**Mailgirls Get Off**

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She came hard. She came fast. She came loud.   
  
Louder than she'd expected to, at least. Louder than she'd intended. The rapid in-and-out breathing had turned into a repetitive series of increasingly high-pitched "ohs" as she'd begun to crest, and she was borderline ultrasonic by the time she hit her actual climax. It wasn't that these squeaks and squeals were echoing off the tiled walls of the locker room, or shaking the mirror-glass that separated it from the elevator beyond; she was likely louder in her own imagination than in actuality. And, besides, any excited exclamations joined in among a chorus of happy conversations, genuine laughter, and other similar victory cries offered up that filled the room around her.   
  
But she hadn't been able to control herself all the same, and it was embarrassing to let loose with such a genuine admission of her own self-indulgent satisfaction. It was honest, and authentic, and shameful in a way that even the overall act of getting herself off wasn't. There was no wry detachment, no stagecraft, no going-through-the-motions-just-to-fit-in. As she came, her body had felt the need to release its own version of a war whoop, conquest achieved.   
  
Mailgirl Number Seventeen was standing at her locker, her legs spread and knees bent, with her right hand coaxing every last drop of orgasmic bliss from between her legs. Her left hand was braced against the open locker, with her fingers clutching the partition that separated hers from Sixteen's. Her eyes were shut. Her head was bent. And she found herself rising to her tip-toes even as her legs turned to jelly.  
  
Even when not in the midst of such carnal ecstasy, she would have been magnificent. Long, chestnut brown hair was done up in a ponytail, which waggled back and forth as her body shuddered and shook. Her bare back shimmered with sweat under the fluorescent lights from above. Two large round breasts bounced beneath her with each breath. She was skinny -- too skinny, in fact, according to her new supervisor -- blessed more by genetics than by the discipline of exercise. And she was tall, just shy of five-foot-ten, capable of rising to a full six feet in the right heels.   
  
She worked to catch her breath, but the ministrations against her pussy didn't stop; they only slowed. Her middle and index fingers were still deep inside of her, and the heel of her palm continued rub forceful, grinding motions against the top of her slit -- almost as if she were working her clit from both inside and out. She shivered, though not from the temperature -- given the state of dress of its occupants, the mailgirls locker room was thoughtfully kept a few ticks warmer than the rest of the building. Rather, it was from the last little aftershocks of her orgasm shooting up her spine.   
  
Seventeen couldn't remember the last time she'd gotten herself off while standing up -- outside of the shower, at least. But she'd chickened out of doing so in the shower here at work earlier that afternoon. Flat on her back would have been her first choice if she'd been alone, and seemed to be the most popular option among the other mailgirls, but Seventeen had felt unnerved about the vulnerability of it. Standing, with her back turned to the mirror glass, had made it feel like she was more in control.   
  
Which was laughable. Seventeen was not in control. She hadn't been able to control her vocal chords from singing her own praise. She hadn't been able to keep herself from giving in and getting off here at the Plaza. She'd been stripped, whipped, and humiliated. Hell, she wasn't allowed to go to that bathroom without asking for permission. It scared her how much control she'd given over to her new masters in Human Capital. And it scared her how much that turned her on.   
  
Her eyes had been closed since she'd first found her pussy, and she was nervous to open them back up. She imagined a semi-circle of her nude coworkers around her, watching on with interest, and applauding her success. She imagined a muffled cheer erupting from an audience on the other side of the glass. But, as she released her sex, she risked a peek with her peripheral vision. For the most part, the girls were all busy doing their own thing; in some case, their own selves. And as significant as this new capitulation was in Seventeen's own life, she was sure that it barely registered to a USF workforce that had grown accustomed to such things over the last six months. It was after seven on a Friday; she doubted that anyone was interested in yet another mailgirl debasing herself in the corner on the far side of the locker room.   
  
But Seventeen hadn't entirely gone unnoticed. As she relaxed, and turned, she found Sixteen waiting for her with a smirk.   
  
"I can log that for you," she offered, the gentle teasing evident in her voice. She, like Seventeen, was naked from head-to-toe, save for her collar, her armband, and the number inked upon her hip. But she had Mistress Zero's tablet in her hand, which was new, and the confusion -- on top of the red-faced embarrassment -- must have been evident on Seventeen's face.   
  
"She's out of here when the afternoon breaks are over on Friday," Sixteen explained. "Saturdays, too. Evening Shift gets play the jailer." The girl jangled a key that hung from an elastic on her wrist.   
  
"Liberator," Seventeen croaked, correcting her.   
  
Sixteen chuckled politely. She had brown skin and dark, curly black hair, as well as a megawatt smile that she showed off on those rare instances a mailgirl had something to smile about. She was the lone African-American among the group, and Seventeen -- prior to becoming a mailgirl herself -- had more than once found herself wondering about the racial politics at play in USF enslaving a black girl. That she could be collared, chained, and whipped like the rest of them was a weird sort of equality, Seventeen had supposed. They may have been sadists, sexists, and misogynists up in Human Capital, but no one could accuse of them of discriminating on the basis of race.   
  
"I can log that for you," Sixteen repeated again gently. "If you want me to."   
  
Of course Seventeen didn't want her to. Only deepening the humiliation she had just suffered at her own hand, Seventeen was required to report that she'd gotten herself off here in locker room. This little episode would get logged in her file, and anyone with access to USF's mailgirls app would know she had succumbed to her baser instincts. They'd have quantifiable confirmation that the company's new little mail slut was getting off on her new station in life. But to not report it risked another round on the receiving end of Mistress Zero's riding crop - or worse -- and the red welts still gracing her backside from that afternoon provided persuasive motivation to catalog the event. And, regardless, Sixteen's offer was likely little more than an empty kindness; she'd no doubt be punished alongside Seventeen if Mistress Zero discovered the omission.   
  
"Okay," Seventeen replied meekly. "Sure."   
  
Sixteen seemed to hesitate, and then took a step closer to Seventeen. It was intimate, as if they were sharing a secret, and made even more so as Sixteen draped an arm around Seventeen's naked shoulders. Seventeen was acutely aware of the fact that she was still breathing hard in the aftermath of her orgasm, that she was covered in sweat and grime, and that Sixteen was sure to be breathing in a musky combination of the brunette's pussy and body odor. She also couldn't help but drink in Sixteen's own combination of the same, or keep from noticing Sixteen's adamantine-and-at-attention nipples pressing against the bare skin of her torso.   
  
"Seventeen of twenty-four," Sixteen said softly. "You're number seventeen of twenty-four. You're a mailgirl, and just a number. You're just another mailgirl who got herself off like any other mailgirl on any other day. It comes with the uniform. It's part of the job. And you call more attention to yourself as an individual if you're fighting it."   
  
It was, more or less, the same speech that Fourteen had given her yesterday. Fourteen's argument had been that the other girls weren't going to judge her for masturbating in their midst; rather, they'd judge her if she didn't. Part of it was that these twenty-three other girls were the only ones who truly understood what it was like to live the life of a mailgirl, to wrestle with the constant and confusing arousal, to feel what it was like to need -- not want -- to get off right then and right there. But part of it, understandably, was peer pressure; if Five and Twenty-Four were capable of controlling themselves, what did it say about the other girls who couldn't?   
  
But Seventeen knew full well that there were pools going on upstairs, throughout the building, as to when Five and Twenty-Four would finally cave. And that even in her own department, she had had coworkers who had obsessed over those two girls, and who had pulled up their app profiles daily to see if they'd joined the ranks of masturbating mailgirls. It wouldn't have surprised Seventeen if it had been well into the hundreds of thousands of dollars that had changed hands when Mailgirl Number Eight finally surrendered herself in September.   
  
The brunette grimaced to herself. She wondered who'd had the new Mailgirl Number Seventeen masturbating on just her second day on the job.   
  
She felt whore-ish and dirty.   
  
She needed a shower.   
  
"I know," she squeaked back to Sixteen. She didn't have more to offer, and didn't want to talk about it further. Generally speaking, she'd noticed that the girls gave each other a bit of space when diddling themselves. Even when space was at a premium, they had the decency to look the other way or pretend not to notice. Under the eight showers behind her, there were likely at least a few girls masturbating side-by-side but lost in own private, pleasurable little worlds.   
  
So Sixteen was genuinely sorry that she'd shattered that illusion of privacy. "I didn't mean to," she explained, releasing her grip and taking a step back. "I'm just here for this..." She jangled the key on her wrist.   
  
"That's okay," Seventeen sighed. "And...thank you." Thank you for unlocking my collar. Thank you for the words of encouragement.   
  
"Please," Sixteen offered, brushing it off. She leaned back into Seventeen, but this time reached for the girl's collar.   
  
Prior to that first, fateful day in April that Mailgirls Number One through Six were stripped and dispersed into USF Plaza, Seventeen had never seen anything like those collars in real life -- maybe not even on a pit bull or a rottweiler. Which was perhaps ironic, given the silver number seventeen that hung like a dog tag from the D-ring at her throat. It was black, and metal, and studded with similar such D-rings around the circumference, which allowed the girls to be chained from a number of different angles. It was thick - two-and-half or maybe even three inches in height -- and masculine; this was not a girlish piece of jewelry. And it was tight. Not so tight that Seventeen had trouble breathing or swallowing, but tight enough that she reached to massage the sore, sweaty skin underneath the moment Sixteen removed it.   
  
Sixteen hung the collar on a robe hook in Seventeen's locker.   
  
"But...," the dark-skinned girl continued, "I have to get some follow-ups."   
  
"Oh, god," Seventeen choked.   
  
"Sorry."  
  
"No...no...no, it's okay. It's fine."   
  
"Okay. How many times did you orgasm?"  
  
"Oh my god. That's really part of it, isn't it?"   
  
"Sorry."   
  
"...once."   
  
"Once," Sixteen repeated, tapping Mistress Zero's tablet. "And how long did it take you?"  
  
"I don't know," Seventeen answered. She and Fourteen had been alerted that it was seven o'clock, and that their day was through, while upstairs on the mostly deserted 27th Floor. They'd had to wait for one of the service elevators. They'd joined Mailgirls Two and Twenty-Two when one finally arrived, and then had had to stop to pick up Nineteen, Six, and Ten (all on different floors) before they'd finally been released into the locker room on the 2nd Floor. And then she'd come straight to her locker. "What time is it?"  
  
Sixteen ignored the question, and instead tapped the tablet. "I'm going to say five minutes."  
  
Seventeen wasn't sure it had taken that long.   
  
"Next time," Sixteen advised her, "just glance at the clock on your phone. She says she's okay with 'best guess' estimate, but I've seen her hand out demerits for being off." She reflected momentarily. "Though, honestly, I've seen her accuse girls of lying even when they're telling the truth. So, fucked either way, I guess."  
  
"Uh, okay," Seventeen nodded.   
  
"You're going out with the girls tonight?" Sixteen asked, and reached towards the smartphone tucked in the black lyrca armband around Seventeen's left bicep. She punched in a quick code, and the phone began to shut down for the night.   
  
Seventeen nodded again. It was the last thing she wanted to do. The last two days had been worse than she ever could have imagined, and all she really wanted was to go home, crawl into bed with all her clothes on, and cry herself to sleep. But Fourteen had insisted. Seven, too. And then one girl after another after that. She smiled, and joked, "It doesn't sound like I've got much of a choice."   
  
"No, you don't." Sixteen smiled widely. "You're a mailgirl now. Bitch Sessions are part of the job. It's the only way we all get through this."   
  
She took Seventeen's hand in her own, and interlocked her fingers with Seventeen's. She emphasized, "Together."   
  
"Together," Seventeen agreed, and met the girl's eyes. "That and the drinks."   
  
Sixteen chuckled again, genuinely this time. "The drinks certainly help."   
  
"You're coming?"  
  
"Two and I have Evening Shift, but we'll be over after."   
  
Mailgirls weren't allowed to make eye contact with their betters here at USF Plaza. As their betters included everyone from the CEO down the maintenance and custodial staff, Seventeen had spent the last two days staring submissively at people's feet, or blankly at the floor. It therefore felt odd to make eye contact with Sixteen like this -- uncomfortable and comforting all the same, another paradox in a sea of them that came with her new life. Seventeen offered, "Thank you, again."   
  
Sixteen responded with a look of feigned offense. "Together," she repeated, released Seventeen's hand, and then surprised her with a playful pat on Seventeen's still-tender ass. And then she was off down the line, to free Nineteen from her collar.   
  
Seventeen took a deep breath, and began to compose herself. She hadn't even had a chance to come back down from her orgasm before Sixteen had snuck up behind her, and she hadn't had even a second to reflect upon the line she'd just crossed. She wondered if that had been Sixteen's intention.   
  
She was still a bit weak-in-the-knees, she was still slightly out-of-breath, and she was still giving off significant heat from her pussy. Her right hand was warm, sticky, and wet with her own juices. And, though she hadn't been at it for very long, she had nonetheless managed to work up a sweat -- after having only just cooled down during a lull at the end of the day. She bent, and absentmindedly wiped her hand against her inner thigh, before then rubbing her eyes and massaging her temples with fingers.   
  
"Rookie!" she heard from behind. Fourteen. Shouting from the shower. "Eat something!"   
  
Seventeen steeled herself, and turned.   
  
Fourteen was indeed in the showers on this end of the locker room. As were Thirteen, Nine, Twenty-Two, and Twenty-Four. Five girls between four shower-heads, with Fourteen and Nine sharing the second from the right. Nine was facing away from Seventeen, towards the mirror-glass that lined the far wall, while Fourteen was facing Seventeen and the lockers. Beside her, Twenty-Two was knuckle-deep in her own sex, and -- true-to-form -- neither Fourteen nor Nine were paying her any mind.   
  
"Ma'am," Seventeen shot back with a smirk. "Per Human Capital, I am to be called by my mailgirl number."   
  
Fourteen was forced to laugh, and Nine turned just enough to shoot Seventeen a smile. "Do you need me to slap her?" Nine asked.  
  
Fourteen shot a playful look at her shower-mate, as if daring her to try. To Seventeen, she replied, "I'm sorry, ma'am. This stupid slut was too stupid to comply with such a simple rule."   
  
Seventeen laughed.   
  
"Eat something," Fourteen repeated, running her hands through her long, dark hair. In contrast to Seventeen's girl-next-door looks, Fourteen oozed "bad girl" out of every pore of her body. Her nakedness, rather than diminishing or humiliating her, only gave her more power. There'd been rumors that she'd been sent the mailroom for sleeping around with the executive staff even in her old job, rumors that Fourteen had laughed at but not quite denied. As the mailgirl to whom Seventeen had been assigned to shadow this week, Seventeen had gotten to spend more time with Fourteen than she had with any of the others, and she'd witnessed Fourteen's unique approach to the role.   
  
Among the mailgirls, One and Fourteen were competitive and catty, each one competing to be the program's star. Neither shied away from anything -- there was no punishment too severe, no order too degrading, no abuse too terrible, that either girl wouldn't put up with or accept without hesitation. Mailgirl Number One tended to get herself off at the far end of the locker room with a lot of clearly overemphasized "oohs" and "ahhs", and viewed her role as that of a porn star. Fourteen, admittedly, was the similar -- but with a hint of sarcasm, as if she were in on the joke and had never really ceded control over to her corporate masters.   
  
It had made moments over the last two days more challenging for Seventeen than if she'd been assigned to, say, Sixteen or Eighteen or Twenty-Four. For instance, when one of the traders up on the 22nd Floor had started pressing Seventeen on who she was and where she'd come from, Fourteen had - for some reason - decided to escalate things by asking, "Are you sure you don't want to inspect her, sir?" Sure enough, both girls were then up on their tiptoes with their hands behind their heads in inspection position.   
  
And Fourteen had badgered her, both yesterday and today, to get herself off in the locker room -- almost as if she had money riding on "Day One" in the pool upstairs. To hear Fourteen justify it, Seventeen was going to break eventually, so why not steer into the skid and touch herself now? Seventeen wanted to. Fourteen knew Seventeen wanted to. Twenty-two other mailgirls knew Seventeen wanted to. Why wait? They'd been up on the 18th Floor, in Human Resources, when Fourteen nodded down the "Hall of Panties" towards Human Capital and offered aloud, "Fuck them. Do it for you."   
  
Fourteen also happened to be one of just a few girls who preferred a male chaperone when getting escorted to the bathroom upstairs. Sure, it meant having to use the men's room instead of the women's. But Fourteen explained that men, significantly more often than women, were willing to ignore Human Capital's rule that required the chaperone to actually stand there in front of an open stall door and watch a girl pee. Seventeen, in her prior life, had only been called upon to play the part of chaperone once, but she supposed Fourteen had a point; Seventeen had dutifully stood watch over the previous Mailgirl Number Thirteen, for fear that spurning the rule might land her down here on the 2nd Floor. But while they were taking turns yesterday afternoon in a single stall, stall door wide open, and with their chaperone waiting patiently by the sink, Fourteen loudly and provocatively asked, "You want to play swords?"   
  
Mailgirl Number Seven may have been everyone's surrogate mother here in the locker room, but Fourteen had played the part of a cool, all-knowing older sister for Seventeen over the last two days. And now Fourteen was telling her to get something to eat.

Seventeen slid her black lycra armband down the length of her left arm, extracted the smart phone, and placed it in the charger inside her locker. As she did so, she glanced towards the middle of the locker room, where Mailgirls Number Fifteen and Twenty-One were sharing dinner from a single silver dog dish in front of Mistress Zero's desk. Both were still stark-naked, and Twenty-One was still in her collar. Both were on their hands and knees, and taking turns gobbling down the thick, gray gruel known semi-affectionately as "mailgirl chow." Seventeen couldn't help but gag.   
  
"You're worried about me having a few drinks on an empty stomach?" she asked Fourteen. "Can't we stop and get a hot dog or something?"   
  
Fourteen had turned back towards the shower head, and now her bare ass was what greeted Seventeen as she looked in that direction. "That shit's better for you hot dogs."   
  
Seventeen scowled. "Does it taste any better coming up than it tastes going down?"   
  
"You get used to it!" Fifteen shouted down to her, as Twenty-One took a turn with her head in the bowl.   
  
"And then you end up craving it in the middle of the night," Sixteen laughed, joining in. She was in the midst of unlocking Nineteen's collar.   
  
"You don't get used to it." This from Fourteen. "But it's fuel."   
  
That part was true. Seventeen couldn't believe that there was a company in Northern California that produced this slop specifically for mailgirl programs, but perhaps that fact spoke to the growing prevalence of such programs nationwide. Loaded with vitamins and nutrients, it was literally everything the body needed for an exercise-heavy job like that of a mailgirl, which required a marathoner's stamina as they dashed from one delivery to the next. It looked disgusting, it smelled awful, and it tasted worse -- Seventeen had fought through her first meal yesterday at lunch while retching and heaving. Today had been a little easier, but it didn't help that Mistress Zero was assigning her double portions to bring her up to what she considered an acceptable weight.   
  
The chow was all the mailgirls were given at lunch, and all they were allowed for snacks on breaks. But there were some girls, like Fourteen, who'd taken to eating it at the end of the day, for dinner, even though it wasn't necessarily a requirement, and even though she was free to eat literally anything else anywhere else in New York City. "Eh," Fourteen had shrugged yesterday when Seventeen had challenged her on this. "It's here. It's free. It's easy. It's healthy. And, fuck, I don't want to have to cook dinner when I get home."   
  
But tonight, it seemed like just about all the girls were taking their turns at the bowls. Unlike lunch-time, serving size wasn't as tightly regulated. But also unlike lunch time, the girls were forced to share just two bowls in the center of the locker room, with Two and Sixteen forced to refill them when empty.   
  
"We can't just get some appetizers or something?"   
  
"Eat!" Fourteen ordered.   
  
"Or a salad?"  
  
"Eat!"  
  
The thought of choking down another bowl of the awful, room-temperature sludge made Seventeen's stomach turn, but there was no denying she'd worked up an appetite that afternoon. And maybe Fourteen had a point. After the two days Seventeen had just had, she needed a drink like she'd never needed a drink before, and she suspected she wasn't alone in that regard. To hear them tell it, USF's mailgirls had been closing down the bar at the Imperial Hotel since sometime that summer. Seventeen wasn't going to be able to have more than one drink on an empty stomach.  
  
She frowned, but decided to buckle and do as she was told. She didn't necessarily have to follow Fourteen's orders, the way she was required to do with literally everyone else who worked at USF Plaza. But she and Fourteen were attached at the hip for one more day of training, and Fourteen was -- in her way -- still looking out for her.   
  
First, though, Seventeen had to pee.   
  
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Once upon a time, Mailgirl Number Seventeen had been a fast-rising financial reporting analyst within one of the most well-recognized and well-respected bulge bracket firms on Wall Street. She'd been Emily Evans then - a Maryland native with a diploma from Cornell, a Masters in Accounting from Stern, and a CPA. She'd spent her first few years in the workforce with Deloitte, but had made the jump to US Financial almost three years earlier. The company she'd joined way back then had disappeared, however, and in it's place now stood a forty-eight story fraternity house. The corporate culture had shifted and changed with the introduction of the mailgirls earlier in the year, and one Emily Evans had found herself caught up in the aftershocks.   
  
Why hadn't she left in April? There'd been a mass exodus when Human Capital's pet project came online - most significantly among female employees, but well-represented by both genders all the same. There were women who feared they'd be on the hook for a nude role down on the 2nd Floor, of course, and still more who were understandably and justifiably outraged at the blatant misogyny USF was promoting. But while Seventeen had witnessed a noticeable uptick in exits within her department, that uptick was never as high as maybe it should have been. In the early days, the original six girls had been announced as "volunteers" - a party line that Human Capital continued to provide in defense of the program straight through the present. Why someone, anyone, would volunteer for such an assignment was mind-boggling, but at least the female employees at the Plaza could assure themselves that they'd never stoop to such a level and raise their own hands for the role. Seventeen had told herself that very thing in the Spring.   
  
Rumors soon began to swirl around Mailgirl Number Six in the subsequent weeks. The fact that she'd badly flubbed a trade that had cost USF almost half a million dollars was well-known within Capital Markets, and people started connecting the dots to explain her new job. Even if it was true, Seventeen had reasoned at the time, Six had still volunteered as a mailgirl. Maybe she was going to get fired, and maybe she'd have a difficult time finding another capital markets job -- but she'd still made the decision to go the mailgirl route on her own.   
  
Once the program got going, it was easy enough for empathy to begin to wane. If one truly believed that these girls were volunteers -- even if the alternatives to volunteering were less than optimal -- one couldn't help but write their suffering off as self-inflicted. Sure, they were under contract. And sure, there were penalties for breaking said contact. But no one had forced them to sign their names. And what sort of penalties could be so severe that these girls would subject themselves to eating out of dog bowls or getting paddled in front of an audience or squatting with legs wide open by the elevators? Maybe Seventeen could understand those first few girls in April not entirely knowing what they were signing on for. But by the time the next six girls volunteered - and then the next six, and then the six after that -- they had to know what the life of a mailgirl entailed.   
  
When the masturbation started, everything began to click into place. Of course. Of course, of course. These girls were exhibitionists and masochists. They were the subs in the sub-dom paradigm, deriving sexual pleasure from their own debasement and degeneracy. They were sluts and whores! They put up with this because they were getting off on it. When the mailgirl terrarium in the elevator lobby devolved into a hedonistic temple of self-love, it was like a car crash that transformed the entire populace of Plaza into rubberneckers. Seventeen wasn't gay, but she'd stood outside the locker room that second or third week with Jessica Cochran and watched the show over coffee. What should have been digusting and repulsive was instead hilarious -- and Seventeen had felt the mockery and derision was earned, for the role that these girls had played in their own abasement.   
  
It was surprising how quickly Seventeen and her coworkers had accepted the new normal. There was a naked girl showering in the elevator lobby as Seventeen arrived at work. There was a naked vagina waggling around in reception when she went to use the ladies' room. There was a pair of naked tits bouncing out of the stairwell with an urgent message for her. Sure, whatever.   
  
But then, it was surprising how quickly the mailgirl phenomenon had exploded worldwide. It had been less than a decade since the first program had come online in Tokyo, and only within that last year or two that a gaming company out in Seattle had dared to first launch one Stateside. It had become a common enough occurrence in Southeast Asia and much of continental Europe, and even now appeared to be gaining momentum in New York. Seventeen had thought for sure that the government would step in and shut the practice down -- but good lawyers, private property, offices full of adults, and a pool of willing and consenting volunteers had stymied such attempts thus far. There was vociferous opposition from women's rights groups, as could be expected. But there had also been vociferous support from other women's rights groups, which was more unexpected. "The right to individual self-determination" and "individual life, individual choice" were not ideals Seventeen had ever thought would turn into rallying calls in defense of the mailgirl concept. But those very ideals had managed to unite a hodge-podge coalition of libertarians, sex-positive feminists, and liberal academics who, even if they didn't agree with the choices these mailgirls were making, were actively and passionately defending their right to make them.   
  
And so Seventeen had stayed with USF; this was just the world she was living in now. She'd never opt to become a mailgirl, of course, but she was relieved all the same when the May class was launched and no one had come knocking at her cubicle. Same for June, even though word had leaked out about the "trophies" hanging in Human Capital, and Seventeen -- like Jessica, like Jen, like Ashley, like the other girls in Finance & Accounting -- had worn the sexiest pair of panties she owned...just in case she'd be called upon to undress in front of an audience. And then relief again in July, when USF reached a full roster of twenty-four mailgirls and announced future opportunities to volunteer would be limited to backfills.   
  
The mailgirl was the lowliest of the low at USF. She was stripped and collared. She was spanked and paddled and whipped. She was humiliated and debased over and over again. But the mailgirl, despite all that, could make the case that she was the most popular girl in the company. Everyone knew who she was. Everyone knew her inside and out. Everyone lusted after her and wanted to get a glimpse of her. Everyone knew that she was the cream-of-the-crop - one of prettiest, hottest, most attractive girls that USF Plaza had to offer.   
  
And so it had stung a little when Seventeen hadn't been approached.   
  
She would have said no, flat-out. But it would have been an honor -- Honor? Really? -- to get asked. Seventeen wasn't vain, by any measure, but she knew that she was attractive. Like any girl anywhere, she had her body issues and self-doubts. She was pretty, though maybe she wouldn't have described herself "hot" or "cute." She felt self-conscious about her height. She worried that she had chicken legs. And she didn't have much of an ass. But she'd been blessed with good skin, large-but-not-cumbersome breasts, and big brown eyes, and had gained a good amount of confidence in herself since high school. Confidence that was shaken when USF more-or-less told her, "No, thank you. We'd prefer that you stay in your dimly lit cubicle on the 13th Floor."  
  
Jessica Cochran would have signed on in an instant. She wasn't so bold as to go knocking on Will Barrow's door up on the 18th, but she was the only one of Seventeen's colleagues in Finance & Accounting who admitted out loud that she fantasized about becoming a mailgirl. It wasn't a realistic fantasy for her, though -- she was too short, too little girl-ish, too...bespectacled...to fit in among the other mailgirls. So she continued on planning her wedding, but made the flimsiest of excuses to summon a mailgirl, just to soak a little of their lives in vicariously. She even befriended a few of them, as much as USF employees were allowed to befriend a mailgirl.   
  
In fact, there'd been that evening at the tail-end of August, when Jessica had played lookout for two of the mailgirls in the conference room. Whether it was bisexuality or full-blown lesbianism, sex among the mailgirls was rumored to be rampant. Seventeen had brushed the rumors off as nothing more than the fantasies of her male coworkers, the product of overactive imaginations and undersexed accountants. But on that particular Friday, with the rest of the floor half-empty for the weekend, Seventeen had watched Jessica lead one mailgirl, and then another, into the conference room. Within minutes, one of them was singing out "Oh! Oh! Oh! Oooooh!!!" loud enough that Seventeen couldn't ignore it, apparently courtesy of the other. Jessica had returned to her cubicle blushing, wide-eyed and smiling wickedly.   
  
She hadn't participated; sleeping with a mailgirl was cause for termination whether it happened at the Plaza or not, and Jessica never would have been so bold as to cheat on her fiancée regardless. But she'd stood guard and watched as one of them had gone down on the other, and then promptly recounted the whole thing to Seventeen and Jen Eckersley in the aftermath. Seventeen hadn't needed all the details, but she got them anyway, and found herself wondering how anyone could get off on getting off like that -- in a public place, in front of an audience.   
  
Yes, Jessica Cochran would have inked her signature at the bottom of a Human Capital contract without hesitation. Seventeen, for her part, had just wanted to have been asked.  
  
Mailgirl Number Twenty-Three had quit on a Monday morning in August and had been replaced later that afternoon. The blonde Mailgirl Number Thirteen had been shipped to USF's back office in Jersey City at the start of September, only for a new, dark-haired Mailgirl Number Thirteen to take her place immediately thereafter. By mid-November, Human Capital's roster of naked mailgirls had stabilized, with no new exits or arrivals since the changing of the Thirteens. And so there was no reason for Seventeen to have been suspicious that Wednesday night when she received a calendar invite from her boss, for 9 o'clock the following morning.   
  
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Masturbating at her locker should have been liberating in one sense, at least: it should have made it a little less embarrassing for Seventeen to pee in public. If she could the do the former in front of an audience, how embarrassing could the latter be?   
  
There were six metal toilets that stood behind Mistress Zero's desk, standing like sentries -- three to a side -- in the narrow corridor between the locker room proper and the service elevators. There were no partitions or privacy screens, and they sat closer together than any reasonable person would have placed them. So close, in fact, that Seventeen's naked thigh couldn't help but brush up against Mailgirl Number Three's own as she sat down.   
  
Seventeen grimaced. "Safety in numbers," she thought to herself. And then, echoing Sixteen's assurances, "Together."   
  
The fact of the matter of was, Three's body served as a privacy screen of sorts for Seventeen, as she sat on the toilet closest to their mistress's desk, and therefore closer to the wall of mirror glass, and to the elevator lobby on the other side. Three was in the middle of a conversation with Twelve, one that wasn't interrupted by Seventeen's presence, one that wasn't interrupted when Seventeen's bare skin rubbed up against Three's, one that wasn't interrupted as Three and Twelve finished at the same time and stood to leave. So casual had this become to the two veteran mailgirls that they approached this act of public elimination with no more fear or attention than if they'd been having that very conversation over lattes in a crowded coffee shop.   
  
"...he made me rub hot sauce on my nipples. And then Twenty had to lick it off..."  
  
Well, Seventeen thought to herself as Twelve continued on, maybe not that particular conversation...  
  
Seventeen glanced over Mistress Zero's desk, towards the double doors leading to the elevator lobby. She could see only her own reflection, wide-eyed and nervous, staring back at her. Maybe peeing like this had become casual and commonplace to the other girls, but Seventeen was still painfully aware that she was being watched. Or, at least, that there was a chance she was being watched; it was after seven on the Friday, after all. On the other side of that mirror were chairs and café tables, a coffee cart and a shoe shine service (both likely closed now), and the elevators that USF's non-mailgirl employees took up and down to their floors. She'd just fingered herself for whomever was out there, but her bladder was less cooperative than her pussy had been, and she was forced to abandon the attempt for now.   
  
It still felt odd to just walk away, without having to pull up her underwear or fix her skirt. But Seventeen rounded the desk in the center of the locker room, and joined Mailgirl Number Six at the far dog dish. Twenty-One had finished at the other, and been replaced by Twelve. Mailgirl Number Two hovered nearby with a can opener and a few spare cans of dinner, waiting to refill the bowls upon request. Seventeen dutifully dropped to her hands and knees, but was patient enough for Six to finish her meal before inserting her own face into the bowl. Instead, she went to the water bowl beside her, comfortable enough now at the end of the day to drink as much as she wanted; no need to have bathroom breaks chaperoned out at the bar. She lapped away at the cloudy water thirstily.   
  
"One can or two?" Two asked her politely, as Six pulled back and wiped her face with her hand. Six, a brunette, possessed an enormous set of tits, and Seventeen couldn't help but be distracted as they bounced into line-of-sight. USF's mailgirls all had the same general, tall-and-slender build, and most -- like Seventeen herself -- had breasts in the vicinity of C's. But there was some minimal variation when it came to chest size, with Thirteen and Ten on one end of the spectrum, and Six unchallenged on the other. Seventeen's own breasts had a dull ache from bouncing bra-less up and down stairs all day; she couldn't begin to imagine what it must have been like to be Six.   
  
"Uh...just one," Seventeen replied, re-focusing herself. There was still a little food in the bowl, and she had no interest in eating more than she absolutely had to.   
  
"Bon appetit," Two offered sarcastically but good-naturedly. The thick, foul-smelling mush oozed forth from the can.   
  
Seventeen held her breath and dove in.   
  
She gagged once, at her first bite. But the overpowering urge to vomit was not as powerful this time around as it had been during her first two meals of this sludge. Maybe Fifteen had been right, and she'd slowly get used to it. Or maybe, as Seventeen accidentally breathed in the accompanying bouquet, she never would -- as Fourteen had suggested. Either way, she labored away at the bowl, doing her best to avoid remembering that this particular meal was undertaken by choice. Unlike lunch, where she'd be downing bowl after bowl of mailgirl chow for the next two years.   
  
Two years. Two years! Two fucking years! It was difficult to conceptualize, given that today was only her second day. And given how hard the past two days had been, two years seemed like a lifetime from now. She'd be thirty by the time she was out from under her contract. She wondered about how mailgirl chow would taste then. She wondered if it'd be easier to pee in public then. She wondered if she'd even be able to recognize herself then.

She pulled back from the dog dish, but was caught by Two. "Uh...I'm sorry," the girl apologized, "but you've got to finish it all."   
  
Seventeen looked up at the other girl blankly. She glanced down the length of the locker room, where Six was starting to get into the shower. "But, she..."  
  
"We've got to keep the bowl clean," Two explained. "There's no one else waiting."   
  
Seventeen groaned, but complied. At lunch, they were forced to lick the bowl clean, making sure they'd eaten every last drop of the so-called food given to them. For snacks over break -- and, it seemed, for dinner -- that responsibility fell to last girl to eat. Seventeen wasn't sure she'd be Two's last customer of the night; in fact, she doubted that she would be. But she was the last customer for now, and Two knew the rules better than Seventeen. She pressed her lips against the bowl itself and sucked down every last morsel, and then used her tongue to lick the bottom of the bowl. The bowl likely hadn't actually been washed since Evening Shift the night before, and it had likely been "cleaned" just like this at least two or three times since. If the mailgirls were expected to share communal deodorant and toothbrushes, Seventeen supposed this wasn't so bad.   
  
As neat as she'd tried to be, Seventeen could feel mailgirl chow on her chin and above her lip. She used her hand to wipe her face, and -- with Two watching on -- she licked the last few bits of her dinner from her fingers. Without standing, she returned to the water bowl, and did her best to wash the taste from her mouth.   
  
Seventeen did, after a drink, rise to her feet. She thanked Two for her hospitality, and then padded towards the shower block on her end of the locker room. She pulled her ponytail loose as she walked, and then ran her fingers through her hair too loosen it. The elastic was deposited with a handful of others on the edge of the sink counter, and Seventeen stepped up into the shower block without further ceremony.   
  
Twenty-Four was still showering at the far end, but Thirteen, Fourteen, and Nine had all wrapped up, and Twenty-Two had cum and gone. It was now Fifteen's turn -- one shower from the left, directly beside Twenty-Four -- to get herself off under the frigid water. Under the shower head on the far right was Mailgirl Number Eleven, who was at present squatting over the shower drain and relieving herself; no performance anxieties there, Seventeen thought jealously. She took her place between Fifteen on her left and Eleven on her right.   
  
When Fourteen had first dropped into a squat in the showers beside her yesterday afternoon, Seventeen had been unnerved. She hadn't said anything at the time, and kept her focus on her own reflection in front of her. But Fourteen had noticed the skittishness all the same, and explained that they all did it from time to time. Morning and afternoon breaks were just fifteen minutes long, inclusive of the time it took for a girl to get back down to the locker room. Once on the second floor, a girl's priorities were a brisk shower, a bathroom break, and maybe a quick climax; in the interest of time, all three could be accomplished in short order in the showers. "One-stop shopping," Fourteen had mused.   
  
Seventeen had fully intended for her first act of public masturbation to be in the showers that afternoon, in the aftermath of the incident on the 13th Floor. But as turned on as she'd been then, as much she'd been drunk on her own libido, she hadn't been able to go through with it. The showerheads were affixed onto the mirror glass walls at the front of locker room, and Seventeen had quickly gotten into her head about the potential crowd on the other side. Unable to perform then, she'd gone back for the rest of her afternoon still buzzing on sexual excitement, and had found release only upon returning to the locker room that evening. But that bridge had been crossed, and the running water helped with another; even as Eleven stood, Seventeen squatted, and was finally able to pee.   
  
The act did nothing to dissuade Fifteen from pursuing her passion. The girl had her back up against the wall, with her legs spread just enough to allow her hand access to the prize between them. She was still in the early stages of build, but lost in her own world, and paid no attention to Seventeen squatting next to her, right at crotch-height.   
  
Pressure now relieved, Seventeen stood and caught Eleven's eyes. Unlike the shorter Mailgirl Number Five, Eleven was tall for an Asian-American girl. She was apparently half-Japanese on her father's side, with long dark hair and porcelain skin.   
  
"Day two," Eleven offered with a smile.   
  
"Day two," Seventeen confirmed. She caught eye contact with her own reflection, briefly, and immediately averted her eyes. This was less her mailgirl training, and more about Seventeen still unable to fully come to grips with how far she'd fallen in the last two days.   
  
"So...what...seven hundred and some more days to go?"   
  
Seventeen frowned. Seven hundred and some more days until she was free. Not including Sundays, and with maybe half of her Saturdays off, she could winnow it down to something like five hundred and seventy-something. Five hundred and seventy-something more days like this. To Eleven, she answered, "Something like that."   
  
Eleven's intentions were, of course, not an attempt to rub salt in the wound. "Two down," she assured the brunette.   
  
Seventeen smiled weakly. It struck her how little she knew the other girls. She'd been handcuffed to Fourteen since the previous morning -- figuratively, at least. And both Seven and Nineteen had pulled her aside yesterday to offer her some encouragement and share their own perspectives on what life was like as and among the mailgirls. But she hadn't had much of an opportunity to have more than a few words with the other girls.   
  
Despite that, and despite that she couldn't say that she knew the other girls personally, she did still know quite a bit about them. Eleven's ethnicity, for example. Sixteen's birthplace. Nine's weight. Three's mother's maiden name. The last time Twenty-Two had masturbated at the Plaza. And, because of amount of data on the mailgirls app, the entire company now knew those very things about Seventeen, too. Justin didn't even know her that well.   
  
She felt a pang of guilt.   
  
Justin.   
  
Justin Miller.   
  
What was she going to do about Justin Miller?   
  
Seventeen had had her share of longer-term relationships since she'd first moved to New York, but it had only been a few weeks since she'd first gone out with Justin. They'd been on five or six dates. They'd slept together. And prior to the events of the previous morning, Seventeen might have been able to see the relationship going somewhere. But she couldn't make life decisions around something so new, and yesterday's life decision had been a momentous one. Of course they needed to break up; once Justin found out what she'd signed herself up for, she expected him to dump her on the spot. Men may have fantasized about bedding a mailgirl, but no one wanted to build a life with one.   
  
And, really, it would be for the best. Twenty-Four had reportedly been in an on-again, off-again relationship with her boyfriend of two-or-three years since she joined USF's stable of girls in July. She was back in an "on" now, and seemed utterly and completely miserable. She didn't touch herself. She barely socialized with the other girls. And every indignity she suffered seemed to sting that much more, as if it were inflicted upon her and her boyfriend both.   
  
Justin Miller belonged to another life, another girl. Emily Evans may have had a future with Justin, but it was only Mailgirl Number Seventeen in her reflection now.   
  
As if to drive that point home, a bold number seventeen was scrawled across her naked hip in black ink. She hadn't bothered trying to remove it at the end of her shift yesterday -- she just wanted to get out of the Plaza and get home. And she hadn't bothered to scrub it off during her morning shower here in the locker room; it just seemed pointless, given that Mistress Zero retraced the number again shortly thereafter. But she was going out to a bar tonight, and wanted it off. Or, thought she wanted it off. As she began to scrub with one of the communal pink washcloths, Eleven inserted herself.   
  
"I have rubbing alcohol in my locker, if you want," she offered. "But...I don't know if I'd make the effort."   
  
Seventeen looked at her quizzically.   
  
"Most of us don't even bother anymore," she explained. "Maybe on special occasions, or if we're off all weekend. But you're here tomorrow?"  
  
"I am," Seventeen answered. Fourteen had Saturday Shift tomorrow, which meant that Seventeen had Saturday Shift tomorrow. Half the girls were off until Monday, but the other half were scheduled to be back in tomorrow at their normal time. Actual deliveries were supposedly at a minimum, given the smaller number of regular employees who worked on Saturdays. But Mistress Zero apparently kept the girls busy with supply runs, custodial assignments, and other "special" projects as they came to her.   
  
"Don't bother, then," Eleven advised. "Unless you're planning on wearing something tonight that exposes your hip?"  
  
Seventeen shook her head. She glanced behind her, and confirmed that Fourteen was clearly still demarcated at such. Other girls who'd been in and out of the shower still wore their numbers, too. If anything, the girls who'd taken the time and effort to remove the ink -- likely those off for the weekend -- looked out-of-place and more naked and vulnerable than the girls who hadn't. Eleven was probably right; Seventeen gave up on the task, and assured herself that she'd scrub it off tomorrow night.   
  
Maybe Seventeen would adjust to the mailgirl chow or maybe she wouldn't. But she couldn't imagine a point where she'd get used to the cold water emerging from the showerhead above her. She could appreciate it on occasion -- such as the quick rinse she and Fourteen had enjoyed together that morning after a particularly frenzied, frantic, and sweaty start to their day. But Seventeen certainly wasn't going to linger longer than she had to. By the time that Fifteen announced that she was cumming, to no one and everyone at the same time, Seventeen had soaped and rinsed her body, shampooed and conditioned her hair, and turned off the water. She stepped from showers at the same time as Eleven, and helped herself to a pair of the small, rough-to-the-touch hand towels the locker room stocked.   
  
Communal shampoo and conditioner. Communal bars of soap. Communal washcloths. Communal razors, for intimate grooming and upkeep. Communal hairdryers. Communal lipstick, make-up, and nail polish. Communal deodorant and perfume. Communal toothpaste and toothbrushes. The girls themselves were interchangeable and nothing more than numbers, and so the locker room was stocked for communal use. Yesterday, Seventeen had gravitated towards the same end of the sink each time she'd returned to the locker room, in the hopes that she was minimizing the number of girls whose mouths the toothbrushes had been in, whose underarms to which the deodorant had been applied. Fourteen had noticed, and told her it was pointless; Evening Shift was instructed to collect, check, and redistribute products at random.   
  
Still, though the girls shared a single shade of lipstick and a single scent of perfume while in-uniform, they were allowed to bring in more individualized products for the end of the day. So, as Seventeen joined Thirteen, Eighteen, and Twenty-Two at the mirror (and as Fourteen sidled up behind them), there were a half dozen tubes of lipstick and a smattering of nail polish options lined up around the sinks. Similarly, five different girls were dressed a handful of different ways: Eighteen was fully clothed in a cocktail dress. Thirteen was wearing a bra-and-panty set. Twenty-Two was in a thong. Seventeen and Fourteen were both still stark naked.   
  
Seventeen wondered if she should go put something on.   
  
She decided against it. She wanted to brush and dry her hair first. And, whether she was conscious of it or not, she found herself following Fourteen's lead.   
  
Fourteen, teasingly and without boundaries, reach over and snapped the elastic of Thirteen's black lace panties.  
  
"Stop!" Thirteen objected, though the tone indicated she'd taken the harassment as playfully as it had been offered.   
  
"I thought you were going commando?" Fourteen asked.   
  
Thirteen shook her head. "No. I did last week, and spent the whole night flashing all of you."   
  
"Nothing we haven't seen before," Fourteen replied.   
  
"I also don't want to leave them here," Thirteen explained. Clothes -- panties especially -- had a habit of disappearing from the mailgirls locker room. Human Capital proudly hung its trophies up on the 18th Floor. But it was also widely understood that Mistress Zero would help herself to a girl's things as a way of providing prizes and keepsakes for executives up on the higher-level floors.   
  
Fourteen shrugged, and said, "The rookie's going commando."  
  
Meaning Seventeen. Again, she began to parrot back, "Ma'am, per Human Capital..." Seventeen trailed off.   
  
"Slut, comma, stupid," Fourteen laughed, and pointed to herself with her hairbrush.   
  
Seventeen laughed along with her, but said, "No chance. Zero. I'd put on three or four pairs of underwear, if I had them with me." She was half-joking; what she wanted to do tonight, more than anything, was put on every piece of clothing she owned, and then curl up and go to sleep in her own bed.   
  
"Oh, come on," Fourteen replied, giving Seventeen a fake pout in the mirror. "Or, how about we switch? You wear mine, I wear yours?"  
  
"Tempting," Seventeen offered.   
  
"Don't fall for it," Eighteen advised. "I don't think she's worn underwear in years."   
  
To this, Fourteen responded only by lifting the hemline on Eighteen's dress. Sure enough, Eighteen's own panties were conspicuously absent. The other four girls all had a good, quick laugh.   
  
"They're in my purse," Eighteen explained, defending herself. She pulled her dress back down. "And, at least I wore them to work this morning."   
  
"Why wouldn't you wear underwear?" Seventeen asked earnestly.   
  
Eighteen seemed to shoot an accusing look at Fourteen's reflection, as if she were asking Fourteen how Seventeen's tutelage could be so incomplete. To Seventeen, however, she replied, "It's what they expect of us. So, why not? Why not embrace it?"  
  
Seventeen reached for the hairdryer, and scrunched up her nose. "They think we're sluts, so we act like sluts?"  
  
"Well..."  
  
"...so, by that logic, what keeps up from blowing every guy at the bar tonight?"  
  
"Some of us might," Thirteen butted in, with her own accusing look in Fourteen's direction.   
  
Fourteen attacked the dark-haired girl with a playful mist of the floral-smelling mailgirl perfume.   
  
"I don't know," Eighteen struggled to explain. "It's fun. This is who they think we are. It's like play-acting the part."   
  
Seventeen still didn't follow. She asked, "By actually playing the part?"   
  
"Let loose, you prude!" Fourteen admonished. "Your life is shit now. For the next two years, it's a shit day after a shit day after a shit day. So, own it."   
  
"Flaunt it," Twenty-Two added.   
  
"Flaunt it," Fourteen agreed. "Own it. If this is who you're supposed to be the next two years, be that person. The more you fight it, the more you run away from it, the more miserable you're going to be."   
  
There was logic to it, Seventeen supposed. If she were better able to accept that this was her fate, maybe it wouldn't be so torturous undressing in the morning. If she were better able to put her head down and put up with every embarrassment that Mistress Zero and the 18th Floor threw at her, maybe she wouldn't feel quite so abused by their abuse. Fourteen and Eighteen, through the simple act of going commando out to the Imperial, were reclaiming choice and agency; they were giving the finger to Will Barrow, accepting and maybe even enjoying their new reputations.   
  
Seventeen was still going to wear panties.   
  
She found them where she'd left them that morning, folded neatly on the lower shelf of her locker, beneath her bra. She had felt ridiculous that morning, obediently arranging her clothes just so in her locker. The locker, in actuality, was more of a cubby -- no door, open and exposed to the locker room, and separated only by thin partitions from Sixteen's and Eighteen's. There was an upper shelf for her smartphone's charging station, as well as a simple metal cup that held any jewelry she might have worn that morning. There was a closet rod that ran from one side to the other, complete with hangars, as well as a sequence of hooks -- left, back, back, and right -- below that. There was a bottom shelf, where Seventeen had left her underthings, which protruded out from the wall and could be used as a seat, if necessary. Below that was an open space for shoes.   
  
Oddly, Seventeen felt more naked as she got dressed than she had since getting undressed that morning. After a full day of running around her place of work in nothing but an armband, a collar, and a number, the act of dressing served as a painful reminder of just how naked she'd been. Self-consciously, and again acutely aware that she was doing so in front of a potential audience in the elevator lobby, she stepped into a pair of skin-tone bikini-cut panties and shimmied them up her thighs. Next was her bra, part of a matching set -- also skin-tone, also lace, and also sexily cut. Right arm first, then left, before she reached behind her and fumbled nervously with the clasp.   
  
She'd struggled with what to wear that morning, when she'd gotten dressed at home. There were no rules and regulations as to what she was allowed to or expected to don to and from her new job -- only that she was to be "in uniform" in time for Mistress Zero's morning inspection. Seventeen had been tempted to just throw on a pair of jeans and a big, comfortable sweatshirt. But getting caught by her roommate in such an outfit would have required some sort of explanation or excuse; Seventeen wasn't ready -- not yet -- to come clean to Laura about what she'd been talked into yesterday. Instead, Seventeen got dressed for work as if that Friday morning were no different than any other, in a simple-but-stylish navy blue dress with short sleeves and a scooped back. Laura would still wonder what Seventeen was doing leaving the apartment before six, but at least her clothes wouldn't raise any suspicions.   
  
As she fumbled for the zipper on her back, she was interrupted by a call from down the line of lockers.  
  
"Nope!" Ten called out. "Nope, nope, nope."   
  
Seventeen was confused as to what she was doing wrong. The fact that Ten was approaching her with a wine-colored slip cleared that confusion up.   
  
Ten herself was in red halter-top cocktail dress that didn't shy away from revealing her naked thighs. The spaghetti-strap dress she intended for Seventeen looked a little longer, at least, but not much. The danger for Seventeen would be the neckline; maybe a relatively smaller-chested girl like Ten could get away with something like that, but Seventeen's tits would be in danger of popping out all night.   
  
Seventeen just wanted to wear her own dress, with its hemline that dropped below the knees and its high-collared neckline. She didn't want to spend all night on-guard for inadvertent exposure. But, surveying the locker room around her, the other girls -- those who weren't still half- or fully-naked -- were all wearing outfits more in-line with Ten's than Seventeen's. None of them were out-and-out slutty, exactly. But they were short and flirty, with plenty of skin exposed, and every last one of them was just ever-so-slightly on the classy side of the classy/whore-ish divide. None of them was seasonally appropriate; the walk to the Imperial was going to be chilly.

Seventeen conceded. Once more, she caved under pressure. Once more, she allowed herself to be talked into exposing herself. Once more, she'd accepted what it meant to a mailgirl -- even the parts not expressly written into her new contract.   
  
She gave up trying to zip up her navy blue business dress, and instead pulled it down from her shoulders and let it pool at her ankles. Stepping from it, she took Ten's dress in-hand and pouted. "I don't think I'm going to be able to wear my bra with this."   
  
Like Thirteen, Seventeen worried about leaving anything behind in the locker room. Mistress Zero was gone for the night, and Seventeen would be back here before her in the morning. Even still, she wasn't ready to risk losing her work outfit, or her bra, to the list of clothing items that had gone "mysteriously" missing from the locker room. Thankfully, Mailgirl Number Seven offered a solution in the form of an overnight bag slung over her shoulder.   
  
"We've got a room at the Imperial," Seven explained. "You're welcome to spend the night. Otherwise, I can get them back to you at some other point."   
  
Seventeen nodded, and tugged at the hemline of her new dress. As she did so, the top of her right areola peeked into view. It was going to be a long night.   
  
Seventeen's flats were tossed into Seven's bag, as well, along with shoes and clothes from a handful of other girls. Instead, Seventeen wore a pair of high-heeled ankle-wrap sandals lent to her by Eighteen, which fit surprisingly well, but were uncomfortable all the same. She borrowed a pair of silver hoops for earrings from Twenty, a bracelet from Sixteen, and a choker from Fourteen. Her purse didn't exactly match the rest of her ensemble, but she needed it for her phone, her wallet, and her own jewelry that she'd worn to work that morning.   
  
The girls trickled out of the locker room in groups of twos or threes or fours. Five wasn't coming, Seventeen was told, and a neither was Twenty-Four. Two and Sixteen both promised to catch up after they'd picked up the locker room and Evening Shift duties had been completed. Seventeen lost track of Fourteen, but Seven took her hand and led her out through the front door with Ten and Nineteen trailing behind.   
  
Seven didn't let go as they entered the elevator lobby, and Seventeen was thankful for it. There wasn't a big crowd, as she had feared, but there were still a dozen or so USF employees milling about as her particular little gaggle of mailgirls left for the day. Three young-looking men stood against the wall to the right, and gave each of the girls a good long look without ever breaking from their private conversation. Two middle-aged women sat at one of the café tables, cackling and snickering. A man in glasses, sitting alone, pretended to read his smart phone. An older man stared at them blatantly, with a dirty, wolfish grin, but turned his attention back to where Three and Four were still getting dressed on the other side of the glass.   
  
The people were less unnerving than the glass itself. Seventeen had come through the lobby hundreds of times since the mailgirls program had been launched in April. But it was a different experience now that she had moved to the other side of the glass. Four was topless, wearing just a thong. Three was in her bra and panties. Two, still naked, was now overseeing Sixteen, still naked, on all fours and eating from the dog dish. Seventeen glanced at her locker and turned crimson red; she'd masturbated right there, on display and performing for an audience.   
  
Seven didn't let her linger. Never letting go of Seventeen's hand, she quickly made her way to the top of the escalator, which led to the security desk and the public lobby below. "Don't look back," Seven whispered. "You're free."   
  
For tonight.   
  
\*\*\*  
  
"How bad could it be? Right?" asked Mailgirl Number Seven.  
  
Seventeen wasn't sure how to respond.   
  
Crammed into a booth that had been designed for four were six off-duty mailgirls, done up and dressed for a night out, with one more in a chair on the end. Seventeen was shoehorned between Seven on her right, and Three on her left, with Seven's hand on her knee beneath the table. Across from them was Mailgirl Number Eighteen, as well as Mailgirls Number Seven and Two from Mountbatten Asset Management. USF's Number Fourteen sat at the end.   
  
Seventeen wasn't sure what she'd expected out of Friday night "Bitch Sessions" at the Imperial. There were a handful of men in suits milling about, as well as a few women who clearly weren't a part of the mailgirl party. There were two male bartenders holding court on the far side of the bar, serving drinks at a breakneck pace, and a single female waitress making the rounds from table to table. For the most part, though, it was a largely mailgirl clientele, easily distinguished by their looks; any man lucky enough to stumble into the Imperial that night would have been greeted by forty or fifty of the most attractive women he'd ever seen, all in one place, all stuffed into little cocktail dresses and miniskirts. It was loud and raucous, and not exactly the misery-filled group therapy session that such a gathering could have easily been. The USF girls were scattered about, mingling with the Mountbatten girls and Atlantic Life girls, rubbing elbows with the Hobson Morgan McNamara girls at the bar, and laughing with the Chiyoda America girls by the door. The Young & Unglaub girls, notable for the fact they were all bleach blonde, rounded out the party.   
  
USF's Number Seven squeezed Seventeen's knee, and Seventeen was forced to respond to Mountbatten's Number Seven across from her.   
  
"Sorry?" she asked, buying herself time.   
  
"How bad could it be, right?" Mountbatten-Seven asked rhetorically.   
  
"It's pretty bad, I guess," Seventeen replied.   
  
"Not what I mean," Mountbatten-Seven shook her head. She had short, chin-length dark hair that she wore down, which bounced with the movement. "You signed because you couldn't imagine that it would be this bad."   
  
Seventeen looked to Fourteen for guidance. Fourteen only shrugged.   
  
Of course she hadn't fully expected for it to be as bad as her first two days had been. She wasn't naïve -- she'd known it was going to be awful. But there were twenty-three other girls all doing this already, day in and day out. Volunteers. How bad could it be?   
  
"They would have fired me," Seventeen offered as a defense.   
  
"And that would have been worse....how?" This from Three.   
  
"They were going to go after my CPA designation," she explained. "I wouldn't be able to work..."  
  
"And...again?" Again, Three.   
  
Seventeen felt flustered. She was explaining it wrong. What didn't they understand?   
  
She'd known Will Barrow by name and reputation, but yesterday morning in Joan's office had been the first time she'd ever set eyes on him. He couldn't have been more than forty, and was more attractive than the creepy, perverted old troll she had expected him to be. In fact, Seventeen might never had made the leap that this good-looking young executive was the one and only Will Barrow had it not been for the fact he was accompanied by Mistress Zero.   
  
Mistress Zero was tall, like Seventeen, but carried herself with a confidence, a power, and a sexuality that Seventeen never could have pulled off. She wore her dark hair up in a neat bun, and was dressed in a professional -- albeit tight-fitting -- suit that would have been at home in boardrooms all over Wall Street. That professionalism and polish, though, belied that fact that Mistress Zero spent her days torturing, tormenting, and supervising a locker room full of naked mailgirls, bending them over her knee for spankings and performing periodic touch-tests to make sure they were free of any sort of pubic stubble. She struck terror not only into the mailgirls, but also into half the young women who worked for USF in any capacity.   
  
Mistress Zero's presence in Joan's office meant only one thing: they'd come for Emily Evans.   
  
There were moments of the meeting that followed that would be burned into Seventeen's memory forever -- such as Mistress Zero literally cutting Seventeen's bra from her body with a pair of scissors when she felt Seventeen was moving too slow. Or Mistress Zero tugging on Seventeen's pubic hair, and telling her it had to go. But much of the back-and-forth with Barrow was a blur, and she'd signed away the next two years of her life before the gravity of what that entailed had really-and-truly sunk in. Joan had called it a "special assignment" in her calendar invite, and Barrow had referred to it as a "transfer." She'd have been fired if she hadn't accepted, and the Division of Public Licensing Services upstate would hear of some made-up ethical and professional conduct concerns about her from USF. But she'd also been assured a significant spot bonus, a salary above-and-beyond what she was earning in her current role, and the promise of potential incentives down the line that could bump her up a tax bracket or two just on their own. And so, despite having promised herself that she'd never wind up among the mailgirls, the signature of Emily Evans was soon affixed to the bottom of an official contract, and Seventeen was being paraded naked through the 13th Floor.   
  
After all, she'd told herself yesterday morning, how bad could it really be?   
  
"Okay," Seventeen admitted. "How bad could it be?"  
  
Mountbatten-Seven squealed, and called out, "Every time!"   
  
Mountbatten-Two leaned across the table, patted Seventeen's hand, and explained, "She said the same thing."   
  
Mountbatten-Seven nodded in agreement, and explained, "Second cohort."   
  
"We went six per month, like you all," said Mountbatten-Two. Mountbatten Mailgirl Number Seven, like Seventeen, had seen mailgirls in action before deciding to join up. And yet, despite that, both had talked themselves into it; after all, how bad could it really and truly be?   
  
"What happened to the last Seventeen?" Mountbatten-Seven asked, and all eyes went to USF Mailgirl Number Seven.   
  
Seven swallowed, looked to Seventeen, and then back to Mountbatten-Seven. "Actioneers," she gave in response.   
  
The reaction around the table was mixed, and it was clear to Seventeen that -- whatever "Actioneers" meant -- there was some divide as to whether it was a good thing or a bad thing. She risked being seen as stupid, and asked, "Actioneers?"  
  
"Whitestockings," Fourteen offered.   
  
The term didn't do anything to clear up Seventeen's confusion.   
  
"Whitestockings," Fourteen repeated. "As opposed to the Blackstockings."  
  
Seventeen stared back at her blankly.   
  
"Like the Bluestockings and Redstockings? Feminists?"   
  
"Sorry," Seventeen responded with a shrug.   
  
"Whitestockings are bad," Eighteen jumped in. "Blackstockings are good."   
  
"Right," Mountbatten-Two agreed sarcastically, rolling her eyes.   
  
"Whitestockings are bad," Fourteen repeated, agreeing with the girl to Seventeen's left, and shooting a look of derision at Mountbatten-Two. "Blackstockings are good. Whitestockings swoop in playing Mother Theresa, but you just get owned in a different way, and get treated like a victim. With the Blackstockings, at least, you are who you are."   
  
None of this was making any sense to Seventeen, which was apparently clear to Seven.   
  
"Actioneers," Seven explained. "The International Women's Action Committee. They're one of the 'whitestocking' groups fighting against mailgirl programs anywhere and everywhere. The American Association of Professional Women. Feminists For Equality. United American Women."   
  
The mention of this last group induced a wince from Mountbatten-Two, and Seventeen suspected there was a story there.   
  
"Anyway, they're the 'whitestockings.' On the other side are the 'blackstockings,' which are all the 'individual life, individual choice' groups," Seven continued.  
  
"'I Lick'," Fourteen joked at the end of the table, pronouncing the "ILIC" acronym aloud.   
  
Seven stuck her tongue out at Fourteen, and then went on. Her quick lesson to Seventeen was through, and so she went back to the previous Mailgirl Number Seventeen's story. "They got her on Wednesday morning. She got up and got dressed for work, but then ended up over in their picket line, instead."  
  
"Why?" Mountbatten-Seven asked.   
  
"She got pulled in as entertainment for the COO's birthday on Tuesday, after hours. Got helium balloons tied around her nipples. Some random executive assistant's panties shoved in her mouth. Hot wax from the birthday candles dripped on the inside of her thighs. And..." -- Seven hesitated -- "got the full ponygirl treatment as some sort of pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey thing."   
  
"Ugh," Mountbatten-Two grunted.   
  
Mountbatten-Seven reacted similarly, and asked, "I thought that sort of thing didn't happen at USF?"  
  
Seventeen was baffled as to what the "ponygirl treatment" was. "Sorry, what happened?"  
  
Seven ignored her momentarily, and responded instead to her Mountbatten counterpart. "They're getting bolder," she answered. "Especially at the top."   
  
"Sorry...?" Seventeen again.   
  
"Butt plug with a pony tail," Fourteen said to Seventeen, almost as an aside. Seventeen cringed. To the table, Fourteen picked up Seven's story. "Eight was there, too. Same stuff. And when they left, Seventeen apparently seemed okay with it all. A little shaken, according to Eight, but a little turned on, too."   
  
"She got herself off in the shower before she went home," Three interjected. "Seventeen, that is. Melissa."  
  
"Eight, too," Fourteen chuckled.   
  
"But Eight came back the next day," Seven continued. "Melissa went to Grace Burgmeier and the Actioneers."   
  
Grace Burgmeier, Seventeen had heard of. She was the mailgirl phenomenon's answer to Gloria Allred, and had been fighting tooth-and-nail against the concept since it first kicked off in the States. So far, that fight had been largely one-sided, and Burgmeier's successes limited. But she'd won the attention of a popular, young Congresswoman from Illinois, and the so-called "Mailgirl Hearings" were scheduled to begin in January.   
  
"She's going to use her," Eighteen lamented. "She's already got our original Twenty-Three with her face on pamphlets and her story -- our story -- thrown up all over the Internet."   
  
"Yeah," Seven said, shaking her head. "Rumor has it she's going to trot Twenty-Three out in front of Congress."   
  
"Heather," Fourteen spat. "Heather Harper." Heather Harper had broken ranks and deserted them. She was no longer allowed the anonymity of a number.   
  
Seventeen interrupted again. "Sorry, I don't see what the issue is? Aren't we all rooting to be free again?"  
  
The reaction around the table was mixed. Mountbatten-Two and Mountbatten-Seven both nodded. Eighteen said, "yes," but with hesitation. Three remained silent. And Seven and Fourteen shared a look.   
  
"Not like this," Seven answered. "Heather will get up there and air all of our dirty laundry. Figuratively. Outside of USF, people know we're mailgirls -- parents and friends and so on. Naked delivery girls. Exhibitionists, maybe. But they don't really know the full extent of it. The sadism. The masochism. The masturbation. The punishments. Maybe some of them know some it, sure -- my mom keeps pumping me for details. But not all of it. Every time that Heather opens her mouth, she makes it all public."   
  
"And we look like idiots for not walking out with her," Three said.   
  
"Sluts," Eighteen added.   
  
"Sluts," Seven agreed. "Idiots and morons for ever signing up, idiots and morons for continuing to affirm our participation every morning. Stooges for letting USF do to us exactly what they're doing to us. Laughingstocks."  
  
"But..." Seventeen began.  
  
"But we are idiots and morons," Fourteen jumped in. "We are stooges. We are laughingstocks. We are sluts." She shrugged. "But it was our decision. Individual life, individual choice. 'I lick.'"   
  
"But we all got pressured," Seventeen argued. "Blackmailed. And we can't just walk out like she did. Those contracts would ruin us."   
  
"They ruined Heather," Seven noted. "The Actioneers paid off her debt, but the company still ruined her credit, they took everything she owned, and they're still going after her for breach-of-contract. She's never going to work in finance again. And then Grace Burgmeier turned her into a celebrity: Heather Harper, famous nation-wide as an idiot, a stooge, a slut, a mailgirl."   
  
Seventeen shook her head. "But if Congress..."  
  
"If Congress sets us free --" Seven began.  
  
"Mailgirl emancipation," Mountbatten-Two observed.  
  
"If Congress sets us free," Seven started again, "then all of this is for nothing. No promotions. No bonuses. And, again, we all look like victims."  
  
Seventeen certainly felt like a victim.   
  
"Better to ride it out," Seven said.   
  
"Keep your head down, take everything they throw at you, and get out the other side." This from Three.   
  
There was a brief silence around the table; the other girls all reluctantly agreed.   
  
"So, Seventeen?" Mountbatten-Seven asked, meaning the previous Mailgirl Number Seventeen.   
  
"Melissa Schmidt," Fourteen corrected her.   
  
"Melissa Schmidt," Mountbatten-Seven repeated dutifully.   
  
"Melissa Schmidt will become another puppet for Grace Burgmeier. Another celebrity. And my mother will hear all about the time I got a butt plug with a ponytail shoved up my ass," Seven answered.   
  
Seventeen blinked. "No! You, too?"   
  
"Not a butt plug, no," Seven replied. "But I did get a magic marker, once."   
  
"Top of a champagne bottle," Three volunteered.   
  
"A finger," Eighteen added.   
  
The other girls waved Eighteen off and rolled their eyes. "We've all had a finger," Fourteen said dismissively. "I mean, who hasn't had a finger?"   
  
Seventeen slowly raised her hand, more terrified of what her future held now than she had been before.   
  
Fourteen just laughed, and assured her, "It's not as bad as it sounds."  
  
"It's not particularly enjoyable," Eighteen corrected her.   
  
"I'd take it over a spanking," Fourteen admitted.   
  
"Oh, I heard," Three stepped in. "You two got it up on the 13th Floor today?"   
  
"Her old office," Fourteen confirmed, meaning Seventeen. The two girls had had their smartphones synched, meaning that every delivery Fourteen was called upon, Seventeen was called upon, as well. More significantly to that afternoon, every demerit that Fourteen earned was counted against Seventeen, and every punishment that Fourteen suffered was suffered by Seventeen, too. The girls had been punished that afternoon for a sum of demerits Fourteen had at least partially earned prior to Seventeen even becoming a mailgirl. But, rather than administering that punishment in the mailgirls locker room, Mistress Zero had summoned them both to the 13th Floor, and delivered it in front of all of Seventeen's former coworkers.   
  
"How bad?" Mountbatten-Two asked. "Let me see."   
  
Fourteen didn't hesitate. She stood, turned, and hiked up her dress -- mooning the table and exposing her crotch to the rest of the bar. Her ass, perfectly toned and fit from months of running the halls and stairs of USF Plaza, was decorated with a series of red welts -- fading, but still visible.   
  
Mountbatten-Two whistled. As Fourteen fixed her dress, Mountbatten-Two asked, "Cane?"   
  
"Riding crop," Seventeen answered.   
  
"And you?" Mountbatten-Two. "How bad?"   
  
Three graciously slid out of the booth, and then waited expectantly for Seventeen to follow behind. Seventeen, feeling caught up in the moment and pressured by her peers, dutifully did so. She stood, surveyed the bar to make sure no one but her table was watching, and then reached beneath her skirt. She slid her flesh-colored panties down below her buttocks, while lifting the hem of the cocktail dress.   
  
"Ouch," Mountbatten-Seven observed.  
  
As Seventeen went to fix her clothes, however, she felt Fourteen's hand reach up and grab her underwear. "Lose them," Fourteen ordered.

"No," Seventeen laughed, treating it as a joke. She tugged on them, but Fourteen didn't release her grip.   
  
Instead, Fourteen looked to the table. "Survey?" she asked aloud. Seven shook her head, as did Eighteen and the two Mountbatten girls. Three went a step further, and -- as discreetly as she could - provided proof; she lifted the front of her skirt and exposed her bare pussy to Seventeen.   
  
Seventeen threw up her hands and gave in. "Fine," she sighed. "You win." Again, she scanned the bar, and confirmed that only a pair of the bleach-blonde Young & Unglaub girls was looking her way; none of the handful of men was paying her table much attention at the moment. Fourteen let go of Seventeen's panties, and Seventeen slid them down her thighs, past her knees, and down to her ankles. But, just as she'd lost a pair of underwear to Will Barrow yesterday, Seventeen gasped in horror and surprise as Fourteen snatched these away tonight. Before she even had a chance to object, Fourteen was up and headed towards the bar. Seventeen could do nothing but watch, powerless, as another girl took off with her intimate apparel.   
  
"Where's she going?" Seventeen asked in a panic.   
  
"Drinks," Seven laughed.   
  
Sure enough, Fourteen found her way to the bar, Seventeen's panties in hand, and offered them to the bartender. She and the bartender enjoyed a quick back-and-forth, and then she pointed back to her table, at Seventeen.   
  
Seventeen blushed something awful, but waved at the bartender nonetheless.   
  
"Oh my god," she muttered, and then sat back down in the booth. She slid over to make room for Three, and then tugged at her dress to keep her now bare behind from touching the seat.   
  
As they awaited Fourteen's return, Mountbatten-Two now stood, and then made a show of lifting her own skirt for the table. In contrast to the few and fading red welts that decorated Fourteen's and Seventeen's buttocks, Mountbatten-Two's were covered in a criss-crossed pattern of lashes.   
  
"Fuck," Seven offered. "How are you even sitting down?"   
  
"What was that?" Seventeen asked.   
  
"Cat-o-nine-tails?" Three guessed, and Mountbatten-Two nodded. To Seventeen, she explained, "Mistress Zero has one, as of a week or two ago, but hasn't used it."   
  
"Yet," Eighteen said.   
  
"Yet," Three agreed, resignation in her voice.   
  
"She will," Mountbatten-Two warned, as she fixed her dress and gingerly slid back into the booth. "Your mistress, my mistress -- they compare notes."   
  
"I'm sure," Eighteen said glumly.   
  
Seventeen thought back to that afternoon. She'd been doing her best to keep up with Fourteen, but they'd been late for a handful of deliveries since the previous afternoon, and Seventeen knew at least one or two were her fault. Fourteen, for her part, hadn't seemed overly annoyed with her, even as her demerits began to approach twenty-five; Fourteen explained that it was inevitable she'd hit that threshold at some point, and that it was pointless to cast blame. When their smartphones eventually signaled that they were due, Fourteen groaned, and warned Seventeen that their afternoon break was going to require a visit to Mistress Zero's spanking bench.   
  
Instead, however, Mistress Zero had met them on the 13th Floor. Seventeen had been dreading her first visit to her old office and old colleagues since she'd been led out naked and on a leash the day before. But she hadn't suspected anything more malicious than a routine pick-up or delivery.   
  
Mistress Zero had other ideas; she ordered them both to grab the top of the partition wall just outside of Seventeen's cubicle, spread their legs, and prepare for the riding crop.   
  
Fourteen had gone first, and the waiting had been something awful. Not only did Seventeen wince each time Mistress Zero licked Fourteen's behind, but the sound of the crop itself -- whistling through the air and connecting with a "snap!" --attracted more and more onlookers. Jessica, of course. But also Jen and Ashley. Karen. Lisa. Tracy. Her old boss, Joan. David Ojeda. Mike Gedman. Patrick Nichols, whom Seventeen had had a crush on since she'd first started at USF. She'd been working with these people for years, in some cases. As a peer and as an equal. She'd been in meetings with them, worked on projects with them, raced to meet deadlines with them. She'd complained about Mondays with them, gotten lunch with them, even gone out to drinks with a few of them.   
  
And now, less than forty-eight hours into her new role with the mailgirl program, she was naked and being spanked with a riding crop in front of them.   
  
When Mistress Zero turned her attention to Seventeen, she half expected someone -- Patrick, maybe -- to jump to her defense. But no one had rescued her yesterday, just as no one would rescue her that afternoon. Instead, she listened to them snicker and laugh, and heard someone squeal with excitement when the blows began. The riding crop hurt as much as Seventeen had expected it to, but it was the humiliation that stung worse.   
  
She hadn't cried, which was a victory. But she'd been forced to thank Mistress Zero three times afterwards before the German woman was satisfied with her volume and enthusiasm. And she and Fourteen had been left in-position -- still bent at the waist, awkwardly clutching Seventeen's old cubicle wall -- until their next delivery. Which, thankfully, came quickly, and the girls were allowed to escape to the stairwell.   
  
Instead of immediately bounding up the stairs to the 21st Floor, though, Fourteen had turned to Seventeen, grabbed her forcibly by the back of the head, and kissed her deeply, passionately, and powerfully. Seventeen hadn't been sure how to react; as their breasts met, and as their naked, sticky bodies connected, she couldn't help but reciprocate. Something about the session with Mistress Zero had left her weirdly conflicted and aroused, and the kiss suggested Fourteen was feeling the same way.   
  
"Wow," Fourteen panted when she finally pulled away. "Tell me that that didn't do it for you..."  
  
She didn't wait for a response; the observation was entirely rhetorical. A dumbfounded Seventeen was left in her wake as Fourteen began her ascent, the veteran mailgirl not bothering to look back for Seventeen to confirm.   
  
A moment later, Seventeen followed behind. The two girls hadn't spoke of the kiss since.   
  
Fourteen returned to the booth with two shot glasses and Mailgirl Number Twenty in tow. The two shots -- which smelled revoltingly sweet -- were ceremoniously placed in front of Seventeen. Twenty took a seat on Fourteen's knee at the end of the table.   
  
"What's this?" Seventeen asked.   
  
"Cherry liqueur," Fourteen smiled. "As a celebration."   
  
"Celebration?"   
  
"For your cherry!" Fourteen sang out loudly, and raised the glass she'd left behind moments earlier.   
  
The other girls all laughed and clapped, and dutifully raised their own glasses.   
  
Seventeen blushed again, her face as red as the liqueur before her. They all knew. They all knew she'd masturbated at her locker before coming over here.   
  
"Two days!" Seven shouted out.   
  
"Two days!" Eighteen laughed, toasting her.   
  
What could Seventeen do but laugh along? With the exception of the two Mountbatten girls across from her, she'd seen every other girl at the table get herself off -- whether it had been at some point in the last two days, or whether it had been through the mirror glass in her prior life. They were welcoming her into their sorority.   
  
Seventeen threw the first shot back, and recoiled at the taste. She steeled herself, held her breath, and then reached for the second. She washed it down with a sip from the lemon drop martini she'd ordered before. Still bright red from embarrassment, and still grinning sheepishly, Seventeen accepted the applause.   
  
"I made it to three," Seven confessed.   
  
"Seven days," Three said.   
  
"Four," said Eighteen with a smile.   
  
"Day one!" Fourteen offered with triumph.   
  
"Same," laughed Mountbatten-Seven.   
  
"Two days, as well," said Twenty.   
  
"Twelve days," Mountbatten-Two announced, to a round of catcalls.  
  
"So if I had made it twelve," Seventeen asked, "you'd have gotten me twelve shots?"   
  
"Of course," Fourteen answered. "Though I probably would have needed a few more pairs of underwear to trade."   
  
Seventeen shook her head, but laughed all the same.   
  
"We nearly killed Number Eight," Three chuckled.   
  
"One hundred and four days," Seven explained. "She broke down right after our original Thirteen went to Park Place."   
  
"You didn't make her take a hundred and four shots of this shit, did you?" Seventeen asked, holding up her empty shot glass.   
  
"No, no," Three laughed. She jutted a chin towards where Eight was drinking at the bar, with Numbers Nine and Twelve, and a girl Seventeen didn't recognize. "She's on an installment plan."   
  
"What's Five up to at this point?" Eighteen asked.   
  
Three rolled her eyes at the question, her annoyance with Five plainly evident.   
  
"I don't know," Seven jumped in. "Six-and-half months? Whatever that is."  
  
"Six-and-a-half months?" Mountbatten-Seven asked with incredulity.   
  
"Six-and-a-half months," Seven confirmed.   
  
"She hit a hundred and eighty days earlier this week," Seventeen announced, and the girls all looked her.   
  
Shit, Seventeen thought to herself. Did they not know?   
  
"There's a pool," Seventeen explained. "There's one in Accounting, and I know there are others in the building, on her and Twenty-Four."   
  
"What's Twenty-Four at?" Twenty asked.   
  
"I don't know," Seventeen answered, shaking her head. "I don't follow it. I don't play along with the fantasy game, either. It's just that a hundred and eighty was a big number, and I heard a couple of the guys in my office talking about it."   
  
"Wait...what's the fantasy game?" Mountbatten-Seven asked.   
  
Seventeen swallowed hard. "It's like a fantasy baseball or fantasy football thing. I don't know exactly how it works. I don't play. But you get a 'roster' of mailgirls. Six, I think? And it's some sort of composite score, based on the stats in the app. Weight going up or down, how many demerits a girl picks up, how many bathroom breaks, how many time she...er..."  
  
"Masturbates?" Eighteen asked.   
  
"Cums," Seventeen finally spat out, and took another sip of her drink.   
  
"...which, of course, is why Human Capital now makes us report exactly how many orgasms," Three said, putting two and two together. "We didn't have to do that before."   
  
Seventeen nodded.   
  
"Oh my god!" Seven yelped. "It makes sense now."  
  
The other girls gave her a quizzical look.   
  
"The conversation I had with Spencer Russell in HR," she explained. "He spent five minutes grilling me on my menstrual cycle."   
  
Fourteen coughed in her drink, and then laughed. "They're betting on our periods?!!"  
  
"Jesus Christ," Three cursed.   
  
They were all silent for a moment, as the weight of this revelation sunk in.   
  
Twenty was the first to speak. "I wonder if they'd let us play?"  
  
This went on for a few more minutes, as the girls joked about how they could game the system. Eventually, though, Seven announced, while laughing, that this - this news that the company was now betting on how many times she masturbated at work, how many times she reached orgasm, how many minutes it took her to get there -- this was the most screwed-up thing that turned her on all week. It was part of a game that they all apparently played with one another, week after week at these Friday night Bitch Sessions.   
  
"My own body odor," Fourteen blurted out, and sniffed her armpits for show. Twenty feigned a gag.   
  
"Having my hair pulled," Mountbatten-Two admitted.   
  
"Holding One's hand up on the 42nd Floor," Three offered, to boos and hisses from the other girls. Apparently, it wasn't risqué enough for their liking.   
  
"New fish," Twenty said, looking in Seventeen's direction. When Seventeen looked surprised, Twenty amended her confession. "Not you. Not you, exactly. I mean, you're very pretty. Very, very pretty. But just the thought of my first day, of going through all of this the first time."   
  
The other girls nodded in agreement.   
  
"How about you?" Seven asked of Seventeen.   
  
Seventeen didn't get a chance to respond. "Getting spanked in front of her old co-workers," Fourteen answered for her. "Next?"  
  
Seventeen, red-faced once more, nodded in the affirmative.   
  
Eighteen and Mountbatten-Seven made their admissions, as well, but follow-ups were cut short when Fourteen cried out, "Are you touching yourself on my knee?!"   
  
Twenty's hand was indeed in her lap, and she looked embarrassed about being caught. Though, perhaps, not as embarrassed as she should have been. She apologized with a shrug, and brought her hands back up to the table.   
  
"Come on," Three said, taking Twenty by the hand, and leading her away from the table. "Let's go to the Kissing Booth. We can take turns on watch."   
  
"Your old lady's not going to mind?" Fourteen asked, referring to Mailgirl Number Two. Two and Three, as Seventeen understood it, had been a monogamous couple since some point earlier in the summer.   
  
Three just winked, and b-lined for the darkened booth in the corner of the bar with Twenty in two. The monogamy she and Two shared apparently still had some allowances. Seventeen saw that there was already a girl sitting in the booth, but she couldn't tell who it was or what, exactly, she was doing. Which was, of course, the point of said Kissing Booth; Mountbatten-Two had admitted to getting herself off over in that corner earlier in the evening while Mountbatten-Seven played lookout.   
  
"And speaking of old ladies," Fourteen said, turning to Seven with a raised eyebrow, "how is yours? How was the trip across the Hudson?"   
  
"Not my 'old lady,'" Seven corrected her, "but she's good. I mean, she's okay."  
  
"Really?"   
  
"Really," Seven answered. To Seventeen, she explained, "Our last Mailgirl Number Thirteen, the one that Human Capital sent to Park Place. I went and visited her last weekend."   
  
"Oh, yeah," Eighteen said, just now remembering that Seven had taken that trip to Jersey City. "I meant to ask you. How'd it go? What's it like?"  
  
Seven took a sip of her own drink, and explained. "So, you know, it's twenty-four/seven. She can't leave. But, I mean, you can visit. They basically do this," -- meaning, drinks -- "on Saturday nights in one of the employee lounges. They're off the clock from seven on Saturday night until seven on Sunday morning, so we were up until after three."   
  
"Doing what, pray tell?" Fourteen smirked.   
  
"I'm not one to kiss and tell," Seven answered coyly.   
  
"But she's allowed to...?" Eighteen began, and then stopped. She tried again, "They're allowed to...?"  
  
"Yes," Seven replied. "They're allowed to sleep with each other in the building. At night. After their shifts. But before lights-out at nine. And on Saturdays nights, until Sunday morning." Sensing more teasing from Fourteen, Seven got out in front it. "And, yes, I slept with Thirteen. Once in the lounge, once back in the locker room, and then once more in the locker room in the morning. Happy?"  
  
Fourteen just grinned suggestively.   
  
"So, you can visit. But you've got to be naked," Seven went on. "Not just us, though, either. Any female visitors. Apparently her mom flew out at the end of October, to see her and her sister, and Barrow stuck to his guns."  
  
"No!" Mountbatten-Two gasped.   
  
Seven shrugged. "She's apparently in pretty good shape. Mrs. Scott, that is. Or, Mrs. Ryan, I think? There was a divorce and a second husband in there somewhere, if I remember right. But, she had Thirteen and her sister young."  
  
"Two?" Fourteen asked. "One and Two?"   
  
"One and Two," Seven nodded. "Park Place One and Park Place Two. I was 'Plaza Seven' the whole night."   
  
"It's hard to follow along sometimes," Mountbatten-Seven observed.  
  
"Talk to the Chiyoda girls," Eighteen said. "They get new numbers every single day, just to drive home how interchangeable they all are."   
  
"And apparently it's a clusterfuck," Fourteen added. "It's what they do at Fukuda-Chiyoda Financial Group in Tokyo, so they set it up the same way here at Chiyoda America. It's confusing as shit, though, so they all call each other by their real names secretly, and it ends up slipping out every now and then at work. Which means they get slapped around a lot." She nudged Seventeen with her elbow. "You can tell the Chiyoda girls by the handprints on their cheeks."   
  
"So, Park Place Two," Seven started up again, ignoring the aside. "You can visit her. But you have to be in uniform, and they'll lock you in for night, so I did have to sleep in their locker room. They've all got Sunday shifts they have to do -- with the same sort busy work we do on Saturdays -- but Park Place Two gets allowed some time in Human Capital to work on her research. And, truly and honestly, I think she's okay with it now."   
  
"Come on!" Fourteen waved the suggestion off.   
  
"No, really," Seven said earnestly. "She had a hard time at the beginning, the way the whole thing played out. And, you know, they sleep on the floor over there, so she misses her bed. But it's been like eleven weeks since the last time she wore clothes, and she seems to think it's easier -- not having to get undressed every morning and living half-in and half-out of the mailgirl thing. And she's still angry about the way her sister got roped in. But you should see them -- they're super close, closer than they've ever been, apparently."   
  
"They haven't...?" Eighteen began to ask, but trailed off.  
  
Seven cringed a little, but nodded reluctantly. Seventeen wasn't entirely sure what the exchange meant, but wasn't sure she wanted to know.   
  
Eighteen made a face. She shifted topic slightly, and asked, "What about the HR girl? The redhead?"  
  
"Park Place Six," Seven offered. "What about her? Did she leave an impression?"   
  
"She spat in my asshole!" Eighteen guffawed, to a round of horrified jeers and laughter from the table.   
  
Once she'd composed herself, Seven answered, "Yes, she's there. She had a hard time at the beginning, too, because the other girls blamed her for trapping them. But, if it hadn't been her, it would have been someone else. And however they all got there, she's in it tits-deep right there with them." She nodded in the direction of their replacement Mailgirl Number Thirteen, with whom there was some sort of history Seventeen wasn't privy to. "We're all in this together."   
  
"I heard they don't even have toilets?" Seventeen asked.   
  
"Squat toilets," Seven corrected her. "And they're coming our way at the start of the year. Eighteen's little friend is still plugged into HR and Human Capital somehow, someway, so she's got all the best gossip. Barrow's using Park Place as a testing ground for all sorts of stuff before he rolls the program out to the regional offices. You know, like 'seeding' a new program with an existing mailgirl. Or putting up stockades in the lobby."   
  
Eighteen looked nervously at Seven. "Does that mean we're going twenty-four/seven?"   
  
Seven shook her head. "No. Barrow's not really a fan. He likes watching us undress in the morning. He only agreed to test it out in New Jersey to placate someone in senior management. So, no dorms anytime in the near future."  
  
"You do know that you can still spend the night in our locker room, right?" Fourteen offered.   
  
"Sure," Seven answered. "We've all done that. Together, remember?"   
  
"No, by choice," Fourteen replied.   
  
"Why would you stay there by choice?" Mountbatten-Two asked.   
  
"Fuck," Fourteen said, "I've got to be back there tomorrow morning before seven, and we're going to be here until three. I don't want schlep all the way home and then just turn around."  
  
"You live in Brooklyn Heights," Seven mocked her.   
  
Fourteen ignored her. "You have to sleep on the floor, but we've all done that before." She turned to Seventeen, and offered, "Don't worry. You will at some point, too. In fact, you're welcome to join me tonight?"

The thought of sleeping on the hard, tiled floor of the mailgirls locker room was not one that appealed to Seventeen. But then, neither did the idea of having to get all the way up to Washington Heights later tonight, only to have to get all the way back down to the Financial District in the morning. She supposed she could understand where Fourteen was coming from.   
  
"We've got a room upstairs," Seven offered. "You can stay with us. You both can."   
  
Fourteen declined. "You bitches will make me work for it."   
  
Seven smiled wolfishly.   
  
"So does that mean you're not going home with anyone tonight?" Mountbatten-Seven asked.   
  
Fourteen turned, and smiled at the bartender to whom she'd given Seventeen's panties. "He gets off at three," Fourteen answered. "I get off at three-oh-five. And I'll be back at the Plaza by three-thirty."  
  
This, as it turned out, wasn't much of an exaggeration.   
  
The night carried on in a similarly lively and bawdy way. Seventeen drank a bit more than she usually allowed herself, but it had been a difficult couple of days, and she was in good company. She mingled with the other girls, greeting Four and Sixteen when they arrived, and comparing notes with the girls from Young & Unglaub, as well as Hobson Morgan McNamara.   
  
"Lawyers," Seven had laughed, shaking her head. Junior executives from sales and marketing functions represented a disproportionate percentage of all mailgirls, nationwide, if Seven were to be believed. Especially those up-and-comers who'd signed non-competes and non-solicits as part of their pre-mailgirl careers, blissfully unaware that such agreements would eventually be used against them, to bully them into mailgirl contracts. But lawyers apparently made up the next largest group of volunteers, either because they recognized just how trapped they already were when presented with the opportunity, or because -- as the jokes went -- lawyers were willing to do anything. Seven had herself, once upon a time, worked in USF's Legal department; Eighteen, Nine, and One, too.   
  
Seven kept a watchful eye on the new girl throughout the evening, which both reassured Seventeen and skeeved her out. She had a reputation as the group's mother hen and emotional cheerleader, a role that Seventeen had appreciated at the Plaza. But Seven had repeated her invitation for Seventeen to spend the night upstairs with her and a few of the other girls, and then half-joking/half-seriously repeated it once more. It signaled that Seven's intentions might not have been as pure as she'd have liked Seventeen to believe.   
  
Instead, it was Fourteen to whom Seventeen looked for how to handle herself. In no way did Seventeen feel as confident as Fourteen seemed to be, but Seventeen felt drawn to her approach. With a drink in her - or two, or three, or four -- Seventeen began to appreciate the undaunted and self-assured way that Fourteen accepted her role as a mailgirl, taking everything as it came, and treating each new challenge and embarrassment as if she were in on the joke. As if she were above it. As if she were enjoying it. It was stagecraft, of course. But it was stagecraft that had the potential to keep Seventeen from wallowing in depression and misery. Better to lean in, and accept her new life, than spend the next two years fighting the bit.   
  
As the room emptied, though, and Seventeen found herself sitting alone at the bar with Fourteen, she began to wonder how much of Fourteen's demeanor was bullshit and stagecraft, how much Fourteen truly felt above it all. There'd been no spectators when Fourteen had kissed her in the stairwell, no audience but Seventeen. And Fourteen had indeed seemed charged up and turned on by the public spanking she'd just been administered. Earlier in the night, the table had confessed to all of the perverted and messed up things they'd nonetheless found arousing, and Seventeen hadn't contradicted her mentor when Fourteen had volunteered that same session with the riding crop as Seventeen's. Despite herself, she had been turned on, she had been aroused, she had been wet.   
  
She fiddled with the label on her bottle of Mich Ultra, tearing it back just so, and avoiding Fourteen's eye contact.   
  
Maybe Fourteen's act wasn't just an act. Maybe it was that Fourteen was capable of admitting to herself that all of this turned her on. And maybe it wasn't her false confidence or play-acting that Seventeen needed to imitate, but her honesty and self-awareness. Maybe that was what separated Fourteen from most of the rest of the girls.   
  
The Young & Unglaub girls, nearly indistinguishable due to their hair, left as a unit. The Chiyoda girls, apparently indistinguishable based on number, trickled out here and there. Seven had disappeared upstairs a bit earlier, with Ten, Nineteen, and Twenty-Three all in tow. Two and Three had left together, hand-in-hand. Thirteen had gone home with some average-looking guy in an expensive suit. Twenty had gone home with two.   
  
Seventeen absently peeled a bit more of the label off her beer, and then took a swig. It was room temperature. She'd cut herself off from the hard stuff around midnight - no more cherry liqueurs or lemon-drop martins for her, thank you very much. She'd made so many poor choices that week already; she didn't need liquor to fuel any more. And so she'd been nursing the same beer for at least an hour, all while fighting the good fight to keep from flashing the few stragglers from where she sat perched on the bar stool.   
  
It wasn't quite closing time when Fourteen's bartender raised an eyebrow, followed by a commanding head nod in the direction of the kitchen. Seventeen had, reluctantly and begrudgingly, agreed to spend the night back at the Plaza with the other dark-haired girl. She wasn't looking forward to stripping down and sleeping on the floor of the locker room. But, it marginally beat out the alternative of hauling ass all the way up to Washington Heights, dressed as she was, only to have to turn around and come all way back downtown to present herself to Mistress Zero for morning inspection just a few hours later. But staying with Fourteen meant waiting for Fourteen, and Fourteen had one more thing to do that night before she was willing to head to bed.   
  
Seventeen's roommate, Laura, would likely just assume she'd spent the night at Justin's, an assumption that Seventeen didn't intend to correct just yet. She'd likely need to come clean to Laura about her new job sooner rather than later, as Laura was bound to find out eventually. And she needed to officially break up with Justin -- pleasuring herself in front of audience that afternoon felt enough like cheating she wasn't sure she could do it again in good conscience. Thus, she also needed to politely decline Fourteen's invitation to join her and the bartender in the kitchen, when Fourteen oh-so-casually extended the offer.   
  
"I can't," Seventeen answered, making it sound as if she did want to. The striking normalcy of a chance to participate in a ménage-a-trois caught her by surprise. Fourteen's invitation came across with all the excitement and danger of splitting a cab or offering a stick of gum. "It's just...Justin...and..."  
  
Fourteen shrugged and hushed the girl, making clear that the abstention carried no more weight to her than the proposition had. Her feelings weren't hurt, and she could respect where Seventeen was coming from. "I get it," she assured her. "Day two."   
  
"Day two." Tossed out, as if banging a random bartender with another girl was inevitable, part and parcel with her new role at USF. She hoped that it wasn't. She feared that it was.   
  
"But..." Fourteen continued, making eyes with the bartender, and then returning her focus to Seventeen, "you should still come with me."   
  
Before Seventeen could object again, or stammer out an excuse, Fourteen assured her she didn't need to participate. She shrugged again, this time apologetically, and explained, "There's something about an audience..."   
  
The "okay" escaped Seventeen's lips before she'd even had time to process the request, just as her signature had been scrawled at the bottom of a mailgirl contract in Joan's office without fully considering all of the implications. The only comfort Seventeen could find, however, was that her "okay" hadn't sounded meek or beaten, but genuine and honest; she was simply doing a friend a favor.   
  
"Good," Fourteen replied, flirting. "I'm told I put on a good show."   
  
Still without fully wrapping her mind what she had just committed herself to, Seventeen was led through the swinging door into the kitchen, where Fourteen's bartender stood waiting expectantly and leaning up against a long, silver prep table. He was good-looking, certainly more so than the handful of average guys that Seventeen had witnessed a number of the mailgirls leaving with that night. He was tall -- maybe six-foot-four or even six-foot-five -- with a strong, muscular build, a charming-but-goofy smile, and confidence that came across on par with Fourteen's own. If he were surprised to see Fourteen dragging another girl in behind her, he didn't give it away; his only tell was simply to size Seventeen up, head-to-toe, before turning his attention back Fourteen.   
  
"Not tonight," Fourteen chided him. With a wicked smile, she added, "Sir."   
  
The bartender might only have been twenty-four or twenty-five, but the deference had given away that there was still a power dynamic at work here, one that echoed the submissiveness of Fourteen's day job.   
  
Still, he nodded, accepting both Seventeen's presence and lack of participation without further comment. Instead, he focused on Fourteen, and ordered, "Undress."   
  
"Yes, sir," Fourteen mewed, more playfulness and half-mocking sarcasm evident in her tone than she ever would have dared to answer Mistress Zero with. She found the hem of her cocktail dress, and in one motion, pulled it over her head and tossed it to the floor. She was still in her heels, still in her jewelry, and missing her collar and armband -- but the black marker displayed prominently on her hip announced her as a mailgirl all the same.   
  
Fourteen looked hungrily at the man, but then barked at Seventeen. "You, too," she ordered.   
  
Seventeen shook her head. "No," she choked. "I can't. I'm not..."  
  
"He won't," Fourteen assured her. "I won't."  
  
The bartender looked in her direction, seemingly amused by Seventeen's hesitation. "Price of admission," he offered in Fourteen's defense.   
  
Seventeen wanted to point out that Fourteen had invited her, and that she'd only agreed to tag along as a favor to a friend, not as a voyeur. Instead, meeting Fourteen's eyes, Seventeen only nodded and conceded. In that silence, Fourteen promised to respect Seventeen's wishes, and to keep her bartender from expecting any participation on Seventeen's part. But, apparently, she wasn't willing to respect Seventeen's wishes to remain fully dressed; in that single look, Fourteen reassured her trainee that she was in good hands.   
  
Seventeen slipped her spaghetti straps over her bare shoulders, and let the dress descend down her body -- past her braless breasts, past the hand-written number seventeen on her hip, past her bare pussy. The bartender already had her panties, presented to him earlier in the evening for a pair of shots. Seventeen caught Ten's dress at her knees, and stepped from it. Folding it neatly over her forearm, she awkwardly looked to Fourteen for further instruction.   
  
"The floor," Fourteen offered tersely, humor and delight in her voice. And then, with more authority, "Knees."   
  
"Yes, ma'am," Seventeen replied instinctively. Her response was less playful than Fourteen's tone, her voice sounded cowed into submission as if this instruction were given by Mistress Zero. But she again caught Fourteen's eyes, and shared a quick giggle - both of them laughing at how well Seventeen had been trained.   
  
"Knees," the man repeated to Seventeen, inserting himself into their moment. He pointed towards the corner of the room, ten feet or so from where he and Fourteen were positioned by the door. "In the corner."   
  
"Yes, sir," Seventeen played along. The floor was hard on her knees, but the linoleum warm. She knelt, her legs apart, her hand behind her back, and her chest ever-so-slightly puffed out and protruding into the room. She deviated from the standard "Knees" position in only two ways. First, she was still in her heels; she'd forgotten to take them off before kneeling, and then left them on out of sheer awkwardness. And second, Seventeen's eyes were not focused on the floor in front of her. Instead, she watched as Fourteen and the bartender met in a kiss.   
  
Not for the first time in the past few days, Seventeen wondered how she'd found herself here in the moment. She was naked in a hotel kitchen, down on her knees, and watching a naked Fourteen -- her mentor, her friend -- kiss some unknown bartender deeply and passionately. What was she doing here? How had she ended up here? Who was she now?   
  
The fact that she was wet, however (and she could feel it without touching herself), told her all she needed know.   
  
Breaking the kiss, the bartender pulled back, took Fourteen by the back of the head, and instructed Fourteen, too, to take her knees. "Knees," he said authoritatively, and Fourteen complied with a "Yes, sir." There was no further foreplay; his cock was out and into the dark-haired girl's mouth without any additional hesitation.   
  
Seventeen watched with wide eyes.   
  
Emily Evans was no virgin, but this was virgin territory for Seventeen all the same. Emily Evans would have been appalled to find herself here, naked and kneeling in a public place, witness to the scene unfolding before her. Emily Evans had grown up attending church services weekly, had been near the top of her class in high school, had gone on to obtain an Ivy League education and a Masters from one of the country's best business schools. Emily Evans had friends elsewhere in the city, undoubtedly already fast asleep after a night out at a low-key bar or a night in watching TV. Emily Evans had a boyfriend, Justin Miller, who hadn't heard from her since earlier in the week, and who was likely planning a date night for Saturday evening. Emily Evans had a mother and a father, both of whom she called regularly, and both whom were proud of all she'd accomplished.   
  
Emily Evans was no one where near the Imperial that night, however. Only Mailgirl Number Seventeen was in the hotel's kitchen that night -- undressed, aroused, and owned in every sense of the word.   
  
Fourteen may have been engaged with her bartender, but her focus was on Seventeen. Even as her lips ran the length of his cock, and her right hand found the base, she shared a look with Seventeen. Their unspoken conversation continued, Seventeen's apprenticeship not quite over yet. Give in, Fourteen seemed to be telling the girl.   
  
Submit.   
  
Enjoy.   
  
The bartender offered nothing more than a few grunts of appreciation as Fourteen's head bobbed back and forth at his waist. Fourteen slurped away loudly -- loudly enough that Seventeen suspected she was doing so intentionally, for show. Her hair was firmly in her partner's clutches, and there was playful submissiveness in her demeanor, but never once did Seventeen doubt that it was Fourteen who was entirely in control.   
  
"Please," she begged him, taking a momentary break from his dick. She wrapped her lips around him once more - down-and-back, down-and-back, down-and-back -- before asking again, "Please."   
  
The bartender offered no response.   
  
Down-and-back. Down-and-back. Down-and-back. "Master, please," Fourteen begged again, almost as if she were in physical pain. Almost as if her whole body ached for him to be inside of her. "Please."  
  
"Up," he allowed, finally answering her supplication. He released his hold on her hair, and instead grabbed her roughly by the hips and positioned her up against prep table in the center of the room. Fourteen's back was to her partner. Her legs were spread and her pussy open and inviting. Her arms were braced against the edge of the table. And she faced in Seventeen's direction.   
  
Seventeen, like it or not, was a part of this fucking Fourteen was about to receive.   
  
Behind her friend, the bartender stripped off his shirt, revealing pectorals, biceps, and shoulders all teeming with muscle. He had a stylized, menacing devil tattooed on his chest, just above his left nipple -- thereby eliminating his potential candidacy as a mailgirl, Seventeen mused absently to herself. He, too, looked to Seventeen, and seemed to drink in her naked body, before glancing back down to the business end of the girl immediately in front him, and driving himself into her waiting pussy.   
  
Seventeen, like it or not, was on the receiving end of this fucking that the bartender was giving.   
  
It was too much, and Seventeen couldn't help but break her pose and touch herself. Somewhere, in the distance, Emily Evans howled in objection. But this was Seventeen's hand, Seventeen's body, Seventeen's desperate and hungry vagina, and Seventeen's night. Just a few hours after defiling herself at USF Plaza in front of an unseen audience, Seventeen was at it again -- this time for an audience of two.   
  
Both girls came hard. Both girls came fast. Both girls came loud.  
  
If there were anyone still out at the bar, on the far side of the swinging doors, there would have been little doubt as to what was taking place in the kitchen. Seventeen had lost all track of time, and she couldn't be sure which side of three o'clock in the morning they were on. Not that it would have mattered -- Seventeen doubted Fourteen could have controlled her whinnying and whining, the squeals of carnal delight that echoed through the kitchen. Seventeen, too, had simply lost all control, and her high-pitched squeaks and wanton groans joined Fourteen's voice in an erotic chorus.   
  
Fourteen came first, but Seventeen had already begun to crest when Fourteen's change in tone and tempo signaled her climax. Fourteen's climax put Seventeen over the edge and brought about her own. Fourteen smiled at Seventeen, and Seventeen returned the grin.   
  
Behind Fourteen, the bartender pulled out, and with a few quick strokes croaked out his own orgasm, shooting his load across his partner's bare behind. He, like the two mailgirls, was panting. But he managed to compose himself a bit more quickly. Grabbing Fourteen by the chin, he pulled her towards him, and locked lips with her.   
  
"Next week," he said when he pulled away. Seventeen was unsure if this was a question or an order.  
  
"Next week," Fourteen replied. "Sir."   
  
"I'll let you out when you're ready," he told her. He zipped up his pants, pulled his shirt back on, and headed for the door. He blew a kiss, teasingly and mockingly, at Seventeen, and then left the girls to themselves.   
  
"Next week?" Seventeen asked her friend. After cumming on her hands-and-knees, she rose back to her feet, and stepped towards other girl. For now, Ten's dress was left on the floor.   
  
Fourteen used her bare hand to wipe the bartender's cum from her ass, and then turned towards the sink. "Next week," she repeated.   
  
"You've got a...a...standing thing?" Seventeen asked.   
  
Fourteen rinsed her hands, wiped again, and rinsed one more time. "Maybe," was all she offered in response.   
  
"Could it be...?" Seventeen ribbed the other girl. "Could it be that Mailgirl Number Fourteen is in a relationship?"   
  
"Ssshh," Fourteen laughed, holding a finger to her lips. "You'll ruin my reputation."   
  
\*\*\*  
  
Paradox upon paradox.   
  
As the leash attached to Fourteen's collar three lockers away, a "click" bounced against the bare walls and bare tiles of the locker room. Seventeen's had made a similar sound a moment earlier, and a shiver shot up Seventeen's spine now, as it had then. It was unnerving and upsetting, and underlined the girls' station here at the Plaza. They were mailgirls. They were slave girls. They were the property of US Financial, tools for Human Capital to use in driving the performance of employees who had once been their peers and coworkers. They were the butts of a company-wide joke - undressed and embarrassed, beaten down and beaten up, whipped and chained.

The thought of it made Seventeen wet all over again.   
  
Because the truth of it was that, despite the humiliation and degradation, Seventeen's new job -- her new life -- was exciting. Three days ago, she'd been accountant. A financial reporting analyst. Now, she was a sexualized plaything whose very name had been stripped away from her. She couldn't speak to the sorts of perverts who got off on her peeing in the shower or eating what was borderline dog food from actual dog dishes, but even those two examples sat within a larger narrative about dominance and submission, about a power dynamic she'd entered into with US Financial. Because she was objectified and treated as a slut and a whore, Seventeen couldn't help but to feel sexualized, to feel slutty, whorish, and excited.   
  
Fourteen and Seventeen had made the short walk back from the Imperial hand-in-hand, shivering in the brisk Autumn night, dressed like high-end, Wall Street hookers engaged in a walk of shame. Which of course -- in a way -- they were both. Seventeen nonetheless savored the few short minutes she was actually allowed to wear clothes once more, and it had been a struggle to undress again back in the locker room. It was difficult, knowing that it'd be another sixteen hours before she could get dressed and go home. Even more difficulty knowing that she was spending the night at the Plaza, in such a state, voluntarily.   
  
But Fourteen was right -- it didn't make sense to go all the way uptown, only to have to turn around and come right back downtown for her Saturday shift. Fourteen was right about of a lot of things.   
  
Seventeen glanced in the other girl's direction, and smiled weakly. Fourteen didn't reciprocate, as she'd already pulled the black leather eye mask she'd fished from Mistress Zero's desk over her eyes. She settled to the floor.   
  
The collars were a requirement, apparently. The blindfolds were a necessity, as the locker room's fluorescent lights shone as bright through the night as they did through the day. Whether the leashes were required or needed, though, was less clear. But ultimately, moot; even if they were optional, Fourteen was opting in, and Seventeen followed her lead.   
  
She was an animal, collared and leashed, and locked away in a mailgirl zoo. She pulled her own eye mask over her eyes, once again excited but unnerved by what she was willingly doing to herself. The light of the locker room disappeared. The Plaza disappeared. The world disappeared. She got to her knees, and then to her side, and used her bare arm as pillow for her head.   
  
The floor was hard and cold beneath her, but Seventeen felt exhausted both mentally and physically, and so she doubted she'd have a hard time falling asleep. Morning inspection was less than four hours away, and Fourteen had told her she should get as much sleep as she possibly could. Because they were staffed at half capacity on Saturdays, pick-ups would be further apart, deliveries less optimized with only twelve mailgirls on duty instead of twenty-four. And Seventeen shouldn't expect that less employees in the building meant less work -- she could be assured that Mistress Zero would keep them busy.   
  
Seventeen, though, wasn't quite ready for sleep. Not yet. Rolling onto her back, she allowed herself one more indulgence for the night, one more quick session in service of her body. There wouldd be no lobby audience this time, no bartender to bear witness to her surrender and release. But, from a few lockers away, Seventeen heard the heavy breathing of Mailgirl Number Fourteen, and knew she was in good company.   
  
Together, she thought to herself. They'd get through all this together.   
  
And maybe, despite everything, enjoy themselves along the way.