashleigh perked up. She found her answer. Her brother knew someone, a group of people who worked for the company, or people who had worked for the company.

The owner asked, "You promise to treat my employees well?"

Bob answered honestly, "Fairly."

The owner gave a look.

"Your company has lots of problems."

Ashleigh believed the owner's look was the same as a person being invited to an intervention.

Bob pushed up his glasses and with a stern tone added, "I promise to stop any more wrongful deaths. I'll make it into a company you were proud of starting."

The owner stated, "It's why I had you look into everything."

Mr. Bob turned to everyone sitting on the table representing *Criti-Medical*, "A key to ending most of the problems is the end of the month disaster."

This statement shook all three of the Vice Presidents. One of them was unable to contain his displeasure and stated, "It's the way we've always done it."

This shocked every employee of *Renewed Mastery*.

Ashleigh believed this guy's sincerity was the reason her Brother should avoid taking the company over.

Bob pushed up his glasses and asked, "Should we reinvent the wheel?"

Ashleigh knew her brother was angry.

The Vice President answered, "It's a good design."

"If you truly believe that go out and replace your rubber tires with tires made of concrete. While you are at it let's stop using cars and go back to the horse and buggy. Because a horse and buggy was good enough. Why? Because it's the way we always done it."

Bob angrily stated, "One of the reasons you are encountering lawsuits is because you wait until the end of the month to send out eighty percent of your product."

Ashleigh gently corrected him, "Mr. Bob it's closer to ninety-five percent."

Bob turned toward Ashleigh, "Ninety-five?"

Pete added, "Ninety percent of all production is sent out the last three days of the month. About ninety-five in the last week."

Bob looked at Alex.

Alex answered, "They don't start assembling the product until the start of the third week."

Bob glared at the Vice President, "That's over."

Ashleigh could tell the Vice President, a guy she mistrusted more than the CEO, would do everything possible to keep everything the way it was.

Ashleigh spotted a moment of doubt. She held in her excitement. She prayed her brother would not sign the paperwork in front of him. The board wanted out from this nightmare and hoped he would sign it.

Bob glared at the left side of the table, "I don't play the numbers game. You understand me? I'm all for profits but I'm not having people die on my watch because of reaching some number at the end of the month. You hear me?"

They all shrunk.

He looked at the owner, was about to say something, instead he turned toward Jimmy, "Jimmy how do we fix it?"

Jimmy answered, "If we'all ain't moving the company down here I ain't sure we'll be able to fix it. If we move it here I'm sure we can fix it. But it sounds like Y'all are trying to keep it up north in Wisconsin."

Bob answered, "That's correct."

Jimmy continued, "From what I'm observing Y'all have ticks dug in."

Bob turned to the owner, "Are you ready for me to be removing the ticks?"

The owner thought about all the people who worked for him. He knew his company was in deep trouble.

"Yes."

This disappointed Ashleigh.

Bob surprised Ashleigh by saying, "Ms. Ashleigh."

She said, "Yes sir."

"I'd like you to spend the next hour addressing all of the concerns you have with *Criti-Medical*."

Ashleigh smiled and stated, "Gladly."

Bob said, "One second."

"Okay."

"Mr. Shelby. You have a pen so I may sign this paperwork."

They smiled. Mr. Shelby stood up, and handed him a pen, "Once Mr. Waller signs on every marked x *Renewed Mastery* is the official owner of *Criti-Medical*."

Mr. Shelby's associate stood up and went over to Mr. Bob and showed him where he needed to sign.

As he signed it Mr. Clark's lawyer mentioned, "Mr. Shelby and I believe this is a good order. My client is concerned about your promise to keep the company in Wisconsin."

Mr. Shelby answered, "Well. I want to remind you this is covered in the order. If the conditions in the order are met. Conditions you agreed upon before this meeting *Renewed Mastery* will be allowed to move the company."

Bob signed the last page. The assistant took it.

Mr. Shelby stated, "Well; it's official. *Renewed Mastery* and *Criti-Medical* are now merged. This means *Criti-Medical* is no longer a publicly owned company."

One of the board members lawyers asked, "Everything will happen as we have agreed."

Ms. Fox answered, "As soon as all the paperwork is filed."

Mr. Shelby in his southern aristocratic voice said, "As in normal procedures. If there are any issues please give Ms. Fox or my office proper notification."

They knew what this meant.

Bob looked over at Mr. Clark, "I promise to do my best to keep the company in Wisconsin."

Bob glared over at the executives of *Criti-Medical*, "If you fight me and the conditions are met. Don't think for one moment I won't move it here."

Bob stated matter of fact looked over at the executives, "I will be removing the ticks."

The southern people in the conference room thought the way he said ticks was funny.

The lawyers asked if there was a meeting room they could all sit down and discuss things. Ashleigh suggested the Green Room. Brittany confirmed it was open. Brittany acted as host and lead them to this small meeting room. She trusted this room was stocked with water and snacks.

Bob looked over at Ashleigh and said loud enough for everyone to hear, "Before you go over the material in these binders. Lets have a ten minute break."

Ashleigh answered, "Good idea."

Ashleigh observed Bob pull Mr. Clark off to the side and console him.

Jimmy asked Ashleigh, "Have they always been friends?"

Ashleigh answered honestly, "I've never met him before."

They looked at one another.

Pete stepped over to Ashleigh, "Whats next? I have a lot of work to do?"

Ashleigh smiled, "I'm sure Mr. Bob wants your advice on how to fix the shipping problems."

Jimmy added, "I ain't sure it's wise buying this company."

Alex added, "I'd feel better if he'd move it here."

The customer service manager in her Jersey accent commented, "Have U's look at the reviews of the place?"

They looked at her.

Talking with her hands, "It's horrible. U should see the complaints."

They heard Bob announce, "Ms. Ashleigh would you lead us through the problems of *Criti-Medical*?"

"Yes Mr. Bob."

It took two hours to go through them. Ashleigh felt she rushed it. They took another half hour discussing ways to fix the end of the month situation. The three vice presidents were annoyed they would even entertain the idea of changing their process.

The board of directors were overjoyed at the agreements signed.

A few minutes into the meeting Brittany arrived.

Mr. Clark believed Bob would honor what he told him. During this time of the meeting Ashleigh personally warned all of the executives working at *Criti-Medical* Bob meant what he said.

After the meeting was over they privately wished Bob would have never purchased this company.

Shelly watched her friends separate. Two were headed to different classes, one was headed to pick up her child at daycare, another was headed home, and the youngest was headed to her job. Shelly was pulling for this girl. Unlike many of the others her age, this young woman was paying for school herself, and was helping her mother with a younger brother.

Glancing at the clock she had an hour before her last class. After she would pick up Little Bobby from the schools day care center and go home.

Todd, a father she knew from the schools day care center stepped away from his friends and approached her table. He was the center of gossip with all the single ladies associated with the day care center. Shelly admired him from a distance. He was a single dad who had custody of his daughter. Everyone believed his daughter was well behaved and cute. He was a man's man. He worked part time as a mechanic but was attending tech college to become a certified electrician. All of the ladies talked about: how he treated his daughter, his dream of owning his own business, how he owned a small house, his life was in order, he was toned, and in shape.

What Shelly liked was he never talked about drinking or using drugs. Talked about attending a church and once overheard him talking about Jesus to a woman at daycare. An important quality Shelly took seriously was how well behaved his daughter was.

She felt he was an attractive guy. He was a couple inches taller than her, he had dark hair, good features, and bright brown eyes. She liked his muscles and his smile. She wished he would shave more often but no one was perfect.

He said with a smile, "Hello."

She answered, "Hi."

"I believe your name is Shelly?"

"Yes it is."

"What's Yours?"

"Todd."

He asked, "You have a son who goes to daycare? I believe his name is Bobby?"

She answered, "Yes."

"My daughter sure enjoys playing with your son."

"I've seen that."

"May I sit down?"

A dozen or so answers flashed in her brain. She answered, "I don't mind."

He set down his backpack on the floor and took a seat across from her.

She wondered why she agreed to this.

He asked, "What are you going to school for?"

"I'm trying to get a business management degree with an emphasis on manufacturing."

"Interesting."

She smiled, "I helped a friend with his manufacturing business."

"You planning on working there?"

"No. He moved the business out of state."

He said with concern, "A lot of business are doing so."

She thought about how often Bob complained about the Democrat leadership in the State of Wisconsin. The least thing she wanted was to talk about politics.

She quickly changed the subject, knowing his answer, "What are you taking?"

"I'm hoping to be an electrician. I'm going to run my own business some day."

Testing the waters, "I hope God blesses your dream."

He became serious, "Without God I don't know where I'd be."

"Without Jesus saving me I'd probably be in jail or dead."

He answered, "Accepting Jesus helped me get through my divorce. He's really blessed me with Debbie."

She smiled, "Debbie must be your daughter?"

He answered, "I named her after my favorite Aunt."

"I'm sure she's happy about that."

He smiled, "She is."

For the first time in a long time she was willing to go on a date with a guy.

He asked in a statement, "I've noticed you help out at the daycare center?"

She shook her head, "I just help out between classes. Sometimes if I'm not rushing out of here I'll help."

"I'm sure they appreciate the help."

She picked up on this.

"It's no big deal."

"The kids seem to really like you."

She answered, "Children like anyone who will spend time with them."

"Not everyone does."

Serious she answered, "I suppose."

He stated, "I wish Debbie's mother was involved."

This was completely off the cuff. Shelly could tell he was shocked he let this slip.

He recovered, "What's important is you do."

She smiled.

He blurted out, "Our church is having a pot luck dinner on Saturday. I was wondering if you'd want to go with me? My parents agreed to watch Debbie."

She was honest, "I have to work on Saturday night."

"Oh."

She found herself saying, "I wouldn't mind doing something Sunday?"

He smiled, "After church?"

"Sure."

He smiled. Then asked, "You go to early or late service?"

"Our church service usually ends around noon."

He asked, "How about if we meet for lunch at one?"

She found herself saying, "Great."

He pulled up his backpack, he took out a pad and paper, and wrote down his name and number, he handed to her, "Give me a call Saturday and we'll make arrangements."

"Sure."

"Call between nine and five."

She smiled, "Because of the pot luck?"

He answered, "That's right."

He surprised her when he said, "You could bring Bobby with you."

She answered, "He'll be with his Daddy this weekend."

"I hope you don't mind me bringing Debbie?"

She found herself saying, "I don't mind at all. She's a sweetheart."

Her cell phone rang.

He noticed her expensive phone.

She noticed it was her Aunt Vera, "I have to take this."

He grabbed his things, "I'll look forward to hearing from you."

She winked.

He left.

As she answered the phone she watched him leave the cafeteria.

She focused, "Hi."

"Hi. This is your Aunt Vera."

Shelly was legitimately happy to hear from Vera.

They talked for fifteen minutes. Shelly looked up at the clock and realized she needed to pick up Little Bobby; she told Vera this.

Vera apologized. Vera with both excitement and some nervousness asked Shelly over to her house on Memorial Day. Shelly felt this was a good time because Little Bobby would be visiting his Father in Florida. Vera agreed; she believed it was better for Shelly to meet the rest of the family without Little Bobby.

After this conversation she headed to class.

She blocked out the nervousness about going on a real date and meeting her deceased father's family.

April 25th, Can't Wait Any Longer

Part Three of Six

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Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25

*Can't Wait
Any Longer*

Day 15 of Book I

*(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)*

Part Four of Six

Authored By: R. P. Voght

*Posted on ashleighandmegan.com on:
April 26, 2026*

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I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"

R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Megan changed plans when a group scheduled an evening charter. She was finishing cleaning the galley after preparing individual meals for this impromptu charter.

Her: long dark blond hair was in a pony tail, she was wearing an orange colored woman's polo shirt, with the emblem of her small business named *Dolphin Tours* embroidered on her right chest. Underneath she was wearing a padded floral print brown and white padded swim top, she was wearing the matching mid scoop plain brown boyshort bottom with a white belt, covering these bottoms was a loose pair of green cargo shorts, and she was wearing brown swim shoes with a zipper on top; these shoes were great for a wet deck. She was without makeup. She was wearing small stud dolphin earrings. She was wearing the top and shorts to cover up her two piece. She correctly believed Christopher would disapproved of a woman wearing a two piece; even the very conservative two piece Megan was wearing.

This impromptu charter gave Megan the excuse to change the location of her lunch date with Christopher. She was grateful Christopher agreed to meet at the charter instead of *Lucy's*. Megan felt *Lucy's* was a horrible setting for a break up. Her heart went out to him. She knew what it was like to hope for a relationship but the guy had no interest in dating her. She never believed she would be the one breaking up with a guy who expressed his love for her. The truth was, he was a good guy and had many of the qualities she was looking for, but he was not the guy for her.

Jake opened one of the two doors to the living quarters of her charter and stated, "I just spotted him drive in."

She took a deep breath.

Jake suggested, "If Y'all would like I could tell him."

She wiped her hands with a towel hanging from a drawer.

She said, "I have to do this."

"Okay."

She answered, "Hanging around without bothering us ain't a bad idea."

"I'll check the bridge."

Megan's dimples flashed.

She stated, "Good idea."

Jake shut the door to the living quarters and went up the ladder to the bridge.

She: took a deep breath, stepped out of the galley, went through the lounge, opened one of the two doors, stepped out onto the stern, went to the edge of her vessel, leaned over, and spotted Christopher walking down the first pier. He was dressed in nice khaki colored slacks, a blue dress shirt, a matching blue and white checkered tie, and dress shoes.

She sighed.

This was turning out to be more difficult than she imagined. As he approached she no longer wanted to have lunch with him. She felt it would have been rude to run out on him now. She knew what if felt like to receive similar treatment from a guy; the least thing she could do was have lunch with him.

She yelled when he was close to the gate, "The gate's open."

He stepped through the gate and met her on the port side of the charter. They greeted one another. She: turned, stepped to the doors leading into the living quarters, she opened one of two doors, she waited for Christopher to step in, she carefully shut the door behind her, they stepped through the lounge, and into her galley.

He mentioned, "I've always liked how you decorated this charter."

Megan's dimples flashed.

This was frustrating. She tried to discuss her charter and business with him before and he always changed the subject.

Megan answered, "We did a lot of remodeling to get her this way."

"Looks like it."

Megan's dimples flashed.

Megan asked, "You want to sit at the breakfast table or at the stools?"

"The stools."

Megan was grateful he chose the stools.

She: stepped behind the counter, opened the refrigerator, took out two plastic plates with dividers and a cover. She: set them on the main counter, set out utensils wrapped in paper napkins, set out a pitcher of iced tea, and two plastic cups; these cups had the emblem of her business printed on the side. She removed the covers of the plastic plates and set one in front of Christopher and one in front of her.

He was sitting on a stool as she stood on the other side of the counter.

As he removed the napkins he asked, "New cups?"

She smiled her big dimple smile.

"Ashleigh bought them for me."

He asked, "Why?"

She disliked his tone but decided to answer nicely, after all she was breaking up with him, "She was able to get a good deal on them. *Renewed Mastery* ordered cups like this for their employees."

"I'm sure she gets lots of deals."

Her dimples flashed.

She could tell he was being his passive aggressive self. A list of questions and comments ran through her mind. She decided to be nice and say nothing. She poured the two of them ice tea, she unwrapped her utensils, started to eat, took a sip of her iced tea, watched him, and wondered if he would say anything.

She was surprised when he said, "This is a very good seafood salad."

She answered, "Thank-you."

She left out the fact this was one of two choices the evening charter ordered. She just made two extra for their lunch. This was why the utensils were wrapped and the meal was enclosed in the plastic plate.

She took a sip of her iced tea.

She spotted Jake climb down the ladder onto the stern of the vessel. He stepped up to one of the windows and looked in.

Her dimples flashed.

She nodded.

He rolled his eyes and stepped away from the doors. She spotted him open a storage unit and take out a fishing pole. She focused her attention on Christopher.

She asked, "Y'all want more ice tea?"

"Yes Ma'am."

She poured him some.

They ate.

She watched him eat as she dangled her fork.

Since their bowling date he asked her out twice. She felt he was disappointed every time she procrastinated the date. This date was turning out exactly like every other date when it was just the two of them. This perplexed Megan. The last time they were together he professed his love for her. She expressed the feeling they lacked proper communication. She assumed he'd be opening up and talking to her.

She was again surprised when he stated, "I'm glad we're having lunch."

Her dimples flashed.

"Why?"

He gave her a curious look, "I like it when we're together."

In her mind she shouted, "*Why? You never say anything? You never tell me anything? How can you possibly believe we're a good couple?*"

He smiled at her.

All at once it became real easy to say, "I don't believe we should be dating anymore."

His countenance became a heap.

He spoke, "Oh. I assumed having lunch with Y'all meant we're moving forward?"

"I don't feel we're a good match."

"Oh."

Megan felt compelled to say, "Y'all are a good guy but I don't feel we'd be good together."

"Okay."

He stood up and finished his iced tea, "I appreciate the lunch."

Her dimples flashed.

"Okay."

He stated, "I was hoping to invite Y'all on a dinner cruise."

This was very surprising. Many couples became engaged on these cruises. She was grateful she ended their courtship today.

She answered, "I'm not interested."

He looked devastated.

Her heart went out to him.

He gained his composure, "I'll be going."

She answered, "It's a good idea."

He asked, "Would it be alright if I let myself out."

"Of course."

She watched him: turn around, walk out of the galley, step through the lounge, open one of the two charter doors, he politely shut the door, through the windows she observed him talk to Jake, then he stepped off the charter, onto the pier of the charter, step onto the first pier, walk passed the charter, and was quickly out of sight.

She felt relieved.

She observed Jake walk up to one of the two doors, he looked in, opened the door, he stepped in, and headed toward her. She quickly cleaned the galley. She would have felt better if he would have taken the plate. She hated to waist food.

Jake was standing by the stools and asked, "Y'all alright."

Her dimples flashed.

"I'm fine."

"Y'all sure?"

When she was finished cleaning she looked at him.

"Y'all are sweet."

"Linda says the same thing."

Megan teased, "Y'all have her fooled."

"Funny."

Her dimples flashed.

They were again serious.

She answered, "I feel relieved."

"I reckon he ain't the one?"

"He ain't."

Jake's next comment was far more emotional than breaking up with Christopher, "Y'all don't be fretting. I'm sure a good God fearing guy will like Y'all."

She held in her tears and stated, "I hope so."

Megan stepped back. She leaned her back up against the cabinets.

Jake missing how upset she was suggested, "Linda was saying Y'all should try online dating."

This temporarily stopped her from being upset, "Why on earth would I try online dating?"

"A couple of Linda's friends have found good guys."

Her dimples flashed.

"I ain't online dating."

"Just a suggestion."

"God will send me one..."

She was interrupted when Stan yelled in his New Jersey accent, "Megan? U's there?"

Jake turned around, Megan stepped to the side so she could look out the door window; Barbara and Stan were standing on the first pier staring at the charter.

Jake asked, "What are they wanting?"

"I ain't sure. Lets find out."

They quickly stepped out onto the stern of the boat.

Jake greeted them, "Howdy."

Stan smiled, "Hows U's doing?"

"We're getting ready for an evening charter."

Barbara asked, "Is it a late one?"

Megan answered, "It ain't real late."

Jake added, "It's starting before dinner and ended a few hours after dusk."

Megan asked, "What brings Y'all here?"

Barbara and Stan looked at one another.

Barbara asked, "We're checking to see how U's are doing?"

Jake and Megan looked at one another.

Megan assumed they bumped into Christopher on his way out and he told him they broke up.

Megan answered, "I'm relieved."

Barbara answered, "Relieved?"

Stan said, "We's figured U's be upset?"

Jake added, "Me too."

Megan said, "It wasn't working out."

Barbara and Stan looked at one another.

Stan mentioned, "U's been doing the parade for years?"

Barbara added, "I guess it was getting to be to much?"

Megan and Jake looked at one another.

Megan asked, "What's getting to be to much?"

"The parade."

Megan's dimples flashed.

She asked, "Are Y'all talking about me breaking up with Christopher or the Memorial Day Parade?"

Barbara made a face, "U's broke up with Christopher?"

Megan answered, "He's a good guy and all but he ain't for me."

Barbara waved her hand, "U's okay?"

Stan rolled his eyes, "Good for you. He was a putz."

Barbara looked at him, "They were dating?"

"They ain't dating now."

Barbara looked at Megan, "Forgive my husband for not showing any compassion."

Stan looked at her, "U's think I don't understand?"

"It ain't sounding like it."

Stan answered, "All's I'm saying is our friend here can find someone better."

"Maybe she's in love with him."

"If she's in love with him why'd she brake it off?"

Barbara turned to Megan and waved her hand, "He's a man."

Megan changed the subject, "Y'all were saying something about the Memorial Day Parade?"

Stan focused, "We's heard the city council is canceling it."

Immediately Megan said, "What?"

Jake made a noise and then asked, "Is someone pissing down your leg?"

Stan answered, "We's heard it from a good source."

Barbara added, "We assumed Ashleigh told you."

"Why would she be telling me?"

Barbara and Stan looked at one another, "We's heard the reason they're canceling it is because Bob's company ain't liking the idea of having a Memorial Day Parade."

Megan's dimples flashed.

Megan tuned to Jake, "Y'all finish preparing the charter."

"Where are Y'all headed?"

Angry, she pointed to the houseboat yacht, "I'm marching over there and talking to him."

"Y'all just can't..."

Megan was already headed of the charter, she turned, "Watch me. There ain't anybody shutting down the parade."

Jake yelled, "Y'all have to be back in four hours."

Already marching down the first pier she yelled without turning, "I ain't forgetting."

She: removed the keys from her cargo pants, started to jog, and quickly headed toward her truck.

Barbara, Stan, and Jake all shook their heads.

It was impossible for Barbara to avoid asking about Christopher. Stan acted like he was disinterested in what Jake had to say; but he was very interested.

*A*shleigh's impulse was to carry Captain's food tray. She decided it was best if she just let him carry it. Part of the reason she allowed him to do so was due to the feeling something was bothering him. This upset her because she respected him a great deal.

He was dressed professionally. He was wearing gray dress slacks, a dark blue button shirt, a brand new leather belt, a western styled tie, and his best cowboy boots. Before arriving he had a haircut and was freshly shaved. Smelling his Old Spice cologne reminded her of her Foster Dad.

She led him to what everyone called the Green Side; this was one of two long walls of this rectangular shaped cafeteria. They just left what everyone called the Blue Side. The Blue Side was on one of the short sides of the cafeteria; the main entrance and the vending area were on this side. On the opposite side of the Green side was the Yellow side. On the opposite

side of the Blue side was the Red Side. Each of these sections were named after the double doors painted along each wall of the large cafeteria.

She picked a round table near the corner of the cafeteria.

She wanted to ask him if something was bothering him. He was a leader in the community and he often times worried about his oldest son Duke. He never came out and said so but Ashleigh could tell. Ma told her a lot of the people at the VFW approached him and asked for his advice. Ashleigh assumed this sometimes wore on him but Captain would never admit this. Plus, he was an elder in their church. If he wanted to discuss something he would. Her Foster Dad had this same trait.

Along the way many people greeted them; they politely avoided long conversations.

He set his tray down on the round table. It was impossible to miss the checker board pattern on all of the round tables; what surprised him was there were four different colored patterns. He took note of people playing chess. He liked the thin wooden cover they set on the table. It was made to fit the top of the table, there was a large open square so it would never cover the checkered patten, there were clips on the side, and neatly etched on the sides was the chess formula.

He was amazed at the artwork being painted on the walls. The whole cafeteria was section off into large equal squares; they went from top to bottom. In each square an artist or team of artists were working on or were finishing with a painting. Each square was completely different. The two boundaries Ashleigh and Leah insisted on were nothing real violent and nothing pornographic. There were suggestive paintings and there were a couple war depictions but nothing Ashleigh and Leah would object too. Being practical no one was allowed to paint over the sets of doors or the exit signs over the door.

What amazed Captain was the garden area in the center of the seating area. He noticed a woman in her mid thirties sitting on a bench sketching a small palm tree. This bench was on a curvy walk way. He was correct in assuming it took effort to maintain this area.

He was amazed at the size of this cafeteria and the variety of food it served. He correctly assumed there was no profit in maintaining this cafeteria. He surmised if there were overruns someone would be held accountable for it but there was a lot of grace given. This was especially true for special meals and holidays.

Bob, Gracie, Leah, Haley, Brittany, and Ashleigh were considering food price options for employees, they were in the process of developing punch cards, and were ready to implement a program were employees could have one guest show up for lunch.

Before Captain had a chance to move a chair out for Ashleigh she sat down herself.

Captain's impulse was to ask about the parade. He restrained himself.

Captain said, "Y'all have a nice cafeteria."

"It's come a long way."

"I ain't seen anything like it."

She smiled.

"You should have seen it in January. This side was filled with office furniture. I never thought we'd ever clear it out."

Captain asked, "I'm betting it was some of the same office furniture that ended up at the community center?"

Normally this would have been asked in a fun way. It seemed to her he was way to serious.

She tried to cheer him up by pointing to the key lime pie, "It's Nicole's receipt."

Captain replied in a serious manner, "Ma was saying Nicole was offered to work here."

Ashleigh tried to be jovial, "We'd like her to start working in the clinic across the street."

"I'm assuming this is the job Y'all offered her."

"More than once. We believe she'd make a great head nurse."

Very intense, "She's a damn good one."

This caught Ashleigh off guard. He never treated her this way before. She wondered what was wrong.

They starting eating.

Ashleigh mentioned, "I've heard she was a great nurse."

Again serious, "She has a great reputation. She was a great nurse at the Community Hospital. In Virginia she was respected by Navy and Marine personal."

"I didn't know she served?"

"In Virginia she worked at a hospital near the base."

"I suppose a lot of marines visited the hospital?"

"Navy personal as well."

"Okay."

"Shorty."

One of the few people who were able to call her this.

"Yes."

They stared at one another.

Captain wanted to ask her about the Memorial Day Parade. He held it in because of advice from Ma; he would listen to Ma.

In a polite way but not in his usual way stated, "Y'all are serving some good food."

"We try."

She looked at his plate.

She again tried to be cheery, "How's the jambalaya?"

In a serious tone, "It's good and all. But it ain't Ma or Nicole's."

Ashleigh asked with concern, "Did you select the spicy?"

Captain nodded his head, "Yes Ma'am."

She made a face and was about to leave the table, "I should have gotten the hot sauce."

"Don't be frettin' It's alright."

Upset she asked, "Are you sure?"

"Shorty, Y'all stay seated. I appreciate the meal."

She leaned over and playfully whispered, "It used to be spicy."

"What all happened?"

She rolled her eyes, "The Yankees couldn't handle it."

She chuckled.

He made a scowl.

This bothered Ashleigh. Their running joke was the differences between northern and southern customs.

Captain spotted the artist from the atrium push open a red door and step into a hallway.

Ashleigh asked, "What did you think of the listening device?"

Captain looked at her, "It should help our boys in the subs."

"It's what we're hoping for. You can't tell anyone about it."

Stern, "Honey. Y'all can trust me."

His tone and body language caught her by surprise. She answered as sweetly as possible, "If I didn't trust you. I'd have never asked for your advice."

Stern he asked, "Then why tell me I can't say anything?"

"Because I have too."

He understood this. He again wanted to bring up what he heard about the Memorial Day Parade. He reminded himself, Ma mistrusted the person they heard the rumor from. She promised to find out more before the end of the day.

Out of curiosity he asked, "Y'all have a large contract with the military?"

Ashleigh answered, "Mostly listening devices and small electronic things. We don't make all of the items we design. We outsource some of the items but we design them all."

"How did Y'all get starting making them?"

"Bob bought a company that owned another company and we've done it ever since. We've been working with the military and other agencies for a long time."

Captain made a face, "Y'all making bugs?"

She winked and smiled and was trying to lighten the mood, "We've helped catch a lot of bad guys."

Very serious Captain asked, "Ain't Y'all afraid they'd turn em' on us?"

This was something the company already considered.

She answered seriously, "We've considered this."

There was an awkward pause.

Ashleigh looked around, leaned in and whispered, "If you ever believe someone has bugged you talk to me."

Captain very seriously said, "Never tell my Son Duke."

She understood.

He then asked, "Y'all must be smart enough to protect yourselves?"

Ashleigh winked and smiled.

Captain started to eat the Key Lime Pie.

He calmed himself and abruptly said, "It's good. It tastes close to Nicole's but it ain't."

Ashleigh answered, "You didn't know?"

He was again stern, "What Y'all saying?"

Ashleigh answered, "All the ladies talk about how Nicole doesn't give out the exact receipt. She holds back. I'm still trying to figure out how she makes her sweet iced tea."

Captain smiled.

Ashleigh could tell he admired this.

Ashleigh decided to say, "Megan's excited about the Memorial Day Parade. She's was telling me how it's been a family tradition to help run it."

Captain leaned in and in angry tone said, "I never figured Y'all would be a liar."

Her eyes became large, this hurt her a great deal, she said with a gasp, "I'd never lie to you."

Angry, but calm, he whispered, "Rumor is Y'all want to shut down the Memorial Day Parade."

"I wouldn't want that."

"Does your brother?"

This angered Ashleigh and she cut off her tears, "He would never shut it down."

"I heard different."

She leaned in, "Someone's lying to you. We were..."

She stopped herself in mid sentence and stood up. Being respectful but stern she said, "Let's talk to him."

He was angry himself, "Yes Ma'am."

The two of them were silent until after they cleared off their trays and shoved their garbage into a large trash bin; Ashleigh took her water bottle. They headed toward Bob's office. Not a single person stopped them. Ashleigh noticed an open conference room, she stepped in, and waved Captain into the room. She made sure the door was securely shut.

"I want you to know we're planning on secretly funding it."

Captain studied her, "It ain't what we've heard."

"What have you heard?"

He admired her passion.

"There's a rumor at the VFW spreading like wildfire. The city council is planning on shutting it down on account your brother believes it'd look bad on this here company."

She turned red.

He felt she was like a firecracker ready to explode; he admired this.

She walked right passed Captain and opened the door, "Follow me."

He said, "Someone's been pissing down my leg."

"It isn't me."

A slight pause. "Nor my brother."

Because of life experience he became an expert at studying people. He believed her.

She said, "Give me a second."

He gave her a look when she braced herself against Captain's arm, using him as a pole she took off her shoes, and said with a lot of frustration, "I hate shoes."

She turned, carrying her shoes, and walking with determination to the office.

Captain smiled. He followed her because he admired her. In many ways he viewed her as an adopted daughter.

When Haley spotted Ashleigh step out into the hallway she immediately made a call to Bob.

Ashleigh walked right passed Haley.

Captain said, "Howdy Ma'am."

"Hi."

Ashleigh swung the glass door open.

Captain stepped through the door.

Brittany and Nikita looked up.

Both stayed where they were.

Bob stepped out of his office and greeted, "Nice to see you Mr. Steward."

They shook hands.

"Likewise."

Ashleigh said, "We need to talk."

She went straight into his office.

The two men looked at one another and followed her in.

Brittany commanded Nikita, "Go to your spot."

Nikita looked at her.

Brittany stood up and pointed at her spot, "Spot."

This Nikita understood and obeyed.

Brittany quickly opened one of the glass doors and approached Haley's desk, in her strong Georgia accent asked, "What's on fire?"

Haley looked at Brittany, "I have no idea."

"Who's the gentleman?"

"It's Megan's father."

Brittany with wisdom said, "He ain't the type of man to be messin' with. He's either your best friend or worst enemy."

Haley smiled, "He's a good guy. They're friends."

This made Brittany feel better.

Haley received a call from the security shack.

Haley raised a finger.

Brittany waited.

Haley said, "Give her a visitor pass."

Haley hit a button, turned toward Brittany, "Go get Megan."

"Why is she here?"

"There's a rumor Bob and Ashleigh want to shut down the Memorial Day Parade."

Brittany made a face, "Why would she believe such a tale?"

"What's important is she does. I want you to meet Megan at the entrance. I'll tell Andrea to hold her there until you get there."

"Yes Ma'am."

Brittany rushed to the front.

Haley immediately called Andrea. Then she called Bob.

When Brittany reached the front area she spotted Megan and Andrea talking through the sliding window. Brittany could tell Megan was on fire.

Megan and her Daddy were standing next to one another in Bob's office.

Megan watched Brittany place pens and yellow legal pads of paper on Bob's conference table.

When she was done with this task Ashleigh nodded at Brittany.

Brittany nodded in return and left by shutting the doors of Bob's office.

This was the longest office Megan ever seen. She would readily admit she knew very little about art. However; she was impressed with the sculptures on the long cabinet and the art work on the wall. She wanted to get a better look at the lighthouse cabinets behind Bob's desk but Bob was standing at the side of the desk talking on the phone. Megan was surprised on how well Bob was dressed. She hated to admit he looked very professional. Normally when she spotted him going to work he was dressed in business casual. She spotted several framed photographs between the cabinets. She wanted to be close enough to study them.

Megan observed Ashleigh open a cabinet, she was surprised to see a small refrigerator, Ashleigh took out a water, and handed it to Megan.

Ashleigh demanded, "Lets sit down."

This is when Ashleigh led them to the table. Megan was impressed with the wooden table; she liked how it could be extended or shortened. Megan chose to sit across from Ashleigh. To her left was an empty head chair; this is where Bob would sit. Sitting to the right of Ashleigh was Captain.

Megan felt Ashleigh's suit was somewhat boyish with a nineteen thirties gangster flare. She felt Ashleigh still appeared feminine. Megan correctly assumed if she wore the exact same suit it would support the rumor she was a lesbian. In the past this accusation would have been far more hurtful. It still stung, but within the last year Megan was coming to terms with the idea, it was impossible to stop the rumor she was a lesbian or bisexual.

She felt her Daddy was dressed well.

They observed Bob finish a conversation and hit a button. While holding onto the receiver he hit another button. He spoke to someone briefly and hung up the phone.

Ashleigh whispered, "He's calling in reinforcements."

Megan asked, "I'm assuming Y'all ain't shutting down the parade?"

Bob pulled out the empty chair and in an angry tone stated, "No."

Megan hated to admit she was impressed with his body language and tone.

He first said, "Mr. Steward and Megan I'm glad you are here."

The door to his office opened and Jimmy stepped in.

Ashleigh said, "Grab a drink."

"Yes Ma'am."

"Howdy Sis."

He turned, "Captain."

Captain nodded his head.

Jimmy stepped over to the refrigerator and grabbed himself a bottled water. He sat next to Megan.

Bob looked at Jimmy, "Someone is trying to stop the Memorial Day Parade."

With a shocked look, "Who?"

Captain said, "We aim to find out."

Megan informed everyone, "Stan and Barbara told me the city is shutting her down on account of *Renewed Mastery*."

Bob very seriously said, "*Renewed Mastery* was planning on sponsoring it."

Jimmy said, "Sounds like Y'all have a fox in the hen house."

Captain added, "We aim to do some fox hunting."

Megan glanced at Bob to see how he would react to these southern sayings.

Bob pushed up his glasses and said, "There is more than one way to kill a fox."

Megan glanced over at Ashleigh.

Ashleigh winked.

Megan was surprised when Bob turned toward Megan and asked, "I've heard you run the parade?"

"It's a team effort."

Jimmy clarified, "In the past it's been run by the VFW and towns folks. Over the years people have been allowing Megan to run it."

Megan insisted, "A lot of people pitch in to help. I wouldn't be able to run it myself."

Jimmy stated, "Y'all are downplaying what goes on. Whenever there's a squabble or trouble Y'all are the one settling it. We can't forget all of the organizing Y'all do."

Bob turned to her, "I'm assuming you have started to organize it."

"I start soon after the last one ended."

"I wouldn't expect any less."

This comment surprised her.

Megan's dimples flashed and she brushed her hair behind her ear.

Bob added, "I've been told there is a dinner and dance."

Captain answered, "Yes Sir. It's been held at the VFW for as long as anyone can remember. There's a lot of fundraising and tall tales."

Bob pushed up his glasses, "I'm sure there is."

Megan recovering from the surprised compliment, very seriously said, "During the weekend establishments hold fundraisers."

Jimmy reminded everyone, "Y'all can't forget during the weekend many of the veterans talk about what they've all gone through. There's guest speakers who give talks on the concerns of veterans and their families."

Bob commented, "I'm sure politicians get in the act."

Megan's dimples flashed.

In a serious tone Megan stated, "We ain't always liking them or the establishments these events are happening in. But they're passionate about helping our veterans."

Bob asked, "Have you had protesters?"

Captain said very seriously, "Not here in Eastbank."

Ashleigh then asked, "Has there been groups in town who've wanted to shut it down?"

Megan's dimples flashed.

She thought of some of the letters and editorial comments in the newspaper, "There has always been a group of artists and professors who dislike it."

Jimmy was quick to point out, "Not all of the artists."

Megan added, "Jimmy's right. There's an art fair where the proceeds go to the VFW. Plus there is a group who believe art is good therapy for PSD. They try to make it fun for the veterans and the children."

Bob looked at Ashleigh, "You get with Leah."

"Okay."

Bob looked over at Megan, "Leah is the Vice President of the Art Division."

Ashleigh was already jotting down a list of ideas.

Bob asked in general, "Does this parade involve other communities?"

Megan jumped at this, "It's been growing."

Captain said, "We've always allowed other VFW's and other veteran groups from neighboring towns and counties to join in. Like we've already told Y'all we allow many charities to participate."

Bob asked, "You have bands and floats?"

Megan answered, "Most of the floats are built by charities and churches in the area."

Captain added, "People get excited about the contest."

Megan added, "The group who has the best float wins a blue ribbon."

Captain mentioned, "As well as second and third prize."

Bob smiled, "Has there ever been a trophy and a cash prize?"

Captain answered honestly, "We ain't ever considered someone would sponsor a prize."

Bob looked over at Ashleigh.

Ashleigh answered, "Megan and I will work out the details."

Captain and Megan looked at one another.

Jimmy mentioned, "The mayor and some of them politicians like to ride on them floats."

Megan added, "Car dealerships are always eager to donate their cars for them folks. As long as we allow them to advertise their dealership on the side."

Bob said with a sarcastic tone, "I'm sure they do."

Megan made a point of saying, "We can't be excluding them."

Bob answered, "I wish we could."

Captain brought it around, "It's plain to me Y'all ain't shutter her down. But why are we discussion what happens in the parade if the parade ain't happening? Shouldn't we all be discussion how we should save the parade and find out who's trying to shut her down?"

Bob pushed up his glasses and looked at Captain, "The parade is happening."

Ashleigh smiled.

Bob turned to Megan, "I want you to be the official marshal of the parade."

Megan's dimples flashed, her forehead crinkled, and she brushed her hair behind her ear.

"If it means saving the parade I'll take the title. But I want Y'all to understand it ain't just me."

Bob answered, "Whatever you need you talk to Ashleigh, Leah, or myself. You have our complete support."

He turned to Ashleigh, "I want as many volunteers representing this company out helping the parade."

"I'll get with Brittany and Gracie."

Bob added, "I want Ms. Ericka involved."

Ashleigh clarified, "Our new press secretary."

Bob pushed up his glasses, "Remind me to apologize to her for not inviting her."

Ashleigh answered, "I'll tell her."

Megan was surprised by this exchange.

Haley opened the door, "Mr. Bob. You have guests."

In stepped Susan King and her Daddy, Mr. King.

Immediately Captain and Bob stood up.

Everyone else followed their lead.

Bob signaled to Haley to wait.

Bob said, "I appreciate both of you arriving in short notice."

Mr. King shook his hand, "It's our pleasure."

Everyone started to converse and greet one another.

Bob said, "Excuse me for one second."

Bob stepped over to Haley and whispered a few commands.

She: nodded, stepped out of the office, and gently shut the office doors.

Glancing at Susan, Megan all at once felt under dressed. Megan felt Susan was dressed perfectly for the situation. She was trendy, was professional, and avoided upstaging Ashleigh

or anyone else who happened to be at the meeting. She was wearing a brown colored cropped swing jacket, underneath she was wearing an oatmeal colored feminine button up blouse with ruffled flounce cuffs and lace trim, she matched this with a suede skirt with a bandless waist, she was wearing homemade brown beaded earrings, a matching brown and cream beaded necklace, healed brown shoes, her blond hair was pinned up, her glasses were spotless, she had a brand new purse, and a very expensive watch with a brown band. Megan believed, based upon how Susan was dressed, she had visited the company before. Megan was certain the purchase price of the purse was half of the cost of all her clothes.

Megan felt Susan was a very beautiful woman. She felt her oval shaped face was perfect, she had beautiful lips, Megan admired her smaller mouth, and felt her blue eyes were far more prettier than hers. She felt when Susan slipped on her glasses it made her appear even more distinguished. Megan for the first time in her life noticed Susan's breasts were smaller than hers. Megan took note on how Susan's breasts were the evenly sized, unlike hers with one slightly larger than the other, she assumed Susan's breasts were more appealing than hers. At five nine Megan felt her legs were long for her frame. For the first time in her life Megan wanted to know what a woman's backside looked like.

Susan made a point to acknowledge Megan.

Megan was polite in return.

Ashleigh felt the tension between these two. She wondered if Bob noticed.

Megan sat back down in her chair.

Megan watched as Susan set down onto the table a leather business notepad and an expensive pen. Megan observed how careful she was when she removed her jacket and hung it on the back of her chair. She sat down very lady like.

While this was happening Bob asked Susan how she was doing.

They smiled at one another.

Megan's dimples flashed and she brushed her hair behind her ears.

Susan made a point of reminding Bob of their scheduled dinner date. Ashleigh noticed Susan give Megan a glance.

This is when Brittany: opened the right side door, she quietly shut the door, and quickly took a chair at the end of the table; she was trying to avoid any attention.

Bob ruined this by saying, "I'd like all of you to meet our new assistant Brittany."

She smiled, "Hi Y'all."

"Ms. Brittany I'd like to hear your suggestions."

"Yes sir."

Captain asked in a quiet manner, "Y'all like your apartment?"

"I'm delighted."

She was unable to contain herself, "I'm so thankful for understanding the situation with Momma."

"Y'all are welcome."

Bob stopped all of the small conversations taking place by saying, "Someone is trying to shut down the Memorial Day Parade."

Megan out of the corner of her eye glanced over at Susan. She noticed Susan quickly turn from looking at Megan and focus on Bob.

Mr. King spoke, "This is simply unacceptable."

Bob answered, "I feel the same."

They looked at one another.

Mr. King asked, "Young man do Y'all have a plan?"

"That depends."

Mr. King leaned forward and folded his hands together, "On what?"

"If by some chance. You know who is trying to shut this parade down and why they're implicating my company?"

This is when Susan tapped her Father. She pointed to her yellow legal pad of paper attached to her business notepad.

He then looked up at Bob.

Bob pushed up his glasses.

Mr. King turned, "Captain."

"Yes sir."

"We've known one another all of our lives."

"Yes sir."

"Y'all are a straight shooter."

"Y'all know this to be true."

"Would these folks want to shut down our parade?"

Ashleigh was about to answer. Megan quickly, so quickly only Bob and Susan noticed, glared at Ashleigh.

Ashleigh listened.

"No sir."

"They're strangers in our midst."

Captain looked at Bob and then Ashleigh. He turned toward Mr. King, "It's a fact they are Yankees and ain't from here. But it's my experience we'll have more things in common than we have things uncommon. Y'all can trust their word."

Mr. King looked at his daughter.

Everyone at the table knew there was something behind this look.

Mr. King looked over at Ashleigh, "You must be Ms. Ashleigh."

"Yes Sir."

She felt like she was being addressed by a principle.

"I've heard good things about Y'all."

She answered, "I'm happy you've heard good things."

"What?"

Susan answered, "She's glad Y'all heard good things about her."

Mr. King turned back to Ashleigh, "What do Y'all think about shutting down the parade?"

A hundred answers flashed in her head.

She said, "It pisses me off."

Bob already sitting in his chair smiled.

Mr. King commented, "Ain't you a whipper snapper?"

Captain stated, "It's one of the reason I trust her."

These two men nodded at one another.

Ashleigh stood up, she pointed at the table, "For anyone to think we'd shut down this parade is simply. Horse do do. I'd like to use another word but people around her aren't used to a woman swearing."

Mr. King encouraged, "Go on."

"My brother has told me since I was a little girl. Without our military we wouldn't be able to do the things we do. To suggest we'd be part of shutting down this parade is stupid. In fact Bob and I were talking about sponsoring the parade. We were just trying to figure out how. Now some group of donkeys are trying to shut it down and blame us. It just isn't right. Like you guys say. Proper."

Everyone looked at her.

She then said, "I'd personally like to know what donkeys are trying to shut it down."

She glanced over at Captain.

He winked.

With this she sat down.

Susan tapped her father and pointed at her notebook. Because of Ashleigh's strong Midwestern accent and how fast she spoke Susan wrote down the key points of Ashleigh's speech.

Megan observed Susan's father nod his head toward Susan.

Mr. King looked over at Bob, "Mr. Waller."

He pushed up his glasses and said, "Yes sir."

"Is it true Y'all wanted to sponsor the parade?"

"Yes. But I want Ms. Megan to be the marshal of the parade."

Megan jumped in right away, "I ain't asked for the title."

Mr. King stated, "From what I've understood Y'all have been running it without a title for years. Why would Y'all object to the title now?"

Megan's dimples flashed.

"I was telling Mr. Bob before Y'all arrived. The whole community helps with the parade. This parade was started way before I was even born. The only reason I started helping was on account of Captain and Ma. I grew up around all the guys at the VFW. I've watched their struggles. I ain't deserving to be the marshal but if it's the only way to keeping the parade I'll take it on."

Mr. King turned toward Captain, "Y'all believe Megan should be the Marshal of the Parade?"

Captain replied, "Y'all said it yourself. My daughter has been running it for years."

He turned toward Bob, "I agree with Y'all. Ms. Megan will be the Marshal of the Parade. Would you agree?"

Bob answered, "It's still up to Megan."

Megan's dimples flashed.

Megan reluctantly stated, "I agree."

Mr. King turned toward Bob, "Mr. Waller. I'm a bit curious. Why did Y'all ask Susan and I to this meeting?"

They all studied Bob.

He pushed up his glasses.

"Because Captain and Yourself represent this town. I know of other leaders within Eastbank. But nothing in Eastbank passing by the two of you. I wanted both of you to know I had no part in trying to shut down this parade. I'm well aware without the blessing of you two I'd never be able to clear my name. I suspect whomever is foolish enough to try and shut down this tradition will try again. More important I strongly believe the two of you will find out who

these foolish people are. I want to make it clear. I want the parade to go on. I'm just offering my help to make sure it continues."

Mr. King looked at Captain.

Captain said, "Ms. Ashleigh."

"Yes Sir."

"Y'all will help my daughter with the parade?"

Excited Ashleigh answered, "Of course."

Megan produced her big dimple smile.

Mr. King looked at Bob, "Young Man what plan have Y'all got cooking?"

"It depends on who's trying to stop the parade."

Susan tapped her Father.

He looked at her.

Again everyone noticed he looked down at her notes.

Mr. King asked, "Captain. Y'all suspect who's the traitor?"

Captain answered, "I have an inkling."

Mr. King asked, "Mr. Bob you have any ideas on who is trying to shut her down?"

He pushed up his glasses.

"I've made enemies along the way."

Ashleigh and Megan glared at one another.

Mr. King stated, "May I talk to Y'all over yonder."

"Lets step over by my desk."

Bob asked, "Captain would you be so kind and step over as well."

"Yes sir."

They did so.

Megan looked at her watch.

She whispered at Ashleigh, "I have a charter in a couple hours."

Susan answered, "We ain't staying much longer."

Ashleigh reassured her, "We'll get together and start working it all out."

Brittany jumped in and in her Georgia accent asked, "May I help?"

Megan answered, "Of course."

Brittany forced back tears.

Susan asked, "Honey. What's the matter?"

"My Daddy believed he caught cancer while serving in Vietnam."

Brittany paused and wiped her tears from her eyes.

She continued, "My Granddaddy on my Daddy's side served in World War Two but lost his life in Korea."

Nothing more needed to be said.

This is when the three men sat back in their chairs.

Bob simply stated, "Ashleigh and Megan. You two are in charge of the parade. Like I said earlier this company has your full support."

Ashleigh answered, "Okay."

Megan answered, "Yes Sir."

Bob with focus said, "From this moment on. Whatever is said here stays here."

They all agreed.

For the next hour they discussed who was shutting down the parade and how they were to proceed with the parade and the festivities surrounding Memorial Day. Megan was surprised at many of the ideas passed around the table.

Megan was reluctantly impressed with how Bob handled everything.

April 25^h, Can't Wait Any Longer *Part Four of Six*

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Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25

*Can't Wait
Any Longer*

Day 15 of Book I

*(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)*

Part Five of Six

Authored By: R. P. Voght

*Posted on ashleighandmegan.com on:
May 31, 2026*

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I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"

R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Julie stepped up to her locker. A couple buttons were unbuttoned on her conservative looking yellow cuffed button shirt. This was far from inappropriate because of the tank and bra she was wearing underneath. She was still wearing her capri style jeans.

As she opened her locker she again felt her bra slip.

She sighed.

Before the previous class, she stepped into a secluded section of the hallway, she adjusted her bra, and called her Momma. Nicole promised she would take her shopping and purchase her new bra's. Julie could have easily purchased as many bra's as she wanted but she hated to spend her own money.

She: opened her locker, behind the door she quickly adjusted her bra hoping this would keep it in place, she removed the books inside of her bag, set them inside of her locker, she placed her accounting book, and accounting folders into her bag. She swung her bag over her shoulder and grabbed her orange colored lunchbox decorated with stickers. She shut her locker and headed to the cafeteria.

While walking toward the cafeteria she could tell students were talking about her. This hurt a great deal. Over the weeks she heard how: she gave a couple guys blowjobs at the schools pool, she slept with a male teacher, many guys claimed to have had sex with her, a girl claimed they had done it, and everyone claimed to have spotted her masturbating in numerous places in school. As a virgin this was hurtful. What irritated Julie the most was these rumors were being spread from students who were sexually active. She especially

disliked her nickname Fingerpainter. She found this irritating because she believed just about every student indulged in masturbation. What added to this hurtful feeling was this name was given to her by a supposed friend.

Julie's impulse was to have sex. What stopped her was the high possibility of becoming pregnant. Another fear was contracting a venereal disease. Her concern over venereal diseases was the reason she would never have sex with any guy who attended any sex party. There were a handful of guys she was considering having sex with. They never attended these parties and were likely virgins. The other reasons she was considering these guys: they were often teased, they treated her nice, and it was her personal way of getting back at all of the popular guys who wanted to have sex with her. She correctly assumed the guys she was considering wanted to have sex with her and would appreciate anyone having sex with them.

She turned into a hallway running parallel of the building, at the end of this hallway was the horizontal hallway leading into the cafeteria; this horizontal hallway was filled with many students. The current hallway she was walking in had a small amount of students. Standing to the right against the wall was Ralph. He was the guy she performed breast sex on. He had one or two friends in every social group but was never considered "popular". This happened because he was involved in everything. He: was the third string running back, he was in band, helped the drama club build sets, then helped out with the sound and lights, was on the chess team, took a lot of art classes, and seemed to help out anyone who needed it. This was why he was invited to the sex party by mistake and why he was picked on during the party.

Julie braced herself for rude behavior when he stepped up to her.

Somewhat nervous but pretending to have confidence he said, "Julie."

She stopped. Kids walked around them.

Ralph made a face.

Because of Ralph's body language she was nice, "Yeah."

"Uh.."

He paused.

She made a face. She was expecting him to suggest a time when they should have sex. Just about every guy who attended these sex parties asked to have sex with her sometime after the party. She correctly reasoned, guys assumed she was reluctant to have sex at the party, but was willing to have sex somewhere else. The fact was, even though the rumors said otherwise, she was unwilling to have sex with any of the guys who attended these parties.

"Yes."

He managed, "Would Y'all want to go to a movie?"

Annoyed she asked, "Why do Y'all want to go to a movie with me?"

He was honest, "I'm hoping we'd date."

She sighed, "Y'all don't want to date me."

He made a face, "Uh-huh."

"What Y'all want is to have breast sex with me again."

He blushed.

She gave him a face, turned around, and headed toward the cafeteria.

"Wait."

She stopped.

He stepped up to her.

"It's not why..."
She glared at him.
He stopped.
She was about to turn away.
He said, "I wanted to ask Y'all out before I ever went to the party."
She asked, "Then why didn't Y'all ask me out before?"
"I didn't think Y'all liked me."
"Y'all just want to have sex with me."
"No."
"So you don't want to have sex with me?"
"Yes. But..."
She found it sweet when he blushed.
"What?"
"I was hoping if we dated Y'all would only have sex with me."
Very serious she asked, "Do you believe I've had sex?"
He answered, "I don't care."
"It ain't what I'm asking. Do Y'all believe I've had sex?"
"I don't know."
She sighed and answered, "Then I don't know if we should be dating."
This upset him but he remained proper, "If while we date Y'all don't sleep with anyone else I don't care."
She asked, "Did Y'all end up sleeping with someone at the party?"
He answered truthfully, "None of the other gals wanted to be with me."
"So I'm a consolation prize?"
"No. I've liked Y'all for a long time."
"But Y'all didn't have the courage to ask me out until I let you have breast sex with me?"
And none of the other girls wanted to have sex with Y'all"
He answered, "I don't want to have sex with any other gal."
She gave him a face.
His body language slumped.
"There are a lot of gals who would love to date Y'all."
"I don't want to date them."
"I ain't interested in dating anyone from around here. You've heard what everyone is saying about me. Why would I date anyone from here?"
"I don't care what they've said."
She looked at him, "But you believe I've had sex."
He was honestly unsure.
A moment of silence
Ralph broke into the silence, "I don't care if you have or not."
Very serious, "I'm a virgin."
He looked at her.
Based upon this look she said, "I could use a friend."
He gave her a look and said, "I hate the friend zone."
She thought about some of her friends and other girls she knew who liked him.
She repeated, "There are a lot of good gals who'd be happy to date Y'all."

They started to head toward the cafeteria.

"There are?"

She rolled her eyes, "Yeah."

"Who?"

"What about the gals in drama club. Or Victoria-Lynn?"

He made a face, "From chess club?"

"Yes from chess club."

"She likes me?"

She rolled her eyes and stated, "Guys."

He said, "It's difficult knowing."

She gave him some advice, "Start paying attention."

"Sure."

She decided to ask him, "Since Y'all are my friend."

He made a face, "Yeah."

"Why do Y'all like my boobs?"

He glanced at them.

"Look at me."

"I apologize."

She sighed, "It's okay."

"Is the reason Y'all like my boobs is because they're big?"

Blushing and with the oddest face she ever witnessed, "I love it when they get hard."

"Why?"

Blushing and staring, "I love their shape and what happens to your nipples."

She recoiled, "Y'all like them?"

He nodded his head, "Uh huh."

She stepped up to him, changed her voice, and whispered; "Y'all are the only guy I've ever had breast sex with."

He became hard. This turned her on. She felt teenage guys were immature and pitiful. This was why she especially loved teasing teenage guys. It surprised her how much he liked her torpedo shaped breasts and her large nipples. She wished they would have stopped developing a long time ago.

Again in a seductive voice, "You have a thing for torpedo tits?"

He nodded his head.

She pulled back and smiled and said, "I'm glad we're friends."

He said, "I guess."

With a lot of sincerity she said, "I could use a good friend."

"Okay."

She said, "I'm hungry."

"Me too."

They headed toward the cafeteria.

She asked honestly, "Are Y'all about to tell everyone you've had sex with me?"

"I'll tell em' Y'all are a virgin."

"I'd appreciate it."

They stepped into the cafeteria.

Ralph went to his group of friends and Julie stepped over to the table with her true friends.

Everyone witnessing Julie and Ralph stepping into the cafeteria caused talk.

Julie sat to the left of Hanna. Across from Hanna was Beth, Zoe was sitting next to Beth, Monique was next to Hanna, and Brenda was to the right of Hanna. There were other girls at the table as well. On the other side of the cafeteria Julie spotted: Bobby-Sue, Billy, Jeff, and Bette all sitting together with an assortment of their friends. Julie purposely looked for Belinda and Mindy-Lynn. They were sitting a few rows up with other jock girls. She noticed both had bags with them. Julie correctly assumed they were carrying their accounting materials. She glanced over at Amanda. Amanda casually nodded her head. They both considered themselves best friends. They were separated by teenage social standards. She glanced at the rest of the Snob Club; Jeannie spotted Julie's glance and gave her a scowl. Julie sighed and looked away.

Monique asked, "You headed to the library?"

"I'm helping Belinda and Mindy-Lynn with accounting."

Julie opened her lunchbox and removed her items.

Beth commented, "Your lunch looks better than ours."

Zoe added, "It ain't the best today."

Hannah pushed up her glasses, "It ain't the worst."

Julie joking asked, "What is the dessert?"

Brenda mentioned, "What we know for sure is it has peaches in it."

Monique added, "The mystery is our main meal."

Julie asked, "Is it chicken and gravy?"

Brenda answered, "I believe it's turkey."

Hannah again pushing up her glasses, "Whatever it is. It's dry."

They all giggled.

For the next twenty minutes they all enjoyed being friends. At this twenty minute mark Belinda and Mindy-Lynn stepped up to the table. All of the girls greeted one another. Julie was in the process of packing up and excusing herself.

Zoe mentioned, "Julie helped me through Accounting."

Mindy-Lynn added, "She's helped me before."

Julie said with a smile, "It ain't a big deal."

Brenda nudged Mindy-Lynn and pointed.

The rest of the table looked over to where she pointed. Approaching the table was most of the Snob Club.

Amanda while sitting at the Snob Club table tried to signal for Julie to get out of the lunchroom.

Hannah and Beth spotted this, they glanced at one another.

Hannah blurted out, "Julie why not get a move on."

"Why?"

Mindy-Lynn tried, "Let's get to the library."

Belinda added in her Jersey accent, "I'm clearly struggling. So we better get started."

Julie casually shut her orange plastic lunch box with all the stickers and swung her backpack over her shoulder. She was just about to say goodbye when: Pamela, Chelsey, Tiffany, Leslie, and Marissa showed up at the table.

Pamela immediately commented in a scowl sort of voice, "Look at traitor?"
Chelsey added, "We ain't liking traitor's."
Julie looked at Brenda and Mindy-Lynn, "Let's head to the library."
Julie turned and started to walk out of the cafeteria.
Kendall and Marissa stepped in front of Julie.
Julie asked, "Y'all are doing this?"
Marissa answered in her New Jersey accent, "We have a beef with U."
Tiffany quickly was near Kendall, "Y'all ain't getting it."
"Getting what?"
Jennie let out an obnoxious sigh.
Pamela stated, "Y'all need to learn what respect means."
Monique was about to stand up.
Hannah grabbed her and shook her head.
Monique and Hannah had a silent argument with facial expressions.
Zoe leaned in and whispered, "It ain't the time."
Monique whispered back, "When is it?"
Beth reluctantly said in her Wisconsin accent, "This is between them. But let's make sure it doesn't get out of hand."
Monique asked, "If it does?"
Beth answered, "I'll help."
Zoe was surprised at this, "You'd get into it?"
"There was a bunch of girls like that in Wisconsin."
Hannah with a disappointed look asked, "They live there too?"
Beth answered, "Unfortunately."
Brenda wished with all of her heart no one picked on one another; her heart went out to Julie. She wanted to have the courage to defend Julie but she lacked the courage to do so.
Jennie sneered, "We were friends?"
Julie answered bluntly, "If Y'all didn't spread rumors about me maybe we'd still be friends."
Jennie moved to the side and put her hands on her hips, "What rumors?"
Tiffany added, "Being truthful ain't a rumor."
Julie asked, "When have Y'all ever been truthful?"
Pamela stepped in. Her green eyes were piercing and full of plotting, "We're always truthful."
Chelsey answered, "What we say is the truth."
The Snob Club banded together and gave Julie sneering looks.
Pamela answered, "We run this school. So everyone believes us."
Jennie added, "It ain't like the rest of the school ain't in the knowing Y'all are..."
She paused, "What should I say?"
Chelsey answered, "A slut?"
Kendall sarcastically added "As ladies we should never use such language."
Jennie said with her arms on her hips, "A whore?"
Pamela again glared at Jennie, "We're ladies we ain't using them terms."
Julie's impulse was to be violent. The other response was to brake down a cry.
The girls at the table looked at one another.

Julie managed to say, "I'm a virgin."

The Snob Club laughed.

Pamela moved in and whispered, "Even if it's true. Who'll believe it. Everyone knows Y'all are a pervert."

Tiffany said in a mocking voice, "Everyone knows you can't help yourself from touching your button."

Julie said, "It ain't like Y'all don't masturbate."

Pamela answered, "What news is this? We don't have to get ourselves off in the girls bathroom because guys like us."

Julie answered, "For opening Y'all legs?"

Pamela stepped up to her and pointed, "We ain't the whore of this school."

Tiffany said, "Yeah."

Julie upset repeated herself, "I'm a virgin."

Jennie in a mocking tone replied, "I'm a virgin."

The girls laughed.

Julie defiant said, "I am."

Chelsey glared and sated, "Y'all might be. But who'd believe you?"

This crushed Julie but she managed to keep the pain of this comment hidden.

Kendall spotted a teacher approaching. Kendall tapped Pamela.

Pamela spotted what Kendall saw, she turned toward Julie.

Spitefully Pamela stated, "Jennie's right. Y'all are a teasing whore."

Monique jumped in between, "You better move on."

Belinda gently grabbed Julie's arm.

Julie turned.

Belinda shook her head.

Mindy-Lynn said loud enough so the teachers and everyone else could hear, "We're headed to the library."

Belinda added, "I need help with my accounting."

Monique still standing in front of Julie said, "It's a good idea."

Julie answered, "Okay."

Monique blocked the snob club.

The Snob Club would never admit it but they were relieved Belinda led Julie away. They were afraid to physically fight either Monique or Julie. The Snob Club was wise enough to never fight when these two were together.

Pamela said, "Gals lets talk to someone important."

They followed Pamela to where Ralph was sitting.

Mindy-Lynn, Belinda, and Julie headed to the library.

Julie managed to avoid breaking down in tears.

Both Mindy-Lynn and Belinda tried to cheer Julie up.

What brought some comfort to Julie was helping her two friends with accounting.

*J*ulie stood at her locker.

The confrontation with the Snob Club was all the talk. Of course the play by play of this conversation was now far more extreme than what actually happened. The direction of the telling boiled down to what group someone was in. The first group agreed with the Snob Club and felt Julie was a teasing slut whore. The second group supported Julie if she was a virgin or not. There were a group of students who believed Julie was having sex but believed the Snob Club were a bunch of hypocrites for accusing Julie of being a slut or a whore. Then there was the group who could have cared less and disliked high school drama. There were those who wondered what the big deal was and even admired Julie for experimenting. Just about all of the students in school believed the Snob Club was out of line. Most felt the Snob Club were a nuisance. The problem was no one tried to stop them.

Julie looked up at the hallway clock. The least thing she wanted was to go to track. She was considering removing all the money from all of her accounts and heading to the Caribbean. She wanted to live an adult life. She felt she had the money and the intelligence to be successful as an adult. She felt, living as an adult would be much easier than being forced to suffer through high school. What kept her from fulfilling this plan was her family and the desire to play collegiate sports.

The other impulse was to become sexually active. If everyone believed she was having sex she questioned the value of waiting. She was feeling a strong curiosity of what sex felt like. Masturbation and porn were becoming less satisfying. This was traumatic for her. The way she dealt with the stresses life was by watching porn and masturbating. One of the reasons she wanted to skip track practice was to find a secluded spot on the beach and enjoy herself. Her other impulse was to go buy some condoms and have sex. This was a very strong impulse. She believed the encounter would have been terrible but she wanted to escape the stresses of everything she was feeling. She assumed if masturbation was no longer working sex would.

Her plan was to have sex with either Burt or Bradly. Both were constantly being picked on for being virgins. She knew they found her attractive and they always treated her well. She was currently unsure of where Bradly was but Burt worked at a local computer store. A part of her wanted these guys to tell others she had sex with them. She wanted all of those guys who assumed she should have sex with them or lied about having sex with her to be jealous.

She was about to skip out of practice, buy condoms, and have sex with Burt.

She started to cry as she unloaded her books into her locker.

Out of the corner of her eye she spotted two female teachers approach her. She immediately shut off her tears and wiped them away.

The two teachers were Ms. Bright and Ms. Conner. Julie spotted the two of them together more than once. Out of all the female teachers in the school these two were the ones she admired the most. Both were dressed in conservative spring flowered dresses, both had their hair up, and both were serious. Ms. Conner was carrying two bags and had her glasses on. Ms. Bright was carrying a tote. Over her shoulder was a laptop back pack.

Julie often wondered what these ladies looked like outside of school. She felt Ms. Conner's future husband was handsome; she spotted a picture of him on her desk. Julie would have suggested Ms. Bright date Mr. Bob; but Mr. Bob was dating Susan. She wondered if Ms. Ashleigh and Ms. Bright would get along. Julie assumed this would be important to Mr. Bob.

Ms. Conner sternly said, "Ms. Steward."

Julie looked over at them, "Yes Ma'am."

"Hasn't track practice started?"

"I was running a little late."

Ms. Bright commented, "It isn't like you to be late."

"No Ma'am."

Ms. Conner with compassion said, "If you ever need to talk we're here."

Julie lied, "I'm fine."

Ms. Bright added, "We're here for you."

"Yes Ma'am."

Ms. Conner commented, "We've heard you had a successful softball season."

"Not really."

Ms. Conner tried to be encouraging, "It's been a long time since the softball team made it into the playoffs."

"I guess."

All Julie could think about was how bad she played the night before.

Ms. Bright was trying to be encouraging when she stated, "Make up for it next year."

Julie answered, "I guess."

Ms. Bright commented with compassion, "A friend of mine says. You can't fix yesterday. You can only do better today to make tomorrow better."

Ms. Conner said, "Good saying."

Julie smiled. Julie now knew Ms. Bright personally knew Mr. Bob.

Ms. Bright smiled, "See there is the Julie we know."

"Yes Ma'am."

Stern the only way Ms. Bright could be, "You get to practice."

Julie answered, "Yes Ma'am."

Ms. Conner asked, "You promise?"

"Yes Ma'am."

Julie immediately replied, "I have to go."

They smiled when Julie quickly shut her locker and headed to the girls locker room.

Ms. Bright yelled, "Julie."

Julie stopped and turned around.

Ms. Bright answered, "They need you."

"Yes Ma'am."

Julie turned. She teared as she headed to the girls locker room.

Julie was curious to know how Ms. Bright and Mr. Bob knew one another.

She glanced at her watch and was suddenly angry at herself for being late. She went around a corner. She headed toward the girls locker room. Standing near the girls locker room entrance was Hannah and Brenda.

Hannah said, "Julie."

"I have to get to practice."

Hannah pushed up her glasses, "It will only take a second."

"Okay."

Julie stopped and waited.

Hannah looked at Brenda, "Give it to her."

Brenda sheepishly opened a small pocket of her backpack and took out a homemade pin of a Siberian Husky face and volleyball earrings.

"What's this?"

Hannah tapped Brenda.

Brenda answered sheepishly, "For being a friend."

Brenda was surprised when Julie hugged her. They brought one another comfort.

Julie pulled away, "I have to get to practice."

The two girls could see Julie was tearing.

Hannah pushed up her glasses and said, "They need you."

Julie looked at Brenda, "We could use a shot putter."

Brenda shocked, "I can't go out for track?"

Julie asked, "Why not?"

Brenda shook her head, "No."

Julie demanded in a question, "Are Y'all coming to Hannah's house this Friday?"

"Yes."

Julie smiled, "I'll enjoy seeing Y'all there."

She turned and entered the girls locker room.

Hannah looked at Brenda, "She liked it."

Brenda answered, "It wasn't great."

"Y'all are an awesome artist. It was great."

Brenda said, "Momma is making us dinner."

They smiled and left the building as fast as they could.

Julie ran to her locker, before opening it she carefully put the pendant and earrings into her backpack, she quickly changed, she hoped her sports bra would stay in place, ran out of the building, and to the running track.

She felt terribly guilty for being late.

*A*shleigh: picked up a Kiwi, inspected it, grabbed two more, and placed them into the cart; she stepped away pushing the cart.

She was wearing a yellow light green and white striped crochet edge tunic, the stripes were horizontal except on the bottom and alongside the long V-neck hem; where they were in a zigzag pattern. To remain modest she was wearing a yellow t-shirt underneath the tunic. She matched this with yellow Chico pants. She accessorized with: yellow spring inspired wedges, a thin yellow belt with a silver buckle, looped silver earrings, five plain bracelets on her right wrist, large yellow rimmed sunglasses were resting on the top of her head, and she used a multi-colored floral scarf like a head band to pull back her hair (this worked with the outfit because of the yellows in the pattern). As spring blossomed she was observing a lot of Floridian women wearing bright colored head bands. In the cart was a large pink and white canvas tote with a retailers name embroidered on the side; a tote she received free with a large catalog order. Her small plaid red and white colored purse was inside of the tote. When she put this outfit on at the YMCA she felt she looked attractive; she could see the benefit to working out. She strongly believed without Megan and Julie she would have never found the value in working out.

She now recognized how important Nicole and Diana's advice was. They believed as a leader in the community Ashleigh should always be conscience of how she dressed. Their theory was, she never knew who she would meet, and she should always have a good

presentation. Sometimes this irritated Ashleigh but she found this advice to be accurate. Listening to this advice kept her from finding herself in embarrassing moments.

She stopped at the grapefruit. She picked one up and smelled it; she loved the smell of fresh citrus. The only thing she liked better than the citrus in Florida was the sea food. Her plan after buying produce was to head over to the seafood section of the store. She wanted to make a seafood salad and a shrimp dish. The receipt for the seafood salad came from Nicole and the shrimp dish receipt came from Ma. She choose a couple big pink grapefruits; a half of a grapefruit was becoming a go to breakfast item. She stepped over to the cucumbers. Without looking like she was being picky she chose four cucumbers. She: placed them into a plastic bag, tied the bag, and set them into the cart. She went over and grabbed a bag of already chopped salad and placed this over the cucumbers.

She stepped into the meat department. She spotted Sgt. Marcus standing at the meat counter having ribs wrapped. She stopped pushing her cart and quickly adjusted her clothing. She felt this outfit was perfect at this moment. Ashleigh felt Sgt. Marcus was handsome without wearing his police uniform. He was wearing a nice pair of jeans, cowboy boots, a cowboy hat, and a plaid button shirt. Even though she believed he could dress better she was still attracted to him.

She casually pushed her cart up to the counter pretending she never noticed him.

The ladies in the deli department were watching this develop. In spite of the rumors Ashleigh was Bisexual, the more people were getting to know her, the less people were believing this. One of the ladies in the deli department heard Nicole tell a mutual friend of theirs Ashleigh liked Marcus. There were rumors Ashleigh was showing up at the early church service. Everyone who worked at *Renewed Mastery* could confirm Ashleigh was not an early riser.

Ashleigh checked Marcus out. She was attracted to him and wanted him to ask her out. He was five ten, his sunglasses were hanging from his right front pocket, she liked his thin lips, his squared chin, his brown eyes, light brown hair with a part in middle, and liked the fact he was clean shaven.

She was aware, his Fiancee' broke up with him because he refused to quit being a police officer. A woman at their church confided to Ashleigh, another reason she broke it off, was his refusal to have sex before being married. This impressed Ashleigh a great deal. It was one thing for a woman to force a guy to wait but it was completely different to have a guy force a woman to wait. When she took care of a stack of tickets at the Eastbank Police station she felt Marcus liked her. She made sure to take care of all these tickets at a time when he would be at the police station. Ashleigh later thanked Officer Janet Foster for helping her know when this would be. She was counting on Janet's promise she would encourage him to ask her out.

Ashleigh wanted to see if Marcus would notice her.

This plan ended when Billy-Bob behind the counter asked, "Ms. Ashleigh may I help you?"

She smiled and said, "I could use a pound of hamburger."

She decided she should purchase hamburger; even though there was hamburger frozen in their freezer. She liked Billy-Bob. She was correct in believing he had worked at the store for years.

He answered, "Yes Ma'am."

She immediately said, "Could I have the ninety-five percent lean?"

"Huh?"

She slowed down her speech and this time even pointed, "I'd like the ninety-five percent lean."

He understood this time and answered, "Yes Ma'am."

She watched as a college student handed ribs to Sargent Marcus.

She was happy when Marcus, after thanking the guy for handing him the ribs, turned to Ashleigh, "Ms. Ashleigh."

She pretended to be surprised he was there, "Oh."

She waved her arm and touched him.

"Sargent Marcus. I didn't recognize you without your uniform. I'm so glad to see you."

Everyone standing there was surprised someone could say everything she said in one breath.

A mature lady who was waiting to be served smiled. She missed all of what Ashleigh said but she was wise enough to know what Ashleigh was after.

He smiled, "It's understandable."

She immediately answered, "I should clarify. I don't want you to believe the only reason I'd recognize you is when you are in your uniform."

"Uh-huh."

Ashleigh purposely mentioned, "The other times I've seen you is a church. There you are dressed up. You are dressed casual now. This is why I didn't recognize you."

He stared at her.

She said again, "I've been seeing you at church."

"Y'all go to the early service?"

This was a disappointing statement. The only reason she was going to this early service was for Marcus to notice her.

She held in her disappointment and remained her flirty self, "A few times. But the few times I was at the early service I believe I saw you there."

"Okay."

Billy-Bob said, "Ms. Ashleigh."

Ashleigh winked and turned, "Oh thank-you."

"Enjoy."

"We will."

(When she said we, she was referring to herself and her brother.)

She took the hamburger and placed it into the cart. He stood there. This was encouraging to Ashleigh.

She asked, "You having a party?"

Marcus asked, "What makes Y'all think I'm having a party?"

"You bought a lot of ribs. I was told this is a staple at parties down here."

He smiled, "I ain't hosting a party."

"Then why all the ribs?"

"A few of the guys and their wives are coming over for a small barbecue tomorrow night."

"On a week night?"

Both Billy-Bob and the mature woman looked at the two as they stepped away from the counter.

"With our schedules it's better during the week."

"Makes sense."

He asked, "You like ribs?"

Ashleigh being her flirty self, "I love how you guys make ribs."

"I'd like to think I make delicious ribs."

Ashleigh felt like she was dying, but she smiled, and said, "I'd love to try them."

There was an awkward silence.

They stopped in the middle of the aisle.

They looked at one another.

She could tell he was about to be his polite self and excuse himself.

She quickly said, "We appreciate the daily patrols."

"It's our pleasure."

"I'm not sure you know about it or not. We have this awesome cafeteria. We're giving those people who service our community a discount on lunch."

"Y'all are?"

"We sent the information to the station."

"When did Y'all send it?"

"A couple days ago."

He thought about something, then said serious; "Our officers would appreciate it."

She added, "We have an excellent cook. We always post what's going to be on the menu on the cafeteria bulletin board a week ahead of time. We're thinking about posting it on what's called Facebook and on our website."

"Y'all have a web page?"

"It's one of the best in the industry."

He asked, "Is this discount for all of the officers?"

"Oh yeah."

He smiled at her Midwestern accent.

In a serious tone answered, "We'd all appreciate it."

She touched him and said, "We're happy to help."

They again stared at one another.

She thought about something, something Megan liked doing with Christopher, "Did you see there's a pot luck this Sunday?"

He answered, "No."

"They're calling it *The Spring Get Together*."

"Are Y'all bringing anything?"

"I haven't decided yet."

She asked, "What are you bringing?"

"Maybe I should bring ribs?"

Not thinking she said, "You know I'd love to taste your ribs."

He looked at her and laughed.

She felt like it was hopeless.

She managed to say, "I guess that did sound funny."

He became serious, "I ain't meaning any disrespect."

"None taken."

Ashleigh was disappointed when he said, "I have to get a move on."

"Oh."

He stood there.

She said, "I hope to see you at the pot luck dinner."

He said, "Ma'am."

The way he said it made her say, "Why not call me Ashleigh."

He smiled, "If I called Y'all Ashleigh wouldn't it mean we'd be more than associates?"

Very serious, "Exactly."

He asked, "Y'all interested in coming over to the barbecue tomorrow?"

"I'd love too."

They looked at one another.

Ashleigh was concerned he'd chicken out.

He asked, "Would Y'all like my number?"

Her heart was pounding.

She quickly pulled out her purse, "I'll put your number and address into my phone."

"Y'all have a nice phone."

She commented, "I need a good phone because of work."

She took out the little keyboard, "What's your phone number and address?"

He answered and she keyed it into the phone.

He said, "Ashleigh I'm looking to see Y'all tomorrow."

"Me too."

He was about to step away, she stopped him, "Marcus should I bring anything?"

"Just bring yourself."

In her mind she had a list of dishes she could make and was already thinking about what to wear.

He again tried to step away, "Marcus."

"Yes."

"Is it outside?"

"It'll be in my back yard."

"Okay."

He grabbed his sunglasses and hung onto them, "It starts at six and will end around ten."

"Okay."

Before putting on his sunglasses she said, "See Y'all tomorrow."

"Y'all will."

They smiled at one another and he stepped away.

The mature woman pushed her cart up to Ashleigh, "It took some arm turning didn't it?"

"Yeah."

She smiled at her Midwestern accent.

The mature woman said very serious, "With Marcus asking Y'all out means he really likes Y'all. There have been many gals since his engagement ended who've tried to get his attention."

"They have?"

"Yes Ma'am. He ain't one to take dating lightly."

Ashleigh answered truthfully, "It's one of the reasons I'm looking forward to going out with him."

She smiled, "Y'all are a good girl."

"I try."

She smiled, "I believe Y'all."

Ashleigh then recognized her.

"I'm so sorry. You're Brenda-Lee? You go to Nicole's Bible study?"

"Yes Ma'am."

Brenda-Lee held back tears, "I was impressed with the testimony Y'all shared."

"It was difficult given it."

"It's why we'all knew you were given it to us straight."

Ashleigh teared.

Brenda-Lee smiled, "We're hoping Y'all show up again."

"I will."

Brenda-Lee became serious, "If Y'all need anything you reach out to me."

"I will."

Brenda-Lee was about to step away but she stopped and said, "I hope Y'all are in the knowing. For Ms. Nicole to invite Y'all and give a testimony means she respects Y'all. You understand what it means?"

Ashleigh said, "She's like a big sister to me."

"Y'all are a good girl. Don't be disappointing us."

"I won't."

Brenda-Lee winked, "I ain't meaning Y'all have to be perfect."

"I'm not."

"If Y'all said you were I'd have stopped trusting Y'all."

Ashleigh answered, "Thanks for the encouragement."

Brenda-Lee smiled and pushed her cart into a near by aisle.

Ashleigh brushed away a tear. She focused. She immediately called Nicole for advice.

April 25th, Can't Wait Any Longer

Part Five of Six

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Ashleigh & Megan

Book I: Friendship



Wednesday, April 25
Can't Wait
Any Longer

Day 15 of Book I
(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went
Bowling)

Part Six of Six

Authored By: R. P. Voght

Posted on ashleighandmegan.com on:
July 11, 2026

I hope you enjoy this pioneering format I call, "A Story Cast."

What the term "Story Cast" means; is this story is designed to be read in small to medium intervals. This particular story is broken up into "days." These portions are broken up into part or all of a particular fictitious "day" of the story. Each day surrounds the characters lives, relationships, adventures, struggles, mishaps and triumphs. This story is very different from a Novel or conventional story in many ways. Again, THIS IS NOT A NOVEL AND IS NOT WRITTEN IN A CONVENTIONAL NOVEL FORMAT. Instead; as the reader you are following the characters thoughts and actions during the course of this "day." This fiction story is set up like a TV series and or a third person journal. It always starts with one or more character getting up and ends with one or more characters going to bed; while during the day you experience the Characters actions, feelings, and their thoughts. On a large overview; there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this "Story Cast"

R. P. Voght

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April 25 Can't Wait Any Longer Day 15 of Book I

(Thirteen Days since Megan and Christopher went Bowling)

Nicole and Julie stepped into the house.

Julie: glanced over at Danielle and Ester, she spotted animated penguins on the TV, and before they would start a conversation Julie ran up the stairs with her new clothes.

This disappointed both Danielle and Ester.

Nicole set her bags on the table next to the stairs and asked, "Did Y'all have something to eat."

Ester answered excited, "Daddy made us pasta."

Danielle added, "Ms. Nicole it was good."

Nicole answered with a smile, "I'm happy to hear it."

Ester asked, "Why did Y'all take Julie shopping?"

Danielle and Ester both looked at her.

"Your sister is growing taller."

Ester asked, "Did Y'all have to buy Julie new bra's? She ain't liking how her boobs are growing? She says they are uncomfortable."

Danielle said, "Momma says I'll start growing boobs."

Nicole smiled, "It's part of becoming a woman."

Ester looked at Danielle, "Julie ain't liking hers."

Nicole made a face.

Danielle asked Nicole, "Ms. Nicole does she hate em' because they're big? Ain't gals liking big boobs?"

Ester answered, "I don't want big boobs."

Danielle added, "Momma says we can't help it."

Nicole answered, "This is true. Y'all should be happy with what God gives you."

They looked up at Nicole.

Nicole purposely changed the subject, "Did Daddy buy Y'all a new movie?"

Ester answered, "Daddy rented them from a vending machine."

Nicole asked, "A vending machine?"

Danielle answered, "It's in front of the store."

Ester added, "It's red and big. It has a screen and it shows Y'all the movies. Daddy let us pick one and he picked one."

Nicole spotted the red DVD cases on the TV.

"Y'all enjoy the movie."

Ester answered, "Yes Ma'am."

Nicole glanced at the screen. She noticed animated penguins were talking.

She shook her head.

She looked toward the kitchen and spotted Jimmy finishing his meal. They nodded at one another. She: quickly took her bags into the bedroom, she set them on her chair, she changed into jeans, and a comfortable button shirt. Ashleigh called her. Ashleigh was excited to tell Nicole how Marcus finally asked her out. Nicole clued her in on what to expect at the barbecue and suggested the type of outfit she should wear. Ashleigh thanked her. They spent some time discussing Julie. Ashleigh asked about a seafood recipe Nicole recently gave her. This is when Nicole left the bedroom and stepped into the kitchen. When she stepped into the kitchen Jimmy was filling the sink with water to wash the pots and pans. Soon after: Nicole and Ashleigh finished their conversation, Nicole closed the phone, set it on the counter with the tall chairs, started to wash the rest of the pots and pans; Jimmy then started to unload the dishwasher.

Jimmy looked at her and asked, "Talking to Ashleigh?"

"Marcus asked her out."

Jimmy took a plate from the dishwasher and set it into a cupboard, "Where's he taking her?"

"He invited her to a barbecue at his house."

Jimmy nodded, "I believe it's a weekly event."

"Y'all know about it?"

Jimmy replied, "They like to meet up during the week on account of being busy on weekends."

Nicole placed the pan Jimmy used to make the pasta into the sink.

Jimmy asked, "You want me to rinse it?"

"Just unload the dishwasher."

He opened the dishwasher and started to remove the utensils.

Nicole asked, "Y'all feel Ashleigh will be able to handle dating a police officer?"

Jimmy answered, "She's tougher than Y'all think."

"She's been through a lot."

Jimmy answered, "Y'all ain't whistling Dixie."

Nicole asked, "Y'all feel they'd be good together?"

Jimmy smiled, "I'm sure they'll do alright."

Nicole: crinkled her forehead, she removed the plug from the sink, pulled the sprayer out, and started to rinse the dishes.

Jimmy asked, "What's ticking in your head of yours."

She stopped rinsing and turned to him, "Y'all feel she'll handle knowing the love of her life is putting his life on the line?"

Jimmy gave her a face, "They ain't been on their first date?"

Nicole was stern, "What Y'all ain't understanding is how much she likes him."

"She'll be okay."

Annoyed she handed him the pot he used to cook the pasta, "Would Y'all put this away?"

He pointed, "Goes down here?"

"Yeah."

He opened a bottom cupboard and put it away.

She was using the sprayer to dissolve the suds in the first sink.

She stopped when he stood up.

"Has Jimmy ever dated a gal who makes more money than him?"

"I ain't sure. Why?"

"I feel it'll bother him."

"I ain't in the knowing."

She gave him a look.

He answered the look, "It ain't like we're able to do anything about it."

"I don't feel she cares."

"Ain't it a good thing?"

Nicole gave him a couple serving bowls, "Would Y'all mind?"

He again pointed, "They go over here?"

"Make sure the sizes are stacked proper."

He simply answered, "Okay."

Earlier in their marriage he might have told her he knew how to put away bowls. Being wiser he opened the cupboard Nicole pointed at and put them away.

Nicole commented, "I'm feeling it might bother Marcus."

Being a husband for as long as he was, he was wise enough to ask, "Y'all want me to talk to him?"

She was wiping her hands and felt relieved the dishes were done.

She smiled, "Would you?"

He smiled, "I will."

She asked concerned, "Y'all talk to your sister?"

"Today."

She made a face, "When?"

"She was invited to a meeting at work."

"What was the meeting about?"

"Someone was plotting to shut down the Memorial Day parade."

"This was one of the reasons I wanted Y'all to talk to her."

"Bob held a meeting with Megan, Susan, and Mr. King. Oh, Captain was there too. They're saving the parade. Bob appointed Megan as the Grand Marshal."

Nicole asked, "I thought she was?"

"Mr. Bob insisted on making it official."

Nicole asked, "How was Susan feeling about it?"

"Susan and Mr. King were all for saving the parade."

"It ain't what I'm meaning."

"What are Y'all meaning?"

"I'm assuming Susan will be helping with the parade?"

"Of course."

Nicole made a face, "If Bob is saving the parade won't he be involved?"

"More in the background. I ain't following Y'all."

"Is Megan having to work with Susan?"

"I'm assuming they are."

"How does Susan feel about it?"

"Why would she care?"

Nicole looked at him, "Ain't Susan jealous of Megan?"

"Why would she be jealous?"

"Y'all haven't noticed."

Ester asked, "What are we all needing to notice?"

Ester and Danielle were enjoying listening to the conversation. They were standing at the counter with the tall chairs.

Nicole turned to her daughter, "What Y'all want?"

The two best friends looked at one another then turned to Nicole, Ester stated, "We'd like a snack."

"Y'all just had dinner?"

Danielle answered, "We're hungry again."

Nicole stepped over to the refrigerator opened it, she grabbed a bowl of grapes, and set them on the kitchen table.

The two best friends looked at one another.

Before they would ask for something else Nicole said, "Y'all ain't getting anything else."

Nicole pulled out two bottled waters.

Their facial expressions said everything.

Ester was about to just grab a bunch of grapes.

Nicole sternly commanded, "Be ladies."

Jimmy opened a cupboard and handed two bowls to Nicole.

Nicole winked as she took the bowls, then asked, "Hand over a paper towel."

Jimmy tore four sheets off and handed them to Nicole, she tore it in half and handed two sheets to Ester and Danielle.

Nicole watched as they acted proper and selected their grapes.

When they were finished they walked back into the living room. Nicole and Jimmy heard Danielle say, "I wanted key lime pie."

Ester answered, "This is more healthy."

They sighed.

Nicole yelled, "Y'all will appreciate eating healthy some day."

At the same time they answered, "Yes Ma'am."

The two adults noticed the sound stop, they discussed where they stopped, and the movie started playing again; the two girls forgot to pause the movie before stepping into the kitchen.

Jimmy smiled.

Nicole put the bowl of grapes away and stepped up to Jimmy.

"I believe Mr. Bob likes Megan."

Jimmy answered, "He's dating Susan?"

"If he wasn't dating Susan I feel he'd be trying to date Megan."

"He'd never cheat on Susan."

"I ain't saying he would."

"Then why the concern?"

"I'm sure Susan knows Bob likes Megan."

Jimmy answered, "Megan doesn't like Bob. How many times did he ask her out and she said no."

"I ain't so sure."

Jimmy replied, "She's always talking about how irritating he is."

Nicole very serious answered, "I feel she protests to much."

Jimmy made a face and repeated himself, "He's dating Susan."

She decided to let this go. Earlier in their marriage she would have pushed it until they argued.

Changing the subject she asked, "They're saving the parade?"

"Bob and Ashleigh have the whole company involved."

Nicole mentioned, "Who was trying to stop it?"

"Captain and Mr. King are planning on finding out."

"Y'all feel it's transplants?"

"I'm betting it's locals who haven't liked the parade met with like minded transplants. We're all in the knowing of those few people who haven't like the parade for a long time."

"There's a lot of truth in what Y'all are saying."

Jimmy smiled.

Nicole asked, "Y'all have to go to bed early?"

"No. I rented the new *Rocky*."

From the living room they heard, "We want to watch *Happy Feet* again."

Nicole based upon her husbands face said, "Y'all can watch it tomorrow."

"Oh."

"Why not work on your jewelry until Danielle's Mom arrives."

Nicole and Jimmy heard them talk to one another but were unable to understand what they were saying.

Nicole yelled into the living room, "Y'all have to put the bowls away."

Ester answered, "We ain't done."

"Then put the bowls on the kitchen table."

"Yes Ma'am."

The two ran into the kitchen set the bowls on the table and went running up the stairs.

Nicole yelled, "You leave your sister alone."

"Yes Ma'am."

Jimmy stepped up to Nicole and they gently kissed one another.

Jeff and Buck stepped into the house.

Jeff announced, "I'm here."

They stepped into the kitchen and Jeff asked, "Anything to eat?"

Nicole said, "I though Y'all ate at Bette's house?"

Jeff answered, "We did."

Buck said, "It was weird."

Jimmy asked, "What were they all eating?"

"Sauerkraut and sausage."

Jeff added, "It really stinks."

Jimmy answered, "If it's homemade it'll stink."

Nicole asked, "Where Y'all polite?"

"Yes Ma'am."

Jeff added, "Her Momma made good baked potato's."

Buck added, "Except they put cheese on them."

Jeff answered, "They put cheese on everything."

Nicole suggested, "There is some pasta and fruit salad in the refrigerator."

Buck answered, "Yes Ma'am."

Jimmy said, "We're about to watch the new *Rocky*."

Buck asked, "*Rocky Balboa*?"

"Yup."

Jeff answered, "I heard it was good."

Nicole said, "Buck Y'all will have to go home after the movie."

"Yes Ma'am."

Jimmy stepped into the living room and set up the DVD. Nicole filled two glasses with ice tea.

Nicole made a point to ask Buck, "Y'all doing well in school?"

Jeff waited.

"Yes Ma'am."

Nicole encouraged, "I believe Y'all will make a good lawyer one day."

"Ma'am I'm trying."

Nicole said, "I believe Y'all."

She stepped into the living room.

She yelled at Ester and Danielle for running down the stairs.

Jeff and Buck were carrying plates of pasta into the living room.

Nicole stepped in front of the stairs and yelled, "Julie."

Julie stepped out of her bedroom and looked down at Nicole, "Yes Ma'am."

"Y'all want to watch a movie?"

"I'm studying."

This was a half truth. She was doing research. She believed *Renewed Mastery* purchased one of two companies. She felt she could make a lot of money based upon this information.

"Okay."

Julie and Nicole nodded their heads.

Julie stepped back into her room.

Danielle and Ester placed patterned coloring books and colored pencils onto the kitchen table; coloring books and colored pencils Ester received from Ashleigh as a birthday present. Everyone else enjoyed the movie *Rocky Balboa*.

Ashleigh and Megan were on top of Megan's Houseboat. They were on the stern of the boat with their chairs pointed toward the marina. Directly in front of Megan's houseboat was the first pier. They could easily see the next two piers of the marina. The slight breeze caused the marina to make extra noise. Lights from many of the vessels and the lights from the piers were easily visible. These lights reflected off the river. Passed the marina and in the distance they could see the lights of the cars crossing the bridge built over the *Eastbank River*. Ashleigh liked this bridge. On the port side from the marina to the bridge the lights from the town reflected onto the *Eastbank River*. Directly next to them, still on the port side, was Megan's charter and the yacht. The small security lights surrounding Megan's charter were on. Passed the yacht, which was blocked by the yacht, was the riverbank and the town.

When they looked toward the yacht they witnessed Bob and Susan playing cards at the kitchen table in the galley. They pulled the curtains open allowing Ashleigh and Megan to see them through the sliding glass door; a door Megan admired for its high end quality. Ashleigh correctly assumed they were playing Canasta; Ashleigh hoped Susan was winning.

Ashleigh and Megan were sitting in their usual chairs. In between them was a fold out table. Megan was wearing: a blue stripped hoodie, a blue woman's polo, and was in a pair of gray colored cargo pants; on her feet were blue Adidas athletic shoes. Her dark blond hair was in a pony tail. Ashleigh was wearing a lemon and bubblegum colorblock t-shirt with quarter inch sleeves with yellow summerweight chino trousers; her yellow wedges were sitting next to her chair. Ashleigh was still wearing the bandanna she wore into town. On the table was: a pitcher of Sweet Iced Tea, two plastic cups were filled with Sweet Iced Tea, a bowl of chopped fruit, and a roll of paper towel.

Nikita was laying on her bone print rug gnawing on a bone Megan gave her before they stepped up on top of the houseboat.

Megan mentioned, "I want to thank Y'all."

Ashleigh gave her a look, "For what?"

"Saving the parade."

Ashleigh sat up in her chair, "We didn't move here to stop valuable traditions. We support our troops."

"I shouldn't have believed Y'all would have wanted to stop it."

Ashleigh smiled, "It's alright."

Megan added, "It ain't like Bob hung them flags in the rec room."

"I like how he hung them from the ceiling."

Megan choose to ignore the improper boat term.

Ashleigh and Megan looked at one another and smiled.

Ashleigh out of concern asked, "You doing alright?"

"We just weren't a match."

"I'm sorry."

"He was frustrating."

"In what way?"

"He never communicated anything."

"Ick."

Slight pause.

Ashleigh mentioned, "You've said this before."

Megan answered, "The costume party was an example."

"Yeah."

"During the party he was outgoing and talking. But when the two of us went for a walk his tongue was locked. It's one of many examples of him having his lips zippered shut when we were together."

"Sorry to hear that."

"I'm wanting someone I can talk too."

"I get that."

Megan's dimples flashed.

With a tone Megan stated, "I didn't like his passive aggressiveness."

"I'm not a fan of that either."

There was a slight pause as they chose to eat more of the sliced fruit.

Megan mentioned, "What was even more irritating is he was thinking I'm a lesbian on account I wore denim."

"It's kinda silly."

"It'd be one thing to hear the rumors and ask me. But to feel I'm into gals because I was wearing denim. Ain't it stupid?"

"I felt you looked feminine in that outfit."

"Even one of Daddy's friends told me I looked feminine."

"I feel you look feminine in jeans."

"Are you sure?"

"It's your long legs and your ass."

Ashleigh ate a cube of watermelon.

She added, "You have very feminine legs."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"It's difficult for me to believe I have feminine looking legs. I know guys like my legs but lesbians like my legs and butt too."

"That makes sense?"

Megan's dimples flashed.

"Why?"

"Well if a woman is attracted to a woman. Wouldn't they be attracted to the same thing a guy would be attracted too? With you being athletic it makes sense why a lesbian who's athletic would find your legs and butt appealing. I'd feel this confirms they look feminine."

Megan took a sip of her iced tea. She would think about this.

Ashleigh sat up and blurted out, "A woman at the Y asked me out."

Megan asked, "What did Y'all say?"

"I was nice and told her I liked guys."

Ashleigh ate some fruit and took a drink of iced tea before resting again.

Ashleigh made a face, "She apologized."

"Oh."

"I told her it was alright and said if I ever wanted to switch sides I'd date her."

They looked at one another and giggled.

After they took a sip of iced tea.

Megan blushed.

"What?"

"I still ain't understanding why a gal would want a gal touching her."

"It's why we're straight."

Megan blushed again.

Ashleigh looked at her and restrained from smiling.

"I'm wanting to know what it feels like to have a cock in me. One of the things I'm looking forward to is touching one. But I ain't understanding what would be so exciting about touching another gal. Or to have a gal go down on Y'all. I ain't even understanding why a guy would go down on a gal."

Ashleigh touched Megan's arm, "When a guy knows what he's doing it's wonderful."

Megan asked, "Would Y'all want anyone gal or guy going down on Y'all?"

"You wouldn't tell anyone?"

"Of course not."

"I've often wondered what it would be like for a gal to go down on me. But I'd never go down on a gal."

They gave one another looks.

Ashleigh said with a gesture, "Still I'd miss the full feeling. I'm feeling having sex with a woman would be all foreplay without the punch. I need the full feeling. I'm assuming it'd get boring just touching one another."

Ashleigh made a face.

She continued, "I agree. I'm not seeing what would be so hot about a girl feeling me up."

They looked at one another.

Megan's dimples flashed.

Megan answered, "I'm wondering what it feels like for a guy to touch me but I'm worried about what it smells like down there."

Ashleigh repeated herself, "Receiving oral from a guy who knows what he's doing is a complete turn on."

They looked at one another.

Ashleigh suggested, "If you're worried about it take a shower first."

"I ain't sure."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"What I'm wanting is for a guy wanting to kiss my boobs. And giving my nipples attention. I ain't counting on it on account of how ugly my boobs are and how long my nipples get when I'm aroused."

"He will."

"I ain't sure."

Ashleigh being encouraging answered, "There not ugly. But for the sake of the discussion. Lets say you end up with a guy who doesn't like them. Even if he isn't a fan he'll touch him. Tell him you want him to kiss them. I wouldn't see why any guy wouldn't want to touch then. He's a guy. There's guys out there who have a thing for perky nipples."

Megan hoped this was true.

Ashleigh asked, "You feel Susan and Bob are having sex?"
Megan answered honestly, "Susan ain't allowing it."
Megan's dimples flashed.
Ashleigh looked at her as she took a sip of iced tea.
"Susan will make Bob wait until they're married."
Ashleigh answered with a smile, "It'll be good for him."
They looked at one another and giggled.
They selected cubed watermelon.
Megan's dimples flashed.
"I'm surprised Bob would put me in charge."
"Why?"
"I'd assume he'd want to run it."
Ashleigh stated, "Doesn't mean he won't have suggestions."
"Then why have me run it?"
"Two reasons."
"What are they?"
"He doesn't know what all goes into running the parade and he trusts you."
"Bob doesn't trust anyone."
Ashleigh was very serious, "He trusts you to run the parade."
Megan's dimples flashed and she brushed her hair behind her ear.
They looked over at Bob and Susan playing cards.
Ashleigh studied Megan.
Megan turned toward Ashleigh, "I'm hoping Y'all help me with the order of the parade."
"No problem."
Megan mentioned, "Daddy was impressed with Y'all."
Ashleigh smiled, "Why?"
"He feels Y'all are a good manager."
Ashleigh stated, "He calls me a whipper snapper."
Megan answered, "Y'all are a whipper snapper."
They giggled.
Ashleigh in a very serious tone asked, "He believed I was a good manager?"
"He wouldn't be saying it if he didn't believe it."
Megan could tell this was important to her.
Megan added, "He likes how Y'all are helping him with his model railroad."
"I'm just showing him what Dad taught me."
"It's the fact Y'all are building it with him."
Ashleigh touched Megan's arm, "I enjoy it."
They heard Nikita make noises. They looked and it was obvious Nikita was dreaming.
Megan's dimples flashed.
"I bet she's running with Julie."
Ashleigh made a face.
"I'm so glad she runs her."
"Jimmy was saying Nikita's popular at work."
"She's spoiled."
Megan concerned, "I hope they won't over heat her when they're taking her for walks."

"Haley and I watch that."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"It'll get hot in the summer. She's a good dawg but she ain't made for a southern summer."

"I worry about that. She's already shedding like crazy."

They both took drinks of their iced tea and ate cubes of the fruit.

Megan asked, "How's Brittany working out?"

"She's a blessing."

"Ma told me her Momma moved in with her."

"She helps watch the baby."

"Are they struggling?"

"Brittany hasn't said anything. I'm sure she's happy her Momma's down here. Her Momma works part time in the paint department. She seems to be well liked and is very particular. The lead likes to give her more detailed work others can't do."

"Y'all get along with Brittany?"

Ashleigh answered, "It was our first day together. I liked what I saw. It's difficult understanding her strong accent. I'm used to the Floridian accent but hers is very strong."

Megan found this funny because most believed Ashleigh had a strong Midwestern accent; people found it difficult understanding everything Ashleigh would say when she talked fast.

Ashleigh added, "You should hear it when Gracie and Brittany are together. I'm surprised they understand one another."

"Gracie is head of HR?"

"We finally got her help. I was afraid she was going to quit."

"The locals like her."

Ashleigh smiled, "If there is a way to get around some rule or something an insurance company is doing she'll find it."

Very serious Megan said, "I hate insurance."

Ashleigh looked at her, "I'm glad Jimmy is no longer selling insurance and is working for us. I have to say. He's been helping Gracie get around the loopholes."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"Nicole is happy he's working for Y'all too."

They smiled at one another.

Ashleigh asked, "Speaking of work. How did today's charter go?"

"It went well. They caught a solitary yellowfin. I'm sure Y'all don't know this. But White Marlin are biting. They caught two today. Plus a dolphinfish."

"That's good. Did they give you any tuna? I like the way you cook it. Sure tastes better than a can."

"I'd hope so."

Ashleigh giggled.

Megan did the same.

On the starboard side they spotted Megan's niece Laura step into their view. They were surprised on how respectable she looked. She was wearing a pair of regular cut bootcut jeans, a red and white striped button shirt, a denim jacket, a new pair of tennis shoes, a conservative looking leather purse was hanging over her shoulder, simple loop earrings,

bracelets on her left wrist, and her hair was set nice. Both felt she appeared mature and was being modest; this was a huge change from her past appearance.

Ashleigh and Megan both sat up, Ashleigh asked in a whisper, "Is that Laura?"

"Yeah."

Ashleigh asked, "What's she doing here?"

"I ain't sure?"

Ashleigh mentioned, "She called me last week."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"Y'all were saying she asked about staying sober."

Megan asked, "Y'all believe she slipped?"

Ashleigh answered, "If she slipped she wouldn't be here. She'd be on a drunken bender. If she showed up drunk she wouldn't be looking respectable. I'd say she's trying not to slip."

They stood up and stepped to the edge of the houseboat. Ashleigh was just tall enough to look over the railing.

Just as Laura was about to step from the first pier to the dock of Megan's houseboat Megan yelled, "Laura?"

Laura stopped and looked up. She took a few steps backwards so she could see them more clearly.

"Howdy."

Megan asked, "What brings Y'all here?"

"I was hoping we could talk?"

Both Ashleigh and Megan could spot she was nervous.

Ashleigh was unable to reframe from asking, "You staying sober?"

"It ain't easy but I'm liking it better every day."

Ashleigh answered, "That's how it works. No matter what don't start again."

"I ain't planning on it."

Ashleigh added, "It's half the battle."

Megan added, "Y'all can do it."

Laura smiled.

Megan produced her big dimple smile.

Laura answered, "It's good to hear people believe I'm able to stay sober."

Megan and Ashleigh looked at one another, then they looked at Laura, "Step inside and make yourself at home. We'll be down in a second."

"Yes Ma'am."

Laura did as she was told. She: stepped inside of Megan's houseboat, stepped down the stairs, took note on how Megan's lamp was once at her Great Grandma's house, set her purse on the end table, sat down on the futon on the port side, and heard Ashleigh and Megan step into the galley. She watched them put everything away. When they were done Ashleigh stepped into the lounge and gave her a hug.

Laura was surprised when Ashleigh hugged her.

Ashleigh whispered to her, "You'll love yourself and everyone around you if you stay sober."

Laura embraced her hard.

Ashleigh grunted and hugged back.

Laura was surprised on how strong this short Northern gal was. Laura would never forget the two hour conversation they had over the phone. Ma, of all people, suggested she call Ashleigh.

Ashleigh separated herself, "I'll need to get going."

Megan and Ashleigh winked.

Laura was unable to help herself and greeted an eager Nikita.

Ashleigh mentioned, "She doesn't roll over like that for everyone."

Laura asked, "She doesn't?"

Megan's dimples flashed.

"Nope."

After some small talk, Ashleigh headed out of the houseboat. Laura found it funny when Ashleigh stated, "See you later Alligator"

And Megan answered, "After while crocodile."

Laura could understand why some in the family were still debating if they were lovers, but Laura strongly believed they were just best friends. More important believed both were straight.

*A*shleigh was grateful when she met Susan on her way toward the marina parking lot. She liked it when Megan walked her to where Nikita left her markings but she understood why this was out of the question tonight.

Right away Susan greeted Nikita.

"She's such a good dawg."

Ashleigh smiled, "I'd like to think so."

Ashleigh touched Susan on the arm, "Did you win?"

With a disappointed look answered, "No. He caught up on me."

Ashleigh smirked.

"Did he freeze the pile?"

"I hate it when he does it."

Ashleigh made a face, "It's frustrating."

Susan asked, "Would Y'all mind walking me to the car?"

"No. I have to take Nikita out anyway."

Susan looked toward the preserve, "I ain't a fan of the preserve."

"Doesn't Bob usually walk you to the car?"

"I normally let him but I spotted Y'all headed to the yacht. I wanted to talk with Y'all."

Ashleigh simply answered, "Sure."

They turned and headed toward the parking lot.

"I ain't sure how to ask this?"

"I can handle it."

Susan smiled. She admired Ashleigh.

"What do Y'all know about Shelly?"

Ashleigh became serious, "She's a Christian now. She's a good mother."

"Y'all feel she'd seduce Bob?"

Ashleigh answered honestly, "No."

"Y'all feel Bob would go back with her?"

Ashleigh stopped and turned toward Susan, "She hurt him. I don't believe he'd ever ask her out again. It's my feeling the only reason they're even talking is because of LB."

"You don't believe she stays with him when he goes up there?"

"She has her own apartment."

"Does Bob pay for it?"

"Yes. But she needs to keep her grades up. She's attending tech college. She has a part time job as well. Her parents help watching LB."

Susan asked, "She's a Christian now?"

"Without her faith I believe she'd probably have overdosed or be in jail. It's part of the reason Bob hasn't sold the house."

"I'm hoping Y'all will be honest with me."

"I am."

"Does he have another girlfriend on the side in Wisconsin?"

Ashleigh again touched Susan on the arm, "My brother is a lot of things. But he's a one person at a time guy. He isn't in the business of cheating."

Ashleigh decided to disclose personal information.

"The reason he's never going to cheat is because our Dad cheated on his Mom."

Susan gave a face.

"I'm the product of an affair. Bob's my step brother. With him seeing how hurt his Mom was. He swore he'd never cheat. As far as I know. He's never cheated on anyone. He'll have sex before being married. But he leaves that up to the woman he's dating."

Susan wanted to believe her.

They were silent until they stepped off the first pier. Made a left. They passed the carts and were close to the metal fence.

Ashleigh stated, "I need to walk Nikita over here."

Susan studied Ashleigh.

Ashleigh took a plastic bag from a front pocket and picked up Nikita's markings. Ashleigh led Susan to the dumpster.

This all happened in silence.

Ashleigh broke the silence by saying, "I hate the preserve."

Nikita could sense one of the creatures crouched down near a tree.

Susan demanded, "Walk me to the car."

Ashleigh walked with Susan to her car.

Susan asked in a probing way, "Does Bob base the characters in his books on people he knows?"

Ashleigh mentioned, "Do you believe the woman pretending to be a cabin boy is me?"

Susan stated, "Is it you when you were younger?"

"Most likely. But Bob will say I'm not in any of his books."

"Valerie claims Y'all are in every one of his books."

"That's true."

Susan gazed at Ashleigh.

Ashleigh could tell Susan wanted to really dig into this conversation but backed off.

Susan opened the drivers side door of her car.

She stated, "Y'all did a good thing today."

Ashleigh answered, "Like I told Megan. We didn't move her to change traditions. We believe without the military we wouldn't have the freedoms we have."

Susan smiled.

"I'll see Y'all again."

"Yes you will."

Ashleigh gently shut Susan's drivers door.

Ashleigh watched Susan drive away.

She turned toward the preserve.

She said out loud to Nikita, "I hate the preserve."

Nikita was ready to protect best friend from the creatures who lived in the bush.

Ashleigh quickly led Nikita back to the yacht.

Megan yelled from the galley, "Y'all want some iced tea?"

Laura answered, "Yes Ma'am."

Laura from the futon, could tell based upon the noises Megan was pouring her iced tea and putting things away. The nervousness during this was thick.

Megan trying to cut through these odd feelings asked, "Want some fruit?"

"No thank-you."

Megan stepped over to the lounge, she set two cups of iced tea onto the table, and sat on the futon on the port side of the houseboat.

Megan asked serious, "How are Y'all?"

Laura answered honestly, "Staying clean and sober."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"I'm happy for Y'all."

They looked at one another.

Laura needed to just say it or she would never say it, "I'm sorry for how I've treated Y'all in the past and for how I've acted. With me being clean and sober I recognize Y'all were trying to help me."

Megan answered, "It's hard understanding those things when your mind is cloudy."

Laura sternly answered, "I ain't planning on being cloudy again."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"If Y'all ever feel like using stop on by. I'd rather have Y'all stay here being sober than being somewhere else."

Laura was surprised at this but answered honestly, "I will."

They both took sips of their iced tea.

Laura replied, "I've always admired you."

"I ain't perfect by any means. I've struggled with my sexuality and my relationship with Ma ain't always the greatest. I ain't a fan of who your Daddy works for."

"I ain't liking it either."

Megan decided to be blunt, but in this bluntness tears fell, "He's either ending up in witness protection or dead."

They both teared.

Megan wiped away the tears and stated, "No matter who Duke's working for and what he does doesn't mean Y'all should be drinking or using. Or start following in his footsteps."

Laura removed her own tears, "It was one of the reasons I began drinking. I'm understanding I ain't able to change what he all does."

They stared at one another and took sips of their iced tea.

Megan asked, "I heard Y'all have a job?"

Laura smiled, "I'll be working customer service at the railroad."

"I've heard they're hiring."

Megan knew Ashleigh helped her land this position.

Laura smiled, "They were. Daddy's proud of me."

"No matter what your Daddy's into he does love you."

"I know."

Megan took a sip of her iced tea. They looked at one another.

Megan offered, "If Y'all want to spend the night you can. I just have to go to bed."

Laura asked, "Early charter?"

"It's a long one tomorrow."

"I'll get home. I still have unpacking to do."

Megan mentioned, "I heard it wasn't easy getting a place."

"I appreciate Captain and Ma letting me stay at one of their apartments."

This is when they both stood up and Laura slipped her purse over her shoulder.

Megan with her loving sternness stated, "I'm repeating myself. But if Y'all are feeling Y'all will slip give me a call. Y'all can stay here until it passes."

Laura smiled, "Okay."

Megan stated from the heart, "It's good talking to the gal I always knew Y'all could be."

Laura asked, "You've really struggled with your sexuality?"

"I happened to be a gal who after questioning her sexuality realized I'm straight."

"You ain't saying it because of how religious our family is?"

"Nope. But I do believe God ain't liking homosexuality. The fact is. I ain't into gals in that way. What I'm wanting is to enjoy a blessed bedroom with a husband."

Laura felt compelled to say, "I'd admire Y'all if you were straight or gay."

Megan showed her big dimple smile.

"I'm glad Y'all told me. It's nice knowing if I was a lesbian Y'all would still love me."

Laura: smiled, stepped up to her Auntie, and they hugged.

Megan loved this. It was refreshing to have a family member show outward signs of affection.

Laura stepped away, "Y'all give good hugs."

Megan answered very serious, "What I've never liked about our family is the reluctance to show affection. We all love one another what is wrong with a hug now and then?"

Laura smiled, "I agree."

Megan answered, "Somethings just might take a while to change."

"With our family it'll take a long while."

"Y'all ain't whistling Dixie."

Megan led Laura to the door, she stated, "Let me lead Y'all to the car."

Laura accepted by saying, "I've never liked the preserve. It gives a bad vibe."

"Let me grab the flashlight."

Laura watched Megan step over to the end table nearest the galley and grab a standing flashlight.

"Y'all planning on beating someone to death?"

Megan looked at the flashlight then at Laura.

Megan answered with a very serious tone, "I ain't taking any chances. A lot of times I like walking with Ashleigh when she takes Nikita for a walk. Or when Nikita does her business."

They stepped out of the houseboat.

Laura asked, "If Y'all were gay would Y'all be dating Ashleigh?"

"No."

"Why?"

"How'd we do it?"

Laura and Megan looked at one another and laughed.

Laura recognized this was the first time Megan ever discussed sex with her.

"If Y'all don't mind me asking?"

Laura said, "Sure?"

"Why would a gal go down on a gal?"

They stared at one another.

Laura followed Megan off of the houseboat and onto the first pier. They walked in silence. Laura watched Megan turn on the flashlight. This is when Laura decided to answer, "A lot of times gals are better at it than guys. It feels different when a gal is kissing Y'all and touching Y'all."

"Why would Y'all want a gal to touch Y'all?"

"Have Y'all ever been touched by a gal?"

Matter of fact Megan answered, "I had a best friend from college try seducing me."

"What happened?"

"I tried to like it but it was to overwhelming and uncomfortable. Thinking back on it I wasn't liking a woman touching me."

"What base did Y'all get too?"

"Second."

"Y'all would have never gone down on her?"

"I ain't interesting in putting my mouth on a gals parts."

Laura looked at Megan and laughed.

"What's so funny?"

"I ain't ever heard you talk about sex before."

Megan answered with a serious tone, "For me to find the understanding I was seeking. I needed to start talking about it. Just because I'm talking about it ain't meaning I'm having it. I'm waiting until I'm married to have it."

She looked at Laura.

Megan's dimples flashed.

Megan decided to be fully honest with her niece, "I've been tempted to find out what it's like. There for a while I was feeling if I had sex with a guy then people would stop saying I was a lesbian. If I ain't in love with someone I just can't be having sex with him. I ain't pissing down your leg when I say I like the fact I'm a virgin. This ain't meaning I wish I wasn't married and had sex already. 'Cause there's times I wish I'd know what it's like. I'm really curious in knowing what it feels like."

"If you ain't having sex with anyone how are Y'all knowing Y'all are straight?"

Megan felt this was an honest question, "I figure if I was into gals I'd want a gal to go down on me and I'd want to be touching a gal."

"Y'all never fantasize about being with a gal?"

"Even when I was questioning if I was a lesbian I never imagined having sex with a gal. It was all about having a relationship. But when I'm thinking about having a relationship with a guy I'm wondering what his cock will feel like and what sex will be like. I ain't interesting in knowing what it would be like being with a gal. Y'all understand what I'm meaning?"

Laura encouraged, "I'm feeling it's a good way at looking at it."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"I ain't proud of myself. After doing research I started reading erotic stories and looking at pictures of nude men. I still haven't watched a movie. I'm ashamed to say it. I was turned on by seeing pictures of nude men."

"Y'all like porn?"

"To much. I stopped reading them stories and looking at them pictures because it was becoming addicting. I was afraid if I kept reading them stories or looking at them pictures I might just end up having a one night stand. I ain't wanting to be one of them type of gals. I'm feeling reading them stories was influencing me in ways I still ain't fully understood."

"Y'all feel they were all bad influences?"

"No. I was into what I was reading before I started reading them stories. But there is other things I'm wanting to try by myself and with a husband because I read them stories. I ain't sure this is good or not. I starting reading stories I never thought I'd ever read. I'm a woman who could get addicted to pornography."

Laura mentioned, "For whatever reason porn was never my thing. I was dating a gal who was addicted to it. She was always getting herself off to it and wanting me to watch it."

"It's something I like but I ain't believing it's good for Y'all. I'm glad I stopped looking at pictures of naked men. It hasn't been easy stopping myself from looking at them pictures or reading them stories."

Megan blushed.

"I really like reading them stories."

Laura refrained from smiling. She was surprised to be having this conversation with Megan.

Megan's dimples flashed.

She really blushed.

"I've found masturbating is better without them things."

Laura answered, "I feel sex is better without porn."

They were silent for a moment.

Laura asked, "Doesn't talking about it want Y'all to have it?"

"As long as I ain't reading stories or looking at naked men. Having sex with myself stops me from wanting to just sleep with someone else."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"I ain't in love with anyone or dating anyone? So I ain't being tempted with sleeping with someone."

"Y'all break up with Christopher?"

"Today."

"Sorry to hear it."

Megan's dimples flashed.

"We ain't a match."

"I hope you find a guy Y'all like."

"I'm hoping too."

They reached Laura's car.

Laura mentioned, "I'm hoping to find a good guy to settle down with but I ain't ready to date and I'm never having sex with someone so they'll like me. I want to know what it's like to love someone first."

"Your best changes of finding a guy who's looking for love is at church."

Laura smiled, "Maybe I should start going."

"It's a good idea."

They looked at one another.

Laura teared, "I love you auntie."

Megan answered back, "I love Y'all too."

Megan embraced her Niece.

They cried.

Megan told Laura, "All is forgiven."

They pulled away. Removed their tears.

Without saying anything Laura stepped into her car.

Megan smiled when Laura waved and drove out of the marina.

Megan suddenly felt like she was being watched. She turned toward the preserve. She panned the flashlight. The light looked odd going through the fence. She could sense something was in there and staring at her. The oddest part was the feeling whatever was looking at her knew her since she was a child.

She turned and quickly headed toward her houseboat.

She glanced at the yacht: Bob's office light was on, all of the drapes on the main deck were shut, and Ashleigh's suite light was on. As she neared her houseboat she could hear Gina and her girlfriend Miranda having another argument. Gina lived on the opposite side of the first pier. Megan disliked Miranda; out of all the gals Gina dated Megan mistrusted Miranda the most.

Megan stepped into her houseboat, she quickly cleaned it, she pulled all the blinds, she set her programmable coffee maker, turned off the lights in the lounge, checked her plant buds on the counter, she turned on her suite lights, turned off her galley lights, she took a short shower, dried herself, and went to bed nude.

Laying there she thought about all of the things she needed to accomplish the next day. She made tentative plans for the parade. She thought about Bob's idea of having, as he suggested, "a carnival". His idea was to have all of the functions right after the parade at a park. He believed this would get larger attendance than having multiple events scattered through out area over the whole weekend. Jimmy mentioned the other events could happen as well. She needed to think about this.

She was grateful Ashleigh was helping her with the parade. She hoped Ashleigh's date with Marcus would go well; she was happy Ashleigh found a good guy. She was grateful Laura was clean and sober.

She ended up thinking about the sexual discussion she had with both Ashleigh and Laura. She imagined what it would be like to being married. This led her to imagine what it

would feel like to have a loving husband touch and kiss her whole body. This led to an unplanned self exploration session where she enjoyed using her body pillow. Because of her busy schedule she usually planned her masturbation sessions; because this was spur of the moment she felt she broke one of her masturbation boundaries. This one being, masturbation should never interfere with work or cause her to be irresponsible. She felt masturbating at this time was irresponsible because she should have slept instead. Even still, she was grateful for the relief, and fell asleep cuddling her body pillow.

Ashleigh was feeling aroused.

Laying in bed she was casually caressing her breasts through her shirt.

She imagined Marcus inserting one of the three largest butt plugs from her starter kit into her anus. This is where reality and fantasy separated. First, she was way to self conscience to tell anyone she was experimenting with butt plugs. So far the only butt plug she used was the smallest one. She only explored with it twice. Both times: she needed to really relax herself, she planned both times, she made sure she was extra clean, made sure the toy was clean, she used plenty of lube, and both times she inserted it in the bathroom. Both of these times she used her fingers to bring her over the edge. She wondered what it would feel like to insert the butt plug and use the cucumber at the same time.

She stepped off her bed and commanded Nikita to stay.

Nikita listened because Best Friend was in heat. Anytime Best Friend was in heat Best Friend yelled and shoved her away.

Ashleigh: stepped into her walk in closet, turned on the light, moved her step stool, stepped on top of it, moved a couple of other boxes, grabbed a dark green plastic bin, and pulled it down.

Her heart jumped.

She: took the box to her bed, set it on her bed, removed her clothes, opened it, grabbed a small cloth bag, inside was the smallest of the three butt plugs, grabbed her lube, took a deep breath, laid on her side, calmed herself, lubed the toy, lubed her anus, and slowly and tenderly inserted her smallest butt plug. This process caused her to become moist. The full feeling was super exciting. While touching herself she started to crave a full feeling. On impulse she immediately stood up; this caught her off guard. This was the first time she ever moved with the butt plug inserted inside of her. Both of the other times she remained stationary after inserting it. She was absolutely shocked at this feeling, she bent over, grabbed the bed, and took a couple deep breaths. When she gained her composure she stood up; her facial expression and her gasp said it all. She was about to walk right out of her suite, rush into the galley, and prepare a cucumber. What stopped her was the possibility her Brother would show up in the galley. The least thing she wanted was for Bob to see her naked and with a butt plug stuck in her ass. She reached down and grabbed her stripped pajama bottom shorts and her well worn concert t-shirt. With her breasts hard her shirt was up further than normal and it left little to the imagination. She quickly made her way to the suite door. She again stopped, had to catch her breath, and was now flush; she felt hot.

Nikita looked up at her and knew enough to leave Best Friend alone. It was obvious she was in heat

Ashleigh: managed to open the door, listened for any noise in the yacht, her impulse was to put her hand underneath her pajama bottoms and go for it; but she craved the feeling of the cucumber. She turned and stepped to the bottom of the stairs. She knew, even though she was wearing the t-shirt and the shorts; if her brother spotted her it was obvious she was aroused. She took note of the night light just outside of the galley and just before the hallway; the only time her brother turned on this night light was if he was in his office or sleeping. She wanted to assume he was in his suite sleeping. Ashleigh counted on the fact she would hear him step out of the office and go down the spiral stair case. She was aware if he took the outside stairs and through the sliding door of the galley; he would spot her in front of the sink, clearly aroused, and trimming a cucumber. She would hurry to avoid this terribly embarrassing moment. She wished she would have planned all of this out before experimenting. Just the thought of the cucumber was adding to her arousal; this was without imagining it was Marcus' cock.

She listened.

With the yacht quiet she headed to the galley. Half way there she stopped and took a deep breath. The feeling was intense. Her impulse was to step over to the couch and just go for it. What stopped her was the idea her brother would catch her. Having her brother witness her masturbating was a horrible thought. To be on the couch and with a butt plug inserted in her ass would have been horrifying. As she approached the galley the only light was from the clock radio and the distant night light. Once in the galley she: quickly rushed over to the refrigerator, she opened the door, the light temporary blinded her, she saw spots, she blinked, when the spots disappeared she focused, she yanked open the vegetable drawer, this made more noise than she wanted, she pulled out the bag of cucumbers, they thudded against the drawer, underneath the refrigerator light she chose one, she put the bag back, the vegetable door became stuck, it took her a few moments of yanking it so it would shut, bending over added to her arousal, she shut the refrigerator door, it made more noise than she wanted, she turned on the light above the sink, she quickly placed the cucumber next to the sink, she opened a drawer with a thud, she became frustrated when she had difficulty finding the scrapper, this caused kitchen utensils to bang against one another, she accidentally slammed the drawer onto her finger, it took effort to remain silent, when her finger stopped throbbing she started to trim the cucumber, she stopped trimming the cucumber when it was four and half inches long, she turned off the light, and this is when she heard a creak in the hallway.

In somewhat of a panic asked, "Bob?"

No answer.

She looked over at the hallway and it was as dark as usual; no extra shadows because of the night light.

Making sure she asked again, "Bob?"

Her heart pounded. The least thing she wanted was for Bob to see her aroused and holding onto a trimmed cucumber.

No response.

She quickly cleaned the counter, turned off the light above the sink, quickly, and quietly made her way back to her suite.

She was surprised on how aroused she felt.

When she stepped into her suite she immediately removed her shirt and shorts; she set them on her chair next to her bed. She took a deep breath. Crawled on top of her bed.

Bob heard his Step-sister making noise in the galley. He stopped and waited in the shadows. If he would have stepped into the galley he would have witnessed his step sister trimming a cucumber. The least thing he wanted was to catch her sister trimming her cucumbers. This was why he stepped into the shadows and waited. He was grateful when he spotted her heading to her suite. It was too dark and she was too far away to spot the outline of the butt plug. He waited for her to enter her suite before he entered the galley. He set his cup into the sink, stepped over to the refrigerator, opened it, grabbed a bottled water, glanced at the vegetable drawer, opened it, and recognized they had one less cucumber in the drawer.

He snicked.

Bob figured out they went through three to five cucumbers a month. In all the time Ashleigh lived in the yacht she never once cooked anything with the cucumbers. More than once he spotted cucumber scrapings in the trash. This was the reason he never stepped into the galley when he spotted a light on or heard noises in the galley.

Ashleigh ended with a pulsating orgasm. She felt calm and her sexual desires were satisfied. She felt she could go on her date with Marcus. She believed masturbation was keeping her from having sex. The next time she had sex was going to be on her wedding night. She wanted to make sure the guy loved her and she loved him before they had sex. She felt the only way to know for sure was to make him wait.

When she was no longer aroused she removed the butt plug, cleaned it, took a shower, slipped on her sleep clothes and crawled into bed. She easily fell asleep.

Julie was sitting at her computer desk. The house was silent. On her computer desk were accounting notebooks and her laptop; the light from the laptop was giving the room a blueish glow. She was only wearing a sleepshirt. On the floor was: a pile of clothes, a red wig, and two adult toys. On her bed were banded bundles of false identities. Each bundle consisted of: a fake drivers licenses, a fake social security card, one or two bank cards, maybe a credit card, a receipt card filled with specific information related to the false identity, and a second one with updated accounting information. While sitting up and using the light of the laptop she was writing down numbers in one of her accounting books. When she was done she gently set the accounting book back onto the desk. She took out the second receipt card from a half dozen of these piles and changed the information. She clicked out of all her banking websites and financial sites.

On her laptop she clicked a folder of hers, clicked a sub-folder, and then clicked on a homemade clip of a couple having sex; this couple sent her this clip. An attractive guy with an average sized cock and an a woman in her mid-twenties were having sex. What Julie liked was: their passion, his stamina, and how she allowed him to finish on her stomach and chest. As she watched this performance she aggressively played with her breasts and used a toy. This orgasm was far from powerful but it kept her from facing all of her stresses. She was about to click onto another video. She stopped herself because she had another task to finish. To finish this task she: stood up, she pulled the sleepshirt down over her body, slipped on her panties,

and hid her toys. She sat at her desk, closed out all of the files on her laptop, and opened an internet browser.

She researched medical clinics. She chose a clinic two towns over. She planned on using Lisa Montana's car. Julie was happy she could make an early Saturday as a person named Julie Jones. This person looked exactly like herself except this person wore glasses and her hair was set in what she felt was a nerdy style. A big difference was the drivers license stated she was twenty years old. Julie Jones owned her own business, owned a small house in a small western community where she made the appointment, and owned a car. She would drive as Lisa Montana, stop somewhere, change, and then transform herself as Julie Jones for the doctors appointment.

After finalizing everything she placed her laptop and all her banking information in a secret compartment behind a mermaid print (a print that hung above her bed and covered a secret compartment). She crawled into bed.

She cried herself to sleep.

April 25^h, Can't Wait Any Longer

Part Six of Six

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