

Chapter 3

Saturday evening, June 12
Gram's Hotel

At Eleven-fifteen we removed our heels and left in a hurry.

“Run,” I said as I pulled up my dress.

We fled north on 27th street.

When we reached Wells Fargo we stopped and looked back.

“Oh no!” I exclaimed as I saw about ten boys and two girls running after us.

“I see Clark and Jim following them,” said Heather.

“Our boyfriends are outnumbered.”

“That’s Alexis and Gretchen. I never did like them.”

“Me either.”

We hid our shoes. Then we ran nonstop to 6th avenue barefoot.

“Let’s go in Albertsons,” I suggested.

Heather nodded.

I lead Heather through the entry on the west side, past the hired help and out the back door.

“Come on,” I voiced as I began to climb up a drainpipe.

An old man yelled at us, but he didn't do anything except look up our dresses.

"Aiee!" I yelled in dissatisfaction.

When we were on the roof we squatted down near the south edge.

"They're coming this way," said Heather. "Maybe they saw my red hair."

Alexis and Gretchen stopped below us. They began to tell us how they were going to drag us back to the party and be sure someone did us proper. Then they proceeded to yell out a series of four and five letter words.

In the meantime Heather found a can of water soluble white paint and a screwdriver.

I pried off the lid.

"I'm not proud of what I'm going to do," Heather admitted.

When Alexis and Gretchen called us skanks¹, Heather poured paint on them.

Alexis and Gretchen were fighting mad. They screamed and turned around in circles, but in due time all they could do was set out for home crying.

"I have a feeling our mother's will hear from theirs," I said.

"Probably. We shouldn't walk anywhere alone."

"You're right."

"The boys are coming up the drain pipe!" I yelled.

"Oh no."

"Come on," I said. "There's a pipe on the north side."

¹ High school students across the country know that skank is slang for slut.

As the boys reached the top of the store Heather and I pulled up our dresses and slid down a pipe to the ground.

“What now?” asked Heather.

“Let’s run west on 6th Avenue.”

“And go to your house?”

“Yes.”

We ran across 27th Street with a green light and stopped on the corner.

The boys were sliding down the pipe we used, but as Clark started down, he fell.

“Clark!”

He fell flat on the asphalt.

Heather held on to me.

I began to cry.

“There they are. Get them!” shouted Clyde, a track star.”

“Your asses are mine,” yelled Max.

I screamed.

Thank goodness they had to wait for the light.

We gathered speed and ran west. Heather and I can run a mile in 3 minutes or less. I can run 100 meters in 12.2 seconds. Heather can run it in 12.5 seconds. Olympic women can run 100 meters in 10.25 seconds or better. We can outrun most of the boys

and when we do, it screws with their egos. It reminds me of the time when the football coach asked us to come out on the field after the team was through scrimmaging.²

We followed 6th avenue as it changed direction slightly and turned into Grand Avenue.

I didn't look back.

When we reached 3rd Street west we stopped.

"They're still coming," whispered Heather with some fear in her intonation."

We ran north on 3rd street and passed Daylis stadium on our left. Our team played home games there. As we forged on we reached Pioneer Park on our left.

"This way," I said as I pointed.

We ran east on Avenue C.

"Through here."

I led Heather through the back yard of a house that's behind my house.

A Dog began to bark. Soon he gave chase.

"Who's there?" voiced a woman.

Suddenly two flood lights illuminated the yard. Just before the German shepherd dog could bite into Heather's meaty calf, we noisily climbed over a high wood fence. The dog barked and whined in disappointment and seemed to dare us to try it again.

We slipped through the gate into my backyard.

"My bedroom window is open."

² The coach told his team that the individuals who could outrun Heather and me around the eighth of a mile track could go in and shower. Otherwise, they would have to keep running. The quarterback and two ends nosed us out on the first lap. From then on we led. After 4-laps the other boys were so mad at us that we became scared. Heather and I scaled the fence and jogged home.

I helped Heather get through the opening. I was right behind her.

I closed the hall door so mom wouldn't hear us.

I took my doll of the pillow and set it on the dresser.

We collapsed on my bed and fell asleep.

We awoke with a start when we heard the front door close.

I got up and closed my window.

"I would like to shower," said Heather.

"We shouldn't turn the light on. I'll light a candle."

She removed her dress and checked it over.

"I think its okay."

I took mine off.

"How does it look?"

"Fine."

As she removed her undergarments I tried on her red dress.

"It looks good," said Heather.

She stepped close and traced my exposed breasts via the neckline.

"That tickles," I said.

"I'm going to shower."

She took the candle with her.

My room was dark again. After I removed Heather's dress and hung it up, I took off my bra and stepped out of my panties. I lay down on the bedspread and traced out my body's curves. I remembered how Heidi used to do the same thing.

Heidi was my sister. She was three years older than I was. Heidi was extremely popular — more popular than Madison is now. I loved to hang out in her room, across the hall. Girls and Boys were streaming in and out of here daily. In Heidi's sophomore year, mom found out she was doing drugs. It was too late. A week later, on a cold and still January night, I heard a commotion. I got up and went to the living room. Mom was crying. Dad was too. Neighbors stopped by and brought food and snacks. When dad told me that Heidi had jumped off one of the hotels downtown I felt unbelievably empty. He said she lived several minutes afterward in intense pain. I cried for weeks. Without Heidi, the house became deafeningly quiet. Heather and I played a piano duet at the funeral. It was a melody Heidi and mom loved. When we finished many of the ivory keys were wet with my tears.

The loss of Heidi took something out of the family. Because of Heidi's drug problem, mom and dad have been extra observant of me and Heather too, when she's around. We are drug free. Youth has a way of causing us to feel indestructible. When something happens close to home kids usually realize drugs are bad. I know mom is trying to get pregnant again. She knows she'll never replace Heidi, but she and dad would like another child.

“Can I wear something of yours,” said Heidi as she returned.

“Help yourself. I'm going to shower now.”

I adjusted the water. After I rinsed off I shampooed my hair. I used the external cable spray and washed off. I turned the knob to a pulsating stream of water and held it close to my erogenous zone. It felt good.

When I was through I dried off and returned to the bedroom.

All of a sudden the door opened and the light was on.

“Mom!”

“Oh!” she exclaimed as she saw Heather. She let out a higher note of surprise when she saw me, naked no less.

Heather looked at me for lack of words.

“We came in through the window. Heather showered. I just finished.”

I went to the top chest of drawers and picked out some under things.

“Well,” she sounded. “Some boys were looking for you at the front door.”

“We have a lot to explain,” I said as I put on black shorts and an arctic blue Tee.

I led mother to the living room.

She sat on the sofa.

I then began to tell her how the wonderful evening had unraveled.

Mom was expressionless, but the wrinkles on her forehead deepened and her warm blue eyes cooled as I told her how we ran away.

“We hid our shoes in front of Wells Fargo,” explained Heather.

I told mom about Alexis and Gretchen and how bad they were to us.

Heather admitted that she emptied a can of paint on them.

“Both of you must go clean up the paint on Albertsons property.”

“We will,” I said.

“Clark slipped or something and he fell to the ground. I wanted to go help.”

“Some angry boys chased us,” emphasized Heather.

“Max and Clyde were instigators,” I added.

Ding-dong.

“Who could that be at this time of the night?” asked mom.

“I don’t know,” I replied.

Actually I feared it might be a mob of boys.

Mom went to the door.

She returned with an important-looking man with a trim moustache.

“I’m detective John Williams with the Billings Police Department.”

Oh Lord, what have we done?

He looked at me.

“You are Miss Britton, I presume?”

“Yes.”

Mom went to the phone.

Before Heather and I could finish telling Detective Williams about our hobbies and that we were accepted at the University of Colorado this August, the family attorney walked in.

“I’m sorry Detective Williams, but I thought perhaps the girls should have an attorney present,” she said. “This is Mr. Carl Green, Attorney at Law.”

“How do you do,” the detective said as they shook hands. “It’s always a good idea,” he added.

“Could you fill me in?” asked the attorney.

“Can I use a tape recorder?” asked the detective.

“Have they been charged with something?” asked the attorney.

“No.”

“Then I would rather you didn’t.”

“Very well.”

“Why are you here?” asked the attorney.

“First, there’s a matter of a distraught mother. She reported that a girl urinated on her son at Gram’s Hotel.”

Mother looked at me.

I motioned that it wasn’t Heather or I.

“Her son, Max, was fondling Melissa in the women’s powder room,” said Heather.

Mom’s jaw dropped.

“Madison, Heather and I went to the powder room,” I explained. “We found Max with Melissa. She’s only seventeen.”

“She appeared to be intoxicated and unable to defend herself,” added Heather.

“The mother said you girls treated him badly.”

“That’s not true,” I said. “Max resisted when we attempted to pull Melissa away from him. If Madison had not urinated on him, it would have been difficult to extricate Melissa.”

“Madison and Gloria took Melissa to the Deaconess ER to be checked,” voiced Heather.

“I don’t see why an apology from Madison won’t suffice,” said the detective. “I will pay Madison’s parents a visit. I’ll follow up on Melissa too. What is her last name?”

“Melissa Winters,” answered Heather.

“The other matter is there’s a young man at the morgue, a Clark Weber.”

“I didn’t know he died,” I said in a flood of tears.

Mom got up and sat on the arm of the chair that I was sitting in.

I stood up.

Mom led me to the sofa.

I lay down.

“She told me she wasn’t in love with Clark, but I think now she was fairly close to it,” Heather explained to the detective and attorney.

Heather started to cry.

“I’m sorry,” said the detective.

He looked at the attorney.

“I have all I need for now,” he said. “If I need additional information I’ll contact you.”

The attorney gave his business card to the detective.

“Are you leaving?” asked mom as she reentered the room. “I have fresh chocolate chip cookies and milk.”

Mom put a cool, wet washrag on my forehead.

“Thanks, Mrs. Britton, but I have to run.”

The detective came back in the room and shook mom's hand. Then he left.

"Would you like to stay the night, Heather?"

"Yes, thank you."

I got up and took the washrag to the bathroom.

"I think you girls should get some sleep," said mom when I returned. "We'll talk more of these things in the morning."

"Where's dad?"

"Your dad had to engineer a freight train to Washington. He won't be back until Wednesday night or Thursday."

"Okay," I said. "Goodnight, mom."

"Goodnight."

She looked relieved that we were unharmed.

"Goodnight Heather," said mom.

"Night."

"Do you need to call your mom?"

"I'll leave a note on the answering machine."

I closed the bedroom door.

I waited while Heather left a message for her mom.

Because we sleep nude, we stripped.

"Why do you suppose some of the seniors thought we would make love?" asked Heather.

"I think they simply wanted to watch us go at it," I said.

“If we had been looped and had had some of that date rape drug in us, would we have done it?”

“Probably.”

I began to dance. Heather joined in. There wasn't enough room and heather fell onto the bed. I fell on her.

She screamed in fun.

I moved the fingers of my right hand to her boobs and gave one of her nipples a friendly twist.

“Oh!”

Heather did the same to me.

“Uh!”

“Ladies?”

It was mom's voice.

Heather and I giggled.

“If you have trouble sleeping, I'll give you a little milk and hot tea.”

“No thanks,” said Heather.

I kissed her forehead.

She returned the favor.

I rolled off her and slid under the sheets. She followed. When I turned on my left side, I heard her turn the other way. Soon afterward we fell fast asleep.