**The Pool Girl**

by Leto Armitage

**Chapter 4**

This short chapter starts Monday night with a text message exchange between Robert and Melissa. For convenience each message line will start with “R:” or “M:” to indicate who is writing. Any images will be indicated by square brackets such as [eye roll emoji].

6:01 PM

M: hey

R: hey you

M: making sure I have the right number

R: silly

M: my address book says ‘middle aged pervert’

R: about right :)

M: ok to chat?

R: of course

9:33 PM

M: hey again

R: she returns :)

M: sorry, mom was in helicopter mode

R: why?

M: long story M: what’cha doing?

R: digesting dinner, listening to music

M: what was it

R: broccoli, rice and chicken casserole, candied yams on the side

M: u r kidding?!?

R: what?

M: u make that for just u? I make a bowl of cereal

R: you’re allowed cereal?

M: carry over from when I was a little kid PC

R: PC?

M: pre-cheerleader M: save some for me

R: no prob, it should reheat fine. R: wish you were eating it fresh with me though

M: me too M: I’d like to taste a few things right now

R: tease

M: promising

R: grrrrrr

M:????

R: me growling

M: damn, I want to hear that

R: you’ll get a chance tomorrow

M: who is teasing now? taking advantage of innocent lil me

R: it’s more of a promise

M: shit

R: what?

M: you just made me cum you bastard

R: how?

M: when you said it’s a promise I was touching my clit and reading that made me cum

R: playing with yourself?

M: not really

R: how do you not really play with yourself

M: just on my phone and my hand kinda snakes down sometimes

R: naughty R: you should be reading, we are behind on it

M: I will, I promise

R: I hope you like Steinbeck

M: why?

R: one of my favorites, wrote my master’s thesis on Steinbeck and themes of optimism in American lit

M: don’t you do math stuff?

R: I make a living from data work but I went to school for lit R: planned to be a prof but didn’t happen

M: tell me more

R: tomorrow? long story for text

M: another promise?

R: another promise :)

M: oh, I did tell Tommy about us, hope that’s all right

R: I trust you, what’d he say?

M: lol, he asked if I had a dick pic from you

R: why

M: b/c he wants to see it, he wanted in your pants before we met

R: wow

M: didn’t know he was queer?

R: no clue

M: you know, he didn’t have to mow your yard topless

R: it was hot

M: considering all the housewives that hired him I’d say so

R: me = stupid

M: you’re dense, incredibly but wonderfully dense M: so, sending me a dick pic? :)

R: so you can send one to your big brother? R: [animated gif of Emma Stone rolling her eyes]

M: little brother technically, by 7 minutes

R: twins?

M: yep

R: he’s a year ahead?

M: held back, long story M: but that pic

R: I feel like you’re trying to change the topic again

M: [a picture of her laying back in bed with her shirt pulled up and one bra cup pulled down]

R:...

M: still there?

R: sorry, went to my happy place

M: my tits are your happy place?

R: you are my happy place

M: you’re sweet for a dirty old pervert M: I hear dirty old men like sending dick pics

R: do you really want me to send one? so weird

M: I’ll show you mine if you show me your’s M: [animated gif of a little girl acting innocent]

R: it’s nothing special, not like you

M: [sends a picture of herself on her bed, her shirt is back in place but her shorts are gone and panties pulled up so that you can see her pubic mound]

R: ok, ok R: [sends a picture of his lap, his pants and boxers lowered to show his soft dick sticking up awkwardly]

M: you’ve really never done this have u?

R: uhh

M: guys usually use angles to make it look as big as possible and you’re not even all the way hard there

R: if I wanted it to look big I’d take a picture of it in your pretty little mouth

M: eww, now that I don’t want my brother to see

R: you really want this?

M: it’s silly but I’m proud of you being mine and it’s my brother

R: but no one else, right?

M: right

R: give me a sec

M: think of me

R: I am

R: [sends another, this one with an effort to make it look good and fully hard]

M: fuck yeah, that’s it M: he’s definitely going to jerk off to this

R: I really don’t need details

M: sooooo...

R: yes?

M: want company for lunch tomorrow?

R: absolutely

M: and if I brought someone?

R: like who?

M: my friend, Lavi

R: the cheerleader?

M:???? [shocked emoji]

R: kinda stalked your instagram

M: have you checked her out

R: no, just yours, but she’s in some of ‘em

M: OK, here’s one I won’t be posting

M: [Melissa is laying on her bed in uniform but without the shorts on under her skirt and the skirt is pulled up to show two fingers stroking through her pussy]

R: fuck I like that

M: good

R: is that you right now?

M: no, I took that for you the other day but didn’t have your number yet

R: you are welcome to send that any day

M: I might [devil emoji] M: seriously, look at Lavi’s, I link to her all the time, she’s hot

R: is this a trap?

M: nope I just want you riled up for when I see you M: [two devil emojis] M: besides I figure you’re a guy

R: and that means...

M: means it’s fine M: I know you’re going to notice women M: if you hide it ... it’s kinda like lying

R: so you want me to look at sexy pictures of your friend?

M: I’m saying that I want to know when you look at any bitches and if you think they’re hot pieces of fuck meat I want to know and want to know what you find hot about them

R: I am astounded at your potty mouth :)

M: all the better for you to put your dick in

M: [picture of her mouth wide open with tongue laying flat out]

R: are you getting worked up?

M: way past that I’m imagining you looking at Lavi’s tits while I blow you

R: actually looking at them?

M: no, just online, and you telling me what you like about them

R: your’s are better R: and the only ones i have eyes for

M: don’t do that

R: what?

M: lie to me, ever

Melissa sees him typing a bunch but he never sends anything.

M: I know you want to protect my feelings

R: want you to know you’re special

M: I want you not what you think I want M: I sure as hell don’t want you pussy whipped like my step

R: don’t know what to say

M: say we’re good for lunch tomorrow M: I want you to meet her

R: we’re good for lunch

M: yay :)

R: allergies?

M: no shellfish for her M: what time

R: 12:30

M: awesome M: gotta go & shower but I’ll be thinking of you

R: and I you

Robert reclined back in his own bed, a lot of questions in his mind but first ... a lunch to plan.

**Chapter 5**

Tuesday

The worst thing about having a window over the pool is that when the sun comes up right over the water it lights up the bedroom with no consideration for your lack of sleep. I’d slept fitfully.

As I got up I half considered dressing up a little, trying to look nice but then thought about what Melissa had said. She was going to get me how I am. Jeans and polo shirt it would be then. I did spend a bit of extra time shaving and bothered to brush my hair though. I could pretend to be a member of civilization. As an early to rise sort it was only 6 AM. Wandering down to the cave, my basement office, I checked email. All of my projects were on or ahead of schedule. The last few samples from South America were showing that my projections were dead on so far. It would be months before we did the first deep samples but it was looking like a home run. I didn’t take many vacations so I decided a second day in a row wouldn’t hurt and let my boss Tony know after answering a few routine emails. I think there is some sort of form to fill out but I figured someone would take care of it. Grocery delivery wasn’t until tomorrow and I had planned trying out some new quiches today and tomorrow but I decided on something more robust for my guests.

I picked up my phone. I had waited all night to call but fortunately, 6:15 wasn’t early for cattle farmers. Someone picked up on the third ring,

“Molson Farms.”

“Hi Katie, it’s Rob Carlo.”

“Hey Rob, what can we do for you?”

“I’m looking for some hanger steak, fresh if you’ve got any.”

“We’re doing delivery to some restaurants in a few hours. I don’t know what’s on the order but I’m sure we can do something and put it in your delivery for next week.”

“Actually, and I know this is sudden, but I was hoping I could come to grab it this morning.”

“Wow. OK. Um ... Look, you’re a good guy Rob but we don’t do special orders and let people come pick stuff up like this.”

“I promise you it’s special and I wouldn’t ask if it wasn’t. It’d be a big favor.”

“And I heard you right, you’re coming to get it? Shin can’t bring you stuff today.”

“Yep, I’ll drive out there. And I need enough for three people.”

Katie’s voice changed to curious. “How long have you known these people are coming over?”

“Well ... she texted and asked last night.”

“She?”

“She.”

“And the other?”

“Her friend.”

Katie’s voice changed from stern to curious. “How long has she been worth a favor?”

“Every second since I met her but I didn’t really know it until a few days ago.”

I heard her laugh through the phone. “And this is your first interrogation isn’t it?”

“Something like that.”

“OK, you’re lucky I’m a romantic but you better get steady with this girl because we’re not doing this again.”

“I can come to get it?”

“You can, you goat, and you better bring me a jar of your honey.”

“Yes ma’am, I will.”

By 10 AM I was home with not just the steak but half a dozen other things I wanted fresh. My phone dinged just as I was back in the door.

M: still good for lunch?

R: all good, about to start miss en place R: er, mise en place, sorry autocorrect

M: wha?

R: getting everything ordered before I start

M: u r sexy when you’re like this

R: like what?

M: like u

I’d didn’t have anything else to say so I closed the messenger app and opened up the smart home apps. The soundbar and lights came on in the kitchen and in another minute I had music starting to play. The next few hours went by faster than I would have thought and by 12:30 I had just pulled the steak off the stove from searing it and was letting it rest when I heard Melissa’s voice echo through the hallway.

“Hey, Robert!”

“Kitchen” I yelled back and platted the squares of steak.

In walked Melissa, in a dress for the first time in a long time, a sleeveless dress that went to mid-thigh, paisley in reds and blues but dark enough to pair well with the black sapphire earrings she wore. The girl with her looked exactly like her Instagram photos. She was a few inches shorter than Melissa with a bust at least a cup larger. It was on glorious display in a bright blue dress that seemed to be more of a smock. It flowed freely around her hips and legs disguising any shape but the front was cut out in a deep V to make sure you could see everything. A smaller chested woman would have problems wearing it I imagine unless it was supposed to go to their navel. On Lavi, her magnificent globes tented it out. Her skin was a rich olive color you don’t get from tanning and the only thing that interrupted the expanse was a single cross strap. I wondered what that strap was because it didn’t look like part of a bra but it had to be as I don’t think she could have walked a few steps without shaking free otherwise. She had the body shape of one of those fertility statues they’ve dug up from the Stone Age just without the belly. She wasn’t fat but where Melissa was toned and strong Lavi was curvy and the curves were soft.

I held out my hand to her and she took it a bit warily, obviously not used to shaking hands.

“A pleasure. Robert.”

“Lavi.” She smiled and looked to Melissa, “You were right.”

Melissa tried to hide her amusement and failed.

“What?” I asked.

“Nothing,” Melissa said. “It smells amazing, please tell me we’re going to eat.” She sighed as she said the last of it.

“Sure but you have to earn your keep. Lavi, there is a pitcher in the fridge of sangria, another of water, grab both. Melissa, grab the bowl of salad, it’s in there too to keep it fresh. I’ll get the steak and veggies. Plates, utensils, glasses are outside already.”

We walked outside and I’d made the poor decision to walk first so I didn’t have the view of them in front of me. We all placed our dishes and carafes on the outdoor table under the awning and fan. It was hot but pleasant in the shade, a perfect day for eating outside. I pulled out Melissa’s chair.

“My Bee.”

That earned me a kiss on the lips that made my step lighten. I pulled out Lavi’s also to be polite but stepped away quickly after nodding my head in acknowledgment.

“I hope you enjoy it.”

“Wine?” That was Lavi.

“Well, that’s for me, I didn’t know if you’d like any. It’s sangria, not very strong and further diluted by the mango and pineapple. We have water too.”

Melissa reached for the carafe, filling her glass and mine. “If I drink you’re not contributing to the delinquency of a minor but Lavi is only seventeen. And driving.”

The brunette did not appear happy.

“But,” I offered, “I won’t tell if no one else does. Besides, it’s not strong and we’ll only have a glass or two.”

Both smiled at me and I had the sense that I had just passed some kind of test. Melissa was radiant as I held up the carafe and Lavi held her glass for me to fill.

“So, what is this all?” Lavi asked.

“Well, morsels of hanger steak, in the sous vide for two hours to keep the moisture and then seared with my own rub. Arugala salad with pine nuts and feta, a lite raspberry vinaigrette, I made it while the meat cooked. The Brussel sprouts are baked with truffle oil and black pepper.”

Both girls looked at each other with some apprehension. I grinned. “Give them a try. Brussel sprouts are usually gross but they’re also usually not cooked well.”

Melissa was the braver of the pair, took one from the tray with her fork and put it past her delicious lips. Her face was stoic and then slowly turned to pleasure.

“That’s fucking brilliant.”

Lavi then took one with a bit of determination to not be shown up. She looked concerned that it might, in fact, be poisonous. She held her mouth open in a little O and then slowly put it in, closed her lips and then ... well, she wasn’t going to be calling it brilliant but she did seem surprised.

“Not bad.”

“Yeah,” I offered, “I hated Brussel sprouts as a kid. Still don’t like them usually but I do like them like this.” For a few moments, we ate in silence while everyone tasted everything. It was Lavi who broke the silence. I tried not to stare down the canyon between her mountains.

“So, what do you do Robert?”

“Me? Nothing interesting. Computer stuff.”

“It’s more than that.” Melissa contributed between bites.

“Like computer programming?”

“No, no. I do a little but not the big coding stuff. I work with data, take rock drilling samples, survey data and create an analysis for where the best next place to do samples is.”

“So ... that’s...”

“Boring.” I provided. I liked my pun but they didn’t get it.

“How they find oil, gases, rare minerals,” Melissa added.

“Woah, that’s big money stuff.”

I groaned internally. I’d had this conversation before.

“Not for me. I work for a non-profit. We help them drill indirectly, find ways to get at deposits that won’t destroy ecologically sensitive areas, things like that. It usually ends up costing them a ton of extra money so we can’t charge much.”

“So, you’re some kind of eco crusader?”

“No.” I ate more steak. “I just like what I do.”

“No office or anything?”

“Just my bat-cave.”

“Your what?”

I smiled. “Lots of computers in the basement.”

“Oh.”

“I attend a virtual meeting once every two weeks. Once a year or so I might suffer through a conference.”

“No customer meetings?”

“No, my bosses keep that stuff off me. We have an unspoken agreement.”

“Which is?”

“I don’t go work for a big company, they don’t make me feel like I’m working for one.”

Melissa remained quiet during Lavi’s interrogation but made great progress on her steak. I went ahead and put two more pieces from the central dish on her plate and she smiled. I had been sipping my sangria and she refilled it.

Lavi blurted, “Did you two get married and no one tells me? Holy shit.”

Melissa and I both looked up at her.

“Adding to her plate, her refilling your glass, you’re not even looking at each other much less talking. My parents have been married for nineteen years and don’t do that.”

I shrugged and took a bite of salad after looking at Melissa’s blue eyes. She seemed amused.

“What about you, senior in school this year, like Melissa?”

“Yep.”

“How long have you known each other?”

“Since 8th grade. My parents moved here from Israel. I was the outsider, my English was rough and Mel was held back so we were the two freaks.”

“Sisters since.” Melissa declared it as she and Lavi high fived in a melodramatic and lazy way over the table. It was cute.

“You mentioned being held back a grade, what happened?”

Melissa looked at me. “I got sick.” Another piece of steak went into her mouth, chewed slowly.

“For a year?”

Lavi, “Yep.”

“What was it?”

Melissa, “Dengue fever.”

I blinked. “Dengue fever?”

“Yep.” Lavi again answered for her. Melissa just nodded.

Melissa sighed and then seemed to decide to get it over with, “I got it and it came back like it was dormant in my system. Again and again. It was bad. It escalated to what they call hemorrhagic. And it kept returning so they kept me in a special ward until they were sure it was gone. Took months and months and by the time it was done they didn’t want me coming back to school, or really around anyone even though it doesn’t work like that. Only mosquitos carry it.”

“They couldn’t bring you assignments and stuff? So that you didn’t get held back.”

She shook her head.

“Mel wasn’t in a good headspace at the time,” Lavi offered.

“You didn’t know her then did you?”

“Not until the next year, but I wish I had.” Melissa smiled wanly at her and I reached over to rub Melissa’s forearm.

“That’s why my mom gets psycho when I get home and am a bit ... off-kilter. She’s afraid I’m getting sick again.”

“But it’s been what, three years?” I was having trouble keeping some of this straight.

“Four,” Melissa countered.

“How did you get dengue fever?”

“No one’s sure but our neighbor had just come back from Vietnam. Maybe a mosquito somehow got into her stuff and then bit me. Shouldn’t have survived in a trans-pacific cargo hold. She wasn’t sick, no one in her house was, I didn’t go in her house but it’s the only link anyone could make a guess to.”

It was a weak smile. I could tell that took a lot.

“I understand there is a medical journal article about me.” She was pushing the salad around on her plate.

I looked at Melissa, stood up and walked around, putting my fingers under her chin and kissed her. She tasted of sangria this time. “Well, I’m not surprised you’re a medical marvel, you’re pretty amazing every other way so why not when you get sick too?”

“Some people get kind of freaked out by it.”

I looked down at her. “I got strep throat a bunch when I was in 8th great. I threw up on the floor of the pharmacy because they were so slow.”

“I bled from my rectum.”

“You win.”

We kissed again, me standing over her, her head tilted up. I was back in my seat when Lavi cleared her throat and said,

“Bleeding from your rectum, then butt stuff won’t be too gross huh?”

Melissa actually spit part of the sangria she was drinking out onto her plate and I think I went bug-eyed for a second. Lavi started laughing and it was infectious and soon we all were. The laughter started to die out and then from nowhere, it began again. By the time the second wave had laughed, we were all much more relaxed.

“So, your Mom was worried, last night...”

“Yeah, but Lavi is with me. Lavi is like my emotional support girlfriend.”

“Yep,” Lavi supplied, “some girls get a dog, Mel gets a pair of tits.” She unceremoniously shook them again. I noticed but I was talking to Melissa and ignored them.

“Lavi has been my backup since we met, especially since Tommy was in a different grade after I went back. She even went out for cheerleaders just to watch over me.”

“It sure wasn’t because I enjoy spending my summer busting my ass practicing.” It was a jib but clearly good-natured.

“Well, some of us need to work on our flexibility more and watching tv less.”

“Bitch.”

“Skank.”

They were both now smiling widely.

“Yeah, cheerleading was good for my mom,” said Melissa.

“Not you?”

“I don’t really care. I did it for mom in 7th grade. Then in 8th I just couldn’t face it once I went back. I thought maybe I was gone from it. Mom certainly didn’t push it but it was like living under a microscope. By the time I started high school ... I would give anything to get back to normal. And I did like cheering, not some of it but the dancing and tumbling parts are fun. I guess it convinced Mom I was normal again or she wanted it so bad that she was willing to give up hovering over me a bit. I don’t know.”

For a few minutes, people just ate until we were all just drinking and the food was gone. I collected plates in an inelegant pile and said I’d be right back. I returned with dessert plates and poached pears in a honey sauce. Melissa’s eyes immediately lit up.

“Ooooo honey.”

“That’s my bee.”

“This honey is so good,” Melissa said to Lavi.

“I don’t see the bees,” Lavi said.

“They’re around the corner,” I offered. “I wanted their corner to be private so they wouldn’t get stressed by people moving around a lot.”

“How do they deal with the yard crew?” Melissa asked.

“The yard crew doesn’t mow that part of the yard. I go out there occasionally with a quiet electric mower and trim it when it’s needed.”

Pure silence was only broken by a few delighted throat sounds from the two girls which I took as a compliment.

“So, do you two have to head out after lunch or can you hang around some?”

“Weeeelllll,” Melissa drew the word out. “I didn’t ask but I was hoping we could hang out at the pool while you work.”

“Hmm...” I took a slightly melodramatic air of deliberation. “There is one problem with that.”

“You don’t want two hot girls doing who knows what while you’re working in your boring old basement?” Lavi asked, leaning forward for emphasis.

“Something like that.” I looked into Melissa’s eyes though. “I took the day off again.”

Melissa glowed when I said that. Lavi threw up her arms and yelled “Party!” I think the sangria was having an effect.

Melissa, “So, it’s OK I didn’t ask I take it.”

“You could move in and I wouldn’t bat an eye.”

“Is that an offer?”

“Not yet. Would you accept it?”

“Not yet.”

We leaned over the table and kissed again.

Lavi looked like she was going to say something snide and then stopped and instead chose to have more wine. I started gathering up the dessert dishes.

“Nope, we got these,” Melissa said, “Now, get in some swim trunks so you can join us properly.”

I walked calmly in the door and once out of sight took steps two at a time at a run and may have set a new land speed record for changing into trunks. I was at the bottom of the steps when I heard them in the kitchen.

It was Melissa’s voice. “So, who won?”

“Tommy was kinda right, I didn’t think I was until I saw him look at you.”

“He’s not a creep out to despoil me or anything, mini-mom.”

“Not a creep or not out to despoil you?”

“Not a creep. He’d better want to keep despoiling me.”

“He’s not like that chess geek you led around either.”

“Darrel. Darrel was nice, just not for me.”

“Your mom hated him.”

“That was a bonus but just not my type. I liked him as a friend though.”

Dishes were being rinsed off and put into the dishwasher.

“And they call me a bitch!”

“I didn’t say that to him.”

“Thank god. Seriously though, you’re sure you know what you’re doing?”

“Well ... no. I don’t exactly have a string of ex-lovers twice my age to base my actions on.”

“There goes my role model.”

“Bitch.”

“Slut.”

“Only for him.”

A pause.

“You’re sure about this?”

“As much as I can be. Where the hell is the soap for the dishwasher?”

I heard cabinets open.

“I’m kinda jealous.” That was Lavi.

“Why?”

“He looked at me. Saw me, then ignored me. You know I don’t wear my tits out so that guys, or girls, ignore me.”

“He thinks you’re hot.”

“He told you that?!?” She seemed shocked.

“No, but I can tell.”

I took a few steps back and walked down making sure I hit the steps a bit more loudly. The voices stopped by the time I got there. The dishwasher was now running.

“Did you ladies bring suits? Need the bathroom?”

They smiled at me. Melissa moved first but Lavi not liking to be outdone hurried to catch up. I watched Melissa. Her dress came up and like that first day ... was it only a few days ago ... she showed herself, her perfectly flat stomach and then as it rose past them, showing wearing a bikini top underneath. It was blue with white flowers and the cups held her tits in perfect globes. Not willing to miss it entirely I looked briefly over at Lavi whose dress was lifted in one swift motion showing a classic V of white material covering her crotch with black stripes and a red thread reaching over her hips. The red strip I’d assumed was part of a bra turned out to be part of a matching bikini top that just barely fit her.

This time I let my gaze linger a bit longer and she giggled. Looking back so did Melissa as she dropped her shorts showing a matching bikini bottom as well. Her’s was more modest but that was relative. Both turned around giving me a 360-degree view. Melissa’s just barely covered her ass and was tight but Lavi’s was a thong. Where Melissa had a perfect bubble but Lavi had what could only be called a booty. They turned back and held hands.

“I think he likes it, Lavi.”

“Definitely not gay.” She giggled again. I had a feeling that little of Mellissa’s and my discussions had been private.

Lavi walked out first and I motioned for Melissa to precede me but she instead walked up behind me and whispered in my ear. “Enjoy the view lover.” Then she unceremoniously pushed me to follow Lavi, her hands at my back.

Once outside Lavi and Melissa provided a spectacle worthy of a Turkish emperor watching as they stretched and prepared to lay out in the sun. I walked over to the cabinet where I kept the sunblock and handed it to Melissa but she pushed it back in my hand and motioned me over to Lavi.

“Keep my mini-mom there from getting burned, will you?”

Lavi wiggled her ass at me. My only thought was that this was entirely unfair.

I strode over and squeezed the bottle liberally spraying Lavi’s back with the white cream. I slowly rubbed the cream over her skin, rubbing it first across the small of her back and then in. I looked back at Melissa, she has sat in the shade but was watching me intently. There was no displeasure on her face. Upon successfully applying solar guard to the small of her back I reached both hands to her sides and using my thumbs strongly massaged and rubbed her. Under my hands, Melissa’s sides had been taut and muscled. Lavi had muscle there as well but was softer. She reached back to undo her bikini top but I ignored it. Instead, I simply pulled my hands down and massaged the arc that leads to her curvy ass and as there was no impediment to my hands over her cheeks went without delay to massage it and rub more cream into both cheeks. I lingered there, rubbing in once, twice and a completely unneeded third time before gently smacking the right cheek just to listen to my hand on it and make her jump.

Then I got her legs and once done ran my hands to her shoulders and continued my assault onto every inch of skin including her neck and arms. As I finished she seemed quite relaxed and Melissa took the divan in the sun next to her friend.

“Now me.”

“At your service.” I smiled. She got the same treatment except it took twice as long and I enjoyed it twice as much, including sliding my hands under her bottoms too, completely unnecessarily, to rub the cream in there.

I laid the sunscreen between them and retreated into the shade with a glass of wine and my poolside book. I would like to say that I became deeply engrossed in it but the truth is that one teen girl would have distracted me but two prevented me from more than glancing at words and realizing I was ignoring it. Still, no regrets.

I have no idea how much time passed but Melissa’s phone dinged. By some common understanding, they both turned over. Melissa tossed her top away first. Lavi looked at her, looked at me and then made some internal decision and did the same. Melissa waved the bottle at me.

I waved my book back at her. “Entertain yourselves.” The look my honey bee gave me would have melted the arctic circle. I didn’t hear what she said but she whispered something in Lavi’s ear that had her leaping up and grabbing the bottle.

Melissa laid down and Lavi quickly began rubbing Melissa down and if I had taken liberal time with Melissa’s breasts Lavi worshipped them with her fingertips. I had meant for them to cover themselves not each other but this was fine too. I closed the book with the bookmark in place to make sure I didn’t lose my place.

Melissa moaned as Lavi did this. She ran her hand down Melissa’s sides, covered her stomach, her arms and returned to her breasts, coated her legs and rubbed each toe in sequence, making sure not a single micrometer of exposed skin around her bikini bottom was untouched and returned to the breasts again. Melissa giggled. “I think you got them.”

She gave me a look and I had no doubt the tenting of my swim trunks were putting a lie to my disinterest.

Now Lavi lay down. Melissa waved the bottle at me again, with a raised eyebrow this time. Lavi grabbed her wrist. “No, no, let him read.”

Melissa laughed. “OK, you horny bitch, you’ve been wanting this.”

“Oh yes.” She laid back.

Melissa directed her voice to me though she was smiling at Lavi. “This little carpet muncher has wanted in my pants since we met.” She was rubbing the lotion into Lavi’s neck and shoulders.

“That’s Lavi the Licker to you bitch.”

They laughed.

Melissa continued, “Her nickname when the other cheerleaders found out she was gay. She confronted the nastiest one, Sara Rhine, stuck up, promise-ring wearing, holy roller, in front of everyone and loudly offered to show her how to cum like her boyfriend couldn’t and started putting tape on her locker with LL on it.”

Lavi’s voice rose up with a faraway quality. “I’d have done anything for this before but Melissa has never had any interest in women. Shit, the way she led a few boys around and didn’t really care there I started to think she was asexual.”

Now it was Melissa’s and my turn to laugh.

Lavi looked at us as much as she could without moving away from Melissa’s touch. Melissa supplied the answer. “I had told Robert that I’d wondered about him.”

“Judging from the big top over there you could walk bears and elephants through so I think he likes something.”

“I do too.” Melissa leaned down and kissed Lavi’s nipple.

“Fuck.” Lavi ran her hands through Melissa’s golden hair, pulled out her ponytail from its scrunchy and held the blonde cheerleader to her chest. “Do that, god I’ve always wanted you.”

“I know.” She went back to it.

Then they were whispering. Melissa stopped and they began talking in earnest. Then Melissa waved me over to sit with them. Melissa was on her knees now next to Lavi and I saw nothing mischievous in her face. I went over.

Lavi was sad. “Robert.” Melissa held out her arm to me and I bent in. She pulled me into a hug with Lavi, completely non-sexual but I felt their love for each other.

“We were talking. Lavi is concerned I’m doing this just for you.”

Lavi, “Look, you’re my best friend Melissa, I’d do anything for you but I don’t want to be part of you just being bi for your boyfriend. Fuck, when you first touched me I thought I’d finally gotten it but ... I don’t mind this just being fun but I want you to actually want me.”

Melissa touched her face tenderly. “I do.”

“You know that half the team thinks we’re already a thing.”

Melissa shrugged. “Do you remember when we’d settle down in our sleeping bags and jill off, listening to each other in the dark?”

“Yeah, I wanted to get in your bag with you.”

“I wanted you to too.”

“Why didn’t you tell me? I told you I find you hot.”

“Because it didn’t feel right then. I wasn’t ready. Yes, I want to turn Robert on but that’s not what this is. This doesn’t make sense but ... I feel safe wanting it now.”

I reached out to touch Lavi’s arm. “You girls can go upstairs. I can stay down here.”

She looked at me and back at Melissa. “What do you think?”

“I’d love to go upstairs with you. I’d like Robert with us even if he’s just watching but I’ve thought about touching you every time we’ve changed clothes in the locker room. If you want him to stay down here I’ll still enjoy every second.”

Lavi got up and went to the pitcher of water, largely untouched. She poured a glass and drank it quickly. Her magnificent tits bounced as she walked.

“I need some time. Not today. Fuck. I can’t believe this.”

Melissa came up and hugged her, I watched, Lavi came up to her chin and the contrast, the darker and the pale.

“Not today but another day, any day, you tell me when.”

“Does it have to be here?”

“No, but I do have to ask Robert.”

“No. No, you don’t, “ I said.

“Yes, I do.” She wasn’t adamant, it was just a fact I saw in her eyes.

“OK, well, I’m telling you now it’s fine, with Lavi, anytime and anywhere including not here and it doesn’t need to be with me.”

It was Lavi’s turn to hug me. Melissa was left alone a moment and then joined in the hug again but this time it wasn’t an awkward leaning over hug and I had two different but perfect pairs of tits pressed into me.

“OK.” Lavi said, “If I don’t get some actual sun I’m going to look freakishly uneven.” I started back to my own chair when I heard “Robert.”

Lavi was holding the bottle of sunscreen for me. I walked over and applied it, getting the spots Melissa hadn’t gotten to yet. I did it thoroughly but didn’t take my time, I tried to be a friend and when I was done squeezed her hand and smiled. Melissa was already laying down and when I returned to my seat I saw their hands stretched out, holding hands in the sun.

A while passed and this time I could actually read. I had progressed a few chapters when the phone dinged again and the ladies moved out of the sun. Presumably content with being darker without skin cancer they joined me in the shade.

Melissa, “Cool down and then swim?”

Lavi, “Absolutely.”

I got up and fetched glasses. The ice from the water pitcher was melted but it was still cool and I poured them fresh glasses to help them stay hydrated. The chatter that followed was mundane. Lavi wasn’t in advanced placement English so her reading list was a lot more modest and she was further behind on it than Melissa on hers. Dueling phones exchanged various playing of popular songs. I was gratified that Melissa didn’t care for the ones I found painful to listen to. Some gossip. Melissa left me out of it feeling no need to include me but I saw her look at me periodically. I was perfectly happy reading. A lot of the girls had been meeting in the mornings for informal practice all summer. Officially the team wouldn’t reform until school restarted but returning members would start meeting at the school with the coach about two weeks before the year started to start preparing for the competitions. I had the sense they weren’t talking about football games and put down the book to listen more at this point.

“So, you girls do those cheerleader competitions?”

“Yeah.” Melissa grinned.

“You’re good?”

“Pretty good. We place at regionals a lot and get good scores at national. For most of us, that’s the real reason for being on the team. Cheering at games like football seems kind of anti-climatic when most of us are better athletes than those who we are cheering for.”

Lavi, “But football is big at the school so we’re expected to be super enthusiastic about it.” Sarcasm dripped thicker than honey.

Melissa shrugged. “The team isn’t bad, not great, just average. I think we win slightly more games than we lose and that’s enough for most people to get super excited.”

“I kinda get that. British football is like that.”

Melissa raised her head and opened one eye at me in a query.

“The only sport I follow. A holdover from living in England a while.” I supplied.

Lavi, “Did you play?”

“I kicked the ball around some with friends but actual games? No. My interest in organized group activities is pretty much zero even then. However...” I trailed off thinking about it.

Melissa, “Yeah?”

“I think when the year starts I might have to get interested in our local cheer team and come watch. Who knows, maybe I’ll even get some school spirit.”

Melissa rolled her eyes. “I think I know the spirit you’re looking for, you horny satyr, you just want to perv on high school girls in their uniforms and peek under their skirts.”

“I thought they had shorts on underneath and modern uniforms really didn’t show much?”

“Well, during the game yeah, I’m talking about after...” She grinned at me.

Lavi interrupted this chain of thought, “OK, you two let’s get in the water before you two start something out here.” With that Lavi stood up. Both put their tops back on. Lavi went over to the pool, sitting down on the side to slide in. Melissa took my hand and I walked her to the deep end where she prepared to dive in gracefully but I foiled her plan by scooping her up and jumping in with her in an inelegant jump.

We both came up sputtering, her softly hitting my chest with a glint in her eyes.

“You brute, you hoof footed lech.”

I reached out to her and grabbed her, pulling her forward then kissed her, tasting her and pool water again as I grabbed her ass. As I finished I whispered in her ear “I’m not apologizing.” Then I jumped backward and swam away as she splashed me in mock outrage.

“You take liberties with a defenseless nymph sir!”

Someone had really gotten into the greek mythology. For half an hour we played innocently in the pool. Mostly. Melissa and I may have played a little grab-ass and I think I may have seen Lavi and Melissa exchange a few grabby hands too. Lavi flashed me as much as she did Melissa but declined any ass grabbing with me. And we chatted. This time I joined though I didn’t have a lot to say. Still, Melissa kept pulling me in and as if it was an unspoken arrangement soon Lavi was too. I could talk about music but it turned out I had absolutely no idea about movies that were popular or tv shows.

The next hour passed easily but we were all getting a little bright pink despite the waterproof sunscreen. We retreated to the shade and settled down, subdued from swimming and playing. Lavi laid down on one of the recliners and after about ten minutes she fell asleep. Meanwhile, Melissa was laid up against me, whispering in my ear, my arms wrapped around her.

“You’re not weirded out, right? Lavi and me?”

“No.”

“You’re sure?”

“I’m sure.”

“I ... just don’t want you to think I don’t want you. This isn’t for you but ... because of you.”

“I don’t get that but it’s ok.”

“Sure? A hundred percent sure?”

“Yes. I don’t have to understand it.”

As we laid there, Melissa hand’s went down to my nipples, she rubbed them and then to my shorts. She began playing with my cock through my trunks as I teased her nipples. We kissed lazily but it wasn’t until Melissa moaned into me and I heard an echoing moan from nearby that I realized Lavi was awake.

I froze a second which prompted Melissa to back off. “Let’s go upstairs and shower.”

She got up and I eagerly followed. So did Lavi. I held the door for her. My predecessors had installed a huge shower with four showerheads from two directions. It had no door but the whole bathroom had a very slight incline to a single drain in the center. I had always considered it overkill but right now I thanked them for installing it. Melissa stripped as we walked. Her top ended up in my hallway and her bottoms in my bedroom. I was still watching her ass when she turned on the water.

Melissa looked to Lavi, “Wanna join us? There is room and water.”

Lavi, “I’ll wait my turn.” She smiled and I just now noticed she was nude too. Her legs were spread as she leaned back against the sink and stroked herself. In the other direction under the water, Melissa was already soaping herself up. I was far too dressed and dropped my trunks fixing that.

Entering the shower Melissa started soaping me running her hands across my chest. It only seemed friendly for me to do the same. I felt her nipples and let my palms slide over them. After being teased all afternoon I’d had enough. I grabbed Melissa by the arms, lifting her as she wrapped those toned legs around me.

I was already hard and she guided me into her. She was tight and pool water and shower water don’t make great lubricants. I strained to put my cock in her, feeling her dried out by the pool water and tight as a vise but also hot and getting wetter from the inside with every stroke. Apparently it wasn’t fast enough for her so she responded by spitting in her hand and telling me to pull out. She took the saliva and rubbed the head of my dick with it and I obliged by pushing the head fully in. Once lodged in I torturously pulled out and pushed in, pushing in quarter inch by quarter inch. I lost all track of time. A minute, an hour, it was all a blur of hot water hitting my back, her hands holding onto me, her cunt milking me.

Beyond the spray of water, I saw Lavi. She pushed two fingers inside herself.

Melissa looked at her friend, “Do you like looking at this cock? I like your tits.” Lavi pushed them out more. “I like seeing you fuck yourself. I want to taste you.”

Lavi came up then walked into the shower and fed her fingers into Melissa’s mouth, she sucked them greedily. Lavi whispered in my ear, “She’s tasting my pussy. You’ll taste it when you kiss her.”

Lavi took her fingers out of Melissa’s mouth and I took that as an invitation to kiss Melissa. Honestly, I can’t say I tasted anything other than Melissa but maybe for a split second, I thought I tasted pussy there. It might have been my imagination but it was still hot and my cock got harder. Melissa felt it and her fingertips dug into my arm like she was in a death grip. I pulled back, wondering how long I could hold her like this even with a lot of her weight resting against the wall but at this point, I had too much adrenaline to care.

Lavi wasn’t quite in the water but getting sprayed with it and I looked over at her, she was kissing Melissa’s neck. I looked now, I looked long and carefully at the pendulous breasts, they hung lower than Melissa’s and my initial impression was wrong, Lavi was larger, easily into the E cup territory. She was gorgeous and as she kissed Melissa I saw more than lust.

Melissa looked at Lavi and said “Look at him now. He wants you. Look at his cock, buried in me.” She snaked one arm around Lavi and Lavi had to put one around her to help hold her up on that side. It felt like juggling while fucking. If it wouldn’t have interrupted Melissa’s taunting of her friend I would have probably giggled. The image of us all falling over entwined in the shower was glorious and then it hit me. I was fucking my lover while her best friend held her and it was sexy and funny and I wanted that feeling to last forever. It was also so awkward I wondered if I’d ever cum it was so distracting.

Melissa was now sucking on Lavi’s giant tit and I could see Lavi’s fingers working overtime in her own snatch.

Melissa, “Let him taste them directly, feed those fingers in your wet cunt to my lover. I’m going to taste that directly when you’re ready.”

Lavi looked like a zombie and gave me her two fingers. They were delicious, pungent, a stronger less sweet taste than Melissa but almost spicy. Melissa’s dirty mouth turned back on “That’s it, lover, suck that pussy taste. You know those fingers came out of virgin pussy, don’t you? That’s right, Lavi the LIcker, the slut has never given it up for a cock. Would you like to be the first? You want me to seduce her for you? She wants in my pants not yours but maybe I can convince her?”

At that, I exploded. Then Melissa did something unexpected, she grabbed Lavi’s hand and pulled it to her clit. Lavi didn’t need instruction and played with the little extrusion until Melissa exploded. Lavi was only a few seconds behind. I let Melissa down and my legs were a bit unsteady.

“Fuck I needed that,” Melissa said. After that, we actually showered, even Lavi.

We were quiet and all smiling when Melissa out of the blue a few minutes later said, “What do you think about a big shelf in here, about ... yay height?” And held her hand out just a bit below my cock.

We all laughed, finished washing and towels came out to dry off. I went back outside where the girls got dressed again and we talked more while Melissa went to the shed and got the equipment out to start cleaning the pool.

It had been a good day, which was good because next week got complicated.

**Chapter 6**

“I’m horny.”

Melissa said it, almost at a whisper, while lying against me. She sounded a little sad and a tiny bit annoyed. She had cleaned the pool, which she did every day first thing after getting here. Each day was different. We didn’t have a ritual but each day she came over and we were together. That was enough. Some days we just sat and talked. Some days we read and then talked to each other. Not every day, but nearly, we had some form of sex. Sometimes it was just fucking. When one of us was in that mood the other got in pretty quickly. I could see it in her eyes, her shift from relaxed to lust. On other days we just lazily made love and it was perfect. We only went indoors when it was exceptionally hot.

Today though was Friday again. It was three weeks since we had first given in but her perfect breasts pressed against me had not lost their appeal one iota. I had not wasted time removing my shirt when she walked towards me topless. Her fingertips played in the light hair on my chest. I had put down my book and had a playlist of light poppy songs, currently playing a K-pop song from Oh My Girl after transitioning from the Monkees. Running my hands through her hair I asked,

“So, do you want to... ?” I left the verb for her to fill in.

“I can’t. It’s that time.”

“Monthly?”

“Yeah.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Fucking sucks.”

“Does it hurt?”

“Yeah, not real bad but it sucks. And I’m horny. It’s not fair hurting and being horny and I can’t do anything about either.”

“We can fuck you know.”

She lifted her head to look at me.

“What do you mean?”

“My penis will still successfully insert into the vagina,” I said like I was stating something painfully obvious, which it was.

“Ewwwwww!” I tried not to laugh but her disdain was clear.

“Do you bleed a lot?”

“No, just a bit. It’s just starting.”

“So, it’s not that big a deal.”

“That’s gross.”

“Some women say it helps.”

“That is too weird.”

I didn’t push it. Honestly, I have no desire to see blood on my dick but I didn’t think it was a big deal if it was just a little blood. However, it’s also clear this wasn’t about what was logical so I let it drop. This was the point where Melissa stood up and motioned for me to stand. I did and followed her inside.

“Where are we going?” I asked.

“I need to take care of you.” I held her hand and followed her to the bedroom. I now actually made my bed in the mornings since I might have company. With steady hands and no sign of arousal in her eyes, she motioned for me to get on the bed. “Pants off.” She said. Amused, I took my pants and boxers off.

Lying back on the bed, Melissa climbed onto the bed sliding between my legs. My own blood was already flowing into my dick but it was far from hard. That changed the second her lips parted and she gently touched the side of my shaft with the tip of her tongue. Then she kissed it, not a peck but parted her lips and kissed the shaft like a lover. Running her hands up my thighs she kneed my thigh muscles while using only her mouth on me. Her head bobbed and moved to require her whole upper body to shift constantly as she didn’t allow herself to use her hands. Instead of moving my cock to her purpose she rotated around it, almost worshipping it with lips and tongue. She ran her tongue down the shaft leaving a trail of saliva and took one ball after another into her mouth.

After what seemed like forever exploring the monolith and tasting every exposed bit of flesh she made her way to the top. She kissed the glans and took it between her lips and then slid down to deep throat me. I didn’t know if she had been practicing or just felt the moment but it was the first time she had done that and it was amazing. I felt her throat squeeze me and her nose pressed against my pubic bone. When her bottom lip touched just above my ball sack I felt my whole body jump a little. That made her choke a tiny bit but she continued to breathe through her nose as she slowly pulled up, her tongue firmly against the underside of my cock. My balls felt ready to explode but I wasn’t quite there. It was awful and wonderful.

A noise escaped me, I meant to say something about how great that was but just grunts and maybe something like ‘fuck yes’ came out.

Melissa was aroused and I could see it in her eyes now. She was also grinning like the Chesire cat, clearly proud of herself.

It took a second but I could form words now. “Been practicing?”

She beamed like she had won a prize. “Lavi got me a new dildo from Amazon. I gave her very exact instructions about length and width.”

I laid my head back down and just closed my eyes. “Remind me to thank her.”

“I will ... but first ... I want you to cum without my hands, I want you to cum just from my mouth.”

She went back to work. She’d didn’t build up this time but I immediately went back into her throat. I don’t know how long I lay there. I’d never cum from just a blowjob before, I had always required some stroking but Melissa had not only suppressed her gag reflex but had learned to use her tongue to pull back and forth on my skin. It wasn’t like being stroked by a hand but it was a stroking motion and told my body what to do. It took a while but when I came I felt exhausted. It felt like I’d been there for an hour though it was probably more like a quarter of that. A quarter of an hour of constant unrelenting suction on my dick. I idly wondered for a second if a dick could get sore from that. If so it would have been worth it.

I saw a brief glimpse of Melissa’s satisfied smile and then she darted up and ran to the bathroom. The door had barely shut when I heard her start making groaning noises. I was confused and then realized she was bleeding and didn’t want me to see the blood. I had barely started stepping away when I heard her cry out a single loud exultant grunt. She probably didn’t even want to play with herself but had gotten too worked up. I went downstairs and by the time I returned carrying two glasses of tea the shower was running.

I stepped in and put the glass on the sink before stepping into the shower area with her. Melissa gave me an askance view but I kept my gaze up from her feminine nether region to avoid embarrassing her in case some blood was still there. I gave her a quick kiss on the cheek and just said, “You’re gorgeous. There’s ginger tea on the sink for you.”

She gave me a little smile and returned to scrubbing with the loofah and her hair tied up out of the water. I had only been on the edge of the water so I dried off briefly and then put boxers back on along with a t-shirt. I heard the water stop and shortly after Melissa came out smelling faintly of her strawberry body wash in her shorts and topless still. I had stocked the bathroom with all the same wash and hair products she used at home as well as invested in a hairdryer. Some mornings when I went into the bathroom it felt a bit lonely to see them there but not have her there.

Melissa joined me as I reclined on the bed. She sat legs crossed on the bed nursing on her tea but made a face when sipping it.

“Ginger? It’s strong.”

“Good for inflammation. Might help with your period.”

She replied by kissing me gently on the lips. We sat for a few minutes in silence, her humming as she drank and me enjoying the toned legs that disappeared into her shorts, my hand running along her thigh. Her breasts stood up, defying gravity, and her nipples looked ready to break glass, still probably cold from getting out of the hot shower. Wordlessly she finished her tea and we walked back to the pool where she retrieved her bra, t-shirt and sneakers. She dressed and started to leave, giving me a hug and kiss, which still made me hard. The only difference was that instead of pretending to ignore it these days she would check it with one hand to make sure it was to her standards before she smirked at me and turned away.

“Text me later?” I asked.

“I can’t.”

“Busy?”

“Yeah, Lavi and I are having an Aunt Flo sleepover. Old tradition when both of us are having it. We’re nearly on the same cycle.”

“Make sense,” I said laughing lightly. “So, no cheating?”

Melissa smiled sadly. “No, no cheating. We turn our phones off so we’re not distracted. Otherwise, we’re pinged by the other cheerleaders. And my mom knows if I turn my phone back on. She uses that Find Friends stuff to check on me all the time.”

“That sounds a little ... extreme.” I refrained from calling it crazy.

“Yeah, she set up these actions to notify her when I go to certain places, leave them, so on. She uses those. Says it’s for my safety.”

“Wow.”

“Yeah. And she’s in super helicopter mode thanks to Jerry.”

“Huh?”

She sighed. “Well, I’ve been trying to figure out what to do so I’ve been telling him I don’t feel well. I even suggested he ask someone else out. I really talked him up to a few others on the squad but apparently he called to talk to my mom about it.”

“Did you tell him you were sick?”

“No, just not feeling well, I meant like not in the headspace for going out, nothing dramatic. I didn’t make a big deal about it, just distancing myself.”

“And he went to talk to your mom. I guess that shows concern.”

The look Melissa gave me could have curdled milk. “Would you go talk to a girl’s mom when she’s not going out with you?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“I’m dating her, not her mom.”

“Exactly. I’m a little tired of people being worried about me. And it’s kind of ... wussy.”

I caressed her cheek. “You do know I worry about you don’t you?”

“No, you don’t.” She looked at me dead in the eyes. “You worry about us. You don’t want bad things to happen to me. You don’t just worry. Trust me, it’s a big difference.”

“OK, OK. Well, have fun.” We started walking to the back yard’s door in the fence together.

“We will. Well, not that kind of fun, not much. The time of the month you know.”

“I haven’t asked but have you two...”

“Not yet. Just kissing. Lavi says she wants it to be special. But I’ll tell you.”

“That’s smart but you don’t have to tell me. I shouldn’t have asked.”

“I will tell you. Lying by omission is still lying.”

“That doesn’t mean you have to tell me everything.”

“It does if I belong to you.”

“Do you?”

“I do. That thing may be mine but all of me is yours.”

I stared back in her eyes and saw no doubt, no wavering. I kissed her in response, a bear hug around her body pulling her in for a deep kiss that traded our tongues and souls.

Then she left and I sighed as I returned to the house.

It was after nine that night when I heard the doorbell ring. I was in the kitchen cooking and failing when I heard it. The doorbell rang with some frequency but not usually on a Friday night. Occasionally a delivery person would ring it but usually, they just left stuff on the porch and my phone would beep to tell me the delivery was made. I turned the heat off the stovetop and decided I didn’t care what happened to the noodles, they weren’t any good anyway. Let them sit and go to mush. Grumpily I walked to the front door and opened it partway, leaving the chain hooked just in case, and was shocked to find Melissa and Lavi standing there.

Melissa stood there coquettishly with her hands behind her wearing a light blue dress that ran to her knees. She lifted one left just enough to keep her toes on the ground and swing the knee back and forth like a naughty schoolgirl. “Miss me, babe?”

Lavi seemed to be amused by my surprise. I replied by grabbing Melissa and lifting her off her feet and spinning her around. It was silly but I was feeling silly and sincere when I put her down and said, “I’m delighted.”

Lavi, “OK, love birds, we should probably take it inside unless you want to advertise this to the world.”

“I don’t care.”

Melissa, “Maybe you should take her for a spin too.” Lavi, in a loose crop top and jeans actually backed up.

“Oh, no. My mom’s here.” She playfully gave a ‘no-no’ gesture with her finger.

That sobered me. Lavi made a ‘come here’ motion toward the light red sedan I just now noticed in the driveway. An older woman, probably close to my own age I noted, got out. Spending time with teenage girls was skewing my idea about age. I would need to watch that.

She may have been older but she was still good looking though shared little obvious in common with Lavi who must have taken after her father. She was taller with skinny jeans that made her legs look tremendous and her breasts while concealed under a loose blouse couldn’t have been anything close to Lavi’s. The one thing they shared in common was their hair which couldn’t have been more identical if it had been a pair of wigs.

As she walked forward she stared straight at me and something tugged at my memory. She stopped a few paces away, right beside her daughter and said, “As I live and breathe, Rob Carlo. It is you.”

I stared stupidly in response. Then with perfect memory, she began,

“This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary The trees of the mind are black. The light is blue. The grasses unload their griefs on my feet as if I were God Prickling my ankles and murmuring of their humility Fumy, spiritous mists inhabit this place. Separated from my house by a row of headstones. I simply cannot see where there is to get to.”

Of course, I remembered her name. It was a lifetime ago and a long way from here but I had read that to her because she had been a shy little goth girl and I thought she might like Sylvia Plath since it was her name too and maybe would identify with the themes. “Sylvia? McCallister?” I asked.

“Hi, Rob.”

“Mom?” Melissa was speechless. Lavi was ready to sit down.

“I’ve told you about him, Lavi. Meet the editor.”

I had a lot of questions, including what the fuck was she talking about.