

THE PRISONER

By Jessica Matthews



ILLUSTRATED BY CHAS

AN 'ADULT TV' NOVEL

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Prison was not included in the plan. It was a mistake. He was just the operator who'd hacked the computer codes. It wasn't as if he'd actually gotten any of the money which had been siphoned off through a sequence of remote modems. He was just the only one they could trace.

Mark was left to take the penalty for the whole thing. He dare not assist the authorities in return for a lesser sentence. That would have brought the wrath of several criminal gangs upon him, and all he held dear, and so he was sentenced to two years inside the state's high-security establishment. Even before his sentence, his world began to crumble. Friends denied ever having known him. Worst of all, Shirley had told him she was never going to see him again. It was too much.

"Are you *sure* you don't want to cooperate?" the federal investigator asked before Mark was taken away. "We could take you to a safe house, let you tell us everything, under protection. You could trace all the money for us, and get away with a pardon once it's all recovered. I know that given a computer, and time, you could do it easily. In fact you're the only one who could."

"I'm sure you mean well, Officer," Mark said, "but your protection wouldn't save me if I turned informer."

"You better think again," the investigator said. "Look at you, twenty-two years old, slim, smooth, almost blonde.... you'll be treated like the new girl on the block before a month passes."

"I'm sure the warden wouldn't allow that to happen," Mark said, trying to sound more confident than he felt. "It's against federal law to allow prisoners to be ill-treated."

"The warden can't be everywhere," the agent continued. "In fact, we might just ask him to throw you to the wolves if you're not going to cooperate."

"I understand what you're saying," Mark answered. "I can recognize a threat as well as anyone.... but you must understand. I can't help you. Leave it at that, please."

"Well, if you change your mind, the warden will call my office for you," the investigator sneered. "Don't say I didn't warn you. Think of me when they're screwing you in there."

Mark was quietly terrified. He knew enough about prison to recognize the threat, but could do nothing to protect himself. Silently, he promised himself to get even with those who had used him so cruelly, but he knew it would not be quick or easy.

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“Abandon all hope once you get in there, pretty boy,” the deputy said as he delivered Mark to the reception area, and signed him over to the guard.

“I’ll survive,” Mark told himself, determined not to show the fear rising within his stomach.

He gave his name and details to the guard who entered it on the computer. Mark watched him, noting the system and how slowly it handled the data. The guard moved aside so that he could see the screen.

“It’s not too good, is it?” the guard asked. “Not like *you’re* used to.”

“No, it’s running very slowly. I’m sure I could speed it up,” Mark answered.

“You won’t get the chance,” the guard replied. “Warden’s been notified that you’re the computer hot shot that got caught. He’s instructed you’re not to be allowed to touch any of our systems unless there’s a guard making sure it’s not connected to anything at all. They reckon you could play havoc with our system if you got the chance.”

“I’m not that dangerous,” Mark protested. “Just interested, that’s all.”

“Well, you got your work cut out in here.” The warning was ominous. “You’ve heard of places like this, but you never imagined anything like what it’s really like in there.”

Mark was handed his uniform. He was required to change into it while a guard watched, then put all his belongings into a prison box which was itemized, then sent for storage. He turned obediently to be searched, and felt the guard’s hands all over him, as if they hadn’t watched him changing just minutes before.

“Do you have to do that?” he protested, as the probing hand checked around his private parts.

“You’d be surprised where people hide things in here,” was the response. “Besides, we got orders to put you into ‘A’ Wing. What they’ll do to you there’ll make this seem like a walk in the park.”

“Orders?” Mark questioned. “I’m a non-dangerous first offender. I should be in appropriate accommodation.”

“It’s *all* ‘appropriate accommodation,’” the guard mimicked Mark’s voice. “Besides, we’re full, and you’ll go wherever you’re put.”

“I really don’t think you should put me anywhere my rights may be violated,” Mark said weakly, hearing how thin his threat was sounding to the guard.

“What do you think this is, a hotel?” the guard sneered. “No, the Federal Investigation Team on computer fraud wish you well, and remind you that you can contact them any time. Come on. It’s time to go and meet your cell mates.”

So that’s the game, thought Mark as he followed the guard through the corridors, past secure gates and into the dismal surroundings of the prison itself. They obviously wanted to soften him up so that he would inform, so that they could trace the money. He dare not do that. Even though Shirley had left him, he knew what would happen to

her if they thought he was working with the authorities. He had no choice. He had to endure and survive.

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The first day seemed endless. He hardly slept or ate. He spoke to no one and avoided making eye contact with any of his fellow prisoners. He felt uncomfortable as he moved from his single cell to the common area to collect his meal. He could feel how the room went silent as he approached. All eyes seemed to be on him. He ignored the taunts. Their crude sexual nature frightened him, but he kept his fear under control until he returned to his cell, closed the door, and began to shiver uncontrollably.

The next few days were no easier, but armed with a little more familiarity, Mark could see that there were closed circuit cameras strategically placed all over the building. Knowing that he was under observation by the authorities made him bolder, and he began to move about more freely. That was a mistake, but with his touching faith that the system would protect him, he became careless. Suddenly, there was a group around him, and he was being bundled along.

“Hey, I don't want to go...” His voice was cut off by a bundle of foul tasting rag stuffed into his mouth.

His hands were held firmly, his feet were lifted from the ground, as he was taken away from the main area. He was pushed roughly into a small room where the lights were very dim. Before he could resist, his arms were pulled forwards and he was bent double over a desk. The gag was secured across his mouth so that his shouts were little more than muffled grunts. Tears of fear started to fall down his cheeks.

Mark knew what was going to happen to him. The investigators had warned him, had tried to coerce his cooperation with this very threat. Now it was too late, there was nothing he could do. He felt his shoes being removed. With his legs firmly gripped, his lower clothing was removed. His legs were fastened to the legs of the desk so that he was spread eagled forward over the desk.

They all stood back from him, as if to savor the moment, and allow their captive to anticipate his fate. Mark felt something cold being spread across his buttocks, cold and slippery. Then the first one took him, forcing his legs further apart, grunting and sweating until he had spent himself. Then the second followed and the third, and fourth, each more painful than the last until Mark lost consciousness.

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He came round to find himself alone, still slumped over the table. There was a sticky feeling across his lips which he could not place. He tasted then, realizing what had been done to him, retched violently. He lay there for some moments, then tried to move again. To his surprise, his hands came free. Unsteadily, he stood, then reached down to untie his feet. There was fluid flowing down his legs, as he straightened. He retched again, holding onto the desk.

Slowly, he turned and found his shoes and clothes thrown in a corner. There was nothing to use to clean himself, so using the bottom of his trouser legs. He wiped first

his face, then his legs. The scent remained, with each breath he took. His stomach heaved again, but nothing came. He dressed slowly, feeling an oozing from his rear end as he moved and expelled some fluid. Then he stepped from the room and collapsed into the corridor.

Mark awoke to find himself lying on a cold gurney in a room which smelled unpleasantly of disinfectant. It was cold and damp. He shivered, feeling dirty and violated.

“So, you're awake,” the investigator's voice came from behind his head. “I tried to warn you what might happen in prison when I offered you that deal. I'm still able to offer you a deal. The bank regulators are anxious to know how you hacked their systems, as is the government.”

“I'm here for conspiracy to assist fugitives,” Mark said. “That's all that was proved against me.”

“Sure, and I'm the winner of the All American Beauty Pageant.” the investigator replied. “We all know you were the computer man on the fraud. All we could prove was the assistance when they escaped. You were careless there. The electronic footprints lead straight back to your modem. You almost told us where to look for the evidence.”

“If you know I hacked the system, why didn't you use that?” Mark asked.

He had never known how they had discovered the evidence against him, and the news was stunning. He was *never* that careless; more importantly, his own modem had never been used. He must have been set up. His mind raced, trying not to allow anything to show in his face. Who would have done that to him? None of the others knew enough about hacking to lay such an obvious trail. It was frightening.

“You can still help yourself. Just get the warden to give me a call.”

“You know I wasn't party to the theft. I got nothing at all,” Mark said. “You know I was set up.”

“Yes,” the agent admitted. “You were set up. I'm sure you didn't get the money, but that doesn't alter the fact that you're the only one who can trace it. Give yourself a break.”

“And the whole place will know before you do,” Mark replied. “You'd better leave.”

“I just wanted you to know you didn't have to go through that again. Anyway, it's your choice.”

Mark knew he had no real choice. Once more, he determined to take his revenge, but it would have to be in his own time, and on his own terms.

The days passed like a nightmare, never ending, never fading, as Mark tried to regain his composure. He spoke to no one, and tried to be as unobtrusive as possible. It was no use though, he was a marked man. Whenever he was in one of the common ar-

eas, he found his way back blocked. Several inmates gathered around him, shielding him from observation by the cameras, as hands groped his body, invading his modesty. They never let him forget for an instant that he was vulnerable.

Ten days after the first rape, he was seized again. When he struggled, he was kicked and beaten until he went limp, hoping to feign unconsciousness so that they would leave him alone. It was to no avail. He was manhandled across a chair, raped again and again until he lost consciousness.

This time there was no one around when he awoke on the gurney. Gingerly, he eased himself to his feet and walked to the door. He beat upon it with his fist and shouted as loud as he could, hearing his voice cracking into sobs. Slowly, he collapsed into a crouch and, holding his arms tightly around himself, he wept bitterly.

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Mark spent the next days - or maybe they were weeks - in the prison hospital. He knew days were passing but nothing registered with him. He washed and washed and washed. Whenever they gave him the chance he washed himself, but he never felt clean.

He was not allowed to shave unless there was an attendant present to make sure he did not harm himself. Mark had no intention of harming himself, but he wanted a razor to clean himself more thoroughly and after one supervised session, he was able to secrete one on a ledge. It was still there the day after. Mark used it to shave off every hair on his body, from his toes to the top of his head. As he looked in the mirror, the only hairs left were his eye lashes, and he couldn't shave them off.

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As time passed, he calmed a little. He stopped weeping as easily, but still jumped at sudden noises and shied away from any physical contact. His weight fell to a hundred and ten pounds, slimmer than he had ever been, then remained constant as the realization that he would have to eat or die penetrated his subconscious and took control.

He made no complaint. He knew it would be useless; there was no way out. He answered no questions either, until eventually they left him alone. The prison doctor, a fat slovenly woman, finally decreed that he was fit to be placed back onto a cell block. At once, he was escorted from the hospital into a part of the complex that he had never seen before, and left in a single cell. The door slammed behind him, leaving Mark completely alone. He sat on the bed not moving until, exhausted and terrified, he lay down and pulled the coarse blankets over him. A small voice in the back of his mind told him that eventually he would make those responsible for his plight suffer as never before.

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"The boss wants to see you," said an unfamiliar voice.

Mark did not respond. "I *said* the boss wants to see you." The voice was more insistent, and he felt his shoulder being shaken.

"What boss?" Mark asked, turning to look at the person who had interrupted his torpor.

He looked again. The person was almost feminine. He knew that could not be so. This was an all male institution, yet he was almost sure he was looking at a woman, even though the voice was not quite right. The figure stood away from his bed, watching Mark trying to make sense of what he was seeing.

He took in the high heels, the sheer nylons, and the short black skirt, the gray silk blouse with a black bra showing through. He blinked and looked again, seeing the long red nails with matching red lips, the heavily made-up eyes and the blonde lacquered hair, stiff and teased into an unlikely bouffant. He heard the bracelets jingle as a hand reached out to him, and saw the rings on the hand. He looked up and saw the ear rings moving, several sets jingling against each other. This was an impossible woman; everything was extreme.

"Okay, have you finished staring?" came the question. "I'm called Fern, and I work for Mister Green. He's the boss on this wing, so you'd better get moving."

"Are you...." Mark let the words hang in the air.

"No, I'm a prisoner too," Fern answered his unspoken question. "Mister Green decided I was to be his secretary, and a good secretary should look nice, so I have to look good. It impresses the clients, he says."

"So you're a man?" Mark sought confirmation.

"Yes, and I'm going to be one full-time in a couple of weeks when I get out of here," Fern said. "He's going to be looking for a new secretary soon. Now come on."

"What does he want with me?" Mark asked as he followed Fern along an unusually clean prison corridor.

"He doesn't tell me these things," Fern answered. "I'm just the secretary."

"But who *is* he?" Mark persisted. "At least you can tell me that."

"No, I can't. It's not allowed. He's serving five years. He's got the connections and the muscle at his disposal." Fern shrugged his shoulders. "The guards leave this wing to him, so they don't get trouble, and he gets to run his businesses like he did outside. It suits them both."

There was no more conversation. Mark was ushered into a large office, so well-furnished that it could have belonged to the warden himself.

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An older man, powerfully built, bull necked, but looking as if he was past his prime, confronted Mark as he stood nervously.

"You know who I am?" he asked.

"I guess you're Mister Green," Mark said quietly. "I know nothing more."

“Right. That's good. I doesn't pay to know too much,” Mister Green answered. “I hear you had a rough time out there.”

“You heard right,” Mark said softly.

“Sir,” Mister Green corrected. “Don't forget.” He stood back waiting for Mark to comply.

“You heard correctly, sir,” came the reply.

“Yes, very sad.” A long pause followed. “I've been asked to help you along. Make sure no body gets to you that my associates outside wouldn't like. They figure you already passed one test, so they asked me to take care of you.”

“That's very kind of you, sir,” said Mark. The pauses were so long, he just had to say something.

“You met Fern,” he announced, a statement not a question.

“Yes, sir.” Mark disliked having to use the honorific to this man.

“He's being released soon. I want someone to take his place. I hear you can type good?” Mister Green made it a question not a statement.

“I can type as well as anyone, sir,” he replied. “But they won't allow me near a computer.”

“Yeah. I hear you hack good, too,” he half-smiled. “That could be a good thing for us both one day.”

“I have been known to hack a little,” Mark said, smiling at the absurdity of his situation.

“Sir!” Mister Green shouted. “Don't forget, I'm being asked to look after you as a favor. I don't have to take no crap from anyone, especially you.”

“I'm sorry, sir.” Mark knew whatever his pride said here, he didn't want to be thrown back to the wolves.

“Right. I think we understand each other.” Mister Green allowed himself a half smile. “You'll take over from Fern. You can be Fawn. It's a pretty name. Understand?”

“Yes, sir,” Mark said, then reality hit him. “I mean no, sir, I don't understand.”

“It's simple,” Mister Green said. “When Fern's released, I need a new secretary. You've got the job. You'll have to fix yourself up a little, and your hair's too short, but you're the best applicant. You got the job. Now get out.”

Mark turned to go, a tear forming in his eye, as incomprehension and fear combined.

“Fern!” Mister Green bellowed as he opened the door.

Fern came mincing on high heels, hips swaying as he walked, a fluid motion well practiced. He stood, looking from Mark to Mister Green.

“Fawn here will take over from you,” Mister Green announced, indicating Mark but disdaining to use his name. “Make sure he's presentable before you leave, and make sure he knows what to do about everything.”

“Yes, sir,” said Fern. “I'll do my best, but I'm going in two weeks and....”

“If you're not finished, you won't be going,” Mister Green interrupted, menace barely concealed. “I gave you instructions. You don't expect me to be inconvenienced by your arrangements, do you?”

“No sir, Mister Green,” Fern groveled. “I'll make sure he's fully-functional before I go, in fact, you'd better tell the governor not to release me until you're satisfied with Fawn. I think that would be best.”

“I'll do just that,” Mister Green said. “Get Fawn to type a letter to the governor saying that right now, and bring it to me. Now get out and do what I told you.”

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Mark had never before seen such a display of raw power. It was frightening to know that this man probably controlled more people and wielded more direct power than anyone he had ever met before, his previous associates notwithstanding. Fern was reduced to a quivering jelly by his temper, and Mark could understand why.

They both stood in the corridor outside, as if recovering from their meeting. For all the world, it looked like a corridor of any office block, he had ever been in. Only the surveillance camera, and the metal gate at the top of the stair said otherwise. It was Mark who spoke first.

“He said I was to take over from you.... to be Fawn... and to...whatever... I don't understand.”

“There's not much to understand,” Fern said. “Look at me.” He turned and patted his hair, blew a kiss into the air, then placed a long painted finger under Mark's chin. “What you see is what you've got to be.”

“You mean I have to dress..?” The sentence hung in mid-air as Mark tried to comprehend all the implications of what he was thinking.

“I mean you have to do everything I've had to do,” Fern said quietly.

“I'm not doing that!” Mark's determination was less real than he made it sound, but he had to say it nevertheless.

“You'd better think about the alternatives,” Fern said quietly. “We'd better not stand here waiting. Walls have ears, you know. Let's go and get that letter done. Then I'll explain a few things you need to know for your own good.”

They walked down the corridor, then into what was obviously a well equipped office. It seemed that in Mister Green's section of the prison, none of the internal doors were locked, and the facilities were hardly those of the average cell block. Mark spotted the computer and the fax machine as soon as he entered, saying nothing, but registering more than a little pleasure at the find.

"Welcome to the Secretary's office," Fern said. "I'll show you how the word processing works. You better sit down and start learning to be the perfect secretary."

"I think I can handle one of these." Mark sat at the computer, already reaching for the keyboard, then opening the window to start typing.

Within moments, his fingers were flying across the keys as the letter took shape. Mark copied the style from earlier letters which were on file. Fern watched in amazement as it was finished and consigned to the printer which buzzed as the paper emerged as a completed document, ready for signature.

"You can take it to him to sign," Fern said. "He's never impressed usually, but the speed of this might just make him think."

"Okay, then do I fax it, scan it, send it through e-mail, or just put it in an envelope?" Mark said, assuming things which had been routine to him before his arrest would be routine to Fern.

"I use an envelope," Fern admitted. "I never did get to work out how to use the other stuff, and he seemed to like signing letters to the governor, and everyone else. I never tried anything more complicated."

"Okay, just so I know," Mark said, walking back towards the door.

"Enter," Mr. Green bellowed in response to Mark's knock on his door.

He walked in, and paused, seeing two other men there. They were obviously discussing something serious by the way they remained silent as he approached the desk and handed the letter to Mister Green for signature. He read it slowly, then signed with a flourish. Mark was turning to leave when he spoke again.

"Fawn's taking over from Fern," he announced to his associates. "I thought the name would be easy for you to remember." The men nodded.

"Fawn's new, that's why I'm being lenient." He turned to Mark, his voice rising angrily. "If you ever come in here again without being properly dressed, you'll remember that day for the rest of your life. Now get out. Send Fern in here right now."

"Yes, sir." Mark almost fled from the office. The temper scared him, *really* scared him.

He went back to the secretary's office and relayed the instruction to Fern who turned pale under the make up.

"Oh no." Fern's voice was little more than a whisper. "I was hoping to escape without another of his temper tantrums. I'd better go fast."

Fern got up and ran as fast as possible, the high heels clicking along the corridor, until they reached Mister Green's office. Mark heard the knock on the door and the heels stepping from solid floor to carpet. He heard the door close, then the sound of shouted expletives, muffled so that the words were incomprehensible, even if their meaning was clear. The sound of the door opening came again, then the heels, slower this time and a chastened Fern came back into the office.

"What was all that about?" Mark said gently, seeing how shaken Fern appeared.

“That was because you weren't dressed right to appear as his secretary,” Fern replied. “It was worse because those men are the ones running one of his companies outside. He has a certain status with his associates, and he thinks I've let him down.”

“Well, you're going in a few days,” Mark tried to be gentle with the still trembling figure in front of him. “It can't be all that serious.”

“It can.” Fern's voice was quite weak. “He's threatened not to give me a job outside. I was depending on that. My girl friend's already living in the apartment he promised we could have. I better not upset him again.”

Mark put a hand on Fern's shoulder, feeling the nervous tremors still reverberating through his body. He wondered if he was going to be any better off in this part of the prison. Would Mister Green's terror be any worse than the sheer physical terror he had been in before. A rational part of his mind answered almost immediately. This *was* better. He wasn't going to be raped again... and there was a computer to use, perhaps for a project of his own.

“Tell me what I have to do,” he said. “We'll make sure you leave on time.”

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Fern was busy in the office, or at least appeared so. Mark wondered if it was just an act while his composure returned. He said nothing, but spent some time looking through the computer's data and files. The modem was old and really slow. It was unused but at least it was there. Mark tried to talk to Fern about it, but it soon became obvious that he had no idea what Mark was talking about. Perhaps everybody had forgotten about the possibility of connection to the electronic world outside. Surely that was too much to hope.

When it turned six, Fern indicated that it would be all right to leave the office. The atmosphere lightened, they started to talk again.

“We'd better get you fixed up to look pretty,” Fern said, wiping mascara-stained cheeks as he struggled to recover his composure.

Mark turned towards him. “You can't be serious.”

“Oh, yes I can,” Fern assured him. “My predecessor didn't think Mister Green was for real, and kept forgetting to do his makeup. Mister Green reminded him a couple of times, then let him forget once too often. He didn't forget again, couldn't forget ever.”

“What do you mean?” Mark was getting the idea that this was serious.

“They drugged him. Out cold.” Fern looked as if remembering something he had been forced to witness. “They took him to ‘B’ Block and had the tattooist work on him. He got makeup like no body else.”

“You mean they tattooed his face?” Mark shivered at the thought.

“They did his face like a little girl doll—big red circles on his cheeks, bright red lips, black eye brows, even drew eye lashes round his eyes in black just like on a plastic face, the whole works.” Fern shuddered as the picture coalesced in his mind. “When he woke up and realized what Mister Green had done to him, he tried to kill himself,

but they stopped him. Then he started to use makeup, real good makeup, to camouflage what was underneath. He looked really pretty. He trained me before he was released.”

“That's dreadful.” Mark was appalled. “How did Mister Green get away with it.”

“No one complained.” Fern's voice was scornful. “That's not the sort of thing Mister Green would like.”

“So what happened to him after release?” Mark asked.

“Mister Green gave him a job, like he does for most of those who work for him in here,” Fern said.

“Did he get the tattoos removed?” Mark thought it unlikely, but had to ask.

“No, they don't come off when they're done on the face like that,” Fern replied. “He got a job in one of the Freak Show Bars that they run. Still there as far as I know, he'd certainly find it difficult to do much else. So that's why you'd better take it seriously when Mister Green says how you're to look.”

“Is that story for real?” Mark wondered if Fern was just trying to frighten him.

“You'd *better* believe it.” Fern's eyes said he was not lying. “Why do you think I dress like this? I'm not doing it to attract a man, that's for sure.”

“Okay, I believe you,” Mark assured him.

“And if Mister Green wants you to dress female..?” Fern asked without finishing the sentence.

“I dress female,” Mark replied, certain he would comply.

“And the makeup, the walk, the mannerisms, the jewelry, even the voice,” Fern listed. “You'll be expected to do it all.”

“Okay, I understand. I'll do it, but I hope you're a good teacher.”

Mark would do it. In fact, the more he realized that he had no choice in the matter, the more he thought it might be rather exciting. Almost as exciting as finding the computer and the fax.

“This is my room.” Fern showed Mark a room which looked more like a room in a decent hotel than the prison cell which it was. “That's the shower room and other facilities, and there's an ironing board in the kitchen at the back.”

“This is really nice.” Mark turned 'round again, looking at the room, taking in the television with its video player, and the fancy stereo on the bureau.

“I'm glad you like it,” Fern mocked. “We're sharing for the next few days, until I'm released, then it's all yours.”

“So there are advantages to dressing up,” Mark observed.

“If you look at it like that,” Fern admitted, “yes, there are. You sound like you've decided to treat all this as a dressing-up game.”