**Chapter 27**

**September 24, 1929, Ila Rouge, Seychelles, The Commonwealth**

I smirked as I heard Visha humming as she messed about in the kitchen. She thought I didn't know about the ingredients she'd secretly imported to bake me a birthday cake. I'd have to remember to pretend to be surprised. Although, I was a bit concerned by how many ingredients she had ordered. Either she was planning a truly outsize cake, or she planned to take up baking as a serious hobby. I hoped it was the latter. With just the two of us here now that Jenny had returned to New York, there was no need for something very big.

Well, if it was too much we'd just donate the rest to the locals. The poor souls would probably be glad of it. I turned my attention back to the papers in front of me, detailing our next set of escape routes.

When you were both an international fugitive and had a deity out for your head, there was no such thing as being too paranoid. Ever since I'd been forced to flee from Colombia, I'd taken to remembering my army lessons on contingency planning. It was largely thanks to my spending the money on escape plans that we'd been able to set up this base in the Seychelles so quickly. I'd truly been caught by surprise when Interpol caught up to me, but having the laborers contracted and the land leased meant construction on this place started within days of my near capture.

Now I was making plans for my next refuge. I had no illusions that this idyllic existence would be permanent. Fortunately, the world was nowhere near as crowded as it had been during the 21st century. There were plenty of locations where a young woman could vanish if she practiced a modicum of discretion. Thinking about my next bolthole was surprisingly relaxing as long as I was doing the planning while lying on a beach chair in the warm afternoon sun. I made a mental note to focus on places with good weather.

It was at that point I noticed movement on the path leading up to the house. In one swift motion, I'd thrown on a hooded cloak while casting an illusion on my skin to make it look rough and patchy, while simultaneously sending a warning to Visha. Ever since I'd chased off that busybody doctor we didn't get many visitors, but I was always ready anyway. The persona I'd created was for someone who was too vain to show their disfigurement, which explained why I'd always be fully covered even in the hot weather.

As I stood to greet my visitors, I couldn't help but be concerned. This was a group of four men and a woman, none of whom I recognized. I clutched the small pistol concealed under my cloak and sent an additional warning message to Visha. Out of the corner of my eye I could see her taking position near a window, ready to open fire if necessary.

It was only as the group got to within close speaking range that I could spot familiar features among the group. When the woman spoke, I was certain of my identification.

"Afternoon, Major. Ernest, reporting in."

"Emilie? What are you doing here? And who's all this?" I had my suspicions, but I needed to confirm them.

"Let's get out of sight, ma'am, and I'll explain."

I had to admit, it was honestly disturbing to see the effects of my high efficiency illusion spells from the outside. Even though they were right next to me, I could feel practically no mana emissions from the disguised members of my former battalion. Once we were out of sight in my house, the disguises dropped, revealing...

"Vogel, Teyanen... and Royce and Becker too? What are all of you doing here?"

Royce was the one who took it upon himself to explain. "After that mess with Madelaine... uh, I mean Mary... Koenig decided all of us needed to stay in touch with each other to prevent that sort of problem in the future. So when Cold Steel decided to pursue business opportunities here in the Seychelles, and they assigned me as part of the team, I decided to drop by for your birthday and I let Koenig know. Well, Koenig decided that he can spare Vogel and Teyanen long enough for them to attend your birthday as well, and Becker decided to tag along too. So, happy birthday, Major!"

"Surprise!" chimed in Visha, giggling. My eyes grew wide as I turned to my adjutant.

"Visha! You knew?"

"Emilie warned me, but I decided not to say anything. I thought it would make a nice birthday surprise!" Visha's face grew worried. "It's all right isn't it? You don't mind, right?"

I immediately rushed to reassure her. "No, of course it's all right! Honestly, I'm really flattered all of you would travel so far just for my birthday. And I guess that does explain the huge cake Visha has been making. But I guess I'm just worried someone might follow you all here. You know Interpol caught up to me last time by tracing movements of ex-203 mages."

"No worries, Major," replied Royce confidently. "All of us have been travelling under disguise from the get-go. By the time anyone figures out we're not where we were before, all the others will be back at their posts. I'm the only one who'll be staying in the area long term, and I'll mostly be basing out of Imperial West Africa. I'll only be visiting the Seychelles occasionally, and I'll make sure to use a different identity each time so no one even knows I ever come this way."

All that sounded pretty secure, but I couldn't help but feel somehow, somewhere, there would be a slip-up. Still, that's what contingency planning is for. I can't just order them to stay away from me entirely because if they see me acting too paranoid they might just think I'm losing my nerve, and that's something no commander can ever allow their troops to think. "Well, I still think it's an unnecessary risk, but you're already here. So welcome, pull up a chair. There's wine, coffee, and juice. Everyone, make yourselves at home."

They didn't take long to get settled in. After everyone had gotten refreshments and the initial rush of small-talk had subsided, I brought the conversation back around to business. "So, Royce, exactly what business does Cold Steel have in the Seychelles? The last reports I read they were prospecting for gold in the Mutumbu mountains."

"Well, this is actually just an extension of an ongoing project," he replied. "As you might know, Cold Steel's been looking for opportunities to industrialize the colonies and manufacture goods to cater to the local markets."

I nodded to show I knew what he was talking about. The current undeveloped state of most of Africa was a holdover from the era of mercantilism, where every nation treated colonies purely as sources of raw materials, and insisted all value-addition (like manufacturing) should only take place in their home countries. Yet, this meant an enormous price hike for even the most basic manufactured goods by the time they made it back to colonial markets. Establishing manufacturing centers right in the colonies would short-circuit that nonsense. When placed in that context, Cold Steel's interest in the Seychelles was obvious. "Cold Steel's looking to break into the Seychelles market?"

"Yep. Right now it's just for stuff we'll be producing in West Africa. But it's also part of my job to look at the viability of establishing factories right here in the islands themselves. I mean, there's dozens of decently sized uninhabited islands within spitting distance of Mahe and the other big islands. And while most of these islands grow exotic foodstuffs like fruit and vanilla and spices, there's no reason we can't grow cotton to feed some textile mills. Even now Cold Steel's importing cotton seeds and experts from Aegypt to give it a go."

I didn't know the first thing about cotton and textiles, but I was willing to accept Royce's word on the possibilities. And honestly, I was relieved to hear that all they would be focusing on would be harmless consumer products. I'd been having nightmares of them pouring guns and drugs into these peaceful little islands. "What made them focus on the Seychelles anyway?"

Royce tilted his head towards Emilie. "It's Emilie who tipped us off, really. Outside of some basic foodstuffs like fish and corn, these islands are focused almost entirely on producing cash crops for sale in Europe. Practically all the basic necessities have to be imported. And when you're 5,000 kilometers from the nearest manufacturing centers in the Middle East, the costs add up."

I didn't make my instinctive comment that 5,000 kilometers was nothing. In the timeline that I knew, massive cargo ships would carry manufactured goods from halfway around the world just to take advantage of cheaper production costs. However, the kind of stable international trade that sort of outsourcing would require was still decades in the future of this world. Just for starters, Qinguo was still stuck in a three-way civil war, those parts of it that was not being fought over by the Russy Federation and the Akitsushimani Dominion. Maybe in this world we could prevent the future Qinese domination of cheap manufacturing. One could only hope.

I turned to Emilie with a slight smile. "When I told you to stay in Victoria and keep your eyes open, I meant for pursuers, not business opportunities." I pitched my tone to make sure she knew I wasn't upset. After all, I was the one who started paying them bonuses in the form of shares in my companies. It was my way of incentivizing their loyalty to my cause, and I could hardly complain that they'd acted on those incentives.

Emilie's response was a bit surprising, though. "Do you know the same people who own all the land also have a lockdown on the imports? Some of the prices they charge is ridiculous. And the workers on these islands hardly get paid anything to begin with," she said with some heat.

I shrugged. "And how is this different from all the shit we've seen in the rest of Africa? Monopolies will monopolize. If you want competitive pricing, then break the monopoly."

Emilie threw me a salute. "Consider the monopoly broken, Major."

We all shared a laugh at that. However, I was slightly concerned. As long as the company stuck to producing and selling cheap consumer goods I failed to see why anyone would link it to my presence, but Interpol knew about Cold Steel's gun-running in the Congo. So, I addressed Royce. "By the way, there's not going to be any of supplying weapons to the natives here, I trust? Interpol knows about that, doing it here will definitely draw the wrong kind of attention."

"Oh no, no weapons," Royce reassured me. "This is about the basic stuff like clothes and tools."

I was fairly sure he was telling me the truth, and I mentally breathed a sigh of relief. While I was still uncomfortable at the thought of Cold Steel starting a venture so close to my retreat, it was unlikely anyone would think to look twice at a leper colony.

I managed to put aside my worries and simply enjoy the rest of the evening. I hadn't had many friends to celebrate my birthday with in my past life, so having people who cared enough to throw a party on my behalf was an experience I cherished. Even though I knew this was at least partly because my employees wanted to stay on the good side of their boss, the fact that they made the effort still warmed my heart.

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**October 18, 1929, Silhouette Island, Seychelles**

Pierre Dubois was not a man given to great shows of emotion. His ancestors had been Francois nobility since the 13th century. His branch of the family had moved to Mauritius in the late 18th century and over the generations had established themselves as one of the largest landowners in the region. Even the Albish conquering the islands hadn't really fazed his family, they had smoothly brokered an agreement with their new overlords and business continued as usual. He might only be a second son, but he was the definition of old money, and such pedigree brought with it certain standards of behavior. So he carefully waited until the only person present was the valet who had been attending him for twelve years before screaming and hurling his wine glass at the wall.

Silhouette Island was the most prestigious of the Dubois holdings in the Seychelles. Sure, as far as money went it was only of middling importance. But no other family in the Indian Ocean could brag complete ownership of such a large island. This was why Pierre was here in person, sent at the behest of his older brother and family head. The Dubois family was no stranger to labor unrest, the damn darkies always seemed to be grumbling about something, and Pierre had come with permission to accede some minor concessions, and a dozen grizzled guards to knock the heads of those who remained stubborn.

Labor unrest, Pierre was fully capable of handling. The trouble was, when he arrived he discovered there was no labor at all, restive or otherwise.

The source of the problem was, naturally, the never to be sufficiently damned Bharati. A century ago, those brown skinned savages had seemed the ideal compromise after the Commonwealth outlawed slavery. The Dubois family had not been alone in importing large numbers of those meek and hardworking people, so much more pliable than their African counterparts. But over the last decade or so Bharat was being racked by this nonsense of Civil Disobedience, and the rot had spread all the way out here.

According to his overseers, a few weeks ago a known agitator had come to the island, guarded by armed men, and had proceeded to meet all the most important leaders among his workers. Apparently he had been talking about some newly established plantations whose owners were willing to offer far more generous terms for experienced labor. He must have been persuasive, because when Pierre arrived he discovered over three quarters of the island's workforce had simply packed up and left aboard a ship supplied by this interloper. Not just the Bharati, but a large portion of his African workers as well.

Such a massive loss of workers was a severe blow. It would take months to arrange replacement labor, meaning most of this year's harvest was down the drain. More importantly, the Bharati proving themselves so treacherous meant they'd most likely have to rely on African labor. That would be painful - in spite of the greater distance, Bharati were useful because they came from a farming society, as opposed to the primitive blacks who couldn't tell the difference between a hoe and a shovel unless a white man taught them first.

This was beyond the pale. There was a gentleman's agreement among the various plantation owners never to poach from each other's workforce. After all, they all thrived and profited from the simple fact that, for the vast majority of the island population, it was either work on their plantations or starve. These workers were not slaves, legally speaking. They were free to leave at any time. But since none of them had money to pay for a boat ride and no employer on the islands would dare offend the big landlords by employing someone blacklisted by them, the vast majority of them had no choice but to take whatever terms their betters offered.

Pierre didn't know how that Bharati malcontent got the backing of some new plantation owner who clearly didn't know how things were done here, but the Dubois scion knew what to do about it. The Planter's Association was founded to promote the interest of all plantation owners on the islands, and this was exactly the sort of thing they would be interested in. Hopefully, whoever this newcomer was, they could be made to understand how shortsighted it was to pander to the primitives. Maybe a letter to the Governor would also be in order.

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**November 9, 1929, Governor's Mansion, Port Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles**

The mansion of the Seychelles Governor was currently hosting a ball. Not the Governor's Ball (that would be held on New Year's Eve) but just one of the many get-togethers that any good governor held in order to make the local worthies feel appreciated. Naturally, the guest list was comprised almost entirely of plantation owners and their associates. In other words, the very people whose economic monopoly my companies were out to break.

My presence here was admittedly a bit of risk. But to my mind the risk was minor compared to what Visha might do if she got bored. I hadn't forgotten her comment a few months back on how peaceful our life on the Ila Rouge was. And while she had been vehement that she was perfectly satisfied with our idyllic existence, I couldn't shake the worry that she had only been saying that to keep me happy.

A bored Visha was a dangerous Visha. So when Emilie let me know that the Seychelles Governor had passed on an invitation to his ball to the Dark Earth Corporation, I got myself and Visha included in the guest list. Visha had once mentioned in passing that she enjoyed dancing, so I figured this would be an excellent opportunity for her to blow off some steam. Furthermore, it would also let me get a close look at one Honorable Harold Cromartie, President of Dark Earth Corporation.

Dark Earth was apparently the latest company that I owned. I say 'apparently' because I had absolutely nothing to do with setting it up. It turns out, there was one tiny snag with Cold Steel investing in the Seychelles. Cold Steel was an Imperial company, and the Seychelles was an Albish colony. With the cool relations between the two countries, the Cold Steel leadership thought it prudent to work through Albish intermediaries. Enter Dark Earth, a company incorporated in Rhodesia, mostly funded by Cold Steel, with my Rhodesian mining company Black Diamond providing a minority of the funding and the majority of the Albish contacts. The Hon. Harold Cromartie had been identified by Black Diamond's leadership as a suitable face for this Seychelles-focused agricultural company.

From what I could tell, my people had chosen well. Cromartie seemed charming, intelligent, and was clearly in no mood to take any guff from the local Planter's Association who were up in arms over how they were hemorrhaging workers to Dark Earth and their fair wages and good working conditions and actually fulfilling the indentured worker's dream of one day owning their own land. I carefully hid my smirk. I wish I could be there to see their faces when these newly empowered workers start requesting to join their Planter's Association, or more likely, set up a rival lobbyist group. I was already hearing rumors of something called the Oceanic Affirmation Party.

Off to one side, I could see the Governor looking torn at the controversy surrounding Cromartie. On the one hand, my new company was upsetting the local landowners, the very people the Governor was supposed to administer. On the other hand, Dark Earth itself was a pretty big landowner by this point. Perhaps more importantly, Cromartie was a scion of Albish nobility whereas the large majority of Seychelles plantation owners were descended from Francois aristocracy. After studying the Governor for a bit, I decided there was no need to worry. If there's one thing two Albishmen far from home can bond over, it was the opportunity to put the screws to a bunch of Frogs.

Turning away from the politicking, I saw something far less pleasing. Visha, looking radiant even in disguise, dancing in the arms of some young rake. For the first time in my life, I felt inadequate because I had never learned ballroom dancing. Two women dancing together might look odd, but it would at least reduce the chance of local Lotharios trying to lure away my irreplaceable adjutant.  And I was honest enough to admit my own jealousy at seeing Visha in the arms of another man. Which was silly since, my teenage attraction notwithstanding, there was nothing between us to justify such possessiveness. I had to remind myself it was a good thing Visha looked so happy. After all, the primary purpose of this excursion was to give Visha the chance to work off her pent-up energy before she did something drastic.

My efforts to hide my feelings must not have been entirely successful, because after the next dance ended Visha broke away to offer me her hand. Smiling sadly, I told her, "I'm afraid my formal dancing skills are almost non-existent. I will only slow you down."

Visha only laughed. "It's never too late to learn. I've never known you to be afraid of anything, don't start now!"

Well, how could I refuse an invitation like that? For the next few hours, I took great pleasure in watching Visha brushing off all the horny young and not-so-young men as she carefully led me through the steps of some basic dances. And if I proved a slow learner, that's no one's business but my own.

All in all, it turned out to be a surprisingly enjoyable evening. It even ended on a very amusing note when one of the guests tried the old Nigerian Prince scam on us.

Well, the Nigerian Prince scam was old in my timeline. I suppose here and now it was still quite novel. And to be accurate, the fellow wasn't pretending to be a Nigerian Prince, but rather the King of something called the Ashanti Empire, located somewhere on the Gold Coast.

This King spun quite the entertaining tale. Apparently he had been exiled to Victoria on a 25 year sentence after his people fought and lost a war against the Albish. Now his sentence was up and he was supposed to return home, but the Albish were coming up with one excuse after another to deny his return to his people. Naturally, a king's ransom awaited any who could provide him the wherewithal to return to his homeland.

I had to admit, scammers of my time could stand to learn a thing or two from this old fellow. Instead of overplaying his part by showing up in native regalia and acting like an uncultured barbarian, he was dressed in a quietly conservative Western suit with manners to match. He was greying, soft spoken, and possessed of a sad dignity that I could tell had taken in poor naive Visha completely. The best part was that his scam required his victim to give him travelling money, so his escape was guaranteed by his scam's success. The part that really sold it though, was when Visha started making noises about helping him, he gestured vaguely towards some of the ballroom security and remarked how even if he could find someone generous enough to help him, he was being watched at all times. This pretended reluctance to put a Good Samaritan at risk on his own account instead of immediately jumping at the chance for a payday, it was almost admirable how this conman could play his victims better than an angler with a hooked fish.

As one might expect, the prospect of danger only seemed to impress Visha further with the seriousness of the situation. And now she was giving me the puppy dog eyes. I was tempted to reveal this old shyster for the charlatan he was, but I couldn't see any way of doing that without causing a scene. Conman or no, he must have some impressive contacts to get himself into this predominantly white man's ball. So instead, I decided to hit two birds with one stone. I would give Visha the chance to have a bit of excitement by smuggling him out of the ball unnoticed, and I would teach him a lesson by giving him exactly what he asked for.

By this time, Visha's low power illusions were almost flawless. Since the Seychelles lacked mage detectors or mage patrols, it was simplicity itself to walk out His Highness under the cover of a camouflage spell while I distracted the guards by making small talk. In a matter of minutes, we were at the pier where our Curtiss flying boat was moored. Warned by a communication spell, our designated pilot Emilie was already there and waiting.

This Curtiss flying boat had started life as a long range passenger model before being upgraded with external fuel tanks. Not the fastest machine, but it could reach most places on the East African coast in one flight. I was amused to see the surprise steal across the King's face when he saw the aircraft. He had most likely hoped to milk us for a fat stack of cash, not an actual airplane ride.

"Linda," I said, using Emilie's current identity, "You have a mission. This here is the King of the Ashanti, cruelly and illegally exiled by the perfidious Albish government. Your first job is to fly him to Mzizima. Once there, you will make arrangements to transport him over to the West Coast. From there, he is to be smuggled to... where did you say the Ashanti capital was, Your Highness?"

"Comassie," came the shell-shocked reply.

"Comassie, capital of the Ashanti, in the Albish portion of the Gold Coast," I finished. "And remember, you are to do this in complete anonymity. No drawing attention of any kind, particularly from Albion. I don't care if you have to sedate him and lock him in a suitcase, not a soul is to know of his existence until he arrives in Comassie."

It was a genuine struggle to keep from laughing as I saw the expression on the so-called King's face at my instructions. Try to con me, will he? Well, as the old saying goes, be careful what you wish for.

Emilie definitely looked puzzled by this sudden adventure, but she was too loyal to question it. However, she did ask, "What resources can I draw on, ma'am?"

I dropped my voice so the man couldn't hear, "How much money do you have on you?"

"Right now? About twenty pounds."

"Then that's your budget. You can also contact the other 203 members for help. However, you are not to draw any company funds or in any way involve any of the companies. This fellow claims his arrival will annoy the Albish, so I don't want anyone connecting his appearance in the Gold Coast with us. Consider this a low-budget training exercise. You and the boys have yourselves and your gear, and that's it." At the end of the day, I wasn't willing to spend too many resources on this petty revenge. And if I could give my troops some useful infiltration training in the process, then it was money well spent.

Turning around I rejoined the King who was currently listening to Visha reassure him that 'Linda' would guarantee his arrival in his kingdom, come hell or high water. "Well your Highness, it's all set," I told him. "In just a few weeks, you will once more be gracing the forests and hills of your homeland."

"I... I don't know what to say. This is so sudden. And how can I reward my benefactors?"

Points for style, even now he was trying to use my greed to give himself a chance to escape from this unwanted journey. I wasn't having any of it. "Wait until you're actually back and on your throne, Your Highness. Then you can give your reward to whichever of my people is with you at the time. I am sure you will be suitably generous."

As we escorted him into the flying boat, Emilie whispered to me, "What kind of reward are we talking about here?"

I didn't want to give her false hope, so I said, "I think he'll be lucky if anyone even recognizes him. I'm only doing this because it tickled my fancy. Your job is to get him in, then get out, reward or no. Use your best judgement. Oh, and keep your guard up. King or no, that's still a stranger you're dealing with." I felt that should cover all the bases.

Soon enough, the seaplane was taxiing out into the open water, on its way to Imperial East Africa. Credit to the conman, right up to the very end he maintained his persona. I was half-expecting him to admit the whole thing was a sham and beg not to be packed off to strange lands, but he stood firm. He probably thought to give Emilie the slip once he got to the mainland. I wished him luck - unless her training had slipped badly, Emilie was not going to let him out of her sight.

As the plane took off, Visha remarked, "I'm surprised, Tanya. Usually you don't like involving yourself in other people's problems."

"Yes, well, that's because I don't like long term commitments with no benefits. But this is hardly long term and sometimes I like to do things just because."

"You? Do something without a plan? Should I warn of a cold front bearing down on hell?"

We both shared a laugh, but I could tell Visha was pleased. Her gratitude alone was more than worth the trouble. I just hope she wasn't too upset when the truth came out.

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**November 16, 1929, New York, Unified States**

Jenny grinned as she twirled and flicked her new knife. It had taken her a while to get the hang of it, but damn were these Balisong knives cool! They might not be up to a Bowie when it came to fighting, but nothing, in her sixteen-year-old opinion, could beat them for style. She really had to get something nice for Murdoch this Christmas as a thank you for the great gift.

As she finished her last flick and twirl, some of the idly watching Velvet Iron agents broke into applause. Mixed in the applause was a set coming from the door. Looking around, she blushed a bit as she took in the very handsome and well-dressed young man in the doorway. "Bravo! Bravo, young lady!" came the man's enthusiastic exclamation. "Where did you learn to do that?"

"Oh, y'know, here and there," Jenny said carelessly. "Who're you though?"

"Ah, where are my manners. John Felix Hughes, at your service," he replied, stretching out his hand.

Jenny gave him a firm handshake, "Jenny Brown." Then she blinked. "Wait, Hughes? The movie guy? You're the one who made that movie with big sis Jennifer!"

"Indeed I - "

"John Felix Hughes," came Lena's cold voice. "It's not enough you bug me at all hours, now you're harassing my daughter as well?"

"Excuse me, I don't harass," came the offended reply. "All I want is a single meeting with Jennifer Ecks. If she doesn't want to act for me anymore, then she can say it to my face. Is that so much to ask?"

"I've told you a hundred times, I don't know where she is."

Hughes paused for a moment, then said, "Fine, I won't ask you again. But in exchange, I want her to come down and give a screen test." His hand waved carelessly at Jenny.

"Absolutely not, she has school."

"During Christmas break then."

Jenny was jumping up and down in excitement. "Come on pleaaaase? I wanna see if I can be an actress too!"

Lena rubbed her head. "Hughes, why the hell do you want to drag her into this? She's only sixteen!"

"Are you kidding, woman? Did you see her with that knife? Why do you think I'm chasing after Ecks so bad? Do you know how few actresses can actually play a convincing fighter? I've got a half a dozen ideas and no star to play them!" Hughes whirled around, hands framing Jenny's face. "I can see it now, the return of Jenny E to the silver screen! If you have what it takes, you can be big, my dear!"

Lena sighed as she took in Jenny's pleading eyes. "Fine. But only if her grades are up to scratch. And let's make one damn thing clear. I'm her guardian. You do not film a single frame of her without a proper contract and my permission."

"But of course, I would expect no less from a businesswoman of your caliber."

Sometime later, finally having gotten rid of Hughes, Lena was speaking to her surrogate daughter. "I hope you understand the kind of man he is, Jenny."

"A sleaze?"

"A rich, charming, handsome sleaze. I saw the way you looked at him."

"Just admiring the scenery, Len. He ain't gonna do anything I don't want him to."

"That's my point. He is very good at getting women to do what he wants. He's got a wife and still has a list of mistresses as long as my arm. And you deserve better than to be a notch on his bedpost."

Jenny snorted. "Please. If it does come to that, I ain't gonna be a notch on his bedpost. He'll be the first on mine."