

Family Tradition

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by Edward Lee & John Pelan

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Chapter One

“Boy, are you fuckin’ them worms again?”

Startled by his brother’s voice, Esau Turvog guiltily dropped the bait can he held in one hand and the fistful of nightcrawlers he had in the other. *Damn*, he thought. He’d been just about to get a nut out when his brother interrupted him.

Esau’s brother Enoch stood in the shop’s doorway; his considerable bulk caused the woodplank flooring to bend. “Quit jerkin’ off with them worms, ’less of course you want to go dig some more up. The first weekend of May’s comin’ up, and we might have folks stopping by for some fishin’. We got a business to run here, ya know?”

Enoch wrinkled his nose in disgust as his younger brother stuffed his sullied cock, still slick with spit and worm slime, back into his filthy jeans. The boy was a damn fine cook, but that was about all. He just wasn’t right, Enoch knew. Never had been. Fucking sheep and cows was one thing—something *all* natural men partook of once in a while. But fucking *worms*? Somehow that just didn’t seem normal.

“Aw, Enoch,” Esau complained. “I was just about to have me a big cum.” What Esau did, by the way, was grab a big handful of worms from one of the bait cans in the fridge. Then he’d lay his dick right in that handful and start jerking. He’d squeeze the nightcrawlers so hard some of ’em would burrow open as he shucked them back and forth over his tool. Them worms were *full* of blood, which shined up Esau’s dick nice’n pretty red. And them worms’d wriggle and squirm as he was jerkin’—felt real good. *Next best thing to pussy*, he thought. *Er-shit. Maybe better*. Sometimes, when Enoch was off the shore for supplies, Esau would take a Q-Tip and, inch by inch, shove an entire worm down his peehole. Once he got it all the way in, he’d pinch off the end’a his dick and just let that worm wiggle around in there. It felt *damn* good, it did. Then he’d jerk off and release the pinch just as he was coming and pump his load out right along with the worm.

But not today. No nut today.

Esau reluctantly picked the nightcrawlers up off the floor, dropped them all back in the can, and replaced the can to the fridge.

“That’s better,” Enoch approved.

“What’cha want me to do now, Enoch?”

Enoch’s bulbous, bearded face scowled its disapproval. His great belly hung forth, stretching the front of his grimy overalls. “Boy, ain’t you got no wits at all? *I* do the gatherin’ and *you* do the cookin’. That’s the way it is’n you *know* that, right?”

Esau’s lower lip drooped. “Uh...yeah.”

“SO GO DO THE COOKIN’, YA IDJIT!” Enoch yelled. “Grandpa Ab ain’t got all year to wait for your lazy ass!”

Enoch’s shout fairly kicked Esau out of the front of the bait shop. His big work-booted feet carried him off in haste, to the office and then to the stock room behind it.

Well, it wasn’t really a stock room, not by any typical definition.

Here, in other words, the stock was human.

Esau tromped fully into the room and—

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—the reeking filth-smudged man closed the door behind him. Flies circled around his bushy head, some walked on his grease-sheened face. Jewel, aka Julie C. Atkins, aka Convict Ident # W/F-4-998103, could only see him by looking back hard over her shoulder. Why? Because he and an equally filthy man had knocked her unconscious, and when she’d wakened, she’d found herself in this stinking room with her hands nailed to the floor.

“You’re sure a skinny one, ain’t ya?” the drawl commented behind her. Something clattered. Drawers opening, closing? “Shit, goddamn Enoch, always bossin’ me around. Well, fuck. I got time to have me *some* fun.” The voice got louder. “How’s that sound to you, stringbean?”

Jewel tried to speak but only the coarsest of unintelligible noises came out. Her hands burned, though pierced by white-hot pokers. If she leaned up, the pain redoubled, but it was the only way she could see. And when she could see, twisting her neck back...maybe she shouldn’t have bothered.

The man stood with his back to her, more things clattering as he stood before a filthy counter. From a drawer, he withdrew a short serrated grapefruit knife. “There it is.”

Terror sucked the breath from Jewel’s chest, then she gusted a shriek when he knelt down and hauled her up to hands and knees. Her hands felt as though a tractor had run over them, but as hard as she pulled, she could not unseat them. Rape seemed the next logical event, and she could even surmise the purpose of the short serrated knife chosen over other longer and sharper knives in the drawer. He began to cut off her sherbert-orange prison utilities. The uniform fell away in shreds, and the unbuckling sounds could be heard.

The pain and the horror nearly destroyed her capacity for coherent thought but at least this...rape, she could identify with. His cock felt oddly fat and enslimed when he kned up closer and penetrated her. The stench of his crotch wafted beneath her, drifted into her straining face: old sweat and spoiled meat. His dick felt carbunched as it slid to and fro, herpes blisters, with her luck, or knots of syphilis. But contracting social diseases was hardly a legitimate worry right now.

What would happen when he was finished?

Jewel was twenty-seven years old when the great state of Washington had elected to receive her as a penal resident for ninety-nine years with no possibility of parole. Christ, the baby hadn't even died—it was only a fractured skull and accommodating temporal blot clot. Sure, he'd be totally retarded and epileptic for the rest of his life but she hadn't *killed* him. And the whole kidnaping thing had been Dude's idea anyway. Dude was Jewel's pimp, and they were both junkies. The bag price of black tar just kept going up (\$25 per quarter gram now!) and with both of them monkeying a two-gram-a-day habit, it was just too hard for poor Jewel to find twelve tricks a day every day. The city pigs were just too hot; johns were driving all the way to Tacoma now for their blow-jobs rather than risk having their names in the Seattle papers.

So. The short version? It had been Dude's idea to snatch the baby from Redmond. That's where all those rich Bill Gates geeks live. Ponying up a couple hundred grand to get Junior back? That was pocket change to all those rich fucks.

They'd smuggled the kid into their \$32-a-night place at the Bush. Dude had gone out to look for some tricks (in truth, he sucked dick better than Jewel) and his only instruction had been that she keep the kid quiet. Fine. Jewel had been spiking for a vein in her foot when the baby started bawling like a full maternity ward; the distraction caused her to infiltrate. The vein collapsed, and the next thing she knew she had a syringe full of heroin and blood about to coagulate. Her only resort was to muscle quickly into her arm, which cut the high in half and would cause a giant abscess. The little crumb snatcher had fucked up her fix! So wasn't it understandable that her momentary rage would urge her to pick the kid off the bed and toss him to the floor? It shut him up, all right. It also cracked his coconut.

The cops and FBI came along shortly thereafter. See, Dude hadn't really gone out looking for tricks. He'd gone to the police to collect the fifty-grand reward the parents posted for the kid. He skated, and Jewel was in the slam for life: The Smith-Clark Correctional Center For Women. According to the rule, male detention officers were never allowed in the main block, so they'd simply transport them out for various work details when they wanted some action. All of the girls—Jewel included—were very cooperative. At least it got them off the block, and most of the DO's would always slip them some tranks or speed in gratitude.

It wasn't bad.

But most of the girls were short-timers compared to Jewel. Ninety-nine years? With no parole? *Fuck that noise*, Jewel concluded. Two DO's had taken her and four other inmates out to 101 on a brilliant sunny Saturday. Pick Up Squad, they called it. They'd pick up trash along the road while the DO's smoked and watched over them with shotguns. They were leg-ironed, of course, but when the DO's got them back into the truck for some partying, they'd generally take the irons off. Jewel had been amazed at the expertise with which she'd sunk the sharpened popsicle stick into both of the DO's necks during the second round of blow-jobs. They both fell back, blood bubbling from their holes. Five seconds later, all five girls piled out of the back of the truck, and that's the last Jewel had seen of any of them.

For a dumb junkie, at least, she was pretty smart. It wouldn't be long before there was a state-wide dragnet out on them. And those other stupid slits? *Fuck them*. They'd be back in stir in less than twenty-four, singing like canaries about how Jewel did all the killing. Shit on 'em. With ninety-nine years, Jewel was *not* going back.

And she'd been right.

She'd run and run. Through woodlands so dense it was almost impossible to pass without machete. And as the sun set, she found the shore.

She was standing on the shore of a sizeable lake, and in the middle of the lake—

An island, she noticed.

She grabbed a log and paddled her way across. It took over an hour, and when she got to the other side, she was nearly freezing. But this island looked like an overgrown piece of shit if there ever was one. No roads, no dwellings. It looked uninhabited, which couldn't have thrilled Jewel more.

She slept for a while in brambles, then later, as the moon drifted high, she stomped her way for the middle of the jungle-like island. Not too long after that, however, she'd been discovered by the two huge reeking men, who seemed to be searching for worms in the moist ground.

Then...

Here Jewel was now, hands nailed to the floor and being clumsily raped from behind by the smallest and stinkier of her captors.

"Here she comes, Skinny," the veritable ogre huffed. His dirty fingers reached under, pinching her clitoris, his fat hips pounding. "And there she goes—ooo, mama!" The cock continued to feel odd as it released its seed; the dirty hands squeezed her hips as the climax throbbed to its finish.

He popped out; Jewel felt warm sperm run down her leg, as if he'd just uncorked a bottle of . . . Then the malodorous bulk behind her asked the strangest question:

"What they feed you skinny bitches up there at girlie prison?"

Jewel collapsed back to her stomach, the pain roaring at her hands. The man pinched the back of her thigh till she squealed. "Huh? What they feed ya?"

Jewel, at this lowest moment of her life, could scarcely comprehend the question.

He punched her right at the small of the back. More air sailed from her lungs. "Be that way, Skinny," he said. Then he did something stranger than his question. He widely parted her buttocks and then sniffed. Then licked.

She could hear his lips smacking. "Hmm. Peas'n carrots? Meatloaf...with a little more meal than meat?"

Somehow, even through the shivering veil of her horror, her brain registered. *He's...right*. Peas and carrots and meatloaf. That *had* been her last meal, the lunch she'd had in the dining hall just before she'd been taken out on Pick Up Squad.

"Fuck, skinny as you are?" the voice rumbled at her back. He got up again, went back to the counter. "What the fuck good are ya, huh? Like suckin' a tiny piece'a meat off a toothpick. And I

tell ya somethin' else. For a little bony gal, you sure got yourself one *big* pussy. Shit, Enoch could park his whole fuckin' truck in that giant cooze on you.”

Jewel didn't know what he was talking about and, by now, it clearly didn't matter. All that mattered was that he was back at the knife drawer. He'd already cut off her clothes.

What would he cut next?

The answer was not long in wait. Another sharp crane of her neck and she saw him take a foot-and-a-half-long ham knife from the drawer.

His reeking girth sat down right on her clenched ass, and with the knife he began sloughing wide sheets of skin off her back. The agony paralyzed her; she shuddered in place, a moth pinned to a corkboard at the mercy of the entomologist.

Little mercy here, though.

It was the most deft skill with which he pared all of the skin off her back—a great single sheet. Then he did the same to her buttocks, then her legs.

Jewel quivered as if in low electrocution.

“Now let's git your tummy,” her foul butcher remarked. All the fight out of her, the man yanked the nails out of her hands and flipped her over, then expertly flensed all the skin from her lower abdomen to her collarbones off in a single sheet.

Just as she was dying on the floor, her mind detected these few final words:

“Looks like it's shad-row and scallions in crispy sesame rolls tonight...”

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Chapter Two

When Sheree emerged from the steaming black-marble bathroom, all she wore was a bright-bermuda silk charmeuse-wrap. Her long sleek legs took her out through the sumptuous bedroom and across Ashton's office—not that he really needed one. He was a chef.

“Ashton,” she cooed. “I've got something for you.”

“Huh?”

Ashton, his long hair tied back to a tail behind his head, and his bearded face ever fattening, simply stared down at his lit desk. He was looking at a small, leather-bound book.

“I've got something for you...”

Beside him sat a glass of Medoc. He acted as though he'd barely heard her. Whatever it was in the book seized his total attention.

Jesus, Sheree thought. Is this guy a eunuch?

Sheree had been living with Ashton Morrone for three years. He was no stud—for sure—but thirty-five Sheree wasn't getting any younger. Ashton owned what was critically determined to be the best restaurant in Seattle, The Emerald Room, on the waterfront, from which he bagged a cool \$250,000 per year. Another \$100,000 came from his weekly cable cooking show, *Cooking With Ashton*, and his culinary success had allowed him to purchase this Alaska Avenue waterfront penthouse. They were nice digs, and Sheree liked nice things.

But she also liked sex on occasion, but that didn't seem to be terribly forthcoming from Ashton. Now, a hot stiffer in her pocket... Was that too much to ask?

Ashton was Number One executive chef in the city, but he was constantly worried about Number Two catching up to him. Hence, stress.

Hence, no boner.

“The best eel in the world,” Ashton muttered, staring at the book. “That prissy son of a bitch James got twenty pounds of it from some Capitol Lake fisherman in Thurston County and served it at his own joint.” The reviews had been monumental. And Ashton, left in the dust, had been overplayed in the local cuisine scene for the first time.

To Ashton, it was the equivalent of a normal man having his balls cut right out of his scrotum.

“Fuckin' James—mincing snob,” Ashton muttered, referring to his nemesis, one M. Gerald James, owner of the lakeside Rococo Seafood House. “That motherfucker, he have his own tv show? No! Does he get the best reviews in town and four stars in Michelin's? No! Then the scumbag gets h

hands on twenty pounds of Crackjaw Eel—by total *fluke*—and he’s the hottest chef in the city!”

Sheree came around and rubbed his shoulders. “Oh, honey. James can’t make hash and eggs without screwing it up. He probably molests little kids. What are you so worried about?”

“I’m worried about that fussy-faced limey cocksucker bringing down my business!” Ashton shouted from the desk. “Don’t you understand anything? How did you feel when Jenna Jameson knocked you out of the porn business? Huh?”

That again. Jesus. Yes, Sheree had worked the higher-level porn circuits in L.A. for ten years, but by the time she was “beat” she was well ready to make her exit. She wanted out—she was damn tired of five indifferent cocks a day five days a week and everyone sweating it out for the wet shot. L.A. gave her the creeps.

She was too old to keep her throne in porn but she still looked great. Last thing she wanted was to pull a Shannon McCuller and wind up doing gang-bang flicks and Rodney Moore cum-shots for a couple hundred bucks a day. Let Jenna Jameson have her reign. She’d get *real* tired of all those cocks up her ass just as fast as Sheree did. *Good luck, blondie.*

“That hag?” Sheree replied. “She can have it. I don’t want that shit anymore.... I want you.”

The comment bid a reflexive reach-around pat on her ass as Sheree continued to massage his shoulders. “Don’t you want to see what I brought you?” she asked.

He spun around in his chair.

Sheree let the silk charmeuse-wrap flow off her shoulders and down her legs, like plush shimmering liquid. All that remained was her tanned, fine-lined, 36-D brick shit-house body. Nude. In his face.

Ashton winced. “Sheree!” he barked. “Don’t you understand that everything’s not about sex! My career’s going down the drain! I’ve got more important things to worry about than getting it on!”

It was everything she could do not to wrap a tourniquet around his fat neck and twist and twist and twist until his head popped off. But she had to be tactical, didn’t she? Here, she had a beautiful place to live, all the spending money she needed, her own little BMW 318, and this big fat sugar-daddy doing that sure as hell beat the daily colon inspections by the likes of Joey Silvera and Peter Fucking North. If she’d kept that up, by now, her anus would be bigger than her mouth, and it would be filled with just as much cum. She thought back to her very last gig; when a bulbous borsh-filled Ron Jeremy had walked in, she knew her career was over.

“I understand, baby,” she assured in a silken whisper, still rubbing his back. “I’m sorry for being so selfish. I know you have a lot on your mind.”

He errantly patted her hand, still riled up. “I gotta get that *fucking* eel.”

“Well, we’re going tomorrow. I’m sure you and your brother will catch *so much* eel, you won’t know what to do with it all.”

“You don’t understand,” Ashton said...and Sheree was getting *damn* sick of being told by the

limp-dick fat putz that she didn't "understand." But she swallowed the insult as well as her pride, and then remembered that if it weren't for Ashton she'd still be swallowing a lot of something else.

Ashton stood up from the desk, turned, and took Sheree by the shoulders. "Honey, it's not *just* eel. It's the freshwater *Crackjaw* eel, the most delectable and the *rarest* eel in the world. The *A. Anguilla*. *Mytilus*. It only lives in old deep lakes with variant-low temperatures, and it only eats freshwater mussels and clams. Finding a stockpile of these things could mean an extra hundred grand per year in restaurant profits and a *million* a year in exports. The Japanese will buy this stuff till their eyes go round." He sat back down, pointed to the book. "The secret is right here..."

It was a small leather-bound book printed in the late-1950's called *Delectable Edibles Of The Pacific Northwest*. "Only a hundred copies of this book were ever printed, and look!"

He pointed again, first to a black-and-white photograph of an eel lain out on a cutting board. It was perhaps the most hideous living creature Sheree had ever seen (Ron Jeremy being the only possible exception): the fat, long, snakelike body, with edgy fins running top and bottom. Far worse, though, was the protruded head, with big button eyes and the low-hanging vise-like jaw with which it evidently cracked open the exclusive shells of its prey.

"It's...beautiful, isn't it?" Ashton commented, drawing a slow finger across the surface of the old photograph. The next old photo showed a bearded fisherman grinning as he held one of the hideous things up in his arms, and the caption below the photo read: **Local fisherman R. B. Brown, displays rare Crackjaw eel that he caught on the southeast side of Sutherland Lake. Brown contends that the rather unappealing serpent is delicious and running rampant at this corner of the obscure and rarely fished Sutherland.**

"See that?" Ashton hotly questioned. "'The obscure and rarely fished Sutherland?' Nobody even goes to that sinkhole—it's too cold for any decent fishing—and who's seen this small-press book? Nobody!"

Sheree ran her hands down the front of Ashton's fat-layered chest. "Well, *we're* going there tomorrow, sugar. And we're going to catch so much eel—"

"Not just *any* eel," Ashton accentuated. His finger tapped the book. "The Crackjaw eel—"

"Yes, sugar, you bet." Sheree kept running her hands up and down his body, then took a glance to see if anything was happening at his crotch.

Nada.

Eunuch. What's a girl got to do to get some dick around here! "We're gonna catch enough eel to fill a warehouse. Then you can just throw your head back and laugh at the mean, nasty M. Gerald James."

"Yeah, yeah," Ashton said in a hate-filed daze. "I'll bury that skinny motherfucker like he never was born. Then I'll buy him out!"

"There ya go!" Sheree squealed. She dared reach down to Ashton's crotch. "Baby, you sure you

don't want any—”

He patted her hand. “I’m sorry, darling. I’m just too distracted right now. But I promise...we have a *good* time once we get to the lake.”

Sheree had little else to do but accept it. “Okay, baby. I’m going to bed now.”

“I’ll be in in a while. Goodnight.”

Sheree walked off naked for the bedroom. *That big bucket of lard’s more interested in eel than me.* Oh, well, at least she still had a nice luxurious life, and at least she could still masturbate.

Who knew? Maybe tonight she’d think about getting her asshole cored by Peter North...

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Chapter Three

“The crack of dawn for the Crackjaw eel,” Ashton celebrated, rubbing his hands together in the early morning light.

“Hell,” Bob said, rubbing his hands similarly, “even if we don’t catch any, it’ll be great to just go out and see some of God’s Green Earth. The mountains, the trees, the fresh air.” Then he lit a cigarette and coughed. “Plus, I’m dying to break in my new house on wheels. What do you think?”

Ashton put a comradely arm around his brother’s shoulder, and whispered, “Don’t jive me, Bobby. What you’re *really* dying to break in is that new blonde of yours.”

“Shit, I did that a month ago...and she’s been walking funny ever since!”

Both men brayed laughter, eee-hawing like a couple of...jackasses. Ashton and Bob were twin brothers, forty-three years old, and both looked alike: fat. Close to three hundred pounds apiece. Trimmed beards, long hair pulled back to short stylish ponytails. The only telling them apart was the streak of gray Ashton deliberately dyed into his hair because he thought it looked “entrepreneurial.” And though Ashton was a wealthy man indeed, brother Bobby was wealthier; he was Microsoft executive chairman for advanced research projects, and he pulled down low seven figures per annum. Ashton made up for this inequity by reminding Bob that he, Ashton, had had sex with more women in his life. Ashton’s grand total was five, while Bob could boast a tally of four.

So here were the Morrone brothers in a rather large nutshell. Both were unsocialized, both were obese, and both carried egos larger than their belt size. Both, too, were intolerable snobs. But they were rich...so they must be doing something right.

“Yeah, she’s a beaut, all right,” Ashton commented of Bob’s brand new thirty-foot zinc-white Winnebago. The vanity license plate read #4 AT MS, while a glittery bumper sticker read THE LOVE WAGON. “You dog, you,” Ashton added, chuckling. “Hey, let me ask you something. How many times did you stick it to Sheryl last night?”

“It’s Carol,” Bob corrected, “and I gotta admit, even stud-muffins like me can’t be a machine every night. I only bagged her twice. Usually it’s three or four.”

“You dog, you!” Ashton chuckled. “My problem is I wear Sheree out on the first go-round. Gets so she just can’t come anymore.”

“Wow,” Bob said in a hush, impressed.

“Big men like us, we gotta give our bitches a break sometimes, right?”

Bob slapped Ashton on the back. “Damn straight, brother.”

“But I’ll tell ya—last night? I gave her two more pops...just because I felt like it!”

Both men brayed laughter as they meandered toward the Winnebago's rear. There, hooked via ball hitch, was a brand-new sixteen-foot outboard SeaRay. "Hell, we're rich men," Bob pointed out. "We don't rent boats to go fishing; that would be..." He flicked a pinkie. "...low class. And since we couldn't fit my sixty-foot yacht on the trailer, I bought this."

Ashton's fat face beamed in glee. "This is great! We'll be hauling those Crackjaw eels in one after another."

"You sure this lake's got 'em?"

"Well,,yeah." Ashton had previously explained not only his recent embarrassment at the hands of rival restaurateur M. Gerald James but also the overseas marketing potential. "It says so in an old book I found printed in the '50s."

Bob didn't seem as convinced but why be a spoilsport? "Well, hell, even if we don't find a treasure trove of eel waiting for us...just think of all the *poontang* we're gonna have!"

A hard slap to bother Bobby's back. "Damn straight, brother!"

"We'll be dippin' our willies!"

Both men brayed laughter in front of Ashton's condo building. "Speaking of poontang," Ashton said, looking at his Cartier diamond-studded watch, "where are the girls?"

Scuffing sounds could be heard, then, as Sheree and Carol lugged heavy suitcases down the steps to the front of the building. "Oh, that's okay, guys," Sheree said sarcastically. "We don't need any help."

"Yeah," Carol added. "We're not really human beings—we're *fucking forklifts!*"

Ashton and Bob brayed laughter. "We'll take it from here, girls," Bob offered. The men took the heavy suitcases and walked them the remaining three feet to the Winnebago.

Ashton winked at Sheree. "Can't have the two hottest numbers in the city wearing their pretty little selves out, now can we?"

"We sure can't, good brother," Bob accentuated. "Just think of all the red-hot lovin' they'd miss!"

The men barked more laughter. Sheree and Carol exchanged weary glances which said, *This is going to be a LONG trip...*

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A long trip indeed. Bob drove while Ashton sat up front next to him; the girls sat facing each other in passenger seats mounted on the vehicle's sidewalls, their long, pretty legs crossed. Each dressed for a road trip: sneakers and tube tops, Sheree in cut-off jeans and Carol in a short denim skirt. It didn't

take long for them to both get the shared gist. Up front, Bob yakked about his grand job at Microsoft. Ashton yakked about his grand restaurant and tv show, and in between yakking, they both laughed uproariously at their own bad jokes.

“Hey,” Ashton asked. “What do you get when you fuck a bottle of Coke?”

“What?” Bob asked.

“Burpees!”

Ashton and Bob rocked laughter. Bob’s fat face jerked back to Sheree and Carol. “Get it girls? *Burpees?*”

“Yeah, we got it,” Carol said, and shot a quick frown to Sheree. Sheree leaned forward and mouthed *Fat dicks* to Carol. Carol snorted a tiny laugh herself.

Behind them the luxury Winnebago stretched deep. A full kitchen, a full bath and shower, a double bed built over the cab and another that could be pulled down in the rear. Not to mention a 200-watt Alpine stereo with a dozen satellite speakers mounted in the walls, and a 27-inch television linked to a satellite dish on the roof. Cases of beer—*snob* beer: Holsten—had been brought along, and so had a full dozen bottles of Clos du Val 1990 Pinot Noir, which Ashton insisted was “pre-eminent” with freshwater fish. At the very least, Sheree could expect to get a good load on during this very peculiar outing. In the back, Bob had an auxiliary refrigerator hooked up, for all this eel they thought they were going to catch.

They’d taken the ferry from Seattle across to Bainbridge, then cruised up over the Hood Canal, and shortly thereafter found themselves on Route 101, which traced the peninsula around the Olympic Mountain Range. The scenery *was* beautiful. But as far as Sheree was concerned, better scenery could just as easily be found in *National Geographic* and it didn’t require her to spend an entire weekend with two overweight nerds. To the left, the mountains loomed, spiring high into dense clouds. To the right: the Strait of San Juan, across which they could see Canada with binoculars after Ashton enthused bidding. But then it occurred to Sheree that she had no real reason to *want* to see Canada. *Big deal*, she thought. *A chunk of land that happens to be another country. Big deal.*

The two fat men up front reveled at the rush of scenery, Ashton snapping picture after picture. Eventually, Sheree and Carol settled into their doldrums, sipping beers from foam-rubber sheaths.

“So, Carol,” Sheree asked. “What do you do?”

“I—” She paused over her beer, her breasts thrusting beneath the tight tea-rose-pink tube top. Then she shrugged. “I live off of Bob.”

“Damn straight,” Bob cackled. “Pig-shit rich *and* a great lay. What woman in her right mind would turn *that* down?”

Ashton cracked similar laughter.

“What about you?” Carol made the same query to Sheree. “What do you do?”

Ashton's fat, bearded face shot back over his shoulder, his grin blaring.

"I live off of Ashton," Sheree admitted. "Because he's pig-shit rich *and* a great lay."

Ashton and Bob, to no surprise, brayed laughter. Sheree and Carol rolled their eyes at each other.

More bad jokes from up front cursed the trip: "Have you heard about the teacher who was fired for being cross-eyed?" "She couldn't control her pupils." "What do you give sick birds?" "Tweetment."

Sheree considered suicide as an alternative to this—Ashton, she knew, was a supreme asshole, but in league with his brother? He was *ten* assholes. At least the "trip" wouldn't last forever. Eventually she'd be back at the luxury suite, driving her Bimmer, spending Ashton's cash where and whenever she saw fit, and even copping a stray lay now and again. Sure, she cheated on Ashton; he was too busy braising rosemary racks of lamb and flambeeing Divers Scallops in Gingered Sesame Sauce to keep total track of her. She remembered the last guy she'd picked up, at the Four Seas bar in Chinatown. Looked like fuckin' Gary Oldman with long hair and tattoos, and a pound of potatoes in his pants. That pound turned to two or three once she'd gotten him back to the motel. It was so big even Sheree's porn-seasoned pussy about exploded when he stuck it all in. She came once a minute for an hour, feeling damn near retarded when he was finally finished. Sheree was actually blowing spit-bubbles on the last round, then he pulled out, jerked the rest of it off, and whipped her face with lash after lash of his cum.

Few and far between, though; Sheree knew she had to be careful in such ventures. She had a lot to lose. Not just three-hundred pounds of fat jackass but the car, the joint, and the cash.

She sighed to herself, then flicked a momentary glance at Carol—long tan legs crossed in the tight denim skirt, tits bulging in the skin-sucking tube-top. Carol's blond hair shimmered almost perfectly white over the cherubic naughty-girl face; Sheree recalled the lezzy scenes she's done with Savannah and Zoe and Rachel Ryan when she'd been a blonde, and it occurred to her just then that she wouldn't particularly mind parking her pussy firmly over Carol's mouth. Just a fleeting fantasy. Up front yet another bad joke resounded: "What do you call a rabbit with fleas all over him?" "What?" "Bunny!"

The men brayed laughter as Carol and Sheree winced. It was a coincidence, then, when Sheree, after another appraising look at Carol's impeccable body, thought, *I wonder if Carol cheats on Bob.* Carol reached forward, tapping Sheree on the knee; she passed Sheree a quickly scrawled note, which read: *I cheat on Bob any chance I get. Do you cheat on Ashton?*

Sheree took the pen and piece of paper, and wrote *FUCK yes!*

Carol shrieked in response.

"What's going on back here?" Ashton asked, his eternally fat face glancing back at them. "You girls having some fun without us?"

Don't I wish, dick-wad, Sheree thought. "We were just laughing about your great jokes. Tell us another one, honey."

Ashton grinned in sheer pride. “If you insist. What does a dog do that a man steps into?”

“What?” Carol asked.

“Pants.”

Bob brayed laughter so hard the Winnebago rocked. Carol and Sheree wanted to die.

“I know it’s funny, but don’t laugh too hard, girls,” Ashton said next. “Because, guess what? We’re here.”

«««—»»»

Bob had taken a narrow and poorly marked road a ways past Port Angeles—Sheree had spied a badly painted wooden sign, which read *Sutherland Lake*. It was only minutes later that Bob was maneuvering the girthy Winnebago and its laden trailer through heavily wooded roads that seemed more like hiking trails. Fog sifted through the trees, condensation seeping down from the mountains.

“No wonder nobody knows about this place,” Sheree commented. “Who’d drive through all this shit just to fish?”

“And that’s our good fortune, sugarplum,” Ashton replied. (Sheree’s face creased when he said *sugarplum*.) “The fewer people who know about this spot, the better—for *us*.”

Carol’s mammoth breasts swayed when she leaned up between the two men and peered out the windshield. “This looks—this looks...funky,” she articulated. “Are you sure there’s a *lake* back here?”

“A *big* lake, baby,” Bob said. “Why don’t you girls stick with what you know: looking pretty. Let the *men* do the navigating.”

Sheree yanked Carol back by her tube top...before she could put her hands around Bob’s fat neck. Another minute, though, a crude wooden sign popped up, its enameled letters informing: ***GREATER FISHIN’ 1 MILE! BAIT SHOP! TAKE THE PULL-FERRY!***

“See, schnookems?” Bob countered to Carol. “You saw the sign. Good fishing coming right up.”

“Yeah,” Sheree posed, running a finger across her chin. “But what’s a pull-ferry?”

“We’ll find out soon enough,” Ashton said. “I hope they’ve got a water hook-up for the Winnebago.”

“And electric,” Bob added.

Soon the giant vehicle pulled out onto a long coast road, lining the shore of a broad, spacious lake. “This is it!” Ashton whispered in a hot breath.

Bob: “Yeah, but where’s this bait shop? Where’s the trailer grounds? We need electric to keep the brew cold.”

Then another sign popped up: **TRAILERS AND RV’S WELCOME. HOOK-UP CHARGE \$5 A DAY. COME ACROSS TO THE SHOP TO PAY.**

“What the fuck?” Sheree pondered. “Come across to *what*?”

“They mean come across the lake,” Ashton speculated. “To the island.”

He pointed now, and they could see it: the heavily forested island tiny in the distance, like a faint green clot floating in the lake. Abruptly, a clearing opened, with water hoses flanked next to electric hook-up. **PARK HERE, a sign announced. \$5 A DAY FOR ELECTRIC, \$5 A DAY FOR WATER. \$5 A DAY FOR PARKING. TAKE THE PULL-FERRY ACROSS TO PAY.**

“Those five-dollar charges are racking up,” Carol noticed.

Ashton grinned over his shoulder. “Don’t worry, hon. Bobby and I got it covered.”

“I guess that’s the pull-ferry,” Sheree surmised. They parked near a rickety dock and crude gravel boat ramp. A red Ford Explorer sat parked further down. The “pull-ferry” was nothing more than a rowboat connected to a pulley system of thick rope which stretched all the way to the island.

A wooden sign informed: **PULL-FERRY FEE \$5.**

Ashton chuckled to his brother. “Think we can afford it, big guy?”

Bob pulled out a choke-wad of cash. “Aw, gee, I don’t know! I guess we better go back home!”

Sheree frowned at the laughter which was now obligatory.

The Winnebago literally rocked when Ashton and Bob got out; Sheree thought of two cows being pushed off a cattle car. Her eyes, however, felt snagged to Carol’s ass as she climbed out. A beautiful perfect swervy ass filling up that tight denim skirt. *Sheeze*, Sheree thought through a prickly flush. Two pinpoint points of heat speared her nipples. *If I was a man I’d want to fuck her hard in the dirt...* She got on behind Carol, cruxed by the sudden kindle of lust. Sure, in the porn business, Sheree had licked more pussies than the average kindergarten kid had licked lollipops, and so much hair pie had sat on her face she thought she was a fucking park bench. But it was all for the show, all for the camera and the billion-dollar-per-year industry of men jerking off in front on their tv sets. Personally, Sheree wasn’t into women (she was into *cock*). Her mind drifted back to previous Hollywood boyfriends and suddenly her birth canal grew slickened at the constant recollection of touch, handsome men slapping her down and fucking her hard. Chicks didn’t do it for her.

Her breath felt short when she glanced at Carol again. Suddenly she could think of nothing but eating Carol out and boning her with a 14-inch strap-on. And then receiving the same ministrations. *Guess it’s just been too long since I’ve been laid*, Sheree deduced. Fuckin’ Ashton, the fat limp-dicked pompous ass. *I guess when there’s no Option Number One, Option Number Two doesn’t seem too bad*

It was just a coincidence, of course, but once Sheree’d gotten out of the Winnebago, her muse

lust lingering on Carol...

Carol turned around and smiled.

“Come on, girls!” Bob insisted. “Chop chop.” He irritatingly clapped his hands twice very loudly. “Let’s get across the lake, get our account settled.”

“Yeah,” Ashton hooked on. He, too, clapped his hands. “Plenty of daylight left.”

Sheree and Carol straggled after the two rotund twins. When the four of them stepped onto the rowing boat, Sheree thought it might actually submerge from the excess of weight. As Ashton and Bob turned the crank, the boat began to creep across the lake’s surface, reeling up rope as it went. It wasn’t much for speed, but Sheree had to admit: the scenery was unbelievable. The lake water was clear and shimmering as Waterford Crystal, and the upcoming island seemed to glow in a variety of fresh, fecund greenery. But they had traversed a third of the way across the lake before—

“Whew!” Bob remarked.

Ashton drew a fat forearm across his brow. “*Damn!*”

Then they both sat down on the boat’s forward seat.

“Sorry, girls,” Bob explained, huffing and puffing and lighting a cigarette. “We’re tuckered out.”

“Yeah,” Ashton followed. He lit a La Corona Whiff petite cigar. “We’re old men compared to you two young racehorses. Hope you don’t mind taking a turn on the crank.”

Oh for God’s sake! Sheree yelled in her mind.

“No biggie, boys,” Carol said, shooting Sheree a knowing grin. “Sheree and I would love to.”

“Besides,” Bob added with a chuckle. “You don’t want us wearing ourselves out, do you?”

“Yeah,” Ashton added. “Then we’d be no good for tonight.”

You’re no good for anything ANY night! Sheree thought.

The two women stood up, got on either side of the handles. They began to crank. But Carol’s frequent grins proved she was going along with the joke. The grin seemed to say *This is the price we pay for living with a pair of fat stooges.*

Now that Sheree and Carol were on the crank, the boat began to make some headway, in spite of her conclusion that this “pull-ferry” was about six hundred pounds heavier than it should be. Every time Carol rowed down to display her immaculate cleavage, Sheree squeezed her lip between her teeth. *Christ, I’m soaking...*

The brothers smoked and swapped more bad jokes as Sheree and Carol cranked for all they were worth. The smoke from Ashton’s cigar kept sweeping Sheree’s face, such that she could see herself slapping it right out of her loving boyfriend’s fat mug. She was glazed in sweat by the time they

cranked to little boat to the ramp on the other side.

“Good job, girls,” Bob complimented, flicking his cigarette butt over the side.

“Yeah,” Ashton said. “You both get an A...for *Attractive!*”

And you get an F, Sheree thought. For FAT.

The boat raised a good six inches when Bob and Ashton stepped off. Carol stepped off next, and grabbed Sheree’s arm to help her off.

“Oh, gross,” Sheree remarked instantly. “Sorry I’m so sweaty.”

“I am too, so don’t worry about it,” Carol assured. Then she leaned to Sheree’s ear and whispered, “Besides, I’d love to lick it all off.”

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Chapter Four

“’Fraid you’re right, Esau. This one ain’t worth a ’skeeter off a dead skunk’s ass.” Enoch cast an eye at the skinned girl. She looked like bone scraps, little more.

“Bet she don’t weigh more’n wad of my hock.”

“Bet she don’t.”

Of the two huge men, Enoch was *more* huge, three inches taller than Esau’s six-foot four, and twenty more pounds than his three hundred. Both had beards they hadn’t trimmed in years, long bushy hair, overalls and workboots. Tried and true rednecks, Northwest style. Esau had dragged the girl’s skinless corpse here to what he and his older brother simply referred to as the “tarp.” It was actually an odd, large gully that existed toward the center of the island, about twenty feet wide, fifty long, and God knew how deep. An ideal place in which to discard scraps like this fairly useless thing from the girlie prison. Several days of hard work had been required to effectively cover the gully; Enoch and Esau had felled a dozen trees over it, providing a sufficient framework over which they had unrolled great sheets of olive-drab tarp. Over that, they’d piled enough branches and leaves that the gully was perfectly camouflaged. It was a minor concern but a concern nonetheless. Not too many folks ventured out to Hartsene Island but on the rare occasions when they did, Enoch didn’t need them to be finding out what they’d been doing out here all these years. Their needs had turned the gully into a giant belly full of bones and human gruel; no doubt hundreds of bodies had been dumped beneath the tarp.

Esau threw back the end piece of tarp—the corpse-pit’s door. “’Bout the only good thing was her skin.” He grabbed the corpse’s stiff feet, dragged it over to the dump-hole. “A skinny gal’s skin tighter, fries up better, ya know?”

“If you say so,” Enoch replied. “You do the cookin’, I’ll do the procurin’.”

After claiming the girl’s skin for a delectable pile of roe-filed crispy spring rolls, Esau had also trimmed all of the flesh from her face (for headcheese), which left a curious sight: drab lanky mouse-brown hair framing a raw skull traced with tendons. “In ya go, Skinny,” Esau said, and kicked the twiglike body into the hole. He could hear it tumble down to the bottom.

“D’ja fuck her?” Enoch asked.

“Yeah, but it weren’t a good nut,” Esau recalled in disappointment. “*Big* pussy on her fer such a little thing. I’d rather jerk off with the worms any day.”

“I done told ya ’bout that,” Enoch said in a warning voice. “You leave them worms alone—we need ’em for bait to sell.”

“Aw, Enoch,” ain’t but a half-dozen fishermen came out here last summer. We ain’t gonna make no money.”

“Shut yer booger-hole, boy. They’ll be comin’, just you watch. Bet we make a hunnert dollars least this season. And that’s a hunnert less that I gotta pinch. Most’a these whores’n hitchhikers I pick up, they ain’t got dick in their wallets. Gettin’ viddles ain’t the problem—it’s gettin’ cash. We got expenses here, like yer blammed satellite dish and yer fancy cookin’ gear’n shit and the dang’erous lecktrick bill. Plus I needs ta put gas in the damn trucks. I cain’t very well pay fer gas with a pot’a yam damn fish stew.”

Esau winced. It’s not *fish stew*, it’s called booly-base! Damn it!”

“What the fuck ever, boy.”

All Esau did was cook; it was Enoch who served as the supplier. This required frequent drives out to Route 101, to pick up whores at night, and hitchhikers, and bring ’em back ta meet Esau. Whenever he needed a new vehicle, he simply car-jacked one, then painted it a different color, and brought the previous owner or owners back to the island. In fact, about the only real pleasure in Enoch’s life—save for humpin’ what he brought back—was picking out new vehicles whenever he fancied. Right now he had the Nissan Pathfinder island-side and the brand-new Ford Explorer on the other side of the lake. A man had to have somethin’, didn’t he? Esau had his cookin’, Enoch had his trucks. Enoch always made sure to pluck a nice shiny new one with a nice cassette stereo, so’s he could listen to nice music on the long drives back and forth, music like Handsome Dick Manitoba and the Dictators, the Freddie Blassie’s “Pencil-Necked Geek” album, and WCW’s Greatest Hits.

“Pull that there tarp back over the hole, boy. We best be on our way.”

Esau obeyed, unflinching at the waft of corpse-gas when he replaced the flap. He scratched his crotch with one hand, his ass-crack with the other, then loped after Enoch to the Nissan. They drove deeper into the island, toward still more things they had to hide. Just as the gully was camouflaged, so were the sheds, each of which existed for different reasons. The smoke-house, the curing house, the place where they did their marinates. “We still got them two curin’,” Enoch reminded. “Figger we better check on ’em.” What he referred to was the pair of young men he’d picked up on 101, hitchhiking to the point where they said they had relatives. Spunky fellas, they was. Matt’n Mike they said the names was. They fought like reg-ler buggers when Enoch took ’em down with his slapjack. One fell was shaved-headed, with tattoos, and a devil-looking goattee, the other looked like a college boy in a Yankees hat. Enoch had cracked both their noggins with the jack, then cut off their peckers and chewed ’em as jerky on the ride back.

Fresh-cut dick was always a good chew.

Now them two boys was split’n hangin’ in the curin’ house. Esau was cold-smokin’ ’em, he was, the house was filled with fragrant leaves and herbs as they rotted. It was necessary to come out here twice a day ta drain ’em which was fairly simple. Just run a sharp knife down their legs’n let ’em drain.

“How they look?” Enoch asked when Esau come out.

“They’s e gettin’ there. Few more days, I’d say.”

All the “houses,” by the way, were as effectively covered with branches’n leaves as the tarp-hole. Damn near impossible to see unless you was lookin’ for ’em. Two of ’em had chimneys: the smol

house'n the hot house. They hung ribs and sausage in the smoke house, and cooked the drums in the hot house. All the pine'n ash out here in the woods made fer great cookin' fuel. The chimneys puffed away their soot-black smoke into the high trees. Good viddles in there, fer sure!

The fourth shack was were Esau did his marinatin'. One fella Enoch had picked up near Dungeness 'bout three weeks back, he was still alive on account of how regularly Esau fed'n watered him. Seven times a year, Esau liked ta corn-feed one, so what they did was they tied a guy up tight in strapping twine, put him in an old canoe, then nail sheets of roofing tin over the canoe. The fella's head would stick out through a hole at the top, which allowed Esau to pump corn mash down his throat with bellows. It made the liver real big'n sweet, whiles the rest of him would marinate in his own corn shit'n piss.

The lone head sticking out from the canoe pleaded, "Please! Let me go! Why are you doing this?"

"Quit'cher yammerin'," Esau said. "It's feedin' time." He filled the bellows from the big can of corn mash, then stuck the nozzle down the kid's throat and squeezed. The bellows promptly displaced its contents into the kid's gut. "That should hold ya fer a while, huh?"

When Esau pulled out the bellows, the kid coughed, his eyes bloodshot and nose runny, like he had a cold.

"Damn! Ain't that some luck!"

"What's that?" Enoch asked.

Another cough ruffed up.

"He's done caught hisself a cold!" Esau celebrated. From a big pocket in his overalls, he withdrew a small Tupperware container. "My spinach salad! Grandpa Ab loves it!"

Esau looked at the head sticking out of the hole. He grabbed its throat. "Blow yer nose. Ya hear me?" he ordered. "If ya don't, I'll shove yer head down into that boat so's you'll drown in your own shit. Ya hear me?"

Desperately, the head nodded. Esau clamped his mouth over the boy's nose; the boy began blowing.

The boy blew his nose heartily into Esau's mouth. Long and hard and noisily. At the task's end, Esau pulled his mouth off the victim's nose, cheeks stuffed. He spat the lumpy snot into the Tupperware container and sealed it shut.

Esau smacked his lips, pointed to the boy's wet nose. "You want a hit off this? It's damn good, fer sure. Nice'n meaty."

"What'cha gonna do with that bowl'a snot?" Enoch asked.

"I done told ya. My spinach salad. We ain't got no Feta cheese—snot's better, anyway."

"Oh...yeah."

“Go on. Take a hit.”

Enoch leaned over, covered the boy’s nose with his mouth, into which more bronchial mucus was expelled.

Enoch sucked and swallowed, nodding. “You’re right. That was *damn* tasty.”

“Told ya,” Esau said with a wink.

«««—»»»

WELCOME TO HARSTENE ISLAND AND THE BEAUTIFUL TOWN OF HOTH’S LANDING! a wooden sign announced.

“Here we are,” Ashton stated the obvious.

Sheree had never heard of Hartsene Island or Hoth’s Landing. A mud trail led up from the boat ramp to a series of buildings—shacks, really—whose wood-slat walls had long turned gray when the paint had bubbled off.

Higher in the trees, another wooden sign read:

HOTH’S LANDING

POPULATION: 2

“Two?” Carol cited. “There’s only *two* people on this island?”

“Seems so,” Bob answered, and patted her ass. “What do we care? The fewer people, the better.”

“Yeah,” Ashton agreed. Streaks of sweat trailed down his beige silk shirt from the underarm. “This is perfect. No one else out here fishing? We’re probably the first people here this season. More Crackjaw eel for us.”

You and your fucking Crackjaw eel, Sheree thought in loath. She looked in utter distaste at Ashton’s love-handles rode up and down under the sides of his expensive shirt. The back of his black Armani slacks were riding up his giant ass-crack.

Why don’t you do me a big favor? Have a heart attack.

Yet another wooden sign, over the first dilapidated shack, read **BAIT SHOP. COME ON IN!**

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