

Abby

by: Sophie

*Author's note: This was written a long time ago, before I met Pudding. I wanted to write a fairy tale love story and this is what came out. Now that the online version has vanished, I wanted to add it amongst the works Pudding and I have come to create together. I hope you enjoy it and I hope it inspires you to look into our more recent works!

Premise: Abby is a princess, or at least she's always been treated like one. She has four maids who take care of her whether they like it or not. But there is one rule Abby must follow: she isn't allowed to leave the manor no matter what. This thought never even crossed Abby's mind, until one day, she meets a boy...

Disclaimers: diapers, mental regression, wetting, messing, bondage, abuse

Preface:

I slipped my thumb into my mouth and began to suck on it, dozing off every few moments. I remembered the sound of the tapes being undone and the cold air on my skin when the diaper was removed. I remembered warm water washing over me and some small toys, but I didn't feel like playing. I remembered the chills when I stood up and the warmth the towel brought with it. I remembered the sounds of the tabs once more, and the cold air on my skin melting away. I remember a soft cotton suit replacing the loose dress and the softer cotton pillow lying beneath my head. After that I don't remember anything, and I don't remember ever removing my thumb from my mouth.

1. Staying In Proximity

My palms ached. Crawling along the marble floor was actually as inconvenient as it was humiliating. I was just glad Alice was the only maid around.

My day had been just fine up until ten minutes ago. I had woken up to wonderful weather; sunny, warm, a perfect day to play outside. I danced toward my closet, replaced my pajamas with a yellow sundress, and slipped on my flat shoes. I ran into Alice in the corridor outside my bedroom, but didn't pause for conversation. She had work to do anyway; I left my room rather untidy in my rush to get out of the house.

I was immediately warmed by the bright sunrays once I opened the back door. The mansion was always so drafty; I prefer the warm weather. Hurrying down the stairs to the lawn, I caught sight of a small, fancy-looking silver table with four matching chairs. I rushed over and read the small pink card folded on the biggest of the four plates that had been set on the table.

Abby,

It looked like a nice day for a tea party. When I'm done upstairs I'll be out with Kimmy. Coloring books are on the porch.

-Alice

I smiled to myself. She was a brilliant girl, always thinking of me. I folded the note back up, slipped it into the pocket of my sundress, and ran toward the front porch. Sure enough, Alice had left my two favorite coloring books, along with one I only worked in on occasions, and a box of sixty-four colored pencils.

Grabbing everything in one motion, I hurried back toward the tea party site. About four or five feet from the table, I dropped my books and utensils and made myself comfortable on the grass. Lying on my tummy, my feet kicking in the air above me, I began to fill in each shape in one of the books with its corresponding color. Time went by quickly this way, and in no time at all the shadows nearly disappeared and Alice was at my side.

“Ready for your party, Abby?” she said to me.

I stood up, stretched, and made my way over to the fancy little table in the middle of the lawn, taking my seat in front of the biggest plate. Kimmy, my teddy bear, was already positioned in the chair on my left. Alice organized my pencils and books, and then sat across from Kimmy.

The tea party took almost two hours. Alice wasn't complaining though. The more time she watched over me, the less work she had to do around the house. She saw it as a perk, but it also meant her job was never completely finished. I don't like tea, so Alice had set the table with water and lemonade. I was treated as the princess, of course, so Alice would pour my drinks and focus all her attention on me. We also ate some peanut butter sandwiches since lunchtime had already passed.

When our tea party finally ended, I grabbed Kimmy and went inside to find a new toy to play with. Alice stayed outside to clean up.

Unfortunately, when I walked through the door I bumped into Madeline. We didn't really like each other. Since she got here, she was always playing mean jokes on me or teasing me or calling me a baby. One day when she locked me in the front closet, I tattled to Daddy.

Afterward, she disappeared for two weeks. When she finally came back, she stopped playing her mean jokes even though she still teases me behind Daddy's back.

“Have a nice party?” she asked, concerned. Her eyes gleamed, far too happily for Madeline.

I nodded.

“What are you doing now?”

“Going to find my ball...” I spoke quietly. I couldn't muster courage around her. She still intimidated me even though she hadn't played any real tricks on me in months. I didn't like her crooked smile; it made her look superior, even though I don't know how a maid could be better than a princess. She had nothing over me at all. I didn't have to do chores. I didn't have to pick up after anyone. I didn't have to do anything but have fun. Still, my voice always had inferiority in it when I spoke to her.

“Want to play a different game?”

“What is it...?” My voice came out weak and uncertain.

“Freeze tag.”

“We need more than three people to play freeze tag.” I tried adding acidity to my tone, but it was a failed attempt.

“Lily and Lola will play.”

I sighed, nodding. There was no use arguing. I wasn't exactly in the mood to play freeze tag, but I had never won a fight with Madeline and this time wouldn't be different.

“Great! I'll be outside in a few minutes.”

I sulked and headed back outdoors. Alice immediately saw my grim expression and left the tea table to hug me. She was five-three I believe, an inch or two shorter than me, but it didn't affect her wonderful hugging skills.

“Madeline?” she guessed.

I nodded. “I never win any game I play against her.”

"I'll be on your team," Alice promised, without even asking what game we were playing. Even though the thought of Alice on my team did lighten my mood, it wouldn't help us win. Alice wasn't too fast, and neither was I.

A few moments later, Madeline came out with the other two maids. All the maids were rather young. Lily and Lola were the oldest at nineteen, and the most developed. They were twins, and very beautiful twins at that. They looked exactly the same, except that their long blonde hair parted on opposite sides. They even had matching sky blue eyes.

Madeline had a darker shade of blue in her irises. She was also taller than me although we're the same age, but shorter than the twins. Her hair was a light brown, commonly with a few small braids, and left to hang over her shoulders.

Alice, on the other hand, was far different than the other three maids. First of all, she was only sixteen; the youngest of the four. Her dark brown hair was only shoulder length, and even though it had a very childish appearance to it, the maternal look in her green eyes overpowered it.

Madeline was the first to be it. "Great..." I mumbled to Alice with great sarcasm. She'd always go after me.

Oddly enough, when the game began, Alice was the first to be tagged. I unfroze Alice when Madeline was going after Lola, but it didn't take long for Madeline to freeze her again. Lily was next, and I was too far from Alice and Lola to unfreeze them. Then it was Madeline and me. I backed away, trying to find a way around her, but I knew I wasn't faster than her. She advanced, and in no time I was along the edge of the woods. I stumbled a little and before I could catch my balance, she was right in front of me, pushing me with one finger. Then I fell.

That's when the game ended. Lola took one step forward, but felt it wasn't necessary anymore when Alice came sprinting toward me, so Lola went back to Lily. They both left quietly, sparing me. Madeline emitted a fake gasp, but it didn't fool me.

"Oh, you're in trouble now." Madeline smiled.

Alice pushed Madeline out of the way and came over to me, but didn't touch me. I looked down at the ground, refusing to move. Alice understood and gave Madeline a dirty look. Madeline crossed her arms and walked away in a huff. Even Madeline wouldn't mess with Alice when she's mad.

"This is bad," I mumbled quietly.

"You can't stand?" she asked.

I shook my head in embarrassment.

"You know the rules," she said with a frown. "I'm not allowed to help you."

This was Daddy's way of keeping me in proximity. If I wandered into the woods surrounding the house, my legs would go numb. I had no idea how it happened, but I knew the only way to regain the feeling in my legs was with Daddy's permission. But getting to his room was the embarrassing part. The maids were ordered not to help me if this situation were to occur, so obviously I had only one option.

"Thank you for sending Madeline away..." I whispered, avoiding my humiliation as long as possible.

"Come on, let's go."

I sighed and put my palms on the grass, crawling behind Alice toward the front door.

And here I am now, in the corridor to Daddy's room, crawling along the floor with Alice a few paces in front of me. I did my best not to cry, despite my desire, since I knew it would only get worse.

2. Just The Beginning

"So, wandering the woods again?" Daddy asked me. I shook my head, but he showed no sympathy. "You know the rules."

"The dance is tomorrow!" I complained. "Please, no!"

"Enjoy crawling in front of our guests, then."

I held my tears back, nodding slowly. It was so difficult to argue with him. He would never compromise, and he kept his expression steady, so I couldn't tell if anything I said impacted him at all. "Yes Daddy, I'll listen..." He snapped his fingers.

I stood slowly, turned, and politely walked out of Daddy's room, picking up my pace as I strolled through the hallways toward my bedroom. I flung the door open, leaving it ajar, and sat on the edge of my bed. It didn't take long until the tears came streaming down my cheeks.

The door clicked shut and Alice sat next to me on the bed, giving me a sympathetic hug. I kept crying for a few minutes before Alice decided it was time my fit ended.

“You know what to do.” She had stood up, her eyes glared into my own.

“Can you turn around...?” I asked politely through my tears, but she shook her head.

“Abby, you know the rules.”

I reluctantly stood up and spun so I couldn't see her staring at me. Then I proceeded to lift the hem of my sundress, doing my best to keep the back down. I slid off my panties as gracefully as I could manage without exposing my rear to Alice from underneath the dress.

I used to be so proud of them, my underwear I mean. Sure, my panties were all pink or blue or purple or yellow, and most of them did have lace around the waist if not the leg holes, and occasionally some lace even lined the seat of my panties, but they were a lot better than what the maids had. I'd seen Alice change before, and I'd heard Madeline talk about the underwear that were required for their uniform, and honestly, I wasn't the least bit interested. Plain white cotton panties with a small lace trim around the waist. That was their only option day after day, and I truly felt bad that they had nothing cute.

Nowadays, I'm nearly ashamed of my panties. As Madeline so frequently pointed out, these styles of underwear are only for little girls under the age of ten and never intended for a seventeen year old like myself. Alice tries to convince me that she'd prefer my underwear to her own, but the words don't really reach her eyes.

Now, to increase my humiliation, I was even stripped of the one thing I had over Madeline. This happened two or three times a year. I'd stumble into the woods or I'd have to fetch my ball from the trees or some other situation where I found myself in the forest around the mansion. Then my legs would go numb, I'd be sent to Daddy, and he'd issue the same punishment each time. And Melanie loved my month of humiliation that followed. She loved tormenting me, and being confined to my new sort of “underwear” made it so much easier for her to do so.

I turned around, watching Alice's expression as I handed her my underwear. She kept her face well composed, attempting not to show distaste in my situation to avoid humiliating me further or satisfaction in my punishment since that would only express how she enjoys my embarrassment. I gave her a small smile, a gratitude for being so kind. She then turned herself around, reached into my top dresser drawer, and handed me the underwear I was to be in for the next month's time.

Unable to take her eyes off me, as bound by Daddy's rules to watch me attentively until it was ensured I had been properly dressed, Alice continued to observe as I unfolded and slipped my new panties up my legs. I lifted my arms, knowing no matter how snugly I tucked them in place Alice would come over and do it again anyway.

And she did. She lifted the back of my dress, grabbed the waistband of my new underwear, and tugged upward until they were securely placed around my hips.

I had nearly stopped crying by now, so I thought I could handle a look in the mirror. I was wrong. At first, I looked just as adorable as I had this morning. My dark red-brown hair, just the perfect shade so you never knew what color it really was, pulled into loose, low pigtails. The sundress curved around my body in such an elegant way. Sure, my dark brown eyes were now redder from the crying, but overall I was as pretty as ever.

But the second I lifted the hem of my yellow sundress and saw the thick, pale pink training panties pulled between my legs, my eyes began to water back up again. I dropped the dress back to its original position at my knees. Turning to Alice, I saw the traditional ritual she performed after checking my pull-up. She had already emptied out the entire top drawer of my dresser into a small garbage bag and had begun to restock the baby-style panties with my new pink trainers. I turned my head away from both Alice and the mirror, trying not to cry.

Alice came over to me after completing her task, kissed my forehead, and gave a weak smile, then left with my bag of underwear. I sighed, exhausted. Crying always tired me out. I cuddled up to my pillow and decided to take an afternoon nap.

When I woke up, the sun was low on the horizon. I sat up in my bed, removing the comforter Alice had probably put on me while I was asleep. I was glad too. During my slumber, my dress had ruffled up above my waist, and without those covers my pull-up would be exposed to anyone who walked in. I left myself a mental note to thank Alice later.

“Did I miss dinner...?” I asked myself aloud, examining the sun’s position. I hoped I had. Even though the other three maids knew what was going to happen to me from falling in the woods, the unnatural thickness of the training pants would force me to waddle a little. I couldn’t handle that embarrassment right now. Then the door clicked open.

“Thank you,” I said before I saw Alice in the doorframe. She’s the only one, besides me, that is granted access into my room.

“No problem, darling,” she smiled back. “Hungry? Dinner has ended.”

This time I smiled.

“Madeline wanted to wake you, but the Master sided with me on letting you sleep.”

“Thank you... again...” I hadn’t fully awoken yet, so conversation was difficult.

“I’ll warm you a plate and I’ll be right back. Would you like chocolate milk?”

“Yes please,” I said, shrugging back down into bed. “You’re amazing, Alice.”

Alice wasn’t quick enough, though. Since the door was left open, I found Madeline skipping into my room.

“And how’s the baby?” she cooed.

“Get out!” I was in no mood to deal with her. I was hungry and I hadn’t fully woken up.

“Oh, what’s wrong?” she continued in her mocking tone. “Already wet your wittle pull-ups?”

I don’t even understand it. I had never once wet my panties, my bed, or my training pants during my punishment months, yet she’d still make the same snide remark every time she saw me in a pull-up. To make matters worse, it made me incredibly angry. In an instant I found myself scrambling across my bed toward her. I think I was going to hit her or something, but I never made it to Madeline. Alice stepped right between us a moment too soon, and then pushed me backward onto the bed, giving Madeline a nice glimpse of the pull-up.

“What a child,” Madeline mumbled to herself, but with a piercing look from Alice and a quick glance at her tight fists, Madeline rushed out of the room before she could come up with another insult.

“She needs to learn her place!” Alice shouted, angrily. “You are the Master’s daughter!” It took her a minute, but she calmed herself and looked at me. “And you can’t lay a hand on the help, or you’ll be in more trouble.”

I nodded, immediately regretting my attack on Madeline after seeing how much it upset Alice.

After another deep breath, Alice handed me my plate, and reverted to her kind tone once again. “Make sure you eat enough. You’re a growing girl.”

I began to eat and she sat on the edge of my bed. We made small talk in between bites. It was very comfortable small talk, though. The conversation was not at all forced, and even if we sat there in complete silence it couldn’t be awkward between Alice and me.

Eventually, after I ate my dinner, we chatted for a while, and after a bathroom break she recommended I go back to bed for the night.

“After all, tomorrow is the dance,” Alice said, supporting her own position. “You need to be rested. It’s the only day you actually work.”

I accepted her truth in the matter and changed from my sundress into a pale pink nightgown and plaid pajama pants in my closet, so Alice couldn't watch.

"Why do you need the pants?" Alice questioned when I came out from the closet.

"Concealment," I admitted openly.

"No pants, Abby," Alice responded sternly. "It's a warm night and the nightgown will cover it anyway."

I sighed halfheartedly. I was going to lose this argument, so I surrendered quickly and took the pants off. The nightgown did come to my knees, though, so it wasn't that bad. I slipped under my blanket again, laying my head on the pillow. Alice did a final check, touching the elastic waistband of the training pants discretely, and then kissed my cheek goodnight.

"Sweet dreams," she said as she closed the door.

"Things could only get better..." I whispered as I drifted into unconsciousness.

3. The Boy That Made Things Better

"No, no! The pink one!" Alice shouted at me while scrambling through my drawers to find a bow or hair tie or something. I wasn't paying close attention.

"The pink one is too short!" I shouted back from inside the closet, rapidly searching through every formal dress I had.

"It's not too short; you didn't try it on yet!" Alice walked over to the closet casually. She obviously found what she was looking for or she would still be in a hurry. Pushing me out of the closet politely, she grabbed the pink dress she had been talking about earlier and handed it to me.

"Too short," I told her sternly.

"Put it on then, and we'll find out."

"I hate dressing up for the dance!"

"You love dressing up for the dance." She was still in my closet, searching for something.

"Not when I can't wear underwear." That caught her attention and she came out of the closet to peer at me.

“Abby, you’ve done it nearly ten times now. Your dress always goes past your butt, and it’s not like people dance with you anyway.”

She was completely right. This would be the ninth dance I’d been to in my training pants over the past four and a half years. Daddy hosts these dances once a month. I do enjoy them, even though I do have to work. I’m the server. I’m to dress up in a cute frilly dress and carry around drinks to everyone. It only lasts an hour, even though the dance goes all night. After an hour, people go to the table for drinks. I just help start the party.

After my hour of work is up, I am allowed to do anything I want as long as I do not disturb the guests. I don’t dance though. Most people who come already have dates or they are just looking to party, so no one asks the server in the puffy dress to dance with them. Typically, I just sit on the stairs and watch everyone else. I love seeing other people, especially all dressed up. Daddy’s mansion is in the middle of the forest so aside from the dances, we don’t get visitors.

“I am more comfortable with dresses that touch my knees,” I mumbled.

“And the Master said you’re to wear something with frills. Your other dresses don’t have frills, Abby.”

“I am not wearing that dress! I’m sorry but I am not showing off my new undies to our company!”

That was a mistake. Firstly, I shouldn’t yell at Alice. Not only is it rude, but she doesn’t tolerate it. Second, I have never won an argument against her and I don’t think I ever will.

“Sit down.” Her voice was strong, so I listened. “Arms up.”

“Alice, I can dress myself.”

“If your going to throw little temper tantrums like a child, you’ll be treated as such.”

“I can dress-”

“I said arms up, Abigail!”

I obeyed. I don’t like her using my full name. After I put my arms up, my baby blue dress, which I had put on when I woke up about seven hours ago, was pulled off over my head. Unexpectedly, my bra strap was unhooked and I instinctively put my hands over my chest.

“No straps,” Alice explained.

I whined and moved my arms, closing my eyes as she took my bra off and helped me into a new strapless one.

“Now lie down.”

I knew where this was going. “Alice, I’ll wear the dress, okay?”

“Lie down.”

“Alice...”

“You have to be ready in one hour, and unless you want a spanking like a real child, you are going to lie down.”

I knew she wasn’t kidding. Alice was the only one given permission from Daddy to spank me when I was in my trainers. I made the mistake of acting like a brat once before during a punishment month, and she didn’t hesitate to flip me over and swat my padded butt. Having to be spanked by my best friend was one of the most humiliating things I had ever endured. I wasn’t about to let history repeat itself, so I scooted backward and lied down on the bed.

“Thank you,” Alice said gratefully, slipping the white tights off my legs that I had put on along with my blue dress this morning. Thankfully, Alice made no comment on my pull-up, and went about dressing me as gently as any mother would. In no time, I was standing in the center of my bedroom in the dress I was so reluctant to put on.

I was wrong. The dress came just above my knees. It was shorter than my typical dresses, but it did cover my pull-up completely. The sleeves were pink and puffy, hung off my shoulders, and lined with white, lace, elastic cuffs that hugged my arms. The same white lace, only more pronounced, was sewn along the top of the fabric. The pale pink dress embraced every curve of my torso until it reached my hips, where the material fell limply to my knees. A circle of white lace wrapped around my hips, and then three other rings of lace had been sewn into the skirt equidistant from each other until the final fourth ring was attached at the hem of the dress. Finally, a thin white ribbon zigzagged five or six times up my torso and was tied into a cute bow at the top. Needless to say, I was adorable.

Alice went back into my closet for a minute or so. “Here it is!” she shouted before coming out holding a white petticoat.

“Alice! No!”

“It isn’t going to lift your dress too high, I promise,” she sighed.

“It’s too high now!”

“Don’t argue. Now step in.” She crouched down at my feet and held the petticoat out with both hands on either side. Mumbling angrily to myself, I stepped in. Quicker than I expected, she stood up, pulling the petticoat up my legs, and lifting my new dress. I blushed furiously as she held my dress up and adjusted the petticoat, getting a full view of my pink training pants.

“All done,” she smiled and dropped my dress. It puffed out now, only going halfway down my thigh. The pull-up still wasn’t visible, but I knew I couldn’t bend over if I wanted to keep it that way.

Alice continued to dress me. Knee high white socks were slipped up my legs and Mary Jane style shoes were buckled to my feet. Most of the remaining time was spent on switching my hair styles to find one that fit the dress perfectly, but the end result was to just curl it a little and let it fall over my shoulders. She pinned a matching pink bow to my head, which must have been the hair accessory she was looking for earlier, and then stood back and looked me over.

“Astonishing,” she concluded. “You’re absolutely adorable.”

Alice took me by hand out of my bedroom and down the hall, then a staircase, and into the kitchen to get some drinks ready. I couldn’t help but waddle slightly in my training pants.

The maids did the cooking. I only carried the stuff out there. Maids were not to be seen by guests, even though Alice was always instructed to keep an eye on me from around corners.

When we went into the kitchen, Madeline snickered at me. Lola and Lily avoided their gaze. I appreciated it. I couldn’t understand why Madeline still felt superior. She was covered in flour, her hair a mess, cooking in the kitchen while I was dressed magnificently about to serve our guests. Alice ignored her though.

“Don’t trip. Don’t spill anything. Be courteous.” Alice always gave me the same small set of rules before I went out to serve the guests. I grumbled, hating the situation at hand.

The maids finished preparing the drinks, Alice placed them on a platter, and I was off. Balancing the tray on one hand, I moved around the crowded room of people. Drinks were removed from the tray randomly, and every five or ten minutes I wound up right back in the kitchen to start the process all over again. Thankfully it only lasted an hour, but even with flats, my feet still hurt after eight trips between the kitchen and the dance hall.

“You did well,” Alice complimented as she cleaned the kitchen up.

“It’s just walking.”

“Go watch our guests dance,” she offered. I nodded and took her up on the suggestion.

Walking out of the kitchen for the ninth time, but fortunately without a tray, I did my best to walk instead of waddle toward the staircase. I didn’t do that bad. I took my usual seat on the sixth step and smiled at everyone in their fancy dresses or classy suits.

“You look bored,” a calm, harmonic voice spoke over the noise.

I looked down and at the bottom of the steps stood a complete stranger, but if any stranger were to kidnap me and hold me hostage, I’d want it to be this particular stranger. He wore the most astounding tuxedo I’d ever seen. The classic black pants, the sleek black jacket over a lightly patterned checkerboard vest with a white button up shirt beneath. A black bow tie was tied around his neck beneath the shirt collar. Yet, his outfit was the last thing on my mind.

His face was in perfect proportion, symmetrical, dreamy. The soft blue eyes were glued to my face; his lips curled into a sly close-mouthed smile. The only thing out of place was his tussled brown hair, and even that seemed elegant in its own way. His bangs touched his eyelashes, but the rest was kept off his neck and just below the ears.

“Are you going to say something?” he asked softly, maintaining his perfect smile.

That’s when I realized my mouth was open so I closed it instinctively, only to open it again the next moment with a greeting.

“Hi.”

“Hello.” His smile got a little bigger, and I glimpsed the white teeth beneath his lips. “Are you bored?”

I shrugged slightly. “Watching people is fun.”

“What about dancing? Isn’t that better?” I watched his expression carefully, but his composure never changed. His hands stayed in his jacket pockets. His stance never wavered. His eyes never left mine.

“I suppose dancing does top watching others dance.” I felt my stomach flip. I couldn’t tell why.

“Then would you like to join me?”

I couldn't reply with a real answer, since I couldn't seem to find my voice, so I nodded and made my way cautiously down the steps. At the bottom, his hand was waiting for mine. I let my hand fall into his and he pulled me gently toward the dance floor.

He put his arms at my hips and I rested mine on his shoulders. He was taller than me; probably five eight or five nine. Soon we were rocking slowly back and forth, taking steps this way and that. I tried to focus on my stance so I wouldn't mess up, but his smile was eye level and it was hard to concentrate. Fortunately, I didn't make a mistake. My dancing was excellent, considering this was my first real one.

When a second song started, he pulled my hips a little closer and I no longer looked at his face. Instead I had put my cheek down on his shoulder. His hands drifted to my lower back. Then I remembered what I was wearing.

I panicked, but kept my dancing smooth and my breathing even. My pull-ups were relatively thick, and if his hand brushed it, the padding would instantly inform him that I wasn't in any sort of underwear a girl my age should be wearing. Luckily, this boy was a complete gentleman, and never moved his hand any lower.

When the second song ended, so did our time together. He took a step back, keeping his smile, and looked me up and down. I stood there motionlessly as he observed my apparel, my hairstyle, my face. I grew anxious.

"You really are beautiful," he finally said in a small voice, barely audible over the crowds.

"And your just as stunning," I said formally in return, even though stunning must have been understatement.

"I can't stay longer." His voice sounded sad but he kept the smile plastered on his face. "I will come next month, of course. Save me a dance."

I nodded weakly, a dizzy feeling in my head.

"I'm Miles, by the way," he said as he took another step toward the door.

"I'm Abigail!" I called back as he disappeared into the crowd.

4. Her Balcony Scene

“Don’t trip. Don’t spill anything. Be courteous.” Alice recited the classic rules, adding an extra remark unexpectedly. “Have fun.”

“I intend to,” I giggled, giving her an incredibly sincere smile.

Alice hadn’t witnessed my dance with Miles last month; she was preoccupied with cleaning the kitchen. I didn’t hold out on any facts though. I told her every last gorgeous detail of my new acquaintance, specified every aspect of our dance, and described every emotion that rushed through my head. She would surely be watching tonight.

Most of the past month had been filled with daydreams instead of coloring books and tea parties. Alice didn’t seem to mind though. She still watched over me and occasionally I’d let one of my fantasies slip out for her to hear, and at the end of every story she’d say “I love seeing you smile”. Not even Madeline could irritate me.

Now, standing in the same spot I had a month ago waiting for the tray to be loaded with drinks, I couldn’t help noticing how surreal everything seemed. Nothing physically differentiated this month from the last aside from my clothing and my smile, but everything felt different. It was as if I were dreaming.

I even looked better than usual. My hair sat on my shoulders, a few strands pulled up loosely on one side by a turquoise flower hairpin. I wore a pale sky blue dress. The sleeves were made of two layers of ruffled fabric in a darker shade of blue silk-like material sewn to the shoulders of the dress. The hem of the skirt also had three rows of ruffles that matched those that made up the sleeves. A small blue bow sat at the neckline and a larger version of the same bow held the sash around my waist, tied in the back. The skirt rested on my hips and fluffed outward, but the hem still reached my knees. A pair of white tights also extended from my waist to the tips of my toes, now covered with flat dress shoes. However, my favorite part about my new ensemble was the matching baby blue panties I wore underneath the dress in place of the pull-ups I had finally gotten out of yesterday.

Alice handed me my tray and I balanced it perfectly on one hand. In no time I had made my way into the crowd to pass out drinks and, more importantly, scan for a glimpse of Miles within the horde of guests. No success. My disappointment must have been evident, since Alice questioned my expression when I came back for refills.

“You can’t find him?” Her face was filled with concern.

I shook my head. “I looked around the whole place.”

“Well,” Madeline chimed in, “I wouldn’t come back here either if I had to dance with you. It was probably a dare to begin with.”

Alice threw a wooden spoon across the kitchen, missing Madeline by an inch.

“I won’t miss next time.” Alice’s voice was lethal, and Madeline shut up.

“She may be right...” I admitted.

“Don’t listen to her cynicism,” Alice countered to end my pessimistic thinking. “Grab another tray. Look harder.”

The next hour continued just like that. I would wander around with the tray, scanning aimlessly through the people, turn up empty handed, and return to the kitchen for Alice’s comfort. Then my shift ended. I left the kitchen before Alice could get a word in and sulked toward the staircase to continue my customary ritual of people watching that Miles had so easily broken last month.

“You shouldn’t frown so much,” Miles’ harmonic voice interrupted my thoughts. “It’s bad for you.”

I looked up, and on the sixth set of my staircase sat Miles. He looked just as astonishing as before. He wore a nearly identical suit as last month, although I caught the little differences here and there, his brown hair was still uncombed, but it fell just perfectly, and most importantly, his lips were curled up at the ends into that symmetrical, close-lipped smile I have dreamt about every night since I first saw it.

“There you go,” he said, encouraging the smile that formed on my own face the second I saw he had really shown up.

He stood up, walked casually down the stairs just as I had done last time we met, and came straight over to me.

“Did you save me a dance?” he asked with an eyebrow raised.

“Unnecessarily,” I responded in my matter-of-fact tone. “You can have me without a reservation.”

He chuckled, and it was a melodious sound. It made my smile grow. The next thing I knew we were on the dance floor, his hands on my hips and my arms on his shoulders. We kept our movements simple, but we mastered them very well.

“So, Abigail,” he began, staring down at me with his soft blue eyes, “can you tell me more about yourself?”

“What would you like to know?” I asked, lightheaded. It seemed difficult to converse and dance properly at the same time, and I made minor mistakes in my step, but he either didn’t notice or was too kind to point them out. Either way, I was happy.

“Well, what is your favorite color?”

“I don’t have one.”

“Do you have two?”

“Four: pale pinks, sky blues, soft purples, and yellow.”

“Easter colors,” he noted. “Interesting.”

“I suppose. I never made that connection before.”

“What is your favorite drink?”

“Chocolate milk.”

Conversation continued like that, dance after dance, song after song. Eventually I had told him about my entire life, with a few humiliating exceptions. I told him about Alice, my best friend, and Madeline, my worst enemy. I mentioned Daddy and the twins. I talked about what living in such a big house is like. I went on about my only chore: having to serve the guests during the first hour of each dance. I kept thinking he would run out of questions, but he never did.

“What about your mother?” he asked unexpectedly after a question about my favorite dessert.

I shrugged. I honestly don’t know anything about my mom. If I did meet her, I was too young to remember. Daddy never talked about her, and all the maids were hired within the past two or three years so I couldn’t ask them. He politely dropped the subject.

“Do you have any secrets?”

This one threw me off guard as well. Of course I had secrets. There were things I didn’t even tell Alice. And on top of my own personal secrets there were also the secrets I intentionally kept from him, such as my punishment months, the attire during that time, and how I would always be forced to crawl up to Daddy and beg for forgiveness after entering the woods. I sided with simplicity and answered, “Yes”.

“Are you going to tell me any?”

I shook my head and he sighed. The dance was nearly over. People were beginning to clear out, but half the crowd kept dancing. Tragically, Miles and I were not among the people that continued our dance session. Instead he led me over to the staircase by my hand.

“Let’s find some solitude,” Miles chimed as he took me up the stairs.

“Where are we going?” I asked curiously.

“There’s a nice balcony on the east side of the house.”

“Miles!” I hissed, “I can’t go outside!”

“Why can’t you?” he questioned, keeping his pace as we reached the top of the stairs.

“The doors are always locked.”

He twisted the handle and raised an eyebrow at me. “Always?”

The door opened without a creak. I was bewildered. Every door in this entire house was always locked. The only room I could access was my own. Getting to the kitchen or the living room or the dance hall was never difficult since there were empty entrance ways between each, but all the bedrooms and closets and balconies had always been inaccessible.

We walked out onto the balcony and Miles closed the door behind us. It really was beautiful. The stars were out and the moonlight bounced off the treetops. The lawn was the darkest shade of green you could ever imagine and you could almost see the wind move through each blade of grass. Even Miles’ symmetrical smile was visible in the moonlight.

“It’s nice out,” I commented, clearly stating the obvious.

“I agree.” Miles moved with me toward the balcony railing.

“When are you leaving?” I asked, avoiding eye contact. The thought hurt me.

“I will stay as late as I can,” he promised.

Minutes ticked by, and I had nothing to say. He didn’t speak either, so I kept my eyes on the landscape. I didn’t like wasting my time with him like this, so I turned my eyes toward him to revitalize our conversation, but to my surprise, he was already looking at me. I became flustered.

“You never come into town,” he stated.

“That’s true,” I replied weakly.

“Is there a particular reason why?”

I shook my head no. I obviously wasn’t going to give him the real reason I never wandered farther than the yard. If on the off chance he did believe that I couldn’t walk past the forest edges, he would laugh at the mental image it would undoubtedly put in his head.

“You should visit me this week then!” he exclaimed cheerfully.

“Why don’t you just visit me?” I countered. “You know where I live.”

“Fine then, I will.”

I smiled. Daddy probably wouldn’t approve, and I’m nearly sure Miles would be sent home upon arrival, but the idea of seeing him again before the next dance clouded the logistics.

“In three days, at noon, I will be on your porch,” he notified me.

“So will I,” I chimed happily.

Jumping a little bit off the ground, I managed to seat myself on the balcony railing with my dress between the cement and my white tights. I kicked my feet gently through the air until Miles came between them, holding my hips.

“Don’t fall now,” he stressed with deep concern in his voice.

“Yes sir!” I mocked.

We smiled at each other for a while, me sitting on the railing and his hands placed firmly on my hips in case I lost my balance. We casually came closer to each other, inch by inch, until our faces were nearly touching.

“Shouldn’t this wait until the third date?” I questioned with my eyes on his lips.

“Would you like to wait?” he asked politely.

“No thank you.”

We both smiled and gently pressed our lips together. I had never kissed anyone before. Daddy didn’t like when I was around boys, and he certainly wouldn’t approve of anyone kissing me. But despite my inexperience, everything came naturally. I kept my lips slightly open,

loosely, until he began to pull away, which is when I closed them. I had no regrets at that moment.

Then I felt wetness on my hands, which were placed next to me on both sides, grasping the cement railing for balance. I didn't understand at first, but then I felt the same warm dampness on my thighs and my backside. I froze in shock. There was no way.

I decided to act natural a second too late. I had already sprung to the glass door in an attempt to get inside, giving Miles a clear view of the dress from behind. It was over. In the moonlight there was no doubt Miles could see the dark spot on the back of my light blue dress.

I jiggled the handle in desperation as my tear ducts filled. I twisted and turned and pushed and pulled, but nothing opened the door. I was locked out. I was locked out on the balcony with the boy I had kissed a moment ago, crying helplessly, knowing full well I had just wet myself.

5. How She'll Be Treated

Miles stood against the railing, watching me cry. Through my hands I caught sight of his disorientated expression. He wasn't smiling anymore. His mouth was slightly open. It looked like he was going to talk but, minute after minute of tears running down my cheeks, he kept quiet.

To hold onto some dignity, I removed my wet backside from his view by slipping to the hard balcony floor and putting my knees to my chest. It wasn't the smartest move while wearing a dress, but I didn't care anymore. I didn't care about anything anymore.

"Do you need help?" Miles softly asked, caution in his voice.

It made me cry harder. The last thing I wanted him to think was that I was helpless, that I needed to be taken care of. This wasn't supposed to happen.

"Listen," he continued carefully, "we can get you inside... and act like it never happened."

"And how do you intend we get in," I asked through sobs. Aside from that flaw, his plan sounded perfect. I don't want him to remember this part of our otherwise perfect evening.

"We'll knock on the door," he said skeptically. "From what you told me, Alice should be close. She can let us in."

I broke into more hysterics. The boy of my dreams watching me wet myself was bad enough. Now I have to deal with my best friend seeing me like this? Without regard to my reaction, he strode past me to the door and jiggled the handle. The door clicked open.

Looking down at me, he gave me a strange look, then a small half smile. I stared up at him in amazement. I wanted to thank him, but now wasn't the time. Scrambling off the ground, I dashed past him before he could say a word.

No one saw me run to my room. Alice wasn't anywhere nearby, the few guests that hadn't left had made their way to the front door, and the other three maids weren't wandering the hallways. I was so relieved when I finally clicked the door shut behind me. No one saw me... except Miles. I sulked.

Now wasn't the time for sulking either. I had to figure out what to do. Alice does my laundry; she'd notice a wet dress. I couldn't hide it either; she cleans my room top to bottom. I pondered for a moment and came up empty. Instead I prioritized.

Getting into something dry was my main concern. Heading over to the closet, I managed to slip my dress off and plop it on the floor until I found a hiding place. Then I scanned my closet for suitable pajamas. I was rushing, so I finally decided on a pink pair of loose fitting, heart designed pajama pants with a tank top in the same color. Next I moved to my dresser and yanked out the first pair of underwear I touched. They were a pale purple with lace on the seat. I didn't have time to object. Alice would be looking for me soon.

Throwing the clothes onto my bed, I put my thumbs inside the tights. Before I had a chance to pull them down my legs, my thumbs grew hot and I pulled my hands away like someone would with a hot stove burner. I tried again, but fire coursed through my hands.

"What the hell," I couldn't help saying aloud.

I tried again when the pain subsided, but the same thing happened. Whenever my hand touched the tights it would get a burning sensation. I couldn't keep my hands on them long enough to move the tights even an inch down my legs.

I tried a different tactic. Taking a pencil off my dresser, I slipped it into the waistband of my tights. Nothing hurt. I proceeded to slowly maneuver the tights down my hips, but when they got about halfway down one side my butt felt the same sharp burns as my hands had.

I quickly removed the pencil and the tights snapped back into place around my waist. The fire on my backside dissipated slower than my hands had, and in no time I was crying. I tried to rub the seat of my tights, but whenever my hand touched the dampness both my hands and backside began to burn all over again. Finally, after I had burst into complete hysterics, the fire died.

Then the door clicked open and Alice called in.

“Abby?” She sounded worried. “Are you in here?”

I didn’t reply, and I didn’t want her to find me, but my sobbing gave it away. She hurried into the room and let out a small gasp. I sat before her in nothing but a lacey white bra and the saturated tights and panties around my hips. Her eyes wandered to the wet dress on my floor, then the dry clothes laying on my bed, then back to me.

“Oh, Abby...” she cooed. My eyes dropped to the floor. “Sweetie, this isn’t good. The Master is not going to like this.”

“Pwease, no tell Daddy!” I shouted. Then I covered my mouth. I wouldn’t have believed I had spoken like that if Alice’s jaw hadn’t dropped.

It was silent for a short amount of time. Alice waited until my tears stopped. I waited until her mouth closed. Then, when we both had calmed ourselves, the silence broke.

“Let’s go,” she said lightly.

“Pwease...” I pleaded; I avoided using too many words because of the new form of speech I had acquired.

“I am instructed to bring you to the Master if you behave like a baby,” she said without looking at me. “The way you talk and the condition of your apparel is equal to that of a baby.”

I sat in astonishment. I behaved like a baby? No. None of this was intentional. Nothing was voluntary... as is the same with a real baby. I sunk deeper into my depression.

“Now, Abigail.” I knew not to backtalk when she used my full name.

I stood slowly and slipped a robe on over my half naked body.

“The dress, Abby,” Alice whispered. “The Master will want you in it.”

I whimpered and changed out of the robe and into the wet dress I had thrown to the floor earlier. I cringed when I looked in the mirror and noticed the back. I knew the damp spot was visible, but I didn’t know it was so obvious that I had indeed wet my dress.

Alice left the room, motioning for me to follow. I walked a few paces behind her, scanning the halls for the other maids. I didn’t want them to see me like this, especially Madeline. I would never live it down.

Then we were outside Daddy's room. Alice knocked twice and the door opened slowly. She led the way down the corridor of pillars and I shied out of sight behind her. When we reached Daddy, he was sitting in his chair, wearing in one of his fashionable tuxedos he puts on for the dances. Alice announced us.

"Sir," Alice began formally, "I found Abby in her room wearing a wet outfit and speaking like a child after the dance festivities. I am unaware of her actions after serving the attendees."

Daddy raised an eyebrow. "Really, Abigail?" he questioned. "Come here."

I reluctantly stepped out from behind Alice and walked up to Daddy. I kept my eyes on the ground as he told me to turn, stop, and move this way and that. My dress was lifted as he examined the wet tights and underwear and then dropped the dress back down again. He turned me toward him, lifted my chin, and looked in my eyes.

"What happened," he asked casually.

I didn't want to speak. I knew how it would leave my lips, even though my mind spoke correctly. I knew Daddy wouldn't approve of me kissing Miles. But what I knew more than anything was that if I didn't cooperate, I would be punished.

"Well, Daddy," I began quietly, "I met dis one boy, and I weally wike him. We danced twice and talked and den he wanted to go ousside. I told him I not supposed to go ousside at night, but I did anyway. Den we kissed and I wets myself."

"You are not allowed to kiss boys," he calmly stated. "You are too young."

"I not too young!" I argued. "I seventeen and me should kiss boys!"

"Well, your wet outfit speaks for itself. You obviously cannot be trusted to behave like a big girl should."

"Dat's not fair!"

"And have you been cursing?"

I nodded slowly, thinking back to when I said 'hell' earlier before Alice walked into my bedroom.

"Mature adults do not swear," he plainly stated.

"But me did it juss once!" I whined in a futile attempt to defend myself.

“Abigail,” Daddy began assertively, shutting me up. “If you insist on wetting your clothing and talking like a child, I have no choice but to treat you like a baby.”

I opened my mouth to object, but Daddy cut me off.

“I will not have you ruining the clothes I purchase for you because you do not know how to use the toilet, and I am most certainly not going to allow my employees to respect you as a mature adult if you can’t be troubled to speak like one. From this point, until further notice, you will be under Alice’s complete care. There is a special procedure she will follow, and objections from you will be useless. Since you have no idea how to behave like an adult, you will be treated as a baby.”

“Dat’s not fair!” I screamed.

“Alice,” he called calmly. “Take Baby Abby to her new bedroom.”

“I not a baby!” I yelled at the top of my lungs in my childish tone.

“Abby,” Alice called a few steps away from me. “Now.”

“Alice... pwease...” I begged.

“Abigail.” Her voice was hard. “Do not make this worse.”

Trembling, I gave a slight curtsy in my damp dress to Daddy as a sign of respect, and stomped off after Alice. We walked in complete silence down hallways we rarely go through. Doors lined both sides of the each corridor. Door after door went by, and we kept walking. My paranoia had gotten the best of me and I couldn’t keep my eyes from scanning for the other maids. After what seemed like an eternity, Alice stopped at a door that looked just like every other one aside from a small pink flower painted in the center, and twisted the handle.

My new bedroom, as Daddy had called it, would never be considered anything but a nursery. The walls, from the ceiling to the carpet, was painted a pale pink. White wallpaper with blocks and teddy bears lined the top of each wall, dropping about nine inches from the ceiling over the pink canvas. Even the curtains that hung over the window on the wall opposite the doorway I stood in had prints of rattles and baby blocks printed on the fabric.

But what really took me by surprise was the furniture. Against the wall to the right stood a wooden, white crib, complete with plastic sheets and a mobile. On the opposing wall, there was an oversized changing table, big enough to fit both Lily and Lola at once. There were closed cabinet doors beneath the changing table top, which had been covered with a small layer of padding for added comfort. The last piece of furniture was an extremely large playpen, lying in

the center of the floor. It was nearly as tall as I was, and if it weren't for the small door on the side I wouldn't know how someone would be put in it.

“Wh... what is all dis?” I stammered.

“Your new bedroom,” she responded in all seriousness.

“But... I not a baby, Alice!”

“Yes, Abby, you are.”

6. Baby Abby

I don't fully understand what I was thinking when I decided to run. It's not like I had anywhere to go, and any guest I asked for help would only agree that a girl in a wet dress who can't speak properly is considered a baby. Nonetheless, I spun on my heels and dashed away from the nursery.

I didn't get far though. Alice caught the collar of my dress just after I made it out the doorway and tugged me back into the oddly furnished room. She may be smaller than me, but I'd be a fool to assume I'm stronger than Alice.

“You're going to cooperate,” she stated calmly, tugging my collar toward the unnaturally sized changing table.

“Alice! Sop it! I your friend!” I screamed at her in my childlike tone, persistently pulling myself toward the door. The distance only lengthened, though.

“Abby, I was given strict orders.” Alice kept her voice even, but I knew the edge of sympathy in it far too well. “I will not disobey the Master.”

I wasn't going to let myself cry yet. I knew how bleak my chances were of escaping the outcome Daddy intended, but giving up never occurred to me. I kept up my struggle against Alice, as useless as it was, until she had pulled me by my dress collar to the changing table. Then she let go, but before I could react, her hands were under my arms and I was lifted effortlessly onto the cushioned tabletop.

I planned to swing my feet off the side of the table, but Alice never gave me the opportunity. As soon as my damp backside touched the cushion, her hand was on my chest pushing my torso backward. Before I could recover from Alice's rapid movements, she had produced two pink, velvet bands and strapped them around my wrists. Both cuffs had pink

ribbons tied to them, pulled taut, with the other end fixed to the small railings of the changing table. I pulled at each cuff desperately, without avail. My hands had been efficiently restricted above my head and out of the way. The childish shouting proceeded as Alice restrained my flailing feet in the same fashion as my wrists. One by one my limbs were rendered useless.

When Alice finally completed her task, the ribbons wouldn't wilt no matter how I stretched my body. Any movement I managed with my legs or arms would hurt my joints. I quickly learned lying still was the most comfortable way to handle my situation. I hadn't noticed before, due to my writhing, but the bands were rather soft on my skin. Still, the restraints didn't shut me up.

"Me is so mad at you, Alice!" I whined as loud as I could. "Me not ever gonna forgive you! You is so mean to me! I not your friend no more!"

Then I was quiet. I tried to yell, to complain, to argue, but all the sounds came out muffled. Alice's hand was over my mouth, and I thought that was it. I was wrong. I could feel a large piece of rubber pushing on my tongue. My tongue pushed back, but Alice's hand kept the silencer in place. After a minute of thrashing my head around, and a minute of her hand over my lips, she moved it out of the way.

I couldn't see my mouth, but I knew the object in it was a pacifier. Not only could I feel the shield firmly pressed onto my lips as if Alice's hand was still pushing it down, but the rubber bulb kept a standard pacifier shape, even though this pacifier had to be two or three times the size of any normal one.

I eagerly pressed my tongue against it, attempting to push it out, but it remained sealed to my lips as if Alice had never removed her hand. I tried to ask what she had done, but only stifled sounds came out the other end of the pacifier. Crying suddenly seemed more plausible, but I resisted the urge.

"Your dress is ruined," Alice said with a frown. "It was beautiful too."

She snatched a pair of scissors from one of the cabinets beneath me and proceeded to cut away at the dress. I whimpered behind the pacifier, timidly curious how much clothing would be severed from my body. The dress fell apart into random bits of cloth until the whole thing was easily removed from me without finding it necessary to loosen the ribbons restraining my arms and legs.

Without hesitation, Alice put the scissors to my waist and snipped the white tights off my legs. I felt my face grow hot as color flushed my cheeks. I couldn't help but blush with my best friend standing over me as I was restrained to a changing table wearing nothing but damp underwear and a white bra.

Maintaining her professional expression, Alice slipped the scissors underneath each shoulder strap on my bra. Soon that was off as well, and my face became hotter. Then the cold metal touched my hips. She was going to cut off my underwear!

I tried to protest, but the sounds were barely audible through the pacifier. It was too late anyway. Alice had cut both sides of my wet panties and pulled them from beneath me. I was now completely naked in front of Alice without a method for concealing myself.

I quickly averted my gaze to the pale pink wall. My cheeks were on fire and I didn't want to have to look Alice in the eye in my position. Nonetheless, the noises of Alice fumbling through one of the cabinets below me forced my head to turn with curiosity.

I wish I hadn't, because right when I did, Alice closed the cabinet doors and stood up, holding an abnormally large, folded, disposable diaper. My protests started up again, but with the pacifier secured in my mouth Alice never heard a word of them.

She stood right in front of me as she unfolded the diaper. It was larger than I thought, and judging by Alice's reaction, she hadn't expected it to be this size either. Through different methods of turning and flipping it, Alice examined the diaper with curiosity in her eyes. I couldn't deny my curiosity either. I didn't know diapers were designed in such excessive sizes.

Through Alice's examination I could conduct my own. It looked no different than a standard baby diaper, aside from the size. Everything about it was white. The outer layer seemed to be a thin plastic material while the inside was lined with thick padding that extended into both wings in the front and back. Two tabs were placed on each of the back wings and the crinkled elastic leak protectors curved around what would be the leg holes after it was securely fastened.

Alice extinguished the curiosity from her face quicker than I had hoped and the seriousness took over again. Having already unfolded the diaper, she set it on the changing table between my legs. Then I felt a sharp prick on my butt and instinctively raised it into the air, straining my joints. Within seconds they gave out and my backside fell back to the changing table, but Alice had all the time she needed. The seat of the diaper was now properly placed under my bottom.

I closed my eyes at this point, knowing if they were kept open too long tears would leak out. However, the scent of baby powder still made its appearance, and I could accurately imagine everything that was happening.

First, the talcum powder was sprinkled between my legs, and moments later I felt Alice's hands gently rubbing it into my skin. I felt softer. Then, as Alice pulled the diaper between my legs, crinkling disrupted the silence. I could feel the wings cover my hips and perceive the sound

of sticky tapes being opened. After the fourth tab had been pressed down, and I knew the diaper was securely fastened around my waist, Alice patted the front of my diaper.

I opened my eyes, fixing my vision on the ceiling. Looking would do me no good. I knew what I was wearing and that was bad enough.

One of the velvet straps on my ankle was unbuckled and I could feel something running up my leg, then the band locked my leg back into place. The same thing happened to my other ankle, and I couldn't keep myself from looking down.

Alice had placed one foot at a time through a pair of clear plastic panties, which she proceeded to pull up my legs. Before I had time to react, she pinched under my thigh, and I instinctively rose again. The plastic panties were slipped over the large white diaper and then I heard a faint click. With closer examination, I managed to catch a glimpse of a small metal chain that had been tucked inside the waistband of the plastic panties, along with the tiny padlock that fastened them tightly onto my body.

It was all too much: the sight of the enlarged diaper secured around my waist through the clear plastic along with the locking waterproof undergarments that sealed me in them. I felt the tears slide down my cheeks. I couldn't stop crying.

I was barely aware of what happened next. I felt satin slide over my hands, one at a time, and two more locks were clicked shut. I didn't look until it was over. Alice had slipped a pair of light pink satin mittens over both my hands, restricting my finger usage, and locked thin chains around my wrists. Then the cuffs were removed from my hands, then my feet, and I watched as Alice shut the bedroom door with a click.

At first I didn't move. There was nothing I could do to stop this from happening. Getting up would only advance my humiliation. If I remained on the tabletop, things would stop here.

Then I thought things through. I was laying on a changing table in front of my best friend in nothing but a diaper. If I got up, Alice would at least dress me. So I got up.

Things were wobbly at first. I was dizzy from crying all night and my arms and legs were stiff. Eventually I made it to my feet though, and covered my chest with my arms.

I looked at Alice. She couldn't hide her worry anymore. I could barely endure this embarrassment and I had already broken down into tears. It was obviously she wanted to say something, but we both knew I wouldn't be able to respond with the pacifier stuck in my mouth, so she kept quiet, her eyes on the ground.

I dropped my eyes too, and we stood there in silence until one of us could muster up the valor to move on with this punishment of mine. Surprisingly, I managed to shake myself out of my phase before Alice, so I went up to her and poked her lightly with my mitten.

She looked up, gave the smallest, most false smile I had ever seen, and turned to the closet, which I hadn't noticed earlier. I avoided my eyes from its contents, attempting to be optimistic with whatever attire Alice was about to dress me in.

When she came back with a pink fabric, I raised my hands, eager to conceal my chest again. She slipped the dress over my head, spun me around, and fastened four buttons up to my neck. Then she took me by my confined hand and led me to the mirror on the inside of the closet door.

I avoided looking below the hem of the dress since it was more of a shirt, only covering the top half of the plastic panties. On the other hand, it was very pretty. The cotton baby doll dress had no elastic bands hugging my body, but instead hung like a standard pink shirt. The sleeves, which puffed out like a princess gown, had small bows sewn onto them, and a white bib was attached to the front, surrounded by white lace. Embroidered in the center of this bib, sewn in an elegant pink script, were the words "Baby Abby". The outfit, aside for my undergarment and the unnecessary personalization, was rather adorable.

I, on the other hand, was not. My eyes were bloodshot from crying and my hair was a mess after all the resisting I futilely attempted. My bangs stuck to my wet cheeks and the blue hairpin that held my hair for the dance had gotten tangled during all the fuss. The pacifier, now clearly larger than a standard one, was a light pink, nearly matching my dress, and only added to my unattractive appearance.

I turned away from the mirror and back to Alice, who looked exactly as she had in the kitchen. For the first time, I was jealous of her. It was an unpleasant feeling.

"It's bedtime," Alice cooed. Her voice was as comforting as she could manage.

I shook my head, but my sleepiness was present in my drooping eyelids. I had a long day, and Alice and I both knew I needed some rest. Nonetheless, I wasn't about to get in that crib without putting up a fight.

In the end a fight wasn't necessary. She left me to lower the gate on the crib, which gave me the perfect window to make my escape. I made my way to the door, waddling as to the unusual thickness of the diaper, and reached for the handle. I couldn't tell if the door was locked or if the mittens kept sliding off the doorknob, but I couldn't get the door open quickly enough. Instead, Alice had grabbed me by the ear and tugged me back to the crib.

Moments later, the gate on the crib was raised with me inside. But my failed escapade had made Alice cautious, and she lifted a lid from behind the crib and locked it over my head. Kneeling was the most I could do inside my baby-like prison, and to get around the crib, crawling seemed to be my only option.

Fussing didn't help. I still couldn't form words with the pacifier pushing back my tongue, and no matter how violently I slammed against the wooden bars, they wouldn't even quiver. Eventually, I tired myself out.

"Everything will be better in the morning," Alice promised me. She pulled a tape recorder out of the pocket in her uniform, inserted a small cassette she took from the other pocket, and clicked the play button. She set it on the edge of the playpen, out of my reach, and left the room closing the door behind her.

The tape recorder only emitted a low volume of static for a few minutes, but I was too tired to be curious. It was late and my energy had been completely drained by my useless protests. I placed my head on the plastic sheet, pulled a small blanket overtop of my body, and quickly dozed into unconsciousness just as the female voice started speaking through the static on the tape recorder.

7. Shattering Simplicity

I didn't follow time anymore. Days came and went, and none of it seemed important enough to catalog. I remembered waking up at ease, the pacifier still secured in my mouth. I was still dressed as I was when I went to sleep, but it no longer bothered me. Things seemed calmer. Everything was easier to accept. It was almost as if acceptance wasn't necessary.

I never saw the maids again, or Daddy. Occasionally I would get glimpses of Alice, but she was so much taller than I remembered. I thought nothing of it, though.

It was easier to cry too. I realized that quickly. At first I would try speaking to Alice, but she couldn't seem to hear me. When I discovered she would tend to whatever need I had if I began crying, I replaced the English language with sobs and whines. I never heard any of them though. There was no noise in my new world.

At first my knees would always hurt, but after a while the soreness dimmed. My bangs never fell in front of my face, either. I didn't have to chew my food anymore or worry about spilling my drinks. I had been conditioned to stop crying when something was placed in my mouth. Even the urge to use the restroom didn't surface. Everything had become simplistic.

However, something still didn't feel right, as if a key component of my psychological makeup had gone missing. But that made no sense. Everything was wonderful. I hadn't a care in the world. There were no worries or troubles or problems. Things were easy. Nonetheless, whenever I took a hard look at myself, I was never smiling. I couldn't make heads or tails of this empty feeling. Even above all the simplicity, I had Alice. What more could I desire than the compassion she illustrated?

One day was different than the others, though. Alice was back to her proper size and the soles of my feet took the pressure from my knees. I picked up the tray of drinks from the counter and carried them through the kitchen door toward the dance hall.

The room was completely empty, but the lights were dimmed as if the dances had begun. I weaved my way around the dance floor. It made absolutely no sense, but my feet kept me on a specific route, dodging invisible obstacles, so it seemed.

The drinks gradually disappeared off the tray. I couldn't explain the incidents, but I also didn't care to. When the final drink vanished from the saucer I made my way back to the kitchen, walking this way and that to avoid crashing into nothing.

As I approached the doorway to the kitchen, a weight pressed down on my left shoulder. I was spun around, dropping the empty tray to the floor, and felt a gentle force against my lips.

Then in a sudden burst, noise brought havoc to my eardrums. The sounds were foreign to the silence I had grown so accustomed to. Simultaneously, the room became crowded with strangers in fancy outfits, including the boy who had his lips pressed to mine. Miles.

The empty void in my heart was sealed, but the simplicity was shattered. Just like the first time our lips met, I could feel my backside dampen. But this time was different. Instead of the warm sensation dripping down my legs it soaked between them. My butt felt wet, although I was standing upright, and I sensed the same moisture in the front. I had once again wet myself, but this time my dress was dry and Miles had no idea what I had done.

I couldn't pinpoint how this could be possible, but at the moment it didn't matter. What did matter was that I could kiss Miles without interruptions. Pulling his collar, I walked backwards until I was leaning against a wall out of sight from most of the guests. Miles had his hands on my hips and his lips on mine.

He didn't pull away until I ran out of breath. I couldn't help it; after a few minutes of kissing him, my breathing was heavy. He laughed lightheartedly and flashed his symmetrical smile I'd missed so much.

"I thought you were ignoring me," he admitted.

“No,” I responded, trying to catch my breath. “I just didn’t see you.” It was the honest truth. Time had passed strangely since the last dance, but it seemed my awareness had returned.

“Flagging you down with my arms and screaming your name wasn’t noticeable enough?” he mocked.

“The kiss got my attention, didn’t it?” I countered, trying to keep the ‘you were invisible’ line to myself so he wouldn’t think I had lost my mind.

“I like the haircut,” he sincerely stated, keeping his hands on my hips.

“Haircut?” I nearly panicked, but I was getting better at maintaining certain casualness around Miles. Instead I smiled and shied away from the wall, leaning toward the hallway. “Be right back,” I promised, thinking he’d leave if I stormed off again without giving an excuse. “Bathroom break.”

“Idiot!” I yelled at myself as I nearly sprinted down the hallway. “Bathroom break?” I questioned my own excuse. “First of all, that’s a lie! I don’t want to start lying to Miles. Secondly, does he really care what my bathroom habits are?” I shut up. Talking to myself seemed crazy.

Then I overanalyzed. The wet feeling after I had kissed Miles resurfaced in my mind. It didn’t take long for me to put two and two together. “I suppose if he knew the truth” I mumbled aloud, “my bathroom habits may actually hold importance to him.”

I sulked into the biggest bathroom in the house, the female guest bathroom. There were two unnaturally large bathrooms near the front room, one for males and the other for females, which were used as the guest bathrooms during the dances. They were strange because more than one person could occupy them at a time.

But despite the company I may encounter in the bathroom, I had to check out the haircut Miles had mentioned. I also needed some confirmation on what I had on beneath my dress, and pulling up the hem in the hallway was not an option.

Unfortunately, the bathroom door was locked. I was dumbfounded. I have grown accustomed to every single door in the entire house being locked, but never before had someone limited bathroom usage from our guests. But as I started to walk away, the door opened and two women in beautifully fancy dresses strode out, chatting amongst themselves.

I reacted quickly, catching the handle before the door shut. I slipped inside and let the door close behind me. Three other women were already inside, standing in front of some of the mirrors, mumbling to each other. Managing to sustain a low profile with the group of conversationalists, I crept to the full-length mirror on the opposite wall.

Miles was right about my hair. It had been cut much shorter, just above my shoulders, even all around. A small, pink clip held my bangs to the side of my head. It was a haircut you would only see on a child, and it upset me.

I took the clip out of my hair, but my bangs fell over my eyes. With my long hair it wouldn't have bothered me, but now I couldn't stand it. I had grown accustomed to having my hair out of the way, so I clipped it back into place.

And my outfit didn't dispute the childishness. The pink dress I wore had no sleeves or frills or lace like my common dresses. Instead, it was designed in a little girl's style. The loose floral printed fabric covered my shoulders, back, and chest. A matching sash tied around my stomach, and below it the flowery fabric fluttered past my hips. From where the floral material cut off, a white inner layer of silk descended a few inches lower. I was the perfect depiction of an overgrown toddler.

By now the guests at the mirror had noticed the unmistakably childish-looking girl staring at herself in the mirror, so I sulked into one of the stalls. I listened for a minute until their conversation continued, then reached for the hem of my dress.

My suspicions proved accurate, and I began to pout. The reason my backside still felt damp, the reason behind my slight waddle, and the reason why Miles wasn't aware that I had wet myself was because underneath my dress I had on the same type of oversized diaper Alice had put on me a month ago.

My first instinct was to take it off, but after analyzing the situation I decided against it. Firstly, if I was in this diaper, it was a sort of punishment. If Alice or another maid found me without it on things would get worse, and I didn't want to go back to the way I had been for the past month. Next, it's not as if I had a pair of underwear handy, and I was not about to go back to Miles without something on under my dress. Lastly, and possibly most importantly, it seemed that I hadn't overcome wetting myself when I kissed him. The diaper, although severely damaging my pride, permitted me to kiss him without the public humiliation.

I concluded that it was best to get back to Miles. I didn't know how long it had been or how far along the dance was. I flushed the toilet so the girls at the mirrors would believe my make-pretend bathroom session, and then went to the door. Of course, the handle wouldn't turn, so I jiggled and twisted until my hands felt sore.

"What are you doing?" a woman behind me asked in an impatient tone. She had to have been one of the three that were occupying the mirrors.

"The door's jammed," I mumbled, turning the handle a little so she knew I wasn't kidding. But she reached past me, spun the handle, and pushed the door open. I caught it with

my foot before it closed again and blushed. “I must have been turning it the wrong way,” I defended, but she rolled her eyes and went back to the mirrors.

“Stupid doors!” I mumbled to myself as I paced down the hallway. They never seem to open for me, and irritation was understating how I felt.

When I got back, Miles was positioned against the wall where I had left him. The corners of his mouth were still held up. I returned a smile and attempted to diminish the waddling in my steps.

“Welcome back,” he commented politely.

“Glad to be back,” I honestly answered, since my many troubles seemed to melt away at that point.

“Care to dance?” he asked as he outstretched his hand toward me.

I shook my head, knowing full well the added thickness of the diaper wouldn’t allow me to dance properly. His smile faded, so I came up with another suggestion.

“I sort of wanted to talk to you,” I said, attempting enthusiasm. It didn’t work, so I added, “I missed you.”

“Okay. I have to talk to you anyway.”

His smile didn’t come back. That made me anxious. I wouldn’t know what to say if he wanted an explanation for what happened on the balcony last month or why I got my haircut or why I was walking funny, but I did manage to lessen my nervousness a bit by telling myself that Miles is too much of a gentleman to bring up things like that.

I took his outstretched hand and followed him to the staircase where we first met. Then we took a seat beside each other on the sixth step staring out at the crowd.

“So,” he began hesitantly, which nearly drove me to a panic attack. “Do you remember the arrangement we made to see each other?”

I did remember. On the balcony, before we kissed, we decided that three days after the dance he was going to visit me at noon and I would wait for him on the front porch. It was a date, one I didn’t show up to. Instead I was lost in my silent world of simplicity. That’s probably what he wanted to talk about.

“I’m so sorry!” I burst out, trying to keep my tears from slipping down my cheeks. It seemed so natural to cry. “I forgot! Please don’t be upset!”

He looked at me bewildered, which only added to my anxiety. Holding back my tears became increasingly difficult.

“What are you talking about?” There was no cruelty in his voice, only curiosity.

I spoke quieter, avoiding eye contact. “I wasn’t on the porch at noon. I blew you off.”

I shifted my eyes toward the ground just as my vision blurred and tears came down my cheeks. I didn’t deserve a boy like Miles; a boy so astounding, so elegant, so perfect. And what was I? The childishy dressed server at the local dances, who wouldn’t even bother showing up for a date she had arranged. Of course Miles would prefer someone else. He would prefer someone who behaved like an adult.

But, to my surprise, his laughter broke the silence. I didn’t understand, so I raised my head out of curiosity.

He was staring at the dance floor rather than at me, a first for Miles. I took the opportunity to wipe my eyes before he noticed I’d been crying. He was smiling again and I didn’t want to be the reason he stopped.

“I thought you were mad at me,” he explained, oppressing a chuckle. “Perhaps you waited all day for me to arrive, and then finally gave up on me entirely, giving you reason not to acknowledge me on the dance floor. But you never showed up at all.”

I was thoroughly confused. Had he not shown up? Had he forgotten as well? My puzzlement must have been apparent since he explained without me having to ask.

“I tried to come,” he sighed sincerely, turning his head to meet my eyes. “I really did try. But when I was halfway through the forest on the same path everyone takes to come to these dances, a brown haired woman in a white gown stopped me. She said to turn around, and not return. I protested but...”

I waited impatiently for the story to continue, but all that escaped his lips was a distant remark before we were interrupted.

“She had your eyes...”

8. At Last, Explanations

“Abigail!”

Miles and I both dropped our gaze. Alice was standing at the bottom of the staircase, wearing the same attire she'd always wear while working in the kitchen.

“You were instructed to come right back to the kitchen when you had finished serving! What has gotten into you?”

Then her eyes shifted next to me, and suddenly she had nothing left to say. I slowly maneuvered my way to the bottom of the steps, catching glimpses of Miles walking behind me from the corner of my eye. When I got to the bottom I shot a smile at Alice, although I doubt she noticed as her stare were still glued to Miles.

“I'm sorry,” I tried, which managed to catch her attention.

“It's alright,” she replied, her expression burning with curiosity. I figured perhaps it was an introduction she was looking for.

“Alice, this is Miles. Miles, Alice.”

They shook hands, but I never saw the curiosity fade from her face.

“I've heard a lot about you,” Miles politely commented, but Alice only nodded then faced me.

“I'm sorry Abby, but you have work to do.” The apology sounded sincere. “Say goodbye to your friend.”

Then she left. I'm glad she had the decency to let us have our goodbye privately, or as privately as a crowded dance floor can get.

“Abby?” Miles mocked with an eyebrow raised.

“Shut up,” I retorted. “It's shorter than Abigail.”

“The defensive edge isn't necessary,” he laughed. “Actually, I believe your nickname is rather cute.” I let my gaze hit the floor until the skin tone on my cheeks recovered from the compliment.

“Will you be back?” he asked politely as I stared at the marble.

“Probably, but not for at least an hour.” It seemed easier to talk without the distraction of his beautiful sapphire eyes.

“I can wait.”

“I will hurry.” I lifted my head, stood on the tips of my toes, and gave him a gentle kiss goodbye before turning and making my way to the kitchen. Walking seemed more difficult than before, so I assumed that my goodbye kiss resulted in another accidental wetting. And I could already infer many other inconveniences of diapers, aside from the inability to walk properly.

Alice was waiting for me outside the kitchen next to the doorframe, staring blankly at the wall, confusion still wedged in her expression. I waddled up to her and gave a tense smile.

“Upstairs, fourth door on the right,” Alice said matter-of-factly without altering her display of confusion. “Take the east staircase.”

“But, the drinks-”

“Can wait,” Alice finished for me. “Please do what I say, if you know what’s good for you.”

I sighed reluctantly and headed toward the east staircase, which was very far from the dance hall. I knew I was in some sort of trouble. I never skipped out on my only duty in this household, and I never imagined doing it. Now that I had, I wondered what sort of punishment would follow.

But I noted while climbing the stairs, that nothing could really be much more humiliating than trying to walk up a staircase in a fully saturated diaper. After eight awkward steps, I put my hands down in front of me and started to crawl to the top. It seemed more logical than tumbling backwards and breaking my neck.

Getting back to my feet at the top of the staircase, I waddled down the hallway to the door Alice specified. I took a deep breath, doing my best to muster whatever courage I had in order to face whatever punishment concealed itself behind the door in front of me. After a long minute, I gripped the handle, turned, and pushed on the doorknob. But the handle didn’t turn and the door didn’t open. Alice led me to a locked room.

I considered making my way back downstairs to inform Alice the door was locked, but after replaying the memory in my head, I realized she never told me to enter the room. Then I contemplated a quick dash, as futile as running would be in my current attire, to my bedroom for a change of clothes, but assumed my old bedroom was locked and my new one would have nothing worth changing into. The outcome I came upon was to stay put and wait for something to happen.

After a few minutes of pacing, leaning against the wall, and jiggling the handle a few more times, I decided to sit down to end all the futile movements. Placing my back against the

wall, I slowly descended to the floor, wincing when the warm, wet seat of my diaper pressed against my backside.

It was perhaps a half an hour before Alice came up, walked past me, and twisted the door handle to the room I had tried entering before. The knob didn't hesitate to turn, and the door opened without resisting. I began to stand up, but Alice pushed down on the top of my head.

“Crawl, Abby,” Alice said in a soft voice. “Please.”

I didn't understand what was going on, but since I was about to get in trouble anyway I figured staying on Alice's good side was a bright idea. In a hurry to escape the sitting position I had been in for far too long, I leaned forward and put my hands to the marble floor. Crawling quietly behind Alice, I entered through the doorway she had opened.

The room wasn't at all what I had expected. No oversized baby furniture or spanking utensils or humiliating attire or restraints or anything that could ever be used to discipline me was within view. There was a very large bed against the far wall, a dresser to my right, a window on the left, another closed door located on the far side of the dresser, and a nightstand stage right of the bed. The pale sky blue walls added a small tint to the white furniture, the white doors, the white ceiling, the white curtains, and the white canopy that draped over the bedposts.

Things weren't tidied up like they were around the rest of the house. Books were piled on the dresser, along side some clothes, a jewelry box, and a few hairpins. The bed was made, but ruffled, as if someone slept on the covers. The closet door on the far side of the dresser was slightly ajar, although only darkness was visible inside. And on the nightstand sat the small tape recorder I vaguely remember from last month.

Alice walked over to the bed and I followed, shuffling my hands and knees forward. She sat down and patted next to her, signaling for me to climb on the bed. I did as instructed, letting my eyes glaze over the room a few more times.

“Where are we?” I finally asked with firm curiosity once I was sitting beside her on the bed.

“This is my room, Abby,” she answered, rolling her eyes.

“Why are we in here?” I couldn't make heads or tails of the situation. Wasn't I supposed to be in trouble?

“Well, I am trying to protect you,” she said with hesitation as she rose from the bed.

“Protect?”

“Abby, do you remember anything of the past month?” Her expression was hard.

“I remember...” I began slowly, thinking back to what had happened after I fell asleep in the crib, “you being taller.”

Alice nodded and motioned for me to go on.

“I remember not seeing the other maids.”

She kept her eyes locked on me, waiting for me to continue.

“I remember my hair always out of the way, and never chewing my food, and never spilling my drinks.” Things were becoming easier to recall. “I remember crying a lot. I remember how quiet things were.”

“Anything else?” Alice asked when I stopped speaking.

“I remember desires; the desire to keep something in my mouth, the desire to sleep every few hours. But I don’t remember my haircut, and I don’t remember my bedroom, and I don’t remember ever needing to go potty.”

We were both quiet for a few minutes. She wanted me to say something else, but only one other thing came to mind.

“And I remember,” I mumbled quietly, almost inaudible to Alice, “the emptiness inside of me. The emptiness Miles always filled.”

Before I could judge her reaction, her arms were around me. I wrapped mine around her, and tears slid down my cheeks. I didn’t know why I was crying, but it hardly seemed important. It felt nice to be hugged.

She pulled away too soon, holding my shoulders and kneeling in front of me. I could read the relief in her eyes, although I didn’t understand why. She was happy.

“We have to discuss a few things,” she said with a slight smile, her eyes watering as well.

“Explanations, I hope,” I mumbled with a small, fake smile in return.

“We can start there,” Alice sighed. “It’s the least I can do.”

I waited for her to collect herself. The water that was building in the corners of her eyes slowly faded and her posture became tenser.

“That night, a month ago, when I put you into the crib and left you with the tape recorder, I had no idea how drastic the alteration would be,” she began in her own defense. “The next morning I came in, you weren’t crying. You were sitting calmly in your crib, sucking gently on the pacifier I had stuck to your mouth the night before. Even after dissolving the glue I used, you wouldn’t spit it out.

“After that, you wouldn’t walk, only crawl. Your drinks were given to you in bottles, and even sippy cups you wouldn’t accept. The food I was instructed to feed you was intended for babies and was already mashed up. You never used words properly; you would only cry and talk in gibberish.

“I was instructed by the Master to get you a shorter, more appropriate haircut for your new personality. The nursery also became your new bedroom; where you’d sleep, where you’d play, and where you’d reside when I was too busy with the household chores to watch over you. And for the past month you have been kept in diapers, and not once have you attempted to remove them or hesitated to use them. You merely cried when you needed me to change you.”

I sat quietly, unaware if my face was pale white or bright red, but it had to be one of the two. I couldn’t comprehend what Alice was trying to tell me. I couldn’t imagine being a complete baby for an entire month, let alone not remembering any specific facts about it. This couldn’t be possible.

“Are you alright?” Alice asked cautiously, reading the panic in my expression.

I nodded, but it was a lie. ‘Alright’ was the farthest thing from what I was. A million questions ran through my mind, but I asked the most obvious.

“How?”

“As a maid in this building, I am required to obey a set of rules and regulations. The Master makes sure all of his maids do this by using a series of hypnotic tapes, one of which I believe you have heard.

“Before I began working here I had nothing, just like the rest of the maids. The reason any of us had opted to become maids in the first place was because the Master was offering to provide us with food and shelter, only for cleaning the large house he lived alone in with his daughter. But, of course, there was a catch.

“The Master was very honest with each of us when we started. He explained what he would pay us in; meals, shelter, clothing, and any necessity we needed. And he was straightforward when telling us that if we agreed to take the position, we would undergo a series of hypnotisms that would ensure our obedience.

“I remember, clear as day, the first hypnotic tape I listened to. A lovely woman explained how whenever I heard her voice, I would never hesitate to obey her wishes. The next two tapes used the same woman’s voice, and were easy to comply with. The first of the new tapes was dictating the house rules; how I would do as I was instructed from the Master, and explained to me how to clean each part of the house. The last tape was how to deal with you, Abby. That no maid is allowed to physically harm the Master’s daughter, and that if certain things are to occur, to inform him immediately. I never wanted to tattle on you for your wet dress and baby talk a month ago, but I had no choice. I have to obey the demands stated on my training tapes.”

Alice had stopped talking; obviously attempting to repress the guilt of all the trouble she had gotten me into. I didn’t want to see her upset, so I snapped her out of it with question.

“But how does any of that impact me?” I asked with deep curiosity.

She wandered to the nightstand and picked up the tape recorder, hitting the play button.

“-behave like a proper baby girl. You will cry when needing a diaper ch-”

Alice had hit the stop button and I suddenly felt a slight urge to cry. I couldn’t get a handle on this state of affairs.

“That’s the same female voice that I am instructed to obey. I imagine you were also given the first tape in my hypnosis training, which is why you began to behave like a baby. I didn’t listen to the whole tape, only bits to get a feel of what you were ordered to do. Whenever I heard the word ‘you’ I’d always stop it before I was hypnotized into performing specific actions that you had been hypnotized to execute in a particular situation.”

“This is absurd!” I blurted out, doing my best not to fall into hysterics. “I am not a-”

Alice’s hand covered my mouth at that second, glaring into my eyes with a harsh look.

“Abigail, there is a reason the Master hasn’t taken this tape away from me yet. The night you were hypnotized to become a baby, the rest of the maids were given a new tape in order to take care of you properly in your new status. If you do certain things I am required by the new hypnotism to make you listen to this tape again, and one of those ‘certain things’ is claiming you’re not a baby.”

Her hand came off my mouth and I nodded quietly. I didn’t want to hear the tape again and be trapped in an unaware state for another month.

“How long do I have to live like this?” I whispered to her.

“The hypnosis tape was supposed to last six months. How you broke through the hypnotism is beyond me. But the problem is that if the maids or I see you performing specific actions, we are required to report it and hypnotize you again. Please do not break any of the rules.”

I was beginning to understand, and tears started falling down my cheeks when I thought of what the other ‘certain things’ I was not allowed to do were. I then verbalized my question so Alice could answer.

“Well,” she hesitated, “you’re unable to undress or redress any part of an outfit, including your diapers, on your own. You cannot walk; today was an exception for the dance, but starting at midnight I will have to report it. However, there isn’t a rule against you speaking like a big girl. I still wouldn’t recommend you doing it around the other maids though; we don’t need them getting suspicious.”

“That all sounds... manageable.” Most of what she said I had expected prior to the conversation, so it didn’t hit me as hard as it should have. Alice has dressed me plenty of times, and walking was an easy privilege to give up if it meant retaining a fully conscious persona for the next few months.

“Well, it becomes a little more complicated when you factor in what I am not allowed to do,” Alice said grimly, unweaving the positivity I managed to stitch together. “I am only allowed to feed you baby food, and only allowed to let you drink bottles. I am required to bathe you every night before bed, and you must sleep in your crib. Your playtime will be spent in the playpen, not outdoors. Diaper checks are mandatory every hour, and the other maids are allowed to do it as well. And finally, I am not allowed to change you out of a diaper and into a new one unless you cry.”

I almost shouted at her for assuming I would cry for such a stupid reason, but I closed my mouth when I felt the tears on my cheeks. For another five months, I would have to act the role of a helpless baby, except this time I’d be completely aware of my predicament. I mildly considered lifting the dress and ripping the diaper off me right there so I could go back to my simplistic world, but I didn’t want to forget Miles again.

“I love you, Abby,” Alice mumbled beneath her breath. “Promise me you’ll follow the rules, so I don’t have to lose my best friend again.”

I nodded silently as the tears slid down my cheeks. If this is what it took to make Alice happy, and keep myself aware of Miles’ existence, then I would learn to deal with it.

“I promise,” I reluctantly pledged to my new babysitter.

9. The Rest of the Night, Part 1: Abigail

“You’ve gone through a lot tonight, sweetie,” Alice cooed to me, my head on her lap. For the last half an hour I’ve been engrossed in narratives of what had happened over my forgotten month from Alice’s point of view. They were not compelling stories, all of which involved the same visual: my eyes, darker, unfocused, and empty. The memories tended to trigger frowns on my best friend’s face, and I tried remembering if she had ever smiled when I was still trapped in the simplicity. Unfortunately, I couldn’t remember any.

Alice kept her voice soft as she positioned her hands beneath my head, helping me sit. “You need your rest.”

She was right, and I knew it. I had stayed up later than I had grown accustomed to, and the drowsiness was encumbering. Once I maintained stable footing on the floor of Alice’s room, keeping upright was more challenging than I imagined. My body wanted to fall over, hopefully onto something soft, and shut down.

“Hands and knees, Abby,” Alice stated in a perfect monotone.

“There’s no way it is midnight,” I protested. “I can walk until then, right?”

“You can,” Alice pointed out honestly, “but I’d like it more if you crawled.”

“Why?” I whined, resisting my previous desire to drop to the floor.

“The same reasons I had you crawl into the room earlier. Firstly, its best you get used to the idea of crawling everywhere in your conscious state, since you’ll be doing it a lot for the next few months. And secondly, if another maid sees you walking around on your own free will, even if they are not technically inclined to report it, they might find it suspicious.”

I couldn’t argue; her points were valid. So I decided to give into what my body wanted, somewhat at least, and ease myself onto my hands and knees. Not to my surprise, I was far more stable and less inclined to collapse.

Following a few footsteps behind Alice, I shuffled my hands and knees along the floor and out of the bedroom. The voyage to the nursery from the east side of the mansion was extensive, but to my surprise, my hands and knees never started to hurt. I must have gotten used to my body weight being distributed onto those surfaces instead of the soles of my feet.

Both Alice and I kept quiet during the whole walk. I didn’t want to jeopardize my psychological freedom with big kid language, and I didn’t want to resort to gibberish in order to

get her attention. But even though I couldn't talk properly, I was crawling down the hallways, and my attire stabbed at my pride, the trip wasn't as bad as my imagination had depicted.

At least, that was until we turned the final corner. The first thing I noticed was the door in the hallway, different than any other door in the entire house because it had painted on it a small, pale pink flower. The second thing I noticed was Madeline, reading a book as she walked down from the other end of the hallway.

I let out a small groan and Alice put her index finger to her lips to shush me. We moved closer to the flower door, and Madeline moved closer to us without looking up from her book. I thought we would avoid confrontation, but when Alice placed her hand on the doorknob to my nursery, Madeline glanced up and picked up her pace to meet us as Alice opened the door.

"Hey Alice," Madeline acknowledged with a smile. "Hello to you too, little Abby," she perked up, bent down, and pinched my cheek. I wanted to bite her, but instead I let out a fake, childish giggle. She seemed to buy it.

"Are you putting her to bed?" Madeline intervened.

Alice nodded, passing back a smile. "Abby hasn't been standing for a while. I don't think letting her walk for so long was a good idea; she's exhausted."

"Oh." Madeline shrugged. "Only to be expected." Her tone wasn't at all harsh, and it threw me off. The Madeline I knew seemed to have changed nearly as much as I had over the past month.

Then she bent down without warning, lifted the back of my dress, and stuck her finger in the leg band of my diaper. I felt my cheeks burn, and I bit my cheek to keep quiet. If I shouted at her, everything would be over and I would be sent right back to the simplistic world I just recently escaped from. Alice warned me of it anyway. I shouldn't have been so frightened.

"She's wet," Madeline stated with her eyebrow raised as she dropped the dress back over my diaper, "and she's not crying."

Alice kept her composure. "She's been wet for about half an hour, but we weren't near her nursery. The crying phase ended about ten minutes ago."

Madeline nodded and gave me a quick glance. "Don't let me hold you up then. If she's up crying all night because of a rash, I won't get any sleep." With that, she walked away.

As soon as I knew she was out of earshot I looked up at Alice. "She seemed... different."

“There’s no humiliation in calling you a baby if you don’t react,” Alice replied. “For the past month you haven’t heard anything she’s said to you, so you weren’t affected in the slightest. The teasing got old fast.”

I nodded in understanding. Of course, Madeline was put on this planet to torture me. If torturing me wasn’t an option, changes would have to be made. “At least there’s one positive of being a baby,” I mumbled to myself.

Alice flicked the lights on and we both entered the nursery with me at her heels. Everything was exactly as it was the first time I entered it, but it all looked a little more intimidating from my new viewpoint. I wish I was allowed to stand up. Perhaps then I wouldn’t feel so-

“Abby,” Alice interrupted my thoughts. I looked up at her, watching her lips as she reluctantly pushed out the words. “I need to give you a bath, but that’s an issue. I am not allowed to take you out of your diaper yet.”

“Why?” I asked without recalling the rules.

She sighed and rolled her eyes. “Think, Abby.”

I felt the confusion on my face, and then it hit me. “Alice, I can’t just cry on command!”

“You’re a baby, and you’re in a wet diaper. It isn’t a command; it’s a reaction.”

“I can’t just start crying whenever I need to be changed!”

“You’ve done it for a month,” Alice countered. “Trust me; crying is easier than you think.”

“I am not going to-”

“Then stay in your wet diaper until you leak,” Alice cut me off.

“Fine!” I shouted at her. “I will try, but it won’t work!”

Alice sighed and kept her eyes on me. I looked away to stare at the floor, focusing on one spot as hard as I could. Then I did my best to think of anything that would make me cry.

I am in a diaper.

I am in a wet diaper.

I can’t use the bathroom.

I can’t even change my clothes on my own.

*My hair is cut short, and I look like I'm five.
I am not allowed to walk for the next five months.
Madeline can put her finger in my new underwear.
It's a requirement to cry when I wet myself.
I have no choice over whether or not I use a diaper.
I have no choice but to wet myself when I kiss someone.
I don't even know when I'll get another kiss.
I miss Miles.*

I felt arms wrap around me, and I came back to reality. Alice was kneeling on the floor hugging me while tears dripped down my cheeks. I didn't realize I had begun to cry.

"Hush," Alice cooed quietly. "Settle down. You're a good girl."

And surprisingly, I did settle down. The physical contact meshed with the compliment I was given had a very calming effect.

"Let's get you all clean so you can head off to bed, alright?"

I nodded, and Alice helped me to my feet and onto the oversized changing table. I slipped my thumb into my mouth and began to suck on it, dozing off every few moments. I remembered the sound of the tapes being undone and the cold air on my skin when the diaper was removed. I remembered warm water washing over me and some small toys, but I didn't feel like playing. I remembered the chills when I stood up and the warmth the towel brought with it. I remembered the sounds of the tabs once more, and the cold air on my skin melting away. I remember a soft cotton suit replacing the loose dress and the softer cotton pillow lying beneath my head. After that I don't remember anything, and I don't remember ever removing my thumb from my mouth.

10. The Rest of the Night, Part 2: Miles

"Abby?" I teased, pressing my lips into a slight smile and raising my left eyebrow.

"Shut up," Abigail replied in a harder tone, but the embarrassment was evident in her prominently pink cheeks. "It's shorter than Abigail," she justified.

"The defensive edge isn't necessary. Actually, I believe your nickname is rather cute." She looked away as her cheeks darkened in shades. I couldn't deduce if she took what I said as simply being polite, but I most certainly meant it. In fact, from that point on, I never again thought Abigail's full name in my head.

“Will you be back?” I asked when I finished my thoughts and she still hadn’t looked up.

“Probably, but not for at least an hour.” She never took her eyes off the floor, but she spoke smoother. The reds turned back into pinks and the pinks back into the usual pale color of her cheeks.

“I can wait,” I chimed, waiting anxiously to see her eyes again.

“I will hurry,” she vowed, raising her gaze back onto me. With a swift motion, she stood on her tiptoes, kissed me goodbye, and started an awkward stroll out of the room.

After that, the party seemed rather lifeless. Abby was my reason to be here, and without her being here, my reason was waiting for her to return. Waiting wasn’t very fun.

Time ticked on as people danced and as I sat watching them on the sixth step of Abby’s staircase. Slowly, more and more people would head to the doors and in no time the room faded of nearly everyone but a small group of gossiping women and two men who had obviously consumed a great deal of their own beverages they managed to sneak into the otherwise non-alcoholic party. My impatience grew.

Finally, around the time the intoxicated males went to harass the circle of women, I went to harass a bit of the household help. Sauntering down the stairs, then through the halls, then into a few rooms, I finally found the kitchen. It looked tidy, which meant the clean-up had been concluded and that meant none of the maids would be found here.

I took the same route through the mansion to the dance floor just in time to catch a glimpse of the tipsy men chasing the women out the door. That meant I was the only guest left in the house, and hopefully the maids wouldn’t think of that fact as grounds for my departure.

After climbing the staircase where Abby and I sat on a few hours prior, taking the hall east, turning left twice, right once, and left again, I finally caught sight of someone. The young woman wore a maid’s outfit just like the one Alice had on earlier, but this girl was taller, and had longer hair. From what I interpreted from Abby’s rants about the other house members, I assumed this to be Madeline.

“Excuse me,” I announced in one of my more formal tones.

The girl lifted her gaze from the book she was reading and gave me a hard expression. “Can I help you?” she replied in an equally formal voice.

“Do you by chance know where Abigail is?”

“Yes,” she replied harshly. “She’s in bed. I just saw Alice tuck her in a few minutes ago.”

“May I speak with her before she falls asleep?”

Somehow, my question was a mistake. She closed her book and then closed the distance between us with a few soft strides. She stopped arms length from me, fixated on my pupils.

“You must be Miles. Nice to meet you; I’m Madeline.”

“I assumed,” I commented, dropping my formalities since her tone turned acidic.

“I would prefer you listen carefully,” Madeline began with her formalities intact. “Abby currently is, and will be for the next five months, unable to meet with you. What you have started is irreversible until that date. Would you like me to escort you out of the building?”

“I would rather speak to Abigail about this.” I masked my confusion with more acidity than she could muster into her own words.

A smile formed on her face when she replied. “Oh, I don’t think a conversation with Abby is possible right now.”

My patience was thinning. “Abigail mentioned her return would take an hour, and it’s been two and a half since then. If you refuse to allow my clearance to Abby’s room, take me to someone who has more authority than you do.”

Something hit a nerve. Her face burned with utter confusion, even though everything I said was explained very clearly. I couldn’t make sense of the situation and apparently neither could she. But finally, after a long moment of complete silence, she walked past me and motioned for me to follow. Of course, I trailed behind.

Twists and turns through all the massive hallways seemed to take us nowhere. All the walls and the doors and the tiles were identical. I couldn’t keep track of our location.

“So, what are you reading?” I asked in attempt to cut the tension, referring to the book in her left hand.

“Cinderella,” she responded, obviously putting forth no effort in altering the atmosphere as I had done.

Unfortunately for her, I didn’t care that she didn’t want to talk. “Why are you reading that? You don’t peg me as a girl who enjoys fairy tales.”

“I suppose I see a relation; the domestic outcast that is required to do all the household chores, while the blood relatives to the property owner get pampered. However, my happy ending seems distant.”

“You’re jealous of Abigail?” I asked, not bothering to hide the sincere interest in my voice.

“Jealous isn’t the right word,” Madeline replied under her breath. “Abby doesn’t realize what she has, or had I should say. She doesn’t deserve special treatment if she can’t appreciate it.”

I tried to interject, but my inhale was interrupted by Madeline’s knock on one of two very large doors that stood in front of us. I hadn’t noticed our approach to them; I was too engrossed in the conversation.

The door she knocked on creaked open eerily and I followed Madeline in. The room was very large, a bright red carpet beneath our feet and two rows of equidistant marble pillars rose to the high ceiling on each side of us. At the very end of the hallway, in front of the small set of five stairs, stood a tall, short brown haired man with a very confident expression. Approaching him nearly drove me to intimidation, but I knew the confidence was as evident on my face as I was on his.

“And you must be Miles,” the man spoke loudly as I stopped ten feet away. His voice was very strong, but not at all aggressive. It was apparent he expected obedience.

“I am, Sir,” I boldly answered, performing a small bow as a sign of respect.

“I’ve heard a bit about you, and I must wonder what brings you here tonight.”

“To see Abigail, of course,” I stated with as much politeness as I could manage. It was harder than expected to point out the obvious to someone who was obviously being sarcastic, but not at all rhetorical.

“Well, I’m sorry but Abigail is in bed for the night. Perhaps you’ll have better luck next month.”

“I don’t honestly think I could wait an entire month,” I pressed.

“Is that so?” His expression faded to a frown. “Well, I’d recommend a room for you for tonight, but we’ve established a policy against overnight visitors. You may try again tomorrow if you’d like.”

“Something tells me it wouldn’t matter when I came back.” I felt the formalities slipping away.

“You’re wise,” the man complimented me, forming a smile.

“I refuse to leave this building without either speaking to Abigail or receiving a plausible explanation why the first request isn’t possible.”

“Abby is in trouble,” he man stated simply. “We have a specific set of rules all members of this household must follow, and Abby broke one of those rules last month.”

“May I ask which one?” I continued, attempting to grasp this situation better.

“She kissed you,” he stated calmly. My posture tensed, but his did not.

“Why is that so bad?” I asked with skepticism. It hardly seemed like an adequate motive to punish someone.

“In this house, only those who are married can kiss. If someone breaks this rule, either Abby or a servant of the house, they will be taught their place.”

Arguing over this seemed futile. After all, it wasn’t my home and therefore I had no say over the rulings. Instead I decided to be more direct.

“Is Abigail’s punishment the inability to see me?”

“No,” the man clarified vaguely. “Instead she is restricted from everything.”

“Absolutely everything?” I questioned with deep skepticism, taking into account all the things one needs to get through daily life.

“Everything concerning her free will,” he specified which only confused me further. “Everything is chosen and done for her without her consent for a six month period.”

“And who chooses and does all these things?”

“The help, of course,” he stated plainly. I could tell this conversation was boring him. He wanted me to leave.

“Then I wish to become part of the help,” I replied as plainly as he had.

My remark was unexpected, and suddenly a flurry of emotions I wouldn’t ever imagine having the ability to phase a man like this flooded over his face. First shock took form, then a

touch of frustration. After a moment or two, the frustration morphed into contemplation. It took what seemed like hours for his expression to fade into the confident look he held so flawlessly when I walked in.

“Would you be missed if you vanished?” he asked curiously.

“I am eighteen, and I live alone,” I answered. “My disappearance would go unnoticed.”

“This certainly is a spectacular situation then.”

“How so?” I inquired.

“Well Miles,” the man explained, “the specific set of rules I mentioned earlier applies to the employees, as well as to Abby, and the only logical way I have come across to ensure the rules be followed is to instill a series of hypnotisms into one’s subconscious. If you seek employment in this household, you will be required to listen to these hypnotic tapes and abide by them. Thusly, you’ll be subject to my complete control.

“Kissing Abby is prohibited, and instead you will become one of her caretakers. You may leave now and perhaps find yourself a girl who isn’t my daughter, or you can stay and become a servant in my home where you may be near Abby but never with her.”

I didn’t hesitate, because there was nothing to hesitate over. “Caring for Abigail is all I ever dream of.”

11. Being Taught A Lesson

Acting like a child in my completely aware state was harder than I thought it would be. When I woke up, I had to make myself cry again so Alice would change me out of the diaper I had wet. Apparently, although I did have full control of my bodily functions in the daytime, I had grown so accustomed to using my diapers it had become natural to wet them in my sleep.

When Alice completed my baby doll dress ensemble with a few ribbons in my hair and a pair of pink socks, I followed her down the hall for breakfast relying on my hands and knees to take me there.

Breakfast was four large jars of baby food, which Alice wouldn’t show me the labels of. She said it was for my own benefit that I didn’t know what I was eating, but it didn’t matter one way or another; the secrecy didn’t make the mush easier to swallow. Then I was given a bottle to sip at, which I reluctantly slid between my teeth.

But the embarrassment never quite hit me until Madeline came into the kitchen and started being a nuisance.

“So, how was Baby Abby’s night?” she cooed at me as I sipped at my bottle. Alice shot me a glance as she did the dishes, making sure I stayed quiet. I did my part, maintaining an awkward gaze like I didn’t understand, and honestly I didn’t. Alice said Madeline didn’t tease me anymore. Why was she starting again?

“Did you wake up wet?” she asked with a mocking concern. “I bet you did. That’s why those diapers are on you, little baby.” I felt my blood pressure rising, but I merely dropped my gaze to the floor. Hopefully the red in my cheeks didn’t give away that what she was saying actually affected my mood.

Then, without warning, she slipped her hand under my baby doll dress and put a finger in my diaper. “Dry? How unexpected,” she chimed. “I don’t even remember the last time you kept yourself dry. It’s a good thing you started wearing these when you did. I’d hate to have to wash all your wet panties.” I clenched my fists in frustration. It took all my willpower to keep my lips pressed shut.

“Cut it out,” Alice said very matter-of-factly. “You know she can’t hear you anyway.”

“I must have forgotten,” Madeline said, turning her attention from me for which I was very grateful. “Oh, and Alice, there was some boy here yesterday. Taller fellow, brownish messed up hair. He was looking for Abby, so I let the Master take care of him.”

“Miles!” It slipped out, but I didn’t stop there. “What did you do to him?!” I was silenced as a large rubber bulb passed between my teeth.

“Don’t spit it out, Abby,” Alice said as she removed her hand off the pacifier. Her posture was tense, but she kept her voice very calm. I had already made a mess of things, so I obeyed her command.

Madeline stood in front of both of us, her arms crossed and her cheekbones raised into a devious smile. Alice took a deep breath, turned toward Madeline and began the negotiations.

“We both know Abby using a big girl voice isn’t against the rules,” Alice reminded Madeline.

“And the only way she could speak like that at all is if she has escaped the hypnotism,” Madeline retorted.

Much to my dismay, Madeline wasn’t stupid. Alice knew this as well. “What would you like in return for keeping this between us?”

Madeline's smile grew as she told us her one condition. "I want custody of Abby for the rest of the day without regulations."

"No!" was Alice's rapid reply.

"Then she goes back to how she was."

"Excuse me," I said after removing the pacifier from my mouth. "Do I get a say in this?" Both of them looked at me furiously, but I didn't let it intimidate me. "I think Madeline's request is reasonable."

Madeline smirked and Alice turned toward me and started talking quietly. "Abby, you don't know what you're doing."

"I know that nothing is worse than forgetting Miles again," I countered, "or forgetting you, Alice."

She pressed her lips together in frustration. It was clear that Alice wanted to say something, but I knew she wouldn't. Alice didn't want to undermine my decisions, and she most certainly didn't want to lose me again.

"Then it's settled," Madeline finalized. "For the rest of today, until Abby is put back into her crib tonight, she is under my control, and in return I won't mention anything about Abby's hypnotic awaking to the Master."

Alice bent down to meet me eye level sitting at the table, and kissed my cheek. "I'll see you tomorrow morning," she whispered in a tortured tone.

I nodded, doing my best to be brave, and watched Alice leave the room.

"Let's see," Madeline pondered, "where to begin?" She reached out from inside the cabinet and pulled out another jar of baby food.

"I already ate, Madeline," I protested. She gave me a surprised look, walked over the one of the kitchen drawers, and pulled out a large wooden spoon. I was puzzled at first, but when she smacked my bare thigh with it, right below the hem of my baby doll dress, I knew I had done something wrong.

While I sat there, rubbing my leg and trying not to cry or scream, she explained. "Just because I know you *can* talk like a big girl doesn't mean you are allowed to. You're not to sound any older than a two year old, and from now on, instead of Madeline, you will call me Ma'am. Is that understood, little Abby?"

I nodded, but it wasn't enough. Reluctantly, I regressed my tone to that of a child and spoke softly; "Yes Ma'am." I could feel the blush take over my pale cheeks.

"What a good girl," she smirked, then began spoon feeding me another six jars of baby food. Unfortunately, she showed me the flavors beforehand. That's when I appreciated Alice for keeping them to herself. When I knew what I was eating it tasted much worse, and after a total of ten jars of baby food I couldn't help but spit some of it up onto the bib Alice had tied around my neck at the start of my first serving.

Finally I was finished and given a new bottle. This one tasted much worse than the one Alice gave me, and I couldn't stomach all of it; just like the baby food, a lot of it dripped down my chin and onto my torso.

"Let's get the baby cleaned up," Madeline said as she wiped my mouth and chin with a wet rag. "Hands and knees, Baby Abby," she ordered.

I climbed off the chair to the marble floor, situated myself as commanded, and crawled behind Madeline out of the kitchen. We went upstairs, took a few turns, and arrived back at the nursery to find the door slightly ajar.

It was an odd occurrence to have a door open in our house at all. Every door was properly closed, and most frequently locked. I assumed Madeline wasn't allowed in my nursery, which must have been why Alice left this door open for her. Alice was probably the only one with the key, aside from Daddy of course.

Madeline then walked, with me crawling at her heels, into what has been my bedroom for the last month. She went to the changing table, hoisted me onto it, and secured my hands and feet just like Alice had done once before the hypnotism. It was different though. This time, I was lying on my stomach, facing down.

I heard the tapes rip off the sides of my diaper, and then felt the warm padding leave my skin. My face went bright red with the knowledge that Madeline was looking at my naked backside. But it got worse when I heard the slicing of scissors and the baby doll dress fell off my back and was pulled from under my body. Without the perk of a bra, because I am "not old enough", I was now completely naked in front of my nemesis and unable to move due to the ribbons and wristbands that chained me to the changing table.

"Now, it's time for your punishment to begin," Madeline stated coldly.

"But Ma'am," I muttered in my baby voice, "I did nuffin' wrong."

A large crack rang through the air and pain simultaneously shot across my rear. I screamed, which gave Madeline the moment she needed to slip a pacifier into my mouth. I started sucking it to calm down, which helped more than I anticipated.

Two minutes passed of me quietly sucking the pacifier, settling down, when my backside was cracked again. This time I didn't scream; I tried, but the pacifier held to my lips shut. I knew Madeline had placed super glue on the pacifier before giving it to me, much like Alice had done a month ago. I was almost glad the pacifier stayed in place though; if it wasn't glued, it would have fallen out, and then I wouldn't have it to calm me down.

But I never had the chance to compose myself. Right after the second spanking, a third followed, then a fourth, and after I started crying at sixteen, and after I lost count at fifty three, and after at least doubling the number of spankings after I lost count, Madeline finally let me rest.

My lips were numb from all the tugging they did at the super glue whenever I tried to scream, my joints hurt from all the useless flailing I had attempted, and my hair was stuck to my face in the places the tears ran down my cheeks.

Madeline walked in front of me, flashed the leather belt she had been spanking me with, and stated simply, "That was only the beginning."

I wasn't sure if it was because of the horrible punishment I had already received or because of Madeline's last words before she left, but even after an hour of sucking my pacifier and awaiting Madeline's return I never stopped crying.

Eventually, and unfortunately, I heard her light footsteps transition from the marble hallway floor to the soft padded carpeting inside my nursery. I was facing away from the door, and I couldn't see her enter or what she was holding.

I tried screaming again when I felt Madeline press something into my rear. The small object dove deeper into me. I attempted to push it out, but Madeline held the object in place as I thrashed as violently as I could in my restraints. It did me no good, but I felt a necessity to try.

Suddenly the feeling changed as whatever penetrated started leaking. It began slower, but soon a steady stream of liquid poured into my backside. I stopped writhing and screaming. I couldn't make sense of it, but suddenly my fear subsided into obedience. I sucked my pacifier to slow my heart rate as the liquid filled me.

The nozzle was pulled out of my rear, but it didn't relinquish the discomfort. With all the fluid inside me, my stomach was in a great deal of pain. I wanted to expel the liquid, but before I had a chance to do so a different object was put inside me.

This new object wasn't much bigger than the nozzle, which was a relief. It could easily be pushed out in order to relieve myself. But then the tip placed inside me began to expand. It pushed against the walls inside my rectum and I began to scream again. I wasn't accustomed to anything inside me, especially something this large.

Soon, the bulb in my butt stopped expanding and I felt a slight pinch on my thigh. I lifted my torso best I could, which I had learned to do with Alice, and when I placed my hips back on the padded tabletop I felt the softness of a diaper beneath me. It was an awkward situation being diapered while lying on my stomach, but Madeline managed to secure the diaper perfectly.

My right hand was unfastened from the restraint, but immediately secured into a metal ring before I could thrash. Next, my left hand was freed and I was propped up onto my knees. Both my hands were put in front of me and I watched Madeline secure the left hand into the same pair of handcuffs the right one was already locked into.

The restraints on my feet were taken off, and even though Madeline had a good grip on the chain between the two cuffs around my wrists, I thought once I got off the changing table I could kick her. That's not what happened though.

I failed to notice before getting off the changing table that the diaper Madeline put on me wasn't the type I usually wore. This one was much larger, and much thicker. The second my feet touched the floor, I wobbled and fell to my knees.

Madeline tugged at the handcuffs and I shuffled my knees in her direction over to the crib. Using Madeline for balance, I managed to stand up and sit inside the crib as she directed. The side bar was raised and Madeline used a small key from a pocket in her maid uniform to unlock one hand from the cuffs. My hands were put on opposite sides of one of the crib bars and then handcuffed again on the outside. This made standing, or even moving comfortably, impossible.

That's when it all hit me. The liquid inside me applied a vast amount of pressure to my stomach and I fell to the mattress of the crib, writhing in pain. I knew what I had to do, and I knew the humiliation it would entail, but I didn't care. I pushed, trying to mess my diaper, but the pain came back tenfold when the fluid couldn't push the bulb out of the way. The screams that came through the pacifier were barely audible, but Madeline knew they were tortured. Tears poured down my cheeks.

"I gave you a one-and-a-half quart enema," Madeline explained to me, looking down into the crib. "Basically, I shot water into you, but enough water to fill three-fourths of your bowels. And considering you most likely haven't messed your diapers since you came out of your hypnotism to spare yourself the humiliation, I assume the other fourth of your bowels are full with other things."

I kicked at the crib, trying to scream at her. None of my actions made sense. The movement just hurt my stomach more.

“After the enema, I inserted an inflatable butt plug. It’s exactly what it sounds like. It will make sure nothing comes out of your rear until I deflate the bulb. That means you’ll suffer as long as I want you to.”

This is when I noticed the small plastic hose extending from the back of my oversized diaper into the pocket of Madeline. I couldn’t stop crying. I had no control, even to mess myself. The pain was nauseating.

“I bet you’re wondering why I am doing this to you,” she said, nearly quoting my thoughts. “Ever since I’ve been here, you get everything you want. You can play all day, sleep in, and get breakfast in bed. You are allowed to eat sweets at mealtimes, dress in anything, and play games. You never clean or cook or work, except one day a month, and your work is to look cute and walk around. You are waited on hand and foot by the employees in this house, including your best friend. You are a spoiled little princess, and you don’t appreciate a damn bit of it!

“You want more than you have. You want to play in the woods or adventure into town. You want new clothes; you never even stopped to think that you have a selection while all I have is this uniform.

“And now that a boy comes, you want him. You want to kiss people and be in love. You’re a princess; why do you need more?

“When that Miles boy told me that you were talking in an adult voice yesterday, I knew something was up. You aren’t supposed to be conscious, because without awareness you can’t take anything for granted. I decided I needed to teach you a lesson.

“You deserve this pain, because you don’t understand what a punishment is. Everything is absolutely perfect for you, and since you can’t realize that, I’ll show you what imperfection feels like!”

With that, she walked out. I was so shocked that the pain was momentarily absent. Tragically, the absence didn’t last long enough.

It was everywhere now. The torturous stomachache had given me a migraine, and my feet and torso hurt from thrashing around the crib. My wrists were nearly bleeding because of all the strain my movements had put on the handcuffs. My tears were flowing freely, and even sucking the pacifier did nothing to stop it.

Then I noticed that when Madeline turned and walked away in a huff, the plastic cord that was placed in the back of my diaper pulled the air pump out of her pocket. It was on the floor a few feet away from the crib, and with careful maneuvering, I managed to first get the hose into my restrained hands. After ten or fifteen agonizing minutes of pressure from the enema and frustration with the plastic cord, I finally wrapped my index finger and thumb around the small valve and twisted it.

The butt plug deflated and the pressure pushed the shrunken plug out of me and into the back of the diaper. I fell limp onto the mattress as I let myself suffer the ultimate humiliation of a girl my age by messing my diaper, but I didn't regret it. The mess felt absolutely horrible on my backside, but the pain was gone. My tears slowly stopped, and as I sucked the pacifier I drifted off to sleep.

12. Exception To The Rules

There was a slight nudge at my shoulder and I woke up. Night had fallen and the nursery had become shrouded in darkness. Madeline mustn't have come back after I fell asleep.

I sat up slowly, rubbed my eyes, and let my vision adjust. That's when I noticed the handcuffs were no longer on me, but examining each with the other hand, I felt the indentations on both of my wrists. I concluded they were taken off recently.

"Are you alright?" I heard Miles' soft voice nearby. It took a few minutes let my eyes adjust, but soon the black faded into a dark blue and I saw his outline sitting on the crib's mattress right in front of me.

"I am fine," I whispered, taking notice that the pacifier was no longer in place. "How did you get in here?"

"I'll explain later," he said with relief. "We don't have much time."

With that, his figure was off the edge of the mattress and I couldn't make enough sense of things in my sleepy state to see where he had gone. It didn't matter because a moment later the lights flickered on and I had to now adjust to the blinding lights instead of the uniform darkness.

Quickly, the nursery came into focus. The oversized changing table and play pen appeared in front of me, and the crib bars around on all the other sides. Miles was standing by bedroom door, next to the light switch. He seemed to be wearing a newer suit, more formal, but less elegant in appearance. The jacket wasn't covering his shirt, but rather my body: an observation I hadn't made earlier.

Looking down at the open suit jacket, just barely covering my chest, I felt my cheeks burn as I quickly buttoned it up. The only other thing I had on aside from Miles' jacket was the diaper I had messed earlier that afternoon, and the humiliating situation I was presently a part of slowly took effect on my emotions. I began to cry.

Miles walked over to me, wiped away a tear that was dripping down my right cheek, and kissed me. I barely felt the diaper grow as I began wetting myself, and instead kissed him back. The humiliation began to fade as I became more conscious of his lips on mine, and by the time he pulled away, I had stopped crying.

"We have to get you changed," he nearly cooed. I felt my cheeks burn as I returned to reality.

Taking me by my hand, Miles helped me to my feet. The extra weight of the diaper caught me by surprise and I nearly toppled over, but after fixing my footing I managed to stay upright. The jacket Miles had dressed me in while I was asleep only covered the top half of the diaper, and for me, that wasn't enough to keep my cheeks their usual pale tone.

Miles took me by hand to the oversized changing table and motioned for me to lie down. I gave him a curious look as I took my place on the tabletop, but it wasn't until I saw Miles from the perspective I usually see Alice, or in one instance Madeline, that I pieced together the situation.

"No," I whimpered to him, now much higher above me.

"We agreed you needed to be changed," Miles calmly affirmed.

"I can most certainly do it myself," I countered, but his response took me off guard.

"I know very well you can handle something as miniscule as a diaper change on your own Abigail, but as I have said before, we are short on time and this is a much faster resolution."

I couldn't object, although I didn't know what the significance behind our tight schedule was. Instead I closed my eyes and tried to settle my heart rate. But that didn't work and the blend of my shyness, insecurities, and pure embarrassment took control. Knowing that the first time my Miles would see me completely naked would be while changing my messy diaper sent me into a panic. I started hyperventilating.

It didn't last long though. Miles managed to locate another unnaturally sized pacifier from somewhere in the room and slip it between my lips. I admit, although it only multiplied my humiliation, I calmed down rather quickly. This time I could even keep my eyes open to watch the procedure.

Miles wasn't like Alice and Madeline while changing my diaper. The two maids were always professional and never showed a hint of emotion, but Miles surprised me by keeping the corners of his mouth curled up into a smile. But it wasn't a smile to mock or tease me; it was one of the genuine, heartwarming smiles that would have made me melt if I had been in any other situation.

Miles slid a cold wipe across my skin and I winced at the burning sensation. He continued to clean me gently, but each time the wipe came in contact with my diaper area I would cringe.

Prior to this moment, I simply thought Madeline forgot about me in the crib; I didn't think she intentionally let me sit in the messy diaper until a rash formed. I should have suspected though. Madeline wasn't the sort of person to let a punishment end just because her time in control had ended. No; she would most certainly leave me a painful reminder of her time with me, and she did a very good job at doing so.

Fortunately, Miles either noticed my contorted expressions or the discoloration of the place my diaper had been and began to rub a cool cream into my skin. The pain instantly faded until it was no longer a bother. A bottle of baby powder was then sprinkled over me, eliminating the humiliating dirty diaper smell and replacing it with a slightly less humiliating baby scent.

When Miles finally determined I was ready to be dressed, I felt a flicker of relief that was short lived. Instead of saving me from this personal Hell and finding me a pair of adult underwear, he slipped another diaper under my backside and taped it into place.

"I don't need a diaper, Miles," I protested in vain, my voice slightly slurred by the pacifier.

"I believe you," he replied, "but it is a precaution for later."

"A precaution for what?" I asked in my childish tone.

He took me by the hand and helped me to my feet. The jacket fell back over the top half of my diaper and I took immediate notice.

"Don't worry," he chuckled. "I brought you another outfit."

Then he turned to the entrance and grabbed the hanger from off the doorknob. On the hanger a pale pink, children's style sundress was hung. It wasn't as simple and infantile as the outfits that were in the nursery, and based on the amount of lace and the puffy sleeves, I deduced it was something from my old closet I rarely wore.

"It should cover the diaper completely," he promised.

He turned around while I took off his suit coat and then covered my body with the dress instead. He was right; the dress went nearly to my knees and did a wonderful job of concealing my diaper. I handed him his jacket as he turned to face me again.

“That is much more suitable attire,” he complimented while putting his arms back through the sleeves of the jacket. I felt my cheeks darken a shade.

“I need to test something,” he whispered almost inaudibly. His mood had taken a serious note so suddenly. “Do you mind?”

I shook my head. I felt the fear in my stomach, but it was mostly the anxiety that was getting to me.

“This time, you will not wet yourself,” he whispered in my ear before he removed the pacifier from my mouth and kissed me.

I felt his lips on mine, and I never before noticed how wonderfully they fit. I memorized the texture and the shape, and before I could extract any more information he pulled back.

“Is your diaper dry?” he asked with deep curiosity. The reality which had seemed so extraneous a few moments ago came back to me.

“Yes,” I responded in astonishment, blushing this time at his question instead of my reply.

“Wonderful,” he said enthusiastically. He then handed me my pacifier back, which I put in the pocket of my dress, and opened the door out of the nursery. We both walked out, him closing the door behind us.

“I have some questions,” I asked cautiously, considering he doesn’t seem to explain anything without me having to ask.

“I assumed you would,” he chimed, seemingly excited. “I think I can answer all of them now.”

“Alright,” I began, “then explain to me how you got into the nursery. Madeline must have locked the door. My old bedroom must be locked to, but I swear this dress is from my closet and Alice is the only one with the key.”

“It’s the same way I opened the door to the balcony the second time we met,” Miles explained. “It’s not that any of the doors in this house are locked, but it’s that you and the other maids are under the hypnotic suggestions that you can only open certain doors.”

“Oh, Alice mentioned the hypnosis I had undergone to become a baby,” I informed him, “and how she and the other maids listen to a set of hypnotic tapes as well.”

“Then it seems I won't have to explain that part to you,” Miles said matter-of-factly.

“But Madeline said that Daddy took care of you last night,” I pressed as we walked down the hall. “What really happened?”

“I asked your father if I could see you, but he declined my request. I told him I wasn't leaving without you, so he agreed to let me become a member of his staff.”

“But you would have to go through the same hypnotic initiations as the other maids, wouldn't you?”

He nodded. “I listened to all the tapes, including the one on how to treat you. That is why I didn't seem surprised to find you dressed as a baby in a crib.”

I blushed, but continued the interrogation. “Then you should be kept from doing anything Alice or Madeline cannot do, like opening the doors of the house or treating me differently than what the hypnosis directed.”

“In theory, you're right,” Miles smiled. “But in practice it seems I do not have to abide by the hypnosis and its rules. I can still open every door in the house, which is how I managed to get you out of the crib and into an outfit that was locked away in your old room. I can still witness you walking and behaving like a full adult without feeling the need to tattle on you. I can also still kiss you without wetting myself as I have proven twice now.”

“I don't understand that last part,” I spoke with confusion. “I thought, as Daddy's daughter, I was the only one not allowed to kiss anyone.”

“Actually, all staff members and yourself were all given the hypnotic suggestion that kissing another person will force them to wet themselves. After kissing you and keeping myself dry, I have proven to be an exception to every hypnotic restriction that was intended to be placed on me.”

“Why are you an exception though?”

“There is no definite answer, but I have a hypothesis,” Miles explained as we took a right and continued down the hallways. “Unlike yourself and the maids, I am not prone to hypnotism. You were under instructions from birth, most likely, and the maids had no willpower when meeting your father since they had nothing to lose. I, on the other hand, still maintain a very strong sense of determination that won't be altered by hypnosis.”

“So if I am still weak minded, why didn’t I wet my diaper when you kissed me?” It has only been a half hour or so, but I was already comfortable referring to the diaper that I was wearing beneath my dress.

“I will explain later,” he said as we stopped at a white door that looked just like all the other doors. If I wasn’t so absorbed in Miles’ thoughts I would have noticed where we were, but it wasn’t until we got inside that I knew it was Alice’s room.

The room was dark until Miles flicked on the light switch. It was just as I remembered it from last night, except now the white comforter was displaced with a small lump sticking out from under it: Alice.

Miles walked over to the edge of her bed and started to shake Alice awake. She rose from bed in a daze and rubbed her eyes. Looking up at Miles then at me, she was suddenly wide awake.

“You idiot!” Alice yelled. “You can’t just go get her out of her crib in the middle of the night. If anyone finds out what you are doing-”

“Abigail, walk please,” Miles said to me, cutting Alice off. I did as I was told, but since his instruction to walk was rather vague, I gave awkward glances to Miles as I hoped my walk around the room would suffice.

Alice sighed and got out of bed, still dressed in her pajamas, and started walking down the hallway. Miles and I followed a few feet behind her.

“I don’t get it,” I whispered as we trailed Alice’s footsteps.

“According to the hypnosis I listened to, if an employee sees you acting a certain way, such as walking like an adult, they are required to inform your father. Although I do know which room he stays in during the day, I am not sure where he and your mother sleep. Alice can lead me to them.”

“My mother?” I could hear my voice crack. I hadn’t told him anything about my mother in the past, but he had no reason to conclude she is still alive, let alone living in the same house as me.

“The brown haired woman I had met in the woods has the same voice as the one on the hypnosis tapes that I listened to. That ideology to keep you under control and safe in this house is a parental instinct. Aside from that, you and your father do not have the same eyes, but you and the woman from the woods do. It’s safe to assume that the woman in the woods and the woman who made the tapes are the same person, and it’s also safe to assume that you are her daughter.”

It took me a few moments to compose myself to ask the final question. “But why do you want to find my parents?”

He stated simply, “I need to propose the notion of you leaving with me tomorrow morning.”

13. Confrontations and Conclusions

Just as Miles had predicted, Alice found her way to the entrance of Daddy’s bedroom at the end of one of the northern hallways. I wouldn’t have been able to help find this place; I never had a reason for adventuring to this section of the house. It was a good thing Miles had a plan.

Alice knocked twice and Daddy’s voice instructed her to enter. The hinges creaked as she pushed open the door and advanced inside with Miles and myself just a few paces behind.

The room was extraordinarily elegant, even in comparison to the rest of the mansion. The walls were a basic white with a stylish molding running along the high ceiling where a crystal chandelier was suspended. Against the back wall was an enormous bed with a silver canopy draped over the white, wooden arches that locked the bedposts together about five feet above the mattress. Two nightstands, identical if it weren’t for the book placed on the left one, were situated on each side of the bed. A large, white dresser consumed a good portion of the right wall, void of untidiness. But no furniture sat against the left wall; there was only an open entryway that led away from the main foyer into another branch of the bedroom.

Standing equidistant from Alice and the bed against the back wall was Daddy. He hadn’t changed out of one of the suits he wore during the day, but the tie was loosened and the jacket was nowhere to be seen. He gave an awkward glance in my direction.

“Oh, I didn’t expect you Miles,” Daddy said without a hint of alarm. “And Abby, shouldn’t you be in bed?”

I shied my way behind Miles, afraid of confronting Daddy in the manner Miles intended to. It wasn’t possible for me to do any good getting involved in the quarrel that would soon begin; I’d only hinder Miles’ performance. Alice also took this time to step back into a corner of the room and act as an observer.

“I would like to talk to you,” Miles proclaimed, “about my resignation and about Abigail’s future.”

“Abby, go back to bed,” Daddy said in a stern voice. But Miles had my hand in his, so I knew where I belonged; right here beside him, not in my crib. Out of fear that his expression would intimidate me, I refused to look up and merely shook my head.

“It seems she would rather stay here and partake in our conversation,” Miles said, expressing the utmost confidence that my presence would only be beneficial.

Daddy nodded, unable to do much else than to agree with Miles if he wanted to keep the formalities intact. Irrationalities wouldn’t get Daddy anywhere against Miles and they both knew that very well.

“She may stay,” Daddy agreed. “Now what is this about your resignation, Miles? You had only begun your position yesterday.”

“I decided it was best for Abigail and me to leave the household,” Miles replied.

“Why is it best that you leave?” Daddy inquired.

“It would be disrespectful to maintain a position in your home without abiding by the rules, and I seem to have immunity with your hypnotisms.”

Miles wasn’t subtle with the remark and it made Daddy uncomfortable. The curiosity and frustration was written on his face. Things were looking brighter for Miles and me.

“I see,” Daddy finally responded after a minute of silence. “Then I agree. You should take leave.”

“I would like to take Abigail with me,” Miles pressed.

“That’s unfortunate,” Daddy snapped back, losing his tranquility. “I am her father, and ultimately I make her decisions. I do not believe Abby is ready to enter the world.”

“I beg to differ,” Miles replied casually.

Daddy let one corner of his mouth curl up into a crooked smile.

“You think she is prepared to leave this house?”

Miles nodded his head.

“I will make a deal with you,” Daddy proposed formally as he turned and walked over to the bed, sitting on the edge of it with his hands in his lap. “If you can sway me to believe that

Abby is no longer a child, then you may take her. If you fail to do so by sunrise, you'll leave without question and never return."

I stood behind Miles, mortified. There was no way he would consent to this. Miles knew the position I was in; the effect the hypnotisms had on me and my only option of underwear for the past month. It would be impossible to prove I was an adult by sunrise. I didn't want to lose Miles forever.

"I agree to your terms," Miles challenged.

I had to interject. "Miles please don't do this. We will find another way. If I can't prove that I am grown up-

"Don't worry," Miles chimed. "I have faith in you."

My cheeks darkened a shade and I nodded solemnly. "I will do my best," I promised him. Then Miles turned back to Daddy and began the dispute.

"Explain to me how you could consider Abigail a child." Miles requested with confidence. "I will refute everything you say."

"Abby has spent over a month now drinking from nothing but a baby bottle, crawling along the floor to get around, speaking in a childish voice, sleeping in an enlarged crib, playing with blocks and rattles for amusement, and using diapers instead of visiting the restroom."

I felt my cheeks burn as each thing Daddy listed off added to my humiliation. How Miles would contest Daddy's argument was beyond me. Even under the hypnosis, I hadn't been able to control the simplest of adult behaviors. Doubt rapidly surged through my body, and soon I wanted to cry.

"That is all true," Miles admitted, "but it is irrelevant now. Abigail is not subjective to your hypnosis anymore, and she will no longer perform any of the actions you have recited."

"Oh?" Daddy asked with an eyebrow raised. "It's only reasonable to test your theory then. Don't you agree?"

Miles nodded. I tugged on his arm; I wanted to ask if it was wise to provoke Daddy, but I never had to ask.

"Trust me," he whispered back to me.

"Nora?" Daddy called loudly, and within a few seconds a woman in a white nightgown, half hidden by the archway on the left side of the room, was present. From what Miles

described, this must have been the woman he had met in the woods, although her brown hair had a reddish tint under the crystal chandelier just like mine did in the sunlight.

She cautiously took her place at Daddy's side, avoiding eye contact with me but glancing at Miles every few seconds. Her eyes were dark brown, even in the well lit room. I suddenly remembered what Miles had said this woman being the one who wrote my hypnotisms and I was subjective to obey her voice. The anxiety was pressing on my chest and my breathing became shallow.

"Don't worry, Abigail," Miles whispered back to me when he heard my askew breaths. "I anticipated this."

"Nora," Daddy spoke to the woman after she reached his side, "will you please demonstrate to Miles that Abby is not prepared for the real world?"

The brown-haired woman, Nora, seemed to hesitate. She took a look at me for the first time, and I ducked my head into Miles' shoulder, unable to make eye contact without my heart beat racing. If I had a panic attack at this moment, Miles would have trouble focusing on the confrontation between him and Daddy. I didn't want to make this any harder on Miles.

"Nora," Daddy repeated in a more impatient tone, "inform Abby that babies cannot stand upright, and just so Miles fully comprehends how helpless Abby is, show them both that Abby isn't ready for big girl underwear."

"Abby," Nora spoke softly. Her voice was melodic as if she was singing me a familiar song. I focused on only her voice, paying close attention as not to miss a single word.

"You are a baby, and babies cannot walk," Nora said. "You are a baby, and babies wet themselves."

My knees felt weak, but I didn't return to reality until the seat of my dress hit the floor. I had fallen backwards onto my rear, and worst of all, the diaper was warm against my skin. I thought I had grown up, but if I wasn't big enough to keep myself dry then there was no way I could expect to leave this building with Miles. Tears started to form in my ducts, but before any could slip down my cheek, Miles reached out and grabbed my hand.

"Are you alright?" he asked with concern. "You need to stand up."

"I can't," I whispered back, shaking my head. I wasn't the adult he thought I was, or the adult he needed me to be. I had failed him. I would have to say goodbye to him forever.

"Yes you can," Miles retorted. "You can do anything, Abigail. Now get up."

Contrary to my judgment, I tugged at Miles hand and rose to my feet. I expected to collapse back to the floor like a child trying to walk for the first time, but my knees locked in place and standing wasn't any harder than it was a minute ago.

I looked up at Daddy and Nora. Their mouths were open in awe, watching as I brushed off the bottom of my dress. Something had surprised them. Had I done that?

"It looks like you were wrong about Abigail," Miles said to Daddy.

"She did indeed fall," Daddy replied, astonishment still written on his face.

"It was a momentary relapse," Miles explained. "Nonetheless, she can still walk like any adult and as there obviously isn't a puddle at her feet. It is safe to assume your hypnotisms no longer apply."

I understood now what Miles meant earlier by the diaper being a precaution. Daddy would have never expected that I would wear one while my maturity was being judged. Thanks to the diaper, I hadn't wet my clothing or caused a spectacle. As far as Daddy and Nora knew, I had managed to refrain from wetting myself.

"Nora!" Daddy scowled.

"Abby," Nora's musical voice quivered, "you are a baby. Babies cannot walk."

I looked to Miles when my knees didn't buckle. I couldn't comprehend the situation. Why had I been so obedient with Nora before and what had changed between then and now?

"Go ahead Abby," was Miles' reply. "Show her you can walk."

I nodded and took a step closer to Nora as she repeated herself. Her commands had no affect on me and I advanced forward. This time Nora stumbled back a little and said her instructions again. I continued to walk until I was right in front of Nora.

"Babies cannot walk!" she screamed as I stopped in front of her.

I looked her up and down, which was something I should have done from the beginning. I didn't want to believe it, but there was no mistake. I had her eyes, her hair, and even her figure although she was an inch or so taller. This woman had to be my mother.

I put my arms around her and pressed my cheek to her shoulder. I felt tears falling from my eyes to her nightgown, but I wasn't concerned about that. It took a few moments but she wrapped her arms around me too.

“I am so sorry,” she whispered in my ear.

“It’s alright, Mom,” I chuckled.

After I had finished crying and stopped hugging my mother, I turned to look at Miles. When he saw me smile, he walked over to me and kissed my cheek. Then all three of us, Miles, my Mom, and I, looked at Daddy.

“Dad,” I said nervously since that was the first time I addressed him as such. “I want to live with Miles.”

He stood up, exchanged glances between Miles and myself, and nodded. “I have done everything in my power to keep you my little girl. I tried using hypnotisms to keep you from leaving home, or kissing boy, or removing the evidence if you wet yourself. But you have thwarted all my attempts at keeping you here, and I now realize that is because of this boy. If you want to be with him, then stopping you would make me a terrible father.”

I put my arms around my father and kissed him on the cheek. “Thank you so much, Dad.”

“Anything to make you happy, sweetheart,” he replied, disappointed in his defeat.

When that hug was over, my mom and dad hugged next, and Mom said to him, “I did my best to help you.”

He shushed her and responded with, “You were right all along.”

“Alice,” Daddy shouted over to the corner where I had forgotten Alice played the part of a silent spectator for this performance. “Can you please show Abigail and Miles to a more appropriate bedroom?”

Alice nodded and led us out the door. When we got into the hall, Alice and I hugged and she got talking about my wedding. The suggestion made me nervous, but from the corner of my eye I could see Miles smiling that symmetrical smile I couldn’t help but adore. Anything that made him smile couldn’t be worth getting anxious over.

Finally, Alice led us to a door in the east hallway and opened it for us. The inside was carpeted, which was rare in this house. The comforter on the king sized bed was a lush red, which matched the heart shaped décor nicely. I was beginning to suspect this was a setup.

“Alice,” I asked inquisitively, “why is this room decorated with hearts?”

“It wasn’t intended for you, if that’s what you’re thinking,” she replied. “There are plenty of rooms in this house and we never use them all, so I decorate them in different themes. I thought this one fit the situation best.”

“You’re amazing.”

Alice smiled and made her way to the door. “Get some rest,” Alice said cheerfully. “No one will knock or enter this room. I promise.”

“Thank you, Alice,” I said as my cheeks turned pink.

“Oh, Abby, I almost forgot,” Alice said on her way out. “In the top drawer on the right are a few pairs of attractive underwear if you want to change out of that wet diaper before bed.”

If I wasn’t blushing noticeably before, I certainly was now. “How did you-”

“I am your best friend; I know everything,” she said with a grin and shut the door behind her.

After Alice left the room, I excused myself to the adjacent bathroom to change. Alice wasn’t kidding about the sexual appeal of my underwear choice. My selection was all tight and lacey. Everything fit very well though; the pink underwear as well as the uncommonly short nightgown.

Miles was already in a pair of pajama pants and less fashionable shirt when I returned. He turned off the lights, we climbed under the soft crimson blanket and I pulled myself close to him. Things were perfect...almost.

“I don’t quite understand everything that happened today,” I admitted to Miles.

“What would you like to know?” he asked politely in a quiet voice.

“What were my mom and dad talking about at the end, about my mom doing the best she could, and about her being right?”

“I can only infer, but I believe it’s because your dad wanted you to stay here with him while your mom wanted you to go out and enjoy the world. Nonetheless, she cooperated with your father in keeping you here because she wanted to see him happy. That’s why, in the woods, she told me not to return to the house.”

“Why did she hide herself from me, anyway? I didn’t even know she was still alive.”

“It’s just another assumption, but I believe your mother couldn’t be around you knowing that she was intruding on your future. As I said, she didn’t want to keep you here, but out of love for her husband, she created the hypnotic tapes. She couldn’t bear to see you after taking away your free will, and in theory, you listened to the first tape soon after you were born.”

I nodded. That made perfect sense. “And one other thing; if I was still hypnotized when all this happened, why didn’t I wet myself when you kissed me in the nursery, and why didn’t I fall over when I tried to walk up to her?”

“My theory was that you trust your hypnotisms to keep you safe, considering you subconsciously remembered your mother’s voice from when you were little. This also explains why your father didn’t create the tapes himself; you are more prone to trusting your mother’s voice. But it seems I overrule her. Since I told you not to wet yourself before our kiss, you didn’t. Since I told you to walk to your mother, you did. Your trust in me voids the hypnotisms.”

“So because I trust you more than the hypnotisms, they don’t work?”

“Exactly.”

“That’s romantic,” I said with a smile.

There was a long pause, and I first wondered if he fell asleep. I had no other questions for him, but I did have something I needed to say.

“Miles?” I asked quietly, barely audible even in the silence.

“Yes, Abigail?” he responded in a whisper slightly louder than my own.

“I love you.”

“I love you too.”

Epilogue: Farewells

“You promise to come back, right?” Alice asked as I hugged her goodbye.

Everyone was on the front porch wishing me pleasant farewells. Dad had his arm over Mom’s shoulder, and she was very close to crying. Lily and Lola were to the right of Alice, flashing wide smiles in my direction. Even Madeline was there, probably only to make sure I was actually leaving though.

“I promise,” I repeated to Alice for the tenth time. “I’ll visit during the holidays.”

“That’s over three months away,” she whined.

“You’re welcome to come with us,” I offered.

“I would love to, but my place is here.”

I reluctantly let go of Alice and went to give Lola her hug, and then Lily. It was awkward; I had never hugged them before and they were almost as tall as my dad, but much thinner.

“I’m glad things are looking up for you,” Lola smiled.

“Have a wonderful autumn,” Lily said cheerfully. “We’ll see you in December.”

“I can’t wait,” I responded sincerely.

I left the two of them and went to hug my parents, starting first with my mom.

“I’ll miss you,” Mom whispered to me. “I finally get to spend time with you and you are leaving.”

“It’s okay, Mom,” I said. “I will be back soon and we can do anything you’d like.”

She nodded, kissed my cheek, and let go of me. Tears were running down her cheeks, but she was smiling.

Dad hugged me next, and kissed my forehead.

“Stay safe, Abigail,” he said to me. “Do you understand?”

I nodded. “I promise, Dad.”

Madeline was another story. I haven’t said a word to her since the punishment she had given to me, and I still held a grudge. I had spent the night planning on how to handle this situation, and I wasn’t very content with my conclusion. I could easily hug my best friend or my parents, but showing any affection toward Madeline was difficult. I wasn’t sure if I could do this.

“I’ll see you later, Madeline,” I mustered up the kindest tone I could.

She shrugged and I took a step closer to her. I knew she wasn't going to accept a hug, but fortunately that wasn't what I was going for. Quickly, leaning toward her, I kissed her on the lips.

Before she could react, the leggings she wore under her maid uniform began to dampen. A puddle formed at her feet, and suddenly she had nothing to say. Her cheeks turned light red, which was the first time I had ever seen Madeline blush. My overconfident, control-obsessed nemesis had just wet herself, an action she would soon learn to do constantly.

"It's your turn to be taken care of," I whispered to her. "I'll see you this holiday, princess." I put my left hand in my pocket, hesitated, and withdrew it empty.

Turning back to Miles, I noticed everyone's reaction to Madeline's little accident. Lily and Lola were snickering, Alice had a sly smile across her face, and my parents couldn't help but chuckle too. I knew they wouldn't replace me, but now they had someone else that needed to be cared for.

Miles grabbed my right hand, already holding the suitcase with his other, and stepped off the porch with me alongside him. I gave a final wave to my friends and family and headed into the woods. I admit there was a slight moment of anxiety as I crossed the edge of the forest, but I kept on walking through the trees. With Miles, the hypnotisms were gone. I could be whoever I wanted to be.

I then reached into my pocket with my left hand and fiddled with the pacifier I had intended to put in Madeline's mouth and complete her initiation into babyhood. But for some reason I hadn't, and I couldn't understand my hesitation. Maybe I didn't want to embarrass her further, or perhaps I didn't want to part with my pacifier. Nonetheless, it was still in the left pocket of my dress as Miles and I began our new life together.

"This is just the beginning of our future, Abigail," Miles said cheerfully. That brilliant symmetrical smile flashed across his face.

"You can call me Abby," I responded, and kissed him on the lips.