

A Locked Room Mystery

EXCERPT

Prologue

Well John, you bastard, I have you now and you know it.

How does it feel?

You wronged me horribly, caused me a great deal of pain and misery. Well, you will pay, pay and pay again for it and I will take enormous pleasure in ensuring you never have either the ego, strength or pride to put another human being in such a position. You will pay, John, and pay for the rest of your miserable life.

All your life you have given grief to others, Let us see how you like it, now that the shoe will be on the other foot. Your unending nightmare is about to begin.

Welcome to the terror dome...

Flashback-One

John was apprehensive as he knocked softly on Marina's room.

She had summoned him by the simple and age old method of blackmail; the documents she scanned to him convince enough for him to know Marina could ruin him for life if she chose.

According to her, there was but one course left to him.

Submission.

Inside the room, Marina looked at her watch. It was exactly 7.00 p.m. on the dot. Just as she had told him.

Her lips curved into a smile. A smile that was part contempt and part pleasure. She had been convinced from the start that he was trainable and now more than ever she was confident her darkest desires could be achieved. Not only would she remake him into a creature barely recognizable from the man preceding it but doing so would be easy.

She let him stand at her door for a full ten minutes, making enough noise to let him know she was there and he must wait before, in a tone she knew would madden him, saying:

"Come in, it is open."

As John entered her room she was seated at her desk and he looked here and there for a nonexistent chair.

It took a few moments for him to realise the omission was deliberate and she intended for him to remain standing in front of her.

The woman with his fate in her hands was looking (or pretending to look) at some papers and normally he would have laughed at such an obvious ploy to make him sweat. But this was not normal. On this occasion he *was* actually sweating.

After a few minutes she looked up, peered at him over her reading glasses and examined him critically, as if she would examine an object.

"Take off your clothes....."