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First Time

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FIRST TIME

"They're very clean, I'm telling you. You'll enjoy it.

There's no doubt in my mind. You'll enjoy it."

"Larry, forget it. What do you need me for anyway? I just don't want to do it. Clear?"

"No! It's not clear. Why don't you want to go? Really, I mean. Jesus God. Think of the benefits it's brought Lewbank. Business has gone from bad to booming --- practically overnight."

"Oh come on, Markham. Bad to booming?"

"Yeah. Bad to booming. Look at the area surrounding the parlor; a new mall, everything modernized. And it's not just in Lewbank. Every town that's had the common sense to start one has flourished financially. Deny that."

"Why do I have to deny it? I told you. It just doesn't interest me. Now let's change the subject."

"Look, Smitty." Anytime I saw Smitty I knew I was in for a devastating argument. "Look. If there's one thing I've always said to myself it's that Smitty is an open minded guy--- not liberal minded by any means---but open minded. Why is it you're so close minded about the parlor?"

"I'm not close minded."

"Narrowminded, then."

"For Chrissakes. I'm not narrowminded either."

"Jesus God. What do you call it when a guy refuses to participate in a community function that's not only materially beneficial but altogether moral and...wholesome?"

"Larry, if that's a definition of narrowminded..."

"Look Smitty. It's not like you're deflowering a fucking virgin. You're merely releasing tension through an external, certainly worthwhile, means."

"Listen, Larry. It just doesn't seem right. It's degrading--- personally I mean. I have no moral qualms about it. It's just that it's...it's not right for me."

"Yeah, but how do you know it's not right when you've never tried it? That's not being narrowminded? Look at it this way. It's a hell of a lot safer---and easier---doing it this way."

Larry had concluded his spiel. We just sat there in his parent's den staring at each other.

"What do you say? I'll drive and I'll pay."

"Oh shit, Markham. If it'll shut you up I'll go."

It was only minutes between Larry's home and the parlor. We said nothing to each other during the trip there though I sensed there was something --- something encouraging, I imagined---that Larry wanted to say. Before I had time to develop a foolproof escape line, he had me through a pair of electrically operated crystal doors into an obscurely lit, white walled waiting room. He approached a small aperture in the wall facing the entrance. A light breathy, distinctively feminine voice greeted us.

"Hello, Gentlemen. How may I help you?"

Larry glanced at me and smiled. "Two rooms, please," he said. He kept smiling.

"What models, Sir?"

Larry looked at me sheepishly. "I've only got thirty on me right now. That's fifteen minutes apiece. Hah! That was unintentional. I'm sorry. I thought I had more."

He turned to the opening in the wall. "We'll take two--- what do you want blond, red head, what?"

I was momentarily stunned. "Jesus. I don't care. Blond's okay."

"Two BL 610's, please."

"Fine," the voice responded, "Please follow the corridor to your right to the room marked Preparatory. Thank you. Pay upon culmination."

"Did you hear that?" I blurted as we paced down the corridor. "Pay upon culmination. Jesus Christ. Culmination of what? What's a BL 610, anyway? The least you could do, Markham, is forewarn me a little. Give me a few details. What is a BL610?"

"Take it easy, Smitty. BL are the call letters for hair color, obviously. 610 is the model number."

"How many models are there? What's the difference between a 610 and a 310 or a 210 for Chrissake?"

"A 610 is the more advanced model here in Lewbank. If her battery's well charged she's capable of a hundred words and multiple orgasms. The great thing though are the sounds."

"What sounds?"

"Christ, you are green. A 610 is equipped with a full genre of guttural sounds---sighs, pants, moans, groans, you know. All the sensual sounds."

"My God."

As we entered the preparatory room I realized how thoroughly unprepared I was. There to greet us were two hostesses---both very blond and very nude. They stood amidst bottles and sponges and small wash basins.

"Is this it?" I demanded. "For Chrissake, we don't do it here do we?"

"Schmidt, please. Just take off your clothes and sit on that cushioned table."

"Larry, you didn't tell me..."

"It's not. Just take it easy. They're just gonna make sure we're clean. This is a very sterile parlor."

"Ha-ha. Very funny." I took off my clothes and sat on the upholstered table. I was quivering too much to notice how cold it was to my bare flesh. One of the 'hostesses' came up, sponge in hand and a wonderful smile on her plastic face. She soaked the sponge in some medicinal smelling liquid in a nearby basin then thoroughly covered me with the fluid.

"Oh my God. I had no idea, Larry. Larry?"

Larry was gone as was the other preparatory girl. My cleaning lady took my hand and led me down a brightly colored carpet.

"Here's your room, Sir." It was the same fascinating, breathy voice.

I walked into the room wearing an involuntary, embarrassed smile, and met my 610. She was lying in horizontal grandeur upon a circular shaped bed. Hourglass proportions, lovely face. Perfect.

"Come. I am Jeanette. Come to Jeanette."

She enunciated each syllable slowly; precisely.

"Come."

Not seeing any feasible alternative, I went.

Near her, there was nothing that my untrained eye could notice that indicated that Jeanette was not human. Her hair was silky, hanging in little girl curls along the sides of her face. Her body was warm and soft and supple. Her movements were smooth and flowing. Every physical gesture seemed human. Every area of her anatomy was flawlessly designed to appear human. Her only imperfection was, in fact, her flawlessness.

During our play, Jeanette contributed a vast amount to the mood with her soprano sighs and pants and moans. She lived up to all the expectations I didn't have time to previously form.

"Jeanette," I muttered wistfully, realizing her inability to understand, "you are one beautiful creature."

"I am capable of multiple orgasms," she smiled.

I didn't know whether that was a subtle request for more, or merely a learned response to the word 'beautiful'. I did know that one more fling would run well over the time Larry granted me.

"Can't Jeanette. Gotta go."

"Come. I am capable of multiple orgasms."

"Jeanette, tell me," I whispered. "Does this mean I'm not a virgin anymore?"

"O-oo-oo," she cued. "Once more, Handsome."

Laughing--hysterically--I skipped out the door and followed the brightly colored carpet to the preparatory room.

Bud Foufos

IN THE MIDST OF AN ECHO

for Trena

I move hands through slow, thick air
leaving trails and traces.

Do you watch with intent?

I long to look at you.

I long to linger over each silken vertebrae
to knead the muscles of your soft back.

I long to be strangled.

I long to try on your pants to see if they will fit.

I long to kiss your neck until I long not to repeat myself.

Do you feel the heat of suffocation?

I wait not to touch your hair and touch your hair.

I long for ends and find there are none.

I long to smooth your nose
so that we may breathe again, and

I long to leave myself for your eyes
which are black wildernesses with ebbing irises.

I long for an open mouth which is speechless.

Phil Mercurio

