



# THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

## Callback Packet #4

## SLAVE MASTER AND SLAVE MISTRESS

MASTER: It is 1850 in America...A time of struggle for some...

MISTRESS: But a time of great wealth for others.

MASTER: In the South, we are the paradigms of economic progress. The titans of farming and agricultural development, never before surpassed in the history of humanity.

MISTRESS: And together, with the industrialized North, we are the bearers of the most powerful, potent gift to civilization: The United States of America!

MASTER: And I, a slave owner...Will live, will survive, will thrive, as a slave master...Forever!

MISTRESS: We have been good to this girl! We have rescued her from the poverty of her native land and brought her to America: land of the free and home of the brave!

MASTER: I have given her life... A life of worth, a life of progress; a life of value; a life of merit; a life that toils the soil of the earth that breathes splendor throughout this great land...The land of the free...And the home of the brave. With liberty and justice...(MASTER PLACES THE SLAVE'S HAND OVER THE SLAVES HEART)

# SPARKY

MARIA: Hi, Sparky.

SPARKY: Oh my gosh! How are you, Maria?

MARIA: I'm great!

SPARKY: How was the river?

MARIA: The best.

SPARKY: You.... didn't get too much sun it looks like.

MARIA: My tan faded!

SPARKY: (*INNUENDO*) Right....

MARIA: (*PLAYFUL*) Right!...Hey, can I get a bag of chips.

(*SPARKY PLACES A BAG OF CHIPS ON THE COUNTER*)

SPARKY: Wait...

MARIA: What?

SPARKY: You can't have these...

MARIA: Why not?

SPARKY: You want to know a secret?

MARIA: Sure?

SPARKY: Well, it's not a big secret; it's just a little one. But this bag of chips: it's been on the rack for more than three years. Other customers, or people I don't know, I don't really care about. But you, you get the benefit of the inside scoop.

MARIA: Stale, huh?

SPARKY: Oh, yeah. I've got some fresh ones out back; I'll get them for you.

MARIA: Thank you.

## CONSCIENCE, ANTI-CONSCIENCE, MARIA, MR. SOCIETY, MRS. SOCIETY

CON: Like the slave owners; like the members of hate groups who practice racism today; like the Nazis over seventy years ago: for some, human life is cheap. There is no value to human life for them. And so, even with the promise of a young woman like Maria, a single act of malice, an unthinking, uncaring, almost casual act of senselessness by a stranger, and the world is further diminished of it's wealth and beauty. She was, simply, in the wrong place at the wrong time.

ANTI: Yes, and how do we mourn this loss? How does most of society, uh, deflate?

*(MR. AND MRS. SOCIETY ARE ON STAGE AT THE DINNER TABLE)*

MR. S: Gee, dear, this is one good dinner! Yum-yum!

MRS. S: Well, thank you, honey.

MR. S: You're welcome sweetheart.

MRS. S: I'm glad that you welcome my thank you to your compliment about my dinner, teddy-bear.

MR. S: Anytime, my cutie-pie. *(READING SOMETHING IN NEWSPAPER)* Oh, sweetie!

MRS. S: What is it, nookynooks?

MR. S: I'm reading in the paper here about something awful that happened the other night. Simply terrible. Pass the potatoes please.

MRS. S: What is it, hunky?

MR. S: Horrible, my love. A young girl was shot and killed during a liquor store robbery right here in town. Hand me that bowl of gravy, my pottie-poodle.

MRS. S: That is very sad, my dimpled prince.

MR. S: Such a waste of human resources. And so young. Are we having apple pie for dessert?

MRS. S: Yes we are, lovey-dovey. Do you want to go to the movies tonight?

MR. S: Sure honey, let's go.

ANTI: Do you know how many teens there are in the United States? Millions. So, what's a few less teens? Who's going to miss them?

MARIA: I'm a person. I am not a number. I'm a human being. I am not a statistic.

CON: Every human being on the face of the earth: if you cut them, will they not bleed? If you break their heart, will they not cry? If you take their loved one from them, will they not drown in a sea of sorrow? The key: knowing that.

ANTI: Well, the fact is...in the total scheme of things, you're really very insignificant. When you think about all of the people who have lived here since the beginning of time, what difference can you make anyway? When you think about all of the people who live here now, what difference will you make anyway?

CON: If all human beings were conscious that other human beings were just like they are, with plans and hopes and dreams, with mothers and fathers and grandparents, with fears and passions and pains, with joys and sorrows and regrets, with notions and beliefs and souls... If all human beings only understood that just as they are the center of the universe, with all revolving around them, so are others the center of *their* universe with all revolving around *them*... the callousness, the inhumanity, the thoughtlessness, and even the cruelty, would vanish.

## BASHER AND RON

BASHER: Hey!

BASHER: Nice hair.

RON: Thanks.

BASHER: You comb it yourself?

BASHER: It's pretty, like a princess.

BASHER: Where's your tiara?

RON: Can I help you guys with something?

BASHER: What are you doing here, queer??

RON: Standing.

BASHER: We can see that.

RON: Like you, I'm admiring the sunset.

BASHER: The what?

RON: The view.

BASHER: Well, I don't like what I see.

BASHER: This area isn't for homos.

BASHER: So take your view, and move on, if you know what's best.

BASHER: Hey....let's get out of here. Just, leave him alone

BASHER: Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't realize he was your girlfriend.

BASHER: So what's it going to be, gay-boy?

*(THE BASHERS FREEZE, RON SPEAKS TO THE AUDIENCE)*

RON: Ya know, these guys... They don't know me. They have no idea what I am. And even if I...Look, number one: I have the right to walk on this beach, any time, day or night, no matter what so-called part of town I happen to be in. Number two: These morons wouldn't know a gay person if they had it written on their shirt. And number three: It doesn't even matter if I'm gay or

not. I'm not bothering this coward. It kind of makes me sick to think that people feel the need to run around town looking for people to smash with a baseball bat. All of the problems in the world right now, and *this* is what angers them...A bit of a tragedy don't you think?

BASHER: Are you deaf too?

BASHER: We said this area isn't for you.

BASHER: You are gay aren't you...

RON: That's none of your business.

BASHER: (*PUSHING RON*) Well we're making it our business.

BASHER: We've been looking all night.

BASHER: And I think you're the winner... Congratulations!

BASHER: You're going to be real sorry that you showed your face on this beach.

RON: You have no idea what I am.

BASHER: Here's what I think you are!

## ROBBER

ROBBER: Excuse me! Let's get this over with real fast, and nobody gets hurt.

MARIA: Can I help you?

ROBBER: Work fast and there won't be a problem

MARIA: I'm sorry, I don't...

ROBBER: Don't move!

MARIA: Oh, my Gosh!

ROBBER: Shut up!

MARIA: What do you want?

ROBBER: I said, shut up! Fall to the floor ...*(MARIA STANDS MOTIONLESS, SCARED)* I said fall to the floor. All the way.

*(MARIA LIES ON THE FLOOR, OBVIOUSLY VERY SCARED)*

ROBBER: You got any money in your purse?

MARIA: Yes.

ROBBER: What?

MARIA: Yes. Take it.

ROBBER: Take it?

MARIA: Yes...

ROBBER: What will you give me to let you live? I said: what will you give me to let you live?

MARIA: Any...anything.

ROBBER: What!!

MARIA: Anything.