

# Summer Games

by Kevin Esser

## 1. A Bird in Hand

I sit, as every day, in a posture of feigned nonchalance, waiting for Willie to arrive with his satchel of newspapers. Then (ask, and it shall be given to you) he appears.

“Seen any good birds today?” he asks in his cheerfully piping voice, approaching from across the lawn.

I smile lamely and hold up the binoculars strapped around my neck. “Not much today,” I reply, then cast a token glance at the patch of woods across the road.

“You really like birds, hah?” the boy asks. He poses before me in yellow T-shirt, red shorts and dirty sneakers, a baseball cap turned backwards on his curly mop of blond hair.

“They’re beautiful, some of them,” I say, still smiling. I let the binoculars drop back against my chest. “I like beautiful things.”

“That’s neat,” Willie says. He moves closer – walking with a jaunty, slightly pigeon-toed strut – and hands me my newspaper. His nose, small and upturned and reddened by the sun, wrinkles in a smile. “That looks good,” he says, pointing to my lap – and, I realize after a flustered moment, to the beer can resting there. “Wish I had some of that.”

“I’d say you’re a bit young,” I point out.

“Almost thirteen!” he protests, raising his spunky little-boy hackles.

“Well, you *do* look hot.” I stand up, trying to control my breath. (Don’t blow it, old boy, I think to myself – then, smiling, wish that I could.) “I have some soda inside. You want some?”

“Sounds dynamite!” the boy says. His cheeks dimple in an excited grin.

“Come on, then... come inside. See what kind you like.”

Willie nods, sets down his sack, and steps past me into the house. I follow him, my heart beating a tachycardic tom-tom in my chest. His T-shirt is wet with perspiration, and clinging to his back. I breathe in the sweet tang of his sweat, savoring every pungent whiff of young BOY. “Take your pick,” I say and pull open the refrigerator door. “Cola,

orange, ginger ale.”

Willie bends over as he makes his selection, presenting me (considerate lad!) with a fetching view of red shorts stretched tight over very firm little.... Then he straightens up, cola in hand. “This'll be OK,” he says.

I watch him wander with a lazy grace to the table, where he sits, slouches, sprawls out his legs. His knees are dirty, his left shin nicked with a tiny scratch. “My cat got me,” he remarks, and I realize I've been staring too intently. I look up at his face – still damp with sweat, ruddy with sunburn, lit by a gleeful smile. “Cats eat birds,” he says.

“True enough.”

“I always wanted to be a cat,” he goes on, taking a sip of his cola, then setting down the can. “Cats are cool, man. They look so great!” He stands up – moving to some sort of odd, feline rhythm – and begins a slow shimmy around the kitchen. I gaze, enthralled, as he dances past me, gliding with languid undulations of his head, shoulders, hips. Then he stops, turns, looks at me with his dimpled grin. “I gotta go,” he says, eyes asparkle.

I try to speak, clear my throat, try again: “What about your cola?”

“Gotta go,” he repeats, not to be swayed, already bustling past me out the door. “I got more papers to deliver. See you!” He grabs his sack and rushes off, striding away across the lawn like a sprightly little colt.

I hoist my binoculars and watch him disappear through the maze of houses, then turn away with a sigh, feeling a bit – I suppose – like Napoleon after a hard day at Waterloo.

I content myself, as the afternoon dimly passes, with the recollected image of Willie performing his Cat Dance. I sit at the kitchen table with eyes closed, recalling the sight and sound and smell of him, conjuring him, it seems, by sheer power of imagination – for he stands suddenly outside the screen door, rapping it with his knuckles.

“Willie?” I murmur. I can't quite trust the reality of this delightful apparition.

“I done my route,” the boy announces, sounding very real indeed. “You got any more soda?”

“I suppose I do.”

Sweatier than before – but no less cheerful – Willie lets himself in and sits down in a charming sprawl of sun-browned arms and legs.

“What about your soda?”

“Maybe later,” he says.

“Later?”

"I'm too hot to drink anything right now."

"You'll get cramps?" I offer vaguely.

He shrugs. "Somethin' like that." He kicks off one sneaker, then the other. "That's better," he smiles, wiggling ten very pink toes.

"Mi cas a es su casa," I chuckle.

"Say what?"

"It means – roughly, mind you – 'make yourself comfortable.'"

"Thanks," Willie says, and, taking the Spanish proverb very much to heart, removes his baseball cap and tugs off the sweaty yellow T-shirt. Then he flips the cap back onto his curly head and stands up. "Feels better."

I pick up my binoculars in a supremely incongruous gesture.

"Gonna watch birds?" the boy inquires. A bead of sweat trickles down his glistening chest. "What kinda birds d'you like best?"

"All kinds."

"Little ones?"

"Little ones are nice – my favorites, in fact."

"I figured," Willie says, roaming about the kitchen. He slides a finger beneath the elastic band of his shorts and pulls in and out, in and out, giving himself air. The kitchen becomes fragrant with his rich, sweaty scent.

Quickly his manipulations produce an unexpected – and wholly delightful – side effect, which he unabashedly notes with a downward glance and wrinkly-nosed grin. In my excitement, I raise the binoculars halfway to my eyes before stopping short.

"I'm still hot," Willie says, the front of his snug red shorts poking out now in eloquent confirmation.

"Su cas a es mi casa," I erroneously drone, remembering the proverb's earlier effect, and chanting it as a sort of incantation.

"That means...?"

"Make yourself comfortable."

"Yeah, right," the boy smiles. He faces me from the middle of the kitchen. "That's what I thought." He hooks his thumbs into his shorts and peels them down to his knees, then lets them fall to the floor and steps free. "Now I'm raw!" he giggles. He runs his hands slowly up and down his ribs.

"...as a jaybird," I interject in a joyful mixing of our metaphors.

Wearing nothing but his baseball cap, his dimples, and a devilish little grin, Willie saunters across the room and steps in front of me. "You won't need these anymore," he informs me, and takes the binoculars from

around my neck. “You only gotta watch one little bird from now on.”

“I think I can handle that,” I smile.

And – to Willie's husky giggles of delight – I do....

## 2. Gito

Back woods on a lazy Saturday. Fishing pole, a can of worms, the basso staccato of bullfrogs and the chirring of cicadas from hot sun-speckled weeds.

I lift a branch, brushing aside cobwebs... and there he is, where I hoped he would be. Bright orange T-shirt, blue jeans, sneakers. Seated on a log near the creek. The high sun casting his shadow black and stunted at his feet. He turns and faces me with a wild tousle of jet-black curls. Cocoa-brown skin. Eyes dark, squinting in a smile.

“Gito!” I call out, savoring the soft “g” on my tongue. The sharp “t”. Letting my boy's name linger like an agreeable taste...

His teeth flash fine and white.

I step closer. “Hot today.”

The boy nods, wipes sweat from his forehead with the back of one hand, shoos gnats with the other. “Even worse than last week.”

A fish flops somewhere, unseen, with a soft splash. I put down the can of worms and sit on the log as Gito makes room by scooting left into a brighter pool of sun. Beads of sweat sparkle on his slender brown neck as he glances down at his reel, then up again at his line resting slack in the water. With one hand he shields his eyes against the glass-slick glare.

“You're burning up.” I reach out and run my fingers across his slippery neck. He shrugs, bravely. His tongue darts out and licks away a drop of sweat glittering on his top lip.

A breeze teases the black hair curled over his ears.

“I've been waitin' all morning...” Voice boyishly husky. He smiles, still peering at the water. “...for a bite, I mean.”

A lopsided grin as he casts an impish glance in my direction. Cocoa cheeks dimpled.

A dragonfly thrums between us. Its wings glint silver as it hovers in the sunlight. Gito waves his hand. The dragonfly darts higher, just out of reach, taunting the boy. Then shimmering like a jewel it swoops to the water and hangs above the surface, suspending time...

*A woodpecker hammered sharply somewhere deep in the woods as I*

*approached the stream, aware suddenly of an odd noise through the trees: someone's breath, deep and even. Trapper-quiet, I pushed aside a low branch and discovered him turned towards me, straddling a log, glancing now and then at his line but more interested at the moment in his right hand... cupped between his legs and sliding easy, slow, round and round. Mouth open. Shoulders hunched forward as his breath quickened... then. Still staring down he unfastened his jeans and yanked them underpants and all down his hips. A sharp hiss of breath as his penis sprang up free, eager for the hand grabbing it, pumping it in quick strokes between cocoa- brown legs spreading wider and wider, writhing slowly in delicious anticipation until the boy jerked with a grunt and spent himself in ribbons of pearl spewing onto the green between his feet...*

I pull a candy bar from the pocket of my shirt. "One week ago today..," I smile.

Gito takes the candy. His fingers brush my palm. He grins, tears away the paper, sinks white teeth slowly into chocolate, caramel, coconut going soft and sticky.

"Yeah, I know," he chuckles. "I was scared maybe you wouldn't come back." A bit of chocolate glistens at the corner of his mouth. I wipe it away gently with my thumb. His bottom lip is moist; his skin soft, dark as honey.

He bites off another chunk. "That was the neatest birthday I ever had. Glad I came fishin' here that day!"

"We were *both* lucky..."

He pops the last bit of candy into his mouth. Body rocking slightly as he smiles and chews. His hand is smeared brown. I grab it and lick slowly finger by finger, as he watches, giggling. Warm chocolate mingled with boy-sweat, sweet and salty. I take his thumb between my lips. He wiggles it in my mouth, sliding it in slow circles against my tongue. Then he pulls it free and stands up.

"I shoulda worn my shorts!" He peels the soggy orange T-shirt over his head, baring lean brown belly, chest, shoulders all smooth and glazed with sweat. The pungent scent of him hangs in the air. "Sometimes I get really *sick* of clothes, you know?"

I glance up and down the stream. "Nobody's here... Go ahead."

Gito nods, already unzipping his pants with a soft rasp – then turns and scurries off towards the trees behind us. "But I gotta pee first," he calls back over his shoulder as he steps beside an oak and stands splashing against its trunk, whistling between his teeth and peering down

until, finished, he steps back shirtless into the sun. He makes no attempt to zip up his jeans, which remain agape showing white underpants beneath. His belly is flat, so flat it appears sucked-in, ridged on either side with fine, hard muscle... A fly lights on his shoulder and crawls tiny and black down his breast, glistening brown. Gito gazes down, lips parted, chin resting against his chest as the fly circles his little nipple, stops... then buzzes away before the boy can grab it with his hand.

“Almost,” I laugh.

Gito looks up, shrugs, steps closer. “I caught one before.” A smile wrinkles his fine little nose. “I think they like the way I smell. ‘Cause I get so sweaty.” He gives his face a swipe, then shakes his head and sends perspiration flying in a mist from black hair plastered slick over his ears and neck.

“They have good taste.” I reach out and unbuckle his belt, undo the little copper button at his waist. His jeans flap open loose about his slender hips.

“It’s OK, huh?” he wonders.

“Oh, sure!” I nod. “Nobody comes here... except us.”

“It’s just that it’s kinda weird undressin’ out in the woods.” A shimmy of his behind sends the pants sagging to his knees. He kicks off his dirty sneakers, tugs the jeans over his feet, throws them across the log.

“Not much left,” he grins.

Looks down at himself, snaps the elastic band of his skimpy white underpants.

“That feels a *lot* cooler!”

A bit of milkweed seed from somewhere up-breeze floats soft and white as a snowflake near his head and catches in his mane of black curls.

I wave him closer. He turns and sits down beside me on the log. I pluck the bit of fluff from his hair, slide my hand down to stroke the fuzz on his neck.

“I’m sure glad you came back,” he murmurs. My hand roams farther down the sweat-slick skin, between sharp shoulder blades. “I thought maybe you’d forget all about me.”

“No chance! Not my birthday boy.”

“And it’s really OK?” More earnest now. “Us... messin’ around together again, like this?” He shivers as my fingers wriggle slowly into the back of his tight underpants.

“Sure.. I think it’s terrific.”

He smiles. “Well...so do I!”

His shorts bulge slowly at the crotch... poking out farther and farther as my fingers tease between his warm buttocks. "I can see that."

"OK then, here goes!" He lets out a throaty giggle, reaches down, begins playing inside his own underpants, stretching them in and out to the eager rhythm of his pumping hand.

I give the elastic a tug. His hips raise as I drag the white shorts down over brown legs, past the knees, over his bare feet. He leans back against one elbow, every naked inch of him glistening dark with sun and sweat, the sharp muskiness of him stronger now as he spreads his thighs and fondles himself with easy, languorous strokes.

"God, this feels so great!" The marvel of it...not quite new – but he's only fourteen and a week. A sudden breeze stirs the glossy black hair curled soft beneath his belly.

Kneeling now in front of him, resting my hands on his thighs...a tightening of young flesh...lean cords of muscle flexing visibly beneath tawny skin.

"I'd been holdin' back all morning... hoping..." He grins wider. "wondering..." His breath catches. "Come on... do it now... I'm gonna bust!"

His hips lift with a slow upward squirm as the salt taste cuts sharp on the top of my tongue, the rich sweatiness of him inhaled through damp, tangled hairs... then hands coming to my neck, nervous, strong.

"And you gotta come back again... next Saturday, and the Saturday after that..."

Bright slash of sunlight across copper-smooth belly as he whimpers, jerks half-upright with a gasp and trembles there until his eyes droop shut and he collapses slowly against the log, smiling as if drifting through a dream, thanking me with the last warm spurts against the back of my throat...

### 3. Jeremy's Games

I was late today arriving at the bar, where Bob – my long-suffering friend – awaited me with a pitcher of beer and a weary shake of his head. I had been to the school-yard again (a pilgrim at his shrine) watching the boys playing soccer. One team in lemon; the other in lime. Both of them scampering and darting about the grassy field as vivid in the bright sunlight as a flock of canaries.

But no sooner had I parked my car than the game ended in a flurry of whoops and handclaps and exuberant slapping of young rumps, the milling boys quickly splitting up and going their separate ways. I watched as one of them sauntered in my direction: a husky lad with sturdy hips and strong sloped shoulders rolling slowly as he walked, his hair glowing like burnished copper, now gold, now red, now gold again as he glanced casually this way and that with eyes blue as the June sky brilliant above him.

He stopped very close to me and stood with arms crossed, tapping his sneakered foot, gazing away up the street. A breeze ruffled his hair still glowing a ruddy gold stirring it feathery about his ears and sweaty sunburnt neck. Offhandedly he glanced around and noticed me standing beside him.

“The asshole's late,” he remarked as if I should have been familiar with the asshole in question.

I nodded and smiled, not sure how to respond, gazing at the boy as he turned away again and resumed his impatient vigil with one hip lolled to the side, opposite knee bent, his legs and arms bronzed lustrous with sweat and sun.

“You need a ride?” is what I finally asked.

An eyebrow raised, surprised, supercilious; I was a house pet that had performed a sudden difficult trick. A smile curled his parted lips on one side as his hair caught another breeze and tossed softly, prompting his hand freckled across the back to reach up lazily and brush it away from his eyes.

(I tell Bob at the bar that I've met a boy named Jeremy and never seen eyes so blue or hair so bright like a new penny.)

He shrugs. “I'm straight, remember? I don't, in other words, dig guys. Anyway, how old d'you say he is?”

“Fifteen going on sixteen. Next month is his birthday. There's something about him that almost frightens me. An insolent beauty. And, my God, that hair!”

“So you drove him home?” and he sips his beer from a mug frosted almost white leaving a ring of water on the table as it's lifted.

“Yeah. His chauffeur was late. Can you imagine? I've never met anyone before with a chauffeur. So I took him home, across town, nice house with a swimming pool but not as big as I'd expected.”)

I parked outside the front door in the crescent asphalt driveway and



watched as Jeremy climbed from the car, the back of his yellow jersey stained with a blade of sweat down the middle, his bare thighs scarlet from pressing on the seat. He slammed the door shut then stooped to peer through the rolled-down window, his eyes squinting, nose slightly wrinkled.

“You want to come inside?”

Of course I did and was out of the car as if ejected. The front door was unlocked because, I discovered upon entering, a Swedish housekeeper roamed within, prowling the premises like a watch dog, greeting me with a silent nod and a smile as we passed her heading upstairs.

“This is my room,” Jeremy informed me over his shoulder. Nodding I gazed around turning myself in a circle, inspecting the bedroom: rather typical really, with bed of course, desk, chairs, wallpaper of Revolutionary soldiers and cannons and sailing ships, a pair of jeans and T-shirts and knee socks all discarded on the floor crumpled smelling of boy.

“So your parents are out of town?” I asked, already knowing they were but nervously needful of making small talk, wondering exactly why I had been invited in, why I was here.

Jeremy nodded and went about his business ducking in and out of the adjacent bathroom. “Yeah, they come and go all the time,” shrugging, disappearing again into the bathroom to turn on the water in the tub which I could then hear splashing splashing as it deepened. “They’re at some damned condo in Palm Springs with some assholes they know,” pulling off his shoes, his socks, his jersey. “But I’m *glad*, man! I like it when they’re gone.” His torso was well-muscled and pale, only his arms and neck tanned coppery up to the biceps down to the shoulders, giving him the look of a farmer boy who toils shirted all day beneath the hot sun. He started for the bathroom then turned, recalling suddenly his duty as lord of the manor. “You want a beer or something or some food? Go downstairs and help yourself if you do,” not waiting for my reply, “and don’t mind Hilda, she’s OK.” Turning quickly he padded barefoot into the bathroom already pulling down his yellow shorts, baring half-moons smooth and cream-white before stepping out of view behind the door.

(“Hilda give you any problem?” Bob asks, chewing his popcorn, reaching for another handful from the basket in the middle of the table.

“No, she’s a friendly old bird. Just gave me a smile as I passed her going to and from the kitchen.” I pause, laughing softly. “I didn’t even

take anything to eat or drink, but I needed to move around and get a hold of myself. That glimpse of Jeremy's behind had me pretty worked up. And I didn't know *what* the kid had in mind. The way he behaved, taking my presence for granted, even ignoring me altogether at times, had me totally stumped. I'd never met anyone like him before. Never.”)

I could hear Jeremy splashing in the tub when I returned to the bedroom. He heard me open and close the door and beckoned me with a shout to join him in the bathroom, where I found him reclining in the soapy water, his chest flecked with lather, his knees bent glistening above the surface.

“You caught me,” he chuckled grinning, and I noticed that his right arm was moving up and down rocking the water in the tub to its languid rhythm.

I remained near the door staring at the boy as he pleased himself, evidently for my amusement, his hand and what it held indistinct beneath the cloudy water.

“I didn't know you were coming back so fast,” he lied, still grinning, his hand just visible moving up down up down faster now as he slumped lower in the water, mouth open, eyes nearly shut. And then with a shudder and a sudden startled gasp he ejaculated, the semen coiling white to the surface, floating in milky strands.

Leaving Jeremy sprawled in exhausted bliss I returned to the bedroom and sat at his desk, which was strewn with magazines about cars, baseball, tennis, weight lifting – and girls. I leafed through one, tossed it aside, tried another, then heard the boy rising and stepping from the tub with a great cascading splash. He busied himself behind me, dressing, whistling a vaguely familiar rock tune as I feigned interest in an article about the clean-and-jerk, refusing in a fit of pique to humor him by looking around.

(“The kid was a real tease, hah?”)

I nod, but, “Well, not really. He didn't seem to be teasing me so much as... well, putting up with me. Or gracing me with an occasional display of his splendor...”

“You're losing me, bud,” Bob says shaking his head, refilling his mug from the sweaty pitcher on the table.

“I know, I know. But you have to understand Jeremy. The young prince of his castle. Arrogant beyond caring about teasing someone as lowly as me, though I *was* angry at first, I admit. But that was *my*

mistake. I was taking his behavior personally, which was wrong.”

“And when, old buddy, did you realize all this?”

“Later, after he finished dressing, when we went down to the pool.”)

Jeremy was wearing nothing but a pair of denim cutoffs faded powdery blue almost white at the rump as he led me through the living room and sliding glass doors to the swimming pool shimmering faceted like a sapphire beneath afternoon sun. I followed gingerly walking barefoot on the hot cement, tugging at the elastic of the swimming trunks given to me upstairs by Jeremy from his parents' bedroom.

“Let's *go!*” the boy whooped, breaking into a sprint and diving into the pool slicing the water clean without a splash. He resurfaced near the center with hair slick and dark as amber hanging straight over his ears and forehead. “Come on!” he waved, water flying jeweled from his hand. “Dive in!”

I ventured forward as if striding on broken glass and climbed into the shallow end of the pool, trudging in deeper and deeper until the water lapped against my stomach. Jeremy, ignoring me now, was floating on his back treading lazily with arms outspread, his white belly ridged with muscle poking above the surface. I watched him as I waded aimlessly about splashing at the water with my fingers.

“You don't swim too often, do you?” I called to him from across the pool.

“Hah?” was his reply, turning his head.

“Only your arms and legs are tanned.”

“We just filled the pool last week,” Jeremy said, flinging me this scrap of information with a blasé mumble. Then righting himself in the water he reached beneath the surface with one hand, paddling with the other to keep himself afloat. “This is how I *usually* swim,” he grinned, his shoulders hunched as he pulled off his shorts and lifted them dripping from the water waving them like a flag. “Dig it, man. Bare-assed is *best!*”

He side-stroked to the edge of the pool, tossed his wet shorts with a plop onto the cement then propelled himself out twisting in midair and landed gently on his butt. Smiling he sat with water dribbling from his arms, palms flat beside him, head tilted slightly back as he peered from beneath drenched hair nearly covering his eyes.

I waded to the side of the pool and stood next to him hanging on to the edge. “What about Hilda?” I asked trying to keep my gaze from dropping.

“What about her?”

“Well, I mean,” gesturing vaguely, “aren't you afraid she'll see you?”

He chuckled his insolent chuckle and said, “Shoot! Just watch this.” He grabbed his shorts and stood up, still glistening from head to foot, and waved me after him as I climbed from the water. “Come on, I'll show you.”

(“Now wait a minute!” Bob says swallowing as he shakes his head. “This kid sounds more and more like an unbearable little snot all the time, like he needs a good kick in the ass.”

“Probably, yeah, but that's not my problem.”

“So he gives old Hilda a little flash, hah? I can't *stand* this kid!” And he laughs, still shaking his head, taking another sip of beer.

“It isn't so little, really. I mean he's no stallion, but he is, shall we say, a very healthy boy.”

“Please, old buddy, no details! I get the picture. So what *did* Hilda do?”)

I followed Jeremy through the glass doors into the living room, watching his buttocks still beaded with water flexing white and plump as he swaggered across the thick carpet. He glanced around, holding the shorts dripping over his crotch like Adam hightailing it out of Eden, waiting for Hilda to stumble unawares into his trap, which she soon did, appearing from the kitchen clutching a broom.

The boy smiled, facing her. “Hey, Hilda, when's dinner going to be ready?”

The old woman pushed back a strand of gray hair and returned his smile. “Same time as always, Jerry, you know that. Six o'clock sharp as it's been for years.”

Jeremy let his hand drop to his side in a gesture as nonchalant as a yawn, leaving himself jaybird-naked in the middle of the room. “I'm awfully hungry tonight,” he said, still flashing a saucy smile and scratching himself below.

“Well, you'll just have to wait!” Hilda scolded fondly with a brief wag of her finger.

The boy glanced down at himself and giggled as if becoming suddenly aware of his own nudity. “You don't mind seeing my bare butt, do you Hilda?”

“Well, I should hope not, after all these years starting with diapers!”

Then, still scratching, “And you don't mind lookin' at my little *kuk*, do

you?" being unduly modest.

"Lord, Jerry," Hilda laughed, "I've watched you grow from just a tiny little rascal into such a fine young boy, and so handsome, so I should say *not!*"

This display of his power concluded, Jeremy turned and led me upstairs to his room, his behind working in muscled rhythm before my eyes as we climbed the steps.

"I take it that's Swedish," I said. "Did you bully those words out of your poor housekeeper?"

"They're the ones you always learn first." He flopped down on his bed with one leg stretched out straight, the other bent at the knee lolling to the side.

"I'm really wiped out, man," he sighed. He held one hand behind his head and pawed gently with the other at the hair curled golden around his *kuk* which stirred now and bobbed at a droopy angle between thighs as white as polished ivory.

"Tired, you mean?" I inquired in a voice enfeebled by the desire clutching at my chest, tightening my throat.

"Sure, tired... what else? I played soccer for three hours, man! Boy, am I bushed." He giggled at this expression, then glanced at me. "Did you see Hilda? She *loves* my *kuk!*"

"She's nice," I said moving closer. "You shouldn't tease her. It's very rude."

"It's not *rude!* She loves looking at it. And she likes it even better like this." And as if to illustrate he started what he'd earlier been busy at in the tub.

"I gotta do it *again!*" he said, and then stroking slowly he dismissed me with a flip of his head: "You can go."

But I'd had enough. I pulled off my loaner trunks and stepped toward him shaking my head. "I can't go yet."

He looked at me, a captain eyeing a mutinous member of his crew. "It's OK," he nodded, not quite understanding, "you can go now," then continued staring as I stepped beside him and grabbed his wrists playing *his* game now. "Hey, what're you doing?"

"You have to thank me first," is all I said, flipping him with my greater strength onto this stomach and holding his arms behind his back pulling until he raised his butt to my entry, squirming as I pushed slowly, slowly shoving deeper, leaning forward resting my cheek against Jeremy's sweaty back, hearing the thump of his heart, the rasp of his breath, then giving up the battle against postponement, letting go in the

stroke and counter-stroke until, for Jeremy as well as for me, it was over. Collapsing with a whimper I released the boy's wrists and lay panting on top of him, then pulled free and rose to my knees rolling him into his back reaching down to touch what glistened white on his belly...

("Well, Bob sighs with a shrug, "you shouldn't have done *that*, old buddy! You can get your tail tossed into jail real fast messin' around with kids that young."

"I know, I know..."

"Especially when they don't *want* it!"

"Well, that's what *I* thought... at first."

"You mean good old Jeremy wasn't mad?"

"On the contrary," I say, swirling the foam in my glass. "He seemed delighted to have someone telling *him* what to do for a change. Positively trilled. In fact, he has another soccer game tomorrow, and he wants me to come." I took a sip, then set my glass down and smiled. "I pick him up at noon...")