Letters from No-One

by nikkistew2 (asunder73)

Summary

Christian Grey was having a very bad day, but things start looking up when he finds a lost letter while taking a run around the park. Little Ana Steele has a class project that will change his life for the better one postmark at a time.

Notes

CG and Ana meet as pen-pals...and a friendship is born. ***The "Underage" warning is because Ana is 14 years old when the story begins. There is no sex between Christian and a minor in this story, though they discuss mature themes.***

NOT BETA'D
You Had A Bad Day

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

CPoV

How many times do I have to tell Marketing I needed those reports yesterday? I pay the most for the best, but these entitled fat-cats think their Ivy League degrees gives them latitude to fuck me over? I'll give them one week. If they don't impress me and give me a good reason to keep them on, each one of these overpriced bastards will be fired with cause. There's a long distance between university life and the real world and they just aren't cutting it.

I'm not going to tolerate this age crap anymore either. I've made a big name for myself, but once people see me (and my youth) they lose their ever-loving minds. I heard Fat Bastard last week telling a co-worker that he wasn't going to work for a snot-nosed kid. I happily relieved him of his employment; apparently, he has standards. Who was I to pay him two-hundred thousand dollars a year, offer full benefits, provide an expense account and keep him against his will? Was it my fault he hadn't finished his probation period?

I felt a hundred years old at Harvard. Kids were playing games, partying and fucking around, but hardly any of them had cast their eyes to the future that looked to be grim as fuck. It's a dog-eat-dog world, so I knew I had to be the biggest, baddest dog around. Sorry to say, it's difficult to become the world's most dangerous predator being coddled at that nursery school for nerds and rejects. It was quite amusing to imagine these soft, lazy people graduating with their home mortgage-sized student loans, coming to work for me, hat in hand. They brag about not being put on a wait-list for Harvard, yet are forced to wait in lines long enough to wrap around a city block to be interviewed at GEH.

All of this shit is fucking depressing. I made five million dollars today, but Carrick's still on my ass about dropping out of Harvard, as if I haven't more than recouped his losses and paid him back for all four years of that overpriced daycare. It's been over two years for fuck's sake! What the hell does he want from me? It's not as if I'll need Harvard on my resume to get a job. Those fuckers routinely offer me honorary degrees, and I've only been gone two years. I suppose if I take the degrees they're trying to force-feed me, they can put me in their prospectus as one of their success stories. Amateurs. Those who can't do, teach, and they have a campus full of those ne'er-do-wells to prove it.

Grace expects me to show up to another one of her meet-and-greets cloaked as a 'family' dinner, but I know to only too well what that's code for. Operation: Get Christian Hitched. Ball-busters and debutantes as far as the eyes can see will be there, asking questions, trying to touch me, offering to fuck me, pockets full of numbers I'll never call, Grace's other friends offering up their decrepit cunts. It's ridiculous and insulting that she does this. Are there no people in the world that don't want to be part of a we? Even if I wasn't fucked up, this would be a terrible idea. I'm twenty-one years old; the only choice I want to make about pussy is 'all of the above' and not be forced to feign concern about these poor bitches' biological clocks or monitor their greedy eyes as they focus on my portfolio. I guess since she erroneously believes I'm gay, she thinks I'm not too young for a 'beard'.

Elliot's older, but she wouldn't dare try to hook him up with one of her friend's daughters because he's already fucked half of them with video to prove it, and if he got married now, he'd be starring on Divorce Court: Seattle Edition less than a year later. Instead, my mother designates me as the sacrificial goat, then she wonders why I never want to come visit. What's next: tear stains, a red nose and crumpled handkerchiefs? I'm sick of it and I'm beginning to get sick of them, too. The only reason I considered going tonight was that I had to dismiss my last submissive because, get this, the
bitch had poked holes in my condoms. Gail said they looked moth-eaten.

I rarely fuck during fertile periods even if my sub is on the pill. I usually just make her swallow my cock while tethered to the fucking machine. If the sub is a good enough cum-guzzler, I usually attach the largest dildo or one that's equipped for double penetration. Finding out that Priscilla had attempted to sabotage my contraception made me wonder why we bothered with a contract in the first place. I always honor my contracts and I fully expected her to honor hers. Why did she sign on to be my sub if she wanted a baby? What does she want from me that I could give her? Hearts and flowers? I don't do that shit. I already reward her very handsomely for time she spends with me; why pay for the rest of my life when I don't want to spend it with her?

Fuck, this is tiresome; she'll be at Escala and shit will hit the fan. It's all over but the crying. And the begging. She could prostrate herself before me for all I care. This level of betrayal will never be forgiven. Or forgotten. As soon as she arrives, I'll stop payment on her university fees. She's too stupid for higher education if she thought she could get away with this. I may not care for her, but I certainly care about my dick and my bottom line. I may fuck hard but I rely on safe sex, too. I honestly don't know what pisses me off more, that she tried to trap me or that I can't fuck her one last time before I begin to search for another sub. A lot of shit is going on at GEH and I wanted to get some relief. Best laid plans weren't happening tonight. Bitch may as well have cooties.

Taylor drives me home and I wonder what awaits me. I wonder how long I should let this scene play out. I'm almost tempted to give the best scene of my life. I can't help it; I have Taylor stop at a discount jeweler to pick up a cubic zirconia ring set in silver plate. He starts laughing when I send him in for the order. He knows what's going down; Gail must've told him. I break protocol and ask Gail to prepare a 'romantic' dinner for two even though it's her day off; I even have Taylor grab a cheap bouquet. Flowers, candles, the whole nine. I gonna watch this bitch bleed a proverbial pound of flesh for my troubles.

Ah, seven o'clock and all is very well. I hear the elevator open and her heels clicking along the foyer floor. It's sad that my cock is harder now since I don't intend to fuck her. She wasn't that great, but she was dependable. Whoa, Nellie. She's been dressing sexier and sexier, wearing the most daring outfits I'd allow. However, I enjoyed making her take that shit off, shower of all her perfume and warpaint and present herself in the typical sub uniform of very sheer, virtually see-through. black lace boy shorts while kneeling with her legs open wide presenting her crack like a bull's-eye. This time, I surprised her; as she entered, I quickly got up with a smile and met her in the living area, grasping her hand in mine. I was assaulted with a curious mixture of disgust and elation as her skin made contact with mine. Her face was suffused with pleased surprise. Smile, bitch! I felt like twirling my nonexistent handlebar mustache. To the train tracks we go, my dear.

I direct her to the table, where I seat her next to me, instead of providing her with a cushion to kneel upon while she serves me. I can almost hear her heart galloping out of her chest. Wow! She's never been this excited to fuck me. Trust me, bitch, the only reason I'm raising your hopes to the stratosphere is so that I can witness you plummeting from the greatest height possible, then watching her spectacularly crash and burn. 'Splat!' go her hopes and dreams. I continue to hold her hand, caressing her fingers. I briefly wonder if treachery can rub off and resolve to shower with antibacterial soap and hot water upon her departure.

Gail enters the main residence, rolling the serving cart to the dining table, gently depositing the entrees in front of us, while I pour the wine that I had been letting breathe. I may as well have gastronomic satisfaction since I won't be receiving any sexual gratification for the foreseeable future. I haven't jacked off without a human vessel since I stopped subbing for Elena. Usually, she has some subs in a holding pattern for emergencies, but she claimed that no-one is suitable for my needs right now. She said she might be able to get someone to sub for me temporarily, but I suspect she's
offering herself, and no, just no. Fucking a woman almost thirty years older than you when you're fifteen is hot. Sexing a woman looking down the unfriendly barrel of sixty when you're twenty-one, not so much. She's desperately holding on to her youth with hopes, dreams, duct tape and Botox. It would be too much like trolling the retirement home. Besides, she told me to never look back; she couldn't very well discipline me for following her sage advice, could she?

Priscilla, all but hyperventilating by my side, is beginning to sweat a little and I have to steel myself not to rip my hand from her clammy claw. I look into her eyes, which appear as if she might be about to tear up. The day that began with a tearful Grace will end with a devastated skank. Two women, disappointed for very different reasons. I consider whether Grace would commiserate with this bitch who's so desperately attempting to give her the grandchild she so desperately desires. Priscilla's really no different than the debs she keeps throwing in my face.

I encourage her to eat the sumptuous feast Gail has prepared. I squeeze her hand gently and look deeply into her muddy brown eyes at regular intervals, trying to make a deeper connection. I'd learned how to fake it with the best. Elena wasn't really my type, per se. She was just available and gagging for it until she had me holding the whip; then she wanted rules and limits. I found I couldn't blame her for her sense of self-preservation. I've always appreciated the pragmatic.

After the last morsels were consumed and the last of the wine had been drunk, I got up and pulled out her chair. Fuck! She almost touched my no-go area and screwed up the whole plan. Whew! I ever so surreptitiously rubbed my hip with the ring box against her and I could practically feel her whole body convulse. Did she just orgasm? Without permission? This arrangement has derailed more than I thought. Normally, I'd beat her ass for this type of infraction, but I need her feeling very good while Taylor and Gail pack her shit into boxes so that security can place it in her car. She'll be living in her car by the time I'm through, since a portion of the astronomical fees I pay is for room & board. A small beep alerts me that her all of her belongings have been deposited into her car and Gail and Taylor have returned via the service elevator, so now it's time for phase two. Showtime!

I escort her to the sub-room. I couldn't bear to take her to my room even to lend more authenticity to this plot. She was defiling my apartment enough by breathing. I turn her around with her back facing me, as I open the door to a fully stripped room. Her gasp of shock echoes in the corridor. Her hand goes to her throat. Too late for pearl-clutching, slut. You ain't seen nothing yet.

For the first time she speaks. She had been so shy and demure before, but I guess she was finally driven to speak up. "What's going on? Where are my things?" she squeaked, like the sewer rat she was.

"I have a surprise for you. I couldn't stop thinking about you. You were on my mind all day," I said truthfully. What I had in store for her would surprise the shit out of her, and I definitely couldn't stop thinking about the possibility of her stealing my sperm to incubate my baby, possibly for a big payday. They could probably line her pussy with platinum for a push-present with the amount I'd have to pay her in child-support alone. I was thinking about my vengeance for hours. Usually, I get hot when I'm angry, but ice has filled my veins. I want to savor this and hold this moment in my mind for posterity. I move into position for the best angle because I've made sure to have this shit immortalized on the silver screen. Maybe I'll have Gail make popcorn so I can watch it on repeat while I jack off until I get a replacement snatch. The next sub better worship at the altar of pain and be prepared to be bathed in cum from the chest up. It'd be awhile before I went bareback, too.

Making sure I pressed the fullness of my fury-driven erection into her ass, I lead her in the opposite direction towards my bedroom. When I got close, I was careful to breathe into her ear, "I have something for you, Priscilla. I picked it up just today. It represents everything I feel about you."
I reached into my pocket because I was not going to kneel for this bitch. "I have something very important to say to you," I declared, my voice choked a little with my efforts not to burst into laughter at her expectant expression.

"Yes?" she asked breathily.

I leaned in, pulling the box out of my pocket, as if to present the contents. As I open it, the stupid skank actually proceeds to jump up and down in excitement. She looked like a puppy about to piss itself and her eyes looked almost green with greed. "Priscilla, I want to make a change in our relationship for the better."

"Yes! Yes! I'll marry you! I wasn't expecting anything like this so soon, but I love you so much. Thank you for giving me more," she chirps in glee.

"Like I said before I was so rudely interrupted, I want to make a change in our relationship." I cut in sternly, "I'd like to give you this two hundred dollar door prize and cordially invite you to remove your treacherous, skanky ass from my apartment. I already did you the favor of returning all your shit to your car which you can keep if you continue to make payments and provide your own insurance. Otherwise, it must be returned in good condition so it can be traded in."

Her jaw had steadily dropped until she resembled the drama mask. "What? Why are you doing this to us?" she asked, shouting at me. I didn't appreciate her tone, but as I grabbed her by the shoulders and slowly rotated her in the direction of the 'til now unnoticed large flat screen filled with stills of her carefully perforating least two dozen condoms, her face turned almost blue with fright. Then, when the screen filled with video of her taking my cock up her ass while she begged me to 'fuck my slut harder' as I rammed into her over and over while pulling a set of nipple reins connected to pins on her clit, she looked like a thermometer on the verge of bursting. The beauty of the camera angles was that neither my face nor any other distinguishing characteristics were visible. I knew that multiple cameras would come in handy.

"You recorded that?" she asked woodenly.

"I record everything, bitch. The devil, after all, is in the details. There's more where that came from if you require more compelling data."

"You bastard!"

"Oh, darn! You got me. That really hurts. Don't let the door hit you wherever I split you," I said as she stomped away angrily. "Have a nice life!" I called out as the elevator doors closed.

Back to the drawing board. Fuck!

Chapter End Notes

Next: Christian meets Anastasia Steele in a very unique fashion.

Please check out the FB group, FSoG Fanfic Obsessed
Just another Fifty Shades of Grey fanfiction group, obsessed with all things Grey.
Created by: Lanieloveu & SdaisyS
Blurry

Chapter Summary

Christian meets Anastasia Steele in a very unique fashion. CG and Ana meet as pen-pals...and a friendship is born.

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry this update took forever. It's had many versions before I said, forget it. It's as done as it's going to get. CG's voice was overwhelming me, and Ana's letter does a lot of speaking for her. ***The "Underage" warning is because Ana is 14 years old when the story begins. There is no sex between Christian and a minor in this story, though they discuss mature themes.***

See the end of the chapter for more notes

CPoV

I could barely sleep at all following BabyMamaGate. The bitch didn’t even attempt to offer up a token apology, not that I would have accepted one. Suffering a serious bout of cockblock-induced migraine, I’m tempted to have Priscilla’s car repossessed, until I remember the car is in her name. I could always have it misplaced and repeatedly ticketed until the police impound it. Her only excuse for trying to trap me was love.

Love, that which has given excuse for every bad thing that has happened to me in my life. My sperm donor loved me so much, that he was nowhere to found after I was born whereas the crackwhore loved me too much to just let me go. Instead, she kept our little family together by whoring herself out to barely provide food and a roof and shooting up to escape from our sorry reality in between.

Normal people wouldn’t know what happens to a body after four days without proper ventilation or visualize how the filthy skin of a hardened drug addict looked as gases began to build up within the tissues. And the smell. At four years old, I could remember it all. I thought Ella was sleeping, and I tried to wake her. Then I would go away and her body would move again, so I thought she was waking up. This seemed to go on all day.

The true horror, that Grace and Carrick never discussed, was the fact that Ella was pregnant again when she perished. Neither she nor the baby survived, because I saw the baby come out of her like some dead alien thing. It had been expelled from her body post-mortem. Earlier psychologists accused me of making up a sibling until I no longer attempted to discuss it in therapy. I never bothered to discuss this revelation with Dr. Rosen. I was fucked up enough without the addition of hazy memories of witnessing a homebirth with Ella dead on the floor.

But when Grace put Mia in my arms, I just knew my baby had come back to me and I had to keep her safe. She was my first word in the strange world Grace had taken me to. Mia only responded to me with her smiles at first, though later she began to share them with the rest of the world. She was the first person I’d ever considered mine. Ella was certainly never mine. I belonged to Grace and
Carrick while belonging nowhere. Their touch burned me, and it felt like my skin was being peeled off one strip at a time.

Elena has attempted to send me one file after the next of subs that would meet my exacting requirements, but she sent Priscilla so obviously, her judgement is flawed. If Elena thought love was for fools, why was she matching me with so many fucking idiots? Maybe next time she’ll seen a sub that’s been fixed like one of the dogs you see on those late-night commercials with Sarah McLachlan or like the guy on the Price is Right who reminds everybody to have their pets spayed or neutered. Fuck, I should really look into that. Not the snip, fuck that noise, but subs that can’t have children.

Maybe she could find me a medical-board certified non-breeding sub in her late 20s or early 30s. Surely a few petite brunettes are sterilized? I’ve been scarred by this experience. At a fifty thou a head, you’d think she would’ve been able to weed out the duds. I might have a talented cock, but it’s not a fucking divining rod for lunatics. I may use my skills to drive them crazy, but I don’t expect them to stay that way. If Elena can’t deliver some quality strange soon, I’ll need to make some better friends in the community. Either way, the next contract will give me the power to make all medical decisions. If these chicks are going to act like dogs in heat, I’ll treat them like the bitches they are.

I’m nowhere near the cruelest Dom around. I’m not into public humiliation, unsanitary or dangerous shit like bloodplay or scat. I just don’t see my submissives as women who I want to spend the rest of my life with. Or be seen in public with. At the heart of it BDSM is all about exploring one’s limits and kink in a responsible way. Falling in love isn’t my thing and I make it known upfront that love’s a hard limit. I have a lot to bring to the table. I’m attractive, generous and skilled. Unfortunately, I’m also a public figure, so that means I require a great deal of discretion.

I should probably go for a run; some form of physical activity would do me some good. As I put on my sweats and trainers, my cell rings with my mother’s tone and I just know I couldn’t leave soon enough. Chucking the phone toward my dresser, I meet up with Taylor in the foyer. Fucker’s psychic.

“Gimme a number,” he grunts. He usually attempts to determine what level of fucked up day I’m having by how many miles we run at a time. So far, his method has yet to fail.

“Let’s start with fifteen,” I respond. My usual is ten, but since there’s no pussy to be had, I better run ‘til I’m done. I need to hit the wall. It’s the closest to subspace I can get. This work week is going to be brutal.

The morning, crisp and quiet, is peppered with the sounds of our trainers hitting the pavement. We’re traversing one of Taylor’s nine random routes from Escala. We have other routes from other start points, but this bit of subterfuge would throw off the average abduction attempt. Taylor doesn’t realize that I know he has another team or two that follows us everywhere we go. Watchers for the watchers.

There’s barely a hint of the sun, yet no longer pitch. It’s Saturday and yet the noises of daily life have begun to intrude. Cars and trucks making pickups and deliveries. Few pitiful bastards making their way to work. Seattle music. Coffee shops opening their doors. Ah, there’s the rain right on schedule. My hood becomes saturated, rivulets of water running down my face. Clothes plastered to my body. I run harder, followed by Taylor who seems to be game for everything.
Finally able to filter out foreign sounds, I feel my heart racing and can almost hear my pulse. *Lub-dub. Lub-dub. Lub-dub.* Blood swooshing in my veins. I build up to a sprint with Taylor trailing in my wake. I don’t pretend I can actually outrun him; he just can’t afford to leave me in the dust while keeping me safe. Out feet beat a staccato beat on the wet pavement, puddles splashing in our wake. Our clothes and shoes are fucked. Bet Taylor is grateful for his generous clothes allowance now. After the first five miles, we go somewhat off the beaten path, hitting the park and side streets.

These runs give me the opportunity to see the world I’ve never felt a part of. More businesses and storefronts open, people ready to hawk their wares. Everywhere are signs of people selling something. But I’m not buying. I continue running, everything is white noise. Looking both ways, I cross the street, working my way deeper to a more residential area. It’s much quieter as we complete our second set of five miles.

Doubling back to complete our circuit, I get a second wind and sprint once more. I can almost forget Grace’s plaintive message that awaits me. Will I feel guilty, or put upon, enough to show my face this Sunday for dinner? I have a feeling it’s never going to get better because my family, especially Grace, wants something I cannot give them. They desire family intimacy that’s never existed between us. Regularly showing up and breaking bread together does not a family make.

Besides, we’re not supposed to discuss work at the dinner table and since work makes up the greater part of my life, I have very little to bring to the table. Ironically, Grace spends the better part of our get-togethers talking about the hospital or her various charitable obligations, as if they’re not work-related. Whenever I attend one of the weekly dinners, conversation usually always comes down to two things: whether I’m seeing anyone or if I’m coming to their next engagement.

And there’s always another engagement. It’s as if they’ll die if they don’t always have something to do. I wonder, deep inside, if Carrick and Grace would still be together if they didn’t have a parade of people constantly traipsing through their property for some occasion or other. Personally, I couldn’t stand it which is why I chose Escala as my first place after GEH began to really take off. It’s just inaccessible enough to keep unwanted visitors out. I change the codes and instant, glorious seclusion is at my fingertips.

Every time I cross my parents’ threshold, I promise myself it will be the last. I always feel worse leaving than when I came, somewhat like almost every therapist I ever had. I often wonder why I subject myself to this shit. Each time I see Grace’s number pop up on my phone, I whip out the trusty
checkbook and mentally ask myself how many zeros it will take to shut her up. I get it, people need help. I know, I was once one of them, but apparently, Grace won’t be satisfied until she saves them all with my money. I’ve personally financed two wings of her failing hospital, and provided almost half of the funding for Coping Together. All this proves is that they wouldn’t be able to cope at all without me. On top of that she still wants yet another pound of flesh, shopping me around like fucking one of these dubbitches is the solution to all of my problems. It’s a fucking shame that my only reprieve from my family consists of an eighty-hour workweek and weekend pussy, peppered with lunches or dinners with Elena.

I run harder, attempting to leave my thoughts far behind, yet they pursue me with vicious zeal, mocking me. I feel betrayed, and no-one betrays me with impunity. Between Elliot using me as his wingman and Mia gallivanting around town on my credit, I feel used up. It’s all take, take, take and none of them are giving me anything in return except for this mythical love they swear by. I honestly don’t know why I’ve allowed myself to be forced into a corner, trying to please everyone when they won’t even let me breathe. Where was all this emphasis on togetherness when I was a teenager? Now that I’m a grown man, it’s too late to mold me into the person they want me to be. They lost my respect a long time ago and are just coasting on the dregs of my gratitude to them for taking me in. But really, how long am I expected to pay for less than a couple decades of room, board and tuition? This bit of musing tempts me to call up my accountant. Perhaps he can bottom-line a nice, round figure so I can detach myself from them permanently once and for all.

My parents, Elliot and Mia have all but publicly labelled me as homosexual despite not knowing how I spend my time. It doesn’t seem to matter to them that even I have a right to a private life. Or that they can’t trot me out to do the rounds while bragging on the successful endeavors that they refused to support and at one point attempted to undermine. Carrick never figured out that I was tipped off to a couple of his plots to sink two of my major acquisitions before they got off the ground. He was lucky he wasn’t my attorney-of-record at the time. While I never retaliated against him directly, it solidified my determination to surround myself with my own legal team. What’s outrageous is that he wanted me to fail just so he could send me back to Harvard.

My parents put on a very good show of being liberal but they’re really as waspy as you can get and still be Roman Catholic. They aspired to be the Kennedys of the West Coast, and they were grooming us to be Jack and Bobby. Oh, there was much weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth when Elliot used his degree in architecture from Stanford to start his own construction company. It was so ‘blue collar’ they couldn’t stand it. Then Elliot started getting awards in green design and construction and they acted like it was their fucking plan all along. It was ridiculous.

My parents fell victim to a deep belief in meritocracy, believing the best deserve the best and are inherently destined to succeed. The problem with such utopian beliefs is that they set goals that are almost impossible to reach, and they forced all of their pretentious shit down all of our throats like castor oil. Carrick’s draconian methods to guarantee compliance made it so much harder to live with them, that time spent with Elena was comforting. Elena always said they’d send me away if they ever found out about us and I believed her based on how quickly they laid down the law when we transgressed.

Both Elliot and Mia were the ones possessing excellent pedigrees. They both had blue blood running through their veins, but I was the reject, the mutt, the one thing that was never like the others. I still think Grace adopted me because I looked the part. She was a doctor; I suppose she could see below the superficial bruising and scarring to see the underlying structure. I was a poor, abused orphan that happened to be blessed with attractive coloring and beautiful bone structure. If you look at us, you’ll see they got the pick of the litter. You have Elliot, with his Nordic, blond surfer look. Me, copper-haired, with grey piercing eyes; clearly of Scots-Irish extraction. Finally, Mia, their raven-haired porcelain doll. And I loved her very, very much until she hit puberty and decided to become like the
rest of the Stepfords. Now she’s grating and grasping. If my parents don’t take her in hand, I don’t know what will become of her. She’s bought into that shit wholesale and has become like Paris Hilton overnight without the billions. I felt as if Mia betrayed me, too. Now, she comes around me sticking her hand out. Do I look like an ATM? The brat had the nerve to ask me for a credit card. In a moment of weakness, I considered it, but shouldn’t that be our parents’ job?

I figured out pretty quick that I had to be the Ginger Rogers of the family. How? Ginger Rogers was better than because she had to do everything Fred Astaire did backwards while wearing high heels. In my case, Grace’s mantra of musical instrument became flawless piano, foreign language mutated into French, Spanish and Italian, and martial arts consisted of karate later evolved into kickboxing. Acquiring all of the skills made me a perfect weapon, in or out of the boardroom, yet three minutes at the dinner table with my family and all I can think about is the next bite.

Fuck! I came out here to relax yet clearing my mind has exposed all the flaws of my nearest and dearest, and Elena is still topping the list. I thought she was fine with the end of our sexual relationship, but apparently she isn’t because the last three subs were extraordinary failures. The first sub she sent had an obvious dye job which she knows I despise. She even had a nose job. I’m not fond of corrective surgery, which is one of the major reasons I ended the relationship with Elena in the first place. She was becoming so plastic, I was basically fucking a blow-up doll with crow’s feet. Later, after we had separated, I saw a vaginoplasty brochure and I knew I had dodged a bullet. How a woman who had never birthed a child could need that shit boggled the mind. What kind of horse cock was she taking that she needed corrective snatch surgery? Was she trying to hint that I had knocked the bottom out?

The second sub she sent needed to be retrained. She thought we were going to re-enact Pretty Woman, but got mad when I offered to return her to her street corner. Plus, she couldn’t cook or suck a cock worth shit and she frowned when she swallowed. The major problem the subs had was that they wanted to be girlfriends and just could not comprehend that I wanted them for things that most girlfriends refuse to do without a ring. I am a very rich man and not hard at all on the eyes. Did they think I couldn’t get a girlfriend if I wanted one? I’d probably crash a dating website if I uploaded my real profile and said I was looking for action.

So, no, it’s official; my personal life is shit. I stopped running suddenly, my heart racing, I tilted my head skywards, perspiration and water soaked, drained. Is this all there is?
Taylor, catches up to me, halting at my side. “Are you alright, Sir?”

“Of course not, but I’ve never let it stop me before, have I?” I grimaced. “How many?”

“Almost 20, sir,” Taylor reported.

Fuck! Things are worse than I thought. I’ve never needed a vacation like I need one now. And my problems go far deeper than the lack of a sub. If anything, their absence has just allowed the cracks to show. And I don’t like anything broken. Dr. Harris isn’t paying his keep. I heard of this new therapist who focuses on goals or some shit instead of deeply examining your past. Flint? I’ll have to look into that. What would that make it? Twelve therapists? Let’s hope I don’t get to thirteen. I need all the luck I can get.

“Can you make it home?” Taylor asked.

We had to be almost three miles out. I needed to at least take a breather. We were just on the other side of the park. After walking it off to prevent stiffness later on, I managed to get to a boulder to sit on when my eyes fell upon some shiny blue object to my left. It almost appeared to glimmer in the dim Seattle light. It was rectangular, which meant it wasn’t natural, so what it was doing in the park was a mystery.

Looking closer I realize it’s a box, covered in smooth glass. I was reaching for it before I could help myself, when Taylor grabbed my forearm to stop me. “Sir! We don’t know what that is. It could be an explosive or something!”

“So you think that someone left a bomb in the park?”

“No clue. Hate to find out and have to call you Mr. Hook for the rest of your life,” he replied drily.

But even as I backed away, a missile barreled into me from the right, slamming my body directly into the path of the box, causing it to crack open. There was crying and snuffling coming from somewhere on top of me, where a small weight rested. A woman’s voice shouting, “Tanner! Where are you?! I told him not to leave my side. Dammit!”

The little body reared up in shock. I was in shock, too. I had just been attacked by a midget linebacker. The woman walked onto the path and the little boy pops up with a grin, saying, “I’m sorry, Mommy. I saw a rainbow and I wanted to chase it.”
Come to think of it, the box was throwing off a glimmer that could have been mistaken for a rainbow from a distance with its prismatic effect.

“Say you’re sorry, Tanner. You knocked over this poor man…” she says, getting a look at me and gawking. What is it about me that has women primping and propping up their breasts at the least provocation? This one is blatantly ogling me in front of her child. It’s only a face, you disgraceful cow. Is there a Mr. Tanner around?

“It’s no problem. Keep a closer eye on your boy, though. Play your cards right and he’ll be playing for the Seahawks,” I said with a tight smile pasted on my face. Since the box didn’t explode and kill us all, I felt it was relatively safe to pick it up and take it home. Something told me it was mine.

We walked away from the neglectful woman and her wayward child. I hope I don’t see the little rugrat on a milk carton someday. My legs and arms burned, and I knew I wasn’t going to make it. No sooner had that thought crossed my mind when a familiar black SUV arrived. Have to remember to give Taylor a raise. Someone had helpfully lined the seats so we didn’t saturate them too badly.

My eyes found the box again; it was surprisingly dry considering our usual wet climate. I guess it was somewhat sheltered within the copse of trees. It had beautiful craftsmanship and only the catch had been broken in our fall, causing the box to open in the first place. I opened it, and saw the word Anastasia burned into the lid in calligraphy. The box was really not much bigger than letter-size, which is all it seemed to contained. A rather thick white envelope wrapped in plastic. The box and its contents reminded me of a time capsule. I closed the lid and resolved to open the letter and discover whatever secrets it held. It surprised me that this was the most excited I’d felt in years.

Later, warm and dry, with a glass of wine in hand, I opened the box again, carefully unwrapping the letter mummified in plastic wrap. The handwriting was painstakingly neat, making me wonder if this was one of many drafts. There was a name and address in the sender field:

Anastasia Rose Steele
13 Honeysuckle Lane
Montesano, Washington 98563

The recipient field just read: A Perfect Stranger.

Opening the envelope carefully, trying to preserve it as much as possible, I pulled out the thick, multi-page letter enclosed.

Friday, March 12, 2004

To Whom It May Concern (doesn't that sound pretentious?):

My name is Anastasia (please call me Annie) Rose Lambert-Steele (yes, I’m hyphenated; no, it’s not my fault), and I have to write this letter for a summer project combining communication and social studies. Students that will be sophomores next year have been instructed to write a letter to a perfect stranger as part of a Random Act of Socialization. It's similar to a Random Act of Kindness project,
but instead of giving a homeless person the coat off your back or working at a soup kitchen for Thanksgiving, students are required to give of themselves by baring their souls to strangers. What's 'perfect' about a stranger, I ask you? All my life I've been taught about 'stranger danger' or told NOT to talk to strangers; now, all of a sudden they tell us to put ourselves 'out there'. What if I don’t want to play hokey-pokey with my safety? What if I like to be by myself? I don’t feel lonely at all. Maybe I was lonely at first, but time and necessity have shaped me into a person that can stand to be alone with herself. And I like it this way.

Quite a few of my peers have taken the patriotic route, enclosing their letters in care packages for soldiers who are deployed. I sent a care package overseas once, but my mother Carla ate all of the non-perishable snacks I had included and replaced them with some chocolate bars she bought at Wal-Mart, not realizing that the heat would melt them into sludge. I found out when the soldier wrote back, telling me that candy – which I hadn’t sent – had melted, covering everything in the box except a few decks of cards and magazines that were luckily placed in Ziploc bags, though he thanked me anyway. When I asked Carla about it, she laughed it off and said she was hungry. That was so humiliating.

Some other students decided to write to prisoners because that’s such a good idea. I guess everybody needs friends but I can’t imagine much good coming out of that. What if they end up writing their letters to rapists, murderers or pedophiles? I think the chance of their letters reaching wrongly convicted prisoners is lower than they imagine. Would the warden be able to prevent that? I’m trying to think of anyone in prison that I’d want to have my address but I’m coming up empty. I guess the teachers who assigned this project have never really looked at the faces on the backs of milk cartons.

Ray insisted that I write this letter, even though this assignment will be graded on the honor system, I won’t even be attending Montesano High this year, Carla and I are moving to Texas soon and will probably be long gone before this letter reaches you. He tried to say something really profound about why I should finish what I start, but since he and Carla just filed for a no-fault divorce, it’s very hard for me to understand. Carla is my mom and Ray is my dad, well stepdad, but since he’s the only father I’ve ever known, he should count, right?

This is the part where I am supposed to tell you about myself. First, I am fourteen years old, so I don’t have much life experience to share, but I’ll be fifteen in September if that helps. I live in Montesano, though I doubt you’ve ever heard of it because it is so small. We have a population of less than 4,000 people! The town practically threw a parade when we got a Wal-Mart because there was only a general store and a few strip malls before. I decided to leave my letter up to Fate (in big letters) because that’s how I live my life anyway.

My favorite music is classical, but I love the Eagles, the Pretenders, Prince, Jamiroquai and John Mayer. Don’t judge me or I’ll judge you right back with extreme prejudice!

My biological father died the day I was born in a freak accident during a military exercise. Talk about bad omens. Ray told me that grief at losing my father is what made my mom go ‘round the twist but he’s always made excuses for her. She’s really not a nice person, unless you’re a man.

As a kid, I don’t get to make any really important choices because whatever the adults say goes. Carla cheated on Ray. I don’t approve, but since I’m a child, my opinion doesn’t count. I just think if you get married and say vows in front of God and everybody, you should stick to them. It’s a contract, right? It would be like welshing on a bet. Less than a month ago, I got sick at school and they had to call Ray at work to take me home because Carla didn’t pick up the phone. Ray and I caught her with Stephen Morton with his pants around his ankles, humping on the living room couch. Carla just shrugged her shoulders, got dressed and told Ray she was leaving him and taking
me with her. See? No choices. Except one. I haven’t sat on the couch since that day even though Ray had it cleaned. Ew.

It occurred to me at that moment that people simply don’t respect each other or themselves anymore. I might be a kid, but even I know cheating is wrong. But doing it in your husband’s house when the guy you’re cheating on him with has his own place is just darn disrespectful! Mr. Morton is single (divorced) and lives in an apartment near the general store where he works as a manager. So he didn’t have to have sex with Carla on our couch. I wonder if she just wanted to humiliate and disrespect us even more than she does already.

Ray calls Carla a whimsical person. Whimsy used to sound like a beautiful word, reminding me of grass bending in the wind, leaves swirling in the fall, or sugarplum fairies, but since I’ve been on the receiving end of her whims all of my life, it’s no longer nearly as pretty. I know this letter sounds sad, but I am supposed to put things into this letter that I could never say out loud to anyone I know. Some days I feel like the oldest person in the world. I take pretty good care of myself and I’m thinking of finding some odd jobs I can do to save for college. I can cook, clean and do small household repairs. It’ll give me something to do in Texas.

I really hope that a grown-up finds this letter because if you’re an adult, you can tell me if life ever gets better. Do things change when you’re old enough to drink and vote? Do people trust you or respect you more? Do you feel less helpless and invisible or does this state of affairs last forever? Even though I’m young, I can handle the truth. I’ve found over time that everybody lies and I’d like to meet at least one honest person this year. Consider it part of my teenage bucket list.

Another good item to check off this year would be finding a best friend. I have a lot of people who call themselves my friends, but none of them really know the first real thing about me. They don’t know how I like my tea (I’m a tea drinker by the way) or why I like it with the bag out. Can you guess? They don’t know my favorite color is gray because it’s usually the color of the sky in the place that I’ve always felt the safest. Or that there are so many shades of it, reminding me that life’s not always black and white. They might know how clumsy I am because everybody knows that, but they don’t know it’s because my mind is usually somewhere else. It’s kinda hard to walk straight in Montesano when your mind is far away in Pemberley or Northanger Abbey.

The last thing I’m supposed to talk about is my dreams, but I’ve never really had many dreams for myself. I like to read old books and write in my journal, so maybe I’ll be an author someday. I really just want my life to mean something more than being just another mouth to feed or a body to push around. I mostly dream of a world where no-one goes hungry, homeless or unloved. Is that too much to ask for?

I really hope you respond because this letter has reached you from cloudy Montesano, by way of Glass Beach in Port Townsend where I collected the sea glass that decorates this box, which I made with my own hands.

So, I guess this is it. I’ve done my part and taken a leap of faith to reach out to you. Tag, you’re it!

Yours Truly,
Annie.

P.S. Here’s my e-mail address if snail mail is not for you: callmeannieo@hotmail.com
Fuck me! A kid wrote this? Are kids everywhere getting emotionally fucked over? I thought it was just me, but this girl seems pretty fucking normal and put-together and even she’s being fucked over. If it could happen to someone like her, somebody like me never had a chance.

I wonder if she used this project as a cry for help. Could I just seal the letter and hope some other fucker finds it? Could I take the chance that I would be giving a child molester or serial killer this poor kid’s address? I feel like I know everything about her just from reading this letter. She’s smart, she’s funny and she seems to have a good head on her shoulders even though she’s been landed with a dickless wonder for a father and a whore of a mother. Now her mother wants to move them to Texas? All types of red flags and warning signals are going off in my head. Obviously, this bitch is too fucking dickmatized to notice that this guy with few ties to the community is anxious to take Carla and her teenage daughter to a state over two thousand miles away, too fucking far away, from what seems to be her only decent parent.

This isn’t the kind of thing I can report. How would I explain how I know all this information? What if it’s all a hoax? What if I’m too late? Fuck, Fuck. Fuck! I knew this was going to be a bad fucking week! It’s already July! How long was that fucking box sitting in a Seattle park? And why did I immediately think that this stranger is trying to get into Anastasia’s panties? He’s fucking her mother. Yet, a louder, more insistent voice is telling me that he might like ‘em young, too. He obviously had no compunction against fucking Carla in her husband’s home, so why would they need to leave so quickly? In Washington, a no-fault divorce only takes ninety days. Annie wrote this letter in March, and even if it took a month to file the paperwork, her parents’ marriage could have been dissolved as soon as June even if they were dragging their feet, freeing up Morton to do fuck all!

I’ve never had a feeling like this before; I know something is wrong, but I’d be damned if I could explain this premonition to anybody. It’s like an army is marching over my grave. Suddenly, this letter is the most important thing in my life. It’s the only lifeline connecting me to something inexplicably, yet undeniably compelling.

Picking up my phone to speed-dial Welch, I look at the letter again, noting important data to relate for a thorough background check of all involved parties. “Mr. Grey,” a disembodied voice answers. “Welch, drop everything you are doing. I need several deep background checks done yesterday. I’ll need files on several people ASAP. Ray Steele, Carla Steele and Anastasia Rose Lambert-Steele,” I said, reeling off the Annie’s home address from the envelope. “And I want a very deep check on a Mr. Morton who works or worked as a manager at the Montesano general store. I want to know what his father ate before squirting him into his mother.”

“Sir!” he says smartly, hanging up, ostensibly to do my bidding. I knock back the glass of wine in one gulp. Fuck the bouquet, I think to myself, looking around for something stronger.

Fuck, I was drunk. Thank goodness, it’s still Saturday. The phone rang. It was Elena, likely calling to apologize again, but for some reason I felt leery of answering the phone, letting it go to voicemail.

“Taylor!” I shouted out. Taylor quickly appeared at the doorway of my office. Change all the codes right away,” I directed.

“Sir. What about Mrs. Lincoln’s code?” he asked. He was aware that while I regularly changed the elevator codes, I usually left hers intact, but he still shouldn’t have questioned me.

“ALL..OF..THE..CODES. IMMEDIATELY!” I shouted. I wouldn’t put it past her not to just fucking show up to Escala since I didn’t answer her call. “In fact, after you do that, lock down the elevator and tell the desk clerk that I’m out of town on business.”
There, that’ll keep her from running to Grace, inquiring about my whereabouts. I’m dodging her like I owe her money. Fuck this shit, I’m a grown man and she’s running my fucking life like she’s done since I was fifteen fucking years old. Fuck, Annie is fourteen! I’m going mad. I know it.

I call Andrea. It’s Saturday, but she’s on call 24/7/365. It’s written into her contract, though I rarely enact the availability clause.

“Mr. Grey,” she states flatly.

“Andrea, put Elena Lincoln on my proscribed list; she doesn’t get an appointment, her calls are not to be passed through to me and she’s not to step foot in GEH at all. Consider her persona non grata for the foreseeable future. If my mother calls me within an hour after any of Mrs. Lincoln’s attempts to contact me, divert her calls to voicemail, too. Included in this are any calls from Esclava. Keep a separate log of all of their calls. Do you understand?”

“Yessir,” she replied as if I’d just given her jewelry from Tiffany. She was very chipper all of a sudden. Do Elena and Grace get on Andrea’s nerves as much they do mine?

“Is there anything pressing on my calendar this month?” I ask.

“No, not really. Just a lot of R&D. Ms. Bailey is out of town on business and you’re not expected to travel until next month. You’re supposed to be viewing some factories in Texas, I believe.”

Texas again.

“Thank you, Andrea. That will be all,” I said, disconnecting the call.

Four Days Later:

Welch has dragged his ass long enough. Every time I call for a sitrep, he tells me that he’s being thorough. Fucker! Today, he saunters in to my office as if I hadn’t been lighting a fire under his ass for almost a week.

“Sir.”

“What do you have for me?”

“A lot. I ended up sending a small team of investigators to Montesano to get all the information you requested. The first person we attempted to investigate was Raymond Steele. He had an almost impossibly high military clearance, though he’s paid out. The key to his file was surprisingly his ex-wife, the now Carla Morton, nee Wilkins (formerly Lambert and Steele). She remarried almost as soon as the ink on her divorce from Steele dried. A few minutes earlier and she would’ve been a bigamist.”

“She wanted to get remarried awfully fast. What was her hurry?”

“Morton wanted to pursue a great job opportunity and he wanted to take his wife and child with him.”

What the utter fuck? He was a manager at a fucking general store. What kind of lucrative talents could he have possessed that would require him to relocate. Pretty sure there a plenty of Texans that
can work a register and stock shelves. It’s not exactly H-1B visa work.

“He only has a high school diploma, though he’s thirty-two years old. He was just the part-time assistant manager of the general store where he was employed. The owner said that he was on the way out. He kept showing up late or just taking extra-long breaks in the middle of his shifts. He also has a history of dating women with daughters between the ages of twelve and sixteen. Eight, thus far. He’s moved around quite a bit, and there’s never been a complaint filed, but it’s suspicious nonetheless.”

My hands clench in my lap. There were no complaints filed about any of the shit that happened to me when I was with Ella until someone called the department of public health due to the odor of her decaying body emanating from our apartment. Child abuse reports are shit.

“So what did you discover about Raymond Steele?”

“He is a highly-decorated Marine with over twenty years; he got out after an injury sustained during a failed attempt to save another soldier’s life, a Frank Lambert. His injury resulted in total infertility; his gun still works but he’s shooting blanks. He married the man’s widow a year and a half after Lambert’s death. I think he felt sorry for her since she was practically stone broke despite the death benefits and lump-sum settlement. Raymond Steele put his reputation on the line to get her that much. Rumor was that Lambert was an irresponsible rule-breaker and likely caused the accident himself horsing around, but the results were inconclusive. The mother’s a spendthrift and already owed more than she’ll ever get form the Marines. She even used some of Ms. Steele’s money to cover her debts.”

“Speaking of the child…?” I asked. This is what I really wanted to know. If her story was on the up-and-up or if I was getting played by a teeny-bopper.

In lieu of a reply, he pulls a few yearbooks and small newspapers out of his satchel. He opens the books at several marked pages. Usually only senior photos are in color unless a student participates in extracurricular activities and Annie O participated in almost every non-sports related activity her middle and high schools offered. Mathletes, debate club (president), foreign language club (Spanish), newspaper staff, science club, chess club. It was like she was doing everything she could to stay out of her fucking home. In several of the pictures where students were pictured receiving rewards with their parents, Annie was only pictured with an older man, holding their hands up like she’d just won a boxing match or doing fist bumps while grinning madly at the camera. Carla Steele, the stay-at-home mom, was nowhere to be found.

And there was no denying it. The girl was beautiful; one didn’t need to look hard to know that this girl would be staggeringly beautiful as an adult. I almost felt ashamed looking at her, knowing she would look like just my type when she grew up. Better than my type, actually. Fabulous, dark, waist-length hair. Huge sky-blue eyes surrounded by long, curling lashes. Rose-pink lips and a big blush. Youth and innocence oozing from every pore. And she was just fourteen! She was the epitome of the term jailbait. I felt like I needed to protect her from the rest of the perverts. Damn! I felt like the biggest one.

The photos of Carla weren’t nearly as inspiring. She had medium-length, dirty blonde hair that was overdue for a trim. Annie had her eye-shape and lips, but that was about it. She looked washed out and used up and there was no fucking way on this earth that Morton wanted to run with her into the sunset for her looks alone.

A few photos of Morton were found at the bottom of the pile. He looked smarmy. He was all polished teeth and smiles, but he was uneducated, lacked ambition and barely qualified enough to do anything more than menial labor or lower-level management. And he was supposed to be Carla’s
meal-ticket. On paper, Ray Steele was far superior to this bastard. You could witness the love and trust that Annie had for him in every photo fairly leaping off the page. And I could tell he returned her devotion in full measure. The mother was dead-weight, tearing the family apart for a slap and a tickle. Disgusting.

With confirmation that everything Annie said in her letter was legit (if anything, she likely understated her concerns), I decided to make contact using the only viable method I had: e-mail. But there’s no way I could do that as Christian Grey, billionaire bachelor. That’d be foolhardy in the extreme. I hated reaching out while hiding who I was, but I couldn’t see any other way to protect both Annie and myself. If Mia wasn’t growing up to be such a little shit, I’d have her do it.

“Barney,” a voice answered. I’d found this kid at WSU. He was trying to stay under the radar, but I can detect talent faster than anything. He was a White Knight, Robin Hood hacker. Now he works for me. He probably has a master command center in his parents’ basement.

“I need a double-blind anonymous e-mail address, pronto. But I need you to have all the messages filtered and sent to my GEH address,” I stated, trusting that Barney would be able to fill in all the blanks.

“What filter protocols do you need?”

“All messages from any combinations or permutations of the name Anastasia, Annie, Ana, Rose, Steele, Lambert or Morton received from this address (I gave him Annie’s e-mail address) should be labeled ‘Your Perfect Stranger’ and marked ‘Urgent,’ ” I replied.

“Name you want listed on the account?”

“Chri-,” I began, then hesitated, remembering how all this got started in the first place. “Chris Tanner.”

“Chris Tanner, got it,” he said, already away with the fairies.

“Oh, and can you redirect all messages from Elena Lincoln to my vacation reply?”

“Sure.” He said distantly.

“That’s all,” I said, ending the call. Ten minutes later, Andrea brought in a 3x5 card with my new e-mail details followed by the cryptic message “filtered and shifted.”

As directed, Barney had set it up so that any message sent to Annie could come from my GEH account while looking like just another generic Hotmail account. The key to telling a good lie, is wrapping it around a strong kernel of truth and injecting more truth whenever possible.

To: callmeannieo@hotmail.com
From: chris.tanner@hotmail.com
Date: Wed, July 8, 2004 at 9:53 AM
Subject: Some Little Girls…

Dear Annie:

It was a very dangerous thing you did, sending a letter filled with identifying information to a perfect stranger. Do you have no regard for your own safety? I was jogging in the park in Seattle where I crashed into your time capsule. It’s very pretty, and you should be proud of making it by yourself,
but I’m terrified that this could have fallen into far less honorable hands.

I received your package at a time when I was really low. I found out a woman I was dating had plotted to get pregnant on purpose and trap me into a relationship with her. Just a day later, I was reading your letter and it reminded me that there’s still an honorable person in the world, even if she’s a minor. Never change. It’s very important to keep your word, and people will respect you more if you do.

I want to be honest and tell you that things get better when you grow up, but you’ll find that the fuckery matures along with you, often growing in leaps and bounds; the only difference is that people tend to hold you legally responsible for more of it. Sorry for the profanity, but euphemisms are often grossly inefficient and I call it like I see it.

I’m sorry to hear that you’re paying for your parents’ decisions, but when I was younger, my entire family had to move cross-country for my mother’s job. She does really important work, but our family took a long time to acclimate to our new home and our relationships began to weaken as a result.

I don’t get along with my parents, so I know what it’s like to lose respect for the people who are responsible for you. I get the impression that your mother never had much time for you either, so I guess you’re wondering why she’d want to take you with her. If this worries you, make sure to keep your eyes open to things that look suspicious or appear to be too good to be true. Because they usually are.

By now, you probably have a new stepfather, but let’s just call him Three. Your real father is in Montesano. Morton is just your mother’s new husband. While you must respect him as any other adult in your life, remember you don’t owe him your affections.

About Me: I’m twenty-one. I play the piano and speak French and Spanish. My favorite music is classical, but I can also play by ear. I do indeed like the Eagles, Jamiroquai, John Mayer and the Pretenders, but isn’t Prince a little risqué for a person of your tender years? Bob Seger is pretty good, too.

I work in the communications field, and my hours are insane. There’s always someone trying to monopolize my time, so I’m glad you included your e-mail address because that’s by far the best way to stay in contact with me. Be sure to e-mail me when you get settled, and I’ll be sure to respond.

Perfect Stranger at Your Service,
Chris.

P.S. Is your best friend slot still open? I think I'm in need of one.

There! That wasn’t too stalkery, was it? Now, all I could do was wait. Please be OK, Annie.

Save

Chapter End Notes
E/N: Our hero is disgusted with life right now, and is tempted to dismiss his family (and Elena) from his life. Ana’s letter has come just in time because he’s able to see someone whose life is in greater jeopardy than his.

Next: The assignment. Where in the world is Annie O? Annie’s response.

Please check out the FB group, **FSoG Fanfic Obsessed**
Just another Fifty Shades of Grey fanfiction group, obsessed with all things Grey.
Created by: Lanieloveu & SdaisyS
Carrion

Chapter Summary

How it all started. Annie's response to CG's e-mail. Road Trip.

Chapter Notes

Happy Thanksgiving!!!
I'll probably be editing this chapter later, but here are the bare bones.
NOT BETA'D

See the end of the chapter for more notes

APoV

Friday, March 12, 2004

“...this is a reminder that all returning Sophomores must complete their Random Acts of Socialization projects before the school year begins. Don’t wait ‘til the last minute, Ladies and Gentlemen; The early bird catches the worm...”

The voice from the PA system has repeated the same message for the past week, yet we have months to go before this school year concludes. Let’s just hope that they remind us again before we actually leave school for the summer. I cannot believe they’re expecting us to write letters to people we don’t know. This town is small enough without risking our safety. Whose bright idea was this?

I feel terrible. The little headache from this morning is excruciating now and I have developed a stomach ache to boot. I feel like I’m going to vomit. Please don’t let me vomit in Biology. Please don’t let me vomit in Biology. It’s just a frog. I finish labelling the last part of the organ system with a sigh. I’m not nauseous because of the class. It’s the darn stomach flu that Katie gifted the school with. Her parents should’ve named her Mary because she’s infected almost everyone, one class period at a time; now she’s prancing around campus in the peak of health. Witch. I’m not going to make it to lunch. What’s left? Gym, AP Algebra with Trig, Honors English and study hall. Frack! I’m going to vomit in Biology.

Stomach convulsing, everything hurting so badly... Is this what appendicitis feels like? I feel like something is about to burst. Making my way to the front of the classroom, away from the lab tables, I collapse into my seat at my desk. “Ms. Steele?” a voice calls out as I fall to the floor. “Annie?”

I wake up in the nurse’s office, clammy and disoriented. Looking up, Mrs. Smith the school nurse bustles around the room, grabbing a file from the cabinet, and when she sees me, she exclaims, “Ah, good, you’re awake! We tried to contact your mother, but there wasn’t an answer, so we called your father; he should be here in just a few minutes.”

Make that no minutes, as Ray bursts into the office, his face creased in concern. “Daddy!” I whimper. “It hurts everywhere.”
“Nurse Smith? What should we do?” he inquires.

“Well, it seems Annie finally caught a touch of that stomach flu that’s been going around. It’s a virus, so there’s nothing much to do really, but wait it out and drink plenty of liquids. No caffeine. Ginger or peppermint tea will help with the nausea. Don’t eat heavy foods. Avoid serving Ana any foods that might overly tax her digestive system. Bananas, rice, applesauce and toast are her best bet, but leave the meat and dairy alone. Rest is the best medicine. She can take Acetaminophen for pain and fever if she needs it,” she recited. She must have been doling out this advice for the past week.

Looking to me, she said, “I’m sorry, Annie. We know how much our little valedictorian loves school, but we want you well.”

“I’m not valedictorian, Nurse Smith,” I demurred.

“You are if you stay on track for the next three years, missy. Don’t tell anyone I told you, but you’re a shoe-in, especially with that KR2K program you suggested to the library and your 4.0 GPA. You’re a good egg.”

I hadn’t thought about it much. I had seen a need and it’s disgraceful that so many kids don’t know how to read when we have such a good school and public library system here. Besides, just because a child can’t read doesn’t mean they shouldn’t experience the benefits of a good book. There was one boy in my class that we found had dyslexia the first week of the Kids Read to Kids program. His parents kept thanking me over and over ‘til I began avoiding them every time I saw them. David is just so wicked smart that his intelligence masked it for years, I guess.

“We got all your books and assignments together for you to take home,” she said, handing my overloaded backpack to Ray. “If you listen to your daddy, we’ll see you bright and early this Monday.”

“It’s Montesano, Nurse Smith. You’ll see me pale gray and early.”

She probably laughed at my lame joke because she felt sorry for me. My dad and I left the nurse’s office and walked directly to the truck. “I already signed you out, Annie. VIP-only service for my baby girl,” he said, hugging me gently to his side and patting my back comfortingly. “How ‘bout we swing around to the store and grab some of that stuff the nurse told us you need?”

“K. Daddy,” I said weakly, leaning my head against the cool window.

Minutes later, the backseat loaded with all manner of health food, Ray pops back into the driver’s seat and we’re on our way home. Pulling up in the driveway, we see my mom’s little car. I hope she didn’t get sick, too. She’s a terrible patient.

“I got you this while I was in the store,” Dad says, handing me a small bag containing two new books, *Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett and *A Hat Full of Sky* by Terry Pratchett. “Dad, I was at the store just yesterday, and they didn’t have them in.”

“I, uh, called in an order for them last week. I know they’re way below your reading level, but you’ve checked out similar books and I know you like that Discworld stuff…” he said, trailing off.

He remembered, I thought, as tears filled my eyes. “Thank you, daddy, “I said thickly, swiping the tears away. It must be hard dealing with a child who loves Austen, the sisters Brontë and Hardy, yet he hasn’t forgotten that I adore fantasy, mystery and science fiction, too.

As he opened the door for me, I heard moaning and groaning. I stumbled in, racing into the living room, thinking I’d find my mom as sick and wretched as me. Instead, she was laid back on the couch.
moaning with her head thrown back as Mr. Morton from the general store was moving between her legs, groaning in concert.

I could just stand there, frozen in shock as they continued having sex right in front of me. On our couch. Dad came in, loaded down with groceries, walking briskly towards the kitchen. I guess he must’ve seen something from the corner of his eye, because he suddenly halted, dropping the groceries on the floor.

That sound roused them and my mom just looked at us, while Mr. Morton got off of her and pulled his pants up that were hanging around his ankles. She just sat up and rearranged her skirt. I don’t even think she was wearing panties. Nope, she wasn’t wearing panties because I’m standing on them. Ew! Mr. Morton just strolled out the front door while I ran to my room, slamming the door. This has been hands-down the worst day of my life.

“What the hell were you thinking, Carla?” my father suddenly explodes. I could hear his voice reverberating through the floorboards. “In my house? Where my daughter sleeps? Why would you do this? How?!”

“I haven’t been happy for a long time, Ray. And you two weren’t supposed to be home until six,” she said, as if that was supposed to make any difference. At least she finally answered the question about trees falling in the forest without witnesses. I suppose we’re expected to believe that she never had sex with Mr. Morton at our house on our couch. Ew! I’ve fallen asleep on that couch! My face has been pressed against those cushions! I need bleach! And a clean room with a chemical shower!

“Three generations, Carla. My grandfather built this house with his own two hands! His, blood, sweat and tears went into its very foundation! But I guess I can’t expect you to respect my home since you don’t possess a smidgeon of respect for yourself!”

“You sanctimonious son of a bitch! How dare you judge me? You work all day, and you and Ana don’t even come home until after five in the evening. We never go anywhere. I’m trapped here!” she retorted.

“That’s your choice. There’s nothing stopping you from getting a job except the fact that you wouldn’t be able to fuck random assholes in my goddamn house! That, and the fact that Montesano’s too damn small to give you a corner to work!”

“You bastard! You callin’ me a whore?”

“If the thong fits… You almost made Annie a bastard acting like the base bicycle… If it wasn’t for the fact that I threatened Frank with a dishonorable discharge, he never would’ve married you. He was willing to go AWOL to escape you. He was so angry and hungover the day Annie was born, realizing there was no denying his spitting image in the cot and she was his baby after all, I’m only amazed he didn’t blow us all up and you’re worried that I’m accusing you of being a whore? The whole fucking town knows you’re a slut. You’re not disciplined enough to be a whore. Whores get paid. You spread yourself like Hellman’s for free!”

Smack!

“That’s one’s free, Carla. Go clean yourself up. If you can.”

“Fuck you! Let go of me!”

“Gladly! A dirty mouth on a filthy slut really doesn’t surprise me. The best thing you’ve ever done in your entire goddamn life is give birth to Annie! And whatever goodness Annie left behind ran down
I go inside my closet, closing the door and sliding into the corner while covering my ears. I could’ve lived my whole life without this information. I knew some of the townsfolk sneered at Carla a little bit and tended to avoid her, but I never thought they considered her promiscuous on top of everything else. I just assumed that they were put off by her flirtatious demeanor.

She’s never been precisely motherly, but I always figured she’d at least be an extra body in the event that someone broke into the house. I don’t know this woman at all. How she could just so calmly and cavalierly sit there after destroying our family, and have the nerve to act as if everything was fine, when I knew nothing would ever be the same again. Did she think Dad would take this crap laying down? No man would accept this kind of behavior unless he enjoyed being a cuckold.

Dad had never snapped at anyone like that before. He was always the voice of reason, the peacemaker and a very wise person; so when he dropped the f-bomb, you could’ve knocked me over with a feather. By the time I stopped listening (or simply overhearing at the volume they were going at it), it was a TKO.

“Annie. Annie, honey. Come to bed. You’re going to catch your death of cold!” Dad coaxed and fussied in equal measure. I had fallen asleep in the closet. I felt stiff, but I no long felt quite as nauseous as I did in school. I was also famished because I didn’t even make it to lunch. Dad had placed a cup of hot ginger tea on my nightstand along with a sleeve of saltines and a large glass of water. “This should tide you over for tonight. We’ll get you fixed up in the morning.”

“But you have work…,” I began.

“Where is my treasure, Annie?” Dad gently chides.

“In here,” I reply, pointing to my heart.

“Exactly! And what kind of a dad would I be if I couldn’t take one day off work to help my best girl get well?”

“You would never do that!” I exclaim.

“You’re gosh-darn skippy!” he said, giving me a light squeeze and briefly brushing his lips against my forehead.

To: chris.tanner@hotmail.com

From: callmeannieo@hotmail.com

Date: Mon, Aug 23, 2004 at 3:53 PM

Subject: RE: Some Little Girls…

Chris:

Thank you for e-mailing me! When I didn’t get a response, this ‘little girl’ thought either the letter was lost, damaged or nobody cared. Besides, my mother (like you predicted) did get married to Three, so it’s possible I would’ve missed a letter since we moved away in July. This guy is such a tool! We moved to Texas for his great job opportunity; get this, he’s a management trainee at
another store just as small as the one back home!

You’re right about the amount of info I put in the first letter. I wrote it when I was very angry and humiliated by everything Carla had done and I guess I was lashing out. I was ‘not in a good place’ as my Dad would say.

I can’t believe that girl/woman/skank tried to trap you into a relationship by getting pregnant! OK, that’s not true. I can believe it, but man that would’ve sucked major monkeyballs (since we’re excusing French)! And I’ll have you know that Prince is a very good role model because he turned ‘scandalous’ into a household word. Carla and your skank are scandalous.

**scandalous**

ˈskandləs/

adjective: scandalous

causing general public outrage by a perceived offense against morality or law.

i.e. "a series of scandalous liaisons"

synonyms: discreditable, disreputable, dishonorable, improper, unseemly, sordid; antonyms: proper, seemly

The best response would probably be to just put her in your rear view, but I hope you made her pay. I see so many kids from broken homes and she wanted to purposely bring a child into a loveless one just because she’s bonkers, you might look good and/or have a nice job? I can’t respect that. It would be different if you guys really loved each other and it just happened, but she was trying to take away your choices.

I know of which I speak, too. I heard Carla tried to trap my bio-dad, but he had the last laugh; he married her, but since he died the day I was born, he never had to live up to his responsibilities. Instead, Ray swooped in to save the day, and me, I suppose. Dad told me that Carla had a really bad case of post-partum depression after I was born, but it seems as if she never got over it.

I’m sorry it took so long for me to reply, but I had to handle so much stuff on my end that it’s not funny. Did you know I had to arrange to have my records forwarded from Montesano High because Carla couldn’t be arsed to do it? She claimed that she forgot. Maybe she shouldn’t have been so anxious to drag me from pillar to post, then so many things wouldn’t have fallen through the cracks. She barely had enough documentation to get me registered for school.

They had me placed in all these remedial classes, so I had to send off for my own records which took forever since Ray couldn’t sign for them since he never legally adopted me. As if that was his fault. Carla was the one who changed my name but didn’t let him adopt me. But I’ll show her! I just found out that an adult can be adopted, so I’m going to ask Ray to adopt me when I’m 21. Raymond Steele is my daddy forever!

We’ve settled in Nash, Texas and Chris, there is only one high school! I attend Texas High. The place is so generic that they just named it after the whole state! For the first two weeks of school, I could practically teach the classes they put me in. There is NO WAY I’d ever want to be a teacher if that’s what they have to put up with! Four of the girls in just one of my classes are pregnant. I guess everything really is bigger in Texas including the teen pregnancy rate. Note to self: avoid all boys while I’m here. And the water (jusk kidding). Apparently, there are worse things than cooties and I have absolutely no interest in pushing something the size of a watermelon out of a hole the size of a
lemon. They made us watch a childbirth video in Remedial Health. I liked ‘Saw’ better. The good news is that I’ll have a lot of kids to babysit if I decide to do that as a sideline…NOT!

I have to e-mail you from home or the library because the only computer is in Carla and Three’s bedroom. He tells me it’s ok for me to do my homework in there if I need to, but I’d much rather do it at school. And he rifles through our mail, too! Ray told me he had sent a letter, but Carla claimed she hadn’t seen it. I found it when I was cleaning the house. Three got mad and accused me of rambling through his stuff, though he had told me to clean their bedroom and the letter was on their dresser beneath a huge pile of junk mail. He’s not exactly on the side of the angels here.

I told Ray he should just e-mail me from now on because our postal service is unreliable. I hope he got the hint because I’d hate to miss out on his letters. When I was back home, I used to get an allowance for cleaning the house, taking out the trash and doing the lawn, but that doesn’t happen here. Apparently, it’s my job to do it and I have to ‘earn my keep’ but I had an even better idea; I told Three he and Carla could just let me go home and then I wouldn’t cost them anything at all. Um, the results of that conversation were not good, so I won’t be revisiting it any time soon.

I wrote to Ray about you, mostly; I told him that you were the pen-pal I made from the Random Act of Socialization project and that you were interested in communications, but I didn’t tell him how old you were. I’m not sure it would go over well, but in a way, it’s the school’s fault for assigning it in the first place. For all they knew, my letter could’ve ended up in the hands of someone who couldn’t or wouldn’t write me back.

Thanks to your reply, I was able to fill out their little questionnaire; it was so dumb.

Did you receive a reply to your letter? YES

Was your letter answered by someone of the same sex? NO

Would you be willing to write this person again? YES

How far did your letter travel? ~98.9 miles

Did your give something of yourself? Sure, I gave the recipient a handmade wooden keepsake box that I made myself.

What have you learned from this experience? I learned that it’s dangerous to expect kids to write total strangers and that life sucks no matter where you are.

What would you change about the project (if applicable)? First, I wouldn’t encourage minors to send what amounts to letters in a bottle into what’s been proven to be a rather hostile universe without so much as a parental permission slip. What if something bad had happened to one or more of us as a result of this project? Who would have been held legally liable? Second, I would’ve had the students write to students who are long-term cancer wards across Washington or perhaps to the parents who might have also just lost a child. If anyone needed a letter, it would be them. The problem with your project is that your instructions specified that the letters must be sent to perfect strangers. I don’t know about you, but once you categorize people, they can no longer truly be ‘strangers’ because we all belong somewhere among the diaspora and are known to someone, even if it’s just ourselves. What’s more, no-one is perfect so your project goals failed at the outset.

Turns out that I got 50 out of 50 points for my summer project that can be applied absolutely…drumroll please…nowhere! Not that I’m not glad to have met you, but it seems like they just gave us busy work to keep us out of trouble, and just humored us by letting us pretend to have more control of the situation than we ever did. Once my letter left my hands, I no longer had any say in what
happened to it. I hate having my intelligence insulted. The only thing worse than that is wasting my
time.

Oh! And that reminds me of something rather gross that I felt I should warn you about. Just like I
couldn’t control where my letter ended up, you can’t control what your sperm cells do once they
leave your body. So, wrap it before you tap it. Please. If you get an STD and die, you won’t be able
to write me anymore, so safety first!

I’m thinking of cutting off about a half a foot of hair. This is like the twentieth time some guy has
called me Rapunzel and offered to climb into my tower with me. Besides, if I don’t brush it a million
times and braid it before bed, I end up looking like a tangled up Cousin Itt. And don’t mention the
mean girls who try to put stuff in it when my back is turned. The month before school let out,
someone put a piece of gum in my hair. I had to ice it for an hour to get the gum hard enough to
crumble so I could get it out.

So, what do you think? Should I cut some off? I attached a photo so you can see the before. Don’t
worry; it’s just a pic of my hair. I know some kids are posting images of themselves in the buff on the
‘net, but that’s NOT for me. It would really suck to cut my hair because I wanted to dress up as
Princess Leia or Queen Amidala for Halloween. I think that’s why I let it grow out for so long.
Don’t know if I’d feel safe trick or treating around here, though since I really don’t know many
people here. There is a very nice elderly couple next door, and I’ve done some odd jobs for them to
earn some extra money. My gardening skills are really paying off.

I can’t believe Carla argued so much about living in a small town when Nash has around ten
percent fewer people. And wow, most of the people are kinda poor and it really shows. Montesano
might be a small town, but it was very homey and welcoming. Here, not so much. And my bedroom
is the size of a shoebox. I don’t even have a closet.

I’ve been thinking about your relationship with your parents, and I wondered if you’ve gotten closer
since you’ve gotten older. I can’t imagine a time when Carla and I would ever be on the same page.
Sometimes I just need a hug or some real support and she’s just not present. She may be physically
there, but it’s like she feels nothing for me but disinterest.

What kind of degree do you need to get into communications? I’ve been using the school library to
get information on colleges where I can study Literature, but the job prospects seem somewhat grim.
I think I should minor in something. What do you think?

What I haven’t told you: a year before I left Montesano, my junior high made me the class
valedictorian, so if you ever see me, you shall bow and genuflect before me and refer to me as Your
Uber Geekiness, Nerd Queen of Montesano Junior High. I’ll just wave like Miss America while the
you (peon) worship my mighty brain cells. LOL! Too bad I won’t be the high school valedictorian
like I wished, but moving away with three years to go pretty much put a kibosh on that.

I hadn’t really believed I would get the top spot, especially with everything that was happening at
home, but I guess I just threw myself into my studies rather than deal with Carla and her lover. And
once the relationship was revealed, the floodgates opened. They became pretty blatant with their
affections and the PDA was ridiculous. I can’t help it; I look at Morton and I look at my dad and I
just don’t see the attraction. He’s a ne’er-do-well. I mean, what kind of man has sex in a house the
woman shares with her husband?

Well, technically, Carla doesn’t share the house per se. Finding out that she had signed
documentation that stated that she had no interest in the property or profits rendered from property
owned prior to marriage meant she was only going to leave how she came. The house, workshop
and craft studio had been in Dad’s family for years before they even met. He had spent the majority
of his pay and settlement from the Marines to pay for everything, so she had nothing coming. I can’t believe he pre-nupped Mom! Raymond Steele for the win!!! Go Daddy! Go Daddy!

What did she think was going to happen? That Dad was going to finance her and Morton’s love nest or something? What would be his motivation? Don’t let the door hit ya where the good Lord split ya!

I’ve heard them discussing child support, but since he was never legally my dad (which she’s thrown in his face for the last several months), he doesn’t technically owe her or me anything. How would she explain to a judge why she was demanding child support from a man that she wouldn’t allow to legally adopt me?

Why are adults so crappy to each other? Apparently, Dad sends money for me every month just so that he can talk to me on the phone. Mom said that he had no rights, so he should count himself lucky to have me in his life at all. She’s selling my time to a guy who owes her nothing but a pop upside the head. Really. I dream about slapping her, but I’m afraid if ever did, I wouldn’t be able to stop until I collapse from delirium caused by lack of sleep and food.

Am I a bad person? (HINT: You’re supposed to say “no, of course not” and offer me a shovel and locations to dispose of their bodies ‘cos that’s what best friends do.)

Love,

Annie

P.S. We’re now 2,200 miles apart, so this officially counts as a long-distance relationship.

Friday, August 27, 2004

CPoV

I decided to make an unscheduled side-trip after my meeting in Dallas. It was a logistics nightmare, but I thought if I could just see Annie safe in the flesh, nightmares of her brutalized and broken body would flee my dreams. It was very important that she not see me, so Taylor (finally let into the secret) arranged to have a compact rental at our disposal. I was dressed down in a button down shirt, jeans and trainers, and Taylor had miraculously cast aside his rigid business uniform.

We were parked inconspicuously toward the corner of the street where Annie lived. Soon a yellow school bus pulled up and a passel of kids burst out, one trailing behind. It was Annie! She was wearing jeans and a long-sleeved shirt unlike most of the teenagers nearby in shorts and t-shirts. Her hair was down and she was wearing a headband. Her hair obscured the right side of her face since her head was tilted down. But suddenly she looked up, almost locked in on my location. There was a breeze and her hair was momentarily swept aside revealing her face and a terrific, mother of all shiners.

"Fuck!" Taylor exclaimed with an exhalation of air.

I knew we had just witnessed the result of that 'not good' conversation that Annie wouldn't be revisiting any time soon.
Annie has experienced the day from hell. What is our erstwhile hero doing, you wonder? Re-thinking every conversation he and Elena ever had? Going to a club to find a sub on his own? Or stalking our heroine?

Ray comforts Ana when she’s sick and reassures her that she’s more important than anything or anyone, when he tells her he’ll stay with her rather than working. He uses the scripture from the book of Matthew to explain that she is his priority. Matthew 6:21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Next: CG reacts to Annie’s letter.

Please check out the FB group, FSoG Fanfic Obsessed
Just another Fifty Shades of Grey fanfiction group, obsessed with all things Grey.
Created by: Lanieloveu & SdaisyS
Don't Stand So Close to Me

Chapter Summary

The letters continue, and our hero has to make some decisions.

Chapter Notes

WARNING: I'm really missing 'Blip' so this will be the last chapter of 'Letters' for a while, so I'll try to make this chapter meaty enough to tide you over. There's a tremendous gulf between the mindset required to write about an established, married couple and a nascent friendship between teen Annie and adult CG filled with inappropriate longing and UST.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

I've appreciated your reviews and thought I'd mention a couple that really made my week.

I won't put her on the spot, but here's what she wrote:

“Subject: Writing Skills

Good Afternoon!

I just read your story, "Letters from No-One" and just about dropped my teeth. I'm old school where what you write must be as grammatically, spelling, etc., correct. I guess you could say I'm the "grammar police", but seldom, if ever, say anything, and, if I do, it's through PM. I've quit reading very good stories because I had to interpret what I was reading - wrong words, misspellings, etc. Your story flowed smoothly, punctuation excellent, correct words, etc. I did see something so minor, I just past over it and continued reading.

You've got a great story going, showing a fantastic vocabulary, superb spelling, great punctuation, and an amazing (don't really like that over used word) sense of humor. Please, keep writing. You might want to consider something to be professionally published. And, I've never said or written that before.”

That really made my day. Some authors claim that they don’t write for the reviews, but humans are social animals, and there aren’t many who don’t enjoy praise for a job well done or support for their efforts.

A guest reviewer (who must be a Brit or an Aussie. I’ve read so much historical fiction in my day that I add u’s in many words until spellcheck corrects me) said,
“I almost left this website, but I came across this story and I’m so happy I found it. This is so refreshing and dark. The Grey family and [the] Mortons are rotten. Love this take on our favourite couple.”

If I can keep even one person supporting the fandom (or fanfiction), it’s a very good day. So many authors and fans are leaving, and it is a tragedy.

Even one of the admins from the FSoG Fanfic Obsessed group even left a brief review. I tend to respond when someone reviews or PMs me with a question or starts a discussion about a topic brought up in the chapter. I’m usually game for a lively debate, and I don’t bite (much). Honestly, you’re more likely to get a chapter than a message, so if I have not responded to your review, please know that I thank you and appreciate you nonetheless.

THIS CHAPTER IS NOT BETA’D

CPoV

Monday, August 23, 2004

To: callmeannieo@hotmail.com

From: chris.tanner@hotmail.com

Date: Mon, Aug 23, 2004 at 7:05 PM

Subject: A Woman’s Hair

Good Queen Annie, Your Uber Geekiness:

Your faithful minion and most devoted peon urges you NOT to cut your beautiful hair! A woman’s hair is her crowning glory, and you have been blessed with a head of hair that would put shampoo models to shame. Ignore the assholes offering to share your tower, Rapunzel. There will always be fuckers trying to get into beautiful girls’ panties. I don’t need to see your face to know that you’re beautiful. If you live your life attempting to make yourself invisible in order to discourage them, you’ll only be cutting off your nose to spite your face. Don’t hide your light beneath a bushel.

Queen Amidala or Princess Leia? I have to admit, that sounds pretty hot, but if you really want to blow them away without breaking the piggybank, all you’d have to do is put on some glasses, a nice blouse and skirt, put your hair into a bun and shake it out in class. You’ll knock ‘em dead. Guys are suckers for the librarian look and it’s not that expensive.

The skank who got caught pricking holes in my condoms (so wrapping it before I tapped it wouldn’t have helped) got what was coming to her. I bought a ring that could’ve come out of a Cracker Jack box, flowers, dinner and the whole nine. Then I proposed…that she never darken my doorstep
again.

My **real** SNAFU was helping her buy a car, so there could be no takebacks. The good news is that I know a couple people on the force, and they’ve been ticketing her car right, left and center since our breakup. Last I heard, it had been impounded. With her pitiful salary, she’ll be bucking for social security before she could afford to get it out. If the impound lot keeps it long enough, they’ll sell it at auction. Going once, going twice, SOLD! to the highest bidder.

I’ll take your ‘scandalous’ and raise you ‘treacherous’. Carla and Priscilla are **treacherous**.

treacherous
/treCH(ə)rəs/
adjective
adjective: treacherous
guilty of or involving betrayal or deception. (i.e. "a treacherous Gestapo agent" or "her treacherous brother betrayed her")
synonyms: traitorous, disloyal, faithless, unfaithful, duplicitous, deceitful, deceptive, false, backstabbing, double-crossing, double-dealing, two-faced, Janus-faced, weaselly, untrustworthy, unreliable; apostate, renegade, two-timing; literary: perfidious; antonyms: loyal, faithful

They are both selfish and lack insight. Plus, it takes a very stupid person to bite the hand that feeds her. I guess I trusted Priscilla because we had been introduced by a good friend, I was very upfront with my intentions and I was led to believe we were on the same page. I even let her stay at my apartment a couple days a week, where she took the opportunity to perforate my condoms. She must have lied about being on the pill too, or else sabotaging my condoms would have been useless. She may have had a prescription, but she could have flushed them for all I know.

I can’t help being angry at the friend who introduced us, and I’ve been avoiding that person for weeks now. Can you believe she offered to introduce me to someone else? She’s been calling and e-mailing me constantly. Apparently I ‘have needs’ and I shouldn’t be alone. Instead of obsessing about dating, I’ve been throwing myself into work and have made several extremely lucrative deals that will net my company a lot of money.

You asked me about what type of degree you’d need to get into communications, but I have a confession to make; I dropped out of college for a huge job opportunity. The **real** kind with multiple benefits and potential for profit-sharing. Lest ye think I’m a ne’er do well like Three, I’ll have you know I **own** a very nice apartment, a great car and still have money to burn.

I double-majored in Politics and Economics. My father wanted me to follow in his footsteps, joining his law firm, but that life was not for me. He was so angry when I dropped out, he cut me off financially as a result. He’s still bitter that I’ve ‘wasted my potential’ despite the fact I’m doing quite well in my chosen profession. We barely speak to this day.

My relationship with my parents has sadly not improved despite my attempts to repair it. I guess I never told you I was adopted. I am the middle child of two other adopted siblings. It’s pretty fucked up all around that my parents were allowed to adopt three children, when Ray was not allowed to adopt you. But I digress. My father, you know, is an attorney and my mother is a doctor. These are very demanding careers. They are also dedicated do-gooders of the first order, and socialites to boot.

They (especially my mother) belong to a multitude of charitable organizations, hosting endless parties and so on. I was basically a latch-key kid. My brother is four years older than me and my
sister’s about your age, so I never really had a companion of age with myself. I guess they may have
tried to reach out to me, but I’m a possessive man and was an extremely jealous child. I suppose I
was waiting for my parents to really fight for me instead of foisting me on other people who they
expected to ‘fix’ me. Therapists now would call what my family and I have an attachment disorder.
It’s a sensitive topic.

You’re right about Literature employment prospects being grim. You should put some real
consideration into what you’d do with a degree in Lit. You’ve written off teaching as an occupation,
but that still leaves multiple career options. Publishing, editing, copywriting, advertising, public
relations, etc. There are many organizations that need people who are experts in the written word. I
suggest picking up a foreign language or two to make yourself more marketable.

Speaking of marketability, it’s never too early to learn how to present yourself. Put together a
resume listing all of your employment history, abilities, qualifications, memberships and hobbies.
You probably think that you’re too young to worry about a resume, but you’d be wrong. At my
company, you’d only get ONE chance to shine, and interviews last ten minutes if you’re lucky. One
woman ran out of HR bawling her eyes out after two minutes. It’s that competitive. So, get into the
habit of putting your best foot forward ASAP, so that when the time comes, you will appear
intelligent and poised, prepared to work as soon as they assign you a desk. Employers like that.

My PA Andrea streamlined all of my appointments her second day at work which really opened up
my schedule, since now most appointments only last fifteen minutes and she deters time-wasters with
religious zeal bordering on fanaticism. She later admitted that she spent her first day compiling a list
of the myriad ways my time was being wasted and drafting a report of people who should be
demoted, retrained, promoted or fired with supporting data to back up her recommendations. Most
of her proposals had merit, especially the dismissal of a woman she claims is the living embodiment
of the belief that blondes are stupid. I allowed her to fire her assistant a week later without a
reference.

When I was your age, I was already reading the business section of the paper, focusing on the
financials, when I noticed how wasteful and disorganized many of the companies were. A lot of them
shot themselves in the foot putting all their eggs in one basket, so when the industries changed (as
they often do) the owners were left holding their dicks in their hands, while numerous people lost
their jobs. The moral of the story: Stay on top of technology used in your chosen field so you won’t
be rendered obsolete and remember you’re never too young to decide what you want to do with the
rest of your life. Though your goals might change many times before you graduate, it’s always good
to have them.

Carla was pretty fucking stupid to have sex in your father’s house, but I’ve realized that other people
have done similar in the past. It was pretty damn disrespectful. But so is cheating, no matter who’s
doing it. I guess I always thought the onus was on the party that made the vows, but I understand
your position. There would be fewer cheaters if they had no one to cheat with.

Because I’m trusting you, I’ll admit that I once had an affair with an older woman. And her husband
also caught us fucking in his house. I guess it takes an unjaded perspective to recognize how
disrespectful and fucked up that was. I was young, stupid and only thinking with my cock. Her
husband was probably like your dad, working hard to provide for his wife while she was cuckolding
him behind his back.

She claimed that she was lonely and her husband didn’t allow her to work, yet she managed to have
a lot of time for primping, shopping and volunteer work. And she was wealthy enough to get a room
instead of using her home to cheat on her husband. When he found out, he beat her black, blue,
bloody and put her in the hospital with multiple broken bones, contusions and a dislocated jaw. I
can’t imagine what he would’ve done if they’d had a child to witness the scene he walked into. Since then, I’ve made it a point to never date more than one person or anyone who wasn’t single. If they’ll cheat for you, they’ll cheat on you, and I don’t have time for the potential drama or STDs.

I hope that you’ll remain my best friend now that I’ve disclosed this information, and not reject me for a lapse in judgment in my past for which I am heartily ashamed and would never do again. I felt so guilty, I helped her find employment after her husband injured her and then shafted her in the divorce. In retrospect, she probably had that coming. She was the friend that introduced me to Priscilla.

It was good that your dad took steps to protect his property, and sad that it was proven necessary. It made me wonder why he married her in the first place, then I came to a startling conclusion. He must have married her because he loved you and didn’t trust her to take care of you properly.

Raymond Steele is the salt of the earth.

It’s pretty fucking despicable that Carla’s holding you hostage to get money from the man she betrayed. I’m sorry you have so many chores and that you have to work side-jobs, too. Do I want to know what Carla’s doing to earn her keep? Do you need anything? I’m only a Western Union or MoneyGram away.

And about slapping Carla until you’re faint from sleep deprivation and famine... No, of course you’re not a bad person. Bind and gag her between bouts. You need your sleep and you need to eat. Adequate sleep and good nutrition are vitally important for teens’ growth and development.

Your Best Friend Forever (hopefully),

Chris

P.S. No, I’m not going to send you a shovel and locations to hide bodies. Send for me and I’ll bring the shovels. Digging holes is backbreaking labor. Teamwork is key.

There! I’ve already lied to her so much; yet, Annie, more than anyone seems to see the real me. I have to think of her as Annie. It’s the Anastasia developing inside her that I want to tie to my bed and lose myself inside of for hours. I was forced to jerk off for an hour in the privacy of my office en suite after seeing those photos. I’d never felt so fucking depraved and despicable in my life and I’ve done a lot of foul shit.

She’s a child. She’s a child. She’s a child. Perhaps if I repeat it to myself over and over, I’ll be able to get over my infatuation or find someone to take the edge of until she’s legal. I can’t determine if that’s a dream or a plot. Reading about her plan to dress up as Queen Amidala or Princess Leia, made me momentarily forget I was a Trekkie, brought me over to the Dark Side and gave me a light saber that wouldn’t quit for hours. She makes me afraid of myself. She doesn’t know what comfort the miles stretching between us bring me. I don’t know if I could handle an Anastasia less than a hundred miles away, especially since I’ve begun training as a helicopter pilot. I haven’t had a sub since Priscilla, and since I received Annie’s first letter, I haven’t been able to get erect for anyone else. I’m in Hell and being punished for my sins.

I finally caved and read the Elena digest, the compendium of mail and other communications she’s sent me. Her desperation is appalling. She actually sent me close up photos of cunts with the sub files this time. She must believe that pussy pictures will excite me, but I’ve never quite needed that type of visual titillation. Besides, she sent them to my work e-mail which proves she has completely lost the fucking plot.

Annie sent me a picture of her fucking hair and I almost embarrassed myself imagining my fingers
running through her glorious locks and winding my hands in her hair and pulling her… Fuck!

She has a birthday next month, making her fifteen, the same age I was when Elena seduced me. My desire for Anastasia, at her age, has made me re-think everything that happened between Elena and I. And the realization that the comparisons between Annie and I are quite startling. We both had shitty biological mothers, were weighed down by our parents’ expectations and been exposed to perverse adults whom our parents placed in a position of trust. Because there’s no doubt in my mind that Morton dated and married women with young daughters in order to prey on them. The chance of him dating a series of single parents with only daughters within a certain age range completely defies the law of averages and fully beggars belief.

Carla is just one of a long line of bitches, thinking with their cunts, much to their children’s detriment. Perhaps I should call Welch and have him do a follow-up on Morton’s exes and see how the erstwhile daughters are faring. It says a lot that no reports were filed. I’m sure he’s left many young girls with scarred psyches, and mothers in denial, in his wake. I also have no hope at all that Morton doesn’t want Annie. I want her, and I wouldn’t trust myself under the same roof with her.

If the pattern of perverts worldwide continues, he’ll probably be using this time wisely to lull Carla and Ana into a false sense of security, fucking Carla into compliance while slowly ingratiating himself with Annie. Gaining Carla’s compliance would be child’s play since she thinks with her overused twat. He’s got her nose so wide open I’m surprised her face has room for eyes and a mouth to suck cock with. He’s already taken steps to lure Annie into his bedroom, forcing her to clean up behind him and placing their only window to the world inside their bedroom. I wonder if the only phone is located there, too. I imagine her calls from Raymond are also supervised.

What’s to stop him from having Annie clean the bedroom when Carla wasn’t home, leaving them alone together? Carla’s already been proven not to be a friend or confidante. How would she react when she found out Annie was competition? His next step would be to force Carla to get a job, possibly a second shift so someone would be there to watch Annie. See how caring her husband is? Elena and I had the longest, most brutal, sessions when my parents were doing all-nighters or out of town on business.

I’ve done some research, and Raymond Steele is just as ass-fucked sans lubricant as Carla painted him to be. It doesn’t matter that Steele was listed as Annie’s primary emergency contact for over eight years; he was legally expected to cut Annie off cold-turkey. Courts seem to favor biological parents, especially mothers, no matter how fucked up they are. A child could flounder in foster care his or her entire childhood, unadoptable, due to fucked up parents refusing to relinquish their seemingly unalienable parental rights.

I find myself waiting for the other shoe to drop, constantly worried that this will be the day Morton does the unthinkable, harming Annie beyond repair, though any harm done to her would be too much. The level of my hatred of Morton can be determined by the number of times I’ve plotted his death: 42. It really is the answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe and everything because I’ve planned his brutal demise over a dozen times a day since I received Annie’s last message. Number 42 features a bloody vivisection and closes with a double homicide. That’s another reason I’m afraid to see Annie. If he’s hurt so much as a hair on her head, I don’t know if I’d be able to stop hurting him right back.

Grace is such a pacifist, I often wondered at her desire for us to learn a martial art. Mia obstinately refused at the age of twelve, instead focusing on her French and cello studies. I, however, have been practicing some form of martial arts training since I was eight years old. Sure, give the little fucker who wants to kick everybody’s ass lessons on how to do it more effectively. I imagine she assumed we would benefit from the mental discipline, and Elliot and I both did, to a degree.
In addition to the self-defense lessons, I was also the son of a physician, and subbed for one of the harshest Dommes in Seattle, so I’ve learned more than a thing or two about the human body: how to hurt, how to injure, how to incapacitate, how to cripple, how to bring on an orgasm so strong and long that a woman could break her own bones if she wasn’t properly restrained.

To: chris.tanner@hotmail.com

From: callmeannieo@hotmail.com

Date: Tue, Aug 24, 2004 at 3:05 PM

Subject: RE: A Woman’s Hair

To My Favorite Minion and (still) BFF Chris,

You gave me a lot to think about, but I’d still like to be friends. At least you feel remorse for what you’ve done unlike some people. One small point; I don’t think it’s healthy for you to continue your association with Mrs. Robinson. I think being around her is a constant reminder of your lapse, and keeps your guilt about the affair in the forefront of your mind. I’m pretty sure I’m never going to like her because she helped you compromise your morals. I’m pretty sure you didn’t come on to a married worried woman, so it must have been her. I seriously hope that you aren’t one of those people who need all of your friends to be friends too, because that’d be a total deal-breaker.

It’s pretty messed up that she introduced you to such a shady person. Did you tell her that Priscilla wanted to have your baby? Your life sounds like an Ace of Base song. All that she wants... Sorry, I just couldn’t resist, but I saw the sign and it opened up my eyes that if you keep up that relationship, your life is going to turn into a country song. Does she have any friends besides you? I have to wonder if she’s introducing you to dogs so that you might go back to her eventually. It’s very telling that you didn’t mention a new boyfriend or husband. It sounds like she’s waiting in the wings. Or a web. “Come into my parlor.”

I was supposed to be coming to Washington for my 15th birthday, but Carla just told me that she cancelled my trip yesterday. We got into a little argument about my duties around the house. I mean I cook, I clean, I take out the garbage and do the lawn, but two days ago, I came home from school and it looked like Mardi Gras exploded in our house, complete with beaded necklaces, confetti and doubloons. The house was immaculate when I left, so how is that my responsibility?

When I refused to do it, Three slammed out of the house and Carla decided to lay down the law and let me know how things were going to be. He returned home drunk out of this world, but at least he wasn’t driving. He stumbled into their room with Carla trailing after him. I had to wash what seems like every dish in the house, clean up the living room, and when I vacuumed, he yelled at me to keep it down; is it my fault he came home plastered before the evening news and bought the cheapest machine they had?

I barely got any sleep last night because their headboard kept banging against our shared wall all night. No sooner than I would fall asleep, the thumping and groaning would recommence and my rest would be broken yet again. It doesn’t help that I now have a visual to their horizontal mambo they did on our couch. The bags under my eyes have luggage! I wish I had some noise cancelling headphones, but I don’t know if not being aware of my surroundings would be such a good idea.

A few times, I’ve fallen asleep sitting up against the door. I feel on edge. A couple weeks ago, Three walked in on me while I was changing clothes. He claimed that he got the wrong door when he
needed to go to the bathroom, but it’s in the opposite direction. I have to pass their bedroom to get to it, yet he’s managed to lose his way several times since then. I wish that I had room for a dresser that I could prop against the door. Maybe I could buy and install a door chain, a door latch or something. Perhaps they’ll let me trade out the bed for a dresser and a sleeping bag. My bedroom door doesn’t have a lock, but theirs does. Boy does their bedroom have a lock! I’d never seen a door that locks on both sides before outside of a classroom. If they ever lost the key, they’d have to climb out of the window to get out of their room. It would be like house arrest!

Today, I found out the reason for the celebration; Carla found a job at some widget factory, but it’s third shift, so they’re expecting me to step up my game. [OK, she won’t be making widgets, but she’ll only be earning $5.15 per hour which is minimum wage. She’s not even working full-time. They offered me more than that to work at the diner!] I’m not sure what stepping up my game would entail. I already pack a sack lunch for Three. I mean, what else is there? I wanted to work at the diner down the street, and they were all prepared to hire me, but Carla wouldn’t sign the form for me to work. I don’t know what they want.

I can’t accept your money, but I’d really appreciate if you’d allow me to use you as an emergency contact or a reference. For various reasons, I can’t use Dad. He would be furious that Carla and her husband are forcing me to support myself when I have a huge bedroom and fort in the backyard waiting for me back home in Montesano. And I wouldn’t use Carla or Three as references because they’re complete fails in the character department. So, if you could just give me a phone number and address, that’d be really great. Then I could write you real letters again, though you would have to e-mail me back.

You were spot on about the resume. I’ve put a basic one together and I realized I’m far too overqualified for the job at the diner, so I won’t regret the lost opportunity. And I speak pretty good Spanish which is a huge plus here in the Great State of Tejas. What other language(s) would you suggest, minion?

Thank you for continuing to write me; I’d go crazy if I didn’t have your letters to cheer me.

Your Friend Always

AnnieO

P.S. I’ve rethought the logistics of digging a double grave. How do you feel about sky burials?

Wednesday, I’ll be travelling to Texas on business to get a close-up on our newest acquisition. It’s a company that deals in oil and gas exploration, but I’ve been working with my team to make the extraction process cleaner and more sustainable. While I prefer the use of renewable energy resources, I’m not stupid enough to believe that a worldwide conversion will be made overnight.

Reading Annie’s letter made me laugh, but she dropped more than enough hints to let me know that her life in Nash isn’t very rosy at all. And like I suspected, Carla has decided to work the late shift, leaving Annie home alone with her loving husband. Frank Lambert must’ve had the lion’s share of the brain cells in that relationship, because Annie’s on the ball, yet Carla’s a few scoops short of a sundae.

I’m now in the unenviable position of needing to either come clean with my real name or create a complete identity and work history for Chris Tanner because I want to be Annie’s emergency contact and reference. As I ponder this dilemma, Taylor enters my home office. I notice him looking at something over my shoulder, and I follow his gaze to a series of blown-up photos of Annie in my digital frame. I guess the cat’s out of the bag.
I return my eyes to Taylor, and I’m expecting anger, belligerence or a resignation, but that’s not what I see.

“Permission to speak freely, sir?”

“Go ahead,” I reply. I’ve already beaten myself over this sick obsession. May as well get a beat down from someone properly trained in kicking asses.

“You love her?”

Shut the fuck up!

“I-I care about her well-being.”

“Bullshit! There have been no more submissives, we’ve been running morning and night and Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, has been conspicuous in her absence. You spend so much time in the shower lately, I worry that you’re gonna sprain your wrist. And there’s pictures of this very young girl in your Holy of Holies and I know for damn sure she’s not one of your sexbots!”

“She’s fourteen years old, Jason! I’ve never felt so ashamed of anything in my life! I’ve never been that guy, some pervert, preying on children.”

“If it makes you feel any better, from certain angles, she doesn’t exactly look childlike. I’m not into brunettes, but I can see the attraction,” he replied. He removed his wallet from his pocket, opening it up to the photos, pulling out a couple old, dog-eared pictures.

“This is my Jessie,” he says, showing me the pictures of a girl wearing a crown and sash and the other atop a huge horse. “We grew up together in Idaho. Her parents had her in all those beauty pageants. Li’l Miss Boise, Junior Miss Boise… They say she was born beautiful and only improved with age. She loved to compete, and play dress-up, but she was a tomboy at heart, helping her folks on their ranch.

“She was two years younger than me, kid followed me everywhere. I think I fell in love with her when I was fifteen years old. It could’ve been sooner, but I was so used to her being my friend that I didn’t know any better. We began to date ‘secretly’ when I was sixteen. Well, I did ask her parents’ permission, but we weren’t bragging about it around town. I think we’re gonna need some liquid courage,” he said, grabbing the Scotch and a couple tumblers.

“She had this huge world map, with pins stuck all over it, marking all the places she was going to go, and when we became a couple, she started marking all the places we were going to go together. I was a pretty good football player and I had a full-ride scholarship to UT. We were going to get married when she graduated from high school. We had it all planned out. We would go to the same school, her parents had money and we’d travel after she graduated from college. Summers, when I wasn’t training, we’d backpack across the continental US.”

“What happened?” I asked with trepidation. She wasn’t here; he’d been married to that bitch of an ex-wife and he didn’t seem the cheating type.

“Leukemia happened,” he said, tossing back the whole glass. “She was always such a vibrant girl and she died within months of her diagnosis. It wasn’t fair! I graduated high school, rejected my scholarship and joined the Marines. Not gonna lie; I wanted to kill something, someone. I wanted to make someone else feel the hurt. Jessie’s death killed her mother. She was gone before I left for the Corps.”

“What about Sophie’s mother? How did that happen?”
“Sophia Jessie Lynn Taylor... Named for wisdom and the two strongest women I ever knew. Jessie and her mother. Sophie’s mother never forgave me. She chose Sophia and let me choose the middle name. She loved the name until she found the source. My parents showed her some of my old photo albums and when they said the name ‘Jessie’ that was all she wrote.”

“But it’s been years, and the other woman is dead; why is she so angry?”

“Because she knew I never loved her and it hurt her pride. She might have forgiven anything but that. Jessie’s father left Sophie a trust fund in his will. He died when Sophie was a couple months old and knew it’s what Jessie would have wanted. I haven’t told Sophie’s mother about the trust. Not because she’d want the money, but because she’d never let Sophie have it.”

“What’d he leave you?” I asked shrewdly.

He looked down for a moment, then answered, “He left me our map, and a trust for any other children. Jessie always wanted a big family.”

“So what’s that got to do with Annie?”

“Is that her name?” he asked.

“Her full name is Anastasia Rose Lambert-Steele. Yes, she’s hyphenated; no, it’s not her fault.”

“Does she know you’re hyphenated, too?” he asked slyly.

“I’m no longer hyphenated. I got rid of that pretentious shit and changed my nonexistent middle name to Trevelyman as soon as I legally could,” I said defensively. “And no, she thinks my name is Chris Tanner.”

“Tanner? You stole an alias from that kid who knocked you over in the park? Wait, you let her call you Chris?!” Taylor gasped through bouts of laughter.

“Chris, minion, peon...same thing. I don’t know what I’m doing. I’m just flying by the seat of my pants,” I added as I heard something that sounded like “short curlies” under his breath.

“You’re her minion? Oh, this is just fabulous. OK. First, how did you meet, because you obviously haven’t been trolling high schools for trim.”

“You remember that box you tried to save me from?”

“Yeah?”

“It was from Annie. She left a letter in the keepsake box for whomever found it. She’s my pen-pal,” I said proudly.

“Oh, wow. You couldn’t make shit like this up, so it must be true.”

“Yeah. She has a pretty shitty home life. Her mother cheated on the only father she’s ever known and has now dragged her to Texas with husband number three. Between information gathered from Barney and Welch, this guy’s only dated single mothers with daughters around Annie’s age.”

“Tell me you realize he’s a child molester?”

“Yes, I highly suspect it, but there’s little I can do short of abducting her, taking her across state lines, changing her identity and setting her up in parts unknown. She’s fourteen years old, well almost fifteen, but still. Felony much?”
“I still think you’re going about this the wrong way. To be such a smart guy, you’re really overthinking this. Simplicity is key. Who’s the weakest link? The mother, right? What do you know about her?”

“Besides the fact that she’s fucking a man that wants to fuck her daughter? The stepfather that raised Annie is in Montesano. Annie wanted to stay with him, but Carla, her mother, wouldn’t let the husband adopt her, even though he gave Annie his name. Now she’s making him pay child support to talk with his daughter.”

“What a piece of shit. Wait. Montesano. The fuck! Annie is Ray Steele’s daughter? Raymond Steele?”

“Yes, Raymond Steele is Annie’s father. Is that significant?”

“Yeah, I’d say it was pretty damn significant; I served under him in the fucking Corps! You’re in love with L’il Orphan Annie! You poor fuck. He’s gonna kill you!”

“So what do I do?”

“Well, first you need to tell Annie the truth ASAP. If she’s anything like her Daddy, lying to her will be the last thing you ever do. Her father’s a deadly sumbitch. I knew Annie’s biological father briefly; he bragged on fucking the girl’s mother, but when she turned up pregnant, he tried to deny paternity. Ray Steele pull him aside for a little sit-down in his office. I don’t know what was said for certain, but when he came out of that room, he was as white as a sheet.

“Some guys said he must’ve threatened him with a dishonorable discharge or some shit, but I didn’t buy that. Someone threatens me with a dishonorable. I’d have been pissed. Nah, that’s not what went down. Ray must’ve threatened his life. Ray’s known for quick, clean kills and even quicker extracts. And if it wasn’t for him claiming the kill, you’d never know it was him. I think he put the fear of God into the bastard ‘cause he and the mother-to-be were married the next week. I left the base soon after that but the grapevine works very well. Heard he died in an accident after the baby was born. Almost took Steele out, too.”

Well, don’t I feel like a fool for sitting on the best source of intel! “What else?” I asked.

“That room of pain and suffering upstairs? It’s gotta go ASAP. She sees that room and you’re gonna have a tattoo of your balls on your forehead. I bet Daddy Ray trained that girl to hell and back. The only thing she’s got going against her is her youth. But that room will kill any chance of having a good future with her. Maybe a broken Annie would accept it, but we’re not gonna wait for the worst-case scenario, are we?”

“It’s all I’ve ever known,” I said.

“Yeah? How’s that working out for ya?” he asked sarcastically. “What else have you lied about?”

“I may have told her that I work in communications. I may have given her the impression that I’m a successful up-and-comer,” I confessed.

Taylor gets up, walks to the window, looking outside. “Up-and-comer? What’s next, heaven?” he snorts.

“But I’ve tried to tell her the truth about everything else; I even told her about Priscilla, the condoms and the fake proposal scene. You’re right; she is a bloodthirsty little thing.”

“Have you told her about Mrs. Lincoln?” he inquired.
“Yes, I told her that I had an affair with an older, married woman in the past. She disapproved of the cheating, of course, but she says we can still be friends since I’ve repented and will never enter another relationship where either party is cheating.”

“Well, hell. She’s got a very good head on her shoulders.”

“Yeah. She’s had my number pretty much from the beginning,” I retorted. “She informed me if I expected her to be friends with the woman I had an affair with, just because we’re friends now, it’d be a deal-breaker. Fourteen and already stating hard limits.”

“In our world, that’s called having high standards and strong values. You didn’t e-mail her an NDA, did you?”

“No! I told her I decided to trust her. We’ve talked about many things; our families, our educations and our goals.”

“You relate to her like an equal. You do realize how rare that is for you?”

“Yes. I think she’d be insulted if I treated her like a child. I basically give her the same advice I would give anyone I was mentoring,” I replied.

“But you don’t mentor anyone.”

“I want her to have the best start in life. If that means giving her information or advice that would help her make the right decisions, all the better.”

“Can’t wait ‘til the in-laws take a gander at the future Mrs. Grey,” Taylor chortled.

“I never said we were getting married,” I refuted.

“When I walked in this room, the first thing I saw was this young woman’s picture dominating the table behind you where pictures of wives and kids are generally placed. So, which is she? Does she give you parental feelings?”

“Fuck you!” I snapped.

“Bottom line: it’s not like you’re going to be able to just date her. The media would pillory you. The few famous guys who dated underage girls married them almost right away, and they didn’t live in the age of Facebook, Twitter and the Nooz. You’re gonna have to make a decision. This situation is fucked enough without hemming, hawing and fence-straddling. You’ve gotta be completely out or all in, else you’re gonna end up with splinters up your crack.”

Gazing at Annie’s photo again, I made a decision that would change my entire life, though I didn’t fully realize it at the time. Looking back, many years later, I would understand the expression on Taylor’s face when I picked up the gauntlet he had just thrown down.

“She’s worth it; and she’ll be seventeen in about two years,” I stated.

He looked at me with pity and offered to introduce me to Rosie Palmer and her five sisters. When I informed him that we were already thoroughly acquainted, he glanced at the photo and back to me and said, “You might want to strike up a friendship with her cousin, Sally Fist; I heard she has a handful of sisters, too.”

Fucker! I already figured that shit out when I couldn’t get it up for anyone else.
“So, are you going to give me the info you already have, or are we just going to sit here shooting the breeze?” he asked sarcastically.

I turned to my computer, minimizing Annie’s latest message, clicking a couple keys, attaching the files to an e-mail and forwarding it to Taylor’s inbox. “I just sent it to you.”

“Great! Now how about we dismantle that ‘playroom’?” he asks with a cheerful grin.

Friday, August 27, 2004

CPoV

I knew we had just witnessed the result of that ‘not good’ conversation that Annie wouldn't be revisiting any time soon.

Before I could burst out of the car, grab Annie and get the hell out of Dodge, Taylor’s left hand clamped down hard on my forearm, pinning me into my seat. His other hand was speed-dialing someone.

“Steele,” stated a man’s deep voice, both confirming and questioning at the same time.

“Raymond Steele, it’s been a while, but you might remember me. I’m Jason T-,” Taylor began.

“Taylor, that you, son? Damn, it’s been a long time! Glad to hear from you,” he exclaimed. I was very interested and slightly wary of a man who could call Taylor ‘son’ and get away with it.

“Would love to reminisce and shoot the shit, but we gotta mission, Marine!”

“Understood,” came the reply.

“I know this is coming outta left field, and I’m awfully sorry, but it’s about Annie,” says Taylor, soothingly. “I’m in Texas and your daughter has just gotten off the bus to walk home and half her face is purple. She’s wearing long-sleeved shirt and long pants and it’s hot enough here to fry a steak on the hood of your car. Do I have permission to engage?”

“Fuck! Fuck! Affirmative! Wait. Before you get in her space, I need you to say this to her, and only this, until she replies. Otherwise she will run from you like a bat outta hell, and you won’t be able to find her. I’ve drilled it into since she was five…” Raymond said, his voice breaking.

“Go ahead, sir,” said Taylor, as serious as I’d ever seen him.

“You have to say it just like this: ‘Hi! I’m Ray’s friend, Matt. I came for his treasure.’ When she asks you where it can be found, you must reply ‘126’. Do you understand?”

“Yessir. Understood,” Taylor replied, opening the door, placing the phone on his seat. He ran to catch up with Annie who was trailing very far from the other students at this point. The kids had to walk a long way to their subdivision. I was frightened to see how far she was straggling behind everyone. She looked like a victim and I couldn’t stand it.

When Taylor caught up with Annie, you could tell her flight or fight response was at a very high level. She must have felt him coming or something, because she whipped around and put her body into a fighting stance. Taylor backed away, talking to her, hopefully using the proper code phrase. What kind of fucked up world requires a man to train his child to use code phrases to recognize a friendly?
Annie’s hands relaxed and she got out of that fighting stance. I didn’t recognize the style, but I knew enough physics to notice she had been centered and poised to do the maximum damage her small frame allowed. Apparently, she had agreed to go with him, but I noticed she stayed consistently outside of his range of motion. He even tested her a bit; It was as if they were held together by an invisible, yet rigid, tether. He moved; she moved. It was like a macabre dance, and eerie as hell. This level of situational awareness in a kid bothered the fuck out of me. I was further pissed by the parents and abusers in this world that rendered that shit necessary.

When they arrived at the car, and she noticed another man inside, she said only one word, in a soft, melodic voice, directed at Taylor. “Phone.”

Taylor carefully reached in and tossed her the phone which she caught with deceptive ease. She dialed a number from memory. “Daddy? Who are these people and why did you send them?”

“I’d think the proper question would be why you didn’t call me when that monster hit you, missy!”

“When I’m at home, the phone and computer are locked inside their room, until they bring out the phone to let you call me or vice versa. I haven’t complained because I’ve been watching how obvious abuse cases are handled at the school, and I haven’t been impressed. Besides, I knew if I told you that Morton came into my room and tried to do unspeakable things, and beat me when I did not comply and fought back, you would kill him and go to jail,” she stated in a low monotone. “It doesn’t help that when the school called home, Carla told them I fell down a flight of nonexistent stairs in their ranch house, and the lazy school counselor didn’t follow up. You really shouldn’t worry. I’ve been figuring out ways to kill him accidentally on purpose when I have enough evidence that no court would convict me. He’s big; I’m little. He tried to help me bathe. I was afraid for my life, and I packed a hammer.”

I think both our jaws dropped at her deadpan recital. Fuck, she was badass! Maybe Carrick would forgive me for dropping out of Harvard if I sent her to law school instead. Anastasia Grey: Defense Attorney.

I couldn’t help it; I had to say something. “So, have you made a final decision between a double grave or a sky burial?”

Her beautiful clear blue eyes snapped to mine, wide in her disbelief.

“Chris?”

“Annie,” I replied. “It’s a pleasure to meet you.”

A lifetime of good manners resulted in a small hand reaching out for the traditional handshake. As our hands met, I felt a very strong pulse run up my arm. Annie must have felt the jolt of electricity too because she jumped back quickly.

“Wow! Static shock. Sorry!” she said.

That wasn’t static, but nice try, Annie. I had never felt anything like it in my life. It occurred to me that two thousand miles weren’t nearly enough, I was going to beat Morton so bad that the Hell wouldn’t take him and if it took every last dime I had, Carla would lose custody of Annie and never see her again.
The security code phrase was derived from the scripture from the last chapter. Next: Annie is safe for now, and ODC had met, but all good things must come to an end.

Please check out the FB group, **FSoG Fanfic Obsessed**
Just another Fifty Shades of Grey fanfiction group, obsessed with all things Grey.
Created by: Lanieloveu & SdaisyS
Chapter Summary

The Aye’s have it. I hate to neglect one of my stories at the expense of the other, and my readers know that this story is burning the best and brightest right now. The cavalry has come to the rescue; however, Annie still has unfinished business…

Chapter Notes

[TRIGGER WARNINGS: This chapter begins with a very deep look within a highly-disturbed mind. Experts can’t seem to agree on whether or not pedophilia is a mental illness or a sexual orientation, but I personally believe that pedophiles can never be rehabilitated. I don’t care if they never molest again because I don’t believe the desire ever fully goes away. I’m sickened by the idea that these monsters are allowed to move freely amongst other people based on some arbitrary prison sentence that most won’t even have to completely serve depending on ‘good behavior’ discounts, which usually end far sooner than their victims can recover (if ever).

This chapter is also full of references to child abuse, child exploitation, child abuse, child molestation, child rape. These references may be quite disconcerting or provocative. Please skip this chapter if the events mentioned will cause you to relapse in some way. I recognize the lifelong effect that child abuse and child molestation can have on both the victims and their loved ones which is why I consider perpetrators of these types of crime the lowest of the low.

Annie also commits premeditated violence toward an abusive parent.]

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

SMPoV (Yes, I’ve given Steven Morton a point-of-view. He’s filthy, disgusting and wicked, yet Carla has handed him complete dominion over herself and her daughter. There’s really no way for the reader to know what goes on in his mind without it, and fully understand what Annie is up against and what finally causes her to snap. Carla is such a waste of space, I may not even give her perspective.)

Another long night at Stanton’s, but it will be time well spent. I was shooting the breeze with Harry a couple weeks ago during my break when he let it slip that they were hiring at a local factory owned by his brother-in-law. Said they were having trouble getting workers because of the mandatory three-month long probation period for new hires. Seems they had a hard time filling certain timeslots, so new employees were forced to accept the worst shifts, often cutting into nights and weekends. Perfect. Need the bitch out of the house for my plans to come to fruition, so I quickly offered up Carla’s name and few lies about her weak-ass employment history and she was hired on the spot, sight unseen.

Anastasia was trying to get jobs outside of the family home, trying to avoid me, I reckon. She doesn’t
need a job; I’m gonna take real good care of her. She’s just jealous because I married her mother. I know she wants me. She’s been throwing dirty looks at Carla behind her back, but she doesn’t need to worry. I’m not gonna let a little thing like a marriage to Carla get in the way of our love.

Sometimes I fuck Carla just a li’l harder so Anastasia will know how good it’ll be for her when I bust her tight li’l cunt wide open. I like banging that steel bedrail against the wall while I make Carla scream. Used-up bitch. Thought it’d be harder to get her outta Montesano, but the whore was positively gagging for it. She thought we’d be running off together into the fuckin’ sunset or some shit, but I carefully broke her outta that nonsense. She’s a mother; she needed her daughter, and I didn’t want to break up their family. She ate that shit up like gravy.

It wasn’t hard to set it up for us to get caught. I even parked my car out front a bunch a times, hoping good ole Mr. Steele would catch me if he dropped in for some afternoon delight. I was fucking Carla so hard that when the phone rang, the stupid bitch didn’t bother to pick it up. Little did I know that my Annie would be the one to catch us. This is the source of her jealousy. She can’t get over me fucking her mother. I was just doing what had to be done to guarantee that we could be together!

I had to think about Annie all the time I was inside Carla, or I wouldn’t have even been able to get it up at all. Annie’s tight ass and even tighter cunt fueled my constant fantasies. I couldn’t wait to add photos to my spank bank. Her soft, velvety skin. Long, luscious hair. I used to step outside of the general store to watch her walking home from school. She was always with large groups of kids, so I couldn’t talk to her. She never came to the store alone either, though it was an easy walking distance from her house.

She was on the far end of my type, being so old, but she still had developing assets just like I like them. And her whole persona screamed virginal. I’d had a couple girls a few years back who weren’t even virgins though they were a couple years younger. You’d think a mother would look out for a daughter and at least make sure her kid wasn’t already fucking at eleven or twelve. Someone else had gotten there before me and busted a couple open. Those relationships didn’t last long. When I get a little girl, I expect them to be all mine.

Most of the groundwork is accomplished by placing a wedge between the mothers and daughters. I slowly make those broads feel like sexy women instead of the desperate cows they really are. I usually pony up a bit of money upfront to show ‘em what a good provider I’ll be. I even volunteer to help with homework or drop the kiddies at school to help shoulder some of their burden. Once I move in, I ‘lose my job’ and begin looking for a better one. In the meanwhile, the girlfriend might need to get a job to help ends meet, leaving me alone with her daughter. Then the real fun begins.

That Annie, though, she’s got real spirit. She’s never been alone with me in the car. She’d rather walk. And she’s never needed help with homework. Or housework, not that Carla lifts a finger to help her, the lazy bitch. I made it a point to leave little presents for her, too. I’ve left huge wet spots in the bed and cum sprayed on the shower walls for her to clean up. I’m sure she’s impressed by the load I’ve got to give her. I love it when she gets mad, stomping her pert little ass around the house and turning up her nose in disgust. I’ve even gone in Annie’s room after Carla was knocked out and busted a couple loads in Ana’s room while watching her sleep. It was never too early to begin marking my territory.

**SMPoV END WARNING**

**APoV**

*This is Chris? Shut the front door! Wow! Forget about the cooties and the water! A girl could*
probably get pregnant just spending too much time in his general vicinity! Dang! Note to self: keep far, far away from this specimen of masculine perfection. Am I drooling? And what the heck was that electroshock crap? Is that normal? At first I thought it was him, but he appeared just as surprised as me, so no joy.

Does he think he’s here to rescue me or something? That’s so cute. Unnecessary, but nice all the same. Man, was Daddy pissed, but I couldn’t have him come here to kill this waste of space and end up going to jail. I’d really be stuck with Carla then, and her judgement and intentions have left much to be desired.

Well, no matter; I basically have all my ducks in a row, and it was almost time for me to leave anyway. I wasn’t going to let them force me into becoming a runaway. At least not without a darn good plan. From what I’ve read on the ‘net, that’s the surest route to being placed in a group home. Thanks, but no thanks, to that bridge to nowhere. I was going with my first plan. Stand my ground and make that witch wish she’d never been born before I take my leave.

It was Three’s late day at the store, so Carla would be alone, more than sufficient time for me to set my plan in motion. Instead, I have these strangers in tow. I can’t believe Daddy gave the huge dude the secret code. I hoped we’d never need it. Now, I owe Dad twenty bucks! That sucks real monkeyballs. Now, we’ll have to change the code again. I can see a lot more drills in my future.

I got in the back seat of the car, behind huge dude, because Chris was driving. It would have been nice if the other guy gave me his real name, since the chance of his name actually being Matt is pretty darn miniscule. Daddy didn’t even give me the guy’s name which is proof of how discombobulated he must have been. I’m blaming Chris for this clusterfrack because he’s driving. How the heck did he know exactly where I lived? I know he didn’t just drop into Loserville, spin around three times and put his finger on a map. I will get to the bottom of this, or he will know my wrath.

Seated diagonally from him, I get a great view of his profile. I don’t know. From his letters, I’d pegged him as older looking, but he could probably attend Texas High and pass for a senior. And by any criteria, he’s hot! He’s tall, he’s built and I’ve never seen hair that color. How many shades of red, brown and gold are in that head of hair anyway?

Picking at one of my wristbands, I watch the houses go by. About two blocks from my house, I spot the little bit a scrub that I use as a marker.

“Stop the car!” I command, and Chris hits the breaks hard, causing me to jerk forward. Dork!

“We’re not at your house,” he said.

“No duh, Sherlock. I need to make a pit stop,” I replied. They have no clue how much they’ve messed up the schedule. Muttering to myself, I pull my hair out of my face. They must’ve seen the bruising, so my little disguise was no longer needed. I quickly plait my hair in a sleek French braid, using the headband as a hair tie. Chris was looking at me strangely in the rearview mirror. I could feel his eyes on me. Good thing it wasn’t like when Three leers at me, or we would have words.

Getting out of the car, I make my way over to a large grouping of shrubbery, taking care to avoid the poison ivy present. Using my hands, I dig out the bag I buried almost as soon as we moved here. I’d been collecting things for the great prison break. Shaking off most of the debris, I throw the bag over my shoulder and leave out the way I came, only to confronted by two obviously confused men.

“What’s that?” asked Chris.

“Um, last time I checked, it was a backpack; some might call it a rucksack?” I replied. I really didn’t
have time for this. I’d expected better from my partner-in-crime. Taking my knives out of the bag centered me. I always felt somewhat naked without them nearby. The paperwork and photos I’d gathered for just a day such as this were in their document covers, protected in a couple extra-large Ziploc bags. A pencil pouch containing nothing but tacks, a CD case and a first aid kit made up the rest of the contents. My boots and weighted gloves were there, too. I donned them immediately. I wish I had my real go-bag, but this’ll do in a pinch. It’s clobberin’ time.

“Okay, I’m ready to go home now,” I stated.

“Yes’m, Miss Daisy,” Chris said sarcastically, tipping an imaginary hat while proceeding to my house. The men kept exchanging glances with one another as if having a silent conversation. I wanted to bust up this bromance, so I cleared my throat and two sets of eyes focused, laser-sharp, on me.

“I don’t generally invite people into my home that I don’t know, so a name would be great,” I began, looking at ‘Matt’ grimly.

“My name is Taylor, Annie. Jason Taylor.”

“Thank you, Taylor. Can you stop two houses away from where I live and wait in the car ‘til the coast is clear?” I asked.

“No problem. How will we know when the coast is clear?” Chris asked.

“You’ll know; I’ll leave the door open for you,” I said with a wink. The car soon arrived at our destination, and I made to hop out of the car when a warm hand grabbed my wrist sending that weird shock through my body again. I looked up as the most piercing, gray eyes pinned me to my seat.

“Um, since we’re introducing ourselves,” he began uncomfortably, “My real name is Christian Trevelyan Grey.”

“So can I still call you Chris?” I asked shortly.

“Yes, I’m sorry I didn’t give you my real name, but I was protecting myself. I’m sorry I lied to you,” he said earnestly.

“Have you lied about anything else?” I inquired frostily. Is there a limit to the crap sandwich I’m expected to consume today? I wish I would’ve known; I’d have brought an appetite.

“I may technically work for a communications firm, but I’m the owner,” he said.

That wasn’t too bad. It explained a lot, though. I tried to be really angry with him, but for some reason I couldn’t which made me feel really peevish.

“We’re going to have words, Christian,” I stated brattily, turning my nose up at my ‘friend?’ before I left the car. I walked to my house briskly, walking off the frustration this week has brought. When I get to my door, I bang my weighted fist against it, pressing my body flush to the door while covering the peephole with my finger. The witch most likely won’t look, but there’s always a first time.

She doesn’t realize it’s me, because I normally take pains to walk slower than everyone else, trailing far behind so I can think and exchange items from my secret cache. I hear her coming toward the door and as soon as she makes to open the door a crack with her head sticking out, I rear back, taking my booted foot, kicking the door wide open, sending her body flying from the impact. Her butt lands on the wood floor with a satisfying thud. I love it when a plan comes together!
She’s panicked and disoriented, exactly where I want her…for now.

I hear footsteps and the men enter the room warily, processing the scene of me towering over my mother, booted foot poised to stomp her if as much as twitches. She should’ve known I would come for her when I found out what she has done.

“Have a seat, gentlemen. Take a load off,” I say, motioning to the threadbare couch. “Can I get you fellas something to drink?” I ask in my best Suzy Homemaker voice. “Carla would offer, but she’s somewhat indisposed,” I add in a stage whisper. They’re looking at me like I’m sort of dangerous exotic animal, and they’re sort of right. She could drive the Pope to drink.

I grab one of the chairs from the kitchenette and carry it back to the living room when the guys are still sitting there, most likely in shock. I am shocking, I guess. I’m small, smart and bookish, and people try me because of these things. But I’m also strong, so I usually put them on their collective butts so they don’t do it again. It’s always the quiet ones.

Carla had fallen unconscious, thankfully. Less work. I unravel both of my ‘friendship bangles’. Very few people realize that they aren’t true friendship bracelets. They’re each composed of about seven feet of paracord woven in various patterns. I even wear a paracord belt. Never know when you might have to tie something up or down.

I quickly bind Carla’s wrists and ankles, leaving the cord connecting both. I sit on the floor and twist the rope again, making a chain stitch, basically hog-tying her. When I look up, Taylor’s mouth is hanging open and Chris is staring at me with a very strange look. Awe, maybe? When he sees me looking at him, he drops his eyes and adjusts his collar.

“So, Chris. Tell the truth: how did you find me? If you lie, I will know.”

“I did find your letter while I was running in the park. But I’m a well-known person. For all I knew the letter and its contents could have all been part of an elaborate hoax, so I had Barney, my tech guy and Welch, my security head, do a background check on everyone referenced in the letter,” he said. His body language read true, so I decided to take it as read.

“That’s it? ‘Alright’?” he asked.

“Well, yeah, I asked; you answered. Since I believed you, there was nowhere else for the conversation to go.”
I think I’ve just been blanked by a fourteen-year-old kid. I can tell she’s not trying to be rude, but it’s very clear her mind is far away, designing plans within plans. I think I understand now why I had a difficult time perceiving her as a child; her mind is a fairly surreal place to someone like me: meticulous, methodical and cunning.

When she reared back and basically kicked the front door of her house in, I can’t deny I almost got a boner. The door was left wide open, so Taylor and I got out of the car and walked through the door which thankfully remained on the hinges so we could close it behind us. The scene was surreal; there was a slovenly woman knocked the fuck out on the floor and Annie was there offering us seats and beverages.

Then she pulls off her bracelets and they unravel into two long cords, one of which she uses to bind her mother up on the floor, basically hogtying her in less than a minute. I’d seen subs trussed up like this before in a couple clubs. I’m painfully aware how lucky I am that Taylor and I dismantled the playroom when we did, else this little chick would have me trussed up on the whipping bench! She’s a nascent Dominatrix. The last thing I’d need to do is provide more tools for her craft. She’s dangerous enough without access to the more elaborate BDSM accoutrements.

And little Miss was pissed at me to the nth degree. I had clearly tried her patience, so I was morbidly interested in what her words with me would consist of. I felt my body heat up to an alarming level and my throat dried up. She looks up at us and mutters an offer of refreshments which I gratefully accept. Taylor’s looked at me like I’d lost my mind when I quickly guzzled it down. She leaves again, returning with a pitcher of ice water and a tall glass.

She starts grabbing a bunch of shit from both bags, organizing it and placing it on the floor next to the table. Then she takes a seat in the chair she dragged from somewhere. When she proceeds to ask me how I found her in her sweet, yet commanding, voice, I’m compelled to spill my guts immediately. The last time I felt this compliant, Elena had had me shackled to her Saint Andrew’s cross for over three hours while wearing a cock cage as she lashed me with a cat. She nods her head in a dismissive manner and then she’s back inside her head again.

“That’s it? ‘Alright’?” I queried. Was this all the answer I was going to get?

“Well, yeah, I asked; you answered. Since I believed you, there was nowhere else for the conversation to go,” she said simply and that was that, I guess. “I’m going to take a little nap; if you need the head, it’s that last door down the hall to your right.”

And she went on to fall asleep in the fucking chair! This was the strangest fucking situation. Taylor whispered to me, “The kid’s exhausted. Her father trained her very well, but whatever’s happened here has kept the kid so much on edge that she probably hasn’t gotten much recuperative sleep. All she’d need is a rifle resting across her lap and I’d be experiencing a flashback to my last deployment. I seriously hope you have a good plan to burn that bitch and the asshole she married.”

“Barney and Welch have been on it since the first letter, and except for his rather strange predilection for mothers with pubescent daughters, the fucker’s squeaky clean. For anything else, we’d need incontrovertible proof. Hell, I’ve been looking into ways to get Steele custody, or even get Annie emancipated. Do you realize how fucked up parents have to be to lose custody of a child? And even then, the state’s first option is foster care. To even temporarily lose custody, something extremely bad would likely have to happen to Annie first. I dream about taking her away from this to parts unknown. When I saw her bruises, all I wanted to do in that moment is drag her to the car and drive
far away."

“Bad plan. Do you have a powerful need to have you butt breached by a guy named Bubba? You are very pretty.” she asked groggily. Taylor and I exchanged startled glances. She was still asleep! I had no idea what she’d been planning, but our appearance had clearly knocked her off her stride. I don’t think she just kicked the door in, rendered her mother unconscious and bound her just to catch a few z’s, so clearly something else was on the menu. For the life of me, I had absolutely no idea, which worries me because we’ve been writing flippantly (I thought) back and forth about murders and body disposal. I must admit the cord, duct tape and knives caused some concern, too, in addition to triggering yet another hard-on. This was fucking ridiculous.

Just a short while ago, this was the last situation in which I would have imagined myself participating, yet here I am. I don’t think I could have allowed myself to feel this vulnerable if not for Annie. And yes, I’m attracted to her to a frightening degree, but I’d never harm a hair on her head. Once again, I find myself wondering about Elena. Was letting her beat and fuck me really the only solution to my problems? It’s not like I sought out her help in the first place; I was sent. But Annie was in way over her head. This was a clear imbalance of power, and it was being abused. Just like me. Fuck!

I could neither ignore nor deny the truth before my eyes any longer. While I’d never say that BDSM doesn’t meet the needs of a much larger segment of society than most would expect, it had never fully done the job for me, only taking the edge off of my anger, but leaving me with night terrors. It turned out to be just another type of drug, not a cure, and Elena was my pusher, using that first slap and a tickle as her gateway drug. I’ve told myself I wanted it. I could’ve walked away at any time. I was a man. I lied to myself, then I lied to everyone else to continue living that lie.

She’s been controlling me through sex, even since I stopped fucking her. I may as well have three people in the playroom because I knew all the subs reported to her. I was lazy and had basically delegated most of my debriefing responsibilities to her, not wanting to be bothered with a sub’s ‘feelings’ much beyond aftercare. Subs’ behavior, especially after reaching subspace could be highly suggestible, frequently leading them to become very clingy and needy. It also lent them courage to ask for the unacceptable and unoffered more, which would lead to a dismissal and another fifty grand to Elena.

Andrea sent me a digest of all the calls received from my mother and Elena just this week alone. They’ve been tag-teaming me for days according to the report. Why the fuck is it so important to Grace whether or not I speak to Elena? Is the state of color retouching, highlights and blowouts in jeopardy? We don’t need to meet or speak to one another as much as we do. We don’t really discuss the bottom line; the only bottoms that seem to concern her are the asses I fucked. For someone who wants to keep the secret, reaching out to Grace so incessantly to get my attention won’t do her any favors. Too bad Elena hadn’t gotten the memo that Grace and Carrick were also personae non gratae.

Suddenly, Annie sits bolt upright, looks at the clock then nods to herself. She’s psyched herself up for something and Taylor and I are her less-captive audience. She sends hard-eyed glare at Carla still lying at her feet. I’d really feel for Carla right now if she wasn’t potentially worse than the crack whore. Out of nowhere, Annie gets out of the chair, aiming a fierce fucking kick at Carla’s feet which connected with one of her ankles! Any sympathy for Carla totally evaporates as I realize that conditions in this house must’ve been much worse than I thought because Annie looks to be on the verge of fucking Carla up!

Carla is playing possum, possibly afraid of what else Annie might do. I can’t blame her. I’m on
tenterhooks myself. I’m barely surprised when Annie coolly refills her glass of ice-water, taking a long drink, then hurling the remains on Carla’s prone body causing her to shiver and shake, while bucking against the restraints.

“Good afternoon, Carla,” she stated calmly.

“You little bitch! Just wait ‘til Steve gets home! He’ll set you straight!” Carla threatens and shouts. Annie surreptitiously motions us to be silent and remain unnoticed. No problem.

“Yes, I’d like to wait for him too, but I have an important appointment. Until then, you and I have some time together to chat,” Annie said coldly. “By talk, I mean I ask you questions, you answer them honestly and respectfully; then I decide whether or not to hurt you.”

“Who made you the boss?” Carla asked stupidly, as she was the person bound on the floor wriggling like a fucking worm.

“You did, when you abducted me and relocated me to this hellhole. I used to have school, friends, chores and hobbies to keep me occupied, but you’ve left me with a surplus of time on my hands,” Annie stated baldly. “Now, I think I was clear when I informed you that I would be asking the questions. That one was free,” she continued, pulling out the biggest fucking knife I’d ever seen out of her rucksack.

Whatever retort Carla could’ve come up with obviously withered and died in her throat as only a gasp escaped. As Annie got on her knees and reached for her, Carla tried fruitlessly to wriggle away. Annie just bitch-slapped her and motioned her to be still by pointing to a spot on the floor, making the bitch heel in fright.

Once she was assured that Carla would remain motionless, she took the knife and began cutting Carla’s clothes off as carefully as possible while leaving her bonds intact. I had never been so turned off by a naked body before in my life. Carla was whimpering and crying already and she hadn’t even noticed us yet. There’s no telling the display the histrionic bitch would’ve put on had she known she had an audience. Apparently, she failed to notice that Annie’s ‘give a fuck’ had taken a sabbatical to the land down under and her ‘I’ll cut a bitch’ was substituting for it.

When Annie was satisfied, she stood up, looked at the clock again and said drily, “Your husband gets off work at ten tonight… Five o’clock and all’s well!”

Then she pulled off her belt and proceeded to open up a can of whoop-ass on Carla so big and violent, I almost interfered. The only things stopping me besides Taylor’s almost inhuman grip on my knee were Annie’s tears pouring down her face in torrents. She looked up at the clock again, continuing for about a minute, then she stopped. She was timing herself!

Taylor motioned me to his phone and the display read: “Look at Carla’s body. You would expect it to be covered in welts and bruises with how Annie just let her rip, right?”

And it was true. With all that Annie just did, there wasn’t a fucking mark on her.

The text continued: “Except for the much-deserved kick, Mrs. Morton is relatively unharmed. Miss Steele is using a technique that causes a maximum amount of pain with minimal bruising. She’s holding back just enough. Annie’s exerting herself more than she’s hurting her mother. It just looks and sounds much worse than it is.”

Yeah; Mistress seemed to have everything well in hand. I was quite concerned when she let Carla know upfront that she planned to beat her ass for the remaining five hours, then I remembered who
Annie was. Based on observation, she could’ve most likely taken the feeble bitch out at any time if she just wanted to kick her ass. I don’t think Carla could take Annie unfettered. Yet, little Miss clearly has a schedule to keep.

“Alrighty, then,” she began. “Now that I have your attention, I’m going to ask my questions. You lie, I will hurt you. You hesitate, I will hurt you. This question should be easy: do you understand my instructions?”

“Y-yes!” Carla cried.

“Good. Answer yes or no. Did you know that Morton was planning to put me on birth control?”

The fuck! Now I want to kick the bitch!

“He sai-,” Carla started as Annie’s hand once again descended, striking Carla once across the shoulders, just hard enough to start the poor bitch wailing. Annie began to circle her trembling form on the floor, like a predator waiting to pounce.

“I don’t care what Morton said, Carla. I asked you if you knew,” Annie said mildly. “Do you really want to do this with me? We have almost five hours together. Morton doesn’t even call you when he’s on break. I’m going to assume from your rather paltry defense of him, that the answer to my question is yes. So, no curiosity at all why your new husband wants me on birth control when I’m not planning to have sex?”

Carla began wriggling and shaking her head no. But Annie wasn’t going to take that crap as read. She reached into her bag, bringing out a pair of latex gloves. Too late I realized why she had hogtied her. Grabbing the rope connecting Carla’s shoulders to her ankles, Annie pulled Carla off her side onto her stomach and proceeded to drag her mother to a bedroom toward the right. Carla’s damn lucky the house wasn’t carpeted or else she’d have rugburn on her abdomen out of this world.

I heard a couple small slaps, the sound of a few things falling, then Annie came back, dragging a snotty, soggy Carla in her wake like a fucking sled by one arm, with a big book and a few papers under the other.

Annie looked at her like she was a bug she wanted to stomp. I don’t even think I hated the crackwhore as much as Annie seemed to hate Carla at that moment. Throwing down the rope, she carefully placed the book and papers on the living room table and trudged back into the kitchen. After the sound of running water and paper ripping, Annie returned with some damp paper towels, roughly wiping her mother’s ruined face, carefully cleaning away running mascara, tear tracks and mucous.

“OK. Look, I give up. You’re completely useless to me. You’re going to defend this piece of human excrement instead of me. Fine! But, before I go, I’m going to give you a little history lesson, lest you decide to go out and breed again.”

“Steven Aaron Morton is a serial child molester and child rapist. Sometime between the time you were caught in flagrante and you got the bright idea to move to Timbuktu dragging me with you, I investigated him. Ray was Ray. It didn’t occur to him that Morton was a pervert. He just believed he had rock-bottom standards. You had Daddy not knowing which way was up or down, but not me. Never me.”

“See this book? It’s a photo album. The man has worked menial service jobs for years, yet he has an album full of teen and pre-teen girls. I saw it a couple times when you dragged me over to his house in Montesano. His television barely worked and I needed something to get my mind off his
squeaking bed and your moaning and this was the only game in town unless I wanted to read the phonebook.”

“You know I have a good memory. Eidetic, photographic, something. I’ve never forgotten a face. Came in very handy too, when I joined a few child molestation sites. Did you know I only had to join nine child molestation and rape support groups online to find five girls with photos of Morton? See, they’re not allowed to use the full name of their violators. They can only use the first names and initials for the rest. Do you know how many Steven Ms, Steve Ms, Stevies and Aarons I had to weed through until I struck pay-dirt? Over a thousand! Yep, those Steves and Aarons are busy little bees!”

Carla was on the floor, attempting to manufacture disbelief or issue a denial, but I saw it in her eyes that she knew. There’s no way she didn’t know that she had sold her daughter out to a piece of shit. She finally noticed us sitting on the couch. She tried to primp but couldn’t as she was all tied up.

“I’m not afraid of you, Anastasia! Untie me and your punishment won’t be as bad.”

“Carla, I think our relationship has come to a close. Look at this! You call this punishment?” she asked bitterly as she pulled up her shirt and unwound an elastic bandage with those clips revealing Technicolor bruising covering her torso. But the piece de resistance was a fucking boot shaped print on her side. “This is called abuse, but you don’t care. You’ve never been the kind of person I could tell about a guy leering at me when I walked home from school and that’s OK; it’s what I’ve come to expect from you. But you had to go and marry this one!”

“But you are right. Maybe you shouldn’t be afraid of me, but you should fear Lisa, Diane, Rae, Miranda, Catherine and Pamela,” she stated with a wry grin.

“Why is that? I don’t give a shit about any of Steven’s exes!”

“Is that what he told you? That they were his exes?! Did he actually call them exes or did you just assume? Oh, my goodness! I really did get all the good stuff! Did you brain fall out with the afterbirth, too? Carla, oh! The names I just listed? Those are the names of some of his exes’ children. And as a good citizen, I’ve informed a few of them where they can forward their petitions for current and delinquent child support,” she declared with relish.

“Steve has six kids?”

“No, Carla. He has three baby mommas who are kids! Those kids I told you about? Those are the daughters of the exes that ‘Steve’ molested. He has four children that I know of so far, three boys and a girl. Do you know the best part? Even if the rape and molestation can’t be proven, paternity can’t be denied. So, hi, step-grandma!” she said, laughing her little ass off. “Oh, and he’s really charitable, if you catch my drift. He’s given the gift that keeps giving to all of his sexual partners: syphilis and the clap.”

“Why do you want to hurt me? Why do you hate me so much?” Carla asked piteously. Man, she was trying to milk the cow on all four tits!

“You know, I realized you were selfish. I did. I just had no idea even you could try to make the molestation, rape and impregnation of children about you! This is why I hate you! I wish I didn’t. Other kids write Santa for the newest video game or two front teeth. I used to beg for you to constructively abandon me and Ray so we never had to see you again! Did you know that none of the mothers were even fourteen when they gave birth? One of them is going to have a lifetime of medical issues. When she had the twins at school, something inside her tore and she had developed a vaginal fistula. Do you think her poor mother had good enough insurance to cover that?”
None of the girls mentioned rang a bell, which means Morton must have been more prolific than we thought. I don’t doubt Annie’s skills as an amateur sleuth, so the son of a bitch is worse than we thought. He must have been double-dipping, dating more than one woman at a time. Silently vowing to follow up on all of Annie’s victims referenced and pay for their medical care and expenses, I glance at Carla who doesn’t look at all fazed about the rape and ruination of children. She may just be the worst mother in the entire history of wombs.

“Carla, I’m finished with you. If you don’t let me go to Ray, I’m going to tell the police that you knew everything about Stevie’s activities and that you sold me to him, too. They’ll love that. Two arrests in one night with proof?” she crowed, pulling out a large Ziploc with some material inside. “Morton came in my room while I was ‘sleeping’ and jerked off. He came all over my legs. He thought it was really funny. It was. I’m going to laugh all the way to court because I cut out a swatch and bagged it.”

Annie was so pleased with herself; vindication can be sweet. I just hope Carla realizes how lucky she is that Annie didn’t kill her when she entered the house. In the face of all of these outrageous revelations, Taylor and I would have helped her dispose of Carla’s body.

“Four babies with underage girls is proof of at least three rapes. This part of my blanket is proof of intent. And you took money and crossed state lines with me. So, you have a decision to make. Are you going to let Morton go down alone, or are you going to be faithful for the first time in your misbegotten life and go down for all of this with him?”

Game, set, match. Should I just fire Barney and Welch by phone? Nah... How were they supposed to know they’d have to go undercover as fourteen-year-old girls?

APoV (earlier that day)

Thanks a bunch, Carla! I mean really, you couldn’t have picked a better hell for me if you tried! Parents, even stepparents, can physically discipline a child in public in the great state of Texas. So, if your parent marries an abusive piece of crap, that’s just the breaks. On a lighter note, I can even get married here at the ripe old age of fourteen assuming I have parental permission. I don’t even have to be pregnant.

All Three had to do was wave a family vacation in front of her and she was a Pavlovian dog, panting and salivating at the possibilities. Too bad he forgot to tell her she’d be at work that weekend. That’s the real reason he nixed me going home to Ray for my birthday weekend. From that Friday the 17th until Sunday the 19th, he planned to be alone with me in some honeymoon cabin in the sticks. He called it a family retreat, but if Carla was working that weekend, what kind of family building exercises could he and I possibly be performing? He’d actually set aside a specific time and place to rape me and Carla was too stupid to see it.

He’d even arranged for me to get set up with the Pill. How generous of him! Unfortunately for the others, they didn’t have the luxury of birth control or even mothers who gave a darn. He didn’t even wear condoms, the nasty bastard son of a goat! No, he was busy spreading his pestilence to girls still in training bras. I couldn’t believe this crap could happen in America. We weren’t underage Arab or African girls being forced to marry grown men and join their harems; we were supposedly citizens of the greatest country in the free world.

Everything I ever learned in history had fallen directly in the crapper. I was a second-class citizen at best. Somehow, the government decided that staying with Carla was in my best interest! How?!
was a nasty, disgusting, careless piece of work on her best day. She even cheated on Three before we left town!

And he was trying to court me like the animals I used to watch on the Discovery Channel or Animal Planet! He’d come out the room of his house after doing goodness knows what with Carla, shirtless and sweaty. Was that supposed to impress me or something? He was just as disgusting as her. Even here in Nash, he’d bang the head board against our shared wall so loud, I could barely think or even get more than a couple hours of sleep at a time.

I didn’t even bother to bring my radio from home because I knew I couldn’t afford to drop my guard for a moment. After he finished with Carla, he’d creep into my room foul and sweaty, still smelling of my mother and jerk off. I’d never been so disgusted in my life. I had to play possum because I knew if I got up and screamed for help, Carla probably wouldn’t come to save me or even believe me if I told her later. Plus, I’d have been stuck in that small cell with him while attempting to defend myself. Instead, I had to bear the indignity of feeling his wet, sticky emissions on my blankets while trying to control my breath and breathe deeply and evenly while wanting to vomit. I carefully cut out portions of the blankets and stored them in Ziplocs. If Carla wouldn’t help me, I’d help myself. Between the constant sleep deprivation and fear of being raped, I felt like a prisoner of war without the benefit of the Geneva Convention.

Chris was my salvation. Somehow, I could never tell him how bad it was here, but he’d joke around and he seemed to respect me and my opinions a lot. When I grow up, I want someone like that. Minus the Crusty Crab he cheated with. Eww. I couldn’t seem to make friends here. It was very hard for me to look at pregnant girls practically my age while living in the same house as Morton. Birth control fails. I could fail to protect myself, and then that would be me. No!

My options are few. I’ve done the research. My chances of getting out of this alive and sane are pretty damn low. I’ve seriously considered killing them in their beds. Both of them. Carla is my enemy. I look at my stomach and side, where the bruises are most pronounced, almost black where Morton kicked me with his steel-toe boot while Carla held me down. All I asked for was the opportunity to go back home. Any love I ever had for Carla departed that day.

One of my greatest dreams is to one day write a book. I don’t know if I want to be a full-time author, but now I wonder if I’ll be writing while alone in a jail cell or in some posh New York office building. I’ll surely write about this experience, so hopefully no other child has to experience this. Ray always said that people have to fight for their rights, but he also said I had to respect Carla, so his advice is suspect. I love him, but I’m not sure he knows the woman he married.

My Internet investigation has finally borne fruit. I’ve found and verified a handful of girls that Morton has violated. Several even had photos of him and children resembling him enough to lend credence to their stories. I didn’t even know a girl could give birth at twelve. Guess Three didn’t know either. I wish I had a mother that I could share my suspicions with, who would protect me from monsters like this, but I ended up with Carla. What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, right? Or is that stranger?

The school personnel pretty much ignore me; they don’t want to put a spotlight on me and have to actually get off of their arses and do some due diligence. That would be a little too much like right and we can’t have that. Fine. I spend a lot of time in the computer labs and I’ve printed so many documents, I’m surprised they haven’t begun charging me for paper and toner. I put together my final documents to go with the rest I have stashed away.

Today, I’m going to get off the bus, grab the rest of my stuff, go home and give Carla the come-to-Jesus she’s been begging for. Three’s at work, possibly jerking off to pictures of me, the SOB.
There’s no way I could’ve possibly mistaken the sound of the camera shutter during his almost nightly forays into my room. He’s escalating. It’s time for me to leave.

I don’t know if I’ll be able to convince Carla to let me go back to Ray or give him custody, but I have about five thousand dollars, and if I’m careful, I can disappear for a while. Maybe long enough for Morton to be arrested and no longer a danger to me. In a way, I’m glad for this experience. Without it, I may have still believed that Carla was worth saving. Or spit.

On the bus on the way home, I look at the fields and houses and all I feel is a sense of desolation mixed with resolve. No matter what happens today, I’m making my stand. Who knows? Perhaps I’ll swing by Seattle and look Chris up. Hope is the thing with feathers. Thanks, Emily.

Chapter End Notes

See; this is exactly what I mean! I had a very HELPFUL guest review, who helped me correct a date error in Annie and CG’s letters, but s/he didn’t leave a name, so I can’t credit him/her properly! Now where’s that get fun? I had a calendar in front of me, but my eye must have dropped to the next week’s line. Whoever left that review, I thank you very much and I’ve already posted the correction(s). Please leave your name next time.

To clear up any confusion, CG wrote her back the same day because he wanted Ana not to cut her hair. Could you imagine him sitting on a potential catastrophe like that for days?

Steve’s (known) victims left impregnated by him:
Diane Morgan (twins, syphilis) – Cleveland, Ohio
Catherine Edgerton (single birth, syphilis) – Eugene, Oregon
Pamela Meyers (single birth, chlamydia from her mother via Steve who must be a carrier) – Denver, Colorado

Texas Legal Trivia:
In Texas, the law gives parents, stepparents, grandparents and legal guardians leeway in disciplining their children, but authorities stress that corporal punishment must be "reasonable" and not cross the line into abuse (i.e. using something other than your hand, leaving marks or bruises, or hitting in the face). Corporal punishment is still allowed in public schools.

Texas law permits individuals who have reached the age of majority (18) to get married without parental consent. However, those 14 and older may get married with the consent of their parents or legal guardians. In those instances, consent must be given within 30 days prior to applying for a marriage license.

Next: Will she, or won’t she? Carla needs to make a decision pronto. Annie wants both Morton and Carla out of her life. Christian and Taylor work behind the scenes to restore Annie to her father.

Please check out the FB group, FSoG Fanfic Obsessed
Just another Fifty Shades of Grey fanfiction group, obsessed with all things Grey.
Created by: Lanieloveu & SdaisyS
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!