

Teaching Her A Lesson

Part Twenty-Five: Late Work Policy

“Yikes! What happened to your car, Mr. Canon?” Cassie ran her finger along the fresh stripe down the side of my vehicle.

“A little present from Abbie and Taylor.”

“Oh yeah? I thought you guys weren’t talking, after the whole arresting them and getting them kicked out of school thing.”

I shivered involuntarily, though not from the insinuation. At this early hour it was still pretty chilly out, and my garage didn’t have much by way of insulation. “I went over yesterday to talk to them about the whole thing. Set things straight and all.”

“Mm. Looks like it didn’t go over too well.”

“Seemed to go well enough with Abbie. Not so much Taylor.”

Cassie pivoted to face me. “Wanna talk about it?”

I sighed. “I don’t imagine there’s anything I can say to you that would conceivably prevent you from telling me your thoughts on the matter.” Lord knew everyone else was weighing in.

“I don’t *always* say everything on my mind,” she grumbled, stung. Damn. I hadn’t meant to be rude about it. “I just... I dunno. I need to be completely honest with you. To tell you the complete and total truth. I think maybe it’s a Serenex thing? But I don’t know. I feel like I can say anything to you. I don’t mean to be a nuisance, though.”

I winced. The last thing I needed on my bruised conscience was picking on Cassie, the sex slave equivalent of kicking a crippled dog. Grimacing at the cold concrete on my bare feet, I followed her into the grudge and pulled her into a hug. “I didn’t mean to say it like that. You’re fine, sweetie. OK? I’ve been getting a lot of unsolicited advice coming my way a lot lately is all.”

She hugged back, sighing a little too audibly into my chest before I stepped back and let her go. I’d already woken up with my dick in her hands not twenty minutes ago; I wasn’t trying to reel her back in. “So go on. If you have thoughts, let them out. I can take it.”

“I wasn’t gonna try to tell you how to feel. See, sometimes I try to imagine what this all must be like for you. It’s heckin’ strange for all of us. Durr, right. Having sex with my next door neighbor, a teacher, knowing he’s turned my mom into a hashtag free-use slut, sharing him with a half dozen girls... it’s kinda wild. But I bet it’s gotta be a lot for you, too, right?”

“It can be.” Not that I was looking for sympathy.

“Yeah. I mean, I know you like us, and you’re a nice teacher and you don’t want to hurt any of us kids. Even though I know you try not to play favorites though, it’s bound to happen. Isn’t it? I guess I don’t really know what it is you like about her, though. Like, I know Taylor is crazy hot, perfect tits, perfect ass, perfect legs, super pretty. In a mean way. But I don’t know if that’s all she is, I guess I’m saying. To you.”

“Everybody is more than just their body, Cassie.”

“No, I know.” She snorted. “No offense, that’s something grown-ups say to middle school kids. I think I’m mature enough now to get that sometimes sex is only sex. A man can dip his shwing-shwong in a woman’s howdy hole and neither of them might care about each other beyond cocks and cunts. Like, I’ve been reaching out to porn stars on twitter to ask them stuff, and this one said that it’s a double-edged sword, having a porno bod, because some people look at you and only see tatas and booties, but at the same time, it could be nice at times because you don’t always want to deal with people and all their flaws and people-ness when all you really want is good sex with a hot partner. Which I totally related to, kind of. My ex-boyfriend – he went to a different school, so you probably wouldn’t know him – was really clingy and cheesy, and sometimes it was soooo sweet, but now that I’ve been with you and see what it’s like to be with a man who just wants to use me like a cum sponge (pardon my French), I can also see how it’s awesome to just have great sex with a well-hung dude and then go home and not have to worry if they miss you. We’ll do it again soon, so it’s kinda cool to just pleasure you. It’s fun, and it feels amazing. But it’s nerve ending feels, not heart feels.”

She took a breath at last. “So yeah, I guess that was just what I wondered with Taylor, like which kind of feels you have.”

I blinked. It was early in the day to be bombarded with that many words. “You’ve been talking to porn stars on twitter? What on earth for?”

“Not tons of them or anything, but I’ve gotten a few to reply. Lots of dudes pretending to slide into their DMs and all, so they’re pretty hard to reach. And I just have thoughts and questions, and I figured as a booty call and a daughter of a sex slave, porn stars would get it better than most people. But you didn’t answer the question.”

I shook my head. Best not to pursue every line of thought in that girl’s head. “Sorry, what question was that?”

“What’s Taylor to you? Do you, like, care about her? Or do you just really like fucking her?”

“What difference does it make? I’m still responsible for her, regardless of how I feel.”

“Sure, but... ‘responsible’ is a teacher thing, not a lover thing. Right? So if you’re just her teacher and her occasional sex partner and that’s it, then yeah. That’s it. So you just have to figure out how many chances somebody gets before their problems aren’t

yours any more. But if you actually care about her, then you gotta figure out how to make it right.”

I pulled her in for another hug, planting a kiss on her forehead. “See? This is why I’m lucky to have you.”

“Yeah, and the butt slut thing,” she answered with a coy giggle, but I could tell the compliment landed.

“That doesn’t hurt. Now run on home. It’s finals week, so I want you focused on that this week. I’ll be busy, too, so don’t be surprised if you don’t hear from me until Friday.”

“Doesn’t school end Thursday?”

“For you guys, yeah, but I have grading to do Thursday night, and then teachers are in Friday to close everything down for the summer.”

“Oh. Well, if you’re getting stressed and need a quick ass-fuck to blow off some steam, you know where to find me.” She pivoted, hastily tugged down her pajama bottoms and the underwear beneath, then rubbed her bare ass against the front of my robe for a moment before recomposing herself.

“Hang in there, Mr. Canon. It’s almost over.”

The final Monday of the school year. The air in the halls and classrooms of GHS crackled with unspoken potential. This time next week, the annual miracle that was summer break would be here. This time next week, people would be embarking on family vacations, starting new jobs, spending lazy days fishing at Bear Lake, or simply sleeping in and taking it easy.

But to lay one's hand on the treasure hoard, first, one had to slay the dragon.

Four days. Monday and Tuesday were split between exam preparations, final projects and presentations, and all those bureaucratic tasks necessary to close things out. Thanks to the foresight and leadership of Amy, our department even had a system in place for the inevitable mass drop-offs of past-due books Tuesday afternoon when the students were given time for locker clean-out. We were primed for smooth sailing this time out. On the last two days periods were extended to double length, with the exams for periods 1-3 on Wednesday, 5-7 Friday.

(Period 4 was lunch, a source of endless confusion to new students as the cafeteria's three lunch shifts meant that for a given student's schedule, period 4 might come after period 3 or 5, or in the middle of 5. It was a fine transition for students coming out of middle school, to remind them that life only got messier as it proceeded.)

Since my seventh period was my prep, I'd end the academic year a couple hours before the rest of the building. Until then, though, it was going to be hectic. Custodial was out in force, cracking down on students discarding the detritus of their lockers wherever it fell. The allure of impending freedom made paying attention all the more difficult, while the stakes of final exams simultaneously meant it was more necessary than ever. The useless assholes down at state DoE did us an extra favor this year by distributing standardized test scores this week, prompting god alone knew how many panic attacks and crises of faith amongst students and staff alike. My students' scores happened to be up three points from last year, a statistic which was as relevant to my pedagogy as it was useful to me in the twilight of the school year.

After Friday's triumphant return in the cafeteria, I decided to keep it small and private that Monday. I invited Candy and Isa to join me in my room for lunch. They accepted, naturally. I wasn't sure they could refuse if they wanted to.

"So how's it feel to be back?" Candy asked as we settled in. Like many teachers, she'd gone extra casual for this week, some beat-up jeans and a GHS football t-shirt. Horen was ever a stickler for dress codes, but when we had our hands full filing away hundreds of pounds of textbooks and materials, she turned a blind eye to it these final days. Candy still looked very pretty in it, plain or no. She couldn't help it. Sometimes I could hardly believe I had so much pussy thrown my way that I was neglecting such an attractive woman.

I unpacked my lunch from my briefcase. "It feels a lot better than sitting at home waiting for a squad car to come pick me up, I'll say that much."

“Not something you’d have to worry about if you made better choices,” muttered Isa peevishly. “Ahem. Master.”

“Right, because if you say ‘master’ at the end, it’s automatically respectful,” teased her girlfriend.

I wasn’t offended, though. The only reason I kept having her use the term was because she seemed to get off on it. I’d hardly noticed when she’d ditched “sir” for “master” when we were alone. “I did miss it though, honestly. It’s the best and the hardest time of year, you know? Especially teaching seniors. Wild to think that in a few days’ time, as far as the world is concerned, they’re as much adults as any of us.”

“Except when it comes to buying alcohol,” Isa pointed out as she poured her dressing onto her salad. When she saw the two of us eyeing her, she made a face. “What?”

“No, you’re right, mama. That’s exactly what he was talking about. Buying alcohol.” Candy shook her head, snickering as she took a bite of her tuna salad sandwich.

“I’m just saying—”

“I know, I know. Trust me, I appreciate better than most people that legal adulthood and actual maturity are two very different animals. And yeah, I know if I ‘made better choices,’ yadda yadda, so spare me.”

Isa shot me a snide look, but didn’t resort to a verbal retort. Candy made small-talk about whether I’d been keeping up during my suspension, her irritation that she’d gotten a day behind herself, her anxiousness that her new exam was going to be too long for students to finish in time. It was the most normal camaraderie the two of us had shared since before I’d dosed her in that coffee shop last month. It reminded me that once upon a time I’d had a little crush on her, before I waited too long and Isa scooped her up.

Still, it was the abnormal nature of our situation that had caused me to call them here today in the first place, and when the conversation trailed off, I asked my question.

“Are you two doing OK?” I asked. Recognizing the ambiguity of my sudden pivot, I elaborated. “With our situation. Between you and me.”

The two shared a long look, and there was a lot being communicated in their faces that wasn’t readily apparent to me. They spoke in elevated eyebrows, tilted heads and twists of their lips that emitted no sound, their own intimate language. It was Candy who finally answered me. “We’re holding up OK. Why do you ask?”

“Because a few weeks ago the two of you were so malcontent over my behavior that you tried to chop my nuts off. Figuratively speaking. I’ve been at this long enough now to know that things run a lot smoother when the other participants are happy. If you’re still unhappy, I want to hear about it. After everything that went down last week, I’m sick to death of forcing miserable people to share my space, much less my... well.”

Again, the looks. The two practically had a sign language. “So what is it you want? Our blessing to keep fucking us?” Isa asked. “Not sure how much it would mean, considering.”

“No. I know you don’t approve. So be it. I’m way past caring what you think about me and the girls. We’re doing what we’re doing, regardless of your opinions. But I’m asking about you two. What Abbie and Taylor did to you... it’s pretty screwed up, I have to say.”

“You got that right, master,” answered Isa, the last word dripping disdain.

“So I ask again. Are you two OK?”

Candy’s eyes flickered between the two of us. “Yeah, it’s... weird. It’s definitely weird. I... should I start, mama? Unless you wanna answer first.”

This time the response came in words, albeit mumbled. “Go on, baby.”

Candy set down the last bit of her sandwich, folding her hands together on the desktop and looking at me earnestly. “So, since there’s no point in being coy, part of it has been really amazing. Our sex life has been absolutely next level. For me, at least. And even if it’s this weird vicarious humiliation fetish that you, or the Sterns or whoever, put in my head, it’s still hot. We didn’t have this much sex when we first hooked up, and now...”

“I think he gets the picture.”

“I don’t actually. Not meaning to be nosy, but you’re saying you two have been getting along better?”

“I think so?” Candy looked to Isa.

“Yeah. I guess so. Sexually, at least.”

We left that caveat aside for the time being as the social studies teacher continued. “Still, even if we’re having fun, I do worry sometimes. It can’t be healthy, can it?”

“What can’t be healthy? Sex?”

“No, I mean... well, the *way* we have sex now. It’s not just hands and tongues any more. Now there’s this psychological aspect to it, and I... I dunno.”

“Maybe walk me through it a little, because I’m not sure I get it. What’s happening that you’re afraid is unhealthy? Like, give me a for instance.”

Isa looked plainly mortified, but Candy was inclined to treat this discussion as some plan of mine, helpfully aiding it unfold. “All right, so... Saturday night, I think it was. Isa had just gotten home from the gym, and—”

“That was Friday.”

“Friday then, whatever. So we hadn’t talked since the morning, and I asked her how her day was while she was getting into the shower. Basic chitchat stuff. Except now, part of her day is what she’s done to keep you out of hot water, right?”

“It is?” I wasn’t aware there was on-going labor involved. It had always been on-call, so far as I knew.

Isa replied. “Of course there is. Patrolling outside your room in the afternoons so if you and the girls are getting frisky, I can deflect attention. I have a bug in Horen’s office now, so I have to go through and make sure she hasn’t discovered something we don’t want her to know. That’s easily an hour a day right there. Checking in at the station, seeing if there’s any fresh gossip about cases involving the school without looking too obvious about it. All sorts of stuff. It’s my top priority.”

“Damn. Well... thanks, I guess.”

“Sure.” She scowled at her fork, skewering a cherry tomato with spite.

Candy went on, “Right, so whenever she gets to that part of her day, she gets... I mean, you know how she gets.”

“Indulge me. How does she get?”

“Oh. Well... you want to explain it, mama?” Isa shook her head furiously, eyes low. “She’s acting shy about it, but at home, it’s... no. She’ll just sort of get overwhelmed, I guess is a good word for it. Can’t keep her hands off herself, can’t keep her clothes on, gets... I don’t know. Agreeable, you could call it. Wants me to tell her what to do. To use her, I guess.”

It certainly sounded like my own experiences with Isa. “That right?”

“I get off on being a submissive little bitch,” mumbled Isa. “I can’t help myself.”

“So yeah. And it’s weird, yeah, but it’s so hot watching her break down like that. It turns me on like crazy whenever you or one of your fantasy sluts abuses Isa. I can’t help myself.”

“So you’ve said. Both of you.” I rubbed my forehead, considering. “So it sounds like the sex is fun, but like you said, probably not healthy.”

“I guess not. But hey, it’s your plan. I’m just doing my part.”

“Candy, this was never my plan. This was Abbie and Taylor’s plan. And I think it’s about time we stop letting them call the shots.”

Isa looked up, eyes narrowed in suspicion. “What exactly are you saying?”

“I think we need to see about whether or not I can fix you. Officially, really fix you. We’ve had our fun and all, but the last thing I want is to sit back and relax while Isa’s on her way to a nervous breakdown or something.”

“You seem to have been fine with it so far, master.” Like that, though, what her lover had mentioned played out in real time. It all happened so fast. The widening of her eyes as the wave of lust built, then washed her down to her knees, hands rubbing helplessly at her crotch and her breasts.

“Knock that off, Isa. The door’s unlocked, for god’s sake.”

She winced, stung by the rebuke from her master as much as the brief dereliction of her duty, then hastily returned to her desk, hands folded demurely in her lap. “I’m sorry, master. It won’t happen again.”

I patted her arm reassuringly, though she winced at that, too. “Anyway, you were right. I have gotten awfully comfortable with too many unpleasant situations. I’m trying to get better about it. After all, somebody gave me some good advice about how letting those girls call the shots might have led to a few thrills, but it’s probably a bad way to run my life.”

She smiled thinly at that.

“So the way I see it, if we broke things with Serenex, it’s going to take Serenex to fix things. Now I think I have enough left to give the two of you another dose. *If*, that is, you’re interested in trying. Let me be clear: this is *not* my ‘plan,’ Candy. This is a suggestion, and you’re both free to refuse if you don’t trust me. I can’t blame you, after all that’s happened.”

“Dose us, and then what?” pressed my colleague curiously.

“And then... you tell me. I know we all had our fears about contradictory commands. We could test that, see if there’s anything to be afraid of. Or we could look for a work-around. Maybe I can’t stop Isa from feeling like ‘a submissive little bitch,’ but... I don’t know. Something so you aren’t being spun around. Untie your pleasure from your anger. I’m open to suggestions.”

The two shared another eye-conversation. I cut it short, though, this time. We only had minutes before lunch ended and students returned. “You don’t have to decide anything now. Talk it over, think it over, and when you’ve decided, you know where to find me. It’s a standing offer, too. No rush. I think there’s been more than enough pain and aggravation in all this mess, some of which I can’t pawn off on the Sterns. They may not have any remorse over it, but me, I’m cleaning house. I mean to enjoy myself, and if I have my druthers, I’d like for that to extend to the rest of our little after-school program. I want everyone to be happy, and to get along with each other to the extent we need to.”

“Does that include the Sterns?” asked Isa.

“Did he just say ‘druthers?’” asked Candy.

I stood, wadding up my trash and snapping shut my briefcase. “Just let me know.”

“You look pretty today.” It had taken almost an hour since I’d noticed for the two of us to be alone where I could say it. The final passing period of the day filled the halls with noise, but in my classroom, Tabitha and I enjoyed relative peace and quiet. “I should tell you more often.”

“What, this old thing?” The girl acing AP chemistry and physics grinned, performing a graceful twirl that fluttered her dress up to flash her panties. A thong, fire engine red. It complemented her floral summer dress nicely, white but decorated with sinuous vines sporting countless roses. Not that anyone but the two of us knew she’d donned matching panties. The dress was exquisitely snug across the chest, displaying her perky bust fetchingly.

“Do I need to remind you about showing your underwear in this building, Ms. Hutchings?”

“No, Mr. Canon,” she murmured in playful contrition.

“Good. Now what’s up? You stuck around just to flash me, or what?”

“Actually, sort of?” She glided up to my desk, hands folded in front of her demurely. “My seventh period is doing final projects. I volunteered to go first, so I’m all done in there. Ms. McGough said it would be all right if I wanted to get some extra help for my other finals.”

“Tabitha, absolutely not. Nothing in the classroom. How can you even suggest it after—”

“I didn’t mean *that*, Mr. Canon,” she corrected hastily. “But I thought I could at least help out. You were saying how hard this week is on you. What if I pitched in? I could help organize your shelves, grade stuff, whatever you want. Even if I’m only half as efficient as you, an hour of my time would still get you an extra half hour sleep tonight. Correct?”

Like ice cream on a fat guy, my hands went straight to my hips. “Do you really not remember my being fired last week because you had your ass out in my classroom?”

“I’ll pitch in with my clothes on, obviously!”

“No, you won’t, because if Principal Horen walks in here and finds you’re ditching class to do chores for the teacher you were bullied into flashing your thong at, how do you think that’s going to look?”

Her face took on a serious cast. So serious I was actually taken aback. “Listen. I am *mortified* by what Taylor made me do for you. Or to you, whatever. It was hard just to walk in here when you came back, knowing what you’ve seen. What I’ve shown you. I wanted to curl up in a ball in the women’s restroom and just ditch your class.” This was not a person who displayed emotional vulnerability casually, but in those wide eyes, I saw real shame.

I frowned. “Wait, really? I didn’t—”

“I feel like such an idiot. But worse, I feel awful for what my cowardice put *you* through. You are an excellent teacher, Mr. Canon. You’ve gone the extra mile for me all year, even before all this crud. I can’t tell you how much I appreciate it. My conscience would never fully heal if I graduated without trying to make things right between us, and leave you on a note that reflects both my respect, and my shame for my poor judgment.”

I was stunned. Had she really been burying all that? What had I been putting her through, without even thinking that she was still clinging to—

“And *that* is what I’ll explain to Ms. Horen if she pops in.”

I rolled my eyes. “Nice, Meryl Streep.” Still, she’d been earnest enough to throw me, and I could use the sleep, so... screw it. I couldn’t spend the rest of my career afraid to ever be alone with a female student. “All right. But *no* funny business. I don’t want to see that thong again until I’m taking it off myself.” I winced. “I mean, off of you, by myself. Err, you’d be there, too. With my hands, that is—”

“You plan on undressing me later. Understood, and eagerly awaited. Now how can I help you with my clothes *on*?”

To my credit, I did reach out to Ms. McGough and make sure she was really on board with releasing Tabitha. If nothing else I wanted to be sure that if Horen did stop by and did decide to get suspicious, my defense would include that I had followed protocol. I set her to doing some of my organizational labor for me, tallying what books and supplies were missing, who owed what, and filing my few remaining papers in students’ folders.

I had to hand it to her. As much power as the girl had to arrest my attention when she wanted to, during that prep period, she was a ghost. Pretty soon, I forgot she was even in the room. Amy stopped in at one point to briefly touch base about the summer reading list for next year’s AP seniors; she merely smiled and waved at the comely honors student as she patiently scrubbed at some of the graffiti on one of my desks. Tabitha Hutchings was above suspicion.

Unlike the person who entered my classroom next.

Though my initial reaction was shock at Taylor Stern being in the building, I couldn’t help but register still greater shock at seeing the *way* she was being in the building.

To say Taylor was flouting the dress code would be the understatement of the year. The shorts, if one could call them that, were jaw-droppingly revealing. Once upon a time, they had been jean shorts. Now, they were the tattered remains thereof. It wasn’t so much that they were short – though they were, the legs practically nonexistent – but it was the network of holes and threadbare patches on what remained, all of it strategically positioned to gratify the male gaze. My gaze. As she turned to shut the door behind her, it was clear that if there were panties beneath them, they were only barely

present. The shorts were so tight that part of her ass was literally squeezing out of one such hole in the denim, a tan little bubble of butt.

And if the shorts were scandalous, I'd need a thesaurus for the top. In terms of fashion, I didn't even know what to call it. It wasn't a tube top, but that was probably the closest thing. It consisted of a band of aqua green elastic around her tits, probably only four or five inches wide in spite of her whopping tits' efforts to stretch it further. The poor thing couldn't fully cover them. Just below her nipples (as I happened to have memorized exactly where those were) was a filmy white bit of fabric that was entirely translucent. I could see her belly button with ease. Seated, my angle to her was just low enough that I could make out the underside of her breasts, jutting out proudly before her. The gauze portion didn't even go all the way around. Busty as she was, there were a few scant, mouth-watering centimeters of side boob hanging out by either arm. There was nothing on the shoulders, nothing on the arms, nothing but that elastic band on the back.

Her hair covered more than the shirt did, a blanket of wavy brownish blonde that I only belatedly realized had two pigtails woven into the sides. I almost didn't notice the calf-high red boots adding inches to her height, deadly seduction to her walk. The whole ensemble was a manifesto of arrogant sexuality, a middle finger to anyone who thought they might have a claim to being more worthy of being ogled than her.

"Sup, C-dawg."

"What are you..." *Wearing*, I nearly finished. Of all the things she'd worn in my classroom that had sent me home apoplectic with pent-up sexual frustration, there had never been anything like this. In my life, no one had *ever* worn *anything* like this for me – and there was no doubt from that twinkle in her eye that it was for me, all right. If she'd worn a bikini, it would have been less salacious. At least a bikini was skimpy for some purpose. This was just a walking, talking reminder that sex was still a thing, and this was who we all wanted to be having it with. "Um, what are you doing here?" I spit out at last.

My stammering wasn't lost on her. "Came in to clean out my locker. Good thing they didn't search it, or I'd be in trouble for more than just showing you my cooch."

"And let's just skip right past whatever that means. I'm–"

"I got some edibles in there. Tests make me anxious, so I was gonna use it to get through finals. Guess now I don't need to keep saving it."

I sighed. "And yet I can't help but notice you came here empty-handed."

"You want weed, maybe you shouldn't have sicced the fucking cops on me."

"Referring to the sanctioned contents of your lock, obviously." I didn't know if recognition dawned on her face. I couldn't look up that far. When she didn't respond, I clarified, "Your books? Tabitha, you have the list. What are we owed?"

As Tabitha, who I only now saw was openly glaring at the newcomer, skimmed the papers in her clipboard, Taylor worked in a response. “So it’s ‘we’ now, huh. You and Flatty Tabby?”

“That doesn’t even rhyme,” retorted Tabitha coolly, not even looking up. “For a girl whose name rhymes with ‘nail her,’ ‘whaler,’ ‘impale her,’ is damn close to ‘failure’... that might not be a fight you want to start.” She tapped her lip, suddenly looking up with eyes sparkling. “Oh, if we went full name, we could go for Inhale Your Sperm. Reaching, maybe, but better than Flatty Tabby.”

“If I wanted to start a fight, toothpick, you’d already be—”

“That’s enough.” I stood, interposing myself between the two. “What does she owe?”

“World literature textbook, number 19-104. *Raisin in the Sun* 81. *The Things They Carried* 30. *Frankenstein* 0-75. Two copies of *Beowulf*, number 57 and one that’s just three question marks.” She glanced up contemptuously. “Did you return anything all year? There’s more here.”

She rolled her eyes. “I guess I just fell in love with all these amazing books.”

“Just bring whatever you find, Taylor. I’ll figure out the rest.” I shook my head.

Taylor took a step closer. “That’s it? Not one goddamn word to me in that whole fucked as hell week, and *that’s* what you got to say to me?”

“Language. And what else is there to say, Taylor?”

“Oh, I don’t know. How about ‘thank you.’”

“Thank you? Are you seriously—”

But she wasn’t having it. “Or how about ‘I’m sorry.’ Or maybe ‘I missed you.’ Oh, or you could try ‘I’m a little pussy who snuck in to have a nooner with your little sister and didn’t even have the guts to look you in the eyes.’ Hell, I’d settle for a nice ‘You look so hot I’m coming in my briefs.’”

I took a step in myself, but only to loom. Shit, she even *smelled* good. That garden-variety teen perfume, the scent of which could only be called “baby whore.” That I’d complimented Tabitha on her dress and wasn’t expressing any appreciation for *this* was simply wrong.

Although this was Taylor Stern. Being in the wrong was one of the most consistent features of our relationship.

“Taylor, I don’t know what you hoped for, coming in to provoke a confrontation, but this isn’t the time. I’m honestly not sure after the way you’ve been behaving that there *is* a time.”

“So *make* time, Canon. You owe me that.”

My jaw audibly hit the floor. “I *owe* you? How do you reckon that—” I shook my head. “No. No, we are not doing this again.”

“Doing what again?”

“This, where you and Abbie do something terrible, I roll up my sleeves and find a way of seeing your side of things, we have sex, and you make me feel like an idiot for treating you like more than the bitch you’ve been to me since you walked in that door.” There they were again, hands on hips. I was turning into my mother. “Frankly, I’m done. I don’t know how you got into the building dressed like that—”

“Thank Barbie.”

“—but I’m tired, all right? You feel like you’re owed an apology? Is there no point at which you begin to take responsibility for yourself? For what you’ve done?”

“For what *I’ve* done?! I’ve—”

I thundered over her, though I quickly lowered my volume in case any sound carried beyond the confines of my room. “You, Ms. Stern, have abused my trust countless times, and done unspeakable things to your classmates. You’ve bullied people, deceived people... Taylor, you’ve *enslaved* people! Do you even understand how wrong that is?”

“Don’t look to me like the skinny bitch got complaints.”

Before Tabitha could get into it again, I snapped right back at her. “You removed their capacity to complain! I don’t pretend to grasp the precise ethics of all this, but... Oh sure, give me that look, because I’m the jerk who’s reaping all the rewards.”

“Aren’t you? You talkin’ big shit now, but I ain’t hear you bellyaching when you were basking in all that pussy in the locker room after Saturday class. Aw, but shucks, then you gotta rinse a little yolk off your house, so suddenly it’s boo hoo, fuck Taylor, fuck all she’s done for me, fuck the best mother fuckin’ thing you ever had come your way!”

“Don’t you put this on me! We’re all of us making the best of a situation *you* caused! With your recklessness. With your *arrogance*. You and your sister are two tornadoes, whirling across the landscape sewing destruction wherever you go, and I’m sick to death of it!”

“Don’t you drag Abbie into this! You leave my sister’s name out your fuckin’ mouth!”

“Right, because she’s clearly innocent in all this,” Tabitha said dryly.

“Bitch, don’t make me—”

I cut in. This couldn’t become an actual fight. Besides, my beef with her took precedence. We’d been at this for two years now. “Believe me, I’d love to leave her out of it, Taylor. Wherever I look, though, there’s some fresh chaos the two of you have collaboratively concocted. For the life of me, I don’t know how you could think there would never be any consequences, no end to my willingness to indulge your tantrums and your vindictiveness, but at some point, I don’t care if it’s the best sex I’ve ever had! I just want to teach my classes and live my life without constant terror and harassment! I am *done* tolerating it, you hear me? Done!”

She was quiet for a moment. Inscrutable. I willed Tabitha to stay silent; mercifully, she had the sense to do so.

“Best sex you ever had, huh.”

“That’s not the only factor, Taylor. I gave you a hundred chances. You blew them all.”

She moved forward. I didn’t give her the satisfaction of flinching away, even as she closed to the point where her scarcely concealed breasts pressed into my chest. “But you agree it was the best.”

“Tabitha’s still new. She’ll be able to do what you can do.”

She didn’t press further. Her hands, her eyes behaved themselves. Her tits were soft and inviting against my chest, impossible to ignore. They always had been. “You and I both know she ain’t never gonna be what I can be.”

“What, a hooligan? A vandal? A druggie?”

“A goddess, you fuckin’ asshole.”

I didn’t like the feeling, deep down in my gut, that her words had struck something. This wasn’t the time to back down, though. “Maybe not. But at least I know I can trust her.”

“And I trust my vibrator, but I wouldn’t take it over your dickwad ass. Just ‘cause it can get me off doesn’t make it a worthy partner.”

My eyes narrowed. “Worthy? How exactly did I set myself apart from the, oh, I’m guessing hundreds of other men who’ve looked at you and thought about throwing you down and fucking the hell out of you?”

She looked up at me evenly. “You did it.”

We locked eyes for a long, tense moment. I didn’t know what to say to that. Again, there was that feeling in my gut. The same idiot place in my gut that made me buy that Serenex in the first place. The place that did all my worst thinking, and most of my best fucking.

“Fuck me, Mr. Canon.” Her gut must have been feeling the same as mine.

“Taylor, he’s not going to—”

“Don’t say another mother fuckin’ word to me until I say you can,” snapped Taylor without so much as glancing toward the girl. Tabitha fell silent instantly, cowed.

“Fuck me,” she repeated. “Right now. Don’t think about it. Just fuck me. You know you want to. Shit, I ain’t even gay and I wanna fuck me in this thing. Just get out of your own fucking way and take what you goddamn want for once without me having to drag you to it.”

“We’re in *school*, Taylor. We can’t—”

“So the fuck what. I’m worth losing your sad little life for. Whip out that fat fucking dick and fill me with it. Right here. Right now. Be the fuckin’ man. You won’t

regret it. I will be to you what you never knew you could have. Fuck. Me. Fuck me like I was begging you to when you stole my chapstick, you ungrateful fuck.”

Suddenly, the door opened. I could barely make myself turn to face the woman opening it, even with this student’s tits pressed against me. It was only Isa, though, thank god. “Horen’s moving down the main hallway. Don’t know if she’s coming this way, but head’s up.”

Then the door closed. There it was, the protection I hadn’t known I’d had. Or else she’d simply been ordered to escort Taylor so she didn’t cause trouble. I stepped back. “We can’t,” I croaked, throat dry.

“Fuck Horen. Fuck Tabitha, and Barbie, and Detective Whatshisdick. Take the goddamn life you want, right now. Fuck me.”

God, did I ever want to. This close, she flooded the sum of my senses until nothing else was perceptible. That pretentiously displayed visage of sensual perfection. That slutty fragrance. Her proud, perky tits pressing into me invitingly. The urgency in her voice as she demanded I do exactly what I wanted to do. Hell, I could taste her lips without even putting my mouth to them. They tasted like rain, and strawberry chapstick.

“Psst!” hissed Tabitha.

“Shut up.” Taylor looked back to me immediately. “Who cares who sees it, C. You wanna fuck me; I’m not even a student here any more. There’s no excuses left except being too much of a pussy to take me on. So drop your bullshit, and fuck me.”

“Taylor, I...” Her chin tilted up not hopefully, but expectantly. Of course. How could a woman be *that* sexy and not anticipate compliance with such an offer? I leaned down. She was right. My job could never satisfy me the way this woman could.

Tabitha stalked into our peripheral, flapping her hands in a paroxysm of anxiety.

Shit! Isa had just said... something. Horen! Horen was coming. Maybe not in here. But maybe! Shit!

“We can’t.”

I don’t know what I expected. An angry denunciation, a sob of despair, maybe even a sucker punch to the gut. What I did not expect was for her to take a step back, jam a hand down the front of her shorts, and retrieve – of all things to pull out of one’s pants – a tightly rolled, badly crumpled bundle of papers. With a hard thrust, she jammed one end of it down the front of my own pants before I knew what was happening.

“You know what? Fuck you. Fuck your class, fuck this whole bullshit school. I didn’t want to come back here for another year anyway! You ruined *everything!*” she yelled. Then she turned to Tabitha. “Looks like he’s all yours now. Why don’t you start off writing something a hundred times on the board while he checks out that narrow ass of yours? That really gets him off. Oh yeah, if you didn’t know, he likes to sit back and watch and not do a fucking thing.”

I pulled the wad of paper out of my pants irritably. “Taylor, you’re being unreasonable. We can talk about your enrollment here later after—”

“You been talking at me for two years, Mr. Canon! Just when you finally start saying something worth listening to, you let these fools cram you into their bitch-ass box. This whole fucking place is full of whiny little sheeple, doing what they’re told, playing by some loser’s loser-ass rules, making themselves into whatever you all tell them to be. Guess that’s how you like it, huh.”

“That’s not fair and you know it.”

But she was back after Tabitha. “Go on. One hundred times, nice big letters: *I am a stupid easy flat-chested cocksucking whore*. OK? And use the lower part of the board, so you gotta bend over. Right, C-dawg? That’s where the good shit is.”

I glanced at the door anxiously, but it held. “Leave her out of this. You have a problem with me, talk to me.”

“No no. I’m leaving her in this. You’re welcome, by the way. Guess you’d rather have a pathetic little fuck toy than someone who... just... fuck you, Mr. Canon! And fuck high school!”

She stormed out the door, slamming it so hard behind her that it shook the whole room.

“Are you all right, Tabitha?”

“I’m OK. Are you OK?”

“I’m... I’m not OK.”

“It’ll pass, Mr. Canon. You still have me.”

I was staring at the door, the after-image of Taylor’s departure burned into my eyes. When she spoke again, however, I realized something was amiss from the muffled sound of her voice. “She said, ‘I am a stupid, easy, flat-chested cocksucking whore,’ right? I think I heard that correctly.”

I turned. Tabitha was at the board, dry erase marker in hand, writing those very words along the bottom of the board.

“What on earth are you doing?”

“Huh? She said to... you know. Write.” She gestured to where *I am a stupid, easy*, was already enscribed in red marker. “A hundred seems like a lot of times. Is it OK if I stay after school, or should I come back to finish in the morning?”

“You don’t have to write that!” I snapped.

“I do whatever Taylor tells me to do,” she replied with chilling casualness, and resumed writing. “Though that goes for you too, obviously Mr. Canon.”

Still trying to wrap my head around what she was saying, I glanced down at the rolled up paper in my hands. There at the top was the standard header and a recent date. This past weekend. Taylor’s long-awaited essay. Taylor, the girl who had taken it upon herself to transform a smarter classmate into an automaton. Never mind that

Tabitha's rote obedience was the trait I found most alluring in her, but still. If she had secretly done this, what else had she done, and to whom? Was Tabitha the only one with those words burned into her head?

I suppose I should be glad that I evidently didn't, since somehow I'd let her walk out of here.

I walked calmly over to my desk and threw her essay in the garbage. Right where I should have thrown the one she'd plagiarized all those weeks ago.

It took some convincing to have Tabitha continue her assigned writing project while following her writing hand with the eraser. Taylor hadn't said *not* to, I'd reasoned, and it had evidently been deemed sound logic. On she went, helpless to do anything but comply with Taylor's final, degrading command. I left the room while Tabitha worked and made her promise that if anyone else came into the room she'd pause until they left. Taylor hadn't told her not to, after all, and if she didn't pause, someone might react in a way that she'd be forced to stop. That argument had also resonated with her, though she plainly didn't enjoy deviating from the letter of that particular law.

Disobeying Taylor, it seemed, was not an option for her. When I returned from the teacher workroom with the copies of my final exams an hour later, however, she was gone.

I buried myself in my work. It was going on eight o'clock before I left the school, though I saw I wasn't the only one still there. Not quite. Randi actually left the building a short ways ahead of me, done with her shift that had started six hours later than mine. I didn't have enough gas left in the tank to make myself thank her for vouching for me. I would, though. Otherwise, I might have been as screwed as Taylor and Abbie.

I drove home in silence, wondering what fresh hells my rejection might visit upon me. Back home, however, there was nothing. No eggs, no TP in the trees, nothing uprooted in the garden. *FUCK YOU CANON* wasn't spray-painted on my garage door. Just home, quiet and empty.

I ordered takeout for dinner and kept working while I ate. Grades needed to be completed, and scores needed to be entered. Missing four days had left quite a backlog, but I wasn't about to slack. Those kids had done the work; I was going to honor the effort, even if a bunch of it was nonsensical worksheets my sub had found for *Catcher* that I never would have squandered their time on. My seniors had missed the whole point of the story, thanks to me.

Well, no. Thanks to me, and to Taylor Stern.

I scrolled down to her name in the gradebook. There at the left was her point total, and next to that, a percentage and letter grade. 54%. Not even an F+. There were no grades entered for her in the past five weeks, ever since we'd started our after school sessions, and our illicit relationship. The whole stack of work I'd collected from her in those weeks, hundreds of points' worth of assignments, quizzes, tests and projects, still sat in the past due tray on my desk, poised right above the discarded essay in the trash. I still hadn't ever passed any of it along to her other teachers. No point now. Taylor deserves to fail all her classes.

Across the line where the blanks were situated for her missing work, I filled in zero after zero. I went ahead and created the entry for the final exam and slapped a zero on that, too. Combined with third quarter's D+, the second highest grade she'd gotten in

my classes in five combined semesters, she would finish the year with a 43% in my class. It sounded about right.

I slept alone that night, trying not to think about her. Trying not to get too angry to go back to sleep when I did. Trying not to get too horny when I woke up from another dream where I'd taken her up on her offer, fucked her right there on my desk. Tabitha tried to distract me, but I wouldn't have it. Isa darted in to plead with her master to stop before it was too late. Principal Horen gasped in horror (or awe?) at the sight of me plowing one of her precious students. Candy, Megan, Cassie, Abbie, all of them joined in to implore me to quit wasting myself on this undeserving creature of mine and come shower that same attention on them. Taylor and I only laughed at their entreaties, rutting away uninhibited. Our glee multiplied along with the audience, swelling at just how perfectly we fit together.

Then I'd wake up again, remember who I was and who she was to me, and then fume, and then dream it all over again.

I took a cold shower that Tuesday morning, and was back in school before the sun was over the horizon.