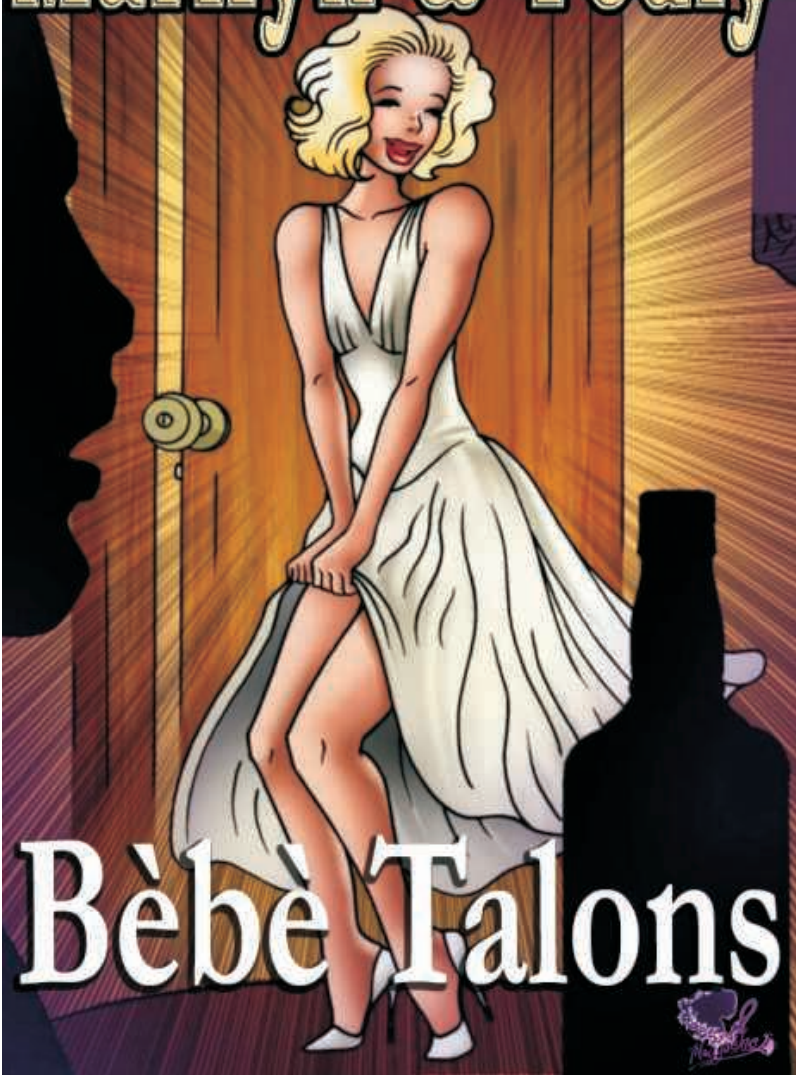


Marilyn & Tedly



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Marilyn & Tedly

by Béb  Talons

I

Captain Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock leaned back in his office chair and held his head gently in his gnarled hands. Captain Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock was nursing the mother of all hangovers and the steady tap-tapping of a typewriter coming through the closed hatch wasn’t doing him any favors either.

The evening before, a Sunday (and he knew he had to go to work the next morning, but he had gotten drunk in spite of his best intentions), he had met some pilot friends and they had gotten to speaking airplane and he had just lost count of how many drinks he had imbibed.

All he could remember was drinking, then waking up in his room at the B.O.Q., feeling like death warmed over. On second thought, he didn't feel that good either!

Back to the incessant tap-tapping. . . "God damn it, Chief!" he bellowed, "Will you for God's sake stop that infernal tap-tapping on that fucking machine?"

Thankfully, it stopped after a moment or two and he tried to relax in his chair.

Then, the tap-tapping started again and it seemed to have picked up speed!

"Sum-na-bitch!" he roared, jumping to his feet and throwing open the hatch. "God damn it, Chief!" he bellowed. "I said to stop that damned infernal racket! Can't a man get a little peace and quiet in his own fucking office?" he demanded angrily.

He looked through bleary eyes, fully expecting to see the multi-striped arm and beribboned chest of Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson sitting behind the outer desk. Instead, he saw an Able Seaman in dress whites seated at the Dictaphone, typing furiously, his eyes closed in concentration, his fingers flying over the keys with astonishing speed!

"Who in the Hell are you?" Captain Wheelock roared, but the Seaman paid him no mind, but kept right on tap-tapping as fast as his fingers would move.

"I said, who in Hell are you?" Captain Wheelock bellowed in frustration. Then he saw the ear phones covering the man's ears that prevented his hearing anything extraneous.

Angrily, Captain Wheelock grabbed an ear phone and yanked it free. "I said, who in Hell are you?" he bellowed at the top of his voice.

"Oh, oh, eek!" the startled young man squeaked and jumped out of his chair, bringing the heavy Dictaphone machine crashing down to the floor, right atop the same sore great toe the Captain had injured when he had tripped leaving the B.O.Q. that very morning!

"Holy Jesus, Mary and Joseph!" Captain Theodore "Ted" M. (for Morgan) Wheelock bellowed as he danced around, his hand grasping his sore toe trying to ease the renewed throbbing.

"Sorry, Sir," the Seaman apologized, "but I didn't hear you. What may I do for you, Sir?"

"First of all, who in blazes are you and where is my yeoman, Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson?" he demanded imperiously. "Where is old Horse's Ass?" he bellowed again.

The Seaman seemed to quail before the Captain's verbal barrage as he replied hesitantly, softly, "Why I would imagine he's long since Stateside by this time, Sir."

"Stateside? What's he doing Stateside? I never signed no leave papers for him!"

"No, Sir," the Seaman agreed, "Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson was retired with full military honors at retreat last Friday afternoon, Sir!" he tried to explain.

"Retire? Why that simple son of a bitch hasn't been in the fucking Navy more than ten or fifteen years, if that fucking long!" he objected, his forehead wrinkling as he worked himself into a frenzy.

“Actually, he had over forty eight years on active duty, Sir,” the Seaman replied gently.

“Hell’s bells! No one ever tells me a damned thing! What’re you doing here?” he demanded.

‘I wouldn’t wonder, with that attitude!’ the Seaman thought. Aloud, “Yes, Sir, Ensign Maxwell sent my reassignment orders down through channels a week ago. Didn’t you get them? When they were returned to her they had been initialed by you, Sir.

Vaguely, Ted remembered signing a whole bunch of papers a few days ago, but had taken his Yeoman’s word that it was all, “just routine paperwork, Sir.””

‘God damned Dawson! That bastard hid them from me in the fucking pile, knowing I’d be up shit creek when I did find out! Damn him all to Hell!’ he thought viciously. “OK, OK, I get the message, I have been screwed royally! What’s your name, Seaman?” he asked in a quieter tone of voice.

“I am able Seaman Marlin Monroe and I have been assigned as your replacement clerk, Sir.”

‘Oh, great! Another one still wet behind the fucking ears!’ he thought maliciously. Aloud, “I suppose you are familiar with Navy procedures as pertains to resupply and requisitions?” he demanded.

“Yes, Sir. Ensign Maxwell briefed me most thoroughly.”

“Oh, she did, did she?” Ted asked absently.

The Seaman nodded in agreement. “Yes, Sir. She wanted me to get up to speed as soon as possible, Sir,” he added shyly.

“All right, what in Hell were you doing with that infernal typewriter machine?”

“Why, I was typing up your last week’s dictation, Sir. Somehow it didn’t get done,” he explained.

“That fucking Horse’s Ass Dawson!” Wheelock stormed. “If I ever catch up with that cocksucker, I’ll kill the bastard, then I’ll punch his fucking lights out!” he raged angrily.

Captain Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock and Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson had taken an instant dislike to one another the very first day they had met.

Dawson hated reassigned fly boys like Wheelock and Wheelock hated petty officers who thought they were smarter than the rest of the Navy!

They had been sniping at each other for four years with neither the clear winner.

“Carry on, Seaman,” Ted retreated through the hatch and closed it behind him. His headache had seemed to have almost dissipated and he pulled his in-basket towards him. Taking the first letter, he saw that it was from Fleet Supply wanting to know the status of some damned doo hickey or another.

“Seaman Monroe!” he bellowed. “Get your sorry ass in here!”

He waited a minute, but there was no response.

Again, he bellowed at the top of his lungs, “Monroe, get in here, NOW!”

Still no response.

Angrily, he strode to the hatch, threw it open and saw that once more Monroe was engrossed in his work. Grabbing an ear phone, he yanked it off roughly. “Damn it, Monroe! I been calling you for five minutes! Why didn’t you answer me?”

Once more, the startled Seaman jumped in fright and once more the heavy Dictaphone fell to the floor with the same predictable result. Once again, it landed directly atop Captain Ted Wheelock's sore, still throbbing great toe!

Once more, "Holy Jesus, Mary and Joseph!" Captain Theodore "Ted" M. (for Morgan) Wheelock belated and once more he danced around the room holding his great toe and whimpering as stabbing pain rushed over him.

"Sir!" the startled Seaman asked, "Why didn't you use the intercom to call me?" he asked softly.

"Intercom? What fucking intercom?" Ted belated.

"Why the one on your telephone, Sir!" the amazed Seaman answered.

"Show me, dammit!" Ted ordered.

"Yes, Sir, when you want my attention, just press this button on your phone and it lights up a light on my phone. If I'm hooked up to the Dictaphone, it buzzes softly in my ear to alert me to incoming."

"Well, I be damned!" Ted replied in amazement. "How long's that been there?"

"It's standard equipment for all Navy phones, Sir," the bewildered Seaman answered. "Has been for many years now."

"That son-of-a-bitchin' Horse's Ass Dawson never said a fucking word about any intercom! Damn him to Hell and gone!" he raged inwardly. Back pedaling to cover his confusion, Ted murmured, "I did not know. You can be sure I will use it in future."

"It will make life a whole lot easier on both of us, Sir, especially since your foot and my poor old Dic-

taphone seem to have a fatal attraction for one another!" he smiled brightly. "What did you need me for, Sir?" he asked politely.

"It's this letter from Fleet. They want to know our status on some damned doo dad or another."

"May I?" Seaman Monroe held out his hand and Ted passed the sheaf of computer print over to him. Stepping to his desk, Monroe leafed through the pages, stopped, ran his finger down the row of print, stopped, made a pencil tick at one line, then leafed through the pages again, stopping further on through the stack where he once more ran his finger down the row of printed words and numbers. He repeated this procedure several more times, then stood up-right.

Smiling, Monroe informed Ted, "You may tell Fleet to continue as scheduled."

Ted stared at the Seaman in amazement. "That's it? Are you sure?" he asked dubiously.

"Oh, yes, Sir, it's obvious when you sort through the chaff for nuggets of pertinent information."

"Show me!" Ted ordered.

"Surely," Monroe agreed with a small smile. Once more his fingers flew across the pages and down the printed columns. "See? We are authorized four items." He made a pencil tick, flipping through the pages again. "And here," he pointed, "we are projected to use three as replacements for these ships of the line being retro-fitted." Again a tick, and he flipped more pages and pointed to another line for a bewildered Captain Ted Wheelock.

"That will give us three used items to turn in to Fleet. Our projected input is three replacement

units and here,” he made another pencil tick as his fingers flew down the pages, “we will once more be at our authorized complement of four units. Therefore, just tell Fleet to proceed as scheduled.” He smiled at the astonished Ted. “See?”

Ted did not **see**, but he couldn’t admit that to Monroe. “Well, I will be damned! That fucking Dawson would have kept me on pins and needles for a week or more before telling me this!”

“I am not Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson, Sir!” Seaman Monroe answered snippily, drawing himself up to his full five foot nothing.

“No, Seaman, that you aren’t! And damned glad I am of it too!” Ted praised, laughing.

Turning on his heel, he strode into his office and closed the hatch. “Now, damn you Charley!” (his friend at Fleet), “stew a little. It’ll do you good, you s.o.b.! Payback’s a bitch!” He laughed to himself.

After a few minutes, he was about to push the intercom, but thought better of it. Placing his cover on his head, he strode through the hatch and passed Monroe’s desk. “If Ensign Maxwell calls, tell her I’ll be at Flight Ops.”

When Monroe didn’t answer, Ted pushed his button. When Monroe looked up, he removed an ear phone. “Yes, Sir?”

Ted repeated his order and left the building.

As he strode across the windy, rain swept tarmac, he had to clamp his hand down on his cover to prevent its loss, until he felt himself bump into something soft, wriggly, with all sorts of blonde hair swirling in his face, sweet smelling and most definitely female!

“Darn you, Captain Ted Wheelock,” came the dulcet tones of Ensign Marlana Maxwell, “just because you’re a Captain and I’m just a lowly peon Ensign, doesn’t mean you can blithely ignore my salute! I’ve half a mind to put you on report, I do, I do!” she sputtered in frustration.

Ensign Marlana Maxwell, all five foot nothing and one hundred pounds of rounded femininity, long blonde hair, blue eyes and a body to die for, glared up at him.

“Why, hello, Ensign Luscious!” he greeted taking her arm. I didn’t see you through all the rain! And the half a mind I see looks pretty darn tasty!”

“A poor excuse is worse than no excuse!” she pouted. “Did your new clerk show up this morning? I had to go all the way to PacCom to get a qualified clerk to replace the Master Chief.”

“Yeah. Speaking of that son-of-a-bitch, why didn’t you tell me he was retiring from the Navy? It came as a Helluva surprise when I found Monroe sitting in his chair this morning!”

“Why, Captain Ted Wheelock, I sent you those orders at least two weeks ago! And you must have seen them because I have them initialed by you in my office files even as we speak!”

‘That fucking Dawson!’ he thought bitterly. ‘He set me up big time!’

Aloud, “That Horse’s Ass Dawson!” he grouched.

“Why, I thought the Master Chief was just adorable!” Ensign Maxwell smiled.

“Yeah, if you like black widow spiders!” he muttered. “You up for some good Navy coffee?” he asked to change the subject.

“You mean that swill they serve at Flight Ops?” she asked, grimacing prettily.

“Years and years of experimentation went into the production of that coffee!” he objected.

“Yeah, all the way back to Alexander the Great, I bet!” she snapped pettishly.

“Nah, he never had no Navy!”

She linked her arm in his and walked closely beside him, her hip bumping his lame leg regularly, innocently, deliberately.

“Watch it there, Ensign Luscious,” Ted cautioned with a wide grin, “I bruise easily!”

“You’re just a decrepit old man!” she taunted.

“I am not decrepit!” he objected hotly. “I’m just badly bruised!”

“Excuses, excuses! You’re just full of excuses, you decrepit old man!”

“I may be a dirty old man, but I am not decrepit!” Ted objected again.

“OK, I’ll buy the dirty old man bit, though!” she laughed, holding his arm tight.

“Humph!” from an unimpressed Ted.

In moments, they were seated in a booth at Flight Ops, Ted with his Navy coffee, Marlena with a pot of brewed tea that she much preferred.

“So, Tedly, where are you taking me for dinner tonight?” Marlena asked quietly.

“Hunh, is that tonight?” he asked, spitting into his coffee in surprise.

She pouted prettily. “Look, if you don’t want to take me, I can always call that cute li’l Lieutenant,

J. G., over at Fleet. What's his name again? Oh, yes, Jamie Cartwright . . ." she mused.

"Speaking of Fleet, Monroe got me out of a big hassle with them," Ted smiled in remembrance, changing the subject deliberately.

"Oh, how? Tell me, Tedly."

As Ted told the story, Marlana listened until the very end. "So, you are going to treat your friend, Captain Charles "Charlie" Charleston at Fleet like Chief Dawson would have treated you?"

"Won't hurt Charlie none to fret a day or so," Ted dismissed the whole thing airily. "He's done the same to me more times than I care to remember!"

"But it's probably of concern to Fleet!" she protested. "Besides, two wrongs do not make a right!"

"Look, Ensign Luscious, Fleet's only concern is covering Fleet's ass!" he insisted.

"It's still not right," she insisted.

"Do him good!" Ted repeated.

"Now," Marlana changed the subject, "where are you taking me dining and dancing?"

"Can't go dancing, my leg's acting up with all this rain," he complained.

"Ooh! What if the flight surgeon heard you admit that? You would be grounded for life and out on Civvie Street in a heart beat!"

"He ain't gonna find out!"

"Then what time are you picking me up, Tedly?" she smirked.

Ted sighed.

He never could figure this tiny woman out!

And she was just as determined that he never would!

II

Captain Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock, aged forty three, an Annapolis graduate with twenty two years of active service behind him, was dodging a bullet, the bullet being the Port Flight Surgeon who kept him desk bound instead of in the cockpit of his beloved Tomcat where he felt he really belonged! For the best interests of the Navy, of course!

From the tender age of three when Ted had first observed birds in flight, his driving ambition had been to fly. To that end, he had devoted his time and earnings to learning the basics of flight, earning his basic pilot’s license at the age of twelve, his multi-engine license at age fifteen, and was well on his way to being jet certified when he was nominated to the Naval Academy at the ripe old age of seventeen and two months. Upon graduation, his first choice had been the U S Air Force and their four engine jets, but when he discovered the Air Force took a rather jaundiced view of pilots not Air Force Academy trained, he went for Naval Aviation instead and soon proved his worth by mastering the Tomcat fighter in record time. On the fast track, Ted had risen through the ranks to Lieutenant Commander before he had twelve years of service and was predicted to become a Rear Admiral at twenty, an unheard of thing!

But, even though Ted had his head firmly in the clouds, he had been reminded by his mother to,

“Never forget your roots in the Appalachian Mountains of West By God Virginia, son! You will never get the Appalachians out of your soul!” And so it was that Ted realized that when it came time to retire, he would return to his beloved Mountains with few regrets!

He had often flown over those same mountains and marveled at how green and peaceful they looked at thirty thousand feet. He would gaze at them longingly and dream of the day he could return. Except to do that successfully, he would have to continue to fly.

Now it was for a very good reason that Ted couldn't fly any more, he had been grounded some six years previously and only by sheer determination had he avoided involuntary retirement from the Navy for the inconsequential fact of a partially twisted knee cap suffered when a student driver had crashed their Tomcat into the flight deck during a night landing practice exercise on ***The Big Stick*** that had almost killed the both of them!

That had effectively removed Ted from consideration for ever becoming an Admiral!

Ted was told later that he came out of the Tomcat in flames, turned around and reached inside the burning craft to pull his Lieutenant J. G. R.E.O. (Radio Electronics Officer) to safety. He barely got to the deck when the plane exploded, ruining some sixty six million nine hundred thousand dollars of United States Navy property!

For his heroic actions, then Commander Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism and utter disregard for life and limb above and beyond. . .

It seemed his Tomcat R.E.O. was the only son of a senior United States Senator who was also Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee!

Later, he had been promoted to Captain and sent to Japan to fly an office desk while he continued to recuperate from his injuries.

“Sure beats involuntary retirement!” he observed later. “’Cept it ain’t flying!”

When he had regained consciousness, he found the grinning face of his partner hovering just out of his reach. “When I get my hands on you, you little son-of-a-bitch,” Ted had threatened, “I’m going to kill you! Then I’m going to wring your fucking, scrawny, little turkey neck! I don’t know what I’ll do to you after that! Probably murdelize you! Or worse!”

“Too late, Boss man! My father, His Royal Lordship Senator Jerry P. Graham, Esq., has already set me up for the fucking firing squad! God, are the Big Brass pissed off! I have to repay them for all that fucking damage! Hell, even if’n they promote me to ten star Admiral, it’ll take me at least two or three or more million years to pay it off!” he laughed.

“Yeah, I’d hate to have to do all that paperwork!” Ted winced.

“Yeah, that’s what the Air Boss said! And he has to do it!” the other man laughed.

“Well, into every life some rain must fall!” Ted quipped. “Where the Hell are we anyhow?”

“Beats the living dog shit outta me, Boss Man, but wherever it is, the nurses are to die for! Wait’ll you see the luscious blonde Lieutenant J. G. who gives us our baths!” He grinned evilly.

Ted blushed. “You’re shitting me, right?”

“Nope! Gets right down to business she does!” he laughed. “You’re gonna love it!”

“My God in Heaven!” Ted moaned, humiliated beyond all reason. “I can’t believe it!”

“Have you ever known me to snow you, Boss Man?” Jerry asked, a pained expression coming over his face.

“Only about a million times!” Ted retorted.

“Now, Boss, let’s let bygones be bygones,” Jerry groaned.

“How long we been here?” Ted asked again.

“Let’s see,” the other man mused, “Not counting the week we spent in sick bay on **The Big Stick** and the two days transport time on the AirVac and the six or seven weeks we been here, I’d guess about two months, give or take a month or two or three. Proolly more’n that. But, what do I know? I’m just a lowly Lieutenant J. G. and like mushrooms, they keep me in the dark and feed me horse shit!”

“Holy shit!” Ted blurted.

“Oops, din din time!” and the other man dove for his bed as a pretty brunette nurse wheeled the food cart up next to Ted’s bed.

“Well, Captain,” she greeted brightly, “T’is good to see you’re awake! Are you hungry now?”

“Nurse,” Ted groaned as hunger pangs struck his stomach, right now I could eat the east end of a horse headed west!”

She laughed merrily. “I should hope our food is better than that! Here, let me help you sit up, or would you rather I feed you?” she offered, her cheeks dimpling prettily.

Ted blushed. "I think I can manage to feed myself!"

"Aw, Boss Man," his cohort teased, "let her feed you. She needs the practice for her girl scout merit badge! 'Sides, I wanna watch!"

"Now, Lieutenant Graham, you stop that or I'll put you on report!" the nurse chided.

"Go right ahead, beautiful!" he laughed. "You know us'n's been in an aircraft accident and are outta our ever loving so-called minds! You've gotta be crazy to put up with that crap!"

"You are impossible!" she smiled at him indulgently.

"Nope, I'm easy!" he retorted with a wide grin.

Once she had moved away, Ted asked, "So tell me kiddo, what really happened out there? My memory's all kinda bent outta shape, yuh know?" he confessed warily.

"Oh, nuttin' much. You just hauled my sorry ass outta the cockpit just before the fucking plane took it in its mind to blow a gasket! Hell, blew us right across the deck and up against the railing! Took the firemen an hour or more to shove the wreckage over the side so the other guys could land! There were some pissed off drivers up there!" he giggled. "Hell, they gave you an M. O. H. for it!"

Ted looked at the papers Jerry handed him and read about his M. O. H. and the promotion, then looked up at his companion.

"You never told me you were a Senator's son!" Ted accused.

"Didn't think it mattered," was the off-hand response. "I was there on my own, not because my old

man happens to be Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee!"

"Holy crap!" Ted whispered.

"That's what the old man does every day, he takes a holy crap! If you don't believe me, just ask him! Modest, he ain't!"

"Neither's his son!" Ted retorted with a wry smile.

"Oh, well, the apple never falls too far from the tree," Jerry laughed.

"What apple?" Ted asked, losing track of his companion's rambling tale.

"Exactly!"

In moments, Ted was fast asleep.

III

Several months passed in which Ted's office ran like well oiled machinery, achieving an efficiency rating it had never shown under Master Chief Petty Officer Horace Asa Dawson. And the more able, Able Seaman Marlin Monroe, worked his tail to the bone to keep things ship shape, the more and more that Captain Theodore "Ted" M. (for Morgan) Wheelock came to depend on him, and the more and more that Ted became aware of Able Seaman Marlin Monroe as a person in his own right!

Several times, Ted caught himself cursing the Navy Regs that prohibited fraternization between enlisted rates and commissioned officers. As time progressed, Ted came to rely upon Marlin exactly like he would a trusted wife or helpmate, and the secret knowledge of this made him blush helplessly.

One day, he had engaged Monroe in conversation in which Monroe had confessed, "I had to stretch to the fullest to hit the mark for minimum height for enlistment, and I ate about ten pounds of bananas to hit minimum weight. God, was I sick later? But, it didn't matter, I was in! And I still like munching on bananas!" He grinned and Ted blushed at the sudden erotic thought of Monroe peeling a banana and then munching on it!

Monroe had gone to Great Lakes Naval Training Center for basic and then to the D.C. area where he was taught to be a disbursing and resupply clerk. After that, he had been assigned to Ted's office and that was where he remained to date. Other than this, Ted learned very little about Able Seaman Marlin Monroe's personal life off-duty!

Ted continued to court Ensign Marlina Maxwell, but no matter how much charm he used, no matter the subtlety of his romantic overtures, Marlina would go only so far with him and no further.

He was beginning to lose faith in his ability to charm women and it frustrated him no end.

Monroe continued to perform brilliantly until one day, Ted called him into his office, looking up with expectation until his face turned dark with anger. "How dare you appear in my office out of uniform?" he raged at the hapless Seaman.

"Bit, Sir, I am in uniform! It's the same one I have worn for weeks!" Monroe sputtered.

"Then explain this, Mister!" Ted stormed, tossing a sheet of paper across his desk.

Monroe looked at the paper, reading quickly. "Why, these are promotion orders, Sir!" he gasped,

“And I’ve been promoted to Petty Officer Third Class!” he whispered in awe.

“Like I said,” Ted smiled and tossed new rate stripes on his desk. “When you are dressed in your proper uniform, report back to me immediately!” he ordered sternly.

“Yes, Sir!” Monroe drew himself up smartly, saluted, and withdrew.

About fifteen minutes later, Ted heard a timid knock on his hatch. “Come!” he bellowed.

Monroe entered and stood at attention before Ted’s desk. “Petty Officer Third Class Marlin Monroe reporting to the Captain as ordered, Sir!”

Ted looked up. “Much better, Petty Officer. Dismissed, Petty officer.”

Monroe hesitated.

Ted looked up. “Yes, is there something else on your mind, Petty Officer?”

“Yes, Sir,” Monroe answered. “Thank you for the promotion, Sir! I never expected it!”

“Petty Officer Third Class Marlin Monroe,” Ted sat back in his chair, “If I didn’t think you deserved that promotion, you would still be a Seaman Recruit, got it?”

“Yes, Sir!” Monroe saluted briskly, turned on his heel and left the office, closing the hatch behind his back. “Whoopie!” he exulted when he was alone. Ted heard his loud whoop faintly through the closed hatch and smiled to himself with deep satisfaction.

When he had proposed this promotion to now Lieutenant J. G. Marlina Maxwell, she had been en-

thusiastic and all for it. It had sailed through the selection committee.

Still, she kept Ted at arm's length and permitted him to go only so far until he came up against a solid brick-like wall!

One day, Ted got a notice that his Petty Officer Third Class was being transferred to another post in accordance with Navy Policy dictating such changes as needed. When Ted called Personnel to protest this reassignment, he was met with the nasal tones of the newly assigned Ensign Pauline "Call me Polly" Lewis, recent Annapolis graduate and vastly proud of her newly acquired power and "importance."

"Let me speak with the director of Personnel, Lt J.G. Marlena Maxwell," he asked crisply.

"Lt. Maxwell has been reassigned to the Admiral's personal staff," came the pert reply.

After some dancing back and forth, the person on the other end of the line identified herself as Ensign Lewis, newly appointed Director of Personnel.

"I am the Director of Personnel, Ensign Pauline Lewis," was the nasal response.

When Ted protested the change, citing his efficiency record since Monroe had come aboard and he requested the transfer be rescinded, leaving things at status quo.

"What is the Petty Officer's name?" Ensign Lewis asked nasally, setting Ted's teeth on edge.

"Monroe, Marlin Monroe."

"Hold one second please," and he was put on hold.

Ted sat for five minutes considering the option of hanging up and calling back when the nasal voice came on the line. "I don't know who you are, Mister," she snarled, "but whoever you are, I would advise you to stop harassing a Naval Ensign on official business!"

"Hey, hold on there, Ensign!" Ted protested. "I'm Captain Theodore Wheelock in the Repo Resupply Department. What is your problem?"

"Captain, if you really are a Captain, there is no such sailor assigned to this port with the name Marilyn Monroe! Now I suggest you quit bothering me and get back to whatever mischief it was you were hatching!"

"Hold on, Ensign! The name is Marlin. That's M-A-R-L-I-N and the last name is Monroe. He's a Petty Officer Third Class who works for me as my chief clerk. To reassign him now is not in the best interests of the Navy nor of the efficiency of this Port!"

He could feel the ice coming through the phone. "We do have a sailor by that name and rate, but he is being reassigned to Hawaii immediately. I shall obtain a replacement for him in due time. Good day, Sir!" and the phone went dead.

"Well, fuck you, Ensign Lewis!" He stormed through the hatch. "Hold down the fort, Monroe. I'll be back!" he growled, snarling "Arnie" style as he clamped his cover atop his head.

Monroe grinned. "Yes, Sir!" Monroe had gotten used to his Captain's rough style.

Ted stormed into the Admiral's office, coming up short at the sight of Marlina Maxwell seated in the secretary's chair, except this woman wore the twin

gold stripes of a full Lieutenant on her sleeve. The woman looked up. "May I help you, Captain?"

Immediately, Ted recognized his mistake and he tried to cover. "Er, you look just like Lieutenant, J. G. Marlena Maxwell."

The woman smiled brightly. "I get that a lot!" she admitted. "I'm Lt Maxine Martin."

"Is the Admiral free?" Ted asked, chastened.

"Not really, but he is reasonable," she quipped with a bright smile.

'Oh, Lord,' Ted thought, 'another out-of-work comedienne!'

"Might I see him?" Ted asked, quietly. "It's rather urgent."

The woman turned, pressed a button, "Admiral Havens? There's a Captain Wheelock here to see you. He says it's urgent."

From her intercom came the squawk of what sounded like a distressed penguin. "Go right on in, Captain," she invited waving her hand at the hatch nonchalantly.

Admiral Thomas Havens rose from his chair and held out his hand. "Hey, Ted, you broken down old war horse! How the Hell you been?"

"Better since I survived that fool Graham's messing up my fucking knee!" he bemoaned the fact.

"How is the Senator's son?" The Admiral asked, grinning.

"Promoted to Lieutenant Commander, last I heard. They're still trying to make him pay for that busted Tomcat!" Ted laughed.

“Good luck with that!” the Admiral laughed. “Just how long would it take to pay sixty six million plus for one of those babies?”

“The way Jerry figures it, about twelve million years or so,” Ted laughed.

“God, even if they promoted him to twelve star Admiral, he could never pay it off in his life time!” the Admiral observed with a laconic chuckle.

“Sure wish I could drive one again!” Ted mused longingly.

“Just stay out of the way of the flight surgeon and you’ll be OK.”

They spent a few more minutes reminiscing about their days in the air before the Admiral turned serious, “Now, what can I do for you this fine morning, Captain?”

“Sir, as you are well aware, Ensign Marlena Maxwell was promoted to Lieutenant, J. G. just last month and she was replaced by recent Annapolis grad, Ensign Pauline Lewis.”

“Ah yes, ‘call me Polly’ Lewis. I knew her old man back when we were plebes at Navy U. He was a horse’s ass then and his daughter is an exact duplicate!” the Admiral laughed. “Once a horse’s ass, always a horse’s ass!” he snorted derisively.

“She wants to disrupt the efficiency of this port, Sir!”

The Admiral sat up straight. “I be damned! What’s she got stuck up her scrawny little ass this time?” Well he remembered their last tussle.

“Sir, she wants to take the best damned yeoman we have ever had in resupply and requisition and reassign him to Hawaii! As you may recall, Hawaii

HQ has Petty Officer Third Classes coming outta their asses and sending our Monroe there will serve no useful purpose, to them nor to us, especially us.”

“Yes, I have noticed a dramatic improvement in the efficiency of your department since Dawson retired. Tell me more,” the Admiral invited.

“Well, Sir, I tried to talk to Ensign Lewis, but her mind is like a sackful of shit, all filled up and no place to flush it. She refused point blank to rescind Monroe’s transfer orders. Now, Admiral, I hate to bother you with such a mundane complaint, but I would take it as a great personal favor if you could intercede on Monroe’s behalf.”

“And thereby save your ass into the bargain, eh?” the Admiral laughed. “Say no more, Ted, I will look into this personally. She’ll listen to me or else!” he smiled evilly.

Ted stood. “Thank you, Admiral. I owe you big time!”

The Admiral grinned sardonically, “Again!”

Ted saluted and left the office in a much happier frame of mind than when he had entered.

“Have a good day, Captain,” Lt Martin smiled as he came out.

Once more he was struck by how much she looked like Marlina. . .

He nodded, then whistling “Anchors Aweigh,” he left and strolled back to his office.

‘Ah,’ he thought contentedly, ‘Life is so sweet!’

IV

Ted had all but forgotten his run in with Ensign Lewis, shepherding Monroe through another promotion, this time to Petty Officer Second Class, with the same predictable result, a chewing out for being out of uniform, a pause, and another heartfelt thanks from Monroe to a blushing Ted Wheelock.

Captain Theodore "Ted" M. (for Morgan) Wheelock couldn't understand why he had this overpowering urge to take Monroe into his arms and kiss those full, bee-stung lips passionately!

'I'm not like that!' he raged inwardly. 'But he does have the cutest, tightest little ass that wriggles just like jello when he walks!' He sighed in frustration, his mind continuing his musings, 'and the way his ass fills out those tighty whitey Navy pants. Damn! I can almost see those pretty pink panty lines!'

One Friday afternoon when Monroe stumbled from a chair he had been using to hang a picture in Ted's inner office and fell headlong into the surprised Captain's outstretched arms. A startled look came over Monroe's face as he gazed into Ted's love-sick eyes and his plump, kissable lips opened in invitation, his sweet breath soft against Ted's cheek, his blue eyes closing in anticipation. Before he thought, Ted moved his face toward those lips until his were pressed firmly against their gentle liquidity.

A jolt of electricity stabbed Ted's body and he was surprised at the intensity of the feeling. Never had he had this reaction from a woman! Monroe's lips flowed under Ted's assault as his arms slipped up and around Ted's neck, holding on for dear life! The kiss seemed to last an eternity, but actually was

less than a second or two before Ted moved back and stared at Monroe in shock.

“Did. . . did I. . . just ki. . . kiss you, Petty Officer?” he asked, his mind in a daze.

“Certainly not, Sir,” Monroe was breathing raggedly. “You most assuredly did not!”

“I didn’t think so, Petty officer,” he mumbled, his brain reeling while he continued to hold the pliant boy in his encompassing arms.

“No, Sir!” Monroe insisted quietly. “That would be fraternization!”

“Of course,” Ted agreed without thinking.

“Er, Sir?” Monroe interrupted Ted’s thoughts.

“Hunh?”

“You can let go of me now, Sir, I have regained my balance.”

“Oh, sure,” Ted mumbled, releasing the boy and sitting down heavily.

“Will that be all, Sir?” Monroe asked, his breathing evening out.

“Yeah, you’re dismissed,” he waved airily.

“Yes, Sir!” and Monroe came to attention, clicked his heels, turned and hastened from the office, a smile of secret delight on his lips.

With the hatch closed behind him, Monroe pressed his fingers to his lips and relived the kiss. He sighed in remembrance, he would never forget it!

That evening Monroe related to Marlena the whole incident, leaving nothing out.

“Oh, Lena,” he cried, “I wanted him to hold me forever!”



She smiled at him lovingly and gently whispered, “Well, I know what’s bothering you, little one,” she teased as she held him close in her arms with his face pressed between her soft, warm breasts.

“Well, I wish someone would tell me!” Monroe blurted, on the verge of angry tears.

“You’re in love with your Captain Wheelock!” Marlena announced.

Monroe said nothing in his defense because what she said was true! He ***was*** in love with his Captain and it was tearing his heart apart.

“But, don’t worry, little one,” she whispered, “one day, after you’ve had the surgery to repair His honest mistake, you will be a real woman and then you can pursue your Captain Wheelock to your heart’s content and no one can deny you!”

“God, would that that day would come soon,” Monroe cried in frustration. “Oh, Lena, you are so right! I am in love with Ted Wheelock and I think that he loves me too. It’s just this thing between us that stops him from doing what we both want so desperately!” he cried.

“Someday, little Linnie,” Marlena soothed, “you just have to be patient! It will all work out, one way or another, it will all work out!”

She held him close against her breasts, her soft hands smoothing the hair from his eyes and soon he fell asleep, to dream of what might be. . . some day!

He slept peacefully the rest of the night.

Meanwhile, in his consternation and confusion, Captain Theodore “Ted” M. (for Morgan) Wheelock did what he usually did. When confronted by any insurmountable, impossible, undeniable problem, he got drunk. And he stayed drunk all through Saturday and Sunday, and was only partially aware of his surroundings on Monday morning.

On his way to his office from the B.O.Q., he stopped abruptly, unable and unwilling to face the confrontation with Monroe that awaited him. He shook his head angrily and turned off, heading directly for Flight Ops and a hot cuppa Java, Navy style!

He had no more than sat down when Ensign Pauline Lewis slid into the seat across the table, a pained look on her face.

He looked up from his second cuppa Java. "What's the matter, Ensign, why the long face? Did someone step on your pet black widow spider this morning and put it out your misery?"

"Have you been to your office this morning, Captain?" she countered nastily, her nasal tones setting Ted's nerves on edge again.

"Not yet," Ted admitted. "Why?"

"You'll find things have changed dramatically when you do get there!" she sneered, sliding out of her side of the booth and all but running through the huge glass doors.

"Wonder what's got her panties caught in her crack now?" Ted wondered, leisurely drinking his coffee before walking slowly, reluctantly to his office. "Let's get it over with!" he thought miserably.

As he opened the hatch, he noticed that Monroe's chair was empty. His Petty Officer Second Class was nowhere in sight. "Damn that fucking Lewis!" Ted raged. "What's that cunt been up to now?"

On Monroe's desk was a small card with a telephone number on it. Ted recognized it almost immediately as being one of N. I. S.'s (Naval Investigative Services) cards. "Now what do those bastards want

with Monroe?" he spoke aloud. "Bad enough when they wanted to court martial that fucking Graham and me for crunching our Tomcat!" he remembered.

He dialed the number and waited. Presently, "Hello, this is Lieutenant Marvin R. Brownlee at Port N. I. S. How may I help you?"

"This is Captain Theodore M. Wheelock of the repo-depo speaking. When I got to work this morning, I found your card on my Petty Officer's desk instead of him working away. Why?"

"Ah, yes. . . hold one?"

"Don't put me on hold!" Ted barked, but the line went dead anyway.

Presently, the same smarmy voice answered, "Ah, yes, fraternization, a Naval enlisted man with a Naval female commissioned officer. They're in the port brig awaiting disposition of their case."

"You're outta yer fucking tree," Ted raged. "Fraternization, my ass! With who?"

"Let me see, oh yes, Lieutenant J. G. Marlina Maxwell. They were observed consorting in the Ginza Saturday evening."

"Now that's a crock of shit!" Ted exploded. "This past weekend, Petty Officer Second Class Marlin Monroe was at a Naval conference in Yokohama and there are twenty Admirals and Admirals' Aides who can verify that fact. You got the wrong Petty Officer, Lieutenant Brown nose!"

"That's Brownlee, Wheelock!" the man corrected angrily.

"Like I said, Lt. Brown nose!" Ted snapped. "And I'm Captain Wheelock to you, Lieutenant!"

And Ted hung the phone up before he really lost his temper.

Raging inwardly, he drove his APV (All Purpose Vehicle) to the brig, parked and stormed inside. "I demand to see Petty Officer Second Class Marlin Monroe and Lt J.G. Marlena Maxwell right now!" he told the startled Marine Captain behind the desk.

"I can't do that, Sir!" the Captain apologized. "Lieutenant Brownlee was quite specific that these prisoners be held incognito and allowed no visitors, especially no Navy Captains!"

"Captain Jessup," Ted roared seeing the man's name tag, "If I don't see my Petty Officer and the Lieutenant in the next two minutes, you'll be a guest of honor in your own establishment if I have to put you there myself!"

"Yes, Sir, I'll obey, but only because you out-rank me and gave me a direct order."

"Good man!" Ted calmed down immediately.

Captain Jessup called a Sergeant and told him to take Ted to see Monroe. Shaking his head, the Sergeant obeyed. "Lt. Brownlee won't like this one little bit!" he lamented.

"Yeah, well tough shit for Lt Brown nose!" Ted snarled.

The Sergeant merely smiled. 'Brown nose,' he thought. 'That's great!'

Soon, Ted was sitting in a chair across from a slightly battered Monroe. "All right, tell me, Petty Officer," Ted demanded, "what's this scuttlebutt about you fraternizing with Lt J.G. Luscious, er, I mean, Lt J.G. Marlena Maxwell?"