

Part 3: A Cozy Cabin

Sue felt like she had every right to complain about the current situation. There she was, wet, cold, and half-naked in the middle of the dark woods; and all of it because Robert had to go on some kind of revenge quest. Of course, her more-reasonable side reminded her that she had invited herself along, and therefore she really couldn't say much. Her less-reasonable side, as it were, fell in line with this view, because despite the fact that she was shivering and hungry, she got to be with him. Besides all that, he was taking responsibility for the situation. Both of them had lost their shoes in the water and Robert insisted on carrying her piggyback through the woods. There he was being the white knight again. If he was going to go to the trouble of being mister noble, then she figured that the least she could do was play the helpless damsel. Feigning complete exhaustion, Sue laid her head on his shoulder and lost herself in his warmth, his smell, and the steady rhythm of his heartbeat.

Robert, for his part, was just as cold and hungry as Sue. Worse, his feet hurt like hell, and though she was a small gal, Sue was starting to get heavy. Even though she'd insisted on going with him, he still felt somehow responsible. His father would have told him not to give into her "childish demands" and to have *made* her stay behind. Though he didn't agree, like most things his father had told him about women, he couldn't help but think it once or twice as he trudged onward through the darkness. For better or for worse, his upbringing also demanded that he carry her no matter how tired or footsore he got. Besides that, he liked the feeling of the smooth backs of her thighs each time he adjusted his hands, the way her small breasts pressed against his back, and the warm tickle of her breath on his neck. It all kept him sufficiently distracted from every stone and twig he stepped on and the concerns that he might be going in circles.

Both of them were in a daze when suddenly Robert spied something odd in the hill they were skirting. In the dim starlight he could see that there was a stone wall with a door and a window built into the side. It must have someone's cabin. He pointed it out, and with a slight groan, he put Sue down.

Sue walked right up to the door and knocked without hesitation. Then she looked down at herself, clad only in her torn white blouse, and her shredded pantyhose, she scurried behind Robert and waited for an answer.

There was no answer. Robert looked down at her. "What if someone actually came to the door? What were you going to tell them?"

Without missing a beat Sue replied with the first thing that came to her. "That we are newly-weds who got lost in the woods and needed help." Her cheeks felt hot as the words hung in the chilly air. She hoped that Robert would take it as a joke and not sense that her words reflected her desire.

Robert cleared his throat awkwardly. Sue probably would have made a pretty, little bride all dressed in white. Of course, she looked just fine to him in stocking feet and tattered blouse. Either way she was wearing white. "You think you could have run that by me first?"

Sue didn't respond. She was eager to gloss over the moment of letting her mask slip. Instead she picked up a rock and looked at the window and then broke out one of the panes.

"What are you doing?" Robert exclaimed and grabbed her wrist.

She liked the feel of her slender wrist inside his strong hand. She liked the way it felt when he controlled her. "I guess you call it 'breaking and about to be entering,'" Sue replied wryly, unconsciously hoping that her sarcasm might push him to do something, but she didn't know what exactly.

For the second time that day, Robert wanted to put her over his knee and teach her some respect for private property. He wanted to hold her still, yank her panties down and turn her milky white backside bright red. He wanted to hear her beg for mercy and see her tears. Robert fought down the urge and let go of her hand. "We're supposed to be the law, Sue!"

"Oh, I'm pretty sure that went out the *window* when we didn't obey our orders," she said, swallowing her disappointment that he hadn't gone further in some undefined way. "Besides, I don't know about you, but I don't plan to spend the whole night out here if I have any choice...and anyway, do you really think that either of us will be in any shape to get those F.E.R.A.L people if we don't get some rest?"

Robert ground his teeth. He wished he had a stick of gum, but it was at the bottom of the stream turned river like their phones, wallets, and even his gun. When she was right she was right. He made a mental note to find the owner of the cabin after everything was over, so that he could pay him or her back for the damages.

He gently nudged Sue aside, reached through the broken window pane and unlocked the window. It was his fault they were out there. If someone was going to sin it should be him.

Robert and Sue had groped around in the darkness until they found a convenient oil lamp and matches in the middle of a table. With the thick curtains drawn over the window the interior of the cabin was quite cozy. Though the ceiling was a bit low for Robert's taste, it suited Sue just fine. The walls were lined with soft, horizontal, cedar boards. Though decorations were sparse, they maintained a warm feeling with the flame of the lamp flickering across them.

"We should get out of these wet clothes..." Robert said absent mindedly. Sue's cheeks colored. He added, "I mean...let's find something to change into."

Sue replied, perhaps a bit too emphatically, "Yes, let's."

There was a dresser next to the bed in the corner. Inside the top drawer Robert found a patched, red-button up shirt that had seen so many washes it was almost a dark pink, and a pair of equally weathered, blue jeans with a worn leather belt still in the loops. Hanging on a peg over the dresser, there was an orange ball cap with the word “Breeder” embroidered along the front in black, block letters. On the floor beside the dresser there was a pair of old, brown work boots, still crusted with mud. Everything looked like it’d fit Robert height wise, but the real owner was clearly much heavier than he was.

Robert died inside a bit as he thought of swapping his custom-tailored, cashmere suit for the rags he was holding. Sue passed him up a pair of socks from the middle drawer and then pulled out the bottom drawer.

“Well, that’s about what I’d expect from someone who owns a cap with ‘Breeder’ written on it...” She grumbled as she spied the drawer’s contents. It was pet gear. Though it was clearly unauthorized, homemade pet gear, it was by no means low quality. The gear was light brown and consisted of hand wraps and leg wraps, a tail plug, a pair of floppy ears on an Alice band, and a red leather collar with a brass, rectangular tag. The name “Muffy” was inscribed on one side. Sue flipped it over and read another inscription, “To the sweetest, most loyal companion a man could have.”

“What’s it say?” Robert asked.

“Nothing...” Sue mumbled and tossed the collar back into the drawer. The tag and buckle clattered noisily.

Robert held up the patched shirt. “I’ll flip you for it.”

“Ha-ha.” Sue pulled the patchwork quilt off the bed. “You can have it. This will do for me I guess.”

The two stood awkwardly for several moments.

Robert pointed to opposite corners. “Uh, which one...”

“Oh, I’ll take that one!” With her shoulders hunched, Sue hurried past him to the corner between a cupboard and a shelf. She glanced over her shoulder to make sure that Robert’s eyes were in his corner. They were, and his shirt was already off. He was slim, but his tanned shoulders had just the right amount of bulk to them. She bit her lower lip and quickly fixed her eyes on her own corner, chiding herself for looking at him the way she thought—wished—he might be looking at her, as if he would have been remotely interested in looking at a scrawny thing like her. Her fingers were still a bit stiff from the chill outside and it made the act of unbuttoning her shirt more difficult than it should have been.

Robert unbuttoned and unzipped his pants and lamented again about what the water and mud and brambles had done to them. He pulled his pants and boxers to his ankles and bent over to get them the rest of the way off. As he did, his eyes darted past his legs, seemingly

of their own accord, to Sue. His mouth went dry as he watched her drop her bra on top of her tattered, stained shirt and slip her shredded pantyhose down her hips and legs. He knew he should look away when she hooked her thumbs into the waistband of her white, satin panties, but he didn't. He was hypnotized as she wiggled her hips back and forth, working her underwear down inch by inch until they were around her ankles. Robert quickly reached for the jeans.

Sue tossed her panties onto the small pile of clothes and wrapped up in the blanket. It was surprisingly soft against her skin. As she did, she chanced another glance. Robert was just pulling his pants up and felt her heart leap at the sight of the top of his butt. Though it wasn't the first time she'd seen some more-intimate parts of a man, it was the first time she'd ever wanted to stare, and that made her feel downright naughty.

She turned back to the corner. "Um...are you done?"

"Yeah," Robert replied as he turned around while buttoning up his shirt. He adjusted his stance a bit. Much to his annoyance, Sue somehow looked more-alluring and more-vulnerable wrapped up in that great big quilt with just a touch of her collarbone showing.

Finally "dressed" the two searched the cabin for something to eat. The owner, Mr. Breeder, as Sue had come to call him, apparently relied on hunting for food, because the cupboard was nearly bare. All they managed to find was a one metal cup, one metal plate, a few pieces of silverware on the top shelf, and a pair of beat-up dog dishes on the bottom. Fortunately, at least as far as Sue was concerned, there was an unopened bottle of bourbon on the middle shelf.

"Well..." she shook the bottle towards Robert. "At least we won't feel cold!"

Outside, there was a low rumble of thunder and a steady rain started again. Sue couldn't help but imagine how romantic it must have been for Mr. Breeder and Muffy on cold nights whenever they were there at the cabin. Then she scoffed at how twisted her own notion of "romance" had become over the previous several months.

Robert took the bottle from her hand and put it back on the shelf. "Or much at all...We'd be better off tomorrow without it."

Sue snatched the bottle back from the shelf and cracked the cap. She was so used to having a drink, usually several, sometimes more, to unwind after even a normal day, and that day had been anything but normal.

"Ah, but that's tomorrow!" She winked and went to the table with the bottle and the single cup in hand. She poured a bit into the cup. The smell made her nose wrinkle. It wasn't sangria, but she wasn't feeling particularly choosy.

Robert glowered at her as she raised the cup to her lips.

Sue paused and set the cup down. "How about we call it a drink to Ed?" She offered him the cup with an earnest half-smile.

Robert nodded and took the cup and raised it. "To Ed, the best hu-vet there ever was or probably ever will be." He took a sip and curled his lip. Other than a brief fascination with it when he'd come of age, Robert had never been much of a drinker. The cheap quality didn't make it any better. He returned the cup to Sue.

"To Ed," she said. "The best hu-vet there ever was or probably ever will be." She repeated and took a much bigger drink than Robert. The liquid burned like fire down her throat. She coughed and tears welled up in her eyes.

Robert laughed. "This isn't your fruity wine, Sue."

Sue wiped away the tears and made a face at him. "Why do guys think they're so manly for drinking stuff that tastes like crap?"

"It doesn't taste like crap to us." He lied and he wasn't sure why. He never really felt the need to try and impress girls, especially with something so meaningless, but with her it was different somehow.

"Oh, I see." She took another big gulp and gasped and Robert laughed again. "Fine, show me how it's done!"

There was no clock. They marked time by trading the cup back and forth until over half the bottle was gone. Robert sat in the only chair by the table while feeling incredibly mellow, while Sue lounged on the bed feeling the same.

Robert looked at Sue and scratched his chin. He needed to think about something else other than her. Only that stupid blanket and one big step separated them. Every time she shifted, she revealed another part of herself. Sometimes a foot poked out of the quilt's folds, sometimes a shoulder, sometimes a bare ankle or a stretched calf. He ached to join her on the bed, to touch her, to hold her, and to do much more to her. He thought of how she'd acted at the end of their first case together, the way she jumped on him and licked him. He thought of how she'd been after the Mutt Maker abducted her and he was glad that the cabin owner's pants were so roomy. He remembered the feeling of her face rubbing against his crotch, desperate and pathetic, and unbelievably hot. His eyes moved to the dresser. His thoughts turned to the pet gear inside. He thought about putting her in it and giving her the training and attention an unruly little thing like her sorely needed. Then again, he knew that she only did those things because she'd been stuck in character and then because she'd been under the influence of a drug, but he couldn't block out the memories. He hated himself for his base

desires. There she was, innocently sitting there, while he was thinking of every awful act he could.

He had to think of something else. He had to talk about something, anything. “So...are you into cars or something? You knew about the Super Station and petrol in cars and all that pretty quickly.”

Sue reached over and took the cup from the table and took another sip. She had stopped making a face three drinks before, Robert observed.

“Oh, that...I’m not really, but my dad was. I guess he probably still is.” Sue took another sip. She didn’t want to talk about her dad or her family in general. What she wanted was for Robert to button his shirt more. In all the time she’d known him, he was impeccably dressed. She had wondered if he’d still look good without his perfectly tailored suits. It turned out he did. The worn, red flannel was parted and showed his strong, hairy chest and she was dying to climb up on his lap, to run her fingers through his chest hair, to play with it, to rest her cheek against it. She desperately wanted him to take the whole thing off and join her on the bed, pull away the blanket and do whatever he wanted with her. She kept trying to think of something to say to get him there while also not revealing her intentions, but even as drunk as she was she knew damn well that there was no reward without risk. Besides all that, she knew she’d only be making a fool of herself if she tried. A man like him would never be interested in someone like her. She knew that after seeing some of his dates. If he could get a tall, voluptuous, sexpot like Donna the pet-groomer, what could she possibly do to compete? Then again, she did overhear him describe her as “cute as a button” one time. If only she could have known if he was being serious or not.

“Oh, so your dad was into classic cars?” Robert didn’t want to let the conversation die. If the conversation died then he’d have nothing to keep him from sliding back into the dirty, dirty, *dirty* gutter.

Sue’s eyes drifted to the dresser and her heart beat just a little faster. She could only imagine being brave enough to pull the pet gear out, present it to Robert and ask him to put her in it. She didn’t want to answer the question. She wanted to think about Robert restraining her and then sternly giving her obedience lessons.

“Yeah, he had this silver, antique roadster. I don’t know much about the specs, but it was super fast. He’d take my sister and I out on drives on the weekends sometimes...just for ice cream or whatever.”

Robert nodded. “Had? Did something happen to it?”

Sue frowned and took another drink. Robert wanted to warn her for the fifth time that she needed to be careful—that hard liquor was different than what she was used to—but he didn’t.

“He...he had to sell it when I got my draft notice. My parents didn’t want me in the ComPet program, so they needed money to ‘negotiate’ a deal with the officials.” It made Sue feel terrible when she thought about all the sacrifices her parents made so that she wouldn’t end up as a helpless, panting plaything for some pervert. It made the fact that she regularly fantasized about being a plaything that much worse.

Robert looked down. “I’m sorry...” He felt like he was saying it to all the girls he’d help train. Sue’s whole family had given up so much to keep her out of pet gear and there he had been thinking about putting her in it just for his selfish fun. Always trying to find the bright side he added, “at least it worked.”

“Sort of, I mean, I still end up on all fours every now and again...” She laughed nervously and took another drink. Her head was swimming.

Robert felt a pang in his chest thinking about what Sue’s fate might be once they returned to headquarters.

“Why did you have to come with me?” He asked.

Sue’s smile faded. She was just starting to feel relaxed with him, and not because of the bourbon. They were living inside on her little fantasies, miles from civilization, in a nice cabin. Most importantly, she wasn’t alone, but then he had to go and say something so cold. “What, do you wish you were here with Donna instead?”

“What?”

“I...” Sue couldn’t believe she’d let that slip. “I...nothing. Never mind.”

Robert was silent. The rain continued to fall outside. He wondered why she would care if he and Donna had gone out a few times, especially because it hadn’t worked out between them. Sure the sex was mind-blowing. Donna may have been an ex-ComPet, but she still fucked like a top-tier one. There wasn’t a trace of shame or inhibition when she climbed on top and rode him, all the while yelping and barking as her long, blonde pigtailed bounced in-sync with her awe-inspiring tits. Robert could barely keep up with her, but after it was all over, when they lay in the dark, their breathing slow, and still sweating, they had nothing to say to each other. More than that, Robert felt nothing but the temporary absence of raw desire.

“Why are you bringing up Donna? Why would I bring her instead of my partner?”

Sue didn’t know what to say. It was the same problem she always had. It was why she hated conversation. She always had a way of unintentionally touching nerves and digging her own grave, and then having neither the ability nor the courage to climb back out.

Robert’s judgment would have told him to stay where he was, had his judgment not been drunkenly singing show tunes in the sordid backroom of his mind. So, he went it alone and sat

down next to Sue on the bed. He reached out and gently tilted Sue's chin up so her eyes met his. She looked away and he whispered, "No, look at me, Sue."

She did. His quiet voice was still commanding. Sue wondered if she could have resisted even if she wanted to.

"Why did you bring up Donna?"

Sue trembled.

"It was just...I know she's your girlfriend and you'd probably want to be here with her instead of me..." Her voice sounded more pathetic than she meant it to.

Robert shook his head. "Donna's not my girlfriend. We just went out a couple times, that's all."

"Oh...I..."

"But why would you..."

"Because, Robert, I think I might..." Sue was drunk, but that wasn't what finally loosened her lips. She thought about Ed's assistant, Natalie, and how devastated she was to have lost him. Near as Sue could tell they hadn't been in any kind of relationship, but she got the impression Natalie would have wanted to be in one. It was so damned cliché, but life was short. It was too short for her not to say something. "I might be falling in love with you."

Her words hung in the air. Robert looked at her for a long time. He was concerned that she was just drunk or maybe playing a game with him, but everything in her eyes told him that she was being sincere.

Sue pulled away. "Oh, God...I can't believe—please, just forget what I said...I—"

Robert followed her, took her by the shoulders and pressed his warm lips to hers. Sue tensed at the unfamiliar sensation. She had to remind herself that she was in her twenties and that her puritanical mother wasn't around to say she was acting "slutty." It was okay to finally be kissed. Robert's arms encircled her the way she always hoped they would as his lips and hers worked back and forth and their warm breath intermingled. She thought she might swoon as his tongue slowly slid into her hot mouth.

Robert's hands drifted up to the top of the blanket and pulled it away from her shoulders. Sue clutched it to her and broke away from the kiss.

"W-wait!"

"What's wrong?" Robert panted.

"I...um..."

He laughed breathlessly. "You're not a virgin are you?" Sue's eyes went wide. It took Robert half a second to realize why. "You mean you're actually..."

Still breathless herself she nodded. "Yeah...that was actually my first kiss."

"How is that even possible?"

"It's complicated. And...*this* is complicated. I'm sorry, I..."

Robert shook his head. "No, Sue. Don't. Why don't we just figure this out later?"

Sue nodded slowly and they pulled away from one another.