**Daddy, Please Don't Sign It**

by Sue DeNym

**Chapter 3**

"Why am I in trouble?" asked Kimberly for the 20th time.

"Hush," said Professor Laskell.

"Can't you at least tell me what I did?" persisted Kimberly.

"How many times do I have to tell you?" said the professor impatiently. "I don't know what you did. I don't know what this is about."

"But - "

"And if I did know," said Professor Laskell with a smirk, "I wouldn't tell you anyway. So there!"

"Am I going to get spanked?" Kimberly dared to ask, dreading to hear the answer.

"If there is a God," retorted Professor Laskell, shaking his head. "Now, be quiet, will you?"

Kimberly finally fell silent. She and the professor had been waiting in the hallway outside of the administration office for the past fifteen minutes. Finally, the door opened.

"Miss Carter, Professor Laskell, please come in," said Miss Monroe.

As Kimberly walked through the doorway, she saw that Jason was already waiting in the principal's outer office. The boy immediately fixed a glare on Kimberly.

"You!" he exclaimed. "I should have known! What's going on?"

"I don't know," said Kimberly. "I was just summoned here, and nobody will tell me why."

"Did you get me into some kind of trouble?" demanded Jason heatedly.

"I haven't done anything!" said Kimberly indignantly. "I don't even know what this is about!"

"Hush, both of you," said Miss Monroe.

"Why am I here?" asked Professor Laskell with his usual tone of impatience.

"I don't know, Professor," said the vice-principal. "All I know is that Mr. Masters instructed me to have you and Miss Carter come here. He hasn't told me anything about why. We will just have to-"

Just then, the door to the principal's office opened.

"I must say, I did have some reservations about your recommendation, Dr. Corrigan," Mr. Masters was saying as he emerged from his office. "Simply giving 'Disciplinary Excellence' automatically to any girl who submits to corporal punishment seemed a bit over the top."

"Your reservations are understandable, Principal Masters," said Dr. Corrigan, following him. "But as I said, it is my belief that a good spanking will allow a girl to start over with a clean slate. And in any case, you cannot deny that it has proven very persuasive to the female students' parents."

"Indeed," said the principal. "More than 97% of our female students have been approved for corporal punishment by their parents. Quite remarkable."

"Mr. Masters. Dr. Corrigan." Miss Monroe gave a nod to her superior and the visiting doctor. "Professor Laskell is here, as you directed, as are Mr. Foster and Miss Carter."

"Excellent," said Mr. Masters.

"Uh, Principal Masters," said Jason nervously, "I think I know what this is about. Listen, I'm not sure what you're thinking, but there really is a very good reason why I have two sets of books for the basketball team's budget - "

"That's not what this is about, Mr. Foster," said the principal.

"Um, where are my friends?" asked Kimberly timidly. "Susan, Lindsay, Katie, and those other girls?"

"They're in my office." Mr. Masters tilted his head toward his now closed door.

"Are they all right?" asked Kimberly, glancing at the door.

"They haven't been, but they will be soon enough," said Dr. Corrigan cryptically.

"Are the boys in there, too?" asked Miss Monroe.

"No, they're waiting in the conference room across the hall," said Mr. Masters. "Miss Carter, have a seat. You and Mr. Foster will wait here. Do not go anywhere. Miss Monroe, Professor Laskell, I would like a word with both of you. Dr. Corrigan and I will require your assistance."

As Mr. Masters and Dr. Corrigan took the vice-principal and history teacher out of the office, Kimberly reluctantly sat down, wondering if this would be the last time she would be able to do so without wincing.

"Stop glaring at me," said Kimberly after a minute. "I didn't do anything."

"So why am I here, then?" asked Jason.

"I don't even know why I'm here," said Kimberly irritably. "And anyway, you should be grateful. If we're in some kind of trouble, I'm the one who's going to get spanked, not you."

The words brought a smile to Jason's face.

"Too bad," he remarked. "How's your backside, by the way, Carter? Still a little sore back there?"

Kimberly glared at Jason.

"You know," said Jason, "next time that Professor Laskell spanks you - and I'm sure there will be a next time, you know how that old man is - you oughtta think about taking the 25 on your bare ass. That 50 you got today really stung, didn't it?"

Now Kimberly was growling, but said nothing. Jason's lips twisted into a cruel smirk.

"If he even gives you a choice," he continued. "He might just give you the whole 50 on your bare butt cheeks, like your poor friend Lindsay."

Jason's smirk deepened.

"Personally," he went on, "I'd like to ... Well, sure, those little pink panties of yours were really hot, but I would love to get a look at your bare butt cheeks."

"In your dreams," snarled Kimberly.

"Always," confirmed Jason, nodding, making Kimberly scowl even more.

Jason opened his mouth to deliver another taunt, when the door to the hallway opened again.

"Mr. Masters, I take great exception to this entire proposal," said Miss Monroe urgently as she followed the principal into the office. Professor Laskell and Dr. Corrigan entered the office behind them.

"Noted," said Mr. Masters in a bored tone.

"Sir," said the vice-principal, her voice rising, "you understand that I will have to notify the school board of your actions immediately - "

"Miss Monroe, really," said Dr. Corrigan. "Do you honestly imagine that we would even consider implementing this pilot program without first having the school board approve it in its entirety?"

"But - "

"They have," said Mr. Masters. "I took the liberty of leaving a copy of the school board's approval letter on your desk, Miss Monroe. You may look it over at your convenience."

Miss Monroe looked at her shoes. The anguished expression on the vice-principal's face sent a chill of fear down Kimberly's spine, as did the satisfied smiles on the faces of Mr. Masters, Professor Laskell, and Dr. Corrigan.

"Now I know why you wouldn't let me into your office earlier," said Miss Monroe in a bitter tone.

"What I don't understand is why you didn't let me in," said Professor Laskell with a chuckle.

"Professor, really," said Miss Monroe reproachfully.

"Miss Monroe, I understand your reservations," said Dr. Corrigan. "But my studies have shown me how greatly beneficial this arrangement can be for a young girl. I have seen it successfully implemented elsewhere, including in my own family."

"Dr. Corrigan, with all due respect," said the vice-principal, looking ready to explode, "I don't - "

"Enough," said Mr. Masters sharply. "The decision has been made, and approved by all involved parties. Your objections are noted for the record, Miss Monroe. We will now proceed."

"Miss Carter." Dr. Corrigan gave Kimberly a smile that made her skin crawl. "Would you please accompany us into Mr. Masters's office?"

"The girls are all in there?" asked Professor Laskell. "And they're really ... "

"Yes," confirmed Mr. Masters. "Now, come."

Now more confused than ever, Kimberly woodenly rose from her seat and followed the adults to the door to the principal's office.

"What about me?" asked Jason.

"We will be with you shortly, Mr. Foster," said the principal before disappearing through the doorway.

"I swear, there really is a good reason why I keep two sets of books for the team budget!" Jason called out.

The boy let out a heavy sigh as the office door started to close. Just before it did, he froze in place, as Kimberly let out a shriek that made even Jason's blood turn cold.

Jason stared at the now closed door. What in the world was going on in there?

**Chapter 4**

"Mr. Masters, what in the world is going on in here?" exclaimed Kimberly.

"I cannot believe this," murmured Miss Monroe.

"Simply amazing," commented Professor Laskell, folding his arms.

"Effective, and very beneficial in the long run," replied Dr. Corrigan.

Kimberly stared in complete shock, utter disbelief, and total horror.

Sitting on two long sofas along the walls of the principal's spacious office were the eight girls who had been called out of the auditorium during the assembly.

All eight girls were tied up and gagged. Each girl's hands were bound behind her back, and a length of cord was wrapped tightly around her upper body, pinning her arms to her sides. The girls' legs were all tied together at the knees and ankles. A thick white cloth was tied tightly in and around each girl's mouth.

As if that wasn't enough, the girls were also nearly naked. Apart from their shoes, each girl wore only her bra and panties. The rest of the girls' clothing was nowhere in sight.

Professor Laskell's gaze was travelling very slowly over each of the eight girls, taking in every detail of the girls' bodies. When he reached Shannon, his eyes fixed on her bra.

"Drat, I was wrong," the professor muttered, which drew quizzical looks from the other adults for a moment.

All of the girls were red-faced, not only from the embarrassment, but also from crying. Some were still sniffling. The girls were also shifting uneasily on the sofas, which Kimberly recognized right away because she had seen it far too many times in recent weeks. It was the discomfort of a girl unable to sit on a well-spanked bottom, even on the soft cushions of the sofas.

"Susan," whispered Kimberly. "Lindsay, Katie - "

Her heart ached at the sight of her closest friends in such a state, not to mention the other girls.

"Your friends are fine, Kimberly," said Dr. Corrigan, in what she seemed to think was a reassuring tone. "A bit sore, perhaps, but fine."

"That reminds me," said Mr. Masters. "Tomorrow morning, Miss Evans will be receiving a bare-bottom spanking in front of the entire student assembly, as punishment for her refusal to cooperate when I instructed the girls to undress."

Ashley sobbed.

"That may seem harsh," said Dr. Corrigan, "but it will serve as a useful example to the rest of our female student population as to the consequences of being so obstinate."

"I think it's a grand idea," said Professor Laskell.

"You would," retorted Miss Monroe, taking everybody by surprise. Kimberly could not recall ever seeing the soft-spoken vice-principal snap at anyone like that.

"Miss Monroe, please," said Dr. Corrigan. "Mr. Masters, should we proceed?"

"In a moment," said Mr. Masters. "First, we have some business to attend to. Miss Carter."

"Y-Yes, Mr. Masters?" asked Kimberly nervously.

"Miss Carter, if you would be so kind as to please strip."

"S-Strip?" Kimberly was shocked, outraged by the principal's demand - and yet, strangely, at the same time, she was not surprised. She had been able to see it coming within seconds after seeing the other girls in just their underwear. But that made the prospect no less horrifying.

"Miss Carter." The principal held up his hand to forestall the inevitable stream of objections from the girl. "Before you start protesting, I might remind you of the example of Miss Evans over there. Unless you would like the entire student body to have a most intimate view of YOUR student body, I advise you to cooperate."

Kimberly looked from one adult to the next, desperately searching for any sign of mercy, finding none. Dr. Corrigan had her face set in firm resolution. Professor Laskell's eyes seemed to be gleaming at the prospect of seeing Kimberly undressed. Only Miss Monroe's face offered any sympathy, and hers was mostly mired in despair.

"Kimberly, I think you should do as they say," said the vice-principal softly. "I can assure you that protesting will only make your situation worse."

With some hesitation, Kimberly slowly moved to unbutton her blouse.

"You won't get away with this," vowed the anguished, angry, and still defiant teenaged girl, reddening as her bra started to come into view. "I'll tell my parents, we all will, we'll report you - "

"Miss Carter." The principal shook his head slowly, with a smug smile on his face. "It is actually your parents who could tell you more about this."

Mr. Masters picked up a document from his desk as he continued, "Everything that we are doing here, we have permission forms for, signed by the parents of each student involved, including yours. Which - "

"I saw that permission form," interrupted Kimberly. "It only says you can spank a girl. There's nothing in it about any of this, whatever this is, tying us up, making us take off our clothes - "

"No," said the principal. He picked up another form from his desk and said, "THIS, Miss Carter, is the form, signed by your father, authorizing your spankings."

He set the form down and held up the first paper he had shown her. "This form, Miss Carter, also signed up by your father, is what authorizes us to enter you in our guardianship pilot program."

Kimberly frowned.

"What are you talking about?" she asked as she reluctantly tugged off her blouse, fully revealing her firm breasts encased in a pink bra. "'Guardianship?' I've never heard of that. My parents never said anything to me about any of that."

"I am not surprised. None of these girls' parents told them about it, either. It was necessary to maintain confidentality, at least for the time being. Simply put, Miss Carter, your parents, just like the parents of all of these other girls, have authorized everything that we are doing here."

Kimberly stared at Mr. Masters. With no way, at the moment, to verify his claims, Kimberly found that she believed him nevertheless. The principal obviously knew that Kimberly would speak to her parents about this by the day's end. It seemed unlikely that he would lie about something that was certain to be checked so soon, and besides, Mr. Masters just seemed too confident, too sure of himself. Dr. Corrigan did as well.

"Wh-Why are you doing this to us?" she asked in a tiny, broken voice.

"It is as I said during the assembly," said Dr. Corrigan pleasantly. "I stated my firm belief in the safety and protection that all girls need and deserve."

"How does it make us safe and protected to be practically naked?" asked Kimberly as she slowly slid her skirt down her legs, revealing her panties to an unwelcome audience for the second time that day. She glanced at the girls on the sofas and added, "And gagged, and tied up?"

"Kimberly, it is my hope that society will eventually return to a more basic view of women," said Dr. Corrigan. "The re-introduction of spanking as the primary form of discipline for girls, and even grown women, is only the first step, albeit an important one, in that process. Starting today, we are implementing a pilot program in this school, an endeavor that has already met with success in other locations."

"I will take that, Miss Carter," said Mr. Masters, holding out his hand.

Kimberly reluctantly handed her skirt to the principal.

"Your blouse as well."

Kimberly watched in growing confusion and anxiety as Mr. Masters placed her clothing inside a small bag. She wrapped her arms around her body, now clad only in bra and panties, like the other girls, shivering - whether from the cold or fear, she wasn't sure.

"I must say, Kimberly, you have done a fine job of keeping yourself in shape," said Dr. Corrigan, casting an admiring gaze at Kimberly's slim, fit figure.

"Th-Thank you." Kimberly was blushing intensely, trying to ignore Professor Laskell's eyes sliding up and down her nearly naked body.

"Miss Carter," said the principal, "you were, like all of the other girls, carefully chosen to participate in this pilot program. Our selections were made with a variety of criteria - if a girl has a record of disciplinary problems that the program could help address, or, conversely, if a girl has an exceptional record of achievement and would therefore serve as an ideal role model for other female students. The latter would also include students like yourself, Miss Carter, who are popular, in positions of authority in student life, particularly in student government. Or simply because a girl's family felt that she would benefit from our new program."

Or because she's gorgeous, thought Kimberly, gazing at the eight girls on the sofas, gagged and bound in their underwear. She had noticed, when the eight girls had been called out of the auditorium, how pretty each one was. Kimberly was now convinced that it was anything but a coincidence that the chosen girls were all so beautiful.

"I think it's time," said Dr. Corrigan. "Professor Laskell, if you would please go to the conference room, and instruct those eight boys to come into the office."

The eyes of all nine teenaged girls instantly became as wide as saucers. Kimberly was too stunned to speak. The other girls simply couldn't.

"Very well," said the professor, reluctantly pulling himself away from ogling Kimberly. He gave the eight girls on the couches another good look before walking out the door.

"Sir, is it really appropriate to bring the boys in here?" asked Miss Monroe nervously. "I mean, with all of these girls in such a vulnerable state?"

"More than appropriate, it is necessary," said Dr. Corrigan. "However, before the boys arrive ..."

Dr. Corrigan gave Mr. Masters a nod.

"Understood," said the principal. "Miss Monroe, if you would be so kind."

"What?" asked Miss Monroe, puzzled.

"Get undressed," Mr. Masters elaborated, slightly rolling his eyes as though it was the most obvious thing in the world.

"What?" repeated Miss Monroe, this time shocked.

"Were you not listening to Dr. Corrigan?" asked the principal. "Our pilot program here is an effort to get back to a basic view of women. Meaning all females, not just girls."

"All females," confirmed Dr. Corrigan, pulling off her pink suit jacket. All of the girls, and Miss Monroe, stared wide-eyed and open-mouthed as the doctor began to unbutton her own blouse.

"In order to send the proper message to all of the students involved," explained Dr. Corrigan, "it is only proper for all females in this office to be disrobed, not just the students alone."

In a day that had been filled with unpleasant surprises, Kimberly, the other girls, and Miss Monroe were stunned even more as Dr. Corrigan not only discarded her jacket, blouse, and skirt, but unhooked and pulled off her bra.

"As the adults, it is up to us to set the proper example." Dr. Corrigan casually slid her panties down her legs and dropped them onto a chair along with the rest of her clothing, leaving herself totally naked. "To illustrate to our students how this effort should be embraced, Miss Monroe, you and I should ideally not only be as undressed as the girls, but more so, completely nude. That will leave the students utterly without any illusions."

For a long moment, Miss Monroe seemed frozen. And then, with an expression of disbelief on her face, not quite able to process that she was actually doing this, the vice-principal began to unzip her dress. Within a minute - quite remarkable, considering the way her hands were shaking - her dress was lying on a chair, soon followed by Miss Monroe's bra and panties, and a few of her tears.

"Principal Masters," said Professor Laskell, walking in, "the boys are - "

The history professor literally froze in mid-sentence and mid-step, gaping at the two beautiful and now completely naked women in the office - Dr. Corrigan standing proudly with her hands on her waist, Miss Monroe wrapping her arms around her body and wishing for nothing so much as the ground to swallow her whole.

"The boys are what, Professor?" prompted the principal.

Professor Laskell blinked, and then shook his head vigorously for a moment.

"They are in the outer office," he said, his eyes still darting about.

"Excellent," said Mr. Masters. "Bring all of the boys in here, Mr. Foster included."

This set off a chorus of protests from the girls, as well as Miss Monroe.

Although gagged, the eight girls on the sofas still made their feelings clear with muffled pleas through their gags as they shook their heads desperately.

"Please, Mr. Masters, don't let Jason Foster see me like this!" begged Kimberly, hugging her nearly bare body.

"Principal Masters, you cannot allow the boys to see me naked!" said Miss Monroe in anguish. "How will I ever have the respect of the students again? My authority in this school will be destroyed!"

"Miss Monroe, you COMMAND authority," said the principal sternly. "You command respect. You do not ask the students to give it to you, you demand it by virtue of your position in this school. I have told you this before. It is one of many things that Miss Collins clearly failed to inculcate in you."

"Look at Dr. Corrigan," said Professor Laskell. "She is not protesting. She's not even covering up."

"Believe me, I am no less uncomfortable displaying myself in this manner than any of you," said Dr. Corrigan calmly. "I have as strong a sense of modesty as any other female would. But I choose to set that aside to do what is necessary for the well-being of our students."

"What are you talking about?" asked Kimberly in frustration.

"You will find out in a moment. Professor Laskell, bring the boys in."

The professor nodded and opened the door. "All right, gentlemen, come on in. Yes, you as well, Mr. Foster."

Kimberly bit her lip, awaiting her humiliation, as did the other girls and Miss Monroe. Within seconds, the boys started coming through the door, all still in their normal clothes.

"Is Katie in here?" came Ryan's anxious voice. "Is she all right? I've been - "

"Where is my little sister?" demanded Theodore. "I want to know what - WHOA."

"What's going on?" asked Paul. "Where's my girlfriend? Jenny, are you - "

"Hey, what are you guys staring at?" said Roger, pushing past the other boys. "I've been waiting to see my sister - What the hell?!"

All of the boys stopped dead in their tracks. Professor Laskell let out a low whistle as he closed the office door.

Most of the girls were unable to speak, but pleaded with their eyes for the boys to look away, to no avail.

The boys seemed unable to speak as well, for an entirely different reason. Their mouths hung open soundlessly and their eyes were everywhere. Not only nine of the most beautiful girls in the school, all in just their underwear, eight of them bound and gagged, but also Miss Monroe, the vice-principal who had long been the object of the adolescent fantasies of nearly every male student in the school, was standing completely nude before them, as was Dr. Corrigan, for whom a great many of the boys in the school auditorium had instantly lusted from the moment she stepped onto the stage.

It was a teenaged boy's fantasy come true. The boys were spellbound to be in the midst of so much bare, beautiful female flesh.

The girls were all blushing intensely, as was Miss Monroe and even Dr. Corrigan, though she seemed far more ready to shrug it off.

It was embarassing enough to be tied up and gagged in just her bra and panties in front of the boys, but Susan felt even more humiliated that one of the boys was her brother, Roger. Katie had the same reaction to seeing her boyfriend, Ryan, in the group, as did Lindsay to her cousin, Matt. All of the girls, in fact, felt the same extreme embarrassment at the sight of their boyfriends, brothers, or close friends. More often than not, a girl was looking at the floor, unable to bring herself to look the boys in the eyes.

The girls were well aware that, with their hands tied behind their backs, their chests were invariably thrust out, a fact that, compounding the girls' embarrassment even further, the boys were clearly taking notice of.

Although she wasn't bound and gagged like the other girls, Kimberly could not bring herself to move her eyes from the floor, either. She could practically feel the smugness radiating from Jason as he ogled her undergarment-clad body, revelled in Kimberly's obvious humiliation.

Katie let out a whimper through her gag, which seemed to snap her boyfriend out of his entrancement.

"Katie," he said, practically falling to his knees in front of his girlfriend. "Are you okay, sweetheart?"

Roger also seemed to shake off his reverie, and rushed to his sister, Susan, his eyes brimming with concern. At almost the same time, Matt was kneeling in front of his cousin Lindsay, gently wrapping his hands around her face. The other boys all did the same, Paul and Curt going to their girlfriends, Jennifer and Kerry, Theodore to his sister Elizabeth, Christopher and Zachary to their friends, Ashley and Shannon.

"It's okay, honey," Curt was saying to Kerry as he brushed his hand against her cheek. "You're going to be all right."

"Don't worry, Shannon." Christopher hugged his friend as she cried softly into his shoulder. "I'm here now, you don't have to worry about anything."

For a moment, Kimberly was amazed to find that she was actually jealous of the bound and gagged girls on the sofas, wishing that she, too, had a boy offering her concern and comfort. The only other boy in the room was Jason, and he was the last person in the world who would do that for her.

"Are you hurt, Sis?" asked Roger, gazing into Susan's eyes.

"Your sister is fine, Mr. Gold," said Mr. Masters. "All of the girls are."

"I would rather hear that from them," retorted Matt, wrapping his arms protectively around Lindsay.

"Me, too," said Paul, putting his hand on the side of Jennifer's face.

"Yeah, do these really have to stay in?" asked Zachary, lightly touching the cloth tied in Ashley's mouth.

"Very well," said Dr. Corrigan. "Each of you boys may remove your girl's gag."

Ryan gently pulled the cloth out of Katie's mouth, letting it hang around her neck. The girl gasped for breath. All around the room, the other girls similarly gulped the air as the boys pulled their gags down.

"Are you girls all right?" Matt did not his loosen his embrace of Lindsay as he looked around the room.

"They made us strip down to our bras and panties," said Lindsay, rather redundantly.

"Mr. Masters and Dr. Corrigan said that if we refused, they'd make us strip naked instead," said Jennifer, her eyes welling up.

"Mr. Masters gave all of us a spanking," said Katie, her face reddening even more. "H-He took down our ... "

She lowered her eyes, seemingly unable to speak.

"He took down our panties and spanked us on our bare butts," Kerry finished bitterly.

Katie nodded, her eyes fixed on her shoes. The poor girl looked utterly humiliated.

"Really hard," she murmured.

"He won't be doing that anymore," promised Ryan, wiping his girlfriend's tears.

"It is true, I won't," said Mr. Masters calmly.

Kimberly stared at him. Something about the way he said that made her heart start pounding ...

"Teddy, please untie me," said Elizabeth, wincing as she tried to hold out her tightly bound wrists.

Theodore hesitated for a moment, looking longingly at the bindings on his sister's hands, and then lowered his eyes. Elizabeth's eyebrows knitted in confusion.

"Wh-What's the matter?" she asked. "Why aren't you untying me?"

Elizabeth was not alone. Each of the other girls had a similarly baffled expression, wondering why the boys had yet to undo the knots on their bonds.

"Katie," said Ryan softly, locking eyes with his bewildered girlfriend. "They explained to us about ... about this whole guardianship program ... "

"So what?" Katie shook her head. "They explained it to us, too. It's nonsense."

"Yeah, what does that have to do with - " Ashley started to say, before Zachary shushed her.

"Katie," said Ryan again, his voice becoming firm. "I'm ... I'm going to be your guardian now."

For a moment, Katie simply stared at Ryan, and then her eyes grew round and her mouth dropped open.

"Y-You can't be serious," she said, her voice barely above a whisper. "Ryan - "

"Well, before they brought us in here, we were all kind of talking about it," said Ryan.

"Yeah, we were." Matt nodded. "And we all decided that ... that it would be a good idea for us to do this."

Lindsay was staring at her cousin in shock.

"But ... But you can't," she protested weakly. "Matt, you can't ... You boys ... You can't mean ... "

"Chris, don't do this to me," pleaded Shannon, struggling futilely against the cords binding her. "Please don't do this - "

"Hush," said Christopher, putting his finger to Shannon's lips.

"Kerry, I love you," Curt was saying to his visibly anguished girlfriend. "I love you so much. It's because I love you that I have to do this. For you. For us."

"Paul, this is insane," said Jennifer, shaking her head as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Your dad doesn't think so," said Paul quietly.

"You mean - " Jennifer looked stunned.

"I called him, just to make sure," said Paul, nodding his head. "It's true, he really did sign the approval form for guardianship. My parents signed it, too."

"No," whispered Jennifer in despair.

"Roger," said Susan, "Did Mom and Dad really - "

"Well, Dad did," said Roger. "I'm pretty sure that Mom was against it, but ... you know, that kind of doesn't matter ... "

Susan let out a sob.

"Zach," said Ashley, her voice shaking, "y-you can't just make me your ... make me your ... whatever you want to call it ... "

"It's already done, Ash," said Zachary gently. "And I think it's for the best."

Kimberly looked around the room. All eight of the girls, still tied up on the sofas, looked devastated, while the boys seemed regretful, but also firm and unyielding. Miss Monroe, like many of the girls, looked on the verge of tears. Mr. Masters and Dr. Corrigan both had expressions of satisfaction. Professor Laskell looked more amused than anything else.

She looked over at Jason, who had a blank expression on his face that mirrored hers. Kimberly felt grateful that at least one person in the room looked as bewildered as she felt.

"Do you have the slightest idea what this is about?" asked Jason.

"Not even a smidge," replied Kimberly.

"Teddy, please," Elizabeth was staring at her own brother as if she'd never seen him before. "I can't believe you boys would ... "

"It's for your own good, Beth," Theodore told her gently. "All of you girls. We're doing this for you. We love you."

Elizabeth lowered her head.

"Beth, we love you," Theodore said again, placing his hand on her shoulder.

"Yes, we know," said Elizabeth softly.

"Could somebody PLEASE tell us what's going on here?" Kimberly said, motioning toward Jason and herself. "Or at least tell me?"

"They're making us girls into the boys' slaves," said Lindsay, sobbing as Matt gently hugged her.

"What?" said Kimberly and Jason simultaneously.

"That's right," Katie nodded emphatically. For a moment, she tried to pull her head away from Ryan as he wrapped his arm around her, and then gave up and started crying into his shoulder.

"Come on, girls, it isn't like that," said Paul, stroking Jennifer's back gently, which seemed to calm her a bit. He leaned in and kissed her cheek, and after a moment's hesitation, Jennifer kissed him back.

"That's not what they're calling it, but that's what we're going to be," retorted Susan, as she grudgingly let Roger tug her head onto his shoulder. She bit her lip, not wanting to accept her brother's embrace, but doing so anyway.

"I think the word 'slaves' is a bit dramatic," said Dr. Corrigan, walking to the door. She paused, and then smiled wryly as she added, "Though, admittedly, it is not without a grain of truth."

"I beg your pardon?" Kimberly said, blinking rapidly.

"Perhaps this requires a bit of explanation," said Dr. Corrigan as she closed the door.