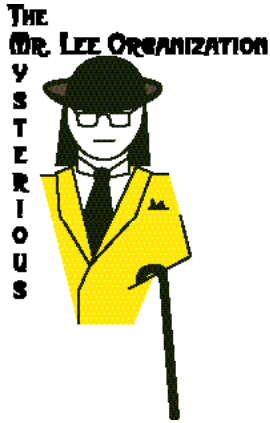


Kansas



She was doing it to me again. She stood in front of me in the doorway to my room, one arm leaning up against the doorjamb, one arm loose against her side, white cotton camisole with spaghetti straps, white cotton panties. “You like business trips?” she asked. “They’re a pain,” I said, folding dresses and packing my garment bag, trying not to look at her. “I have to cart this thing around. I have to be on stage ten, twelve hours a day. I have to smile and laugh and pretend I care about the product. I have to go out for dinner and drinks with them when I’m the only single woman in the room. The only nice thing is they pay for all of it, everything.” “That would have to be fun, though. Nice hotel. Go away for a few days. Eat in decent restaurants. No more spaghetti every night.” She lowered her arm as she talked, leaned to the other side. I could see her breasts shifting through the thin cotton, nipples brushing against it. Her underwear was cut high on her hips, elastic bands curving up on either side of her pussy. It seemed snug. I kept busy putting socks in the corners of my bag, and looked at her. She was gazing away, running her fingers through her dirty-blond hair. I was still in my sweats. Another night at home. Laura envying me going away on another trip, another high-tech marketing extravaganza; me envying her staying home, sitting on the couch with a pint of Ben & Jerry’s, watching cable. She was chattering on about how much she hates cooking; I was nodding, folding, wondering if she sometimes likes to press the pint of cold ice cream against her cunt just long enough to feel it burn, the way I do sometimes, standing in front of the freezer in the dark. I looked at her breasts heaving through the white cotton. Her boobs are bigger than mine, at least another size; we joke about it when we borrow each other’s clothes, how she stretches out my sweatshirts. Her nipples were clearly standing out now, casting little shadows from my bedroom light. I glanced between her legs again, wondering if I could see her lips outlined. I looked up at her, and saw her looking right at me. Did she know?



Why did she do this to me? Laura and I have been living together for a year and a half. We met through friends, both of us looking for a decent apartment in Boston at the same time, hit it off right away. There’d never been so much as a raised eyebrow between us for the first year—just hanging out, complaining about guys and our jobs, going out, renting movies. We’re single, we’re in our twenties, we’re roommates. There are thousands of people like us in the city, right? So why had she taken to wandering around the house in her underwear? Ever since it started getting warm, she was forsaking her sweats for a t-shirt and underwear. Once, I swear, there was no underwear. She was sitting on the couch and I was across from her in the big green chair, and I thought I saw fuzz between her legs, and when I couldn’t stop looking I made myself get up and leave the room. I hadn’t had a boyfriend the whole time we’d been living together. There was Rick, a guy I saw now and then, but we weren’t really a couple, just friends who fell into bed together every couple of months when we both needed it. Laura had a boyfriend for a while, Travis, who made her pant and moan like thunder in the bedroom, and always made me uneasy when he hung around our kitchen. They’d split up months ago. We admitted to each other that we liked it better having just the two of us around. I’d been paying more attention to her boobs. Did she know? I don’t know how it began, I just realized that I enjoyed

the way she swayed in her sweats. Then she started wearing less clothes. I started wondering what she was doing in the bathtub. I mean, I knew, of course, but I started thinking about it. Weekend evenings she'd soak in there for an hour, just the little bulb over the sink lit up. I'd be sitting on my bed trying to read, and then I'd start to feel strangely constricted, distracted. I'd read the same sentence three, four, five times. Finally, a few weeks ago, I quietly stepped into the hallway and sat down outside the bathroom, listening. I could hear water swishing, I could hear low moans. I knew what those moans meant. The last couple of months, she'd been leaving the bathroom door open when she took a shower in the morning. First just a crack, now wide open. "Laura, you want me to close this?" "No, thanks, I'm just letting the steam out, if it doesn't bother you." It didn't. I'd walk past in the hall and see the vague outline of her hands, her legs, her hips through the curtain. I'd stand and gawk. I knew she could probably sense me there, too. I told myself I was just appreciating Laura as a beautiful woman, which she was—about five-five, firm upturned breasts, taut ass, legs looking longer than they really were. Dirty blond hair that hung straight and ended just above her shoulders. She worked in a hair salon, so she always had to look good, and she also got a discount. She got invited to cool parties, too. I told myself I was just admiring her body. Harmless. People painted nude women because they were beautiful, not because they were horny, right? Besides, she's my roommate—I have to share a place with her, pay the bills, argue about cleaning the fridge. I fought it for a while. I was still fighting it. I'm no prude: Every woman has those strange dreams now and then, the ones that don't really mean anything, the ones that just mean you really feel close to another woman. I've had lesbian friends, co-workers, whatever. One night at a college party, drunk and happy, I kissed a girl from my drama class on the back porch -- hands on each other's hips, chests pressing against each other, my face so flushed and red, but it didn't feel right enough to do anything more. So why was I feeling this way about Laura? Was she sending me signals? Was she leading me on? Was I imagining it? Had she seen me staring at her cunt? Did she know?



"I've never stayed in a really nice hotel before. You know, nice furniture, big bed, marble sink. Is that the kind of place you stay?" "Sometimes. The DuPont in Delaware was like that. It had this huge bathtub and all these nice bubble baths and soaps. The bed was a little higher than normal, so I felt like I was on a pedestal. I told everyone that I was feeling a little ill, so I didn't have to go out with them, and then I went back and took a long bath and put on the terrycloth robe and sat at the window in the dark." She knew what I'd been doing in the tub, I was sure. She was sitting now on the wooden floor of my room, legs crossed, the white triangle between her legs tugging at my eyes, her nipples perky as hell. My boobs are smaller than hers, like I said, but as I stood and swiveled and reached into my closet and bent over my bed, I could feel my own nipples scraping against gray cotton. I felt warm. "But most of the time," I said, "it's just all right. A nice hotel, but a small room. It's always jammed with my stuff. And it's not like I'm even going to these places to see the sights—it's just meetings and meetings and then these forced dinners. Like this week, I'll be in Kansas City for four days, but I'll probably never go downtown or eat the barbecue or hear any music, because I'll be so busy demonstrating products and all this shit." "Poor Susan," Laura pouted. "All alone in her little room. No one around but boring old guys. Nothing to do but soak in the tub." I threw a pair of black hose at her. "It sucks. Really. I'd rather be at home. You're going to have the place to yourself for four days. You can do whatever you want. You can meet some guy and have wild sex on the floor and I'll never even know. You can—"

"If I do that, I'll be sure to tell you," she giggled. "I'll brag about it for weeks. It's been too long, you know?" She threw the hose back at me and stared. She kept staring when I turned away. "How long has it been?" I asked. "Something like four months now." "What's the longest you've ever gone without getting laid?" "Something like four months." She giggled again. This is the kind of thing she did to guys when she wanted their attention—tease, flirt, hint, but leave it to them to finally have to make a move. Usually, then she'd shut them down cold. It was cruel to watch, sometimes. But I was starting to understand about the giggle. "What's the longest for you?" "A year and a half, when I was in college. After Charlie broke up with me. I just didn't want to do anything with anyone." "Nothing?" "Nothing. I stayed at home." And because I was in the dorm, I couldn't take a long bath and slide myself under the faucet. And because I had a roommate

in the top bunk, I couldn't throw off my sheets and rub myself in the night. And because I couldn't do any of that, I tried not to think about any of it, and just pretended like I didn't want any of it. Should I say it? I opened my mouth and said it: "A year and a half is a long time to go without coming once." This wasn't an offer, wasn't a pickup line, just a new kind of confidence between us. We'd talked about guys, of course—how long they were and how long they lasted, if they went down on us without being asked, if they made funny noises when they came. They'd have slunk out the back door, tails between their legs, if they'd ever heard us talking the way we did. But never had we talked about orgasms. Laura made a big show of dropping her mouth open. "I don't think I could last a week without coming once," she said. There. It was out. I smiled, looked at her. "I couldn't either, now that I know better," I said. "So that's why staying in a nice hotel can be nice." She had this devilish look on her face now, the one she gave to guys when she decided it was all right for them to start resting their hands on her thigh in a crowded club. "Especially if their bathtubs are nicer than ours."



Airports always turn me on. I don't know why. Something about the people coming and going, strangers all crammed into the same place for a few hours, the anonymity, the movement. When I was a girl I'd watch old black-and-white movies and imagine myself in one of those train stations, decked out in some sexy A-line dress and a hat that cast glamorous shadows, waiting for my dark-haired mystery man to arrive on the midnight express. Then I got older and found out about sex. And I started going to airports. Walking through Logan in a tan skirt and a blue pullover, garment bag over one shoulder, canvas briefcase over the other, I looked like a million other travelers. Nothing special about me. Don't look here. I certainly didn't fall asleep with my hand inside my panties, picturing my roommate's nipples, a fingernail scraping my clit, my open mouth biting at the pillow to keep from yelling out. Airports turn me on. Couples are standing in corners, getting ready to say goodbye after long weekends at the shore or in the country. Couples are embracing in the middle of the hallway, wrapping themselves around each other in long, deep kisses. Good-looking men are sitting in those deep bench seats, eyes scanning over the top of their Business Weeks, watching women like me walk by. College kids are going home for the weekend, ready to tell their high school friends about the wild shit that goes down in their dorms. Wives leave their husbands for a while. Boyfriends leave their girlfriends for a while. They go away, to places where nobody knows them, where no one will recognize their face in a smoky bar, where they can watch a dirty movie late at night on the hotel pay-per-view, where they can wander through the "Anonymous" books at a Barnes & Noble and not have to worry about their boss spotting them. They sit in hotel bars at night, drinking on the company tab, telling half-truths about their lives and falling together for a night or two. Airports turn me on, but it's not all in my head. Over there, where the plane from Cleveland is letting out, the guy with the sharp haircut and gray suit is wrapping his arms around his girlfriend in the yellow sundress. She's not wearing a bra; the straps are too thin, the material is too light, she's feeling him press against her chest, he's feeling her back, kissing the side of her neck, whispering something in her ear. He slips his hands down her hips, feels nothing, whispers again, smiles. She's wearing nothing underneath. She grins and holds his hand as they start walking toward the parking garage. When Charlie went away for spring break in our sophomore year, that was me. I stayed on campus, borrowed my roommate's car, picked him up at the airport in a long print dress with a neck that billowed nicely open when I bent over. He got off the plane in jeans and a flannel shirt, like always; I leaned over to kiss him, watched his eyes work lower, until he realized he could see all of me. I had barely kept my hands off myself in the car that day. At the baggage claim, I squatted on my haunches in front of him, pretending to look at the straps on his bag. He looked down, saw me naked between my legs, smiled. In the garage he took me around to the side of the car and pressed my back against the glass, his hand pulling the dress up until he could reach me. He slipped two warm fingers inside of me and I came, effortlessly, quietly, chewing my lip, thinking it would only get better in the car and back in the dorm and when we got home, thinking it would always be like that, that when I picked him up from all the business trips he'd take in the next 50 years, I'd never wear underwear. It would be our little secret. Charlie left. The thing about airports didn't. I liked to

take a seat where I could watch the crowds, eyeball the guys with cute asses in old Levi's, watch them watching me, watch the couples hand-in-hand, watch the older men in impeccable suits and strong silver hair and a firm presence about them. They'd cheat on their wives for me. I'd let them. Of course, I never did; it was just fun to watch and imagine before diving into a marketing report. So it was completely harmless, when I sat down in Logan, to aimlessly watch the women too. There were the professionals—black miniskirts, black hose, briefcase, sharp yellow or blue blouse, jacket. Which ones were the wild ones, the ones who fucked three different guys one day years ago when they were feeling out-of-control, the ones who bought vibrators on their out-of-town trips and brought them home to show their husbands, the ones who liked to be tied up? I watched them strut past with their wheeled carry-ons, imagining what they'd look like in wild-eyed passion—mouth open, eyes shut, hair flying, squeezing their tits hard in their hands, squatting over a dildo and fucking themselves silly. There were the students—jeans and t-shirts and plenty of layers, hair cut wild and dyed unnatural orange. Which ones were the ones just coming out, the ones who were learning about other girls in some funky candlelit dorm room, the ones who decided to let their armpits grow, the ones who smeared their blood on their chests one day in the bathtub just to see what it felt like? I watched them curl up on the benches, imagining what they'd look like all curled up with each other, fingers tracing lines down each other's sides, ducking their heads between each others' legs, tongues swirling in their cunts. There were the wives—khakis and light summer sweaters, maybe a couple of kids to keep an eye on. Which ones were finally learning to embrace their own orgasms at home in the afternoons, keeping nasty porno videos hidden in their underwear drawers where they think their husbands won't find it, rubbing themselves silly on vacuum cleaner hoses? I watched them saunter past in comfortable shoes, imagining what they look like in mid-afternoon, lying with their legs splayed on their newly-made beds, fingers a blur digging into their bush. Jesus, what was I doing? I looked around, convinced someone had seen my thoughts plastered on the wall above my head: "Average-looking black-haired woman here, turned on by imagining sex lives of other women walking past." Or this: "Still obsessed with idea of kissing roommate, feeling roommate's nipples in mouth, touching roommate's pussy, trying to crawl into bed with roommate one night on pretext of being upset." Or this: "Multi-orgasmic when she's in the right mood, utterly unpenetrated in months except by her own fingers, wondering what she'll do with four days and no plans in Kansas City." What the hell was wrong with me?



She's not my type. Frizzy brown hair billowing around her head, a simple light blue business suit, white hose, ugly flats. Maybe a year or two younger than me. Nothing alluring. Nothing exotic. Standing behind her in line at Starbucks, no one would look at her twice. But I wasn't behind her. I was sitting next to her for two and a half hours from Logan to O'Hare, me next to the window, her in the middle seat, a dozing grandfather on the aisle. Our conversation petered out politely—traveling on business, going to Phoenix for a meeting with other bank execs, hoping we make our connections in Chicago. She pulled out her stacks of spreadsheets; I took out my New Yorker and started reading about Brazilian politics. I didn't get far. The same paragraph, over and over, my mind wandering. What was she going to do in Phoenix? Was she looking forward to a hot bath by herself as much as I was? Was she going to sleep naked, or still wear the ratty old t-shirts and panties she wears at home? Was she even conscious of her body? Oh, shit. She's not even good-looking, I told myself, even as my eye kept wandering to see her breasts from the side. Pretty nice, actually. I looked down to where her skirt was riding up. She was sitting with her legs spread, one tapping up and down rhythmically. I watched. I kept the magazine spread on my lap for an hour, through the little veggie-wrap that United calls lunch, through the drink service, over Pennsylvania and Ohio. I didn't read it. I kept looking at her side, looking down, imagining the shape of her body, imagining her stripping off her hose in Phoenix, imagining her stepping out of the airport into the hot Arizona afternoon, feeling a trickle of sweat running down her back. I saw her lying on her stomach on her hotel bed, biting her lip, humping her hand, wondering if she could come if she'd only let herself stick a finger inside. It was too much. I made a pretense of turning the page every couple of minutes, but I wasn't reading. I was fantasizing. It wasn't just her—it was

me with her, me sitting in a chair in her room, watching her undress; me running my hands up and down her stockings, feeling them silky along her thighs; my fingers drifting through her messy hair, my mouth tasting the back of her neck, my hands squeezing another woman's breasts, feeling her pussy get wet. Jesus. I was getting wet, too. I crossed my legs and crossed them again; I felt mushy, hot, flustered. My bra felt tight; I looked down and could see my nipples outlined through the fabric. This was too much. This had never happened to me before. I squeezed past her and past the old man, waited in line at the back of the plane and closed the bathroom door behind me. I flipped the plastic seat down and sat on it, my skirt bunched up around my hips, and pulled down my panties. They had started out light blue that morning, old and reliable. Now they were soaked through in the middle, a dark blue splotch two inches long. I held them in one hand and poked at the stain with my finger. It was more than wet—it was a puddle. One foot on the door, one on the sink, and I was off. I started the way I always do at home—pinching my left nipple hard, suddenly, pulling on it, and then grasping the whole boob in my hand, wrenching it. Right hand circling my slit—start by tickling the hair, stroke up and down the wet skin, plunge in two fingers when I can't stand to wait anymore. Switch hands. Repeat. Even after squirming in my seat for an hour, unable to focus and heating up slowly, I still was able to keep myself under control. No wild moaning. No feet pounding against the door. This wasn't some long-hidden fantasy of mine—pulling myself off in an airplane bathroom—and the cruddy old plastic walls weren't exactly erotic. This was simply how I come when I want to come quick, when I can't sleep or am wracked with cramps. So why, when I switched hands again, did I find three fingers slipping easily inside my pussy, not just two? Why could I feel the impact even harder than usual on my g-spot? Why, when it finally hit me, did the shudders keep moving through me? Finally, I put my feet down and figured I'd better get out. The bathroom didn't smell too bad. I looked at my wadded-up panties sitting next to the sink and realized there was no way I was putting that wet thing back on me—it would have been like putting a wet swimsuit back on after I got dry. So I pushed them deep into the trash barrel, washed my hands, and headed back up the aisle with my pussy drying in the air. Sitting back down next to Miss Average, I tried to convince myself that I'd stopped my silly lusting. I picked up the New Yorker and focused on yet another piece of incomprehensible English fiction. And I started reading the same sentence over and over, until I looked once more to my right.



She never noticed, of course. I had a bit of a scare when I reached up to pull my garment bag from the overhead bin, but then I was out walking through O'Hare, as anonymous as anybody else, picking up a slice of pizza and a Coke, sitting with my legs tightly crossed in a booth by the wall, and heading for a comfortable spot at my next gate to kill another hour. Faces walking by. Bodies walking by. Imagining what the men and women in front of me looked like naked—dangling balls, jiggling boobs. Picturing men with their cocks hanging out, me able to just walk up and grab one, no consequences. Picturing women with their tits on display, me able to stroke them and watch their nipples rise, kissing them passionately in the middle of the airport. I looked down and saw my own nipples pressing through my shirt. I was definitely getting out of control. What was I going to do about it? I got up, hoisted my bag over my shoulder, and walked down to one of the far gates. I strolled down the last row of facing seats, where a collegiate hippie chick with long red hair was sitting against the wall reading "Steppenwolf." Figures. I plopped my bag down, made brief friendly eye contact, sat down across from her and opened the New Yorker once again. I was never going to read this magazine. First I sat with my legs crossed demurely, swinging one foot and savoring the little vibrations it caused. Then, after a few minutes, I planted both feet on the ground with my legs a little bit apart. Hippie Chick looked up, looked around, looked at my face, looked at my legs ... kept her eyes there for a minute ... and went back to Herman Hesse. I waited a minute or two. Then, pretending to be engrossed in a ballet review, I folded my right leg under me and settled down on it like a cat, spreading my thighs a little. This caught her interest. She looked up and kept looking up. I could sense her eyes on me, but I focused on the page in front of me, little black squiggles on white. She was sitting on the floor, her eyes even with my crotch. It was bright and sunny in our corner, down by the windows. She could see me. She could see my black curly

hair. Maybe she could see my lips, still swollen and puffy and wet, spreading slowly apart the way they do when I'm excited. Maybe she could tell how excited I was. I shifted in my seat, just to see what she'd do. Her head shot down to her book again. We sat for a few minutes, her looking up occasionally to see what she'd see, then looking down again. Could she see my clit swelling? Could she see it fiery red, begging to feel a fingernail against it, wishing for a cock to crash against it as some faceless guy pounded me again and again? I hadn't planned any of this. I tried to figure out why I was doing it, why I was flashing my cunt at a random girl in Chicago, why I had to show myself to a woman like this. I couldn't answer. Of course it had nothing to do with Laura, I said. Of course not. Then I pulled my other leg up and propped both of them in front of me, heels on the seat, knees up. I knew my cunt must be hanging there obscenely, lips clear and slick, squeezed together between my thighs. I buried my face in the magazine, but could just see her head to the side of the page. She was staring, of course—at my pussy, at my face, at my pussy again. She shifted in her seat. She had to know something was up, didn't she? Or was she young and clueless enough to think I was older and clueless? I must have sat like that for 15 minutes, turning pages occasionally, feeling one drop of juice after another drip down to the crack in my ass. It was excruciating. I wanted to touch myself. If she had reached over to me—she was only about ten feet away—I would have let her touch me, would have gripped my knees and moaned as she stroked me. Instead, I sat there, getting frustrated, getting horny. I thought about stroking myself, but it would have been too much. I'm not ready to go that far ... although, I wondered, who would ever know? This couldn't go on. I had to stop. I had to catch my plane. I suddenly set down the magazine and looked her straight in the eyes. She blushed, jerked her head down toward my lap. If I were some kind of super-confident, super-sexual woman, I would have come up with some witty line for her. Instead, I kept looking at her until she looked up at me. Then I smiled wide, stood up, straightened my skirt and walked back to my gate. I could feel my thighs trembling.



No twenty-something woman next to me on the flight to Kansas City. It was a newer plane, one with two seats side-by-side, me by the window and a fellow in his late 30s sitting on my left on the aisle. No worries about reaching up to the overhead bin; they made me check the garment bag. I pulled down a blanket to stretch across me in case I just had to touch myself. Naturally, he wanted to talk. Wedding ring, polo shirt, jeans, curly black hair and a mustache. I hate mustaches. He was heading out to Missouri to update the systems on a big metal stamping machine, or something. "My name's Bob, by the way," he said. "I'm Laura," I said. "Pleased to meet you." He talked about the business of installing big metal stamping machines. He talked about the boat he hoped to buy and sail on Lake Michigan in the summertime. He talked about his family, about his daughter going into sixth grade and starting to have trouble with her homework. I didn't care. I made up scandalous lies about myself, telling him I was going to present a road show for a hot new Internet IPO, how I was living on nothing but Ramen Noodles and stock options, working 80 and 90 hour weeks in a hip office where all the programmers had nose rings and took me to crazy bars that didn't get hopping til 3 a.m. He obviously didn't know Boston bars close at 2. He was eating it up. I was loving it. I felt shameless, the way Laura often does, the way I never can. I crossed my legs and pulled my right arm under the blanket, resting my hand in my lap, testing myself to see how many minutes could go by before I started touching myself. "How long have you been married?" I asked. Fifteen years. He talked about marriage, talked about his wife, asked me if I had a boyfriend. No, I said. "Free and easy," I told him, "and I plan to stay like that for a long time." "That's fine, but don't stay like that for too long," he said. "Wait too long and suddenly you'll find you're all alone." He was probably right, but I didn't like hearing it on principle. "I haven't had a steady boyfriend for two years, but I don't get lonely," I said with a snort. Let him chew on that for a while. I dropped my hand into my lap. Slowly, slowly. He's right next to me. Keep breathing normally. Keep a conversation going. Talk about music. Talk about cars. Talk about anything where I can just say, "Uh-huh, uh-huh." On the other hand, why not? I slowly worked my skirt up, shifting right, shifting left, pushing the hemline up past the edge of the seat, under my thighs. He didn't even notice me shifting back and forth, didn't notice my hand sweeping around under my blanket. You poor dumb sonofabitch. I let out a big sigh in

the middle of one of his interminable sentences. I didn't even like him. I looked across the aisle; the people on the other side were sleeping, reading, wearing a Walkman. I turned my head and looked straight at him. "Bob, flip up the armrest, will you?" He did. "Now put your right hand on the seat between us." He did. Oh my God. It was happening. I could feel my nipples tenting again. "Now move your hand under the blanket, slowly." "Uh, Laura ..." "Just do it," I snapped. "I want to show you something." He still hesitated. I pouted for just a moment, then turned it into a smile, the way Laura would. "Just do it, Bob." He did it. He stopped cold when he felt my bare thigh against his hand, withdrew. "Keep going, Bob." Slowly, slowly, he put his hand back. "Now keep moving your hand toward me." My God, how long had it been since I'd felt a man's hands between my legs? This felt good. I didn't care. He reached my pubic hair and stopped again. He was considering madly, I knew—was this wrong? What kind of girl was I? Why wasn't I wearing panties? Isn't this the kind of thing he read about in Penthouse but never believed would have really happened to him? I looked him straight in the eyes and whispered, "Bob, I want this. I want you to touch me. I need this. Do it for me." I stopped, saw hesitation in his eyes. "I've been thinking about this since I sat down next to you," I lied. Then I looked at the seat in front of me and closed my eyes. He started rubbing me with a finger, got it a little bit moist, and stuck it right in. He was clumsy and wrong and had no sense of timing. I tried spreading my legs a little wider to make it easier, but it didn't help. It felt all wrong, but somehow, it worked. I could feel myself building to a climax, praying that he wouldn't stop, praying that he wouldn't screw it up somehow. "Keep going," I whispered between my clenched teeth, not even opening my eyes. He kept going, sticking in a second finger and poking me harder, and it wasn't long before I could feel that familiar flush creeping over me. It was all business—catch in my throat, hold my breath, squeeze, red flash in my head, and suddenly my genitals were sore. "Stop, stop now," I said, still not looking at him. He stopped and slowly pulled his hand out, setting it down on his lap. I could see his finger glisten. He kept trying to make conversation, but I wouldn't bite after that. I scrunched my skirt back down to my knees, wrapped my arms across my chest and looked out the window. I'm sure he was wondering what he had done wrong, but really, he hadn't done anything wrong. I didn't feel like explaining. Hell, I couldn't have explained it to myself. Kansas City was getting closer. I could see flat, square farm fields giving way to suburbs out the window. What was I heading into? What was I doing?



At the baggage claim, Bob kept trying to ask me if he could see me again. Nice dinner. Drinks. Nothing serious, nothing has to happen, he just really enjoyed talking to me, thinks I'm something special. Where was I staying? Did I want to share a cab? I acted cold and distant and I lied, lied, lied. I caught a cab by myself to my anonymous Hyatt in the suburbs. I watched the office parks and the strip malls whiz past, keeping my legs tightly crossed, feeling no urge whatsoever to flash the cabbie, feeling vaguely depressed. Twice today I had come in airplanes. Once fantasizing about a mousy banker with ugly shoes—a woman, don't forget—and once as a guy I felt nothing for stuck his fingers up my cunt. I had no idea what was pushing me to do this, what was turning me into this kind of slut. It was wrong. I dragged a married man into going to third base with me. I looked at everyone around me today as a body, an object, not a person. I had these crazy, utterly hopeless feelings for Laura, and I was acting out in ways that were so out of character. Sitting in the air-conditioned cab, watching this drab landscape roll by, listening to top 40 songs on the radio, I wanted nothing more than to go back to Boston, crawl into bed alone and read Jane Austen until I felt like myself again. I checked into my room on the twelfth floor, admiring the beautiful view of scenic Overland Park. The windows were sealed shut. I turned off the air conditioning, opened my bags, hung my work outfits neatly in the closet, stashed my jeans and underwear in the dresser, set out my makeup and toothpaste and shampoo, put the New Yorker on the nightstand, and crawled into bed. Okay. I was getting control of myself.



That night I dreamed of Laura. She was dressed in some sort of dominatrix bitch goddess outfit, all black leather and metal studs, with black stockings and garter belts and a whip in her hand. I was lying on my back

on a wooden floor, she was towering over me in high heels, and all my friends were standing around, laughing. I was, of course, completely naked. I wasn't tied down, but I couldn't move. My co-workers watched me squirm as Laura walked around me slowly. My college friends listened intently as Laura told me I had to be punished for thinking my dirty thoughts. I wanted to fuck a woman? Okay, I was going to get fucked by a woman. Laura was smiling wide, like she'd wanted to do this all along. My friends were enjoying the show, probably because they'd always expected to see me involved in something like this. I was shocked, too stunned to really move, getting closer and closer to the edge but unable to reach that peak, gritting my teeth and clamping my eyes shut, trying to block out the jeers of my friends, accepting my shame, turning redder and redder ... but it was never enough. I awoke panting and sweating, too mortified by my dream to finish myself off. Normally I don't have a hard time coming—Charlie taught me I didn't need perfect silence and perfect stroking to come like a banshee—but this unnerved me. Laura with a whip. Me at her feet. When I finally woke up and took a shower, I didn't even want to play with the detachable shower head. I dressed conservatively, acted calmly at the day's meetings. Four days of this to go. I didn't even feel that horny—maybe these urges were finally going away. Of all the people I met, none of them appealed to me. Except for a woman in her 30s, working in the back of the room at the client company, none of them were even remotely near my age. That made it easier. Meet, demonstrate, talk, pile into a cab for dinner, pile back to the hotel, go to bed, read the New Yorker. It's nice to be here in bed by myself, I thought. It's nice not to hear the TV, to hear Laura's old boyfriend talking about himself in the kitchen, to hear the neighbor's stereo through the walls. I bet Laura was enjoying herself too ... and as soon as I pictured her lying in our bathtub, the single bulb illuminating her form, the thought pinned me against the bed, arms at my sides, legs spread. I could feel my pussy lips spreading wider inside my panties. They were heating up, swelling, growing puffy, alive. I knew they were bright pink. I knew my nipples were standing up, starting to ache. I could feel myself moistening. My only movement was my chest rising, falling, as I breathed deeper. Laura was leaning back in the tub, one hand lazily trailing down her belly, teasing the blond fuzz between her legs. Laura was drizzling water across her soft skin; she was slowly stroking the insides of her thighs, scraping her nails against her, watching her muscles tense. She was propping one leg up, making a vee with her cunt in the middle. She was feeling the water lapping at her nipples, warm and inviting. She was rubbing, stroking, fondling. She was licking her lips, opening her mouth, waving her tongue into the steamy air. She was thinking of me. I got myself off through my clothes. I grabbed my left tit roughly, I plunged my other hand against the cotton between my legs, and rubbed hard and fast for 90 seconds until I came, a few brief gasps and a white flash before my eyes. I lay there, my own tongue swirling circles in the air, and knew I needed more. I walked into the bathroom and closed the door. I stand five-foot-six, about 120 pounds when I'm not on the rag. My hips line up with my shoulders; my boobs are smallish, at the upper edge of 34B, but I happen to think they're beautiful—pert and pointy, filling up the cups of my bras, curving deeper at the bottom than the top, standing on their own when I'm braless. Black curly hair, still cut above my shoulders, enough space at the back of my neck for someone to kiss me and make me come. I stripped off my t-shirt slowly, watching in the mirror as the nubs of my nipples became visible. They're big, like gumdrops almost. I can grasp them firmly, and I do, pulling hard on them when I come. I slid my panties off next, looking at my furry bush. Is that a turnoff? Should I keep it neat and trimmed like I've seen in Charlie's Penthouses? (All right, all right, like I've seen on the Web?) My God, I said, I'm beautiful. I am a sex machine. I can make a man crawl across a room to get between these legs. I can wear him out all night, and then I can get his best friend, too. I watched myself as I started stroking again, harder, faster, watching the red flush spread blotchy across my chest, watching my chest heaving, watching the way I trembled until I slumped against the counter, my fingers a glistening blur. I wanted more. I sat down on the floor and looked closely at myself in the mirror. Reaching down with both hands, I pulled away at both sides of my cunt, watching the lips separate. They really were puffy. I could see folds within folds, pink and fleshy and jumpy to the touch. I poked at my cunt curiously with my fingers—I'd never seen myself up close like this before. This is what guys saw—my clit hiding under that pink flap, my lips wider, my lips wild to their tongues. To Laura's tongue. I jammed two fingers into me, reaching up to grab my g-spot, while my other hand tore at my clit. I came again, within seconds, watching

myself panting in the mirror, watching my eyes roll and my lips writhe. I wanted more. I grabbed my nipples; it wasn't enough. I wanted more. I wanted to be wild. I reached up onto the bathroom counter for my big makeup bag and emptied it on the floor, eyeliner and nail polish and compacts clattering around me. There in the center was my hairbrush, a big wooden handle gnarled and worn. I wrapped my fingers around the brush and held the handle against my pussy lips, savoring the view, teasing myself. I had never done anything like this before, but now it seemed so right, so firm, so solid, so big. With a wiggle of my hips I slipped it into me, feeling the bumps slide over my clit, feeling the end bump up against me, feeling my body adjust to a strange firm object inside me. It wasn't like a cock—too thin, too straight—but it was close. I started sliding it in and out, twisting it like a butter churn, riding myself like a joystick. In the mirror I saw myself wild-eyed, saw the muscles in my arm flexing and bending, saw the lips of my pussy sloshing and stretching. I came again. It wasn't enough. When I pulled the hairbrush out my lips stayed open, leaving a black canyon between the lips. I wanted more. I reached over and grabbed my shampoo bottle out of the shower: This would be a challenge. It wasn't enormous enough to make the whole idea laughable, but I still couldn't get my finger and thumb to touch when I wrapped my hand around it. I started by sliding its smooth, cold edge against me—not much friction, but the motion felt exquisite. Soon I had worked the top of the cap inside me and was pushing with one hand, trying to get the whole end in me, using my other hand to tease my clit, poking and pulling and scraping, making my whole chest flush red, feeling my breath get shorter. The woman in the mirror was humping a shampoo bottle, for God's sake, pressing the wide top into her, trying to feel her cunt expand to accept it, to fill something insatiable inside her. I leaned back to make the angle easier, but still the shampoo bottle wouldn't work, not yet. I dropped it in frenzied frustration and fished around for something else. My toothbrush case—too narrow. A vitamin bottle—wide enough to feel very nice, but not long enough to push it deep. A tube of hand cream—just right. I slipped it in, out, in, out, the crimped end of the tube sliding very nicely against my clit. My free hand found the string that I keep with me when I travel, with a couple of clothespins tied to it so I can hang clothes up to dry in the shower. I had an idea. Leaving the tube in my pussy—it looked so obscene there in the mirror, a white blob sticking out of me—I held my left breast in one hand, teasing the gumdrop with my fingernail until it strained to be touched, then snapped a clothespin down on it, hard. A searing flash of pain and then a warm glow, one that filled my whole body, made me shiver. When I snapped one on my right nipple next, I came instantly. This was too much. Looking at myself in the mirror—tube in my pussy, string tied to my nipples, sweat cascading between my breasts, cunt juices puddling on the floor, my hair wild around me—I was turned on just watching myself. Is this what Laura looked like right now? Was she jamming a hairbrush into her cunt too, water sloshing around her and spilling onto the floor? Was she calling my name? Was she dreaming of me? I pounded and pulled and pushed, my body screaming, my mouth wide, my moans echoing off the tile floor, until I simply collapsed. I don't know how long I lay there until I disengaged myself from my improvised fuck-toys. I stood up when the floor started getting cold under my ass, when my pussy felt uncomfortably squishy as it tried to recede, when the clothespins on my nipples started looking foolish and hurting like hell. I got into the shower, and this time, I used the massager. When I went back to sleep, I didn't dream.



The next day, I knew exactly what I was heading for. I squirmed my way through another day of meetings, another dinner of smiles and edgy casual talk, my mind wandering far afield from software specs. I had gotten dressed specially that morning—I don't know why I brought black satin panties with me on this trip, but I'm glad I did—and every time I crossed my legs, I loved the feeling of nylon stretching across my skin. Thank God I wasn't oozing. At dinner I had an extra glass of wine. In the cab home, I pushed my skirt up to the base of my ass and teased my inner thighs through my stockings, biting my lip in the dark. In the elevator I leaned back against one wall and looked at my reflection in the mirror, admiring the line of my skirt, unbuttoning my blouse down to my bra. When I walked into the room I turned on all the lights—overhead, next to the bed, bathroom, by the chairs. Then I pushed the drapes to the sides until my window was a wide pane overlooking Overland Park. Hello, Kansas. My show was about to start. I had been planning this all day. I

didn't know a soul in Kansas City, and no one would ever be able to identify just which window this was on the twelfth floor of a glass-faced Hyatt. Would anyone even see me? Who knows? There was another hotel across the boulevard, hundreds of feet away, but if I was able to scan their windows from mine, then some man or woman—a woman, I hoped—would surely be able to take note of me. I started with my jacket, peeling it off, draping it over a chair. Then I walked back and forth a few times, strolling to one side of the room to take off my earrings, then to the other to set them down. I unbuttoned my blouse all the way but let it hang loose, hoping someone was looking for a glimpse inside billowing white cotton. When that finally came off, I stood near the window and looked around the room, my back to the world. I was wearing a demi-cup bra, almost a shelf, really, solid and firm and pushing my boobs up. My skin was electric. Turning, I faced the window, trying to act oblivious about the world. I couldn't tell if anyone was watching me, but I knew who I was really performing for. She wanted to see my tits? Oh, yes, she did. I unsnapped the clasp between the cups and shimmied out of it, then took turns rubbing out the lines that the seams had pressed into my sides. Rubbing the sides, not the nipples, takes discipline. I stroked the sides, underneath, left, right. I kept stroking. I wanted someone to see me overcome with tension despite myself, wanted them to see my hands start exploring on their own. Soon I was pressing my left breast up in my palm, while my right hand traced a slow circle around my nipple until I grasped it between my fingers. Then I wet my fingers with my lips and did it again. Was she watching me? Was some woman sitting at the edge of her window, lights off, leaning against the glass, running a hand between her thighs, breath fogging the glass in her air-conditioned room, praying that I didn't close my drapes? If Laura saw this, would she be trickling down her thighs? I pulled a chair into the center of the room and imagined myself on a stage somewhere, lots of dim eyes in the darkness watching me, hands stroking themselves at me. I reached under my skirt and pulled my pantyhose down just below my ass, then sat on the chair facing the window and waved my legs high in the air. I rolled them off my legs one at a time, drawing each leg up to my body, until finally I was sprawled against the seat with my legs bent at my ears. I teased them, stroked them like I'd been dreaming of all day, like I'd done in the cab. My skin was on fire. My nipples were straining. I reached from my knees to the narrowest point of my panties, feeling my cunt burning. I stood up and paraded back and forth, walking around the room in my bunched-up skirt, gathering things up and putting them down, seeing how long I could tease my audience, how long I could tease myself. It was about four minutes. In the mirror I saw my tits bounce as I walked, saw my sexy form, dreamed of how women would drool at the thought of biting my nipples with their teeth, at the thought of holding my arms down on the bed while they forced their boobs into my mouth. I unbuttoned my skirt and stepped out of it, hung it neatly in the closet, then stood in front of the window again. No pretense now. I started rubbing myself through the satin, crazy for the feel of the fabric against my clit. I put a hand against the window to steady myself, and when I finally moaned into my first orgasm I collapsed my whole body against the cold glass, tits and shoulders stinging. Then I dropped my panties, leaned back in the chair, spread my legs wide and started again. And again. And again. I was insatiable. I know I had an audience by now. I plunged my fingers into me, rubbed circles and lines and slashes against my clit, worked my fingernails like pincers all over my skin, closed my eyes and gulped for air. My orgasm was a series of waves crashing against the shore—small, small, a broad plateau, then a crashing blow that wracked me and made my breath loud and raspy. It never stopped. I never stopped. Next to me on the floor I had placed the shampoo bottle. Picking it up, warming it in my hands, I held it against me and pushed. This time—slick with sweat and come and juice, my cunt gaping—it went in. First just the very top, then an inch, and then, as I gently pushed and pulled, a few inches. I kept sliding it back and forth—it didn't have the friction of the hairbrush, or even of Charlie's cock, but it was the biggest thing I'd ever had in me in my life—until I fell into an orgasm like I'd never had before: A wrenching peak that never stopped, the top of a wave hitting the shore over and over again, my eyes open but my sight blinded, my skin bursting out of itself, my body alive and shouting. My lips were dry. My hands were crimped into little balls. My knees were pressed against my chest. My cunt had never felt so full, so voracious, so insatiable. When it finally ended, I pulled the shampoo bottle out of my pussy with a loud splish and set it down, utterly spent as never before. I almost fell asleep like that, but I stood up, blew a kiss to the world, doused the lights with a flourish, and marched straight into

the bathroom for a quick shower. This time I didn't even touch myself. I could see a wide, naughty smile on my face when I brushed my teeth. It was still there when I fell asleep.



I was mortified when I woke up. Sun was streaming in the windows instead of being blocked by the drapes; I was sprawled on my bed naked instead of in a t-shirt and panties; and I slowly remembered how I had been so insatiable that I showed a whole city. Normally I'm not an exhibitionist. I've almost never gone out without a bra, I've always closed my bedroom window, I've never even responded to Laura's flashing by showing some of my own skin. I flashed Charlie in the airport, sure, but that was just for him. This was going too far, and it was all because of Laura, I told myself. There was no way I could do anything with her—she was my roommate, after all, and maybe I was just imagining her interest in me—but clearly she was tapping into some sort of urge, something that I couldn't even talk about with my friends, something that I'd been hiding for a long time. I tried to lower myself back into the mundane world. I talked product features, chatted with engineers over lunch, spent time with the hard-edged sales types my company sends on trips with me. I ended the night swilling a couple of martinis with them in the hotel bar, two guys and a woman in their forties, full of stories about the big deals they've made and their suffering families and their boats back in Boston. They're not bad people, really, even though I try not to spend much time with them; as I sat there, ever-conscious of trying to keep perverted thoughts out of my mind, I envied their solidity. They weren't confused and horny, I told myself. They weren't perplexed by questions about their sexual orientation. They were just average folks, and I was a freak, a would-be lesbian freak. My mind swam in gin and vermouth. I talked more than I normally do, which still wasn't much against three salespeople, but I could feel tension seeping away. All around the room were other people like us, still in the expensive suits and dresses that we wear to client offices all day, sipping seven-dollar drinks and putting them on our corporate AmEx cards, occupying the same space for a few hours before moving on. Just like an airport. Oh, shit. One guy at the bar kept eyeing me. Rugged-looking, maybe early 40s, stiff sandy hair and a dark blue shirt, sitting alone and watching baseball but every now and then looking at me. Turning his head to make sure I noticed. I made eye contact, smiled over the top of my martini glass, looked away. Every couple of minutes after that, we'd lock eyes again and look away. This was harmless flirting, and I loved it. I was sitting at a table full of drab married people, and a good-lucking guy was making eyes only at me. I looked around and realized that I was probably the youngest, hottest thing in the bar. Our table broke up early, and it was only when I stood up that I realized what two martinis had done to me. I wasn't wobbling, but the world seemed to move fluidly past me; I felt warm and sexy and happy, my lesbian issues safely put aside, surrounded by friendly people, living well on someone else's money. Up the elevator, good night to my colleagues, and inside my room. Except I wanted more. No more explosive masturbation; no more late-night dreams of my roommate's legs crossing and uncrossing on the couch. I wanted hands on me. I wanted to be undressed. I wanted to feel weight on top of me. I wanted a cock. I don't go in for bar pickups; I'd hooked up for one-night stands exactly twice in all my years, and never really wanted more than that. But now, for whatever reason—the liquor, the desire to get Laura out of my mind, sheer lust—I wanted to get fucked. I stripped off my panties, looked at my smiling face in the mirror, and headed back downstairs. He was still sitting there at the bar, and he couldn't hide the surprise on his face when he saw me strolling through the door alone. I sat down next to him and said nothing. "Couldn't leave after all?" he asked. "Welcome back. You want another of those martinis?" Hell, yes. He was charming up close, gray eyes and a little stubble on his cheeks, witty. He claimed to be a consultant in town from San Francisco to study a proposed building downtown; he said his name was Philip, and I didn't see a wedding ring. I claimed to be part of that Internet IPO, said my name was Laura, and tried to make up in bravado what I lacked in experience with random encounters. The bartender kept looking our way when he thought I wasn't watching. I don't remember what we talked about. I don't remember what the pretext was to go to his room. I don't remember much past the third martini. I just remember that I wanted it, and I was going to make him give it to me. I remember leaning into his shoulders in the elevator, trying to make it clear that I was the one in control, even as he was reaching up to grab my ass and jerking his eyebrows up when he

realized I was naked underneath my skirt. He was sexy, I'll give him that, and he knew what he was doing. He left the lights off when we entered the room, and gently pressed me face-first against a wall as he stood behind me and breathed hot against the back of my neck. I twisted my face to the side and he started nibbling on my ear. I kept my hands on the wall as his roamed over me, mauling my tits through my blouse, reaching up and down my thighs, grasping my hips firmly as he pressed his hard-on into me, unbuttoning buttons and unzipping zippers, as my clothes fell around me. I trembled and he held me up. This was exactly what I wanted—to be delirious with joy while someone else did all the work. When I was naked, he led me to the bed and immediately kneeled between my legs, before I'd even taken his clothes off. His tongue was soft. He started slowly, tracing up and down my slit, even as I could feel myself engorged and dripping. I tossed from side to side, watching his sandy hair mesh with my bush, seeing the occasional flash of his tongue on my cunt. This was what I wanted—I wanted it good, I wanted it anonymous, I wanted it wicked, I wanted it straight. Just as I could feel myself at the brink of coming, he pulled away and watched me writhe, listened to my little moans. I reached out for him. He stripped in a flash and kneeled over my face, giving me a view up of his long, skinny cock, curved and urgent. He lowered it toward me, teasing, and I reached my tongue up, trying to get a little lick of his balls and his meat. I could smell that warm, earthy scent. It had been so, so long since I'd even touched a man; when I felt him inside me, I knew, it would take me to another level of euphoria. He was gentle in my mouth, and when we rolled over so I could take him deeper from above, I didn't even gag as my lips slipped along him to the base, feeling his pubic hair scratch against my lips. This was enchanted. This was perfect. "Do you want me inside you?" he whispered. "Yes. Get a condom," I whispered back. He halted. Uh-oh. "Are you protected?" he asked. "No," I lied. I'm on the pill, have been for years, but I can't do it without a condom with someone I don't know. This was bedrock. "I don't have anything with me," he said. "I don't have any." "Oh, shit," I sighed. I collapsed on top of him, my clit urgent against his leg, his dick pushing into my belly, and kissed him on the lips. "I can't do it without a condom. I can't." "Where are you in your cycle?" he asked. "It doesn't matter. I just can't." "Oh, come on," he said, exasperated. "Nothing's going to happen. You've gone this far with me and you didn't say anything?" That pissed me off. I rolled over and looked away. He tried to put a hand on my shoulder and I shrugged it away. "What's the matter?" he said, suddenly acting concerned. "Look, if it's really that much of an issue for you, we don't have to go that far." You're right, I thought, we don't have to do anything. A dark storm brewed up instantly in my mind—angry at him, burning to come, questioning my own standards, suddenly angry at myself for finding myself naked in a strange bed with a strange man. Put in that perspective, I realized that I was pretty proud of myself for refusing to do anything else. "Forget it," I said. He tried to put his hand on me again, but I stood up and started putting my clothes back on. "Oh, come on, Laura," he said, his erection bobbing in front of him as he tried to talk to me. He talked a long string of patter—we could make each other happy in other ways, I didn't have to leave, he wanted to spend more time with me—and all the while I was becoming a little bit more afraid that he'd try to stop me, try to do something. Fully dressed, I looked at him. He had looked so sexy in the bar, so full of spark, a twinkle in his eyes. Now he was desperate, pleading, wanting what he'd dreamed of in the bar, wanting what I'd implicitly promised him in the elevator. He wasn't a bad guy. I wasn't such a bad girl, either, I thought. "Sit down," I said. He did. I kneeled in front of him on the carpeted floor and gave the blowjob of my life, sucking and squeezing and licking him, my eyes closed, my mouth on fire. It turned me on more than I ever imagined. My nipples were turning all gumdrop again. My cunt was still aflame. When he came I kept sucking, my mouth a perfect seal, swallowing him salty, gulping, still swirling my tongue. He fell back on the bed, spent, looking cute but almost pitiful. "Wow, Laura, that was amazing," he said softly. "That was incredible. Come here. I want to make you feel the same way." I stood up, said nothing and walked out the door.



Friday dawned cold and rainy. Every night this week I'd gone to sleep captivated by sex, and every morning I'd woken up ashamed and embarrassed at what I'd thought or done the night before. This was the worst. I smiled through my day, focusing on marketing. The engineers handled the real technical details,

refusing to pay attention to me because I'm the good-looking woman who can't possibly handle them; I smiled, focused on contracts and features and deals, smoothed things over with the clients when the techies announced that things couldn't be done. It was the end of our four-day collaboration, and we were all in pretty good spirits. I was wearing pants—no need risking any urges. By the time the whole group headed out for dinner, a good 20 or so of us, I was happy to be thinking strictly about work, about a job well done, about a pleasant night out and then back to Boston in the morning. It helped, of course, that I didn't have any interest in any of the people on the project team; no furtive glances, no meaningful smiles, just normal human interaction. I need more of those in my life. We all piled into booths at a Pizzeria Uno, somewhere in the parking lot wasteland of Overland Park, and I found myself next to the woman in her early 30s, who turned out to be the engineer who designed her client's entire nationwide network. Diane was no fan of Overland Park either, and said made a point of living in downtown Kansas City. It had some life there. "When I was in school, half the reason I stayed in computer science was that the coolest people in the department were the ones who had the coolest hobbies," she said. "Weird old horror films, good live music, foreign beer. Most of those guys were like frat brothers, but I could hold my own with the top guys technically, and they were just starved to be around a real woman who could talk IP with them." "I always thought some of the computer people in my dorm were pretty neat," I said. "I was an English major, so I never really spent much time with them. But then when I started here, I realized I was pretty lonely." "I see it as being like a mascot," she said. "They like having me around, but they're kind of scared of me, too. I like letting them know that I spend my free time doing stuff that they can only imagine." She wanted to go outside to smoke. I hadn't lit up since college, but sure, this was a good excuse to get away from 18 computer people drinking beer from pitchers. A soft, warm rain was falling as we huddled under an awning, watching cars swish past. "I don't even do anything that exciting," Diane continued. "But I like them to think that I do. We come in on a Monday, I leave my weekends ambiguous. They know I'm not married. They know I wear lots of black. They know I've got a pierced belly button. I let them imagine the rest." "So what do you do?" "Mostly, what anyone else does. I go out for a drink. I hang out with my friends. I ride my bike. I watch cable." She took a drag on her cigarette. I watched her, arms crossed over black jeans and a black Gap ribbed t-shirt—damn those techies, they don't have to wear clothes that show stains—and I wondered if she was putting me on, too, trying to get me to read more into her. She had straight, short red hair and little silver rings in her ears. "Not much doing in Kansas City, then?" I asked. "Actually, there's some good music now and then," she said. "I'm going to a show later that should be good—some blues woman from Chicago. All my friends wimped out, but fuck 'em—I'm going alone." The night sounded better. I wanted to have a good time, forget about everything. "Mind if I join you?" She tossed her cigarette butt into the grass and smiled as she exhaled the last puff. "Sure," she said. "But you have to get out of those fancy clothes."



I was tingling, just a little, when we stopped back in my hotel room. It wasn't even sexual; she hadn't shown even a flicker of interest in me, and though I was starting to admire her ribbed shirt, I still wasn't that attracted to her. It was more that I was glad to be able to hang out with a cool chick for a night, someone who could show me hidden places, someone whose attitude might rub off on me. It felt like high school. In my hotel room, I didn't go into the bathroom to change. I turned my back to her, stripped off my blouse and pulled on a dark green polo shirt, dropped my fancy slacks and slid into jeans. I felt a little embarrassed to let her see my big flowered panties—she probably had on a black thong or something—but soon I was dressed again, turned around and facing her, continuing our conversation as if nothing had happened. If she had been leering at my ass, she didn't betray it. "Can I see your navel ring?" I asked suddenly. She shrugged, untucked the front of her shirt and lifted it. It was a small silver ring with a ball in the middle. It was beautiful. I told her so. "Thanks," she said, putting it away. "The people at work just think it's gross. They ask about whether it hurt. Of course it hurt. You want to get one?" "Yeah," I confessed. "The one I really want—it makes me feel like a pervert, and I'd never get it, but the one that looks really cool is the bar through the tongue." She

shivered a little and smiled. “Really? Now that one would hurt. But I know what you mean, I guess. And I don’t think it’s perverted.”



By the end of my third bourbon, the band still hadn’t started and I was crying in my glass. It was only part of a story, to be sure—nothing about my unrequited lesbian lust, nothing about what I shoved up my cunt in front of which window—but it felt just as painful. I told her how I hadn’t gotten anything in months, how I foolishly thought I was seducing a guy who ended up using me, how I filled myself with false confidence in order to fall into his hands. She watched, sipped, smoked, didn’t go out of her way to sympathize. I wanted a shoulder to cry on, and she wasn’t giving it. “Look,” she said finally, “first, I can’t really sympathize with you about not getting any cock, because I don’t do cock. I’m a dyke. And second, I think you’re beating yourself up. You wanted something, you couldn’t get it, you shouldn’t feel bad. You had every right to pick him up, and you had every right to get up and walk out when you wanted to. The only reason you’re blaming yourself is that you think you ought to feel guilty. But you shouldn’t.” Her words hung there in the smoke and the humid air, suddenly very clear in my mind. I was overloaded. The cool chick thinks I’m doing things right, and then she turns out to be someone who dreams about sucking women’s breasts, just like me. I didn’t know what to say. I didn’t say anything, but I stopped crying. “I’m sorry, did I shock you?” “No, no, it doesn’t bother me, I just didn’t—I mean, I know that’s a stupid thing to say, but really, I don’t care. I admire that.” And that’s a stupid thing to say, too, I told myself. “Hmm. Always good to be admired.” “You know I didn’t mean it like that.” “I know, I know.” “And everything else you said, that means a lot. I’m glad you think I’m not a slut.” She laughed, looked at me. “No, you’re not a slut,” she said. “I was a slut. I spent college on my back. I threw myself into fraternity basements with a bottle of Southern Comfort and no bra. I kept wanting to prove something to myself—how straight I was. Hah!” “So when did you know?” “I had to meet the right woman.”



The band was amazing. We were tucked at the far end of the bar, and we could barely make out the singer, but she was short and black and loud and powerful. She roared about her no-good home man, about her sweet-lovin’ side man, about lipstick on collars and cheap motel rooms, about all the things she was making sure to get from her next man after her last one turned into a skunk. Diane may have been a dyke, but she was mesmerized, too. We clapped and hooted and sang along, shouting loud in a seedy bar on a Kansas City back street, and I was deliriously happy. Midnight, 1 a.m. passed, and when the band played their final set I walked outside feeling electric. There was a night mist in the air, I felt awake and swimming through the world, and for the first time all week, my good feeling wasn’t sexual. I was thrilled just to be myself. “Thank you, thank you so much for taking me here,” I burred drunkenly to Diane as we walked back to her car. Thank God she was more sober than me. “You don’t have to thank me,” she said. “I was coming here anyway. You just invited yourself along.” I looked at her, hurt for a second, until I saw that she was smiling. “This was like a revelation,” I said. “How old are you?” “Twenty-five.” “I’m thirty-two. You’ve got a lot of growing up to do. Come on, let’s get in the car.” She stepped up to unlock the passenger side of her Civic, and as she did, I put a hand on her shoulder and pulled close to her, putting my face next to her neck. “I want to get closer to you,” I said, feeling foolish. She turned and looked at me. Our eyes, our lips, our tongues were inches apart. Her eyes studied my face. When she opened her mouth, I could feel her beery breath on my cheek. “You don’t know what you want yet,” she said, and turned away.



In the car we were quiet. I’d blown it. I found a woman who boosted my spirits, developed a goofy instant crush, and promptly made a pass at her and pissed her off. In a few hours I’d fly away and never see her again. I looked out the window and tried not to cry. I figured she’d spin me up to the Hyatt entrance and say goodbye. Then I’d have to walk past the doorman and the desk clerks, wondering why I was red-eyed and

staggering, wondering what variety of fucked up I was, exactly, until I collapsed on my bed, hating myself as much as ever. Instead Diane pulled into the parking lot and circled until she found an empty space, way in the back. “Come on,” she said, her blank face breaking into a smile. “I’d better walk you in there.” In the parking lot, I walked beside her quietly. In the elevator, I couldn’t help it, I put an arm around her and half-hugged her, not daring to look at her face. She reached an arm around me, too. In the room, I left the lights off but hurried into the bathroom to pee, and to wash my face, and to brush my teeth. When I came out, the lights were still off, but she had opened the drapes and was silhouetted against the night sky. She was fully clothed, sitting cross-legged on the bed. She patted a spot next to her, and I sat down, trembling. “You’ve never done this before.” “No.” “You’re curious.” “I want to.” “You’re just playing.” “I’ve been dreaming.” “Oh? Yeah? What have you been dreaming?” Oh my God, this was embarrassing. “I’ve been dreaming about women.” “Which women?” Shit. “A couple of different people.” “Like who?” “No one in particular.” “Bullshit. Who is she?” The whole time, she kept the same flat look on her face, never betraying any desire. I was sweating. “She’s my ... she’s my roommate.” “Oh, oh, oh, now I understand.” Diane leaned back on the bed, letting me watch the patterns of light on the curves of her chest, watching her short hair swing back in the dim light. “You want her bad. You think about her every night. You think she’s straight. So you get away from her for a week, and what do you do? You jump into bed with a guy, thinking that’s the answer. It’s not, Susan. I’ve been there.” I started crying, and this time, she took my head in her hands, just looking. My eyes were bubbling with tears, I was sniffing, I wasn’t even making sense when I tried to respond. She shushed me, put a finger to my lips, then pulled my head to her shoulder and patted the back of my head like anyone would do for a friend. “What time’s your flight?” “What?” “What time do you have to leave tomorrow?” “I think it’s at 11:30.” What did she want? I’d tear up my ticket, spend the weekend with her in an instant, if she’d only promise to keep holding me like that. Instead she reached over to the phone and called for a 9:30 wakeup call. Then she stood up, slipped out of her jeans and shirt, and sat back down on the bed. “Get undressed,” she said. “Let’s sleep.”



In my dream I was sitting on a park bench in Boston Common. I could see buses passing by in the distance, with Laura’s face splashed on the ads on the sides. People walked past with copies of People magazine in their hands, and Laura was posing on the cover. Laura was selling makeup, or maybe she was in a movie, it wasn’t clear, but she was everywhere. I was sitting next to Travis, her ex-boyfriend, and we were trying to smile whenever we saw her face, like she could see us too, except we both were so jealous of her but couldn’t say it out loud. When I woke up the sun was splashed across me. I was lying on my side, one arm tucked under me, one wrapped around ... Diane. She was sleeping, curled in the fetal position, facing into the sun also, wearing only a black bra and black panties—bikini, not thong. My bra was white and drab, my underwear looked juvenile, and my boobs were smaller than hers. I looked at her face in the light. Her skin was rough, and her features looked much less flattering in the daylight. I could see her resorting to black clothes and red hair dye after college, after realizing how invulnerable that made her feel, when she wanted to obliterate all her old connections and begin the rest of her life. She looked so vulnerable, sleeping there. Her body wasn’t poised to tease; she was resting on her side, arms and legs curved for nothing more than comfort. When I moved my arm, she stirred, opened her eyes, looked at me quizzically, then smiled, like she finally remembered who I was. “Do you still want to get closer to me?” “God, yes,” I said. She rolled over and put a hand on the side of my face, grazing my cheek with the tops of her fingers, running it around through my hair, behind my ear, along my neck. I closed my eyes and tried not to tremble, feeling sun glowing on my face. Then the fingers meandered down, stroking the sides of my breasts through my bra, drifting from one to the other, gentle friction driving me mad. Diane was watching my nipples harden, watching the smooth skin turn rough and crinkled. She was smiling. “Roll onto your back,” she said. I did. “Unhook your bra,” she said. I tossed it on the floor. “Take off your panties,” she said. I tried to look as sexy as I could wriggling around, until I freed them from my ankles. Then she straddled me, a knee on either side of my hips, looking down with a big grin. How did I look? I was naked, of course, my fur turning damp, my boobs sliding to the side just a little under

their own weight. Diane was glorious in the sunshine—tits spilling out of her black bra, panties pulled high on her hips, fabric taut against her mound, her mouth luscious behind red hair. I looked up at her and let my mouth fall open. Oh, shit, this is happening. She started kissing between my breasts, letting her tongue roll sideways, first to the left one, then the right. She circled her tongue around my nipples, getting closer, teasing, leading, but always pulling away. I ached, wanted tension, wanted pressure. I arched my back up, trying to push into her mouth, only to watch her recoil with a grin. When she finally made contact, it was with her teeth—biting hard, sucking my tit into her mouth, playing with the nipple with her tongue. This felt so different with a woman. Her hair, her skin, her smooth hands—she leaned farther onto me, rubbing her whole body against mine, and I was on fire. I could feel the pressure of her tits scraping against me, her long legs entwining with mine. Even her fingernails against my side turned me on. I was moaning, shifting from side to side, trying to pull her into me. She moved her head down, slowly, dragging her lips across my belly, licking my belly button, letting her fingers drift against my thighs, teasing me. Then her lips turned insistent, moving purposefully up one thigh, circling my swollen pussy, breathing hard against it but never touching, then up the other thigh. This was wild. I put my hands on her shoulders, desperate to touch her, trying to focus her between my legs. When she blew hard against me, I could feel every hair tingling, every nerve jangling, every inch of my skin begging. I shuddered and tried to guide her, but she was taking her time. Diane teased, but she teased for a reason, I thought to myself. She's done this before. She knows what speed to take me at. Or does she? "I want you," I breathed, low and heavy. "Please. I'm burning for you." She just laughed, kept breathing, moved up and down my thighs again. I tried to look at this whole scene. A woman I met with the night before was kneeling between me, her tits jostling against my knees, licking me. This was new and electric—getting licked is always good, but never this good. I wanted to do her, too—I wanted to taste her, wanted to feel her wet, wanted to nuzzle her boobs. I closed my eyes and tried to focus on just the sensation, a million nerve endings shooting the same nervous fire into my mind. My vision narrowed. I closed my eyes. Then, in a flash, she was on me. Her tongue focused on my clit, turning a tight circle against it. Oh, my God. Her fingers crept into me, pressing up, filling me, pushing my pubic bone against her chin. Oh, shit. I tried to hold back, tried to build up one huge crashing orgasm, and instead fell into a rolling wave that wracked my body and didn't stop. I clutched at her back, at the sheets, at her hair. She kept a firm grasp on me, her fingers still plunging in, her tongue still firm and hot and wet against me, as I crashed through uncounted moments of white-hot bliss. I don't remember her pulling out of me, just looking up and seeing her kneeling nonchalantly above me once more, a flush on her chest, her hair askew, smiling. "So was it everything you hoped?" she asked with a smirk. I reached up my arms. "I want more." When I got her under me, ripping away at her underwear, I started kissing her sloppy and all over. I wanted to taste her tongue. I wanted to feel the curve of her boobs rising into my mouth. I wanted to feel a nipple between my lips. My hands roamed across her, teasing and pulling, pretending that her body was my body, doing to her what I would have otherwise done to myself. She kept that cat-like grin on her face, smiling and slinking back and forth, nostrils flaring. Her pussy tasted fresh and clean. I expected it to be soft, and was pleasantly surprised to find it fleshy and firm, forcing my tongue to pry harder against her. She was squirming under me. I reached a tentative finger into her, slipped it slowly inside her, felt her muscles clasp it, slid another inside. I pulled out and pushed back again. My God, I was fingering her. I was fucking her. I was fucking a woman. All my dreams, all my visions of Laura, all my frustrated nights in bed and guilty mornings in the shower, and now here I was, dipping my head between Diane's legs, my face drenched with her juices, my skin still jumping with the force of her touch, feeling her hips grind beneath my tongue, feeling her body churn. I pressed inside her, rubbing her g-spot, working intently at her clit, feeling the hard nub, gauging the pace of her breaths, moving faster, pressing harder ... until she crashed against the shore, too, thrashing and moaning, a loud low sound from deep in her throat. She grabbed the back of my head and pressed my face hard into her, smashing my nose into her pubic hair. It was a little difficult to breathe. I didn't mind.



We lay there in the morning sun for a while, talking. She told me she'd never really come until she came with a woman, a good friend of hers who she traveled to France with after college. My heart swelled at the thought of it. I had a silly smile on my face, one that would stay there all day. As we talked, I couldn't stop touching her—stroking her hips, circling her breasts, teasing her hair. She reached out to me, too. We made each other come once more like that, lying down and facing each other, our hands entangled between our legs, our hips jabbing against each other. Then the wakeup call came. I couldn't miss the plane—everyone else from my company would be on the flight. No reading by myself in peace. No frigging myself in the seat. Shit. "I wish I could stay here with you," I pouted. I started to talk about letters, e-mails, phone calls back to Kansas City. "No, that's not the right thing," Diane said. "We have separate lives. This is a one-night stand, Susan. You needed a push, and now you've done it. Now you have to go back to Boston and figure out what to do about it." I lay back. "So that's what this is?" I asked. "Just a fling? You wanted to get laid, so you decided to break in the straight girl and then go on to another conquest?" "That's not true and you know it, Susan. It's a fling, yes. But I wasn't taking advantage of you anymore than you were of me. You wanted to be with a woman. And you were amazing. You made me feel alive. If this is what you want, you're good at it. But you need to figure it out." I was confused, still silly with happiness but feeling hurt, too. I got up and peed, then stepped into the shower. A moment later, just as I got the water running hot, she joined me. "Susan, this wasn't supposed to be the beginning of anything, and you know it," she purred, wrapping her arms around my slick breasts, nibbling at my ear. "But this has been fucking amazing." I surrendered—leaning into the tile as she scraped her teeth against my neck, spreading my legs wider as she reached around to tease my clit, keeping my eyes closed as she grabbed the showerhead and started blasting water between my legs. She held me up as I writhed in one more wrenching orgasm, my tits on fire, my hands trying in vain to grasp the smooth tile. I sat down on the floor to catch my breath. She slipped back out of the tub. I washed my hair, scrubbed my skin, thought about what to say when I stepped out. It didn't matter. Just as I turned the water off, I heard the door slam. She was gone.



I was a mess on the long plane rides home—a shit-eating grin that I couldn't explain to my co-workers, a heart torn to pieces by Diane's sudden exit. Between my legs, I could feel I was sore. But I was horny. When I got home that evening, Laura was sitting cross-legged on the couch, wearing the same white cotton camisole she had on when I left. She was watching some softcore sex flick on cable, an empty tub of ice cream beside her. When she stood up, I could see she wasn't wearing anything else. "You always dress like that when I'm not here?" I asked. "Depends what's on TV," she shrugged with a smile. She followed me into my room and sat cross-legged on my bed as I unpacked. My eyes were drawn magically to the light-colored hair between her legs. She didn't seem to care. I told her about the trip, about hearing the blues in Kansas City with "one of the techies," about eating well on the company's dime. We were still chit-chatting about nothing special when I finished emptying my bag and threw it into the closet. I stood there in jeans, a shirt, a light sweater, looking at her. I kept looking at her as I pulled off my sweater, then my shirt, then my bra. Then I took a long time digging through my drawers, pretending to look for just the right old t-shirt. She was staring, I knew. When I turned to look at her, she turned away, and I could see her nipples rock hard. This felt good. My t-shirt was long, so when I dropped my pants and my panties, she couldn't see my bush. Believe it or not, we were still talking about what I had for dinner. We went back to the living room like that, sat down next to each other and kept an eye on the TV as we talked. Thank God for Cinemax. A bare-chested woman stood in a dark room, watching as a man ran a hand between her breasts in the moonlight. Then they were tugging at shirts and underwear, thrusting their hips, going at it. "So," Laura said. "Did you get any?" "Did you?" "Nothing but this," she said, pointing at the TV and then dropping her hands into her lap again. "What about you?" I stretched my arms above me, feeling the cotton of my shirt slide against my nipples, letting myself remember, feeling the smile spread across my face. Go for it, Susan. She wants you. She wants to. She didn't try to cover up. She didn't get modest when I came home. She had lust in her eyes when I was changing. "Oh, yeah," I said slowly, turning and looking her in the eye. "I got a lot." "Tell me! Tell me!" "You tell me first." "You're

the one that got laid! Tell me!” I just smiled. This is the first time I’d ever gotten one over on Laura. “You tell me first what you did this week.” She sighed. “You want to know? I sat here at night and rubbed myself. That’s it. It works. Is that all you did?” “Nooo,” I said, and we both laughed. Part of me didn’t want to tell her, so I let her drag it out of me, piece by piece, demurring on some points until she begged for an answer. Yes, it was last night. No, it wasn’t one of my co-workers, it was a techie from the other company. Yes, it was amazing to get fucked so hard I couldn’t stand. Laura was burbling with excitement like a schoolgirl, sitting up with her arms wrapped around her knees. “Did he go down on you?” she asked. I took a deep breath. “Actually,” I said, “that’s not quite right. It wasn’t a he.” Laura’s jaw dropped. Her eyes got wide. Her smile got bigger. “You mean it was a woman?” “Yeah.” “You did it with a woman?” “Yeah.” “Oh my God! Oh my God! Was it amazing?” “Yeah.” Finally, I had one over on Laura. “Are you shocked?” “No, I mean, yes, I mean, that’s great.” Pause. “I’m not shocked. I’m jealous.”



She insisted on dragging details out of me for an hour. What was it like? How did it happen? What did it feel like? Was it different? Did she have short hair? I didn’t tell her about my dreams, about my long build-up to last night; I just made it seem spontaneous, the kind of thing a wild and crazy chick like me would do. The mood in the room kept getting warmer. Her nipples were hard, and so were mine. Now I knew my instincts about her were right. “My God, Susan, I’m turned on just thinking about it.” “I’m still turned on.” We looked at each other for a long time, not saying anything, our grins wide. “Show me,” I said, finally. “Show me what you did when I wasn’t here.” Laura took a deep breath and stretched her legs in front of her. Then she pulled them up and apart, knees sticking up on either side of her, and went to work. I like to tease and stroke; she just jabbed right in, one hand sticking fingers into her, one hand pulling—literally pulling—at her clit. I slipped down off the couch and knelt between her legs to watch more closely. She was biting her lip, hard, and then opened her mouth fast in a flurry of deep, raspy breaths. She was fast and rough and to the point. My orgasms crash like a wave on a shore; hers exploded like a string of firecrackers. She withdrew her hands, flopped her legs down to either side, opened her eyes slowly and looked down at me. I was inches away. Here it is. This is what I wanted. This is what I had been dreaming about, what had driven me crazy with lust on the plane, what pushed me to do scandalous things in the last week, what pushed me to flash myself to strangers and open my thighs to the world, what seeped into my dreams at night and my daydreams at the office. I slowly stuck out my tongue and flicked it right on her clit, and when she started to shudder and shake all over, I pinned her hips to the couch with my hands and pummeled her with my tongue.



Like I said, I was sore, but I wanted it more. We kissed and humped and touched each other, confessed in the dark that we’d been craving each other for months. I told her how wet I’d gotten whenever she was in the bathtub; she told me how wet she’d gotten after walking around in her underwear in front of me. Around midnight, we flopped onto her bed and she pulled her big secret out of her nightstand—a Hitachi Magic Wand from an old college boyfriend. I’d never used one before. She showed me how. There was so much more I wanted to do. I wanted to tie her to the bed and ravish her. I wanted to slip an ice cube inside her and suck it halfway out, sliding it in and out against her clit. I wanted her to sit on my face, smother me with her juice, feel her cunt all over me. I didn’t want to think about how this would change our relationship—could I still bring Rick home now and then? Would it be weird to be living with a semi-lover? All the things I’d worried about flashed into my mind for a moment—and then disappeared. That that night, it was enough to finally sleep in the same bed with her, both of us warm and moist, skin on skin, giggling and talking. It felt natural. It felt sexy. It felt right.

Send your comments to Susan Susan. You can email her at susan282@yahoo.com. Unfortunately, as far as we are aware, she has only a few stories and no website. Perhaps if you write her, she will write another story and we will all benefit.