Corporal Punishment

by Jake Barnes

When I was a little boy, I had a thing about women's behinds. I liked to swat them. Fat women especially. I did this when my mother took me into one of the local dime stores. I don't know why I liked to swat big butts. Because they were there, probably. The ladies were outraged, of course, and some of them protested. “Well. I never!” they would say. At first my mother paid no attention. I did my work behind her back.

Then one day she caught me. We were standing at the checkout counter at the five & dime. While my mother was paying for her purchases, I swatted the butt of a fat lady who was leaning over looking at something in a glass case nearby. My mother was mortified. She saw me do it. She hauled me out of the store, and on the sidewalk outside, she gave me a swat on bottom. I cried and cried.

When I got home, I plotted revenge. I got it, too. One day I was playing outside, and I caught a little garter snake. I shoved it into the pocket of my overalls. Monday was wash day, and our wash machine was in the basement. The clothing I had worn the day before was in the clothes basket. I heard my mother scream.

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