

## e-male

*erotica by Jonathan Lockett*

JUDGE ZOE TYLER bangs her gavel down with a crack as she says, “Let’s take a short recess.” She stands, pressing one hand to her dark shoulder length hair that is pulled into a taut ponytail, the other flat against her black robe. Retreating into the back door of the courtroom, she heads to her chambers, closes the door behind her, and sighs heavily. “Lord, when will this day be over?” she asks rhetorically. Her docket this morning has been filled with the usual—divorce, child support payments, visitation, and a few nasty custody battles. Zoe heads to her window as she removes her robe, displaying a grey pinstripe suit underneath that hugs her curves in a sensuous yet professional way. Small shiny pearls adorn her neck. She glances out at the expanse of green that lines the courthouse; her chambers are on the fourth floor of the Family Court wing. Checking out her reflection—dark skin and soft facial features glance back at her. A voice inside her whispers, “you’re the youngest Circuit Court judge in the County...Black *and* female...you go girl!”

Just don’t let this job be the death of you...

Zoe turns. Her desk—an old wooden thing her father used when he was practicing takes up a quarter of the space. She lowers herself into the chair and folds her hands on the surface before glancing at her PC to the right. Her eyes flick over to her desk clock. A few minutes to check mail and return phone calls.

Zoe clicks on her mail icon as she lifts the phone receiver and punches in her code to retrieve voice mail.

Three messages. She listens absentmindedly as her e-mail opens. She notices a handful of those. Her gaze scans the subject matter and one in particular, the third one from the top, catches her eye and stops her heart cold.

Her hand instinctively rises to her throat as she drops the phone.

BITE THAT NIPPLE HARD

Zoe checks the sender.

[Axme2dou@aol.com](mailto:Axme2dou@aol.com)

She’s never heard of anyone by that name. She glances around as her heart thumps in her throat. Her door is closed, she is alone, and yet the feeling, a dark foreboding sensation suddenly overtakes her, rushing into her veins.

Ever so slowly, her hands creep towards the keyboard, and with a sharp intake of breath she positions the mouse over the message and hits the ENTER key.

I WANNA TAKE THAT DARK NIPPLE BETWEEN MY TEETH AND BITE DOWN...HARD. WOULD YOU LIKE THAT, ZOE? OF COURSE YOU WOULD. THAT’S WHY YOU WANNA GET IT PIERCED...

Zoe blinks, as if that split-second act will erase this aberration. She feels weak as the letters in the message glare back at her.

Oh my God. How is this possible? A thousand thoughts rush through her head.

She's told no one.

No one save for her best friend from college, Michelle, and she wouldn't tell a soul.

Not even Marcus knows.

No, her husband would be the last to know.

How can this be possible?

She's googled a few sites, entered no more than a handful of late-night chat rooms, anonymously of course. And yet...

Zoe is afraid to touch the keyboard. She stares at the grey plastic as if it is a spider, eyes wide, unable to process what is happening. Someone she does not know has sent her a message. Someone she is not acquainted with knows something about her. Something deep and secret—something she has no wish to share with anyone else.

Three minutes go by. Then five. Her fingers rest over the keyboard. After seven she touches the molded keys, hits REPLY decisively and types:

DO I KNOW YOU?

Hits SEND as her mind races.

Breathe, she commands herself.

A moment later a new message is deposited into her inbox. Opening it she gasps out loud.

NO, BUT WE'LL BE MORE THAN JUST FRIENDS SOON.

A single thought has invaded her psyche as the words are emblazoned on her retinas. One that has visited many times before today.

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*THE SKY WAS clear and ultra blue. The Caribbean waters were a deep aqua marine that appeared so inviting, she desired to cup the liquid between her palms and drink ravenously. In the far distance, almost to the horizon, she spotted a vessel bobbing along lazily. Could that be the boat Marcus had chartered for a day of marlin fishing?*

*She lay on the white sand, her toes curling continuously into a substance so warm and pure. Zoe glanced left then right. The beach was desolate—remarkable because this place was just a short stroll from the resort property. Without fanfare, she removed her bikini top, reveling in the warmth as the Trinidadian sun caressed her skin. She glanced down at her breasts as she liberally covered them with sunscreen. A lovely sheen adorned her torso. Her nipples were hardening. Zoe was alive, this vacation the best thing she had done in eighteen months since being appointed to the bench.*

*Lying down, she closed her eyes and drifted off into dream-filled sleep.*

*How many minutes passed by, Zoe did not know. But at some point she was awakened by a noise. She sat up, instinctively bringing her hands to her chest.*

*A dark Trinidadian man rose out of the sea before her.*

*Could this be a dream? She blinked repeatedly and glanced around quickly before snapping her attention back to the form before her.*

*His skin was the color of coffee beans. Rich and dark. Taut muscles covered his form. He was completely nude and Zoe could not help but focus on his genitals. His penis was enormous. A glint of steel at his scrotum flashed at her eyes. Then she discerned more flickers coming from his chest.*

*He was coming toward her. She reached for her top, but couldn't find the strength to pull her gaze away from him. He flipped his dreads from left to right and settled his gaze upon her as she felt her heart flutter.*

*Zoe was silent. She stared at his chest, taking in each nipple that was pierced with a gold loop. Try as she might, she could not wrestle her gaze away from his oversized sex. It reminded her of a sleeping snake, laying there, this tube of flesh that swung lazily in the Caribbean breeze as he approached her. She spied a third piercing below his scrotum, a short stud of glinting steel. She winced involuntarily and immediately regretted her actions.*

*She glanced up into his soft eyes, the lightest shade of brown, almost hazel in color that belied his hard exterior and chocolate skin.*

*For a moment they were both silent. Then he smiled, displaying perfect white teeth and Zoe felt her face flush.*

*"That's gotta hurt," she ventured, not knowing what else to say. The man bent down on his haunches until he was eye level with her. Beads of water meandered down his strong body and Zoe felt overwhelmed with raw sexual emotion. This must be a dream, she pondered. She swallowed hard as her nipples beneath her palms rocked to attention. Thankfully, they remained covered, and this stranger could not see their engorged state.*

*"Pain be good," he said in a voice that was rich and deep. If voice had color, his would be indigo, she mused as the rings in his chest winked at her.*

*Zoe smiled. "I don't know..." she said hesitantly, not sure where her stare should rest. His face was infectious. And the rest of his body, eighteen inches from hers, was a disease.*

*He bent forward. "Grab one," he whispered.*

*Zoe blinked. "Excuse me?" she said, her pulse sprinting in her neck.*

*"Take one," he repeated, reaching for her hand and pulling gently away from her breast. She put up little resistance; her digits found the cold ring of gold that bisected his left nipple; clasping it between her fingers unsurely. "Pull it," he said, eyeing her exposed nipple, but with authority that chilled her to the bone.*

*She did, lightly, not wanting to hurt him.*

*"Harder!" he exclaims, his indigo-painted voice rising in pitch, startling her. She glanced around, yet they were still alone. Zoe pulled again, his flesh elongating as if it were a volcano rising from an ancient sea. "Harder still," he commanded, as Zoe sucked in a breath and tugged hard, causing him to wince. She let go quickly and returned to cover her breast.*

*"Ahhh," the Trinidadian whispered, smiling brightly. "Pain be good." His eyes seemed to swim in their sockets – Zoe was unsure if this was an illusion or not. She*

*smiled as she shook her head slowly, having no idea how to answer that question. For it was one she had never considered.*

*"You not agree?" he asked. Zoe contemplated this for a moment and then shrugged. Something wispy tugged at her deep inside but she wasn't focusing on it, so it passed her by.*

*"Turn over," the Trinidadian directed.*

*"What?" Zoe asked, but the man's hand had taken hold of her elbow and she began to experience the growing pressure of his strength.*

*"Turn over!" This time it was a command. Zoe felt a shot of adrenaline course through her. A fragment of her was frightened – out here on a nameless beach, alone, without benefit of her husband – suddenly she questioned the common sense of venturing out alone. The rest of her, however, was experiencing a sudden rush of excitement as if she were poised to take on a behemoth roller coaster for the very first time.*

*Zoe turned away and obediently lay down on her stomach. The sand was warm on her forearms. For a moment she closed her eyes, but reopened them as a shadow hovered over her. She glanced upwards.*

*He consumed her field of vision – dark coffee skin, still wet with thick beads of moisture, thigh muscles that rippled as he moved, his cock swinging indolently as he shifted onto the sand besides her. Zoe's insides were on fire. She was filling with desire, the cotton fabric of her colorful bikini bottoms moistening with every mounting second.*

*She needed to get away.*

*The guilt ripped at her – Marcus was there, bobbing inside of her mind like the vessel on the distant horizon. And then there was this stranger, this powerful black man who was tantalizing her with his alluring skin tone, riveting eyes, long dreads, and resting snake. She attempted to command her breathing to subside, but it wouldn't cooperate. Her eyes locked onto his chest and those shiny rings, the strain in her neck too much to gaze upward into his eyes. She notices that his penis was awakening, snaking upwards, and Zoe closed her eyes to say a silent prayer.*

*The powerful impact on her ass was a shock that rocketed through her. His hand connected with her bottom, flat palm to sun-ripened fabric and skin, fingers curling down toward her dampened sex, with a force that shoved her hard against the sand. She cried out in pain as she felt the first inkling of something she had yet to willfully consider – a mingling of pleasure and pain – and in that split second for some strange reason she found herself thinking about high school chemistry. Two substances combining to make a new compound – the barrier of one breached by the other. This was the single unifying feeling that overtook her, slowly driving up her spine toward her limbs, running down her thighs to shins and toes. Pleasure and pain. And for the first time in her life that she was conscious of, Zoe was on fire.*

*Jerking herself around, the pain on her flanks a slow steady burn, she glared at the Trinidadian. In that second, he spanked her again. This time, the pleasure-pain breach was immediate – shooting through her entire body like a rocket, tightening every pore. He stood, and his cock was semi-hard now, darkening in color – almost jet-black in contrast to his coffee-colored skin. The flesh along the edges of her bikini was bruising – reddish brown heading toward a brighter red, tiny raised welts from where his calloused*

*fingers impacted skin, and yet, a feeling of gratification infused along her insides overtaking the pain in a way that she found remarkable.*

*"Pain be good?" the stranger intoned before turning away.*

*Thankfully, the Trinidadian did not hear Zoe moan...*

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A DIALOG BOX popping up brings her back to reality.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL.

Zoe stares at her monitor hesitantly, then drags her mouse across the screen to open the new message.

I KNOW YOU.

Zoe catches her breath as another dialog box pops up signaling another message delivered.

I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT.

Beads of sweat are forming on her neck.

Then a third box.

LET ME SET YOU FREE.

Zoe stands, pacing about her chambers, her mind racing. Who is this person?

What do they want?

Do they really know me?

Zoe glances at the time—she has three minutes before heading back into her courtroom. Her hands reach for her hair—this is crazy—I'm imagining all of this, she tells herself.

Calm down. Breathe. There is nothing to worry about.

A final dialog box pops up, accompanied by that Microsoft-branded sound. Zoe snaps her head around in the direction of her computer.

THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT BEGINS PROMPTLY TONIGHT AT 11:30. STANDBY YOUR COMPUTER AND DON'T BE LATE.

Zoe stares at her computer dumfounded. She is stunned. And anger infuses into her.

She types rapidly without thinking.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WANT TO BE ENLIGHTENED?

She hits SEND with her index finger and sits back. Then leans forward again, hands across the keyboard. The last message remains open on her screen. She glares at it for a second before hitting REPLY again.

AND I DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM STRANGERS...

Pounding the SEND button she wonders just who the fuck this person is? Who do they think they are ordering her around like this? She is a Circuit Court Judge. Not one to be pushed around, that's for sure. But as she reaches for her robe and dons it, a single thought overtakes her, and it is sobering indeed.

This is *exactly* what she's been dreaming about...

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SEVEN FIFTEEN P.M. and Judge Zoe Tyler has thought of nothing else. Her mind races—wondering and worrying. She probes the innards of her mind for a clue as to the identity of the sender. There has been no response to her messages. The screen has remained blank. It is as if the sender is taunting her, teasing her, knowing that her afternoon will be ruined, consumed by thoughts of who and what he wants...

THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT BEGINS PROMPTLY TONIGHT AT 11:30.

Zoe completed her docket as if on autopilot, going through the motions, listening but not really hearing the back and forth between defendant and plaintiff. And for this she is pissed. Mad at herself for allowing this...this unseen face to get in the way of her job.

Allowing someone to get in the way of justice.

Her chambers are bathed in shadows from the setting sun. Zoe checks the time. It's still early on the west coast. She needs to reach Michelle, but knows her best friend will be teaching for another few hours. She glances around, suddenly feeling chilled. She rises, goes to the window, and peers down. Unexpectedly, she is concerned for her safety. The Family Wing is silent and cold, the rest of the judges and clerks long since gone for the evening.

Her cell phone rings, jarring her with a sound that slices through her concentration like a knife.

"Hello?"

"Hey." Marcus.

Zoe exhales a breath. "Hey."

"Just wondering what time I can expect you home," he says in his soft, reassuring voice that Zoe's come to cherish. "I've put dinner on."

"What?" she says, her attention snapping back to reality, "Did I hear you correctly?"

"Oh, I see your honor's got jokes now?" Marcus says teasingly. "What, a brutha can't cook once in a while?"

Zoe smiles. This is what she's missed—the back and forth between her and her husband. Lately, it has seemed like they've both been distant—as if they are on two separate tracks; two roads that invariably fork, never to rejoin. She has her career, a judgeship that she fought long and hard to obtain, and has no intention of giving up. And her husband of ten years, Marcus—has his. A sculptor and artist-in-residence at the University. An extremely gifted and creative person—warm, giving, supportive, and intelligent—that's Marcus—the man she fell in love with ten years ago when she was fresh out of law school, after tiring of those fast-talking lawyers with their hyper-ego bullshit. Marcus had been different. Not pretentious in the slightest. Passionate about his art and his beliefs. That's what she loved about him—he was his own person, independent to the core—he thought long and hard about those issues that he was passionate about and made up his own mind—regardless of what others

thought. And he wasn't hard like so many other men out there—he was soft, in more ways than one, and she liked that. Soft in everything he did—the way he spoke to her, the way he lived, slow and easy going, and the way they made love—slow, deliberate, and with feeling.

"That sounds wonderful, Marcus," she said. "I'm finishing up here, and should be home in about thirty minutes, okay?"

"Cool."

Driving home, Zoe tried Michelle's cell phone. Zoe got her voice mail and left a message. Michelle was probably in the midst of a step-aerobics or spinning class. She recalled several conversations they had had over the past few months. About relationships in general, married life, and how things over time change. For months Zoe had been building up to tell Michelle the secret thing that she had kept from her. Not sure if she could bring herself to actually say it, she broached the subject, dancing around the edges, attempting to feel her best friend out—to see how she'd react. Part of the problem was that these thoughts that Zoe was having were still immature in her mind—still forming and enlarging. But she knew that Michelle was the one person she could talk to about how she was feeling.

"What do you think about me getting a piercing?" Zoe had asked Michelle a few weeks ago.

"What? You girl? Your honor???"

"Please—don't even trip. You've got one!"

"Yeah, but that's different, I'm not a judge!"

That was exactly the point, Zoe considered. She was a judge, the epitome of respect and authority...and yet, she was still a woman, young—early thirties—and had desires just like other folks.

"It's not like you'll be able to see it."

"Well, that depends on where you get it. Where are you thinking?" Michelle had asked.

Zoe had paused for a moment before answering.

"My nipples," she had responded softly.

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Zoe sits across from Marcus in their dimly lit dining room. Several candles are burning and for a moment they are both silent, lost in their own thoughts. Zoe is observing the dripping wax, caught up in the path the hot substance takes as it dribbles down the lip of the lighted candle, down the sides of the stem, meandering to the left then right as if following some predestined route. She is fighting the urge to look at her watch, knowing that Marcus has seen her glance at it several times already since they've sat down. Instead she reaches for her fork and swirls it around the half-eaten plate of angel hair pasta.

Zoe is troubled by the intensity she feels.

These sexual urges are making her shift in her seat like that of a restless child.

Eleven-thirty can't come quick enough.

Marcus is watching her. He is light skinned, his curly hair brushed back into a ponytail and held fast with gel. He has angular features thanks to his Creole lineage, and they are enhanced by the candlelight—a square chin, pointed cheekbones, and linear forehead. He is thin and in good shape due to the four-mile runs he takes every morning.

“Penny for your thoughts?” he asks with a grin. He knows it is a corny thing to say, but doesn't know how else to break the quiet. Zoe is silent. She is contemplating: how do I answer my husband honestly? How do I tell him what is coursing through me right now?

That I am a judge with power over people's lives.

That every day I make decisions that ultimately leads to a person's happiness or sadness.

That with this power comes a heavy burden that wrestles inside me.

That even when I come home, exhausted and spent from a full day dolling out justice, I am still viewed as the authority and the one in charge.

That what I really long for is for someone to have command over me.

That for once I want someone who can relieve me of this...the pain that I sometimes feel, and dominate me, if only for a short while...

Instead, Zoe smiles weakly and replies, “Just work, honey. Just plain old work...”

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SETTLING DOWN IN front of the television, Zoe grabs the remote and powers on the set.

Nothing but static.

“Marcus,” she says, her voice rising in octaves, “honey, the cable's not working again.”

Marcus shuffles in, hands in his pockets, eyes down turned.

“Yeah, I need to call the cable company,” he says sheepishly. Zoe sits upright, snapping her head around in disgust.

“Wait a minute, Marcus. We talked about this days ago. You said you were going to take care of this—*remember?*”

“Yeah, but I haven't gotten around to it—been kind of busy, you know?” he responds, stopping several yards away from the couch where she sits. He is staring at her with a sullen expression, like a teenager who's just been grounded.

“Damn it, Marcus!” Zoe exclaims as she stands to glare at her husband. “Do I have to do everything around here?” she asks, pointing the remote at him. “Would it be possible for you to follow through with just one thing you say you're going to do, or is that too much trouble?” She drops the remote on the

wooden coffee table. It hits with a resounding thud. Marcus is silent, and unmoving. His jaws seem to be clenching behind taut cheeks. Zoe exhales forcefully and retreats from the room, glancing at her watch as she moves. Ten-fifty-five.

Soon now.

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SILK SLIPS EASILY over her smooth dark skin. Zoe dresses in the semi-darkness of her closet, the only light coming from a hallway that seems like miles away. She is alone. Marcus has absconded to his studio, a large, open space attached to the garage. She knows he will remain there for hours, perhaps all night – there is a couch that he frequently sleeps on.

Perfect.

She doesn't need to be interrupted this evening. She's been thinking about how she'd explain her quirky behavior – spending time in front of her computer so late. But now, an explanation is no longer needed or necessary.

Zoe glances at the clock and notes the time. 11:20 pm. She is in her study with the door shut two minutes later. Her PC is powered on, the screen casting a haunting glow on the otherwise darkened room. She pulls her bare feet up underneath her and waits for enlightenment to come.

Five minutes pass.

Then ten.

Twenty.

Zoe's frustration is mounting. She glances at her wall clock repeatedly, as if wanting to make sure she hasn't gotten the date and time of this clandestine meeting wrong.

She knows she hasn't.

Ten more minutes pass her by. She can feel her heart beating. She remains inactive; afraid to touch the keyboard for fear that she may interrupt some kind of unseen process. She knows that her thinking is illogical, but she doesn't care.

11:55 pm. A small window pops up on her screen. Someone is IMing her.

AXME2DOU>I SEE YOU'VE WAITED. GOOD.

Zoe flinches unconsciously.

JUDGEZOEY>WHO ARE YOU? She responds.

AXME2DOU>DOES IT MATTER?

JUDGEZOEY>TO ME IT DOES

AXME2DOU>IN TIME, YOU'LL KNOW

JUDGEZOEY>I COULD JUST SIGN OFF NOW AND FORGET THIS WHOLE THING...

AXME2DOU>YOU COULD, BUT YOU WON'T

JUDGEZOEY>WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE?

AXME2DOU>I KNOW YOU

Zoe sits back, the fabric of her nightgown bunching against her thighs.

AXME2DOU>BTW, YOU LOOKED NICE TODAY. THE PEARLS WERE A NICE TOUCH...

The butterflies that have filled her stomach are suddenly replaced by raw anxiety.

JUDGEZOEY>YOU'RE WATCHING ME . It is a statement, not a question.

AXME2DOU>I KNOW YOU. THERE'S A DIFFERENCE.

JUDGEZOEY>NONE OF THIS MAKES ANY SENSE. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

AXME2DOU>I WANT TO SET YOU FREE

JUDGEZOEY>JUST WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

AXME2DOU>WE BOTH KNOW YOU ARE BOUND. YOU ARE CHAINED, YET YOU LONG TO BREAK FREE FROM YOUR BINDINGS

JUDGEZOEY>YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES...

AXME2DOU>SHALL I SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU?

JUDGEZOEY>YES

AXME2DOU>A FEW GROUNDRULES FIRST

JUDGEZOEY>SUCH AS???

AXME2DOU>I'M HERE TO SHOW YOU A DIFFERENT PATH. BUT IN ORDER TO LEAD YOU, I NEED FOR YOU TO TRUST IN ME COMPLETELY. THAT WILL BE DIFFICULT, SINCE THERE IS NO FACE TO MY NAME, BUT IT IS WHAT YOU MUST DO TO BE FREE. I INSIST ON IT.

JUDGEZOEY>AND IF I DON'T?

AXME2DOU>THEN I WILL NOT WASTE ANY OF MY TIME

Zoe sighs heavily and waits for the next message to come. Several minutes pass her by.

AXME2DOU>AM I WASTING MY TIME???

Zoe contemplates the question. Her mind is racing—she can't help but feeling intrigued by what this stranger is saying. On the one hand, she knows this is a dangerous game she is playing, allowing herself to be lured by an unseen person, a freak, for all she knows. Yet, something in her commands her to go on. She senses that she'll be okay.

JUDGEZOEY>NO, YOU'RE NOT WASTING YOUR TIME.

AXME2DOU>GOOD. YOU WILL TRUST ME. YOU WILL LISTEN AND DO AS I SAY. WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOU TO QUESTION EVERYTHING I ASK YOU TO DO. THIS IS NOT A DEMOCRACY...AND THIS CERTAINLY IS NOT YOUR COURTROOM. ARE WE CLEAR?

JUDGEZOEY>I CAN'T PROMISE YOU I'LL DO EVERYTHING YOU ASK ME TO. THAT'S JUST RIDICULOUS.

AXME2DOU>YOU'LL BE SORRY IF YOU DON'T  
Zoe pauses to consider this.

JUDGEZOEY>OKAY. WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

AXME2DOU>YOU CAN CALL ME ZION

JUDGEZOEY>AS IN THE BIBLE?

AXME2DOU>I PREFER THE BOB MARLEY SONG

JUDGEZOEY>ZOE AND ZION...I LIKE THAT

AXME2DOU>ANOTHER SUBJECT—WHAT ARE YOU WEARING?

JUDGEZOEY>WHAT?

AXME2DOU>WHAT ARE YOU WEARING RIGHT NOW?

JUDGEZOEY>A RED SATIN NIGHTGOWN. WHY?

AXME2DOU>ARE YOU WEARING PANTIES?

JUDGEZOEY>I DON'T THINK WE KNOW EACH OTHER WELL ENOUGH FOR ME TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION FOR YOU.

AXME2DOU>IT IS A SIMPLE QUESTION, ANSWERED BY EITHER A YES OR NO. ARE YOU WEARING PANTIES?

JUDGEZOEY>NO.

AXME2DOU>THANK YOU. I TRUST THAT'S WASN'T TOO DIFFICULT FOR YOUR HONOR...

Zoe smiles

JUDGEZOEY>NO, IT WASN'T.

AXME2DOU>TOUCH YOURSELF

JUDGEZOEY>WHAT?

AXME2DOU>I AM GROWING TIRED OF REPEATING MYSELF. TOUCH YOURSELF WITH ONE HAND NOW. USE THE OTHER TO PLAY WITH YOUR BREASTS. IMAGINE THAT IT IS ME GRIPPING EACH NIPPLE BETWEEN MY TEETH. AND THAT I'M GOING TO BITE YOU.

Zoe stares at the screen. She feels herself heating up from within—her core radiating outwards. The idea of pleasuring herself, in front of her computer screen, in full “view” of this visitor is strangely revolting and simultaneously exciting. The IM message screen taunts her. It is daring her to hike up a leg, pull the satin over her skin, and part those chocolate thighs.

Zoe does so.

She traces a finger slowly down from her satin-covered navel to bare skin, feeling the rise of thick pubic hair. She continues downward, feeling the cleft of her sex as her fingers glide over moistened flesh. She feels herself widen at her touch. Her legs tremble with light pressure from her digits. Zoe's eyes remain locked on the screen.

AXME2DOU>ARE YOU WET?

Her fingers explore her opening. Zoe is breathing uneasily—hot winds whirling around her as she probes her inner flesh. It is as if she is feeling herself for the very first time, the way her clit rises to her touch, the fleshy lips of her pussy, the spongy opening to her canal.

JUDGEZOEY>YES.

AXME2DOU>PINCH YOUR NIPPLES. HARD.

Zoe does so.

Lightly at first as she glances quickly to the closed door. Her hand cups her breast, returning to her hardened nipples, grasping the flesh between fingers and twisting.

The feeling is indescribable.

JUDGEZOEY>I AM

AXME2DOU>HOW DOES IT FEEL?

JUDGEZOEY>WONDERFUL...

AXME2DOU>TELL ME ABOUT YOUR NIPPLES

For some unknown reason, the faceless person hiding behind an IM dialog box makes it easy to share.

JUDGEZOEY>MY BREASTS ARE NICE (I THINK SO)...FIRM AND NOT SAGGING (YET)! MY NIPPLES ARE THICK AND DARK—AND VERY SENSITIVE. I'VE ALWAYS LOVED TO HAVE THEM TOUCHED, LICKED, AND YES, PINCHED.

AXME2DOU>GO ON

JUDGEZOEY>WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW, ZION?

AXME2DOU>WHY DO YOU WANT TO PIERCE THEM?

Zoe pauses.

Takes a breath.

And begins to talk about her yearnings—beginning with the Trinidadian on a beach months ago who awakened within her these desires. The feeling she had when she saw his piercings attached to nude flesh, and her sudden wish to have both nipples pierced.

As she types with one hand, Zoe continues her exploration, giving in to the feeling of no longer thinking of this person she's communicating with as a stranger. For several moments she even forgets about the computer screen that bathes her skin with unnatural light, instead concentrating on pleasing herself. It's been a while since she's done this. Zoe is no prude, but lately, she's been so busy, that when she finally falls into bed, the last thing she's thinking about is sexual pleasures, either with her husband or pleasuring herself.

But tonight, she takes it slow, her thoughts flowing back to the coffee—skinned man, bringing herself to the edge of orgasm as her fingers find the insides of her wet pussy.

AXME2DOU> THOUGHT I LOST YOU

JUDGEZOEY>NOPE, JUST ENJOYING MYSELF

AXME2DOU>STOP WHAT YOU ARE DOING. NOW

JUDGEZOEY>WHY? IT FEELS SO GOOD

AXME2DOU>I WON'T ASK YOU AGAIN. I'M GIVING YOU AN ASSIGNMENT—I WANT YOU TO SHAVE YOUR PUSSY. TAKE ALL THE HAIR OFF. MAKE IT CLEAN. I LIKE IT THAT WAY.

JUDGEZOEY>RIGHT NOW?

But Zion has already signed off...

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THE FEELING IS one she is not used to. Zoe finds that she is intensely aware of her shaved pussy in everything she does, the way it feels when she walks, her thighs brushing together lightly, sending a spasm of current through her extremities, or when she sits and the fabric of her panties bunch against smooth dark skin, causing a radiant smile.

It is a feeling that is invigorating and electrifying.

Zoe is reveling in this newfound freedom, the sudden awareness of her bare sexuality.

It is there—this new sensation—in every single moment—and Zoe loves it.

11:48 she recesses for lunch. The morning has gone by quickly—her caseload light.

Zoe has a spring in her step as she heads toward chambers.

Inside, she rushes to her computer to check for waiting messages.

There are none.

A feeling of distress rushes through her.

Disappointment spreads like a virus—Zoe was hoping she'd hear from him today.

At that exact moment her cell phone attached to her waist begins to vibrate—it rips her glare away from the screen. Two short, yet powerful jolts—then silence. Zoe glances down and reaches for her phone. Flips it open.

MESSAGE RECEIVED

Zoe frowns. She doesn't even know to retrieve a text message from her phone. Thankfully it guides her.

READ?

YES

REMOVE YOUR PANTIES. FIND THE BENCH NEAR 4<sup>TH</sup> & NORMANDY BY THE FOUNTAIN. BRING YOUR LUNCH AND WAIT.

Zoe glances at her watch. 11:52 a.m. Then back at the message.

Who is the sender?

She scrolls down, noting the date/time stamp and the sender's phone number.

It is local, but not one she recognizes.

She hits OPTIONS, then CALL SENDER.

Placing the phone to her ear, she listens to the ringing.

No one picks up. After four rings the line goes dead.

Zoe checks her watch again. Moves away from the window towards her closed door.

Pressing her back against the wood, Zoe breathlessly slides her panties down bare skin. She bunches them up in her fist and presses them into the deep folds of her purse.

Zoe is on a mission, and she refuses to be late.

With determination etched onto her face, she heads out.

\*\*\*

ZOE IS ON the bench for three minutes when her cell phone chirps twice. She glances down at it and reads the display.

MESSAGE RECEIVED

People are out enjoying the warm crisp air. They meander around her, going about their way, each lost in their own world, unaware of the judge and her electronic dealings with a total stranger.

SPREAD YOUR LEGS

Zoe snaps her head around, searching for the source of the message. She spies many people, all shapes, sizes, skin tones, but none are paying her any mind.

SPREAD YOUR LEGS

Zoe's heart is beating loudly. Her fingers massage the molded plastic of the phone. She is beginning to sweat on her palms.

Digits trace along molded buttons. She punches in a short reply.

I CANT. 2 MANY PEOPLE

And receives a reply a minute later that stops her cold.

GOODBYE

Zoe glances around frantically, ignoring the pasta salad beside her. Reaching for her phone, she rapidly punches in another text message.

WAIT. 1 MORE CHANCE

She hits SEND and settles in for a quick response. Zoe tries to eat while waiting, forking a bit of the pasta into her mouth. Suddenly, it tastes like rubber. She glances at the cell in her lap, but it is silent. She gets up and saunters to a

trash receptacle near by. Zoe tosses the half-eaten salad in and returns to the bench. Checking the time and her phone, she sighs heavily.

Zoe glances around. The stretch of park in her periphery is desolate, as if someone has removed all activity with a quick wipe of his or her hand. Zoe glances down at the silent phone, and then back up at her surroundings. Slowly, she parts her legs.

The air brushes against her thighs with a rush that feels utterly wonderful. She is barely breathing as she opens her legs wider, allowing an unobstructed view of her shaved sex. Her skirt fabric is stretched taut—the wind tickling at the soft folds guarding her cavern. Zoe is becoming moist, she can feel it. All she wants to do is lean back and close her eyes, but she can't bring herself to do that here in this damn park.

She is a judge, for God's sake...but perverse thoughts are invading her psyche, mixing with the intoxicating liquor of the wind that licks at her inner thighs the way Marcus used to do, with that serpent-like tongue of his.

Instead, she reaches for her sunglasses, dons them, as if protecting her eyes with her shades will keep those nearby from reading her thoughts. With legs parted, Zoe closes her eyes for a moment and allows herself to dream Trinidadian dreams...

\*\*\*

NINE P.M. ZOE is locked in her study, as she has grown accustomed to, feet resting comfortably underneath her as she stares at the screen beyond her reach. To her left is a steaming cup of Red Zinger tea. She has yet to take a sip—instead, she is enjoying the vapors that waft over her, comforting her with their soothing scent.

It's been seven days—a veritable lifetime since that afternoon on a park bench when her aspirations for enlightenment drifted away.

Like the vapors from the herbal tea...

Zoe has been in agony every since.

She hasn't heard from Zion. And she is kicking herself for the way she acted.

For not following directions.

For not allowing herself to be dominated, the way she'd been told.

The way she's been dreaming of...

Life has gone back to normal—the monotony of the court and her marriage—still the same—still strained. Just two days ago, she and Marcus went at it again over something quite stupid indeed. And this time, with the tension from everything—work, the stranger, the lack of sexual release, and, of course Marcus—pressing against her shoulder blades and the gnawing pounding in her temples relentless, Zoe raised up and yelled at him without warning.

“GROW A FUCKING BACKBONE!”

The outburst frightened her. She locked herself in her study where she attempted without success to masturbate to completion. Instead she cried.

A day later Marcus left for a three-day exhibit down south. They barely spoke as he made ready to leave.

Now, Zoe sits alone. She is doing what she always does in these circumstances: analyzing the situation by taking a step back—observing things from an eighty thousand foot view.

What she sees is this—a slight blip on a relatively straight line.

Her life.

Normal, conventional, and sometimes boring.

No—that’s not right—Zoe’s life is far from conventional or boring.

She’s a circuit court judge, for God’ sake.

But, the fact remains—for a brief moment in time, a faceless stranger came into her life and gave her something to feel passionate about. And for that slight blip in time, it felt so damn good to be *alive*.

Yes—she was on fire.

Now that feeling is gone. Zoe desperately wants it back. Alas, longing for it the way she does won’t bring it back.

\*\*\*

ZOE IS DAYDREAMING about pierced nipples when a dialog box breaks her concentration.

AXME2DOU>YOU AREN’T HAPPY

It is a statement, not a question.

She stares at the screen incredulously, feeling the twin rush of excitement and fear hit simultaneously in her lower gut. She didn’t think she’d ever hear from him again. Her fingers poise over the plastic keys, yet they are vibrating with anxiety.

What to write?

What to say—Zoe has no desire to force him away.

Again.

JUDGEZOEY>I AM NOW

AXME2DOU>WHY

JUDGEZOEY>BECAUSE YOU CAME BACK

AXME2DOU>AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT

JUDGEZOEY>I’M SORRY, ZION...

AXME2DOU>PERHAPS YOU’LL GET A SECOND CHANCE

JUDGEZOEY>THANK YOU

AXME2DOU>THERE’S AN ALL-NIGHT GROCER ON MISSION AND KEMP

JUDGEZOEY>I KNOW IT

AXME2DOU>GO TO THE DAIRY SECTION. STAND IN FRONT OF THE MILK AND CREAM. LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD. TALK TO NO ONE AND THINK ONLY ABOUT ALL YOU DESIRE.

JUDGEZOEY>ALRIGHT  
AXME2DOU>SOMEONE WILL TAP YOU ON THE SHOULDER. FOLLOW THEM WITHOUT  
SPEAKING. DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, LOOK AT THEIR FACE.  
Zoe's heart is on fire.  
AXME2DOU>ARE WE CLEAR?  
The judge nods breathlessly at the screen and empty room.  
JUDGEZOEY>YES  
AXME2DOU>GOOD. GO NOW

\*\*\*

SHE HAS REMAINED in one position for thirty minutes now. Not moving,  
not glancing around, hardly breathing.

This time, Zoe is taking no chances.

She is following his instructions to the tee.

Why?

Because of this feeling that courses through her veins as she shifts  
imperceptibly on the soles of her feet, staring straight ahead, eyes locked onto a  
half-pint of Borden's Dairy Cream, focusing in on the waxy carton, looking  
neither left nor right, paying no attention to those that meander around her,  
stopping to whisper and point as if she isn't there.

But Zoe is there.

Yes, tonight she is all feeling and all sensing.

Tonight, it's about the pleasure and the pain.

The pleasure she feels—giddy as a school girl—as she ponders all that she  
desires—beginning with a dark stranger on a nameless beach—distended  
nipples pierced by shafts of steel—and right now her own nipples are hardening  
from the seductive thoughts that rip through her mind at light speed—that one  
day, her own flesh will know what it feels like to be pierced by gleaming steel.  
Then, thinking about this cat and mouse game the two of them play—the judge  
and the master, Zion—and ending with thoughts of not knowing what may  
come next.

Then there's the pain—the pain of standing still in one position, the cramp  
that she experiences, surging down her thighs and legs in a rolling mini wave  
that hurtles toward her feet. The discomfort of knowing that people are  
watching, wondering just who this dark skinned woman is, standing here at  
attention all by her lonesome, seemingly lost in thought, inches from a carton of  
dairy cream, for Christ sake!

These two—pleasure and pain, mingle inside of her like a cocktail,  
infusing into flesh and pores, radiating outward from her core the way scalding  
lava flows. Zoe is flushed—she feels herself warming up, growing hot and  
hotter with each successive thought.

Tonight—I finally meet my master.

Zion.

Tonight – will be the moment that I gaze into his eyes – she can feel it.  
The event horizon is growing near.  
What will Judge Zoe Tyler do when she gazes upon this stranger?  
What on earth will she do?  
Will their eyes lock with intense passion?  
Will he reach for her, his strong arms, locking her into his embrace?  
And will she allow him to do with her what he wishes, commanding her  
with silent gestures or harsh words?

The answer is a resounding yes.

Oh God, *yes!*

A light tap to the shoulder jolts her with such intensity that she almost comes.

Zoe fights a sudden urge to spin around. Her heart is thundering inside her chest with an intensity that almost causes her to faint. She swears she can hear her own pulse. Lord knows everyone else can. A hand grips her elbow and pulls her to the right.

Obediently and with down turned eyes, Zoe follows silently...

\*\*\*

THE JUDGE IS led outside to a waiting black van away from the main entrance. The evening air caresses her hair and face as she walks, led by the hooded stranger. She cannot construct details of him – he is tall, taller than her husband by probably a good half-foot, but this is only conjecture – she has yet to gaze up into his eyes.

That is forbidden, and Zoe will not make the same mistake twice.

The stranger walks her around to the back door of the van and pulls it open. He gestures for her to get inside. Zoe complies.

Inside, the vehicle is cool and dark. Jazz is playing softly in the background, and Zoe locks on to this, humming along with the melody to calm herself. The tension is rising. She can taste it in her throat – part of her wants to scream – she is very much afraid, climbing into a strange van with someone she has yet to know. She could be harmed, raped, or worse.

No, he is not about to do that.

So she breathes slowly and methodically, hoping that everything will be okay.

On the carpeted floor of the van is a pile of clothes. The stranger gestures toward them. She glances momentarily at his face – he is expressionless, his skin dark.

“Put those on,” he whispers.

Zoe locks onto the sound, the timber and pitch of his voice, desperately searching for a clue as to this stranger’s identity.

She finds none.

Bending down, she picks up the first article of clothing. It is a leather mask that covers the head completely. Underneath is a pair of obscenely short shorts, made from black neoprene. Her size. A matching bra adorned with steel studs lies on the bottom. To the right—a set of thigh-high boots—black leather and sexy as all hell!

Zoe is speechless.

“You’re wasting time,” the stranger says, softly again, but with an edge.

If voice had color, his would be mocha.

Zoe blinks as she silently removes her clothes.

\*\*\*

THE BLACK VAN rolls to a stop eighteen minutes later. The ride has been punctuated by deafening silence. Neither judge nor stranger spoke.

Zoe has remained staring straight ahead. The pulse in her temples, neck, and chest continues to beat, but no longer thundering as before. She is calming down. When she moves, shifting in the seat as they take a turn, Zoe feels the intensity between her legs—the heat from the neoprene—the material stretched tight against her closely cropped cunt.

Yes, she’s kept it clean every since...

Her breasts are barely contained. The bra displays much cleavage. But Zoe’s attention is focused downward. She can’t get over the boots. On the ride over she continued to rub them incessantly, enthralled with how they made her feel.

Like a sexual goddess—the outfit has transformed her into something she has yet to be. A being oozing sensuality from every pore.

The heat from between her thighs is overpowering. Zoe resists the urge to reach for the stranger right now.

When they come to a stop, Zoe quells the momentary fear. She glances out the window briefly, and spies the edge of a closed gas station.

Off to her right the sound of an engine firing causes her to shudder.

She turns toward the sound—a gleaming motorcycle with its driver gunning the throttle. The stranger silently leads her over. Zoe notices that the driver is done up in black—helmet, dark shades, black leather jacket, worn chaps over tight stonewashed jeans. Zoe takes in his shiny boots that are made of lizard skin. For a moment she focuses on the pattern before raising her head slowly. The stranger moves towards her. In his hand is a black strip of studded leather with a thick ring of gleaming steel at one end. He places it snug around her neck.

A collar.

Zoe is unblinking as a three-foot chain is hooked from her collar to that of the motorcycle’s glinting frame.

She climbs on without being told, settling into the seat as she wraps her arms around the waist of the driver. Zoe leans forward, rubbing her leather-clad breasts seductively into the back of this stranger. She is feeling more alive than she has in years. This cat and mouse game that they are playing is one that has her captivated beyond words.

Zoe—clad in thigh high boots, tight shorts, and hood, all fitting her like a glove—is feeling like a goddess on the back of this bike.

She has been transformed into a goddess.

Impulsively, she tightens her thighs around the stranger. Zoe is smiling as they pull away...

\*\*\*

DARK CURVING WALLS of stone beckon Zoe with their hidden secrets. She is being led around on a three-foot steel leash by the motorcycle driver. He has removed his helmet; his face, like hers, is covered by a thin hood of leather skin.

His mask, however, has a slit for his mouth. Hers does *not*.

For the moment his eyes remain shaded. This faceless stranger commands respect—Zoe can see that. From the moment they arrived she attempted to ascertain just exactly what this place is—a museum or mansion—she really is not sure. It is clear now that the *one* called Zion, her guide/master, has been leading her through a throng of scantily clad people. Partygoers adorned in varying stages of undress: leather, lace, and even steel mesh lingerie. At each turn they make, he is recognized, admired, and she might even surmise feared, as he holds the gleaming chain in his palm, jiggling it like loose change. It is the way he walks, she concludes, strutting around like a cock with purpose to his step, those badass boots of his, unblemished like a living reptile. He moves slowly, but it is with principle and intention. He is in charge—there is no doubt. And why shouldn't he be—a Circuit Court judge is on his leash—this negress oozing exotica; eyes trembling behind a hood of leather; a virgin, no doubt; firm, rosy cheeks of ass-flesh that peek out from the edge of stretched neoprene.

Zion is showing off his property to all who care to examine it. He pauses as a couple leans in to whisper—he listens, nods attentively, holds the leash at arms length, beckoning her near with a hand. Zoe receives his hand, and mutely pirouettes before them, displaying her wares for the crowd. They nod appreciably before Zoe is once again led along.

One moment she is revered by the crowd, a goddess in heat, the next she is a fucking animal—something to be led along like a donkey or a lamb.

Something off to the side catches her eye, and Zoe makes the mistake of moving too slowly. Zion rewards her by yanking the chain sharply towards him, the collar digging into the darkened flesh of her neck, and she is jerked forward like an ill-trained dog. For a moment she sees red—the pain bone chilling and excruciating, but then it is over like that, and Zoe feels the pleasure infusing back

in, warming her insides the way cognac does when sipped along with a fine cigar.

Their eyes lock for several seconds before moving on.

Zion's stare is unwavering.

The message is clear.

How does Zoe feel being chained to a leash like a dog?

It is difficult to put into words the emotions this situation conjures. On the one hand, Zoe feels humiliated at being dragged around by a collar—this master/stranger in total control of her every movement. On the other, this is the very thing that has eluded her touch ever since that moment on a Trinidadian beach—the ability to lose herself by being dominated by another. This total loss of control is both hyper-erotic and frightening at the exact same time. Therein lies the rub...

They descend steps, following the curving walls. Candles light their way as Zoe concentrates on her footfalls, which echo from the boots. She is led into a room—lightened by a set of lone candles, a single antique barbershop chair surrounded on three sides by huge mirrors. In the chair, an Asian woman reclines nude, bound at the wrists and mouth with thin black electrical tape. Behind her, an attendant is bent towards the Asian's forehead. In her hand she holds some sort of object that resembles a clamp.

Zoe is led nearer. And then all things become clear.

Like ice.

The bound Asian is getting her eyebrow pierced.

Zoe's insides summersault. Yet she has no time to react. The piercing is complete within minutes, the Asian is ushered away, and Zoe is pressed into the barber seat.

Her eyes are wide beneath the slits of her mask as her feet are placed in metal stirrups.

Secured in place.

With fear or from delicious anticipation—Zoe cannot be sure.

Nearby, but out of arms length, is a set of steel rods embedded into the floor. Zion loops his end of the chain to one of them. Without fanfare he takes up the tension—her neck and shoulders are thrust back into the folds of the seat. Zion moves around behind her, Zoe's eyes flirting back and forth to keep him in view.

It is a lost cause.

She feels a hand behind her as her top is removed. Her swollen dark breasts break free—they hang defiantly in the candlelight, nipples distended as if they are rabbits, perking up in tall grass, listening for unfamiliar sounds.

Zoe has no choice but to lean back as the attendant comes to her side and smiles while reaching for her breasts. The woman caresses them delicately as Zoe's breasts and nipples are wiped down. The combination of hot and cold—the heat from this indescribable night coupled with the cool liquid on her skin—

pleasure and pain enmeshed together inside of her—cause her to feel giddy. Zion has come from behind to stand in front of her. He is facing her now, watching her with unblinking eyes. She gazes up into his leather-covered face—their stare connects for a moment—electricity passed between them, before she drops her gaze. She lets it roam over his torso, and down those sexy chaps of his. The bulge in his pants is unmistakable. He watches her silently as he fills with life. Her eyes are locked onto that place where his sculpted legs come together—that *thing* she’s dreamed of sticking inside of her ever since that very first e-mail.

The attendant places a clamp on the nipple of her right breast. Zoe is contemplating all that is happening to her. Her desires are suddenly coming true, cascading upon her like the rush of a waterfall, thanks to this faceless stranger, a savior.

A liberator.

Zion.

LET ME SET YOU FREE

The pressure from the clamp is radiating outward. She continues to gaze at her master’s crotch, the neoprene bunching in the folds of her sex, causing her to squirm. His hands slowly fall from his chest. One hand is closed. He raises it to eye level—opens it—Zoe reaches for his open palm, and touches the steel barbells that will soon bisect flesh.

She studies each one—there are a handful, various shapes, sizes, and patterns. She chooses one—a stud of polished steel with a small barbell on each end.

Simple, yet elegant.

She raises the stud between her fingers. Zion nods.

As the attendant pulls out the needle, Zoe feels the heat within her spike. She is lightheaded, frightened, and sensitized all at the same time. It’s as if all of her senses are turned on full. Zion reaches for her hand—their digits connect and interlock for a brief moment—it is the first real contact they have had; Zoe feels him squeeze her hand, and she is immensely grateful.

The needle goes in smoothly, following the hole in the clamp, but not without pain.

“Oh God!” she utters, but her words are muffled by the leather hood. She exhales forcefully, sending hot air around her mouth and cheeks.

“Yes, Zion!” she yells, sucking in a breath as the room begins to spin—she tenses, and reaches out for the arms of the barber chair where she finds the cracked leather comforting.

The neoprene stretches and strokes.

The attendant pushes down—the pain is there—loud and crystal  *fucking*  clear, but not earth shattering as she anticipated. Yet, there is something else—the sensuous joy she feels as her desires are fulfilled.

“God, Zion... Yes!”

The heat escaping from between her legs is hot and stifling. A twitch in both thighs begins involuntarily, her cunt pulsating to its own rhythm, chest pounding reggae beats as her mind whisks Zoe off to a faraway beach where she can run naked and free with Zion—juices flowing hot against the neoprene, as she jams her eyelids shut, shifting in the chair which only makes it worse—that is to say, much better—and then the primal sensual pleasures cascades over her in waves, endorphins kicking into high gear—like acid, and Zoe hears a distinctive pop as the needle comes through the other side.

Zoe emits a short scream followed by a long tapering moan—not from the pain, but from the pleasure.

Judge Zoe Tyler's just come...

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BY THE TIME her other nipple piercing is complete, a needle followed by a stud and screwed-on barbell, the pain is a dull roar—like a jet plane on takeoff, before receding into the sky—and soon—silence.

Zoe is holding each breast in hand, gazing lovingly at the twin studs that bisect each nipple horizontally. Zion stands before Zoe; he reaches for her, takes her breasts in hand and caresses gently. He is careful not to touch the nipples—they are distended and sore. But Zoe is in heaven. There is no doubt about that.

The attendant is gone. They are now all alone.

Zion begins by slowly unzipping his jeans. Zoe watches, mesmerized by his taut body that is slowly revealed by candlelight. He removes his cock from his pants without flourish—it is long, dark, and very hard. He tugs on it slowly, massaging the bulbous head as his eyes lock onto hers. She is purring like a kitty, rubbing her palms ever so slowly along her neoprene-covered thighs. Her stare is locked onto his member—her mouth watering underneath warm leather. Zion reaches for her shorts and pulls them down her thighs until she is sitting closed legged in the barber chair. He parts her legs, places each boot-covered foot in its stirrup and runs a hand lightly over the soft leather, stroking upward toward thighs.

Zoe's head is upturned—candlelight and shadow reflect off the smooth ceiling. The flickering imagery she sees is enthralling.

Zion is pressing boot leather between fingers. He grabs flesh and hide before progressing toward her core. His hands are flat, fingers spread wide as they leave the top of her boots, gliding over silky thighs. He extends his thumbs and points down toward her shaved cunt. Zoe reaches for his cock—takes it in hand and closes her fist around it. She is dizzy with the spirits of this evening, intoxicated with all of its intensity as she pumps his thick cock. His thumbs meet her labia, pressing against her opening before thrusting both digits inside. Zoe is wet from her orgasm, but as his fingers enter her, she feels herself rushing to boiling point all over again.

Zion's fingers become alive, a blur of activity—he is massaging her from the inside out—and Zoe marvels at his handiwork as she wriggles in the chair. Marcus comes quickly to mind—and the differences between this newfound lover and her husband, profound indeed. Marcus is soft; gentle in everything he does. Zion, in stark contrast, is hard—like the new steel embedded in her tits—he is taking no prisoners, nor asking for permission as he thrusts deep inside, opening her up, palming her cunt with the other hand, before snapping her clit between glazed fingers. He tugs Zoe's flesh from side to side, stretching and opening her cavern wide as if her pussy were the mouth on a petrified face.

Bending forward, his mouth lightly scrapes against her navel as he gets on bended knee. When he is cunt-level, Zion does not kiss or lick her. Instead he exhales against skin, his hot breath on sticky lips. His teeth find her clit first—sucking it into his mouth, slurping it up, lightly biting down, yanking at the hooded flesh before moving on down, tracing a wet swath with his tongue against the line of her cunt lips. Zoe is moaning, and thighs are moist, nipples on fire. He continues to eat her, swilling his teeth and tongue against the flesh of her lips, the leather of his facemask scraping against her skin as she grabs his head. Zoe's anus contracts autonomously.

Abruptly he stands up and moves in, his cock bobbing between thighs. Zion stands before her, legs apart, leather chaps creaking as he thrusts forward, cock in hand as he probes her cunt with his dick. He jams the head in quick, for no more than a split second, before pulling out, head glazed with her juice, and thrashing his dick against her wet lips, slapping engorged flesh against flesh, encircling the mounds of breast-flesh with his hand, applying pressure, kneading right tit then left as he wiggles the head of his cock against her hardened clit.

And when Zoe can no longer take it—when her hot breath threatens to suffocate her, when no words emerge even though she screams, Zion stuffs the entire length of his black cock inside her. Grabbing the arms of the barber chair, he entombs his cock deep inside of her sugar walls, chaps slapping against her bare skin as he pummels her. Zoe's entire frame has ignited, she is a pillar of molten fire—the feeling she experiences so overpowering, so fucking good, as she rocks against her master, sweat-drenched limbs thrashing out as she loses control, succumbing all to her new lover.

They are locked in a dance, the two of them, Zion and Zoe. She glances down, marveling at the sight of him slamming in and out of her with a blur that is hypnotic. The feeling is unparallel. Every nerve ending inside of her is tuned to the pitch of his cock—the rhythm and melody of his thrusting—the song they are singing like gospel to her ears.

Zion pulls out abruptly, leaving Zoe panting like an animal. Before she can react, Zion has her legs out of the stirrups and is yanking her out of the chair and down to the floor by her collar.

Zoe complies.

There is little else she can do.

She is his.

Zion is in control.

Zoe is on all fours. Her heavy breasts sway in the semi-darkness. Candlelight flickers over her bare ass as she thrusts it seductively towards him. Zion moves behind her, as she glances back mutely. With one hand he pushes her hooded-head forward; with the other he rears back and slaps the cheek of her ass.

Hard!

Zoe's cry is muffled by the leather hood.

Zion attacks her ass again with splayed fingers.

Palm to ass-cheek, he whacks her again.

And again.

Zoe's ass is on fire. The intensity so great that for a moment she feels herself slipping and she is suddenly consumed by fear—that she will fall into this vortex of pleasure/pain and lose track of where she is—Dorothy's no longer in Kansas—and perhaps will not get the opportunity to finish sampling the exotic pleasures of this new found flesh.

But Zion is not about to let that happen.

Zoe's ass is trembling, smarting from the beating as he spreads her legs and enters her from behind. He thrusts forward, slapping his balls into her reddened cheeks, filling her up with his manhood, reaching forward for the leash and yanking back. Her head is wrenched backward obscenely, like a rag doll, she gags, and in an instant Judge Zoe Tyler has become a horse and Zion is her jockey, riding her with fervor normally reserved for races between crazed men.

They continue their thrusting, banging against each other as if they were dogs embroiled in a bitter fight for alpha dominance—but they are not animals—just two people giving the other something they've both seen in their dreams for some time now.

The waves of pleasure wash over Zoe again and again as Zion fucks her with abandonment. She senses a tensing within him, a kind of slowing. Like a car that rolls to a stop, Zion too decelerates, and finally stops, his rock hardness deep inside of her. For a moment, neither move, both enjoying the feeling of the other. Zoe can feel him beating within—and he can feel her contract around him—a sensuous cocoon.

Zion pulls out. Hastily he lifts Zoe up onto her knees. He glances down at her sweat-covered torso and swollen tits. He reaches for his meat, grips it tightly between his fingers as he pulls Zoe near.

Her leather-covered face is now inches from his cock. She is gasping hard, her breathing billowing against the balmy hide. Her eyes blink as he jerks the length of his shaft, and even in the near-darkness, save only for candlelight, Zoe can see the veins clearly.

Zion reaches for the leash and pulls her to him. His cock touches the leather of her mask. Tracing circular patterns around her covered mouth,

leaving a trail of pre-come, Zion increases the fervor of his pumping. He snaps his head to the ceiling as Zoe hears him moan.

It is the first sound he's uttered since they've been together.

It is a groan, deeply guttural infused with timber and bottom. Zoe reasons that if voice had color, his would be violet.

It is the most beautiful sound Zoe has ever heard.

Zion's hips buck wildly as he shoots a stream of thick fluid onto Zoe's leathery face. Her eyes widen as the hot liquid makes contact, splattering against her eye slits. His eyes are shut tight as he rubs his seed onto her mask. The dark leather is smeared with his cum as he pants hard, reaching for her shoulder for support.

With a semi-hard cock between his fingers, Zion wipes his dick repetitively against the leather hood of Zoe's face, sopping up his cum until his entire cock is coated with his sap.

Then Zion reaches for Zoe's hood, pulling it upward from her chin until mouth and nose are exposed. Zoe exhales forcefully, thankful for the sudden ability to gulp cool fresh air.

Zion parts her lips with his cock slowly, and she takes it all in, sucking until the head hits the back of her throat, licking him clean, slurping up all traces of cum, swallowing it down, drinking him in as his eyes never leave her own.

And then Zion does something completely out of character, which blows Zoe away.

He bends down and kisses her on the lips—soft, light, and complete—a perfect kiss that transports Zoe back a decade ago when she was young and in love, the remnants of cum mingling with the warmth and wetness of dual tongues, brings her back to reality as he tickles her teeth and gums before consuming her mouth with his own.

They both sigh heavily when it is done...

Zoe is crying when Zion drops the leash and turns away.

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MARCUS HAS BEEN back for three days. But it is as if he no longer exists. Something changed in Zoe that night when a stranger named Zion set her spirits free. Something so deep and profound, that she doubts she'll ever be the same again.

Not that Zoe has any desire to return to the way things were.

She has undergone a radical transformation—same inner Zoe, the core is unchanged, but with a new wrapper—it's as if she's seeing the world fresh and anew, no longer with color-coated glasses. She no longer peers through glass—this time, everything is crystal clear.

Like ice.

Zoe has yet to hear from Zion, but she knows she will soon. Her days are comprised of working and thinking of *him*—analyzing his every move while they were together. It is as if she is cataloging every minute detail she knows about him, going over it twice, to make sure she's left nothing out.

Marcus no longer exists. It's heart wrenching—she feels terrible, but she cannot help the way she feels. Like back in high school, her thoughts are consumed with nothing else but *him*.

Zion. The man who set her free.

Her nipples are healing nicely. They are no longer red and distended—yet they are hyper-sensitive. Marcus has yet to see them. They have not made love since he's returned. Zoe has no idea when or if she'll be ready any time soon.

She is in chambers on a brilliantly lit morning, docket light—nothing until afternoon, so she bides her time with paperwork and reading.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL

Zoe sucks in a breath as she turns toward the screen. She can feel her heart race. It's been this way ever since.

Perhaps it will never change.

Her hands are shaking as she opens her inbox and spies the new message, highlighted in black at the top. The sight of the sender—one she recognizes all too well—causes her entire body to shudder.

From pleasure and from pain...

I'VE ALMOST SET YOU COMPLETELY FREE. THERE'S JUST ONE THING LEFT TO DO

Zoe hits REPLY, her fingers clattering across keys as her mind races. She can feel her face growing flush, yet she doesn't care.

ZION, I'VE MISSED YOU. WHEN DO I SEE YOU AGAIN???

Zoe hits SEND and waits patiently for the message to exit the system. She gets up and paces about her chambers, removing her jacket. Suddenly it's grown stifling hot in her space.

FIRST THE TASK YOU MUST COMPLETE

And Zoe's responds...

I AM YOURS TO COMMAND...

Zoe hits SEND and sits back in her chair. She contemplates this last response. Ponders whether it was the appropriate response. Then decides that it is the truth...

TO BE TRULY FREE MEANS YOU MUST SHED THE PAST. COMPLETELY. I'M READY TO COMMIT TO A BRAND NEW FUTURE. THE QUESTION IS—ARE YOU?

Zoe exhales forcefully as she reads this. A brand new future. What does that mean? She writes:

TELL ME WHAT YOU MEAN.

Her heart is racing as she presses SEND. A few minutes pass before her inbox receives a new message.

IT IS TIME THAT YOU CHOOSE YOUR FUTURE. ONE P.M. TOMORROW AT THE END OF THE CITY DOCK. IF YOU COME, IT IS BECAUSE YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO EMBARK UPON A NEW

PATH. A GLORIOUS FUTURE. BUT BEWARE—ONCE YOU TAKE THAT STEP, MARCUS WILL BE IRRELEVANT. HE WILL NO LONGER EXIST. IT IS A CHOICE THAT YOU HAVE TO MAKE.

Zoe stares at the screen, her eyes unblinking. For a moment she does not breathe. The silence is unnerving. Then she glances down and finds that she is shaking; and begins to cry.

Zoe is thinking back to when they first met. She and Marcus. The way she used to feel. The way she thought she'd feel forever.

It didn't turn out that way.

Zoe has no desire to hurt her husband. She loves him—she knows she always will. There are so many wonderful things about him that she'll always cherish...but things have changed. And the ache Zoe feels inside is too big to ignore.

Slowly she composes her response.

AND IF I OBEY?

Zoe is rewarded with her answer a moment later.

THEN ZION WILL REVEAL HIMSELF COMPLETELY TO YOU

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THE RAIN CASCADES down, a squall that turns the river the color of iced coffee. Waves crash against the wooden pier, sending spray up into the dull gray sky.

Zoe stands at the edge, facing into the wind. The spray and rain have long since drenched her—she no longer bothers to wipe away the precipitation—it wouldn't matter. She's been soaked hours ago.

It is three p.m. For close to two and a half hours she's stood still on this very spot, feet planted on the soaked planks as if she were a root—not going anywhere. A few folks have come up asking if she's okay. Zoe has neither answered them or even bothered to acknowledge their presence. Her mind has shut down long ago. She merely exists at this time and in this space.

Her life has reduced to this—she is a point on a continuum. The past stretches behind her—the future lays before her. She is too blind to see either extreme.

She said goodbye to Marcus hours ago—Zoe had no idea how to tell him what she's been feeling. She stayed up all night attempting to conjure up the words that would somehow soothe. But in the end, there is no soothing a broken heart.

Hers nor his...

Her thoughts are interrupted by a sound behind her.

The storm has been playing these devilish tricks on her all afternoon. Shortly after she arrived, she began to hear things—howling in the rain, nuances in the pitch of the wind, and Zoe swore a half-dozen times that it was speaking directly to her. She glanced around like a crack addict too many times to count.

Finally, she gave up and dug deep, becoming strong, knowing that in her heart, Zion would show in the end.

And he would make everything okay.

Zoe has passed the time by transporting herself back to a lone beach in Trinidad. She recalls a wise man that rose from the sea to change her life.

*Pain be good...*

Yes, Zoe nods appreciably, that man was indeed correct.

A second noise.

Man-made—neither of the wind nor the rain.

Zoe freezes.

Something touches her shoulder. Zoe takes in a breath, exhales completely. She knows that this is it. The thing she's been waiting possibly her entire life for.

LET ME SET YOU FREE.

Oh God, Zoe ponders, she's wanted this for way too long.

A thousand images invade her psyche. Her life flashes before her. She is a point on a continuum. The future is before her, she can't see it, but it is there.

She can smell it.

Zoe can taste it.

She turns slowly and comes face to face with *him*...

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IT IS THE ponytail that she notices first. It wraps around his smooth creamy skin and stops just short of his angular chin. Marcus is holding an umbrella but it does him no good.

He is as sodden as she is.

Their eyes lock; Zoe feels as if she's been pummeled. The wind has been knocked out of her to the point where she can barely speak. A thousand thoughts are going through her mind right now. She opens her mouth to speak but no words emerge. Thankfully Marcus speaks, saving her the effort.

"First things first," he says, his dark eyes piercing and not giving up what thoughts lie behind them.

Zoe swallows hard as she nods.

"Things are going to change," Marcus says. "Beginning today." He says this with authority and Zoe suddenly feels the hair on the back of her neck begin to rise. If voice had color, his would be indigo, she concludes. The revelation is astonishing.

Zoe attempts to speak as she tilts her head to the side to gaze past him. The dock is empty. No one else is coming.

Marcus interrupts.

"My name is *Zion*," he says. The words cut deep to the bone—Zoe shudders imperceptibly. "The man you know as Marcus is dead—he no longer exists..."

Her head drops, stare falling to shiny lizard skinned boots. Zoe's heart quivers. She stares uncomprehendingly at her husband. And then, like a door swinging open, suddenly everything becomes crystal clear.

Zoe experiences a rush of emotion that bombards her with the sudden intensity of an orgasm.

"You will address me as such," he says, his indigo-colored voice commanding authority, "except in public places or with family."

Zoe's face is melting. The emotions she feels—love, hope, freedom, pleasure, and pain all surface simultaneously and threaten to drown her. But she is strong. She has made it through.

"Are we clear?" he asks, moving in until mere inches separate the space between them.

Zoe's insides are in flames. There is an intense adrenaline spike of feelings—beginning in her spine and racing downward to the core of her very being, causing her to tremble, a hunger pang so overpowering that she can barely stand, let alone contain herself.

"Yes..." she moans. Zoe blinks back tears as she reaches for her husband, the one who has set her *free*.

"There's a lot of ground to cover, Judge—things to do and see. A new life awaits," he says, placing the umbrella over the head of his wife and touching her face for the first time.

"Yes," she utters.

"But first," he says, with a glint in his eye, "we need to make a stop."

"Please, Mar—Zion—take me home. Make love—"

A quick wave of his hand and a riveting stare shuts this chatter down.

Cold.

"I'm getting your clit pierced first," he says. "It's all arranged..."

A smile forms on the lips of Judge Zoe Tyler. Her soul alights from this saturated dock like a flame and soars free, no shackles to bind her, no chains to hold her back.

Zion steps in front of Zoe, and takes her by the hand, leading her out of the driving rain.

**THE END**

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