
AUGUST HEAT

Campus Life - Book Eight

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Chapter 1

"The usual?" Angie asked as she stepped out of the patrol car in front of a local coffee shop.

Her partner, Larry Ramos, looked at the clock and sighed. "I should probably have a decaf."

She chuckled. "Careful, your age is showing."

"Fuck you." He scowled. "You're only seven years behind me."

She continued to chuckle and stepped back to shut the door.

"Make it iced," he called out.

She leaned back down. "Iced? Really?"

"It's already eighty-five out, and it's not even noon. This heat wave is killing me."

"All right, coming up."

Before she shut the door, they both heard dispatch over the radio. *We have shots fired at the Quick-Mart on Tenth and Yamhill.*

That Quick-Mart was fifteen blocks from them. Angie jumped back in the car as Larry flipped on the lights. He pulled out of the parking lot while Angie notified dispatch they were enroute. She'd been on the force for almost ten years, but the call for shots fired still made her stomach lurch.

Larry jerked to a stop in front the little convenience store. Angie told dispatch they'd arrived first on scene, and they got out with their guns drawn.

Angie couldn't see anyone through the glass on either side of the front counter. Larry gestured for her to go in the front while he went around to the back, and she nodded. She opened the door and called out, "Portland police!"

"Back here!" someone yelled.

She stepped further in and scanned the store. A young Hispanic man wearing a Quick-Mart shirt waved at her from the back wall. "Come quick, he's been shot."

"Where's the shooter?" Angie asked, scanning all the aisles for potential threats before she quickly made her way to the back.

"He took off."

When she got to the back wall, she saw a shirtless Caucasian man in his thirties holding presumably his own rolled up tee-shirt against his upper arm. A small pool of blood had formed on the floor beside him. She used her radio to call for an ambulance and a trauma team.

The back door opened, and Larry called out, "Portland police."

"Clear," Angie called out before kneeling next to the injured customer. "I'm Officer Williams. What's your name?"

"Sam. Sam Banks."

"Are you injured anywhere other than your arm, Sam?" she asked as she pulled a pair of latex gloves out of her pouch.

"I don't think so."

Larry let dispatch know that the gunman was no longer on site, while Angie pulled on her gloves.

When her partner was done talking, Angie turned to him. "I need the med kit." Then she focused back on Sam. "What happened to your arm, Sam?"

"That maniac shot me!" Sam lifted the rolled-up shirt to show her the gunshot wound in his shoulder.

She pushed the shirt carefully back onto the wound and said, "The ambulance is on the way. Keep direct pressure on it. Can I check your back?"

Sam nodded and sat forward, with her help. The exit wound was still rapidly leaking blood. Focusing on the front of the store, she saw Larry rushing back with their first aid kit. He opened it and set it on the floor beside her. She ripped open some large gauze pads and held them against the wound on his back.

"How bad is it?" Sam asked.

"You just focus on staying calm," Angie answered. She heard sirens in the distance and knew the ambulance was close. "EMS will be here any second."

She heard the clerk talking animatedly to her partner. "Some guy came in here talking crazy shit. He said I'd drugged and raped his girlfriend. Man, my girl's pregnant, and we're getting married next month! I've never cheated on her, and I sure as fuck never had to drug a girl to get with her. When I told him he had the wrong guy, he pulled a gun on me. Before I got a word in, this guy," he pointed at Sam, "dropped a bag of chips. The noise startled the guy with the gun, and he turned and shot."

Angie heard the sirens stop.

"Then what?" Larry asked the clerk.

"Then he ran out of here like he was being chased by a rabid dog."

"How old was this guy?" Larry asked.

"I don't know. Twenty maybe?"

Angie heard the front door open, and a male voice called out, "Medical Services."

"Against the back wall," she answered.

She looked towards the front and saw Isaac Hanson coming down the aisle. Of all the EMTs she'd met over the years, Isaac was her favorite. The tall African American man was not only incredibly handsome, he was good at his job, and he seemed to genuinely care about the people he helped. Most of the EMTs

Angie had met were professional, proficient, and good at their jobs, but Isaac brought a little something extra. It was something Angie had a hard time quantifying. Warmth? Sincerity? Confidence? She couldn't say, but whatever it was, she approved.

Isaac hurried to them with his partner, Sophie, close behind.

"Gunshot wound to the right shoulder," Angie said as Isaac put his kit down and knelt beside them. "Bullet went straight through. His name is Sam Banks."

Isaac nodded and put his hand over the gauze pad she had been holding.

"Hi, Sam; I'm Isaac. We're going to be taking you to the hospital, okay?"

"Yeah," Sam said, his eyelids drooping.

"Try to stay awake for me," Isaac said as Sophie started handing Isaac more gauze for the front. "Are you allergic to any medications, Sam?"

"No."

While Isaac and Sophie took care of Sam, Angie took off her bloody gloves and started securing the scene while Larry questioned the clerk.

Hours later when Angie's shift ended, they hadn't made much progress on the case. The Quick-Mart's security cameras had been broken for over a month. After canvassing the area, they hadn't found any other witnesses. The clerk, Luis Gomez, didn't have a lot of information about the suspect other than his appearance. The shooter was described as a Caucasian man in his twenties with brown hair and an average build, wearing jeans and a dark blue t-shirt. After looking Luis up in the system and spending most of the afternoon questioning his friends and family, both Angie and Larry believed that it probably was a case of mistaken identity. They'd gone through their records to see if there were any rape victims who'd been drugged in their area. The most recent one they found was from three weeks ago, at a

frat house, and the young woman couldn't even remember what her assailant looked like.

Angie had finished her day by questioning Sam in the hospital, with roughly the same results. The explanation of events and description of the shooter matched what Luis had said with nothing new to add. It was almost enough to make her cancel her plans for the evening, because a beer with her co-workers who would understand her frustration sounded great, but she knew visiting her favorite club would be more relaxing in the long run.

ANGIE FOUND A SPOT TO PARK, three blocks down from Club Domino, and checked her makeup in the rearview mirror. The new light grey eyeshadow she'd used made her blue eyes appear a shade darker than usual, and her pale skin had tanned over the summer months because she kept forgetting to put on sunscreen. After running her hands through her long brown hair, she deemed herself presentable and muttered, "This time, you'll do it." A negative little voice in her head scoffed, *No, you won't.*

Refusing to listen to her inner voice, she got out, straightened her leather skirt, and made sure her royal blue blouse was fully buttoned. Then she opened the trunk, grabbed her duffle bag, locked her car, and walked briskly along the sidewalk towards the club.

Even though the sun would be down in half an hour, the heat from the baked pavement radiated up and penetrated her clothing. Five years ago, when she'd moved from Seattle, Washington to Portland, Oregon, she'd been told that the weather would be similar. Rain, rain, and more dreary rain could be expected, even in the summer months. But this summer hadn't followed suit. Today was August first, and it hadn't rained a drop in five weeks. The endless heat made people cranky, and

cranky people made stupid mistakes. Stupid mistakes like the one the shooter made at the Quick-Mart this morning. Angie shook her head and tried to put the case out of her mind for the night.

Her high heels clicked along the pavement, and her eyes automatically scanned the surrounding sidewalk for potential threats while she thought about the promise tonight held. Club Domino was hosting an hour long meet and greet for kinksters and then a three-hour play party for those who wanted to stay. It was held on the first Saturday of each month, and Angie always tried to attend. Meet and greets brought out new players, and since Club Domino operated near Northern Oregon University, the potential existed to meet people from all over the country.

She opened the door to the club and sighed with relief as the air conditioning enveloped her. The lobby was professionally bland, with a front desk, some chairs for customers to sit in while they waited, and beige walls. A middle-aged couple stood at the front counter, a young man waited behind them, and a woman perched on one of the lobby chairs while looking expectantly towards the entrance as if waiting for someone. Angie got in line and waited her turn, glad to see Kirk working the front desk. He was pleasant, efficient, and well trained to check IDs.

Once the couple had paid and were allowed into the back room, the young man in front of Angie scowled and said, "Why is it sixty for me, when that couple only paid forty for both of them?"

Kirk answered with no hesitation, "I'm sorry, sir, the pay structure is set that way to keep the ratio of men to women equal. Management has tried to make it twenty for everyone, and the night ends up being eighty percent men. With the pay structure the way it is, it will be closer to sixty percent men."

"That doesn't seem right," the guy said.

Angie stepped up to the desk, held out a twenty along with her ID and said, "He's with me." As a single woman, she would

have been free, but she didn't agree with their pay structure, either, and often helped out single guys at the door.

The guy turned his scowl to her, but that scowl quickly turned into a grin once he looked her up and down.

Told you so, her inner voice sneered. She couldn't be honest while someone examined her like a piece of meat.

"Hey, Angie," Kirk said, taking her twenty.

"Hey." Angie scrutinized the guy. He was a foot taller than she was and at least a decade younger. He barely looked eighteen, but since the club didn't serve alcohol, eighteen was the minimum age to get in. The guy had blond hair, blue eyes, and he gave off a very 'trying to be dominant' vibe.

"I take it you're new?" she said.

"I am." He held out his hand. "Mason. Nice to meet you."

She shook his hand firmly. "Angie. Fill out your paperwork here with Kirk, show him your ID, and pay your twenty. Then meet me inside, and I'll show you around."

"That sounds great." Mason's eyes remained on her blouse, and the corners of his mouth curled.

Kirk set a sheet of blank name tags on the counter along with a Sharpie. Angie picked up the pen, wrote the word *Dominant* on a sticker, and put it on her blouse. She gave Mason a smile. "Be sure to write your orientation on a tag for the meet and greet portion of the night. I'd love to play with you if you're a sub."

"Oh." His eyebrows furrowed, his lips turned down, and he shook his head. "I'm sorry, but I'm one-hundred percent dominant," he said firmly.

She tried not to sound patronizing as she patted his arm. "That's okay. I won't hold it against you. I'll see you in there."

She gave Kirk a wink, and he gave her a knowing nod before waving her through the curtain and into the back room.

Past the bland lobby the dim lights, loud music, and staged equipment made it clear what the club offered its patrons. Two spanking benches, three massage tables, a Saint Andrew's cross,

and two sets of wall shackles were ready for use. There were also two empty floor spaces with sturdy metal hooks above them for rope suspension. Near the back, on the left, there was a bar that served non-alcoholic drinks, and against the right wall, there were several chairs for people to sit and visit. The back wall had six doors that led to small rooms with single beds in them, also sheeted and ready for use.

Angie put her duffle bag in one of the cubbies next to the entrance. She unzipped it, pulled out her little handheld purse, and left the rest there. She went to the bar and ordered a club soda with lime to drink while mingling. After greeting some of the regulars, she showed Mason around and pointedly introduced him to the evening's Dungeon Master. Thankfully, tonight, they had Bill working as Dungeon Master. Angie knew for a fact that Bill kept a sharp eye out, so if Mason thought he was going to talk some innocent little virginal sub into doing something she didn't like, he was in for a rude awakening at this club.

After doing her due diligence with Mason, she caught sight of her friend and fellow Domme, Mistress Candy, and went to say hello.

Mistress Candy, or Marcia as her friends knew her, pointed out Mason and said, "Please tell me that one's a sub."

"Sorry."

"Damn."

"Yeah. He could really use it, too." Angie imagined Mason bent over her knee and smiled. "I'd love to strap him."

Both women sighed and looked around the room for any other new people they could strike up a conversation with.

"This will be a lot more exciting next month once the college kids arrive," Marcia said.

"Yeah," Angie agreed, even though she didn't actually. Next month, in September, Angie would be turning thirty-five. The older she got, the less interesting young college students became.

One of Marcia's regulars, Karen, came over to talk with them.

"Mistress Candy. Ma'am." Karen nodded to each of them.

Marcia put an arm around Karen's shoulders and asked her how her summer had been.

Technically, Karen was still a college student, but her last year of grad school was coming up. Angie had done a couple of impact play scenes with Karen over the years when Marcia wasn't available, but Angie couldn't give Karen everything she wanted in a scene, because Angie was straight. Marcia, on the other hand, was bi.

While Marcia and Karen talked about the oppressive heat, Angie scanned the room trying to read tags from a distance. Several people had tags with the word she was looking for, the word that expressed her true orientation, even though she'd never told anyone the truth. But as soon as she saw the faces of the people who had *Switch* written on their name tag, she immediately discounted them as potential play partners. Half were women, and she had no interest in being topped by a female, and the other half were people she knew. She couldn't play with someone who'd thought of her as a dominant for years. That would be awkward as fuck, or at least that's what she told herself.

Then Angie caught sight of one of her new regulars and smiled. She could happily stuff the submissive side of herself away for the night for Jessie. For a little over a month, they'd been growing close. Whenever they both showed up at a kinky event, which was at least twice a week, they would seek each other out and play.

Even after a month, every time she saw him, she flashed back to the first time she'd laid eyes on him. *Sweet* was the word she would always associate with him. It had been a meet and greet like this one, and Jessie had just started summer classes at the local college. He'd also recently turned eighteen and had never been to a club. He was tall with green eyes, light brown

shaggy hair, scruffy chin, and pale skin that showed every blush. That first day he'd been grinning, blushing, and proudly wearing his sticker that read *Submissive* in bold letters. She still felt a rush of excitement, pride, and just a hint of guilt at her own less than truthful sticker, every time she witnessed his open honesty.

He caught her eye, grinned, and walked up to her. "Hey, Angie."

Her high heels added another three inches to her original five-foot-six, which still left her a couple inches shorter than him. "Good to see you, Jessie."

He looked over at Marcia. "Hey, Mistress Candy. Karen."

Karen gave him a quick hug hello and then pulled Marcia towards the bar, talking enthusiastically about some band Angie had never heard of.

"How've you been?" Jessie asked once the other women were gone.

"I'd be better without the heat wave. How about you?"

His eyes darted down and he shrugged. "I'm okay."

The downcast eyes gave him away. Angie took his hand in hers and asked pointedly, "How were your classes this week?"

He winced and looked over at the bar. "Could we talk about that later? Like... in a room?"

"Of course, we can. Just as soon as the playing starts, we'll go talk. Okay?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She could hear the relief in his tone and squeezed his hand in comfort before letting it go. Keeping her tone light, she changed the subject. "Have you done anything interesting since I saw you on Tuesday?"

"Not really."

"I don't believe that for a second." She bumped his hip with hers playfully. "You're a college student in a big city during the summer. You must have done *something* interesting."

"Well... I went to the campus movie night with my friend Olivia yesterday."

"That sounds fun. What did you guys see?"

For the next half an hour, Jessie and Angie talked about life in general and visited with the people around them. Then right at nine o'clock, Bill the Dungeon Master clapped his hands to get everyone's attention and announced that the equipment was now available for anyone who wanted to stay and play.

Angie put a hand on Jessie's shoulder. "Go get us a room while I get my bag."

He nodded and went to stand in the doorway of one of the empty rooms while she got her duffle bag out of the cubby. She brought it to the room and closed the door behind them. The small room had a single bed, a wooden chair, a wastebasket, and a small shelf with a hamper under it. On the shelf were several folded clean sheets, a bowl of condoms, a box of tissues, and some baby wipes.

She set the duffle bag in front of the door and locked it. No one in the club would walk in on them when the door was closed, but she knew it made Jessie feel more secure to have the added precaution. She sat on the bed and pointed to the floor by her feet. He knelt down beside her and looked up expectantly.

"How were your classes last week?" she asked.

"I'm doing really well in my Intro to Art History class. Professor Jackson is incredibly knowledgeable about the subject. I stayed after class Wednesday, and we talked for like twenty minutes about the paper I wrote on Banksy. I showed him some of my sketches and he said I have a lot of potential. He even said I should apply to be his T.A. the year after next once his current T.A. graduates."

"That's wonderful. Congratulations." Angie leaned down and kissed the top of his head. "I'm proud of you."

"Thanks." His eyes stayed downcast.

"And your other two classes?"

"My Intro to Literature is fine. A lot of the stuff we read is dull, but it's easy for me to understand, and my grade is fine."

"Are you stalling?" she asked sharply when he paused for a few seconds.

He scowled up at her. "I don't see why I need Algebra anyway. I'm never going to use it. I'm getting a degree in art, not math or science."

Unimpressed with his attitude, she pointed to the duffle bag. "Go get the strap."

After letting out a tiny whine of protest, he stood, opened the bag, got out her favorite implement, and handed it to her. She pointed to the floor again, and he knelt down.

"Did you want to try that again?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am." After she gave her permission with a nod, he said softly, "I got a D on my midterm, and I just... gave up." He looked up at her with sad eyes and said, "I'm not good at math."

Angie had to look away when he gave her those puppy eyes that reminded her so much of her little brother, or she'd just give him a hug and tell him it was all going to be all right. Focusing on the strap in her hands, she said, "Giving up isn't the right thing to do, is it?"

"No, ma'am."

"You need to pass at least one math class to get your degree, don't you?"

"Yes."

Her eyes narrowed and snapped to him.

"Yes, ma'am," he corrected himself.

"The library at the college offers free tutoring to students, don't they?"

"Then all the tutors are going to know that I'm stupid!"

She held the strap out to him. "You've just upgraded yourself to the paddle."

He grimaced and shook his head.

"Go on. Right now. Or do you need a strapping first to check your attitude?"

"No, ma'am," he whined. He pouted as he put the strap away and got out the dreaded paddle. The implement was custom made by one of Angie's woodworking friends. The polished wood was a foot long, three inches wide, and half an inch thick. He handed it to her with an expression of distaste before kneeling back down.

"You think about this next question carefully before you answer it, young man, because I'm sure you know where this is going. When you see other students getting help in the library, do you think to yourself, 'those people are stupid'?"

Jessie slowly shook his head. "No, ma'am."

She cupped his face and said softly, "Sounds to me like you're holding yourself up to a standard that you wouldn't hold anyone else up to. We've talked about this more than once. Who taught you to do that?"

"My mother," he whispered.

"And what have I told you about your mother?"

"She's human, and she can be wrong just like everyone else, and I can still love her, even if she's wrong."

"That's very good." She leaned down and kissed him on the mouth. Pulling back with just enough focus on his eyes, she said, "You're not stupid, and no one is going to think you're stupid for getting help with math. I'm not good at math, either. Monday morning, I expect you to go set up a tutoring appointment. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I'm going to ask you about it at Tuesday's play party, so unless you'd like a second punishment, you'd better have an appointment scheduled."

"Yes, ma'am. I will."

"Getting a D and then *giving up* isn't the kind of behavior I want to see from you but refusing to get help because of your

erroneously perceived notion that someone will think you're stupid is completely unacceptable." She stood and pointed to the edge of the bed with the paddle. "Over the bed with your pants and underwear down."

Looking very sorry for himself, he slowly stood and started to unsnap his jeans. "How many?" he asked softly.

"Ten."

"With a warm up?" he asked hopefully.

She raised one eyebrow. "What do you think?"

A little whine came out as he let his jeans and boxers fall to his ankles before bending over the end of bed. He was tall enough that his knees almost touched the floor. He crossed his arms on the bed and hid his face in the crook of his elbow, as if trying to hide from what was about to happen.

Watching any submissive prostrate themselves for her got Angie's libido up, but a man who was physically bigger than she was offering himself up for punishment was doubly exciting. Panties now damp, she pushed his tee-shirt up slightly, put her left hand on the middle of his back, and rested the paddle on his naked backside.

"What's your safeword?" she asked as part of their established ritual.

"Red."

"Do you agree you deserve punishment?"

"Yes, ma'am," came the muffled reply.

"You know I'd rather be having fun with you tonight, right?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She'd heard a hitch in his breath and knew he was already close to tears. "All right," she said gently. "Here we go. You keep your hands up front, or I'll add to the ten you've already got coming." She saw him dig his fingers into his own arms as she raised the paddle. Focusing on her target, she landed the first harsh swat across both cheeks, near the top of his ass.

He gave a little involuntary yelp, followed by a sincere whine

as he shifted his hips from side to side to deal with the pain.

She gave him a few seconds to settle and then lined the paddle up again. After years of practice, she had good aim. The next smack landed just below the first, with about an inch of overlap.

"Ooow!" he complained, sounding almost angry.

"I know," she responded, rubbing his back, and lining the paddle up again. "But giving up on yourself is never going to be okay with me."

She waited until she felt the muscles in his back start to relax then raised the paddle and cracked it down dead center on his ass.

"Ah!" He tapped the toe of his right tennis shoe against the floor a couple of times and hissed in pain. "It *really* hurts."

She rubbed the paddle back and forth across the spots she'd already struck. "It's supposed to. I want you to be reminded of this moment every time you sit tomorrow. It will help motivate you to see the tutor on Monday." Instead of waiting for a reply, she took aim and slapped the wood against the lower section of his backside.

"Oow! I'm sorry!"

Tapping the paddle a little lower, where his ass met his thighs, she said, "What are you sorry for, Jessie?"

He squirmed lightly in anticipation of the pain to come. "I-I'm sorry I gave up."

"That's good; you should be sorry." The paddle found its mark with a loud smack.

"Oooow!"

She saw his shoulders tense and then shake with tears. That moment when a submissive under her care broke down always made Angie feel a strange mix of power and jealousy. She was proud to have given him the cathartic release he needed, but there was always that voice in the back of her head telling her that *she* needed that cathartic release, too.

Moving the paddle up to the top of his ass again, she said, "Are you sorry for holding yourself up to unrealistic standards?"

"Yes, ma'am," he answered tearfully.

She whacked the top portion of his rear end again, to build on the burn she'd already put there.

"Oow!" he cried out. His fingers let go of his arms for a moment, as if they wanted to reach back, but then they dug into his flesh even tighter.

She moved the paddle down a notch and said, "You're not going to do it again, are you?"

"No, ma'am."

The implement cracked against his skin for a seventh time. He yelped, and his head came up to look back at her. His tear-filled eyes pleaded with her as he said, "Angie, please."

She set the paddle on his back and rubbed her hand gently over the hot skin. "Please what?"

"Please no more."

She shook her head, because 'please' wasn't 'red', but it was still difficult to say no when he was looking at her with such a sorrowful expression. "You have three more to go. Tell me why I'm not going to stop."

He hid his face back in the crook of his arms and said between tears, "B-because we a-agreed that y-you'd k-keep me on track."

"That's right, and who has final say on punishment?"

"You."

"Punishment is supposed to be unpleasant, and we've played enough for me to know that you can take this, even if you don't like it. So, you tell me when you're ready for the last three." She knew that was a difficult task, because his ass had to hurt already, and he'd want to avoid more pain for as long as possible, but he'd also want the punishment over so that he could get a cuddle and be forgiven.

He squirmed and whined while she picked up the paddle and

rested it on the center of his backside. Anticipation and silence filled the room for the next thirty seconds, until he hunched his shoulders and said softly, "I'm ready for the last three."

"Very good," she praised before slapping the paddle down hard.

"Oow! I'm sorry!"

"I know you are. You need to remember that no one is perfect, and everyone needs help sometimes. That includes both you and me, and there's no shame in asking for help." She waited a couple of seconds for him to stop squirming and then lined it up on the lower portion of his ass and cracked it against his skin.

"Oow!" His hands let go of his arms, and they reached halfway back in an attempt to cover his ass, but then he stopped himself before his hands made it.

"One more," she said. "Unless those hands get in the way, then it will be two more."

He immediately crossed his arms on the bed again.

She patted his sit spot with the paddle, and he tucked his hips to get away from it. Taking on a stern tone, she said, "Tilt your ass up and show me that you're taking responsibility for your poor choices."

Audibly crying, he did as she asked, and she immediately gave him the last hard spank.

"Ah!" he cried out, and his hands flew to his backside now that the punishment was over.

The normally pale skin on his ass had taken on an angry red in the areas where the paddle had landed the hardest. Angie knew he would have some bruising from this session, but Jessie had a high tolerance for pain. He often had a smile on his face when they were having a fun session and she left bruising on him. But that was with a long warm up first and no emotional turmoil to set him off in tears.

She set the paddle on the floor by her feet and toed off her

high heels. Then she put her hand on his back and rubbed it in circles. "Are you ready to cuddle?"

He wiped his teary face on the sheet before looking up at her. "Can we be naked?" he begged.

"Was this a punishment?" she asked.

A few more tears leaked out, and he nodded.

She continued to rub his back as she spoke. "You know I love having you inside me, and I love it even more when I make you use your talented tongue on me after you've come over my knee. But we will not mix punishment with pleasure. Behave yourself until Tuesday, and we can do all the naked cuddling you want. But for now, you put your boxers and pants back on over that sore bottom, take off your shoes, and come get a hug."

It took a few seconds, but he eventually pushed himself up to standing. He hissed and rubbed his ass a few more times before pulling his boxers and jeans up with a pout.

She lay on the bed while he grabbed a few tissues, blew his nose, and cleaned up his face. When he looked her way, she held out her arms to him. This had been his second punishment, and she knew he'd be a little clingy. Some subs she played with needed punishment much more frequently, and they were generally able to recover sooner than the ones who were rarely punished.

He kicked his shoes off and crawled onto the bed with her. He lay on his side and rested his head on her shoulder.

Speaking softly, she held him close while reassuring him, "You're completely forgiven, and I know you're going to do much better on your next Algebra test, because the tutors are going to help you. I have every confidence that you can pass the class and get math over with so that you can focus on your art."

He squeezed her tightly and whispered, "Thank you."

She kissed the top of his head and let silence fall between them for a while.