

ON THE ORIGIN
OF THE FURRY POPULATION OF LONDON

A victorian furry Novella



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As requested by **Magun Silver**



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With the increasing number of anthropomorphics among the original human population of the large metropolises of the world the question of their origin has become more pressing with every year. The most important issues by far remain political and social in nature and the question of so-called human rights and how they are being applied to anthropomorphics has been on the agenda for years. The various reactions of the nations have led to a deep schism within human society. The recent massacres in some north African countries are still on the mind of most politically involved people and the effects of these events have increased the number of voices which endorse to grant anthropomorphics in general the full benefit of human rights.

One of the most affected metropolises is still London, capital of the United Kingdom. To some people the only relation between the city and the anthropomorphics are the infamous brothels in the east end. But this matter is very exaggerated as the number of anthropomorphic prostitution is significantly smaller than in cities such as Amsterdam, which has become apparent in the increasing number of hate-killings of anthropomorphics in Amsterdam's infamous red light district. Unknown to most people London has the largest anthropomorphic population on the European continent. In these last years the ratio of human population to the anthropomorphic population has even surpassed the ratio of Rio de Janeiro which had had the highest ratio for quite some time, the city still accommodates the highest absolute number of anthropomorphics in the world though.

The question of why London harbours such a huge number of anthropomorphics has been debated in the scientific community for quite some time now, but up to now the results of these researches are meagre at best.

London in 1883

London, capital of the British Empire reigned by Queen Victoria for 46 years. The city hid under a constant layer of fog and fumes that rose from the uncountable chimneys of houses and factories, from the smallest chimney of a simple round iron stove in the maze of Whitechapel to the towering chimneys of the gas works or the coking plants fuelled by the never-ending stream of goods, flooding the city from every direction. The smoke and the stench of the city clouded it in a constant haze which got worse when fog rose from the Thames and rendered the air almost unrespirable for the many people who walked its streets, going about their business or searching for labour, carrying goods on their bare backs or driving on horse-carriages that had trouble to get off the mud and dirt that covered the streets in the less fortunate parts of the city. At the very same time expensively dressed women promenaded through the city's park, over scrupulously clean squares and visited the Burlington Arcade where vigilant porters greeted them and kept the less fortunate away.

At the very core of this restless city was the harbour where ships landed with every high tide. Their sails and chimneys cast dark shadows over the docks, the exhaust of their steam engines added to the city's fumes while instantly uncountable dock workers swarmed through the smoke, even though the ship was still about to be tied up. Restless representatives of the trading companies boarded instantly as well, starting to take stock of the cargo that was being unloaded and telling the dock workers where the different goods had to be transported or delivered. They filled endless lists with names of goods and the countries of their origins: Imperial India, Rhodesia, Guyana, Hongkong, Benin, Antigua, New Zealand, Bengal and all those other colonies nobody could keep track of.

Sometimes the proxies were puzzled by some specific cargo they could not find on their lists. Instantly they send an errand boy to their company's headquarters asking for instructions. In the dark narrow corridors of the headquarters slim accountants took the note into their skinny fingers, readjusted their glasses and studied the proxy's notes before they began to pore over their books, trying to find a note about this specific cargo. After a futile search they got angry, realizing that someone aboard the ship had wasted cargo space for some private deal, they wrote a quick note and shooed the errand boy away who ran back to the ship and handed the note to the proxy. He studied the note with care, knitted his frowns, crumpled the piece of paper and threw it into the Thames.

Then he instructed a subordinate to sell this piece of cargo before anyone else could claim it. The subordinate nodded, called out for a some dockers and instructed them to load the small cage, one half made of metal, one half made of wood on a small carriage. Then he instructed the coachman who just nodded in response and then lashed on his horses who started to trot reluctantly into the busy streets of London.

The moment the carriage left the area of the docks, its surroundings seemed to change: The streets were full of people, coaches, droshkies. Traders screamed at every corner, praising their goods, paper-boys shouted the headlines of the day, coachmen yelled at each other when they could not get their vehicles past one another, children screeched, women shrieked when they noticed the absence of their purses or policemen bellowed, trying to restore order in the heavy traffic.

In the meantime the carriage with the cage made its way through the streets. The wheels squashed the dirt that lay around, rolled through puddles of mud and water from the last rain and the coachman yawned, day-dreaming of getting back to bed as soon as possible.

Finally he arrived at Camden Town's market: Birds and chicken chirped and cackled, pigs squealed before an ox abruptly interrupted them, cows lowed and all about was the smell of blood and manure that drifted along the place.

The coachmen made his horses stop in front of one of the stands.

The surprised owner looked up.

They shook hands and then the coachmen handed the other man a small note.

The owner studied the small slip of paper, trying to decipher the words, sniffed and then shortly looked at the content of the cage. He frowned, then shrugged his shoulders and made a sign to the coachman to unload the carriage.

The coachman struggle with the cage for a while until the owner was finally willing to help him. Together they got the heavy cage of the coach. The owner cursed all the time and finally they let the cage drop down next to the stand. When the heavy cage slammed to the ground a small yelp came out from the inside. The owner kicked the cage in response, then handed the coachman the money he was supposed to get and then this man climbed onto his coach again and drove it away while the stand owner scratched his head and studied the cage and the creature that was mostly hidden in the darkest corner.

The new owner sighed thoughtfully, got a piece of tobacco out of one of his pockets, broke off a piece of it and started to chew on it while he leaned on the cage and eyed the people who strolled over the crowded market.

In the late afternoon he finally saw one man whose looks inspired his sense of business: He wore a long grey, fur-trimmed coat, a shiny new top hat, his hair was mostly white and pointed into every possible direction, something that was even more emphasized by his long sideburns which framed his broad, wrinkled face with the firmly closed mouth and the small dark eyes behind his glasses that studied the different stands with accuracy. His gloved hand held a long cane with a shiny silver knob while he walked over to the stands, curiously eyed one good or another. Usually he strolled on within a few moments.

The stand owner stood up straight and put his pants in place. Then he turned around and shuffled some crates as if he did not notice how the man in the coat was just about to approach the cage.

"What's this creature?"

The stand owner looked up from the crates he had never really paid any attention to. He opened his eyes wide when he looked at the man in the grey coat as if he did not know what he was talking about. Then he looked at the cage and instantly said: "They call it a linsang, sir!" The man touched his hat as if he wanted to take it off and snuffled.

"Hm!" The man in the long overcoat leaned over and looked into the cage. He could not make out much in the darkness of the cage, except for a ball of dirty fur the size of very large dog. Its bad smell instantly stuck to his nose. "Interesting." He took his cane and stuck it into the cage, trying to get a reaction from the creature but it just lay there, he could not even see its face. Carefully he poked it with the tip of his cane, but the creature hardly moved at all. Somewhere in between the dirty strands of fur an eye showed up but the man could not make out much more than the reflection on its surface.

The man stood up again and smiled mechanically towards the seller, a man in simple brown clothing, now leaning against the cage again.

"It's one of 'em humanoid creatures from the colonies," the seller explained while he chewed on his tobacco. "It could make you a good price for it."

"No!" he man in the coat replied almost instantly and sneered. "I am just curious. I don't collect anything larger than birds."

"Hm." The seller nodded slowly. "You look like a gentleman to me, sir."

"I daresay I am gentleman," the man replied coldly, slightly offended by this remark.

The seller scratched his head. "Oh, yes... Well you look like the man who could be interested in 'em creatures, sir! Exotic creatures and all. She's a young one, still mighty flexible..."

"Pardon?"

Suddenly the seller broke out in laughter. "No, sorry! I was..." He laughed even louder. "No, sir! 'em creatures are rare and you seem to be able to distinguish things of value."

"Yes, indeed. But it is a question of accommodating them, isn't it? What's worth a painting by Caravaggio if you can't put it on display the way it should be?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I totally agree with you!" the seller replied even though he had no idea what his counterpart was talking about. "But 'em creatures, they're adaptable, see? They can be trained, they're about as smart as the finest dog you can get and don't eat much more than that."

The man in the long coat approached the cage again, inhaled deeply and instantly he had the stench of the creature in his nose again.

Suddenly a teenage boy in an expensive school uniform emerged from the crowd that populated the entire market. His blond hair and his blue eyes were almost shining brightly in the dim light of this London day, they certainly set him apart from the rest of the people while he walked towards the man in the coat

without hesitation. "Uncle, they have cockatoos over..." he said while he approached the man who was still looking at the creature in the cage.

"Not now, boy, I am..." The older man fell silent.

"I can make you a good price with that one, it's injured, don't know if it's going to make it, see!" the seller mentioned. He eyed the boy who had approached the cage too by now.

"Hm." The old man hesitated, turned away from the cage and took out a handkerchief. He cleaned his nose with it.

In the meantime the boy was by the cage's side. He hesitated for an instant, then he started to study the almost lifeless creature who lay in the cage which was much too small for it: It was obviously in a very poor condition. It had curled up at the far end of the cage. Its dark, brown and white fur was stained with all kinds of dirt and it looked as if there were wounds hidden underneath it as well, at least some of the stains looked like dried blood. The fur stretched tightly over the clearly visible bones of the obviously underfed creature. Very slowly one of the arm-like limbs moved slightly and a set of dark eyes showed between the fur, gazing at the boy.

He exhaled and instinctively made a step backwards.

"Your son?" the seller asked the older man.

"Oh, thank goodness, no! He lives with me ever since my sister and her husband went under with HMS Excelsior."

The seller nodded and waited for an instant. "So, what do you think, sir?"

"My opinion has not changed, good man. I am here out of mere curiosity. I told you that I don't collect anything but birds."

"She's injured, uncle," the boy said suddenly.

"I know that, my boy. Nothing that can be done about that."

The boy had bend his knees and was now almost at the same height as the set of dark eyes that were still observing him. He could see how nervous the creature was, even though it kept on observing him, its eyes shot about whenever there was a louder sound in its environment and there was always some loud noise on this market. Its small chest rose and sunk quickly. By now he knew enough about his uncle's profession that such a quick breath was anything but a sign of good health.

"You could..."

"I could do many things!" the man interrupted the boy. "That does not mean that I will. I have different interests though."

"What's your profession, if you don't mind me asking, sir?" the seller asked suddenly.

The man in the overcoat wrinkled his nose. "I am a surgeon," he explained.

Suddenly the seller pushed himself off the cage he had rested on. "Listen, kind sir! I have a proposition: This creature, sir, is a fine specimen of a rare humanoid species from the colonies. If it survives you have purchased a fine, exotic pet, if it

doesn't it will still be interesting for your..." The man vaguely waved his hand. "...science," he suggested finally.

The man in the overcoat hesitated. Shortly he looked at the man, then he scratched his sideburns with the top of his cane.

"Uncle, please..."

"Silence, boy!"

"And you will do your nephew a favour. Could you ask for more?"

The older man exhaled.

"Seven guineas, ten shillings, sir."

"I won't pay more than 6 guineas."

"Six guineas, so be it, sir!" the seller exclaimed.

The boy looked towards his uncle and smiled.

"And I expect you to deliver this cage at my residence."

"Ten shillings, sir!"

The surgeon pulled a face. "You do not expect me to carry this cage through London."

"Ten shillings."

"Whatever! I don't want to discuss this matter with you. Deliver it at my mansion: 52, Grosvenor Square." He pulled out a wallet and handed the delighted seller a business card. "You will be paid on delivery."

"With pleasure, sir!"

The old man made a sign towards the boy. "Come on, Christopher!"

For a moment the boy waited. He grinned at the small furry creature in the cage. "See you soon!" he said towards it, stood up quickly and went after his uncle who was about to walk away quickly.

The wounded creature in the cage did not leave the young male from her eyes, she observed the upright walking human boy with the blond hair while he walked away. His bright hair was visible among the crowd for quite some time.

She started when the hand of the seller slammed down on the cage.

"Six guineas! Fucking yes! You better don't die now, kitty!"

She inhaled deeply into her feverish body and buried her eyes under her paw, willingly succumbing to the darkness that offered some deliverance from the noisy, painful world that surrounded her.

The next day brought fog that spread over the city like a shroud. One could no longer distinguish fog from smoke, but the inhabitants went about their business anyway, having no choice but to leave their homes in order to earn their living. But most people tried their best to avoid the streets as much as possible, walking as quickly as possible through the cold haze that crept into one's clothes if one gave it a chance.

The whole city seemed to be in a hurry and all the vendors in the streets did their best to stop someone who hurried past while the vendors themselves pulled their clothes or their coats tighter around their body.

Only the most unfortunate inhabitants stayed outside in this weather. The prostitutes in Whitechapel stood close to one another in order to warm each other for a short moment while they stood in front of the poor houses that made up this ill fated district of the Empire's capital.

From one of these houses emerged a plump man in dirty clothes. He quickly buttoned his fly before he put on his hat and walked into the foggy morning. He approached a carriage that stood on the side of the road. The two restless horses shook their heads from time to time and scratched on the dirty ground with their hooves. A teenaged boy held them by their headstall until the man arrived. The man threw a coin towards the boy, who nodded gloomily in return and went along while the man mounted onto the carriage and told his horses to get going again. Slowly the two animals started to trot and the carriage was on his way through the foggy streets.

On the back of the carriage stood some rectangular thing covered by a thick cloth.

The carriage left Whitechapel and joined the broader roads of the city, suddenly surrounded by a large number of other carriages and droshkies which rolled through the districts. The carriage passed through Shoreditch, Holborn and entered the district of Westminster, getting closer to Hyde Park, but before the carriage arrived there, it reached Grosvenor Square and the driver scratched his head when he eyed the neat façades of the multi-storied houses. Even the fog did not seem to be so dense in this district of London and the white stone of the houses stood out on this grey day.

The driver finally stopped his carriage in front of a slim building that was squeezed in between two much larger buildings. But its front side was no less impressive, the two columns that framed the entrance were like two guards of stone.

The man stopped his horses and jumped down from his carriage. While he walked towards the door he somehow instinctively took off his hat, spit into his hand and slicked down his hair with it before he dared to use the massive brass knocker.

Almost right in the same moment a fat woman opened and looked at the man in front of the door. Her eyes were wide open and she was dressed in the black and white dress of a maid that had gotten slightly too tight for someone her size. She studied the man.

"I am sorry, ma'am," the driver said instantly. "This 52, Grosvenor Square?"

"Yes! What do you want?"

The man was slightly intimidated by her harsh attitude. "I was instructed to deliver a..." He pointed towards the cage on the back of his carriage.

“Oh!” the woman exclaimed. “Yes! Wait!” Instantly she turned around and slammed the door shut again.

The driver was slightly confused, standing in front of the closed door, not knowing what to do. He made a few steps from the door and scratched his head again. He pulled his clothes tighter.

A few moments the door opened again and a valet emerged. The man was very slim, his hair was a mixture of grey and brown and the many wrinkles in his face showed that he was beyond his best years. “You are delivering...?” He asked the driver while he walked up to him.

The other man pointed towards the cage.

“Ah yes, that would be this creature from the colonies,” the valet stated.

“I think so, sir!” the driver replied.

“Doctor Neunen does his round,” the older man said and sighed. “We must try to get it into the house.”

The driver nodded.

For a moment the two men stood in front of the hidden cage and did not move.

“Is it heavy?” the valet asked.

The driver shrugged and sighed.

The valet nodded. “Very well then...” He inhaled deeply.

The driver climbed onto the carriage and started to push the cage towards the edge while the valet took the cage’s side and held it while the driver came on to him. Finally he held it tightly. He gasped when he could feel its weight.

Quickly the driver jumped down from the carriage and pulled the cage entirely off the carriage until the two men carried it entirely, feeling the full extent of its weight. They panted while they hauled it towards the door.

The weight of the cage occupied him so much that the driver was not even able to admire the riches of the house he had entered. Instead the two men struggled not to let the cage drop down.

“Where do you put this?” the maid asked. She stood in an opened door and observed the two men very carefully.

“Greenhouse,” the valet gasped.

“Doctor Neunen will not be pleased by this! He said...”

“I know what he said...” the valet gasped. “But there is no way the two of us can get this down the staircase.”

The maid frowned in disapproval.

In the meantime the two men were already about to pass through the door to the salon.

“Could you, please, open the door to the greenhouse?” the valet exclaimed.

The maid clicked her tongue but then quickly passed by the two men with the heavy cage.

She approached the back end of the house where two large windows opened towards a large backyard. At least it seemed to be a backyard with lush green

trees and plants, but when she opened the back door the driver's eyes opened wide: It was anything but a backyard. It was a huge greenhouse. He could not even see its ceiling but it had to be made of glass as natural light fell into this structure. He could hear the sound of running water even though he could not see any kind of running water either. The only thing he saw were plants totally unknown to him and full-grown trees. On their branches sat exotic, colourful birds that looked down curiously on the two men. Their chirping and the ticktack of their beaks filled the air.

The driver stared at his surroundings and did not pay attention to the ground until he stumbled.

He let go of the cage and with a loud bang it slammed to the ground. Its edge slammed against the valet's hand who let go of it too and then then the other end of the cage fell down too and the valet screamed in pain when it landed on his foot.

"Damn, damn, damn!" he shouted while he jumped around on his other foot.

The driver did not even notice, he was still staring at the interior of what was supposed to be a greenhouse that exceeded all imaginations he had ever had about this subject.

In the meantime the maid helped the valet and supported him while he hobbled back into the house. When they passed by the driver the maid grabbed the driver's arm and pulled him along. "This way, young man!" she said towards the man who was still looking at the beautifully coloured birds who flew from one tree to another.

The maid forced the valet to sit down on a chair in the salon and dragged the driver along while she approached the door again.

"Six guineas, ten shillings, wasn't it?" she asked. Without waiting for an answer, she thrust the coins into the driver's hand and then pushed him out of the door which she slammed shut almost the very same instant.

The man stood on the street and did not move. His mind was still inside the greenhouse with its multitude of shades of green, the smell of fresh earth and clean running water, the sound of birds which flew all around, their feathers shimmering with all the colours of the rainbow. He stared at the greyness of this foggy London day that was so much unlike what he had seen moments ago.

The gas lamps were already being lit when the doors of a large building suddenly burst open and a huge crowd of boys, all dressed in the very same, black clothes dashed out of it.

In front of the building, on the street already stood several droshkies, servants in expensive livrees and maids in long dresses which hid almost all of their skin except for their faces and their hands.

The boys were welcomed by them and little by little these small groups started to leave, some of them taking a droshkey, while others walked down the broad

streets. There was no boy walking alone, except the young blond boy who said goodbye to his friends before he turned into a small street opposite his school, walking past a small stationer's.

He pulled his cap tightly over his head and stuffed his hands into his pockets to avoid as much of the unpleasant, cold wetness of this autumn day as possible while he walked through the streets all by himself.

Christopher's way was lined with small shops at first. They did not look like much from the outside, but Christopher and anyone who cared to watch their display would instantly have noticed that the goods they sold there were the finest one could get in the whole of the British Empire. Haberdashery, clothiers, delicatessen, glove makers and watchmakers.

But soon he left most of the shops behind, walking into streets full of family houses where much less people were on the streets, mostly due to the unpleasant weather.

For a moment Chris hesitated because he was uncertain which way he should go on this day. He finally decided to take the shorter one and turned off into a street of even smaller houses. Almost instantly the street was much less cleanly, the frontages of the houses were stained and except for a carriage drawn by an old, greyish mare it was entirely empty.

Chris did not look towards the misted-up windows of the houses where small children gathered, looking down on the boy in his school uniform.

A faint curse escaped his lips when he saw a group of boys down the road.

They sat upon the remains of a carriage somebody had simply dumped by the side of one of the houses. Most of them were younger than him, except for a boy who stood in front of the carriage, his cap almost entirely hiding his face, his hands lazily buried in his pockets while he chewed on a long straw hanging down from his lips.

"Lookie, lookie!" The boy exclaimed when Christopher came closer. He was larger than Chris, even though he was not any older. He wore a simple set of thick, worn clothes totally unlike Christopher's black school uniform.

"If that ain't the ward of that fancy doctor of the royalty."

Chris inhaled deeply. He knew the boy well. Everyone called him Watson and ever since Chris had come to his uncle Watson had been there as well. At first when Chris had been younger he had wanted to play with him when he had seen him and his gang in the streets, but his uncle had always forbidden it and little by little Watson had started to show him what he thought of someone like him.

Not looking at them Chris walked past, but one of the younger boys jumped down from the carriage and started to walk after him, parodying Chris' walk.

The other boys started to walk after him as well and Watson threw his straw away.

"Good day, your Lordship!" he yelled after Chris. When Chris did not reply, he repeated it: "Good day, your Lordship!"

The boys snickered.

"I said: Good day, your Lordship!"

Christopher tried to ignore him, but an instant later the big boy was by his side, walking right next to him.

"Oh, his Lordship's too good to talk to the likes of us?" Watson sneered. "We're all criminals, aint' we?" He spoke to the younger boys who followed him. They laughed in return.

Chris clenched his teeth.

A moment later the other one was even closer yet, almost right by his side. He lowered his head so that he could look into Chris' eyes who looked to the ground.

"Hello? Anybody home in that fancy dress? Ah, no don't bother, it's just me, Watson, y'know!"

Somewhat instinctively Christopher's feet were walking faster as they approached Grosvenor Square. He could hear Watson's breath as the bigger boy was so close now.

"What's that uniform anyway? What's that fancy school ye're goin' to? Ye never told me!"

Christopher's hands had formed fists. Of course, everyone else at school was picked up by some maid or a droshkey or something similar. Except for him who had to endure meeting Watson and his gang almost every day. If it had not been for his uncle who had told him that he did not want to spoil him and who had said that walking was good for his health.

In the meantime Watson had went on with his speech. "Well you know, one day we gonna pay ye a visit in your house, y'know! Look what it's like in there. I guess ye won't mind." The other boys laughed. "Such good friends we are."

Christopher looked ahead: Grosvenor Square was already getting into sight. He knew that Watson and his gang would leave him any moment now.

In this moment he could feel Watson's hand picking at his cuff link.

"Ye don't mind me taking one o' those? Ye'll be getting it back for sure!"

He walked even faster.

"Hey, don't ye run away, my friend!"

Christopher gritted his teeth. He was totally unable to bear this voice and its sneering tone anymore. He turned off into Grosvenor Square, but Watson did not seem to have any intention to leave him. The rest of the boys stayed behind, they knew that there was usually some police man somewhere close by, but Watson did not seem to mind this time.

"Come on, gimme that fancy button."

Suddenly Chris spun around. "Scram, you damn crook!" he yelled at the larger boy.

They looked into each other's eyes for a short instant. "That's what ye think o' me, don't ye?" Watson said.

"Hey, what's going on over there?" It was the shout of a constable who had just walked around the square and gotten into sight of the two boys.

Instantly Chris turned around and ran towards his uncle's house, leaving Watson behind.

He dashed towards the door and instantly used the brass knocker of the front door.

A moment later the valet opened and Christopher rushed inside.

"Good after-noon, Master Christopher," the valet said and closed the door again.

"Hello, Andrew," Chris replied.

"Did you have a good day at school?"

Christopher grunted. "I am going to change."

"Of course you do!" The valet turned around while Christopher ran up the staircase and into his room. As quickly as he was able to he tried to get out of his tight school uniform. He was certain that it had gotten tighter or maybe he had grown. He put on much more comfortable clothes and left his room again.

He strolled down the staircase again and went for the kitchen.

The kitchen was hidden at the end of a long corridor and when he approached it he could already hear the maid working there. He went inside.

"Hello!"

"Master Christopher!" Misses Cavendish replied without looking up from the chicken she was about to cut.

Chris approached one of the cupboards and took a big jar from one of its shelves. He reached out for a bowl and poured grains and nuts from the jar into the bowl.

As soon as he had put the jar back into the cupboard again he left the kitchen with the bowl, wandering through the corridors into the salon and through the door into the greenhouse.

As soon as the door to the greenhouse opened again the birds looked down curiously.

The teenage boy came in. Instantly the interest of the birds turned towards him, some of them flying closer towards the boy who was not paying any attention to them at all as he studied the strange rectangle which was hidden under a dirty cloth. The birds seemed to be worried by it, because usually they were much more daring than that, but they kept a safe distance from the object which gave off a strong scent.

Chris put the bowl on the ground, eyeing the rectangular object that stood on the pastel-coloured stones the floor was tiled with.

For an instant he wanted to call out for the maid, but then he remembered. Instantly he was on his knees by the cage's side and carefully lifted the cloth a little bit while he leaned forward to have a look inside. The smell got even stronger and stuck to his nose with pungent power. It was almost entirely dark inside, his eyes needed a moment to perceive anything. "Hello..." he said cautiously. Finally he saw the creature curled up in the darkest corner of the cage.

Instantly he jumped to his feet. "Misses Cavendish! Misses Cavendish!" he yelled while he ran into the house again as fast as he could.

In the meantime the birds dared to approach the bowl with the grains and finally flocked to it, each of them trying to find a spot where it could get as much food as possible. They fluttered in order to chase each other away, chased each other across the tiled ground while different birds used this chance to occupy the abandoned place.

When the boy came back the birds were instantly roused. They took to the air, the flapping of their wings was a sound that reigned the greenhouse for a moment until they had settled on the trees again, glaring down on the boy who had kneeled down by the cage's side again, having put down some clean cloth and two brown bottles which he had brought along.

He cast the cloth on the cage aside. For a moment he struggled with the key he had brought along which did not want to turn as the locking mechanism of the cage resisted his attempt. With a crunch it gave in.

In this time the maid came into the greenhouse too. "Your uncle would certainly not approve of this commotion," she said while she came closer. "Most of all he would not approve anyone touching his drugs."

The boy paid no attention to her as he had finally succeeded to open the cage's door. Without hesitation he crawled inside.

"Master Christopher, I must insist that your behaviour is totally inappropriate!" the maid went on, glaring at the two shoes that were the only thing that looked out of the cage in this moment. "And most certainly not befitting your station as the ward of someone like Doctor Neunen and the son of a..." She was interrupted when she saw that the boy pulled something out from inside the cage. "Dear goodness, what is this?" she exclaimed in horror.

The boy gasped as it was difficult for him to move inside the confines of the cage and the creature that he tried to get out was larger and much heavier than he would expect it to be. Finally he had simply pulled at its feet and little by little it came out from the darkness, the lush light of the greenhouse illuminating its emerging body.

"Jesus!" the maid shouted and shuddered in disgust.

What had emerged was a strange mixture of a human woman and a furry, cat-like creature. The first thing that came into sight were two short, digitigrade legs, thick with muscles and covered in a white fur on the front side and light brown fur with black spots on the back side. Then came a slim hip with lush fur around her pubes, it might have been white sometimes but now it was so dirty that its original colour was hardly recognizable. A slim stomach was followed by a furred chest which a number of small furless spots where a number of teats was partly hidden and above a long, slender neck sat a head with a short muzzle, long whiskers, a feline nose and large animal-like ears. Last came two lifeless arms with two hands of four fingers and a very long tail which could have been lush if had not been stained so much.

In this moment, the eyes were firmly closed, the muzzle was wide opened, exposing sharp teeth while the chest did not seem to rise and sink at all as her breathing was so weak. The creature's poor looks was bad as the stench it gave off.

"Dear god, what is this... abomination?" the maid said when she had finally found her speech again.

Christopher paid no attention to her as he was already about to lay the creature onto the stone ground. For a moment he studied her appearance: She was only a little bit smaller than he was, but due to her very slender body she looked much more fragile and vulnerable, especially in this weakened condition. This reminded him of what he had to do. Quickly he tore some of the cloth apart that he had brought along, took the larger one of the two brown bottles and opened it. Instantly the strong scent of iodine rose to his nose and he poured some of it onto a piece of cloth.

"Master Neunen, I believe that you are far beyond your...," the maid said.

"Do you think my uncle would be pleased if his new pet would die and you actually kept me from saving it?" he replied while one of his hands brushed through the fur of the creature in search of wounds.

The maid wanted to reply something, she even opened her mouth, but then she hesitated. For an instant she just stood there before she finally closed her mouth again. She scowled but did not say a thing, turned around and went back inside the house.

In the meantime the boy was about to clean the first wound he had found. He smiled to himself. "Don't worry," he said towards the unconscious creature. "She can't do you any harm."

Carefully he tended to her wounds, slowly his hand moved through her fur, his fingers explored the outlines of her body. He had wettened a larger part of cloth in a nearby pool of water that was supposed to be a watering place for the birds. With the wet cloth he cleaned her fur, he pulled the felted strands apart and removed the dried blood until the white of her fur got visible again. His fingers moved over her legs, slowly he rose them and let his fingers glide over the inside of her thighs. This fur seemed to be softer than in different spots, it tickled on his fingertips, he could feel the outlines of muscles beneath her palm and he eyed her face while he went on stroking her leg as if he was afraid that she could awake any moment. One part of him wanted her to, because it would have been a good sign, but a different part of his mind feared this because he knew somehow that what he did right now was no proper behaviour. But the longer he took care of her body the more it fascinated him. When he searched for wounds on her bottom he could not help himself but to touch her teats, small knots of skin and flesh atop of less firm fabric. He took one of them between his thumb and his index to feel its structure and it reminded him instinctively of his own breastwart which was slightly smaller but felt almost the same. Unlike him she seemed to have at more than two breastwarts, the largest set of them in the exact spot

where he would have expected to find them on a human body. The other ones which were further down her body were smaller.

But he reminded himself of his task and went on cleaning her and disinfecting the wounds he could find. There were many wounds on her knees and all around her shinbone. Some of the wounds looked awful. He had to clean off lots of pus and when he looked at the soaked cloth he realized that the pus had been one of the main origins of the bad smell. He sniffled.

When he had finished with her front side, he carefully turned her around to inspect her backside. He was impressed by her long tail that was very fluffy despite being dirty. He stroked it several times and then his hand went down further and finally met her buttocks. He pinched one of them and grinned mischievously. Unfortunately she did not react to this either and so he went on in silence. Her elbows were in pretty much the same state as her knees.

Having finally finished he rolled her on her back again. Very carefully he took her in his arms. He moaned when he had to lift her up as he was not that strong. He loved playing cricket but he was not as fit as some of his classmates and he certainly was not used to carry large anthropomorphic creatures through the house as he had to now. With the female creature in his arms he left the greenhouse and walked across the parlour and the corridor. He wheezed when he carried her up the staircase which proved to be much more difficult than he would have expected as the staircase was quite narrow. Finally he arrived on the second floor, kicked a door open and let the creature fall down on the duvet of his own bed.

He panted strongly, quite proud that he had made it and he smiled at her. In this moment he saw that her eyelids quivered. Instantly he was on his knees to look into her face and observe this feeble movement. But there was not much more than that: Her eyelids quivered some more, than even this little movement vanished altogether.

Quickly Christopher was on his feet again and left the room again, running down the stairs and into the greenhouse again. There he picked up the smaller one of the two brown bottles and rushed back again.

When he passed by the surprised valet who stood in a doorway, he quickly said: "A glass of water, in my room!"

The valet stared at him while the boy ran up the stairs again.

A few moments later the valet entered the young man's room. He frowned when he saw the furred creature lying in the bed. In the meantime Christopher had wrapped the unconscious creature comfortably in his bed.

"Master Christopher, this is most unusual," the valet said.

"The glass of water?"

The valet handed it to the boy. "I don't think that it is appropriate for that creature to be here." He observed how the boy put the glass down on the bedside cabinet and then took the small brown bottle into his hands and opened it. With a small silver spoon the boy produced a little bit of white powder from of

the bottle. When he put it down again, the valet studied it carefully, most especially the label that read "Quinine".

Christopher poured the substance into the glass of water and stirred forcefully.

"This is your bed," the valet stated.

"Yes, I know," Christopher replied while he leaned over to the creature in the bed. Very carefully he put a hand behind her head and rose it slightly while he put the glass to her dry lips. Quickly he poured some of the water mixed with the quinine into her mouth, lay her head back and then lay his hand on her nose. An instant later the creature swallowed automatically. She retched and a gurgle escaped her throat but the boy smiled when he realized that she had truly drunken the substance. Instantly he went on to repeat the procedure.

The valet sighed. "Master Christopher, I would be delighted if you would consider this for a moment. It is not, I repeat, it is not appropriate for a man of your age to take some animal to his bed."

"She is not an animal," the boy replied, having just poured another part of water into the creature's mouth.

"That thing certainly is," the valet replied.

The creature in the bed coughed weakly, having choked on the last gulp of her medicine. But even this cough was hardly a powerful reaction.

The boy stood up again and smiled at the valet. "Let's see what my uncle has got to say."

The valet sighed. "Your uncle has sent a message. He will not be here until tomorrow morning. He has to tend to the Duchess of Malfi who is in a very serious condition."

Christopher's smile started to transform into a broad grin. "Then we will have to wait until tomorrow morning to know about my uncle's opinion on that matter."

The valet sighed even more strongly.

The door swung open and slammed against the wall with a loud crash.

Christopher was instantly awake, but not awake enough to recognize his uncle who had rushed into the room, already standing at the bed the young man had rested his head on.

"What is this..." the old man's voice asked coldly. "...madness?"

Christopher was still much too sleepy to realize what happened. He had been awake all of the night, guarding the creature all of the time. She had been restless, she had turned in the bed, obviously tormented by her fever, she had moaned and sometimes she had tried to fight off the invisible ghosts of her disease, her powerless arms and legs lashing about while she groaned helplessly. He had tried to cool her forehead with a wet cloth but he had to force her to accept it, as her weak hand pushed it off again and again, maybe she just wanted to adjust it but, maybe she wanted to push it away, he could not tell. He forced

her to drink some water and some more quinine. In the middle of the night, he had sneaked into the kitchen and had gotten some cold soup and had forced that down her throat as well. It went on all of the time and he observed her until his blue eyes were bloodshot and he felt as powerless as she had to be. In the late morning she was finally getting calm and found some sleep.

For a few more moments he had watched her, her muzzle with the opened mouth where her white fangs showed, her short fur that covered her face and her closed eyes, the eyelids quivering very, very faintly. He had been able to smell her, it was a strange scent, he had tried to figure it out and while he had done so he had lain his head on the duvet she was resting under. His fingers had run over the soft surface and before they had finished their course his eyes had closed and he was fast asleep.

Until the moment his uncle had entered the room.

He stared at the man who stood on the other side of the bed. Christopher jumped to his feet, wet his lips and tried to push down his hair that had to be a total mess.

His uncle's dark eyes glared at him and then he simply made a sign with his hand and the valet entered the room as well. "Put this where it belongs!" the doctor said simply.

Christopher frowned. He needed a moment to understand what his uncle meant, but this was all the time the valet needed to bow down and lift the unconscious creature out of the bed.

"Hey, what are you doing?" Christopher exclaimed, trying to reach out for the valet's arm who was about to turn around on the spot, holding the nude creature in his arms.

"Manners!" the doctor ordered.

Christopher looked at him for a moment.

The valet was about to carry the creature out of the room.

"What... What..."

"I am ending this little... My goodness, Christopher, what did you do here?" The doctor shook his head. "Taking this creature to..." He hesitated for a moment. "Your room!"

"I... I..." Christopher stammered.

"Hush!" the doctor interrupted him instantly. "I don't want to hear any more of this. You will stay in your room until I allow you to leave it again."

"But... But she is sick," Christopher was finally able to utter.

The doctor's eyes narrowed and he scrutinized the boy. "Would that be an excuse for your... behaviour? I don't think so."

"But I just wanted to help..."

"I said: No more of this!" He shook his head and then he pointed at the boy. "This has gone much too far already. You stay here!" With these words he turned around on the spot and left the room, slamming the door shut again, leaving the puzzled boy behind who was unable to understand his uncle's anger.

He knew all of the details of his uncle's anger. He had witnessed it before, but he had never been the victim of it. His uncle never showed its full extent, but the consequences were no less dire and in these last few moments he had seen it in his faces: The small, narrowed eyes, the firmly closed mouth, the chewing of the jaw, the red colour of his face and the pulsing of the carotid artery while at the same time his voice hardly changed at all.

Christopher exhaled and felt totally powerless for a moment.

From below he could hear noises, he did not know what they meant. There was a racket on the ground floor, he could hear the scratching sound of something large being moved around. He guessed that it had to be the cage, but he could not distinguish what they were doing with it. The muffled sounds of his uncle's, the valet's and the maid's voices were coming through the door as well. But he could not understand this either.

He gulped and slumped onto the bed.

For a moment he lied there. He noticed that the bed was still warm, it was her warmth that he was feeling, he inhaled deeply, sucking all of the scents of her body which lingered between the sheets into his nose and his hands cramped around the soft fabric and held it tightly while he lied there.

Slowly sleep was coming over him again and he started to dream.

The next day he was allowed to leave his room again. He had to go to school after all.

But whenever he returned from school he could feel the valet and the maid observing him, he could feel their eyes upon him and when his uncle was at home too, he could feel his glare too. The doctor was even more taciturn than ever, at least as long as he talked to his nephew. Christopher felt horribly uneasy, but there was nothing he could do about it. He simply went along with it and pretended not to notice the adults' interest in him.

The cage had disappeared from the greenhouse. He had noticed this right away.

At the same time, the door to the basement was locked all of the time.

Thus he had little doubt where the linsang had to be right now.

During the afternoon, when he and his uncle had tea in the greenhouse Christopher could not resist asking anyway.

The cucumber sandwich approached the lips of his uncle with deliberate slowness while the man looked at the boy opposite. His eyes reflected dim sunlight which came in through the tiles of the glasshouse. "She is in the cellar," he said finally, lying the sandwich aside and stirring his tea in order to dissolve the sugar.

Christopher tried not to react to this statement. He looked at the cup in his hand, observing the traces of the milk in hot, reddish liquid.

“In my laboratory,” the doctor added. He had lowered his head, but looked at his nephew anyway. He studied the boy very carefully, the movements of his eyes, the steadiness of his hand, the motions of his mouth. Thus he noticed the very faint frown. He stretched himself a little bit, sat up straight and took up his cup. “Don’t you agree that this is best?” He sipped his tea.

Christopher just nodded without looking up.

“I am very happy that we both agree on this subject,” the man said.

They were both quiet for a moment.

Above them the birds in the trees chirped and fluttered their wings.

Chris rose the cup to his lips and drank some tea. The liquid was still too hot, it burned his throat.

The days went by with agonizing slowness. Autumn came along with great footsteps. The leaves of trees on Grosvenor Square lost the last traces of green colour, changing to a sickly yellow. They grew heavy with the moisture of the fogs which floated across the city and they fell down, already rotting before they reached the ground.

Road sweepers, hired by the reputable neighbourhood families, cleaned the streets almost every day, thankful for the few pennies they could earn, handed to them by ill-humoured maids.

Chris could observe it all from the window of his room. His uncle had punished him with several days of detention. He was not allowed to leave his room except when he went to school or attended the meals in the dining room.

The door to the cellar was always firmly locked. He had checked every time when he had walked past it and nobody had been looking.

He knew the room down below. A long time ago, his uncle had set up a small laboratory down there when he had lived here all alone. Since Christopher lived with him the doctor had transferred the last of his experiments to his surgery which was situated close to Hyde Park where his noble and rich patients could drop by before having a walk in the park.

The centre of the room down below had always been a huge examination table, the walls filled with cupboards of the strangest kinds of medical equipment, shelves full of jars with drugs. He had been down there many times before, but it was anything but a pleasant place. Up to now the door had never been locked.

Whenever he walked past the door he pricked up his ears because he hoped to hear something from down below but there never was anything at all. He just wanted to know if the linsang was well down there. She had still been sick when his uncle had taken her away.

The more days went by, the more anxious he became. He did not want to mention this matter in front of his uncle who was still annoyed by what had happened, but little by little his uncle’s anger vanished and after six days Chris was finally allowed to leave his room again.

The first thing he checked when he was certain that nobody observed him, was the door to the basement. The door was still locked. Even though he had expected this, he felt a little sting in his chest anyway.

Over the weekend he observed the inhabitants of the small household.

His uncle had keys to every room in the house, but he either kept them by himself or in his room all of the time. His uncle's room was totally inaccessible because the doctor locked it during the day. Despite the long time he had lived with his uncle by now, Chris had only been in there once.

Chris knew that Andrew, the valet and Misses Cavendish, the maid, had to have keys as well.

On Saturday his supposition was finally confirmed when he saw Andrew coming out of the door to the basement. It was still early in the morning and Chris had just come down the staircase when he saw how Andrew came up from the basement.

In the least suspicious way possible Chris strolled across the corridor, towards the door.

But the moment he had finally reached it, Andrew quickly came out of it and slammed the door shut.

The valet smiled towards Christopher who returned the smile and walked on towards the salon without hesitation. It was more than obvious that Andrew had tried to prevent this encounter.

Walking on Chris could hear Andrew locking the door. He turned around and could see how he made use of one a large metal key which hang on a ring, together with another key. Before Andrew turned around again, Chris walked into the salon as if nothing had happened.

Monday had been a dreadful day.

Light, cold rain had come from the North Sea and it had washed over London. In the early morning it had already drenched all of the streets. The streets and the houses glistened with moisture in the greyish light that reigned daytime.

The teachers at school had insisted that they had to practice for some parade anyway. Christopher and his comrades had not even cared what it was all about. The weather had been so bad that none of them had paid any attention when the dean spoke to them. They had just stood in the rain, within moments soaked to the bone. Dripping wet they had to march across the school yard in celebration of one of the Empire's recent victories in one of the restless colonies.

As soon as it was all over Chris had ran home. The rain had stopped by now, the clouds had travelled on and there was even some sunlight coming through. Chris did not care because his school uniform was still wet and when he was finally home, he was happy to be able to change into something dry.

His uncle had not come from his surgery and dinner would not be served for a long time because his uncle had been summoned to the Duchess of Malfi's residence which was at the opposite end of the city.

Therefore Chris went for the kitchen in order to get himself something to eat.

The place was empty because Andrew was busy in the greenhouse and Misses Cavendish took care of the laundry.

First Chris got himself an apple and ate it hungrily. He started when there was a knock at the back door. This door led to a small passageway behind the house.

For a moment Chris was uncertain what he should do, but there was another, much more insistent knock and he went for the door, unbolted it.

The moment the door opened, Chris already regretted having done so.

Watson stood on the doorstep, looking at Chris with the same surprise Chris looked at him.

"Now what a surprise!" Watson said and started to grin.

Chris frowned. He hesitated for a short instant, then he wanted to shut the door, but Watson stopped the door from slamming shut by grabbing its edge

Chris had felt fury rising the moment he had seen Watson's face and now- with his whole weight- he pressed himself against the door in order to slam it shut.

"Damn you...!" Watson exclaimed.

A short struggle ensued. Chris threw his entire weight against the door and simultaneously tried to push Watson away who tried to prevent this. Their hands met, finally slammed into each other. Chris grabbed Watson's face, trying to push him away.

Watson gasped.

But the bigger boy was much stronger than him and pushed Christopher away who stumbled backwards and slammed into one of the cupboards. The door opened with a bang.

A moment later Misses Cavendish came into the room. She looked at the two boys.

Chris stood against one of the cupboards and Watson stood on the front step of the door and pulled at the apron he wore.

"Thank you, Master Neunen, for opening!" the woman said in a total misinterpretation of what had happened. She walked towards Watson. "Now what do we got?"

"Potatoes, ma'am!" Watson said, changing the subject as if nothing had happened at all. He tipped his cap and walked down the staircase towards a small handcart which stood in the passageway. It carried a huge sack.

Chris looked away and gulped. He felt stupid in this moment.

Misses Cavendish walked past him. "Andrew...," she yelled into the hallway.

A moment later the valet stepped into the room. "Yes?"

Misses Cavendish stood by the back door. "We have gotten the potatoes, could you...?"

“Certainly!” He put down some things on the table in the middle of the room before he went towards the door.

Chris went away from the door towards the other end of the kitchen, walking past the table, when he noticed something. Between a watering can and a small rake which Andrew had laid down there were two large keys on metal ring. Chris exhaled and stopped cold.

“Oh, dear Jesus!” Andrew exclaimed outside.

Misses Cavendish sighed and went for the back door.

Christopher was still transfixed, his eyes stared at the keys which lay on the table. They were totally lifeless, made of dull metal which hardly reflected any light at all, but still they seemed to be calling out for him. He stretched out his hand, but hesitated for a moment.

From outside he could hear the grunts of Andrew who was not able to carry the load he was burdened with. Misses Cavendish complained about his clumsiness. Watson said something as well. Chris paid no attention to it.

His hesitation ended the moment he thought about the caged linsang. He had to know how she was doing. The urge to see her again was powerful.

He could hear Andrew on the steps to the kitchen door and in this moment Chris rushed forward and grabbed the key, retiring the very moment the valet walked into the room again, a heavy bag of potatoes on his back, sweating and puffing. The bag was so large that it almost seemed to crush the slim man. Watson followed him closely, trying to stabilize the rear end of the sack.

Chris tried not to look at them. Blood had rushed to his face, he felt hot.

Misses Cavendish followed last, behaving like a big breathless chicken who did not know what to do.

With a bang the bag dropped to the ground and Andrew panted strongly.

“Never! Never again!”

“But you can’t leave them here!” Misses Cavendish said instantly.

Andrew dropped down on a chair. “Don’t worry, I will...”

“But I need the kitchen to...”

“Later!” Andrew said firmly and wiped his frowns with a handkerchief.

Totally unlike her Misses Cavendish fell silent. She bowed a little bit to look at Andrew, but hesitated.

“Well, so what’s ’bout the money?” Watson asked.

Misses Cavendish rose to full size again and looked down on the boy. “Of course!” she said and went for a one of the cupboards. She picked up a small jar, grabbed into it and pulled out a few coins. She counted a few of them and finally held them out to Watson. “Here!” she said.

“Thanks, Misses!” He looked after Chris for a moment, but Chris did not look at him.

The blond boy did not feel well in this moment, he held the keys in his hand, he felt terribly ashamed of what he had done and yet this was his chance to see the linsang again. His face burned, his hand had closed firmly around his prize.

Watson grinned at Chris, then he turned around. "See ya, Misses!" he exclaimed and jumped down the stairs to the back door. He took hold of his handcart and pulled it out of the small passageway between the houses.

Misses Cavendish closed the door. Then she turned around and bent over towards Andrew. "Are you feeling all right?" she asked, a strange, sensible tone in her voice. She put her hand on his shoulder. "Should I get the doctor."

"It is nothing, Milly!" Andrew said and took hold of the hand on his shoulder. "I am just not made for this any more." He pulled the hand closer to his face and pressed it against his cheek. But suddenly Misses Cavendish pulled it away and rose to full size again.

Chris had observed all this.

The woman who had noticed this looked at him and put on a broad, fake smile.

Andrew looked up as well, getting aware of Chris' presence again. Suddenly he smiled as well. "Nothing to worry about, Misses Cavendish." He stood up from his chair and pulled at his livree. "Just a momentary lapse."

Chris was looking at the two of them. He did not fully grasp what he had witnessed in this moment. He had never really thought about the servant and the maid, he had never asked himself what they did when they...

"If you excuse me, Master Neunen," Andrew said. "I have to water the greenhouse." Without any further hesitation the servant left the kitchen.

Chris looked after him for a moment, then he looked at Misses Cavendish. But the woman paid no attention to him any more. She was busy getting some potatoes from the sack which lied on the ground.

Christopher hesitated for a moment, slowly he turned around and walked out of the kitchen, feeling strangely numb. He felt something in his hand, he lowered it and saw a pair of keys in his palm.

It was quite late when the doctor came home.

The rain had sat in again and the droshkey stopped right in front of the house.

The doctor jumped out of it and ran towards the house as fast as he could. Andrew opened the front door before he went out himself in order to pay the droshkey's driver.

A moment later the droshkey disappeared in the darkness of the late evening the gas lamps offered no resistance against. Reflections shimmered on the wet ground.

Chris observed this from his room.

A moment later there was a knock at his door.

"Yes?"

"Master Christopher, the dinner will be served now."

Chris stood up from the small stool he had been kneeling on while looking out of the window. He left his room and walked down the staircase which was

illuminated by candles and gas lamps He went through the long empty corridor and finally into the dining room.

The room was sparsely lit by nothing but a few candles. A small fire burned in the fireplace.

“Good evening, Christopher,” his uncle said when he turned the pages of “The Times“. He leaned against the sill of the fireplace and did not look up.

“Good evening, uncle!” Chris replied and sat down on the table.

For a moment everything was quiet in the room except for the crackle of the fire. The doctor read his newspaper in silence.

The flames of the candles were reflected on the silver cutlery and the porcelain which made up the two place settings on the table.

Chris observed the play of the lights.

A moment later the door opened again and Andrew entered the room, carrying a large soup tureen which he sat down on the table.

The doctor laid his newspaper aside, quickly cleaned his glasses and finally sat down on the table himself.

The valet anticipated this. Then he opened the tureen’s cover and started to serve the soup with a huge silver ladle. First he served the doctor, before he filled Chris’ plate. Steam rose from the hot liquid and filled the room with its scent.

“Thank you, Andrew!” the doctor said.

The valet bowed slightly and approached the door.

Chris picked up his spoon and started to eat. He was hungry. He had left the kitchen without having gotten himself anything to eat at all, even though he had gotten something far better.

“One more thing, sir!” Andrew said suddenly.

The doctor exhaled a little bit. “Yes?”

“I am sorry to report that the keys to the basement have been stolen from us by a boy from the neighbourhood“

“What? Stolen, you say?” The doctor asked in disbelief.

“I am afraid so, sir!” Andrew said. “My apologies!”

Doctor Neunen pursed his lips. Suddenly he looked at Chris who was still eating his soup. “What keys did you say?” Behind his glasses his eyes glistened.

“The keys to the cellar, sir!” Andrew replied.

“And you are certain that this...”

“...the delivery boy from the greengrocer...”

“Yes, that this boy has...”

“Absolutely, sir, no doubt! I apologize... It happened when this boy brought us some potatoes and I... I was...” He cleared his throat and looked at Christopher as well.

The boy was still eating his soup, the spoon slowly rising towards his mouth.

The valet stood up straight and looked at the doctor again. “I was absent-minded. It is entirely my fault. I take full responsibility.”

For another moment Doctor Neunen observed the eating boy, then he waved towards Andrew. "Do not worry. I don't think that this is such important an issue. It has no use to anyone who cannot get into the house, now has it? Maybe it is better this way if I am the only one with a key."

Andrew bowed slightly.

"Leave us now, Andrew! I am quite famished."

Once again the valet bowed and then left the room in silence.

The doctor turned towards his own meal, picking up his spoon again. While he did so he did not lift his eyes off Christopher who went on eating as if nothing happened around him.

The boy could not even taste the soup at all. It was as if water ran down his throat. He felt perfectly calm, totally detached from the world around him, the dining room with the long table he and his uncle sat on. It was very far from him in this moment.

It seemed to him as if the stars were shifting, they were turning without fading, drawing long lines into the sky. He could see them in front of his window when the cloudy sky had finally cleared. He saw through the window in his room, lying on his bed and turning the key to the basement in his hands.

But this was no time for waiting.

The entire house had been silent for a long time by now and thus he rose from his bed.

He had been fully dressed all of the time.

With the key in his hands he left his room. He was as silent as he was able to. He wore no shoes, just his socks, so that his footsteps were as quiet as possible on the floorboards.

He looked at the door to his uncle's room which was firmly closed.

Chris inhaled deeply, turned away from it and faced the staircase.

Very carefully he started to sneak towards the rail of the stairway. When his fingers closed around it, he noticed that they were sweaty. He inhaled and stepped to the edge of the stairway which disappeared in the darkness beneath him. He gulped and took the first step.

The wood creaked slightly beneath his foot. He wet his lips and took the next step.

The wooden staircase creaked even louder.

He stopped short and listened to the sounds of the house: The hammering of his heart had gotten so loud that he could not hear much else. But he waited anyway before he went on.

His hot breath brushed over his dry lips which he licked instinctively while his foot came down on another step.

The stairway's wood did not creak as loud as before.

He dared to make another quick step.

When he could not hear another creak he started to walk faster and suddenly he stood on the ground floor and could not even believe it himself. His hammering heart, the strange lightness which he felt in his head dizzied him, the skin of his face felt so hot as if it was afire.

He had to walk slowly inside the corridor. There was almost no light at all, except for the very dim one which came in through the small window above the front door. He knew the position of the furniture but he did not feel familiar with his surroundings at all. He had put forth his hands, feeling his way. He tried to stay close to the wall. He knew that close to it there were less obstacles in his way. Still his hands could feel the frames of pictures which hang on the wall and which he did not have to fumble too much because they were much too fragile.

He gulped down the saliva which had gathered in his mouth, he was nothing but a few yards from the door to the cellar and his heart skipped a beat when his hand closed around its handle.

His other hand slowly pushed the key into the keyhole. His hand was trembling slightly.

With a metallic crunch the key turned and unlocked the door.

Christopher sighed. Until this moment he had feared that this had not been the right key, but now the door was opened. Slowly he pushed it and it swung open without a sound, revealing the dark staircase to the basement down below. The darkness in front of him seemed to be totally impenetrable in comparison to the one which surrounded him in this moment.

He could hear noises from down below, faint rustling.

The boy made a step forward and felt his way towards some shelves which stood close by the door. He knew that there was always an oil lamp and matches on the uppermost shelf.

His fingers touched the glass object and the small paper box.

He closed the door behind him and took the oil lamp from the shelf. He sat it down on the ground, knelt down himself and took off the glass cylinder. He lit a match and blinked when he was suddenly blinded by its light.

Down below the noises vanished instantly.

Carefully he lit the oil lamp's thick wick. A tall, sooty flame arose and instantly lit his surroundings. Chris extinguished the match in his hand, laid it aside as well as the paper box, put the lamp's cylinder back on and rose from the ground again, the lamp in one hand.

Finally he saw the damp staircase made of bricks which led down. Without waiting any longer he walked down, around a corner and a moment later he stood in the spacious basement of the house.

In the dim light glass jars flashed up, catching the flame's light. Strange organic objects, weird specimen which his uncle had collected over the years floated in cloudy liquids. Jars and smaller bottles with labels with peculiar names occupied the rest of the cupboards and shelves.

The centre of the large room was a large metal examination table, fully equipped with a huge gas lamp above it and several drains all around it. From the shelves hang medical instruments, large knives, saws and strange scissors. There were several large objects covered with pieces of cloth.

The dreadful atmosphere of this room had always had its effect on him. He had avoided it. As far as he knew his uncle had never used it for anything since he had lived with him.

He looked over it. The light of the flame danced across the surfaces until it was finally caught in the reflections of two cat-like pupils.

Instantly Christopher hurried to the other side of the room and fell to his knees in front of the small cage. "Is it you?" he asked. "Is it really you?"

From the darkness behind the bars rose a furry face which studied him with narrowed eyes.

"It is really you!" Christopher exclaimed. "You are healthy!" He laughed. "You are not sick any more!"

The linsang blinked. She observed the human boy carefully. She was not quite sure about him. Somehow she had the feeling to know him, but she was not sure about it, even though he was behaving totally different than the two men she had already met while she had been held captive in the darkness of this cellar.

"I am Christopher!" the boy exclaimed and pointed to his chest. "I took care of you, when you were sick, do you remember?"

The linsang tilted her head. His behaviour did not seem to be hostile. She had curled up in the far end of the cage, having covered herself with her long tail, now she rose a little bit and instantly Christopher started. Unlike the first time she had met her, her fur showed no signs of sweat any more, her eyes shone brightly and her nose was obviously moist, but her fur was terribly dirty again and her bones showed beneath it. Despite her muscles she looked terribly skinny.

"Are you all right?" he asked carefully.

The linsang pulled a face.

He stretched out his hand through the bars.

The linsang looked at the hand for a moment. She was not entirely sure what to do. On one hand he behaved so differently, on the other hand he seemed to belong to the people who held her captive. Her lower eyelids twitched.

"What is wrong...?" He asked when he saw that she had no intention to come closer. "It's me, Chris!"

Very slowly, with movements which seemed to take place in slow-motion, the linsang bent forwards, towards the boy's hand. She approached it with extreme caution, not taking her eyes off him. She saw the smile which got bigger on his face, but she paid no attention to it, because she knew that these human hands could hurt her as well.

Chris observed her progress with a quickly beating heart.

The linsang stretched out her head and sniffed at the hand.

Chris moved his fingers and he was hardly able to follow the quickness of her movement.

Within a blink of an eye she was back in the far end of the cage.

"I... I..." He gulped. "Sorry, I did not want to frighten you!"

The linsang pursed her lips, rose a little bit and then turned her back on him. She lied down again, curling up as a small furry ball, wrapping herself in her long, dirty tail. In the shadows of her own body, she tried to remind herself. Where had she smelled this scent before? She was certain that she knew it. It was awfully familiar, but she could not place it. It awoke strange feelings of warmth, comfort and security. But where did they belong to?

She knew that he was still there. She could hear his breathe and see the light of his lamp, but she did not move any more His shadow was visible on the wall she faced and she observed how he sat there and just kept on watching her. Maybe he was not as bad as the other humans she had met yet, maybe her feelings were a sign. She inhaled deeply. Even if he was better than the rest of the men she was still a captive in this tiny cage. It did not change anything. She closed her eyes.

After a long time she could hear how he rose and went away. The light diminished and when she could hear how he climbed the stairs, the light vanished entirely until everything was dark again.

She rose her head and sniffed. There were still traces of his scent in the air and instantly those feelings came back.

When she laid down, she felt strangely relaxed.

She slept well this night, vague memories of a warm, soft bed flitting through her dreams.

Two days later he was finally able to go down into the basement again. He had waited for a chance, but his uncle had been restless during the nights and he had not dared to sneak to the basement. He dared to go when the two servants were gone to do some shopping and his uncle had not returned from his surgery yet.

This time he did not even look at the gruesome instruments which hung on the wall. He had brought some food along which he had gotten from the kitchen.

Instantly Christopher ran across the dimly lit room towards the cage which stood against the wall.

The linsang inside had looked up the moment she had heard somebody at the door. For a short instant fear had spread inside her chest, but then she had heard his quick footsteps and curiosity had gotten the better of her. She had looked up from the back of the cage, but had not approached the bars yet.

He fell to his knees in front of the cage. "Look what I got!" He said and showed her what he had carried on his arms.

The eyes of the linsang opened wide. She had never seen anything like this before. She did not know what a bread was, nor had she ever seen bacon, boiled eggs or black pudding before, but the scents of this food was all it needed. She

looked at the boy for a moment, unable to believe that this was meant for her, but Christopher just smiled at her and then her hunger broke through.

Quickly she rose. Carefully she approached the bars, eyeing him constantly. The days she had been forced to spent with the doctor had made her suspicious, but she approached the bars anyway and when she saw that Christopher did not retire, she reached out greedily.

For days she had not gotten anything but the remains of vegetables which Andrew had thrown at her under the doctor's careful observation. The peels of potatoes, stubs from raddish and rotten tomatoes. At first she had refused to eat this, but then her hunger had overcome her and she had devoured it just to ease the pain in her stomach. It had never been enough, the cramps inside her belly had not stopped and all these days she had been able to feel how she was getting weaker by the moment.

All of it was forgotten the moment she buried her teeth in the bacon. It was salty and unfamiliar to her but it was real meat, so much like the game she had hunted herself when she had still been free.

Christopher observed her. He felt relieved that he had been able to get her something to eat, but on the other hand it pained him to see her that way.

Arbitrarily she stuffed the food into her mouth. She knew raw eggs and would have preferred them, but she could feel that the boiled ones did her good as well. The consistency of the soft bread bewildered her, but she ate it anyway.

Finally Christopher started to smile a little bit. The linsang was still in a horrible condition, but this little food did already seem to have an effect on her. He inhaled deeply and for a short instant he was convinced to be able to smell the scent of her fur again which he had already been able to perceive when he had watched over her when she had been sick.

He reached out one hand between the bars.

She started the moment she felt something touching her and instinctively retired. She snapped at his hand as some kind of a warning.

Chris did not move. "I don't want to hurt you," he said calmly.

Her food had dropped to the ground. She looked at it, then she looked at him and his hand.

"I just want to stroke you..." He smiled.

She would have to get closer to his hand in order to get her food again. Finally she moved over to the cage's bars again, taking up the food which had fallen to the ground and while she bit into the bread again his hand touched her cheek very carefully.

He was amazed how soft her fur was. Even though it was dirty after all this time she had been forced to spent inside her cage, it was incredibly soft. He almost shivered a little bit, because the feeling was so intense in this moment. It was as if something had suddenly caught up with him, some powerful feeling which had haunted him for days or maybe even longer.

The linsang tilted her head towards the hand. At first she had to get used to this feeling of the furless paw touching her, but after a short moment a tickling sensation of pleasure had spread from the spot he touched. Her food was suddenly bereft of its attractiveness. She inhaled deeply and now that his hand was so close she was able to perceive his scent. It was sweetened by soap and the strangeness of his bare skin, not totally matured yet either, but it was undoubtedly male.

He stroke her gently, noting with satisfaction that she closed her eyes and let him go on.

Her cheek was getting warmer by the moment. The feeling spread throughout her body and mixed with the pleasure of a full stomach.

There was a sound from the first floor.

Instantly Christopher stopped and looked up with concern. "I'll be back!" He said hastily, jumped to his feet and ran away from the cage, up the staircase to the first floor.

The linsang looked after him. She had not wanted him to stop. Suddenly she was all alone again. Her head dropped down and she looked at the ground of her prison. Her eyes fell upon the remains of the food which she were still lying there. With a flick of her long tail she cast it aside.

During the days that followed Chris was usually very tired, because he spent most of the nights going down to the basement to visit the linsang. There were nights when he was unable to do so. One night his uncle had to watch a patient, the Duchess of Malfi, and was supposed to return some when during the night. Chris did not dare to leave his room, as he did not want to meet his returning uncle.

On another night, Misses Cavendish was unable to sleep. He knew that she had such fits from time to time. Then she usually sat in the kitchen in a strange state of wakefulness. Thus she prevented Chris to leave his room.

The boy was restless as he wanted to get more food down to the linsang. He had found a safe way to obtain it by preparing himself a fake afternoon snack which he hid in his desk. Sometimes he got some more food after dinner when there were some left-overs nobody paid any attention to. All together it was a worthy meal for the linsang who ate everything with visible delight, even though she studied some stuff a long time before she finally came to the conclusion that it was edible.

He enjoyed watching her and while she went on eating he told her about his daytime activities.

It was on one of those nights, when she was just about to lick her fingers clean after having finished off a huge piece of roast beef.

"Was it good?" he asked her.

The linsang pursed her lips and knitted her brows for a moment. “Goooo?” she said finally and smiled at him. “Goo!”

Chris stared at her with mouth agape. “You can talk?”

The linsang’s eyes narrowed while she tried to imitate the word he had used. “Gooo,” she said tentatively. “Goo? Goooo... T!” The T sounded like a crack deep inside her throat.

Breathlessly Chris approached the cage. “Listen! Listen, my name is Christopher!” he pointed to himself and watched her carefully.

She studied him for an instant and wiggled her long tail.

“Christopher!” he repeated. “Can you say that?”

“Christopher,” he said once more and pointed to himself.

The linsang tilted her head. “Ksssp?”

“Christopher!” he repeated. “Or simply Chris, call me Chris!”

“Ksssis?”

“Almost! Chris! K-rr-ee-ss!”

“Kreess?”

“Yes, yes!” He exclaimed and smiled at her.

She smiled too.

“Say it again!”

“Kreess!”

“You got it!” he laughed.

The linsang smiled and showed her sharp teeth. She shook herself because she felt so happy in this moment. She was so delighted as she had obviously made him a pleasure.

“Now what’s your name?” he asked her.

“Kreess?”

“Nono, that is my name!” he laughed.

“Myyy?”

“Yes, your name!”

“Meemo?”

“Mimo?”

“Mimo!”

He looked at her with wide opened eyes. “Your name is Mimo?”

“Mimo!” she said proudly, she enjoyed seeing him so excited. He had been so down all these days, she had felt sorry for him. His loneliness had hang over him like a dark cloud. It felt good to be with him. His juvenile eagerness was so much like her own. Even though she was trapped inside the cage it was good to have one to share it with.

Sudden frustration came over her and she jumped up and threw herself against the bars of her cage. She grabbed them and pulled at them with the full power of her cat-like body.

Chris was startled by her sudden reaction but when he saw the grim expression on her face, his sympathy overcame any other feeling. Maybe it was even more than sympathy. "Don't!" he said. "Please, don't!" He shook his head.

Mimo stopped and fell down on her backside again. She was exhausted, the cold metal had resisted the power of her arms. She looked at him as well and shook her head as well.

Chris felt terribly sorry. He gulped down the bitter taste which had gathered in his mouth. He reached out his hand and stroke her cheek.

She tilted her head again, snuggled up against the soft, furless hand which caressed her. His touch was so soft and gentle. She could feel warmth spreading throughout her veins. She tensed and felt relaxed at the same time. The sweat upon his hand rose into her nose and she inhaled it willingly. It contained all of the traces of manhood, the faint musky notes which she had perceived earlier, but this was not the same. It got a grip on her somehow. She could feel herself respond to it and she desired just that.

Christopher could feel how his uncle observed him, the weight of the doctor's eyes was resting upon him. He was not sure if his uncle knew about his regular visits to the cellar, but it was clear that he knew that the linsang was changing. She was getting healthier and more lively every day, Chris could see it in the change of her fur which was much more shiny every time he visited her. Of course, she paid more attention to it, but there was more to it and his uncle had to know about this. He was a doctor after all. Chris would not do the mistake to underestimate him. If he was lucky the older man did not know exactly *what* was going on, but he had to know that something happened after all.

So Christopher behaved as casual as possible. But it was difficult as his uncle seemed to try to be close to him at any given time. Whenever Chris went to his room, he could hear that his uncle stopped doing whatever he did as he listened carefully to Chris' steps on the staircase, making sure that he went up the stairs at all. His uncle suddenly popped up when he was doing his homework, he came back early from visits and asked him to stay at table as long as possible. Chris played along as well as he was able to.

It seemed like yet another evening when the doctor wanted him to stay after dinner, but this day the man asked Chris to follow him to the salon, the large room with the fireplace, right next to the glasshouse. Through the windows they could see the dark shades of the plants in there, the birds were not invisible in the darkness of the night.

Christopher watched his uncle who had leaned back in his chair and suddenly the older man looked up and their eyes met.

For a moment they looked at each other.

Christopher did not turn away. He could see how his uncle lowered his head and studied him carefully. The boy's eyes narrowed, he felt uncomfortable, but he did not evade the stare.

Suddenly the doctor smiled and turned away. "Andrew," the doctor addressed his valet.

A moment later the valet came in through the door.

"Sir?" He bowed slightly.

"I wish to have a cigar," the doctor said suddenly.

Christopher's eyes widened. His uncle did not smoke usually except on holidays or when there was something to celebrate.

The valet bowed again and left the room. He returned a few moments later, carrying a small wooden box which he held out to the doctor.

The other man opened it and took out a carefully wrapped cigar.

In the silence of the room the paper rustled audibly when the doctor unwrapped it. The valet quickly cut off one end of the cigar and then held out a lit match that he had produced from one of his pockets and had lit at one of the candles.

With the cigar between his teeth the doctor started to puff. Smoke billowed around his face.

The valet left the room again.

The doctor was still smiling.

Christopher looked away, it felt as if the temperature in the room had dropped by several degrees.

When he inhaled the gleaming tip of the cigar flared up and shimmered in the shades of fire.

"I have registered you for the attendance of Dartmoore College."

Christopher stopped cold.

The doctor took the cigar out of his mouth and produced a huge cloud of spicy smoke. "I think it is time for you to learn a little bit more about life and Dartmoore is place to do that." Quickly he took the cigar between his lips again, in order to hide his smile.

It was as if his heart was suddenly sucking all of his blood out of his veins and refused to pump it back into his arteries. He could feel that he was getting pale. The sound of rushing blood was getting so loud that it drowned out every other sound. Even his uncle's voice sounded as if it was coming from far away.

"A boy of your age and class should get the best tuition possible. When I was your age, it helped me a lot. It cured me of my foolishness and prepared me for my future career. It made me what I am today."

Christopher rose his head and stared at his uncle. His eyes were small and his lips pressed together. His left eyelid twitched while he looked at his uncle who smiled and went on smoking his cigar, the gleaming tip flaring up brightly.

Inside his pocket Christopher's hand closed around the cloth of his trousers. Within a short moment his fist wrung the cloth.

“Nothing to say...?” his uncle asked after a while and blew out a huge cloud of smoke again. “You should be grateful. Not every boy gets a chance...” The doctor started to grin and blew the next cloud of smoke into Christopher’s direction.

Within a moment, the smoke surrounded him completely, it billowed around him when he rose his head. He felt as if the smoke was so strong that it produced tears from his eyes. “Thank you, uncle,” Christopher said.

“You are welcome.”

On his next night-time visit to the cellar he told Mimo about it.

“He wants me to leave,” Chris said and watched Mimo who was about to devour some heavy stew he had brought her.

He had put it in a small wooden bowl and had brought a spoon as well. He had held it out for her but she had not even looked at it, instead her entire short muzzle had disappeared inside the bowl. He had looked at her for a moment, then he had looked at the spoon in his hand and had put it away again. She had smiled at him, her muzzle dripping wet.

Now he sat in front of the cage and watched her. “I know he...” Chris paused. “He...” He searched for a word. “He... loathes me!” he said finally and the moment the word passed his lips he understood that this was the most appropriate term to describe their relationship he had ever dared to utter. “He did not like me the moment I came to him, after my parents...” He paused shortly. “...had died and he still does not like me at all.”

The linsang licked the bowl clean. The stew had been delicious.

“And now he wants me to get out of his way. Next term I will go to Dartmoore which is... very far away.” He looked at her and blinked.

Mimo looked up, she had been busy licking herself clean. But she stopped doing so and watched him for a moment. She saw that he was unhappy.

Chris looked to the stony ground, the light of the flickering flame cast strange shadows all over it.

“Krsss!”

He looked up.

The linsang was right in front of him and smiled at him. She tilted her head and stretched out one hand. Her furless palm touched his cheek. “Krrsss,” she said affectionately.

Where her hand touched him his skin seemed to liven up. The spot became warm and this warmth spread throughout his body within a few moments. At the same time he relaxed and he could feel the weight of the day resting upon his juvenile body. He was tired and yet there was no place he rather wanted to be in this moment.

He had noticed that Mimo was getting better every day. Even though she was still very slim and no traces of fat showed on her body, her body seemed to get firm again. Her fur got a distinctive sheen which he could even see in the gloomy

cellar. It was much less dirty and it was obvious that she spent a lot of time grooming it again.

But there was more to it. He noticed that curves of flesh rose from the fur of her chest and belly. After a few days he was certain that they grew in size, got more distinct. They were furless and perfectly round except for the small teats at their very top. They were just like the breasts of a human woman which he had seen in some of his uncle's scientific books he had dared to look at when nobody had watched him. The only difference was that there were more than just two of them. Beneath the two largest set were two smaller ones and there were at least two more sets underneath, even smaller in size. He tried not to look at them, even though their growth fascinated him and whenever he came down to the cellar Mimo sat down cross-legged behind the bars and straightened herself as if she presented them to him. She always smiled when she did so.

At other times she strode through the small cage on all fours, wiggling her long, lush tail and fooling around with it in his presence. When she saw the look on his face she let out a soundless laughter, showing him her sharp teeth and sat down again.

"Kreesss?"

Christopher looked up. He had almost dozed off, for a moment he had seen her in front of his inner eye with a clarity he had never seen before. He needed a moment to get his bearings again, to realize that he had been sitting in the cellar all of the time, his head resting in the linsang's hand.

He felt something in his pants and instantly he blushed. "I have got to leave," he said quickly and tried to stand up without her seeing the bulge in his trousers.

Her hand hang in mid-air for an instant. She looked at him and pulled a face, but handed him the small bowl when he reached out for it.

"I will be back as soon as I can," he said. "Good night!" Still feeling terribly ashamed because his excitement was still quite visible he turned around and walked away with the wooden bowl and the oil lamp, leaving Mimo alone in the dark.

The linsang sighed. She had not wanted him to leave. She looked at her paw for a moment, then she rose it to her nose and inhaled deeply. His scent was still present in her palm and even though she was still not entirely used to it, she enjoyed it immensely. It made her belly tickle.

Chris did his best to avoid his uncle.

Whenever the man was at home, he was restless and irritable. He kept on talking about his patients which he rarely did at home. But most of all he seemed to observe Chris. Obviously it was not enough that Christopher would be sent to a far-away boarding school.

With every day his uncle was becoming more aggressive.

On a Sunday when Chris and the doctor returned from church, his uncle had gone to the kitchen and a moment later Chris had heard a loud bang from this room. Instantly Chris had gone to the kitchen as well and when he had entered his room he had seen Misses Cavendish, sitting on a stool, sobbing terribly. Andrew had stood at one of the cupboards, shaking and his uncle had stood in the middle of the room, his eyes flashing hatred at his two servants.

“I will not tolerate this! Not within this house! Am I the only one with some sense of decency?” The doctor’s voice was as cold as a icicle. He spoke very lowly but netherless his voice dominated the entirety of the room.

Then the doctor noticed Christopher’s arrival. “Get out of here this instant!” he hissed towards his nephew.

Chris instantly dashed outside again and slammed the door shut. For a moment the realization that neither Misses Cavendish, nor Andrew had not worn the entirety pf their usual uniforms startled him, but fearing his uncle’s rage Chris did not stay any longer and he went for his room.

When he saw Andrew again, serving dinner, the long, thin man was still unusually pale.

Chris did not say a word. Everybody was almost totally silent that evening and when Chris dared to raise his voice anyway, the glare which he got from his uncle in return made Chris regret it instantly.

It was as if the entire city itself was getting darker than usual. The common London fog had risen and had formed a solid layer which hang right above the city. There was neither moonlight, nor starlight, just the dim light of the gas lamps in the streets which tried to drive away the shadows.

While he lay awake Chris was convinced that he had never heard the trill of the policemen’s whistles as often as he heard it during that night.

Finally the boy had risen and sneaked into the basement and the moment he had been down there Mimo had greeted him happily.

Chris smiled at her. She looked healthier than ever, her fur was clean again, she was not so skinny any more and her growing breasts were ample and firm, standing out of her fur when she rose.

But even the linsang seemed to be able to feel the tension within the house. Most of all she felt the scent of fear that lingered about him. She smiled anyway, she wanted to give him some relief and when he leaned against the bars, she approached him.

He leaned his face against the metal of the cage, he could feel its cold on his skin which seemed to suck the warmth from him as it pressed against his cheek and his forehead. It was an obstacle, but the only way how he could be closer to her and Mimo responded to it, leaning against the other side of the metal so that he could feel her soft, scented fur. Their hands found themselves while they leaned there, close to one another. Their fingers found the gaps between the cage’s bars. Their fingertips met and he was surprised by the softness of her furless pads, it felt like the callus on his feet, but it was much smoother and it

belonged to her who explored the softness of that strange bright skin that covered his body. She could feel its warmth despite its lack of fur and it was softer than anything that she had ever felt in her life even though it was nothing but the skin that stretched over the bones of his fingers that held on to hers while they leaned their in the darkness of the nightly cellar, nothing but the oil lamp flickering in a distant corner.

“Mimo,” he whispered.

Her cheek was as close to his own as it could be and he could feel the warmth of her breath on his face’s bare skin and it seemed to contain such strong and strange perfumes. They were undistinguishable, they surrounded her entirely. But in these moments of closeness her breath seemed to be their most potent carrier. Maybe he was mistaken, maybe her breath simply carried them along, blew them into his direction so that he inhaled them with every breath he took, let them invade his body until he could feel them sparkling beneath his skin as if they were taking a life of their own in his blood and made his blood run thick until it pumped heavily in his veins and arteries, something he could feel beneath his skin which got tighter and hotter and in his loins he could feel a whole new sensation, his blood gathered there and all of his skin tightened around his lap, something that he had never felt before. It awakened unknown urges which were so powerful that he did not know what to do with them. Even though it felt good, he was terribly ashamed and he tried to hide his excitement from her, but she did not allow it, as she did not let go off his hands.

In the same time Mimo inhaled his scents too, the tinges of his scent, the saltiness and muskiness of his sweat and even stronger perfumes. She shivered and the fingers of her free hand closed tightly around the metal of one bar, pressing into it as strongly as they could as if the metal would melt and bent beneath her firm touch. Her heartbeat got slower, but stronger at the same time and she could feel the itching of her breasts that were rising beneath her fur, swelling, their skin getting tighter, the nipples getting harder, pulsing with her blood. She knew that her breasts would grow furthermore, she knew it every moment she inhaled the air that had surrounded him moments ago, it was as if it was the air that had this effect on her and not the boy who sat so close to her and whose fingers were playing with her own, gently stroking her hand’s furry upper side and tenderly touching her fingertips.

On Tuesday when Chris had come home from school, he had noticed that his uncle was already at home which was quite unusually for him at this time in the afternoon.

Because his uncle’s mood had not improved at all, Chris avoided him and instantly went for his room. He sat down on his desk and picked up a book he was supposed to read for school.

He had not intention to read it at all. He looked out of the window and lazily doodle on a piece of paper. He could not really draw at all, he just filled the paper with random lines and curves while he thought about Mimo. He wanted to be with her. She was constantly on his mind, he yearned for the softness of her fur, the careful touch of her hands and her scent. He did not really understand these desires. Drawing long lines like the course of a mighty river he concluded that he just wanted to help her. She did not deserve being locked away constantly.

In this moment there was a knock on his door.

“Yes?”

Andrew came in. “Master Neunen,” the valet said formally. “The doctor wishes to speak to you.”

Chris looked at the slim man in surprise. Usually his uncle had no problem to come for him whenever he wanted something from him. The boy did not say a word and stood up from his desk.

“He is waiting for you in the greenhouse.”

Chris just nodded and walked past the valet who held the door open for him.

He walked down the staircase, through the corridor and the salon. Through the windows he saw that his uncle was about to feed the birds which flocked all around the man who stood in the greenhouse.

Chris went outside and the doctor looked up.

His uncle smiled and instantly Christopher knew that something was wrong. His uncle never smiled and yet he did so in this moment, except for his eyes which flashed in the bright sunlight which had broken through the clouds and shone down on the greenhouse. All of the plants sported a lush green in this light, the window panes shimmered brightly.

Christopher kept on walking for a moment, observing his uncle who did just the same.

“This creature in the cellar...” he said slowly.

Chris did not stop walking, he went over to one of the large trees which grew in the greenhouse.

The doctor was surrounded by the birds. Their many colours shimmered around him while they fluttered with their wings, trying to get closer to their seeds the man held in his hands. “I think about dissecting her.”

Christopher stopped cold. It was as if his blood froze in his veins, he could feel goosebumps on his skin, the mild temperature of the glasshouse having dropped to freezing point. Very slowly he turned his head towards his uncle and stared at him in disbelief.

The older man was not doing anything, still holding out the seeds in his hands, one of the larger birds having settled on his shoulder as it had managed to chase away the rest which were now hopping around on the ground, trying to get a few seeds which had dropped down while the red parrot on the man’s shoulder ate to its delight. “The creature is entering a strange state.” Very slowly so that he did not chase away the bird, he turned his head and looked at his nephew. “A very

annoying condition, unnatural under these circumstances, a filthy little fit of primordial primitivism, disgusting to say the least..." His eye caught the light which shone through the glass tiles and it glistened.

Christopher's hand closed to a fist. "I beg your pardon, uncle, but..." He had to focus so that his voice did not shake while he spoke, but it got louder and more confident while he went on, rising his head, looking at the man surrounded by birds. "...she is a... I mean she seems so human..."

The doctor looked at him. "You seem to have grown fond of her...!?" He paused. "I wonder why?" He tilted his head and observed the blond boy. "As far as I know you have not seen her since you have taken her... *to your bed.*"

"I..." Chris' voice trembled.

The man threw the seeds on the ground. The birds flew all around while the doctor walked over to his nephew. "I saw your foolish attachment to her and with the state this creature is in now, I wonder if there is no link between the two of them... I can assure you that I will not allow such derangement within this house." The parrot on his shoulders took to the air.

The man looked away towards his birds again. They were fluttering around his feet now, fighting over the last few seeds which were left and had been scattered on the ground. His voice became soft. "Under different circumstances I would give her away. But what would anybody say if they saw the state she is in now? In the end we are helping her, a quick end is best to this." He turned around and wiped his hands clean.

Christopher inhaled deeply and while he did so he straightened himself, glaring at his uncle. "But there is nothing about her. She is just a..."

"How does it come you know anything about her condition?" The man repositioned his glasses. "Do you know what she is going through right now?"

"No! I... I mean... she is just a..."

He silenced him with a glare. "I am willing to admit the thought that this is not because of you. But your little naive attachment to that creature just shows what it is doing to the state of this house." He went towards the little table which stood close to the door of the glasshouse. "I believe that you are the one who is weakest, most receptive for this primitive suffering." He picked up the small glass of port which stood there and sipped at it. "At least I hope that this is the actual truth and not some childish naivety. God knows my efforts were always meant to make a man of you."

"Uncle, she has been entrusted to us. What..."

The older man just looked at the boy from over his glasses.

Christopher fell silent and pressed his lips together.

After a while his uncle went on: "Trust me, it is suffering from it quite as well, irritable and excited as it is. We are being merciful indeed."

"No, this is cruel!" He had yelled at his uncle, only realizing what he had done after it had already happened. He saw how the eyes of his uncle narrowed.

"I think it is best if you go to your room now," the doctor said quietly.

The boy spun around on the spot. His heart beat quickly while his skin was so hot that it seemed to burn. He was beyond tension already, his entire body was at the verge of explosion. He wanted to do something, to let out his fury, but most of all he wanted to see Mimo. He could feel the yearn in his chest while he climbed the stairs to his room, but even greater than his yearn was his rage.

He knew where the key to Mimo's freedom was. He just had to get it. No matter what.

He did not sleep that night.

He pretended to, blew out the candle which stood on his bedside locker and than lay awake all of the time, staring at the night sky while he listened carefully to the sounds of the house.

The stars wandered slowly in front of his eyes, in the meantime he could hear how the doctor walked about in the library. He could hear the creaking of the old leather arm chair when his uncle sat down, the rustling of books and newspapers, the faint noises of the valet's shoes who walked about the houses, carrying stuff from the dining room to the salon, from the kitchen to the greenhouse, from the cloakroom to the laundry room. There were the heavy footsteps of the maid who rummaged around in the kitchen.

Finally he could hear how his uncle left the library, walked into the bathroom (there was the rushing of water), left the bathroom again to join his bedroom.

In this moment the valet started to walk up the stairs in order to bring his employer a glass with Scotch whiskey, something that he brought the doctor every night before he went to sleep. No matter how much the doctor tried to hide this little lapse from everyone, Christopher knew about it, everyone had to know about it.

After this ritual was finished the valet walked down the stairs again and things were getting to calm down furthermore.

There were faint noises from his uncle's bedroom who was about to get ready for going to bed. Finally these sounds subsided as well.

From downstairs he could hear some noises from the valet and the maid, but they were about to join their rooms as well and within short time, he could hear no more from them either.

Finally the house had gotten completely silent and all that Christopher could hear were the sounds that came in from outside, the sounds of London, a restless city where factories were working constantly, where ships were boarded and set sail, where policeman constantly patrolled the streets except for those districts where they did not dare to go late at night, where things were just about to wake up properly, the bars getting noisier, the men and women getting more daring, going about their business in dark alleys with goods, knives, their bodies or their voices, yelling lewd songs, forgetting half of the lyrics while they staggered across the streets, finally stumbled and fell and succumbed to their drunkenness, a

moment others used to pick their pockets and quickly ran away, in order to get drunk as well.

After a long time he could hear single drops on his window ledge outside and after a few minutes a light shower came down from the sky, drowning most noises in the sound of running water. Christopher's eyes narrowed and he rose from his bed. Under his sheets he had been fully clothed all of the time.

As slowly and silent as he could he opened the door and looked outside.

His eyes needed a moment to adapt to the corridor's darkness which was so unlike the darkness of the night sky that he had observed all of the time. After a few moments he was able to make out a few things: The carpets on the floor, the outlines of the paintings on the wall, the other doors and the balustrade which led to the stairway.

He stepped outside. His heart beat quickly, partly because he instinctively held his breath, too cautious to inhale properly. His hand pulled at the door until it set quietly in its frame. His pressure on the handle decreased slowly until the bolt snapped into its counterpart again and the door was fully closed.

Christopher stood in the corridor and listened carefully, not daring to move yet. He breathed slowly.

He could hear no sound except the rush of the blood in his own ears. He stood in front of the door to his uncle's room.

His hand trembled when it approached the handle. The metal was cold beneath his fingers when he pushed it down as slowly as possible. His mind raced, he tried to remind himself of every little detail he knew about this room, but there was nothing he could remember. He did not even know if this door he opened creaked or not.

Something got a hold of his throat and pressed it together. He pushed it open and there was no sound.

There was the faint noise of a man's breath he could hear in the darkness. Last remains of light came in through the curtains which covered the windows. They emphasized the outlines of the objects, but nothing more. Except for those shimmering outlines the room was still perfectly dark.

Quickly he stepped inside and closed the door again, fearing that some noise could arise elsewhere in the house and wake his uncle.

He stood on the carpet, looked around and froze.

He could not remember having seen them before. Once- shortly after his uncle had taken him into his house- he had been inside this room. When his uncle had discovered him, he had beaten him with his cane, the old wooden cane with a silver knob in the shape of an eagle. Strangely the picture of that cane was still inside his head, but he had no recollections of the room he had pried about.

The eyes of the dead birds looked down on him in the darkness. The glass they were made of reflected the last remains of light that came in. It was nothing but a reflection of the street lights that was caught by the countless drops of rain which fell down and were cast anywhere. These were birds from the greenhouse. He

remembered having seen them before. He had expected them to have simply died, he had not known that they were all here in this room, stuffed and fixed upon small branches of wood which hang on the walls of his uncle's room, guarding his sleep.

The rain outside had gotten stronger and the sound of the gushing rain was still everywhere to be heard.

Very slowly he went on, still looking at the stuffed birds whose wings were spread as if they wanted to take off, something they could never do again.

A snore from his uncle made him turn around again: Under the duvet there was not much to be seen from his uncle. It was nothing but a heap of white cloth.

Chris tried to get his bearings between the bed, the bedside table, a large cupboard, a wardrobe, a chest of drawers, the small table with the two stools and a desk. The room was much larger than his own.

He looked towards the wall opposite the bed. There were even more birds hanging on this wall, they were larger and their poses were strangely lively. He could not fully see them in the dark but they rather looked like birds of prey than the peaceful tropic birds he knew from the greenhouse.

The one in the very middle was the largest of all of them, it seemed to be looking at Chris constantly and Christopher returned the look. The dead bird's gaze was almost hypnotizing. In the darkness the shape became blurred, the light twisted by the water flickered all over it and in this moment the bird flapped its wings. The bird swooped on him, his beak wide opened, his wings wide spread, his eyes ablaze with the light which came in from outside. The undead bird was all alive again and Chris instantly retired. His hands were stretched out behind him so that he would not slam... They brushed over something.

It dropped down and hit the ground with the sound of metal and glass.

"Who's there?"

Christopher's blood ran cold. He dropped to the ground.

In his bed his uncle had sat up. His tall build visible between the sheets and cushions, his head risen high, his eyes glistening in the darkness.

Lying flat on the ground Christopher could not do anything at all. He could not even breath, the intensity of fear had stopped him from breathing. It was as if some giant's hand had gotten hold of his entire chest and was now squeezing it with all of its power. His heart pounded as if it wanted to explode and he buried his face in the carpet, not daring to look up.

The rain's noise came in from outside.

The cushions and duvets rustled.

Chris held his breath, he did not move at all, he just felt the pounding of his heart in his chest and even this noise seemed to be too loud to him. He did not want to look up, but he did it anyway, catching a glimpse of his uncle's figure in the dark and the dead bird on the wall which had not really moved at all.

But the doctor was moving now, casting aside the sheets.

He would have preferred to be petrified in this moment, but instead Chris moved instinctively. He rolled over into the small corner between the bed and the door and pressed his small teenage body against the bed's wooden frame, hiding in its shadow as well as he could.

Almost the very same moment the sound of a match catching fire could be heard. Then the doctor lit a candle and the unsteady light of the match was replaced by it.

The doctor put his feet out of the bed.

Chris cowered behind the bed. In his head he repeated a short prayer he knew, over and over again.

The hand of the old man searched around the bedside table.

Christopher had forgotten the words of the prayer, he could not recall them, instead there was just one word going through his head now: "Mimo, Mimo,..."

"Damned, where's..." His uncle's hand was still running over the bedside table while he held the candle in the other one.

In this moment Christopher dared to rise his head a little bit and looked at the object which had dropped down: Catching the dim light of the solitary candle in the room, he saw the doctor's glasses lying on the ground.

Grunting loudly, the doctor stood up from his bed and looked across the room. The flame of the candle danced lightly, casting fleeting shadows all over the room. Very cautiously the man started to walk towards the window opposite his bed. He used his hand to assure himself of his way, he almost crashed into the cupboard anyway.

Under different circumstances Christopher might have dared to laugh, but he kept his mouth shut as tightly as possible, while he observed his uncle's back which slowly approached the curtains. He had never seen his uncle that way before, he had never seen him without his glasses.

Having reached the curtains the man cast them aside and approached the window.

Instantly the noise of the rain got much louder. It sounded as if the rain was inside the room itself: The gush of the rain, the constant pouring as it fell down on the streets and the roofs, the gurgle of the water in the gutters. The doctor looked down on it, his face as close to the window as possible, while he held the candle up high.

The man sighed.

Slowly he turned around, let the curtain drop down again and carefully felt his way towards his bed again. Suddenly there was a crunching noise.

"Oh, goddamn!" the man exclaimed.

Christopher could not see him, but he imagined what had happened: His uncle had found the glasses which had dropped down.

The shadow of the man bent over and picked up the remains of the glasses.

"Damn, damn, damn!" he hissed while he examined the twisted metal and the broken glass in his hands.

Finally he put them and the candle holder down on the bedside table again, sat on his bed, blew out the candle's flame and quickly hid himself under his duvets and sheets again.

Christopher felt a surge of triumph, more powerful than ever before, but he just crouched where he was and did not move. He waited for a long time. He could not even tell how long he remained in that spot, but he did not dare any movement until he could hear his uncle's breathing becoming steady and regular again and still he kept on waiting for some time before he finally stood up again.

No matter how short the time had been when he had seen the room in the candle's light, it had given him a much better sense of direction.

He turned around. During the short time his uncle had stood in front of the window, he had seen his desk, the huge wooden frame standing right next to the window.

Despite his new-found confidence he approached the desk as silently as possible. He stood in front of it for quite some time and studied it in the very little light that came in through the gaps between the curtains and the window. Finally his hand reached out to open one of the desk's drawers. In the first one he found pens, the second one contained papers of some kind, the third one held small bottles (he held his breath and stood motionless some time when they clicked between his fingers).

His heart pounded powerfully while he opened the fourth one. His hand reached into it, his fingers disappearing inside a void until they touched the wooden ground of the drawer.

His heart skipped a beat.

Almost panic-stricken his fingers ran all over the drawer's inside and suddenly he could feel something metal against his fingertips. At the very back of the small drawer his fingers closed around a key and suddenly he felt his head getting as light as a feather. His entire body relaxed while he pulled it out of the desk.

He was certain to have found the key to Mimo's cage, it had just the right size. A powerful surge of ecstasy washed over him. For a moment he was totally intoxicated by this feeling, he wanted to dash out of the room, ran into the basement and free Mimo right away.

Christopher closed his eyes and tried to calm down. It seemed to him that the excited beat of his heart could wake his uncle at any moment. For a moment he simply stood there and tried to get his feelings under control again. It was not easy for him, as he had suddenly gotten so much closer to Mimo's release and her picture, the feeling of her fur danced through his mind.

After some time, he was confident enough again to move. As slowly and carefully as he was able to, he approached the door again. He opened it and slipped from the room.

The moment the door behind him was closed again, relief came over him like a crushing wave. The feeling was so intense that he started to shiver powerfully. He had not been aware of this mix of fear and anxiety as long as he had been inside

the room. Now it came over him with full force, but on the other hand he knew that he was safe now.

Almost totally stunned by these emotions he got into his room and fell onto his bed. He did not even worry about undressing. The only thing he cared about was the small metal key in his hand.

He knew that this was not over yet, he had to make sure that his uncle would not find out about him having gotten it, but he had the key to Mimo's freedom right there. That was all that mattered.

Before he grasped it, he was asleep on his bed, his hand clenched around the small metal object.

All day long he had kept the key to the cage close to himself.

He had taken it to school. Every other moment his hand had reached into the pocket where he had kept it to make sure that it was still there. He had worried about it all of the time and he had been unable to anticipate the end of the day. He wanted to set things in motion as fast as he could. He did not want Mimo to be imprisoned any longer than absolutely necessary. Neither did he want his uncle to find out about the key's absence.

The thought of setting her free, thrilled him even though he took no account of what might happen afterwards. His face turned all red and he tried to suppress this notion because he did not want anyone to find out about this. Or maybe it was the fear about his uncle finding out about the missing key. Of course the doctor did not use it every day, but the risk to keep the key any longer was too high.

When the dreadfully long school day was finally over Chris ran home. But he had no intention of going to his uncle's home right away.

As soon as he approached Grosvenor square he left the larger streets with the big, reputable houses and went for the smaller streets where less fortunate people lived.

It was a foggy day, mist constantly rising from the Thames and slowly wandering all over London. As it was already rather late, light had decreased significantly and few people went through the cold and unpleasantly damp streets.

Christopher looked out for the shape of a big boy. Usually he dreaded to encounter him, but under these circumstances there was nobody he rather wanted to meet.

The small streets were almost entirely empty.

"Watson!" he shouted, looking all around. "Watson!" The shape of the big boy in the light brown, worn clothes was nowhere to be seen.

Christopher sighed in frustration. Watson was always there when nobody wanted him to, now that he was needed he was nowhere to be found.

He walked into yet another small alley. Walls enclosed it which were there to protect the small gardens behind them. A few trees looked over them, their tops hidden in the fog.

“Watson!”

“No need to cry, fat cat!”

Christopher spun around on the spot.

Watson sat on a high wall behind him, letting his feet dangle in the air. He seemed to be alone. “What d’ye want?” he asked while biting into an apple.

“I need your help,” Christopher replied

The other boy laughed out. “Ye of all people! Gosh!” He paused shortly. “Go ’ome! There’s no way I gonna ’elp the likes of ye!” He glared down on Chris.

Chris did not budge.

“Eh, what? Do I’ve gotta teach ye the ’ard way to scam?”

Christopher did not move.

“Get goin’!”

“Listen, I don’t expect you to help me just like that, I will pay you.”

Watson glared down on Chris, bite another chunk off of his apple and then simply threw the rest behind himself, into the garden.

Chris did not turn away from the other boy’s glare. “I have money.”

“I reckon ye think I need yer bloody money,” Watson replied.

“No, I think you know how to strike a deal.” Chris looked up at Watson, carefully scrutinizing the other boy.

For a moment the boy on the wall seemed to be amazed, then he scratched himself and suddenly started to grin. “Awright, what d’ye want?”

Christopher reached into the inside pocket of his coat and pulled out the small metal key. “I need a duplicate of this.” He held it out towards Watson.

Watson laughed out. “You think I’m a burglar or somethin’?”

“No!” Chris answered. “I think you know people and places. I think you know more than I do and I think you might know some locksmith who does not ask that many questions.”

For a moment Watson eyed Christopher from above, then he slipped off the wall and attired hard in the alley. “Awright,” he said when he stood up straight again. “Maybe I do! But...” He paused. “Ye know, I’m in a tight spot right now... That damn greengrocer’s kicked me out ’cause somebody accused me of stealin’...”

Chris nodded. “Your price is my price. I need this fast.”

Watson took the key which Chris had been holding in his hand all the time. “Don’t worry, with the right amount o’ dough I can get ye this in no time.”

Christopher smiled at him. “I see, we finally understand each other.”

Watson who had been looking at the key, rose his head and grinned. He took the key out of Chris’ hand and studied it more closely “Just, tell me, what do ye need it for?”

He had been sitting in his room almost all of the time. Dinner had taken place in a strange atmosphere. He had been so excited all the time, he had hardly been able to talk.

His uncle had no intention to speak either, obviously annoyed by the fact that he was forced to wear his surrogate glasses. He took Chris' silence for stubbornness and the boy gave him no sign that it was anything other than that.

Afterwards he had observed his uncle who had fed the birds in the greenhouse. It had never occurred to him before how strange a sight this was, the doctor in his tight greyish clothes surrounded by all those colourful birds which were so much unlike him. Christopher did not feel any sympathy for him any more, not even a sense of obligation. There was no way to forgive what he had in mind for Mimo.

Chris was hardly able to wait for Watson. The big boy had told him that he would return the key this very evening.

Now Chris sat in his room. Several hours had went by and Watson had not come yet.

Impatiently Chris had looked out of his window for a long time, but it had not helped to ease his nervousness. Now he lied on his bed and tried to think of something, but the only thing he could think about was Mimo. Her face, the texture of her fur, the way she smiled and moved in the confinement of her cage, all of it fascinated him, it was as if she had cast a charm on him. He closed his eyes and envisioned her and almost the very same instant his excitement reached a new peak. It was as if something was sitting atop his chest, impeding his breathe, even though it was not really an unpleasant feeling at all. It wandered throughout his body and awoke parts of his body he had hardly even thought about. He felt a little bit ashamed.

His thoughts were interrupted by a short click against his window pane.

Instantly he was on his feet and rushed towards it, opening it wide.

He looked down on the street and in the light of the gas lamp stood Watson, holding a small leather bag in his hand.

"Here I got it!" he half yelled, half whispered towards Chris.

"Can you throw it up?" Chris replied.

Watson made a few steps backwards. With a short run-up he hurled it towards Chris' window.

The throw was so accurate that the boy above caught it in his hands, feeling the weight and the shape of two metal objects through the thin leather of the bag. He opened it hastily and finally held two keys in his hands. They looked so much alike each other, that he could hardly distinguish them except for the new metal sheen of one of them. The relief he felt in this moment was far beyond anything.

He remembered Watson standing down below and finally he turned towards him again. "Thank you!" he also half shouted, half whispered towards the boy in the street.

Watson just tipped his cap. "My pleasure. T'was fun makin'..."

"Now what do we got here?"

Watson spun around and Chris froze at his window.

A constable had come closer in the increasing darkness of the night, playing around with the baton in his hands.

"If this isn't Watson."

"N'evening, constable," Watson replied.

The man in the uniform looked at the boy in the ragged clothes and then he looked up towards Christopher who felt numb in this moment.

"Get to bed, the two of you, this ain't the time for games any more!" the policeman said firmly. He looked firmly at Watson before turning towards Christopher.

Watson started to grin. "Sorry, constable, we just lost track o' time!" Instantly he turned around, tipped his hat towards Chris again and walked away without saying anything else.

The constable looked towards Chris again.

The boy hesitated for a moment. Then he simply retired and closed his window, hardly able to believe that the man in the street had not expected anything of what had been going on. It was as if the policeman had just wanted to be fooled by the two of them.

In the silence of his room he sat down on his bed, holding the two keys in his hands.

Finally after all this time he had everything he needed to free Mimo.

He suppressed his feeling of triumph. There was still a lot to be taken care of. First he had to return the original key to his uncle's desk and that meant another nightly venture into his uncle's sleeping room. Unlike the first time, the thought did not trouble him any more. It was nothing but a minor step any more.

He stood up from his bed and started to prepare everything.

As much as it pained him. He had to wait for three days.

They seemed to be the longest day in his life. He did not dare to see Mimo. He did not want to risk anything. He carefully observed every step his uncle made. He had to prevent anything that could happen to Mimo, not in this short time.

His uncle was still missing his original glasses though and it was obvious that the replacement he used hindered him.

On the second day a delivery man brought a large bottle of an anaesthetic. The doctor accepted it personally and Christopher observed him while he did so. Never in his life had Chris felt any more hatred for the man who nurtured him.

But it was already late evening when the delivery man came and Chris knew that his uncle would not take any steps that night any more. His uncle was a man of habits and as he had to work the next day he would go to bed early.

Mimo was safe. For now.

Chris knew that he had to hurry, but his plan would take place the next day. So he just had to wait. A strange feeling of confidence was coming over him. He wanted to tell Mimo, but he did not dare to go into the cellar. He promised himself that he would make up for his absence.

The next day, he fled his school before the end of his classes. This was rather difficult, but he managed to do it by hiding in the toilets and then running out of the school as quickly as he could, evading the caretaker who patrolled the corridors.

On the street he did not stop running until his school was out of sight.

When he had finally reached a broad shopping street, he slowed down and hid in the crowd of busy Londoners. He was surrounded by their noises, their chatter and their yells. The noises of horses and carriages and the shouts of shop owners who extolled their goods as the best in the whole Empire.

He felt at ease in the crowd and in its safety he slipped into a post office.

There were many people inside the huge hall of the building. Many lines of many men and women waited in front of the small desks and Christopher simply joined one in front of a one of the desks with the sign "Telegrams".

He waited in the line for a long time. The huge hall was noisy, reflecting the sounds from the marble walls. The voices of many men and women filled the room, the crying of children, the coughing of old people. The clerks behind their desks cried in order to make themselves understood.

Christopher waited patiently, he watched the people all around him and during the time he waited he noticed several people who suffered of various diseases he recognised, because he had read about them in the books of his uncle. There was a man with a rash, an old woman who seemed to have had a broken leg which had not regrown properly, there was a coughing child who gasped for breath every time. Finally he could not look around any more He looked upwards to the decorated ceiling and closed his eyes, trying to recall the face of Mimo who was sitting in the dark of the cellar right now, not having seen the sunlight in weeks. This picture just reinforced his conviction.

Finally he stood in front of a grumpy clerk. "What can I do for you," the fat man mumbled.

"I want to send a telegram," Christopher said, laid his money on the counter and smiled at the man opposite from under his blond hair.

The man hesitated for an instant, puzzled by the boy's good humour. Finally he rose a little bit. "What is the message?"

When he walked across the square, he watched the trees and listened to the birds which chirped in the trees. Beyond the treetops he could see the smoking chimneys of his home town, but in this moment he was not paying any attention to them.

He felt strangely calm and yet strangely nervous at the same time. His movements showed deliberate slowness, he was truly strolling across the square. He did not feel as if he was in a hurry as he knew that it was no use because everything would unfold at its own speed, but on the other hand he could hardly anticipate what was yet to come.

Coaches rolled over the street when he walked over it, approaching his uncle's house.

A woman with basket full of bread walked past him.

"Miss?" He called out to her.

The woman stopped and turned around. "Young sir?" she asked.

Christopher walked up to her, grinned and looked at her baskets. "What do you sell?"

Surprised to be stopped by the boy, the woman hesitated for a moment before she rose her baskets and held them out to him, showing him their content.

The boy started to smile when he noticed that she had several kinds of pie.

With all the money that was left to him, he bought as many of the small meat-filled pies as he could.

Then he walked towards the entrance of his uncle's house.

Just before he entered, a droshkie stopped before the house.

"This 52, Grosvenor Square, boy?" the driver shouted.

Christopher turned towards him. "Yes," he replied.

"You go in there? Tell the doctor that I am waiting for him."

"Sure!" Christopher said, turned around, opened the door and stepped inside.

Instantly he noticed his uncle's coat lying over a jamb and his slippers lay around as if the doctor had just thrown them away in a hurry.

"Uncle?" Christopher asked while he walked inside.

He noticed that the door to the laboratory was wide opened.

"Uncle?"

He approached it, he could hear sounds coming up from below, there was also light down there, but the moment he had finally reached it, his uncle was suddenly standing right in front of him.

Christopher stopped cold.

The doctor held his opened bag in his hands, inside were countless little flasks and surgical instruments. The man's hair was a mess and his eyes shot about while he slammed shut the door behind him. "Christopher!" the man exclaimed.

"Uncle?"

"I..." For a short instant the man tried to find the right words. "I have to leave right away. The Duchess of Malfi had a relapse."

Christopher had problems to hide his grin.

Fortunately his uncle was busy studying the content of his bag in this moment. When his head rose again, he looked over Christopher for a moment, then he looked directly at the boy who tried to look as casual as possible. The man's eyes narrowed. He put his bag down, got his keys from his pocket, turned around and firmly locked the door to the cellar.

"I have to go to Oxfordshire and will not return until tomorrow, the servants will be..." he started.

"They have their free day," Christopher interrupted him, his face now really showing a broad grin he could no longer suppress.

The doctor did not react at first. Then his hand reached for the door handle and he pressed it down, reassuring himself that the door was properly locked. When he turned around again, Christopher looked away, as he was still unable to hide away his amusement.

The doctor glared at the boy. "I have no time to..." He did not end the sentence. He stashed the keys in his pocket, went past Christopher and up the stairs.

Chris could hear him unlocking the door to his room, he could imagine that the sounds which came down next were those of his uncle going to his desk, opening the drawer, getting the key to the cage, closing the drawer again and leaving the room again. He could hear his uncle locking the door to his room again.

Then the man hurried down the staircase. "I expect that you know how to behave yourself until that time, Christopher."

"Your droshkie is waiting, uncle," the boy replied.

The doctor studied the boy for an instant.

There were still traces of a grin on his face, no matter how hard Chris tried to hide it.

Pulling a face the man grabbed his bag and went for the door. He put on his coat while he opened the door. "Be assured that I do not like this, but I have no options. I am gone now!" he said and an instant later, the door slammed shut behind him.

With an inaudible cry of triumph Christopher fell to his knees. The sensation of victory was overwhelming. He jumped up again and threw one arm in the air, before he ran up the stairs, fuelled by the intense feeling of imminent success.

He dashed into his room, jumped over the bed and glided over the slick parquet and fell to his knees when he reached the spot in the corner where he had loosened the plank. With quivering fingers he forced open the piece of wood and reached out into the dark void beneath the floor. His hand closed around the cold metal of the keys he hid there. One to open the door to the cellar, one to open...

He took them out and the dull surface of the new key seemed to shine in the evening light that fell through the window of his room. He was breathless while he looked at the simple piece of lead, he was so full of happy anxiety. He was

convinced that his entire body was trembling, shaken by a source of inner power that had been tapped in this very moment. It was now overcoming him, pumping through his veins.

No longer able to kneel he jumped to his feet and dashed out of the room again. He rumbled down the stair and ran towards the door to the cellar. He almost slammed against it while he fumbled his pocket to retrieve the other key he had stolen days ago. The time it took to unlock the door was almost unbearable and when the door finally swung open he stumbled onto the staircase that led down into the dim light of the laboratory.

“Mimo! Mimo!” he shouted.

The entirety of the room did not matter to him, he did not even notice the fully prepared operating table where syringes and scalpels glistened in the twilight.

“Mimo!” He sled over the ground.

Two paws had taken hold of the cage’s bars and the linsang was looking out of the cage, having recognized his voice the very instant he had called out for her. She instantly noticed his excitement, she could smell it surrounding him and she understood that something had happened or was about to happen. Her tail started to wag while she saw how he rushed towards her, fell to his knees in front of her cage.

“Mimo, Mimo!”

Her paws reached out for him and instantly she tried to embrace him the best he could. Her soft fingers ran all over his face while he tried to free himself from her hold as he wanted to show her what he had acquired. But Mimo pressed herself against the bars the best way she could. She wanted to be as close to him as possible, now that he was finally with her again. But Chris freed himself of her hold and moved away a little bit.

Mimo stared at him but in this moment he rose a small piece of metal. “Mimo, look!” he gasped breathlessly. “Look!”

The linsang looked at him, then she looked at the key, then at the boy again.

“This is the key, Mimo! This is the key to your cage!” he stammered and smiled all over his face.

The female did not know what to do, she looked at the key again, then she looked at him again and started smiling because he was smiling at her as well.

“My uncle is gone, I am here to free you,” he said.

She tilted her head.

He noticed that she did not understand. “Look!” He rose to his feet and approached the lock at the side of the cage. His hand trembled even more strongly when he pushed the key into the opening of the lock. For a very short moment the thought that the key might not work crossed his mind, but he did not hesitate and turned it around. Beneath his fingers rusty, unwilling clock wheels started to turn, faint vibrations were transmitted through the simple machinery as some resistances had to be overcome, then a faint click was audible and the clamp of the lock sprung open.

It felt as if his heart skipped a beat.

Then with the full power of his body he thrust himself against the metal front side of her prison.

When she felt that her cage started to move Mimo retired a little bit but then she noticed that a gap was about to open at the side of the cage and she stared at it in amazement.

Chris groaned as it took all of his power to open the cage.

Finally there was an opening large enough to...

He was not even meant to realize that it had taken place. Suddenly he was jumped by the linsang who flung herself around him. The boy was pushed over and fell to the ground.

When he was finally able to grasp what had happened he looked right into her face. He needed a moment to realize that there were no longer any bars between them.

Mimo rubbed herself against him, she was closer to him now than ever and it felt so good and yet she yearned for even more. She knew what her body craved for, her desires were overwhelmingly strong and she enjoyed it so much.

"Kreess," she hissed.

Chris looked at her for a moment, he need a moment to realize that he was held by a furry, but nevertheless naked linsang female. She was as warm as a duvet and as soft as a pillow. Furthermore he could feel the tightness of her muscles and most of all he could feel her firm breasts which pressed down on his shirt. He gulped. "Mimo, I..."

Mimo did not listen to him, she was busy rubbing her head against his chin. She had wanted to do this all of the time, to mark him with her own scent.

Christopher inhaled deeply and in for the very first time he became truly aware of her scent's power. While he could feel her rubbing her head against his chin, he was totally overcome by the scents he inhaled. The skin of his body tightened almost instantly and he could feel something strange in his loins. First it was nothing but a restless itch which got more intense with every moment and finally gathered within his sex. He blushed while he could feel it hardening inside his pants.

"Mimo, I..."

The linsang looked up and smiled at him. She could smell him as well, the traces of his excitement mixing with traces of sweat and hints of fear she did not quite understand.

As gently as he was able to he took her by her shoulders.

"Wait! I will get you something to eat," he said, pushed her away and rose to his feet.

The linsang stared at him.

For a moment he looked down on her. She looked so small and fragile despite her feral traits, but he realized that this was the first time that he saw her outside of her confinement. She sat on the cold stone ground and looked up to him, her

dark eyes wide opened and despite her grown, swollen teats and her fur he could see the outlines of her ribs.

“Wait, wait!” he said, hastily tried to fix his clothes a little bit before he ran up the staircase.

On the ground floor, he stood in the corridor and tried to remember where he had put the bag with the pies he had bought on his way to the house. For an instant he was confused because he could not remember anything at all. He looked all around.

He was confused, some part of him wanted to go back to the linsang right away. The moment he inhaled he recalled her charming scents, the touch of her fingers and the entirety of her presence. He blinked and a picture flashed up in his mind which made him shudder. In this moment he remembered to have thrown the small paper bag with the pies on his bed when he had ran into his room.

Quickly he dashed on, running up the stair to his own room.

The paper bag was still lying on the bed where he had thrown it absent-mindedly when he had come into the room to retrieve the key. He quickly grabbed it and walked down the stair again.

He smiled to himself when he had the idea to get some plate from the kitchen. Misses Cavendish was gone and this was his chance to get at some of her porcelain. He walked right into the kitchen where he stood in front of the cupboard where all the expensive chinaware was stored. Its blue and white surface was neatly cleaned. He reached out for the most luxurious bowl in the cupboard: It imitated thin wickerwork as if it had been made of single threads of porcelain which had been woven together. He had never seen it on the dinner table, maybe the maid considered this piece to be too valuable for such mundane occasions.

He grinned. This was perfect for Mimo.

Carefully he took it out of the cupboard.

He ripped the paper bag apart and took out the pies which he carefully put into the bowl.

Finished he took the bowl in both hands and walked out of the kitchen again.

He was just about to walk into the cellar when he noticed that the door to the greenhouse was opened. His eyebrows rose.

It was a strange feeling of anxious surprise that took control of him as he did not understand what this was suppose to mean. He walked into the salon and towards the greenhouse.

He was just about to enter it when he stopped cold feeling something beneath his feet. Looking down he saw a bunch of feathers.

His blood ran cold.

He looked up again and made the last few steps into the glasshouse.

Suddenly his fingers got powerless. Every drop of blood seemed to withdraw into the depths of his body and the porcelain bowl slipped from his fingers. It turned in mid-air and attired on its side, the thinly crafted ceramics shattering

instantly. Pieces of broken porcelain were shooting about while the structure crashed against the stone ground, while the pies tumbled around. Larger chunks of the bowl ricocheted and fell down again, breaking into even smaller pieces until there was nothing but a mess of the tiniest porcelain pieces and squashed pies lying at his feet.

Mimo rose her head while Christopher, totally pale, stared at the small, bloody tatters of brightly coloured feathers and flesh that were spread all around Mimo whose face was stained with dripping wet blood. Quickly she swallowed the piece of bird flesh she had held with her teeth.

Something had taken hold of his heart, had fully grasped it and was now pushing down on it. He was hardly able to breathe.

Mimo looked up to him and tilted her head. The paleness of his face troubled her and quickly she looked around, until she found a large parrot whose head she had bitten off when she had caught it but had not touched it otherwise. She took it in her paws and held it out to Christopher, smiling at him.

The boy stared into the smiling linsang's face for a while before he looked down onto the gory remains of the little bird.

"WHAT..."

With full power he pushed the bird out of her paws.

The small corpse flew across the glasshouse, spraying blood all around before it landed in a small bush.

"...HAVE YOU DONE?"

Mimo looked at him with her eyes wide open. Instinctively she made a step backward.

His fury washed over him with the power of all of the fears he had faced during the last weeks. "What did you do?" he yelled at her. His face was contorted while he glared at the linsang.

Mimo observed him, he reminded him of the large man with the pieces of glass which hid his eyes who had visited her in the basement from time to time, raging at her. She had never understood why and she had been almost happy that the bars of her cage had held him off.

"Why do you have to spoil everything... They're just birds." Chris said. His voice cracked, his rage receded as suddenly as it had come and what was left behind was nothing but desperation. What would he tell his uncle? What would happen to Mimo? She could not go back into the cage, she had to... Suddenly all of these questions washed over him. He realized that he had never made any plans beyond this point. He had wanted to free Mimo and she was free now. He looked to the ground. Mimo was free now and this was the result...

The dead birds on the ground looked terribly small.

A sob escaped him.

Mimo looked on the ground as well. She looked at the birds and at the broken plate with the smashed pies. When she looked at him again, she saw him

tremble. Carefully she approached him and when she was by his side and he had not moved, she embraced him, wrapping him in her furry arms.

“Srrry,” she mumbled.

She pulled him closer and pressed her face against his cheek, holding him as close as possible.

Chris’ hands grabbed her fur, held her tightly. He could feel the warmth of her body, he could smell her and it calmed him.

Her furry cheek brushed over his own. “Srry, srry, srrry..”

The greenhouse was strangely silent. The few birds which had escaped Mimo, had retired and did not utter the faintest sound. There was nothing but the faint sound of running water while the linsang held the boy.

“It is not your fault, it’s...” He fell silent. It felt so unnecessary to say anything. He felt perfectly safe in her embrace. He could feel the shape of her body, her muscles and the round shapes of her multiple breasts. He felt that he had an erection again. In this intimate closeness they shared it was all right. Both of them were fully aware of their young bodies which did not let go of each other. She could feel his erection, just like he felt her tight breasts.

She brushed her head over his cheek while her hands stroked his back.

His tension vanished and was replaced by a strange restlessness when he inhaled deeply and the scent which arose from her fur made him giddy as if his head was suddenly shooting into the night sky, the dark space which looked down on the glasshouse with a thousand glittering eyes.

Smoke swirled past the roofs of London, pouring out from countless chimneys. The greyish gases whirled about, past the gleaming glass with the dark green of lush plants beneath, before they vanished in the darkness, the dark sky absorbing it entirely.

Christopher’s hand grabbed her fur even stronger and pulled her even closer, he lowered his face and pressed it against her breast while her arms held him with all over her power, her hands gliding over his back, her protruding claws cutting into the thin white fabric of his shirt, slowly ripping it apart. Light skin showed underneath and Mimo gasped and threw her head backwards when she felt how he rubbed his features against her swollen breasts which stood out furless from the rest of her body, the nipples small, hard nubs.

Every breath he took was saturated with scents he could not smell, but he felt their effect, it was like chloroform, laughing gas, any drug he had ever taken, except for the instant effect which clouded his mind. Sweat shot from every pore of his body, he felt strained like an athlete and yet excited beyond any experience he had ever had before and it was all coming from her. He just had to keep holding her and so he did, wildly rubbing his head all over her front, until his cheek stroked over one of her many breasts and he felt the softness of this furless spot.

The linsang yipped when his hand suddenly took hold of one of her breasts. His fingers dug deep into the fabric while he stared at his catch. His blue eyes looked

closely at the bare skin which was dimly shimmering because of the sweat that had started to break free from the pores of her body. The breast was almost perfectly round and firm, even between his fingers, it felt so warm and slick and at the very top of this round shape stood out a tight breastwart which quivered lightly. His mouth opened and when she forced his head towards it, he eagerly sucked it into his mouth, his lips closing around the firm fabric like around a ripe apple. His lips closed (she moaned) and he got a hold of the nipple's bumpy surface which tickled almost upon his tongue and a strange scent remained behind. He could not pinpoint it, he was not even sure if he had tasted anything at all, so he swallowed it whole again and sucked at the breast, absorbed the saltiness of her sweat, wallowed in the resistance of its firmness. This time his lips held on to the nipple while his tongue reached out to explore its surface. Unlike the soft fabric of the breast it was rock-hard, a small tough spot which resisted him while he sucked on that seductive flesh, his whole mouth pressed into her breast, his lips closed slowly and enclosed as much of it as they could, until nothing but this hard, tiny teat was still between them.

The linsang yipped, her hands cramped behind his head. Meanwhile Chris mouth wandered through her chestfur, his breath a hot trail on her chest until he found another breast just underneath, smaller but no less excited and he showed it the same attention while his hand started to wander over the other side of her chest, through her fur and the first hard teat which was entirely hidden under that hair, over the second one, already sitting atop a small globe of sensible flesh, over the third, the breast just large enough for him to take fully into his hand, he message it before his hand went on, finding the fourth one which was towering above a perfect globe, too large for his hand, but certainly not too large to be caressed by his fingers which dug deep into the flexible tissue. The skin was bare and soft and he could feel its excitement as it heated beneath his fingers, shivered and pulsed.

Mimo gasped and she leaned backward a little bit. With her animal eyes she looked down on the male whose face showed up between he chestful. He looked up too and their eyes met. Her teeth showed when she started to smile and she leaned back even further, folding her arms above her head, thus further stretching the taut skin of her chest, proudly showing him her sets of differently sized breasts.

The feelings he had already awakened within them were totally irresistible and she yearned for more. But in this moment she wanted to show him what was going to be his for the time coming, the visible aspects of her femininity which had grown in anticipation of this day, had grown to feel his touch and caresses. They were the carnal proof of the affection she felt for the blond boy who sat in front of her and looked at her chest. She grinned.

Suddenly she jumped up.

Christopher reached out his hand to hold her back. But the linsang was much faster than him.

She came down on all fours, right in front of him, showing him her buttocks with the long lush tail. She looked around and smiled at the boy who was still slightly confused. Slowly she spread her legs and rose her tail until her mons showed. The coarse hair of pubic fur framed the straight lines of her netherlips. They had taken a reddish colour and glistened wetly. They stood out between her fur, having swollen slightly, her small virgin folds having gotten even tighter between the muscles of her lap, the small reddish spot of her hardened clitoris showing between them.

Her tail was now risen high, showing him her entire backside, from the base of her tail, the rim between her muscles buttocks, the small rosette just above her sex, her labia and the entirety of her mons. She wanted to show him that she was ready, that she wanted him to have her. She wiggled her bottom.

Christopher gulped, transfixed by what she showed him. No matter how many books of his uncle he had read, there had been none which would have mentioned anything about the female sex, nor had anything prepared him for what he saw there: Those pink folds which were located at the very spot where his own sex was located which was now hard and erect within his trousers. His mouth opened a little bit. He could smell something, he was certain of that, but once again the exact nature of that smell eluded him even though he could feel its effect. It was sweet and forbidden, damp and rich like over-ripe fruit, he understood that it had been a part of her fragrance all of the time, but its current intensity was overwhelming. He could feel how his skin tightened, how his heart beat faster because of it while his hand reached out tentatively as he was drawn towards that female sex.

Mimo yipped and shivered when she felt the tips of his fingers upon her labia. The sensible skin tightened furthermore and instantly she could feel pleasure within her limbs, even though it was nothing but his fingers which pressed lightly into it.

He could feel her reaction while his fingers pushed into that tissue, which at first was soft to his touch, the folds easily giving way before he met tighter parts of her sex which were resisting him. He withdrew his hand and looked at the two fingers with amazement: They were soaking wet now and when he tried to smell at them, his head jerked back because the scent was almost too intense.

His fingertips came down on her sex again and Mimo gasped inaudibly, shivering once again. She felt how his fingers went up and down her labia, gliding upon her juice. Shortly they pressed down on her clitoris and a shudder ran up her spine and her tail which she wagged strongly for an instant, before that feeling dissolved in an instant of pure bliss. Meanwhile his fingertips pressed a little bit deeper, delved between her outer labia and from her clitoris they travelled upwards and before he understood what happened they plunged into her very sex.

Mimo tightened instantly, gasping powerfully while her senses went wild. She had felt an unexpected sting the moment his fingers had penetrated her, but it was gone as quickly as it had come and then she had been overwhelmed by

sensations which defied her grasp. Petrified as she was, she just gasped for breath and wallowed in the many feelings which spread throughout her small body.

Christopher just stared at her, two of his fingers deep within her sex. He could feel the hot, wet tissue which encompassed them, it pulsed powerfully, rippling around them. Even though it was nothing but his fingers it felt strangely pleasurable. He got a little bit closer, drawn to the pink folds she showed him. It was strange how they stood out between the surrounding fur which was much thicker in this spot of her body, it was a little bit curly there. The texture of her sex fascinated him, it was so smooth, so soft and warm, his fingers glided through her insides and out again, over the uneven labia and the hard lump of her clit. Mimo whimpered while he did so.

His fingers were glistening wet, he noted the moisture that slowly ran down while he looked at them for a moment, the scent was still very strong and strange, but now this time it was no so unpleasant anymore. He wet his lips and he slid closer on the stone ground until he was almost right between her legs. Kneeling right behind her, he reached out his hands and his fingers pressed down on her labia, very carefully- he paid attention not to apply too much pressure- he parted her labia, revealing the pink behind it. The linsang girl gasped when she felt how cool air was suddenly all around her sensible, touchy sex, but the mere thought that he was looking at her like this was thrilling her, it was a previously unknown kick. It felt as if she had always wanted to do this without even knowing it and now it happened and it was nothing like she would had imagined it to be, the actions of the boy were unknown to her, but it felt good anyway and she moaned and shivered in delight while his fingers went on exposing her inner folds. She lowered her chest to the ground, so that her face and her chest lay on the cold stone ground, but now she had her hands free to reach out to her buttocks and spread them apart for him, rising her tail at the same time, showing him the entirety of her backside.

Chris' fingers went on, spreading the moisture of her sex, they ran on, glided through the short hair in her furrow and pressed against the touchy little rosette of her pucker which gave in a little bit before they went on to the base of her tail. To his surprise the linsang shuddered powerfully when he touched her there, giving off some kind of sound which was something between a yelp and a giggle. He grinned to himself and lowered his face towards her backside, the tiny little spot which was the base of her tail was almost furless, except for a little bit of down and he reached out his tongue and licked it. Instantly the linsang tensed and gasped powerfully, suddenly overcome by the totally unexpected feeling of this most sensible and vulnerable spot of hers. It was a strange feeling for him to lick the furry skin, it was as if it had a taste to it, but if he had been asked about it he would had been unable to explain this. Curiously his tongue went on, for an instant it pressed against her pucker, the flexibility of strong muscles fascinating him, as it gave in just a little bit before it got too strong for his tongue which went on towards her sex which smelled so powerfully. Beneath his tongue the folds

were uneven and wrinkled but beyond them was the smoothest, softest texture he had ever met. Mimo moaned, the intensity of his tongue upon between he labia was too powerful for her. She gasped for breath, shuddered while cold and warm sensations travelled up and down her spine. She felt her knees getting weaker by the moment, but she tensed because she did not want to interrupt what he did.

Two of his fingers glided into her depths again, he introduced them up to the hilt before pulling them out again and instantly sticking them into his mouth and licking off the moisture that stuck to them. He realized that he was about to like this specific taste better by the moment, he enjoyed what it did to him, how it made his heart beat faster and how his own penis throbbed powerfully in his pants. His tongue ran up and down her furrow, teasing the base of her tail which rendered her powerless every time he licked that spot, probing her pucker and fully plunging into her mons, the tip of his tongue searching for her clit and the very opening of her sex while gathering more of her juice. In the meantime his fingers were busy as well, pushing down on her clit, spreading her labia and a little bit, penetrating her pucker as well when his tongue was not busy in this spot. Mimo just gasped for breath, she quivered and gave up herself to the erratic pleasures that spread throughout her body, pulsed in her veins and sparkled beneath her skin.

Suddenly he stopped. He gasped as he realized that he had been holding his breath for a long time, the taste of her sex still lingering upon his tongue.

Mimo quivered in the after-effects of his caresses and then flexed suddenly. She spun round and faced him. Her face was closer than ever while she looked at him, her dark feline eyes were transfixed upon the boy's who did not dare to breathe again in this moment. His jaw trembled shortly then he bent forward a little bit and approached her lips with his own. Quickly he placed a kiss upon her lips. The linsang's eyes opened wide. She did not understand what he had done, kisses were unknown to her, but it had felt good. In a very unambiguous pose she presented him her lips and carefully he kissed her again. She giggled in return and showed him his lips again, pursing them a little bit. Christopher inhaled deeply and dared to kiss her longer, his lips truly touching hers for a while. In this closeness the little space their lips had was quickly used up as they approached each other and their mouths opened a little bit.

Mimo supported herself against his chest and when they broke the kiss, she realized that her hand pressed down against his shirt. She felt the outline of his body through the thin fabric and how his chest heaved with every breath he took. Instantly she was struck with the desire to feel this much more closely and before he realized what she did, the linsang had shown her little claws and had shred the front of his shirt to pieces.

Her furless palms came down on the naked skin of the boy's chest. She had never felt entirely furless skin before and its texture fascinated her. It was a little bit sweaty from his excitement and it showed the lines of his muscles. She let her

fingers glide up and down his entire torso while he observed her hand. His breath had gotten irregular in this moment, because he did not want to disturb the movements of her fingers. They tickled and still the caress was so gentle and felt so good in his movement.

But suddenly she hesitated for a moment. Her hand rested upon his soft belly and suddenly she could feel the proximity of his sex. She quivered a little bit and then in an outburst of urging desires she started to pull at his pants. Powerfully she just ripped out the buttons of his fly and tore his underpants apart until his member was fully exposed: It was nothing like she had expected it to be. It was much bigger and totally furless except for a little bit of downy, blond hair which was hardly visible against his skin. Without any hair which could have hidden parts of it, it stood out from his body, pulsing lightly. The perfectly smooth tip with the little chink and its round edges glistened brightly, while strained veins throbbled upon the whole length of the long shaft underneath.

Mimo inhaled deeply and instantly she could smell its powerfully male, musky scent and its effects upon her body. She jumped forward and pounced Chris, throwing him over until they were both lying on the floor.

She was lying upon him, looking directly into his face, showing him her teeth and the urgencies of her desires. His sex pressed against her warm belly and it felt good this way, but she wanted more.

Suddenly Chris grinned.

With a little cry of triumph he took hold of her and turned her over, instantly lying down on her.

Wide-eyed she stared at him, never having expected him to overcome her that easily.

Chris just grinned at her. He was not fully lying upon her, just his chest rested upon hers and now that his shirt was nothing but rags any more he could feel her breasts and their hard nipples against his bare skin. His hand wandered over them for a moment, then through the fur of her belly, between her curly pubic fur and between her legs.

Mimo opened her mouth and quivered in anticipation of what came next.

The inside of her sex clamped around the intruding fingers. He could feel muscles and moisture flowing all about while her netherlips pulsed gently. The depths he reached into now were much profound than anything she had ever experienced, he reached into parts of her abdomen she had never felt with such an intensity. Responding to it, she rocked and quivered, little yelps escaping her wide-opened mouth which constantly gasped for breath. But even the air around her was of an intense heat, it could not ease the burn of her skin which poured out sweat from everyone of her pores, every droplet saturated with the power of her female scents.

She opened her legs wide while Chris went on.

As if it was a reflex his other hand grabbed for one of her breasts while she squirmed underneath him, rubbing herself against his bare chest and loin. Even

though her fur was so short it felt like a thick duvet which covered her entirely, allowed no heat to escape: He was sweating just like her, his sweat drenching her fur where they were joined and every time he respired the pheromones which surrounded her broke away yet another restraint inside his body, freed his instincts, the raw power of his sex which rested against her side. Yet there was so much he did not know about the female beneath him and as if he could find answers this way, his fingers dug deeper into the wet opening between her thighs, moved about between the wet flesh down there, getting out and going back inside, pushing aside pulsing, clenching, vibrating muscles which girthed the index and the middle finger the best way it could to enclose those two shifting limbs, while his other hand still held on to the largest of her breasts, groping it firmly, squeezing and massaging it which was dominated by a hard, prominent nipple, a spot of nude skin between her fur, glistening with salty wetness.

His fingers went in deep again and he bent them, striking new, sensible areas inside her abdomen and she rocked strongly and droplets of sweat shot all about. She moaned, pressed herself against the hold of his arms for a moment, but when he went on fingering her, she just whimpered and weakness overcame her and her body went limp, yipping quietly she pressed herself against his bare, human skin and succumbed to his caresses. Additionally his thumb found a resting place on top of her mons, sunk between her labia and came to a halt upon her clit, stroking it occasionally. She inhaled strongly and shivered, her hands instinctively taking hold of his arm.

Totally aware of her reactions he pressed a kiss against her furry cheek and pulled his fingers out of her sex. The glistened with the wetness of her juice. The linsang relaxed a little bit, she whined softly, no longer under the effect of his fingers, even though the intensity of this caress was still haunting her body. She inhaled deeply and despite her own scents her sensitive nose was overcome by the musky scents of Christopher's maturing, male body again. She had detected his arousal long before he had even been aware of it, it had surrounded him since he had visited her days ago and it had gotten stronger every time and now it had reached its peak, it was all over him, it was in his breath, upon his bare chest she pressed herself against and most strongly between his thighs where his member was standing erect, throbbing powerfully and its firm shape pressed against her side, mere inches from her eager mons and in this moment his fingers slipped into her sex again, drove in all the way and she moaned as she was overcome by this.

Agile as they were, they rubbed the slick fabric inside of her sex, glided over it, caressed it, slipped over it, stroke it in every possible direction and constantly dipped into the wetness which welled up from the very depths of her body. The way they bend inside of her, stimulated new, even more sensible areas and the linsang moaned in delight while the boy wondered about this moisture, foreign and unknown to him, but he could feel its charm as well and the slickness in between these tight folds of a female body was fascinating. He squeezed the

largest one of her right breasts and curiously licked the nipple which stood out there, tasting her sweat. Eagerly his entire mouth closed around it again, took as much of it inside his mouth as he could, sucking on its firm, sensitive flesh.

Mimo squealed, bucked, turned and moaned and suddenly she stopped cold.

Christopher instantly froze as well, not know what to do.

But her fingers closed powerfully around his hand and urged him to go on while the female started to quiver from her teeth to her toe, trembled and gasped for breath, pressed herself against his chest while her abdomen was ablaze, the fury of her climax spreading throughout her legs and her belly. The oncoming delight was like nothing the young linsang had ever felt before. She squealed and for a moment everything in front of her eyes went black as her body was so powerfully strained by this rush of bliss.

His fingers locked deep inside of the female sex, he felt her urging heartbeat, the convulsion of her inner muscles and of course all of her powerful, instinctive movements. It was as if his fingers were suddenly surrounded by running water. It was nothing but an illusion, but it was a convincing one and slowly, when her grip on his hands got weaker, he pulled his fingers out of the trembling, pulsing mons, his two fingers dripping wet and glistening in the dim light of the glasshouse.

He kissed her small, cool and wet nose while Mimo just lay there for a moment, panting. She blinked and looked at him and he grinned mischievously. After a moment she returned the smile, showing him her predatory teeth and now it was her who grabbed him and with a ferocious growl she forced him onto his back again.

Chris just laughed, when he suddenly lay on his back, the linsang girl sitting on his belly. She was still grinning too.

When it finally subsided he reached out his hand and started to pet her breasts again. More than ever they had swollen in size, they were almost perfectly round now, obviously larger than before. The fur stretched tightly all around them and the nipples stood out, hard and bare. His fingers took hold of the smallest breasts which were not far from her belly button and which were almost invisible among her fur, they were even smaller than his hand, but their nipples were just as excited as the rest. He caught them between his fingertips and started to squeeze and rub them. It felt good and Mimo's eyes wandered from his hands to his face and back again.

The boy sat up as well as he could, embraced her and his mouth reached out for the next best nipple, his lips instantly getting a hold on it. He sucked on the succulent round shape, his tongue encircling the hard nipple which reached into his mouth. It was as if her breasts had an ephemeral taste he could not perceive, his human senses too inaccurate to grasp it. But still it felt so good, just how her touchy, soft flesh reacted to his mouth's caresses, how it felt beneath his lips and his tongue and how it was almost too much for him while he sucked on it, it felt so good that he was unable to stop.

Mimo had put her arms around his head and quivered a little bit, enjoying what he did. But she felt that it was not enough any more, the urges and desires which swirled through her mind had drawn out different intentions. She was beyond the pleasant caresses, the teasing and the little games of mutual arousal. The way she sat upon him, she could feel his throbbing sex pressing strongly against the round shapes of her buttocks.

She changed her position a little bit. Because of this he looked at her in surprise, as he had to let go off her breasts. Now sitting on his legs, his sex was right in front of her, standing tall.

As there was very little light in the glasshouse right now, the only thing she could really see was the outlines of his erected member with its round, enlarged glans at the very top. The smooth limb attracted her, her hands reached out for it and she touched it gently with her furless palm. He winced anyway, totally overcome by the intensity of this touch. It was as if lightning had struck him and he whimpered a little bit when the feeling lasted because her furless palm went on petting it. Its shape fascinated her, she knew by now that she was going to feel this inside of her body within a short time and she wanted to know its shape: Its sleekness of the glans, its edges which would hold his sex within her, the little crack at the top, the long, veiny shaft which she could contain full length and girth, from the top to his tightened balls. She panted, her heart fluttering in her chest.

Looking at him, she saw that he was totally overcome by the feeling of her hands making out his member's shape by touch and therefore she stopped as she wanted to have his attention. She wanted him now, but she wanted him to understand.

When she stopped, he gasped for breath for a few moments and then opened his eyes which he had mostly closed as long as her caresses had lasted. He looked into her eyes and she looked into his when she rose a little bit. Having straddled upon his legs she exposed her lap to him once again. She parted her legs a little bit further, leaned backwards as she wanted him to see her sex again. Despite the little light Christopher could see it glistening wetly, hovering just above his own erected sex.

Quickly she turned around and came down on all fours, showing him her backside again, her legs spread invitingly, her tail risen high in the air.

Her heart beat fast. She did not dare to look back, because she could not bear the excitement any more. Deep in her mind, she begged that he had understood her intentions. This was a first time for her as well, but she had followed her instincts all of the time and she knew that she did the right thing, unfortunately she was not that sure about him. He had behaved so strangely all of the time, had always misunderstood her, even though everything had been so clear right from the start: She was destined to have him, her body had told her so, as it had responded to his presence and matured whenever he had been there for her. She

was in full heat now and now it was up to him to make all of this come together. She could feel her juices running down her thighs.

It was as if something crashed into her, hurled her through the open air and when she crash-landed she dove into a pool of the most intense pleasure she had ever felt before. Invisible to her, he had positioned his own sex behind her with his hand and then with one smooth movement, he had pushed it through her puffy labia into the depths of her mons, tearing fully apart what had been left of her hymen.

Christopher could hardly grasp a fraction of what was going on. He looked down her backside to the spot where her labia enclosed the shaft of his member, her folds holding it gently while his glans had risen into her body, now surrounded by slick, hot, wet fabric that pulsed and rippled around it. It was that feeling of running water again which he had felt around his fingers, it now seemed to be very long ago and it was hardly comparable to the overwhelming sensations of what happened now. Christopher just moaned and rolled his eyes, he shuddered as his whole body was suddenly weakened by this. Even in his wildest dreams he never had dared to imagine that his affection for Mimo would culminated in something like this.

The linsang girl whimpered happily. The presence of his sex deep within her abdomen triggered so many feelings, pleasures and joy that she was unable to contain them all. It seemed as if he was present everywhere inside her body, even though she could totally perceive the shape of his sex as her inner muscles had tightened around it, holding his larger glans, just like the length of his shaft. As her desire urged her to, she pushed herself back a little bit and his shaft went in even deeper, the smooth glans parting her inner muscles until she pressed her buttocks against his loins. It was as if this had turned up her pleasure. It was so intense that she was convinced to be able to taste it upon her tongue. Delight fluttered through her head like little butterflies.

Instinctively following the intention of her movement Chris withdrew a little bit, his sex gliding through her folds upon a coat of her juice, through her labia which clung to it, the veiny surface caressing the touchy fabric until nothing but his glans were inside of her any more, the smooth head of his sex a round knob of pleasure at the entrance of her innermost depths.

It was Mimo who pushed backwards and instantly she whimpered again, wallowing in the ecstasy of the penetration. Chris gasped as the movement of his sex set sensations free which were totally unknown to him. Throughout his loins he could feel a powerful strain and a feeling of emptiness all over his backside which urged him to move on, while a warmth spread throughout his belly. But this was nothing in comparison to all of the pleasures that came forth of his enclosed sex, the mere fact that her labia held on to it felt like something of a single firework rocket which shot throughout his body and into his head were it went off in the darkness of his pleasure-clouded mind. He felt wobbly for an instant and yet the intensity of his lust overcame any weakness. He pressed his

hips strongly against her buttocks, then he withdrew again. Instinctively he took hold of her hips with both hands and with all the power of his body he thrust his sex back in.

Mimo gasped, totally overwhelmed by this, the glans gliding into her depths with all the strength of his loins. She responded to it, adding her own strength to the power of his thrust when he penetrated her the next time, pushing herself towards him and onto his member.

Holding her tightly he rocked his hip, his urges telling him to explore her depths even further and his glans were enclosed by her tight flesh which released even more juice which run along his shaft, through the tight hold of her netherlips and down their joined limbs. "Mimo," Christopher moaned and his sex slipped through hers again, when they receded.

The linsang gasped strongly when his sex was pushed into her again in a mutual effort of both of their bodies, their strength adding to each other. Every thrust rocked her entire body, delight washed over her like a powerful surge. She quivered and shivered whenever he was fully inside of her and the most intense feeling of loss overcame her whenever his shaft slipped out of sensible, irritated labia. But this feeling was cast aside moments later when she was fully penetrated again and this feeling of carnal unity filled her with joyous pride far beyond the pleasures of the moment.

Christopher just stared at their joined sexes, fascinated by the sight of the tightened ring of her delicate labia which clenched the full girth of his member's base while the rest of it was held in the tightest and yet softest hold of her inner muscles. Moisture glistened upon his shaft whenever he pulled it out, moisture which was shed all over whenever he thrust his member into hers again. He shuddered because of the many sensations that came along, his knees went weak and he rolled his eyes, his head suddenly flooded by warm and wet emptiness which seemed to be the same as the one which surrounded his sex. Sweat glistened all over his bare skin, but he did not notice this.

"Mimo!" He gasped her name from time to time while she gasped in accordance to his thrusts, shaken by their power and yearning for it. Her breasts swayed to and fro, his hands upon her hips seemed to burn themselves into her fur. Her entire abdomen was on fire. Everyone of his thrusts unlocked another secret room of pleasure deep within her and she could not get enough of it.

And yet...

He had just pushed his sex fully into her again, his glans seemed to bring along an even more powerful surge while it went deep inside her depths and when his loins pushed against hers the power of it resonated throughout her abdomen and suddenly she could feel it all with such an overwhelming clarity: The unification of their bodies, the wet heat of her own sex, her pulsing mons surrounding his sex whose tip was deep inside of her, round and smooth. It merged with the feeling of Christopher's presence and all the memories of the last weeks and suddenly her entire body tensed, much to her own surprise. Every ounce of pleasure

seemed to be sucked out of every pore and a moment later the pleasure came back, increased tenfold and with such a brutal power that she was instantly overwhelmed by it. Her eyes and her mouth were wide open while her body was suddenly ravaged by delight and carnal joy.

She roared and the birds of the glasshouse fled to the farthest reaches of the place.

It was as if she was taken apart by it, her mind was scattered for an instant while pleasure reigned supreme. She quivered and gasped for breath, trembled and rocked, suddenly bereft of all of her strength she almost collapsed, but a moment later it vanished. Instinctive sobs escaped her while the peak of pleasure faded away and was instead replaced by warm passion that came forth from her abdomen.

Behind her, the boy had felt her sudden tension. He had pulled his shaft backwards and had thrust it into her again with all of his strength and in this moment her climax had overcome her entirely and he had gasped for a moment. All of his strength was gone within an instant, he had exhausted himself. He rolled his eyes and in this moment his sex seemed to go off deep inside of her. He was suddenly electrified by it, he spasmed, his hands clasped her hips, he pressed himself against her with all the power of this spasm. From the tip of his sex shot such a powerful force that he just moaned, shuddered while it spread throughout his body. His loins rocked without control, a sudden strain took hold of his balls and when the full power of this reached his head, he just moaned and rolled his eyes, instinctively holding onto Mimo.

Deep inside of her his sex throbbed strongly, rocked between the rippling muscles and released his semen which instantly mixed with her own juices.

Chris collapsed onto her back, overwhelming pleasure spreading from his loins throughout his body. He could feel the movements of his member inside of her as she could feel it as well, wallowing in that feeling that she discovered when the most intense part of her climax had subsided.

She felt his weight upon her back and it felt good because his closeness was so comforting. In the meantime his member kept on pounding in her folds, releasing his semen into her. She knew now that this had been the moment she had longed for all of the time and she sighed happily. Quivering she moved her hips, shifted her weight as well as she could, so that his sex moved lightly within her, releasing more of his seed while the boy shuddered and moaned because these moves were almost too much for him. But the feeling of his weight upon her gratified her, he was so hot and it reminded her once again of her attraction to him.

Slowly she lowered herself, lying down on the ground with the exhausted boy on her back.

“Mimo,” he whispered.

For a moment they just lay there, their mixed juices running down their joined limbs.

She turned around, gently lay him down on his back and turned towards him. He smiled at her, his eyes half closed.

She grinned and then gave him something like a kiss. It was rather far from the true thing, but she did her best to imitate this previously unknown caress.

His smile widened and he stroke her gently.

Mimo sat up shortly and looked down on herself. Between her thighs she was almost completely drenched by her own juices, but now there were little white stains of his semen as well. Curiously she reached out for it and gathered some of it upon her finger and stuck that into her mouth. She discovered the taste to be very salty and bitter, but it reminded him of his sex' scent.

Her curiosity satisfied she lay down by his side again and snuggled up to his side.

Chris sighed happily, feeling her warm, furry body so close to his own. It was like the softest duvet he had ever felt. He could feel the shapes of her breasts and her nipples against his bare skin.

Mimo reached out his hand and gently fondled his member which had been inside of her moments before.

"I am so happy right now," Christopher mumbled.

Mimo did not understand, but she smiled at him.

At the far end of the glasshouse, the birds distrustfully spied through the leaves of the trees, still rather alarmed by what they had witnessed earlier.

Despite the pleasant afterglow of their lovemaking, Mimo felt a little bit restless.

Christopher just lay there, still much too exhausted to do anything else.

She would have expected him to go on, but the longer he lay there, she understood that she could not rely on his initiative. She had no time to loose, she knew that this was the night.

Her hand went on, caressing his sex and when it was slightly erect again, the linsang sat up. She smiled towards him, showing her the white line of her sharp teeth.

Weakly he returned her smile while she spread her legs above him. For an instant he could see her sex, the glistening pink folds, dripping wet and his own semen sticking tightly to it, as well as to her pubic fur and her thighs.

She spread her legs wide apart as she came down. Her hand reached out for his sex and quickly guided it into this drenched opening. Christopher moaned as he could feel the strain in his entire body, it was as if he needed every fibre of his body to maintain his erection. But Mimo gasped in delight when she felt how the familiar shape glided into her sex yet again and settled between her inner muscles. She leaned forward and started to move.

Breathlessly Christopher watched her, how her different sets of breasts bounced up and down while she rode him, how the expression on her face changed constantly, how her lips quivered, how her closed eyes fluttered, how her tongue wet her lips again and again. It felt good, it felt so good, but he was much too

exhausted to do anything himself. He just watched her and contented himself with observing her ecstasy, her boundless pleasure, her relentless passion. She stretched herself every time she came down on his sex, proudly showing him her swollen breasts, droplets of sweat glistening on her nipples, droplets which sprayed about when she sped up, taking his sex faster and faster.

He gasped for breath when he climaxed another time and Mimo let got a high-pitched howl and shuddered so strongly. Her tail wiggled frantically while the linsang contracted in order to compress the intense satisfaction that was flowing throughout her body again, until it transformed into a warm glow inside her belly.

Christopher breathed heavily.

When she rose he could see his seed dripping from her sex.

She came down by his side and snuggled up to him with her back. He turned to his side and took her in his arms, feeling her warm body with all its fur against his skin. She let go a sound that reminded him of purring, but he was not sure and no longer capable to ponder about it as sleep was coming closer any moment. Her closeness, the scent of her furry body, the slow rhythm of her breath was all it needed to lull him.

His partly limp sex was pressing firmly against the round shapes of her backside and in his dizziness he did not noticed how his sex regained a little bit of its strength until he could feel her hand between his thigh, slowly guiding his sex into hers yet another time.

He rather felt than heard her gasp when she settled upon it. But unlike before she did not move as powerfully as she had before. She seemed to content herself by moving her hips so that his member gently moved inside of her abdomen, while she felt his closeness as well, the sultry heat of his bare body, his regular breath. It comforted her and she snuggled up furthermore, equally eased and excited by the boy.

His breath quickly transformed into a light snore and the linsang smiled to herself and closed her eyes as well.

It was early morning and she was up with a start.

For an instant she was confused as she had suspected to awake in the cage again, but then she felt the weight of Christopher's arm on her body and she remembered the past night again.

When she looked upwards she saw the large plants of greenhouse, some of its avian inhabitants chirped cautiously between them and beyond the glass there was a reddish stroke of light illuminating an otherwise dark sky.

The presence of his body felt good, he was warm and soft, but she felt an urge to move and thus carefully freed herself from his hold.

Softly his sex glided out of her folds.

She sat up besides him, now feeling a wetness between her thighs which had not dried yet. A smile flitted over her face while she looked towards the boy who lay on the ground, still fast asleep, his breast rising slowly whenever he breathed, his blond hair an entire mess while his blue eyes were firmly closed.

She looked down on herself and her hands glided over her belly, which felt warm beneath her fingers. She looked towards the boy again and smiled once again, feeling at ease like she had never felt before.

Very carefully she leaned forward and brushed her cheek over the boy's nude body, she rubbed it all over his face, thus inhaling his scent again, something that was now imprinted in her memory, something she could recognize any time, anywhere. Melancholy struck her for a moment, but then she looked upwards, towards the glassy ceiling.

With a few athletic jumps she had climbed one of the greenhouse's largest trees, reached its uppermost branches and kneeling on it, she pushed one of the windows open, while a few birds watched her from a safe distance.

With a crunch the window opened and the cool wind of the passing night swirled around her while she climbed out of the window.

The slick roof of the glasshouse confused her for a moment as she had never stood on anything like this before, but quickly she had found a way and balanced over the glass tiles' metal edges until she reached a nearby roof.

There she stopped and looked over the city: The dark mass of constructed buildings, the countless chimneys and church towers, the distant shapes of bridges and castles which extended towards the horizon where a thin red line announced the coming of the sun.

She turned around when she heard a fluttering noise and she saw how the birds suddenly flew out of the greenhouse's opened window and headed for the open sky, small dots of colour above the grey city.

Mimo smiled. She was free in the city now.

Her hands glided over her warm, furry belly.

She had to find a safe place where she could build a nest and with this urgent aim on her mind she jumped over the tiles of the roofs.

THE END