

The Home Worker

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Chapter 1

My name is Ray. I'm a thirty year-old widower. My wife, Alice, died giving birth to my adorable son, Clem and I'm determined he won't lack the love and attention a child needs. It was fortunate I had a job where I could work from home most of the time.

I had a large screen on my computer and a webcam so I could conduct meetings almost on a face to face basis. My colleagues were used to me excusing myself if Clem needed attention and just as used to seeing him on my knee or shoulder during a meeting. It worked well. On the second Friday of every month, I had to go into the office for a meeting. The office was nearly seventy miles from home. As the meeting rarely finished before five, I would socialise with my colleagues in the pub for an hour or so, just to let the rush-hour traffic die down. I was grateful for my neighbours Eva and Jack.

I used a childminder for Clem on these Fridays while Eva was at work and then Eva would have Clem and I'd pick him up when I got home, usually between eight and half past. Eva would have something for my evening meal. Leanne, their daughter, loved looking after Clem. She'd feed him, bath him, change him and give him loads of hugs and cuddles. When she was fourteen, and Clem was almost two and a half, Eva suggested I should go out one evening a week and let Leanne baby sit for me. Reluctant at

first, I was eventually persuaded. Despite Leanne's protestations she didn't want to be paid, I insisted she should receive £10 a night. I didn't want anyone to feel I was taking advantage of her fondness for my son. It was agreed that Thursday would be my night out. Because she had school the next day, I made sure I was home by a quarter past ten at the latest.

Leanne was a pleasant girl. She was rather plain, wore glasses and was a bit chubby, but not fat. She was also bright and good at most subjects at school. Her one weakness was maths and I was able to help with her homework or explain things she hadn't fully grasped at school. When Clem went to sleep, she would do whatever homework she had. I allowed her to use my computer as long as it was strictly for homework; no chat-rooms, no downloads, no talking to mates. To the best of my knowledge, she respected my wishes. And I always left a packet of her favourite chocolate biscuits. She didn't eat them all at once, but she took the part opened packet home and spread her enjoyment throughout the week.

Chapter 2

Things continued in this vein for just over a year. I enjoyed meeting some friends on my free Thursday. Because of my need to look after Clem, I couldn't, wouldn't, consider trying to have a relationship, although there were some tempting offers from time to time. Leanne had also taken to putting Clem to sleep in his own bed when I was at my monthly meeting and staying to look after him until I returned. I took the opportunity to have a meal before I started my homeward journey, not arriving home sometimes until eleven o'clock. I felt better for my 'self time'.

It was approximately a year after Leanne had started baby sitting that I arrived home much earlier on a Thursday evening. A fight had started in the pub I was in, half an hour after I'd arrived. I decided to get out before it got any worse and before we became involved, if only as witnesses. My friends and I went to another pub, but the evening had turned flat and I decided to go home.

I could hear the television as I opened the door. I wasn't deliberately quite, but Leanne must have been so engrossed in what she was doing that she didn't hear me. Walking into the living room, I was about to say 'Hi' when I was stopped in my tracks. Leanne was sitting on the sofa with her skirt hitched round her waist, her legs apart and masturbating. The position of her hand prevented me from seeing anything I shouldn't

have seen. Her eyes were shut and she appeared to be approaching an orgasm. I didn't know what to do. Should I make a noise to announce my presence, which would surely ruin her pleasure? Or should I quietly walk away for a few minutes and return as if nothing had happened? Or should I watch this young girl pleasuring herself? I'd never seen a woman masturbate before and I was fascinated. I watched. She gave a low moan as she reached her climax. For maybe half a minute she continued to stroke herself and then she opened her eyes.

“Oh God!” she gasped as she saw me. She jumped up, smoothed her skirt back into position and then sank down again. Her face drained as she sat looking down at the floor, no doubt expecting me to be angry. How could I be angry? I could have spared her the embarrassment she was feeling. I had witnessed what should have been a private moment. If anything, I felt guilty. I didn't know what to say, so I said nothing. “You won't tell Mum and Dad, will you?” she begged, still not looking at me.

“I've no reason to tell them anything,” I tried to sound reassuring. “But you've nothing to be ashamed of. Millions of women, including married women, do the same thing. It's normal. Did it give you pleasure?” She nodded, but she still couldn't meet my eyes. “There you are, then. You enjoyed something perfectly normal. You're embarrassed because I saw you and for that I apologise. Now, when you feel better, you can go

home and no one will be any the wiser.” I could see her relax. “I’ll go into the study. No need to say goodnight. I’ll hear you when you go. And I’ll see you tomorrow. We won’t mention this again.”

The following day was my Friday in the office but I learned later, Leanne didn’t want to baby sit for me. She told her parents she had a headache and pleaded with her mother to look after Clem herself. Unfortunately for Leanne, both parents were going out and wouldn’t be back until very late. She had no alternative but to go next door and wait for me to come home.

It was between half ten and a quarter to eleven when I arrived home. I spoke to her as if the previous evening hadn’t occurred and I felt she appreciated that. She didn’t stay long after I returned, but she didn’t scoot away the minute I walked in either. Gradually, she came to realise I would keep my promise and say nothing to her parents. The situation, and our relationship, had returned to normal.

About five or six weeks later, I again came home on a Thursday earlier than usual. “Fraser, my boyfriend, reckons you’re gay,” she told me as we sat having a drink of cocoa before she went home.

“Whatever gives him that idea?” I asked, surprised both by the comment and that she had made it. We had never previously spoken about sexuality or anything sexual.

“When you saw me, that time, he reckons you’d’ve made me do things if you weren’t gay. Threaten to tell my Mum and Dad. He said that’s what a man would’ve done. You didn’t so you must be gay.” I was stunned at her boyfriend’s analysis, which was way off the mark. I was also surprised that she had told him. I took a few seconds to consider my reply.

“Although it is none of your business, and certainly none of your boyfriend’s, I can categorically assure you he is wrong. And if he would have acted the way he suggests, then I’m afraid he would, to all intent and purposes, be blackmailing you, or worse. He can have very little respect for you. I have a great deal of respect, which is why I never said anything to your parents and have not raised the subject with you. I am surprised you mentioned it to him.” She didn’t answer directly.

“He wants to watch me doing it. Wants to film it on his phone. Is that OK d’you think?” I was flabbergasted. I felt a surge of responsibility for this young girl. She was asking my advice. Totally unexpected. What should I say?

“You’re young,” I began. “You may be madly in love now, but very few relationships at your age last for more than a few months. Let’s say, what, in two or three months, you and your boyfriend break up. He still has the film on his phone. Would you like it if he started showing that film to his friends? Maybe he posts it on the internet. How would you like that? I would

strongly argue against allowing anyone to take intimate films, or picture, of you. You don't want your parents to know what you did privately. Think how you'd feel if, somehow, they found out what you were doing on film. And I don't think it would be a good idea to let him watch you either. It sounds as if he could easily get aroused and things could happen that you maybe don't want to happen just then. You're a young woman and what you choose to do with your life is for you to decide, not me, not your parents. But you asked for my opinion. You're a lovely, intelligent, person and I like you. All I ask is that you consider the consequences of whatever you decide to do."

"Fraser wouldn't do that."

"I'm not saying he would. But what if he did?" She abruptly changed the subject. When she had finished her drink she went home.

Chapter 3

Three months later, Fraser had dumped her for another girl. Leanne was heartbroken. She came straight from school to my house and just burst into tears. When the tears eased she started telling me about Fraser. After she'd told him about what I'd witnessed, he became increasingly insistent that she let him do things to her and she did things to him. She hadn't let him film her but he demanded more freedom to touch her as compensation. Eventually, she'd allowed him to have sex with her. It was only a couple of weeks later that he'd dumped her. She couldn't understand it. She thought that was what he wanted. Why then did he dump her? My concern now was that she might be pregnant. There was no way she could keep that from her parents. I was now her confidante. I couldn't be judgemental. I had to support her.

Carefully, I elicited that they had taken no precautions on the three occasions they'd had sex. Fortunately, her period had started less than a week after the first time. She'd refused to have sex during her period. Maybe that was why Fraser had found another girlfriend. It seemed certain that now she'd had sex, she would have sex again with her next boyfriend. I suggested she visited her school nurse and arrange to go on the pill. They wouldn't tell her parents. It was bizarre. She was obviously embarrassed at talking to me about such personal matters and yet

she seemed eager to have someone she could talk to. She needed to talk, but there was no way she could talk to her mother as she talked to me. She heard her mother's car in the drive and left.

Chapter 4

Clem's fourth birthday was fast approaching. Eva asked if I was giving him a party and Leanne enthusiastically offered to help and do the cooking. She was beginning to be almost as good a cook as her mother. For almost four months, Clem had been going to nursery school two mornings and one afternoon a week. There were only four others who attended the same days as Clem and they were invited to the party, which was on the Sunday afternoon. Leanne spent all Saturday afternoon at my house, making jelly, trifle, fairy cakes and a small birthday cake, and on the Sunday, she made some sandwiches and helped put up some decorations. I had rarely seen her so happy. Eva was looking after Clem while we were making the preparations at my place.

The three boys and one girl arrived on time – half past two. Their mothers stayed to 'help' and supervise their little darlings. They needn't have bothered, as Leanne was more than capable, and enjoyed playing with the children. Emma, one of the mothers, did not seem too concerned about her son, Piers. She spent most of the time talking to me and flirting openly. Emma was a tall, blonde, slim woman, probably aged about twenty five, with small breasts and an attractive face. I was enjoying the attention, especially when she suggested we met and had a coffee while the boys were at school. She smiled

as she said ‘coffee’, indicating it might be a euphemism. There had been no one in my life since Alice died and for once I was feeling I needed some female company. Emma could provide what I had been missing.

And then Susan, one of the other mothers came across. “Missing your husband already?” she asked mischievously. The look Emma gave her would have frozen Hell in seconds. “He’s taken the fifth formers on a rugby tour in France,” Susan explained to me, obviously enjoying Emma’s discomfort. “Left, what was it Emma, Thursday? Won’t be back until a week today. But you do so miss him, don’t you?” I never believed in infidelity in my own marriage and there was no way I was going to get involved in someone else’s marriage. Shortly after, Emma decided Piers was getting tired and took him home. It wasn’t long before the others had departed and Leanne was clearing up the mess.

Since the episode when Fraser dumped her, Leanne had come to regard me as someone she could talk to about almost anything, confidant that what she told me would go no further. She treated me like a best friend or the sister she never had. As I had expected, she quickly found another boyfriend and they did have sex several times. But she was never happy about it. It didn’t feel like it was supposed to in the books and magazines she read. A couple of weeks before the party she had ended it. Since then, she had seemed much happier.

While we were clearing up after the party, she casually asked if I liked the tall blonde woman. As Leanne had been honest with me, I felt she deserved an honest answer from me. But I couldn't quite deliver. At least, not at first. "She's married," I replied, hoping that would kill the conversation. It didn't. It wasn't a proper answer, she told me. "She is attractive, and sexy" I conceded, "but I'm not sure she could hold an interesting conversation for very long." That wasn't what I had thought at the time, but now I said it, I realised it was probably true. Her next question was totally unexpected.

"Are you going to sleep with her?" I knew if I tried to lie, I would lose the respect we shared.

"It's been a long time," I told her. "I'm sure that's what she wanted. If she hadn't been married, then the answer would probably have been 'yes'. But I couldn't do it with a married woman. But it would only have been sex, not because I loved her." She let the subject drop and finished the clearing up.

She stayed for tea; well, finishing up what hadn't been eaten at the party and asked if she could bath Clem before he went to bed. Clem loved having someone who played with him and indulged him far more than I did. When he had finished splashing, both Leanne and I were quite wet. As she dried him, I realised she had grown quite a bit since she had started to baby sit for me. She had grown maybe three inches and not

put on any weight, so she looked slimmer. Her hair, which had been long, had been cut short and it suited her. Her breasts had filled out and the wet top clung to her, emphasising their roundness and plumpness. And she seemed really happy. That was what I noticed most. She didn't suffer from acne as many youths her age, and her face, while still plain, seemed to shine as she laughed and smiled at Clem. "You'll make an excellent mother," I told her, simply and honestly.

After putting Clem to bed, she bid me goodnight and went home.

I was realising how lucky I was to have Leanne. Clem loved her. His eyes lit up when she came round and she had endless patience with him. As he had no mother, he lacked socialising with adult women. Leanne provided the female input to his upbringing. She asked to come and put him to bed more often. Her mother at first refused, saying it wasn't fair on me, though she couldn't say exactly why. When Leanne begged and I raised no objections, her mother relented. She began to come home after school, play with him for a while, feed him, bath him and put him to bed. Mostly she'd go home after that. While she was looking after Clem, I was catching up with my work. During the day, Clem was a good child and played by himself but I knew he needed my time too. That meant I needed to make up my time whenever I could.

Occasionally, Leanne would stay awhile and have a chat. And she had a very mature

outlook on life. We discussed subjects that appeared on the news; we discussed sport – she particularly liked rugby and tennis, particularly the men; we shared jokes and she continued to discuss personal matters without embarrassment. If she had homework, however, I would send her home with good natured severity.

Chapter 5

Her mock exams approached and she had time off for revision. At her request, we agreed a pact. I would help her with her revision for two hours and in return, she'd look after Clem for the rest of the day while I worked. I wasn't really surprised at how organised and methodical she was with her revision. I doubted she would have any difficulties with her exams. Her schedule meant she finished all her exams while others had still had a week to go. She looked after Clem all day on these occasions, leaving me to my work. I was enjoying life more than I had for a long time.

One day, shortly after her mock exams I had a video conference with my boss. There was to be a major conference at work the next Thursday and Friday. I was expected to make a presentation on the Friday about working from home. As the conference was even further away than Head Office, I would need to stay overnight Thursday and Friday. I also needed to arrange someone to look after Clem. Needless to say, Leanne volunteered, but she would be at school during the day and Eva was at work. He would be at nursery Thursday afternoon but they couldn't offer him more time. They had a strict ratio of helpers to children. After the incident at Clem's party, I couldn't ask Emma. Fortunately, Susan agreed to look after him, for what seemed a small fortune - £4.00 per hour. Eva would drop Clem at Susan's on her way to work and Leanne would

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