

Two

The day of my first-ever shoot – it's pissing with rain and I'm exhausted. I've been up half the night, drinking wine, smoking fags and whispering the change of location to porn stars down my mobile phone. What am I doing this for? This is not quite the golden start that I was after. Ana became increasingly annoyed with my furtive behaviour. I told her it was some music video shoot that someone was asking me to help out on and that things were going a little pear-shaped. She asked me three times if I was getting paid. After I reassured her yet again that I was, she sighed and sloped off to bed.

However, when she caught me stuffing sex toys into my bag this morning it was a different story. I can honestly say I have never seen a face like it. Her eyes were totally round and her mouth hung open. She was paralysed by shock and fear and was so appalled by my scrabbling around in the corner of the room with a collection of giant rubber cocks that she was silenced for a very helpful three seconds.

'It's a heavy metal shoot,' I lied. 'God knows what they're want with this shit.'

For some reason, she believed me. I think perhaps she

wanted to. The alternative explanations were too devastating to contemplate.

So for the moment I am in the clear, which is more than I can say for the traffic going over Albert Bridge. It's solid. I can't believe that this cab is taking so long. I'm supposed to be there at 9.30 a.m. and we are not moving. The wind-screen wiper is rubbing against the glass. The loud squeaking is beginning to get on my nerves.

'Is there a short cut?' I ask, leaning over the ginger velour of the front seat.

'What?' mutters the driver.

'Can't you get me there any quicker?'

'I'm doing my best,' he replies, gesticulating towards the road in front of him.

I sigh and lean back into my seat. He does the same.

I'm really quite tense now. I'm supposed to be there first, if only to placate Ian. The man is a true saviour. I can't believe that both of my so-called mates pulled out at the last minute. Trying to get people to agree to let me film in their houses is the biggest and most unexpected headache of my porn career so far.

Finally the cab pulls up outside Ian's block of 1960's council flats. Low and long, made of red brick, with small windows, open walkways and poorly lit corners, they are a triumph of municipality over humanity. Not the sort of location I was after.

I pay the cabbie and take the dank, concrete stairs to the second floor. As I walk slowly along the corridor, buffeted by the wind and driving rain, I try to read the directions and remember the precise location of Ian's flat. I reach a junction. Should I turn left or right? Then suddenly I spot Ian. Dressed head to foot in black denim, he is standing outside his own flat, wringing his hands.

'Jesus Christ!' he announces, as I approach. 'There you fucking are!'

'Hi, everything all right?' I ask, trying to sound relaxed.

'They're here,' he whispers,

'Who are?'

'They're ALL here,' he says.

'Good,' I say.

'Yeah, well,' says Ian, his white sweaty face coming closer.

'I wasn't really expecting all this.'

'All what?'

'All this,' he says, slowly opening his front door.

Inside, Ian's small hall is chock-a-block with coats, suitcases and black boxes. Piled up high on top of each other, they lean precariously against the pale green, peeling walls. There is only the narrowest of routes to pick your way through to the sitting room. Standing at the entrance, I can see why Ian is so tense. Bathed in the bright, white, film lights are: a naked bloke pacing the room, tugging at his own penis; a naked girl horizontal on the sofa, her legs hooked behind her ears; a man with just his pants on reading *OK!* magazine; a bloke in black laying out cable; and sitting on the sofa a middle-aged man in a ginger leather jacket with lank Richard Madeley hair.

'Ah!' says the man in the ginger jacket, standing up. 'I'm Mike Hunt, and this', he indicates across the room, 'is my mate Pete.'

'Mike Hunt.' I shake his moisturised palm. He smells strongly of pine aftershave. 'Pete,' I nod. Pete nods back. I turn back to Mike. 'Lovely to meet you. You know, after talking so much on the phone.'

'Likewise,' he sniffs. 'Have you come far?'

'North London,' I hear myself saying, like I'm at some polite dinner party. 'You?'

'Leeds,' he says.

'Of course you have,' I reply. 'I'm glad you could make it.'

'Well, you booked me,' says Mike, raising his eyebrows, revealing a whole load of white crow's feet where he's missed with his fake tan.

'Yes, right, of course, but good to see you all the same,' I say, reaching for a dildo and a clipboard out of my bag. I really wish the bloke in the corner would stop wanking. It's making it very hard to concentrate. 'So are you familiar with the script?' I riffle through my papers.

'Script?' snorts Mike. 'You haven't gone and written a bloody script?'

'Oh, no, not really.' I feel my heartbeat rising.

'What do you mean "not really"?' asks Mike, pulling his tight jeans out of his crotch.

'It's a sort of scene by scene breakdown, you know, what scenes we are doing today, etc. There's a bit of dialogue. But not much.'

'Well, you won't be wanting dialogue, mate. Take it from me as a bloke who has been in the business for nearly twenty years, you don't need the stuff. It only gets in the way. Punters want fucking not chatting.'

'Right.'

'Anyway,' he adds. 'I don't know what you mean by scenes. We only shoot a scene a day in the porn business.'

'That's old school,' I say. 'I'm doing at least four scenes a day.'

'Yeah, right,' laughs Mike like he knows so much better. 'Your star's not even turned up yet.'

I look up and realise that he is right. We're a porn star short. There are supposed to be four of them for the orgy scene and there only seem to be three, in various stages of masturbatory undress. And although it is difficult to tell

exactly who's who from the quality of the headshots I received, the girl on the sofa, her head now seemingly buried between the thighs of one of the boys, resembles Helga, and not my leading lady, Shell.

'Hi guys,' I say, walking over to the first bloke, his thighs spread and Helga's head bouncing up and down between them. 'I'm the director/producer.'

'Hi, man, I'm Freddie,' says the man, his accent is French and his handshake as hard as his cock.

'Freddie,' I repeat.

'Helga,' says Helga, raising her head and drawing breath. She smiles and wipes her mouth on the back of her hand, extending it for me to shake. 'I do G-G, B-G, anal but not DP,' she lists in a thick Eastern European accent.

'Oh, OK.' I slowly shake her clammy hand. 'But your agent said—'

'Don't listen to that fucker bastard!' she laughs. 'He always says such things.'

'Ah,' I say.

'Big Stiff,' interjects the guy in the white jockey pants.

'Hello,' I say, noticing he looks anything but. 'Good morning.'

'All right?' he says. 'Any idea when we might be starting?'

'Um, just as soon as I have tracked down the other girl,' I say.

'Right,' he says. 'I do need to know, you see, as it depends when I start, you know,' he looks down at his crotch, 'pumping.'

'Of course,' I reply. 'Let me just make a couple of calls.'

I walk out of the sitting room, pick my way through the hall, out the front door and straight into the rain-soaked corridor outside. Jesus Christ! I throw myself flat against the wall. Jesus Christ! Where the fuck is Seb? What the hell is

going on? This is not what I was expecting. My heart is really racing. I'm short of breath. I can feel dribbles of sweat snaking down my sides. I think I'm starting to panic. I never expected them all to be so bloody naked and so bloody up for it. What is that girl doing giving Freddie a blowjob? Is she doing it for fun? For free? I haven't asked her to do anything yet and she's already got her clothes off. And so's he! I never imagined the porn world would be like this. For some reason, like other performers I always thought that they would, well, fuck to order, turn it on when they have to, and then stop as soon as the director yells cut. It never occurred to me they might go off menu, or freelance, between takes. I've got to calm down. I'm the bloke who is supposed to be in control. The boss. I just wish it looked a bit more like I'd done this before. Confidence must be the key. I take a deep breath. Confidence.

I call up Total Babes to find out where the hell Shell is. Instead of the helpful bloke promising me the best girls this side of the Atlantic, I get someone who can hardly be bothered to form a sentence.

'She's on her way,' he mutters. 'Traffic.'

'Do you know how long she will be?'

'How long's a piece of string, mate? Ten minutes.'

'Could you ask her to call me?'

'Call her yourself,' he says. He hands over the number and hangs up.

I get through to Shell on the fourth attempt. She sounds half asleep and hungover when she answers. She promises to be here as soon as she can. Apparently, she is just having a little difficulty with her transport. I ask exactly how long she might be. She gets a bit cagey and, sounding increasingly like her agent, says something along the lines of ten minutes. I lean against the damp wall. Are those ten civilian

minutes? Or ten porn minutes? I take out my clipboard again. I light a cigarette and try to work out how to shoot an orgy with only three people. Where's Seb when I need him?

By the time I come back into the sitting room, resolved to start with a straight boy-girl scene that takes in anal, there seems to be some sort of argument going on.

'I don't care what he says, I won't fuck him. I won't. Not ever.' Helga is not only sounding heated but appears to have found some standards since I left the room. 'I don't care,' she continues, pacing the room naked, her slim body totally devoid of hair. 'There are rules and regulations and I know my rights.'

'Calm down, baby,' says Mike Hunt, his soft hand resting on her buttocks.

'Don't you bloody "baby" me!' she huffs, pushing his hand off. 'I won't do it.'

'What's going on?' I ask.

'Oh, hello,' says Mike turning round. 'Back again?'

'Yes,' I nod.

'Good,' smiles Mike, running his hands through his long hair. 'Well, the thing is, Big Stiff here has forgotten his Aids certificate and Helga is refusing to go on with the shoot.'

'Oh,' I say.

'Yeah, "oh",' Mike mimics helpfully.

'I am up to date,' says Big Stiff from his chair. 'Promise. I've just forgotten it. I've got my two forms of ID if that's any help?'

'Yeah, well, I don't fucking care. No fucking certificate, no fucking fucking,' says Helga, her hands in the air. 'It is as simple as fucking that.'

The agency had warned me about all the paperwork to do with porn. Before any shoot can go ahead, they explained, you need photocopies of two forms of ID to make sure that

the star is not under age, plus a copy of an HIV and STD certificate confirming that they are disease-free, and the certificates have to be less than a month old. The actors are then all required to sign a release form that allows me to use the footage before they leave.

Mike hands me all the papers and I look around the room. Freddie is pacing up and down playing with himself. Pete is organising lighting and Ian is sitting on his own sofa, his white face in his hands. In the space of twenty minutes the foursome orgy scene has deteriorated into a boy-on-boy gay sex scene and only the slim possibility of Helga joining in with one but certainly not the other guy.

'Um,' I say. Everyone stops what they are doing and stares at me. 'Surely there is a way around this?'

'Like fucking what?' asks Helga.

'Well . . .' I am thinking so damn fast here. 'Well . . .'

'Doesn't your clinic have a copy of your certificate?' Mike asks Big Stiff.

'Er,' he says.

'They must have,' says Mike. 'By law.'

'Great,' I say. 'Then let's get it faxed over.'

'Right,' nods Big Stiff. 'Good idea.'

'Good,' I smile. 'Ian, do you by any chance have a machine?'

'Yup,' says Ian, indicating towards his computer in the corner, 'if it's got some paper.'

'Great.' I pick up my clipboard and double-clicking my pen. 'So which clinic is it?'

'Oh, right,' says Big Stiff, like he has just been asked the most difficult question in the world.

'Where d'you go and get your tests done?' asks Mike.

'Hang on,' he says.

'Where do you live?' asks Mike.

'Hertfordshire,' he says.

'Hertfordshire.' I make a note. 'D'you get tested in the same area as you live?' He nods. 'Are you tested under your porn name or your real name?'

'Real name.'

'Which is?'

'I'd rather not say out loud.'

'You could whisper it to me?'

'OK,' he says, getting out of his chair. 'Lesley . . .' he mumbles very quietly in my ear.

'Thank you,' I say. 'I'll make a couple of calls and I'll be back in a second. Ian,' I ask, 'what's the fax number here?'

Armed with the number, Big Stiff's real name and my mobile, I go back outside to the rain-soaked passage to see if I can save the shoot from total collapse. His Hertfordshire clinic are helpful and understanding and amazingly agree to send over Lesley's Aids certificate within the hour. So now the only thing I have to sort out is the whereabouts of Shell.

I call and she picks up first time.

'All right?' she says.

'Hello,' I reply. 'Shell, I was just wondering where you are and exactly how much longer you will be?'

'Oh, right,' she says. 'Well, the thing is . . .'

'Yes?'

'I'm on my way . . .'

'Good.'

'But I'm coming from Birmingham.'

'Birmingham?'

'Yeah, Birmingham.'

'Right,' I say. 'I thought you were coming from London.'

'I was,' she says. 'But I went on a night out in town last night and I ended up here. I'm not really sure how I got

here, or where exactly I was when I woke up. Anyway, I won't be long. It's not far.' She sounds optimistic.

'Great,' I say.

'Yeah,' she adds. 'I should be with you by dinnertime. I'm on the train.'

'Good,' I say.

'Won't be long, see ya,' she says and hangs up.

Porn stars, it seems, are not always the most professional of employees. Despite supposedly being in charge of this charade, there is no way I can get another star at such short notice, so I shall have to wait for Shell to wend her hungover way here from New Street Station. I lean against the wall, searching in my pocket for some fags. I've now got to rewrite the beginning of the film. I have to rejig the whole morning's shoot. Needless to say, the orgy is out of the window. We're going to have to do a threesome with two men, something that was never on the agenda, and I have two blokes and a porn star who won't do double penetration. Could things get any worse?

'Hi there,' comes a familiar voice from down the corridor. I look up. It's Seb. 'Sorry I am a bit late. Toni didn't really want me to come. We had a row. I said I couldn't let you down. So here I am.'

'Thank God,' I say. 'Everyone's already in there. We're a star short. But I'm sorting it.'

'Cool,' he says. 'Mike Hunt come with his equipment?'

'Looks like it.'

'Great,' he smiles, rubbing his hands together. 'Let's go and make some porn.'

I walk back into the room and try to exude control, coupled with enthusiasm.

'Right,' I say, looking round at everyone. 'I have made a few changes to the initial running order. This is Seb, the

director.' They all smile and nod. 'He'll have a word in a minute but just to say Shell is on her way. In the meantime we'll work around her.'

'OK,' nods Mike from the sofa.

'All right then, Seb?' I turn and look at him. The man has gone as white as the A4 paper I am holding. 'Seb?'

'Yes?' he says, very quietly taking in the scene.

'Are you ready to talk Mike and the stars through what you want?' I ask.

'What?' he mumbles.

'Talk them through things? Like we'd planned?' He says nothing. 'Like in the script?'

'Um,' he says, just standing there.

'I won't do DP,' says Helga, stretching on the sofa.

'I know. You told us earlier.'

'Good,' she smiles. 'You listen.'

'Yes,' I smile back. 'Let me just run through the story so you know what you are doing.'

'You 'ave a story?' says Freddie, who pauses from masturbating for just one second to look and sound surprised.

'Yes,' I say.

'Oh,' he says and carries on wanking.

As I go through my student's interview and professor story, I can't help but think that this should be Seb's job. But he seems to have lost the power of speech for the moment and we have to get the show on the road.

'Oh, that sounds quite a lot more complicated than I'm used to,' says Mike. 'But I'm sure we'll get through it all.'

'Good,' I say, tapping my hands together. 'So I think we can do the professor/secretary scene, if that is OK? Helga? Freddie?'

'Sure,' says Freddie, looking down at his own genitals, checking the firmness of his cock.

'Fine,' says Helga, getting off the sofa.

'You're going to need some clothes,' I suggest.

'And some professor glasses?' Freddie suggests.

'Great idea.' I smile.

Helga walks over and brings her suitcase in from the hall. Small, black and on wheels, it looks like something an air hostess might trail through an airport. She opens it up and pulls out three packs of wet wipes, two white surgical-looking boxes and a whole load of red nylon underwear that you might buy a lap dancer for Christmas. She also has a pair of red, plastic, heavy heels that look like they fell off the back of a lorry in Albania.

'I have this skirt,' she says, holding up something short and turquoise and covered in chains. 'And this shirt,' she adds, waving a short pink T-shirt.

'Thank you, Helga,' I say, rattling around in my bag. Amazingly I had planned for this possibility. Quite frankly, red nylon panties and a pink T-shirt are not really the look I am after. 'Um, I was thinking more along the lines of this.' I hold out a pair of white cotton pants and a short black skirt with a white shirt – a little bit more upmarket for my upmarket porn film.

'What?' she says, looking down her pretty nose at the knickers. 'But those are not sexy.'

'They are,' mumbles Seb from the corner.

'Really?' she says, turning to smile at him. 'These are sexy?'

'Yeah,' he nods.

'You're sad,' she says, plucking the knickers out of my hand. 'I wear the panties, the skirt, but I keep my shoes.'

'OK,' I say quickly. Anything to get this shoot started.

'Right,' she says, bending over to put on the underwear, slipping into the skirt and shirt. 'What do you want me to do?'

Mike Hunt's got his camera out ready to roll. It's not quite what I expected. Small and grey and very much of the handy variety, it looks like the sort of thing you would use to shoot a day out in Margate, rather than a high-quality porn film.

'Is that your camera?' I ask

'Yup,' he says, holding it up to his eye.

'It looks very small.'

'It's served me well through the years,' he sniffs. 'Lets me get into all those nooks and crannies.' He lunges forward to prove his probing abilities.

'Righto,' I say. 'What's the quality like?'

'Oh, great,' he insists. 'Definitely porn standard.'

'Excellent,' I say, thinking anything but. 'Shall we start?'

Everyone in the room looks at Seb. Seb looks back at everyone else. There's a pause. My heart starts to race again. The fucker has frozen on me.

'Mike,' I say quickly. 'What are your ideas?'

'Well,' he says. 'She comes into the room. And then, you know, the usual sort of thing. She goes down on him. He goes down on her. They fuck. They do anal over the desk and then I get the cum shot up the arse.'

'That sounds excellent.'

'OK then,' he says.

'One thing? Could he go down on her first? You know, just to mix it up a bit,' I suggest.

'What?' says Mike. 'Don't be stupid.'

'Why not?'

'Because that's not how it happens.'

'Why not?'

'Cos in porn,' sighs Mike, 'the girl always goes down on the bloke first. Shows she's gagging for it.'

'Right.'

'They expect a girl to go down on the bloke – if you

change it, it won't work. Trust me,' he winks, 'I'm a porn director.'

'Actually Seb's the director,' I say.

'Course he is, mate,' he says, slapping me on the back. 'I'm only here to help.'

'Thank you,' I smile tightly. 'Shall we get going?'

'Absolutely,' says Mike. 'OK, team!' he shouts, with a small game-show whoop. 'Let's get fucking!'

'Yeah!' says Freddie, wearing clothes for the first time today.

'OK, Helga?' asks Mike.

'Fine,' she says, putting on her lipstick.

'So,' says Mike, picking up his camera, 'do you want me to shoot hard and soft at the same time?'

'Sorry?' I say.

'Hard and soft? At the same time?' repeats Mike.

What the hell is he talking about? I can feel my heart racing again. Hard and soft? Hardcore and soft porn, I get that much. At the same time? What does that mean?

'Um,' I hesitate.

'You know, so you can double-bubble at the same time?' A small frown flickers across Mike's tangerine-coloured face as he tries to read my blank expression. 'TV? Satellite? As well as yer video market?'

'Of course!' I exclaim. 'Hard-soft, absolutely! At the same time! Exactly! Exactly what I was thinking! Good idea.'

'Great,' says Mike, turning around like I am some weirdo. 'Oh!' he says, twisting quickly back. 'Who's doing your web-site stills?'

'Um,' I say.

'I am!' says Seb, moving suddenly.

'He is,' I agree, rather too quickly. 'As well as directing . . . a bit.'

I turn around to see Seb pull a Boot's disposable camera out of his jacket pocket. My heart sinks. 'Only a couple of skiing snaps in here,' he whispers in my ear. 'Should be able to get you a few.'

'Thanks,' I say patting him on the back as he walks past. I knew he would be useful in the end.

The shoot finally gets under way. The lights are turned up bright. The crew are quiet. Mike squats down. Freddie takes up position behind Ian's desk and Helga walks into the room, dressed in her skirt, shirt and cheap red shoes. She mutters something along the lines of, 'Good morning, professor, here is your morning coffee.' The opening line, naturally, leads to her going down on him. Freddie, dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, couldn't look less like a professor. Even Pete's glasses do nothing for his intellectual status. He takes them off as he goes down on Helga – a touch that he seems inordinately proud of. All seems to be going OK. Mike is filming away, occasionally pulling back for Seb to point the snappy snap. However, no sooner does Freddie move between Helga's thighs, than she starts to make the most extraordinary noises. She moans, squeals, shrieks and squirms like a whimpering, wounded wild animal.

'Um, hang on there a second,' I say, interrupting her apparent ecstasy.

'What?' she says lifting her head off the desk.

'Very good so far,' I say swiftly. Freddie sits bare-buttocked on the floor. 'It's just that, er, we don't need all those noises.'

'What noises?' asks Helga.

'You know, those sort of moaning noises.'

'Moaning noises?'

'You know, those noises you were just making.'

'How else do you know I'm enjoying myself?' she asks.

'The expression on your face?' I suggest.

'But we always make noises,' she says.

'Well, perhaps not so loud?'

'Oh,' she says.

'Quiet noises,' I smile.

'Whatever,' she replies, lying back down on the table and opening her legs.

Freddie gets back up on all fours and puts his head straight back between Helga's thighs. She starts to shout and scream like I'd never interrupted her. They move on to full sex. They bang away like a couple of rabid terriers and then go on to anal.

I'd always thought that I might be slightly turned on by the process of making porn, or at least have my fancy tickled in some way. But once over the initial embarrassment of watching people have full-blown sex in front of me, all I can think about is: Is Mike getting the shots? And I wish Helga would stop making that noise. She is yelping like a dog now, shouting: 'Fuck me! Fuck me harder!' It's just not the sort of thing I'm after in my movie. It's so goddamn cheesy. I know she is lying. You know she's lying. It's obvious she's not really feeling it. My only hope is that all her fake enthusiasm doesn't come across as plastic on film.

Another person clearly not enjoying all the histrionics is Ian. Standing against his sitting-room door, his face is contorting with every yell, wail and exclamation. His knuckles shine bright white as his hands grip the doorknob. The doorbell goes. His face looks horrified.

'Can't you please try and keep it down,' he says, as he opens the sitting-room door.

We all stand stock still, listening to him mumble away in the hall.

'Helga,' I whisper.

'What?'

'Can you try to keep it down a bit?'

She shrugs and looks away, which I take to be Eastern European for 'yes'. Ian comes back into the room.

'My neighbour,' he stutters. 'Asking if I was OK. She says it sounds like someone is being murdered in here. She says the noise is so loud she can't watch Phil and Fern on *This Morning*. I told her I was watching a movie and she's asked me if I could turn it down a bit. I said I'd try.'

'Helga?' I say.

'All right,' she sighs.

'Shall we go for another take?' I ask.

'Do you know when you'll be needing me?' asks Big Stiff, fully pumped, from the sofa.

'Um. Has your fax arrived yet?'

'Yeah,' he says, pointing to a curl of paper on the desk.

'Oh,' I say. 'Well, I suppose we could bring you in somehow. What do you think, Seb?' Seb shrugs. 'Mike?'

'Ideally we'd shoot some DP at this point. Two boys, one girl, it would be the most natural thing to do.'

'Yes, well,' I say. 'But other than that?'

'Well,' says Mike, appearing genuinely stumped. He scratches his head and adjusts his crotch. 'Um, other than double penetration?' He whistles through the back of his teeth, deep in thought.

'I'll do it,' Helga announces suddenly from astride the table.

'You will?' both Mike and I say at the same time.

'Yeah,' she shrugs. 'I feel turned on now.'

'You do?' we both say again.

'Yeah, why not?' she says.

'Are you sure?' I add. 'I don't want you to do anything you're not comfortable with.'

'No, it's fine,' she says. 'I want to. I like double penetration. Just so long as you guys don't bang around too much.'

'What?' says Freddie, looking surprised. 'Are you accusing moi of not knowing my job?'

'No,' says Helga. 'But you know what I mean.'

'I'll be professional,' smiles Big Stiff, walking towards her, finally living up to his name. 'Where do you want to go, man?' he asks Freddie. 'Front or back?' Freddie shrugs. 'I'll take the back, then,' says Big Stiff. 'I'm a back type of guy,' he smiles and then adds quickly, 'not that I'm gay at all.'

'Let's get on with it,' says Mike. 'Big Stiff, you get some clothes on and come into the room like you are some sort of client for the professor. They are fucking on the table and you come and join in. OK? Do you think that you can do that?'

'Yeah, sure,' he says. 'Give me a minute.'

Big Stiff gets dressed into some jeans and a blue jumper. It's not quite the sort of outfit normally associated with professors and their clients, but I am almost past caring. My morning orgy has disappeared before my very eyes. My star has yet to arrive. I'm in a shitty location. I have some irate granny next-door complaining. Never has the world of porn been less glamorous, or, indeed, so incredibly un-erotic. I am just very glad that Ana is not here to see this rather expensive disaster.

Big Stiff ambles into the room as comfortably as his erection under his tight trousers will let him. He hands over his own Aids certificate and says something plot-defining like: 'Professor, here are the papers you asked for.' Meanwhile the professor is taking his secretary Helga over his desk. Big Stiff removes his trousers and pulls his blue jumper off. 'Do you mind if I join you?' he asks. 'Non,

non,' says Freddie, sounding really quite French again. 'Be my guest.' Somehow Helga contorts herself into a position where she manages to take both men up each orifice while keeping her legs out of the way to allow Mike to get the 'in and out' close-ups. Both boys move slowly back and forth, Helga yelps like a puppy and the front doorbell goes again.

'You deal with that,' says Mike, leaning right in close between Helga's thighs. 'I've got to get this on film.'

Ian goes back out into the hall and returns almost immediately with a slim, curly-haired brunette who I presume to be Shell.

'Oh 'ello,' she says, taking in the lights, Mike, me, Pete, Seb and the double penetration taking place on the sitting-room table. 'Sorry I'm late,' she says. 'That's a shit of a train journey. Took me ages. Do you have any idea how far away Birmingham is? Shaggin' miles.'

'Glad you're here,' I say, glancing back and forth between her and the double penetration.

'Ri-ight,' she says, looking around the room. 'Where's the toilet? Let me just give myself a quick douche and an enema and I'll be right with you.'

'Oh, great?' says Helga from the table. 'Is it dinnertime yet?'

'Yeah,' agrees Big Stiff, still pumping away. 'I could murder a tuna sandwich.'

So while the rest of the stars sit around eating the Somerfield sandwiches that Pete goes out to buy, Shell spends half an hour in the loo 'flushing out her pipes'. I have to say it never occurred to me that porn stars travelled around with enema and douche kits, but I suppose it makes sense. If you are taking it up the backside, the last thing you need is anything unpleasant going on. Still, I'm slightly

taken aback by the matter of fact nature of it all. None of the others seems to bat an eyelid as she disappears into the bathroom. Although I can't actually look Ian in the eye any more. Poor bastard. I think I better double his beer order. He can't have been expecting all this. I've spent my life watching porn and even I didn't realise it was going to be so visceral. I can't blame him for standing around outside his bathroom looking increasingly twitchy. Fortunately Mike gives him a distraction.

'Oi, Ian,' he says.

'Yes?' he replies.

'What's the letter in the alphabet that comes after "s"?'

'T,' says Ian.

'Oh, don't mind if I do,' says Mike. 'Milk and four sugars.'

With Ian making tea for the entire room, Shell emerges from the bathroom wearing red panties, a matching bra and plastered in make-up. She looks nothing like the head-shot photo she uses on the internet. She's older and a good deal more rosy, and this girl is supposed to be my star. I wish I'd employed hair and make-up on the shoot. My years in the music business had made me wary of employing them. In my experience hair and make-up are the ones who usually make trouble on the set, either through incompetence or bitching, so I had decided to try and do without. But looking at the heavy line-painting around Shell's pale lips, I am beginning to see the error of my ways.

A Fanta and some solids seem to have perked Seb up a bit: he takes me aside and says that he's ready to direct. I approach Mike, who is sitting on the sofa picking lettuce out of his BLT. I suggest that he might like a break from directing so he can concentrate on filming and he appears to take it remarkably well.

I decide to kick off the afternoon session with the G-G lesbian scene that is to start the film. I am planning to do the links outside later on, where the girls meet, but for the moment I am keen to get the half-hour girl session in the can. And I am relying on Seb to make it happen.

'Right, let's go,' says Seb, clapping his hands together and trying to sound motivational. 'So, um, Shell?'

'Yeah,' she says, her head down; she is fiddling with the front of her pants.

'I would like you to, um, come into the room, take your clothes off, if that is OK with you,' says Seb.

'You what?' She looks up. 'I'm a porn star it's my job to take my clothes off.'

'Quite,' says Seb. 'So you do that. And then, Helga?'

'Yes,' she says.

'You embrace Shell and then you have sex,' mumbles Seb.

'What do you want us to do?' she asks, standing stark naked in the middle of the room.

'The usual sort of thing,' says Seb.

Right! That's it, I think. I have a director who is too posh for porn and who is practically tripping over the word naked. There is only room for one amateur on this shoot and that's me.

'Seb, mate,' I say. 'Maybe you should stick to stills and we should let Mike get on with the shoot?'

'Of course, of course, whatever you want.'

I can see the relief all over his face.

Mike swings into action.

'OK,' he sniffs. 'Shell, you come in. See Helga. You say something like: "What is a young girl like you doing in London?" You take your clothes off and take hers off immediately afterwards. You snog. Lick each other's tits. You go down on Helga. Then she goes down on you. You

turn her over and put the red dildo up her arse and then we'll cut.'

'OK then,' says Shell.

'Um,' I say. 'In the script—'

'You're not still harping on about the script, mate?' asks Mike.

'Well, I would like some sort of story.'

'What then?' sighs Mike.

'Could Shell say: "Oh, I am sorry to bother you. Is the professor in?" And Helga says: "Oh, no. He is in a meeting. You might just have to wait".'

'And then they fuck?' suggests Mike.

'Absolutely.'

The afternoon shoot starts in a similar way to the morning. Helga shouts her head off. The next-door neighbour rings the doorbell to complain about the noise. She says that we'd better keep quiet for *Countdown* otherwise she'll be calling the police. I poke my head out of the door after she goes to see if there's any possibility of filming a few link shots outside. Depressive sixties socialist architecture is not the look I want for the film but perhaps there's a park nearby. I look up the corridor and with a jolt realise that our bright lights and screams have attracted a small crowd.

'What are you doing in there?' asks a fat woman with a leathery face, a fag in her mouth and a tight perm.

'Oh, we're making a film,' I smile, taking in the sea of some fifteen faces.

'Porn?' she asks.

'No,' I say.

'Are you Ben Dover?' she asks.

'No,' I reply.

'Told you,' elbows her friend.

'Keep it down,' adds the crone. 'We've got kiddies coming home from school in an hour.'

I go back into the flat to find Helga over the desk with a red dildo up her bum and Shell's face between her legs.

'And cut,' says Mike. 'Good work, you two. Do you want to wipe yourselves down?'

'Cheers,' says Shell as she goes into her suitcase and cracks open a packet of baby wipes. She swabs down her breasts and armpits and starts to walk towards me, wiping her fanny as she does so. 'How much more have we got to do today?' she asks. 'Because I'm shagged out.'

'But you've only just got here,' I say.

'I'm exhausted. Honestly. I can hardly move.'

'Well, you've got one scene with Freddie and then one more after that.'

'Freddie?' she says. 'I don't like French blokes. Can't I work with Big Stiff?'

'I'm sorry. I'd much prefer you to shoot with Freddie,' I say, thinking I am paying this woman five hundred quid and all she has done is ten minutes of cunnilingus and shoved a dildo up Helga's arse.

'This is the last time I am doing a job this shit,' she sighs and throws her wet wipe across the room. It misses the bin. 'Fucking hell,' she yawns. 'Can someone pick that up?'

The next ten minutes are a nightmare. Shell huffs and puffs and strops around the place, creating an uncomfortable atmosphere. Freddie wanks so vigorously in the corner to get hard, he practically gives himself blisters. The poor bloke's been pumping all day. He's come twice and been blown once, and the tension in the room is getting to him. Finally he is able to shoot. Pete turns the lights on. Mike turns over. Freddie walks into the room pretending to be the professor, takes Shell's clothes off and bends her over

the sofa. He puts his cock in for the anal shot, Shell shouts, 'OUCH', at the top of her voice and we wrap the film. There is no point in carrying on. My star is not behaving. My boys are exhausted and my director still can't ask porn stars to take their clothes off. I stand at the door thanking them all, shaking their hands and peeling twenty-pound notes off a roll. At the end of the day I am around five grand down. I just hope against hope that I have something to show for it.

The next couple of days go a little bit better. In a bit of good fortune a mate of a mate agrees to lend me a sunny flat overlooking the King's Road. We shoot with the windows open. We are joined by the two other girls I booked from the agency, Olga and Camilla. Olga is a surly Slav with a pretty nose and thick lips. Over from Poland on a student visa, she is lap dancing and shooting porn to supplement her studies. Camilla on the other hand is altogether different. She has a fantastic body, pneumatic tits and an accent that can cut glass. She is a Home Counties girl with a private education and is saving up for her own stables. She will only do G-G and spanking and has the bruises on her backside to prove it.

'Bloody hell,' she says, bending over in her thong, pushing her buttocks in my face. 'Can you believe this?' Her perfectly shaped cheeks are pink, black and blue. 'I can hardly sit down. Some bitch whacked me with a hairbrush!'

None of this seems to hold her back – her moans stop the passers-by in the street. They crane their necks to see what is happening in the first-floor window, much to the amusement of Mike and Pete. By the end of three days I am sure that I have something that I can edit. We shoot Helga and Shell meeting in Battersea Park; Camilla puts on a room service uniform as she gives the girls breakfast in bed and

then, after she leaves, Professor Freddie comes in to finish the whole thing off.

Come the end of the week I may be ten grand poorer but at least I have something in the can. Something that I can show investors, something that will help me raise money. Something that means I actually work in the porn industry. I am not just a bloke with plans in the pub. Seb and I go out for a small drink to celebrate. He apologises for being pathetic. He says that the situation got the better of him. I forgive him. He promises to be tougher. And we toast the future of Spring Meadow and Touch Wood Films. It is good to have a real friend on board.

One week later and we are each in an orange chair, sitting in the edit suite with Dave. Since Mike left with his camera neither of us has been able to see the rushes. I am excited, Seb is very excited and Dave can hardly contain himself.

'I never thought you two blokes would do it,' he says, putting the first tape in the machine. 'Far too nice and posh, I thought.' He turns on the tape. 'I am looking forward to this,' he announces as he scrolls forward. 'No need for any of the chat. Let's cut straight to the action.'

Ian's flat comes up on the screen. It doesn't look quite so small on film. I breathe a sigh of relief. The lighting's not bad. And the sound is OK. The first scene is Freddie and Helga over the desk.

'Oh dear,' says Dave. He leans in all concerned. 'Oh dear,' he says again. 'That's not quite what we're after now, is it?'

I stare at the screen. A wave of depression engulfs me. I can't believe what Mike has done. There are legs in the way. His feet in the shot. His reflection in the mirror. And no close-ups of the action at all.

'You need to see it going in and out,' says Dave, looking at

me. 'Didn't someone tell you that?' He turns back to the screen. 'Oh no!' He points to the footage of Freddie coming just a bit off-screen. 'Look at that. That's terrible. He's only gone and missed the money shot!'