
Lysergic

2nd Edition

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DISCLAIMER

This book is mostly factual; however some parts of this book have been fictionalized to protect the individuals involved. It is a sad time when spiritual people must hide out of fear of imprisonment.

Why is this country waging war on itself?

I pray for spirituality to be given the freedom to manifest itself without such a horrifying struggle. We are losing our brothers and sisters everyday. We are getting beaten down by the system. We must stop this trend.

We all are one, most of us just have forgotten.

These are merely my views. I am in no way claiming that I know anything other than what I believe to be true for myself. I realize each person must find their own answers. In a sense, I am only recounting how my slice of the infinite cosmic pie tastes.

Chapter 1 FIRST ROLL

I was raised in a small Kansas town, which is comparable to being sucked into a spiritual black hole. I was surrounded by flat, bleak cornfields farmed by similarly flat, bleak people. They were stuck in a philosophical time-warp that held their minds back in the dark ages. At a young age my classmates labeled me as a nerd, causing me to never quite fit in. The first thing that comes to my mind upon reflection is, "Thank God for being an outcast!!!" However, as a small child, it was extremely difficult to deal with. I wanted friends to play with at recess instead of kids that behaved hatefully toward me.

By the time I started high school my life hadn't gotten much better. My peers were the perfect example of white trash at its worst. The majority of them had already given birth to a couple of children and dropped out of high school because of it. No aspirations existed in their minds beyond the next round of incestuous sex, six pack of beer, and line of meth. I had nothing in common with those people. In fact, this is why going to college became extremely important to me. I needed to get out of there before I somehow ended up becoming one of them. So I didn't waste any time! I dropped out of high school at fifteen and started going to a nearby community college. Of which, I graduated before my classmates graduated from high school!

I quickly discovered that life as a college student wasn't cheap. From the ages of sixteen to eighteen I worked at Sonic Drive In, as a car hop during the day. At night, I worked at a group home for the mentally handicapped. Going to college full time and holding two part time jobs completely wore me out. So by the time I turned eighteen, I was willing to do anything that could possibly change my life for the better. I desperately started working as an exotic dancer. I was tired of being poor and knew that dancing would solve that problem within a few days!

I had long blonde hair, stood five foot eight, and weighed about one hundred and twenty pounds. The guys at the club *loved* me. I wore my hair in pigtails and looked like the innocent country girl next door. The perverts and child molesters were immediately attracted to me. I remember one client commenting on how perky my breasts were and that they probably weren't even developed yet. He drooled over me, knowing he was getting something fresh. YUCK!

In no time I was able to afford to pay back my student loans, rent my own place, and buy my first car. This was a necessity because my Dad raised me as a single parent. He worked in a bakery for \$9.00 an hour, so we didn't have much money for anything. We were always poor when I was growing up. This wasn't his fault because he tried his best, yet is part of the reason stripping was a welcomed solution.

My life was incredibly predictable. I went to school, work, and then back to my house. I was always alone. Alone and miserable. At night I would sit in my empty house and think. What was the most important thing in the world? What would make me the most happy? These were easy questions for me to answer; I needed to be loved. However, love was not so easy to find with the people I had to choose from! I yearned

for an intelligent conversation. Someone out there had to be able to actually understand what I was saying and respond with something intelligent, rather than a blank look on their face.

After dancing for about six months the pain of loneliness eventually reached a new depth. Something was missing; life was supposed to be different somehow. I had tried everything except for prayer. I had never prayed before because I didn't like the scare tactics of Christianity. It also seemed to me that such a definitive answer could never be true. I believed that I would never totally understand, and was comfortable with not understanding. Yet no other solution presented itself. A person has to try everything right? I sobbed as I begged for *whatever was out there* to help me find a family. I bargained with it by promising that I would do anything if I could be loved, really loved just once. I didn't want to be alone anymore. I had been isolated my whole life, stuck in a world with non-thinkers and non-feelers. I needed to find people that were like me. I needed it deeply with my whole soul.

The next day Todd walked into the club. He looked like a very well dressed Amish man, which got my attention immediately. My first thought was, "What a Sick-o!" Did Amish men actually go into strip clubs? Weird! Curiosity overcame me. Upon introducing myself, I quickly learned that the only thing he had in common with the Amish was the lack of a mustache. He started our conversation with a unique question. "If you could have anything in the world, what would it be?"

I paused briefly. Should I give him a real answer or just tell him something that he would want to hear and move on? I knew I should say something sexual that would turn him on, if I wanted to make money. But at that moment I didn't care if I made a dime from him. After my crying session last night, I was simply not in the mood to play the usual games. So out came the truth. "I don't want to be alone anymore. I want to be loved, really loved."

"Don't worry. You will never be alone again." He stared at me for a moment and then smiled lovingly. I knew immediately that he was different than everyone else. The universe had answered my prayers.

We talked for hours about philosophy and religion. The conversation consisted mostly of him asking me what I thought about everything, and then me stumbling through an answer the best I could without sounding too stupid or uneducated. As the evening progressed, I started to feel very comfortable with him. He really seemed like he cared about me.

Most of the men that came into the club were only there for a cheap thrill. If the money wasn't so good I never would have been there; the whole dynamic of the club disgusted me. I was repulsed by the smelly old men that paid me ten dollars to grind on their laps for five minutes. Todd wouldn't even watch me when I was on stage, let alone buy a *dance* from me. The club made him uncomfortable too. Neither of us were ready for the night to end, so we eventually decided to go back to his place. This isn't like it sounds; we both made it clear that I wasn't going there to have sex with him. We were just friends.

Todd lived in an old decommissioned missile base, which he claimed was supposed to have housed his robotic spring factory. Even though I never saw any evidence of one. This made me even more curious about him. Why would a person want

to live in a missile base? Questions started to spin in my mind. How did a person get a missile base? From the government? Who was this strange man?

His missile base was huge. It was like a fortress, surrounded by chain-linked fence and barbed wire. We went to the main room first. He explained that this was where the missile used to be stored at *rest*. So, accordingly, they named it the coffin. The room was about twenty-five feet tall, two semi-trucks long, and one semi-truck wide. There were Persian rugs covering the cement floors, and the walls were painted white. It had a sterile smell, very clean. In the center of the room, white leather couches were positioned in front of a complicated looking stereo system. There were stereo components placed side by side on the floor with wires everywhere. Huge speakers were positioned on each side, and hundreds of CD's were hastily stacked in between. Behind the stereo and CD's was a black baby grand piano.

"It's a Mark Levinson and Reference system; the most expensive stereo money could buy. Its price totaling around \$200,000." It was easy to tell that he was proud of his baby.

"I never heard of a stereo that expensive. It must be really nice!" It impressed me but at the same time I thought it was a little foolish. Couldn't he have done something better with all that money? My Dad didn't make that much money in ten years. We headed down a long metal tunnel that was also painted white, which connected the main missile bay with the rest of the complex. There were fluorescent lights spread evenly along the top of it, about every five feet. The floor was a combination of cement and grating. So each time we would walk down it our footsteps would echo. Clang, Clang, Clang, Clang. It was wild!

The other side of the complex had the same sterile smell and white walls as the rest of the facility. There were several normal size bedrooms, a kitchen, and a very extravagant bathroom. The bathroom was tiled with granite and marble and had a vaulted ceiling. The largest bath tub I had ever seen took up the main part of the space. Ten people could have fit in it! There was a steam bath and a large multi-head shower. It looked like he modeled it after a bathroom in a spa; it was amazing!

"I hate the smell of cigarettes from the club on my clothes." He grabbed his shirt and sniffed it. "Disgusting! You don't mind waiting on me while I take a bath, do you?" He led me to an empty room, before I could even answer.

"Sure, I'll wait." What choice did I have? I looked around and saw scraps of paper with what looked like phone numbers or notes scattered all over the carpeted floor. There was a lone office chair positioned in the middle of the room, and on it was a silver metal briefcase. He walked directly over to it, put a combination into the lock, and popped it open. It was stacked full of one hundred dollar bills! And that is how he left me. Me and all of that money, alone in a room! I was incredibly nervous. What was I getting myself into?

I was alone in a room with more money than I had ever seen. It was so tempting to just go take a few hundreds, but I didn't. I didn't even go near it. I just sat on the floor and waited, wondering how much was there. Could it have been two possibly three million? Time moved slowly. I stared at the white walls and waited. And waited. And waited some more. Would he ever return? Finally, after what seemed like a lifetime, he came back looking relaxed. He had redressed in a polo shirt and khaki pants; he looked much more comfortable. It was evident that his bath was warm because his cheeks were

still red!

* * *

In the kitchen he had a digital lab scale set up, ready and waiting. “Would you like to try some MDMA?”

“What’s that?” The only drugs I had ever heard of were weed, cocaine, and meth. I thought I had tried everything!

“It’s ecstasy.” I stared at him, blankly. He could tell that I didn’t have a clue what he was talking about. “You’ve never heard of ecstasy? You will like it. It makes your body feel really good, and it makes you happy. Really happy.”

“I don’t know. I hardly know you. Maybe I should try it some other time.” I was nervous. Who was this guy?

“Really you should try it. You will love it. They used to prescribe it in the 80’s for marriage counseling. It allows people to bond without nervousness or anxiety. It helps people to open up easily.” He looked at me hopefully. I could tell he wasn’t giving up anytime soon.

“Well, are you sure I won’t have a bad time? I have taken drugs before that I didn’t like and felt miserable. Are you sure I will like it?”

“Yes, I am sure.” He smiled, knowing he had won.

“Okay, but I want a small dose. Very small.” If he was my gift from the universe, then I would have to jump in head first. I didn’t know what was ahead of me but I had to go for it. I had made a deal with the universe. I had promised *whatever is out there* that I would do anything for love...

Consequently, we stood together in front of his scale. He weighed the white powder, 100 mg exactly. Then he handed it to me lying on a piece of paper. I looked at it with one last second of hesitation, and then poured it into my mouth. It tasted horrible! I will never forget it as long as I live. It had a sharp chemical, slightly alkaloid-like taste with a bite at the end. Absolutely disgusting!

“That was gross!” My stomach was becoming very queasy. I thought I might throw up.

“This stuff does taste nasty, but you will love it. I promise. Let’s go to the bay and listen to some music.”

One hour later:

“I can’t believe I didn’t want to try this!” I was the most happy I had ever felt. The world was uplifting, radiating warmth.

“I told you that you would enjoy it.” Todd smiled. He reached out his hand and touched mine never taking his eyes off me. He had big brown eyes, deeper than any I had seen before.

“I feel so good!” It was a little difficult for me to talk; my mouth was dry. My skin tingled as it crawled around my body. A comforting fuzzy, cuddly feeling came over me. Yet my mind was clear.

“I am so glad to finally find a real friend. You are a dream come true!” I felt like we were better friends already than I usually ever was with any of the people in Kansas. Maybe it was the MDMA that made me feel like this, who knows.

We were sitting on one of the couches in the missile bay. Todd’s stereo played

music in the background that was magnificent; it was better than perfect. It had depth and layers. So much energy rushed through me that sitting was impossible; I had to get up and dance. I felt like a child and twirled around in circles, arms stretched out, embracing the world. I moved with the sound, my soul floating along with the beat. The music took on new shape, twisting, evolving. The highs and lows were more noticeable than before. The voices were singing in another language, yet I understood them perfectly. I was at home, safe.

The room pulsed slightly. There was a large tapestry hanging over a doorway to an area I had not yet seen. The designs on it started to move, crawling around in a wavelike motion. My skin bonded with it all, warm and energized. I felt the love that is always in the universe for the first time. I was happy. I was awakening.

INTEGRATION

MDMA changed me. Not only did it make me feel warm and fuzzy for about three days afterward, but it altered my consciousness permanently. The realization that love is everywhere was refreshing. My soul was cleansed and reborn into a reality with more possibilities than I had ever imagined. The goodness in life had magically revealed itself, giving me a new sense of hope for the future.

I surveyed my new world with innocence, much like that of a child seeing and hearing for the first time. Sound, no longer clothed with preconceived notions of what it *really* was, stood before me partially undressed. Subtleties in pitch allowed themselves to be heard. My eyes could see new shadows and differences in hue. The beauty in each never-ending moment appeared so quickly. How had I missed all of this?

I believe this *new vision* occurred from realizing the possibility and instinctively moving toward it. Life only needed to be perceived or conceptualized this way once. By listening and paying attention, I naturally allowed it the space to manifest its radiance again. The mental blocks/constraints that held me in my usual pattern of selective perception were no longer there. Everything was possible!

Chapter 2 MEET L

Todd and I flew into Oakland. This was the second time I ever rode on an airplane. The flight made me a little nervous, but other than a few bumps it was uneventful. As we got off and headed toward the luggage carousel, a really big grin spread across my face. Giggles exploded out of me every so often; I just couldn't keep all that happiness contained within myself. I was excited to be out of boring small-town Kansas and in the big city with lots of things to do!

We watched everyone else pick up their bags but ours never came. "Don't worry they'll get them to us. We have to go we're late."

"I don't care. I am just happy to be here!" I was elated, even if I had to wear dirty clothes for a few days. It was worth it!

Todd and I hurriedly caught a cab and headed to the Warf. We were going to have dinner at one of the famous seafood restaurants. The restaurant was extravagant. As we waited for the host, I looked around in awe. I had never been out to eat at a place like this; it was like the restaurants that people went to on TV! There were so many different types of silverware and dishes on the table. Which ones did I use for which dish? My palms started to sweat as I pondered it all.

A feeling of uneasiness crept into me upon noticing that most of the people filling the room were wearing either suits or dresses. People just didn't dress like this in Kansas; they mostly wore jeans and t-shirts! To describe my appearance as underdressed is putting it nicely. I had on black knee high boots, a black leather mini-skirt, and fishnet stockings. A dog collar was proudly wrapped around my neck and thick black eyeliner was under my eyes. I usually dressed "Goth" at home for the sole purpose of giving the bible thumpers a heart attack! But here, now, with these people I felt completely different. I tried to calm my nerves by taking a few deep relaxing breathes.

The host led us to our table. Todd allowed me to sit down first, pushing my chair in behind me. "A brother of mine will be joining us for dinner."

"Your brother lives in California?" This surprised me; he had never mentioned having a brother.

"He is not really my brother. We have just been business partners for so long it feels like we are brothers. Anyway, please don't speak to him much. He likes his space and privacy." He started shuffling through the metal briefcase of his and pulled out some Plexiglas plaques. "You should look at these before I give them to him. They are worth a lot of money, much more than they say; they have been out of circulation for many years." Smashed in between the Plexiglas for protection were two bills, a ten thousand dollar bill and a five thousand dollar bill.

"I didn't know there was such a thing!" I was impressed, which definitely was his goal. Todd was like that, all about the flash and shock value of things. He loved to feel important, powerful. And he was.

Todd quickly put them back in his briefcase, as he stood up to greet the couple that was being led to our table by the host. Two people never looked more elegant. They wore black suits, which perfectly complimented their tall, thin stature. The man must have been twice the age of the woman. His wavy shoulder length silver hair allowed his face to radiate a grandfather's loving warmth. He gazed at me for a moment and tried to place me. Todd didn't seem to notice that he was politely awaiting an introduction. Instead, he took matters into his own hands. "Hello. This is my fiancée Natasha and I am Leonard." His voice was as soft and kind as his face.

"I'm Krystle." Their energy drew me to them instantly. Who were they? I wanted to know more, but Todd didn't allow it.

Todd immediately took over the conversation for the rest of the dinner. He rambled on about political happenings and world events. Then next, he moved onto springs and the stock market. Sometimes he would say things that were so over my head that I had no idea what they were. His dissertation was putting me to sleep. I think it was boring everyone else too. They were just better at acting interested!

My presence seemed to cause Leonard and Natasha to be quite reserved. They both sat straight and tall in their chairs with legs crossed in front of them. They tilted their bodies slightly, resting to one side a bit more than the other. Somehow they made themselves look at ease and comfortable. How? It was difficult for me to sit up straight all the time like that. It would hurt my back after awhile!

When Natasha ordered, she revealed a beautiful Russian accent. She mentioned to the waiter that neither of them ate meat and asked about a vegetarian meal. I was so excited by this; I rarely met other people that were vegetarians at home! She ordered an appetizer of deep fried tofu for Leonard. I later found out that he ate this at every meal; it was a staple in his diet.

I gazed at them across that table. Natasha's long blonde hair and light skin complexion contrasted attractively with her all black attire. They were so alike. You know how couples that are really in love get. They seem to grow over time to become like each other. Each one picks up the other's habits, word structure, and the like. He smiled slightly, noticing that I was admiring the two of them. My palms started to sweat again. How could I talk to them with Todd droning on?

I had to know more about them. So I eagerly waited the chance to interrupt his discourse and change the subject to something more interesting. What would I say if I got the chance? My heart sped up. I didn't want to say something stupid. What if my Midwestern accent made me sound like a hick? These people were obviously better educated than me, what could I say to them? My face flushed.

I ended up chickening out. I felt like a teenage girl trying to talk to the cute guy in school. Why? The courage just never came to me, despite how much I wanted it to. They really intrigued me; I simply had to know more! Maybe next time I would get a chance to talk with them more freely, without Todd's control and my shyness.

Chapter 3 WALNUT CREEK

Two days had passed since we first arrived in San Francisco and the airline still hadn't found our luggage. "Let's go buy some new clothes!" Todd was had so much energy that I thought he might burst. "I can't stand wearing these any longer."

"Don't you think we should just wait until they find them? New clothes are expensive." I only got new clothes twice a year when I was growing up, in the fall for school and the spring for summer. My parents said that it was a waste of money to buy them any other time.

"The money means nothing to me. Feeling clean is much more important than a few hundred dollars." He was already walking out of the hotel room door. "Come on sweetie, hurry up."

"Okay," I slipped on my platform boots and headed out after him. "Where are we going to?"

"Nordstrom in Walnut Creek. And if we don't find what we want there, we'll head to Saks Fifth Avenue." He glanced over at me, trying to gauge my reaction.

"Okay." I had never heard of either of them before.

"I need to get dress coats and pants. Shoes and socks. Shirts, cufflinks, and ties. Oh and boxer shorts, I like Nordstrom's boxer shorts." He opened the doors to his Porsche Boxster with his keys by remote. "You've never seen my west coast car. You'll like it, it's a little smaller than the C-4 I have in Kansas but otherwise it looks the same."

We both hopped in. He cranked the music immediately, Sarah McLaughlin. Then he put the top down. We both loved driving with the top down. The sun shined brightly on us for the half an hour it took to get to the stores. Todd drove a little too fast, but it was fun. After driving like this for awhile and not getting in a wreck; I started to feel safe. He obviously knew how to drive at fast speeds.

The Nordstrom had many nice things, but everything was so expensive. "Do you want to go look in the women's section while I pick out what I need? The only thing I ask of you is, pick out something that looks classy. No more trashy Goth clothes. Okay?"

"But I like the clothes I have on." Where did he think he got off, telling me what I should dress like? I wasn't going to stand for it.

"You can't dress like that if you want to be around me while I am doing business. What will everyone think of me if you are dressed like that?"

"I don't care what people think, screw them if they don't like it." My heartbeat pounded in my ears.

"Sometimes in life you have to care what people think of you. I am not going to ruin a million dollar banking deal because of the way you *like* to dress. You'll either wear appropriate clothing or leave." He turned and walked off in a huff.

I walked around for a long time, but didn't find anything that seemed to fit in my

age group. The clothes looked like what grandmas would wear. Every once in a while I went by to check on Todd. It seemed like he would never finish. He must have picked out three new suits, a half a dozen shirts and ties, a dozen socks and boxers, and two pairs of shoes by the time he was finished. "I didn't find anything I wanted. Can I wait to shop at Saks?"

"Sure, let's go pay for this stuff." Todd motioned for the clerk to take his pile to the cashier.

"Sir, the total is \$4, 896.24." The cashier waited patiently, the total was obviously nothing unusual. However, I was in shock. His clothes cost as much as my car!

Todd propped his metal briefcase up on the counter and opened it up. It looked like a tornado had hit it! After digging around in the mess for about five minutes he finally found a stack of cash. Then he nonchalantly counted out forty-nine one hundred dollar bills. He acted like it was nothing, like he did it everyday. And he did...

* * *

We were headed toward the Saks with the top down and music blasting again when Todd realized the time. "Sweetie, we don't have time to go to Saks. We have to get to the airport to meet Leonard. We chartered a plane and can't be late, it's business."

"I don't mind. Where are we headed?" This was the first mention of a business trip. What happened to planning things out?

"We have to get to Las Vegas. There are some people coming in from Europe for a big banking deal." He got a serious tone to his already deep voice. "And we're late already. I didn't think shopping would take us so long." The traffic on the freeway was slowing down because we were in rush hour. So Todd sped up and started to drive on the shoulder. He cranked the music up louder, to drown out the noise created by the extra wind. I wasn't nervous at all; Todd was a good driver. I laughed as we went faster and faster. At one point I looked over at the speedometer and it read 136 mph. I laughed more, it was great. Adrenaline rushed through me. I had never driven that fast.

We drove for several minutes, and then started to exit without slowing down a bit. I thought nothing of it until the back wheels started to slide around. I glanced at over at Todd as we began to fishtail. Neither of us had our seat belts on. Luckily we were ahead of all the cars so we didn't crash into anyone else. The only thing that was in our way was a cement light pole and we hit it head on. The last thing I heard Todd say before we crashed was, "here we go!" I was screaming as we impacted.

Neither of us blacked out, in fact we both jumped out almost instantly. Todd started digging his clothes out of the smashed trunk while I lay back on the ground. My neck was in excruciating pain; I thought it must have been broken. I couldn't see out of one eye or feel the right side of my face, both of which turned out to be caused by a severe airbag burn. A commuter passing by called an ambulance for me. Todd kept telling everyone that he didn't need one. He was walking around just fine, like nothing happened. All the while, people would stop and ask where the fatalities were; it surprised them all when we said that we were the people in the wreck!

When the ambulance arrived the EMT's stabilized me by strapping me tightly down to a headboard. It hurt my head more than it helped my neck, I'm positive! I don't

remember much of the ride, other than the EMT's telling me I was okay and to be calm. At the hospital, I was put through x-ray after x-ray and they found nothing wrong with my neck other than a severe whiplash. I was lucky! My guardian angel was definitely beside me that time!

* * *

We went back to the hotel for the night, and then flew out to Las Vegas the next morning. The doctor had prescribed oxycodone for my pain, so I was pretty out of it. I kept nodding off. During one of these periods I had a visit from aliens. We were in the air, at 35,000 feet when it all took place. There were seven of them with extra long arms and legs. Their bodies were very thin with heads shaped like pears and gray pasty looking skin. We were all naked cuddling and stroking each other. They were different than me though; they had no sexual organs. We caressed each other more as I figured it out. They were telepathically having sex with me. They don't do it like we do; they do it with their minds! It was too weird! I woke up and quickly looked around me. Thank god nobody noticed!

Chapter 4 A BIG PURPLE FRIEND

Our plane landed on a private runway in Las Vegas. There was a long black limousine waiting to pick the four of us up. Leonard and Natasha were absorbed in a 3-d molecular modeling computer program on their laptop for the entire flight. Todd and I had both been dozing off periodically. Now that we landed, I felt a little better. I wonder if the altitude contributed to my strange hallucinations. I did have a concussion after all. Who knows...?

The limo drove us to a *secret* entrance of the Mirage's nine villas. They are around the side, where no usual gambler could find them. We stayed in number eight, right next to Kevin Costner. There were four bedrooms, three bathrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, a bar, and a pool in the backyard. The pool was surrounded by little misters that sprayed small amounts of water everywhere. This whole idea of outdoor air conditioning astonished me. I remember when I was a kid; we didn't even have it indoors!

"Hey sweetie, look at this. There are Monets on the walls!" Todd pointed to a painting of a flower seen.

"Cool." Who was Monet? I thought the painting sucked, flowers were boring.

"So do you like the place?" He plopped down on our bed. Leonard and Natasha had retired to their room as well.

"It's really amazing. I want to go swimming! I can't believe we have our own pool!" We were in a palace, something right out of a movie. Suddenly there was a knock on the door. And the bellman let himself in.

"Good evening Mr. Skinner, Mrs. Skinner." This caught me off guard; no one had ever called me a Misses before. It sounded kind of good. "I have your luggage. Would you like me to bring it into the closet?"

"Sure, go ahead." Todd didn't move from his relaxed position, except to hand the bellman a twenty dollar bill when he was finished.

* * *

The next morning we awoke and ordered room service. A bowl of cereal cost eight dollars! It was a rip off. But "money meant nothing" to Todd, so we lived it up. We ordered enough for the four of us, knowing that they would be hungry too. By the time the food arrived we were all waiting in the dining room. Our butler set it up for us and then left. Oh yes, each villa had its very own butler that was at our beck and call!

"L and I have to go to some meetings today. You guys should explore the city while were gone." Todd shoved a huge bite of eggs in his mouth, and then another. He was inhaling his food faster than I had ever seen anyone. He must have been hungry!

"I need to go shopping for some clothes since they still haven't found my luggage." My clothes were incredibly dirty. "Can I have a few hundred dollars? I don't

have any money.”

“Sure sweetie, as soon as we’re finished with breakfast.” He continued to shovel away.

“I think I will pass on the shopping trip and stay here to rest. The combination of the flight and morning sickness really wore me out. I would like to get a few more hours of sleep.” Natasha took slow dainty bites out of her bagel, chewing them completely and swallowing slowly.

“I couldn’t tell that you were pregnant. How far along are you?” This was a complete surprise.

“I am almost three months.” A glowing smile covered her face as she said this. You could tell she was happy to be a mother.

“Excuse me,” Todd interrupted us as he got up and walked into our bedroom; his plate was finished even though the rest of ours weren’t. He returned as quickly and handed me three one hundred dollar bills. “Now I have to go take a bath.”

“Thank you.” Clean clothes were on the way!

We finished our food with small talk about the sites I should go see, since I had never been there before. I wasn’t old enough to gamble in the casinos but I could check out the shows like Cirque De Soleil. When all of us were through, Leonard politely excused himself to go to the restroom. Afterwards he called the butler to come back in and clean up our mess. Then he walked over to me and pulled an envelope out of his pocket. He must have gone into their bedroom to get it when he excused himself to go to the restroom.

“Here you go, baby. Don’t tell T that I gave it to you. Just keep it between you and me, okay?” He raised his eyebrows and looked me straight in the eyes.

“Okay. Thank you.” How much was there? It was really thick. I peeked inside and it was all hundreds. There must have been two thousand dollars!

“Go put it up, before he gets out of the bathtub.” He motioned toward Todd’s and my bedroom.

* * *

“VIP services,” the female operator had an aristocratic tone to her voice.

“Yes, this is Mrs. Skinner in Villa 8.” I glanced over at Natasha, who had just woken up from her nap.

“Good evening, Mrs. Skinner. What can I do for you?”

“Could you send a limo around to pick us up?” I almost giggled, but somehow suppressed it.

“Yes, Ma’am, I’ll send him right now. Is there anything else?”

“Oh, yes,” I paused, about to burst. “I need to know where the raunchiest sex store in Las Vegas is.” I couldn’t contain it any more. Laughter spilled out of my lungs. Natasha rolled into the corner of the couch attempting to muffle her cackles; she was laughing so hard. This was her idea but she expected me to pull it off! How? It was hilarious!

“Let me check into that for you.” The operator hung up abruptly.

The limo arrived soon after the phone call ended. The driver held the door open while we situated ourselves. “Where to Ma’am?” He was so polite and uptight it was

disgusting. Boy was he in for a treat!

He drove us to several different sex stores, all the while keeping a straight rigid face. Was he used to this kind of thing? We got all kinds of outfits, including a bunch of bondage gear. I guess Leonard liked that kind of thing. I dressed Goth but wasn't really into bondage. It was fun to act like it though, to shock people! We, also, each got a three foot tall stuffed penis pillow. Natasha's was pink and mine was purple. We did this mostly to see what the driver's reaction would be, but got absolutely no response from him.

"Drop us off at the front of the casino. We'll walk through it, to the villas." If he wouldn't react, someone else would!

We paraded through the floor of the casino. Everyone stared at us as we giggled uncontrollably. We made so much noise that Leonard noticed us and hurried over. "Well, hello," he looked at us with a smile that radiated warmth from his face. "I see you girls have been busy shopping!" He started to laugh too. "Don't let T see you out here like this, he is such a square."

"We're on our way to the room right now." I didn't want Todd to be upset with us.

* * *

I woke up in the morning and realized that Todd had never come back to the room. I had waited up until three, but must have fallen asleep some time thereafter. I was a nervous wreck as I knocked on Leonard and Natasha's door. "Todd didn't come back last night. Something must be wrong!" A tear rolled down my cheek.

"Oh, come here Beh-beh," Natasha said baby but her Russian accent always made it sound that way. She wrapped me up in her arms. "Where is T?"

"Let me try and find out." Leonard picked up the phone, seeming annoyed more than worried. He talked to someone for a few minutes and then hung up. "T is staying with Roxanna over at the Bellagio. I am sorry about this baby, but he will be back in a few days. Don't worry about her. She is just a fling and won't be around for long. You are here to stay, we like you."

I was in shock and quickly left their room to cry in my own. Todd had never mentioned anything about us dating, but I had sort of assumed it. We were traveling together after all. I had fallen in love with him. Didn't he love me? I thought people that loved each other only dated each other. Maybe he didn't love me. I miserably waited in the room and sulked for two days until he finally returned.

Todd could easily see that I was upset but offered no explanation. He simply said, "I love you sweetie. You have nothing to worry about with her, believe me." What an asshole. He could have apologized at least!

Leonard's prediction turned out to be correct though. Roxanna was a one time thing. She never came back into our lives.

Chapter 5 THE BEGINNINGS OF AN EDUCATION

Todd left me behind at the missile base, while he went to Tulsa to visit his mother and two children. Before leaving, he explained that he wasn't ready to introduce me to his family and that he was only going to be gone for a three or four days. I was a little disappointed about being apart from him, yet understood completely. Whenever I thought about meeting them it made me nervous too! What would they think of our eighteen year age difference?

I wasn't all alone at the base; the caretaker was also there. Gunnar was forty-five years old, about six feet tall, and slightly overweight. He had the very appropriate nickname of "Mopy-Dopy." It came from the story of the seven dwarves, you know Mopy and Dopy. Gunnar was always one or the other. "Mopy" would start the day really down and depressed. At which point, "Dopy" either took some sort of drug or drank alcohol to escape his feelings. I often wondered why he wasted his life hiding from his problems instead of actually doing something about them.

Needless to say, we stayed out of each other's way for the most part. I tried to use my time productively. So I read a few of the psychedelic chemistry books that Todd had recommended. I started with Pihkal, and then moved on to Tihkal. I finished both books in less than two weeks. They were way over my head. I had to refer to both a dictionary and a Chemistry I book in order to even remotely begin to understand them. However, I did gain some knowledge. Most importantly, the books inspired me to learn more. My interest in Human Biology, Neurology, and psychedelic Chemistry increased immediately. What were these amazing substances actually doing to us? How were they working in the human body? Were they harmful like the anti-drug campaign claimed? How could they be "bad" when they seemed so helpful psychologically and spiritually?

Two weeks had passed and there still was no word from Todd. He was supposed to only have been gone for a few days. Was he alright? Did something bad happen to him in Tulsa? I tried to push the worry out of my mind, but it was difficult.

The books were finished so I moved on to the internet. The multitudes of information absorbed me for hours. There was more available than I ever thought possible! I quickly found an incredibly helpful site, www.erowid.org. It had a wide range of information on many different types of drugs. The writers discussed dosage, safety, and legality. They posted people's personal accounts of their trips on different types of psychedelics, which was the most helpful part of the site at the time. Unlike the books that I was attempting to understand, they used a language style that was easily readable. Links to sites with more complex technical information were also provided.

One of these *educational* links got me into a little trouble with Gunnar. I accidentally stumbled onto a site that showed pictures of an MDMA lab and had synthesis instructions. When I saw this, my heart started to beat a little faster. How could they print that much information? It was amazing! I had never seen anything like

this before, so it took me a few minutes to comprehend what it even was. I was pondering all of this when, unfortunately, Gunnar walked up behind me. There was a picture of a flask filled with a red residue on the screen. He immediately knew what I was looking at and was not too happy. "If T knew you were getting on sites like that from the base he would be really upset with you."

"What do you mean? I am just looking at stuff on the internet, what's wrong with that?" Gunnar had never been upset like this toward me. I really hadn't meant to do anything that would cause a problem.

"Well," he sighed and shook his head in disbelief, "the government tracks stuff like that. They trace your location through the phone lines." His face started to flush as his tenseness obviously increased as he thought about it.

"Who cares? It's just some pictures. What ever happened to the Freedom of Information Act? Anyway, there isn't anything here at the base that's illegal, so why does it matter anyway?" Wasn't he blowing it all out of proportion?

"This is a missile base and people like to spread rumors about places like this. We don't want to be raided. The cops could come here with search warrants and rip the place apart. We both know that they wouldn't find anything, however, the damage could cost T a lot of money." He wasn't going to let me squirm out of it, so I gave in.

"Well okay. I sort of understand. So you won't tell Todd?" I didn't want Todd to be disappointed in me; I honestly didn't understand what my actions could potentially cause.

"I won't tell him as long as you are more careful from now on." His apprehension caused a slight frown.

"Please don't tell him! I promise I won't look up any of this stuff, from here, ever again!" What would Todd think of me if he found out?

* * *

Life was weighing me down. Todd had never even called once to talk to me over the phone. His absence was eating away at me more each day. It felt like he didn't care at all. And now, having Gunnar watch my every move to make sure that I wouldn't screw up again, just made the situation even worse. It was all too much to deal with; I needed a change of pace.

Two hours away, in Kansas City, there were raves every weekend. I started going and easily found a new group of friends to hang out with. After a few weekends of this, I decided not to go back to the base. The city was so much fun! I took e-pills, or ecstasy, at least three times a week and went to clubs almost every night. I was out of control; I took more ecstasy than I ever should have. Todd had always warned me to never take it more than ten times during my whole life. I was way over that mark by the second week! But Todd was talking about pure MDMA. E-pills usually didn't have much real MDMA in them. They consisted mostly of DXM and Meth. So I felt safe taking more of them than he had suggested. All the other party kids ate more pills than I did and they seemed okay.

I should have listened to Todd because eventually it caught up with me. I started getting "back-ends". A back-end felt similar to a hangover from alcohol, only it was worse. My head pounded with pain. My energy dropped to almost nothing. I slept for

days and each time wake up feeling as tired as when I went to sleep. The worst part about it was that I felt stupid. It was like my brain was processing everything in slow motion. Once this started happening to me, I noticed that some of the other ravers had experienced it too. The *responsible* ravers even had a name for this decrease in IQ; they called the other *careless* ravers, E-tards!

* * *

Finally Todd called me after about six weeks with no contact. I was relieved to hear that he was doing well. At the same time, I was extremely disappointed with him. The way he blew me off had really hurt my feelings. Our conversation was abrupt. He obviously wanted to avoid a stressful interchange and made a sad attempt at an apology. Then he quickly moved on to the actual reason behind his call. "I need a driver. You would have to drive a moving truck, but it would only take an afternoon. Can you do it?"

Did he actually think I would help him after what he did? "No. Maybe some other time. I'm too busy." To get me to stop what I was doing, he would have to try harder than that! I immediately hung up on him to get my point across!

He left several messages on my phone over the next few days. Somehow his persistence started to chip away at my defenses. So when he invited me out to the base to see him, I decided to go. We had both suffered enough. I still wanted to be with him, so there wasn't a reason to keep playing games.

Upon my arrival, I noticed that Gunnar was acting strange. He was walking around outside aimlessly. He was in his own world as I tried to say hello to him. I received no response, or indication that he even knew I was there. He just stood there with a blank stare. His eyes were sort of glazed over; they were bulging out so far of his head that they looked like they might pop out. What was wrong with him? He never got that messed up when he was on one of his Mopy-Dopy benders...

Chapter 6 ALD-52

“So you think you can handle it?” Todd was excited by my boastfulness.

“I have been tripping a lot since you’ve been gone. I can handle it!” Adrenaline raced through me.

“How long has it been since you have taken LSD?” He said this with an inquisitive look, just like a scientist studying his experiment.

“Well, I had some really bad acid last weekend. It didn’t give me any visuals and only made me feel low. I am not for sure it was even real.” I had only taken LSD that one time ever, but he didn’t have to know that! Mainly I had just been taking e-pills. You have to fake it until you make it, right?

“Okay, the weekend was about four days ago so you probably still have a small tolerance. I guess you can take the ALD-52, an analog of LSD. If you didn’t have a tolerance I wouldn’t suggest it, only because it’s still in the extremely potent crystalline form.”

“So what does that mean?” He always talked over my head. What was crystalline? Didn’t acid only come in liquid or on blotter paper?

“It is extremely potent. It hasn’t been broken down to a liquid yet.” He seemed to be disinterested with explaining things to me. So he quickly grabbed a large vitamin jar. “We need something to get it out with. Go find a paper clip.”

The nearest office in the missile base was only a few steps away. I finally found a paper clip and hurried back. “Okay here it is.”

He methodically straightened out the paper clip and then opened the jar. “Come here, you’ll want to look at this. Most people never get to see what crystalline ALD looks like. Be careful, just look inside. Don’t get too close.”

I cautiously peered down inside. The jar was dark opaque brown, so it allowed the crystalline to be seen quite easily. The sides were covered with a gray-white dust. A layer about an inch thick was covering the bottom. How many doses could that have been? One million or so?

After I was finished looking, he dipped in the paperclip. “I am using the paperclip to control the dose since it has a small surface area. I only want to get the very tip of it covered with the crystalline. The normal dose is 100mcg; however we will hope that your dose is only 1000mcg!” He dipped it in, looked at it, and then handed it to me. “Hold it under your tongue.”

The taste was slightly bitter, yet there was hardly enough there to give an adequate description. The paper clip stayed in my mouth for about five minutes. I could feel it instantly! The world around me started to sparkle. White light, shimmering energy pulsed through everything. The colors around the room became more vibrant than I had ever seen. Each one had an infinite number of shades and hues. I felt incredibly alive. Power surged through my veins. “I want to listen to music!” And off we went, toward the stereo down in the missile bay.

The stereo put out a sound that was very clear and crisp. Perfect. However, the ALD made the sound take on a new dimension! Todd had put in a Deep Forest CD, which has tribal beats with pygmies harmonizing to them. The pygmies were amazing! I could feel them singing and dancing all around me. Little angelic, sparkly, pygmies! They created mandalas that spiraled through my existence. I became them. I created mandalas. Time began to swirl in a pattern comparable to the mandalas. It started from me, and then expanded out to the world.

My body felt so light, like I was floating on clouds. A fairy, flying around leaving a trail of pixie dust behind! I wondered how much further I could go. How much more beautiful could it get? I contemplated this for awhile, lost in wonderment. Eventually I asked Todd if I could have another dose.

He was sitting next to me on the couch and looking very skeptical. “Well, I guess so. Don’t you think you are high enough already?”

“No, I want more, MORE! I feel wonderful!”

“Okay, but you might not feel it since you are building a tolerance.”

“Oh well. Can we just try anyway?”

“Okay, Okay. But you have to drink some juice before you take it. You need to keep your blood sugar up.” We got up and headed to the other side of the complex. First however, we had to walk through the tunnel.

It was amazing! Claaaaoeeng, Claaaooooeeaaang. The world was spiraling out of control. Our footsteps created rainbow light prisms that bounced off the sides and reverberated everywhere. Claeeeeaaooongg, Cleeeaaouueeeaaannng.

As we got to the kitchen, I immediately went to the refrigerator to drink some apple juice. It was more difficult than I thought it would be. I picked up the glass and was instantly sucked into it. My hand felt connected with the cold moist glass. We were apart of each other. I was the glass and the apple juice and they were me. There was no difference, no separation. Swallowing myself was quite a challenge! As I drank, I felt like I might choke. I just couldn’t swallow normally now that I could see it from both angles. This oneness was strange, very confusing to me. Yet it felt as though I always knew that our world was set up this way, only I had forgotten for some reason.

When my struggle eventually finished, I noticed Todd was laughing at me. My consciousness was so absorbed in the apple juice unity thing, that I had forgotten he was even there. “Are you sure you want another paper clip sweetie?” He just kept giggling.

“Yes I do. And stop laughing at me!”

He prepared another paper clip, the same as before. Then we headed back down the spinning rainbow tunnel to listen to music and await the results. Where did I end? I was expanded, whole. Time moved slowly, yet seemed to be in the natural flow of things.

I could see the *real* reality. Amazing texture and depth. People started to remind me of dogs. A dog can only see in black and white, so the dog thinks the world has no color. The dog is obviously mistaken because, as humans, we always see in color. Yet, how do we explain to this dog that the world is *really* this way? There is a language and comprehension barrier between us. The dog’s mind is set on its course, as limited as that may be. My visions showed me the next step; they revealed what people don’t usually get to see. My words could never come close to describing the magnificence of the entheogenic headspace.

* * *

“I don’t think I’m getting any higher. Can I have another paperclip?”

“I think you have built up a tolerance, so no amount will affect you. Anyway it is getting late, or shall I say early! I think you should take something that will bring you down so we can rest.” He was lying on the couch looking exhausted. I don’t think he had taken anything so far. How did he stay awake this long?

“I don’t want to come down, this is so much fun! I’ll trip by myself. I know you’re tired; you can go to sleep. Don’t worry about me, I can amuse myself!” I didn’t want it to end, that’s why I asked for more. Didn’t he understand that?

“I don’t want you to have to trip alone. But I have to take something if I am going to stay up with you. How about we both take some 2-CB? You won’t be tolerant to it because it works on Dopamine, unlike LSD which works mostly on Serotonin.”

“What’s 2-CB?”

“You haven’t heard of 2-CB in the rave scene?” Todd looked a little shocked.

“Well, it’s sort of like MDMA, only mellower. Music doesn’t sound as good on it, but it is peaceful. Very warm.”

“I am up for anything!” I loved to try new drugs and get another notch on my belt.

One hour later:

“Please take me with you when you leave Kansas this time. You don’t know how hard it is to be away from you. I love you.”

“I won’t leave you behind, but if you are going to be around I have to tell you something.” He paused nervously. “I have to tell you who I really am.”

“Okay.” I already knew that his facility wasn’t a “spring factory”. He had excessive amounts of money and was far too paranoid to only be an investment banker. Plus, Gunnar had gotten overly upset about my internet research. I suspected that something was up. Finally my questions would get answered.

“Follow me.” We walked into a storage area next to the missile bay and headed toward a row of large green metal boxes. “Do you know what these are?”

“They look like storage containers to me.”

“You are partly right. I got them from the military.”

“Why do you have military storage containers?”

“Camouflage!” He chuckled a bit as he popped the lid off one of them. He reached in and pulled out a large flask with dark residue in it. “I am the head of security for the Brotherhood of Eternal Love.” He carefully put the flask back into the container as he continued. “The Brotherhood has been around since the 60’s. You’ve probably heard of Owsley and Nickie Sand. We are the ones that supply the world with LSD.”

“I knew something was going on.” I couldn’t believe he was finally telling me all of this!

“I just got finished tearing down this lab and moving it here for storage. You see, the other missile base is where the lab was operational.”

“You have another missile base?”

“Well, indirectly. Do you remember Tim? You know the guy’s funeral I had to

go to last month? Anyway, he was letting us use his facility. That is until he committed suicide. We had to move everything because his family now owns the place.”

“Is that why you called and asked me if I could drive for you last week?” I started to put together the pieces.

“Yes, but it’s alright. We managed without you.” He started to laugh really hard.

“It was a wild ride though, driving those big trucks when I was tripping that hard!”

“So you got dosed when you were taking it apart?”

“Oh, of course. The LSD crystals were everywhere. Leonard made such a mess. Gunnar picked up a flask and somehow got dusted. He has been tripping for almost three days! He shit in my bath-tub that asshole! All I can do is just keep giving him valiums to try to bring him down. I had a tolerance going from finishing up some chemistry, so luckily I didn’t get nuked out like he did!”

I hadn’t even suspected Leonard to be involved until now. I thought he was just another rich “investment banker” friend of Todd’s. Whenever I saw him, he was always wearing a black suit with the confident elegance of someone very educated. I think he said something about going to Harvard. He just didn’t seem like he was into drugs. I never did any with him anyway.

I struggled to remember anything that would go along with what Todd was saying. Leonard always called to the base and said he was an hour and half away. I thought that meant that he was driving from the KCI airport, having flown in from San Francisco where he lived. He must have actually been at the lab. Amazing. How had I missed that?

Three or four hours later:

We both lay on the bed, cuddled up. Todd went to sleep the moment his head hit the pillow. Now he was lightly snoring; it was methodic. I lay very still with my eyes closed trying to relax. It wasn’t working. I had been tripping for about fifteen hours so far. I was getting a little tired, but it just wouldn’t end. I kept seeing scenes of things happening when I closed my eyes. I saw a bustling city, the ocean, and horses running in a field. Then I discovered that I could see any scene I wanted to see. I would think of a scenario and then it would act itself out in front of me. It was pretty cool. I had a personally directed movie inside my head! Finally, after an hour of movie-making, I drifted off. Content. Home.

Chapter 7 PUTTING TOGETHER THE PIECES

Out of nowhere Todd told us, his employees and family, to pack down the base. He didn't explain why; he only told us to hurry. It seemed so urgent that no one even asked him why. We all just assumed we were about to get busted. We didn't move the containers holding the lab for some reason; we only moved what Todd felt were the most important things like his stereo and his clothes. When he told us we were moving to Mendocino, California we forgot about the stress of the move immediately; we were all so excited about living on the beach!

I recruited two of my raver friends from Kansas City to help drive some of the moving trucks. I had never driven across the country before and was excited! Todd wasn't going to be making the drive; he was flying out there ahead of us to get everything ready. This didn't bother me that much because my friends were coming along. Also Todd seemed to slow things down sometimes. He liked to sleep in late, eat three full meals a day out at restaurants, and talk on the phone for hours at a time. This couldn't be a good combination with all the miles we needed to travel!

Before Todd left for the airport he gave me a stack of cash and said, "You're in charge, go for it." This shocked me. Didn't he know that I had absolutely no experience with this type of thing?

* * *

The trip was long and boring. To spice things up, we decided to do what we called "nudity across America". It was funny; we would stop in opportune spots and take snapshots of ourselves showing a little skin! We shot photos in the mountains of Colorado, the desert of Nevada, a McDonald's somewhere, a huge three story tall cross, and a metal sculpture of a tin man. It made my adrenaline rush as I would look around before taking off my shirt or lifting up my skirt. No one ever saw us; I would have laughed excessively if they had!

We pulled up to our new house on the beach about four days after we left Kansas. I had never seen the Pacific Ocean before, and we could see it from our living room. The view was breathtaking. The air was thick with moisture and the smell of saltwater, yet still cool on my skin. I loved it immediately. We were surrounded on both sides with National Parks, which created a quiet and peaceful environment.

Once we got settled in, I started to notice that something was different somehow. Todd spent a lot of time alone. It looked like he was thinking about something, deeply. He kept taking long walks through the nearby trails in the parks. He meditated every day. I had never seen him isolate himself this way. He didn't want anyone to talk to him and disturb him; his only request was to be left alone. What was up with him?

Todd left several times in the first month we lived there for "meetings". They were very secretive because he wouldn't say where or for how long he was going. The first two were only for a couple of days. So this time when he had been gone for almost

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