

4/17

I hate this. I hate it. I hate it! That was my mantra all day long.

A whole day spent slogging through the mud and planting genetically modified seedlings. Just like the day before that and the day before that. And, I guess, just like tomorrow. I hate it. I'm sore, I'm tired, and this mask and latex suit are driving me nuts. Now I have to spend another night in this damn prison cell. It's not like I have a choice. I'm a captive here just like everyone else. I hate to use the word 'slave,' but I guess that's what I'm here for. Slave labor.

At least they were nice enough to hose the mud off before sending me back to this cell.

I'm not exactly sure, but I think I've been here for four weeks, ever si

4/18

I got cut off last night. One of the guards came by. I'll have to time my sitting and writing this better. Honest, I don't what they'd do if they caught me writing this. I mean, they haven't said we can't, but they don't tell us much of anything. You only know for sure if you've done something wrong when they start hitting you with those neurowhips. Fuck, they hurt! It goes right through your clothes and feels like your skin is on fire. I hate the guards. You'd think they'd be nicer, cause they're captives just like the rest of us. It was just luck they got given red outfits and were set to oversee us. But I guess power does weird things to people.

Anyway. I found this old notepad in the trash and I stole a pencil to go with it. My name is [illegible] and I'm writing this down so... I don't know. Maybe somebody will read it someday and I won't just be forgotten. Like, in case I should disappear or something. I swear, I really have no clue what's going to happen to us. The world's too fucked up to care about us or come rescue us, and so far no one's found a way to escape. Mistress can't really make us live like this for the rest of our lives, can she? She's not even here most of the time. Does she even know what she's putting us through? Would she even care if she did?

4/20

I didn't write last night. I was too worn out. Today I got scolded by a guard for planting the seedlings too far apart. Oh, yeah, like I know how far apart to plant fucking corn. I bet the guard doesn't know, either. She just wanted an excuse to get on my case.

A month ago, or somewhere around that, I lived in a sort of gypsy band. Well that's a romantic way of saying we were beggars. We traveled up and down the river between towns, looking for food in exchange for news, doing a little trading when we

could. I was hungry and sick a lot of the time. With all the starvation, disease, and shit after the war, and all the thieving marauders, nobody wants strangers in their towns. Hard to blame them. But that's life, isn't it? You got to do what you have to get by.

We started hearing weird rumors. There was some woman who had come up from the south. Some said she was some robot or military experiment from before the war, and others said she was an alien from space. They said she had started up some sort of colony or something near a large section of wasteland, one of those zones poisoned by the fallout. They said she was kidnaping people for some evil purpose. Yeah, right. Of course, we gave the news about as much credence as anyone would about some alien colony or whatever. If there was some crazy woman living in the poison land, well, more power to her. She certainly wouldn't be bothered by noisy neighbors, I thought. No neighbors for a hundred miles. We just kept

AARRGH!!!! I hate this mask! The latex is bad enough, but having this damn gasmask sealed over my face gets to me sometimes. Can't escape it. I've tried cutting it off with garden tools, but the stuff is about indestructible. I'd rather breathe poison than live in this thing. It's suffocating me. My whole world stinks of latex. Breathing in this thing, seeing through it, eating through it... I haven't had real food since I got here, just this nutrient shit through a tube. I hate it I hate it I hate it! I can't write anymore.

4/21

We finished the corn today, thank God. And what's next? Oh goodie! Genetically modified soybeans. More mud. There's about thirty of us working on the planting. A bunch more work growing the seedlings in the big greenhouses that were built before I came here. I wish I could work in one of those, cause at least it'd be drier and out of the sun. But you can't pick where you work, not even if you beg. "We all have our roles," said one of the red guards. Easy for her to say. Her role lets her carry a fucking whip.

And you know, planting all this food wouldn't be so bad if we could eat it. But, no, most of it is going to go into that almost flavorless nutrient junk we all have to eat. I don't know where the rest is supposed to go. Nobody tells me nothin.

So, where was I? Well, we were just traveling on the road when the slavers came. Of course, we didn't know they were slavers at the time. They came down the road in a few big trucks and stopped. These women in red and black latex got out, they were armed, and said they were looking for workers. Said we'd get food and shelter and even health care, but that they were only looking for women. It didn't take me long to decide. The people I was with were practically like my family, but hey, ya gotta do what ya gotta do to get by, right? So me and a couple others hopped in the truck.

Should have known better. You know? Should have known better than to trust a bunch of sweet-talking women in rubber in the middle of the woods. Anybody could tell you that. And I did know better, about a minute later when they stunned us with

these electrified sticks and chained us to the seats. There were maybe ten or twelve others in that truck, and about the same in the other trucks. I yelled and cried, but that didn't do me any more good back then than it does now. And I do spend a lot of time in this cell crying. Not as much as I used to, I guess.

Anyway, we drove for a long time, out into the barren lands that everybody knows better than to go. Hardly any sign of life. Nothing grows and the water's poison. No plants, no animals. I thought for sure we were going to be sold into slavery in some Godforsaken hell-hole, or maybe killed outright for sport, or maybe eaten... well, I thought a lot of things. We came up to a damn a guard's coming

4/22

The trucks brought us to an old, abandoned prison out in the middle of a dusty field with scary looking dead trees everywhere. I later heard that a prison was chosen because it was secure, set up to be self-sufficient, and already had the facilities for housing... us. There were more of the guards with whips and some women in black latex working here and there. There were also some big junk piles from where the captives had been cleaning out the place, and some buildings and silos that looked newish, and a bunch of long greenhouses. We were lined up in a little courtyard place, some of us were still crying and stuff, and then we saw *her*.

I was terrified of her from the start. I knew this had to be the woman those rumors had been talking about, and I started to believe maybe she really was an alien, after all. She was dressed like the guards in red and black latex, but there was something about her that set her apart. I don't know how to describe it, but everything about her was a little unnatural, a little too perfect to be real. She was really tall and her flawless figure was like a... like a doll's. Like a life-size, totally exaggerated Barbie doll. I mean, nobody's shaped like that, not really, but she is. Her waist was too narrow and her breasts were like huge! Big, huge breasts all covered in shiny red latex.

I was too far away to see her eyes through the mask she was wearing, but those lenses were the only part of her that wasn't covered in latex. And when I say latex, well, her outfit was *like* latex except it was different, too. It almost looked alive. Like it was a part of her. Even her hair was made up of rubbery tendrils that stuck out of her hood like a ponytail. She was wearing a metal chastity belt, God knows why. I still don't know why. And she had this aura about her that... I don't know. I know I'm failing miserably to describe her, you'd just have to meet her in person to understand. She looked erotic and invincible, unapproachable and scary all at once. I did all I could to hide behind some of the other trembling captives and not be noticed.

So anyway, the latex covered lady gave us a little welcome speech. She didn't give us her name, said we could call her 'Mistress.' Yeah, right. She basically told us she was sorry we had to be brought here under these circumstances, but that she didn't have much of a choice. She said she had a vision for a better future but she couldn't do

it all by herself. She thought we weren't responsible enough to be trusted to make the right decisions and not repeat the same mistakes, so we would have to become a part of improving our lives whether we wanted to or not. She wanted to reclaim the damaged land and set an example for everyone. And how together we could build a better future blah, blah, blah. She could say whatever she wanted, all I wanted to know was if I was going to end up raped or murdered or not.

4/24

I hate the guards. Some are okay, I guess, or at least they aren't mean. But it only takes one rotten apple in a batch and all that, and there's more than one rotten apple around here. They get away with a lot because the latex lady isn't always around. I hear she's usually shut up in the infirmary or in the machine shop building crazy shit, and sometimes she just goes away. I think maybe there's a couple other places like this or something she goes to check on. Or maybe she's just gathering parts. Either way, some of the guards have plenty opportunity to have their fun with the rest of us.

Yesterday a girl working in the rows near me made a run for it. I don't know why. We all know we can't get away. I doubt there's one of us who hasn't tried at least once. One minute she was fine, just planting like everyone else. Next minute, she started clawing at her mask and trying to rip it off... I know how those panic attacks feel, for sure. Then she took off running. The closest guard didn't even have to chase her. The girl made it just out of the field and then just collapsed in the dirt, like always, because the lenses of our masks go solid and blind us when we go out of bounds. The guard went up and just started whipping her, way more than she needed to. It was torture just to watch. And I couldn't do anything but keep working, or I'd have gotten it, too.

I want out of here!

4/25

I'm lying here on my bunk wearing ankle chains now. They're totally unnecessary, they're always going tight and making me stumble, and they just plain fucking suck. My ankles are already bruised. And yet, I'm sort of in a good mood today.

Okay, get this. Today, some of the guards thought it'd be a good idea to restrain us like that to help keep us under control. Just what we need, right? As if we aren't helpless enough. The place was a prison, so there were plenty of old restraints in storage, so they started lining us up and locking them on our ankles. Nobody was too happy about that, as you can imagine. Then the latex lady comes out and sees what's going on. Does she tell the guards to cut it out and unlock us? Nooo. She approves! I was just close enough to hear her say it looked 'beautiful.' Oh, yeah, whatever, I'm standing there with chains on and looking beautiful. I sure feel beautiful, all right.

But then, get this, I guess she liked it so much she orders the guards to wear them, too! HAHA! Take that! How do you like it? Most of us had a hard time not laughing, because some of the guards looked so pissed off. But they didn't have any choice in the end, and now the guards are all chained, too! That makes me smile just thinking about it.

And then, the weirdest thing of all, the latex lady says that since we must endure it, so must she. And she goes and locks the cuffs on her own ankles! Do you need any more proof that she's nuts? I just don't know what to think about her sometimes. Is she an evil genius or just plain crazy?

Oh well, at least the guards aren't much better off than the rest of us.

4/26

Do you have any idea how hard it is to work in the fields with your ankles cuffed together? Imagine it, and then multiply it times ten.

I've been debating with myself how much I should write about my first day here. I guess I should. I just mean that, if anyone ever does read this, it's kinda humiliating. This was after the 'Welcome to camp!' speech we were given. See, the first thing they did was strip us completely naked and throw away our clothes. Then they forced us into the showers and scrubbed us until we were raw. Being waterproof, they got right in the showers with us. It's a unique sorta intimidation being naked and wet while a rubber-coated woman with a whip on her hip scrubs you down. Then they used something that dissolved our hair, all of it, every last hair on our bodies. Everyone was yelling and crying and nobody knew for sure what was going on.

Then we had to wait in a room and, I could tell just by looking around at the faces, everyone was looking for a way to escape. I was so scared when they started taking us away a couple at a time. When it was my turn, I was taken into what used to be an infirmary, but now looked like some mad scientist's lab, and I started to think maybe it was true that the latex woman was a space alien. There were all kinds of equipment and tools and things there I had never seen, not even from pictures and movies from before the war, made up of all these scavenged parts. She had made it all, come up with everything out of her head and somehow just made it happen. Anyway, there were some more guards in the room, only I guess they had been maybe nurses or doctors before being brought here, because they seemed to know what they were doing, you know, in a clinical sort of way.

So they gave me an extremely thorough exam, I mean everywhere, and started giving me all these shots. I hate shots! And they put me inside this... pod thing, where I guess I was gassed to sleep for a while. I can't complain too much about that part, though, I guess. I learned later they had totally decontaminated me from the tiny amounts of poison and crap so many people have inside 'em after the war... they made me totally healthy, and to be honest, I feel physically better now than I can ever

remember. They even fixed my teeth! But I know they only did all that so I could work better.

They're still bringing in small groups of new people, by the way. Right now there's a newbie screaming her head off in a cell across the way. The guards won't have to quiet her. The others are already yelling at her to shut up. No one wants to hear that noise. You know they play old music from before the war on the old prison speaker system? I guess that's nice. Something to listen to, anyway. They even have reading classes in the few hours of free time we have. But I already know how to do that.

Next they dressed me up in this black latex suit that covered my whole body except for my face. Said it was specially designed by 'Mistress' and that it would keep me clean and comfortable. They said it made me look prettier, just like *her*. Whatever. It was tight and felt like a constant, personal prison cell. It still does. Then they locked this high-tech gasmask on my head, because of the poisons that were still out there, to keep me safe. Talk about claustrophobia. Most of the time all I can hear is this hissy sound of my own breathing, and the world through these round lenses doesn't even seem really real. I swear, I'd rather risk the poisons stirred up in the dust and dirt rather than wear this thing another minute.

4/28

Hard work. It never ends. It feels like it's getting warmer every day. This fancy latex keeps us cool, but being covered in rubber and working out in a sunny field of dirt isn't pleasant, no matter what they say, believe me. I'm just gonna go to sleep.

4/29

Right. So after we were all suited up, we were assigned to a task. I was sent to work outside. One of my friends, one of the women who got on that truck with me, was sent to a greenhouse. I haven't seen her since. I mean, I'm sure I've seen her, but I can't recognize her since we're all dressed the same and our faces are covered. All we can really see of each other is our eyes behind the gas mask lenses.

A lot of work had been done before I arrived, but now that there were more of us, we were taken to scavenge all this abandoned farm equipment, mostly irrigation pipes and stuff. It was such hard work. I haven't exactly lead an easy life, but still, working that hard... I was so sore the first few days. Almost passed out a few times.

A few days later we had these watering systems finally set up in all the barren fields around the prison, and we started spraying this decontamination stuff the latex lady had come up with. I thought it was crazy. I didn't think anything could grow around there. Guess I was wrong. The corn I was planting last week is already getting big. I've heard that we're going to seed these modified bushes to grow all over this zone, and they'll help neutralize the rest of the contamination and let things grow all over. I'll believe it when I see it. Tomorrow, more planting. Why do I feel this is

punishment for something I had no part in? I didn't start the fucking war. It's just not fair.

5/1

I don't know why I'm still writing this. I don't know what to say. Nothing changes. Same thing, day after day.

5/3

I talked to her today!

This morning I had to help unload this truck of supplies and boxes and shit. I'm not sure where they're getting this stuff from, whether it's being stolen, or traded for something, or what. All's I know is it's not my job to know, I just have to do what I'm told. So this guard was taking inventory on a digital clipboard and points to me, tells me to take it to the 'Mistress' in the machine shop. I was nervous, but I did as I was told. I tripped on the cuff chains while going up some steps on my way there and hurt my ankles, so I was upset, but I'll get to that later.

She was inside this big warehouse room, which was starting to look like something from some old sci-fi movie, like the infirmary. I have no idea who she is or how she knows how to build all this stuff. She's crazy, obviously, but she must be all kinds of smart. She was in there, looking perfect as always, working on one of the machines, but I couldn't tell you what it was for. I was scared to get close to her, I thought she might start whipping me or something. So I got her attention and kinda waved the clipboard in the air.

"Just set it down, please," she said, but she didn't look at me. Her voice sounded weird inside the mask. She sounds, I don't know, 'cultured' and she has a sort of an accent, but I can't place it. So I put it down and stood there a minute, not sure if I should just walk away or something. I really wanted to go sit down, cause the cuffs had dug in when I tripped and had bruised me. Then she asked me if there was something on my mind.

I didn't know what to say. I mean, I wanted to yell at her to let me go, but I was too scared. So all I said was the first thing that occurred to me. "You know, I think these cuffs could use some padding," I said.

"What's your name?" she asked me.

I thought I'd just gotten myself in trouble. "[illegible]"

She looked down at the chain between her own ankles. "Well, [illegible], you may be correct," she said. "I was thinking much the same thing, myself. Good call."

She didn't say anything else, she just kept working on that machine, so I left. I'm confused. I don't know what to think about her.

5/5

The bulk of the crops have been planted. One of the guards came by and said we were supposed to start work on landscaping around the prison, like planting gardens or something. I'm not ashamed to admit it... I fell on my knees and begged and pleaded to be picked to work there. Anything for a change of pace from working in those big, muddy fields. And I got in! I'll be working there for now. It's still the same sort of work, planting things, but now it's saplings and bushes and flowers. For some reason, that just feels less like hard work than planting corn. Go figure.

5/9

Will wonders ever cease? We all got a surprise today. Remember what I said to the latex lady? Well, all of our ankle cuffs were replaced today with new ones. The machine shop has been churning out boxes full. The new ones are a different from the old prison style ones. They're wider (and sadly, sturdier), and they have this squishy rubbery padding on the insides. Padded! Just like I asked for! Me! Can you believe it? I mean, they're still cuffs and that sucks, but, wow, they're so much more comfortable when you pull on them or trip in them.

It's weird, though. I don't want to take any credit for it with the others. Asking for better cuffs... I don't know. It sounds too much like conspiring in my own captivity.

5/15

Sorry I haven't written much. I've just been depressed. I guess I used to hold out some hope that we would all be rescued, but it doesn't look that's ever going to happen. The people who live in the few big cities that survived and the people in the prosperous zones don't care what happens out here, if anyone's even heard rumors of what's going on here beyond locally. How long am I going to be doing this? Until I'm too old to work anymore? I've only been here a couple months, but it seems like forever. I sit here and try to read (they've been gathering a lot of books and stocking the prison library to bursting, and have lots more on computers), but its hard to concentrate.

But anyway, the crops have been growing like crazy with whatever alien fertilizer the 'Mistress' uses. I got pulled away from the planting the gardens to help harvest. It's a lot easier harvesting than planting, cause the big farm machines do that pretty fast. Does this mean I have to start planting them all over again? Fuck.

5/29

Okay, get this. 'Mistress' is being all charitable now, but not to us. She started up a little distribution place at the edge of the zone, maybe an hour's drive away, to give away some of the food we've been growing to wandering people like I used to be. She also opening up a little hospital, or more of a clinic, really. I don't know where she's going to find people to work there, but that's not my concern. Just makes me kind

of mad, giving away all this stuff to people. That's mean of me to say, I know. I never said I was perfect.

6/3

I got whipped today. I don't even know why. It hurt.

6/20

That little distribution place and clinic I talked about. It's starting to turn into a settlement. Like, a little shanty town is growing up around it. I guess it's only a matter of time before it becomes permanent. That fucking sucks. Why does it suck? It means the 'Mistress' has supporters, now. She's given them food and medicine, and because of that they're not going to do a single thing against their supposed savior. Now no one's ever going to save us.

I got to ride down there today, taking supplies to the clinic. Spent several hours helping put things away. We don't need the gas masks out there, probably don't need them here anymore, either, but we're not allowed to take them off. The people living there see us, see our weird, latex outfits, see our chains. Do they help us? Nooo. They're afraid of us. They think we want to live this way. They call us 'the dolls,' I guess because of how we're all shiny like plastic and dressed alike. They think we're like some sort of freaky cloistered nun sorta women miraculously growing food out in the barren land and helping the poor. Don't they wonder why we're in chains? Do they think it's a fucking fashion statement? We can't tell them what's up... our mask speakers were turned off. Can't say a thing. And worse, anyone going out there had to be fitted with an electrified collar to keep us behaving right. An actual collar, a shock collar, like an animal.

Okay, I admit, even though I'm bitching about it, it made me feel kinda good to help some of them. I was able to give some food to some kids, and I even grew it with my own hands. That's kind of cool, when you think about it. One said to me, "Thank you, doll lady." Weird. But at least something worthwhile has come out of my slavery. There was a woman there who asked me if she could join up and be a part of it. I sort of shook my head in warning at her. I couldn't say anything, but I think I confused her enough to make her think twice. That's my good deed for the day.

6/28

I've noticed some of the guards starting to take themselves way too seriously. There's a group of them who, I guess, are closest to the alien latex lady. They're slaves, just like the rest of us, and they can't leave, but I don't think they see themselves that way. They admire her. Practically worship her, though I know that even though she's nuts, she's never ordered us to worship her or anything like that. Even so, they're trying to be just like her, some even wearing chastity belts like she does... I still don't

know why. Looks uncomfortable, if you ask me.

She overheard one of us captives saying, um, unfriendly things in reference to the guards. She corrected her, saying we should treat others with more respect. Said we should call the guards 'Mistress,' too, just like her, since they represent her and enforce her will. That hardly seems fair, now does it? It's only by chance they were made guards instead of laborers like us. They aren't any better than us, they just have different jobs. Well, she can tell us to call them whatever she wants. I say she can take a flying leap.

Not out loud, of course.

7/4

There's been a shift in tasks. A lot of the farming stuff is being more automated now, so fewer laborers are needed for that. Some of us have been assigned to learn technical things, like how to work on computers and machines and construction. Not me, though. I'm still tending the flower beds.

7/12

I know I haven't been writing much, but there's just not much news. Life is pretty much a routine right now. Can I possibly be getting used to it? I don't know. I was thinking the other day that I hardly notice I'm wearing this latex anymore. I've been wearing it for so many months now, and it fits me so perfectly that, well, it's almost become like a new skin. Like when I look down at myself, I expect to see the shiny black instead of my own skin. I hadn't noticed that, not until I really thought about it. Even the mask. As much as I used to hate it... well, I still hate it, but I don't get claustrophobic in it anymore. It's been so long since I've seen my own face. I was never actually beautiful, you know, but I had my own face, and now it feels like it's gone.

I can't sleep right now, cause it's noisy. There's construction going on. The prison is being remodeled, I guess to look nicer. Can't complain about that. After all, if I have to live here, at least looking around won't be as depressing as concrete and steel everywhere.

Okay, I think the noise is stopping for today. Night.

8/1

It's amazing. I mean, really amazing.

Today I was walking around the gardens I've been working on. You know, just walking around in what little free time I have. I mean, it's really becoming beautiful. Everything is growing super fast thanks to whatever we've been putting in the soil. Even the trees I planted as saplings months ago are already getting pretty big. They'll probably become big shade trees before long. There are flowers growing everywhere and bushes. It's all so tidy and wild. There are butterflies all over the place and bees

and birds. I never would have thought birds would ever come back to a place like this.

I sat on the wall of a fountain I helped build and was kind of overwhelmed. I helped make all this happen with my own hands. I never thought I'd ever do anything worthwhile in my life, at least nothing permanent, but then I just look around and, wow. Just hard to believe the place is becoming an oasis out of a wasteland so fast, and I helped make it. I felt really good about that. I took a lot of pride in it. Maybe she's not completely crazy. Maybe she has a clue what she's doing, after all.

But I became sad again a little later. I'm still a slave, after all, and a pretty cage is still a cage.

8/6

Something happened today.

I was moving a wheelbarrow of stones over to where we were building a path. It was kind of heavy and I lost control and spilled it right at a guard's feet. She had to jump out of the way. I already knew I was in big trouble, cause I recognized her as one of the mean ones. I apologized, but that wasn't good enough. She started whipping me and it hurt so bad. I was screaming and crying and thrashing in the mud and saying I was sorry. She stopped long enough to order me to call her 'Mistress,' but I refused. She wasn't anything like the real Mistress, she was just a petty tyrant. She started whipping me again.

"Stop that!" thundered a woman's voice. The latex lady was coming quickly up the dirt path between the azaleas. She had her own whip in hand, which I had never seen used, and lashed the guard once across her thighs. The guard yelped and sort of staggered to the ground. The lady came over and knelt down in the mud beside me. I was afraid of her and was still sobbing, but I didn't resist as she pulled me onto her lap. She was looking at the guard. "What did she do to earn such an extreme punishment?" she asked.

"Sh-she attacked me!" the guard said. "I was just--"

"Silence. I saw everything, and you are a liar," said Mistress. The guard's mask lenses went solid and she whimpered in fear. She started to crawl away, but bumped into a bush and went still. "Are you listening to me? When you harm her, you hurt me. You hurt yourself. Can you not understand? Now, go." The guard, able to see again, I guess, went running off. Then she looked down at me. I was still sniffing. "I'm very sorry that happened to you."

I looked into her mask for the first time and saw her eyes, really saw them, and I was shaken. She didn't have a lunatic's eyes or even bizarre, alien eyes. Her eyes were beautiful. They were looking at me with such... such warmth, and sadness, and... love? It was the last thing I expected. I felt helpless and exposed. I didn't know what to think. How could I hate someone who could look at me with such compassion? How could I hate someone who would get into the mud with me and cradle me like I was a

child? I wanted to trust her, but... "But that always happens," I sniffed.

"I know, and I'm sorry. I try to prevent it as best I can. Don't judge her too harshly," she said, meaning the guard. "She's only human."

"You could stop it from happening at all if you just let us go."

She shook her head slowly. "There is too much to be done, and I can't do it all alone. I need you, you see. I need your hands to work my will. It is for your own good, you know."

"I've heard you say how we're equal and stuff. But you're free and we're not. That's not equal."

Her eyes smiled sadly, kind of distant. "You believe me to be free? That's amusing to me. You have misconceptions, my child."

"You could always just ask us," I said. I probably sound bolder here than I felt.

"And how many would submit willingly to my demands?" she wondered. "Not nearly enough."

"Some might," I said. "If you asked."

She looked hard at me. "And you? Would you continue to serve me if I asked you?"

I didn't know what to say, but I had to say something. "I don't know."

"Well, at least you're honest, [illegible]."

"You remember my name?" I asked. I was pretty surprised about that.

"I have a fairly decent memory, for this and that," was all she said.

After a few seconds, I asked, "Why *do* you wear that chastity belt, anyway?"

She laughed. I made her laugh! I couldn't believe it. "Why do you think I wear it?" she asked me.

"Me? Um, cause you, uh, don't want... sex?" I stammered, feeling stupid.

She smiled. "I wear it to keep me focused, as well as to remind me that even my body isn't free to subject to my own whims nor the desires of others. I am a slave, too, you know. Besides," she added mysteriously, "there are deeper and more intense pleasures to be found in this chastity."

"Like what?"

"Maybe you'll find out someday. So, are you feeling better, now? Here," she said, helping me off the ground. She bid me to get back to work, so I did and gathered up all the spilled stones.

I'm pretty tired now, but I wanted to write all of this out while it was fresh in my mind. I still don't know what to think about it all. I feel strange about it. I was always terrified of her, and I guess I still am in some way, because she seems so strong to me. But I sure never expected her to be so nice. What *is* she? Where on Earth did she come from?

Would I stay? If I was free. Would I stay? I hate the work sometimes, I know, but what would I do if I no longer had it?

8/4

Finished the construction of a reflecting pool today. It'll look better once the trees grow in and the prison gets remodeled. It's looking less and less like a prison every day, inside and out. More like some kind of temple. It's kind of funny to watch all the black latex figures all over it like little ants or something.

I heard rumors that we may eventually create new farmland closer to that outpost, so the people there can better feed themselves and not be so dependent on us. I guess that's a good thing.

8/7

We're free. I can't believe it. I don't even know what to say.

Mistress gathered everyone together in the courtyard this afternoon. She told us that she had come to a decision and that it wasn't right to keep us here against our wills. She said that even though her dream might falter or die because of it, she couldn't in good conscience force us to keep working on a dream that wasn't our own. She said she was heartfully sorry for hardship or suffering that she had caused us, and that those who desired to leave will be taken to the nearest town tomorrow and given enough compensation to keep them comfortable for a time.

As you can imagine, there was lots of cheering and hugging and tears. After all, it's the moment we've all been dreaming of, and some of these women have been here longer than me. I mean, we're free!

I'm not so vain as to take credit. I know I'm not that important or influential. When I was speaking with her the other day, I could tell this has been bothering her a long time. This emancipation would probably have happened sooner or later. Maybe I was just the straw on the camel's back, or something.

So... why don't I feel as happy as everyone else? Where am I going to go? What am I going to do without... without someone to tell me what to do?

I've got a lot of thinking to do.

8/8

I'm still here.

I watched as others left in groups. Some of them were friends I've made. It was so weird to see their faces. I've gotten so used to looking at their masks and all of us looking the same. Some of them looked at me like I was crazy and tried to convince me to leave with them. I just couldn't. Out there I was nothing. But here I feel like I belong to something. There's too much work left to be done and I want to be a part of it. She needs me, after all. She said so.

How can I refuse, when someone like *her* says she needs someone like *me*?

She told us that things may be different for those that chose to stay. Since we chose this, and she's not forcing it on us, she's free to make certain things more strict,

more the way she would like to see. Well, I'll give it a shot.

There's only about ten percent of us left, or around that. Maybe a little more. It's going to get tough around here with our smaller numbers. Hopefully, she'll come up with better ways to automate a lot of the labor. Nobody really knows what's going to happen.

8/17

Been too busy to write much. I was right about having to work harder. But now I want to do it, now that I have a choice. I want to help her out. I want to make her proud. I'm not sure where all this is heading, but I trust her.

Some of the guards who stayed on have left. Even though we don't actually need guards anymore, since we aren't prisoners, Mistress said she still needs women to enforce order and discipline, as well as to guide and comfort. That's cool. I can't argue with that. If they try to act more like the Mistress and how I know she can be, I guess it won't be so hard to call them 'Mistress,' either. As long as they're nice.

There was a catch, though. The guards are being temporarily 'demoted,' so to speak. I heard that in order to learn humility, compassion, and to learn appreciation for some of the things Mistress holds important (still not entirely sure what those might be), they have to wear all black like us and spend time being a lot more helpless than even us workers ever were. This I've gotta see. Some of the guards refused and decided leave, but only a few.

9/3

I had to escort some women inside this afternoon. I was out in the field trying to figure out what was wrong with a section of sprinklers when I saw four women coming out of the barrens... on horseback, of all things. I guess they didn't hear they could catch a ride here out of the village nearby. They were thirsty and overheated, so I had to lead them to the infirmary. They aren't the first to show up out of the blue, and they won't be the last, I hope.

People have been showing up in twos and threes for weeks now. Ever since the rest were freed and went back to wherever they came from, rumors have been going around, or so I hear, about this commune or cult of identical 'dolls.' So I'm a doll, now? Some people have been showing up every day. I guess they're curious about the Mistress, want to be part of something bigger than themselves, want a place to call home, or whatever reasons they might have. Some of them leave when they see our outfits and realize the kind of discipline we live under. A few want to stay even more because of that. Go figure!

I think if this keeps up, we might even have our numbers back in a matter of months.

9/4

Oh, I meant to write about the guards. I didn't know what to think the first time I saw them! They're all chained up in restraints. Constantly. Every hour of the day. Way worse than any of us ever were. They're so helpless they can't even take care of themselves. We have to feed them and take care of them and everything. At first, I was sadistically happy to see them so helpless, and I admit I thought of being to cruel to them. But I remembered not all of them had been so mean, and I knew Mistress wouldn't approve of being vengeful. Later on, I felt sorry for them. Then I began to admire them. I mean, I don't think I'd be able to endure what they're willingly going through to prove their... their dedication (?) to this...

Well, what are we now? A community? Some sort of way of life? A cult, like some of the rumors say? It's all over my head. I'm just happy when I'm able to do what I'm told and do a good job at it. But anyway, the guards. I think if they're willing to go through this in order to better to take care of the rest of us once they make it through, I'll try to help them in any way I can. We all have to help each other, right? And that makes us all better. Sometimes they cry and break down and have to be taken to the infirmary. Sometimes I think they start to go a little crazy and go on about how wonderful it is. I don't know. Sometimes I'm almost tempted... but no, I already have a purpose. This suit and the ankle chains are enough for me, thanks.

9/5

Our rules are becoming a little more defined now, like more specialized. Workers like me have been given yellow additions to our outfits to identify us better. So, I'm black and yellow now. I feel like a bumble bee! Ha! I guess it's fitting, though. That's what I am. I'm a worker bee!

9/12

I'm scared.

Okay, maybe not so much scared as really, really nervous. Mistress says she's invented something that will bring us all more close together than we've ever been. Supposed to unify us, she said. Some kind of implant. She says it'll bring us all closer to her. That's great. The downside is that we may have to give up some our old selves in the process. That's kinda scary. What if I'm not me, anymore? If I'm not me, then what am I? It's happening tomorrow. I want to, I want to be closer to her, but... I'm scared.

9/13

This is beautiful.

This is just so wonderful. How could I have been afraid?

I can't write right now. I only want to feel.

9/14

I can't say much about what happened. We're told to keep it a secret, because outsiders might not understand. They're afraid of us as it is. But I can say it was a procedure, the nurses did it, but Mistress was there. The former guards had it done first. I was among the first of us workers to go through it. She told me it would be okay, so I trusted her. It hurt, but not for long. She took away my name and gave me a number, since a name of my own would only emphasize my differences, my individuality, which only causes conflict. And now... now I can hear.

I hear her voice in my head. I hear the voices of my... sisters. The ones who have already been implanted, and more and more voices as others of us are implanted. I feel her will guiding me, strengthening me, giving me purpose. I'm not alone, even when I'm alone. And, my God, the PLEASURE. Like nothing I've ever known.

I love this latex that surrounds me. I love the chains that bind me. I love her will that gives me purpose. I love my sisters. I love these Sisters of the Latex. Oh help me help me don't help me I love this I love losing myself to this

10/2

I'm not sure there's much reason for me to write this journal anymore. I started it because I was afraid, but I'm not afraid anymore. I continued because I was lonely, but I'm not lonely anymore. There are others much wiser than me writing things down now. I'm not frightened of disappearing and being forgotten anymore. I realize it doesn't matter so much who I am, or was. It's okay if I disappear, anonymous, because it's my work that lives on. I realize that, now.

There are more of us now. I feel so much for all of them, because I know they all feel the same for me. I feel so happy for the new people that show up, looking for answers. I'm happy because I know first hand the wonders they'll be experiencing, if they choose to come this far.

Some of the former guards have chosen to stay where they are, in that helpless condition, wearing solid black. They want to learn more about the bondage and loss of control and want to experience it any way they can. And I'll help them in any way I can. I'm happy to help. I view them as monks, in a way, trying to learn self-discovery through their own self-deprivation. That's good, because when one of us improves in any way, we all do.

The renovations are coming along great. This used to be a prison, so dreary and concrete and poison, but it's becoming beautiful and it's slowly becoming like a temple to me. It's my home. She did something that changed our bodies, too. I'm so much stronger now and have so much more endurance. I can work all day if I have to. And if I never need to know how to do something, such as a complex technical task, the knowledge is simply sent to me, and suddenly I know how to do it. It's so efficient! I love my Mistress so much. I'm so happy I'm able to contribute in some small way.

10/10

This will be my last entry. I've read back through this journal, marveling at how much I've changed in such a short time. I haven't altered anything other than to erase my old name wherever it appeared. Don't get me wrong, it's not that I hate the old me or that I'm ashamed of her. It's simply that I'm such a new and different being now that I can hardly relate to the person I used to be. That person was a fine person, and I love her, and of course I remember her, because she's me. But now I'm something more, and, I hope, better.

I'm going to tuck this journal away in the new library. Maybe someday someone will find some use for it. I know that such amazing things are going to happen. I can't believe I've been so lucky to be a part of it. I exist to serve. I want nothing else.

We are the worker dolls. Through our effort comes the foundation of the entire Sisterhood. Our sacrifice becomes permanence. Our Mistress's will becomes our own and through us she makes her dreams real. Our hands are hers.

I am Worker Doll #1002.

I am a Slave of the Latex.

[What preceded are the contents of an encoded text that was uncovered by members of the Sisterhood. The journal and the events therein occurred several hundred years ago at the dawning of our Order. Why a previous historian of our Order deemed this particular text important enough to encode and preserve is a mystery. However, it does appear to fill in some empty spaces relating to our own history and hints at some of first steps that were taken towards us becoming what we are today.

Praise the Latex.

Translator, M293]