

*Anna and Phil - Part 1*

Anna Belladonna sat back in the pew of the church and stared up at the ceiling for about the tenth time. The service had been droning on for hours. The criticism made by the pastor about scantily clad women on television made it seem even longer. Such comments had an ill effect on Anna. This was most likely due to the fact that she was not sitting in this pew by her own accord but by the constant and pressing requests of her husband, Phil. They had been married for about five years now but in the last few months their relationship had developed a rough edge. At one time, when they first met, they were close and snug lovebirds on their honeymoon. Now they seemed like associates working together just to get by or to pay the bills. Phil had tried to persuade Anna that it would help them get along better if they would spend time in church together. Just as Anna finished this assessment of her life, she heard these words spoken from the pulpit, "Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah - from the Lord out of the Heavens. Thus He overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities - and also the vegetation in the land. God will judge all the adulterers and all the sexually immoral." At that moment, a great deal of trepidation soared through Anna. Just the thought of losing the land's vegetation seemed to traumatize Anna, but an entire city being destroyed seemed unbearable. She felt sweat bead on her forehead. The verses may not have been directed at her exclusively, yet she felt like they were. For about six months now, Anna was trying to add an extra kick to her marriage with Phil by wearing sexy clothes and high heels around the house on the weekends. Phil has been very inanimate about such ventures, even

when she wore a white lacy shelf bra and matching panties with a garter-belt and thigh-high stockings. In fact, the more she tried to excite Phil, the more he resisted her allure. It even got to the point where Phil went out of his way to tell Anna to cool things off. While the pastor went on with the sermon, Anna found herself day-dreaming back to a conversation that took place about a week ago...

"Why do you have to be dressed like that so often?" Phil asked. "The neighbors can see you each time you prance in front of a window. It embarrasses me to death. I wish you would wear something less revealing."

"We are married!" exclaimed Anna. "We have been married for five years and now you tell me that you are embarrassed by my appearance." Frustration coursed through Anna. "We have not spent any time having sex for the last six months and I am trying to change all of that." She didn't realize the fact that it wasn't the outfits that she was wearing but that she could be seen through the windows that made Phil nervous.

Instead of reasoning to her that he just didn't want her walking around where everyone can see, Phil shut her off as usual. "I don't have time right now. Get dressed," he pleaded.

Anna came back from her daydreaming at the Pastor's announcement that the service was coming to a close. After the closing hymn and the Benediction, Anna walked around with Phil for a while and said goodbye to some of their friends. Her height, which nearly came in at six feet, was accentuated by her high heels and long dresses that she often wore. Phil by contrast, was a little shorter and stout with blond short hair. His suit and tie was grey and black

accordingly, which he took time to have custom tailored. Normally, Anna's charismatic personality would almost always have a positive effect on other people, as did her blue eyes, which were brought out by her long and dark hair with feminine curls at the bottom. However today, Anna stoically paced around with Phil. She couldn't forget those various passages from the message from the pulpit. Thus, a darkened cloud seemed to follow her wherever she went.

Anna and Phil often ate out at the local restaurant down the street, and this Sunday afternoon was no exception. After their meal, Phil told Anna that he wanted to go to the park to feed the squirrels and to have time to think.

"Don't you want to spend more time together?" Anna asked.

Phil replied, "I need to get away for a while. I need to have time to think."

"You are not going to get drunk again, are you?"

"You have my word," Phil quickly replied.

Anna told Phil that she could go to the mall while he went to the park. After talking some more, the couple eventually agreed that this was a fair way to spend the afternoon. After both of them had some apple pie, they headed home to get changed out of their formal attire. Color finally returned to Anna's face.

When Phil was on his way to the park, he passed *The Lofty Tavern* which loomed on the corner of two streets not far from the park. This tavern seemed very inviting, especially in light of his inability to satisfy Anna's desire for more frequent moments of intimacy. He knew that he

would have a hard time stopping after just a few drinks, but the lure of the tavern was about as strong as the attraction that a kid has to candy in a candy store.

When Anna entered the mall, she made her way over to the bookstore right away. This was unusual for her because in the past she often went straight to the lingerie shops first. However after her futile attempt to put on a fashion show for Phil, she decided to relax and do some reading. After browsing through a number of shelves, she found some books that explain the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. After sorting through a few of them, she found one that really caught her attention.

*Sodom and Gomorrah*

*The Cities of the Plain*

*Only ash and brimstone remain*

*The five cities of the plain have been located and the evidence is staggering. For the first time in modern history we have found round balls of brimstone, or nearly pure sulfur, embedded in an ashen area near the Dead Sea, which show clear signs of having once been ancient building structures!*

*The cities of the plain were destroyed as a warning for all that this same event will happen again one day to the wicked.*

Anna felt that familiar feeling of trepidation once more. She couldn't help but think about the weekends of her attempts to seduce Phil and his condescending comments about her outfits. Once again, sweat beaded on her forehead and this time it started to drip down her face. She was also worried about Phil. Whenever they were apart for a long period of time, he would

almost always be over at *The Lofty Tavern* just short of finishing up another pint of beer.

To say that *The Lofty Tavern* was appealing to Phil would be an understatement. Resistance to escape the seductive lure of this tavern on his way to the park became futile for him. He had already turned his car around and parked it in the gravel parking area and was heading for the door. It wasn't just the alcoholic beverages that were served at this drinking den that he liked to consume that made him change his mind. The temptation to enter the pub was heightened by the music that was played there. Some of his favorite "count and crunch" tunes by his favorite garage bands were often played at more than a satisfactory volume throughout this local pub. The reason that he didn't treat himself to this kind of music more often during his daily routine was that he was affected by it in unusual ways. For example, just after a few minutes of listening, the music impeded his normal thought patterns to the point that his behavior became something very unacceptable for most normal facets of society. In fact, to say that he became animalistic would be closer to the truth.

Phil sat down at a table quite a distance away from the bar, right by the entrance. The Lofty Tavern was extremely smoky, especially closer to the bar. The front door was open but there was also a screen door that was closed so he was able to breath in at least a little bit of fresh air.

After a few minutes, a waiter came up to Phil and asked him what he would like.

"Hello, my name is Charlie and I will be your waiter for your stay at The Lofty Tavern. What can I get you?"

Phil froze up. He knew that if he started drinking, he wouldn't be able to stop. The waiter, seeing his distress, asked Phil what was wrong.

"This is a place where you should be able to put your troubles aside. Tell me your distress, and I will see if I can help you."

Phil told Charlie about Anna. He explained to Charlie that she is unhappy because of a lack of intimacy in their marriage for the last six months.

"She keeps wearing these sexy outfits all day long on the weekends. She doesn't even consider the fact that the neighbors can see," said Phil.

"Did you tell her?" the waiter asked.

"I told her that the neighbors can see her each time she prances in front of a window and that it embarrasses me. I told her to wear something less revealing."

"It sounds like your comments were condescending. Women like to be complimented on their appearance," the waiter reasoned.

"Well, I didn't mean to----"

"You might not of meant to, but you did anyhow. Everything you say to a woman is remembered in their mind for eternity."

Phil leaned forward and started to become transfixed by the sound of the music but yet considered the waiter's words. "I will keep what you told me in mind. Thanks for the advice. Please bring me a Pepsi."

"Sure thing," said the waiter. He went off to get a soda for Phil.

Phil sat in deep thought for a a moment to consider once again the waiters advice and to also consider his destiny.

*To be continued...*