

The Rehabilitation of Kylie

Written by Max Harper

Part Eleven: Rebellion

The weekend with Donna and Kylie was the best weekend Lucy had ever had. She hadn't felt so good, so carefree, or so unburdened in her entire life. Donna had taken them out shopping and even though she was constantly self-conscious about what she was wearing, no one noticed. A large part of that was that Lucy was trying to let it all go.

Since puberty, pretty much, Lucy had gone out of her way to look the best, feel the best, and be the best. It was part of the abnormal psychology of modern humanity. Humans were the only species that she could think of where the females were competing for a mate instead of the males. She thought of all of the birds and mammals that she could name and all of them shared the same trait. The males were the ones that pursued the females, that performed or stood out to win a female's favor, but not humans. While society would love to make it appear so, men did little besides clumsily spew pickup lines or brandish their wallets to win over potential mates. And men settle. It never mattered how many times a man was rejected, there was always someone farther down the ladder who would accept it. Women don't have that luxury. Women are told never to settle, to sleep up, as it were, as the value of a man was gauged by what he could provide. So all of the girls did everything they could to win the best of the bunch and Lucy was no different. With such pursuits came the inevitable disappointments. When love is decided by committee, there is little room for what the heart wants. She'd been victim to such hive thinking many times. Her circle of friends would say that a guy is really cute and that she should date them, but it would always end up the same. Pretty and wealthy made her a trophy and not a pursuit. Guys treated her as a conquest instead of a person and she had to accept it all.

Babied, and with her new best friend, Lucy didn't have the pressures to turn heads anymore. She hadn't honestly thought about her old friends and she was sure that they hadn't thought much about her. The hive was quick to replace fallen drones. Kylie didn't treat her like her old friends did. Kylie walked with her, arm in arm, and pointed out all the things that she thought were cool or cute. Lucy had to admit to herself that her tastes were more in line with Kylie's than what she would normally go for. Slutty chic she called it. Show enough to get them interested, flash it to keep them coming back for more. Kylie was far more conservative. Her being a virgin had a lot to do with that, or her mother, Lucy wasn't sure which, but Kylie acted genuine around Lucy.

Donna held their pacifiers in her purse as they walked around the mall. She let the girls walk in front of her so that they could enjoy themselves as they wandered around. Donna didn't have a game plan, she had just wanted to get out of the house. She hoped that her experiment of taking the two of them out together wouldn't blow up in her face. There had been previous examples of little going out into public too early and not coping very well. A lot of the time, it was that first taste of freedom that often pulled them astray. Other times, it was running into the familiar, be it a friend or acquaintance that would derail their progress. The Institute had therefore decided that such excursions were better left for later in the program when the client had reached the final stages of segment one and were well indoctrinated into needing their caregiver. The pull towards their old life was easier to resist when they relied on someone else almost entirely. Donna felt that Kylie was close to that point. What little resistance she may have was drowned out by the routine. She was nearing diaper dependency to control her wetting and within the next few months, she would be fully incontinent. It was easier for Kylie to stay on that path, as that's where she wanted to be. Lucy, however, was far from that point and Donna doubted if she would ever get there. The walls and barriers that Lucy had around her psyche were hardened by Penny's mistreatment of her and Donna felt that Lucy's portrayed happiness was a shallow feeling. She wasn't there yet. She wasn't willing to let it all go.

Donna bought them a few outfits, Kylie wanted more skirts and tights, claiming that they helped her feel little and would provide Donna with ease of access for changing. Lucy was shy about her clothing, trying to find pants that were larger than she needed to hide her shame. She put

on a brave face about all of it but Donna could tell that she was feeling uneasy. Donna did let her choose her own stuffed toy though, a Huskie dog that she named Paws. She held it in her arms the rest of the day, doing her best to ignore the strange looks she got from passersby.

They ate at the food court and Donna let them ride the carousel. They behaved much like sisters and the longer the day wore on, the more Donna felt that her wishes had some merit. She wished that the powers that be could see how Kylie and Lucy behaved together. If the goal was to get them to act as if they were hiding some embarrassing secret, then Donna had been overwhelmingly successful. Kylie behaved as if she were oblivious to her situation and even Lucy didn't seem hindered much. Donna watched them with interest and recognised the signs as they spun around on the carousel. They would both slow down for a few moments as if they were pretending to concentrate on something, and then they would be right back to giggling and horsing around. Donna had seen the act enough times before to know that they were wetting themselves and then carrying on as if nothing had happened. They were making huge strides in their regression and Donna couldn't be more proud.

She waited to change them until they got home. They weren't ready for a public change. Lucy was still hesitant but with Paws in her arms, she was less resistant than before. They played with the toys in the nursery until dinner and after they ate, Donna led them into the living room for their bottles and cuddle time. She laid their heads on her lap, their bodies going to opposite ends of the couch and she held their bottles for them. It was here, again, that Lucy was apprehensive, but she went along with it at Kylie's behest and quickly found that she loved the idea. There was something so intimately pure about it that she almost wished that she had Donna all to herself.

Donna tucked them in together in the crib. Their bonding was important to Lucy's care and as long as Donna could live the dream, she would. She wanted a baby of her own, for sure, but daughters held a special place in her heart.

The girls awoke Saturday morning in each other's arms. There wasn't any sexual tension, just warmth and peace. When Donna came up to get them, they both opted to play for a while before they got changed. Kylie had wet during the night but Lucy hadn't and they wanted to be changed together. At least, that's what they told Donna. What they really wanted was more gyrating time in the Truth Zone. Once they were both spent and wet, they went downstairs for breakfast. Donna was putting Lucy's little age at a little under Kylie's. Where Kylie was a functioning toddler, around 4 or 5, Lucy was closer to wanting to be 2 or 3. Lucy was amazed and entranced by Kylie's grasp of being little and looked to Kylie as a mentor or bigger sister. She followed Kylie's lead through breakfast, their morning change, and tummy time. Kylie, who was far less ashamed about the state of her diaper, stayed in her routine even with Lucy around. Not long into the second TV episode had Kylie filled her diaper as if it was the most natural thing in the world. Lucy couldn't follow suit as she was still too embarrassed of messing, but she was curious as to how Kylie could let go. Donna let them play in the bath until they were shivering before getting them dressed. She kept an eye on them throughout the day, but only bothered them to give them bottles or to perform diaper checks. Even with the sparse monitoring that she was doing, Donna could tell that Lucy was having a much easier time regressing. She had found means in which to let go, and she was doing so with positive results.

Her mood soured as Saturday turned to night. The impending dark cloud that was Penny loomed closer and closer with each passing hour. Lucy was trying her hardest to not let it affect her but Donna could sense that she was getting uneasy.

After dinner and cuddle time, Donna put them down for the night. She made sure they were dry and clean. She gave them a bottle apiece and tucked them in the crib. She kissed them both on the forehead and bade them goodnight.

Lucy wasn't at all tired and she tossed about in the crib. Kylie was worried for her and did her best to be supportive.

"I don't know what I'm going to do." Lucy said after rolling over for the umpteenth time. "I don't want to go back there."

"I know. I want you to stay here with me but I don't think it's allowed." Kylie said, laying on her side and propping her head up with her hand.

"That's a stupid rule. We aren't hurting anything or anyone."

"And you've made a lot of progress this weekend."

"I have. I am even starting to like all of this, but with her, it's just rules and punishments."

"Maybe we can plead our case or something."

"To who? I said this before, Kylie. No one cares. We are a job. A task. A paycheck."

"To some, maybe. But we are still people. Paying clients. And I think they would rather keep their perfect record than fail."

"You know what they say about good press, it's as good as you are willing to pay for."

"We can't just give up, though."

"You said there was a way. Remember? You said there was a way that I could get out of this."

"Well, yeah, there is, but I don't know what happens if you try."

"You think that I shouldn't?"

"No. I think that you should but only after exhausting all other methods."

"I don't have anything else Kylie. If you were really my friend, you would just tell me what to do."

Kylie sighed. She laid her head on her arm. Clause 13 was not something that should just be thrown around. And she only knew one side of the story. She didn't know if Lucy was exaggerating the circumstances. She wanted to believe Lucy, and for the most part, she did, but she knew that Clause 13 was meant to be taken seriously. Her adult mind battled with her little mind and she was confused as to what to do. Lucy's face was hidden by the darkness of the room but as the clouds passed from blocking the moonlight, Kylie could see that Lucy was crying. Big or small, Lucy needed Kylie.

"It's called Clause 13. From what I was told, you say these words: *I want Clause 13* and you will be taken to see Dr. Theroux. I don't know what happens after that but Mommy is very tense around him. I'm guessing that he's someone of great power and that Clause 13 means that they did something bad."

"That's it? It's that simple?"

"From what I was told, yes."

"Why wasn't I told about it?"

"Would you have given all of this a chance if you had been?"

"No, but--"

"Exactly. Listen, Lucy, I've known you for a long time and I've never seen you as happy as I have now. This program, for all that is weird and crazy, does work. And if you had known that there was a way out, you wouldn't have given it a chance and we would be best friends."

Kylie flopped her head onto Lucy's chest. "And I wouldn't have you in my life anymore."

"I..." Lucy started but trailed off. Kylie was right. It was hard to admit, but Kylie was right. In Donna's care, Lucy had started to accept the program and the reasons why she was in it. The sexual pleasure she got from grinding in her wet diaper was the icing on the cake. Lucy wasn't ready to admit it yet, but she liked being taken care of. As much as she was adverse to the means, she had never been treated with this level of care and respect with her own parents, or the nanny that raised her. Donna was beyond what Lucy knew was possible from a maternal figure and like anyone who had been deprived of that human connection, she wanted more.

She patted Kylie on the head. Kylie's forgiveness and acceptance of Lucy's actions had shook her to her core. Lucy had never seen such compassion and never felt like she truly belonged. Kylie saw past her mistakes and flaws and still wanted to be her friend. They like a lot of the same things, from toys to clothes to food. Lucy was amazed at how much Kylie and her had in common that she felt guilty every time she remembered the cruel things she had done.

"You're right." She finally said. "I would have never gotten to this point if I had taken the easy way out. You're also right to say that I'm the happiest that I've ever been. And I want to

continue to be happy. I just don't know how to make Penny see that what she's doing isn't what works for me."

"The only way to let her know is to talk to her. You have to convince her to listen."

"How?"

"I-I don't know. I can't even say what I would do in your shoes."

"Wet your diaper." Lucy said with a grin, "Duh."

"Hey! Why are you picking on me?"

"Because it makes you smile when I do it and your smile makes me smile." "It never used to make me smile." Kylie said with a forced pout on her lips.

"Because I was trying to hurt you before, now we both know that I'm not being serious."

"And that suddenly makes it all better?"

"It does."

"How?"

"Because now you're not the only one who wets herself!"

"So, wetter is better?"

"With my best friend, everything is better!"

As long as we are together. Each of them thought it but neither could say it. From one side, it sounded depressing, from the other pretentious. They lay next to each other, each with their stuffy in their arms. They didn't know what they were feeling. Was it kinship? Was it love?

Was it the unbreakable bond of sisterhood? Romance? It was hard to tell. What they did know was how they felt tied together. For better or for worse, they were in it together.

Donna finished filing her paperwork on Kylie from the desk in her room. She had put the girls to bed a little earlier than normal because of Lucy's behavior and her need for a break. Lucy wasn't misbehaving, but her dour tone was exhausting. Donna understood why and that knowledge was also concerning. She made some notes in her weekly report, stared at them for far too long, before deleting them. She sent the report in and sat back in her chair with a heavy sigh. Penny's business was no business of hers but Donna knew that Lucy's progress was beyond phenomenal. The influence Kylie and her had on Lucy was enough to see significant gains and all of it within a short period of time. Donna knew that most if not all of the progress would be lost not long after the end of the weekend and Lucy would be at risk of relapsing entirely out of the program.

Donna typed out a long message to Penny in a text. She knew that she would end up in an argument if she were to voice her opinions in person. Her thumb hesitated over the send button. She didn't feel like it was her place to say anything and yet it was her responsibility to speak up for those in her care. Penny entrusted her with Lucy, if even for a weekend, and Donna felt that she had enough moral ground to voice her opinion.

She closed her eyes and sighed. She didn't know what she should do and then, suddenly, her phone started vibrating in her hand. Her eyes snapped open and she stared at the incoming call for a second. She sighed again, this time out of exasperation and answered the call.

"Good evening, Ma'am."

"Donna! How good to be able to talk to you!"

"Likewise, Ma'am. How can I help you this evening?"

"Well, for starters, you can drop the formalities. We've worked together far too long to be caught up on such things."

"As you wish."

"And the reason that I'm calling this late is that I was reviewing your weekly report and had some questions."

"Did I forget to fill something out?"

"Heavens no. Your reports are the template I use to base all others upon."

"Then what is the issue?"

"Issue? No issue, just more of a concern. While detailed, it read like you were omitting something."

"I don't think that I am."

“Are you sure?”

Donna paused. Moira Vale always acted like she knew more than she let on, usually because she did, whether through deception or subterfuge.

“I’ll cut the small talk. I know you deleted things off your report and I know what those things are, my question to you, then, is why?” “Relevance.” Donna said.

“You don’t think they were relevant?”

“To my client, no.”

“And what gave you that impression?”

“Well, as socialization is something that we push all of our clients towards, I believe that at this juncture, it’s too early.”

“Which didn’t stop you from taking on another charge, so do you not believe your own opinions or are you compromised on your convictions?”

“Neither. I believe that what I have seen runs contrary to how we operate and further noting of it would make matters complicated. I feel that my client has come a long way.”

“And you are worried about stagnation?”

“No. I’m worried that her faith in our program hinges on more than my ability as her caregiver.”

“Because of this other client?”

“Yes.”

“How so?”

“They have a bond. A close one. Mine was tormented by the other in the outside world but here, they have become best of friends. Kylie’s growth I fear is tied to the growth of Lucy, of whom she feels responsible.”

“You know how we feel about more than one client to a caregiver.”

“I do, which is why I erased some of my comments. I do feel, however, that this specific instance requires more observation than critique.”

“Noted. However, it’s not your little that I’m concerned with. Your thoughts on this matter betray your feelings. You worry for someone not in your care. Why?”

“Because I fear for her safety. Some of the things she’s said have me worried about the type of care that she’s getting.”

“A horse must be broken before it can be ridden.”

“I know. But I also know that after the initial shock of the program, we have seen cases where further attempts to break end up costing more than they help. I feel, and this is solely my opinion, that Lucy needs a different kind of care. She’s been broken and she’s making great strides to fall in line with the program. But I also know that there is more to all of this than just the program. There needs to be care. A bond between us and our clients that builds the trust needed for therapy to work. I don’t see Lucy getting that if she stays in this part of the program.”

“Are you sensing something that I should know about?”

“I’m not sure. I know that when I brought Kylie home, she had been made aware of Clause 13.”

“That’s potentially problematic.”

“I think with proper intervention, perhaps on your behalf, things could be changed.”

“And why should I intervene?”

“Because it’s what right to do. I feel as if the board would view this differently if it becomes a problem.”

“Potentially. However, I feel that you’re too close to this situation to have a clear view of what’s going on. I will take your concerns into account and investigate the situation. I do recommend that going forward, you don’t omit anything from your reports.” Cold, callous, and calculating, everything that Donna knew about Moira summed up in a quick exchange of conversation.

The line went dead and Donna sighed again. Moira was always a hard person to deal with and Donna felt as if she had shot herself in the foot saying as much as she had. It couldn’t be

helped, however. Donna had her suspicions that the Institute spied on its employees. It wouldn't be too hard to install a keylogger program to track what she typed. She hoped that it would all be worth it in the end and that Lucy got the help that she truly needed.

Donna deleted the wall of text she had planned to send to Penny. She didn't know how to argue her gut instinct and Lucy's claims. They were, after all, mostly unsubstantiated. She set her phone on her nightstand and changed into a maternity nightgown. She pumped her breasts as she watched some mindless program on the tv. In the closet of her room was a chest freezer that was nearly full of breastmilk. It had been so long since she had been able to nurse anyone that she was considering letting her supply dry up. Kylie had come close and was getting more than half of her bottles as breastmilk, but as a toddler and not a baby, Kylie wasn't getting nearly the amount of bottles to keep up with the supply.

Drained and exhausted, Donna packed away the supplies, stored the milk in the refrigerator, and quietly snuck upstairs to check on the girls. Lucy was sound asleep, her legs splayed slightly apart and her diaper was wet. Kylie was turned away from Donna and between Lucy's light snoring, Kylie's soft, rhythmic breathing could be heard. Their bottles were empty so Donna carefully retrieved them before stealthily heading back downstairs. They were a lot of work, but Donna was happy to have them. Something about it just felt right.

Sunday morning found the Pampered Princesses awaking to being soaking wet. Wet enough that they both left small wet patches on the mattress of the crib. It had been the first time that either of them had leaked and it was a stark reminder of how dependent they were on their diapers. Still locked in the crib, they looked around for something that they could put between their legs to grind on. Without much but their stuffies, which were too small to be of any use, they had nothing but each other. It took some convincing, but eventually, Kylie agreed to have Lucy straddle her thigh. It was weird and awkward at first, especially as they faced each other, but as the sensations grew and Lucy began panting, Kylie held her close and Lucy ground her pelvis into Kylie's thigh until she shuddered in orgasm.

Keeping quiet enough to not be heard was the hard part, and when they switched spots, it took everything Kylie had not to be loud and boisterous. It didn't help matters when the more experienced Lucy seized upon the opportunity to deliver some well timed swats to Kylie's padded rear. Collapsing into Lucy's arms, Kylie spasmed for a few moments before regaining her composure, and just in the nick of time as they heard Donna's footsteps ascend the stairs.

She changed them, fed them, and let them have their morning tv time before she gave them their baths. She wasn't in any rush but she did want them to spend as much time together as they could before Lucy had to leave. Donna had gotten a text from Penny that morning saying that she would be landing in the early afternoon and would pick up Lucy as soon as she got back. Donna decided to keep the times to herself so as to not disturb Lucy but as the morning wore on, she thought it best to make the transition as easy as possible.

"Well, girls, what would you say to some fresh air? I think we should take a walk around the neighborhood."

"A walk?" Lucy asked.

"Would you prefer a ride in the stroller?"

"I."

"It'll be fun, Lucy! We can go down to the park!" Kylie said excitedly.

The park she referred to was barely used as a vast majority of the kids that grew up in the community had reached adulthood and moved on. Kylie had seen it on the way home from Penny's house and wanted to play there.

"A park?"

"Yes, there is a park not far away. I know you have your reservations about being seen but I think we have already jumped that hurdle, don't you?"

Lucy fidgeted, twisting one ankle to look sheepish and shy. "I guess so. But..."

"I'll tell you what. You can ride in the stroller on the way there and if you still don't feel like playing, you can watch us play."

“Uh, okay.”

“Good.” Donna said. “I’ll get the stroller ready, you two go get your little furry friends.”

She smiled as the girls ran up the stairs to get their stuffies from the crib. They giggled and laughed. She heard them fall over each other to get their friends from the crib and one of them squealed in joyous delight. She unfolded the stroller as they came rushing back down the stairs, practically tumbling over each other.

Donna grabbed the diaper bag as Lucy crawled into the stroller. She didn’t think that she would need it, being so close to home, but it did serve as a visual reminder to the girls.

Everything was about repetition. Hammering it home.

With the girls giddy and ready, she entered her code into the keypad and pushed the stroller out into the warm summer day. Kylie had a hop to her step as Lucy and her giggle talked their way down the sidewalk. Donna didn’t really pay much mind to what they were saying, but more to how they interacted. She wished that she could record them for Moira to see and perhaps be able to sway some opinions.

The walk went uninterrupted and it wasn’t long before Kylie squealed and ran ahead. The park was about twenty yards away and by the time Lucy and Donna had gotten there, Kylie was already reaching peak momentum on the swingset, her skirt blowing up, showing her pink diaper through her white tights. She behaved as if she didn’t have a care in the world and for Lucy, it was refreshing. She leaned forward to look around from the safety of the crib and upon seeing no one, she cautiously crawled out.

“C’mon Lucy! Swing wif me!”

“Go on, Lucy. I’ll keep watch.”

Lucy looked at Donna, her eyes full of hope filled trust, before tentatively heading towards the swingset. With each step, her courage grew, and the more Kylie egged her on, the braver she became.

Kylie and Lucy played at the park for hours. They had no semblance of time, all they knew was joy and fun and happiness. The sun had reached its zenith in the sky and was slowly falling before the girls began to feel signs of exhaustion. A few people had passed by the park but no one paid them any mind. They didn’t seem to notice the fact that anyone ever lived in the neighborhood until Kylie crested the steps of the biggest slide and froze. She tried to play it off like she had to potty real quick, but she knew that her time with Lucy had run out.

Lucy saw Penny and immediately felt her stomach drop. All at once, her fears and anxieties came rushing back. Donna hadn’t put any of Lucy’s restraints back on and Penny was tapping them against her thigh as she talked to Donna. The girls had no idea how long Penny had been there but it didn’t take long before they were called over.

“Did you have fun playing with Kylie?” Penny asked as the girls got close to their caregivers. Lucy nodded but didn’t say anything.

“We had the bestest time ever!” Kylie said, still wound up.

“That’s good. But I’m sure you need a change and it’s almost dinner time, so let’s get you back in the stroller and head home.” Penny said. While her words seemed caring, her tone had a hint of displeasure. She spoke to Lucy, seemingly indifferent to the presence of Donna or Kylie.

Lucy silently obeyed. She gave Kylie one last heartwrenching look before pulling the sun shield over her face. Penny exchanged curt pleasantries with Donna before briskly walking away, pushing Lucy towards the direction of her house. When they were out of earshot, Donna sighed and shook her head.

“Mommy?” Kylie asked, tugging on Donna’s shirt.

“Yes, baby?”

“Is Lucy going to be okay?”

Donna paused. Her quick conversation with Penny hadn’t gone well. “I’m not really sure, sweetie. It’s not our place to intervene.”

“Lucy won’t be hurt, will she?”

“What makes you think that Penny would hurt Lucy?”

“Just a feeling, I guess. I’m hungry, Mommy.”

“I know, baby. You really need a change, too, don’t you?”

“Uh huh.”

“Well, let’s head home. Can you be a good girl for Mommy and wait a little bit?”

“Yeah. I can wait.”

“Okay. I just want to take a different way home is all.”

“Otay.”

Donna gathered her things and took Kylie by the hand. She had the same gut feeling that Kylie had, only worse. She hoped she was wrong. She prayed that she was just being paranoid.

Lucy’s hell started the moment they got in the door. She hadn’t even been able to get out of the stroller before Penny started berating her, bitching about how she had gotten her restraints off, how she wasn’t acting like the baby she really was. Penny had attached the restraints again, and was furiously ripping Lucy’s clothes off.

“Babies don’t act like that. Babies don’t dress like that. Babies are supposed to do what they are told!” Penny kept repeating as she pulled Lucy’s more mature clothes off. “And what’s this I hear that you didn’t mess your diapers at all this weekend? Do you want to end up with a belly ache?”

“Ow! You’re hurting me!” Lucy said. “I was scared.”

“Stop fussing or I’ll gag you. I didn’t ask for your opinion. You know the rules, you know what you are expected to do. It seems that you need to be reminded of your place again.”

“No! I was a good girl. Ask Donna! I was good!”

“If you were so good, then why did I see you walking around? Do babies walk? I don’t think so!” Penny sharply pushed Lucy to her knees, forcing the girl on all fours. “Let’s see how a week in your cage with one change a day does for you!”

She attached the leash to Lucy’s collar and pulled her down the hall. Lucy was crying and barely moving but the harder she resisted, the more Penny choked her by pulling on the leash. Slowly, Penny worked her down the hall and into the punishment room. Lucy pleaded and begged, but to no avail. When she reached the doorway, she dug her heels in, bracing herself on the doorway and pulling back on the leash.

“Don’t resist me you little babied bitch! You want to go down this road? Huh? You want to see just how bad it can be? Fine!”

Penny dropped the leash and in two steps, had Lucy by the hair. She slapped Lucy repeatedly about the face and as Lucy struggled to get to her feet, kned Lucy in the stomach. Lucy gasped and clenched her midsection and Penny pulled her by the hair, dragging her into the room.

Lucy cried out the only thing she could readily think of. “Clause 13! I want Clause 13!”

“Clause 13? Ha! Like I give a shit! No one can hear you in here, you spoiled cunt! You’re mine! And you will never see that little skank Kylie again!”

Lucy snapped, the pain in her abdomen turning to white hot rage. She reached both hands behind her head and dug her nails into the first thing she could get her hands on, Penny’s wrists. No one could tell, but Penny’s wrists were horribly bruised from her weekend of BDSM restraints and Lucy’s nails cut into already sensitive skin. Penny cried out in pain and let go of the fistful of Lucy’s hair. Lucy seized the moment, spinning around and shoulder charged Penny into the metal dog cage. The welded steel corner dug into Penny’s back and Lucy followed it up by bashing her elbow into Penny’s face. Penny’s head snapped back and she slumped forward.

Lucy let her fall to the floor before she kicked Penny in the ribs a few times.

Seeing an opportunity, Lucy ran for the front door, stumbling around the stroller. She pulled on the door, trying the latch several times but it wouldn’t budge.

“Now you’ve done fucked up.” Penny growled. She was leaning against the hallway wall, blood running down her chin from the gash on her lip. “Where are you going to go now? Huh? You think this is me hurt? I’ve had the shit kicked out of me far worse than anything your pom pom cheering ass can do.

“So now what? Nowhere to go. Can’t get out. It’s just me and you, bitch, and I’m just getting started! But hey, I think when I’m done with you, I’ll invite Kylie over, this way, you won’t be alone in that cage. Teach you two to threaten my job.”

“You leave Kylie the fuck out of this you psycho!”

“Oh, but where’s the fun in that? I bet you’d both look great on all fours, like the worthless dogs that you are.”

Lucy roared in fury and charged down the hall, her veins coursing with adrenaline and hatred. Penny thought that she was prepared but the cage had done a number on her back and her muscles had stiffened. Lucy’s punch was wide and would have been easily blocked but Penny couldn’t react in time and with a dizzying clap, the punch to her cheek sent her head into the concrete wall. Penny saw stars as she tried to blink away the disorientation. Lucy grabbed two fistfuls of Penny’s hair and violently slammed Penny’s head into the floor.

“What’s the code?! What’s the fucking code?! You let me out or I’ll fucking beat you to death!”

Penny choked on blood and nausea. She hadn’t expected Lucy to be so aggressive and her wounds were quickly adding up. Lucy paused long enough for Penny to cough out a few words.

“Four...eight...nine...seven...”

Lucy let go of Penny’s head and rushed to the door. She punched the numbers in and the magnetic seal broke. She bolted out of the door, completely oblivious to the fact that she was naked save for her diaper, and ran out into the street. An elderly black lady was tending to some flower beds just down the road when she heard Lucy’s cries for help. She got to her feet the best she could and as the barely clothed girl ran towards her, she heard a name being called out.

“Lucy?!”

Henrietta turned just in time to see a familiar young girl bolt past her, heading towards the girl in distress. Lucy ran into Kylie’s arms, crying and distraught.

“Not so fast you little bitch!”

The three of them turned to see Penny, hobbling down the street with something in her hand.

“You leave her alone! Clause 13!” Kylie screamed.

“Enough!” Penny shouted, pushing a button. Lucy tensed immediately as an electric current ran through her body and into Kylie’s.

“Penny! No! Stop it! You’re hurting them!” Donna yelled, finally catching up to the excitement.

“No! They need this! They need to know their place!” Penny bellowed. She let go of the button and then held it down again.

“Not like this! This is cruelty, not therapy!”

“You were always too soft. Too quick to worry about feelings.”

“Because we are supposed to care for them, not hurt them!”

“Care? For these spoiled little shits who’s parents couldn’t be bothered to raise them properly? Why? For what? For a measly living spent wiping asses and padding egos?”

“To help them.”

Penny let go of the button and the two girls lay trembling on the ground. “Help? Do we really help them? Or anyone? This world is so full of degenerates that it’s hard to tell what’s normal anymore. This isn’t normal. This isn’t therapy. This is a perversion of what we set out to do.”

“I disagree. I’ve seen real change in these girls. They were enemies and now they have become friends. What’s perverse is your predilection to inducing pain. You can’t heal by hurting, not like this.”

They turned towards the sound of a vehicle rolling towards them. It was a black panel van. Inconspicuous, but menacing. It stopped next to them and two rather large men got out, followed by a thin woman. The men opened the side of the van and picked up Lucy and Kylie.

The girls were placed carefully inside and the door shut behind them.

The woman approached Donna and Penny, disregarding Henrietta altogether.

“It has been made aware to us that a Clause 13 has been requested, is that correct?”

“Before-” Penny started.

“A simple yes or no is required.” The woman said, cutting Penny off.

“Yes.” Donna said.

“Very well. Dr. Donna Duncan and Ms. Penny Carver, you are both hereby suspended from all Institute affairs pending a ruling by the council. Your hearing date is tomorrow at 9 a.m. sharp. That is all.” The woman spun on her heel and returned to the van, which promptly drove off, taking the girls with it.

Donna felt her heart break as the van passed out of sight. Kylie was probably terrified, isolated and alone, and it was all Donna’s fault. If she hadn’t gotten her to see Lucy, had she not rushed the program, had she not wanted what was best for the both of them, and had she just taken Kylie straight home, then none of this would have happened. Wracked with guilt, Donna headed home, the diaper bag hanging from her shoulder a monument to her sins. In trying to do what was right, she had lost it all.