

# snatch 4

by Mathew Paust

So tearfully gratifying was the promise of Aggie's melodious humming it whisked away into its customary ignorable background the interminable locust chorus. A downside accompanying this positive note arrived with the voice of the shrink *du jour*.

"What are you thinking?"

He flashed on the shrink, this one a youngish woman with regular features spoiled by the pinched, nervous expression skin would instinctively assume fighting a facelift. Her narrowed eyes peered at him with rote interest. Annoyed on principle, he nonetheless wanted to share the delight of his newfound joy. To this end he smiled, shifted his glance with deliberation to her shapely legs and back to her face.

"You really don't want to know."

She tugged uselessly at the hem of her Confederate gray skirt and swiveled her hips ever so slightly away. Her mouth twitched a single instance, eyes relaxed a tad then retreated back to their professional squint. A yawn stifled her sigh, fingers providing genteel cover for both. Remnants of the sigh adhered to her vocal response, softening the voice in a way not prescribed in training texts. "But I do, Jack. It's what we're here for."

The "we're" dispelled whatever reverie had seemed to be forming. His irritation was sudden and visceral. He wanted to say It may be what you are here for, lady, but I have no choice in the matter. No fucking choice, and, oh, by the way, leave those legs of yours here when you go. I'll tell them whatever they want to know.

Instead he said, "I'm scared of dying."

