

EYE OF THE CHINOOK

SERIALIZED

A NOVEL

By Homer Kizer

Chapter Twenty

When Peggy, rummy from driving all night, returned home a few minutes after nine, her worry was about being late for work. She never anticipated having her arms pinned against her front door, her legs spread apart, her body patted down, her hands cuffed, feet manacled, then being forced into a car and put on this plane. She never anticipated that her protests would get her electrical jolts from alligator clips attached to her, *I can't even name the parts of me they touched*. She never anticipated sitting in an otherwise empty first-class section for hours, chained like no one would chain even a dog, unable to use the bathroom or eat or get anything to drink. When she couldn't hold it any longer— she was hurrying home to use her bathroom— she really couldn't: her panties are soaked with urine as are her thighs, knees, legs all the way down to her ankles. She's raw where the clips were attached. They gave her enough jolts that she couldn't control her muscles, that she couldn't resist. She would've said anything just to get them to stop, to be able to clean herself up, to be human. She would say anything now, but she hasn't been asked any questions, hasn't been arrested, just handcuffed and chained and shocked, then ferreted away from the Capital. All of her importance meant nothing. Her human rights advocacy, her degrees, her job. Nobody asked who she was.

What's wrong? Why the distance? Where is the anger I should feel, the intensity of the rage, the hatred? Has it been shocked out of me? Have I become the piece of meat that I have been made to feel?

Shades are pulled on the windows in the first-class section so she doesn't know where she's being flown although she has a guess. She really knows why she's trussed up like a Christmas goose, but she can't believe the number of rights and the number of laws being violated. She didn't think this was possible in America. This nation is supposed to have a conscience. She never accepted as factual the claims of Black dissidents that this type of police brutality has been used in inner cities. She thought her government and her President was morally above using political terrorism. She thought the stories she heard of the CIA operatives teaching secret police agencies how to torture subjects were exaggerations, especially the stories of electric prods to genitals. And she wonders how much more torture awaits her. Can she even imagine what she'd say or sign if she is again shocked? She doesn't think so.

She has never thought of herself as physically brave. Mentally brave, yes, but not physically. She sees now that there is no difference. So each passing minute increases the number of things she'll say, the number of things she will admit just to be able to wipe herself clean.

She thinks about women sold into slavery— that happens even now— and she realizes that submitting is easier than resisting. The veneer of freedom is thin. How many more shocks would it take for her to submit to slavery? Not that many.

If she could, she would call Mr. Carter, who would end this immediately. This is why, she knows, she hasn't been arrested.

If she were arrested, she would have to be arraigned, and when arraigned, she would have made sure that both the press and the White House knew what happened to her and what was happening

in Alaska. She should have gone to the President yesterday. It might now be too late, for her will to resist has become a need to survive. Fear of more shocks stops her from even struggling.

The plane is like the earth itself: without reference points, she doesn't seem to be moving, seems rather to be suspended, with heaven outside and hell all around her.

Cramped in the seat, unable to move, she worries about little blood clots forming deep inside her legs, clots that her piss won't wash away or dissolve, clots that will jam together like coffee grounds stopping a sink drain to prevent blood from being pumped through veins or arteries. Without blood, life dies. She is flesh and blood and breath. Her soul will cease to be. And she seems to feel clots begin to occlude a vein to her heart.

Her heart muscles weaken as they did when she was shocked. She wants this all to be over, to be a nightmare that will end when she awakens. She's sorry she got involved with Ben, sorry that she didn't report him immediately, sorry she didn't let him take her car last night. Then none of this would be happening. Then she'd have no fear of more shocks. Then she could ignore the constricting muscles that scream for more oxygen, that scream NOT IN AMERICA, that are dying even as she realizes her screams will never be heard, that her fears have paralyzed her physically and mentally.

Her legs cramp as do her arms. Her back hurts. Her ankles are swollen. She has to move, has to. But she can't. She won't in case they think she's struggling to free herself.

She can't even move her feet for fear. She can barely wiggle her toes, her fingers. And even though her mouth seems dry, she drools and can't wipe the spittle off her chin. She can't do anything for herself, and she doesn't again try to hold back either the bile or her bowels. She's become so-much meat.

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