

# Her House of Hypno



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[Content Warning: This work contains hypnosis/mind control, an obsession with phallic objects, plus mentions of workplace stress and drugs/alcohol.]

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~Chapter 1~

"...And if you do end up enjoying the food, you can always come by our restaurant to try some more!" Silva Purscat smiled and waved goodbye to the housewife and continued down the street. He carried a wicker basket in one arm which was now mostly empty, holding only 2 stuffed fruit pastries wrapped in cloth and a single brochure with some coupons attached.

*Okay, this is going pretty well. I'm glad I tried this. Talking to people I've never met might be hard, but you've gotta try to get anywhere. Not bad for a Monday night!* Plus, it had been a fairly successful day. The movers had finished getting his boxes inside, and he had had plenty of time to bake some pastries and greet the neighbors, mixing in a little PR in the process. He had gone up and down the street, starting with a basket full of twenty fruit pastries and ending up with one that now only held two. He scratched his naturally white hair and grinned. There was just one house left on the street to visit. And it was a nice, clear, sunny day, to boot!

...Or at least it had been. He stopped for a second when he reached the last house, a three-story mansion that seemed to come from a different period of architecture than the rest of the neighborhood. The house's color scheme was a mix of harsh blacks and reds. And, for some reason, it was cloudy now. He strode down the walkway, but slowly, peering left and right anxiously. When he reached the doorstep, he nearly turned around and left.

*No, I promised myself I would try my hardest on the PR side!* Silva tapped his breast with a clenched fist a few times, took a deep breath, and timidly rapped on the door three times.

He stood there waiting for about a minute before the door creaked open. The home's owner was a tall, lanky, raven-haired woman who looked to be in her mid-thirties. Her arms were crossed over a sweater that had a grey and black spiderweb pattern. "Oh, I don't believe I've seen your face before. How do you do? My name is Kuroka Meringue." She uncrossed her arms and extended her left hand out for a handshake.

Silva awkwardly swapped the basket he held from his left hand to his right. "Oh, yes, um, pleased to meet you. I'm, ah, Silva Purscat." He grasped her left hand with his own.

She nodded, shaking his hand firmly for a short time. "Tehehe, you're cute. And to what do I owe the pleasure?"

"\*Ahem\*. I'm glad you asked. I happen to be a chef, and I've been handing out food samples and coupons for a restaurant my business partner and I will be opening next week." He gestured to the basket. "I don't mean to brag, but I do bake a good pastry now and again."

"Oh, interesting. And you've come all the way out here to promote your restaurant?" Her words came out smoothly with a tiny lisp, flavoring her dialogue like a drop of honey in a hot cup of tea.

He scratched his neck with his free hand. "Actually, as of this morning, I live just down the block from here. I figured I might as well bring some gifts to greet the neighbors."

"Ah, I see. Well, it would follow that I'm seeing your face for the first time, then." She tilted her head and looked over at the basket. "I am quite partial to a good fruit tart. What are those made of,

if I may ask?"

"The filling is a mix of peaches, strawberries, and sugar, and the dough is just flour, eggs, butter, water, and a pinch of salt." He held out the basket to her. "Would you like to try a pastry?"

"I would indeed, you charming little thing." Kuroka plucked one of the two remaining lumps of food from the basket and took a bite. She chewed for a minute. Then her eyes lit up. "Mmm! This is quite simply delicious." She took another, larger bite.

Silva nodded happily. "Glad to hear you say that, Miss Meringue. You're welcome to come by my restaurant for more." He fished the last brochure out of the basket and handed it to her.

Before he knew it, she had finished off that first pastry. She accepted the brochure and stuffed it into an unseen pocket, a fold of black cloth in her long pleated skirt. "Feel free to call me Kuroka. I'll take a look, yes indeed. I suppose I should tell you my own occupation. I am a therapist. I treat patients for a wide variety of stress and trauma related issues. I'm quite willing to say that I'm very capable at what I do."

"Oh, a therapist, huh? So you help people work through their problems, more or less?" He shifted from left to right, slightly restless.

Kuroka had plucked the last pastry out of the basket on her own initiative while he was speaking. She swallowed a mouthful of it before speaking, "I do. You know, small business owners can experience intense loads of stress, at time. I'm sure you've spent a lot of time making a plan, but why don't you take my card anyway. I'd be happy to listen to your worries whenever you like."

He grinned sheepishly, taking one step back. "Haha. Well, I do think I'll be fine, but I'd be happy to get to know you better all the same. Stop by my restaurant and I'll whip you up something special! Or you could just try the Tropeiro."

She smiled cordially at the suggestion. "I will consider it. All the same, I left my card in your basket. Feel free to come calling if you'd like to talk."

He blinked and looked down to see she had indeed left a card face down there. The card was midnight black, and a logo he didn't recognize was etched in purple ink on the back side. "Uh, well thank you. I'm going to get going for now!"

"Tehe, take care. I do hope to see you soon." Her laugh made Silva blush for reasons he wasn't sure about.

It was only after he had waved goodbye to her and started walking back towards his own home that he took her card out of the basket to take a closer look. The symbol he had seen earlier was a clockwise spiral placed within a spider's web. He flipped it over to see the front side. It had her contact info written on it with that same purple etching.

Card text:

*Miss Kuroka Meringue*  
*~Therapist~Mentalist~Hypnotist~*  
*666 Allez Street*

*Well, this sure is a fancy business card. I'll have to ask her who made them for her. Probably gonna need a few for myself once the restaurant takes off.* He flipped the card over to the back again and spent another few moments staring at the symbol before tucking it away into his wallet.

## ~Chapter 2~

It was a Tuesday four weeks later when Silva again found himself at Kuroka's doorstep. Weather had been sunny for most of the day, but it was raining and windy now, and his white hair was soaking wet. The plain white shirt and black pants he wore had likewise gotten wet despite his umbrella. He shifted around nervously before taking a deep breath and knocking twice on her door.

It wasn't long before Kuroka opened the door. "Oh my. Silva, was it? The weather's awful tonight, why don't you come in?" Today, the therapist was wearing a loose-fitting purple dress with long, flowing sleeves and a hem that ended just above her knees. The pair of shiny black boots she wore left only a small amount of skin visible. She beckoned him in to the entryway of her mansion.

He hastily scurried inside, standing on the doormat and wiping his feet. She offered him a towel, which he took. After he was done drying out his hair, he took a look around. Kuroka's entryway was spacious, with enough room for a coat rack and several life-size sculptures which depicted humanoid shapes, made of some sort of pink crystal. The room was decorated with a mix of red and black hues that was somewhat unnerving. There were six doors out of the entryway. One black door was open to a set of stairs leading up, another black door was shut, and there were four more red doors set in the side walls, two on the left and two to the right. Silva shuddered involuntarily, then handed the towel back to her, "Thank you for that, Kuroka."

She took the towel and laid it over the arm of one of the nearby sculptures to dry. "Think nothing of it. I would, however, like to hear why you were on my doorstep after eleven at night."

He sighed, "The truth is, I haven't been able to sleep well lately. Today was supposed to be my day off, but I tried to get to bed an hour ago and I still feel wide awake." He pulled her business card out of her shirt pocket. Despite the rain, it seemed to be entirely dry. "I remembered you helped people when they're under a lot of stress. I would've called, but I didn't see a number on the card. I know it's late, I can come back some other day if you'd like."

"I see." She nodded in a way that conveyed some sympathy for his situation, "I will say, normally my sessions are by appointment only, and I would direct you to call my assistant. That said, I've had a dreadful time trying to find and keep a capable staff. Too, you are a neighbor. Would you like to talk now?"

He gulped. "Uh, yeah, I should have made an appointment, sorry. You know what? I'm just now realizing how rude it was to come here late at night."

Kuroka placed a hand on his shoulder, firmly preventing him from walking out. "No, don't be sorry. I'm a bit of a night owl myself, so the time is not particularly problematic. I also happen to have an hour free right now. Let me ask again. Would you like to come in to my office so we can talk now?"

Her grip was comforting. He turned around, looked her in the eye, then nodded. "Yeah, yeah I would. I really appreciate this."

She shook her head. "The pleasure is all mine." She continued to grip the unsteady man by his

shoulder, leading him through the leftmost red doorway.

"Welcome to my study. This also happens to be the office where I see my patients," she said. This room's walls were more traditional wood paneling. It contained a few pieces of furniture, including a desk, a plush armchair behind it, and a long couch that Silva had seen in plenty of dramas on TV. Kuroka gestured towards the couch. "Why don't you lie down on the couch, Silva?"

"Mm, okay." He nodded and leaned back into the couch.

Kuroka took a seat on the armchair behind her desk and crossed her legs. "You said you haven't been able to sleep. Do you, by chance, have a history of sleep issues, insomnia, that sort of thing?"

"Not really, no. Never had trouble sleeping after work before." Silva was staring up at the ceiling.

"Let me go through some physiological factors, if you don't mind? Do you smoke?"

"I don't, it messes with my sense of smell."

"Any recreational drug use? Medication?"

"Nope."

"Do you drink alcohol?"

"Sometimes. I like white wine."

"And how often do you drink?"

"I have a glass maybe two or three times a week. At my old restaurant, I would have a beer or two with my coworkers once in a while."

"Alcohol can interfere with your natural rhythms, especially if you drink late at night."

Silva turned his head towards her. "Alcohol's never kept me up before."

"It might be doing so now."

"Do you really think the drinks are the major issue?"

She shook her head, "Not particularly, no. If it's not a chemical problem, it could be environmental. Do you sleep in a dark room?"

"Yeah, I had an apartment on main street at my old job and it always bothered me how bright the city was. Never could handle the light, so I sleep in my basement. No windows, and it's quiet down there, too. I slept like a baby the night I moved in." He shrugged, rolling his shoulders on the couch.

"Hm, well, I suppose that rules out noise level as well." Kuroka picked up a notepad and clicked her pen. "That would leave... Psychological factors. How much stress do you experience in a typical work day?"

"Well, I'm trying to make a small business work in a new city. Does that sound stressful to you?"

Kuroka nodded, "It's certainly an aspect of things I would consider. What do you do at work?"

"I'm co-owner of the restaurant. I do inventory, cook our meals, and make sure the kitchen is stocked with what we need. And I sometimes talk to customers, though that's more often my partner's job."

"What's your partner like?"

"Jameson? He's a cook, but the truth is he's a real business school type. Knows his advertising and promotions stuff, talks in a lot of big words. He's kind of a slick guy, but I've seen him shake a lot of people's hands and talk them into things they weren't sure about. Not the type I normally make friends with "

"Are there any other staff at the restaurant?"

"There are about 10 cooks and 12 wait staff, mainly people we hired locally, who handle different parts of the restaurant. One person can't cook for the capacity we're trying to fill. I wish I could say the staff are good people, it's just..."

"Just what?"

"It's like they don't know how to use spices and so everything comes out not quite right or just really bland. That's not good in any case, but we're trying to be authentic cuisine and we're trying to advertise for that. And charge like it, too. I can't bring customers back in with that kind of food."

Kuroka scribbled down some more notes. "I see. Did you hire the staff yourself?"

"No, and maybe that's part of the problem. Jameson did the hiring. I gotta say sometimes he doesn't seem to share my vision for the restaurant. There are so many burdens we have to bear. PR, payroll, schmoozing the customers, keeping inventory. I'm not good at these things by any means, but have to do them because he seems like he's rarely there to help. I do the tough small stuff because there's raw joy in that act of cooking something you know your customer is going to love. The fact that we're not sharing that burden, the fact that he's just ignoring the hard parts and not sacrificing in the way I've had to, and that the staff take his side? It hurts, and, talking about it now, I guess that maybe is the thing that keeps me up at night."

"I see, yes." Kuroka was silent for a moment. "Would you mind if I made a comment, an observation of mine?"

"Shoot."

"From what I've heard so far, it does sound like you're working hard. At the same time, you're dealing with a good deal of factors that are, quite simply, beyond your control. It's common to feel more comfortable about a situation when you feel in control. But most of the time, control turns out to be an illusion. When that illusion is stripped away by forces that are obviously beyond our control, it can be extremely disconcerting."

Silva found the therapist's voice made him drowsy, but nodded as she finished speaking. "Y'know,

Kuroka, there might be something to that..."

...

45 minutes later, Silva stood back in the entryway, getting ready to leave. "Thanks a lot, Kuroka. I'm gonna go back home and try and get some sleep now."

Kuroka smiled. "I hope you have a good rest. I should mention, though. I was happy to hear your concerns tonight on short notice. However, if you plan on coming back, and perhaps you should, I must insist that you make an appointment."

"Sure, how can I do that?"

"We can do it right here, in fact." The doctor had a notebook out, pen in hand. "Why don't I write you in for this same window of time, 11PM at night, 2 weeks from today?"

"Alright, that works for me." He took out his wallet. "How much do I owe you?"

Kuroka shook her head. "As a matter of fact, I'm quite well off, and am not charging my clients money at the moment. If you would like to pay, would you mind coming by an hour or two before your appointment and whipping me up a nice dinner? If I am to be perfectly honest, the talk of food during our session had me very curious to sample more of your cooking." She extended her hand.

He clapped both of his hands over hers and shook it vigorously. "Oh, I'd love to. I'll come by two weeks from now with some fresh ingredients!" After the handshake, he turned around and opened the door. "I'll be seeing you."

"I'll be waiting for you to return." She smirked. "And if your sleeping troubles do continue, just know that there are other methods we can try. I happen to be an accomplished hypnotist, you see..."

The rain had stopped, and Silva stepped out into the fresh, clear night air. He did not stop as he walked out the door to ponder the meaning of Kuroka's parting words.

### ~Chapter 3~

Two weeks later, Silva knocked on Kuroka's door at just after 9:30PM. Today, he was wearing a grey tank top and carried a hefty plastic bag full of fresh ingredients.

Kuroka opened the door to greet him. "Ah, perfectly early. Do come in." Today, she was wearing a red vest coat over a black turtleneck sweater with purple cat silhouettes stitched in around the hips. The ensemble made her seem extra tall, and accentuated the tight fit of her grey khaki pants around her thighs.

Silva looked down for a moment, blushed, then looked up to meet her eyes. "Thanks so much for having me, Kuroka. Do you mind if I use your kitchen?"

"I insist that you do." She ushered the white-haired cook into the entryway and to the right, where a sizeable kitchen with black marble countertops and dark grey cabinetry.

Silva looked around and whistled. "Wow, this is a pretty clean kitchen. Also, you really like greys



and blacks, don't you?"

"I do like the color scheme, it puts me at ease." Kuroka took a seat at the table. "Would you mind if I watched while you cook?"

"Not at all." Silva fished a plain, practical white apron out of his bag, tied it around his back with a practical square knot, and got to work. He didn't see the raven-haired woman glance down at the apron and frown.

...

After finishing a hearty meal of shrimp in coconut sauce, the two were once again in Kuroka's study. He lay on the couch, and she sat in her chair, listening to him talk about spices.

"My mentor had this special mix of Tempero Baiano that she used whenever she was cooking fish, and it always came out just right. I learned how to make it from her before I left home, but it took me 5 years to get the right flavor as an end result. It's my number one specialty."

Kuroka nodded. "Sounds delicious. And this is something your restaurant advertises."

"It is, which is what makes it so frustrating that the food critic came in last week, on my one day off, and ordered the dish that nobody can make half as good as I do! I was furious when I saw that review in the paper the next day. They should have called me up, even if it was my day off. I yelled at the staff. Probably more than I should have." He slammed his fist down on the couch, making a \*thunk\* sound.

"You think the bad reviews could have been avoided, if only you were there?"

"I do. I'm willing to go the extra mile to make this restaurant work, but it still feels like the staff and I just aren't on the same page."

Kuroka looked up. "If I may interject, this sounds like another situation where something you couldn't control resulted in heavy stress. As I've said, it can be that uncertain situations, such as the one you seem to be in, make us lose the illusion of control. While I wouldn't just tell you to swallow everything about your present situation, I can suggest an exercise that may give you some perspective. Perhaps help you accept times when you're not in control."

"Hm?"

"Tell me, Silva, how often do you do relaxation exercises at home?"

"I lift weights and do push-ups. Is that the same thing?"

She laughed softly. "That certainly is a healthy habit, but what I'm talking about is a bit different. The type of exercise you're referring to helps develop one's muscles and releases helpful physical stress chemicals. I'm referring to relaxation exercises, the kind that don't so much work your body as they do help you decompress. They help you empty your mind."

"Is this like meditation? I don't think I've ever tried it."

"It is in some ways like meditation, yes. Would you like to give it a go now?"

"Well, Kuroka, I'll try it if you'll vouch for it." He sighed.

"Alright then." She stood up from her chair. "I find it's more effective if I stand up for this part. From here on, I'm going to give you a series of instructions. I'd like you to follow them as best I can. You may find yourself growing drowsy, and it's okay to feel that way, but try to follow my instructions when you can, and stay awake until I tell you to sleep, okay?"

"Okay. Whenever you're ready."

Kuroka began to pace the room. "First, take a deep breath. Fill your chest full of air. Now hold that breath. Hold it. ... Now, slowly exhale~."

Silva breathed in, held that breath inside. When she said exhale, he breathed out.

"Again. Take a deep breath. Fill your chest full of air. Now hold that breath. .... Now, slowly. Exhale~"

A deep breath, held and exhaled.

"Take a deep breath. Fill your chest full of air. Now hold that breath. Now, sl~owly exhale."

A deep breath, held a little longer than before, then exhaled a bit slower. Silva was feeling relaxed.

"Continue to breathe with that rhythm. Next, let's focus on your shoulders. Lift your right shoulder off the couch, just a little. Roll it forwards in a small circle. Let your right shoulder fall back to the couch."

His right shoulder lifted and made a slow loop around, counterclockwise. When it fell, it felt a little bit less tense.

"Again. Lift your right shoulder off the couch, just a little. Roll it forwards in a small circle. Hold. ... Now let your right shoulder fall back to the couch."

His right shoulder lifted and made a more sluggish circle. It fell to the couch feeling limp.

"Well done. Next. Lift your left shoulder off the couch, just a little. Roll it forwards in a small circle. Let your left shoulder fall back to the couch."

His left shoulder lifted and made a slow loop around, clockwise. It fell, and Silva felt more at ease.

"Again. Lift your left shoulder off the couch, just a little. Roll it forwards in a small circle. Hold. ... Now let your left shoulder fall back to the couch."

His left shoulder rose, slowly circled around one time, and hung in the air for a few seconds before Kuroka gave him permission to let it fall. As it fell, he began to feel truly relaxed.

"Good job. You're doing so well. You may find that you feel the urge to close your eyes as you feel more relaxed, and it's okay to feel that way. But you musn't close your eyes before I say so. If you

understand, say 'Yes, Kuroka.'"

"Yes, Kuroka..." Silva's speech was beginning to slur. He continued to breathe deeply, following a steady rhythm.

"Next, let's turn our attention downwards. Focus on your feet. Tense all the muscles in your feet as hard as you can. Squeeze~. And release~. Squeeze~. Hold. And release~. Squeeze~. Hold... And release~."

He clenched his feet as she spoke. At the end of three cycles, he found they were very loose.

"Up to your calves. Tense all the muscles in your calves as hard as you can. Squeeze~. Release~. Squeeze~. Hold. Release~. Squeeze~. Hold... And release~."

Silva's legs grew slack, and his eyelids were beginning to droop.

"In your abdomen now. Tense your abs as hard as you can. Squeeze~. Release~. Squeeze~. Hold... Release~. Squeeze~. Hold..... Release~."

His chest seemed to expel exhaustion, leaving a soft nothing in its place.

"We're working our way up to your neck. Stretch those neck muscles, give them your full attention. Squeeze~. Release~. Squeeze~. Hold... Release~. Squeeze~. Hold..... And release~."

His neck joined the array of muscles which had gone slack and motionless. His deep breathing continued.

"Lastly, your head. Focus your mind on the peak of your skull. Push those muscles up. Your thoughts are loose, drifting out. Now ~squeeze~ them. Hold. Release~. Squeeze your thoughts. Hold. Release~. Once more. Squeeze your thoughts. Hold on to them. Now ~release~ your thoughts, let them drift away."

Kuroka had begun to pace around the couch where Silva was resting. Her voice seemed to be coming from different directions at once. "Now, Silva, let your eyelids close. Let your eyelids close, and let conscious thoughts away. You are drifting in an ocean now. It is an ocean of your consciousness. There are no solid thoughts for you cling to. And so you sink. Deeper. And Deeper..."

"Sink... Deeper..." He was too lethargic to realize he was repeating her words.

"I am going to count down from ten to one. With each count, you will sink deeper into your sea of thoughts. Down to the depths, to where the deepest parts of you lie. You will sink. Ten..."

"Nine."

"Eight..."

"Seven... There is darkness."

"Six..."

"Five..."

"Four... There is no sound."

"Three..... No sound, except Kuroka's voice."

"Two..... Kuroka's voice guides you deeper."

"One..."

"You have arrived at the depths of your consciousness. But you can still hear my voice, isn't that right? Say 'Yes, Kuroka.'"

Silva responded, repeating blankly, "Yes, Kuroka."

She nodded approvingly as she watched him sink. "You're not happy right now. I can help you with that. You just need to let me make some changes to your subconscious. That's fine, right? Say 'Yes, Kuroka.'"

"Yes, Kuroka."

A whisper came from close by his right ear. "First, 'I don't need to be in control. I can give up control to the right person.' Repeat."

"I don't need to be in control...give up...to the right person..."

Her next whisper came from his left. "Next, 'Kuroka can be trusted. I can tell Kuroka anything.' Repeat."

"Kuroka can be trusted... I can tell Kuroka anything..."

Her third whisper seemed to invade both ears at once, rasping like a winter's breeze. "Third, 'Kuroka's advice is good advice. Kuroka's advice must be followed.' Repeat."

"Kuroka's advice is always good advice...must be followed..."

Another whisper came closer, blowing new, tingly life into his ears. "And onward. 'Being with Kuroka makes me feel safe. I want to be with Kuroka more. I cannot attack Kuroka.' Repeat."

"...Kuroka makes me feel safe...want to be with her more...cannot attack Kuroka..."

"And finally, 'When Kuroka says the words <Gateway to Slumberland>, I will drop back into this deeply hypnotized state, ready for more advice.' Repeat." That last whisper seemed to come from nowhere, and yet he could hear it inside his head.

"...Gateway to Slumberland...drop back...ready for more advice..."

"Let's review that last one. Silva, what are the words that will bring you back to this deeply hypnotized state?" The question also seemed to come from inside his head, in a tone that demanded

an answer.

"...Gateway to Slumberland..." He repeated those words in a monotone.

"Well done~." She purred those two words of praise. "In a moment, I'm going to clap my hands three times, and you will wake up. You will not consciously remember any of what was said or done. You will only consciously remember that it was a soothing experience, one that made you feel extremely peaceful and relaxed. But my commands are burned into your subconscious mind, and they will guide your actions. Understood? Nod your head yes."

Silva's head shifted up and down in a very slow, tired nod.

Kuroka began to count. "Three."

"Two."

"One."

\*CLAP\* \*CLAP\* \*CLAP\*

"Whoa, what?" He snapped upright, and almost jumped back when he saw his therapist's yellow eyes and grinning face just inches from his own. "What *was* that?"

"Relaxation exercises. Some might also call them a form of hypnosis. I don't use that word before trying it with a new client - some are biased with a mistaken idea of what to expect. But that was indeed hypnosis." She took a step back and spun playfully around on her heel. "So? How do you feel?"

"I feel..." He gave his right arm a few twirls. "Really nice, actually. It's like a whole bunch of tired is just gone, like BAM."

"I thought those exercises might work well for you. Come back here for another appointment, and I'd be happy to work with you further." Kuroka turned to her clock. "Unfortunately, we seem to be almost out of time for tonight, and hypnosis can take an unexpected toll on the mind. I recommend you go home for the night and sleep."

"I'll do that, yeah. Thank you so much, ma'am!" He stood up and grabbed her right hand from her side to shake it with his own. "I really appreciate this. Does this time next week work for our next appointment?"

"It does indeed. I'll write you down for the same time. You should come early and make me dinner again, as payment."

He pumped his fist. "That's a great idea! I'll make you dinner next week too. Ohh, I'm excited already."

"Tehehe, your enthusiasm is positively infectious." There was a twinkle in Kuroka's eye. "But remember, my advice for tonight is for you to go home and sleep."

"Yes, of course. I should go home and sleep. That's good advice." He nodded and walked out

towards the entryway.

Kuroka remained in her study, clutching her own abdomen and trying not to laugh. "That session really took. \*pfft\* Take care. I expect to see you again soon. Tehehe."

#### ~Chapter 4~

One week later, Silva knocked on the door at the same 9:30 PM time. The chef was, again, wearing a casual tank top/pants combo. His host opened the door, and he immediately felt underdressed. Kuroka was wearing an outfit that may as well have come from a dance club in a different decade, or a very extravagant stage show. The color contrast with her double-breasted yellow blazer on snug over a black shirt with a yellow necktie was strong enough, and the white satin gloves alone were overkill. But the dark-haired hypnotist had also decided to wear sequined purple pants and a yellow top hat to boot. He blinked several times. "Did... Did you have plans to go out tonight?" He cleared his throat. "I can come back, if you want?"

Kuroka blushed. Something about the expression seemed particularly sincere. "Oh, oh no... No good, huh? \*AHEM\* The outfit doesn't mean much, really. I simply find I tend to get more flashy with repeat clients. That's all. I'd advise you not to pay too much attention to my outfit for tonight. I'd prefer if you spent your time before our session preparing me another scrumptious meal."

"Alright, good advice, I won't pay too much attention to your outfit. I, um..." She draped an arm around his shoulder to lead him into the kitchen, and now it was his turn to blush. In the kitchen, he set down his bag and got out his plain, white work apron.

"Wait." Kuroka held out a hand to stop him, and grabbed a piece of cloth off a nearby shelf. "Why don't you wear this apron tonight?" She held out a baby blue apron.

He hesitated, slightly reluctant. "I really just try to wear simple aprons. I don't want to worry about splashing them with grease. Especially not if I'm borrowing from you..."

Kuroka's expression grew downcast, and she let out an eerie laugh. "Tehehe. I see. I appreciate your concern." She turned up to face him. "Let me rephrase that. I advise you, as your therapist, to wear this apron while cooking for me tonight."

"!" His eyes lit up. "When you say it that way, suddenly it sounds like a great idea. Thank you, Kuroka." he took the baby blue apron from her, slung it over his shoulders, and laced it up around his waist.

So it was that Kuroka sat at her kitchen table, resting her head against both hands while she watched Silva cook her a meal of grilled catfish and plantains...

...

After the meal, Kuroka suggested Silva clear the dishes as well, and he was only too happy to oblige. No sooner had he finished washing his hands than she clasped his hand with her own and pulled him along to the therapy room. He didn't resist. After all, if his therapist was this enthusiastic about helping him, what was there to complain about?

He lay down on the couch, still wearing the baby blue apron, and pondered for a moment. "Y'know,

I'm not really sure where to start talking tonight."

She nodded. "Yes, well, therapy can be a long road sometimes, and finding the entrance to that road is part of the journey. We could open right up with some exercises, or, perhaps, you could try your hand at taking a shortcut through the Gateway to Slumberland."

"..." Silva did not respond.

Kuroka smiled triumphantly. "Can you hear my voice, Silva?"

"Yes...Kuroka..." His speech was clearly slurred.

"Are you awake now? Where are you?"

"I am at the depths of my consciousness...in a deeply...hypnotized state..."

"I see. Are you ready for more advice?" It was a question she already knew the answer to.

"I...am..."

"Good." Kuroka stood up, and began to pace with her arms folded behind her back. She spoke deliberately with each step. "It is my professional opinion that you are burdened by a series of unhealthy urges. We could try and remove those urges themselves, but removing an urge that has taken root is like trying to dig out an old tree - hard to do without uprooting one's entire garden. We don't want to do that. After all, you have so many ~valuable~ skills. And I find you charming. \*ahem\*. I don't want you to lose your mind."

"Instead, what we will do is counter those detrimental compulsions with a few much more healthy urges." Kuroka voice then sharpened, and she stopped pacing. The therapist leaned in over her client. "I am about to tell you a list of healthy thoughts. Each of these urges I will give you are constructive, and perfectly safe. After I clap my hands, you will repeat my words, and you will have no problem letting what you say take root in the depths of your mind. Understood? Nod your head yes."

Silva's head shifted up and down, slowly, indicating his assent.

"Very good. Now let's sow some seeds." She clapped her gloved hands softly. "Repeat. 'I want to obey Kuroka. Obeying Kuroka is sexually arousing.'"

"I want to obey Kuroka... Obeying Kuroka is sexually arousing..."

"Yes." She clapped her hands. "Repeat. 'My nipples are so sensitive. Fondling my nipples makes me feel so sexy.'"

"...nipples are so sensitive...makes me feel so sexy."

"Tehehe, yes it does." She clapped her hands, now almost strutting around the room. "I will constantly daydream about Kuroka dominating me. It's so nice to masturbate while Kuroka watches."

"...Kuroka dominating me...so nice to masturbate..." Silva continued to repeat, oblivious to the meaning of the words as they took root in his mind.

"So, so nice. You adorable little thing." Another soft clap to get his attention. "I keep fantasizing about Kuroka and phallic objects. I yearn to put my lips on her phallus. I REALLY want her phallus in my anus."

"Kuroka and...phallic objects...my lips on her phallus... Really want...in my anus..." The words were barely a whisper, but they were engraved in his mind all the same.

"At the count of three, I am going to snap my fingers, and you will wake up. You will not remember being hypnotized, but your subconscious will remember everything I just told you. Including the cravings." She grinned and held her thumb and index finger together. "Three... Two... One..."

\*SNAP\*!

Serva snapped awake, and saw that Kuroka was standing above him, looking down with a warm, sunny smile. "Good morning, sleepyhead. You woke up just in time."

He shook his head, trying to clear the fog in his mind. "I, huh? Wha...?" He eventually caught up with what she had said. "In time for what?"

"In time for ~confounding cacophonies~ of conjury!" She twirled her finger and produced a scarlet rose from seemingly thin air. "In time for ~dazzling displays~ of divination!" A stack of tarot cards danced from one glove to the other. "In time, my dear, for me to put on an simply spellbinding show." There was a flash of light as the woman twirled around, shadowy hair racing behind her. She struck a pose with one hand on her hips and the other fingering the brim of her hat. "You are going to have the chance to see what few ever gaze upon. But first," Before he could react to any of that, she was on one knee, offering her hand to him. "Be my assistant on this journey to a world ~beyond~ your understanding. Obey my instructions and we'll have an especially enjoyable performance."

"Oh, I um... Oh yes!" Flustered, he took her hand, and found himself being yanked upwards. Once they stood opposite each other, she twirled her right hand in a sideways spiral and gave him a flourishing bow. He returned her gesture with a stiff, clumsy one.

The showman deftly plucked the yellow top hat off of her head and presented it, upside down, in front of him. "For our first act, the Chapeaux du Désir, we will produce an object of your lust from this very hat." She held the hat up to him, "Assistant, if you will, can you check inside this hat?"

"Uh, sure..." He reached his hand inside and rustled around. "It's empty? I'm feeling around here, but there's nothing inside. Just feels like a bunch of felt." He eyed her curiously. "Is this supposed to be a therapeutic metaphor for how there's nothing I actually really want?"

"\*tsk\*, \*tsk\*. Oh, silly assistant. Your head may not be stuck in the clouds, but this hat seems to be giving you a smokescreen." Kuroka swished her finger back and forth in front of him. "But it's far too early to surrender on this stovepipe." She twirled around him and set the hat down on his head. "Let's put on our thinking caps and try again~." She put some emphasis on that last word with a playful \*tap\* on the top of the hat. "Why don't you have another look?"



He shrugged. "Well, okay." He lifted it off his head and looked inside again. "There's a mirror in here. Why didn't I see this earlier?" When he was about to put the hat down, the mirror tilted upwards, revealing something on his head that hadn't been there before. "What is that pink thing? It's...long..." Silva found himself staring at the long, pink object through the mirror. He reached up to grab hold of it and give it a closer look.

The bedazzling entertainer placed her palms on her cheeks with exaggerated emphasis. "Oh my~!" She spun around like a flashy yellowish-purple tornado, and snatched it off his head before he had time to lay a finger on it. "This looks like, no, I daresay it is~...a dildo! And a ~very~ phallic one, at that." She eyed him sideways. "The mirror usually wows a typical audience, but I see my assistant tonight has an appetite for the more scandalous strain of desires." She held the dildo by the base, dangling inches in front of his eyes. "Tell me, assistant, do you want to touch this?"

He was transfixed by the sight. "I do..." He leaned slightly forward.

She pulled the dildo slightly back. "Do you want to lick it?"

He took a step forward, and licked his lips. That rubbery-looking object was so shiny. "I do. Wanna lick it."

She took two steps back. "Do you want to put it in your mouth?"

He was drooling uncontrollably at the mention. "I do! I want it in my mouth!"

She took the phallic dildo and tucked it inside her suit's breast pocket. He could still see the object's shape bulging through her lapel. "Well, that happens to be the perfect attitude for our second trick, the Disappearing Dildo!" She clapped her hands, and a spew of rainbow confetti seemed to \*pop\* into existence as she spread them out in an arc. "Your next assignment, my assistant, is to chase this dildo as hard as you can. If you can catch it, you can do whatever you like with it." She donned her top hat again and grinned darkly. "If you can catch it." She let the pink phallus come to rest on the palm of her hand. "Go on, then."

"Oh yes. Thank you, Kuroka. I want it..." Those last few words were all the encouragement her assistant needed, and he reached out to grab it. However, a flash of sudden motion as Kuroka flicked her wrist distracted him, he blinked. The next instant, his hand grabbed at empty air.

"Nope! Gone! Tehehe." She produced another red rose with a twirl of her hand, this time placing the flower behind his ear. "Oh my~." She frowned, placing a curious finger on her chin. "And it was right there a moment ago. Where could it be?"

Silva's jaw hung open. "Wha...? Huh...but, how? It was right there..." He peered around the room, looking frantically.

\*Clap\*! "Focus, my lovely assistant. All is not lost." She put her hand to her forehead and peered around the room. "It can't have gone far. If you search the room, it's bound to be somewhere. A piece of friendly advice. Next time, don't waste time with your hands. Use your lips from the start and you just might catch a mouthful." She pointed out towards her desk. "Don't dally, start looking!"

He snapped back into focus. This time he'd get it. "Wanna kiss that dildo. Gotta put it on my

mouth!" He fast-walked around the room, looking to and fro. When he got to Kuroka's desk, he was surprised to see the dildo sitting right there on the cushion. He followed Kuroka's advice and leaned over one arm of the chair to grab it with his mouth. He got within an inch before hearing a \*pop\* sound, and suddenly realizing that the chair was now empty. He bobbed his head around the armchair cushion, questing for that phallus to no avail.

"Nope! Gone!" She wagged her finger at him again, this time from across the room. "\*Tsk\*, \*tsk\*." You're pouncing too quickly, Silva dear. A hunter must savor the moment, truly ~corner~ their prey. Here, let me give you one more chance. I'll be magnanimous and help you look." She turned away, and he heard the sound of rustling fabric.

"...Aww. \*sniff\*." He slouched over the chair, despondent, barely looking at the lead performer as she set up her next snippet of showmanship.

"! ...But all that changed when he saw what she was now holding to her waist. "How did you get that over there?"

"Tehehe. A good question. But, if I were you, which, admittedly I am not, I'd be worried about letting this one get away." She tapped the phallus with her fingertips for emphasis. "Something tells me that if you miss this one, you may have to wait whole ~days~ for another chance. Crawl to me, slowly, so as not to startle it. And whatever you do, don't blink!"

Silva removed his apron and rolled out of the chair and landed on his hands and knees, in a hungry crouch. He locked eyes with the dildo. He licked his lips one more time, freshly determined. "One more chance. I've got to do this right. Wanna lick her phallus..."

He crawled forward, crossing the deep red carpet. He forced himself towards her one limb at a time. Kuroka held that bulging phallus at her waist, staring him down with an encouraging look. He had gotten halfway to her by the time his eyelids started to water. But he couldn't speed up, and he couldn't blink. He pushed himself forward, and managed to get his knees just in front of the tips of her toes. His eyelids were screaming as he stretched upwards. He was close enough to smell the rubbery powder on that phallus, just another second and he could taste-

"***FWOOO~!***" A heavy breath of cool air blew out of Kuroka's mouth down right into her unfortunate assistant's eyes. Unfortunately, that gentle push snipped the last fragile thread of endurance his poor eyelids had. And he blinked. When the moment was over, he looked up and saw the dildo was no longer at her waist. He could taste nothing.

"Nope! Gone!" His therapist tipped her hat and tucked the dildo back inside it, signaling the end of the act. "Tehehe, excellent. Bra~vo, assistant! You're a true natural!" She clapped her hands appreciatively as he collapsed on the floor, squirming under the agony of denial.

Silva looked up at her with pleading eyes. "\*sniffle\*." Did you do all that just to tease me?"

"Ohh, no no no." She placed a hand on his head, running her fingers through his messy white hair in a series of slow, soothing strokes. "That was an exercise meant to teach an important lesson to you, Silva dear. While you stand on my stage, chasing pleasure on your own accord is a futile pursuit. I hold the key to your carnal delights, a gift that you will have to beg for!"

"Mmm..." The feeling as she stroked his hair, scratching around his ears just a little, was heavenly.



It did lessen the emotional impact of that last act of misdirection. "I'll beg! I'll beg! Please, Kuroka, I'm going crazy! I'll lose my mind if I don't get to masturbate soon! Please may I have permission to masturbate?" His voice cracked, and he kissed the carpet at her feet.

She spread her feet apart and leaned closer towards him, grinning hungrily. "That's a good assistant. Working hard and taking my lessons to heart? You do deserve an opportunity to chase some pleasure."

She spun around, taking her position in the center of the room. "In your moment of greatest desperation, I present to you my third and final trick of the night, ma plat de résistance. I give you the Zero-hour Climax!" Her arms danced around in the air, drawing a giant number 0 that seemed to linger in the air like a yellow laser light for just a moment. "The Zero-hour Climax is little more than a simple game. You lie down on the couch and masturbate however you like. I will count downwards from five, and, when you hear me say zero, you will experience a tremendously satisfying climax."

"Oh YES! Thank you so much, Kuroka." Silva fast-crawled to follow her. Still kneeling on the floor, he hugged her right leg.

She flushed slightly. "I'm not indifferent to your charms, you adorable little thing. But time waits for no one!" She thrust her arm out, pointing at the room's horizontal recliner. "To the couch, my dear Silva!"

He hopped up and sprinted over to the couch, unfastening his pants and lying down. One hand reached towards his chest. He spat in the other hand and reached towards his crotch. "I'll start as soon as you start counting down, Miss."

"Five. Do that, then." The raven-haired hypnotist wore a thin smile as she spoke.

"Hn." He immediately grasped his nipple, pinching it gently. Then less gently. His other hand went to work stroking his dick.

"Four. Try to enjoy this feeling."

"Hrg, rrrgh!" He pinched his nipple again, pulling it a little ways this time. His dick-stroking hand had already gone to short, rapid strokes around his cockhead.

"Three. Feel that pleasure building stronger, like a raging storm about to break."

"Hng, oh! OH OHHH!" Silva stuck both hands under his tank top and used them, fingernails and all, to pinch his nipples hard. The pleasure was electrifying.

"Two. Let your limbs ride the lightning as it carries you higher! Higher!" She was pacing rapidly now, her own actions infected by the beastly energy of his lewd acts.

"Oh, oh yes! AmazinNNNGHh! So close, I can feel it!" Raw white light was shining inside of his brain. The fuses were burning short on a dozen fireworks at once.

"One. You're almost there, you've almost made it to the Gateway to Slumberland."

Silva immediately fell limp on the couch. His hands went slack, and Kuroka again giggled. "Tehehe. I'll never tire of that. The Zero-hour Climax may or may not be performed at the moment when you feel you most desperate for an orgasm. But it's called the Zero-hour Climax because a climax that never happens takes exactly zero hours, even past the decimal point. As well as zero minutes, zero seconds, et cetera. I *do* try to give everything an appropriate name, but an extra *entendre* here or there is still a bonus."

The hypnotist lay down on the couch next to him, just barely not touching his body. Her lips were right next to his left ear. "Oh, you wanted that orgasm, didn't you? Just look at you, your face is such a mess. I'd wager I could bring you to climax right here, just by blowing half a lungful of air into your ear. But I won't." She smirked, continuing. "You see, this show goes on. You can't climax yet. There's an order to things, Silva. For example, you can't cum, and you won't be able to cum all week, because you haven't yet entertained me enough. You should try to please me more." Her words continued on, soaking into his mushy brain like water pumped into a balloon that just could not, would not burst. "It's kind of like how you can't call Kuroka 'Mistress' because you're not her servant. Of ~course~ it would feel so wonderful to be able to recognize her in title, but you cannot do this, as you are not her servant. Ah, but how sweet it would feel to be able to speak to her and express such total submission. Why, if you were a servant, you would be able to kiss her boots, and even lick them clean! How wonderful that would be, yes, I agree. But you cannot do those things, because you are not her servant. And only servants, servants who are ready to help Kuroka pursue her prey, are allowed to do those things."

She hopped up off the couch. "I'll let that be food for thought until next week. Until then, my parlor games have run their course. Serva!" Her voice focused in, speaking directly to his mind. "You will not remember the details of our little performance piece. You will only recall that you had a refreshing dream, and you will wake up feeling relaxed. At first. Over time, your body will remember this pleasure, and you will touch yourself, thinking of me. But you will not be able to climax, no matter what. You will also want to make an appointment for next week. Nod your head yes."

Silva nodded, a gesture that looked that much sillier with his face in that state.

Kuroka looked down and frowned. "Ah yes, I should deal with that." She pulled a handkerchief and a small spray bottle full of cold water out of her breast pocket and wiped away his tears, snot and other bodily fluids. "That's better. Wouldn't want you asking questions before the time comes. At the count of three, I will clap my hands three times, and you will wake up. Three."

"Two."

"One."

\*CLAP\* \*CLAP\* \*CLAP\*\*

...

"I really can't thank you enough, Kuroka." Silva scratched his white hair sheepishly as he stood in the entryway. "Every time I walk out of here the world feels so much brighter, it's like you take a huge weight off my shoulders." His scratching hand reached inside his tank top. After a few scratches around his collarbone, it dove lower and pinched a nipple, squeezing it for a few seconds.

She smiled as she watched him. "Believe me, the pleasure's all mine. I look forward to seeing you again." She held out her notebook. "I'll jot you down for two weeks from now. Same time?"

The air seemed to go out of him when he heard that. "Two weeks?"

"I'm sure you have other obligations, and I do have my own. Unless you feel it's particularly important..." She trailed off, tilting her head slightly and turning to meet his dark eyes with her own.

He grabbed her hand with both of his, clasping it tightly. "P, please, can you see me next week? I promise I'll make you dinner again! I'll wear whatever apron you want! I'm begging you, can I please come next week? Have I... Have I been bothering you?"

Her yellow eyes twinkled, and there was a mild blush in her cheeks. "Tehehe. No, no bother at all. I'd be happy to put you in for next week."

Silva was tearing up, "Thank you so, SO much! I'll make sure dinner next week is the best thing you've ever tasted."

She put her hand to her mouth, only partially exaggerating a bashful response "My, how exciting."

### ~Chapter 5~

[Preview ends here. Story continues in full version.]