

Pleasure House

He came around from behind the desk and stood next to her. “You seem a little confused, so let me see if I can clarify a few things for you. First of all, the treatment here at The House is unique, and we prefer to keep our activities hidden from public knowledge. We find that the community, in general, tends to repress certain emotions and behaviors. You, on the other hand, will be addressing those emotions and behaviors. You’ll learn things here no one else does.”

“Is that why I’ve heard very little about this place? I mean, people seem almost reluctant to talk. Perhaps it’s because they signed this document?”

“Precisely. And if you’ve read everything, you’ll see that we will silence those who talk.”

“Yes, but you don’t say how, exactly.” She put the paper back on his desk and folded her hands in her lap. “I’m unclear why such secrecy is necessary.”

He knelt down next to her, his eyes holding hers with a steady, pleading gaze. “While I can’t reveal our methods to you at this time, I’m hoping you can surely understand our position. You’re in need of assistance and we can help you. So will you be willing to put your signature right here on this line?” He tapped his finger on the specified area. Maintaining his stare, he handed her the pen.

“What if I don’t sign? What if I just got up and left, right now? My parents are gone. You can’t stop me.” Her eyes remained fixed on his.

John swallowed hard. “I really don’t recommend you do that. You won’t get far, and if you don’t sign this form, then we’ll have other plans for you. And you don’t want that. Trust me on this.”

“It seems no matter how much I try coming up with ways to get out of this, I can’t seem to. Everyone keeps telling me the same thing as you. Don’t people ever say no, leave here when they feel like it, go start a new life for themselves?”

Returning the stare, John replied, "Most people actually like it here."