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THE INTERVIEW BY STEPHANIE ALLEN

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Mr. Deminger leaned back in his ergonomically-correct chair and turned to face his charming view. Downtown sprawled beneath him. The beetles scuttled for scraps, trapped in the throes of a death that never quite comes. The corners of his lips twitched as he thought of those unemployed in the backwash of GM's surrender. Precisely centered, a tower of applications waited to intimidate this day's horde. The last one left a bit early, mascara running down her cheeks. His lips spread into an unnatural expression.



A thought - born of guilt perhaps, or shame - skimmed his mind. An over-furnished suite awaited him on the upper-east side. He would leave his temple to spend another night alone, with a bottle of claret, or two, his only companionship. While she, whoever she was, would retreat to the sanctuary of family and home.

His fingers curled, as if to cup a wine glass, and he turned to face the door. Soon it would open. Soon he'd have another over-eager wannabe squirming in the leather chair, at the edge of the seat, knees together, trying oh-so-hard not to appear nervous. The door opened. She stepped in. Poised, as if on the cusp of greatness, she took her seat, and she owned it. She handed him a portfolio of her work and her manicured nails scratched his polished desk, and she owned it. Their eyes met, his gloomy gray, hers a burning blue. He shifted in his seat. He tried to. The command was there, in his mind, to squirm. He couldn't.

"Charlie." He tried to speak *Charles, no Mr. Deminger to you*. His parched lips wouldn't move. His tongue adhered to the plastic plate of his partial. "I am Ms. Weidh."

He inhaled the stench of his own fear.

She smiled, showing pointed little teeth set in two, maybe three rows. Her tongue, a sweet, pink, little thing, slid across her full, red lips. She stood. Her black suit rippled across her slender frame. Gray filaments unfurled from beneath various articles of clothing, writhing in excitement. His eyes, fixed to her face even as she moved towards him, watched as her sharp teeth dripped saliva.

Her mouth closed over his, sickly sweet breath filling his lungs. A hundred slender fingers caressed his body, penetrating his flesh. As her tongue slid into his mouth he found a part of his body could move. His paralyzed frame shivered as her tongue and tendrils pulled away from him. He sighed. Confused, gratified, spent, he forgot.

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