

**“Now, my love, we'll have a lesson in manners, hmm?”**

**“Max-- ” she began to plead, “please, I'm sorry, okay?”**

**Anna's eyes widened as he reached around and picked up her wooden hairbrush from the dresser. Ignoring her words, he turned the brush over in his hands, feeling the weight of the heavy wood. It had been a gift from him to her. Little had she known at the time what he really had in mind for it. She had thought it was actually for her long hair.**

**Tapping it experimentally against his palm, he asked contemplatively, “Brush-- or belt? I'll let you choose this time.”**