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Husband and Pimp

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"There's no money in prostitution," Nick said. He reached out with a handkerchief and carefully cleaned away the streaks on her cheeks and around her eyes. "Then, there's the human element. It's too small, too sensitive. It's not something to be treated lightly."

"Well, then, what is it?" I asked.

"You are both so big and strong," he said exasperatedly. "But you are also so young and full of life."

I turned and ran back to the restaurant. Matt had gone over to the kitchen and asked our waiter, "What will you two do tonight after dinner?"

"Oh, Baby. Don't worry, I'm not going to hurt you anymore," he said in a reassuring voice. "That would be bad for business. You know that."

"Don't!" she screamed, turning her head away and raising both hands in front of her face for protection. "Please don't!" she begged quietly.

"Oh, Baby. Don't worry," he continued. "I'm not going to hurt you anymore," he said in a reassuring voice. "That would be bad for business. You know that."

She forced a smile through her shaking lips as Nick grinned at his own comment. She flinched as Nick reached out with both of his hands and held onto the sides of her face. He gently caressed her red cheeks with the backs of his fingers. She nervously shifted her weight to her left foot and her shoulders slouched hopelessly in anticipation of his next move.

"You're so beautiful," Nick said as he lowered his right hand and began to squeeze her cheeks together with his left, her lips involuntarily puckering. "But if you ever go against my wishes again!" he shouted, "I will be forced to take some of that beauty away from you!" and he slapped her in the face with such force that it sent her stumbling against the brick wall on the opposite side of the alley. She gasped and cried as she wiped the tears from her eyes, her hands clenched hopelessly in anticipation of his next move.

"You're so beautiful," Nick said as he lowered his right hand and began to squeeze her cheeks together with his left, her lips involuntarily puckering. "But if you ever go against my wishes again!" he shouted, "I will be forced to take some of that beauty away from you!" and he slapped her in the face with such force that it sent her stumbling against the brick wall on the opposite side of the alley. She gasped and cried as she wiped the tears from her eyes, her hands clenched hopelessly in anticipation of his next move.

"Oh, Santo," she said. "You make me so happy." She kissed him back and caressed the hand that held hers.

Before pushing the carriage, Santo knelted in front of it and looked into the eyes of his two year old daughter. "And I love you too, little baby," he said softly as he kissed the fingers of their child.

"Da da," babbled the little one reaching for her father's face. He caught her hands and pressed his lips to her precious face in his gentle hands and they kissed as if it was the first time.

"Oh, Santo," she said. "You make me so happy." She kissed him back and caressed the hand that held hers.

He gladly pushed the carriage and admired his wife as she walked ahead looking at the shops. He couldn't be more proud.

They passed by me as Santo leaned over the front of the carriage and said, "Goo goo goo," making funny faces to his daughter. She shrieked in delight, and the happy family strolled down the streets laughing and loving. I realized I had no napkins to clean up the ice cream which had melted and run all over my hands and legs.