



Reluctant Press presents:

Sissy Corps

Dee Dee Perri



AN 'ADULT TV' E-BOOK

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Reluctant Press TG Publishers

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Sissy Corps

U.S. Army Active Reserve

By Dee Dee Perri

Chapter 1

I hadn't been in Nebraska before but from what I could see from the train window, I'd not missed much. The absence of trees and hills made the landscape featureless, nothing on which to settle one's gaze. Worse, the view seemed static, unchanging as if the train itself had come to a complete stop and yet I could still hear the wheels against the rails and I could feel the irregular sway of the car in which I sat as the track bed rose and fell asymmetrically across invisible deviations from the horizontal. My forehead was resting against the pane of glass between me and this bleak, barren panorama as my eyes continued to seek something, anything, by which to gage our progress, Denver was still a long way off to be sure. The window glass was cold against my flesh, almost painfully so, for it was late October and near freezing out there in that void; even as I watched, snowflakes began to replace the sleet that had been falling since we crossed the Mississippi River earlier in the morning. Ironically I remained uncomfortably warm. This car, like the other ninety odd cars in this train, was crammed with eighteen year old draftees and each and every one of us added our own small measure of humid warmth and ripe body odors. The background of meaningless chatter of young men that had been confined far too long, punctuated by obscenities and the occasional yell, 'are we there yet', had become familiar like a toothache. For most of us this was our first train trip but for me the novelty had long ago dissipated into tedium and I was certain I wasn't alone in my reaction. A soft, supple breast abruptly pressed against my bicep as a hand quietly settled on my upper thigh.

"There," he said. My accidental companion, my seat mate, leaned fully against me now. His small, pear shaped breast, unfettered inside his tee shirt, squished nearly flat

against my arm as he twisted and leaned yet more to his right. I could see his other breast react by growing a sharpened nipple that tented his tee shirt. His left hand swung into my field of view, stabbed out and pointed. "Those are cottonwoods," he said, "over there, see? About the only kind of tree that grows out here on the Great Plains."

His breath, laced with honey, slid across my neck and then cheek before finding its way into my nostrils. The ripe, musky odors of his male body soon followed along with the floral tang of a popular girly-boy perfume. I half turned, partly to see what he was pointing out but mostly, to be entirely honest, to lessen the unrequested contact. Both of his breasts were now squished against my back but my thigh was momentarily free of that hand. "Um," I said as I pressed my face fully against the glass. Metallic odors replaced the all too sweet olfactory flavors of my companion. I felt my gut cringe. For the first time in hours I could actually judge the speed of our progress. "I could walk faster than this." I groaned. The contact of those breasts ended abruptly as Carl flopped back into his seat with a languid, almost self satisfied, sigh.

I eased back into my seat as well and closed my eyes hoping against hope that I could fall asleep but such an escape was impossible. I was too keyed up. Where would I be in say six months? For starters would it be Air force or Army? I'd hoped for the Navy but that desire was now hopelessly out of the question, wrong initial destination. Had the draft notice assigned me to one of the Great Lakes camps... my eyes fluttered open against my will once more. Across from me was another 'girly-boy'. He was asleep. His jaw hung open exposing white teeth between his red, perpetually wet looking lips, his head back, I envied his ability to sleep under these conditions. His eyelids, painted with the flat, dark grey powder so popular with his kind, lay relaxed across his eyeballs though the fringe of mascara laden lashes fluttered from moment to moment as the car rocked from side to side. I found myself staring at his crotch. He was wearing a skirt and it had ridden up until his panties were fully exposed. His freshly shaved legs, sprawled apart, hid nothing. The bulge of his penis and testicles was entirely too evident underneath the nylon fabric. I averted my gaze, twisted once more in my seat and closed my eyes yet again.

I was annoyed with myself. The aversion I'd felt toward that girly-boy across from me was as automatic as it was perverse. Paw had started taking me to a shrink way back in tenth grade for this problem, not that my Paw was any better than me. Like most oldsters, he was a confirmed heterosexual. My little brother Bobby hadn't had any such problem, but then he'd been only ten when Mom and Sis had died and frankly he'd never had a chance to think of females as sexual objects. Me, I was twelve at the time and well fixated on girls before the Flu took most of them away. The few million females who survived in the U.S. were simply too precious to risk allowing them to go about unescorted. The continuation of the human race was at stake for Pete's sake. Not that really rich men did without real female companionship, to be sure. And females still played a rich cultural role, one could see and experience real women and new women easily enough on video and the internet but for people like Paw and I, well, we'd have to make do with what was possible, right? And my little brother Bobby? Like most of his generation, one didn't miss what one never had. Bobby had started wearing 'girly-boy' clothes before high school. Makeup and boyfriends soon followed. Paw still wouldn't let Bobby get a boob job even though the government would foot the bill. Paw, like me, was still stuck in an earlier age.

My shrink had said there was no homosexuality, only sexuality. And life lived in denial of one's essential sexuality was, well, perverse and decidedly unhealthy. Not that the psych treatments had helped me one whit. At eighteen I was still a virgin and try as I could I'd never been able to go all the way. Hopefully that would change. I felt myself finally drifting off to sleep- thank God.

I don't know how long I'd been asleep, seconds perhaps, but someone was stroking my penis and there was little question as to the culprit. The unwanted attention had already had some significant impact, for I'd grown a full woody. "Christ, Carl!" I swore a tad too loudly. Someone across the aisle giggled but it might have not been in response to my situation. I jerked to my feet. My raging hard-on trapped in my slacks was all too evident as I pushed out on to the passage way and headed for the john. My companion started to follow me and I jerked to a halt and turned to face my would-be-lover. "Carl. No." I hissed.

He looked stunned as if he'd never experienced a rejection before and then his face brightened, "Oh, you're a guy-guy type, right?"

"Yeah," I said, completing the lie and then I retreated to the john to jack off. A guy-guy type was a male that liked ordinary males rather than girly-boys. I was neither, of course. I was a secret heterosexual, go figure. As I pushed down the aisle toward the rear of the car, it was obvious in the growing twilight that lots of guys and girly-boys were doing 'it' right now in the crowded train car. Breasts were being fondled, lovers embraced and more than one male was enjoying a quiet blow job. There was nothing rowdy or out of control regarding the sex in this confined space, nor even any embarrassment about the activity. Some guys even watched, the latter certainly beat staring out the window as Nebraska slowly slid past. Sexual activity was both natural and completely necessary and far more open than in my Paw's day. I was half sick with myself. Why couldn't I be, well, normal? The next four years could be long indeed considering the lack of privacy common in the military. How could I hide the fact I wasn't exactly like most of the others. Oh sure there were other's like me, lots of them probably. Guys that had matured in the old days, back when women literally walked the streets, like my Paw. But in my generation I was a distinct 'odd-ball'. I learned early in high school that one didn't flaunt one's heterosexuality openly. Under the circumstances, it was 'almost' unpatriotic if you followed the twisted logic seen and heard on television and the internet. With approximately one hundred men to every one female, real or new woman, anyhow, the world population would continue to shrink well into the next century having already dropped from to six plus billion to less than two billion in half a decade to potentially less than a half billion by the beginning of the twenty-second century, same sex relationships would have to be the unavoidable norm. I found the concept depressing.



Basic boot camp probably hadn't changed in a hundred years, may be longer, leastwise for the U.S. Army, which was, it turned out, my fate. Anyhow, over the next six weeks, any concerns I might have had regarding my sexual orientation difficulties was about as relevant as toast in a roaring forest fire. Up before dawn, they ran us into the ground with all deliberate intent. Oh yeah there were a few guys hopping from bed to bed after taps

but most of us were simply too exhausted to play so my refusal to get 'involved' with another guy, any guy, went largely unnoticed. By the end of that period I was as hard muscled and physically fit as any young man having suffered the Army's systematic physical enhancement program which was, after all, the primary purpose of 'basic'.

I hadn't seen Carl since we'd started basic and to be truthful had he not recognized me, I'd never have spotted him in a million years. Apparently the Army treated the girly-boys exactly the same as the other draftees. His long locks were gone and he wore the same regulation clothing as I did, sans makeup, even his feminine mannerisms had been 'tucked away'. What I saw was a cocky, young male who'd just completed Army basic training and he was chock-full of his manly self. He still had his 'tits' but they rode on a chest every bit as masculine as my own and there in lay the problem. I guess he thought that he could get lucky with me, now that he was so... dude. Perhaps my original rejection still hung over him or maybe he was seriously attracted to me. The reason didn't matter of course. Shorn of every feminine feature except for his small, pear shaped silicon implants I think he expected me to be attracted to him, you know, guy-guy wise. Thus began the mating dance.

"Fuck me," He said, "Armor." The look on his face suggested that maybe something special had happened, something magical, as if we were fated to be together. On the bulletin board was a list of initial duty assignments and yes we were both selected for Tank school.

"Hey," I responded. I had yet to recognize that this was someone I knew and I certainly didn't connect this 'dude' with Carl. "It sure beats slogging around in the mud and when the bullets start to fly..." I didn't need to finish my statement, it was well known that the modern U.S. battle tank was immune to most stuff the Mexicans were using in the war that wasn't a war.

"Yeah," he said letting his mouth hang open as a grin seemed to lurk at the edge of his features. "Assuming you end up in Southern California."

"Oh... yeah." I said immediately growing more somber. He was referring to the Victorian front. Once the Northwest Provinces had broken away from Canada, most of Washington and parts of Alaska had followed into the so-called country of Victoria. Lincoln hadn't like that idea back in the mid nineteenth century and the current President wasn't any happier about the possibility of losing Washington and parts of Idaho, Alaska and Montana. The 'Vickies' had weapons that make even a modern combat tank whimper. "There is that," I concluded.

"It's me, Frank."

I stared. "Sorry?"

"Carl. Carl Ragguf. Indiana, remember? We sat on the train together going to basic training."

"Fuck me." I said and was immediately horrified by the way his eyes lit up as if..."



They should have moved the Tank Training facility out of Texas after the war that wasn't a war heated up between Mexico and the much battered U.S. of A. but the Army doesn't always do the smart thing. Going from the camp into town on a weekend pass was literally taking one's life in one's hands. Roadside bombs mostly and the occasional grenade tossed into a dingy bar. All too many of the locals were of Mexican descent, not unlike San Diego, Los Angeles and Phoenix, so the usual suspects were plentiful. Anyhow, the first couple of weeks were spent mostly in classroom instruction with, as yet, little hands-on experience. Weekends I chose to stay in camp. Paw didn't raise an idiot. Or maybe he did. Anyhow, Carl stuck to me like a second shadow. He was properly miffed and confused by my continued rejection of his advances but his frustration only seemed to make him want me more. And he wasn't beneath giving a go at aggressive seduction.

Physically we were evenly matched. What started out as Carl's attempt to show his affections ended in a knockdown fist fight which resulted in the two of us landing in the stockade. To be entirely honest, fights were common enough between the guys in camp, especially now with the growing problem in town, weekend passes were temporarily canceled. Things change dramatically after our third trip to the hoosegow. Apparently Carl had given me up, that is to say he used the 'H' word.

It was only a junior officer setting across from me, a Captain, but as a lowly Tank Corp cadet I wasn't expecting to have a heart to heart talk with brass, not even a Captain. I was sitting across from him stiffly erect and fully ready to say yes-sir and no-sir as the situation required. He went into a surprisingly long winded exposé about the ancient Greeks, to be specific, the Spartans.

"Soldier, do you have any idea why the Spartans were the best fighting men the world has ever seen?"

"No sir." I said. I expected him to answer his own question as officers usually do but he just sat there and so I took a wild guess, "Superior training? Sir?"

The Captain smiled, "The Spartans fought for each other. Oh I'm sure they fought for their people, their city but good soldiers fight for the man beside them. A good army squad is a band of brothers."

I nodded, "Ah- yes Sir."

"All superior soldiers in all modern wars have done the same. Flag, country are used as explanations but it is always about the man beside them that really counts for why they fight. They fight for each other." He looked at me. "So now you know why they were the best of the best?"

"Yes sir, they fought for each other."

"No," the Captain said. "All good fighting men fight for each other."

"I'm confused, Sir."

The captain looked at me like an interesting but odd artifact. "The Spartans understood something that we lost sight of until recently soldier, they fought alongside not mere comrades."

"Sir?"

"They fought, side by side with their lovers, soldier."

"They were gay?" I said forgetting myself and my current position and then remembered just in time to avoid grief, "Ah- Sir?"

The captain laughed, "I haven't heard that term used in five-six years. Gay? That outdated term has negative connotations, soldier." He paused before continuing, "Real men love real men."

I felt my heart stop. I knew I was supposed to say something but I just couldn't. The silence grew pregnant. "Sir?" I finally added.

Your fellow cadet, Mr. Ragguf, a man you might very well fight beside, a man who might die for you..." He left that idea hang for several long seconds and then he seemed to change his mind. "Are you heterosexual Mr. King? Exclusively heterosexual?"

I gulped.



I never returned to my barracks in camp, not even to pickup my personal belongings. They ran me through a psych evaluation, but it was a casual affair as if my status had already been determined and it was, I had no reason to lie. All that shit bottled up inside me since middle school just came out in a messy gush. Truth? I masturbated to the images of naked women, pictures of 'real' women. Males just didn't work for me. They ran some tests with pictures of guys and 'girly-boys', naked of course, and I failed to respond. Oh yeah, they had me cold to rights.

By late afternoon I was one of perhaps fifty men herded onto a bus by a contingent of MPs. The bus was a hurriedly converted school bus, like so much in the battered U.S. of A., some Army green paint had been splashed over the original vivid orange there by converting the vehicle from civilian use to military. There probably wasn't an elementary school in operation anywhere in the Southwest anyway, what with the small pool of breeding females housed much further north and toward the east. Where the women and children were precisely was, of course, a government secret. It's been rumored that the original stimulus for the conflict between Mexico and the U.S. was over women or more precisely female Mexican nationals in the good old U.S. of A. that survived the flu. Apparently the Mexicans wanted their 'own' back and the U.S. refused. Hell if I really knew what-was-what considering the vice like grip the government maintained on the so called 'free press'. After the President was given emergency powers that were but a step shy of a full dictatorship a lot had changed in my country, like the universal draft.

The converted school bus rattled slowly north and east, avoiding major highways and the interstate. Ahead and behind us were armored Hum-vees, each sporting a fifty-cal machine gun. It was so obvious that even a blind man could see that the U.S. was losing con-

trol of this part of Texas. Just south of Huston we lost our escort and I, for one, breathed a tad easier. I glanced around at my companions for about the hundredth time that night.

Most of them were, like me, fresh face draftees. Concentrated toward the rear of the bus there was a contingent of older men: Non-coms and possibly even officers. Their badges of rank had been removed but here and there one could see from the darker, unbleached patches on their fatigue jackets what had to have been chevrons recently ripped off. One had to wonder if they were all, you know, heterosexuals, as if the military were purging themselves of people like me. One thing was clear however, the atmosphere was as somber as a funeral. Except for the bang and rattle of the vehicle as it found and navigated across numerous pot holes, we, the lot of us, were mostly silent.

After Huston we made better time. The bus was now on an interstate and moving at top speed. There was damn little civilian traffic until we swung due north in Mississippi and headed toward Memphis Tennessee according to the signs along the highway. It was there, just outside of Oxford Mississippi, that we finally stopped for rest and food. I hadn't eaten for more than twenty hours, none of us had. The camp looked more like a prison compound, ringed with razor wire and fully staffed with MPs, I had the distinct impression that they weren't here to protect us. Go figure.

Someone had made a camp fire and I and a couple of other draftees had carried our mess tins full of hot beef stew and took advantage of the opportunity to eat by fire light. I had just gotten comfortable when one of the old guys made his way into our growing circle. I don't know, probably it was all those years avoiding the attentions of older men that too often had had a sexual intent but when he stopped beside me and asked if it was ok to join me, well I felt that familiar quiver of discomfort. It must have showed on my face.

He laughed and sat down without waiting for me to answer. "I ain't one of those." He said softly. "Not to worry." He took a spoon full of stew and chewed and stared at the fire. He started to talk. Not to me precisely or to anyone for that matter. Maybe he was thinking out loud. "Nineteen fucking years in the Service, one year shy of retirement and a pension. I had it all figured out when things began to go South, you know. Me and Pat." He stopped and chewed. "We went through the motions of being lovers." He laughed. "Fuck me if we didn't." He stopped and looked at me, "There ain't nothing wrong with being a heterosexual, son. Not a damn thing." He went back to eating and seemed lost in his thoughts. I finished up my food and thought of getting up but he started talking again and he directed his gaze toward me. "It'll be a hundred years before things get back to anything like normal. Oh they'll make as many girl babies as they can, all in a hurry you can be sure. Before you see women walking fancy free down the sidewalks son, you'll be wearing dentures and swinging a cane. They don't need you and they sure as hell don't need me in this brave new world. Heterosexual men here in the good old U.S. of A. and in the whole wide world are just plain superfluous, you understand son? Tits on a bull."

"Uh-huh," I mumbled wishing I was somewhere else.

"Sergeant Tyler's the name," He said swinging out a ham fisted paw in my direction, "but you can call me Jack."

"Sir? I mean, glad to meet you, I'm King, Frank King." I took his hand. It was a hard, well muscled grip.

"So what's going to happen to us?" I said, asking the question that was on everyone's mind, leastwise between us draftees.

"Oh for me and the other regular army types, we'll go home, find jobs you can be sure of that. Some will eat a gun or drown in booze. You young guys..." He looked at me thoughtfully before continuing. "You'll have a long, long road ahead of you. A hard one I should think, heterosexuals without women."

"So can we, well, get out of the service? Now?"

He shook his head no. "Don't think so. If the Army don't want you and they don't that's as plain as the nose on my face, the government will find something to keep you busy I suspect. Most likely they'll use you as cheap labor, digging ditches and the like for the full term of your enlistment." He shrugged, "They'll get their pound of flesh and then some, trust me on that."

I felt relief. "That doesn't sound so bad."

He slapped me on the back, "That's the spirit, son. You have the makings of a first class grunt."

~oOo~

We were back on the bus before dawn. I can't think of a single reason that the Army felt compelled to start my day, every day, in the dark except maybe tradition, go figure. Rations were distributed before the bus moved out so at least we wouldn't starve before we got to wherever we were headed. I figured that was a good sign.

Sergeant Tyler took the seat beside me. Of the old guys, he was the only one with us now. He seemed miffed that he'd been separated from his buddies. "I should have been on that other bus." He growled. "Same old Army, AFU."

"AFU?"

"Read my lips, all-fucked-up." And with that he fell asleep.

The guy across the aisle from me laughed, "He's quite the character, isn't he? Pete's the name but my pals call me Pee Wee," He said extending his hand out.

"Pee Wee?" I said taking his hand. "Frank."

"You have any idea what they're going to do with us?"

"Sergeant Tyler thinks we will be used as labors or something. Cheap labor. Four years of digging ditches." I paused and thought before adding, "It sure beats having your ass shot off."

Pee Wee twisted his face in a grimace and shook his head no. "I don't think so. Cheap labor? Naw. Seriously? Unemployment is like fifteen percent, ok? Too many goods and too few people. I read somewhere that almost a half of the houses and most of the apartments in this country are empty, construction ain't coming back for a long, long time. Hell before the bad times the American farmers could grow enough food for almost half the world all by their lonesome and now we have half the people we used to have and that number is going to get smaller, a lot smaller. My dad says the whole idea of the draft isn't about na-

tional security a-tall. It's to keep guys like us busy. Fact is, if the Mexicans and the Canucks weren't shooting at us, we'd be shooting at them anyway."

I laughed, "Your Paw seems a bit negative."

"Naw, Dad's just a realist. He thinks the country's got way too many people, guys I mean. Anyhow, you bring a squad of us into say Springfield Illinois as dirt cheap labor, hell the locals would riot."

"You're from Illinois?" He nodded. "Ohio, Westville Lake," I said. "It's just a little village, farmers mostly, hardly a town at all." I paused, "Your Paw is right about one thing, farming. My Paw says it's hardly worth growing stuff for market these days, the prices are so low."

Sergeant Tyler abruptly sat up and growled, "With all your yammering..."

"Sorry Sir," I said.

"Don't ever call me Sir, you lunk head. Sergeants aren't gentleman and, well, fuck it, I'm not a sergeant anymore just another ex-Army mug." He stuck out his hand toward Pee Wee, "Name's Jack, just plain Jack," He said giving me the eye. And they shook hands. "Fuck me if what your old man says doesn't make sense. That crap that's going on in the Southwest? I was there all last year and part of the year before. We had no clear cut objectives, no strategic goal except killing greasers. And the poor bastards on the other side, hell what would they do with Southern California anyway? Like us, they're already rolling around in a country that suddenly got way too big for their britches. Northern Mexico's got no civilian population anymore, none, zip. Like us, it's all military, the whole Southwest."

"So you're saying..."

"Fuck if I know what I'm saying. You, me, the lot of us are just surplus assholes that don't fit in this new 'fag' society and that worries me plenty. The new regs that came in last year identified straights as, well, liabilities. Sexually unstable since they had no reasonable expectation of access to females, you know?" He looked at me and then Pee Wee. "In the old days, that was one of the arguments they used against the homosexuals who wanted to serve their country. Homosexuals were identified as security risks, bad for moral and so forth. Now the shoe's on the other foot." He laughed darkly. "God only knows what civilian life is like now. I read somewhere that more than half of the men over thirty are still exclusive heterosexuals, even after all the brainwashing the government has done. If we are a source of instability in the military, imagine what it's like in small town U.S. of A."

"Yeah," I agreed. "My Paw, he'd rather eat pig shit rather than have sex with a man. Doesn't say much about it though, he isn't stupid." I paused, "He never used to drink much."

"Yeah, there is that," Added Pee Wee. "You don't think... naw."

"What?" I said.

"You know like the Germans did with the Jews?"

"Hell, that's... sick."

"Is it?" Said Sergeant Tyler. "That's pretty much what they're doing in the Southwest. Christ I should have seen this earlier, these wars aren't wars at all just another ah- solution to a population problem."

"Fuck," I said. "That doesn't make sense Jack. If too many straights are a problem for the establishment, why aren't we in the damn Army so we can get... eliminated."

"I didn't say the Army was smart son," responded the old Sergeant. "More than likely they're just doing the best job that they can do, winning battles. It's the egg heads in Washington we got to worry about. More than likely they're more worried about the ninety million heterosexual males that are too old to change. Hell, most of them eggheads are probably straight themselves now that I think about it."

"Yeah Sergeant. You think they have women of their own?" I waited for an answer but none was offered. "Maybe in the next election..."

"If there is an election son, yeah those millions of frustrated normal men might just blow their collective top. Civil war? It ain't impossible boys."

"Wouldn't that be a pool of piss, huh Sarge? There aren't nearly enough women to go around even if they tried to make them more available. And a couple of million very, very tired females would be hard pressed to repopulate the country and provide sexual services to enough men to make a difference. Beside a lot of those females are probably either too old or too young, right? Maybe only a million could be in play, Christ even the new women have more guys digging at their shorts than there are ants at a picnic even if they look like toads."

"We're fucked," Pee Wee said.

The old sergeant added, "The whole world is son, the whole fucking world. This ain't just a U.S. of A. problem."

Chapter 2

I'd never been in Saint Louis before, it was bigger than Cleveland and that was the only big city I'd ever been to. Denver didn't count, the camp I'd gone to was a good thirty miles from the 'Mile High City'. But the so-called Gate Way to the West was a huge city with hardly any people. I mean the downtown area next to the baseball park was like empty. One could walk around looking up at all those tall buildings with hardly a chance of getting run over if it wasn't for the occasional military vehicle. I guess the absence of civilians was no accident. Jack said that marshal law had been declared here almost six years ago after a really, really bad riot. Anyhow, they'd apparently emptied out the downtown area and it had remained that way ever since.

One could house an army in all those high rise hotels setting almost under that amazing arch that dominated the sky line. And house a tiny portion of the Army they did. The lot of us were put up in the Hilton. I'd thought I'd died and gone to heaven. Clean sheets every day, the works. Most of the labor was performed by P.O.W.s, Mexicans, which made Jack uncomfortable but for Pee Wee and I, no problem. Chow was served all day in the hotel restaurant, all one had to do was go in and wait for someone to take your order and it was free. It was all so un-Army that Jack got really nervous, like there was something hor-

ribly wrong with this. Anyhow, me and Pee Wee were having the time of our lives. We both went up in the Arch a couple-three times, wondered down to the Mississippi River and just about anywhere our feet could take us over a twenty block perimeter. MPs manned the outskirts of our zone but they mostly stayed on their side of the barriers. Hell, they were even friendly as long as one didn't try to go too far, not that Pee Wee or I had any intention of doing so.

Most of the buildings were closed, locked up. The window fronts in the department stores, the ones that weren't smashed anyhow, were just as they had been back when the riot had happened. Manikins, mostly female forms, in dresses and such. It made me sad considering it was so much like it had been, well before the sickness and all. We were both mesmerized by the displays and the memories of 'before'. It was Pee Wee that saw the difference first. Girly-boys don't really look like real girl at all, do they Frank?"

"A lot of them got boobs."

"Yeah. And big chins and five o'clock shadows."

"So? Most of them don't do hormones, it fucks up their performance, their sexual performance that is."

"The government would supply them all the hormones they might need to become more like women. Even sex change surgery, completely free."

"Yeah Pee Wee, like who'd want their prick cut off. You know my brother is a girly-boy, has been almost forever. Anyhow, he doesn't want to be a girl, a real girl. He's happy just the way he is, all man where it counts. No my Paw says Bobby is just an old fashioned queer. Trust me, Paw ain't exactly happy with the whole thing except, what can he do? The government would come down on his ass



like a ton of bricks if he tried to stop Bobby from being a girly-boy.”

“So you think the government is pushing this girly-boy thing?”

“Duh, Pee Wee. You get a gold star. Girly-boys on TV, the movies, free boob jobs, whatever. Yeah. But it didn’t work, not for me.”

“Or me.” Added Pee Wee. And then he waved, “Oh-oh, the neighborhood’s going to shit.”

“Huh? Oh. Hey, Jack, over here.”

The old sergeant headed toward us, his shoulder hunched forward and his head down. A posture that said he wasn’t happy.

“Com’on you lugs, we got work to do. What do you think this is, the Army?”

~oOo~

Our leisure days were over, perhaps Jack had been right in the first place. Grunt work, a lot of it and the natives weren’t objecting but how could they, they were long gone. It was a massive cleanup of downtown St. Louis for starters and then there were the new arrivals. They came in small bunches, more heterosexual rejects, but not just from this year’s draftees, guy’s that had already completed two-three years of their enlistment in the Army. By the end of the month there might have been eight or nine thousand of us with only a tiny handful over the age of twenty. It was during this period that the Army discovered Jack was in the wrong place, AFU. Anyhow I was sorry to see the old soldier off. He’d been a rock of stability for me at least.

Gone too was the ad-lib feeding. The Army chow lines had re-appeared and all the other niceties of military life. Both Pee Wee and I knew that it had been too good to be true and it was.

There was also something sinister under foot or at least that was my take. The MPs were no long quite so friendly and the barriers around us were becoming, day by day, far more significant. I almost pissed myself that first morning that I saw the razor wire that had sprung up over night and the river front was no longer accessible. “Fuck,” Said Pee Wee when I showed him what Santa had brought us.

“Yeah. I got a really bad feeling about this pal.” I shivered but it wasn’t from the cold as I shoved my hands more deeply into my overcoat pockets.

“They’re still feeding us.” Pee Wee added hopefully.

“Yeah, so?” I turned and headed back to my hotel room. Unlike the late arrivals, we still had plush accommodations, satellite TV, the best of the best.

Pee Wee grabbed my arm as I turned to go, “It don’t make sense, Frank. If they’re going to murder us, why have us clean up this place first, huh?”

Through clenched teeth I said, “Because they’re not going to kill us twit. Just cut off our balls.”