



The Red Collection

PORTIA DA COSTA

THE *SUNDAY TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR

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About the Author

Portia Da Costa is one of the most internationally renowned authors of erotica.

She is the author of *Continuum*, *Entertaining Mr Stone*, *Gemini Heat*, *Gothic Blue*, *Gothic Heat*, *Hotbed*, *In Too Deep*, *Kiss it Better*, *Shadowplay*, *Suite Seventeen*, *The Devil Inside*, *The Stranger* and *The Tutor*; as well as being a contributing author to a number of Black Lace short-story collections.

Also by Portia Da Costa

Continuum
Entertaining Mr Stone
Gemini Heat
Gothic Blue
Gothic Heat
Hotbed
In Too Deep
Kiss it Better
Shadowplay
Suite Seventeen
The Devil Inside
The Stranger
The Tutor

The Red Collection

PORTIA DA COSTA

BLACK
LACE

Introduction

When I first decided I'd like to try to be a writer, my earliest efforts were short stories. The very first thing I ever committed to paper was a fan-fiction short about a handsome, sexy zombie, inspired by Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' video which I was dotty about at the time. It was a terrible story, of course, but I loved it and I was so pleased with myself – and amazed that I'd actually managed to string a plot, of sorts, together.

One zombie story led to five zombie stories, culminating in a tragic – in many senses of the word – effort called 'Love Death', but eventually, I got the undead out of my system and began writing erotic stories with different themes and characters. I was writing romantic novels at the same time, and while my novels consistently came whizzing back to me with rejection slips, I was lucky with only my second short-story submission and I was published for the very first time in 1991 in the well-known British erotic magazine, *Forum*. The story, 'The Man in Black', was about a handsome, sexy ghost.

Since then, I've written short stories as well as novels, and now in 2013 I think I've probably had about 150 published altogether, although I can't put a precise figure on it as I'm a significantly better fiction writer than I am a record keeper.

This collection contains the stories I've written for Black Lace anthologies over the years as well as a couple of

longer paranormal erotic romances that were published in Black Lace novella collections. No zombies in this lot, but there are a couple of vampires ('Buddies Don't Bite' and 'Sometimes They Come Back'), a very macho fairy ('Ill Met by Moonlight') and a phantom detective who manifests himself through the medium of a haunted television ('Watching the Detective'). The remaining stories are fairly kinky contemporary tales, predominantly BDSM themed and some of them are even linked to novels that I've written. 'Are We There Yet', 'Duet for Three' and 'This Very Boutique' feature two of my all-time favourite characters: Maria Lewis and Robert Stone from *Entertaining Mr Stone* and *Suite Seventeen*; and 'A Study in Scarlet' is a further adventure for Joanna Darrell and Kevin Steel from *Continuum*. In other linkage, 'A Lavish Affair' and 'The Distraction' are about the same pair of lovers, and 'Fireworks Inside' takes place at the same wedding reception as 'A Lavish Affair'.

That's it then, and in case you're wondering why it's called *The Red Collection* ... well, several of the stories have red-themed titles ('A Study in Scarlet', 'Red Haze' and 'Strawberry Shortcake'), the vampire stories naturally involve a certain crimson beverage, and quite a few of my heroines end up with rather rosy bottoms after being spanked by their dominant heroes! I do hope that you find all the offerings to be red-hot entertainment and enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed writing them!

Portia Da Costa

Screen Dream

THE FIRST THING he saw when he entered the room was the Coromandel screen.

It wasn't the best one he'd ever seen, but he could have sold it at a nice profit, no problem. It was the sort of thing the Goths liked and they were always prepared to splash out on something black and symbolic-looking.

But he wasn't here to think about flogging cheap antiques, was he? He wiped his hand across his brow and found he was already sweating. When he looked back at the screen, he seemed to see something else entirely.

There was a woman sitting behind that lacquer-covered surface, and in his mind's eye she was also black and shiny and desirable. She was wearing a vinyl catsuit that gleamed like varnish, and clung to every curve and indentation. She was like the screen in another way too: not young, but well preserved. She had large breasts, a narrow waist, and her thighs looked like ebony in their vinyl carapace – hard enough to crush a man's skull if he put his face between them.

'Take off your clothes.'

Oh God! Oh yes! That voice ...

It was low, rich and earthy, yet somehow also quite posh. The cut-glass diction seemed to dance along the length of his cock and make his balls vibrate. He felt as if he knew her somehow. Really. He'd heard that incredible voice somewhere else and now he wanted to hear it say the

filthiest of things to him. He'd do anything to hear it purring obscenities. Inside his trousers, he was rigid with thwarted longing.

He felt as if he were a boy again. On the day he'd got his first car; the night he'd fucked his first willing girl; at his first big auction and scoring a bargain worth ten times what he'd paid for it. As he slid off his coat, his heart thumped and his cock got harder.

Weirdly enough, she always enjoyed this much more when she couldn't see the man. Concealed behind her beloved black screen, she could make the punter into a much hotter property than he really was. In her mind's eye, he was a gorgeous movie star, a wild, hard rocker, or even somebody she fancied from an advert. Anonymity gave her total control over him. Not seeing his face or his probably deeply inadequate body, she could just remodel him into any man she wanted.

So the little CCTV monitor stayed blank as she listened to the sounds of him taking his clothes off.

'Are you done yet?' She kept her voice light, but with backbone. She knew he hadn't had time to be anywhere near ready yet, but this way he'd have to speed up, get in a panic, and be anxious. She was turning the screw, but that was the whole point of the exercise, wasn't it? She imagined him fighting with his zipper - sweating and shaking - and she immediately wanted to touch herself.

'N-no!' he stammered, 'not yet.' She heard the jingle of a belt, then a bump and a muffled curse. He'd probably stumbled and knocked himself on the heavy mahogany side table where the props lay. She put her hand over her mouth to stop herself laughing, and pictured him rubbing a bruised hip or thigh, bronzed muscles flexing in his shoulder as he did so. That made her less inclined to giggle, and more inclined to do other things. It was a delicious image, and she fixed it in her mind.

'You may call me "mistress",' she said after another long pause. In her experience the cool, measured approach was far more undermining than snarling and shouting at them. He would be thrown even more off balance now, not knowing quite what to expect, and certainly not getting precisely what he'd specified.

Strict dominatrix demands you follow her orders.

It was corny, but always a winner. The punters loved it. It was amazing how much power a cliché had, and how much money desperate men would shell out in pursuit of it. But even so, she couldn't find it in herself to despise them. The tried and true kinks paid for nice things like antique screens and Georgian side tables. Her other employment paid for the basics, not the frills, as celebrity faces earned much more than unknown voices ...

'I'm ready, mistress.' His quiet voice surprised her. It wasn't usual for 'slaves' to speak up. They were supposed to be tongue-tied and to wait for instructions. This man sounded respectful, yet stoic – which appealed to her.

'Indeed?' She kept the smile out of her voice. 'Well, I'm not. So just keep quiet and stand still until I'm ready.'

Did he sigh? She wasn't sure. If he had sighed, he'd have to pay for it. Unseen by him, she grinned and ran through a few particularly fiendish humiliations. She fancied something out of the usual run. Something a bit 'extra' – which he'd enjoy, if he'd got the bottle for it, just as much as she would. The beauty of it all was that she didn't have to do a thing herself, not really. All she had to do was talk, use her vocal training and her imagination, and let the man do things to himself. There was no surer way to demean a punter than that!

Was he already erect? Unable to resist prising open her own clothes, she reached in to touch her quim. Tonight was just getting better and better. She couldn't work out why it was so much more fun than usual ... but it was.

‘What’s your name?’ She looked down at her own body as she pictured his again.

Would he be as aroused as she was? Would the tip of his cock be as wet and sticky as her slit was? She imagined a pearl of juice hanging suspended from the end of his penis, and saw it slowly descending towards the polished floorboards beneath his feet.

Should she order him to touch himself yet? Or even taste his own juice? Ooh, that was cruel! Perhaps he was already masturbating? If he was, he was keeping it quiet.

‘My name’s John.’ The words were tight and staccato with controlled tension. He *was* nervous, but he still had some control over himself, and she liked that. She’d been right; things were really getting better.

‘Well, John, I shall call you “slave”,’ she said, touching her fingertip to her clitoris. The tiny little bead felt moist and polished, and the jolt of pleasure was astonishing. She couldn’t believe how much this feeling always managed to surprise her, no matter how much and how often she played with herself.

Circling, she rolled her clit like a ball bearing, and bit her lip to stop herself moaning and panting. It was as hard to master her own urges as it was those of the man she was supposed to be mastering.

‘Not very imaginative, I know,’ she went on when the surge had crested and retreated, ‘but it’ll have to do.’

‘Yes, mistress,’ replied John from beyond the black lacquer that divided them.

‘Don’t speak yet, slave,’ she admonished gently, reaching into her clothing again, with her other hand, and adjusting her bottom cheeks so they were spread against the upholstered surface of the chaise longue. There were two layers of fabric between her anus and the moquette, but even so, it felt grubby and perversely voluptuous as she wriggled. ‘Not until I tell you to,’ she added, pressing her bottom downwards.

‘Caress your body, slave,’ she said after a moment or two. It was amazing how just a few heartbeats could ramp up the tension. ‘Rub your palms and your fingers over your naked skin ... but whatever you do, don’t touch your cock yet. Do you understand me?’

‘Yes, mistress,’ he said, and near silence followed. Straining her ears, she could just about hear the faint swish of skin against skin.

The picture in her mind was irresistible now. She saw him squatting slightly, long bronzed thighs flexed as he ran loving hands over his chest, his belly and his bottom. His hips swayed, and his erection – huge and angry pink with hyper-stimulation – bobbed and jiggled to the rhythm. His eyes were closed and his strong, handsome face was taut with the effort of *not* touching himself, and the stress of *not* coming.

She breathed heavily but silently. Part of her wanted to say ‘sod it!’ and then crawl out from behind her shield to kneel before him and take that juicy shaft into her mouth and suck on it hungrily. Either that, or lie on the panelled floor, legs akimbo, inviting him to push his swollen rod inside her ...

But that wasn’t what he wanted of her, was it? And if she broke the spell by revealing herself, and seeing him in turn, it would be cheating them both.

So instead, she swivelled her wrist and thrust two fingers slowly into her vagina. This was a better way, she thought, beginning to thumb her clitoris.

Touching himself was a test of his self-control. Rarely in his life had John felt as aroused as he did now, staring at the black screen and focusing hard so he wouldn’t come.

With his hands on his thighs, fingers itching to stray to his cock, he took a silent step closer and peered at the four lacquered panels. The even number meant that it was of oriental origin. European repros tended to have an odd

number. He'd had lacquered screens like this in the shop many a time – and some a lot better than this – but never one with this strange, almost living quality. It was like a third person in the room with them, and now he was closer, he could see more wear and tear ...

'Are you still stroking yourself?' Her diction was still exquisite, but also huskier now.

Was she as affected by all this as he was? John licked his dry lips and prepared to reply. Behind her screen was she turned on too, her body hot and horny inside its slinky suit of clinging black plastic?

'Yes! Yes, I am,' he managed to murmur at last, stroking the pads of his fingertips up over the hollows of his groin, brushing his wiry pubic hair. Going close, so very close to his rigid penis.

'But not touching your dick, I hope.' Her voice was as clear and golden as honey, yet dark as blasphemy. 'Not fondling your stiff, red, aching dick ... Your hard-on. Your rod. Your erection.' She seemed to roll the words around on her tongue as if she were swirling the tip of it around the very organ she named. He looked down, saw the head of his cock jerk and weep thick silver goo. His rod looked as hard as a bar of mahogany and it ached as if she had it in a vice. He clenched his hands against his hips so he couldn't grab himself and wank to oblivion.

'Aren't you going to answer me?' she asked, and across the crazed black lacquer, a vivid picture grew sharper.

She was lying on a Victorian, scroll-ended chaise longue, her sleek body upholstered in firm flesh and gleaming black vinyl. Her slim legs were splayed, and between them an ingenious zip lay open. Her gorgeous slit was open too, the pink folds swollen ripe like segments of red fruit.

'No! No, I'm not touching myself, mistress,' he said, as in his mind's eye she did the thing he wasn't allowed to.

A single long slender finger, the nail painted with a polish as black as her suit, slid into the peachy channel and

sought out the very heart of her desire. There was no sound, because it was a silent movie, and any noise from within might make him miss any real sounds, but his mistress's mouth formed a rosy, perfect 'O'. The finger flexed, and the 'O' grew rounder than ever.

'Do you want to?' The fantasy fractured and John saw himself reflected in the screen's blackness again.

The surface of the lacquer had seen better days, and the image was fuzzed, but he saw the faint outline of a white-skinned man, of medium height, with lightish, curly hair. At his groin, there was a shadowy smudge - his dark brown pubic tuft - but no clear detail of his pointing, rampant penis.

When he looked downwards, it was a different story.

He was huge. Bigger than he'd ever been. Bigger than it was possible for him to be. His flesh was red, the skin stretched and shiny with an angry inflamed sheen. His swollen glans seemed to yearn towards the screen and for a moment he had the mad thought that if he struck it against the nearest panel it might shatter the ageing lacquer.

Without thinking, he laughed.

'What's so funny?' There was humour in her voice too, but the fact that she didn't shout frightened him more than anger.

'Me, mistress,' he said quietly. 'My hard-on ... It's sticking up. It's ridiculous.'

'So ridiculous that you don't want to touch it ... to caress it?'

There was a smile in the beautiful tones. She was toying with him, playing with him subtly, lightly, almost with kindness.

'No, mistress ... I mean, yes, mistress.' He felt confused, angry with himself for getting confused; yet more and more excited because of it. 'I do want to touch myself ... I'm aching. It's driving me mad. I've never felt this hard before.'

‘Oh, surely you’re exaggerating,’ she said. ‘That’s what all men say ... They’re always the hardest or the biggest. The soonest ready, the longest lasting ... You men are always the best and most of everything.’

She was mocking him. Putting him down. She didn’t care about him at all, and why should she? He was just a client to her, a source of revenue.

And yet ...

He couldn’t hear anything. She’d given nothing away. No rustle of clothing, no uneven breathing, nothing. Yet still he sensed she was enjoying herself. And that made his own pleasure greater. His cock felt as if it had grown another inch, and he didn’t care what she said; it *was* the hardest ever!

‘But it’s true, mistress,’ he said boldly. ‘I’ve never been harder. Honestly!’

It was her turn to laugh now.

‘All right. I believe you. Now describe it to me.’ She chuckled softly. ‘Tell me all about your prick and why you think it’s so wonderful.’

Oh, he’d been good, she thought afterwards, rubbing her blonde hair dry as she sat on the chaise longue wearing men’s pyjamas and dressing gown. She’d just had to shower again and that didn’t usually happen.

But there had been something about this John, and the way he’d described his cock and what she’d made him do to it, that had got her going. Unknown to him she’d masturbated furiously throughout the whole diatribe!

As he’d wanked, she’d rubbed and worried at her clitoris; as he’d described pushing a butt plug into his own anus, she’d reached around and fondled and played with her own bottom.

As he’d climaxed, gasping and gulping, she’d come too. It’d been bloody hard to keep her own moans in check, but

she'd managed it. And she'd also resisted the temptation to call him back, afterwards, so she could take a look at him.

She felt a pang of regret that the only memento she had of John was the nice pile of banknotes he'd left on the Georgian side table, but there was always a chance he might become one of her regulars. Sometimes that happened; sometimes she never 'saw' a customer more than once.

'*C'est la vie,*' she muttered to herself, abandoning her towel and counting the payment again.

Generous John had left a tidy bit extra, and what with that, and her latest cheque for a series of television voice-overs ...

Well, it was time, she thought with a smile, to hit the antique shops!

It's a top screen, really it is, thought John, as he arranged his latest acquisition to its best advantage. Technically it was far better than the one that had concealed 'mistress' and yet because it hid no mystery, he didn't like it nearly as much.

Three weeks had passed now, and a dozen times a day he'd considered ringing her number again, but something had happened that made him even more in awe of her.

He'd seen her in an advert on the box. Several times. She was beautiful, blonde and sleek, but somehow not quite how he'd pictured her. The voice had been the same though, and he'd almost come on the spot when he'd suddenly heard it one evening while he wasn't really paying any attention to the telly at all. Deep, dark and complex, it had made a banal advertisement into a siren's song that had stiffened him instantaneously. It even worked now, just from hearing her in his mind.

Embarrassed because there were people in the shop, John moved away to his work area, and opened a sale

catalogue. A moment later, though, his concentration drifted. A woman was studying the black, lacquered screen.

Not his mistress, alas. This woman was no television blonde, just an average-looking and slightly dumpy brunette. She looked even less remarkable when she put on a pair of glasses to lean up close and inspect the screen's inlaid design.

But when the woman smiled - presumably in appreciation of the screen - the erection that had just subsided twitched into life again. And it jumped even more when the woman looked across and smiled at *him*.

'A very fine Coromandel screen,' he said when he reached her, and then found himself launching into a rushed and rather jumbled sales pitch. She wasn't looking at his crotch, but he had a feeling she was aware that his penis was hard. The woman said nothing, but nodded knowledgeably now and again as he spoke.

'So, are you interested? I think I can make you a very fair price,' he said in an attempt to stop babbling. The woman was looking him in the eye now - and down at his groin from time to time - in a way that made his head light and his cock as heavy as lead.

Then the woman spoke. In those rich, measured, perfectly modulated tones he'd heard in every dream he'd had since he'd visited her apartment.

'No, thank you. I have a screen already.' She licked her lips and gave him a slight, yet powerful smile that transformed her ordinary face into a beautiful icon. Until a few moments ago, he'd never seen that face before yet it was totally familiar. 'Have you anything else that you'd like to show me?'

In the space it took to draw a breath, questions were posed, then answered in John's mind, and he realised that the face you saw on a TV screen and the voice you heard didn't necessarily have to belong to the same person. And

what you *thought* you wanted to see wasn't always what you actually wanted.

'John?' she prompted, her voice so resonant and glorious it seemed to make his cock sing.

His own voice was thin and light, yet it also had strength. 'Whatever you want, mistress. I'll show you anything ...'

She smiled and nodded, and then – his shop and his customers forgotten – John fell to his knees before her and started tugging at his zip.

The Best of Hands

YES, I UNDERSTAND perfectly,' murmurs Madame Guidetty, escorting us into the room. A silver coffee jug stands on a tray, on her desk, flanked by two fine bone-china cups and the usual paraphernalia of milk jug, sugar bowl and tongs. There are just two cups because I won't be taking coffee.

'Do be seated,' Madame continues, smiling almost flirtatiously at my Master, 'and we'll have our coffee while I outline our range of services.'

'Thank you, that sounds most pleasant,' my Master answers genially, sinking down into a comfortable, deeply upholstered chair set at right angles to Madame's spacious desk. He glances at me and I blush furiously. He has noticed my transgression – the fact that I am staring about the room, and at Madame, and at him, when I am supposed to keep my eyes lowered at all times and I realise that I will suffer for it soon.

It seems that Madame has observed my slip-up too. 'Perhaps Susan could stand in the corner while we chat?' she suggests pleasantly, although there is, I detect, a faint thread of excitement in her barely accented voice. 'In a display position, possibly? I always find that tends to curb a wilful streak quite nicely, don't you, Monsieur?'

'A good idea, madame,' returns my Master, his own voice rather vibrant too. 'Would it offend you if Susan removes her skirt and her slip? I always find a greater degree of exposure more effective ... Although if that isn't your

practice here, perhaps I could trouble you for the loan of a couple of safety pins?’

‘No need for that,’ says Madame, ‘we too recognise the subduing qualities of partial nudity. It is a measure we rely upon heavily.’ She pauses, and I hear a slight click, then the sound of a bell ringing somewhere else in the house. ‘There, I’ve summoned a maid to take Susan’s slip and skirt.’

My heart begins to lurch around in my chest. Yet another stranger to see me embarrassed. I colour even harder and feel sweat prickle and run beneath my arms.

‘Well, Susan?’ my Master prompts, and with shaking fingers I unfasten my skirt. Just as I am stepping out of it, there is a knock at the door.

‘*Entrez!*’ calls out Madame, and a maid enters, a beautiful dark-haired girl, with a sullen, sultry mouth. Her uniform is old-fashioned and immaculate; her apron is snow-white, and her buttoned shoes shine like polished jet.

‘Ah, Florenza, Susan here doesn’t need her skirt and underslip for a while ... I wonder if you would take care of them for her?’ Madame speaks to her maid in almost an intimate manner. Against my will, I begin to speculate on the type of duties this Latin beauty might perform. She gives me an expressionless look as I hand her my skirt.

Sliding down my lace-trimmed half-slip, I become more and more conscious of my undies. They are chosen by my Master, as always; and, as always, they are costly and luxurious. The slip is heavy satin, pure white, and was bought at an exclusive Knightsbridge boutique. I sense both Madame and Florenza silently pricing it, and thus estimating how highly my Master values me.

My stockings and suspender belt, which I will retain, are both equally extravagant. The former are fine deniered, smoke-grey – to match the formal suit I wear – and with a thick welt of lace; and the latter is white silk to match my underslip. My panties, however, are very plain, just the

simplest of white cotton interlock, bikini-shaped, but not especially brief.

I pass my slip to Florenza and she folds it neatly, placing it upon a chair, on top of my already folded skirt.

‘Florenza,’ says my Master, his voice appreciative, although I do not know whether this is in regard to the sight of me, skirtless, or due to the dark girl’s undeniable loveliness. ‘I wonder if you would be good enough to lower Susan’s knickers for her? Just as far as mid-thigh, that will be perfect for our needs.’

‘Of course, sir,’ replies Florenza dutifully, her voice rather more accented than Madame’s and clearly indicating quite a different nationality.

I start to shake as her deft hands go about their business. My Master has not exposed me a great deal to the eyes of strangers, so this is relatively new to me. There was of course the time he invited a few male friends around to watch him cane me, but then I was blindfolded, and the resulting darkness calmed my shame.

Nevertheless, I don’t resist as Florenza eases my panties down my thighs, revealing my belly, and the silky blondness of my pubic grove. I am tempted to try and cover myself, but I fight the need. As if sensing my discomfiture, my Master says, ‘Hands on head, Susan. There’s a good girl.’

Florenza is crouched beside me, seemingly intent on adjusting the position of my bunched white panties, but what she is really doing, I guess, is studying the sight her Madame has not yet seen. A phenomenon that will soon embarrass me even more. As the pretty servant finally straightens up, my Master abruptly calls out, ‘Turn!’

I obey.

‘*Quel cul ravissant!*’ cries Madame, as her eyes light upon my mortifying secret. A naked bottom that’s already a brilliant pink.

I feel the scrutiny of all in the room fix on me. They study my soreness, the warmed state of my buttocks. The

evidence of my intractable behaviour ... There is silence for a few moments, then Madame dismisses Florenza. That she has allowed the maid to see me at all is a punishment in itself.

‘Yes, I have already had to deal with her,’ observes my Master as the door quietly closes. ‘Susan is often disobedient and disrespectful in public, but I find a smacked bottom tends to settle her somewhat. We never leave the house without making sure she’s nice and red.’

How true that is! I think if my Master had his way, I would spend my whole life with a hot, crimson bottom. Dinner parties, the theatre, the ballet; every function I attend, I attend it feeling sore. Every time I sit down, I’m reminded of his preference.

Today is a typical example of my life. My Master came to collect me at my work place, and when he was ushered into my office, and we were alone, he locked the door. Within moments, I was face down across my own desk, skirts up, pants down, whilst he belaboured my bottom-cheeks with my own plastic ruler. The snapping impacts soon raised a glow of stinging pain.

‘An excellent regimen,’ comments Madame, her voice approving.

‘You may move to the corner now, Susan,’ says my Master.

Again, I obey, my steps rendered tiny and awkward by the pants that are bundled around my thighs. I hear the tinkle of spoons and china, and smell the delicious aroma of fresh coffee. As Madame and my Master enjoy their refreshment, she outlines the facilities offered by ‘Maison Guidetty’.

‘As I described on the phone, Monsieur, we provide a service to dominants like yourself, who, for one reason or another, are unable to attend to their charges themselves. Whether it is due to family circumstances, or to foreign travel or work commitments, we administer discipline, in

your stead, and to your exact specifications.’ She pauses, then goes on with pride, ‘Or if you prefer, we will create an appropriate programme for you ... We – that is my husband, my son, my daughter and myself – are all extremely experienced with all devices, and conversant with all classic scenarios.’

I can well imagine. Madame is very handsome, with her elaborately chignoned hair, and her Parisian clothes, but she exudes an exciting air of hidden strength. Beneath her hand, a hapless bottom will sting and burn furiously, that’s evident. And her eyes, beneath her long, dark lashes, are those of a true, impassioned zealot.

‘And we offer a variety of arrangements to suit every need,’ she continues, warming to her theme. ‘For instance, a charge may simply attend once or twice a week for a sound punishment to see them through until the next visit. On the other hand, we also offer boarding facilities, for those submissives who require continuous attention.’

‘I think an arrangement somewhere between those two will suit Susan best,’ interposes my Master. ‘She has commitments ... Employment of her own. I wouldn’t want to interfere with that ... Perhaps she could come to you each weekend?’ he suggests.

Yes, employment of my own. How ironic. What would my colleagues and subordinates think if they knew I was chairing a meeting with a bottom still raw from the lash? That beneath my Ralph Lauren skirt I was pantieless, because my inflamed cheeks could not stand the slightest brush of underwear? That my buttocks were bruised and wealed by the man I love?

‘Of course,’ says Madame, concurring. ‘Many of our clients specify “weekends only”. I would say it’s our most popular option.’

They go on to discuss the finer details. And money, which seems so meaningless in this strange and special world. My Master specifies Madame herself to be my

disciplinarian, and that my 'treatments' be morning, noon, and night. Especially night. It seems that even though night will not occur at the same time for us during the next few months, he wishes to dream of me lying in my bed with my buttocks scarlet.

Madame coughs delicately. 'And is she to be provided with ...' Her voice lowers. 'With "release"?'

'Oh, yes, I think so,' replies my Master. 'Perhaps Florenza could oblige?' he suggests, his voice playful.

I shiver in dread anticipation. The dark-eyed servant does not look very kind to me. Pleasure with her might be as testing as the pain.

'A splendid suggestion,' agrees Madame. 'And perhaps I might supervise, to ensure it is correctly dispensed?'

'Of course,' concurs my Master suavely. He well knows how it shames me to be watched while I lose control.

'And now, perhaps a brief tour of the facilities? And a demonstration?' offers Madame, her soft voice full of anticipation. My instincts tell me she can't wait to get her hands on me.

'Yes! Capital!' My Master can't wait for her to get her hands on me either. 'I would like Susan to be fully acquainted with the tests that lie ahead of her.'

With that, Madame escorts us from the room, still describing the many advantages this establishment offers. I follow, at a slower pace, hampered by my underwear around my thighs, my pulses racing at the prospect of further treatment to my already smarting rump. Progress up the stairs is particularly difficult for me, with my hands still on my head, but my Master gently guides my faltering steps.

The first room we enter offers quite a sight. A young woman, completely nude, is draped over a thickly upholstered couch. Her bottom is a blazing pink, all over, and she's sobbing. Behind her stands another young woman, a breathtaking beauty; her face is flushed, her arm

is high, and in her narrow, patrician hand she grasps a paddle.

‘My daughter, Mariette,’ announces Madame proudly, and the enchanting disciplinarian bobs a curtsey.

‘Charmed, Monsieur,’ she answers prettily, her fingers moving on the paddle she still clutches, as if she is anxious to continue with her task. Her fine eyes settle momentarily on my semi-nakedness, and her lips – so like her mother’s – quirk with longing.

‘Pray do not let us disturb you, *chérie*,’ encourages Madame. ‘Monsieur here is anxious to see how we deal with our charges ... He will shortly be putting Susan into our hands.’

‘Of course, *Maman*,’ says the young woman pleasantly, returning immediately to her task. She lifts her arm and the paddle descends with unexpected force. Mademoiselle Guidetty is far stronger than she looks. The owner of the unfortunate, becrimsoned bottom wails piteously, her hips shifting and weaving against the surface of the couch. She bears a fresh patch of deeper red on her rounded left cheek, and beneath her pelvis the moquette upholstery is visibly damp. I bite my lip to contain my moan of sympathy.

In the next few minutes, the younger Guidetty treats us to a virtuoso display with the paddle, whilst her charge puts on a show of equal vivacity. The round tongue of leather crashes down with almost metronomic regularity, its point of impact constantly circling its chubby target. The punished girl bucks and heaves across the couch, her strident squealing unrestrained and deeply stirring.

‘Valerie has much to learn,’ observes Madame Guidetty, and just as she speaks, Valerie howls loudly, her torso stiffening.

It is clear what has happened. Remaining rigid for a couple of seconds, the girl then flails her legs and pumps her crotch against the edge of the couch.

‘Oh, Valerie,’ murmurs Mademoiselle, accusingly, as the body she has been chastising jerks in orgasm. As we leave the room, she is lifting a cane from a selection in a drawer.

‘My daughter is quite a stringent disciplinarian,’ says Madame fondly as we move along a corridor. ‘I believe she inherits her gift from me.’

My Master nods discreetly, in congratulation. I hobble behind them, my bottom bare, my flesh aroused. Other rooms pose other tests to my frazzled nerves ...

In one, an exquisitely good-looking young man is hand-spanking an older woman whom I seem to know. I start to sweat again and I gasp, recognising her as a formidable adversary across the bargaining table – my opposite number in another prestigious company. Briefly craning her neck she looks up at me, her eyes languorous, her mouth working as the pretty youth pounds her cheeks. If she recognises me, it seems to be of little importance to her. All that matters now is the growing torment of her reddened bottom.

As we leave, Madame names the gorgeous boy as her son, Jean-Louis. I feel a sense of awe that in just one family there could be such fearsome gifts.

We do not see Monsieur Guidetty. Although we hear his work ...

Before a closed door, we pause, listening to the sounds issuing from the hidden room beyond. I hear a heavy thudding slap, a ponderous doleful sound, then a low, weak groan. The slapping comes again, and the answering cry is ragged, extenuated, redolent with suffering. The slaps repeat. And repeat. The voice of their recipient gurgles. There is no way to tell whether the cries stem from agony or reflect a state of bliss.

‘This client has requested a closed room for his charge,’ says Madame in hushed tones. ‘And the severe attentions of my husband. No observers ... No manual pleasure to be given.’ Although I am not supposed to, I look up and see

her roll her expressive eyes. 'Just the strap. Laid on with energy. For extended periods.'

'And this will be Susan's room,' she says a little later, conducting us into a bedroom decorated in a delicate Victorian style. There is a proliferation of chintz, a very beautiful armless nursing chair, an elegant chaise longue. It is warm and cosy, and the air is rich with the essence of quiet, domestic discipline. I already see myself in a long, white nightdress of perfect purity, my buttocks uncovered as I lie across the bed, waiting to receive what is due to me.

The picture is so vivid, so meltingly appealing, that I long for it immediately to be real. Without thinking I gyrate my naked bottom, and my Master – ever watchful – notices the movement.

'Perhaps Susan can be punished here now?' he suggests, striding over to a dressing table cluttered with antique knickknacks. He lifts a simple wooden hairbrush from amongst the profusion of gilt and crystal, and holds it out towards Madame, whose eyes light up with undisguised glee.

'Of course, Monsieur, I would be happy to accommodate you,' she says gaily, already seating herself on the chaise and arranging her skirts. My Master catches my eye, then nods in Madame's direction.

Silently, obediently, I shuffle towards her, and skilfully she tips me across her lap.

It takes just a few moments to position me correctly. Madame slides my knickers down to my ankles, but leaves them there. 'I find that underwear left around the feet impedes kicking ... Especially when tangled around high heels.' My arms are forward, but she asks me to cross my hands at the small of my back. When I comply she firmly grips my wrists.

Waiting, I stare at the patterned carpet, aware that my Master has handed the brush to Madame Guidetty. I smell his cologne as he sits down beside us on the chaise, then

feel the gentle touch of his caressing hand as he strokes my hair.

When the first hard blow smashes on to my bottom, I start to cry ...

That was over a week ago, and now my Master is far away, and overseas.

I miss him, of course, but other pains are soothing the pain of us being apart. These pains are less abstract, and more absorbing; they divert the mind.

And this is why I'm lying face down, my buttocks bare, on my chintz-clad bed.

A little over a quarter of an hour ago, Madame Guidetty finished giving me a rigorous caning. My nightly punishment. I can still feel the savage line of each sharp cut she laid upon me; the grid of fire she worked so cleverly across my flesh. My snorts of distress are still ringing in my ears.

I cried pathetically, of course, but my Master will enjoy that. I can just imagine his secret pleasure when he receives the video.

Maybe he'll find amusement in the interlude which followed too. The sight of my engorgement being resolved by Florenza's tongue.

So, here I am, my dearest Master, I think, mentally composing an intimate letter to accompany the tape. My bottom's hot, and it's caned bright red, just how you like it. But because it hurts, it reminds me of you, and I don't feel lonely.

That's true. Reaching behind me, I finger my weals, their fire my solace.

I miss you madly, but I know I'm in the best of hands ...

This Very Boutique

‘GOOD AFTERNOON, SIR, and welcome to The Boutique. How may we help you this afternoon?’

Sir strolls into the showroom, then halts right in the centre and slowly looks around. His sharp gaze flits hither and thither, alighting on the various samples set out for display in a studiedly casual arrangement across the sideboard, the occasional tables and elsewhere. We offer a very personal hands-on service here in this bijou little establishment and we like our shoppers to feel as comfortable and relaxed as they would do in their own homes. So they’ll buy more ...

It’s hard to tell what Sir really thinks about the risqué items we have on show. His expression is inscrutable, mutable, and hard to fathom. The only indication of any kind of emotion is the faintest hint of super-cool amusement. But even that could be a trick of the imagination.

‘Please, won’t you take a seat?’ I encourage, gesturing to the most comfy armchair.

His hooded eyes narrow, but he moves towards the seat, and lowers his tall, substantial form into it, setting the pink paper carrier bag he’s been holding on a table beside him, and making a big show of fussing with the panels of his voluminous dun-coloured raincoat. It’s not a plastic mac, thank God, or even a crumpled Columbo jobbie. But it’s not exactly an example of metrosexual man chic either, and

disturbing thoughts of flashers spring to mind. Especially given the way he's eyeballing me. His face is still bland enough, but there are lights dancing in his intelligent brown eyes.

'Sir?' I prompt, but all he seems to want to do is just sit there smiling slightly, as if he's guarding a special, wicked secret. I get the feeling that he's enjoying the retail experience immensely.

'Sir?' I enquire again, as he looks me up and down, those intensely gleaming eyes doing the grand tour from my boobs to my legs to my general groinal area to my face and then back around again. Suddenly my crisp white blouse feels tight and restricting across my frontage, and to my dismay my nipples choose this moment to want to pop out like organ stops. I can almost hear them go 'Ping ping! Ping ping!' They're acting as if it's cold here in the showroom, when in reality it's already far hotter than it should be and getting hotter with every minute that passes.

'Ah, yes,' Sir purrs at last, focusing that sultry look of his like a technician tuning a high-powered laser, 'I've got a slight problem, my dear.' He taps the pink carrier bag at his side, the one that's been subconsciously bugging me since his arrival. His long fingertips flick at the paper in a way that's vaguely suggestive. 'I bought this item a couple of days ago, from this very boutique, and I'm afraid it's very far from satisfactory.'

I bite my lip, feeling uncontrollable silliness suddenly bubble up inside me for a split second, and then immediately I make every effort to keep my mind on the job. I'm not behaving very much like a professional vendeuse, am I?

Right, back to business ... and, oh dear, it's a return.

I hate returns. They can be really tricky when you sell the sort of merchandise we do, and half the time people who bring things back are just in here to try it on. I just hope that Sir doesn't turn nasty. Not that he looks nasty. In