

Chapter 2

Saturday evening, June 11
Gram's Hotel

“Here I am,” remarked Clark as he returned.

He took Lindsay's left hand and led her inside.

Jim and Heather followed.

Lindsay saw people she knew dancing to the beat of the senior band. Green, white and blue spotlights illuminated the dance floor. Multicolored balloons were overhead in a net. Streamers of red, white and blue adorned the walls. A small functioning fountain was near the door. Light for eating and talking issued from elegant chandeliers. The sturdy looking round tables had crepe paper decorations and dainty favors on them.

“Hi Heather.” said Jody Norris.

Jody was wearing a full white strapless gown. It contrasted with her lightly tanned face, arms and jet black hair in a glamorous way. During the school year Jody sometimes wore a red wig. Many times, she wore a green wig for the home games of women's basketball. Some students believe she was a rebel.

I couldn't judge her. She was an accomplished swimmer and golfer. *Jody models au naturel now and then for a college art class. Her mom knows about it, but her dad doesn't.*

“Hi,” Heather replied.

“Hi,” said Lindsay.

Jody smiled.

“Hi Lindsay,” said Madison Lockwood.

Well, hi!” exclaimed Lindsay.

Madison was wearing a short red dress with pleats. She was leggy, good-looking and popular. Her red lipstick enhanced her tan face. Her light brown hair was up in a bun. Her green eyes and thin attractive eyebrows defined her feminine mystique. Madison was the oldest of five daughters. Her dad was a well-to-do surgeon and her mom was a Billings socialite.

“Do you think you and Heather might dance for us later?” asked Madison with a grin.

“Well, I suppose we could if that’s what people want,” said Lindsay. “We don’t have our dance gear with us.”

“Dance in your panties, Lindsay. La dolce vita!”¹

She laughed and hugged Lindsay.

Her remark wasn’t as far out in left field as it might seem. Last spring Heather, Jody, Madison and I were fooling around with two other junior girls. We had Budweiser beer that Madison took from her dad’s refrigerator.

With some beer in my tummy, my inhibitions and parental warnings nearly evaporated. Heather and I danced and frolicked topless in our panties on the rim near

¹ The sweet life. It refers to a carefree attitude as in the Italian movie La Dolce Vita.

the airport in the light of headlights. We had a ball, but when I got home I was real sick. Mom watched as I vomited in the toilet. She had that I-told-you-so look. Thank goodness dad was working. Still, I lost most of my privileges for a while. Mom enrolled me in a two day seminar on the dangers of social drinking and she took me to a lecture for ladies on how to drink, have fun and stay sober. After mom told Dad what happened, he gave me a lecture and told me alcohol should be measured by the teaspoon and not by the jigger² or mouthful.

Word of what happened on the rim leaked out. Lindsay's popularity skyrocketed. She was suddenly cast in a bad-girl frame — something the student body thought was cool. Some of her poetic sayings were quoted in the yearbook with a reference to that night.

Clark selected one of the last two unoccupied tables. He pulled out a padded chair and waited for Lindsay to sit down.

Jim did the same for Heather.

“Would you like to dance, Lindsay, or have a bite to eat?” asked Clark.

Lindsay liked his chiseled features, high cheek bones and his cute nose that had been broken five times.

“I'd like to eat a bite first.”

“By all means,” voiced Heather.

Lindsay got up.

Clark and Lindsay held hands on the way to the buffet line.

² Typically a shot or a jigger holds 1-ounce of liquor. Some establishments use a 2-ounce jigger. A level teaspoon holds 1/6 of an ounce.

Clark handed Lindsay a plate.

She helped herself to a dinner roll and butter, mashed potatoes and brown gravy. A man sliced off a thick slice of prime rib and set it on Lindsay's plate. Then he added juice to it. Even if there was little room left on her plate she pushed some baby green peas and hot buttered sliced carrots into the potatoes.

"I'll take it to the table for you," said Clark.

"Thanks."

Lindsay poured a cup of hot black coffee and filled a small glass with two percent milk. As she passed the desert counter Lindsay eyed the cheesecake. She smartly opted for some strawberry jell-o with mixed fruit in it. As Lindsay turned to go to the table she saw Heather looking at the cheesecake.

"Don't, Heather. With that topping there must be five thousand calories in a slice."

"Whoa," sounded Heather.

She chose a mixed salad.

Lindsay met up with Clark. She gave him her helping of jell-o and a napkin.

"Thanks."

Clark and Lindsay sat down to eat.

"The food is out of this world delicious," said Clark.

"It sure is," voiced Lindsay. "I like it here."

"Yes," replied Clark. "I like the way they put topiary bushes around the eating area."

"Me too. We could make a wish in the fountain," suggested Lindsay.

“Great,” he replied.”

When Jim and Heather returned they sat down and began to eat.

“I saw Taylor Bradford and she was crying,” said Heather as she tasted a bite of prime rib. She’s dressed to kill.”

“What?” asked Clark.

“She’ wearing a long green oriental dress with slits up to her navel.”

Heather’s eyes rolled upward in her head.

“I’ll check on her in a while,” said Lindsay.

The band struck up a slow tune.

Lindsay looked at Clark. *My, he was already looking at me!*

“Shall we?”

“Okay.”

They walked to the center of the dance floor.

Lindsay turned to face him.

He put his right arm around her and took Lindsay’s right hand in his left hand.

As they started dancing Clark pulled Lindsay close.

Lindsay felt his lips on hers.

Clark turned and he spun Lindsay away.

She turned full circle and he pulled her close again.

They French kissed.

Lindsay felt her temperature rising.

All too soon the music ended.

They broke their embrace.

He led Lindsay back to the table.

She looked at Heather.

Heather smiled.

When Lindsay sat down she drank some coffee and ate the remainder of the prime rib.

“I didn’t see Taylor,” said Lindsay.

“I did,” Heather said with a smile. “She stopped by the table while you were dancing. She said her boyfriend was dancing with Helen, his old flame.”

“Oh-oh,” voiced Lindsay.

“Everything is alright now,” said Heather. “It was a false alarm.”

“Good,” Lindsay replied.

“I wouldn’t be so sure,” said Jim.

“What does that mean?” asked Lindsay.

“Her boyfriend told me that Helen wants to marry him.”

“Poor Taylor,” said Heather.

“Maybe she’s better off,” suggested Clark.

“I’m going to have to see a man about a dog,” said Jim.

“I’ll join you,” advised Clark.

While their dates went to the rest room, Heather and Lindsay sipped coffee and waited.

“I kind of like Jim,” Heather said.

“I know.”

Lindsay removed two packs of condoms from her bag and handed the items to Heather.

“What are they?”

“Condoms.”

She grinned wide and flashed her eyes, as Eve must have done when she prepared to seduce Adam.

“It doesn’t give you a license to do it,” warned Lindsay.

“I know. The pill is safer, as far as pregnancy protection goes.”

“Do you have any?”

“Mom gave me one. She said to take it in the morning if my emotions get the better of me.”

“My mom was afraid you and I would have sex tonight,” said Lindsay.

“Like sexual abandon?”

“Yes.”

They giggled.

Heather put the condoms in her bag.

“Would you like some more punch, Lindsay?” asked Clark as he returned.

“I haven’t had any yet.”

“We can remedy that pronto.”

Lindsay looked at her watch. It was a quarter to eleven.

“It’s time for your dance, Lindsay.”

It was Madison's voice and I knew she was mostly kidding.

Heather got up and walked around the table to where I was standing.

"I have to pee," Heather whispered in my ear.

"Heather and I are going to the powder room," I explained to Clark. "Then you can take me to the punch bowl."

He beamed an all-American smile.

"I'll come too," voiced Madison.

The three women walked across the ballroom.

"What did you mean when you rolled your eyes up, Heather?" Lindsay asked.

"She's vulnerable and her dress leaves little to the imagination."

"I saw her," said Madison. "She's going to get some sperm tonight."

Lindsay and Heather laughed.

Madison opened the door.

Heather and Lindsay walked in.

Madison followed.

As Madison and Heather went into stalls, Lindsay looked in the mirror. She heard a female sound of woe and turned to look. Lindsay saw Melissa on the love seat.

"Heather! Madison!"

Madison walked out of the stall and stepped close to Melissa.

Lindsay noted that Melissa's pink dress was hiked up to her thighs.

"She doesn't have panties on!" exclaimed Heather.

"You're right," replied Lindsay.

Lindsay sat next to Melissa and straightened Melissa's hair do.

"What happened, Melissa?" asked Madison.

"Max Palmer raped me!"

She began to cry.

"She's only seventeen," Lindsay said.

From newspapers and TV Lindsay learned that a human female is raped every minute in the United States on the average.³ *Dear Jesus, I pray it doesn't happen to me or my mom or my girlfriends and their moms. Amen.*

"Look!" exclaimed Heather. "She's getting a black eye.

"Can you give me a hand?" asked Madison.

Lindsay took one of Melissa's arms.

Heather took the other arm.

They helped Melissa to walk out of the powder room.

Melissa was slow.

"I'm going to take Melissa to the ER," said Madison. "I think Max got her drunk."

"What about your date?" Lindsay asked.

"I came alone."

"Oh? I know you and your boyfriend broke up. I can't believe no one asked you to come tonight."

"I had some boys ask me. I just wanted to come alone."

³ One rape per minute means there's one thousand four hundred forty four rapes every twenty four hours. There are more than five hundred thousand rapes a year. If we figure there are approximately one hundred million females who are the right age the risk is 0.5%. An undetermined number of these women get pregnant. Twenty five thousand children are born each year to women who were raped.

“Which ER are you going to?” asked Heather.

“The Deaconess.”

“By the way, I’m not going to Montana State University here in Billings,” sounded Madison.

“What are you going to do?” Heather asked.

“Mom and dad pulled a few strings.”

Madison smiled.

“I’ll be joining you at CU.”

Heather and Lindsay put Melissa on a chair.

Then they walked to Madison and hugged her.

“You’d be smart to swear off boys this summer,” said Madison glibly.

“That’s impossible,” replied Heather.

Lindsay laughed heartily.

“What dorm are you going to be in? I’d like to room with you if they have rooms for three.”

“Libby,” said Heather.

“I’m not sure,” Lindsay said. “Come over and we’ll talk about it.”

“I will.”

“What’s going on?” asked Jody.

“Max apparently got Melissa drunk so he could have his way with her,” explained Heather.

“Melissa doesn’t look too hot,” said Jody. “Maybe Max gave her a date rape drug.”

“Maybe so,” said Lindsay.

“I could use some help to get her to an ER,” said Madison.

“I’ll help,” replied Jody.

“Don’t you have a date, Jody?” asked Heather.

“My boyfriend had to work tonight.”

“Oh.”

“Lindsay, why don’t you and Heather go back to your dates,” suggested Madison.

“Okay.”

Clark spotted Lindsay.

“I was wondering where you went.”

“We were delayed,” said Heather.

“Shall we jitterbug, Lindsay?”

“I’d love to.”

“Shall we join them, Heather?” asked Jim.

“You bet!”

Clark talked to the band.

George Potter began to play a fast tune on his saxophone. Brittney Hain joined him with the piano.

Most seniors stood up so they could watch.

Lindsay and Clark began to *cut a rug*.