

# Her Choice, Always

By

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# Chapter One

Holly fretted, walking, pacing, back and forth, around, up and down the stairs. She could not stop moving. Knowing what was coming, what was going to happen when he got home later this afternoon.

What she deserved. Yes. Desired even.

But not really.

Holly hit the wooden corner post of the stairs as she marched up them. Why couldn't anything be easy? Why did she have all these conflicted feelings?

She read a lot—maybe too much—online about how other people did things and what happened in their relationships. Desiring to be someone who just accepted her life was freaking hard. Especially when she didn't want this kind of life, but she so totally did want it. Challenging. Conundrum. It was her choice. Always.

So why didn't it feel that way sometimes?

Pacing, she decided not to think about that aspect anymore. Just, why had she done it? Well, she knew why. It soothed her nerves, eased her mind, and she hadn't wanted to wake him. It was force of habit. Not her fault! In her last relationship, she'd not been allowed to 'bother' him with her feelings, nerves, or what she termed her nightmare cycle.

A few times a month, she had several days in a row where her nightmares were bad. Strong, intense, very real. She would wake up sobbing and terrified.

The last male she'd shared her bed with always told her, "Holly, go back to sleep and change your dream." And that just wasn't an option. She tried, she really did, but it didn't help and it wouldn't stop them or make the terrified feeling go away.

So, she found something that did. Vodka.

Just a little shot in the middle of the night. Not normally much of a drinker, she found that it immediately soothed her mind and made the shakes and jitters go away, so she could go back to sleep. She did love that burn as it hit her throat, and then the calm that came almost immediately after. Sometimes she wondered if it was a placebo, it worked so quickly. Honestly, though, who cared, as long as it worked, and eased her fears. And it did work, very well.

The last man in her life and bed didn't care what she did to make herself feel better, as long as he got his sleep needs in. She could understand that. She liked sleep too, after all! Though, when he wanted her in the middle of the night, sleep needs didn't matter then, and that didn't seem quite fair, but she lived with it.

This male, her husband, Eric, cared. He did not want her turning to something else for comfort when he was right next to her. She was allowed—no, she was *required* to wake him up.

But really, it had been the third night in a row that she'd awakened him, and she could tell it was wearing on him. He had a very mentally strenuous job, and surely needed his sleep. Plus, she smiled, she kept him up too much anyway with her “needs,” as he teasingly called them.

She'd never had sex before like the sex she had with him, and there was no way she was doing without as long as he was ready and willing. So far he was ready and more than willing as often as she was. She appreciated that about him.

Most of the time, too, she appreciated the firm hand he had with her. Something in her nature needed it, but geez. Did he have to tell her in the morning she was getting her butt blistered when he got home from work? That was a long time to wait, and get antsy and nervous.

Besides, she reasoned with herself as she paced, it wasn't fair. She had just done it for him. She woke up in the night, shaking and afraid, again, but not screaming, so he'd stayed asleep. She thought about waking him up, but chose to let him get his much-needed rest. She was thoughtful! That's all it was! It was consideration! Why did he not understand that? Was he happy and grateful? No. He took it as a personal affront. Like she deliberately disobeyed him. Why would he think that?

Because technically that was what she'd done. Holly sighed and rounded the corner again, bare feet sinking into the soft carpet on the stairs. Who needed a stair machine or a treadmill? She had real stairs and nervous energy to work off.

Instead of waking him up, she'd let him sleep, and sniffled her way to the kitchen, poured herself a shot of vodka, and downed it.

It felt so good that she had one more. Then, feeling much better, much calmer and not afraid, and ready to go back to sleep, she turned to go back to bed. She let out a small shriek as

she saw Eric standing in the doorway watching her. Startled. Not guilty. Just didn't know he would be there, that's all.

He held out his arms and she rushed into them. After holding and comforting her, he led her back to bed, and made sweet gentle love to her until she fell asleep in his arms, happy, sated, and not afraid.

Then this morning....

Waking up to the sound of the shower running, she stretched and debated joining him. Despite her midnight adventures, she felt great—refreshed, happy and ready to meet her day of work. Before she could get out of bed, the shower turned off, and she felt a pang of disappointment. Shower sex was oh so good, and they both got clean! Win-win.

Eric walked out of the bathroom a minute later, wrapped in a green towel. His gray-blue eyes found hers and he smiled. “How are you feeling this morning?” he asked.

“Good,” she purred. “How are you?”

“Well, I'm irritated,” he replied, dropping the towel to let her feast upon the freshly scrubbed eye candy.

Wet and resting, it was still extremely yummy. She bet she could change that resting thing in three, two, one... oh crap... what had he said? A sinking feeling engulfed her. Not good.

“Were you out of shampoo?” she asked, innocently, though she knew exactly what he was upset about. Man, this was not how she wanted to start her day. She had a meeting this morning and didn't want to be squirming on a hot butt while listening to her boss hand out new assignments. She wanted to be there, eager and excited, and ready to grab the best ones, not concentrating on trying to sit still. Eric wouldn't... yeah, he would, she realized. She sighed.

Her mouth opened and she began an excuse.

“No. Just stop,” he commanded, and she obediently shut her mouth.

That counts as behaving, she thought. Maybe? She hoped it did.

“I have to be at work early, so your little butt is safe for now. But tonight when I get home, I want to see my wife in the corner, her pale ass on display for me, ready for the paddling she doesn't want. You will not be sneaking drinks in the middle of the night again, and I'm going to give you a lesson you won't forget. Do you understand me?”

Oh, no, Holly moaned silently. ‘The paddling you don’t want’ meant pure punishment. No fun. It was one that left her giving dancing lessons as she howled and high stepped and stomped around the room trying to put out the fire in her well scorched behind. He was so very right. She didn’t want that.

“Yes, sir,” she said meekly. “I thought you weren’t mad since...” her voice trailed off.

“You thought I wasn’t mad since I did what I would have done if you woke me up like you were supposed to, right?” He fixed her with a stare that made her wiggle and pull the covers up higher. She’d forgotten she was naked and suddenly felt very vulnerable.

“Yes,” she said, faintly.

“No,” he said flatly. “I will never be mad at you for waking me up. I will be mad at you for sneaking drinks instead of coming to me for comfort. We’ve discussed it a hundred times. You know that, and you flat out disobeyed me, and lied by sneaking around.”

Holly started to cry, she couldn’t help it. She felt so bad right now.

He raised his eyebrow at her. “Seriously? Better save the tears for tonight. You’re going to need them. Maybe after I’m done and you’re able to sit down, we’ll have a beer or some wine with dinner. Adults can drink, but there is no reason to sneak around. Especially when you need them for something I can give you. Do you understand me?”

“Yes, sir.” Holly tried to stop the tears. She didn’t want to dance around the room holding her hot bottom. She didn’t want to be begging and squalling over his lap. Would he use the paddle? His belt? She whimpered, softly. “Please?” She asked, not sure what she asked for.

He did though.

“Yes. I love you enough to paddle your butt when you need it. Count on it.” Eric pulled on the rest of his clothes and said, “Coffee will be done in a few minutes. Are you eating with me?”

Holly nodded, hoping her nervous stomach would let her eat. Would be a long tummy-grumbling day otherwise.

Who was she kidding? It was going to be a very long day, knowing what was coming at the end of it. What she deserved, and desired, and hated, and didn’t want, and yet still craved.

\* \* \* \* \*

Holly pulled her thoughts back to the present time and reality. Dang, was that his car pulling into the driveway?

While most of her spankings were given in the bedroom so they could have much fun during and after in comfort, she knew by now that the paddlings she didn't want were given in his office. She'd only had a handful of them over the years, but each one was memorable in its own way. Guess she was adding one more to her memory list today. Not some of her favorite memories, at all.

After a very distracted day at work though, she'd gotten two of the coveted assignments she wanted, so yay! At least that was good. She'd come home, changed into a long yellow t-shirt, and gray shorts with an elastic waist. The zippered kind often fell to her ankles before she wanted them to. Throwing some chicken and rice into the slow cooker, she hoped she would be able to enjoy it later on. Who knew? Maybe she'd eat standing up. Maybe not at all. She could smell it cooking and her stomach rumbled, but whether from hunger or nerves, she didn't know. Did it matter? Not really.

Shaking just a little, she slipped into his office, listening for the garage door to go down again. As soon as it did, she walked to the corner, dragging her feet. Was this really happening? She was a grown woman! She had a good job! She didn't need spanked like a child and she did not want to stand in the corner like a naughty toddler.

Yet, there she was. Nose in the corner, she pushed her shorts to her thighs, along with her pale pink panties, and fisted her t-shirt in her hand, so her bare bottom was on display. He would walk in and see just what he wanted to see.

His wife, waiting obediently for her spanking.

His office was dark, the darkest room in the house, but very comfortable. The thick dark carpet felt good under her bare feet, and she curled her recently pedicured toes into it. She wondered if he would notice her new color. Probably not, he'd be too busy focusing on the color of her bottom.

Books lined the walls, many of them collector items from his grandfather, who had been a very well read lawyer. She'd loved his grandpa. What would grandpa think if he knew Eric was going to paddle her butt? He had been an old-fashioned man, and probably would have highly approved. Holly sighed and peeked over to the clean, organized desk.



His desk was huge, cherry wood, an antique, also handed down from his grandfather. She'd been bent over it a few times for some fun play. She eyed the armless chair in the corner, knowing if he was serious—and she was quite certain he was—he'd pull it to the middle of the room, and she'd go over his knee. It was the only way he could control her wiggles and urge to flee. And he managed it so easily, as if she wasn't five foot five and a hundred and plenty pounds, but more like a spitting kitten.

Half smiling, as she heard his footsteps coming her way, she knew that despite her fear of the pain of the paddling, she could not live any other way, now that she experienced him. His ways, his kindness, consideration and thoughtfulness, his sweetness and his dominance. She loved all of it.

But she didn't want to be spanked.

Although, despite her true wish not to be paddled, she knew she would lose some respect for him and be greatly disappointed in him, if he didn't follow through. She knew before she married him, that he'd be a spanking husband. She accepted it then, and she accepted it now. But, you know, he could let her off now and then! Or maybe just not spank as hard....

Holly sighed, and her shoulders drooped, there was no doubt it would happen. It was not up to her, but him. Before too long, she'd be howling and begging him to stop. Why did she do this to herself? What was wrong with her programming?

The door opened, and she felt, rather than heard, him walk in the room.

“Good girl, that's what I wanted. How long have you been there, waiting?” he asked.

“Forever,” she replied. “Seems like it, anyway.”

“I imagine it does,” he said. “You know what's going to happen, right?”

“Yes, sir,” she bent her head into the corner and sniffled, almost convincingly. “I'm sorry. I won't do it again. I promise.”

Eric chuckled, “Oh, I can almost guarantee that, but only time will tell, right?”

“Yes, sir,” she said feeling the cool air on her trembling bottom. She had better appreciate it while it lasted, she thought. Hot would happen soon enough.

Blushing, she knew he was eyeing her bottom, and fought the urge to drop her shirt. Give the man what he wanted, was her motto, and he wanted to see her ass.

“Pull your shorts down and off. You won't need them the rest of the night,” he commanded.

Whimpering slightly, she did as she was told. The rest of the night? When her shorts pooled at her feet, she kicked them off and behind her.

“Panties, too. Girls who sneak and lie get paddled on their bare bottoms, so those aren’t needed, either.”

Shorts were easy to kick off. Panties involved shimmying. And wiggling and bending... but she managed with only a modicum of mortification. The wisp of silk joined her shorts and she bent forward slightly to hide her face, knowing it arched her bottom out some, but still.

“Good. Now. Go fetch the hairbrush,” he said and she heard him sit down in the chair.

No! Not that! “It’s upstairs,” she said.

“I didn’t ask you where it was. I told you to go get it.” His voice was calm and flat and she turned to see him rolling up his sleeves, leaning back in his chair, relaxed and waiting.

“Yes, sir,” she said, dropping her t-shirt so it was covering important parts. She hardly ever called him sir, but during a punishment session, it just seemed right and proper, somehow. She didn’t question it, just went with it.

Heading out of the room, Holly tried to decide if she wanted to dawdle, because spanking, or hurry because irritated male meant worse spanking. How could it be worse? It couldn’t. Dawdle was the decision, put it off as long as she could.

Then she heard, “By the way, you better be down here before I count to ten. One, two—”

Her feet flew up the stairs, she grabbed the hairbrush from the bedroom dresser without contemplating what would happen when she returned, and rushed back into the office.

“Eight, nine... good deal. I was going to add however many swats on to how many seconds you were late.” He held out his hand for the dreaded implement.

Holly didn’t think she’d actually made it up and down the stairs in less than ten seconds, but she sure wasn’t going to argue with the man who now held the hairbrush.

“Over my knee. Assume the position.” He motioned and she looked into his eyes.

“Please? I don’t want a spanking,” she said, stomach clenching. She didn’t want to whine, but she didn’t want what was about to happen either.

“Then you shouldn’t have done something to deserve one,” he said, almost cheerfully. “Buns up. Over my lap. Now.”

Did he have any clue how hard this was to do? Arrange herself willingly over his knee? Opening her mouth to beg one more time for mercy or leniency or something, she saw his head shake slightly. Holly let a small whimper escape, but then shut her mouth, and bent over his lap.

Hands forward, toes on the floor, for at least a second or two before she started kicking her legs. The girls in videos she watched occasionally—just occasionally, really! They either got much less of a spanking than she did or had much more self-control. She tended to think it was the former. Nobody could spank as hard as Eric, she was certain.

Luckily for her, he didn't spout nonsense like 'hold still' when there was no way she could. Before very long at all, she'd be trying to cover her bottom with her hand and attempting to block that hairbrush with her kicking feet, and vigorously wiggling, striving to slide off his lap. She knew it, he knew it, and she figured secretly he appreciated her reactions to his efforts. Just lying there and taking it would be boring, at least it was in the videos. Why did they want them to just hold still? She never understood it.

Plus, she always thought he'd paddle harder if she didn't react to what he was doing, and who wanted that to happen? Not this girl. He paddled way too hard in any case, not that she could convince him of that, of course. The few times she'd tried to tell him that, when he wasn't spanking her, he just laughed and said, "I know your limits and your bottom can take a lot more than I give you." Mean male.

"Huh, that's funny," he said. "I can't see your butt. Pull your shirt up. I need a good target."

Holly whimpered again, as one hand reached back to pull her shirt up, and he grabbed it while it was there, and held it in the small of her back. This was not good. He meant business.

She wiggled, trying to get more comfortable in this awkward and embarrassing position. He'd seen her in all positions, of course, but this one was not like sexual positions. It felt way too vulnerable and she felt way too exposed, and they both knew why. She wondered if he'd let her up if she said she had to pee? Doubtful.

"So explain to me in small words my poor male brain can comprehend why your butt is about to be lit on fire," he said, rubbing her bottom with the cool wood of the hairbrush. She didn't want to think of how good that felt.

"I'm sorry," she gasped out.

“Not as sorry as you’re going to be,” he said cheerfully. Why was he in such a good mood? What was worse, a pissed off male with a hairbrush or cheerfully determined one? Did it matter? The end result was the same. Pain in her rear.

“Did I ask if you were sorry?” The hairbrush rose and fell across both her cheeks with a loud crack that made her squeal and jump.

“Ow!” she complained. He obligingly smacked her again and she wiggled.

“Answer my question,” he said. “Why is your bare butt over my lap?”

“Because you told me to put it there!” Holly wailed.

He cracked the hairbrush down again. “Is now really the time to have a smart mouth?”

“Maybe!” she sniffled.

“Talk now,” he smacked her again in the same spot, “because in a few minutes you aren’t going to be able to.”

“I’m sorry!” she said, promptly, “I was sneaking drinks in the middle of the night.”

“That’s right,” he said approvingly.

Despite the knowledge of what he was going to do, she wiggled a bit, happy to have pleased him. Not for the drinks, which obviously did not please him, but for saying what he wanted to hear from her.

She just wished the blood wasn’t rushing to her face and her nose wasn’t sniffing carpet, and his eyes weren’t gazing on the probably pink splotches on her bottom. They didn’t even hurt right now, but she knew that wouldn’t last long.

“Why is drinking bad?” He smacked again and made her give a startled jerk.

“Drinking isn’t bad,” Holly said quickly, and quite intelligently she thought. “It’s sneaking and lying that’s bad, and not doing what you told me to do.”

“See how smart you are with a couple applications of hairbrush?” he replied. “Imagine how well your brain is going to work when it’s done with you.”

“No... please?” she whimpered. “I’m sorry.”

“Oh, I know you’re sorry, now. This is to help you remember next time,” he smacked her again and she wiggled. Cause and effect.

“Ow! I’ll remember!” she promised.

“I know,” he chuckled again, and her spanking began for real. His usual method, as she knew from too much experience, was to warm her butt up by lighting it on fire with a volley of quick sharp smacks that would make her stiffen and cry out.

Then he’d stop a while and lecture, and expect her to answer, which was hard when her brain was totally focused on her bottom, and not on the words coming from his mouth. He’d do that a time or two until somehow he knew she was no longer able to answer. Then he’d just spank with no let up, until he decided she’d had enough. She always thought she had enough way before he did. She didn’t get a vote, though, which hardly seemed fair.

In the books and stories, she read, she knew some people over a lap tried to be stoic, the, ‘I can take whatever you give me,’ kind of mentality. There was also, the, ‘She took her spanking so well,’ school of thought, and personally, she thought that was ridiculous. Why? She had no desire not to explain to him quickly and loudly that it hurt and she didn’t want anymore, and even less to take it well. What was the point in that? None. She was going to wiggle and squeal and complain and cry and beg, and now was just a real good time to start.

“Ow! No more, please! I’ll be good!”

“Seriously, Holly? You think you’re going to get by with that?” he asked.

“No,” she panted, confessing, “But it made you stop for a second.”

Eric laughed. “Yeah, that’s true. Won’t make that mistake again, will I?”

The hairbrush began to rain down again, and Holly kicked and twisted, and tried to get away from it, or at least put a fresh spot in place of one that had already been hurt.

“Not so hard!” she shrieked. “I’m sorry! I’ll be good! Not there, not there! Please!”

“Not where? There?” He smacked right where her thigh met the crease of her butt about six times straight while she stiffened and wailed. “Huh, must be it,” he said, entirely too calmly.

Most men, she figured, if they had a wiggling, screeching female over his lap, would be a bit upset, or reacting in some way. Not her guy. He just held on and smacked merrily away, as if it didn’t even matter what she did. Why that made her feel safe and secure when he was the one causing her pain and distress, she didn’t know. Holly just knew it did. She tried not to overthink it. It got complicated way too fast if she did, so she didn’t. Very often, at least. Sometimes she tried to think about it, but now was not one of those times. Now there was burning heat completely and totally occupying her thoughts.

Finally, she realized he'd stopped spanking and she sobbed over his knee, trying to catch her breath.

"So," he said, rubbing her bottom gently. She almost purred it felt so good. He needed to do that more. "Tell me why you have yourself over my knee this time?"

"Because I was bad," she choked out.

Eric smacked her hard and made her howl. "You are not bad, try again." He gave her one more for good measure.

She knew her butt had to be bright red, already, and she was smart enough to know they weren't nearly done. She wanted to be done. "I did something you told me not to do," she said between sobs. She was trying to accept blame here, why did he not understand that, or that it was hard to talk.

"Why did I tell you not to do it?" He smacked her again. Sometimes during her mid-spank lecture he would smack her ten or more times, and she never knew when they were coming. Or where they would land, and all she could do was stay held firmly over his lap and listen very carefully to the hairbrush wielding man. Must get the answers right!

"Because I need to rely on you, not a bottle for comfort!" Ha! See, she knew the answer to that one.

"And?" He smacked again, and she wiggled hard trying to shake the sting out of her burning bottom.

"And?"

"What else?" he asked.

"I don't know!" She gave a few hiccupping sobs. "Really, I don't!" She just wanted out of this position and to be in his arms.

"You went behind my back to do it. I won't tolerate lying, even by omission and you know it," he said, bringing the hairbrush down a few more times. She could hear the thud of the wood on her skin, and it was not her favorite sound at all.

"I'm sorry," she said promptly. "I won't lie to you ever again!"

"I hope not," he said sadly, and her heart clenched.

She knew his history and vowed not to be the next one to hurt him. Which was ironic considering he was planning to wear a layer of skin off her butt right now.

“Ow!” she screeched as he began the next volley of smacks on her poor already abused bottom.

Vaguely she could hear the *smack, smack, smack* as the hairbrush hit her bottom. His belt was a softer sound, oddly, but equally as nasty, in its own special way. Weirdly enough, it was also the thing she preferred, other than his hand, for erotic play. But how could she even be thinking of these things now?

Suddenly she couldn't, as he pushed her to another limit and all she could say was, “Okay, okay, okay, no more, please, *please!* I'll be good no more okay!”

“Oh, much more,” his voice floated into her frantic brain. “This is going to be a lesson you won't forget for a while.”

“I remember!” she sobbed, not sure what she was remembering, just needing him to stop. She could not take this, she could not, that was all there was to it. She was done, done, *finished!* How could he not know that?

“I think I'll remember now, thank you for the spanking, I won't ever do it again,” her brain said as her mouth emitted, a long, “*Ah-ow!*”

Then simply tears.

She couldn't kick anymore, she felt nothing, thought of nothing but the fire in her bottom. Her breath came in huge hitches and she knew she had a pool of tears and snot on the rug in front of her. Collapsing over his knee, she submitted, gave up, and he finally stopped.

Thank you, God. Or Eric. Or something.

She never, never, wanted that to happen again, but she did want to put out the fire. He moved his knee and she jumped up on very shaky legs and grabbed her bottom, rubbing frantically.

In some small portion of her brain, she knew she had to look ridiculous, hopping around the room with her hot red bottom held in both hands, nose sniveling, and tears rolling down her equally red cheeks. Did she care?

Not one single iota.

She just needed to rub harder for the burn to stop, and then she needed to be in his arms. Two small simple things and then life would be complete. How hard could it be?

Still rubbing frantically, she pranced, sniffing and hiccupping, over to where he was now standing by the chair and threw herself at him. It was his turn to deal with her. Time for him to comfort and soothe and make it all better. She could not wait. It was her favorite part.

Well, other than looking in the mirror after, of course. But that could wait. Right now, soaking his shirt with her tears, telling him she was sorry, and would never do it again, and feeling his strong hands gently stroking her steaming rear, was more important than anything else in the entire world.