

Heather quickly fell asleep, sheltered in Steve's arm. Steve and Greg talked for a while until they both fell asleep too. About an hour later Heather woke up with a throbbing shoulder but at least the pain was only about a four. She sat up carefully and nudged Steve awake with a giggle.

"Hey," she whispered, "just who's taking care of who?"

"Whom, my dear," Steve whispered back with a sleepy smile. "Who is taking care of whom?"

"Oh don't be such an English major!" Heather teased him.

"Can't help it, Beautiful." They were still whispering. "It comes with the territory."

Heather leaned back and drew her feet up on the edge of the couch. Steve felt her movement, sensed a sudden thoughtful attitude.

"What?" he whispered with his eyes still closed.

"I was just wondering," she whispered back. "What it's like ... exploring that territory."

"I wouldn't know," Steve whispered, eyes still closed, a blush gently touching his cheek.

"You mean ...?" Heather's whisper was awed.

"Virgin territory," Steve nodded slowly.

"Not just me?" Heather felt a fierce joy rise inside.

"Not just you, Sweetheart." Steve rolled his head toward her, his blue eyes bright with his smile.

"Some whispers are loud enough to wake the dead," Greg grumbled. "This is not a conversation I wanted to hear."

"Does it bother you to find out you've been hanging out with the world's largest virgin?" Steve laughed.

"It shouldn't," Heather giggled. "He's the second largest."

"You are?"

"I am."

"He is," Heather smiled.

"Good for you," Steve said.

"Good for all of us," Greg agreed. After a moment's thought he had to ask. "How did you guys do it? It wasn't hard for me because girls never pay attention to me but you two have both been in cultures that glorified and expected ... shall we say vigorous activity."

“Pretty much the same way you did, I guess,” Steve answered thoughtfully. “I made a conscious decision while I was still young then stayed as clueless as possible for as long as possible.”

“Clueless?”

“Yeah,” Steve said. “Don’t look for it. Don’t listen to it being talked about. Don’t watch it in pictures or videos. It’s a lot easier to resist temptation if you keep it out of the room.”

“How’d you keep the motivation all these years?” Greg asked.

“I knew it was what God wanted for my life,” Heather said, “and that was enough. When I got out into the real world, I heard other women comparing the men they’d had and I realized I never wanted to have anyone to compare my future husband to. That pretty much cemented it for me.”

“I was backwards from that.” Steve carefully controlled his surge of joy at her words. “I started out thinking about being as pure as I wanted my future bride to be. Then when I was a junior in college I dated a girl. One date. She was looking for a rising star to hook up to and she embarrassed me with the lengths she was willing to go to sink that hook.”

Steve shook his head and blushed with the memory. “That’s when I realized that waiting for my future bride wouldn’t be good enough motivation to stay sexually pure. If it was only for her, what would I do if she decided she wanted it before the wedding night? So I decided to remain pure because God is pure and holy, not for my future bride.”

Greg thought for a moment.

“So you both did it for God,” he finally said. “I’ve wondered if I’ll be strong enough when temptation comes, now I feel more sure. But I don’t know if it’s really weird or way cool to have had this conversation with my big sister and her wanna-be fiancé.”