

China World

Chapter 6

Penelope almost cancelled her Reiki session with Sarah because of how exhausted and burnt out she felt after work. Something about always having to smile and ingratiate herself to customers and pretend like nothing was ever wrong really wore her down. It felt like there was a great lie that required all this labor on her part to uphold, and annoyingly it was a lie that was damaging to her.

"Could you do my feet for another half hour?" Da-Xia had flagged Penelope down to ask her, after she finished her miniscule lunch break.

"I'm just feeling tired today.. It would really help."

"Yes, Miss Da-Xia," Penelope replied, feeling the tiredness in her own back as she knelt before this pampered woman for a second time.

"Thank you."

Apparently she had nothing better to do than spend time in the foot parlor. Even after Penelope finished the massage, Da-Xia stretched out on the sofa and took a nap. But not before politely asking a white girl to detail her shoes as she slept, and telling another to gently awaken her after thirty minutes had passed.

'She could have just set an alarm on her phone,' Penelope thought, but apparently it pleased the woman to have some human element of servitude meeting every one of her needs.

By the end of the work day, the scent of that peppermint foot butter was etched into Penelope's subconscious. She could not escape it – washing her hands didn't fully remove the aroma and it was strong enough that she sensed it even as she was waiting for her bus later. To her thinking, it marked her new station in life: a lowly foot parlor-girl, coated in scents that were pleasing to her mistress. And while the peppermint did smell good at first, after several hours of having it permeate her senses, the sharpness became more pronounced. It reminded her of menthol – tolerable for an hour or so, but who would want to smell it all day long?

She hoped that the smell would fade into the background of her awareness eventually, but

the thought of being in this place long enough to get accustomed to any of these torments just depressed her. Getting back to her apartment, she was thankful not to find her landlady sitting on the sofa, and resisted the urge to just lie down and sleep. Instead, she kept her appointment with Sarah.

Miss Nguyen's studio was markedly different than any apartment Penelope had seen so far – she was the first woman who didn't live in obvious decadence. When she opened the door, she was greeted with the scent of a sickly sweet perfume, like a burning flower. Miss Nguyen, a Vietnamese lady in her mid 40s at least, sat on a plush chair with her skirt down on the floor. Kneeling between her thighs with her pretty face buried in the woman's snatch was Sarah, who playfully kissed and nuzzled the woman's pussy with apparent glee. Penelope didn't know what to do, or if she was intruding on a private moment.

Neither Sarah nor Miss Nguyen acknowledged her, and the Asian lady was obviously smoking some kind of opium pipe. Her face looked aged beyond its years but she was probably once an attractive woman. She sat with her head tossed back and a placid smile on her face, sighing and moaning every so often. Penelope guessed that she didn't care about the intrusion, based on the fact that the woman didn't even acknowledge her entry. Or maybe she was too strung out to notice – there was a lot of smoke hanging in the air.

Sarah, it turned out, was an expert at eating pussy. The small studio apartment was filled with the wet slicking sound of Sarah's tongue probing Miss Nguyen's sex, and the red-haired girl would enthusiastically kiss her nether lips and suck the girlcum from between her them, of which there was quite an abundance. Penelope tried not to stare, but it was quite a spectacle: the lower half of Sarah's face was coated in Miss Nguyen's juices, and the girl seemed absolutely thrilled about this. The difference between them was stark: Miss Nguyen languorously reclining on a plush chair while Sarah adroitly darted her tongue in all the right places, joyously.

Was she just acting?

Sarah pulled back for a moment, which obviously displeased Miss Nguyen. She addressed

Penelope:

"I will be taking care of our beautiful hostess for a while, you can just wait in my reiki studio. Leave your smartwatch in the bowl outside the door. Bring a book with you, if you'd like."

With a voice full of deference, Sarah whispered an apology to Miss Nguyen, spoken directly to the woman's sex. Then she reverently began licking the mature Vietnamese lady's intimate garden once more, her lips disappearing into thick black pubic hair. If Penelope recalled correctly, heroin was a depressant that made it difficult for a person to orgasm – did that extend to opium? Would poor Sarah be trapped licking that woman's pussy for an extraordinary length of time far beyond what was 'normal?'

Penelope busied herself looking through the woman's collection of books, many of which looked old enough to be from before the founding of the New Kingdom. They were practically antiques: linen covers and fragile, yellowed pages. Books in English were somewhat rare – information was digitized now for the most part and Chinese women believed that white girls didn't read and that white culture wasn't particularly worthy of preservation. But what was more odd than that was for Penelope to remove her smartwatch! This was literally a crime, probably because it created a gap in the system of surveillance that the entire New Kingdom labored beneath.

She decided to trust Sarah, and took off the damned listening device. She browsed the collection of books, taking "The Count of Monte Cristo" with her, although she obviously wouldn't be able to read much of it before the reiki session began. Miss Nguyen was apparently a collector of literature although Hemmingway, Steinbeck, and London were all missing from her library. Samuel Clemens had, in this world, probably died before being known as Mark Twain. It hurt Penelope to think of the catalogue of American literature that would never exist here, and the cascading penalties it would have on the nation's identity.

"White women have no culture," the adage went, "They just aren't evolved enough."

The reiki room was little more than a bed and some crystals sitting on a wooden dresser, and Penelope just sat and read. After perhaps twenty minutes, Sarah joined her.

"Miss Nguyen fell asleep," Sarah explained, wiping her face and frowning that she couldn't remove all the woman's girlcum from her soft lips and red cheeks.

"That bitch. The opium makes it so she takes forever to finish, and she has become accustomed to me alone, licking her. Sometimes it takes more than an hour to be done!"

Penelope winced – calling a Chinese woman a bitch was certainly punishable. In fact, she was probably supposed to report this infraction, or she would be punished too!

"It is an honor--" Penelope began, quoting Council dogma.

"Stop," Sarah cut her off, "The Council can't hear us in here, at least based on what I know. We won that right years ago, back when we actually fought for things."

"What?"

"Yes. Reiki is sacred means by which a white woman can uplift herself. It is SO sacred, that in practicing it, the white woman is equal to the yellow woman. It is, therefore, exempt from all manner of surveillance."

"Wow!" Penelope replied, "I didn't know that."

What a relief to not be under the microscope!

"I'm trusting you to not tell everyone," Sarah cautioned her.

"I saw how you reacted to that bitch Lai Fu's snotty little request. Making us eat her leftovers off the floor, like we're animals. And she's one of the nicer ones! It makes you angry, doesn't it?"

"Yes!" Penelope's reply was automatic, "It infuriates me! How did things get like this? Has it always been so bad?"

Sarah gave her a strange look.

"That's what I don't get about you," the red-haired girl started,

"You act like you've never seen these things before. Every other white girl will gladly put her tongue up a Chinese woman's ass if she runs out of bath tissue. But you take issue when one asks you to just kiss her feet. Where did you get these ideas?"

"Because it's not normal!" Penelope snapped, "A Chinese woman would NEVER do that for a white girl. How many times have you licked a yellow woman's pussy like it was some casual thing, maybe because she was bored? And how many times has she returned the favor?"

Sarah laughed bitterly.

"I agree with you," she replied,

"But it's just really strange to see someone get upset about these things. I've done a lot of reiki. Lots of women complain about the specific ways they are treated, but almost none of them complain about the system as a whole. That's what makes me think: how did you arrive to this conclusion? Where did you learn to think like that?"

"All men and women are created equal," Penelope quoted, "Haven't you heard of the Declaration of Independence?"

Penelope thought this would be inspirational but Sarah just scrutinized her, screwing up her pretty face she was appalled by the notion.

"You're nutty," she said, shaking her head, "We aren't like yellow women. We are completely different."

Penelope could tell that Sarah didn't appreciate being compared to Asian women, even favorably. She switched gears, choosing to explain what the Declaration of Independence was, and that this country was once known as the United States of America. She got a bit carried away, believing that it would resonate with Sarah on a deep level even if the girl scoffed it off in the moment.

"Are these the things you tell yourself when a Chinese woman whips your ass for being a minute late?" Sarah asked sarcastically,

"Or when you have to lick her priceless shoes clean, then go back to our apartment where you sleep on a pile of rags? We aren't supposed to have dignity. Dignity would just make all of this even more painful."

Penelope had no reply, and she could tell that she had offended Sarah.

"You have your Declaration of Independence, your ideas. Let me tell you how it really works. The reality."

Then she explained how the New Kingdom functioned. Sarah had a tremendous grasp on the social and economic systems, and the lecture would help Penelope contextualize everything that happened later. Far from the drunk that Penelope had first judged her for, Sarah was a forceful and highly observant speaker. She had knowledge far beyond what a typical white girl should possess, and Penelope suspected that she was part of a greater network of like-minded white women. Although Penelope found her to be cold and somewhat hostile at times, they had a long and informative conversation.

Then Sarah showed Penelope how to tunnel.

"I can tell, by the way you talk, that you are on our side," Sarah concluded,

"So I will help you. Your smartwatch has been updated with special software. Now, you can shut off the microphone to have an actual conversation without the Council hearing, just make sure the other woman does the same. You can also use the Internet without them seeing the information you look at. And you can create false destinations, to fool the tracking system and move freely around New Beijing."

This was it – her way out!!

"But be careful," Sarah warned, "And don't use these things frivolously. You are a Daughter of the Revolution now. If you are caught, it will be very bad. Don't think they will be merciful if you betray me, either: even if you did that, they would still dispose of you."

Penelope started to panic.

"I don't want to be part of some revolutionary group—"

"It's too late," Sarah cut her off, "You are one of us now, and you will do everything you are told, to help bring about our liberation. Or else you'll end up in a Council prison for the rest of your life. Or maybe you would prefer that the only thing you taste for the rest of your days is a Chinese warden's pussy, and the soles of her feet after a long day at work?"

Penelope couldn't process that she was being recruited into some radical resistance right now, when all she wanted to do was go home. She started by pleading not to be in the group, but when Sarah wouldn't budge, she just swore up and down at the girl. Sarah seemed completely unfazed and perhaps a little bored at the outburst.

The reiki room felt very claustrophobic, and Penelope knew that she was probably experiencing a panic attack right now. She imagined being discovered and brought before a tribunal of Councilwomen. She would be outed as a traitor, and sentenced to permanent imprisonment beneath a woman's desk worshipping her feet and her pussy for years in total sensory deprivation. Blindfolded, fixed with permanent earplugs, chained to the one spot at another woman's feet and called to service at her leisure. Maybe they would zap her with those pink wands to give her muscles exercise, but she would never go home again – she was hyperventilating.

"You're even worse than the Chinese women!" Penelope said, accusing Sarah of the worst thing she could think of.

Sarah glowered at her, and Penelope could tell that she had managed to offend her. It was true, as far as she was concerned: what did it say about the world if the Chinese woman enslaved the white girl, and then the white girl turned around and enslaved other white girls to get free? Red-haired Sarah began to say something, but stopped herself. She took a moment to mumble something silently to herself, as if in prayer. When she finally did speak, her words were emotionless and careful.

"Please follow me. It's time for your first assignment."

Wordlessly, they put on their watches and left the apartment. Penelope followed Sarah through the crowded streets of New Beijing, thinking about how much she despised this woman who had just made her even more of a slave than she was before. This woman who had taunted her with the freedom of getting to Di Columbus only to use it as another shackle to press her into servitude to a different, no less demanding mistress.

Penelope remembered reading about how political power requires the unity of action, but it

was unbelievable that a group would function by forcing this on people under the threat of death. It contained all of the worst threats of an authoritarian power – what was wrong with this world where even the resistance to a totalitarian regime was, itself, totalitarian?

Her ruminations were interrupted by the following scene, which they stopped to look at when they had been walking for ten minutes or so:

It happened at a place that looked like a boxing gym. Inside, two Amazonian white women squared off against each other inside a wrestling ring. They wore very little in the way of clothing; just micro bikinis and rectangular athletic bras, but neither had very large breasts. Penelope marvelled at them; between their muscular thighs, long legs, and pert backsides they could easily be Olympic volleyball players in her world.

Here, they were sock wrestling with each other while a crowd of Asian women watched on and cheered. But the crowd's enthusiasm belied the seriousness of the white athletes' struggles; the blonde wrestler was bleeding lightly from a scratch on her cheek. It was probably caused by the long acrylic nails that both women had, which were completely impractical for any sort of strenuous work but especially dangerous here. Penelope knew the pain of breaking a nail, and it was practically guaranteed to happen here as they clawed and slapped and groped at each other to the delight of everyone watching. Everyone except for the waitresses, white girls who tottered around in high heeled shoes taking drink orders and collecting dishes.

The round ended decisively when the brunette girl tried to bull-rush the blonde, only to be lifted and body slammed onto the mat. While she was dazed from the force of the blow, the blonde woman deftly snatched both black ankle socks off of her, revealing her large and shapely feet. She held these socks triumphantly above her head, at which point the brunette woman's coach came into the ring, furious at her loss.

The Chinese coach was dressed in a smart dress and wore a lot of fashionable jewelry; it dazzled as she leaned down to yell at the defeated Amazon. In response, the white woman merely got to her knees and bowed, lowering her head to the ground in an imploring gesture. She was quite

beautiful, but bore a look of profound shame and deference as she came up from her kow towing. With her hands folded in her lap and a straight back, she daintily opened her mouth, sticking her tongue out a little.

The triumphant blonde stepped out of her micro bikini, blushing no small amount to be exposed in front of a crowd this big. She handed the undergarment to the Asian coach, who stuffed it in the brunette's mouth along with the two socks that had just been taken from her feet. Then, with a look of total resignation, the Amazonian brunette departed from the stage only to go bend over a table that Penelope hadn't noticed until that point. A group of angry Asian women gathered around her, and took turns viciously smacking her ass with a riding crop that they passed between each other – were these the women who had lost money betting on her?

The brunette woman was the portrait of restraint the entire time: keeping her arms neatly folded behind her back, wrists touching, hands balled up and jerking slightly with every blow that landed. Her forehead was scrunched in agonizing pain as the women took out their frustrations on her youthful body, and Penelope thought she saw the look of outrage there, too. As a crowd, the Chinese women were certainly more merciless than they would have been individually. Each one wanted to 'get her turn's worth' and it sounded like they were encouraging one other to go harder; she deserved it, after all, and it was their duty to administer such punishments to help the girl improve.

Nor did the winning girl fare much better. In fact, she too was on all fours so that women could get take a photograph with her. One, sometimes two Asian ladies would sit on her back, casually resting a palm atop her head and smiling wide at the camera, often insisting that she do the same. If she didn't follow their exact directions or messed up the photo, they would yank her ponytail in admonishment, scowling at her while commanding her to smile more.

"What purpose does your life serve, if you aren't working for our liberation?" Sarah asked.

'Escape,' Penelope thought in response, but she said nothing.

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At night, they reached their destination: a bus stop.

Penelope felt uncomfortable when she saw the people there. A large number of white women got off from an arriving bus, but right away she noticed something was off about their appearances. Although they ranged greatly in stature and looks, each woman was disconcertingly thin. They reminded her of runway models – the tall ones, at least. The shorter ones looked like women with low-key eating disorders, and everyone had a noticable lack of muscle tone.

To see one woman like this might have been relatively normal; Penelope had friends who prided themselves on being size 0. None of these women seemed malnourished by any means. But as a whole they seemed fragile, meek, and vulnerable. Seeing so many of them like this was strange, and it made Penelope even more uncomfortable to speculate on where they had come from. Their body language made them seem even more docile: each one slouched, tried to take up less space, and generally kept their eyes downcast.

Sarah had talked about the nutritional drink that all white women subsisted on, back in the 'reiki' session. She had said something about how it was no accident that white girls were never overweight, and that they were required to take into account any and all negative feedback they received from their Asian mistresses regarding their physique. Penelope guessed that they had come here to illustrate that point in a more visceral way. Sarah subtly flashed her smartwatch and Penelope saw a red lock icon on its screen, signalling that the audio was blocked. It had probably been blocked the entire time.

"We need you to go to New Tehran for a while. It's about a 12 hour bus ride from here. When you get off, your smartwatch will tell you where to go,"

Penelope looked at Sarah with unadulterated rage – now they were dragging her away from her only hope of escape!

"Sarah, this is messed up!" Penelope hissed, "I have a life here, I can't just skip town. AND I was just questioned by the People's Council. If I disappear, they're going to be suspicious."

The bus was already filling with white women, and the ones boarding were more hale than

the ones who had arrived. It added to Penelope's anxiety greatly to be shunted even further into a hostile world. Especially when she thought about returning as one of those meek, underweight girls.

"Yes, we know you have been questioned. The People's Council has marked you as an 'asset.' We don't know why. But if you stay, I guarantee you that they will disappear you, probably much sooner than you think. If you leave, you at least have a chance of saving yourself with a new identity."

The last of the women were boarding the bus, swiping their smartwatches against the fare-reader. Penelope scrambled for some explanation, some excuse that would keep her here.

"Listen," Sarah snapped, narrowing her emerald eyes,

"I'll make this easy for you. Either you get on this bus, or your smartwatch stops tunneling and you get discovered here, out of position, with no excuse for how you did it."

Penelope clenched her fists – she wanted to scream at this bitch, or to punch her in the face, anything to show that she wasn't helpless.

"Believe it or not, we are helping you. And at a great risk to ourselves."

There was nothing more to say. Penelope shook her head, and went to stand in line to get on the bus. The driver, a Middle Eastern woman in her late 40s, paid no attention to Penelope as she scanned her watch and went to sit on an uncomfortably stiff seat towards the center of the bus. The cabin smelled faintly like gasoline – this vehicle was at least two decades old. As the bus pulled away, Penelope tried to steel herself for moving to a new city.

Perhaps it would be better there. But from what little she knew, white women were viewed as odalisque harem girls there. They were frequently used as human furniture by bratty Persian women, who also viewed foot worship as an elegant artform that they could demand from any white courtesan.