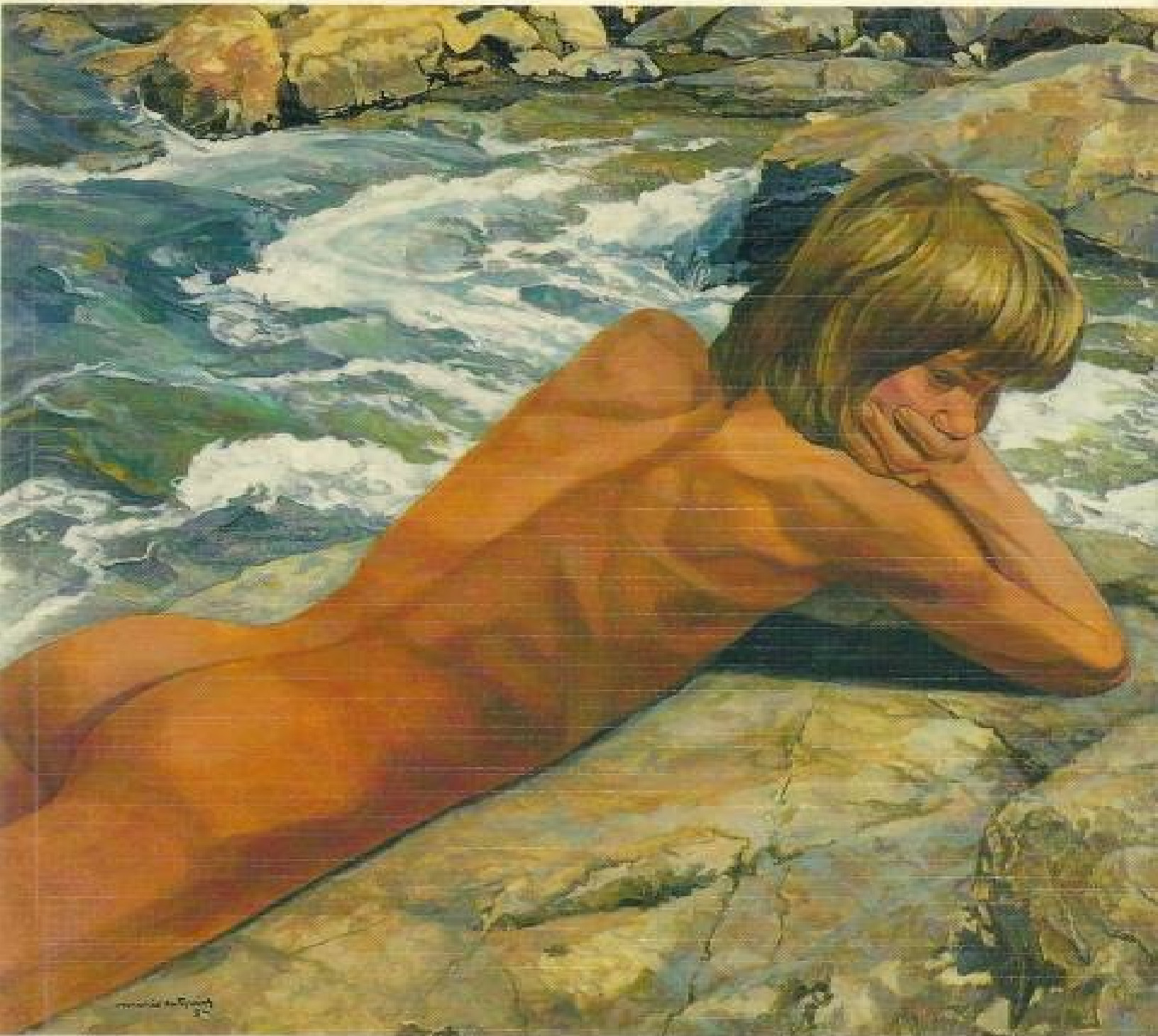


A **BL** CLASSIC

# ADAM AND THE PARADISE GARDEN



BY PETER GILBERT  
& TOM HOLT

# Adam and the Paradise Garden

by Peter Gilbert & Tom Holt

ebook by the Ghost

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# Adam and the Paradise Garden

## 1.

The heat of summer never seemed to end. It was September. The goalposts had been put up, but it was far too hot for football: the only things live on the playing field were millions of insects which danced over the grass. Beyond, the sea glistened like a huge sheet of crinkled metal foil.

Lunch had just finished. Most of the boys had gone straight to their boarding houses but Adam and Ben lay in the shade of the trees which separated the road from the playing field.

“God! That was awful!” said Adam, shielding his eyes from the sun. “They have the cheek to call that a meal! Roll on teatime.”

“We've got the memorial service first,” said his companion. That'll go on for hours. I'll bet tea will be late.”

“I've a good mind not to go,” said Adam.

“You'll have to. They'd miss you straight away.”

It was true. Adam was a very striking boy. He was tall for his fifteen years. He lay with his legs slightly parted. His arms were folded across his broad chest and his golden hair gleamed in the sunshine.

Ben, on the other hand was of average height, average looks and average build: in fact a very average fourteen-year-old.

“Let them,” said Adam lazily. “They can't force you to go to church.”

“They can make things pretty difficult if you don't,” Ben replied. “Anyway, I think we ought to. We did know him.”

“I don't think the stupid sod deserves a memorial,” said Adam. “Fancy getting drowned on the last day of term. He missed all the summer holiday, all the birds, all the fucking. God! Even thinking about it makes me randy.” He turned over on to his front. “And we've got fifteen more weeks!”

Ben sat up. “That's all you ever think about,” he said. “School's not that bad.”

For Ben it wasn't. He had been there for a long time whereas Adam had come just a little over a year ago. Ben's father was in the Forces and serving abroad. He only saw his parents once a year. For him, the school was home.

He looked round. It was all so familiar. Red brick buildings ran down each side of the field almost to the sea. Teaching blocks on one side and dormitories on the other. Behind him, on the other side of the drive, were the Headmaster's and staff houses and the chapel where they could see people were already beginning to arrive, dressed in various shades of black and purple.

“Watch it! Alky's coming!” said Ben suddenly.

“Sod him,” said Adam but he turned over and sat up.

Mr. Henderson, their housemaster (otherwise known as 'Alky'), hated untidiness. A boy lying prone

on the playing field constituted, as far as he was concerned, a particularly grave type of untidiness.

“Come, come!” he snapped. “Why are you two boys not getting ready?”

“We are ready - Sir,” said Adam, deliberately delaying the last word.

“But where are your ties? You heard the Headmaster.”

“In our pockets, Sir,” said Ben, producing his and knotting it round his neck.

“No, no! Not like that. Come here boy!”

Ben received a blast of whiskey-laden breath as the master fiddled with his tie. Mr. Henderson had obviously been on the bottle again. Everybody knew about his drinking. Mr. Henderson, was a figure of fun to the entire school. He was now in his late fifties. It was said that when he joined the staff as a young man he had been an outstanding teacher but all that remained of that early enthusiasm, it seemed, was his passion for neatness. The wise and wily of the pupils knew that if one wrote a theme in a neat hand with margins of exactly one inch on either side of the paper Mr. Henderson would award an A+ for several pages of gibberish.

He swept off to round up more reluctant mourners. Adam and Ben made their way across the drive to the chapel.

They were too late to get seats. One of the masters ushered them to the side where they stood with several other boys. Parents, governors and distinguished guests occupied the front rows, the school, pupils and staff, filled in behind, the few boys from other continents scattered like freckles amongst them. All wore the standard dress as laid down by the Headmaster that morning: gray trousers, white shirt (“of which the, er, sleeves will be rolled down to cover the wrist”) and the school tie.

The organ began to play. The procession began. First came Roger Butterworth-Symes, the School Captain wearing his red gown and carrying his staff of office and looking, thought Ben, even more stupid than usual. Then came the Senior Master followed by the dead boy's parents. The father was in Army uniform. This would have normally attracted Ben's attention but it didn't, for he and Adam, and several other boys, gasped in astonishment: walking with the Headmaster was a fairly young, good-looking man, and walking with him was Charlie Franks, otherwise known as Charlie Wanks.

Charlie was living proof that masturbation does not affect the hearing or the eyesight. Both faculties were particularly acute in his case. It was said that he could hear a creaking bed spring from a hundred yards away. He could negotiate a dormitory in pitch darkness to locate the bed of a potential client over whom he would lean and whisper in his whining voice, “I'll do it for you if you like.”

None of his classmates accepted the offer. Ever. Charlie was an unprepossessing youth. He was tall and gangling. His bright red hair contrasted with a very pale face perpetually decorated with spots. Both his pallor and his continually erupting countenance were attributed by everybody to his insatiable self-abuse. Charlie wanked in the dormitory, the showers, the toilets, the classrooms and on the playing field. He gave free demonstrations to Junior School boys, some of whom he persuaded to act on his behalf. To speak to a Junior School boy was regarded as a breach of tradition. Charlie's association with them made him a pariah.

At least, that was the reputation he had. There had been an improvement of late, especially to his countenance, but schoolboys are cruel and have long memories. His dormitory companions were not believed when they said he now slept soundly all night, leaving them to masturbate alone and in peace. It was said that Mr. Henderson had discovered him in the act. Others said that the Housemaster had been appalled by the paper tissues scattered around his bed. Certainly something had happened.

But Charlie was disliked not just for his masturbatory obsession but for his continual whingeing. He complained about the food, about the weather, about the shopkeepers in the village, and he maintained, with some justification, that everybody in the school was against him.

To see Charlie walking up the aisle with the Headmaster's procession caused a murmur which spread through the entire congregation. When the Head had passed by, several boys raised both hands and formed their fingers into a W. Charlie ignored them and took a seat in the front row with the Headmaster on his right and the other man on his left.

As Adam observed later, one would have thought from what was said about Mark Lee in the service that he had been the best of all possible boys: he had worked hard and played hard; he had been honest, sincere and totally trustworthy. His death had deprived the school of an outstanding pupil, and the world of someone who would certainly have risen to prominence - in what, was left unspecified.

In truth, Mark Lee had been a rather indolent boy. Only his good looks and undeniable charm had saved him from expulsion on one or two occasions. He was a joker. It had been Mark who led the midnight raid on the kitchens. Mark let off the firework under the Headmaster's car. It had been Mark who flushed sodium down the toilets, causing an underground explosion which put the staff cloakroom out of action. Anyone else would have been on the next train home, but Mark had only to turn those big blue eyes on his accuser and switch on his penitent act, and all would be forgiven.

On the morning of the last day of the previous term, his bed had been found empty. This was uncharacteristic of Mark who enjoyed a lie-in. The bed had been slept in. He had not returned by lunch time when buses came to the school to transport the boys to the station. It was only when they returned to school at the beginning of September that they learned that he had been drowned. Nobody knew the details, but it was presumed he had gone down to the beach for one of his midnight swims and been caught by a treacherous current.

The service was intolerably long, especially to both Adam and Ben who had to stand throughout. At last, Mark's parents, who seemed very composed, walked with the Headmaster to the side of the chapel and unveiled Mark's plaque.

The boy's likeness was carved in profile at the top. The sculptor had not needed to exaggerate Mark's good looks. Below ran the inscription:

IN MEMORY OF MARK LEE  
MUCH LOVED PUPIL OF THIS SCHOOL  
REST IN PEACE

"That's all he ever bloody well did," whispered Adam.

Once outside in the glaring sunlight, Adam asked Ben, "Who the hell was that with Charlie and the Head?"

"Simon Spencer," said Ben. "Haven't you come across him before?"

"No. Who is he?"

"The writer. You must have seen some of the films they've made from his books. Like *Regiment of Blood*?"

"Oh, yes."

"He lives down in the village. They say he paid for the swimming pool and the new science block. He's loaded. I'll bet he's got even more than your dad."

"I doubt it," said Adam, airily. "My dad spends his money on sensible things. Anyway, what's bloody Charlie doing sitting with him and Head?"

"He's Spencer's unpaid gardener. He does it instead of sports.

I suppose it's the Head's way of keeping well in with Spencer. One or two other boys have done it. They say he's a really nice bloke. He gives them fags and takes them out for meals. Mark Lee went for a

few weeks but I think he got fed up with it.”

“I don't blame him. Give me games any day,” said Adam.

“I can buy my own fags and meals, and I won't be anybody's servant - paid or unpaid.”

## 2.

It was stiflingly hot in the little attic room. Ben had given up all ideas of getting to sleep that night. He and Adam had opened the windows and the skylight before going to bed but it seemed to make no difference. He had thrown his blanket and bedspread on to the floor and lay there with only a sheet to cover him. The moonlight made it look much whiter than it was. The school laundry was not very good.

It was a mistake, he thought, to have moved into this room in the first place, but when Mr. Henderson had said that the attic was being converted into bedrooms to accommodate the influx of new boys, Adam had immediately asked to move into it and had put Ben's name down without even consulting him. That was typical of Adam. He would never admit that it was a mistake on his part either.

He looked over to where his roommate lay apparently fast asleep. The wall on that side was covered with futuristic posters and over those hung Adam's sporting medals, glinting in the moonlight, their ribbons crisscrossing over the posters like a map of a complicated rail junction.

He lay there thinking about Adam. There was no doubt that he was a terrible big head and always boasting about his background and his achievements. Mind you, he had something to boast about. Adam's father was a very big noise indeed. Ben had seen pictures of the house. It was the sort of place where Ben's family would have to pay an entrance fee to get in on a sight-seeing tour.

From the way Adam behaved, you'd think he had been at the school all his life. He was always telling other people what to do and suggesting improvements. To hear him talk, the attic conversion had been his idea. But Adam *was* brilliant in class, very good at games and, Ben admitted, putting his hands behind his head, he wasn't bad looking either.

It was Adam's blond hair which had first caught his attention. It was like an advertisement for some shampoo. Adam spent a long time every morning brushing and combing it and never used the barber in the village. He had very long legs too - and a prick to match: Ben had caught glimpses of it when Adam undressed and dressed.

Ben knew that he wasn't particularly good looking. He had to wear glasses for reading, and they didn't help. He didn't deserve the nickname 'Pudgy' which Adam had inexplicably given him, but it had stuck and, because Adam had invented it, it went all round the school. In fact he had proved that, proportional to his lesser height and somewhat smaller frame, he actually had less spare flesh on his body than Adam, but it had made no difference.

“You awake, Pudgy?” So Adam wasn't asleep after all.

“Yes. It's so bloody hot in here.”

“I knew that would happen when I saw them working on it,” Adam replied. “Too much insulation, see?”

“I wish you had said something at the time. I'll bet the blokes downstairs are better off. This room gets all the sunshine through the skylight in the daytime. It stands to reason that it acts like a solar oven.”

“It'll be a terrific advantage in the winter, though,” said

Adam.

“It isn't winter. It's bloody summer.”

“You'll see.”

“I hope you're right.” Ben turned over on his side to face Adam. There was a mound in the center of Adam's sheet.

“You having a wank?” whispered Ben. There had been occasions when he had heard suspicious sounds. He'd never actually seen Adam doing it, for it always happened on very dark nights when he could never be quite sure. When Ben wanted to wank he used the toilets, and was careful to check that nobody could be spying on him. The thought of being seen at it in bed and the news being passed round the school made playing with his penis just after 'lights out' something he did only in emergencies. That didn't stop Charlie Franks of course - he couldn't leave it alone. Everybody knew about him. 'Wanker' was written on almost everything he owned.

“I might do. I can always get to sleep after sex. I wish you were a bird.”

“Why?”

“I could fuck you then, couldn't I?”

Ben felt a pleasant stirring down below. He adjusted the sheet so that the swelling would not be noticeable. “Have you really done it as many times as you said the other day?”

“Course I have.”

“When was the first time?”

“When I was about ten.”

“Don't believe you. You can't do it then. You have to have hairs round it.”

“That's what you think. I did it.”

“Who did you do it with?”

“Oh, she was an *au pair* girl who worked for us. She was French. Bloody good at it too. She said I gave her the best fuck she had ever had.”

“Have you ever done it with a black girl?”

“Only once or twice. That was when we went to the Gambia on holiday.”

“Is it different doing it to them?” The swelling beneath Adam's sheet seemed to be getting greater every minute, though Ben couldn't be sure. He lifted his head to get a better look, but Adam turned on to his side to face him.

“Different? I should say so. They have these huge cunts, see? One of the ones I fucked used to put a full beer bottle in her fanny afterwards and shake it up and down.”

“Why did she do that?”

“Well, the foam off the beer washed all my spunk out, see. That way she couldn't get pregnant.”

“Oh.”

The conversation continued in that vein for the next hour. Ben couldn't make up his mind if Adam was lying or not. It was exciting, though. Ben felt down to his very stiff penis. The tip of it was slightly damp. He hoped that he wouldn't have a wet dream. It was always a bit embarrassing to ask Matron for a clean sheet, though she was very understanding about it.

“I think we ought to get some sleep,” Ben said at last. He would have much preferred to stay up all night listening to Adam's stories but they did have to get up at seven o'clock and there was always the risk of 'spunking up' on occasions like this.

“You can. I'm going to have a wank.”

“What, now?”

“Course. I'm not waiting till tomorrow. You are a fool, Pudgy.”

“Do you mind if I watch?”

“You can do it for me if you like. Another bloke's hand always feels better.”

“What do you think I am?”

“Nothing wrong in that. In Africa, they do it for each other all the time.”

That was hardly a convincing argument, Ben thought, but it *was* a convenient one. “Okay,” he said, lowering his voice to a whisper. “Come over here.”

“No way. You come over here.”

This argument continued for a further five minutes. Ben knew he would weaken in the end, but he didn't want to appear too eager. He was, though. He was very eager indeed.

“Oh, okay then,” he said. “Just this....”

He could have cursed himself. At that same instant, Adam threw aside the sheet covering him and put one foot on the floor. By the time both boys realized they were too eager, it was too late and they were both standing up.

They giggled. Without looking at what he was doing, Ben felt down and grasped Adam's prick. It was very hard and had a silky feeling in his hand. He knew it had been circumcised for when he'd seen it limp its purple-pink head was always totally exposed. Adam had even boasted (causing a certain amount of amusement among his school fellows) that the operation had been performed by the Queen's surgeon who just happened to be a friend of his father's.

But Ben had never thought he would be allowed to hold it, and never dreamed how good it would feel to have it enveloped, stiff and throbbing in his grip. He put his hand on the glans. It felt like the tip of a hard-boiled, peeled egg, smooth and cool. Then Adam's hand closed round Ben's prick, and Ben gave a little gasp of pleasure.

“You're pretty hard already,” whispered Adam.

“So are you. Your bed or mine?”

“Yours. Got a handkerchief or anything? I come a lot.”

“So do I. There's some tissues in my locker.”

Reluctantly they let go of each other's cocks. Ben rummaged around in his possessions and produced a packet of paper handkerchiefs.

“Just the job, Pudge.”

“What about Henderson? He hasn't been round yet.”

“He's not likely to do it now is he?” Adam looked at his watch. “It's nearly two o'clock in the morning. He'll be pissed out of his mind on Scotch. Get on the bed, then.”

It was a bit small for the two of them. Ben squeezed against the wall and Adam joined him under the sheet. The bed creaked with the extra weight.

“Can't you move up a bit?” Adam whispered. “I'm half off the edge.”

“No way. I got my butt right up against your U-2 poster. What shall we do?”

“This.” Adam took Ben's steel hard prick in his hand.

Ben did likewise. “Yours is really nice,” he said.

“This isn't bad either.” Adam began to move his hand up and down. Ben groaned with pleasure.

“Well, wank me, then,” Adam whispered. “That's what you wanted.”

It wasn't all Ben wanted. He wondered whether to say it. He knew that if he didn't, he would come very soon. “Show me how you do it properly,” he gasped.

Adam stopped working on him. “How do you mean?” “You know. When you do it to a bird.”

“Haven't you done it then?”

“No. Show me.”

“But you're a bloke.”



“Can't you pretend? Explain as you go along. I'd like to know.”

“Okay then, first you get on top... like this.”

Ben thought he might faint with pleasure as Adam rolled on top of him and he felt the warmth of Adam's whole body. Adam smelt nice, too. It was mixture of sweat and expensive after shave.

A moment later Adam was straddling Ben's body between his knees. “Then you play with her tits a bit, like this.”

Ben was at the age when fatty tissue often builds up just under a boy's nipples. That in fact, was the reason for his nickname, and he'd always been embarrassed by what he considered the dirty trick nature had played on him once he'd come into puberty. But the feel of Adam's fingertips tweaking his nipples sent shivers down his spine.

“Ooooooh. That's good!” he breathed. He reached forward and took Adam's now-damp prick in his hand and began to rub the foreskin up and down.

“Tickle my balls a bit,” said Adam. “That's right.”

Adam's balls hung low. Ben held them in the palm of his hand. They, too, were slightly damp, and warm. He tickled the skin behind them with his extended middle finger - up and down, up and down. Time seemed to stop.

Suddenly Adam fell upon Ben, making the bed give a groan of protest. To Ben's astonishment, Adam brought him into a tight hug and began kissing him. Instinctively, Ben opened his mouth. Adam's tongue, rough and moist, passed through his lips, between his teeth and started exploring his mouth, right and left, up and down. It made Ben want to cough but he stifled it.

Adam's prick was squashed up against his abdomen. He reached down to grasp it again but just then Adam's buttocks began to rise and fall and his penis began to slide in its own pre-ejaculatory juices up and down on Ben, reaching as far as his navel. Ben slid his hand up to grasp Adam's buttocks, so strong and round and muscled. His own penis, equally moist, was clasped just as tightly in the hot envelope between their abdomens, and now it was sliding against his roommate's smooth skin with the greatest pleasure it had ever given him. They held each other in an almost breath-stifling grip. Ben heaved upwards repeatedly, trying to synchronize his movements with the older boy's. This was difficult because Adam became more and more frenzied. In seconds they were gasping and moaning and biting into each other's necks.

“Oh! Oh! I'm coming!” Ben cried. He gave one final convulsive upwards thrust and sank back on to the bed exhausted. Adam continued for a few more strong strokes and fell heavily onto him with the warm semen spurting out into the sweaty cleft between their clasped abdomens. Adam had not lied: he really did come a lot. Ben felt it trickling down his sides, but then some of it, of course, was his own.

With it all over, each boy became aware of the other's embarrassment. It was all so incongruous. There they lay, still, silent and soaked in each other's semen.

As usual, it was Adam who broke the spell. “We'd better clean up the mess before it soaks into your sheets.” He stood up. Ben followed, and felt warm drops falling on to his bare feet.

Adam turned on the light. There wasn't a great deal on the bed: most of it was on them, caught in their pubic hair, trapped in their navels, running down their legs and puddling between their toes. It was much too late to have a shower so they did the best they could with Ben's tissues.

Adam spotted some on the back of one of Ben's legs, just under his buttocks. “Come here,” he said, plucking a fresh tissue. “I'll get it for you.”

Now it happened that their Housemaster, Mr. Henderson, on his way back to the house from a dinner party, noticed that the light was on in the attic room. Two a.m. was a little late for boys to be awake. Only Adam would be likely to be burning the midnight oil like this, and that wasn't fair to his roommate.

He made his way quietly upstairs to remonstrate.

He opened the door and stood, mouth agape, confronted with a most amazing tableau: Ben was standing by his bed with legs apart, bending slightly forward at the waist; and Adam, the fair-haired boy of the House, whom the Headmaster was now openly proposing as the prospective School Captain, this paragon of virtue was stroking the younger boy's legs and buttocks, and both were as naked as on the day they were born.

They spun round.

Mr. Henderson said nothing for a full minute. Then he spoke and there was a menacing edge to his voice. "Both of you report to me at eight o'clock in the morning. Now get into bed!"

### 3.

They expected to be expelled. In fact they spent most of the next day packing their bags and trying to avoid the other boys.

They had seen Mr. Henderson that morning. There seemed no point in denying anything. He didn't want to know the details anyway. He said it was sickening and filthy.

He was bound, he said, to discuss the matter with the Headmaster who would decide their fate. He sent for them again that evening. To their amazement and relief, he said that the Headmaster had decreed that they give up their recreation afternoons on Tuesdays and Fridays and go instead to work in Mr. Spencer's garden. To protect their reputation, and that of the school, it would be put around that they had volunteered.

And so it was that on the following Tuesday afternoon, instead of playing cricket or tennis, they set off for the village. Both boys carried sports bags. Mr. Spencer had apparently suggested that they bring shorts with them and change at his house. Logical, for it was an extremely hot afternoon. The air was rich with the smells of summer in the country: a mixture of farmyard and the fragrance of flowers.

"That's his house, down there," said Ben. They had reached the top of a hill and the village of Combleton - more of a hamlet, really - lay below them. There were a few houses, some farms, a church, a pub and a shop which also housed the post office. Up the valley a bit was the house which Ben had pointed out as their destination.

"Not much of a place for a rich man," Adam said. "Our gardener lives in a bigger home than that."

Ben let the remark pass.

It was, in fact, a rather small house, but it was old and obviously cared for and tastefully modernized. The leaded windows were insulated and much of the stonework had been inconspicuously replaced.

A shiny red Porsche stood in the drive. Ben whistled.

"Not bad," said Adam. "My dad was offered one when they first came out but he turned it down."

The front garden looked neat enough but long grass hugged at the sides of the house and one could only guess at the wilderness which might lie behind. Ben rang the bell.

Mr. Spencer himself opened the door. He was dressed in a gleaming white shirt, expensive looking slacks and very expensive shoes. In fact he looked rather like one of those models Ben had seen in his mother's mail-order catalog.

"Aha! You must be my gardening angels," the man said. "Come along in. Let me get you a drink."

He went into the kitchen and came back with two very large glasses of iced Coke.

“Don't you have any servants, Mr. Spencer?” asked Ben.

“No need for them. There's only me.”

“My dad's alone but he's got five,” said Adam. Ben couldn't be sure, but he thought Mr. Spencer smiled and winked at him. In any case, Ben smiled back.

“I guess your dad's probably busier than I am,” said the author, “though I have to confess I am occupied this afternoon. If you'd like to get changed in here, I'll show you what has to be done.”

They finished their drinks. Mr. Spencer took the empty glasses into the kitchen. He came back as they were in the middle of changing into football shorts.

“That's some computer you've got there, Mr. Spencer,” said Ben.

It stood on a table in the corner of the lounge, an incongruous touch in a room of expensive leather and dark wooden furniture.

“It's not mine, actually. It belongs to a friend of mine. You'll meet him on Friday. He comes here for the weekends. And Simon's my name. I don't know your names, by the way. All Alky gave me were your surnames”

Dropping 'Alky' surprised and delighted the two boys. They relaxed and chuckled and introduced themselves.

Simon showed them the back garden. Apart from one small patch which had been dug and planted with vegetables, it was, as they feared, a jungle.

“It doesn't look much now,” Simon said, “but with your help we shall convert it into a Garden of Eden - a veritable Paradise Garden.”

“Well I've got the right name for the job,” said Adam, “if not the experience. Our gardener at home reckons you need a lot of experience to do this sort of thing.”

“If the original Adam had thought that, we wouldn't be here, would we?” Simon smiled. “I'm sure you'll get all the experience you need.”

They selected an assortment of tools from a rickety shed at the back of the house. After Simon left, they set to work, hacking at the dense, often prickly, undergrowth and throwing it aside. The sun got hotter and hotter and soon they were stripped to the waist.

They heard the Porsche being started and driven away.

A half hour later Ben said, “Wonder where he's gone?”

Adam was chopping away at a particularly thick branch. “To the village, he said.”

“Wonder why.” Ben put down his sickle and sat on the ground.

“Probably got a bird there. He's gone to screw her.”

Ben laughed. “You're disgusting. He's too nice a bloke to do that.”

“Everybody screws. But he does seem a decent sort. Not stuck up, is he.”

“If your theory is right, that's just what he is.” Ben laughed. “Stuck right up one of the village maidens.”

“We'll it didn't take him long,” said Adam. “That's him coming back.”

They heard the crunch of tires on the gravel drive and the slam of the front door of the house.

“Better get back to work,” said Ben. “Don't want him ringing Alky to say we were lazy.”

Simon came out several times during the afternoon to bring them cool drinks. He said they should try to burn the heap of cuttings and brought out a pile of old newspapers with which to start the fire. But the vines and branches were far too green to ignite, and it was whilst trying for the fourth time to get it started that a headline caught Ben's attention:

## SCHOOLBOY FEARED DROWNED

He showed it to Adam and they sat on the grass to read it.

It told how their Headmaster had called in the police when Mark had gone missing, and the massive search operation that had ensued. Late in the afternoon "the boy's clothes were found neatly folded behind a rock on the school's private beach." The Air-Sea rescue service had been called in but there was no trace of Mark.

Subsequent papers in the pile reported that the search was still going on - shipping had been alerted, lifeboats called out - but there was still no trace of the missing boy.

At the bottom of the pile was the report of the inquest. It was presumed that he had been caught by an undertow and swept out to sea. "A verdict of accidental death was recorded."

"That," said Adam, "is utter balls!"

"What is?" said Simon who had come up behind them with more Cokes.

"This - about Mark."

"Oh God! Do you have to bring that up again?" Simon's voice sounded strangely throaty.

"Well, yes," replied Adam. "They've got this wrong."

"How do you mean?"

Adam read the line again. "'The boy's clothes were found neatly folded behind a rock on the school's private beach.' Mark Lee never ever folded things neatly. You ask anyone at school. Alky used to go barmy. Mark left his clothes all over the place when he went to bed. Anyway, he wouldn't have had his clothes with him. He was always nipping out for a swim at night. It's only about seventy five yards across the grass. He used to wear his trunks."

"He's right," said Ben. "He was a good swimmer, too. I don't think he would have been swept away."

"The sea can be very treacherous," said Simon, "especially at night."

"He used to come here to do the garden for you, didn't he?" asked Adam.

"Yes, just occasionally."

"And bring football kit like we have?"

"Yes."

"And get changed in the lounge?"

"Yes. I see what you mean. There was a tendency to leave things on every bit of furniture. I tidied them up when he was out here working."

"I reckon we ought to tell the police about this," said Ben.

"I don't." Simon's voice had recovered. "I'm a writer. I know about these things. That article was written by some junior reporter on a small provincial paper. He wasn't there at the time. You know how stories get changed when they go through a small community like this. Someone in the village almost certainly told him about the clothes and he wrote it all down in good faith. It happens all the time."

"Well," said Adam, "they're always getting things about my dad wrong."

Simon smiled. "Exactly. They do the same with me. Anyway, pack up now and come in and clean up. You must both be shattered."

They put the tools away and followed him into the house.

"Only one bathroom I'm afraid," said Simon. "I'm sure you have more, Adam. Anyway there's a shower and a tub. Top of the stairs and turn left."

The lack in number of bathrooms was more than compensated by the luxury of this one. Ben had never seen a circular bathtub before and found that it was in fact a jacuzzi. Adam showed him how to operate it

and chose the shower for himself. They had, he said, a jacuzzi at home.

“Only one?” asked Ben, and got into the tub.

Over the sound of rushing, swirling water, they discussed the newspaper report and came to the conclusion that Simon had been right.

But Ben had only half his mind on Mark Lee. The shower cubicle was made of plate glass and Adam was much more interesting. Water streamed from his blond hair down his back. Most of it seemed to run into the cleft of his tight bum but some ran down his legs. Ben found that, if he watched very closely, the faint golden fuzz on Adam's legs seemed to vanish as the water drenched his skin.

From time to time Adam turned to say something. Ben tried not to be too obvious, but it was difficult not to stare at Adam's prick. It was limp now, which was more than could be said for Ben's. He was glad of the swirling water which hid it.

How amazing, Ben thought, the way a prick can grow. He remembered the feel of Adam's prick three nights before when he had held it in his hand. He remembered how hard it felt as it slid up and down his belly. Now it hung down, much smaller. It swayed from side to side with Adam's movements, and water, gathered in the bush of his surprisingly dark and still bristly pubic hair, streamed from the tip.

It was a great pity that it would never happen again.

Adam stepped from the shower, looked round and said “Blast!”

“What's the matter?”

“No towels - and our clothes are downstairs.”

“Shout down for them,” said Ben.

Adam opened the door and did so.

“Oh, sorry!” Simon called. “Hang on!”

He came up the stairs with two towels and their clothes in his arms. “Don't know which clothes are whose but the towels are clean.”

“Thanks very much,” said Adam. “We'll be down in a minute.”

Simon didn't take the hint: he seated himself on the cork-topped stool in the corner and started a conversation. “It's really decent of you chaps to come down here. I'm sure you've got more interesting things to do at school. But I'd love to have you with me again. You've done a fantastic job today. I've just been out looking at it.”

“We'll come every Tuesday and Friday,” said Adam.

“Oh, that's too much. Once a week is more than enough.” Ben felt it was time to make some kind of explanation.

“Well, er, to tell you the honest truth, we've got to. What did Mr. Henderson say?”

“That you had volunteered.”

“It's a punishment,” said Adam.

“What for?”

“Just something we did.”

“Would you like to tell me what it was?”

“Not really, no. It's over now.”

“Oh come!” said Simon. “I'm a writer. I know what people get up to. I write books about the strange things people do.”

Ben blushed but couldn't help laughing. “Not about what we did, I'll bet.”

“Sex?” said Simon.

Ben nodded.

“Girls in the village or boys?”

“Just us,” said Ben.

During this last exchange, Adam had been glaring silently at Ben. Now he cut in. “I've had it with some of the village girls,” he said. “They never caught me at that, though.”

“How ludicrous!” said Simon. For a moment Adam thought he was casting doubt on his sexual prowess, but the man continued, “How typical of that stupid place and your twit of a Housemaster. I suppose he told you it was filthy and you've polluted yourselves?”

“Just about,” said Ben.

“It was really, I suppose,” said Adam.

“Utter rubbish!” said Simon. “Now just you listen to me, both of you. I'm older than you are. I've had a lot of experience of this world. If you enjoy something, do it. Keep on doing it. Forget this silly nineteenth century public school morality. Providing you don't actually harm another person, if it's fun at the time, have fun. Life's too short.”

“It isn't my scene at all,” said Adam hotly. “I just did it as a favor to Ben.”

“Balls!” said Ben.

“Rubbish!” said Simon.

“It's not!” said Adam.

“It's everybody's scene, especially at your age,” said Simon.

“You really ought to talk this over with my friend Richard. He'll be here on Friday. He's nearer your age than I am. He's also remarkably sensible.”

Ben had been waiting for Simon to leave the bathroom, but since he showed no signs of doing so he turned off the water and climbed out, dripping, onto the tile floor.

“You've got a nasty scratch on your back,” Simon observed, handing him a towel.

“I've got several. It was that big blackberry bush. It came off worse than me, though.”

Simon rummaged through the medicine cabinet on the wall and produced a tube of ointment. “Come here.”

“I can do it myself,” said Ben.

“Not there you can't.”

Ben felt a finger glide greasily from his shoulder blade to his backbone. It felt cold. It also felt nice. He shivered slightly.

“There's another one at the top of your leg,” said Simon. “Hold still.” This time the finger caressed the back of his right thigh. He wondered how he could possibly have been scratched there and concluded that some thorn must have been caught in his shorts.

It was only when Adam asked to borrow a hair drier that Simon finally left.

They joined him later in the lounge. The sun was streaming through the windows. Three full glasses stood on a silver tray on the table.

“Sundowners,” said Simon. “A tradition of the house, though it will be some time before the sun goes down tonight.”

They took the glasses and sipped. Ben choked. “What is this stuff?” he asked.

“Just Coke with a drop of Scotch. Don't you like it?”

“Oh, yes, it's nice,” Ben lied.

“A good Scotch too,” said Adam.

“It's the same stuff that I send up to Alky. It makes for good relations with the school. Bottoms up.”

## 4.

On Friday, there were two cars parked in the drive. A small red saloon stood in front of the Porsche. "Shit! He's got visitors," said Adam.

"Probably that chap he mentioned. The computer bloke," said Ben.

The door was opened before they had time to ring the bell.

"Adam and Ben, I presume."

He was a slim young man in his early twenties. He had dark, curly hair and was dressed in jeans and a striped shirt. But it was his eyes which the boys noticed first, indeed, everybody noticed and remembered the man's eyes. They were bright - almost hypnotic - and even when he was serious they seemed to smile, as if the gravity of the moment was a charade he played for fun.

"I was expecting you," he said. "Simon's busy upstairs with a screenplay. My name's Richard."

They shook hands and went into the lounge. The computer was switched on and a complex mass of figures was displayed on the screen. Ben, who did Computer Studies at school, walked over to it.

"A new program," explained Richard. "I'm just finishing it off. It's a game. You can have the honor of being the first players if you like."

"We'd better get stuck into the garden first," said Adam.

Richard sat at the computer keyboard. "Yes, okay," he said, without turning round.

"Is it all right if we get changed in here?" asked Ben.

"Mmmm? Oh yes. Go ahead. Don't mind me."

"Richard, did you know Mark Lee?" asked Adam as he unbuttoned his shirt.

Richard started. He swung round to face them.

"Yes. I met him here once or twice. Simon said that you had doubts about his death."

"Yes... It's this business about his clothes," said Adam. "Mark was a very untidy slob."

"Do you want to hear my theory?" asked Richard.

"Yes please," said Ben.

"I think it was suicide. Strangely enough, I've had exactly the same thing in my family. I had an uncle who was untidy. I'm not kidding; his house was like a pig-sty. What does he do? He cleans the whole place from top to bottom and then shoots himself. I think it's some sort of instinct. Leave things tidy. Something like that. Was Mark happy at school?"

"Not really, no," said Ben. "He was pretty bright. He thought the work was too easy so he just attacked the system."

"He never got on with his father, either," added Adam.

"I got the impression he was miserable," said Richard.

"Apparently your Housemaster had a real down on him."

"I didn't know that," said Ben.

"Well, you can't believe all the stories you hear, but Mark said the Housemaster was pissed one night and started to bash him up."

"That's news to me, too," said Adam. "But Alky often gets pissed at night. That ought to be told to the Head."

"Quite honestly, I should say least said, soonest mended, for everybody's sake, including yours if you reported it."

They had been working in the garden for a little more than an hour when Richard joined them. "God,

haven't you done a lot?" he said.

"We did most of this last Tuesday," Ben explained.

"You must both be incredibly strong. It would kill me."

"Well," said Ben, "you get into a sort of rhythm..."

"It takes strength too," said Adam.

"I can see that," said Richard as Adam, applying rather more force than was necessary, severed a branch. "Anyway, you can pack it in for today."

"But we've hardly started," protested Ben.

"Won't Simon mind?" asked Adam.

"No. He won't mind at all. Believe me."

They did. They put the tools away and followed Richard into the house. "Simon asked me to say that he's put clean towels in the bathroom for you."

\* \* \*

Later Adam said, stepping out of the shower, "He seems a decent enough bloke."

Ben, who had again taken the jacuzzi, agreed. He was sitting with his back to the shower cubicle so as to prevent any possible embarrassment.

"The sort of fellow I can get along with," added Adam. "Hey, what'd you do to your back?"

"Nothing. Where do you mean?"

"Here."

Ben felt Adam's finger, warm and rather damp, trace a line from his spine to his right shoulder blade. If only Adam knew what one touch did to him! Once again he was thankful for the bubbling water concealing the evidence of his excitement.

"Stand up. Let's have a look lower down."

"No... It doesn't matter..."

"Come on."

It was a wheedling whisper rather than a command, but Ben obeyed. He stood up in the water, keeping his back to Adam.

"Can't see anything. Oh! Hang on! There's a little scratch just here." Ben felt a finger touch the top of his leg, just under his right buttock. "It's not very big." Adam was whispering again. "This is, though!" He reached around and grasped Ben's rigid cock.

Ben jumped, then shuddered as passion surged through his body. "Jesus," he said, "what are you playing at? One of them could come in here any time."

"They're both busy." Adam only tightened his grip.

"Yes, but they could come up and want to come in. What would we do then?"

Adam let go. Ben turned to face him; Adam's face was rather red. That could have been the shower, Ben reflected, but his erect penis clearly hadn't been brought on by the shower.

Ben climbed out of the tub and took Adam's tool in his hand. It was the first time he'd seen it properly, in daylight. It was a very beautiful penis. It was symmetrical and straight. The head, smooth as purple silk, seemed enormous.

He felt Adam take hold of his. His heart began to beat loudly. "Let's do it," Adam whispered. "It won't take long."

"All right." Ben felt his teeth begin to chatter. Surely he wasn't getting cold already.



“What shall we do?”

“I don't care.” Ben let go of the prick and slid a hand between Adam's warm, moist thighs.

“Lie down,” Adam commanded.

Ben spread his towel on the floor and lay on it. Adam stood with his feet on either side of Ben's legs looking down at him and smiling. His prick, from that angle, looked longer somehow, almost as long as a man's. His balls seemed huge, seen from underneath, the right one larger than the left. No hairs yet sprouted from the crinkled surface of their sack.

Ben's examination was cut short when Adam dropped down as one would for press-ups, supporting his weight on his hands. Their faces were inches apart. Ben lifted his head and kissed his roommate on the lips.

It was as if Adam had been jolted by an electric shock. He leapt to his feet, wiping his lips with the back of his hand. “Fuck you!” he growled. “You filthy sod!”

“What's wrong?”

“Blokes don't *do* that!”

“You did it to me the other night.”

“No, I fucking didn't!” Adam started to dry himself. Ben got up. All traces of both erections had gone. Silently, they dressed. Adam left the room, slamming the door behind him.

Ben was glad to be alone, for tears weren't far behind his eyelids. He sat on the stool and worked to control his feelings. He eventually dressed and went downstairs.

To his amazement, Adam's mood had changed again. He was sitting at the computer with Richard and laughing at something.

“Aha, there you are,” said Richard. “We thought you'd fallen down the plug-hole.” Ben gave a tentative smile. “Do you want to play my new game?”

“Okay.”

“I hope you're not easily embarrassed. Adam says *he* isn't.”

“No.”

Richard put a disc into the machine and tapped a few keys. The figures on the screen vanished, to be replaced on the right hand side by two pictures, one over the other. Although small, they were well drawn, and it was easy to see precisely what they were: two human penises, one labeled *Adam* and the other *Ben*.

“How does it know our names?” asked Adam.

“I put them in whilst you were in the garden. They show your scores. You have to get them erect and the first person who shoots his load is the winner.”

“A bit different from the programs we have at school,” said Ben, a bit embarrassed in spite of himself.

In fact, the game itself could have come from the school. It was a general knowledge quiz. At first the questions were easy and there was ample time to tap in an answer. Both penises grew in size and jerked slowly up towards the vertical.

Adam made the first mistake. A command appeared on the screen:

Adam: Remove your shoes.

“That's your first forfeit,” said Richard from the settee behind them.

Adam did so. Then it was Ben's turn to remove his. The questions became more difficult and appeared more rapidly. Only a few minutes were allowed for the forfeits. Adam lost his socks. Ben lost his socks and his watch.

“You obviously programmed it with the clothes we're wearing too,” said Ben.

“Guilty,” said Richard with a laugh. “Concentrate, now!” He spoke too late. Ben missed the next question.

Ben: Remove your shirt.

Ben obeyed, and to both boys' surprise, the penis labeled *Adam* gave a decided upward twitch.

Adam lost his watch, followed almost immediately by his shirt.

“Oh, good,” said Ben. “That's given me a hard-on.”

Richard was the first to laugh, then Adam. Ben blushed. What a stupid thing to say! It was, however, true. It wasn't only the computer image which had reacted, as a glance down at his jeans indicated all too clearly. He wondered if Adam realized why Ben was always the first to get into bed.

He tapped in the next answer in the nick of time and to his relief got a right answer.

Adam's turn. It was a chemical equation. He didn't know it.

“Oh well,” he said and, without waiting to be commanded, stood and peeled off his jeans.

Perhaps things had gone far enough, Ben thought. The sight of those long legs with their light fuzz of golden hair was too much both for him and his cathode ray counterpart: both were rampant. “Uh, maybe we'd better stop here,” he said.

“No way!” said Adam. “It'll be your turn next.”

It is very difficult to concentrate on anything when your would-be lover is wearing only mauve Y-fronts. Ben failed a question. He stood with his back to Adam and slipped off his jeans, the bulge in his boxer shorts all too apparent.

Adam got a correct answer.

Fearful - his fingers were actually trembling - Ben tried to answer the next question. “Oh Christ, I know that!” he said, but the answer wouldn't come.

*Ben: Remove your underpants,* commanded the computer.

“Do I have to?” he asked.

As he spoke, the Adam penis jerked and emitted a white trajectory of drops which hit the top of the screen, broke up, and cascaded down like rain on the outside of a window pane.

“Of course!” said Richard.

“But... I've lost anyway!”

“There are two of us and only one of you. We wouldn't want to use force, eh, Adam?”

“That's right, Pudgy. Get 'em off!”

“This is daft!” Adam and Richard stood up. “Okay! Okay!”

What the hell!” He stood up and, manipulating the shorts over the stiff obstruction, let them drop to the floor.

Simon couldn't have chosen a more dramatic time to stop work on his screenplay. He entered the room just as Ben was picking up his discarded underpants which the boy now clutched tightly against his midriff. He took in the situation immediately. “I see you've lost, Ben,” he said. “Let me give you a hand.”

He walked over to the shamefaced boy - and snatched away the shorts.

“Hey!” Ben yelped.

Adam laughed. Richard said nothing.

“Hmmm. You really do need a hand,” said Simon and grasped Ben's cock.

Ben felt as if he had somehow stepped out of the real world. He was, after all, only fourteen. The events of the afternoon had been, to say the least, extraordinary.

Simon led him by the cock across the room and sat down in an armchair. Behind him, Richard and Adam were arguing in low voices, but they were outside Ben's field of vision and might as well have

been miles away. Much nearer was the man who had hold of his cock: a man almost old enough to be his father and who was fondling him in a place his father hadn't seen for years.

And yet he liked it. Simon's other hand was caressing his bottom, now, and gently pulling him closer. Then while that hand continued to knead his buttocks, the other left his prick to cup and caress his balls. A finger tickled the skin near his anus. He shuddered mightily with pleasure.

Something soft and warm and wet touched the super-sensitive tip of his penis. He opened his eyes and looked down. It was Simon's lips and Simon's tongue. Simon was actually licking his prick! What a strange thing for a man to do, Ben thought, but it did feel nice. It felt very nice.

Ben was incapable of resistance. He uttered a gentle sigh. Simon inclined his head to one side and began to lick along the shaft. The tongue traveled down to base, his pubic hairs tingling as Simon's nose and lips touched them. Then the tongue played upon his scrotum. It was finding places in its downward journey so sensitive that Ben's toes curled up in the thick carpet.

Both of Simon's hands were on his buttocks again, persuading them to part. He shifted a foot. He felt Simon's hair brushing against his stomach and then - Ben could hardly believe it - Simon took his cock into his mouth!

The feeling was like no other he had ever known. He felt the man's lips and teeth sliding up the shaft and then the sensitive end of his penis was engulfed in the warm wetness of the man's mouth.

"Ooooh!" he gasped. His heart was beating so hard he could actually hear it. Simon's tongue continued to play on the sensitive underside of his penis. A vacuum developed, drawing even more of him into the wonderful mouth.

Ben thrust forward. He couldn't help it. Simon choked slightly. Then Ben thrust again, aided this time by the hands which grasped his backside. He felt that he would explode .

"I'm... I'm coming!" he gasped.

If Simon had wanted to avoid the jets of semen which now shot out of the boy, he wouldn't have had time, for it all happened very quickly. But he didn't. His hands clasped Ben's buttocks if anything more firmly.

Ben felt Simon swallow. Coming back at last to our galaxy, he looked down. He saw one tiny drop of semen at the corner of Simon's mouth. More appeared on Simon's lips as Ben slowly backed out.

"My word," said Simon, licking his lips, "that was good!" The spell was broken. "You enjoyed it too, didn't you?"

Ben made no reply.

Adam, on the other side of the room, was far less silent. "Do it faster!" he gasped.

Ben turned around. Richard, fully clothed, was sitting on the settee. Sprawled across him with his head at one end of the settee and with his feet at the other, lay Adam. The mauve underpants lay on the floor. What till the end of the computer game had been hidden from view was now in Richard's hand, and Richard, ignoring all pleas to speed up, was masturbating Adam with calm deliberation.

"Faster!" Adam cried again. He began to lift his bottom from Richard's lap with such rhythmic violence that the man had to hold him with his free hand to keep him from falling onto the floor.

"Oh-oh, I'm getting... close! Here it is!" sighed Adam. Quick as lightning, Adam shot. White drops jetted out of his penis-tip, flew upwards catching the sunlight streaming in through the mullioned windows, and splattered down on his heaving chest. He thrust upwards into Richard's hand one more time, sighed, and lay still.

"Enjoy it?" asked Simon.

"He did," said Richard.

Adam said nothing. Richard grabbed a handkerchief from the side of the settee and clamped it over

the boy's still pulsing prick. A few seconds later Adam started wiping his glistening chest with the sperm-damp cloth.

The sun was getting low as they set out for school. Adam, for once, was silent as they trudged back along the country footpaths, for which Ben was thankful. His roommate seemed to be as much in a state of post-ejaculatory bliss as Ben was himself. Each boy had a large sum of money in his jeans pocket.

They had promised to return on Tuesday afternoon. Both were sure the garden tools would gather rust whilst tools of a more intimate kind were put to far more enjoyable use.

## 5.

The events of Friday somehow put a new strain on Ben and Adam's friendship. Suddenly they were uneasy with each other. Ben suspected that Adam in some way blamed him for what had happened. Yet there was no open hostility. They still waited for one another to walk to the dining hall, or back to their dormitory room, or, as now, to chapel, where Mr. Henderson stopped to speak to them on the path. "And how are you getting on with your gardening?"

"Very well thank you, sir."

"Splendid! Splendid! It will keep your minds off filth, One is nearer to God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth. You can learn a lot from Mr. Spencer, too. An admirable man. Admirable! I hope you always do what he tells you to do."

"Oh yes, sir," said Ben with a smile. "And we're learning a lot from him, as you say, Sir." He tried to catch Adam's eye.

But Adam wasn't playing that game. "Sir," he said, "Mr. Spencer was telling us about Mark Lee. What actually happened?"

Alky's face paled. "What do you mean, boy?" he snapped.

"Well, we were at home when it all blew up. As far as we were told he was just missing. We didn't know he'd been drowned until we got back."

"If he was drowned," said Ben.

The remark had an instant effect.

"What do you mean by that?" Henderson said, raising his voice. "How dare you?"

"Well, his body hasn't been found. He was a good swimmer. He'd never have gone to the beach in his clothes, and if he had he'd never have folded them up - we all know he wasn't the type to do that."

"Now listen here, boy!" Mr. Henderson grabbed Ben by the ear. "If Her Majesty's coroner is satisfied that the poor lad died accidentally by drowning, that is the end of the matter. You are a poor one to question the verdict of one of Her Majesty's officials." He pronounced the words 'Her Majesty's' as if they were in block capitals.

"Couldn't you just explain to us what happened, sir?" Adam asked.

"Certainly not. The matter is closed."

"But, sir..."

"I said closed!" Alky gathered his gown round himself and strode to chapel.

"Well... that was an over reaction if ever I saw one," said Adam. "Do you know, Pudgy, there's more in this than anyone's telling us."

“I think you're right.”

They were actually talking to each other again. Ben felt a wave of relief pass over him and catch momentarily in his throat. “What's the next move then?” he said.

“We talk to his friends.”

This was easier said than done. None of Mark's dorm-mates claimed to have been his friend. But they did confirm that he often went for a swim in the middle of the night and that in the summer he always slipped into his trunks when he did.

“He was a loner,” said one boy.

“He didn't talk much,” said another.

The boys who had sat next to Mark in class bore this out. None of them had their places by choice. They told of a constant running battle between Mark and Alky Henderson. Some said Mark infuriated his house master, others that Alky hated the boy unreasonably.

School lunch on Sundays was a very formal affair. The Head and other masters, wearing their gowns, were placed at the end of the dining hall. The boys sat on long tables at right angles to the dais. Portraits of previous Headmasters bristled down at them from the ancient walls.

It was the custom for the Headmaster's written messages to be delivered at this meal by the School Captain. Adam and Ben, who had never received such messages before, were surprised when Butterworth-Symes, attired in his red gown, stopped behind them. They stood. From the traditional wooden casket Butterworth-Symes took out two pieces of yellow paper and handed one to each boy. He bowed. They returned the bow and sat down again.

The notes were identical. They were ordered to report to the Head's study at three o'clock that afternoon.

In considerable trepidation, fearing they were going to be expelled after all, they knocked on the Head's door and were commanded to enter.

The Headmaster's study was one of the nicest rooms in the school. It was very large, light and airy. It overlooked a well-kept green known as 'Tiddlers' Lawn'. Here only boys from the junior part of the school could play. Their shrill voices, carried on the summer breeze, drifted through the open windows.

The Head was as vague as ever. He had to search through a pile of papers on his desk before he found the one reminding him of the reason for their summons.

“Ah, yes. Here it is. I gather that you have been making nuisances of yourselves.”

“No, sir,” said Ben.

“Don't argue with me, boy. You've been asking questions about young Lee.”

“We just wanted to know what happened, sir,” said Adam.

“Why?”

“We were interested, sir,” said Ben, shifting his weight from one foot to the other.

“I don't call it interest. I call it morbid curiosity - nay, inquisitiveness! Do you hear me?”

“Yes, sir,” they replied in unison.

“And I won't have it. If there's one more complaint of people being upset by your questions, I shall telephone your parents and ask them to remove you from the school. Do you understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

“That's all. You may go. Oh, Adam, I didn't see you on the sports field this week.”

“I go to Mr. Spencer's to help with his garden,” said Adam. “Oh. Do you?” The Head looked baffled for a moment. “Aha! I see! You are trying to emulate Mr. Spencer's facility for writing mysteries.” He leaned back in his chair and his face took on a more benevolent look. “Well, concentrate on your English

first, boys. That's most important. The ideas come later when you're more grown up. I am sure Mr. Spencer wouldn't dream of using a human tragedy as raw material for one of his novels. That's all. You may go."

"Well, that was most peculiar!" said Adam as they left the building.

"I reckon they are trying to cover something up," said Ben. A small, fair haired boy limped towards them from Tiddlers' Lawn.

"Excuse me," he said. He looked about twelve years old.

"What do you want?" said Adam.

"Did you want to know something about Mark? I heard what the Head said. I was sitting on the grass by his study. I sprained my ankle, see?"

"What do you know about him?" asked Ben.

"He was my friend," replied the boy simply.

"Don't be stupid!" said Adam. "He couldn't have been." It was against tradition for seniors to mix with boys from the junior school.

"He was. We live near each other. Er... I mean 'lived'." He bit his lip.

"Better go into The Thicket." Ben looked around anxiously.

Chatting to a small boy about Mark, especially now, was best done in private.

The Thicket was a dense clump of bushes at one side of the playing field. It looked impenetrable but there was a way in known only to a very few of the boys. A carefully disguised path led to a small clearing in the center littered with cigarette ends and beer cans.

Adam moved the branch covering the entrance and they pushed in.

"Well, what do you know?" asked Ben when they had finally reached the clearing.

"About what?"

"About Mark's accident."

"It's all very mysterious. I don't know. There's something..." Again Howard bit his lip. "But he couldn't have drowned. He couldn't, could he?" The little boy looked up at Ben.

Adam turned to go. "Thanks a lot!" he said with heavy sarcasm.

"No, wait," said Howard. He turned his back and began playing with a twig. "Did you know him?"

"Course we did."

"Did he tell you the secret?"

Adam swung around again. "What secret?"

"That's what I want to know."

"Better start at the beginning," Ben suggested gently.

They had to wait until Howard made up his mind. Then he turned and faced em. "We were friends since about my eighth birthday. Mark kept on and on about a really big secret. He said he wouldn't tell me until I was eighteen. He said somebody might drag it out of me. He said... he said... he said..."

Howard hesitated, biting his lip again.

"Well, what did he say?" asked Adam impatiently.

"He said... if that happened he would die!"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"You're telling us the truth?"

"Yes, honestly. I swear it."

There was a sudden rustling in the bushes behind them and they wheeled round. Charlie Franks shouldered his way through the undergrowth pushing ahead of him two other small boys.

“Oh, sorry,” he said. “I didn't think anyone else was using The Thicket this afternoon. I wouldn't want to disturb you.” He smirked.

“You're not,” said Ben.

“What's the matter with him then?” Charlie pointed to the younger boy.

“He's sprained his ankle and he's in pain,” said Adam.

“That's true; he did it this afternoon,” said one of Charlie's boys. “Shall we take him to Matron?”

“That would be a good idea,” said Adam.

The little lad played his part well. Supported round the waist by one of his friends, he limped along whilst the other boy pushed the branches aside for them.

“You'll come back won't you?” called Charlie.

“In about five minutes,” replied a light, young voice from the undergrowth.

Adam turned on Charlie. “Still at the same game, then?”

“You're going down to Simon's on Tuesday aren't you?”

“Why?”

“They've changed my rec. day next week so I'll be coming too. We could go together if you like.”

“We don't like,” said Adam firmly.

“Tell me,” said Ben, “strictly between ourselves, what do you actually do down there?”

“Well... gardening of course. What do you think? I did all that front garden. I might be a landscape engineer when I leave school.”

“Do you know Richard?” Adam asked.

“Course I do. Stuck up sod. I don't like him.”

“Have you played any of his computer games?” asked Ben.

“No. Computers are dead boring.”

The bushes rustled again. “Time we were going,” said Adam.

“That sounds like your tiny friends coming back. You'll get caught one day.”

“You won't tell, will you?” Charlie put on his cringing voice.

“What do you take us for? Though what you get out of being tossed off by small kids beats me.”

“Oh, these two are past that stage. Ever heard of sucking off?”

“Can't say I want to,” said Ben. He felt the unusually fat wallet in his pocket and smiled. “It sounds disgusting.”

## 6.

On Monday night they were arguing again. They had questioned Mark's little friend twice more. He was adamant that his story was true. They had made further inquiries of Mark's dormitory companions but had learned nothing new.

“It just doesn't add up,” Adam was saying. “Mark discovered something and they got rid of him.”

“Go to sleep!” said Ben.

“That's you all over - the problem's too difficult; leave it.”

“You don't seem to have thought that we shall be expelled if we keep on asking questions.”

“They wouldn't dare. My father's too important.”

“If your theory is right we could end up dead.”

“I can look after myself.”

“You're going to have to. I think we ought to let it drop. It's nothing to do with us.”

“Bloody weakling!”

“Could I get some sleep, please? Do you realize that it's two o'clock in the morning? We've got to go to Simon's this afternoon.”

“Which I'm not looking forward to all that much. I want to get to the bottom of this business. Anyway, Charlie will be there.”

“Oh Christ! So he will.”

“Never mind. There's really only enough tools for two people. I can take a break and talk this over with Richard. He's got a brain, which is more than I can say for you.”

It was the custom for boys going off the school premises to line up outside their Housemaster's study to receive a special written permission called an 'Exeat'. Ben and Adam took their places in the queue. Charlie was already there. Mr. Henderson handed over their slips.

“You've got a special assignment,” he said to Charlie. “Mr. Spencer wants you to go into town for him to collect some gardening equipment from Allworthy's. He's asked me to advance you the fare.”

“What have I got to get, sir?”

“I don't know, boy. It's already ordered. All you have to do is collect it and take it to Mr. Spencer's house. That shouldn't be beyond you.”

“Why can't he go himself?” Charlie whined.

“Because, you stupid boy, like me, he is a busy man! Now get out of here or you'll miss the bus.”

When Ben and Adam arrived, both cars were in the drive. Simon opened the door for them.

“My word, you *are* prompt,” he said. “Actually, we weren't expecting you for another half an hour.”

“What do you want us to do?” asked Ben.

Simon laughed. “You're really keen, aren't you? Well, I thought we'd all spend the afternoon in the garden.”

Ben was disappointed. “You mean, more wrestling with the undergrowth?”

“There aren't enough tools for three of us,” said Adam, “Ben and me and Charlie.”

Simon laughed. “Unless something has changed since I learned biology and mathematics, there are exactly the right number of tools.”

“Oh,” said Ben.

“You lads have worked hard and created a garden. Let's turn it into a real paradise garden and have some fun out there.”

“Count me out,” said Adam. “It's not my scene.”

“Don't be daft. It'll be great,” said Ben.

“I'll stay indoors. Besides, there's something I want to talk to Richard about.”

“Think,” said Simon. “If you go back to school on a hot day like this without some sort of sunburn, our friend Alky's going to smell a rat.”

It was a valid argument. Adam agreed to go out, but only to sun-bathe.

Simon and Ben went to the back garden to get things ready.

Inside, Adam and Richard watched them through the back window as they spread blankets over the grass.

“What did you want to talk to me about?” Richard asked.

“Mark Lee.”



“Sure. Go ahead.”

He told Richard everything. Richard listened intently. “So, I think Mark uncovered something and was murdered before he could report it. I think he meant to report it when he reached home but they got to him first. What I've been wondering is whether it was something to do with what goes on down here. I hope you don't mind me saying so, but Mark did come here once or twice, and Simon is very thick with Alky and sends him whiskey. Charlie Franks is a wanker and does gardening some- times like we do. Now there's Ben and me. Was Mark sent here to do gardening, too?”

“Mark would have known nothing,” Richard said. “Simon just met him in the town one day and he used to come to visit occasionally - mostly just to get away from school. Simon had no idea of why you were sent here until you told him - and he told me. As for having it off with Charlie, God help us! No, Simon's a bit of an idiot at times and a randy idiot at that, but Mark couldn't have known anything and Simon doesn't go round bumping people off. I think your Mr. Henderson is the man we should concentrate on.”

Adam noticed that he had said 'we' and felt elated. “I don't know what to do next,” he said.

“You keep your head well down to protect yourself. I'll make a few inquiries and we can work on it together when you come down here and the other two are screwing.”

“That should give us plenty of opportunities,” said Adam, looking out the window. “By the look of him, Ben can't wait!”

In the garden, Simon was undressing, laying each item of clothing on a deck chair, but Ben had already stripped off everything and thrown his clothes around everywhere. Adam watched as his roommate's penis rose and grew without a finger being put to it, until it pointed up toward the chattering birds in the trees.

“What happens if someone sees them?” Adam asked Richard. “How's Simon going to explain that?”

“Nobody can. Those walls are too high. Besides, there isn't a house anywhere near this place. That's one of the reasons why Simon bought it.”

“A helicopter could fly over.”

“Or a flying pig maybe.” Richard laughed. “When did you last see a helicopter round here?”

Adam had to admit that he never had.

Richard suggested that they should strip off in the house. “Shaking insects out of your clothes might be Okay with Simon,” he said, “but he's into this outdoor life. I am not!”

“Nor me,” said Adam. Reluctantly he turned away from the window - reluctantly because both Simon and Ben were naked now and lying next to each other. Simon's prick was huge, especially in comparison with Ben's which was still on its journey through puberty to adolescence. Simon's was quite as thick as a pick-axe handle.

He drew Richard's attention to it, trying to keep his voice as off-hand as possible.

“You don't have to tell me,” Richard said. “I know it well.” Adam turned back from the window. Richard put his hand on Adam's belt, undid the buckle, lowered the zip and slid his trousers down to his ankles.

“You don't let him... put it up you, do you?” Adam asked.

“If he wants it. He prefers school boys, like Ben and you, but sometimes I get roped in to oblige.”

“Not my scene at all. I go for birds.”

Richard removed Adam's underpants and sat down. “Not entirely though, in a pinch, eh?”

Adam felt Simon's eyes staring at him. “Oh, this you mean.” He looked down at his prick and blushed. Despite his having desperately tried to think of other things, it had risen and was poking out at ninety degrees from his taut abdomen. “It often happens when I get undressed. It's something to do with

being a teenager, I think, but it happens to everybody, sometimes.”

He might have known that he couldn't fool Richard. After all, Richard had been a teenager himself, and not so long ago.

“I don't think you've any reason to be embarrassed about it,” Richard said.

As if under hypnosis, Adam's tool continued to swell and to twitch as it became more and more rigid.

“You're probably the most beautiful fifteen-year-old I've ever laid eyes upon,” said Richard.

“Do you think so?” Adam smiled.

“Yes I do. And I think you're a fool for not letting Simon have his fun.”

“He's got Ben. What else does he want?”

“You! He's a powerful man, Adam. Upset him and your life at that school could be misery.”

“It already is.”

Adam sat down. Despite their nakedness, he found Richard very easy to talk too. It pleased him to have made an intelligent and shrewd adult friend. He told Richard things that he had never told anybody. He told him about his father whose sole purpose in life seemed to be to make money and who had no time at all for his son. He explained that his father had chosen the school because it was a very long distance away and would make it impractical for Adam to come home weekends and disturb him.

He told about the lonely foreign holidays which his father insisted upon. And he found himself telling Richard the truth. It was difficult on such holidays to make friends with anybody, least of all the girls he boasted about.

He talked about the school and how he hated it and how he despised everyone in it; how he had several times decided to run away but had thought better of it - largely because there was nowhere else to go.

“I don't really know what to suggest,” Richard said, after thinking for some moments. “You haven't got very long to do at that school now and I know they have you in mind for a prefectship later on. That should make life a little more bearable.”

“I'm not sure I want the job,” said Adam. “Walking around, bossing people about and having tea with the Headmaster. Mind you, the teachers treat prefects as human beings. Anyway, I'm only fifteen and you have to be sixteen at least.”

“Simon told the Headmaster that they should make an exception in your case. I shouldn't tell you that, I suppose, but I was there when he said it. I think you'll find that what Simon says up there is rather highly regarded. I'm sorry to bring the subject up again but it's another good reason to keep well in with him. Anyway, it's time we went out. We can sun-bathe, and Ben can keep Simon happy.”

It was a job at which Ben was proving surprisingly adept. He lay next to Simon. Their bodies were so close that one of Simon's hairy legs lay over both of Ben's smoother limbs. With one hand Ben was slowly moving the foreskin of the author's massive prick up and down.

“Oh, that's beautiful, Ben. Keep it up. Nice and slow. Make it last.”

Adam shook his head. He lay down on one of the blankets and, putting his hands behind his head, stared at the sky. Richard settled near him. Adam wished he had Richard's self-discipline. Richard's penis, tiny and shriveled, could hardly be seen amongst the dense hairs of his pubic bush. Adam's, on the other hand, was fast getting out of control.

“You're nice and hard. I can see you want it.”

It was Simon's voice and, for an awful moment, Adam thought he was talking to him. He turned his head and found that it was Ben who had been addressed. Simon was fondling Ben's prick.

Adam shook his head again but he didn't look the other way. It was, in fact, quite interesting (from a purely scientific point of view) to watch Ben's mounting excitement.

“Lovely and hard. And lovely little balls. Busy making cream,” murmured Simon.

Adam raised his head slightly. Simon's hand was down between Ben's wide-open thighs. He heard Ben gasp.

“Oh, that's beautiful - so nice and tight. Oh Ben, you're going to screw so good.”

For a famous author, Simon's misuse of English was appalling at times, Adam thought. He turned his head the other way and glanced at Richard who now seemed to be asleep. Adam closed his eyes too. It wouldn't do to let Simon think that he was interested!

But curiosity got the better of him. He heard slurping noises, liquid and sticky. He opened one eye to a squint. They were sucking each other. Ben now lay on top of Simon, the soles of his feet only about a meter from Adam's head. Ben's prick was buried up to his little patch of pubic hair in Simon's throat and his head rose and fell rhythmically above Simon's groin.

With strong hands under Ben's shoulders, the author hoisted Ben upwards. There was a distinct 'plop' as the head of Ben's penis emerged from the pouting lips beneath. A thin stream of sticky fluid which joined it to Simon's mouth became thinner and thinner and then snapped.

Ben supported himself on his hands. Simon massaged the boy's shiny, spit-wet tool. Adam could see the veins standing out on its surface.

“Lovely!” said Simon. “Would you like to fuck me?” “Can I?” asked Ben. His voice sounded strangely hoarse.

“You can do anything you want.”

Simon turned over and spread his legs. Adam was surprised at the amount of hair growing in the exposed arse. It looked most unpleasant - not like Ben's. It wasn't really his scene, of course, but Ben's arse was much more attractive. From a purely scientific point of view. It was still a school-boy's arse, perky, bubble-like; skin as smooth as a 10-year-old's cheek. And no hair. Ben's bum was... well... sort of succulent... juicy... like a steak. No, a peach. That was it. An arse like a succulent, juicy peach.

Adam's prick leapt to attention and nodded violently as if to agree. He shot another glance at Richard who still seemed asleep.

Simon whispered something to Ben. “Where is it, Si?”

'Si' indeed! It would be 'darling' next!

“In the cool box with the drinks.”

Some rootling around, and Ben's hand emerged with a small blue tube. “How much do you have to use?”

“Not much. Aaaah! That's nice. Mmmm. That's lovely. You've got beautiful hands. Oh yes, put it right in. Mmmm! Now try another. That's it. You've got the technique well.”

“I've only *imagined* doing this...”

“I'm ready now. That's it. Up a bit. A bit more. Here, let me help.”

Out of the corner of his eye, Adam saw Simon's arm come back and a hand guide Ben's prick-head towards the roseate pucker between the parted arse-cheeks.

“Now, in you come. Oh!”

“Did it hurt?” Ben's voice was croaky again.

“Oh no! It's beautiful. Fuck me now. Really fuck me. Don't worry about hurting me. Oh! That's good. Oh! Nice! Oh! Beautiful!”

Ben was gasping for breath. It sounded as if he were running the 800 meters.

Adam closed his eyes again and tried to shut Ben and Simon out of his mind, but the gasps and moans made that impossible. From a purely scientific point of view, it was a change to hear Ben gasping as a result of physical activity. He was a bit of a slob - so passive. Yes. Passive. Ben wasn't the boy for this

sort of thing. Ben should be passive, lying there waiting for Adam to do what he wanted...

Adam's penis agreed. Ben should be the one being fucked. Screwing Simon was such a waste of energy. Those muscles in his buttocks. Adam took a quick look at them heaving up and down and forming dimples on the down stroke. They should be gripping, not grinding. They should be writhing under Adam and not on a nearly middle-aged author!

But it had to be said that the boy seemed to be doing it well. Simon was moaning quite loudly. Adam was amazed that Richard could manage to sleep through it. Perhaps Richard was used to that sort of noise. He had admitted that he had done it with Simon.

Adam wondered who did what and came to the conclusion that Simon fucked Richard. In its sleeping position, Richard's prick didn't look very big, though that could be deceptive. Charlie Franks' prick in the toilets looked as if it belonged to a junior school boy. It was a different weapon altogether when roused. Adam smiled at the joke that had gone around among the juniors last year about it - that people had been known to feed it buns by mistake.

Yes, Simon would be the one on top. He wondered if it hurt. It was pretty huge. He wondered how he could find out. Simon didn't seem to be in any pain at the moment, certainly, and Ben was thrusting so hard that he could hear their bodies, and maybe even their balls, slapping together.

"Oh, that's beautiful," Simon sighed.

"I'm about there!" gasped Ben.

"Let it go! Aaaaah! Lovely! Pump it into me!"

Ben gave a long drawn out sigh and collapsed on Simon's back. For the moment he just lay there. The dimples on the sides of his bottom continued, for a few seconds, to deepen and fill again, and then he was still.

Adam turned over. It was extremely uncomfortable but he didn't want his condition to be seen. He closed his eyes again.

"God! That was the best I've experienced for years!" said Simon. "You, Ben, are an artist! What a boy! What a tool!"

"I don't think I could have been that good," replied Ben. "I've never done it before."

"I know, but some people have the knack and others just don't. Take it from me. You're an expert."

"I could do with a shower, now."

"We can use the hose. Save going inside."

Adam heard the hose being turned on and a few drops of cold water landed on him. He thought it better to pretend that he hadn't noticed.

"Would you like a drink?" Simon asked.

"Yes, please." But that wasn't Ben. It was Richard. Perhaps the spray from the hose had woken him.

"Adam, do you want one too?" Richard touched the boy's bare back.

"Eh? What? Oh, a drink. Yes, please. I was fast asleep." Simon brought them their drinks, and now Adam had to turn over. The wretched thing still hadn't subsided.

"About time you did something about that!" said Simon. He stood over Adam and his monstrous prick, still half-hard, swayed as he handed down the Coke. "I'm sure Richard would oblige."

"I'll think about it," said Adam. He took the drink, pulled the ring and drank thirstily.

"What shall we do now, Si?" asked Ben.

"God, such energy! We shall have a few minutes rest and then, my darling Ben... and then...."

It had to come: 'my darling Ben'! Whoever heard of a grown man in an important position calling a boy his darling?

Ben laughed. "And then what?"

“Aha! Wait and see. I shan't be as good as you were but I'll do my best.”

“What about Richard and Adam? What are they going to do?”

“That's up to them.”

“Well I think they ought to join in.”

“So do I,” said Simon.

“Get stuffed!” said Adam. “Not you, Simon. I mean Ben.”

“Oh, he will be,” said Simon.

## 7.

Still addressing each other in what Adam considered sickeningly endearing terms, Simon and Ben went into the house to make some sandwiches.

Adam lay dozing next to Richard. Slowly, the erection which had been embarrassing him subsided. He felt relatively safe next to Richard. He wondered if Richard was asleep but decided not to look. There was always the possibility that the sight of Richard's naked flesh might revive his now flaccid member. It was so stupid because Adam wasn't like that. Yet, for some strange reason, the sight of a naked male always caused the same reaction.

“You asleep Adam?” It was Richard's voice.

“No.”

“I'm about to ask you a favor.”

“What is it?” Oh no! Surely Richard wasn't going to ask...

“I'd like to take some photographs of you.”

“Not like this, surely?”

“Yes. Would you mind?”

“What do you want to photograph me in the nude for?”

“Well, I have a friend who's doing some research into the correlation of intelligence, age and physical development.”

“I suppose if it's for science it's okay,” said Adam. “Can I put some shorts on though? You don't want pictures of my prick.”

“Of course I do. I think we ought to include all of you.”

“Prick size has nothing to do with intelligence, believe me!” said Adam. “Have you ever seen Charlie Franks's penis?”

“No.”

“Well it's enormous. Miles bigger than anybody else's in the school, and he's as thick as a brick.”

“Is he now? Well, I wouldn't be surprised. But we must include yours. My friend told me, if I ever had the chance, to take as many detailed pictures as possible. You know what these medics are like.”

“Oh, he's a doctor, is he?” said Adam, considerably relieved.

“A professor of genetics actually. But he's basically a doctor, yes.”

“Oh, I don't mind,” said Adam. “Some doctors came to my last school once to take pictures like that. Can't remember what it was for, though.”

Richard got up and walked back to the house. His camera lay on a table inside the door.

“Just keep still,” he said standing over Adam and focusing the lens. “That's it.” There was a click. Then another and another. Richard's tool was deceptive, thought Adam. It didn't look much when he was lying down but seen from underneath, it was really quite large .....

There were more clicks. He had big balls too... the sack hung loosely... Damn - it was beginning to happen again: he felt his penis begin to rise. Richard smiled. “Don't worry about it. The professor won't mind. It's a point of advantage, really. Shows it off better.” He took several more pictures some of which were taken from disconcertingly close quarters.

“Now turn over.” Adam did so with relief, and the camera clicked away behind him.

“That's it. Thanks a lot, Adam.”

“Nobody else will see them apart from your professor friend, will they?” asked Adam.

“Certainly not. I shall post this film to him today.”

Richard sat down again and Adam heard him rewind the film and open the camera.

Simon and Ben returned with two huge plates of sandwiches. Since it is impossible to eat a sandwich lying on one's front, Adam was forced to turn over.

“Guess what, Si?” Ben said. “Adam's still hard.”

“So he is.” Simon looked over in Adam's direction. “I really think you ought to do something about that, Adam. It can't be good for you to keep it all bottled up in there.”

“I'll look after myself, thank you.”

“And I shall look after my Ben,” said Simon. “When he's finished stuffing his mouth, I shall stuff his rear end.”

Ben giggled and sprayed crumbs onto the lawn.

“We'd better start soon or we shall have Charlie back,” said Simon. Adam closed his eyes again. The mere mention of Charlie's name made him shudder. He hoped they would be able to leave before Charlie arrived. It was a very good reason for Simon to do what he wanted to do as soon as possible. He opened his eyes again. Ben was ready for it. His prick was as hard as iron again. Simon's too. From a purely scientific point of view, he thought, it would be interesting to see how easily a grown-up cock like that would go into Ben. Adam knew that the anus could distend, but not how much.

Simon stretched full length on the grass and shaded his eyes from the sun.

“Suck it a bit first, Ben. Get it nice and wet.”

“Ugh!” thought Adam, but Ben had no such qualms. He knelt between Simon's outspread legs and bent to take the excited penis into his mouth.

“Oh, that's nice! That's right - use your tongue like I showed you. Mmmm. Get it really slippery.”

From where Adam lay he could see through Ben's legs to the object which filled his friend's mouth. He watched Ben's lips moving up and down the glistening shaft. A thread of saliva fell from Ben's lips and glittered in the sunlight like a thread of diamonds in Simon's dark pubic hair.

“That's enough, Ben. Ready?”

“I am if you are,” said the boy. “Go slowly, won't you?”

“You ought to watch this, Adam,” whispered Richard.

“I don't see why.”

“In case you change your mind.”

“See what I'm missing, you mean?”

“You could put it that way.”

Simon had arranged Ben so that the boy was lying face upwards with a cushion under the small of his back. His legs were over Simon's shoulders. Simon was whispering; Adam couldn't hear what he was saying. Not that he particularly wanted to, of course, but from a scientific point of view it might have been of interest.

Ben's young voice carried further. “I still think Adam and Richard should do it too,” he said. “They haven't done anything all afternoon. Oooh! That feels cold!”

Adam couldn't see what Simon was doing but guessed.

“It's been in the cool box,” explained the author. “There! How's that?”

“Mmmmm. Nice!” said Ben. There was a long pause. Simon whispered something again.

“Not yet,” said Ben. “Ow! Oooh! Yes!”

He jerked his legs so wide apart that they slipped off Simon's shoulders. Simon stopped what he was doing and hoisted them up again. Ben was beginning to breathe heavily.

More whispering. Ben: “All right. You won't hurt me will you?”

Adam hoped that it would hurt like hell. It would do Ben good to be hurt. People like Ben deserved to get hurt.

The stillness of the afternoon was ripped apart by Ben's scream. It was so sudden; so unexpected, that even Adam shuddered.

“Oh, Christ, take it out! Oh God! Please, Si. Take it out!” More whispering and then silence.

“He's just getting used to it. Nothing to worry about.” It was Richard's voice.

“I thought you said it didn't hurt,” said Adam.

“The first time is always a bit uncomfortable for a second or two. He's all right now. Look.”

Adam didn't really want to look, of course, but he did. What Richard had said appeared to be true. Ben was smiling again. Extraordinary.

Simon moved his hips forward. Adam saw his buttocks tighten. Ben gasped. He did it again. Ben opened his mouth but no sound came. His mouth remained gaping open as Simon increased the pace. It wasn't very fast, rather slow and deliberate. Ben began to writhe. At first Adam thought he was he was trying to wriggle off the stake which was thrust into him but the smile on his roommate's face belied that idea. Ben, it seemed, was actually enjoying it! Both he and Simon were groaning and gasping now.

“Our friend,” said Richard, “says the finest music in the world is the sound of a boy being screwed. I suppose we should be honored to be at this public performance.”

“I'd rather listen to some of my Pete Clegwith albums myself,” said Adam.

“Your ears and brains might but I suspect that one portion of your anatomy is taking an interest.”

Adam blushed. “Damn thing. It's often like that.”

“Not quite so stiff I suspect. Why don't you relieve the tension? They won't notice.”

“How do you mean?”

“Don't be coy, Adam. Shall I give you a hand?”

Aha! So that was it! Of course Adam had guessed all along. It was just a matter of time. Adam wondered how he should react. Actually, it wouldn't be such a bad idea. He really ought to do something or he'd lose the friendship of both Simon and Richard. Well... What the hell. After all, it was Richard's idea. There was no harm in a wank, Save him the trouble of doing it himself.

"If you want to," said Adam, trying to sound as casual as possible.

"If *you* want, and I think you do," said Richard, and Adam felt Richard's fingers touch his penis.

"Tell me," said Richard, gently sliding the loose skin back, "what you were thinking about just before I spoke."

"I can't remember. Ow! Hey! That hurt!"

Richard had squeezed the cock really hard, releasing a warm string of pent-up pre-come.

"You can remember. You were thinking about Ben. You were thinking how you'd like to be there screwing him instead of Simon."

"I bloody wasn't!"

"Yes, you were." The young man's hand was sliding slowly up and down the shaft of Adam's penis. It felt so good!

"He has got a nice arse, hasn't he? You'd give anything to be Simon at this moment. Buried in that nice tight warm arse. Feeling young Ben give in to you. Totally at your mercy. Just think, Adam. A really fresh fourteen year old boy and you could do anything you want to him. You'd thrust into him."

The grip on Adam's shaft became much tighter. "You'd push in really hard." The tightly clasped hand moved down. "And then you'd fuck him. Just think of that, Adam. Close your eyes and think about it."

Adam did. Mmmm! It was a thought. Give Ben the screwing he deserved. Make him feel every centimeter! He listened, with eyes tightly closed to his roommate's loud sighs and gasps. Richard's hand began to move faster now.

"That's right! Give it to him Adam. Fuck him really hard!" Richard whispered.

"Ben!" gasped the boy. "Watch out. I'm going to come!"

Richard said nothing. Colored lights flashed in Adam's brain. His balls ached.

"Now!" cried Adam. His body arched upwards as the first jet of semen spurted from him. He felt the warm drops land on his belly. Then another - and another. The grip on his penis was released and he opened his eyes.

"Christ!" he sighed.

"Feel better?" asked Richard.

"Mmmmm!" Spots of pearly white semen, like large white buttons were spattered over his torso. Richard was wiping his fingers in the grass. Adam looked over to Simon and Ben.

They had finished. He wished he had been aware of the finish, They were still in the same position but quite still, like two statues. Both were smiling broadly.

"Really nice. Sort of warm and damp," said Ben in reply to one of Simon's whispered questions. "Don't take it out yet."

"I think it's time we left them to it," said Richard. How do you fancy a trip to post office?" He amazed Adam. He was totally composed. His penis was still as limp as ever. Adam was certain that it hadn't stirred at all during the entire afternoon.

In the car, driving into town, Richard said, "So, your friend has beaten you to it. I thought that might happen."

"I knew all along," replied Adam. "He's welcome to it."

"It's quite a responsible position, though, isn't it?" said Richard.

It was a remark which made no sense at all to Adam. "It looked bloody uncomfortable to me," he said.

"I was referring to a school prefectship, not the means by which he is getting it."

Adam couldn't believe what he was hearing. "You don't mean that Ben..."



“That is exactly what I mean. I think you've missed out, Adam my friend. At this very moment they are whispering sweet nothings. Simon will ask Ben what the school needs. Ben will ask around. Simon will pay for it and have a word in the Headmaster's ear and your friend Ben will be installed as the youngest prefect ever appointed at the beginning of next term. Just see if I am not right. Anyway, here we are. Shan't be a moment.”

Adam sat in the car, thinking deeply. He was surprised when Richard emerged only a few minutes later. “How did you manage to do it so quickly?” Adam asked. “When any of us go in there, she keeps us chatting for ages.”

“I've no time to talk to menials. They're there to do a job.”

“I wish our Headmaster had the same philosophy. Do you know that we are even supposed to call the groundsman 'Sir!'”

“Bloody ridiculous. There ought to be a meritocracy. People like you, for instance. All the others can be bred to do a specific job and then, when they've come to the end of their working life, they can be put down.”

“Like horses and cows, you mean?” Adam wasn't sure whether Richard was serious. In any event, it was fun to toy with the idea.

“Exactly. Look at that idiotic Housemaster of yours. His brain's fuddled with alcohol. He's totally useless. I gather from Simon that he was good once. He's past his prime now. He should be put down and another younger man should take over.”

The Professor, said Richard, held the same view. Who could know better than a Professor of genetics.

Simon, they mutually decided, could be allowed to live a bit longer. The masses liked his books and the films into which they were invariably made. It was necessary that the masses should be kept entertained. It saved them from getting too restive.

Ben should be allowed to live for a few more years. His brain wasn't up to much but his body had its uses. Charlie Franks, on the other hand, was a candidate for immediate liquidation.

“That reminds me,” said Richard. “We'd better get a move on. He'll be arriving soon. Simon sent him to get some gardening stuff.”

“I know,” said Adam. “I don't think I could stand seeing him this afternoon.”

When they got back to the house both Ben and Simon were dressed and sitting in the lounge. The blankets had been taken off the lawn. There was no trace of the afternoon's activities.

Ben was attempting to explain to Simon that the garden could be laid out by means of mathematics. Adam could hardly contain his impatience. The boy was making so many mistakes. He was oversimplifying things which he obviously didn't understand fully himself; yet Simon was taking it all in.

“It's the radius, not the diameter,” Adam said at one point.

Simon smiled patronizingly and raised a hand to silence him. Adam was dumbfounded. Richard had been right. Simon really wasn't very bright.

“Charlie will be back soon,” said Adam. “I think we ought to go.”

“The bus doesn't get here for another hour at least,” replied Ben. “There's only one to Combleton.”

“He may get a lift back,” suggested Richard.

“No, we're not allowed to accept lifts.” Ben replied. He smiled at Simon. “Nasty men might do dirty things to us in their cars,” he said.

“Or in their gardens,” said Simon. “Still, Richard has a point. If he does get here early and sees you sitting around here we'll never get rid of him.”

Simon insisted on driving them back to school himself, which was stupid in Adam's opinion, as

Richard's car had to be moved to allow Simon to get out. Predictably, Ben sat in the front seat. Adam, in the back, listened to their conversation.

"It's decent accommodation we need mostly," Ben was saying. "Some of the dormitories have fifty boys in them. We could call it 'Spencer House'"

"No, you name it. It's your idea. Anyway, I'll call the Headmaster tomorrow and talk it over with him."

Adam pondered.

Simon dropped them at the main gate and they walked up the drive.

"You boys, come here!" It was Mr. Henderson. "You've both caught the sun. Have you been working hard?"

"Very hard, sir," said Ben.

"Excellent. Nothing like gardening for stretching the muscles."

"Mine have really been stretched this afternoon, sir!" said Ben.

## 8.

"Bastard!" said Charlie. He kicked one of the bags. "Bastard!" he said again. It was as well that there was nobody in the vicinity. They might have wondered, with some reason, why a boy should be so angry with something so inoffensive and inarticulate as a bag of fertilizer!

His anger was not actually directed at the 10 kilo bag of fertilizer, or the 15 kilo bag of weedkiller which stood at his feet or the two hoes or the two rakes which he had propped against the lamp-post. No. His rage was aimed at Simon Spencer who had asked him to collect it without warning him that it would be difficult to transport it to the bus station or get it on and off a bus.

The next bus to Combleton wasn't due to leave for over an hour. The whole thing was typical of people, he thought. They used you. He'd thought better of Simon than to play a dirty trick like this. It just went to show you couldn't trust anyone.

"Sod him!" he said. An old lady glanced at him and walked quickly away.

He stood wondering what to do and was not aware of the car until it had stopped and the driver had wound down the window.

"Excuse me," he said.

"Mmm? What?" said Charlie.

"I'm trying to get to Combleton. Do you know it?"

"Yes. Turn right after the bridge. It's sign-posted from there."

"Thanks a lot. You've got a load there. Are you waiting for somebody?"

"I've got to get it to Combleton," said Charlie.

"Can I give you a lift?" It was a young man, in his early twenties, Charlie estimated.

Sod the school rule, Charlie thought; this offer of a lift was too good to miss.

"Would you?" asked Charlie. "There's a hell of a lot of it. I didn't realize there would be as much as this."

"No problem at all. Here, let me give you a hand." He got out of the car.

The car had a roof rack. The man explained that the rack was usually used to transport a canoe. Apparently he was very keen on canoeing. He produced elastic, hooked cords from the boot and soon

they had everything fastened securely on to the car.

“Right, then. Off we go. My name's Ashley Corper, by the way.”

“Charlie Franks.” Charlie extended his hand.

“How come you've got all this lot? You must have a very large garden.”

“I had to collect it for a mate of mine,” said Charlie reinstating Simon for the sake of his own ego.

“He's a famous author. Simon Spencer. Have you heard of him?”

“No!” said Ashley.

“Most people have,” said Charlie, momentarily offended.

“I didn't mean it like that,” said Ashley. “Of course I've heard of him. I meant, 'No, how incredible!’”

“How do you mean?”

“I'm going to his house for the weekend. A mate of mine is a friend of his and he invited me.”

“Not Richard?”

“Yes! Do you know him too?”

“Course I do! I go down there twice a week. I'm great mates with both of them.”

“Are you now? I haven't seen him for ages. We were at school together and then we were in the same university. “Is he still mad about computers?”

Charlie laughed. “That's him. He's barmy about anything like that.”

“And what do you do there?” asked Ashley. They were out of the town now.

“I do the garden,” said Charlie. “I'm going to be a landscape architect when I leave school.”

“Well paid job, I believe,” said Ashley,

“Here!” said Charlie. “Are you the friend Richard takes measurements and photographs for?”

“Er... yes... well... I'm one of them,” the young man replied, having not the faintest idea what Charlie was talking about.

“Is it all right to talk about it?” asked Charlie.

“Go ahead.”

“Was mine the biggest?”

Ashley remembered something which had happened at school.

“I can't tell you off hand,” he said.

Charlie, rebuffed, fell silent.

“What else do you do when you're there, apart from gardening?” inquired Ashley, “Nothing. Why?”

“Balls!” said Ashley,

“Well, we used to go to the pub for dinner sometimes. We haven't been for ages, though.”

“We'll go tonight,” said Ashley, “But let's have the truth first.”

“That's it.”

“Look, mate, I've known Richard for a long time. He doesn't just measure it.”

Charlie blushed. “That's Simon,” he said. “Richard doesn't do much. Simon does.”

“Does he indeed? Does he do it to you?”

Charlie nodded. “I'm not supposed to say anything,” he said.

“Does it help to tell you that I'm the same?”

Charlie turned in his seat to face him. “No! Are you really? You don't look like it.”

“I'm not sure what that's supposed to mean, but yes. That's how Richard and I first got friendly.”

“Is that why you're going to Simon's?”

“I hope so. I haven't had it for ages.”

“Nor me,” said Charlie. “Not with Simon, anyway. The boys I knock around with at the school are mostly pretty young.”

“Know what you mean,” said Ashley. “Nothing like a big cock is there?”

Charlie laughed delightedly. He turned round in his seat to get a better view of Ashley. He wasn't bad looking. Charlie couldn't help noticing that there was a distinct and promising looking swelling in Ashley's jeans. “How old are you?” he asked.

“Twenty-two. Same age as Richard. What about you?”

”Fourteen.”

“I can see why Simon's keen on you,” said Ashley, looking at the bulge in Charlie's jeans. I can see why you're proud of it.

“It's the biggest one in my year,” said Charlie. “It's funny really. I was sent down to Simon's as a punishment because the Housemaster caught me wanking.”

Ashley laughed. The time, he thought, had come. Keeping his eyes firmly fixed on the road, he reached over and placed his hand over Charlie's prick. It really was big for a boy barely out of puberty. Ashley slid his hand over the jeans. It was well worth stopping for.

“What do you say to a bit of mucking around now?” he asked.

“What? In the car?”

“Have to be, I'm afraid. I can pull in somewhere.”

“Okay. I don't mind. There's an old quarry track just up here on the left. Nobody goes down there.”

They turned off. The car bounced and clattered over the rough ground. Ashley pulled up under a large beech tree.

“How about here?” he asked.

“Okay.”

“What do you want to do?”

“I don't mind.”

“What if I give you a blow job?”

“Okay.”

“And then you can give me one.”

“Okay.”

“You don't say a lot, do you?” asked Ashley. He reached over and undid the top button of Charlie's jeans. He unzipped them and Charlie obligingly rose in his seat to let Ashley pull them and his shorts down.

“Ah, beautiful!” said Ashley, licking his lips. Charlie's tool was as large as many adults', although still only rubbery. He could feel it twitching slightly in time with the boy's pulse. The foreskin, gathered together over the tip, came almost to a point. With finger and thumb, Ashley retracted it to reveal the shiny moist glans beneath and release the musky smell of sweaty boy.

“Mmmmm!” he said, licking his lips again. “It looks good enough to eat. What a delicious aroma!”

Charlie giggled.

“Put the seat back a bit. You'll be more comfortable.” Charlie did so and lay back. “Here goes!” said Ashley. “Don't worry about coming in the car. A lot of people have.”

Carefully he lowered his head and took the boy's now slightly stiffer tool into his mouth. Just the tip at first. He let his tongue play over it and felt it twitch. Charlie made no sound. With some difficulty because of the confined space and their relative positions, Ashley managed to get his hand under the boy's balls. They were large and warm. Obliging Charlie lifted himself a little in the seat enabling Ashley to get his hand further in and to take a bit more of Charlie's prick into his mouth. It was a delicious mouthful, swelling fast now, and he could feel it pulsating against the roof of his mouth.

He closed his lips around it and began slowly to move his head up and down. Charlie gasped. By

this time, the boy's prick had grown to full size and was hammering at the back of his mouth.

Ashley's remarkable skill was well known to all his friends. Practice with a stick of celery when he was young had been well worth while. Now for his party trick. He removed his mouth for a split second to take a deep breath and then went down again upon the boy's rigid organ, this time relaxing his throat. It was difficult in the car but he managed it. He felt the cock-head at the back of his throat and then it was in, hard as steel and thumping inside his gullet. It was a trick he could only sustain for a minute or two but it worked.

He was aware of Charlie's gasp of pleasure; pleasure which Ashley heightened by worming his finger as far as possible into the boy's warm, receptive arse.

Very slowly and carefully, for he knew how easy it was to choke, he disgorged the swollen prick. The foreskin was fully retracted and a bead of sticky fluid had gathered. Now for it.

He took another gasp of air into his lungs. Supporting the cock in the fingers of his left hand, he took it into his mouth again and sucked rhythmically and hard, moving his head up and down as he did so. He felt Charlie lift. He heard him gasp and then the first jet of fluid pumped into his mouth. Then another. Then another. For a fourteen-year-old, this one was quite remarkable! Ashley swallowed as fast as he could but inevitably some dripped from his lips onto the lad's thighs and the car seat. It was a nice taste. Everybody's tasted different. Young teenagers tasted best of all - salty, still sweet. It had been a long time since Ashley had tasted anyone as good as this.

He sat back in his seat and licked his lips.

"Christ! That was good!" said Charlie. "Miles better than Simon. How did you manage to get it all in like that?"

"An awful lot of practice!" said Ashley proudly. "It's a pity I shan't see you again. I could teach you how to do it. Your turn now." He unzipped his jeans and pulled them down. His tool swayed stiffly upright. It wasn't Ashley's best attribute. He had hoped when he was at school that it might grow, but it hadn't. He had been virtually hairless until he was sixteen. Now there was a reasonable growth of hair but it was soft, silky hair quite unlike the wiry bushes of most men.

But his friends were appreciative of his soft and very attractive bottom. Richard had been the first to penetrate him properly, and the memory of that frenzied occasion at school was still exciting. To Ashley's great disappointment, that was the only time.

After graduating from university they had lost contact and he had been surprised to receive an invitation to spend a weekend with none other than Simon Spencer. Ashley presumed that his services would be required. He would settle for a famous author. He had borrowed some of Simon's books from the local library and had taken the opportunity of finding out more about him. He was rather older than Ashley would have preferred. There was just the chance that he could persuade Richard....

"Take it nice and slowly," he said as Charlie's lips touched the head of his cock. "That's right. Mmmmm!" He felt a drop of saliva on his bare thigh. Charlie made slurping noises as he moved his head up and down. His vivid red hair fell forwards over his eyes. Ashley felt the boy's hand gliding up and down his smooth thigh. He put his hands over Charlie's ears and gently maneuvered his head up and down. The slurping, swallowing noises increased as the action got faster. Not wishing to choke the lad, Ashley forced himself to remain in contact with the seat, but it was difficult.

"Oh God! Keep on! Mmmmrn! Great! Ohhhh!" he cried and then he came. The first jet went into Charlie's mouth. It was fortunate that Ashley never produced a great deal. Nevertheless, rivulets of semen ran down between his thighs and dripped from Charlie's open mouth.

"That was great!" said Ashley. "You all right?"

Charlie nodded and wiped his mouth on the back of his hand. They cleaned themselves, and the

interior of the car, as best they could with a box of tissues which Ashley kept in the glove compartment.

For the few remaining miles to the cottage, Ashley drove slowly. His mind, though, was racing. He had an idea.

## 9.

Simon and Richard were both standing in the front garden when they arrived.

“Where are Ben and Adam?” Charlie wanted to know.

“Oh, they left some time ago,” said Simon. “Here. Let me give you a hand unloading all that stuff. It's very good of you to have collected it Charlie.”

“If I hadn't met Ashley, I would never have been able to get it for you,” said Charlie. “That was a bit of good luck.”

They unloaded the car. They? Well... Richard didn't help. He stayed on the lawn. He hadn't even shaken hands with Ashley.

That was typical of Richard, thought Ashley, as he humped a bag of fertilizer round to the back of the house. He hadn't changed. Most people would have felt slighted. Not so Ashley. Ashley was delighted.

After graduating, they had gone their separate ways. He didn't know exactly what Richard did - save that it was something to do with computers. Ashley had found employment with a pharmaceutical firm which allowed him time off to compete in canoeing events.

And then the letter came. He was commanded to wait outside Allworthy's until a red haired boy emerged from the shop carrying bags of weed-killer, fertilizer and some gardening equipment. A roof rack would be necessary, said the letter. He was to offer the boy a lift to the home of Simon Spencer in the village of Combleton where he was most cordially invited to stay for the weekend.

He wondered if the incident may even have been planned in advance by Richard, but he thought not: Richard himself would have derived nothing from it.

Once back in Simon's home, Ashley suggested that they should all go out for a meal. Simon telephoned to get permission for Charlie to go with them. Mr. Henderson was not on duty so Simon left a message with the assistant housemaster.

Charlie went in Ashley's car, Richard in Simon's. Charlie said nothing. In fact, if there was nothing to complain about, Charlie rarely said anything at all. His silence was welcome to Ashley whose mind was still occupied with his new idea.

Ashley had known he was gay at a very early age and had grown to accept it. He enjoyed life. He enjoyed sex. He liked to 'talk smut'.

The thing that Ashley did not like, the thing that he found really repellent, was affection. Ashley was quite unable to have a loving relationship with anybody. Even shaking hands with a sex-partner disgusted him. He knew he had an attractive body. He was quite happy to let people use him. The trouble was that they invariably wanted to be loved as well.

He looked at Charlie in the car mirror. The boy was dim; there was no doubt of that. He didn't say much; that was another good point. He had a huge tool for a schoolboy; that was plus-point number three. Charlie hadn't displayed any wish to be kissed or cuddled in the car.

Of course, there was always the chance that Richard had invited him with a view to another session. That would be better, but Ashley rather doubted it. Otherwise, if this red-headed, spotty dimwit could

keep his mouth closed, he'd make an admirable long-term acquaintance.

The age difference was a problem. How could he explain the role he wanted the boy to play?

Richard assumed it naturally. Charlie would have to be taught; and that meant he, Ashley, would have to teach. It was difficult. If only Charlie were a little older....

He cast his mind back to the last occasion with Richard. How had he managed? Perhaps there was a clue there...

He was sitting in the refectory. Two friends had just left the table and Ashley was scooping the last drops of custard from his plate. He was suddenly aware of a presence standing over him. He looked up. It was Richard. He handed Ashley an address written on a piece of paper.

"Come round tonight at half past seven," Richard said. "I've got something for you." And with that he left, striding through the knot of students at the door as if he were the Vice Chancellor himself.

Ashley was late. He explained that the bus had broken down. Richard said that buses ran every ten minutes on that route and that he was twenty-six minutes late. "You'll need to think up a better story than that," Richard said. "Anyway, now you're here we can go upstairs. Everybody's out."

Ashley couldn't now remember the real reason why he had been late, but everything else that happened was as clear in his mind as if it had just happened. He could even remember the pattern of the wallpaper, how he had counted the coils in one of Richard's computer leads as he knelt on the bed waiting for what was to be the screwing of a lifetime. Richard said nothing. He didn't appear even to be out of breath. It lasted a delightfully long time, after which Richard had withdrawn, washed himself at the hand basin and handed Ashley his clothes.

No 'Thank you'. No 'Good bye'. That was it. Richard sat down at his computer. Ashley washed, dressed, and let himself out, and walked home feeling oddly elated. He had found his master at last.

He waited for days for another summons, but nothing came. Finally, in desperation, he rang Richard. Richard said he was busy, but he had a friend who might be interested.

And that became the pattern. Whenever Ashley felt particularly randy, he would telephone Richard who seemed able to produce the name of somebody in a similar state of mind. But sex with Richard again seemed out of the question. On the one occasion when Ashley actually pleaded with him for just one more session, Richard changed the subject.

Mind you, Richard was always curious to hear the details. Sometimes he even arranged to be there to watch. And whenever Ashley had been with one of the men Richard had recommended, it was a sure bet that Richard would ring up to ask if everything had worked out. What was the man like? What did he do? How big was he?

"That's the restaurant - with all the lights," said Charlie. Ashley swerved the car slightly as he came out of his reverie. He pulled into the car park.

They had just ordered when Charlie said "Christ! Look over there!" A few tables away sat Mr. Henderson, deep in conversation with a swarthy, foreign-looking man. Realizing somehow that they were being watched, Henderson turned and saw them and waved.

Simon waved back. "Damn!" he said under his breath - and smiled broadly at the teacher.

Thus there was none of the promised bawdy conversation. They spoke of gardening, of writing, of computers, and of canoeing; and Charlie had to limit his intake of alcohol which gave him cause to launch on a tirade against the world in general, the school and its staff in particular.

They were just finishing their coffee when Mr. Henderson left his companion and lurched over.

"I wonder if I might interrupt you, Mr. Spencer?" He pronounced the name with difficulty.

“Yes of course,” said Simon. “You’ve met Richard haven’t you?”

“Yes, yes.” They shook hands. Ashley was introduced. Mr. Henderson and Charlie learned that this was no ordinary canoeist but a champion several times over. Mr. Henderson remembered seeing Ashley in a competition for schoolboys some years previously. He thought it excellent that Charlie should be in such healthy company....

“What did you want to see me about?” asked Simon.

“It’s rather confidential. I wonder if I could perhaps ask young Franks to leave the table for a moment?”

“No problem,” said Richard, taking control of things. “Ashley can take Charlie home and... er... put the coffee pot on. Here, Ashley, take my key.”

“Right,” said Simon when the other two had left. “What’s the problem?”

“It’s about young Lee,” said the schoolmaster. “The parents were at the memorial service, as you know. Colonel Lee gave Mark a diary every year and insisted that the boy should write a full account of every day. Naturally enough, the parents would like it back. We have questioned the boys with whom he shared a dormitory. All confirm that he did keep such a diary which he wrote in bed just before going to sleep. Their description of the volume tallies exactly with that given by the Colonel. We’ve been all through the boy’s personal effects and we have scoured the school from top to bottom but we can’t find it. I wonder if perhaps he might have left it with you for safe keeping during the holiday.”

“No,” said Simon.

“Do you think he could have secreted it somewhere in your house?”

“I don’t think so, but I’ll gladly look for it.”

Mr. Henderson was clearly agitated. “Please search most thoroughly, Mr. Spencer. It is most important that we find it... For the parents, you understand, thought it might also shed some light on the unfortunate boy’s mental condition.”

Simon assured him that a thorough search would be instigated the following morning.

“That’s very kind of you. Please don’t hesitate to call me night or day if you should find it or should hear anything about it.” He excused himself and rejoined his companion.

“I didn’t know he kept a diary,” said Simon.

“Neither did I,” said Richard. “I’d better get Adam and Ben onto that.”

“He says he’s already searched the school.”

“The trouble with you, Simon, is that you never went to a boarding school. Had you done so you would know that there is a small group of pupils in all such schools who make it their business to know everything. They know things that the staff don’t even dream about. If the diary is in the school, the boys will find it. I’d like to read it myself before Henderson gets hold of it.”

“Indeed yes,” said Simon.

Richard leaned back in his chair. “Tell me what you think of Ashley,” he said.

“I like him.”

“Will he fit the bill?”

“Oh, I think so. Yes. It won’t be for very long will it?”

“About six weeks,” said Richard. He leaned forward confidentially “He hasn’t got a great deal up front but he does possess a lovely little arse.”

“I’ve noticed. I’d like to see more of him,” said Simon. Richard looked at his watch. “That shouldn’t be too difficult,” he said. “If we go now we shall catch them in the act. They’ve already had it off once today.”

“When?”



“They stopped at the quarry on the way to the house.”

“How the hell do you know that? You haven't got a bug in Ashley's car have you?”

“Mud and chalk on the tires,” explained Richard. “An instant giveaway.”

“And you think they're at it again in the house?”

“No doubt about it. They're both insatiable.”

They parked the car some way up the lane from the house. Curtains had been drawn in the front room but the glow of a light could be detected through the thick material.

“How very convenient - they're using the lounge,” chuckled Richard.

“Shall we go round the back?” suggested Simon.

“No. We don't want to scare them. We can go in quietly through the front door. Ashley won't mind. I've seen him in action before. Charlie won't see us. He'll have his face buried in a pillow.”

For once Richard was wrong. Far from lying prone, Charlie was standing up. With feet planted firmly apart and with hands on Ashley's slim, smooth hips, he was giving Ashley a very competent schoolboy screwing. Ashley was bent double in front of him. He was sweating copiously; his hair hung dankly down in front of his eyes, and his tongue was hanging out. He was gasping for breath like a marathon athlete as Charlie's prick reamed into him.

Charlie caught sight of them first. He stopped.

“Don't mind us. Just carry on,” said Richard.

“Mmmm, Yes. Keep going!” gasped Ashley.

Charlie smiled and lunged forward again. His face was bright red and his spots seemed more pronounced than ever.

A well built lad, thought Simon, as he sat on the settee. He watched the dimples on the sides of Charlie's buttocks deepen and fill as the boy brought the muscles of his backside into play. His penis was deep inside Ashley, whose smooth-skinned bottom was now pressing against Charlie's midriff.

What little he could see of Ashley impressed him. He really did, as Richard had said, have the figure and skin of a young boy. His legs were hairless and his hips so narrow that they made Charlie's fingers look much larger than they were. Simon caught only occasional glances of the diminutive prick of which Richard had spoken. It was stiff and the circumcised tip glowed purple in the light of the solitary standard-lamp.

“Aaaah!” Charlie's mighty buttock-thrusts stopped. His hands slid from Ashley's hips up to his shoulders. He pulled back on them with one mighty heave and Simon watched, fascinated, as the dimples on his buttocks quivered. Ashley groaned.

Richard clapped. Simon smiled. The two participants were still for a few seconds and then, very slowly and carefully, Charlie withdrew his swollen, sticky penis. A few drops of semen fell on to the carpet. Ashley straightened up and brushed his hair back with his hand.

“Phew!” he gasped. “I've had some screwings in my time, but that one comes real high on the list!”

Charlie grinned at the compliment. “I'll suck you off now if you like,” he said.

“No,” said Richard. “I'll do that. Come over here!”

Ashley obeyed meekly and stood in front of Richard. Charlie was a little shocked at Richard's manner, but Ashley didn't seem in the least put out.

“See what I mean?” said Richard, fingering Ashley's prick. “He's got nice balls, though.”

“Mmmm,” said Simon.

“Turn round.” Ashley obeyed without a word.

Richard stroked the silky skin of his buttocks. “Definitely his best attribute,” he said. “Feel that.”

“Er... I'll reserve that pleasure until later,” said Simon.

“Turn round again,” ordered Richard. Ashley complied. “Come a bit closer. That's right.”

Richard leant forward and took the whole of Ashley's cock into his mouth. Charlie was even more surprised. Richard rarely took an active part in the sessions. Ashley's backside began to gyrate and he groaned slightly. He, at least, was enjoying it.

The buttock movements suddenly stopped and Ashley seemed to judder slightly like a car which had stopped and stood for a split second shaking on its springs. Richard gulped.

“Thanks, Ric,” Ashley gasped.

Richard made no answer but wiped his lips on a handkerchief.

Ashley and Charlie went upstairs to clean up.

“You really amaze me,” Simon said to Richard.

“How so?”

“You're such a cool customer. Don't you have any emotions?”

“I keep them under control.”

“It seems to me that you keep everything and everybody under control.”

“I try to,” said Richard.

Richard drove Charlie back to the school.

“When we get there, do you think you can fish Adam out for me?” he asked.

“What do you want him for?” Charlie whined.

“Tell him it's about a friend of mine. He'll understand.”

Richard parked under the towering walls of the chapel. The school was eerie at night. Some lights were on in the boarding houses, casting strange, moving shadows of branches over the drive. From somewhere in the distance came the sound of a trumpet playing the same succession of notes over and over again.

Richard didn't have to wait long. Adam tapped on the window. Richard opened the door.

As tersely as possible, Richard told him about Mr. Henderson and his companion. Adam had no idea who the man might be. Then Richard told him about the missing diary.

“We've got to get hold of that before Henderson does,” Richard said. “If my guess is right, that diary will tell us everything.”

Adam whistled. “Looks like my hunch was right, doesn't it?”

“It certainly does. I don't think now that there is the slightest doubt that Henderson knows much more about this than we do. That diary may well be the key.”

“If it's here, I'll find it,” said Adam.

“Good man! See you on Tuesday. Did you think about that proposal I made about Simon?”

“Yes. I suppose it would be all right. I see what you mean about his influence. The Head was going on about him this evening. It seems Simon's got more power than any of the Governors.”

“Indeed he has. I'll tell him you've agreed, shall I?”

“You might as well. Just this once, though. It isn't my scene at all.”

“No, that's understood.”

As Richard drove away, he smiled.

Adam sighed. It hadn't been as bad as he had feared. Some parts had been quite nice. This bit, lying snuggled up against Simon with the man's hairy arm encircling his middle... this was the nicest bit of all.

"You mean he doesn't even shake hands with you?" asked Simon incredulously.

"Never. Mind you, he's hardly ever at home when I'm there so he doesn't get much of a chance to."

Simon kissed him lightly on the cheek. Adam blushed. "Don't do that," he whispered.

"It's to make up for that father of yours," said Simon. "Everybody needs affection."

"Not with other men though," said Adam. "I mean... it's unnatural, isn't it?"

Simon laughed. "You didn't give that impression about half an hour ago," he said.

Adam blushed again. It was true. He had played it all so carefully. Richard and Ben had set out for a walk along the old railway line. Adam had been very reluctant to respond to Simon's entreaties to accompany him to his bedroom. Simon, after all, was a queer and such people disgusted Adam.

But Simon had talked so intelligently. Everything he said was so sensible. It wasn't long before Adam found himself in the bedroom despite his best resolutions.

Adam had resisted at first. He put up a good struggle. He was quite strong. But then something peculiar happened. Simon grabbed his wrists and all the fight left the boy. He allowed Simon to undress him, and he lay panting and passive as Simon started to caress him.

Simon explained that it was natural enough to resist as Adam had. He quite understood. He smiled as he pointed out that the state of Adam's penis belied the boy's stated dislike of the proceedings.

Adam had to agree. No man, not even his father, had ever hugged him before. No man had kissed him, and certainly no man had ever stroked him so lovingly and gently.

Telling Simon about his father was nice. He pulled the bedclothes over them both and whispered in Simon's ear. He told him things that even Richard had failed to elicit and, as he poured out his misery and his loneliness, Adam began to cry.

He felt mortified but he just couldn't stop. Simon hugged him and comforted him and said that grown-ups cry sometimes. That made it feel a bit better. Adam began to relax.

With those strong arms round him, he felt totally secure. The sobbing subsided. Adam had found a friend; a good, mature, caring friend. That was the important thing. He couldn't care less what Simon did to him now. Simon was his friend and that was all that mattered.

He liked the feel of Simon's tongue playing on his prick and his balls. He felt slightly nervous as the man turned him over, but again Simon had been so gentle and sensibly persuasive about it.

He didn't really like the feel of the cold, greasy finger which had been pushed up inside him but, once it was in, a strange warmth began to suffuse his body.

What followed had felt indeed like a red hot poker. Adam was aware that he had yelled out as it drove remorselessly, centimeter by centimeter into him.

But even the agony of those initial moments were made bearable by Simon's own warmth and the kindness of his embrace. The pain soon receded. They both lay quite still except for their, heavy breathing. Simon continued to whisper words of encouragement.

The pain soon abated and was replaced simply by a feeling that something uncomfortably large was forcing his buttocks apart.

He squeezed the cheeks of his arse on to it. It felt very hard and he could detect a pulse which seemed to emanate from somewhere in his abdomen and which was not synchronized with his own, which was racing fast.

And then Simon started. At first it felt very odd, slightly uncomfortable, and Adam found the man's

groans rather embarrassing. Then he suddenly became aware of his own excitement. Without realizing what he was doing, he began to move as well. Muscles which, in the past, had only been used in the swimming pool or the sports field seemed to come into play of their own accord. It was as if some unseen puppeteer had taken control of his body, jiggling strings to make him writhe and arch his backside upward.

It all ended so quickly. He knew he couldn't hold it back. He didn't want to. He collapsed with a gasp and felt the piece of toweling under him get wetter with each successive warm spurt.

Simon came a split second later. He lay panting on top of the boy. The prick inside Adam jerked rhythmically and then lay quiescent.

Having Simon's semen inside him felt nice somehow. It seemed to baptize their new-found intimacy.

Afterwards they lay side by side, holding hands and gazing at the ceiling. They shared their secrets, their weaknesses, their aspirations and their fears. It seemed almost holy.

Adam plucked up courage to ask the question that had been nagging at the back of his mind for some time. It was wonderful to talk to an adult like this, but he knew he wasn't the only boy to have shared Simon's bed.

"Si," he said. "What do you think of Ben?"

"In what way?"

"Like this."

"What did you think of him?"

"Oh. We didn't get this far."

"Pity. You should. He's a good lay."

"Just that?"

Simon chuckled and kissed him again. "Well, more than that," he said. "He's got a nice arse and his gear up front is not too bad and he's dear; but he's still a schoolboy, whereas you..."

"Go on."

"You're quite extraordinary. Physically you're superb. Mentally, too. I really feel proud to call you my friend. Can I?"

"Can you what?"

"Call you my friend."

"Course you can. I thought you meant something else. You can do that too if you like."

He felt Simon's hand move down to his groin.

"My God! It doesn't take you long to recharge your batteries, does it?"

"Nor you," said Adam with a giggle. Simon had turned over onto his side and something which might well have been a rather damp hammer-handle touched Adam's thigh.

The second time was even better than the first. There was no pain; just the glorious, slippery, warm feeling which increased as he writhed frantically, reaching behind him and grasping Simon's buttocks as if trying to cram even more of the man into him.

He came long before Simon. At that moment of total ecstasy, his backside was elevated from the bed to such an extent and moving from side to side so wildly that spots of semen flew in all directions.

Then, gasping, he lay flat with his face buried in the pillow. Every muscle ached. He felt as if he had just won a swimming race. On those occasions though, he lay on the pool-side to recover, and he didn't have a hard, thick and unyielding prick hammering into him.

"Christ!" gasped Simon. Adam felt himself being pushed further into the pillow as Simon gave a final mighty thrust. The prick inside Adam seemed to bulge slightly, then twitch convulsively for a few seconds. It was over.

They lay talking for a few minutes longer and then, wearily, they went to the bathroom. Adam wiped his legs with the towel as he walked.

Richard and Ben had returned and were sitting downstairs when Simon and Adam had finished the long process of bathing, showering - and talking.

"We've tried everybody and everywhere for the diary, Richard," said Adam. "It's just like you said. Loads of people know that Mark kept one but nobody knows where it is."

"Yes. Ben told me," said Richard. "Bloody nuisance. It certainly isn't here. I wouldn't mind so much if I knew definitely that it isn't in the school."

"I think you can be sure of that," replied Adam. "We've seen absolutely everybody including the little kid who lives near Mark's place. It isn't in the school. I think it's in the sea with Mark."

"Unless," said Richard, "unless Henderson already has it."

"He wouldn't be chasing round looking for it then, would he?" said Ben.

"Just think about it." Richard cupped his chin in his right hand. "The parents want it. Henderson had something to do with their son's death. For all we know he killed Mark or had him killed. In the diary there is something that incriminates him. What more natural than to lock it away or destroy it and pretend to be looking for it."

"Do you really think Alky is involved?" Ben shuddered as he spoke.

"I'm sure of it."

"We daren't search his house," said Adam.

"No. Don't even try."

"It's just like a detective story, isn't it?" said Adam. "You should have all the answers, Si."

Simon laughed. "In fact," he said, "I've got a problem with the latest book and I was hoping you could help me out with the plot."

"Me?"

"Yes. Have you still got time?"

"Sure," said Adam proudly.

They left Richard and Ben in the lounge and went up to the study.

"Richard," said Ben, when they had gone, "Adam's been crying. His eyes are all red."

Richard nodded.

"Do you think he's all right? Has Simon hurt him, do you think?"

"It wasn't Simon," said Richard. There was a pause. He spoke again. "Will you promise me faithfully that you won't tell anyone what I am about to tell you?"

"Of course."

Richard leant forward. "Your friend Adam is in a very depressed state. Both Simon and I are worried about him."

"Adam? Depressed? Never!" said Ben. "He reckons he's the next thing to God."

"It's a front, Ben. It's probably a bit difficult for you to understand. We've both tried to help him. Quite honestly, Simon and I are worried sick about him."

"I don't think you need be. Even if he is depressed, he'll soon pull out of it. You don't know Adam."

"I don't think he will. I fear he might even resort to suicide."

"God!" exclaimed Ben. "Don't you think you ought to tell the Head or Alky or somebody?"

"No, that would make it worse. You can do a lot to help him by just being with him. You're his best friend."

"What's he depressed about?" asked Ben.

"He won't say."

“Shall I ask him. He might tell me.”

“God, no! He'd know that I had told you. If he volunteers the information, listen; but never let on that I have told you.”

“OK. Trust me. Poor old Adam. It's probably something to do with home. He seems all right at school. He never gets letters from his dad.”

Up in Simon's study, the 'victim of depression' was feeling more and more elated. Everything he said as he read the manuscript in his hands was being listened to. Every suggestion seemed genuinely to be appreciated.

“Do you ask Richard to help with your books like this?” he asked.

“Never. You're the first one, as a matter of fact. Richard has his uses but literary criticism is not his forte. He's going away shortly. Did you know that?”

“No.”

“Ashley's coming to replace him whilst he's away. I like to have somebody else in the house. Writing is a lonely job.”

“It's a pity I can't come down.”

“It is indeed. You've got the brains and the body. Mind you, I don't think I'd get a lot of work done if you were here.”

They laughed.

When it was time to go, Adam refused the money which Simon offered him. Ben was furious.

“You're mad,” he said, as Simon's car sped away down the hill. “He's got pots of it, and you've worked for it.”

“Friendship is worth more than money,” said Adam, loftily.

Ben glanced at him.

“You know that I'll always be your friend, don't you, Adam?” He blushed as he said it. It sounded like a speech from one of the novels his sister enjoyed so much.

Adam grunted.

“I'd do anything to help you,” said Ben. That sounded even worse.

“Would you really?”

“Of course.”

Adam looked Ben up and down. Even in the dull light coming from a window he could see Ben's bottom. His jeans were stretched tight over the twin fleshy hemispheres. He remembered how Simon had described it: “a nice arse”.

“If you really mean that, I might take you up on your offer soon,” Adam said.

## 11.

Tradition in Britain's independent schools often carries more authority than a Headmaster's edicts. Sometimes tradition actually contradicts itself. Tradition at Adam's and Ben's school absolutely prohibited any communication between boys in the Upper School and their younger, short-trousered counterparts in the Junior School. Aged from eight to thirteen, they were considered by their elders and betters to live their lives, hugging their teddy bears and crying themselves to sleep in almost monastic isolation; and were universally referred to, scornfully, as 'Tiddlers' by their senior brethren.

There was just one occasion when the tradition of partition was overridden by one even stronger.

This was 'Tiddler Trapping Night'. It was held sometime during the month of October, though its precise date was kept a tightly guarded secret, right up until the moment itself.

Sometimes it took place on the night of Governors' Meeting. On such occasions the staff were always far too busy entertaining their distinguished guests to be very much aware of what else was happening all around them. If any inklings did come to light, they were soon hushed up for fear of attracting scandal, or upsetting the important visitors.

In other years Tiddler Trapping Night might take place on the night of the annual Founder's Day dinner for the staff at the Blue Boar. On this day, only old Mr. Sergeant remained behind to act as duty housemaster. Mr. Sergeant neither liked sociable dinners nor pubs. It was said that this was because no barmaid in the world could refill his gin glass quickly enough. Everybody in the school (save, again, the Headmaster) knew that the old man was quietly drunk out of his mind by six o'clock every evening of the year.

On rare occasions, when no date for the tryst had been achieved beforehand, the event occurred spontaneously on the night before Half-Term. But this was generally considered too dangerous. There was always the fear that little boys, full of the excitements of the night before, might go home and blab something inadvisable to their loving parents.

On this one evening of the year, boys from the Junior School could, by long-standing tradition, be trapped, brought over to the Upper School dormitories and introduced to pleasures and pastimes which were not mentioned in the school prospectus

Tradition also dictated that they might regard only their own dormitories as sanctuary. Once a boy had reached the top step to the landing on which the Junior School dormitories were situated, he was safe.

But once caught, there was no escape. The captive had to lower the stocking on his his right leg to indicate that he had been captured and obey the capricious wishes of his captor. The activities which might be engaged in were traditionally circumscribed. To go 'too far' was as much a breach of the evening's unwritten protocol as it was of a tender backside.

It was said by some that the staff were aware of what went on whilst they were away. It was also said that some tiddlers made very little effort to escape their fate. Some, or so it was said, even waited to be caught.

It might be assumed that only Adam, Ben, Charlie and a few other Upper School boys were involved, but no. The entire ethos of the school changed in the few days before the event. Senior boys suddenly took a great interest in the Junior School sports fixtures. Junior boys were watched from dormitory windows as they made their way to and from the chapel.

One Tuesday afternoon, Adam found himself watching a Junior School football match. Next to him stood Henry Munro, a youth who boasted even more than Adam of the number, beauty and readiness-to-please of his many girl friends.

"That Nelson House striker's good, isn't he?" said Henry.

"Oh, I wouldn't say he was that good. He'll have to play better than that if he wants to make the First Eleven."

Henry leered. "I wasn't thinking of football. Just look at his tight botty. I'll bet he's got a lovely little tassel in front."

"Perhaps you'll be able to find out on Friday night," Adam replied.

"I'll have a go, certainly. I wonder where he hangs out. He'll be as stiff as a poker when I've got my hands on him."

"Imagination is running away with you, Henry," said Adam, glancing down at the swelling in Henry's trousers. He switched on his imitation of Alky Henderson. "A cold bath is what you need, my boy!"

“It'll be him that will need a bath when I've finished with him,” said Henry. “He'll have my spunk all over him.”

On the evening in question, which this year was to be held on Founder's Night, everybody seemed just a trifle too casual. It was all, as one lofty seventeen year old said, “a frightful bore but one had to put up with it for the sake of tradition.” But within moments of the last old bore setting off for the Blue Boar, he was seen sprinting in pursuit of a long legged twelve-year-old.

Adam suggested that he and Ben should work together and wait by the gap in a hedge which was used as a short-cut to the telephone kiosk and post box in the lane.

But Ben had other ideas. “I was a tiddler once myself, remember? I know where they get to.”

“You'd better be right, that's all,” Adam said as Ben led him down through the playing fields and along a well-trodden path which led, eventually, to the lane.

“No kid would come down here,” Adam complained. “They'd be spotted from the road. It's off Junior School limits, anyway.”

Ben put his finger to his lips and pointed towards a large, dense clump of undergrowth. In a moment they heard a 'click' and a little torch could be seen deep inside. Silently, they approached until their faces were brushed by the foliage. They could see nothing but heard everything.

“Cor, they're spiffin'. Where d'yer get them?”

“Our Nan bought them at Fortnum and Mason's.”

“Let's have another one!”

Ben smiled. “Okay, come on out. You're caught!” he shouted.

“Oh fuck!” The oath sounded strangely out of place in the clear treble voice which had spoken it. “Are you prefects?” The voice was tremulous.

“No, don't worry. Come on out.”

“Oh crikey! It's their Tiddler Night!” said another voice. “I never knew it was today.”

There was a rustling in the undergrowth and four boys emerged, crawling on hands and knees under low, thorny branches. The first was a very small, fair-haired child clutching a wicker-work picnic hamper; then another, not quite so small, holding the straps which had been around it; finally two with red bands on the tops of their stockings indicating they were in their final junior school year.

“HmMMM,” said Adam, appreciatively.

Ben knew what he was thinking. There would be several Upper School boys who would fail to catch a single tiddler, and here they were with four! They were not bad looking, either.

“Pull down your Right socks. I'm Adam. This is Ben and you are all caught.

“You're a boy whose dad's loaded and has a couple of snazzy cars, aren't you?” said one of them.

“I guess so. Who are you?”

“Croborough. Adrian Croborough.”

“And how old are you?”

“Twelve and a half, actually.”

The others introduced themselves: Neil, who was twelve, Peter, aged eleven, and a diminutive boy named Kenneth, the holder of the picnic basket, who turned out to be Peter's brother and only nine.

It would have pleased Adam to lead them back to school in a single file - 'The Hunter and his Quarry' - but Ben could never be relied upon to keep his distance and, by the time they reached the door which led to the dormitory staircase, they had heard all about their prisoners' hobbies, relations, school work - and Nana's secret visit last Wednesday afternoon with the smuggled basket of goodies.

The conversation was interrupted by the one person whom Adam and Ben didn't wish to see. Charlie Franks hove into view, his red hair gleaming untidily in the light of the lamp over the door. Both Adam



and Ben recognized the boy with him. No longer limping, and with one sock pulled down, it was Mark's friend, Howard.

"Look what I've found!" Charlie crowed. He cast an eye over the four boys with Adam and Ben. "I'll bet that was a put up job - typical of you two. You're not supposed to bribe them with money."

"We didn't," said Ben.

"No, Charlie, they didn't. Honestly," said little Kenneth.

"I see you two know each other," said Adam.

"What of it?" Howard said. "What's it got to do with you?" He turned to Kenneth. "You should have come to the thicket the other day, Ken. We had a great time."

"I wanted to come," replied the child. "I had extra Prep. that day."

"You missed a treat. Ramesh did it and I shot really well. I got spunk on my chin!"

"Yes, I know. He told me."

A frown indicated that something was going through Charlie's slow brain. Slowly it formed itself into an idea and then into a suggestion.

"How about a swop?" he suggested. "This one's thirteen years old, would you believe? It'll be all over in seconds with him. I like to take my time, if you know what I mean. I could swop Howard for Kenneth.

Ben and Adam looked at each other. Adam nodded. "Okay, then," he said.

"That's good," said Charlie. He was almost licking his lips.

"Come on, young Kenneth. Come and play with the biggest prick in the Fourth Year."

For a moment Kenneth looked doubtful but, after an encouraging wink from his elder brother, he let himself be led over to the Fourth Year dormitory block. Peter rather envied his younger brother his friendship with Charlie Wanks. He wasn't quite sure what went on between them, but he had a shrewd idea. He wished he knew more; and perhaps tonight might be his chance to learn.

"Adam and me have our own room in the attic," said Ben.

"Adam and I," Adam corrected him.

Ben laughed. "Well, you know what I mean. Come on up."

With a clatter of Junior School leather shoes on the wooden staircase, the boys scrambled up the stairs with Adam and Ben following.

"That was actually quite a good idea of Charlie's," Adam whispered to Ben. "Howard might remember some more about Mark."

"He won't have time to think," replied Ben. "He's got a smashing arse, or haven't you noticed?"

"God," said Adam, "you're really beginning to sound like a full-time queer."

"I am," replied Ben quietly. "Simon taught me to accept it. So, dear old Adam, are you; but you haven't learned to admit it yet."

Adam would certainly have argued the point hotly but they were now at the door. Adam unlocked it.

"Wow!" said Adrian. "Are those your medals, Adam?"

"Yes."

"Wow!" said the boy again. "I wish I was like you."

Coming so soon after Ben's remark, the boy's words went straight to Adam's heart. What was he like, really? He didn't know.

"Welcome to our little den," said Ben, indicating the two beds and inviting his guests to sit down.

"Who do you want, Adam? Oh look, I've got some stale biscuits here. Anyone want one? They're not much cop after your Fortnum's picnic hamper; but they're better than nothing, I suppose." He handed the packet round.

“Count me out,” replied Adam. “This is your scene, your party. You make your own choice and don't mind me.”

“Don't be daft. This is the only time in the year...”

“I don't really feel like it. I'll just sit and watch.”

“The boys will be disappointed, won't you, lads?” said Ben.

“Oh, I'm sure you can keep them occupied.”

“What? Four of them. My name's Benjamin, not bloody Sampson!”

Adam sat on his bed in the space left between Howard and Adrian. It appeared that the choice had already been made.

“Oh, well, if Adam doesn't want to play it's just me. I'll take the two youngest first,” Ben said, looking at the pair sitting on his own bed. “You know what you've got to do?”

“Well... er... not exactly, no,” said little Peter.

“You have to take your clothes off first.”

“What? All of them?” Peter looked flabbergasted.

“Every stitch.”

“Are you going to take yours off?”

“Yes, of course.”

“What about Adam?”

“That's up to him.”

Ben glanced at Adam who sat silent and stony-faced on his bed.

“Well, I reckon he ought to; we all ought to” said Neil. “I'm game if no one else is. Come on, Aidy!” He lifted a leg to remove his shoe. Adam caught a glimpse of long, white thigh in the school shorts. “I'll bet Adam looks really terrific without clothes,” Neil whispered. “Like my cousin. He's sixteen and fair-haired too.”

Adam concentrated very hard on famous battles of history. It wasn't easy. Somehow, Neil's long legs and flattering talk intruded. His toes, Adam noticed as the boy peeled off his stockings, were very long.

Ben striped down to his underpants and sat on his bed with flushed face watching the two younger ones stripping down to theirs.

“Do Adrian and I have to get completely undressed just yet?” asked Howard. “It's a bit chilly up here.”

It was. Adam's confident prediction that they would spend the winter in the warmest room in the school had been disproved some weeks earlier.

“Okay by me. You'll have to get them off eventually though.” Howard was in fact already bare to his shorts. Gratefully, he slipped his blazer back over his shoulders. Adrian, on the other hand, had only removed his footwear and tie. They sat back on the bed on either side of the still moping Adam, eager for what looked like a pretty lively show.

Ben took a deep breath, rubbing his crotch excitedly with his right hand. Slowly he peered around as if he knew he was the principal actor making his first appearance on the stage, and then he slipped down his own underpants. The anticipation of joys to come had already started to get him aroused. Tucking his cock as best he could between his thighs, he knelt to remove the last shreds of clothing from Peter and Neil in turn.

“Coo! Ben's got a nice dick, hasn't he?” said Adrian, turning to Adam.

Adam didn't answer. The sensible thing, he knew, would be for him to leave the room but there was nowhere else to go. Every room in the school would be in use that evening. He would have to stick it out. He concentrated even harder upon battles. It had been at the Battle of Agincourt, as he remembered,

that the French soldiers had invaded the English camp and killed all the boys. Mr. McGregor had said that some of the boys would only have been eleven or twelve. In the lesson he had wondered what a boy of that age really looked like. Now he had his answer. Fully undressed and giggling, Neil and Peter stood before Ben with their backs to Adam. They were very different. Peter's little-boy bottom was compact and plump. Neil, on the other hand, didn't seem to have a bottom at all. Just two very long legs which joined together at the top and formed his back. The tan which he had acquired during the summer months was still evident. His brown legs and equally brown back both terminated in a wide white band, bisected vertically by a dark cleft.

A strange mental picture crossed Adam's mind. Neil at Agincourt and he, Adam, as a French soldier... His penis decided that it enjoyed the fantasy and jerked upwards. He crossed his legs.

Neil and Peter sat on either side of Ben. Now all thoughts of Agincourt vanished. Neil's prick was erect; about seven centimeters, two and three-quarters inches, pointed and pursed like an unopened flower. His balls were small and tight and he sat in such a way that Adam could see down between his thighs. Peter's prick was really tiny. Adam guessed it to be only about four centimeters, an inch and a half, long, and it hung down, flaccid, over his equally tiny ball sac. Both boys were quite hairless. That was rather nice, thought Adam. You could see everything so clearly.

Ben took a prick between the fingers and thumbs of each hand. Peter gasped. Neil touched Ben's penis. Peter, more shyly, followed suit and played gently with the older boy's balls. Tentatively, nervously at first but with increasing confidence, they played with what to them was a massive prick, played with Ben's balls and stroked his ample thighs.

Ben's breathing began to sound like somebody sawing wood. The little boys started to squirm as Ben manipulated their little pricks. Both of them were erect now. Peter lay against Ben's shoulder. Neil had taken the pillow and placed it against the wall. He lay back on it with his mouth open and his eyes closed.

"Neil does it with his cousin," said Adrian. "He told me so."

Neil opened his eyes and shot Adrian a dirty look.

"When Neil's older his cousin wants to fuck him up the bum," Adrian continued unabashed.

"I wouldn't shout about that at school," said Adam. "It's Neil's business, not ours, and people might get the wrong idea."

"Have you ever done it?" Adrian persisted.

"What?"

"Been fucked up your bum."

"Oh, I can't remember." Adam felt himself blushing.

"I wish I had a cousin like that," said Adrian. "All mine are a bit religious, actually."

Adam looked down at the boy's lap. Sure enough, as he expected, there was a ridge in Adrian's shorts. Adam's mind was in a turmoil. He knew enough about small boys to know that, despite the tradition of secrecy which veiled the events of Tiddler Trapping Night, there was bound to be some chatter in the Junior School dormitories. Upper School genitalia would be described in detail and dimensions exaggerated wildly.

He wondered what they would say about Ben who had now provided himself with a box of tissues to absorb his imminent emission and those of his two companions. Ben was quite well equipped, certainly. It was fairly large for a fourteen-year-old. It was thick and fleshy but Ben never seemed to achieve the absolute rigidity that he, Adam, could achieve. He looked down at Adrian again.

"Looks like you've got a hard on, Adrian," he said.

"Yes, I have, actually. It's from looking at Ben."

That did it. Adam laid his hand, as gently as possible, on the ridge. It stirred slightly.

“Shall I give you a hand with it?” Adrian grinned. “If you like,” he said.

“I don't particularly want to. I'll do it if you want.”

“Oh, okay, then.”

The boy had already removed his tie. As calmly as he could, Adam undid the six buttons of the gray Junior School shirt, pulled it back over Adrian's shoulders and tugged it out of his belt. Now for the shorts. The buckle was a bit difficult. For a moment Adam couldn't work out how to release one loop from its ring. He pushed it the wrong way.

“Here, let me,” said Adrian. It clicked apart. The zip was easy enough. He lifted his bottom from the bed and the shorts fell round his ankles. Adam grasped the ridge through a pair of boxer shorts covered with cartoon characters. The feeling of holding something so young, so warm, so alive and, yes, kicking, gave Adam a terrific thrill.

“Shall I take 'em off?” asked Adrian.

“Yup. Go on.” Adam's voice sounded hoarse.

“Better take your hand off then.” Adrian stood up. “There!”

Adam had seen a good many boys' behinds in his time. In changing rooms and dormitories he had admired their symmetry. More recently he had learned that a bottom was a very tactile thing. A bottom had a smoothness, a roundness that existed nowhere else. At that moment he realized that, like fruit, they ripened. Little Peter's bottom was nice and compact. Ben's was big and, to Adam's way of thinking, rather too soft. 'Over ripe' would be the best way of describing it. Adrian was just perfect. The gluteal folds and the deep, dark cleft made an inverted Y. It was beautifully smooth and gleaming white. He reached out and touched it.

As a small boy, Adam had pleaded with the servants to let him break the surface of a newly opened tin of polish, or to burst the bubble-pack of supermarket vegetables. To penetrate Adrian's arse would be a thrill much, much, more intense!

The boy turned around. His front was as beautiful as his rear. Eleven centimeters, over four inches, of delicious boy-cock pointed stiffly at Adam's face. The foreskin was slightly drawn back to expose the domed purple glans. His balls hung loose in their crinkled sack. But the boy's most exciting asset was his pubic hair. It was silky and sparse enough to set off the milky-white skin from which it grew. It formed an inverted triangle with the top edge as straight as if it had been shaved by an expert barber.

“Gosh, you're really nice,” said Adam. He reached around Adrian's waist and drew him gently forward. The glans touched his chin. He felt it moving up and down slightly in time with the smaller boy's pulse. He put a finger under the shaft and lifted it gently to his lips.

“Aren't you going to get undressed too?” asked Adrian. “It'd be better, and much more fun.”

It was a sensible enough suggestion. There was no doubt in Adam's mind that he would 'spunk up' pretty liberally. It would be a disaster if it all happened inside his trousers and shorts! He stood to undress.

Howard, whilst all this had been going on, had sat quite still with his eyes fixed on the activity on the other bed. At that moment only one of the participants was active. Ben, his prick limp and drooping, hugged a seemingly sleeping Neil, and nuzzled the younger boy's neck. Peter lay on his side with one of Ben's legs clamped between his own and appeared to be copulating, canine fashion, against Ben's thigh. His little bottom rose and fell and gyrated wildly.

“I reckon I'll get undressed as well,” Howard said. “It's getting pretty warm in here now.” He flung off the blazer which had been draped over his bare shoulders and stood up. It was immediately apparent that, when revealed, any lack of width in Adrian's cock would be amply compensated for by Howard's.

Even allowing for the bunched-up material which hid it from view, it was a thick prick for any Junior School boy. Its owner smiled cheekily and undid his belt. "Don't look!" he told Adam, who ignored the order. Still grinning, he turned to face the wall, lowered his trousers and pants together and stepped out of them.

Adam kicked off his underpants at exactly the same time and sat down again.

"Wow, yours is absolutely huge!" Adrian said. Adam felt Adrian's fingers touch it with sincere younger-boy reverence.

Howard was probably less than a year older than Adrian but the difference in the two was striking. In the first place, Howard had tiny brushes of soft hair in his armpits. Adam had already noticed the down upon his upper lip. A similar golden fuzz covered the boy's legs. His bottom was less protuberant than Adrian's. It seemed slightly broader, though that could have been the effect of the boy's narrow waist. The greatest difference, though, was in the shape and the depth of the furrow which bisected it. Adrian's seemed just a dark line on the surface of a smooth, white globe. Howard's was a definite cleft.

"Well, turn round then," said Adam.

Howard turned and smiled shyly. Neither Adam, Adrian, nor Ben (who was taking an interest in the proceedings again) noticed the smile. Howard's prick was not as long as Adrian's but the early promise of a substantial diameter proved to have been correct. It was almost as thick as Adam's and it pointed upwards at a sharp angle.

"The boys in the dorm call it 'Howard's sausage roll'," said Adrian.

"I've never seen a sausage roll with hair round it," replied Adam.

Howard's bush was, indeed, denser than Adrian's. It was darker too.

"It looks good enough to eat," said Adam. "Or at least... er... to suck."

"Have you ever done that?" asked Adrian; "sucked somebody's thing?" As he spoke he played very gently with Adam's penis. Adam felt his heartbeat speed up.

"Once or twice." He was a little more truthful than in his reply to Adrian's previous question.

Adrian screwed up his face. "I don't think I should like it," he said. "Do they taste of piss?"

"Of course not. They taste nice."

"All I've ever done is wanked," said Howard. "That's a nice feeling."

Adam had an idea. It was, he thought, one of his most brilliant ideas and it accorded well with his senior status. These boys had to learn from someone. It was even possible that, after Ben and he had left the school, they might be invited down to Simon's. Simon would certainly approve of Adrian's arse. He felt a slight pang of jealousy at the thought.

"I could teach you a few tricks, if you like," he said.

"I've never had a naked teacher before," Howard laughed. "Specially one with a prick like you've got! What does spunk actually taste like?"

"It's time you both learned," said Adam. "Now, Howard, if you get up on the bed..."

"Not upside down?" The boy sounded nervous.

"Of course not, silly."

Howard climbed onto the bed and lay with his legs parted as widely as a narrow school bed would allow. The cleft of his bottom was even more apparent. Deep down, Adam could see his little, pink, pursed orifice. That could wait - there was always another time. It was Adrian he was after. If anything, Howard was a little too 'ripe'. Adrian was just right. It was a pity that actual screwing was taboo. But, if Adam's plan worked, he would enjoy the next best thing. His prick began to ooze slightly in anticipation.

From a drawer he took a tube of Nivea. Ben raised his eyebrows but said nothing. This was hardly

surprising, for Peter was working on his tool again with such vigor that his little hand was a blur.

“Now, Adrian, I want you to keel between Howard's legs and face him,” said Adam. “Yes, that's about right. See if you can touch his prick with your lips. Mmmm. You need to come back a bit. You're tall for your age. That's better. You start by licking it. Lick his balls too. He'll like that.”

Indeed he did. The moment Adrian's tongue touched his scrotum, Howard arched upwards and parted his legs farther so that one fell off the edge of the bed.

“You just lie back and enjoy it, Howard,” said Adam. “Let him do all the work.”

Adrian stopped and knelt upright again. For a moment Adam thought that the boy was going to desist. He was wrong. Adrian licked his lips and returned to his task with renewed vigor. Pleasant, wet noises blended with the sound of Howard's breathing which was becoming more audible by the second.

“Good! Make it nice and wet. Don't forget his balls.”

Adam was enjoying his new-found ability as sexual mentor.

There was something else which he was enjoying, too. Adrian's white rump seemed to become more and more taut and more and more attractive as the boy's head went lower and lower. As if aware of Adam's thoughts, he parted his legs slightly for greater stability, and Adam had an even better view.

Adrian gasped slightly as Adam reached under him to feel for his cock. It was still hard - a good sign. The foreskin was tight. Adam found that, although he could pull it forwards, the all-important backward stroke made the boy wince. No matter. His balls felt nice - cool and delicate.

“Now take the tip in your mouth,” Adam directed. “Just the tip. Be careful with your teeth.”

Howard moaned. “That's it. That's just right. Now, let your tongue play with it.”

Howard moaned again. Adam continued slowly to manipulate Adrian's foreskin. There was no need for further instruction. He watched Howard's glistening shaft vanish millimeter by millimeter into Adrian's mouth. Howard wriggled with pleasure.

Adrian's bottom was now pointing at the ceiling. Taking his hand away from the boy's cock, Adam laid it on his left buttock. He could feel the muscles moving under the soft skin as Adrian moved his trunk up and down. Using both hands, Adam parted the cheeks. He'd never actually seen an anus so close-up before. A little wrinkled pink spot which Simon had once referred to as 'The Entrance to Paradise.'

He found that he could keep the cheeks apart with the finger and thumb of one hand. He knew from his own experience with Simon that the skin between scrotum and anus was super-sensitive. The peri-something, Simon had called it. Who cared what it was called? Very carefully he ran his finger nail from the base of Adrian's loose hanging scrotum up to the tiny spot. The effect was immediate and startling.

Adrian wriggled his bottom, causing Adam's fingers to lose their grip. He opened the cleft and did it again. Another delighted wriggle. This time, Adam managed to keep the cheeks apart. Now he went to work seriously, tickling here, stopping there, brushing the skin lightly one minute and rubbing with more vigor the next.

Adrian moaned. Howard sighed. Despite their youth, Adam was aware that it wouldn't be long now.

As he opened the tube, Adam had brief second thoughts. Was this really wise? Oh well. What the hell. Simon had done it to him. Mind you, he was fifteen; this kid was only twelve.

Lust and curiosity overcame conscience. He touched the magic spot with a greasy finger. Adrian wriggled again and speeded up his nodding movements. His hair fell down over his eyes.

Adam pressed. There was no reaction. He pressed again. Was it his imagination or did it yield slightly? There was only one way to find out. He increased the pressure.

“Relax,” he said, and pushed again. This time Adrian was pushed right down. He choked as Howard's penis touched the back of his throat. Then he moaned slightly and Adam realized that something was gripping the top joint of his finger. He was in! Adrian, recovered from his choking attack, took

Howard's streaming wet penis into his mouth again. His head began to work up and down like a 'nodding donkey' oil pump.

Gradually the grip on Adam's finger loosened. He looked down to see what he was doing and noticed how his sunburned finger contrasted with the whiteness of the flesh in which it was impaled. Very gently he pushed in some more. Down to the knuckle - a pause - then a bit more.

The sensitive nerve endings in his fingers began to send a succession of agreeable sensations back to Adam's brain. Softness, warmth, a pleasant, almost oily, moistness. The scent of an aroused boy caused adrenalin to rush into his bloodstream. His heart beat faster and his mouth dried.

A spot of lubricant formed at the tip of Adrian's prick. Howard had his hands under his hips and was beginning to heave upwards.

Very gently, Adam pushed in the remainder of his finger. The effect was remarkable. He felt a spasm go through the boy's body. It seemed to start at his fingertip and travel forward along the spine. Adam actually saw the boy's shoulders tremble. He moved his finger from side to side feeling the soft warm tissues deep inside. He touched some sort of fold. The boy shuddered again.

Suddenly, Howard began to squirm uncontrollably. "It's... It's..." he cried and thrust upwards violently. Adrian jumped back, impaling himself even further on Adam's finger. He yelled and knelt forward again. A long white stream tumbled from his slightly parted lips. Even more cascaded from Howard's cock.

"Oh, Jesus!" Howard sighed. "That was brilliant!" Adrian wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

"I'll do you now," said Howard. "Change places."

It is difficult, if not impossible, and certainly inconvenient, to move when a handsome fifteen-year-old boy has his finger deep in your anus, especially when the finger is the cause of the pleasant sensations which Adrian was enjoying. He stayed where he was. Howard, when he realized the situation, reached forward, grasped his friend's streaming cock and began to work on it. He had hardly started when it happened. Adam's finger was suddenly grasped so tightly that the grip almost hurt. Dimples formed in the sides of Adrian's rump. Adam was just in time to clap a tissue over the combined hand and prick. Adrian shuddered and gasped and the Kleenex became saturated. The grip on Adam's finger slackened. Very carefully, he pulled it out and watched, fascinated as the muscles closed the opening again.

It was Howard's suggestion that he and Adrian should 'do it' to Adam. Adam wiped away most of the sticky mess from the bed and lay down. He closed his eyes. He didn't know who it was who tickled his balls so cleverly. The hand on his penis felt soft. He started to think of Adrian again. It wouldn't be just a finger next time.

It happened all too quickly. The familiar slight ache in his balls, the strange sweating sensation on his face and then - bliss as three jets of semen spurted in rapid succession. Some of it landed on the boys; some on the floor and some on the bed.

They cleaned themselves and each other as best they could with Ben's supply of tissues. Adam was reminded of a previous occasion in that very room when he and Ben had been caught by Alky. It had all started from that. In retrospect, he was glad that things had worked out as they had.

Adam and Ben walked the boys over to the Junior School. There was always the chance that they might get caught a second time.

"It might not be a good idea to tell your friends what we did," said Adam.

Adrian smiled. "I don't remember a thing," he replied. "Perhaps we'll have to do it again some day to remind me!" They ran up the stairs to bed.

In the darkness between the buttresses of the chapel, a tall, dark youth disengaged himself from the

clasping arms of his eleven year old lover and walked across the road to the Upper School.

“Hi Ben! Hi Adam!” he called as their paths met.

“Hi Henry!”

“Looking forward to the holiday?”

“You bet!” said Adam.

“I know what you mean. I'm going to ring my bird from the station. First thing I'm going to do is get my leg over her!

“Me too!” said Adam. “I haven't had a good fuck for ages. My bird said she can't wait.”

“Mine too. This place is like a fucking monastery, isn't it?”

“Sure is,” said Adam. “Good night.”

## 12.

Weeks passed. The weather changed. Summer sunshine gave way to damp and drizzle.

The 'gardening' afternoons took on a regular pattern. The boys would arrive early in the afternoon and Richard, who always seemed to be there, would announce who would spend the afternoon with whom. Simon seemed to prefer Adam but Ben also spent frequent afternoons in the front bedroom.

Richard, they decided, was a strange young man. He very rarely did anything with the boy with whom he spent the afternoon. If he did, it was at the boy's request. Ben occasionally asked to be masturbated or sucked off in which case Richard obliged. Adam never asked.

But the most peculiar thing - which both boys noticed independently - was that the conversation with Richard was always about Adam.

When Adam himself was with Richard he was questioned for hours about his life. Sometimes, but not often, Richard would want to know of the boy's last session with Simon. Sometimes he talked about his friend the professor. In the main, however, he dwelt on Adam's dissatisfaction with the school; his non-existent home life and the scorn he felt for other people.

If the subject was changed at all, Richard would revert to Mark's death, his conviction that Mr. Henderson had something to do with it, and the search for the missing diary.

When he was with Ben they spoke of Adam's depression. Ben began to understand the reason for some of Adam's less attractive traits: his scorn for everything connected with the school, the way in which he ordered Ben about, and the occasional outbursts of fury on the rare occasions when he failed to excel in school.

They were all, Richard explained, a defense built like a wall round an exceptionally vulnerable person.

There were at least two occasions when Adam had spent the afternoon with Richard and returned to school visibly shaken. He didn't tell Ben what had happened, and Ben was too polite to ask. He wondered if Richard had made a proposal which had upset his roommate, but that was unlikely. He assumed Richard had been asking probing questions which had upset Adam. He was just told to 'Shut up!' and Adam spent the next few days brooding silently or exploding with wrath at some minor upset.

The only excitement that term was the break-in at Mr. Henderson's house. It happened on a Saturday



evening when the Housemaster was, as usual, out. Most of the boys were away for the weekend. Ben had gone. Charlie Franks had gone. Of several hundred boys, only Adam and about six others remained on the premises. Simon had asked Adam to spend the weekend with him, but Adam had a lot of school work to do in preparation for the exams. One had to consider, too, what the other boys would think.

But Simon had him out to dinner on the Saturday night. Adam enjoyed his new status as the personal friend of a famous author. It was nice, too, to talk man-to-man about all sorts of things. They spoke of Ben.

“Have you screwed him yet?” asked Simon.

“Not yet. I was going to ask you about that. When Richard goes away, could we do it round at your place? We daren't do it at school. Old Alky watches us both like a hawk. If we go to the showers together he's there snooping.”

“What about me?” asked Simon. “What do I get?”

“You'll have Ashley.”

“Thanks a million! Ashley is all right and he will have his uses. I don't deny that I shall spend a few nights with him, but you and Ben - especially you - are favored company in the afternoons.”

“You could watch.”

“I'll think about it.”

When they arrived back at the school, some kind of drama was in full swing. A police car stood outside the Henderson's house with its roof-lamp flashing.

“I wonder if it's something to do with Mark. Perhaps they've come to arrest him,” said Adam.

Simon left him and went into the house. He emerged a few minutes later.

“A break-in,” he said.

“What did they take?”

“Some sporting trophies and some money. They've made a hell of a mess, though. They've opened every cupboard and every drawer and thrown all the stuff they didn't want out of the window.”

Simon reached down and picked up a piece of paper. It was somebody's school report. Adam picked up a large brown envelope. So as to have both hands free to catch the other pieces of paper which were whirling around in the breeze, he opened the door of Simon's car and threw it inside.

He concluded the break-in probably had nothing to do with Mark's death. Simon told him that the Headmaster was sure it was the work of someone who didn't know the school at all. The side door of Alky's house was always open but the burglars had broken a window at the back to get in.

The next few days were like a gigantic paper-chase. Pupils were marshaled in long lines to comb the school grounds and the surrounding fields and woods for Mr. Henderson's papers. They found some. His liquor bill was found but never handed in. It joined the collection of secret souvenirs found in every school.

The examinations came. Adam, as anticipated, did brilliantly. Ben's results were described as 'satisfactory'.

It was the custom, after the exams, for Mr. Stevens, the History teacher, to take his pupils, of whom Adam was one, to the British Museum.

Ben had no interest in history and, when he looked out of the window at the departing bus, he was glad that he had not gone. The sky was black. The trees along the drive were waving furiously in the gale and the rain was lashing down.

He had just finished dinner that evening when the bus returned. It disgorged its damp, tired and dispirited passengers outside the refectory where a much-needed hot meal had been prepared for them.

Ben was surprised to see the Headmaster dash out of his house and confer with Mr. Stevens. One of

the other boys came over. "Your mate will be in trouble when he gets back," the boy said. "He missed the bus. We waited for him for over an hour. Old Stevens is hopping mad."

"It's not like Adam," Ben said.

"Serve the arrogant sod right!" said another boy. "He'll have to come back by train now - probably first class. I hope it's the milk train."

"He'll cop it when he gets here," said a third boy. "Bang goes his chance of being a prefect."

For most of that night Ben lay awake waiting for a footstep on the stair. None came.

In the morning the Headmaster sent for all the 'historians', and Ben. He asked about Adam's friends. Ben wasn't able to help.

In the afternoon, the police came and asked the same questions.

On the following day, Simon arrived, looking very shaken and, with Mr. Henderson and Ben, went through Adam's things. Ben was surprised that Adam's father wasn't there. He was quite sure that, were *he* to go missing, his father would fly to England and make his way to the school at once. He said so to the Housemaster.

"Oh, Adam's father is a very busy man," said Alky. "We are in touch with him, of course. It's probably better for him to stay put in case the lad returns home."

Simon was going through Adam's underclothes. Ben knew exactly what his roommate possessed. He had, after all, seen them day after day. Simon had a good idea of the boy's wardrobe as well, of course, but could hardly admit to it.

"There's definitely just one pair missing," said Ben. "The ones he wore. Sort of pale blue color."

"In that case," said Simon, "I doubt if he has run away. Nobody runs away with only the clothes on his back."

"So where is he?" asked Mr. Henderson. "The police have checked all the London hospitals."

"I wish to God I knew," said Simon.

The museum trip had taken place on Friday. Ben spent the whole weekend being asked questions. By Sunday night he was tired and very worried.

On Monday he decided to see Simon, who might know what to do.

Simon seemed disturbed. "Oh! Er... it's you. You'd better come in, I suppose."

It wasn't his usual affable manner. Ben presumed that he, too, had been subject to endless questioning.

"I need your advice," Ben said when he was finally admitted. Simon nodded. Ben told him about Adam's depression as he had heard it from Richard. Simon nodded again. "The problem is that Richard said I mustn't tell anyone. I feel I ought to. You see, Richard once said that he might even kill himself."

Simon said he had come to the conclusion that Adam had run away on the spur of the moment - depressed or angry, of course: boys only run away when they are. He felt that there would be little gained in telling the police something which they must have guessed. He felt, too, that it would be better not to involve Richard. Richard had gone away on business at the beginning of the previous week. There was no point in worrying him. Simon felt quite sure that Adam would either return very shortly or contact someone.

Ben felt much better. In fact, relief was causing a kind of elation.

"Well, now that you're here," said Simon leaning back in his chair, "how long have you got?"

"You should know. You've seen it enough times!"

Simon laughed. "Sorry. A badly worded question. When do you have to be back at school?"

“Lights out. Eleven o'clock.”

“Well then. Shall we pass the time pleausrably?”

Ben smiled. “Okay.”

As he followed Simon up the stairs, Ben thought he detected sounds coming from the back bedroom. This was confirmed when Simon turned and put his finger to his lips.

“Who is it?” he whispered as Simon closed the bedroom door behind them.

“Ashley,” replied Simon.

Sex with Simon had now become such an established part of Ben's life that he didn't really think about what he was doing. The money he earned was very useful. He had already bought a better Hi-Fi set and had his sights on a portable television. He only needed to spend a few more afternoons with Simon and it would be his. That thought excited him far more than watching Simon get undressed and then playfully strip him.

Simon put a towel on the bed.

“How do you want me?” Ben asked.

“Same as last time, if it's okay by you.”

“Sure.” Ben got up on to the bed and knelt, supported by his knees and forearms and with his bottom pointing upwards.

“I like you like that,” said Simon. “I enjoy feeling you like this...” His hand reached between Ben's legs and cupped the boy's balls. Ben shuddered slightly.

“You really have got a lovely arse,” said Simon. He stroked Ben's buttocks with the other hand. “Adam asked me if he could have it off with you here one day. Did you know that?”

“I knew it was in his mind. I didn't know he'd asked you.”

“I wasn't very keen on the idea,” said Simon. “I want you for myself. Boys like you are like delicate musical instruments. They should be played by an expert, not hammered by schoolboys.”

Ben was about to say that he would have had no objection at all to being 'hammered' by Adam but thought better of it. It might have hurt Simon's feelings, and it would be tactless to say it whilst Adam was away. When his roommate came back though...

It was fortunate that Simon didn't know precisely what was going through Ben's mind. As it was, he was pleasantly surprised by the boy's sudden enthusiasm. Ben's prick had never felt quite so hard as it felt then. Never before had Simon's finger slipped so easily through the guardian sphincter. It had been a long time since Ben had groaned so ecstatically when Simon grasped his hips and placed his penis against the boy's anus before the final slow thrust into him.

At that moment, to Ben, Simon was Adam. It wasn't Simon's prick pressing between his buttocks - it was Adam's. Those were Adam's hands grasping his sides.

“Do it!” he gasped. “Ooooh!” He felt it sliding in and distending him as it went.

It began to move inside him. He imagined Adam's white, tight rump tensing and moving back and forth - pushing that gorgeous fifteen-year-old prick into him and hurting him.

“Harder!” he gasped.

Simon, more surprised than ever, obliged. The boy's bottom began to waggle from side to side like that of a duck.

“More!” groaned Ben.

But Simon had no more to give. He had never before been able to penetrate so deeply. He did the best he could and fucked as hard and as fast as he was able.

“Ooooh! Oooh!” cried Ben. “Oh! I'm...”

Simon was used to young teenagers' ejaculations, but Ben's surprised him. He actually *heard* the

spurts of semen hit the towel. He felt the boy tighten and then relax.

He gave a few more strokes. Ben moaned, exhausted and limp, as the man's semen poured into him.

Then, mysteriously, Simon felt the boy tense again. Ben had opened his eyes and reality flooded in on him.

“God! You were good that time, Ben!” said Simon, patting the boy's damp rump.

“I'm learning from a good teacher: a master musician!” said Ben.

“I am very pleased with your progress, young man,” said Simon in a perfect imitation of Mr. Henderson's pompous voice. They both laughed.

They left the room, as they always did, naked. The bathroom was only a few feet away. Just as they reached it, the door of the back bedroom opened. Ashley stood in the doorway. That wouldn't have mattered except that he wasn't alone.

“Christ! It's you!” There was no mistaking that whining voice and the red hair of Charlie Franks.

“What are *you* doing here?” asked Ben angrily.

“Same as you, by the look of it,” Charlie giggled.

Ben rounded on Simon. “I thought you said he only came to do the gardening!”

“Yes,” said Charlie, “and you told me that Ben and Adam didn't do it!”

It was Ashley who calmed them down - Simon seemed to have been struck dumb. “What does it matter, for Christ's sake?” said the younger man. “You wouldn't have wanted him to tell the truth about you, would you? Well, now you've both found out. It's unfortunate, but it isn't the end of the world. We just have to make sure it goes no further.”

“Yes, that really is important,” said Simon.

All four of them had to use the bathroom together. Ben found himself sitting in the jacuzzi with Charlie, hoping spots were not catching in a shared bath, and got out as quickly as he could.

Simon took them back to the school gate in the car. Both boys sat in angry silence speaking to Simon only when absolutely necessary.

Ben would have preferred to have walked up the drive alone to ponder on Simon's deviousness, but there was something he had to find out.

“I can't get over it,” Charlie was whining. “I thought I was the only one.”

“So did we.”

“Did Adam do it as well, then?”

Ben could have kicked himself. “Oh... no.... well... only sometimes. He's too hooked on birds.”

“Was,” corrected Charlie.

“Oh, he'll be back,” said Ben. “At least, I hope he will.”

“He'll be expelled for sure if he does. Good riddance. You're the only person in the school who liked him, and now I know why, and the reason he was so keen to get that attic room. I'll bet you used to screw each other silly.”

Ben almost hit him, but fighting in school was forbidden. He kept silent.

“Ashley's all right, isn't he?” said Charlie, changing the subject. “I like him.”

“He doesn't seem as two-faced as Simon,” Ben conceded. “I don't really know him that well. Who else goes down there, Charlie?”

“I don't know of anybody else. Ashley asked me to find some more. He said I'd get well paid if I did.”

“Have you?”

“I've talked to two kids in the Junior School. Maybe they're too young though.”

“If you'll take my advice, you won't even mention them,” said Ben.

“Why not?”

“Think about it. Mark went to Simon's and disappeared. Adam went to Simon's and now *he's* gone. I wonder who's going to be next.”

## 13.

“Who will be next?”

Had Adam heard the question, he could have assured them that they had nothing to fear.

He was sitting in an expensive flat in London, dressed in new clothes which cost a great deal of money. He was with a boy of about his own age: dark haired, very sunburned, and so good looking as to excite the attention of nearly everybody who saw him, male and female. He was dressed, like Adam, in the very latest designer clothes. He spoke English with a strong French accent.

Richard's plan had worked perfectly. It had been easy to get away from the school party and slip out of the museum and into Richard's waiting car.

Richard had warned him that the professor - the man doing the research on intelligence and physical development - wanted to see him and that it would involve at least twelve hours of medical examinations and intelligence tests.

No medical examination, no examination of any sort, is a pleasant affair for the examinee, but Adam had liked the Professor from the start. He was an elderly man; his field was genetics. He was rather fat, had a bald head and wore thick glasses. He lent a sympathetic ear to the boy's opinions as he prodded, poked, listened, and took samples. Adam talked. The only time when Adam's speech dried up was when he was pedaling furiously on an exercise bicycle with a tube in his mouth, a clip on his nose and electrodes stuck all over his body.

Laurent, his French companion, had arrived on Saturday morning and Adam had taken to him at once. Like Adam, he scorned most of the human race. They had spent the afternoon looking out of the windows of the Professor's flat and inventing appropriately grisly fates for most of the people in the street below them.

Laurent mentioned a house party. It was the reason for his visit to London. Every year, a friend of the Professor's gave a party. Laurent left Adam in no doubt as to the nature of the party. At first Adam said that he would not go, but when he heard that Pete Clegwith would be there, he changed his mind. Adam didn't have 'idols', as many weaker-minded teenagers had, but he concurred with the opinion that Pete Clegwith was the world's greatest living guitarist. “It's an opportunity I just can't miss.”

That party turned out to be the strangest Adam had ever attended. It was held in an enormous house with turreted battlements some distance from London. The guests, most of them rather elderly, were standing around in the enormous hall drinking when they arrived. Suits of armor stood in the comers; huge leather sofas lined the edges of the hall, and in the center stood a podium on which, at the moment, Pete Clegwith sat with a glass in his hand.

Richard introduced Adam to him and then left with Laurent and the Professor through a heavily studded door at the end of the room.

Pete was quite nice. They spoke of guitars, of composers and concerts. Adam wished that the boys at school could see him chatting so normally to one so famous.

Normally? Well... not entirely.

“So tell me, what are you doing here?” asked Pete.

Adam explained that the Professor and Richard had brought him along to see what went on.

“You're not part of the entertainment, then?” Pete asked.

“Oh, no,” said Adam vehemently.

“And you're a friend of the Professor's?”

“I suppose you could say that, yes.”

“I see. Hallo. We're about to start. Can I get you a drink?” Adam accepted gratefully. His throat felt very dry.

Pete returned with a pint glass filled with a fruity-tasting concoction with pieces of orange floating on the top. It tasted delicious. Pete moved off the rostrum and Adam sat with him on one of the settees.

Their host entered. Adam started. He had seen the man somewhere before. He racked his brains but couldn't remember how or where.

Their host started with the usual pleasantries, welcoming them to his house; he hoped they had had a good journey and would soon be enjoying themselves... “as I am sure you will, gentlemen. We have a very good selection for you tonight and all proceeds will be going to the Professor's charity. Now, you know the rules. Payment must be made tomorrow morning at the latest and in cash. You may re-sell any purchase, but all money thus made must also be handed over.”

He thanked his 'sponsors' who had so generously brought the boys and trained them. He thanked Richard for arranging the event and, finally, he thanked the Professor. “As you can see from your programs, gentlemen, the Professor has kindly provided one of his own proteges to be the star of the show.

“Now, then, I believe the first one is ready. We'll work in order of age, starting from the bottom and moving upwards.”

“I'd rather start on a nice little cock myself!” said one of the guests.

“As I am sure you will,” said the host. Now, are we all ready?”

One or two men went to the drinks table to re-charge their glasses. Pete kindly fetched another drink for Adam.

“Ready!” shouted the host.

The double doors at one end of the hall swung open. Adam gasped. Richard came in, leading a very small boy by a dog lead. Apart from the leather collar round his neck, the boy was naked. The boy smiled in a dazed sort of way, as if awakening from a deep sleep.

Richard led him to the podium. The boy tried to climb on to it but tripped and fell backwards. Richard caught him and helped him up. Then he unclipped the leash and the boy grasped the podium rail for support.

“Looks like he's had a bit too much,” said one man.

“On the contrary,” said the host. “He can't have enough of what you have to offer, gentlemen. This is Andrew. He's eleven years old. I'm assured by his sponsor that he's been well trained but not fully broken in. I'm confident one of you can oblige him in that respect. Now what am I offered?”

The bidding was slow but Adam was amazed at the amounts offered. The lowest would have kept him in pocket money for a year.

Andrew finally went to a gray-headed man who had to come forward to collect him and half carry him off.

The next boy to be brought out was a blond eleven-year-old called Paul. This lad seemed completely sober and stood proudly upon the podium with legs apart, smiling broadly.

“Introducing Paul,” said the auctioneer. “Just look at that nice little bottom, gentlemen.” He told Paul to turn round. “Not a hair on his body. A really beautiful boy.”

Adam had to agree. He drank down the remainder of his first drink and picked up the second.

Paul was very good looking indeed, he thought. Adam's mind went back to the Tiddler Trap. If Paul had been in the Junior School, he'd be well worth trapping. He had a really nice, tight little bum. It would be a bit difficult to get it in, maybe, but when it was...

The bids rolled in and were soon in three figures.

“Nice,” said Pete. “Do you fancy him?”

“Certainly not!” said Adam.

“Please yourself. You could do a lot worse. I'd be happy to buy him for you. Do you good. Do him good too. I expect you could do him justice, eh?”

Adam ignored the question and felt himself blushing.

Paul was 'sold' and another boy was led in. He was disposed of very rapidly.

A further five boys, all under fifteen, were 'purchased' and led off, before the auctioneer declared an interval and the remaining guests rushed to recharge their glasses. Pete came back with another pint of punch for Adam and a whiskey for himself.

“What about you?” asked Adam. “You haven't bid anything yet?”

“Oh, my time will come. Here we go again.”

The next boy to be led out was fifteen years old, although he looked much younger. Bidding was fast and furious and one guest seemed quite put out to be beaten by a bid shouted at the last moment before the gavel came down.

“Never mind, George,” said their host. “You can always buy him later. I don't suppose John will want him all night, will you John?”

“I might, just to save his hide,” said the buyer, and led the boy off.

Something in Adam stirred. A memory. What was it? He took another sip of his drink and looked across at George. Where had he seen him before?

A nice looking boy was led in, with blond hair - exactly, thought Adam, the color as his own. It was done in the same way too.

“Nicky,” announced the host. Fourteen years old. Nicky is new to this scene, gentlemen, but I am assured that he is anxious to please. I'm sure that you are equally anxious to please Nicky. What am I bid now?”

Nicky smiled shyly and shifted his weight from one foot to the other.

“He's got a perky little arse and a tasty looking prick,” said Pete. “What do you think?”

“He's okay I suppose,” said Adam, and hiccuped.

Pete smiled. “You could do anything you wanted to him, Adam. Just think of that. Anything you wanted. He'd be your slave for a night.”

Adam found that an interesting thought. He hiccuped again. It was becoming increasingly difficult to concentrate.

“Could you turn him round?” called George. “We've seen enough of his front view.”

Richard whispered to Nicky, who obligingly turned round on the podium and smiled at Adam. Adam smiled back.

“Oh yes,” said George. “That's more like it.”

Adam's mind was reeling. He knew he had had too much to drink. Voices seemed to come from a long way away. He was conscious of what was going on around him, but it all seemed to be happening on a kind of waving cinema screen. He leaned against Pete for support. Pete was fondling his cock through

his trousers. What the hell! It was a nice feeling...

"A bottom like that takes a lot of beating, eh George?" said the host. He's got a good strong pair of legs, too."

Adam's memory stirred again. He knew the man. But how? And there was something familiar about the auctioneer, too. Something nasty. He shuddered.

"Not cold are you?" asked Pete.

"No. I'm all right."

"We'll warm you up later," said Pete, squeezing the shape of Adam's penis.

The squeeze made Adam realize how much he needed to go to the lavatory. He hoped there would be another interval or that the proceedings might end soon. He wouldn't be able to pee immediately anyway.

Pete's manipulations had brought his penis to full erection.

The bidding for Nicky was fast and furious. George's final bid was made just as the gavel was coming down.

"Poor little sod!" said Pete.

"Why?"

"They had to fetch a doctor in for the last boy he had at one of these parties. He beats them. He comes with a golf bag full of canes."

And then Adam remembered. It all came flooding back. The blood drained from his face and he felt himself sweating.

"Are you all right?" asked Pete. "You look quite green."

"I'll be okay. I think it's the drink."

"Won't be long now," said Pete, consulting a typewritten card.

"The one I've got my eye on is coming up soon."

Two more fifteen-year-old boys were rapidly disposed of.

"Now gentlemen," said the auctioneer. "By courtesy of the Professor himself, we present Laurent. Laurent comes from France. He is fifteen. He's intelligent and, most important, I am told that he's a very playful, loving boy."

Laurent strode into the room looking very self-possessed despite the collar and lead. He took the podium and smiled at Adam.

"There is a reserve price, gentlemen, as you will see from your prospectus."

By now there were only three remaining guests in the room, apart from Pete and Adam, but the bidding was fast and very competitive. It wasn't fast enough for the auctioneer, though.

"Come, come, gentlemen. You can do better than that."

"If he's one of the Professor's boys, he'll be as wide open as the channel tunnel," said one man.

"I quite fancy frogs' legs myself," said another.

"And very nice legs they are, too," said the auctioneer, approaching the podium. He put his hand on Laurent's behind.

"A lovely tight bottom. I'll bet he knows how to use it," he said and massaged it with a rotating movement. And then Adam knew him beyond any doubt. He shuddered again.

Pete was bidding furiously. There was no doubt that he would succeed. One by one the others dropped out.

"Going for the first time... Going for the second time... Gone to Peter!" and the gavel smacked down. Laurent got down nonchalantly and strolled over to Pete and Adam.

Adam was aware of the laughter behind him as both Laurent and Pete helped him to his feet. His legs felt like jelly. His bladder was bursting and his face was ashen. He dimly remembered being



manhandled up a carpeted staircase and into a room. He spotted a toilet through a half-open door and dashed into it. The first drops of urine felt like molten lead as they dribbled out, but the pain subsided and he peed as he had never peed before.

He flushed the toilet and looked at himself in the mirror. He looked ghastly. No wonder! It had been a nasty shock. The two men whom he had tried to forget for years had come back into his life. He doused cold water over his face.

“Are you all right in there?” called Pete.

“Yes. I'm okay.” He wasn't, though. His legs still felt weak and he knew that if he couldn't lie down soon he would collapse.

He opened the door.

The room began to revolve. “Catch him!” said Pete. They managed to prevent him from falling flat on his face. He was dimly aware of being laid on the bed.

“I'll be okay,” he murmured.

“Course you will,” said Pete.

“What's the matter with him?” asked Laurent.

“He's had too much of that punch. It won't do him any harm. Here. Help me get his clothes off.”

Adam tried feebly to resist, but he was in no state to do anything but lie there giggling.

“Now these,” said Pete, pulling on his underpants. “But you're not going to... ?” asked Laurent.

“Why not? It'll do him good, and he can hardly refuse now, can he? Or remember? You can watch until it's your turn.”

“Where's my Daddy?” murmured Adam. The light fitting in the ceiling seemed to revolve and become dimmer. It was changing...

## 14

The light in the lounge was dim. The man was a friend of his father's. Mr. Furth. That was his name. Adam was in his pyjamas. He had come downstairs to say goodnight to his father. Adam was nine years old. Daddy had gone into the study to make a phone call. The man said his father would be back in a moment.

He showed the man his muscles, taking off his pyjama jacket to do so. Then the man put his hand in the back of Adam's pyjama trousers.

“That's my bottom!” Adam said indignantly.

“A nice little bottom it is, too,” said Mr. Furth. “Do you like this?” He massaged Adam's buttocks.

“Very much, thank you,” the boy lied. But he was always polite to guests and did what he was told to do.

“Well, we might as well have these off, hadn't we?” said the man, and Adam's pyjama trousers slid down to his feet.

And then the door had opened. The light was turned up. There was a lot of shouting. Adam was sent to bed and ran, naked, up the stairs clutching his pyjamas.

He cried that night. He cried again when his father announced, a few days later, that he was going to a boarding school.

He enjoyed that school but there was no escaping Mr. Furth. Adam had been there about a year when Mr. Furth first called to take him out for the afternoon. Adam's home was a long way away and his father was often overseas on business.

Adam wondered, at first, whether to tell the Headmaster he would prefer not to go out with Mr. Furth but decided against it.

The first outing was pretty scary but he soon got used to it, and there were advantages: the excellent meal in an expensive restaurant, the pocket money afterwards, and Mr. Furth lived in a castle with its own swimming pool. Mr. Furth told him he held parties there for boys, and one day, when Adam was older, he would be invited.

It was always the same old routine. Mr. Furth called it the 'chicken game'.

Bright light from a chandelier in the restaurant. "Chickens need lots of food. Makes them plump and tender. Ready for stuffing." The way he said that always made Adam shudder a bit.

Flecks of sunlight, coming down through the canopy of trees and dancing over the tartan rug which Mr. Furth spread so carefully over the ground whilst Adam undressed.

Lying face down on the rug to have your bottom massaged. That was really rather nice. Odd certainly, but rather nice.

"Cluck, cluck," Adam would say, feeling an idiot and parting his legs.

Then the tickling of his anus, which was really nice. Adam looked forward to that bit. It made his heart beat faster and strange things happen to what Mr. Furth referred to as his 'giblets'.

"It won't be long before you're ready for stuffing," Mr. Furth would say. The tickling would continue. "Let me know when it's doodle time."

"Cock a doodle do!" It was more of a whisper than a crow and was a signal that Adam was ready for the next stage. That involved turning over.

There was no doubt in Adam's mind that it was wrong. For that reason he never mentioned Mr. Furth's visits in his letters to his father. Boys who touched each other there were expelled. He didn't really know whether the rule applied to men. On the other hand, it was a lovely feeling. It lasted a long time and Adam nearly passed out at the end when, wriggling and writhing with excitement he had to ask Mr. Furth to stop.

A bare bulb in a white enamel shade. St. George's school. The punishment room. Adam, aged twelve-and-a-half, bent over a high stool whilst the Headmaster, G. Fuller MA (Cantab) searched through the famous golf bag for a suitable stick.

Mr. Furth had helped him to obtain a place there. As schools went, it was all right. It was the petty regulations that Adam found so irksome. He'd only gone out to buy some sweets but he hadn't signed the book.

"We shall teach you, young man, the importance of self-discipline," said the voice behind him. The sticks rattled.

"Aha! This one I think, Walton, eh?"

Walton was Adam's fifteen-year-old 'guardian'. At St. George's, all new boys were assigned to a prefect guardian for their first year. Coincidentally, Walton also knew Mr. Furth, and Adam was curious to know if he too had played the chicken game; but one did not ask senior boys personal questions. They only met occasionally, mostly when Walton had to escort him to the punishment room.

"Six Ts or three Bs?" asked Mr. Fuller.

Adam hadn't known what that meant on the first occasion and had received an extra swipe for not

knowing.

“Three Bs, sir.”

A 'T' was a caning administered to your trousered bottom. It hurt like hell. A 'B' was on the bare bottom and, although painful, was not quite so severe. There was a rumor that Mr. Fuller had once been in trouble for beating a boy too severely.

“Three Bs what?”

“Sorry, sir. Three Bs, please, sir.”

“That's better. Do the necessary, Walton.”

He stood up again so that Walton could undo his belt and the top buttons of his flies. His shirt was lifted and his trousers and underpants lowered. He bent over the stool again.

“A very cheeky boy, Walton eh?”

“Very cheeky, sir.”

“You can always tell an impertinent boy from his bottom. Did you know that, Walton?”

“No, sir. I didn't.”

“Take it from me. This is a very impertinent boy. He needs to be taken in hand.”

“If you say so, sir.”

“I do. We can't have him letting Mr. Furth down, eh?”

“No, sir.”

*Swish... Whack...* “Ow!”

*Swish... Whack...* “Oh!”

*Swish... Whack...* “Ow!”

A paper Japanese lantern casting a yellow light onto the posters on the walls. Adam lying face down and naked on Walton's bed.

After a beating one was allowed to go to one's dormitory to get over it. Adam was amazed when Walton suggested that he might like to come to his own room and lie on his bed. He was even more amazed when Walton offered to rub his welts with some special ointment he had.

Walton said to remove all his clothes. Ointment stains, he said, were very difficult to remove.

The elder boy was remarkably gentle. Adam felt the greasy finger tracing along the weals left by the cane. It was a cool, soothing feeling.

“Better?”

“Much better. Thanks, Walton.”

“I'll put a bit more on.” He began to rub Adam's buttocks with the the palm of his hand. The old stirrings came back.

“You've got a lovely arse, did you know that?”

Adam didn't answer. His heart had started to beat faster.

“Did old Furth do this to you?”

“Mmmm,” said Adam non-committally.

“I expect you'll be invited to one of his parties soon. I'm going next month.”

“How do you know?” Adam hadn't seen Mr. Furth for some time.

“He told me you'd be going. I can see why. You've got a lovely arse. Just right for fucking. Have you ever been fucked?”

Adam shook his head.

“I have. The art teacher at my old school fucked me when I was eleven. That's how I met old Furth. The teacher was a friend of his and sort of recommended me. It's a lovely feeling.”

Adam said nothing. The massage continued in silence.

“Would you like me to fuck you?” asked Walton.

“No thank you, Walton.”

“I've got to wank you, though. The Head said so.”

“Don't believe you!”

“That's what he meant when he said I had to take you in hand. You *are* dim sometimes!”

In normal circumstances a remark like that would have made Adam fighting mad, but lying face-down on a senior boy's bed and having his rump stroked so exquisitely mollified his anger.

“I'm not!” was all he said.

“Well, it doesn't matter if you are or you aren't. Shall I do it to you now?”

“Cluck, cluck,” said Adam, parting his legs.

“Does that mean yes?” Walton's hand moved under his tummy.

“Cock a doodle do!”

“Eh?”

“If you like.” It was obvious that Mr. Furth had played another game with Walton.

“Do you make spunk?” asked Walton. His finger tips had reached Adam's prick.

“Not much.”

“How old are you?”

“Nearly thirteen.”

“I'd better get some paper just in case. Stay there for a minute.”

He left the room. Adam continued to lie quite still. His bottom didn't hurt so much now. It just felt a bit hot. In fact he felt strangely hot all over. He wondered what it was going to be liked being wanked by Walton. He did it to himself, of course. Most of the boys in his dormitory did. He knew that one or two of them were wanked by prefects. It gave a boy status if he was.

Walton came in, carrying a toilet roll.

“All I could find!” he gasped. He had obviously been running. Adam wondered why. Walton sat on the edge of the bed. “Turn over, then,” he said. “I can't get at it like that.”

As Adam turned on his back he was aware of the swelling in Walton's trousers. It seemed enormous.

“That's right! Mmmmm! You've got quite a good one. I like them like this.”

Adam wasn't sure if he was referring to the size, shape or circumcision of his penis, or the fact that it was standing up.

“Open your legs a bit. That's right.” He felt Walton's hand reach underneath him. “Nice little balls, too. No wonder you're on old Furth's party list.”

Adam felt a finger pressing against his anus. He brought his legs together, clamping the older boy's hand between his thighs.

Walton laughed. “No good trying to keep your virginity in this place. By this time next year you'll have had so many pricks in there that you'll have lost count!”

“I will not!” said Adam vehemently.

“Please yourself. I believe in going with the tide - not against it. Open your legs again.”

“Promise you won't...”

“I promise that no part of me shall enter your little virgin arsehole. Not this afternoon, anyway. Is that good enough?”

Adam opened his legs.

Walton took Adam's penis delicately between finger and thumb and rubbed it up and down very gently.

That felt nice. Adam opened his legs wider.

The pace quickened. Adam gasped.

“Okay?”

Adam nodded. He felt his prick getting stiffer and he began to sweat. Walton had several fingers around it now. That felt even better. Mr. Furth had only used his finger tips and Adam, alone in bed, had done the same. To have a whole hand around it was a new experience. If one could be allowed to do it to a boy like Walton... He looked at the bulge in the older boy's trousers. It seemed frighteningly large. It would be nice to feel it, though...

He decided against it. 'Taking liberties' with prefects was a serious offense and he had no wish to be thrashed again. Maybe Walton would offer one day. He closed his eyes, the better to imagine the scene: Walton, lying on a bed, naked as Adam was at that moment, his big prick, hard as iron waving slightly from side to side...

The hand was moving much more quickly now. He began to breathe faster. The thought of doing it to Walton was really exciting. He would start slowly and then get faster and faster just as Walton was doing to him.

“Tell me when you're ready to come.” Walton's voice sounded throaty and hoarse.

Adam nodded. It wouldn't be long now. His heart was beating really hard, a sure sign that what Mr. Furth used to call 'ice cream' time was approaching. In those days it meant stopping, rolling up the blanket and heading for an ice cream shop. To Adam it now had an altogether different significance: a gasp, a dribble of sticky liquid and a glorious feeling of exhaustion.

“Aaah! I'm going to spunk up!” He arched upwards. Walton was only just in time to clap a piece of toilet tissue over the end of his prick. A wet sticky stain appeared. Adam sank back smiling.

“Not bad!” said Walton, using a fresh piece of tissue. “Not bad at all. Did you like it?”

“It was okay,” said Adam.

“Want to do it again?”

“What, now?”

“No, stupid. Some other time.”

“If you like.”

“I'll have to think about it. There are quite a lot of boys who like me to do it to them. They let me fuck them too. Course, if you were to change your mind...”

“No thank you, Walton,” said Adam who didn't believe a word of it. He knew all the boys who obliged prefects and nobody had ever mentioned being fucked as one of their duties.

“Please yourself. But I'll have one more look at your arse before you go. Turn over.”

“I'm still a bit sticky in front.”

“No matter. Turn over. That's right. I reckon you've got the nicest arse in the school.”

Walton began to stroke it again but this time it didn't seem nearly so pleasant. In fact Adam felt uncomfortable and was very glad when Walton finally dismissed him and allowed him to return to his dormitory.

He would have liked another session with Walton, but fate intervened in a very strange way. A number of men arrived one day in police cars. Several older boys were questioned. An extremely kind man asked Adam several rather silly questions. Had the Headmaster or any member of the staff touched his private parts? Of course they had! How else would the housemaster know if he had had a proper bath!

Then there was the medical inspection. Three doctors came and made each boy take down his trousers. Some boys, those with visible stripes, had their bottoms photographed. A rumor ran down the

queue of waiting boys that they actually stuck instruments up your bottom, but Adam was relieved to find that this was not so. In fact, despite Walton's assessment of his posterior, the doctors appeared to pay it little attention. He rather wished he had been beaten more recently!

A desk light. The psychiatrist's study. The hypnosis again. It was his father's idea. Slowly, the memories were blotted out and the new Adam created.

His father sent him on holidays abroad. He grew to learn that tension at home abated if he mentioned the names of any girls he had met. He made a point of secreting 'girlie' magazines in places where he knew they would be found.

Another desk light. The Professor's study. Richard, the Professor, Laurent and Adam.

"It looks as if fate has caught up with you, Adam," said the Professor. "If it hadn't been for the closure of St. George's you'd have been at the party some years ago."

"I'm very glad I wasn't. I didn't enjoy it very much."

"We're not getting anywhere near solving the problem, are we?" said the Professor. "The question is what should Adam do now."

The original arrangement had been that Adam would stay with the Professor for about two weeks. That would enable Simon to have a confidential chat with the Headmaster and Adam's father and explain how unhappy he was. Richard was quite certain that Simon could handle everything and thought it better that Adam himself should not be around at the time.

But everything had gone badly wrong, he was told. Richard said he had telephoned Simon on the previous evening. Apparently Charlie had told Mr. Henderson all about the 'gardening'. Both he and Ben were to be expelled and Simon had made a full statement which meant that he would shortly be arrested. All of them had implicated Adam as the ring-leader.

Adam wanted to telephone Simon but Richard thought this a very bad idea. The police, he explained, would certainly have tapped Simon's telephone.

By now Adam was very nearly in tears. "I honestly don't know what to do," he said. "I can't go back to school. I can't go home. My dad would throw me out if he knew I'd started all that business again."

"None of this is your fault, Adam," said the Professor. "It's the fault of the idiots who run this country. They're just narrow minded morons...."

"I've got an idea!" said Richard. "Can't Adam join the community?"

Together, the Professor, Richard and Laurent explained.

The Professor was making a study of gifted boys. To do this, he had bought a small island somewhere near Scotland. The boys stayed there for varying lengths of time.

"I wouldn't mind that," said Adam. "I suppose it's a compliment to be invited, really."

"You're certainly qualified," said the Professor. "Your intelligence and physique are well above the average."

They explained that each boy had his own self-contained apartment which he could furnish as he wished. The funds provided absolutely everything a boy needed. There were facilities for education. Laurent confirmed that. A few weeks previously he had been in London sitting for an examination and had every hope of an extremely high mark.

Sports facilities were first-class. All that was required were occasional samples of various things like urine, semen, - nothing painful.

"It sounds all right," said Adam.

"It is. Believe me," said Laurent.

“What about these parties? There's no way I want to be led round a room like a dog.”

“Entirely voluntary,” said the Professor. “We do have regular parties on the island for our supporters, but they are nothing like friend Furth's extravaganzas.”

“And you meet some really important people,” said Laurent. “It's good fun. What do you say?”

“I don't think I have much of a choice,” said Adam. “I don't have anywhere else to go.”

Richard smiled. “You're in the same position as your Biblical namesake, aren't you, Adam?”

“How do you mean?”

“Adam has just been evicted from the Paradise Garden.”

## 15.

Adam felt proud of himself. He was proud to have been selected. Richard, Laurent and even the Professor himself had complimented him. To be chosen from millions of boys was quite something.

He would never have admitted it to anybody but there were moments when he felt slightly nervous. It was a big step to take. It wouldn't be so bad, he thought, if it was on the mainland, but it wasn't. It was on an island. Still, it wouldn't be for long. Richard would think of some way of extricating him from the situation back at the school.

But the Professor had mentioned 'parties', and even though he was told they were not as extreme as the one he had attended, Adam had second thoughts. That sort of thing might be all right for full time queers but not for people like him.

On the whole, the disadvantages outweighed the advantages, but Adam was caught in a cleft stick. He cursed Ben and cursed that fateful night when Alky had caught them. If it hadn't been for that, if it hadn't been for Ben's big mouth, everything would have been all right. It was typical of Ben to tell all. He could so easily have said nothing but Ben was weak. He deserved to be expelled. He deserved worse than that. If only Ben could have drowned instead of Mark!

It was a shame about Simon, though. He was a good friend. He asked Richard again if he could telephone Simon but Richard said no. Simon was so honest and good that he would report the call. Policemen could easily be in the house when the call came through. They'd trace it and Adam would be picked up. It was better, Richard said, to forget about the past and concentrate on the future.

Some aspects of concentrating on the future were very pleasant. He spent two days with Laurent buying the things he would need for his flat: a television, a video recorder, a Hi-Fi unit together with compact disks, cassettes and albums. They bought an exercise rowing machine, several posters, sports equipment: everything that a young man would need to keep himself amused. And there seemed no limit to the amount he could spend.

Laurent explained that the things he had bought would be taken to the island by the monthly supply ship. There would thus be a short period of time when Adam would be in the transit flat, but that, too, was well furnished.

Patently, Laurent answered Adam's many questions. There were, he said, twenty-three boys on the island already. The direction consisted of the Professor and his three medical technicians. There was a domestic staff of boys and young men who had wanted to be associated with the project but who hadn't made the grade. The daily routine consisted of getting up when one wanted, having breakfast, doing some studying in the study rooms provided, spending the afternoon studying or playing games, and relaxing in

the evening after dinner. There were no real rules. Generally speaking, boys organized their own lives. There was a senior boy, a German who arbitrated if there were any dispute, but disputes were rare. Everybody got on well together. Help was appreciated with the gardens but that wasn't compulsory.

"It sounds a million times better than school," said Adam.

"It is. Believe me, it is," replied Laurent. "You'll enjoy it."

Departure day was set for the Wednesday of the following week.

Adam's room in the Professor's flat was packed from floor to ceiling with cardboard boxes stuffed with his various purchases.

It seemed to Adam that Wednesday would never come.

Having made his decision, he was anxious to get away. The last two days were particularly bad. He had to stay in the flat whilst Laurent went shopping on his behalf. One of the Sunday papers had got hold of the story of his disappearance. The photograph of him wasn't very good but, as Richard said, it wasn't worth taking any chances. There was always the possibility that one of the many shop assistants with whom he had dealt, anxious for a reward, would have recognized him. The article had emphasized his father's wealth. There was no mention of Simon having been arrested. Richard said that he was so important that it had probably been hushed up.

Adam was up early on Wednesday. Laurent came into his room whilst he was washing. Seeing his friend's reflection in the mirror, Adam spun round in surprise. Laurent was dressed in army uniform.

"Put this lot on," he said, depositing a similar uniform onto the bed.

"Why?"

"It's for the journey. The Prof. has put it around that the island is a training ground for Army Cadets. It keeps the locals from being curious, so whenever we are seen by the moronic general public we have to be dressed as Army Cadets."

Richard was at breakfast already, dressed in the uniform of a Second Lieutenant. Adam threw him a smart salute.

"Not bad," said Richard.

"I was in the Corps at school," said Adam.

Late the following afternoon they got out of the car in a remote Scottish west-coast fishing village and stretched.

"Don't forget to call me Sir," said Richard as a local man approached them.

"Hallo, Lieutenant," he said. "We were expecting you. The boat's at the jetty. Did you have a good leave?"

"Splendid, Mr. McGregor, thank you."

"And I see you've bought two of the laddies with you. I ken you..." He nodded towards Laurent. "But yon man's new, I think."

"Yes. Private Shaw."

The man shook Adam's hand. "Aye, you'll be having a few weeks of excitement over there, laddie. Mind you, I'm not sure as I agree with boys of your age learning about bombs and the like, but I suppose it has to be done if you've made up your mind to join the Army when you're older."

He turned to Richard. "Is there anything you'd want me to do to the car now?"

"Just look it over, if you would. I think it's okay. Come on now, you lads. Down to the boat! Look sharp!"

At the end of the narrow street was a jetty. A large, gray, inflatable boat lay bobbing on the shining water.



"We'll just get there before dark," said Richard. He started the engine.

After the long confinement of the trip up from London, the boat journey was most enjoyable. The boat was big enough for Adam to stretch his legs. The sea was calm and the setting sun threw a golden path across the water. The spray from the propellers shimmered with all the rainbow colors seen so seldom in that part of the world.

Richard, at the tiller, shuddered slightly. "Winter's just round the corner," he said. "We shan't be making many more mainland trips this year."

"Thank God!" said Laurent.

"What do you find to do in the winter?" Adam asked.

Laurent looked at him incredulously and laughed. "It doesn't take much finding!" he said.

The island came into view. Huge cliffs towered out of the foaming sea. Sea birds circled and cried as if to warn them not to approach. How could any boat land there? It seemed as if a spot of difficult rock climbing would be called for. Adam looked up, hoping to spot someone on top of the cliffs, but saw nobody.

Then they rounded a headland and approached a point where the cliffs appeared to have been struck by a gigantic axe and split apart. The gap was just wide enough for the boat to pass. Richard cut the engine and they inched through, all hands reaching out to fend off the rock walls on either side.

To Adam's amazement, the cleft gave way to a small cove. Bleached remains of trees lay scattered over a crescent white sand beach. A large red notice-board proclaimed the island to be Ministry of Defense property: landing was forbidden and live ammunition was in use.

"Good Lord," said Adam, "how are they going to get my new stereo, not to mention the exercising machine, up that cliff?"

Richard chuckled. "Supplies are brought in by our own helicopter service. You should see your things in about a week."

Far above them, on the cliff top, stood a lone figure. It raised a hand in a mock Nazi salute - a gesture which made Adam's blood run cold. It brought back memories; not of the war - he was far too young to remember that - but of school. Whoever it was began to climb down a precipitous path cut in the rock wall.

"Lend a hand, Adam. We want to get up the cliff before dark," said Richard. Adam helped pull the boat up the beach and make it firm. Laurent and Richard unloaded their few pieces of luggage.

Adam looked at the cliff path again and was very glad that Richard had insisted so strongly that he leave all his clothes behind in London and take just a minimum amount of essential luggage. The path looked frightening. He watched the figure who was now about half way down, extending a leg carefully to find a firm foothold before moving down another few yards.

There was something very familiar about the way he did that. It couldn't be, of course; but yet...

Then, suddenly, Adam knew that he was right: It was Mark, Mark Lee, presumed drowned and whose memorial service Adam had attended; and he was climbing down the path to meet him!

"I don't believe it," Adam said. "It can't be!"

"It is," said Richard. "We didn't tell you before in case you changed your mind."

Adam wanted to run up the path to meet him but that would have been foolish. Instead they waited until Mark jumped the last few feet and joined them on the beach.

"Hi Adam!" he said. "Welcome."

"This is incredible," said Adam. "What happened? Why didn't you tell me? How did you manage it?"

"Leave the questions till later," said Richard. "Let's get up that path first. It terrifies me in daylight,

let alone after dark.”

“Okay,” said Mark, “follow me. Let's have one of those bags.”

Mark led the way. He was followed by Adam. Then came Richard with Laurent close behind. Finally, panting for breath, they stood on top of the cliff. Dusk was falling. Across the turf stood a group of low, flat-roofed buildings. Lights in their windows came on one by one as if to welcome them. By the time they reached the buildings, the ground was flooded with warm yellow light. The sound of laughter was carried on the cold evening breeze.

“They've left a meal for you on the hot-plate,” said Mark. “I guess you're hungry.”

“Ravenous!” said Adam.

When they were alone together, after supper, Mark grinned at Adam and said, “So... you're here at last. I've been waiting for this day for the last six weeks.”

“Eh?”

The grin expanded into a chuckle. “They say it makes you deaf. I said, I've been waiting for this day for the last six weeks.”

“But I only decided to come here a few days ago.”

“You might have done. Richard decided some months back.

He told me six weeks ago that you would arrive today.”

“Balls!” said Adam.

“I hate to disillusion you, but he did. What story has he told you?”

“How do you mean?”

“How long are you staying?”

“I don't know, really. It all depends on Richard.” Slowly, haltingly, and with some embarrassment, he told Mark everything. He played down his own involvement with Simon. It had been Ben who did that sort of thing. “Now Simon's been arrested. Ben's been expelled so I can't go back to school and I dare not go home. Richard's going to sort something out.”

“Just like me,” said Mark. “I was supposed to be here for about three weeks and then go to a family in America. I'm still here. Immigration problems, or so Richard says. You might be around for quite some time.”

“You think we've been tricked?”

“I don't know. I've been waiting for five months. Mind you, it's not a bad place. I quite like it here.”

“I don't like being tricked.”

“If you're ready,” said Mark, “I'll take you to my place. Yours isn't ready yet, so you're sleeping in the transit room. I've got music and coffee in mine, so I suggest we spend most of our time there till your stuff comes.”

They walked out of one block, through a glazed corridor to a block built as a square with a courtyard at its center. Every door bore a boy's name. As they passed them it seemed to Adam like spinning the tuning knob of a radio. Pop gave way to Heavy Metal, which gave way to Country and Western, which gave way to Bach. From one room came the unmistakable sound of Pete Clegwith's guitar. Adam shuddered.

Mark's flat was impressive. A very expensive Hi-Fi unit seemed to take up most of the sitting-room.

“Not bad!” said Adam inspecting it closely. “I got the later model of course.”

“You haven't changed, have you?” said Mark with a laugh. “You're still the same arrogant sod!”

“Neither have you. You're still the same untidy sod.” He removed the books and magazines which covered a chair and sat down.

“Simon's a nice guy, isn't he?” said Mark as they drank coffee.

“He's okay. It's been a bit of a shock to discover that he's a queer, though.”

Mark smiled. “And you're not?”

“Do leave off, Mark - you know me!”

“I thought I did. But you wouldn't be here if you weren't. We all are. I suppose I'd better tell you that I've had it with Simon. I liked it too. Now suppose you tell me the *full* story.”

Adam did. This time he left nothing out. He confessed that all the stories he had put about at school of his amorous holidays were just that - stories. He told Mark about himself and Ben.

“I wish we'd known about each other at school,” said Mark. “All I could do was go down to the stream and lie out in the sun on the rocks and have a wank.”

“Naked, I'll bet.”

“Of course. I had to dive in afterwards, didn't I, to wash off all that sperm. Do you know Howard Ainsworth?”

“A little kid? Used to live near you?”

“That's the one. I really had the hots for him. Still have, as a matter of fact. He's one of the reasons I'm here. I was fool enough to tell the Head, and the Head told Alky, and that gave Alky yet another lever to blackmail me.”

“Why should he do that?”

“Oh, it's a long story and best forgotten. It's all over now.”

“Come on now, Mark; this is tell-the-truth night.”

“I will, but it looks like your eyelids are drooping. If you've finished your coffee, I'll take you over to the transit room.”

The transit room had every appearance of having been added to the main quadrangle as an afterthought. It was well furnished with a large, comfortable-looking double bed, huge cupboards and an *en suite* bathroom with shower cubicle. Dominating the entire room was the largest mirror Adam had ever seen. It stretched from one wall to the other and was at least five feet deep.

“It's a good bet they didn't haul *that* up the path from the cove,” Adam said. “It looks big enough to sink a helicopter.”

“It's a relic of the war. The whole place is,” explained Mark. “Apparently they assembled something in here and they needed to see what was happening at the back of whatever it was.”

“It's weird.” Adam moved about examining his reflection from all angles. “It makes the room look huge.” The Professor was right, he thought - he really was a good looking boy. Even an Army Cadet uniform looked smart on him - small wonder that so many people found him attractive.

“It's quite fun to have sex in front of a mirror. Have you ever done it?” asked Mark.

“No. Can't say I have.”

Mark locked the door from the inside. “Feel like trying it?” he asked. “If you're not too tired and feel up to it.”

“Could do, I suppose,” said Adam. His heart began to beat faster.

“Well, let's first get you out of that stupid fancy dress.”

Adam peeled off the jacket and the thick pullover and felt his penis twitch slightly as Mark's fingers unfastened the buttons of his coarse khaki shirt. It twitched again as Mark pulled the shirt tails out of his trousers and slid his hands up over Adam's ribs to his armpits. The shirt seemed to fall off.

“Boots,” said Mark breathlessly.

Adam sat for a moment and undid the laces. He kicked the boots away from him and pulled off his socks. His feet suddenly felt cold.

“Stand up again. Over here. Stand with your back to the mirror. That's right. God! I thought this moment would never come!”

Even the thick uniform material failed to disguise the contour of Adam's rapidly rising penis. Mark stroked it with his fingertips.

“I never saw this at school,” he said. “I used to hang around in the showers sometimes, but you were too modest. You always had a towel round you.”

Adam laughed. “You should talk,” he said. “You're the only person ever known who wore swimming trunks when he bathed.”

“I had reason to,” said Mark. “Now then, let's have a look at it.”

He undid Adam's belt and then, with some difficulty, the array of buttons and fasteners. Adam had wondered, on the journey, how many soldiers had been shot on battlefields whilst they prepared to urinate. Army trousers seemed to be designed to make the process as difficult and as slow as possible.

Suddenly the coarse, itchy material began to slide down his thighs and Adam felt cool air against his skin. He kicked the trousers off, almost losing his balance in the process. He fell back against the mirror. The glass felt delightfully cool.

“Now these,” said Mark. He knelt in front of Adam, grasped Adam's Y-fronts and yanked them down. Freed after so many hours from the constraints of military serge, Adam's penis sprang out and slapped against Mark's nose.

“It's beautiful!” gasped Mark. “Just as I thought it would be.” He ran his finger-tips softly along the shaft. “It's so stiff and silky, and so... suckable!”

Adam gasped as he felt Mark's lips touch the tip of his penis. Then there was a moist feeling as Mark took it, centimeter by centimeter, into his mouth. He felt Mark's tongue come to life and lap against the now pulsating shaft. He parted his legs slightly to make it easier for Mark to take in more, and leaned back against the cool glass of the mirror.

“O God! That feels good!” he gasped. “Now I'm really glad I came!”

Mark withdrew his lips and looked up, smiling. “You haven't, yet, but you will. You most certainly will!”

\* \* \*

Richard, too, was smiling. He was seated at a desk in a room adjacent to the transit flat. The desk stood against the longest wall of that room, and what was a mirror where Adam and Mark were giving vent to their fresh, young sexuality, was a dusky window before Richard.

He was smiling because Adam's buttocks were compressed against the other side of the window, not more than three feet away - two roughly oval white shapes bisected by a vertical line.

Strange noises came from a small loudspeaker on his desk. Sucking, slurping, liquid noises interspersed with groans and sighs.

“Give it a rest for a minute, Mark - I don't want to come too soon.”

“Okay.”

“Better get your clothes off, eh?”

The white ovals detached themselves from the window, leaving rather greasy marks on the surface. Still smiling, Richard leaned back in his chair and watched whilst Adam helped Mark remove his shirt.

As Adam had done before him, Mark sat down to remove his shoes and socks. Then he stood up again

and stood in front of Adam.

With trembling fingers Adam undid his belt and then the zip of Mark's jeans. They fell to the floor with a metallic crash. Richard guessed that something had fallen from the pocket and landed near one of the many hidden microphones in the room.

Adam stroked the bulging and already slightly damp material of Mark's multicolored underpants. Richard expected him to slide them down, but Mark did it himself and kicked them away.

"Mmmm. Looks good enough to eat," said Adam. Mark's penis was not particularly large but it was beautifully symmetrical. In Adam's terms it was 'neat prick'. Not too big, not too small. The perfect size for a fifteen-year-old boy to have and the perfect size for another fifteen-year-old boy to receive! It rose proudly from an escutcheon of dense brown hair. A small spot of sticky liquid gleamed at the tip of its smooth, circumcised head.

Adam knelt down and licked the drop away. He stood up again. "I still can't believe it's really you," he said.

"And I can't believe that you're here at last." Mark gave him a chaste kiss on the cheek and, grasping Adam's prick, guided him gently towards the bed.

"This is it," murmured Richard to himself.

"Ready?" Adam asked when his friend was positioned with a pillow under his loins.

"Ready when you are," Mark replied. "That's right. Just there.

Oooh! Christ! That feels great." He reached behind him and clasped Adam's buttocks. "Oh! Oh! That's right. Fuck me Adam."

Adam's white, tight bottom began to move up and down rhythmically to the accompaniment of gasps and moans from both boys.

Richard spun round. The door behind him had opened. "Oh, it's you," he said as the Professor entered.

"I've just come to see your new import," the Professor said. "He seems to be settling down well. I suppose we should have known that they'd be at it pretty quickly. He's a lovely looking lad. It was a stroke of luck finding that school."

"It was a stroke of luck finding Simon Spencer," Richard replied. "He did all the work. It was risky though, taking two boys from the same place. I shall leave that area well alone for a long time."

"We need still more though, Richard."

Richard laughed. "For your research, eh, Professor?"

"For our joint research. And for our joint bank balance."

Life on the island was in many ways like being at a very exclusive boarding school, but without those petty restrictions which Adam had so loathed. It was nice to know that his intelligence, physical strength and good looks had been recognized, but it had to be said that some of the other boys didn't seem particularly bright. Quite a few had escaped from juvenile penal establishments. To Adam, anyone foolish enough to commit such minor crimes, and then get caught, could hardly be very bright. But they were all good looking and, as Mark said, one really didn't know how many other crimes they had got

away with; most of the boys on the island were markedly reluctant to talk about their previous lives.

The study and sports facilities were, as Laurent had promised, first class. Adam soon got to grips with 'Computer Assisted Learning', and the Professor and his staff were always on hand to help with problems if necessary. A sports fixture, a football match, a table tennis tournament or just a 'work out' in the gymnasium, was arranged for every afternoon.

At first he missed Ben and Simon - missed them quite a lot, in fact. The remoteness of the island didn't help. But Mark introduced him to people, studied with him, sat next to him at meals and, after an exhausting day, was always willing to share his or Adam's bed.

Soon even Martin, the senior boy, read out 'Adam and Mark' as one person at the breakfast time notices.

Martin was a founder member of the community, having been recruited at age thirteen in Germany. Eighteen now, he was tall, very handsome, very popular and, despite a rather boyish appearance, extremely strong. Whenever there was a minor squabble, as there must inevitably be in any community of adolescent males, Martin sorted it out with unfailing fairness and good humor.

His status allowed him to select his partners as if by royal edict. Mark had warned Adam that it wouldn't be long before he was summoned to Martin's room, but the first few weeks were so hectic that hardly a day went by without a call for Adam to report to the Big House.

Originally the residence of the island's owner, it had been extended considerably and housed the Professor and his staff. In the new wings were offices, computer rooms, laboratories and a photographic studio. Every part of Adam was meticulously measured, photographed, pushed and prodded. He found it strange to be masturbated by one of the technicians with total clinical detachment before a video camera.

Probably the strangest aspect of island life was this casual, at times even cold-blooded, attitude toward subjects which, at Adam's school, had only been whispered about and sniggered over. It disturbed him at first and he mentioned it to the Professor. The Professor explained that it was quite normal for superior beings thus to deal with matters which the lower orders of humanity found embarrassing. And it wasn't long before Adam, too, was extolling a younger boy's 'cheeky little arse' or 'neat little cock'.

Martin's invitation was similarly forthright. Adam was in the foyer of the dining room one afternoon looking at the program for the following day when he suddenly realized that Martin was standing behind him.

"You'd better come round at seven this evening," said Martin. "I should think you fuck quite well, don't you? You've got nice legs."

"I don't really know," replied Adam, blushing despite himself.

"Remind me to tell you. Don't forget. Seven o'clock." Martin strode off.

At seven, freshly showered and with his hair neatly brushed, Adam found himself sitting in Martin's flat. Martin was easy to talk to.

"This place must cost millions to run," Adam observed.

"It does. Mind you, the owner is a multimillionaire and the Professor's not a poor man. They get money for our services, of course."

"But not that much, surely?" said Adam.

"You'd be surprised. We're responsible for some pretty big industrial deals."

"How do you mean?"

"If some major company wants a big overseas contract and they know that the potential customer likes boys, they get in touch with the boss and he sends one of us. Helps get that signature down on the dotted line. Knowing Richard, it wouldn't surprise me if they don't get up to a bit of blackmail too: 'Sign here or we'll tell the police that you screwed a fourteen-year-old.'" Martin obviously had enormous admiration for the Professor, but didn't seem to care much for Richard. Was it, perhaps, that he saw Richard as an

interloper between himself and his revered Professor? "Maybe Mr. Furth is in on it, too."

"Did you say Furth?" Adam had jumped at the name.

"Yes, why? Do you know him?"

"Indeed I do!"

Adam told Mark about his early experiences and seeing Furth at the boy-auction in London.

"I've been to some of his parties," said Martin. "That one sounds a bit over the top, though. Richard's influence, no doubt. The ones we have here are much more civilized affairs. You'll see for yourself at Christmas time."

"I only went to this one because I was told Pete Clegwith would be there," said Adam ruefully.

Martin touched him gently on the thigh. "I have a feeling, Adam, that you were taken there deliberately. I think the whole thing was set up. I can see it all. Mr. Furth told Richard about the pretty little boy called Adam whom he once knew, and Richard traced you. It wouldn't have been difficult. They get you to the party. You still look good and, bingo! You're here."

It made sense. All of it made sense. Adam sat silent and horrified. He was furious, mostly with himself, for having fallen into such obvious traps. Unable to contain his anger, he punched a cushion and swore violently.

"I think Richard is the one mostly to blame," Martin went on. "Mr. Furth is a dear old chap. He wouldn't hurt a fly. He's very popular here. Richard probably told him that you missed him as much as he missed you. Well, shall we get down to what you came for?"

When it was over, Adam climbed shakily to his feet and apologized for the stain on the bed.

"No problem. How old are you, Adam?"

"Fifteen and a half."

"Do you mind if I give you some advice?"

"No, go ahead."

"Let up on the sex a bit between now and the Christmas party. Our guests will expect rather more than a tiny pool like that."

"Do I really have to go to this party?" Adam asked.

"Well, yes. Most of the boys look forward to it. You'll meet important people and earn a lot of money."

"It's that which puts me off it. I mean, it's just prostitution, isn't it? Whoring isn't my scene."

Martin put a hand on Adam's shoulder. "Now listen," he said. "The men who come to these parties may be famous; they may be rich, but deep down they are desperately lonely. Most boy-lovers are. All year they live a sort of double life. Only here can they be what they really are and do what they really want to do. They go back to their important work rested and relaxed; the world is a better place for it. We are here because we are the tops; not because we are, as you say, prostitutes. We perform this small service. We get paid well for it. Look upon that as a professional fee."

It all sounded so reasonably sensible. He would have to think about it.

Martin's advice about over-doing it Adam remembered only occasionally. That very night he screwed Mark, and Mark appeared as grateful as ever for the libation Adam pumped into his gyrating arse.

A few days later an order was published, signed by the Professor himself, decreeing abstinence until after the Christmas party.

"What's it mean?" asked a small boy - one of a pair - who stood between Adam and Mark looking at the notice board.

“No sex,” said Mark.

“That's a bit unfair,” said the boy. He turned and winked at Mark. “There's nothing else to do on an afternoon like this.” It was true. It had rained all day and every available game had been booked. The two boys seemed grateful to be invited back to listen to records. Music gave way to checkers, checkers to a game of strip poker and it wasn't very long before the floor was scattered with clothes and two attractive thirteen-year-olds lay naked on Mark's bed.

This, thought Adam, as he licked down a taut, wriggling arse, was the life for him: being totally in charge of a situation; having a boy; doing what he wanted. He thrilled to the sound of Mark's boy gasping (was it in pain or pleasure or both?) as Mark went into him with a cock slicked up and dripping with the spittle of both of them. He thrilled even more when his own boy, whose name he had learned was Alan, squirmed and groaned as he felt Adam's prick thrust deep into him. It was exciting to feel the tight sphincter slide up the slick shaft and then grip it tightly at the root, to feel the boy become damp with sweat and wriggle ecstatically as he pumped! Then, all too soon, came the greatest excitement: the thrill as his pent-up spunk spurt into the boy. Yes... this was the life!

“I suppose we could say that we didn't see the notice,” said Alan as they showered afterwards.

“Well, it is best to keep it in moderation,” replied Adam loftily. “I should keep off it until Christmas, if I were you.”

“That shouldn't be too difficult,” the boy smirked. “It's Christmas Eve tomorrow. The Professor asked me to make a Christmas Carol tape for the party. It starts with 'Oh Come all ye Faithful' and finishes with 'God Rest ye Merry, Gentlemen'.”

## 17.

Helicopters, carrying guests from all over Europe and America, began arriving on the day before Christmas, depositing their passengers and whirling off again in a flurry of snow. Adam shuddered when he saw Mr. Furth, accompanied by two very small boys, arrive and be greeted effusively by Richard and the Professor.

That night the guest-wing foyer was crowded with men and boys. Adam fought his way through the throng, past the self-service bar and buffet and retired to a corner with a loaded plate and full glass. Mr. Furth, standing at one end of the room with his two tiny friends, waved and smiled. Richard and the Professor were with him. Adam did not wave back.

“Mind if I join you?” The voice was unmistakably American. Adam turned. The speaker was equally unmistakable. “I'm Jake Wade,” said the man. He smiled and put out a hand.

“I know,” Adam replied feeling slightly overawed. “I saw you in *Commando Combat*.”

“Did you now?”

“I know the man who wrote the book: Simon Spencer.”

Jake was an easy man to talk to. Soon Adam was telling him the story of his life - or, rather, *a* story, for he was sexually quite innocent, he said, and didn't realize until tonight what might be expected of him by the guests. Jake was good looking. Small crow's feet round his eyes wrinkled attractively when he smiled. Adam remembered what he had looked like in *Commando Combat* when the rebels had stripped him to the waist and tied him to a tree. His torso was a mass of muscles. He remembered Ben's excitement as they sat together in the darkened cinema. They were perversely disappointed when, just



before he was due to be tortured, Jake had been rescued by his devoted troops.

And so, despite his determination *not* to enjoy the party, Adam was actually pleased when Jake led him off to a suite in the guest wing which had its own bathroom, a large bed, a sofa and two chairs.

“Look, Adam,” said Jake, “I don't want to embarrass you. I'll go and have me a shower and you can get into bed. That'll make it easier for you.”

Getting undressed took only a couple of seconds. Adam turned off the light, crawled into bed and lay waiting. A strange, tormented cry came from somewhere a long way off. It could have been a sea-bird or a boy. Adam hoped it wasn't a boy. The Bathroom door opened and the light inside snapped off at the same moment. Moonlight, made brighter by the snow outside, filtered past the edges of the curtains. And then all Adam was aware of was Jake crawling into bed beside him and folding him in his strong arms. “This may not be love, boy,” the actor said, “but it's the next best thing to it. And it sure beats jerking off.”

At the 'social hour' the following evening, Jake pointed out to him a boy by the name of Gavin whom Adam knew to be intellectually brilliant but extraordinarily shy. The lad stammered so badly it made him difficult to talk to. Once Adam had invited him round to listen to some music; the boy had actually run away after trying vainly to articulate a reply.

“He's a bit odd,” Adam said, and explained.

“Guess he's probably had a rough time. Used to stammer myself when I was his age. How old is he?”

“I think he's thirteen. A bit young,” said Adam, feeling distinctly jealous.

“Well, maybe my lucky number's thirteen after all,” said Jake.

“You don't mind....?”

“Not at all,” said Adam untruthfully. “Go ahead.” He took his drink and sat in the corner and meditated bitterly. This really was not his scene. Wherever he looked men were pawing boys; pushing their wrinkled hands into shorts; kissing; stroking legs and chests. Martin could say anything he pleased: this was *really* what the island was all about. It was just another whorehouse, and he was a whore.

He was picked up by a Norwegian by the name of Olaf. Back in Olaf's suite in the guest-wing, Olaf proceeded to get very drunk, and very voluble. The sons of most of Europe's notable families had, it seemed, at some time or another, shared a bed with Olaf. They had indeed even fought for the privilege. Olaf's crusade in life was to screw as many millionaire's sons, teenage princes and peers as possible. Adam listened, first with amusement and then with concern, as the fairy-tale unfolded.

“Have you heard of Prince Rupert?” asked Olaf.

“No... I can't say I have. Who is he?”

“Oh, his father is the hereditary ruler of half of Germany. One of the richest families in the world. They own three castles. They gave Rupert a castle of his own for his fourteenth birthday. I gave him something else. Lovely arse that lad's got. He couldn't have enough of it. He used to wear pure silk underpants. Just imagine that! Pure silk they were, with the family crest on them.”

Olaf poured himself another drink - half a tumbler full of pure malt whiskey. “I had them off in double quick time, I can tell you. And underneath all that finery, what did I find, eh? What did I find?”

“I don't know. What did you find?” said Adam.

“I'll tell you what I found. A prick, a pair of balls and an arse. That's all you ever find. These people who lord it over you and me are all the same. Just a prick, a pair of balls and an arse. Do you know what I think?”

“No.”

“I think I'd better go into the bathroom and have a pee...”

A minute later came the sound of Olaf vomiting. At first Adam couldn't believe his ears, but his nose soon confirmed it. He felt disgusted and nauseated, and he buried his nose in the pillow. He had always been the same. If one boy on a school bus was sick, it triggered Adam's reflexes. He'd been sitting with Ben once.... thoughts of Ben again.

Olaf didn't return. Minutes passed. Adam raised his head and promptly lowered it again. The stench was overpowering. He waited and waited. Still nothing. Finally, claspng his nose between his fingers and keeping his lips as tightly shut as he could, he got off the bed and peered through the open door of the bathroom. One glance was all he needed to know that Olaf would not be returning. The man lay curled in a fetal position on the floor. There was vomit everywhere. It was the most disgusting sight Adam had ever seen.

Now what? He could go to bed, but Mark wouldn't be there. He decided to take a stroll round the guest-wing to get the revolting smell out of his nose. It was too cold to go out into the open dressed only in shorts and sandals, and he didn't feel like returning to his own room to change.

He didn't actually listen as he passed the various rooms: just paused occasionally by a window or a door. He couldn't hear very much anyway. Some people, though, had opened the small ventilation louvers, and from those rooms he heard moans, groans, panting noises and even occasional snatches of conversation.

"I like it when you do that," said a high pitched voice from one room.

"That's right, let yourself go slack. There's just a bit more."

That was an adult voice from another room.

Mr. Furth's inimitable, rather feminine, voice came from another air-vent and caused Adam to pause there for some time.

"Oh yes! This little piglet is ready for stuffing. Now let me look at my other little piglet..."

Somebody giggled.

"I am a lucky farmer! You're a suckling pig. What a nice little sausage! I wonder which piglet I shall have first?"

"You said *I* had a nice sausage last night!" a childish voice protested.

"So I did. Well, maybe I'll suck both sausages first and then I'll stuff my piglet."

Adam shuddered but smiled. Mr. Furth hadn't changed! Jake's door vent was open too. Adam wondered how he was getting on with Gavin.

"Bill, the baker, bakes bread," said Jake. He said it very slowly and deliberately.

There was a pause. "B... B... Bill, the baker b... b... b bakes bread." That was Gavin.

"Hey! You did that real good! Try again."

"B... B... Bill, the baker, bakes bread. Bill, the baker, bakes bread."

Jake clapped. "Great! You've got it. Now try this. Bill bakes bread for Pete the policeman."

"Bill breaks bread for P... P... Oh, no! B... Bill..."

Adam went back to the room he shared with Mark, threw some articles of Mark's clothing off of his bed, lay down and closed his eyes. He felt trapped. Life was a trap. It just got worse and worse. You either lived in the outside world where there was lots to do and lots to learn but there was no sex, or you lived in a prison like this, where there was all the sex you could want, both nice and raunchy, pre-fabricated instruction, but nothing else to do, no world to explore and make your way in; where you lived a life with no future.

He would have given anything right then to be back in that little attic room at school, arguing with Ben, feeling Ben's steady presence. How he missed Ben! Tears welled in his eyes. Come on, he thought, you haven't cried since you were a little boy; don't start now! He turned over, grabbed his pillow and knew it

would be a long night before he fell asleep.

## 18.

It has to be said that a Royal Air Force station in North Germany is not the ideal place for a teenager to spend his Christmas holiday. Ben's father was on temporary assignment there and had arranged for his wife and children to join him. But Ben was soon bored. He watched Harriers landing and taking off. His father arranged for him to have a go in the flight simulator. He didn't know that his son's conception of a joy-stick was very different to that held by the officer who demonstrated the machine.

It was good, though, to be back with his family again. But Ben was worried about Adam. Was his old roommate sleeping rough? Even Adam would find it difficult to survive that in winter. Adam hadn't taken any sort of coat with him.

Ben spent a lot of time in the base indoor, heated swimming pool. Some of the young R. A. F. personnel he met there were quite nice. He found it took his thoughts off his missing friend to fix an unknowing eighteen year old youth in his mind so that, in the privacy of his room, he could retrieve the mental picture and relieve his pent up sexuality.

Each fantasy started in the same way. The youth of his choice would undress him slowly and very gently. Then he would peel off his own swimming trunks to reveal a voluptuous prick. But just when he was being turned over, his companion was transformed into Adam. Ben invariably found himself unable to sleep after he had wiped himself dry.

He knew what he was missing. He decided to visit Simon the moment he returned to school. Simon would know what to do. By the end of the holiday he was counting the days before departure for England - not because he longed to 'get down to his studies' as his father suggested but to get down on Simon's bed.

Mind you, the more he thought about it, the more he wondered if Simon was in some way involved with Mark and Adam's disappearance. It was too much of a coincidence that they had both visited his house. But Simon was such a nice man. It didn't seem possible.

Luck was not with him on the day of his return. The flight was delayed for thirteen hours because of bad weather. It was one o'clock in the morning when, tired and fed-up, he trudged into the school. He had best report to Alky in the morning. His housemaster wouldn't be happy to be woken by a returning pupil at that hour.

He groped his way up the darkened staircase, took out his room key and tried to unlock the door. The key wouldn't turn.

"Fuck!" he exclaimed. He would have to wake Alky after all unless, perhaps, one of the dimwitted cleaners had failed to lock his door. He turned the handle. The door opened. 'Home' at last!

He slung his bag onto Adam's empty bed.

"Hey! Watch out!" grumbled a young voice. Ben switched on the light. There, lying in Adam's bed, was young Howard! Adam's psychedelic posters had been replaced by one depicting a squirrel eating a nut.

"What are you doing in here?" Ben asked.

"I'm Upper School now. I passed the exam second time round and they put me in with you. Did you have a nice Christmas?"

Ben was in no mood for conversation. He undressed and slipped between the sheets. Tomorrow he

would visit Simon. All he could do to work out his frustrations now was to wank, and he would have to wait for Howard to go to sleep before he could do that.

Howard, however, now that he had been woken up, didn't seem to want to go back to sleep. "I asked to move in with you," he said. "I expect you can guess why?"

"No idea," Ben yawned.

"Well, you know. We can have fun."

"What sort of fun?"

"Like we did on that night you and Adam rescued me from Charlie Wanks."

"Forget it," said Ben. "Much too risky. Alky's likely to come in at any time."

"We could lock the door."

"Not allowed - and he'd certainly think the worst if we did."

"But he wouldn't come round really, really late, would he?"

A door slammed downstairs.

"Unless I am much mistaken," said Ben, "We are due for a visit right now."

He was right. The door swung open. The housemaster was still wearing the gray wrinkled suit which he had worn on the last day of the previous term.

"You're back!" he said. "Why didn't you report to me, boy?"

"I thought you'd be asleep, sir. I thought I'd do it in the morning."

"You must always report in, the moment you return." As usual, the man's breath stank of Scotch. "I knew your flight was delayed and I've been sitting up waiting for you. I saw the light come on and I guessed it must be you sneaking in. I've got more to do than chase up silly boys, you know. I'm a busy man."

"Yes, sir. Sorry, sir," said Ben.

"Well don't let it happen again." He lowered his voice.

"You'll see that we've put young Ainsworth in this room."

"Yes, sir, I had noticed."

"He was a friend of Lee's, you know. Outside school, of course. I expect he's forgotten all about it by now, but we didn't want to put him in Lee's old dormitory. We don't want the poor lad reminded of the tragedy."

From under the sheets on the other bed came the sound of the thirteen-year-old snoring contentedly.

"I quite understand, sir. I won't mention it. Is there any news of Adam?"

"None at all, I fear. None at all. Well, goodnight. Put the light out soon, won't you?"

"Yes, sir. Goodnight, sir." The housemaster left, closing the door quietly behind him.

"And good riddance!" said a muffled voice from the other bed.

Ben laughed. "I thought you'd gone to sleep."

"No way. I wanted to listen. Forget about Mark indeed! What does he think I am?"

"Excuse me for asking," said Ben, "but did you and Mark ever... er... you know?"

"Have sex you mean?"

"Yes."

"No... never. I wish we had. I gave him plenty of chances but I don't think he was like that."

"Adam and I had suspicions at one time, but I think you're right."

"What made you suspicious?"

"Oh, it doesn't matter."

"No. Go on. Tell me."

"Will you absolutely promise never to say a word? I don't suppose you've got a Bible to swear on?"

“No. If it's something really, really important I use something else. Here...” Howard got out of bed, crossed the room to his prep-desk and took out a small, brown paper package. He held it up in his right hand. “I swear by the memory of Mark Lee not to tell anyone what Ben is about to tell me.” So saying, he put the package away again and sat on the end of Ben's bed. “Now you can tell me,” he said.

And so Ben told him about their visits to Simon's house. He told him about Simon's generosity and kindness, pointing out the various things in the room which Simon had bought him. He told him about Mark's neatly folded clothes and how Mark, too, had been a regular visitor to Simon's cottage before his disappearance. “And now Adam's gone,” Ben said. “It's too much of a coincidence.”

“Could Mr. Spencer have something to do with it?”

“We used to think so but he's really a nice man. I'm not that keen on Richard, though he seems nice enough too, but, as he's a friend of Simon's, he must be in the clear. And I think Alky knows more than he's let on.”

“Do you think,” Howard said after some time, “that Mark might still be alive?”

“Well they've never found a body, have they? There's always a hope.”

Howard went quiet again. “I'd like to go to Simon Spencer's house,” he said. “Could I come with you when you go?”

“What for?”

“Well, I could talk to him about Mark and maybe he'll, well, like me and I'll get a stereo and a computer like you've got.”

“I think you're still a bit young for that,” said Ben.

“What's age got to do with it?”

“A lot. Besides, he might suspect that I have told you what we get up to at his place if I take you there.”

“That's a point. Shall I put the light out now?”

“Yes, please. We'd better get some sleep.”

“Actually, I'm not really tired,” said Howard.

“I've noticed.”

Howard got up and turned off the light. “I can't see a thing now!” he complained.

“That's the wrong bed, tit-head!” said Ben as Howard landed heavily on his leg. “Yours is on the other side of the room, remember?”

“You can see the stars really well from your bed, can't you?” said the younger boy.

“That's probably a lot to do with the fact that the skylight is above my bed and, as its name implies, it's transparent. Now, will you please go back and crawl under your own covers?”

“I think I'll just sit here for a bit and watch the stars.” “You won't. You will go back to bed right now!”

“Who's going to make me?”

“I am!” Ben sat up, reached out and grasped a pyjama-clad arm. Howard struggled to release himself.

“Now will you go to bed?” Ben tried to twist Howard's arm up behind his back but the boy was surprisingly strong.

“No, I won't!” He grasped Ben's free arm and pushed it down, falling as he did so and pulling Ben down with him. Their faces were so close that Ben could smell the toothpaste on Howard's breath.

“You've been drinking!” said Howard.

“I had a beer on the plane. It was free.”

“Naughty boy! You're supposed to set me a good example.”

“You wouldn't have known it if you'd kept to your own bed,” said Ben, but his voice was losing the proper commanding tone.

“I don't mind it,” said the younger boy. “It's quite a nice smell.”

They stopped struggling and lay there, Ben in bed and Howard lying on top of him and on top of the covers. Ben felt his heart beat quicken.

“You're getting hard,” said Howard. “I can feel it through the blankets.”

“I'm not surprised. I've got a very handsome thirteen-year-old lying on top of me. It's a good thing for you the blankets are between us.”

Now Ben wondered who was going to make the first move. This sort of deadlock could go on for hours and it was very late. There was a period of silence.

“Last time you were in this room,” Ben said, “I noticed that you had hair growing under your arms. Have you grown any more?”

“I expect so.”

“Let me look.”

“Why should I?”

“Because I said so.” He undid the top button of Howard's pyjama jacket. The little boy rolled off him and lay against the wall. “Let me see now.” Ben felt downwards. There were five more buttons. He opened them one by one and parted the front of the jacket.

“You won't be able to see if I have or I haven't,” said Howard.

“No, but I can feel.”

Howard squirmed and giggled as Ben put the fingers of both hands into his armpits.

“You seem to have,” said Ben, feeling the sparse, rather damp growth on his finger-tips. “I wonder if you've grown any anywhere else.”

“You'll have to find out, won't you?”

That was a clear enough invitation. Ben was well aroused now. What Howard had felt as a lump under the blankets now resembled a raised rocket, ready to launch.

The cord of Howard's pyjama trousers was easy enough to undo. Then just one button and the fly fell open. He could see nothing but placed the palm of his hand on Howard's firm belly and slid it downwards. Sure enough, his finger tips felt hair. It was soft and rather silky. A few centimeters further down still and he felt something hard and rigidly upright. One didn't need to see it to know it was a beautiful pubescent prick. Ben grasped it.

“Shall I get into bed with you?” Howard whispered.

“Might be a good idea. Bedclothes tend to get in the way.”

Howard giggled. “I'm a snake, and I'm coming to eat you!” With that he tucked his head under the top sheet and slid down, head first. As the snake slid into its warm burrow it cast its skin - a pyjama jacket and trousers - on Ben's head. Ben threw them to the floor and caught the multiple boy-odors as Howard's body glided past his nose - hair not too recently washed, toothpaste, and then boy-perspiration which became stronger and muskier as Howard slid down the bed.

“Snakes are supposed to flick their tongues in and out,” said Ben. “Go a bit further down.” He felt Howard's prick against his forehead. It trailed, slightly wet and slippery and smelling delicious, down his face.

“What's this?” Howard said from under the covers. “Another snake in my burrow!” Ben flinched as Howard grasped and bent it forward.

“Be careful. That hurt!” Ben said, and then his lips closed over the end of Howard's prick. He'd seen it from a distance on Tiddler Trapping Night. It had looked good. He hadn't been prepared for how

good it felt and tasted. It was rather thicker than he had expected. This was no longer a small-boy tool which could be manipulated in pursed lips. This one was at least four and a half inches long and required a full mouth to do it justice.

Howard thrust it deeper. Ben pulled away.

“Don't do that, Howard. Let me, okay?”

“Okay. Sorry.”

He took Howard's cock again. He found that he could push the foreskin back with the tip of his tongue. He delighted in the smooth feel and the pungent taste and smell of the glans. Slowly, he let his mouth engulf the whole shaft. It was pulsating and hard as steel. He felt the muscles in Howard's thighs shudder against his cheeks.

Something wet touched his own erection. Was Howard going to... Yes, he was! He felt Howard's lips part over it; felt the boy's teeth scrape it slightly, and then the exquisite feel of Howard's tongue lapping against the slit.

Closing his lips tightly round the base of Howard's prick, and feeling the boy's soft pubic hair against his nose, Ben sucked in his cheeks. Momentarily Howard's mouth slackened. Ben heard him groan slightly and then, rather hesitantly, Howard took as much of Ben's penis as possible into his mouth. Ben's glans touched the back of the thirteen-year-old's throat. Howard withdrew slightly and then began to suck on it again, this time as greedily as an infant at feeding time.

It would have been nice to tell Howard how much he was enjoying this and even how fond he was becoming of his new roommate, but liquid noises, deep breathing, and squeaking bedsprings were in the final analysis just as eloquent.

The smooth thighs clamping Ben's face began to shudder. He felt Howard's prick hammering into his mouth. Howard wouldn't take long. Nor, for that matter, would Ben. Should he warn the boy? Howard was still rather inexperienced and might not appreciate a mouthful of semen from a very fertile boy. But to warn him would mean releasing Howard's prick and that was something he was sure Howard would regret as much as he would. He put his hands round Howard's inverted rump to urge the little boy's penis further in and was delighted to feel Howard do the same to him under the bedclothes.

Ben ignored a minor tremor in Howard's gluteal muscles. As generations of people living near volcanoes have done for thousands of years, he thought nothing of it. A split second later, the eruption took him by surprise. He felt a massive spasm in the soft flesh of Howard's buttocks, a violent tremor in the boy's thighs, and then his mouth was filling with short successive squirts of sweet pubertal juice.

For a moment, but only a moment, the sucking of Howard's lips on Ben's penis ceased. Ben lay still. Some of Howard's semen dribbled out of the comers of his mouth. He swallowed the rest. Then Howard started again, sucking, tickling and sliding his lips up and down the older boy's thick shaft. Any time now. And then, with heart pumping, loins pushing and muscles tensing, Ben came. One, two, three spurts.

Howard pulled back. Ben heard him retching. “Sorry,” Ben gasped. “It came too quickly.”

Howard gulped and then gulped again. “It's okay,” he said, sounding a bit like a cartoon film goldfish.

“Come up and have some fresh air,” said Ben. Howard wriggled under the bedclothes, reversed position and emerged to give Ben a spontaneous hug. It was all too quick, but it made Ben feel warm and protective. He kissed the boy's smooth cheek and embraced him.

"That was really, really nice!" Howard said. "Can we do it every night?"

"No we can't! I dread to think what Matron's going to say when she sees these sheets!"

"I'll try to swallow it next time. It surprised me. It's probably quite nice when you get used to it."

"Not half so nice as you are," said Ben.

"Me or my spunk?"

"Both."

"*You're* nice," said Howard dreamily, "but your spunk does taste a bit like swimming pool water."

"I'll warn you next time."

"Oh good! You said 'next time'!"

"You are incorrigible, do you know that?" He hugged the boy to him.

"What does 'incorrigible' mean?"

"I think it means that you can't stop."

"I've hardly started yet!"

"You keep on. You're doing well." He kissed the boy's full lips and felt the soft down of Howard's upper lip against his own.

"You won't tell anyone, will you, Howard?"

"What do you take me for? This is our secret."

"Do you swear?"

"Well, it's too late to get Mark's diary out again but I'll swear in the morning."

Ben nearly jumped out of the bed. "To get what?"

"Mark's diary. It's what that parcel was. He gave it to me the day before he went. That's how I know it wasn't an accident."

"Good God! *Everybody's* been hunting for that! You said you knew nothing about it."

"I know. But I wasn't about it give it up. It's all I've got to remember him by."

"Have you read it?"

"No. He made me swear not to until I was eighteen. That was the first swear I had on it. I don't believe in God, so when I have to swear something, I use that."

Ben sank back. "I can't believe what I'm hearing!" he said. "Mark's diary might just explain everything."

"I suppose so. I'm afraid I can't read it, though. I'd die first."

Ben thought for a moment and then said, "Look, Howard. Mark made you promise. Yes?"

"Yes."

"Which you did and I respect you for keeping your promise; but you promised for yourself. Nothing was said about other people reading it. Me for instance."

"No way.."

"But, Howard, if Mark isn't dead - I don't want to raise your hopes - but if he isn't, then the information in the diary might let us get him back. I could promise not to tell you what's in it."

"But you'd have to tell the teachers and they'd tell the police and they'd take it away and I'd be in trouble for hanging on to it."

"Not necessarily. We could tell Simon. He'd know what to do. He writes thrillers."

"I don't know," said Howard dubiously. "It seems wrong. I swore, see. I think it's something to do with Mark's secret."

"Most probably."

"Can I tell you later? I need time to think."

"If you must. You'd better go back to your own bed now or we'll never be able to get up in the



morning.”

“It is the morning,” said Howard. He climbed out of the bed and rummaged round for his pyjamas.

“Goodnight, Ben - and thanks a lot.”

“Goodnight, and thank you. Do think about that, won't you?”

“I will.”

Ben heard him cross the floor and get into bed. It was really nice to have Howard in the room, Ben thought. He missed Adam badly but Howard would be good company. He wondered how long it would be before he could persuade the younger boy to let him screw him. From what he'd felt, Howard had a really nice bottom... Ben's prick began to take an interest again.

“Ben,” Howard whispered from across the room.

“Yes?”

“Can you do it when I'm not here?”

“Do what?” What Ben was thinking about at that moment certainly required Howard's corporeal presence.

“Read the diary.”

“Yes, of course.”

“Then I'll let you do it.”

“Oh, that's wonderful!”

Ben wondered whether the boy would accede as easily to his next request which he hoped to make very soon.

## 19.

“When I am not here,” Howard had said. If a person is asleep, Ben thought, he isn't really present; not in a mental sense anyway. It would surely do no harm to read the diary when Howard was asleep.

“Are you awake, Howard?” he whispered.

“Yes, why?”

“Oh, nothing.”

He waited for about five minutes - it seemed like half an hour - and asked again. This time there was no answer. He slipped out of bed, opened the top drawer of the prep desk, located the package and pulled it out. He slit under the seals with his penknife, cut the tape and the brown paper fell open to reveal a bulky envelope and the diary. On the envelope was scribbled, *Howard: open on your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

Getting into bed again, Ben tilted the bedside lamp so that it made a small pool of light on his pillow and settled down to read the diary. The first few entries seemed to consist of lists of grades and comments on the lessons: 'Tried hard in history. Maths lesson dead boring. Mr. Saunders says he's pleased with my art. Football 2:1 to us. I didn't score.'

Ben flicked through the pages. Suddenly, in June, the style changed. Blank paper gave way to entries written in minute handwriting so dense that the entire page looked blue. Ben pulled the lamp down closer and turned over so that his nose was inches from the pages.

That's it. Decision made. I'm off. H. last night. Painful. Saw R. He says not to tell S. about H. S. is the sort of bloke who would report him. I'd be in the shit. R. says he has a friend who can help. To see him again tomorrow. Saw Hd. On football field. Beautiful as ever.

*June 29.*

To beach again last night. Good wank over Hd. And a swim. Lessons more boring than ever. Stopped working now. No point. Saw R. this afternoon down at S.'s place. He says S. mustn't know. He'd tell Dad. R.'s friend is a big noise medic. Professor. Studies above average teenagers. We stay on an island off the west coast of Scotland. Masses of games, study resources etc. Stay there won't be long. Just a few weeks. I am to help the Prof. with his research - a laugh. Never was much good at science. R. will work out somewhere where I can live permanently. Feel very relieved. No more of this dump. No more H. No more of my bastard dad. He won't be sorry. Feel sorry for Mum though.

*June 30.*

S. this afternoon. Went the whole (hole!) way again. Hurt slightly but then it was nice. Feel like I'm sitting on a fence post. S. says it will wear off.

*July 1.*

R. says he's trying to fix me up with an American family in San Francisco. (Wow! Surfing!) They will adopt me and I'll go to a day school there. R. says he will have my name changed. Gave him my passport. Says I mustn't tell *anybody*.

*July 2.*

H. again 8 pm. He was drunk. Horrible. Not like with S. Same fence post feeling and sore as well. Last time I hope.

*July 3.*

R. has final plans. D-Day July 8<sup>th</sup>. I am to leave plastic bag with all my day clothes in the hollow tree by the lane before 7 p.m. on the day before. At 2 a.m. On the 8<sup>th</sup> I am to walk towards beach in swimming trunks, cut across to hollow tree. He'll be there waiting. Wonder why trunks? Perhaps he wants to wank me in the car. Wouldn't mind. Like being wanked by R. He can fuck me if he wants. He deserves a favor!

*July 4.*

Saw Hd. in showers from library. Super body and smashing bum. Recognized him straight away.

*July 5.*

Went to beach at 2 am just to make sure of route to hollow tree in dark. Easy to find and not too bad on bare feet. Had wank about Hd. Nearly caught by H. on way back but he was too pissed to recognize me.

*July 6.*

S. did it again. Really nice and peaceful somehow. He said I'm good at it. Says Dad should go to prison for what he's done to me. I said "Don't men who fuck fifteen-year-old boys go to prison too?"

S laughed. Said nobody should be punished for doing what boys like. Have to admit he's right. Really, really nice.

S. obviously not in the picture. Said goodbye to him and he said, "See you next week." Saw Hd. again. Super kid. He smiled. Is it worth staying for him? I can't.

July 7.

Goodbye to this dump. Good riddance to H. Goodbye to S. Goodbye to Hd. I love you Howard and always will.

And there the entries stopped. Ben lay astounded. So Mark wasn't dead. He was alive in San Francisco! S. and R. could only be Simon and Richard. So Mark had been one of Simon's boy-friends after all. Ben almost got out of bed to wake Howard and tell him the good news but then thought better of it. But somebody ought to be told. Simon perhaps, though he would be embarrassed by some of the things Mark had written. Fence post indeed! Ben smiled. It did feel a bit like that sometimes. His prick twitched slightly at the memory.

The next thing was the letter. It was quite clearly addressed to Howard. Ben turned it over in his hands wondering if he ought to... There was no writing on the back. He could always say that he didn't see to whom it was addressed until it was too late. Absentmindedly he toyed with his pocket-knife. The envelope opened with one quick slash, solving that moral quandary. He might as well read it now that it was open. There were quite a few pages of it. He settled down for a long read.

Dear Howard,

It seems funny to think that you'll be 18 when you read this. Five and a bit years from now. I wonder if the paper has gone all brown and crackly. Maybe you won't even know who it's from, but I guess you'll recognize the writing from those notes I wrote to you at home. Remember that? How we strung black cotton from your house to my house and sent notes in the middle of the night? They were good times.

I ran away from school. When you read this I'll be in America. It's all been arranged.

I want to tell you why I left. You will be 18 when you read this so I think you'll be able to understand.

The most important thing is that I love you. I mean *really* love you, the way boys are supposed to love girls. I first realized it the day when your dad took us to the lake and you went skinny dipping.

You were 10. I was 13. You put your hand on my trunks. I remember how you smiled. I didn't have the courage to touch you. I wonder what you would have said. Well, I'll never know. I expect you've got loads of girl friends now. For you this is all in the past, but not for me. I'm still 'queer'.

You sent notes to me on the cotton message system about how you missed me. I wrote back that I missed you too. Was that really a kiss-cross on one of your letters? I always wondered, but you didn't say anything about it so I guess it wasn't

Then your dad decided to send you to this dump of a school where I already was. It should have been a stroke of good luck, but you know how it is - Upper School boys don't talk to Juniors. No real way of communicating with each other - no 'cotton telegraph'. I used to watch out for you and sometimes after I saw you I'd sneak over to the stream. You know that funny smooth boulder, the one with a flat top and a depression like a soup plate? I called it Howard's rock and I used to wank on it in your honor. If it wasn't for the rain, that depression on top would be full of my spunk - all shot for you. When I think of you it comes out like bullets from a machine gun!

I used to watch you in the showers too. No, I wasn't there with you. I wish I had been! If you stand in Upper School library and look out of the window next to 'HISTORY' you can see straight across to the Junior School shower window. Even though the glass is opaque and the room used to fill with steam, if the lights were on I could recognize you straight away. I won't tell you how - you'd be embarrassed.

And that, dear Howard, is the first reason. The second and the third reasons are my dad and Alky. I'll start with my dad.

When you were about 11, you said he was a nice man. Do you remember how I laughed?

To start off with - (this is between you and me. *Please* don't say anything at home because your mum and dad are friends of my mum and dad) - Dad isn't really my dad.

My mum got preggers when she was working as a secretary at the barracks. My real dad was a sergeant, it seems. Anyway, Mum kept quiet about it. My gran looked after me in the daytime and Mum carried on working. Then she met the bastard Major. I quite liked him at first, He gave me presents and sweets. I suppose he was trying to soften her up.

Well, they got married and we moved into that house near you. I think I was about 8. Mum got more and more miserable because he started drinking. And he began beating me, knocking me around, sending me up to my room without supper if I didn't practically salute and stand at attention when he talked to me. I got so I hated him. I told him one day, "I'm going to find my *real* father." He hit me and kicked me and cracked a rib so Mum took me to hospital. I had to tell people I'd fallen off my bike. "Accident prone" - that's what the bastard told everybody I was.

When I was 13, he decided to send me to boarding school and I came to this dump. I thought it was all over, but Alky was made my tutor. Seems my step-father had been a pupil here - God knows what he and Alky had got up to - but it was pretty obvious they'd been in touch with each other recently. I didn't know it when I arrived, but I'd been set up.

About a week after school started, Alky called me into his room. He'd been drinking - you could smell it on his breath. He drew the curtains, sat me on his lap in the armchair and started feeling me. Of course it got hard. He took my trousers and my pants down. That's when he saw my bum. There were still some marks there from the last whipping I'd got at home.

Alky said, "I see your father beats you thoroughly." I denied it. He said, "A boy is like egg white. He froths up when he is beaten."

I said I had heard a friend of my dad's say the same thing. I couldn't help it. It was such a coincidence. He said, "I'll bet I know who it was!" and he laughed. Anyway, he tossed me off and said he would send a good report to Dad. Then we broke up for the holidays. I was a bit scared to go home. That's why, when you and I used to go together, I was always a bit snappy in the train.

I remember telling you, during one school holiday, how I'd met Simon Spencer, the author of all those popular thrillers, and how I went down there to help with his garden and we'd become great mates. Well, the real truth is that it wasn't just gardening. This bit is ever so confidential. I really like Simon so *please* don't tell a living soul.

One day shortly after the holidays, we were hacking away at this really thick undergrowth in his garden. It was just like a jungle. He said, "When I was a kid, we used to go into a bush like this and toss each other off." I said loads of boys did it in the thicket. He asked if I did and I said sometimes. I suppose I must have gone a bit red. He just laughed and said, "Good for you!" or something like that. Then he said, "I still do it sometimes. In fact I could do with one right now." I didn't know what to say so I just kept on hacking and said nothing.

Usually, after we'd been gardening, I had a shower first and then he went into the bathroom after

me. But on that day we must have worked for longer than usual and he said it would save time if we cleaned up together. He said I could have the shower and he would get into the jacuzzi.

It was then that he noticed the weals on my bum. He called me out of the shower and asked where I'd got them. I said some boys at school had been mucking about. He was all set to telephone the Headman! I nearly died. I said, "Please don't do that. I quite like them doing it. It's good fun."

He looked at me in a funny way and said "Oh! You're one of those are you?" I thought he meant that I was the sort of boy who didn't snitch on his mates so I said "Yes."

He said, "Don't get dressed yet. Come downstairs as you are."

I felt a right fool, I can tell you. When I got in the lounge he pulled me down over his lap and started smacking my bum!

I felt his thing getting hard under me and mine got hard as well. I got away from him and said I didn't like it. Then he took hold of my thing and started playing with it really gently. Not like Alky who sort of kneaded it.

I came pretty soon. He wanted me to do it to him but I said no, and I left. He gave me some money which was useful as my dad was so stingy, and that was that.

Well, the gardening soon stopped. I got used to tossing him off and he put my thing in his mouth, which is a lovely feeling, and he licked me. What I want you to understand, Howard, is that he was so nice. He was kind and thoughtful, and he made me feel really wanted, like I brightened up his whole day, somehow.

Meanwhile, the sessions with Alky continued. Each time a bit further. Trousers down - trousers off - everything off. He took my photo nude. He wanked me off drooling all over me and suffocating me with whiskey fumes. You are the first to know about Alky and me.

Simon got bolder and bolder too. It wasn't long before I was stripping off the moment I got inside the cottage. I was aware, I think, of what he was after. He started by tickling my arsehole. Then he licked it, putting his tongue right inside. Maybe that sounds revolting to you. Actually it felt smashing.

One afternoon, instead of doing it in the lounge, he took me upstairs to his bedroom. I had to lie on the bed with a couple of pillows under my prick. As you can imagine, I thought he was going to beat me, but what he did may have hurt a bit at first but after that it was nice. He put some greasy stuff in me and stroked me and kept saying how beautiful I was and things like that. Then he put a finger in, and it felt like an electric shock. I jumped; he laughed. He tickled me *inside* and then - well - he fucked me. It was a bit painful at first but with a bloke like Simon you sort of know that it isn't meant to hurt. He's such a nice person that it doesn't matter. I suppose it's a bit like playing Rugby. You get hit and knocked over but the hurting is all part of the fun. That's the best way I can think of to explain how it felt. Honestly, Howard, it was really, really nice. It lasted for ages.

After that it got to be a regular thing, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons down at Simon's getting fucked!

Simon has a friend called Richard. He's much younger - about 22, I think. He started to spend weekends at Simon's last year. I can't really make him out. I think he's sexless. There was a day when Simon and I were having the usual good time in the bedroom when the phone rang downstairs. Richard answered it and came barging into the bedroom and said, "When you've finished, you're to call your agent." Just like that - as if Simon was having his dinner rather than me.

One Saturday, Simon wasn't in when I got to the cottage. Richard said he'd had to go to London on business. He gave me a drink and said, "I suppose you're missing your little sex session." I, of course, said nothing. Then he said, "I don't mind giving you a wank if you like." Dead calm. I said,

“Okay, then,” so he did. I watched to see if he was getting a hard on under his trousers. If he had, I'd have given him a hand with it (he's quite 'fanciable'), but I couldn't see anything.

After the Easter holiday I went straight down to visit Simon and he saw the scars and of course I had to admit that it was Dad. It was daft of me to have gone over there so soon after coming back.

Simon must have spoken to Richard, because Richard took me for a long walk the next day and made me tell him everything, all about Dad and his beatings. Not about Alky though. I thought that was best kept to myself because maybe, if Simon found out that he wasn't the only man who did those things, he might think I was really dirty and drop me.

By now you'll have read my diary, so you'll know what the plan is. I can't tell anyone - not even Simon; not even you.

I am delighted to be leaving the bastard, leaving Alky and this dump of a school. I shall miss my mum and Simon and, more than anyone else, I shall miss *you*. Look after yourself, dear Howard.

Maybe I'll come back to England one day and we can meet again. You'll have a wife then. I shan't, but I'll be happy.

Much love,

Mark

XXXXXXXXXXXX

## 20.

It was difficult to leave Howard behind, but Ben knew that he dare not take him to Simon's house. Howard was cross with Ben for having read the contents of his little package, but was talked into letting him take it to Simon. Ben didn't tell Howard he suspected Mark, and possibly Adam too, were in America.

“You're back!” cried Simon, on opening the door. “I cannot say how much I've missed you.”

Inside the cottage, a fire was roaring in the grate and the flames were reflected dully in the red leather furniture. The computer had gone. That was the only change.

“I've got something for you upstairs,” Simon said. “Apart from the obvious, of course...”

“Uh, before we do anything else,” Ben said, “there's something very serious I want to talk about.” He produced Howard's package from inside his jacket. “Here. It's Mark's diary.”

“What?”

“It's Mark's diary, and a letter. He gave it to young Howard, the boy who lives near Mark's parents. I must confess that I read it. Mark's alive, Simon. He's in America.”

Surprise, worry, relief - all chased each other across the author's face. “Don't tell me,” Simon said at last. “I think I know. Alky Henderson has something to do with it.”

“Yes and no. I think you'd better read it. There's some things about you, too, but don't worry - I shan't say anything.”

Simon took the diary and the letter and went to the sofa to read them. How different he looked with his little half moon glasses riding on his nose: older, wiser, and, yes, more dear!

The big clock in the corner ticked off the seconds. The fire crackled. Simon grunted occasionally. Once he said "I'll be damned!" Otherwise, the room was silent, until Simon finally put down the little notebook and the sheaves of letter paper and, looking over his glasses at Ben, said, "The bastard! The lying, devious bastard!"

"Not Mark, surely?" said Ben.

"No. Richard. I see it all now. As soon as he heard that I was a welcome visitor at the school, he started his weekends here.

First Mark goes, then Adam, and now he seems impossible to contact."

"How can we get them back from America?" asked Ben.

"I don't think they're in America at all. I think they are on this mysterious island. The funny thing is that I've heard vague rumors of the place and of the Professor before. But I've been waiting for you to get back to show you something. Hang on for a minute."

Simon ran upstairs and returned with a big brown envelope. "It was found by one of us on the ground outside Alky's house on the night of the robbery there. It must have slipped under the seat. I only retrieved it the other day."

Ben turned the envelope over. It was addressed to T. Henderson Esq., M.A. at the school and bore the imprint of a university. The word PRIVATE was printed in Alky's neat hand right across the top. Ben opened it and a host of glossy pictorial magazines slipped out, cascading on to the chair and the floor. The cover pictures and titles gave them away at once. *Schoolboy Sex, Bubble-Bum Boys, Cute Cocks, Fourth Form Floggings, Beautiful Butts, Chicken-Feed*. There were about twenty of them.

"Now look in the small brown envelope on the floor," said Simon. Ben picked it up and pulled out a wad of rather poor Polaroid shots.

"Good God," said Ben, "that's Atkinson. He was in the Upper Sixth when I came to the school... And this is Moberley. He's left now, too. Don't know who this is.... Hang on, here's Mark! Hey, this must be the photograph Mark mentioned in the letter."

"Precisely," said Simon. "You'll find another two of Mark in the pile."

Ben shuffled through the photographs. There was Mark sitting on the arm of a chair - easily identifiable as the one in Alky's study. In another he was bending backwards holding his erect penis; it was a rear view but taken against a mirror. Plain to see were dull, red marks on his buttocks. In all of them he wore the same sullen, almost frightened expression.

"What will you do with them?" Ben wanted to know.

"I don't know yet. They may come in useful. What we have to do now is to get these, boys back. I think my research assistant is just the person for this."

"What does he do?" asked Ben.

"She," said Simon. "You don't think I know all this stuff I put in books about revolvers and poisons and Army customs? Joan digs all the facts out for me. Only this time it won't be for make-believe."

Simon picked up the telephone and dialed a number. "Greetings, you old bag! A late happy Christmas to you. ... Thank you, dear, I hope you drop dead as well. .... Now, Joan love, seriously, can you drop all work on the Gestapo thing? I've got something much more important for you. Have you got a pencil there? ... Good. I need to know about a boy called Mark Lee born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. He'll be sixteen next birthday. I'll let you do the maths. He was born illegitimate if that's any help. I want to know if he has been admitted to the United States in the last year. The US Embassy will tell you that, but you'd better work through John the lawyer - they prefer the legal approach. It's just possible that the boy might have changed his name - go and see the Registrar General's office about that. ... Got it? ... Good. ... When can you let me know? ... Super. ... Thanks a lot, Joan. Bye now."

Simon put the receiver down and dialed a much longer number. Ben guessed it was an overseas call.

"Good afternoon," he said. "Could you put me through to Lord Charles Beresford? .. I know he's busy. He's always busy. Tell him it's Simon Spencer. .... Simon Spencer. .... Yes, that's right."

He turned to Ben and smiled. "Shan't be long," he said. "Aha, Charles, I hope I'm not disturbing anything. ... Are you indeed? Lucky you! Give him an extra one from me. No, I've got a friend with me at the moment. ... Fourteen, and very beautiful. You'll meet soon I hope. Charles, is the *Narwhal* seaworthy? You're not having new carpets laid or anything? ... Good. We shall be going on a little cruise shortly .... To Scotland. .... Yes, in the winter. First I need you over here. It's very important. We're going to rescue at least two boys. .... These are fifteen .... Yes, I thought you'd be interested. When can you get here? ... Good. I'll meet you at the airport. Oh. Say nothing to anybody yet, Charles. It could be nasty if the word gets out. I will. Cheers!"

Simon replaced the receiver "Good!" he said, "he'll be here tomorrow. He sent you his best wishes."

"But I've never met him," said Ben.

"If you had, I feel sure he would send more than just regards," said Simon. "Anyway, that's all we can do at the moment."

"What's the plan?" asked Ben.

"I really don't know at the moment. The *Narwhal* is a very big motor yacht. First we have to locate this island, then we sail up there and, somehow or other, we rescue the lads."

"I'm coming, even if they throw me out of school!" said Ben. Simon picked up the envelope and the photographs. "I don't think they will," he said. "I think Mr. Henderson will prove most co-operative!"

Despite all the excitement, or perhaps partly because of it, Ben's eyes had strayed to the porno books while Simon was on the telephone. He had picked up *Fourth Form Floggings* and idly leafed through it. Idly? Well, it might have appeared that way to Simon, had he glanced at his young guest. Ben had looked at a page, paused, and then gazed at the ceiling. That was because the pictures had been having a dramatic physiological effect on him. He found the only way to control his penis was to think about something else for a few seconds before turning the page. One photo in particular seemed almost to burn itself into his brain, and he knew he would remember every detail for a long time - even down to the continental type telephone next to the bed and the yellow candlewick bedspread. A boy, a boy of about Ben's age, lay sprawled, face-down, over the bed. His wrists and ankles were secured with cords to the bed posts. Over him stood a man of about Simon's age playing with his very large and very erect penis and smiling down at the youth. There was no doubt at all as to what he was going to do.

It wasn't the man whom Ben envied. He identified himself immediately with the boy. He wondered if they were just acting for the benefit of the photographer but cast that thought aside immediately. No.... The boy had been tricked into coming to the man's house, tricked into going into the bedroom, forcibly stripped and tied up.... It started to happen again. He stared at the ceiling for a few moments.

Now Simon took the magazine from Ben's fingers and said, "I think we'd better put all these back. Ashley's taken Charlie into town for some shopping, and I don't want either of them to see this lot."

"I'd forgotten about them," said Ben. "How is Ashley?"

"Oh... He has his uses. He answers the phone, cooks the occasional meal and does the cleaning. Very little else. He doesn't know where Richard is. I've asked him already. The message to come down here was the first he'd heard from Richard in years. He has no idea where Richard lives, what he does, or anything."

"And Charlie?"

"Keeps Ashley happy. Well... I've been waiting for you all your holidays with increasing frustration. You've probably been kept happy by all those R. A. F. personnel and the occasional German. Did you



have a good time?"

"I'm not telling you," Ben replied with what he hoped was an enigmatic smile.

"Very wise. I shall find out though. I shall sense if somebody else has been visiting my special hideaway."

"That's if I let you in," said Ben. "I might not. What would you do then?"

"I should carry you upstairs and force you to obey my every whim. I've waited too long."

"Well, I think you'd better do just that. I've decided to go on strike."

"For more money? I thought I gave you enough."

Ben was horrified. "Oh no! Nothing like that. I wasn't being serious. Just teasing you."

"So that's it, is it? Well two can play at that game. I'd better open the door first."

He did so, came to the chair in which Ben was sitting and, with one arm under the boy's legs and another round his shoulders, he hoisted Ben up. Simon was remarkably strong considering how little exercise he ever seemed to take.

"Put me down!" Ben cried.

"Certainly not! You are coming upstairs with me and I won't take any arguments!"

Going up the stairs was a bit tricky. Ben knew that he was quite heavy and, indeed, Simon was panting by the time they reached the bedroom door.

"Howard would be better for this," said Ben. "He's lighter than me."

"Aha, but Howard is young and untouched."

"Not actually. We did it last night, as a matter of fact."

"Naughty, evil Ben! Was it nice?" He laid Ben on his bed. "I don't know really," Ben replied, serious for the moment. "In a way I liked it, but I like this better."

"I can see that!" Simon looked down at the lump in Ben's trousers. Rapidly, Simon removed his own tie and shirt, kicked off his shoes and undid his trousers. "Aren't you going to get undressed then?" he asked.

"I may not want to."

"You may not want to but I want you to," said Simon.

"Would you force me to?"

"I certainly would and I will. Just let me get these trousers off first."

When Simon's penis emerged, Ben found the sight of it, after so many weeks, as exciting as ever. It was thick and rampant, standing right out from Simon, pointing at Ben's throat.

"Now then, my willful young friend, it's your turn," said Simon.

He leaned over Ben and grasped the boy's left leg.

"Let go!" cried Ben and tried genuinely to wriggle free, but the man's grip was much too firm. With his free hand, Simon took a shoe and sock off Ben's left foot and threw them into the corner of the room. Then, taking the other leg, he did the same thing.

Now Simon slid his hand up to the bulge in Ben's trousers and seized the boy's penis through the school-gray flannel.

"Up you get," Simon said, and pulled it.

"Ow!" cried Ben, but there was no option but to get up and off the bed. Ben flailed around with his fists and got in one good blow to Simon's solar plexus. It seemed to have no effect at all. Still grasping Ben's penis through the flannel, Simon used his free hand to undo Ben's fly. When he released his grip, the trousers tumbled round Ben's ankles, causing him to stumble as he struggled.

"Stay down there," said Simon. "Suck it."

"I may not want to."

“I'm the boss round here. Now suck it.”

Obediently, Ben knelt in front of Simon and, still in his school shirt, his school tie and underpants, he took the blunt-nosed, pulsing penis into his mouth.

“Oh God, Ben. That's beautiful!” Simon gasped. If Ben had been able to speak he would have said the same. It was as if Christmas had never taken place. The same thick flesh in his mouth. The same glorious odor of sweat and masculinity. Simon's bristly pubic hair against his face. Most exciting of all was the thought that the penis in his mouth, which he was savoring so hungrily, would soon pierce him, sliding, saliva-lubricated, into his anus. At first it would hurt, then it would ache - and then would come the feeling that Ben had been waiting for so long: the sensation of being filled by his dear lover, mentor, at last.

The thought made his mouth water even more. Simon leaned down and with gentle competence took off Ben's tie and unbuttoned his shirt. Ben closed his eyes as he felt Simon's hands slide the shirt back over his shoulders.

Now Simon stopped the motion of Ben's with a hand in Ben's hair. Ben knew what that meant. No longer protesting, he got up onto the bed and took up the kneeling position that Simon liked so much. Whatever Simon wanted, Ben would do. Simon was his friend, his advisor, his master. Yes, that was it. Simon today would be his master. He felt his underpants being dragged down his thighs, under his knees and cast off.

A hand reached underneath him. It tickled delightfully. It lifted his balls slightly as though weighing them. Then it grasped his cock, slid the foreskin gently back and forth, sending a huge shudder of delight right through him.

“Oh God! You've no idea how I've longed for this moment!” said Simon.

“Me too!” Ben breathed.

Simon opened the jar and parted Ben's arse cheeks. Then came the glorious cool feeling of Simon's finger playing and tickling at his anus. The finger started to press inwards.

It was as though he opened up involuntarily. Ben wasn't aware of any conscious effort, but suddenly the finger was inside, pushing and worming its way deeper and deeper into him. He shuffled one leg sideways. Now there were two fingers in there, one still, the other moving. These were the fingers which typed best-selling books and wrote autographs, and at this ecstatic moment, thought Ben, they all belonged to him. He closed his grip upon them.

“Mmmm! You really have tightened up, haven't you?” said Simon. Ben relaxed again and the fingers came out with an audible squelch.

Ben felt two hands grasp his waist. This was it. Ben breathed out as hard as he could. He felt the penis between his arse cheeks, sliding up and down, searching for the right spot. Then came a moment that Ben always enjoyed: a strange feeling as if someone had put an egg between his buttocks. He forced his muscles to relax. The grip on his hips tightened. Any minute now....

“Ow! Ooooh! Aaaaah!” Ben cried. Centimeter by centimeter Simon's flesh pushed into him.

“Oh! That feels so good!” Simon sighed.

It did to Ben, too. Big and warm and alive. Ben squirmed with pleasure.

“Man, you're such a good fuck!” said Simon, lunging forward.

“Mmmmm!” said Ben. “Do it hard, Simon. Do it hard.”

And Simon did! The bed creaked, Ben moaned, and Simon panted as they made up then for the weeks they had been apart. Ben was ecstatically happy. He was the favorite boy-slave of a handsome and famous author. Adam was forgotten. Simon was all-important now. Simon, his master, who would punish him, forgive him and then take him to bed and love him. The picture in *Fourth Form Floggings*

flashed into his mind again. This time it was he who was tied tightly to the bed and it was Simon who was standing over him...

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” he cried. He had never come in his life as he did then. It jetted out of him, splashing onto the bed and even his own face.

“Oh, this is incredibly grand!” Simon gasped as he continued to thrust into the boy's arse.

For a moment, Ben thought he might faint. He was suddenly totally exhausted and breathless, as if he'd been running for several miles. It was all he could do to support his weight on his arms.

“There!” Simon gasped. The thing inside Ben seemed to shudder. Simon gave one mighty lunge and they both collapsed forward; the man on top of the boy, nibbling and kissing the back of Ben's neck.

Ben lay there in a semi-swoon. Everything felt wet. Everything felt warm and it felt so good! Simon's cock was subsiding; he felt the semen leaking out and running down his thighs: Simon's sperms, every one of them capable of producing a famous writer - and millions and millions of them had been pumped into him.

Man and boy rested there for some minutes, enjoying each other's warmth, breathing each other's odors, and fondling each other gently.

Then Simon reached over to the bedside table and handed Ben a package. “For you,” he said, “with heart-felt thanks and great esteem.” It was a pocket-size television set.

When Ben got back to school, he showed the miniature TV to Howard.

“Wowie! Gosh! You are a lucky sod! When are you going to take me to see this Simon?”

“One day.”

“Did you show him Mark's diary?”

“Yes.”

“What did he say?”

“Not much. What's on TV tonight?”

“Don't know. Why?”

“I thought I'd watch it in bed on this thing.”

“If I climbed in with you,” Howard said hopefully, “I could watch it too.”

“Some other time. Definitely not tonight. I'm shattered!”

“I expect it's all the traveling you did yesterday. Sitting around at that airport can't have been fun. Those plastic seats make your behind ache too, don't they?”

“Yes,” Ben said, “they do rather.”

## 21.

For the next few days, and well into the nights, Howard badgered Ben to take him to see Simon. But there were problems. Attractive though Howard was, Ben was certain that the boy was too young to appeal to Simon, and he and Simon could hardly vanish into the bedroom for an hour and leave Howard in the lounge. And then too, although Howard had been discreet up till now, there was always the chance that a kid of his age would say the wrong thing back at school.

“I'll take you when you're a bit older,” Ben finally said.

“Not just yet.” They were curled up together in Ben's bed, playing idly with each other's penises and looking at a late night show on the pocket TV.

“Alky!” said Howard suddenly as the outer door creaked. Quick as a flash he got out of Ben's bed, picked up his pyjamas and dived into his own. Ben hid the television under his pillow, retrieved *Physics Revision Exercises* from his side table and to all appearances was studying it intently.

The door opened. “Time to stop reading now,” said Mr. Henderson.

“Sorry, sir,” Ben said. “I didn't know it was so late.”

Alky peered over at Howard. “Asleep,” he whispered.

“Yes, sir. He always goes to sleep early.”

“I wanted to talk to you about him. He still misses young Lee, you know.”

“Does he, sir? I hadn't noticed.” Alky revolted Ben, even more now that he knew the man's dirty secret.

“That's half the problem. You're so often out of school, I do rather rely on you to keep the boy company, you know. I think we shall have to cancel these gardening sessions down at Mr. Spencer's.”

“But you said it was good for me.”

“It was, but there's no real need for it now. You've grown out of your silly stage and, although we're delighted to help Mr. Spencer, there's not a lot of work in a garden at this time of the year.”

“But there is, sir. We've got stones to lay for the paths, all the stuff to order for next year, er... tools to clean and repair...” Ben's mind was racing to think of other jobs which could be done in the winter. “And then there's the flower pots to be scrubbed clean and the indoor plants to look after, not to mention the winter vegetables.”

“I shall have to think about it.”

“I could put the problem to Mr. Spencer, sir. He might be able to think of a way round it.”

“Certainly not!” said the Housemaster. “Mr. Spencer doesn't want silly schoolboys talking to him. I shall make any approaches I deem appropriate. Now put the book away and go to sleep.”

“Yes, sir,” said Ben with a sigh. “Silly sod!” he muttered as Alky went downstairs.

“I could help you with all that work,” said a voice in the darkness. “I like gardening. I help my dad at home.”

“Not a chance. We've gone over all of that.”

There was a short silence.

“Ben.”

“What is it now?”

“My dick's gone hard again.”

“But you've only just...” Two semen-soaked tissues lay under Ben's bed for disposal the following morning. He would drop them in the loo before breakfast. He couldn't wait for tomorrow to arrive. A whole afternoon with Simon. There was no room in the scenario for Howard. Alky would have to be stopped....

“It seems to get hard more quickly these days,” Howard persisted. “Is yours hard too?”

“It might be.”

“Shall I come over and look?”

Ben glanced at the alarm clock. There was just about time. Howard was pretty quick these days.

“Oh, come on then, if you must,” Ben said, and threw the bedclothes back.

The next morning, as Ben was strolling dreamily to a history lesson, he heard running footsteps behind him. “Ben! Ben! Wait!” It was Howard.

“I've told you before,” Ben said, “you're not supposed to use my first name. You're two years junior to me.”

“Sorry, but I've got the most fabulous news to tell you.”

For a moment, Ben thought Howard was going to say that Mark had been found.

“I'm coming with you to Mr. Spencer's. Alky just told me.”

“Mr. Henderson,” Ben corrected him.

“Mr. Henderson told me. Alky - Mr. Henderson - rang Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Spencer said you were indispensable and, like you said, there's loads of work, and he would like me to come if Mr. Henderson could let me help you, and Mr. Henderson said yes, and I am to come with you this afternoon and any other time you go!” He paused for breath.

“You're sure you didn't ask him if you could go?”

“No, honestly. He just sent for me to tell me.”

So much for his plans to keep Howard away from Simon! Ben felt angry and frustrated.

At lunch he was uncharacteristically silent.

“Fuck Alky!” he muttered.

“No thank you,” said the boy sitting next to him. “If it's all the same to you, I'd rather have a bird. That reminds me. I'd better go down to the village soon and get some johnnies. I used loads of them this holiday. My bird couldn't get enough of it.”

“Mine too,” said Ben and fell silent again.

“That bloke you help, that writer bloke, he's got a Lord something staying with him,” said the boy. “Sheila the cleaner told me. He came this morning. Sheila's mum drives a taxi and he took a cab into town just five minutes before the bus went. He made her wait for him and drive him back. He gave her a twenty pound note and said she could keep the change! She says he's ever so nice and friendly. A bit posh but I suppose you'd expect that from a Lord.”

“Yes, I knew he was coming,” said Ben. He had, in fact, completely forgotten that Lord Charles was due. “I expect I'll meet him this afternoon.”

Now Ben felt better about Howard coming along - with a guest in the house, Simon wouldn't be taking him up to his bedroom, even though Ben guessed from Simon's telephone conversation that Lord Charles and Simon shared the same tastes.

“Ask him if he's got any spare cash for a poor schoolboy,” said the other boy.

“For you to buy contraceptives with?” said Ben, laughing for the first time that day. “Not likely!”

Howard chattered continuously all the way down to the cottage. Howard wanted to know how one addressed a Lord. Ben didn't know. Howard wanted to know if Lord Charles lived in a castle. Ben didn't know that either, but doubted it. “I think he lives abroad, but I'm not sure.” Howard had one of Simon's books in his pocket and hoped to get an autograph.

“You're not to make a nuisance of yourself,” said Ben. “Mr. Spencer will soon send you back to school if you pester him.”

Simon's Porsche was standing outside the cottage.

“Wowie! Gosh! What a fabulous car!” said Howard. “Do you think he'll give me a ride in it?”

“No way!” said Ben, “And don't you dare ask!” He rang the bell.

Simon was delighted that Ben had brought Howard. He ushered them in and helped Howard off with his coat - something he usually did for Ben.

“I've got *Murder Mission* here, Mr. Spencer. Could you autograph it for me?”

It was a very shabby copy and some of the pages fell out. “Of course I will. Did you enjoy it, Howard?”

“Cor! Yes! It's fab! I've read all your books, or at least I think I have. I think the bloodthirsty bits are

best. I really liked it in *Renegade Regiment* where they cut that chap's heart out.”

“I don't think Simon's that interested in your opinion,” said Ben, hanging up his coat.

“On the contrary. If I don't get feed-back from the readers I don't know what they want. You'll have to tell me more, Howard. But come in. There's somebody I want you to meet.”

Ben had always assumed a Lord was an elderly man. Lord Charles was a shock. He was little older than Simon. He sat in a leather armchair next to the fire reading a paper which he put down immediately and stood up. He was very tall, much taller than Simon, and quite as good looking. Simon was in his usual slacks and sweater; Lord Charles wore a dark suit. Introductions were made.

“I'm delighted to make your acquaintance,” Lord Charles said. “Especially you Ben. It seems you're almost an indispensable member of Simon's household!”

Ben smiled proudly. “Simon and I seem to hit it off pretty well, sir.”

“So one gathers. Please call me Charles.”

Simon prepared drinks. Coke for the boys and a Scotch for himself. Lord Charles surprised them by wanting coffee and surprised them even more by making it himself.

Soon all four were chatting happily in front of the fire, Simon on the settee listening patiently to Howard's prattling, Ben with Lord Charles. Occasionally Lord Charles looked over to Ben and smiled or winked.

Ben helped Charles take the empty glasses and cup into the kitchen.

“Your friend is a delight, isn't he?” said Charles. “He's okay,” Ben relied. “He chats a lot.”

“They do at that age. He's a super kid though. He must miss Mark very much.”

“I think he does. I gather you and Simon have spoken... about things.”

Lord Charles put his finger to his lips. “Extensively,” he said. “He'll tell you all about it. I am to take your young friend into town to buy some bulbs.”

“But I heard that you were in town this morning,” said Ben.

“It's an excuse to give you two some time together. Simon will tell you the plan then. I have no doubt that you will find other things with which to occupy yourselves. We shall be away for at least two hours.”

Ben blushed and smiled.

When they returned to the lounge, Howard was wearing his coat again and was almost beside himself with excitement. “You'll never guess, Ben. Lord Charles - Charles, I mean - is going to borrow Simon's Porsche and we're going to get some supplies in the town. I wish all four of us could go, because then I could tell you some more ideas for your stories, Simon, and...”

“Tell me when you get back. I'll have some old ones autographed for you. Anyway, Ben and I have garden work to do, haven't we Ben?”

“An awful lot,” said Ben.

“Like what?” asked Howard.

Simon smiled. “I'm going to plant some seed,” he said.

## 22.

“Tell me about your plan,” said Ben. He was lying naked beside Simon on Simon's bed. It had been another glorious session. Both of them had taken time to warm up, feeling each other, exploring each

other, fingering and kissing, until neither could hold back any longer. Now they lay, tired, covered in perspiration and spattered with semen, nuzzling their heads together.

Ben was enjoying the stretched feeling he always had after sex with Simon. The muscles in his buttocks and legs relaxed. The muscle of his sphincter tightened delightfully up again.

"It's Adam's plan actually," said Simon.

"How could it be? He's not here."

"Nonetheless, it is. Do you remember that day he came up to help me with a plot? You were downstairs talking to Richard."

"Vaguely. Oh yes, that was the time Richard told me that Adam was thinking of committing suicide."

"Another yarn," said Simon. "Well, Adam had this idea...."

Howard was really scared. He was trying hard not to cry. At first the journey in the Porsche had been enjoyable.

"We're not supposed to take lifts from strangers," he said, laughing as he strapped himself in.

"I'm not a stranger," said Charles.

"You are to me. But you're a Lord, so it's okay."

"One wishes the rest of the population would take the same enlightened view," Charles replied. "As it is, if I am caught for speeding, you may be sure that my punishment would be much more severe than anyone else's and my picture would be in the papers over 'Peer rapped for speeding'."

They chatted happily for some minutes. Howard told Charles about his family and about Mark. Charles described his motor yacht, the *Narwhal*.

"I wish I could see it," said Howard. "I've never seen a really big one."

Charles laughed and that made Howard a little bit anxious.

He knew about Simon. Ben had told him. If this man were going to do something to him in the car, he wouldn't know how to handle the situation. Boys were always being warned about that sort of thing.

It was at the crossroads between Combleton and the town, that Howard's doubts turned to fear. Charles turned off and headed for the motorway. "This is the wrong way," he said. "You should have gone straight ahead."

"I know. We're not going into town."

"Oh, we must. We told Simon that's where we'd be."

"Simon knows where we are going."

"Where?" The speedometer needle was right up now. The countryside was flashing by.

"We'll be meeting a friend of mine."

"Please, I don't want to," said Howard, panicking. "Could we go back please?"

"Nearly there," said Charles. "Just another five miles."

They turned off the road into a lane. Charles looked at his watch. "Made it!" he said.

"There's nothing up here except the old aerodrome," said Howard. "I've been here on my bike."

"That's where we are going," said Charles.

"It's private," said Howard. "You can't go in there. It's part of the farm now."

"I know the owner," said Charles. The car swept on. They stopped by a gate marked *PRIVITE PROPERTY: KEEP OUT*. Charles pulled up, got out of the car, and, to Howard's relief and amazement, opened the gate with a key. Then he returned to the car and they drove in.

Howard had always wanted to have a good look around the place. The drove past rusty Nissan huts, a deserted control tower and a forlorn brick building which was still marked 'Aircraft Dispersal'. During the war this had been a minor American base.

They stopped. "No sign of your friend," said Howard. He felt a bit better now. Anyone who could open gates marked PRIVATE was probably all right after all.

"He'll be here," said Charles. "What do you make the time?"

"I haven't got my watch on. It broke the other day."

"I should have thought a watch was essential for a schoolboy these days," said Charles.

"It is really. I'll get it repaired when my allowance comes through."

"Remind me on the way back. We'll buy you a new one. We have to go into town anyway, for Simon's bulbs." Charles was peering at the sky. "Aha! Here he is," he said. "Spot on time. Good old John!"

"Oh! He's in a plane?" said Howard.

"One would have thought you had realized that," said Charles, "for someone determined to give a successful novelist tips on his stories."

Relieved and excited, Howard became his old self again. "I've only met one pilot before," he said. "They let me go in the cockpit when we went to Majorca for our holiday."

"A much over-rated profession," said Charles. The aircraft descended, appearing for a moment to disappear behind a clump of trees, then hove into sight and, with a slight squeak and a bump, smacked on to the cracked concrete runway.

It was a Beech twin turbo-prop Kingair, a medium-sized corporate passenger plane. All the paint, all the metal, gleamed in the winter sun. It flashed its lights as it taxied over. It stopped on the apron very close to the Porsche. The pilot shut down the engines, a door in the fuselage opened, and a man of about Charles's age stepped out and jumped down.

"So what's this about?" asked the pilot. "Your message was mysterious to say the least."

Charles suggested that they should discuss it in the aircraft. There wasn't really room for three in Simon's Porsche. Now Howard was allowed to sit in the pilot's seat, warned on pain of death to keep his fingers to himself, whilst the two men sat earnestly talking behind him. He was dying to ask just what each of the myriad instruments told the pilot; what all of the toggle switches did, but then he realized Charles and John were talking about rescuing somebody. He forgot the instruments and sat back to listen.

"There are one hundred and eight islands and it could be any one of them," Charles was saying. "It's this stretch here on the map. What we want you to do is to check out all of them in your little... how do you call your stunt plane?"

"It's an *aerobatic* plane, not a stunt plane, please; and it's called a 'Twister'."

"You do a roll to the right three times over each island that you feel is a reasonable possibility. You then go away for a minute or two but fly back over the island to see if you get an answer, which should be a reflected flash or possibly a small fire. That will tell you that we've got the right place. We'll later decide the day and the time for the rescue, and that will depend upon how soon the *Narwhal* can get up to that area. You then return and do another run over the island. This time - and this is the important bit - you do rolls to the left. One roll is Sunday, two rolls is Monday, and so on. Then you do rolls to the right - clockwise - to indicate the time. One roll means one o'clock in the morning, etc."

John wrote some notes on a pad strapped to his knee. "Got it," he said. "Only try to make it one o'clock on a Sunday."

"Why?"

"Some of these islands are so bloody small that I shall be half way over the Atlantic if I have to tell them that it's eleven o'clock on a Saturday evening."

"There's one other thing," said Charles.

"What's that?"

"We need your plane repainted. It's got to be yellow."



“What?”

“To conform exactly to the specifications, it must be yellow.”

“You do realize how much it will cost to repaint my Twister and then restore it?” said John. “It will make your garage bill look like peanuts.”

“Just go ahead and have it done. It won't break the bank. Now then, I have a small favor to ask you. How much time have you got?”

“About twenty minutes. As you've just virtually canceled my last job, it wouldn't really matter if I was late picking up the design man.”

The conversation was getting boring. Howard concentrated on the controls again. Charles tapped him on the shoulder. “Did the school say anything about accepting lifts from strange pilots?” he asked.

Howard beamed. “Gosh! No! Do you mean...?”

“John will take you on a quick flight over Combleton and the school. I'll be waiting here for you.”

“I've got to be back before dinner time.”

“I think we can guarantee that,” said John. “We're rather faster than a rotten old Porsche. Now, you shift over to the co-pilot's seat. That's right. Let me help you do up the straps....”

Charles got out and sauntered back to the Porsche. He suspected John and Howard might prefer a bit of privacy for their flight. The boy had already shown himself a little nervous in the car coming over. Perhaps John would be more able to bring him out where he himself had failed.

The plane hummed away along the runway and suddenly, before Howard was really expecting it, it lifted its nose and... they were airborne. The ground fell away from them.

Howard rubbed his thigh. He was wearing his school shorts and his legs were suddenly cold. Howard liked short shorts; he liked tight-fitting clothes generally. Some people might have said his shorts were already too short for him when Mother bought them; but that was eighteen months ago, and he had shot up since then. His long legs protruded from them like graceful daffodils from a tiny bulb.

“Cor, one gets a fantastic view from here, doesn't one,” said the boy.

“One does indeed,” replied the man, gazing longingly into Howard's lap. “You cold or something?” He saw the boy rubbing his thigh. The air vent under the instrument panel was full open, but just for the time being that suited John's purpose admirably.

“My leg is. Draught.”

“I'll warm it up for you.” With a rough, calloused hand, John massaged the boy's soft skin firmly. “That better?”

“Thanks!”

“Don't mention it. My pleasure. You like it too?” John inched a bit higher.

“S the worst of short shorts. Can be a bit chilly sometimes.”

“S the *best* of short shorts. Man can warm a boy up sometimes.” They were talking in a sort of shorthand over the noise of the engines. “Got nice legs.”

“Thank you.”

John kept his right hand on Howard's left thigh. He wasn't massaging it any longer now. He was just manipulating it gently; as gently as he manipulated the controls of the plane with his left hand. Howard was so enthralled by the excitement of flying, and taken by the kindness of the man, that he had forgotten all the silly stuff he had been taught at school about Stranger Danger.

He looked out of the window. He had rarely flown; this was absolutely brilliant. And the pilot was being so kind to him - the way he kept his hand comfortingly in his lap, as if he thought he might be frightened. Howard was not in the least bit frightened, but he appreciated John's concern.

“Fantastic! Look at that great chimney on the factory. Huge; but we're much higher than it. It seems so

tiny from here. Know what I'd like to do? Have a wee-wee down it! Be fun, wouldn't it?"

"I'm afraid that's not possible; planes don't have windows like cars." John leveled the plane off at fifteen hundred feet. "Now - where would you like to go?"

"Charles said something about flying over Combleton and the school, didn't he?"

"Is that what you'd like?"

"Please! Can we?"

They veered to starboard and the sun dazzled them for a moment from straight ahead. Howard gave a little wriggle. The thought of peeing down the chimney had put ideas into his head. He suddenly realized he wanted to, but being stuck in the aeroplane he knew it wouldn't be possible. That, combined with the chilly blast, made it even worse. He gave another wriggle.

"You still cold?"

"Not really."

"It was just the way you were... Or are you...?" John did not finish either sentence. From the boy's behavior he suddenly guessed the problem; he had been young himself with an impetuous, inconsiderate bladder.

Howard clamped his legs together. Why hadn't he thought of it before they had taken off? It always happened at inconvenient moments like this, didn't it. Or in the middle of a Latin lesson. He wriggled again.

"Sir," he said.

"John' to you!" The man squeezed his thigh and gave him a quick wink.

The boy looked back at him and smiled. Such informality made things a little easier. "Thank you. But - er, John..." He squeezed his thighs up to his tummy. "Is there...? Is it...? Can I...? Is there any...?" How was he going to put it? "Sir - *John* - I need to... to 'be excused'." He wriggled again.

The man laughed. "No problem!" he said. "If you're not embarrassed," he added. "It's only Number One is it? Not Number Two?"

"What do you mean?"

"You want to spend a penny, have a pee, have a wee-wee? You don't need to have a full-scale crap?"

"Sir!" Howard looked at him, surprised to hear such a rude word from an adult's lips. "No; just a - what did you call it? 'A Number One'."

"That's okay then. See that?" John indicated an empty jam-jar peeking out of a side-pocket next to Howard's seat. "It's there for just such emergencies. But best not leave your seat. We might hit a few more bumps than we're getting now; we're we're still at a pretty low altitude."

"We are?"

"Can you do it in your seat? Without being too shy?"

Howard looked at him. "I go to a boarding-school, sir..."

"John!"

"Sorry, sir - John! But - I go to a boarding-school, and one can't afford to be shy there."

"That's all right then. Just tell me if you want a hand," the man hinted hopefully. He gave the lad's leg a final squeeze and removed his hand. But he couldn't resist keeping his eyes concentrated firmly on the activities which were taking place in the seat beside him. The plane was on autopilot; the only thing important at the moment was to keep one eye open for other low-flying aircraft.

Howard unzipped his trousers. With a little glance at the pilot beside him, he pulled out his "sausage roll" and inserted the tip of it into the jam-jar. John watched the jar slowly fill with orange liquid.

Their eyes met. Howard had a beautiful smile. The boy felt he ought to have been shy about piddling in front of John, but he was not. He did not feel in the least bit embarrassed about it. John didn't seem to

disapprove, so why should he be shy, the lad reasoned with himself.

“You're fun. I like saucy boys!” John chucked him playfully under the chin. “Do you want a hand with that? ... Just in case the jar slips,” he added quickly, as if it were an afterthought. “I wouldn't like your piddle splashed all about my plane, you know.” He gave the boy another mischievous wink.

Howard said nothing and did nothing, but he showed no objection to the offer of help, so John allowed his hand to drop down to the boy's lap and his fingers to close around the jam-jar and the root of the young stalactite inserted into it. Howard grinned as the man touched him.

“Eeargh! Don't you mind touching my smelly thing?” Howard was surprised. Not shocked that John should touch him in this way, but just amazed that he would want to do so. “Isn't it smelly?”

“It's yours, so it's delicious; and sweet.”

Howard appeared to have finished using the jam-jar, so John pushed it aside and Howard put back the cap and screwed it down. Now John grasped the thick roly-poly object which had just been inserted into the jar more overtly. The kid didn't seem to object. Its tip was still moist. John let it wet his fingers, then tasted them. “Mmm! Delicious!” he smiled.

Now Howard did look bashful. He put the jam-jar back in the side pocket. This flight was turning out to be more amazing - and more fun - than he would ever have dreamt of imagining. “How far's Combleton?” he asked.

“Just coming up on the port side.”

“Where on earth's that?”

“On the left' to you.”

Howard tried to stretch himself up to look over the instrument panel and out of the windscreen, but the seat belt held him tight.

“You can undo that if you like now - so long as you are careful. We might always get some bumps - you never know.”

Howard released himself, pushed his seat back and stood up. “Is that allowed?” He stared at the village, fast disappearing on the left-hand side.

“If *this* is allowed,” replied the pilot, reaching round the boy's waist and unbuckling his belt. It was of the traditional school pattern with an “S”-shaped snake clasp. The lad's zip was still unfastened, and soon his waist-band was too.

“Hey, look!” Howard cried. “There's the school.” He jumped up and down in excitement. It was also on the port side, and he found himself leaning right across big John to get a better look. He hardly noticed that the pilot was pulling down his shorts and letting them fall to his ankles. “Cor, that was super. I could see my classroom, and Matron's car going up the drive. I wish we could go round and have another look.”

“For you, anything! One good turn deserves another,” said the pilot, banking sharply. “You see - I want another look too!” The kid was still standing, and John flicked down the back of his underpants with the tips of his fingers for a little peep.

“Sir!”

“Sorry. Do you object?”

“I ought to, oughtn't I.”

“Why?”

“Well...” Howard turned round and shrugged.

“You don't look the shy type. You look the sort of boy who enjoys a bit of fun.” He flicked the protrusion at the front of Howard's pants to test his reaction. There was no reaction. Except a delighted smile. “The village is coming up again in a second.”

Howard turned himself round again. As he pressed his nose against the window, trying to see below, he felt John easing down the back of his hipster underpants. So what, he thought to himself. Perhaps letting this happen could be his way of saying thank you for his ride. Again the village and the school were passing on what John always referred to as the port side. Howard leant himself completely across the pilot's lap to get a better view. He rather suspected what might happen. He rather presumed what might happen. He rather *hoped* what might happen. And it did!

He felt the back of his pants being pulled right down to his legs. He felt his bottom being spanked very gently and playfully. He felt the cleft between his cheeks being tickled by an insolent finger; and he felt a gentle and exciting touch on the bud of his bottom itself.

“Oh sir! John, I mean,” said the boy still lying contentedly there as the village and school passed away away behind them out of view. “That was really wonderful. Really exciting... Seeing the school, I mean.”

“And this? Is this wonderful and exciting too?” inquired the man tickling the prostrate boy once more.

Howard didn't answer, except with another question. “What on earth do you think Charles would say if he knew what we were really doing up here?” His buttocks were rippling with excitement as John petted and patted them.

“What do I *think* he would say?... I *know!* He would be delighted. But even so, I'm not going to tell him; are you?”

“Not going to tell anyone! Far too much fun! I like you, John. How on earth can I ever thank you enough for this afternoon?”

“Do you really want to know?... By turning over.” John gave him a little nudge.

“What, like this? But I'm...” Howard made as if to roll over onto his back across the pilot's lap, but didn't actually do so.

“I know you are. Or at least I guessed you would be. But who cares?” John slipped his hand under the boy and felt for what was embarrassing him.

“It's this you're worried about, isn't it.” He squeezed the lad's joystick and jiggled it to port and starboard. “But don't worry; I've seen one before. I've even see yours before.” He rolled the lad over on his lap.

A few moments later the boy was puffing and panting, but with a smile of serene happiness shining all over his face.

As they were coming in to land, John asked, “You enjoyed this afternoon?”

“Not half!”

“Me too. You're a super kid. Couldn't we meet again some time? How'd you like another flight? Maybe in my Twister?”

“Cor. Could we? Honestly?”

“You two have a nice time?” asked Charles as soon as their feet touched *terra firma*.

“Great!” Howard's face sparkled with delight. “John's promised to take me up again in his stunt plane some day ... if I'm a good boy!” He suddenly realized his shorts were unzipped and hanging open. It had been hard getting dressed in the cockpit of the plane, especially during the excitement of landing and with John's hand constantly probing in places where it should not have been. Howard blushed, and tried to turn aside so that Charles would not notice the open flies.

But Charles already had. “Yes, I can see you've been enjoying yourselves,” he commented enigmatically.

It was one of those February afternoons which give the first hint that spring is on the way. The grass was no longer covered in thick white frost. The pale yellow sun had seemed unable to summon up enough heat to warm the air, but it was shining at last and its rays reflected from the windows of the study block. Adam and Mark were playing tennis, breathing out great clouds of condensation as they attempted, skidding occasionally, to return each other's shots.

Mark was a good player, but getting him organized, as usual, had been a problem. First, it took forever for him to get ready and locate his racket in the muddle of his possessions. Then he couldn't find his shorts. There seemed to be only one white sock. The lace on one of his tennis shoes broke. By the time they were on the court, Adam's temper was at boiling point.

"Concentrate, Mark!" he called. It only needed somebody to walk past the court and Mark lost all interest in the game. The ball which Adam had served so well rolled behind Mark who stood with hand shading his eyes gazing off into space.

"An aircraft," Mark said.

Adam walked to the net. He'd had enough. "Look, Mark. Are you going to play or not? So far you've stopped for the Prof. and for Martin. You stopped for Gavin and Geoff, and now it's a bloody aircraft! They're not unusual you know." Indeed, the sky over the island was often criss-crossed with vapor trails.

"This one's small and it's low and it's flying over that island to the east of us. I just saw it catch the sun.

Adam turned to look. He couldn't see the aircraft but he caught the flash of reflected sunlight which had disturbed Mark's concentration.

"Are you two going to be long? We booked the court for two-thirty and it's a quarter to three now." It was Laurent and, predictably, he was with young Alan. Laurent and Alan were rarely seen apart these days. Adam had gone off Laurent since they had met in London.

"Shan't be long," Adam said. "This is the final set." He bit the inside of his cheek in irritation. "Oh, now what?" Mark had gone over to talk to them. Mark had the shortest concentration span of anybody Adam knew.

"Come on, Mark," he called. "I'm getting cold!"

Mark returned to the court and played quite well for a few minutes, encouraged by occasional applause from young Alan who was one of Mark's many admirers in the pubertal set.

But then Mark did it again. The racket arm dropped; the ball, which he could have returned so easily, sped past him and landed in the corner of the tall wire fence.

Furious, Adam threw his racket to one side. "That's it!" he called. "That's the last game I'm ever playing with you! I'm going back!"

"It's coming this way," said Mark.

"I couldn't care less!" said Adam. He picked up his racket and left the court.

Mark ran after him. "Look!" he said. "It's quite high but you can see the color. I've never seen a yellow plane before."

"It's the sun reflecting off it," said Adam.

"Don't be daft. The sun doesn't make things look yellow."

“Of course it does. It stands to reason...” The drone of the approaching aircraft got louder and louder and Adam was forced to take an interest.

“Well I'm damned!” he said. Mark was right. The sun couldn't make an aircraft look that color. It was a horribly garish color.

“Don't know what make it is,” said Mark. “There's a book in the library. I must look it up. Hang on. What's he doing? Good God! Did you see that? He's doing it again. He's not in trouble is he?”

Adam didn't answer. The blood had rushed to his head and he was rooted to the spot. “He'll do another one .... Yes... there he goes. Three rolls to the right!”

“What does that mean?” asked Mark. “Adam!”

But Adam was running for all he was worth towards a trash pile where discarded building materials had been stacked up outside the kitchens. Adam grabbed a large piece of glass which, broken, had come out of some window on the island and, looking intently through it, held it above his head, wiggling it slowly.

“Quick,” he yelled at Mark, “Grab that other piece and signal him!”

“Why? How? Signal how?”

“Oh, for Chrissake, didn't you learn *anything* in Physics? The angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflection. *Estimate!*”

Now Mark understood. He picked up another broken window pane, held it up and imitated Adam's motions. “It's no good,” he said a moment later. “He's gone.”

“Just watch!” said Adam. They stared at the departing plane and were about to give up hope when first one wing dipped low, and then the other.

“Now tell me what this is all about,” said Mark.

Adam stood, open mouthed, for some seconds before replying. “It means that we are going back to England. It means the problem has been dealt with and you are clear to return.” It was as though Adam was talking in a dream.

“What are you on about?”

“Come with me. Have your shower later. This is important.” In his room, Adam explained that, one afternoon many months ago, Simon had asked him to suggest a method of informing agents hiding out on an island that the Head of the Secret Police had been assassinated and it was safe for them to return. “Simon is okay,” he said. “Only he and I know it was my idea, and he used it, and it's in chapter three of his *still unpublished* next book!”

“So nobody can know about it except you and Simon. Brilliant!” Then Mark's joy faded. “This is all very well, you know. We've got the message, but how do we get away from this place?”

Adam sat frowning. “Turns to the left are the day... Yes! That's it. Clockwise for time and anti-clockwise for day!”

He turned to Mark. “He'll come back,” he said. “Probably in a few days, but at the same time.” Adam explained the meaning of the rolls. “If the rescue is to be at night, a motor boat will moor fairly near the island. It will give three green flashes and we swim out to it.”

“In winter, in the Atlantic?” said Mark. “We'd never get more than fifty yards.”

“Yes, we will, because the boat crew will lay a net from as near the shore as they can to the boat. All we have to do is swim out, find the net and hang on. They'll pull us in. I'd thought of that problem, obviously.”

“Well,” said Mark, “I'll believe it when the aircraft comes back.”

They changed their routine. Instead of playing tennis or spending the afternoons indoors at the snooker table, they walked along the cliff-top. Rain didn't stop them now; neither did the sneers of the other boys

as, armed with binoculars borrowed from the Professor, they enjoyed their new-found hobby of bird watching. That had been Adam's idea. It would enable them to scan the sky without arousing suspicion. In the library they boned up on gannets, guillernots and puffins but nobody else on the island had the slightest interest in ornithology so the easy identifications they made went unchallenged.

They didn't talk much on those excursions. Each had begun to irritate the other. Mark's untidiness and lack of concentration irritated Adam, as did his flippant manner. When Adam tried to explain anything, Mark accused him of being a know-all and said he was arrogant. Dear old Pudgy back at school would always listen to what he had to say. Adam rather regretted having told Mark anything about the plan. There were several other boys who would be worth saving from the island. The problem was that none of them seemed to have the slightest desire to leave it.

"If the plane doesn't come today, I'm packing this in!" said Mark as they walked along the cliff-top path one Wednesday afternoon. "It's bloody madness! It was just a coincidence, seeing that plane."

"The whole of life is coincidence," said Adam.

"Who said that?"

"I don't know. I heard it somewhere."

"Well, it's a stupid remark."

"It was probably made by somebody with more brains than you've got," said Adam.

"You don't know, so you can't say, can you? If you were to tell me his or her name, I might respect it."

"So you evaluate what a person says according to his reputation?"

"Yes I do. And when an arrogant, overbearing sod like you claims to have helped a famous author write his books and then makes out that some pilot doing a few aerobatics is all part of a plot you hatched up, I beg leave to suspect it."

"So, you're calling me a liar?"

"I'm not saying that. I think you might have imagined a link where there isn't one. Hallo! Look!"

Mark pointed at the sky behind Adam. A small droning dot in the sky was coming their way.

"Well, I'll be buggered!" said Mark,

"You have been," replied Adam clapping the binoculars to his eyes. "By me, among others."

"And this time I'm glad."

"You always were glad."

Irritation evaporated as they stared intently at the growing speck in the sky. "It's the same one all right!" Adam said excitedly. "Yellow. I can see the color clearly."

The aircraft approached, rose slightly as it passed over the cliff and then, as they watched, began to roll to the left.

"Count them!" shouted Adam.

"One, two!" said Mark. "Two rolls to the left. He's going over the other way. One, two, three. Two to the left and three to the right."

"Monday, three o'clock in the morning," said Adam. "Now he should indicate where we should be."

True enough, the aircraft dived sharply towards the cove and climbed again.

"That's the only practical place anyway," said Adam. "I could have told him that."

"It'll be no picnic getting down that path at three o'clock in the morning."

They watched the aircraft disappear into the distance.

"You can apologize now," said Adam with a grin.

"Later. Look who's coming."

"Oh shit!"

Most people walking from the big house to the boys' block took the inland path. The other, used mostly in the summer, ran along the top of the cliff. Richard was approaching.

Adam put the binoculars to his eyes again. "It's a gannet; I'm sure it's a gannet," he said.

"Puffin," Mark claimed, just to be saying something.

"That was the same aircraft which flew over the other day," said Richard as he stopped beside them.

"Yes it was," replied Adam. "Silly sod. Just showing off. He wasn't doing it very well, either. Did you notice how much height he lost?"

"One of the kitchen staff maintains that you were trying to signal the pilot," said Richard. He stared at Adam.

"We were trying to blind him," Adam said with a laugh. "If we'd succeeded he'd have gone smack into the sea."

"What did you want to do that for?"

"Well, we don't want people prying, do we?"

Richard smiled. "It's just as well you weren't successful. We'd have had the air-sea-rescue people here, and that would have been worse."

"I didn't think of that."

"Still, you meant well; but in the future, please leave security to the Professor and me, okay?"

The two boys nodded, looking suitably subdued.

"By God, you're clever!" said Mark after Richard had left them and was walking out of earshot along the path. "I would never have been able to think up a story like that."

They were friends again - and excited co-conspirators.

They spent the next few afternoons memorizing the difficult places on the path down to the landing cove. Gannets, they claimed, were roosting there. A night-time practice was out of the question: one didn't watch birds long after the sun had set, and there were too many comings and goings in the accommodation blocks to risk sneaking out.

On Sunday they both pretended to have bad colds and stayed indoors - actually to minimize the risk of having to spend the night with Martin. Time dragged. They ate a hearty lunch and an especially big dinner. Swimming at night in Atlantic breakers would require a lot of energy.

At one o'clock they set off, dressed in dark pullovers, jeans and strong training shoes. Fortunately there was nobody about.

"God, it's dark!" whispered Mark.

"Just as well," Adam replied. "We don't want anyone to see the boat."

"Do you think it's already there?"

"No. In the book it stands off several miles away and only comes in at the last moment. That's why timing is so critical. We have to be down there at exactly three to see the signal."

"Which is.... Tell me again," said Mark.

"Three green flashes."

They stood for a moment in the darkness looking back at the blocks. There were still some lights on.

Adam chuckled and took on the voice of Alky Henderson: "It's not good for these boys to be studying so late!"

"Funny sort of studying," said Mark. "You don't need the lights on for *that*."

"I shall miss it though."

"Watch out. Here's the path."

Thanks to their careful examination of the way down, their descent went reasonably well.

"If the boat doesn't come, we'll have to wait till tomorrow to get back up again," said Mark.



“Shut up and concentrate on what you're doing. That's my hand you're treading on!”

“Sorry.”

An hour and a half later, scratched and bleeding, they reached the bottom. Adam looked at his watch.

“Just thirty minutes to zero hour,” he said.

“I can't hear the boat,” said Mark.

This was hardly surprising. The sea outside the cove was roaring. It was a pleasant enough evening with very little wind but the sea was always rough in the winter.

With backs to the rock face, they edged along the narrow beach to the entrance. Sand gave way to rock. They stood on a ledge, not more than nine inches wide on the face of the sheer rock. Every few minutes a wave, rushing in through the narrow cleft of rock, swamped over their feet. Very slowly and very carefully, they edged their way to the gap and finally stood, with Mark behind Adam, at the actual entrance to the cove.

The other side was only about eight feet away and the gap was filled with the spray of breakers which poured through the narrow entrance like cream. It would be no fun swimming through rollers such as these!

Adam looked at his watch. Two forty-five. Fifteen minutes to go. He peered out to sea. The boat would be there now and the crew, whoever they were, would be paying out the net letting the tide and the wind float it towards the shore. He regretted not having specified that the floats on the net should be fluorescent or contain small bulbs. It would be reassuring to know that it was there.

“Two fifty-five; two fifty-eight; two fifty-nine... “Time to get ready!” Adam shouted. Holding on to the rock for support, he bent down and removed a shoe and then the other. Mark caught on and did likewise. The rock was cold and wet on his bare feet. They peeled off their jackets and jeans, leaving on just their wool pullovers and thermal underwear - all the protection they would have against the waters of the North Atlantic winter - and stood, feeling very vulnerable, against the weed-covered, slimy rock face.

Mark grinned and, bending down, arranged his discarded clothing in a neat pile. One had to admire Mark: even at a moment like this he kept his sense of humor. It was a pity that nobody would appreciate it. The sea would wash the clothes off the ledge within the hour.

They were both straining their eyes, looking far out to sea, and suddenly there it was. The flash appeared to come from a spot much nearer. It was incredibly bright - three quite long green flashes.

After his eyes had accustomed himself to the first two, Adam had the impression that he could actually see the outline of the boat in the back flash but dismissed it as a hallucination. No private yacht could be that big.

“Ready?” he shouted. Mark nodded. They put their legs over the edge and slid into the water.

Both boys were strong swimmers, but each thought he was going to die in the first few seconds. The cold was intense. Adam felt his muscles go into spasms. For a moment he panicked as the sea swirled him round and round, dashed him against the rock face, pushed him under, brought him up again, swept him back.

Mark, too, seemed to be having difficulties. Adam could just see his head. The net. They must find the net, and very soon. Where the hell was it? He had to find it for Mark's sake, if not for his own.

His leg scraped painfully over a submerged rock. He reached down, hoping that he wasn't bleeding. There was something there. He stopped swimming. What was it? It seemed to have caught his toe. Seaweed? Then he realized it was the net. He made a wild grab and caught it and looked around for Mark.

Mark was little more than five feet away, and he too was holding a part of the net. It had worked! Adam threaded both arms through the mesh and held on tightly and screamed at Mark to do likewise.

It was impossible to swim properly like that. Adam's feet kept catching in the net, but he was able to propel himself through the water and was surprised for a second or two at the progress they were making until he realized that the net itself was moving. Another huge wave engulfed them. He looked up and thought he saw a light. The light got brighter and then grew dimmer and dimmer before fading away altogether. He had the sensation of swimming through a tunnel, a very dark tunnel. Somebody was behind him and seemed to be pursuing him. He swam even faster.

"This chicken is ready for stuffing," said a voice. Mr. Furth!

What was he doing here?

"Cock a doodle do," said Adam. Powerful hands turned him over.

"He's okay," said a voice. "He's had a bash on the head."

"How's Mark? Is he okay?" Funny. That sounded like young Howard Ainsworth.

"Oh yes. He's just swallowed a lot of sea water."

This was ridiculous. That was Simon's voice. For a moment, the blackness returned. He tried to hold on to the netting but it wasn't a net. It felt like wood. He opened his eyes. It was wood. He could see the joints between the planks. They weren't very clear and seemed to be distorted somehow. Somebody was doing something to his leg which hurt a bit.

"Cock a doodle do," he murmured.

He heard a boy's laugh. "He used to say that in his sleep."

"Ben? Ben? Is that you?" He opened his eyes wide.

"Yep! Me! How do you feel?"

"Where am I?" The joints in the wood seemed clearer now.

"On the *Narwhal*."

"Try to keep still," said a voice Adam couldn't place. "You've a bad cut on your leg."

The planking under him began to vibrate slightly.

"We're off!" That was certainly Simon's voice. "Let's get them below and into bed." He felt strong arms raise him up.

The floor moved away from him. He was dimly aware of stairs and of lights and then of something incredibly soft under him.

"He's perfectly okay," said a reassuring voice.

"So's Mark," said Simon. "These lads are as strong as oxen."

"One hopes that the skill of one's extremely expensive crew had something to do with their success," replied the unknown voice.

Adam opened his eyes. The speaker was a youngish man. They were in a room of some sort. Adam turned his head, which was painful. Mark lay on another bed and, just as Adam looked, was violently sick.

"You always did know how to make a mess," Adam murmured.

"How about you?" said the stranger. "You feel like being sick?"

Their eyes met. "No," Adam said. "Who are you?"

"Tell you in the morning. I must go up top. I'll leave you with Ben."

So he hadn't been dreaming! He felt a hand slip into his.

"How do you feel?" Ben asked.

"Okay. How are you, Pudgy?"

"I was worried as hell the last hour, but I'm okay now. And this 'Pudgy' shit has got to stop."

"Okay, Pudgy. You're daft to worry about me."

"Daft I may be; but worried I was."

Ben's face came closer and closer, and then Adam felt a kiss on his lips.

“Oh, Ben, I can't believe this,” Adam murmured. “What a friend you've been!”

## 24.

They all slept late. Adam had woken several times to get over nightmares in the luxurious cabin he shared with Ben, and he was caressed back to sleep again.

Then Ben was sitting on the side of their bed with a steaming hot cup of tea. Adam felt better after downing it. Ben helped Adam dress in a pair of jeans which just about fitted and a sweater which certainly didn't.

At late breakfast, Adam basked in familiar companionship: Mark, Howard, Ben, Simon and 'Charles', as Adam had learned to address him, all talking nineteen to the dozen, laughing and teasing each other, whilst two white-coated stewards served up a delicious brunch. The two boys from the island were full of questions: about the rescue, how Ben and Howard had been let out of school, the enlisting of Charles, all about the boat.

And, of course, the future. Nobody, Simon suggested, would be told that Adam and Mark were still alive or that they had been rescued. That was a great relief to both boys who had feared that there might be an attempt to return them to their respective fathers. “What I suggest is this: I shall buy a another house near a good school which you can attend as day-boys and live with me as family. Is that all right?”

“Smashing!” said Adam.

“Sounds great!” said Mark.

“But what about us?” asked Ben.

“You will spend your weekends with us. Alky, for reasons Ben will soon brief everybody on, will certainly agree to that. The two of you are doing well at the school and your parents will expect you to continue there. Besides, you're comfortable roommates.”

“Family!” Mark mused. “I've always wanted a family.”

“I'll be your big brother,” said Adam with raised left eyebrow.

“Maybe not *that* much of a family,” Mark laughed.

“We all owe Charles a lot,” said Simon.

“Here, here!” Adam said, and the other boys joined in with a lusty cheer.

“It was nothing,” said Charles when the tumult died down. “One has enjoyed the experience enormously. It makes a change from one's usually boring social routine. Whenever any of you feel like a holiday or a change of company, I hope you'll fly down to Cannes to see me.”

“Wowie! Gosh!” said Howard. “Can I come?”

“You proved you could do that back at school,” Ben said. “But there's one thing, Simon.”

“What's that?”

“Will the new house have a garden?”

Simon leaned over the table and drew the hands of all four boys into his own.

“It will indeed. And do you know what we shall call it?”

“I know,” said Adam. “It will be the Paradise Garden.”

Then Charles and Simon shooed the four young people back to their respective cabins and forbade them to emerge before dinner.

“If you carry on like this, I shan't be able to get a word in, let alone anything else,” said Mark.

Howard had been talking non-stop ever since they had entered the cabin. As Mark was undressing him, he chattered on: “And then I passed that test, and then the Headman said I had to move to Alky's house, and I thought, 'Oh, no, not Alky,' 'cause Alky has this reputation, but I got into Ben's room, and Ben came in in the middle of the night and, whomp, this great heavy thing was falling on me, his suitcase, and I think he was pissed at first, but he's got this pocket TV, brilliant, that he looks at in bed after lights out, and he lets me - not all the time but sometimes - sneak into bed with him to look at it, and that's how he knows I can cum, and I can, too... Ooooooh, Mark, that feels... super!”

Mark had taken Howard's very stiff, four-and-a-half-inch pubertal cock between two powder-dry fingers and was examining it for the very first time in his life, moving the loose skin up and down the shaft and watching the cute little purple head peep out and disappear back inside its enclosing fold. How long he had waited for this! How ardently he had wished for just one look at the magic little scepter! He couldn't believe his luck, not just at being rescued, but at having the boy he would love for the rest of his life standing willing, completely and totally naked, before him.

Howard started off on another volley of chatter, but Mark rose off his knees and put a finger to the little boy's lips. Then he gathered him into his arms, lifted him up and deposited him on the bed and fell to kissing him.

That was something new for Howard. At first his lips resisted, then opened a bit, remaining stiff, then a bit more, then allowed themselves to be sucked in.

Once awakened, Howard's mouth became as good at kissing as it had been at chatter. He covered Mark's face with his lips, seeking out comers and pits, sliding, laving. And, oh, the lovely smells of the boy, the sweet, almost honey-like scent of his lips, his tongue, his breath, his very saliva!

Mark dropped down and took the proud pricklet into his mouth. For once Howard was speechless. All he could do was make little peeps of pleasure and let the spasms of arousal ripple through his body. Then he was pulling on Mark's hair, gasping, “Stop! Stop!” He wanted, it seemed, to drag the exquisite excitement out as long as he could.

Mark took the little boy into conventional embrace and they rested for a moment, letting their passions cool. “I know what you were doing back at school,” Howard whispered, “with Simon and his friends. I know all about it now. It doesn't matter. And Ben's taught me a lot. Mind you, nobody has fucked me. I waited for.... Oh, Mark, that feels really, really nice!”

Mark had just then reached around Howard's pert little bottom and inserted a preliminary finger, dripping with saliva, rather rudely into the little boy's virgin arse-hole.

At the same moment, Adam and Ben were resting after their first bout of love-making.

“I still can't believe this,” said Adam. “And I can't believe how stupid I was to be taken in by Richard.”

“Well, it's all turned out for the best, hasn't it?” Ben ran a finger over Adam's sensitive right nipple.

“No thanks to my intelligence!”

“Just think.... Every weekend I'll come and visit. That means Friday night, and Saturday night...”

“And Sunday morning...”

“Do you know, Alky had some really raunchy magazines, about kids being tied up and blokes with big cocks getting ready to rape them...”

“Is that a hint, Pudgy?”

“It'd be just pretend, of course. But I won't let you do *anything* if you keep calling me that name.”

There was a yelp from the cabin across the narrow corridor.

“Howard,” Ben said. “This will be his first time. Remember ours?”

Adam fondled Ben's semen-damped buttocks. “Mmmm. So well,” he said. “Alky corning in and then we had to help Simon. Seems ages ago.”

“Any regrets?”

Adam reached round and grasped Ben's stiff prick in his fingers. “No. None at all. You?”

“No. I'd do it all again.”

“That's just what we are going to do. Did you know that you're the best mate anyone ever had?” He kissed Ben's neck. “And you've got the nicest arse in the whole wide world.”

“And you've no idea how much I've missed having your hard prick in me,” said Ben, dreamily. “It just fits my world-wide hole!”

“It wants to go back in there,” said Adam. “Turn over.”