Gromby – Chapter 1

 Sam Gromby was having a day off. Not that he wanted it, but it was raining, and his construction gang never worked under those conditions which was too bad as it would have been a busy day with a rush over-time job. The owner of a house that was being constructed had a closing deadline, and he was paying Acme Construction a premium to complete the project on time. Now, he’ll have to work on Saturday when he would have had time to spend with Jane. So, instead, he and his son, Jason, who was enjoying summer vacation, decided to spend the afternoon and evening at the mall until his wife, Jane, got off her lunch shift at the La Bordeaux restaurant.

 Sam is approaching 40. He’s weathered from having worked under the sun and in driving rain. His hands are gnarled from hours of heavy lifting, cutting, hammering and stapling. His back constantly aches from years of doing this work. Each day becomes a reminder to lift and move carefully or he will be dropped like a pole-ax and rendered unable to work. This would cost him a day’s wages at least since his paycheck is at an hourly rate. No work means no money.

 Jane is about ten years younger than Sam. She’s blonde, about five and a half feet tall and weighs about 130 pounds. Her shoulders and arms are surprisingly bulky from lifting 30 pound trays of food all day long. As she says, it’s my workout. She considers her job to be her profession after having done it since she went from high school graduation to bus tables at McDonald’s. Now, after ten years of climbing the restaurant ladder, she’s now in a place where her tips are significant.

 Jane’s biggest assets are her beauty and ready, dazzling smile. Her blonde hair is offset by azure eyes that dance when she is teasing a customer. Without being too overt, her figure is voluptuous which has caused more than one man to have erotic dreams. La Bordeaux is located right on Capitol Hill just within eye shot of the Capital Building. Consequently, over the years she has built a clientele of staffers, representatives and senators who seek her services.

 Since her marriage to Sam, her services now are strictly limited to providing hot food accompanied by a warm sense of hospitality at each table. However, earlier, when she was broke at the end of a week, she was known to provide more intimate hospitality. This is something of her past she has never shared with Sam. She did once remark however, “After all, I was young, it was fun, and the tip was usually excellent, but now it’s all in the past. I have a husband and a wonderful son.”

 Jason is twelve years old. He is about Jane’s height, but growing very fast and will soon become taller. Probably he will reach Sam’s height of five – ten or so. He also has his father’s build and consequently, is pretty husky. Sam loves to imagine him playing running back for the Washington Redskins. If he has his way, Jason will fulfill his father’s dreams. Meanwhile, he’s stuck with school work and playing pick-up games of football, basketball and baseball.

 Jane, for all intents and purposes, is Jason’s mother. His own mother died when he was still an infant and so, he has no memory of her. He does remember when Jane entered his life. He was about six before which time he can only recall a series of baby sitters and nannies. When Jane started to hang around the house, Jason simply assumed she was another in this long string of caregivers. But, eventually, Sam invited her to move in, and shortly thereafter, she simply became “Mom.”

 On this particular day, Sam and Jason were staying indoors because it was raining outside which made for sloppy screwing off. They watched TV until that became boring and then they played video games which became even more boring since they had played them many times before. Having nothing else to do, they went to the mall to hang out, look at sports windows, check out new games and whatever else might catch their attention.

 As they walked along, Sam was generally letting his thoughts wander.

 *Gee, it’s been a while since we ate, and I’m getting hungry.*

“Jason, here’s a Mickey D. Want a burger?”

 “Yeah, that works. But, I thought Mom told you to stay off those grease burgers. They run up your cholesterol and blood pressure.”

 *Durn, you do listen don’t you kid?* “Yeah, Jason, but tell you what, if you don’t tell her, I won’t either. So, let’s just play hooky from the diet. After all, if we’re not bad, how do we know if we’re being good?”

 “Yep, Pop, that’s right, and that’s what I hear whenever you want something you shouldn’t have.”

 *Probably Jane would fuss if she knew we were here anyway. Work has been slow of late, and my paychecks have been pretty thin. It’ll be tight making our payments, but what the hell, we’re caught up for the moment and next week will be better.* ”So come on son, let’s eat.”

 Did you say something Pop?

 “Hummm? Oh no, I was just talking to myself. After all, when I do so, I never get into an argument.”

 Jason quipped, “Yeah, but just don’t listen to yourself ‘cause that guy is really pretty dumb.”

 Sam cuffed his son gently across the top of his head saying, “Yeah, right. And I suppose I should listen to you?”

 “I’m smarter than that other guy you’re talking to. OK. Let’s eat, or are we gonna just stand here?”

 “Right, wise guy. Let’s eat.”

 The father and son went into the McDonald and each ordered a burger, fries and coke. Sam followed his order with a coffee and some cookies that he shared with his son.

 “So, Jason, what movie do we want to see tonight? How ‘bout something romantic like…

 “Aw, Pop’s. No romance. You promised.”

 “Somethin’ romantic like *Texas Al and the Chain Saw Massacre?”*

“Oh cool? Is that a new movie?”

 “Nope, but I thought it’d get your attention. How ‘bout a Batman flick?”

 “Yep, that works.”

 Thirty dollars later for tickets, popcorn and more coke, the two saw Batman and Robin beat up the Joker. Coming out, Sam said to Jason, “Son, this is just our time out for the two of us. Money has been tight, and your mom has been working hard enough, so let’s not worry her about what we’ve been doing and what it cost?”

 “What if she asks?”

 “We just hung out. OK?”

 “Works for me.”

 Thus ended a simple day of pleasure of a father with his son