

## The Rising Cost of Medical School

“She just puts her hand on my shoulder and says, ‘Not everyone is cut out for medical school. You’re a pretty girl, Jessica. Maybe life has something else in store for you.’” I sighed despondently, leaning my head back against the trunk of the big maple tree at Pulaski Park where we always hung out.

Seth winced. “Wow, Miss Clemensen said that? Harsh. Though spot-on about the pretty girl bit.”

I ignored my friend’s momentary leer. “She practically told me to give up my dreams and pursue my M.R.S degree! What am I supposed to do? We’re already into junior year and I’m carrying a 2.4 GPA. You know how my mom and dad are – they already have a space reserved on their mantle for my M.D., and now my guidance counselor is saying I’m destined to be a housewife! My whole life I’ve wanted to be a surgeon... what am I going to do?”

My mom was a heart surgeon at the city hospital. My dad was a pediatric surgeon. My older brother was in school to become – guess what – a surgeon. Maybe I could be a beautician – same thing basically, right?

“Well, if you pull straight A’s between now and graduation, get yourself a spot in some honor’s courses... You could be sitting at a 3.45. That’d definitely get you into plenty of schools.”

I arched an eyebrow. “Did you just do that in your head?”

Seth laughed, plucking a nearby dandelion and popping the flower off with his thumb. “Even split between honors and regular means 4.0 plus 5.0, average 4.5, and since we’re effectively at the halfway point of school, we can average that with the existing 2.4, and...”

“Ugh, see? You just... think like that, Mr. Future Computer Genius. My brain doesn’t work that way.”

Seth stroked his baby smooth chin pensively. “Well... what if I told you it could?”

“You’ve tried tutoring me, Seth. It didn’t help.” I didn’t add that he’d also spent half of those sessions checking me out and generally being kind of a pig. I loved Seth dearly – we’d been friends since elementary school – but puberty had really turned him into a horndog. Not that I was even close to one of the hottest girls in school, but I was pretty enough, I knew, especially for a girl with a few extra pounds and not many of them in her chest.

Nonetheless, our long friendship seemed to make Seth think my pussy was within reach. He was a sweetheart for up to ten hours after beating off, but it didn’t mean I was eager to resume having him in my bedroom for one-on-ones any time soon.

“I don’t mean tutoring. It’s the twenty-first century, Jessica. There are all kinds of programs out there to help reinforce positive behaviors.”

“What, you mean to like, trick myself into studying harder?”

“No, it just... look. You trust me, right?”

“Um, yeah, I guess.”

“That’s the spirit. I’ll do some research and find a good fix for you, and I promise you, I’ll get you into medical school, if I have to kick open the doors for you myself.”

That made me smile. I didn’t have much faith in his plan, but it was nice to have a cheerleader. “Thanks, Seth. I owe you one.”

“Oh, you haven’t heard my condition,” he said, eyes sparkling.

“Hold on to your checkbooks,” I replied with a laugh. “Go on.”

Honestly, I expected him to kiss me. Leaning against our tree, wind blowing through his hair, sweet as he was being just now... I might have even let him. Only instead...

“The day you get into medical school, you belong to me.”

“Belong to you?” I repeated incredulously. He just nodded, looking a little too serious for comfort. “Tell you what. If I ever get into medical school, and if your help is the reason I’m there – sure. I’ll ‘belong to you’ or whatever.” I rolled my eyes. *Way to blow your chance, Seth.*

I’d forgotten all about his offer by the time Seth stopped by unannounced a week later. He’d apparently taken this whole thing really seriously, and rambled on and on about all the awesome features of the program – unobtrusive, hands-off, guaranteed-or-your-money-back results. HeadMaster, it was called. “You know, like the principal at a fancy school.”

I just smiled and nodded at his chattering; I might not be a great student, but I wasn’t dumb enough not to be able to see through basic advertising techniques.

He was so excited I didn’t have it in me to tell him it was probably a waste of time. I sat back on my bed playing with my phone as he logged into my computer and downloaded HeadMaster. For over an hour he sat there fine-tuning its settings. He asked me for input on some of the stuff he didn’t know. I humored him.

He finally called me over to review it while he installed the HeadMaster app on my smartphone. “Basically,” he explained, “you set your goals and preferences here, and it uses that information to create streaming audio customized to help you achieve them.”

“Uh, what?”

“Think of it like a motivational podcast made just for you. Just pop in your headphones and it’ll do the rest.”

“Oh. Well... thanks, I guess.” I paused, then had to clear my throat. “Seth...? Hey. HEY Seth. My eyes are up here.”

He smiled. “I know,” he said, then finally looked back up. Even more forward than usual. It gave me a little chill.

It was another two weeks before I actually remembered to try out the Headmaster. He brought it up at one of our late-night rendezvous under our tree and I lied and said I'd used it, then dodged his follow-up questions. Honestly, I probably never would have used it at all except that the app kept reminding me over and over again, and I couldn't get it to uninstall. It was like a virus, practically. Finally, hoping it would make the damn thing shut up, I inserted an earbud and opened the app. All there really was to do was hit play.

Lo and behold, it either was an incredible guesser or had somehow linked with my music media. All it did was play my favorite songs! It was kind of amazing, really. Solid sound quality, good variety, easy to adjust settings for my mood... I was hooked overnight.

"So you finally started using it, huh?" Seth asked at my locker the next day.

"What do you mean? I've been using it all week."

He snorted. "Jessica, it tells me your usage statistics."

I frowned. "That's kinda creepy."

"Hey, gotta know if my investment's paying off, or how else are we gonna make sure you're mine come med school?" He grinned.

"I gotta run," I said after a moment. "And hey – delete your access. Not cool."

I started studying. I wasn't crediting HeadMaster, but I just figured if I was going to stoop to trying to subliminally nudge myself into good habits, I may as well take the basic step of going over my notes and re-reading a chapter or two.

Seth deleted himself from admin on my account. (At least, he said he did, and nothing said otherwise.) I even went through it meticulously to make sure the settings didn't have anything creepy in them. Call me paranoid, but now that I was invested I just wanted to make sure he hadn't done anything... weird. I didn't think he would – he was still my friend – but better safe than sorry. It all seemed to be on the up and up though, except for one line in my goals that said: "belong to Seth when I get into med school."

I tried to delete it, but it said initial goals were locked. I texted Seth to ask what gives, but he just replied, *You can't wiggle out of our agreement that easy, sexy. ;)*

*Gross, Seth.* Whatever. I turned on my HeadMaster playlist and set the phone down.

That nine weeks, I studied like a woman possessed. The more I did it, the more I felt like I had to keep going. *This was it*, I kept telling myself. *If I work as hard as I can and don't get results, I'll know I'm academically doomed and can just give up. Go to beauty school, crush my parents' dreams.*

Only I wasn't failing. I didn't ace everything, but... I was acing a lot. By the end of the first nine weeks, I'd pulled my grades up from the dismal 72% average I'd started the quarter with to a solid 90%. It was the highest grades I'd pulled since fourth grade.

"End of the semester next week. Think we'll actually get to see you again over break?" my friend Jeff prodded that December as a group of us huddled for warmth under our tree. (Jenna had started smoking pot and was too paranoid to do it indoors.)

"I know, I've just really been trying to bring my grades up. Once finals are over, I promise, I'll be yours. Hand to god."

"Don't get too far ahead of yourself," Seth said. When I just gave him a confused look, he reminded me. "You know, you won't be mine until med school."

"Sure, fine, whatever, just... stop reminding me, OK? It's really creepy."

He looked embarrassed at least, and quickly shuffled away. This time, I didn't follow him.

I didn't wind up seeing much of Seth over break, but I did see plenty of the rest of my friends. Better yet, I saw straight A's on my report card! My mom was so proud she literally cried when she saw them, and my dad hugged me so long I start sniffing a little myself. I was doing it!

The next semester, I doubled down. I talked some teachers into bumping me up into honors classes, which meant I couldn't afford to let up a hair. I didn't. I even got roped into academic decathlon, where I tied the school record for medals earned in competition. When summer came, I got the satisfaction of another straight A report card. Including the bump for honors track, I was up two entire points in only a year. Letters began flooding in from colleges eager to recruit me.

As for Seth, we still saw each other at school, and yes, he still occasionally made me uncomfortable reminding me of our so-called agreement. At some point he hooked up with this girl Dana, and I kind of lost track of him for a while. The two of them stayed together through most of senior year until, according to the grapevine, she dumped him at post-prom.

I wasn't there; I was studying for my AP chemistry final, HeadMaster playing all the while. And wouldn't you know it? I made the Ivy League.

That summer, I only saw Seth once, and we only spoke for a few minutes. We were meeting at Pulaski Park like the good old days, and I was saying my goodbyes in early June since I had to move out east for school to attend a special pre-med program. He gave me a big hug and congratulated me on my success, and I laughed and said he was entirely to credit.

"HeadMaster really worked, eh?"

“It deserves one hundred percent of the credit,” I said laughing. “Though honestly, it does keep me mindful of the work I need to do, but... well, whatever. At this point, I’m too superstitious to drop it anyway.”

“Well I hope everything goes great for you in college. Keep at it and all.”

I leaned in and gave him a big hug. “And you do the same. I’m gonna miss your pervy ass, ya know.”

He hugged me back. “Not as much as I’ll miss your *curvy* ass. Speaking of, you might wanna take better care of what will someday be mine. You can use HeadMaster for more than just academics, Jessica.”

I didn’t make a fuss over his chauvinism – no point getting bent out of shape about it now. Plus, he had a point. My book-worm lifestyle hadn’t done my body any favors, and who knows, maybe I had a solid enough grip on my academics to get a new goal.

I didn’t see Seth again until winter break of my sophomore year. We crossed paths at a coffee house. I was just stopping in for a cup, but he waved me over to his table. We spent hours catching up on lost time. He griped to me about life as an IT major. I tried to tell him about my studies without sounding braggy (dean’s list four semesters running, straight A’s, internship offers flooding my inbox).

“You know, you look dynamite, by the way,” he said, giving me a once over. I was surprised he hadn’t said something (something inappropriate, that is) sooner. Ever since I’d added losing weight and getting in shape to my goals, I’d been working out and running ten or more hours a week. I’d finished high school at almost 150 pounds; now I was down to 123 as of that morning. I still had quite the booty, but now it was a lot more appreciable on my new, toned frame.

“Thank you,” I responded, pleased not to be fending him off. “So, are you seeing anybody?” I asked. Not that I was interested in a one-night stand with Seth of all people, but I was curious.

“On and off – hard to find time for it. You?”

“Same. Mostly, just trying to get some experience under my belt.” I downplayed my success in that department. More and more I’d been telling myself that someday I’d meet someone, and it would be important to know how to please a man. I’d always had a pretty face, and with this body, it was a lot easier to find willing “tutors,” as I thought of them.

Finally, we had to get going. He walked me to my car and gave me a long hug and wished me well. *Look at you, Mr. Grown-Up*, I thought – only then I caught him staring at my butt while I unlocked my car door.

“You never change.”

“*You* sure did. Darn shame those boobs never grew in, but hey, whatcha gonna do.”

“Not like I did it to spite you,” I said.

“No worries. You still got two more years.”

I had no idea what he meant by that, but either way I’d had my fill of him. I quickly got in my car and we waved goodbye.

Evidently two years was exactly the right interval for contact with Seth, because that was right about how long it was before I saw him again. It was my final semester of our undergrad, and I’d landed an amazing internship at a hospital back near home. My old friend saw via social media that we were now living in the same city and looked me up.

Should I have felt guilty at dodging him for so long? We’d been friends as kids, but it felt like a different lifetime. Then, I’d been a confused girl with no direction or work ethic; now, I was a driven, hard-working professional with limitless upward potential. From what I heard, Seth was doing well for himself, already securing grants for some projects of his own, but still. It had been a long time since our interactions had left a positive taste in my mouth.

Then one day as I was coming home from work, there he was outside my building. He was sitting on a planter obviously waiting for me, and stood up the moment he saw me. “Jessica! Hey, Jess... wow.”

I didn’t have to wonder what prompted his dropped jaw. “Hi, Seth. Eyes are still up here.” I tried to make a joke of it.

“But... you... I know I... but... wow.”

“Get enough of an eyeful?” I asked, voice heating somewhat.

“Well they look amazing. I can’t wait to—”

“Let me stop you right there.” I sighed. “Look Seth. I know we were friends when we were children, but that was a long time ago. I’m in a different part of my life now and that life doesn’t include being sexually harassed by you. I think you should go.”

I folded my arms across my chest and tried to look intimidating; it didn’t come naturally to me, nor did it look like it affected him in the least. “Geez, I only stopped by to congratulate you.”

“Congratulate me? On what?”

“Med school, obviously.”

“What? How did you... you know what, it doesn’t even matter. Not that it’s your business, but I haven’t received any letters of acceptance yet.”

“Oh? Check your mail.”

“Excuse me?”

“Did I stutter?”

I frowned, but the suggestion had me excited in spite of its source. “You in cahoots with my mailman or something?” I said, walking over to the row of mailboxes in front of the building.

Seth didn't respond, or if he did, I didn't hear him. Sure enough, there was a letter from one of the schools I'd applied to. Not my top choice, but in my top three. My hands were shaking too hard to open it.

"You can read it through the envelope if you hold it up to the light."

I ignored him. After a few deep breaths, my nerves finally allowed me to open the letter. *Dear Ms. Werner, on behalf of the selection committee, we are pleased to inform you...* That was as far as I got before the tears in my eyes made it impossible to read.

I'd done it. I'd gotten into medical school. The day I'd worked for like a machine going on six years now. It was here. Which meant... which meant...

It meant something. I couldn't for the life of me remember what, but I knew there was another layer of significance.

"So like I said, congratulations," said Seth. "Looks like you're mine now, huh."

I snapped my fingers. *That* was it! I turned to face him, a broad smile coming onto my face. "Thank you, Master."

He laughed. "You can still call me Seth in public, Jess."

"Of course." I left my arms at my sides and smiled brightly as he resumed ogling my chest. His chest, technically.

"I cannot wait to see those things," he said with a happy sigh.

Without hesitation, I lifted my top up to show him; I was halfway to undoing my bra to unblock his view when he tugged it back down. "Right, forgot how literal you girls can be at first."

"Girls?"

"Well sure. I didn't invent HeadMaster and wait six years to see if it worked. Been kicking myself for years for setting such a long timer on you, but we were friends. I didn't want to risk scrambling that big brain of yours reconfiguring you in the middle of things. So I found some other girls to amuse myself with in the meantime."

"Thank you for not scrambling my brain." I was mostly sincere. Seth hadn't had the right to mess with my brain then, but he did now.

Seth snapped his fingers as he started walking towards the nearby parking garage. "Heel, Jessica."

I fell in line behind him instantly. He didn't say a word, just lead me to his car and bade me get in the passenger seat. I recognized the basic direction we were heading, back toward home. It was only an hour or so away – my parents had managed the commute every day before they'd retired – and I rode along in silence. Seth didn't want to hear me speak. I put in an earbud – only one, in case Seth had further commands for me – and started listening to my daily HeadMaster, today an oddly appropriate mix of hits from back when I was a teenager. It put a smile on my face.

The sun was nearly set by the time he pulled up to Pulaski Park. I hadn't been here since high school, and the memories came flooding back to me. Our first times sneaking out past

curfew; first time experimenting with alcohol and weed; not-so-surreptitious first makeouts in the dim parts of the grove.

I'd thought I was done making firsts happen at this park. But here I was.

We got out of the car and I stretched after the long confinement, and I could feel Seth's eyes glued to my breasts. Unlike when we were last here, this time it felt right. He snapped again and pointed to our tree, where he and I had always met after sneaking out of the house at night. I walked in front of him, and made sure to put a sway into my hips. He would like that. He'd always liked my ass.

"You know, I had the biggest crush on you back then," Seth said behind me.

"I know." It was awkward, not only because such confessions always were, but also because of the sudden and massive reversal of our power dynamic.

"How come you never gave me a shot, Jessica?"

I wanted to say something pleasing, something sexy, like I was always to be for him now. *I was too shy to tell you all the filthy things I wanted to do to you – that you'd think I was a skanky little whore.* But I knew by some instinct that my owner's direct, personal questions were to be answered with total honesty. "I thought you were kind of pervy. I liked our friendship, but you kind of made me feel like a piece of meat in a butcher shop."

"Yeah, I figured," he said, sighing. "How about now?" He laughed, giving my butt a little pinch.

I gave him a look over my shoulder. "How would you like me sliced, Master?" It felt like such a slutty thing to say, but that was good. Seth was my master, and he'd like me to talk like a slut for him. I didn't know how I knew, but I was sure of it, as confident as I'd been when I'd nailed my MCATs last fall.

Then we were there, under our tree. The shade offered us privacy even from the moonlight, while the vantage point let us see the whole town spread out before us. It was even more beautiful than I'd remembered, a vista that filled my heart with—

"Strip, Jessica."

"Yes, Master."

I wanted to be quick about it, to be naked per his command as quickly as possible, but as I began unbuttoning my blouse, I could see the anticipation was pleasing to him. I undressed as I would have in the privacy of my bedroom, unhurriedly and without fanfare, discarding my blouse on the ground haphazardly. Seth came around behind me. After inspecting the tag on my bra, he squeezed my butt through my jeans, then through my panties as I discarded the jeans.

"Having you ditch the baby fat... that was a good move, but I wonder if I tuned you too far. We may have to see about grafting some curves back onto you," Seth commented as I removed my underwear. I didn't point out that I'd gotten breast implants, and been very very careful in my exercise regiment to preserve my prominent booty. If he wanted to change my body, it was his to change.



Then he shed his own clothes and sat down at the base of the tree, using my top to keep his butt out of the dirt. My pussy responded immediately to the sight of him naked. He patted his lap, and I curled up in it immediately, his hardening cock against my hip. I took a calculated risk and began kissing along his neck, reasoning that either he was creating a romantic ambiance on purpose, or would enjoy getting to reject my advances as I had so many times rejected his.

Seth didn't complain.

"You have no idea how bad I wanted to fuck you back then, Jessica. I always figured our friendship would pay off, but you never did defrost, did you? Just as well. This is much better, don't you think?"

"Oh yes, Master. I'm very glad to be owned by you." Was that ever true. It was like scratching an itch that had been nagging me for my entire adult life.

"I don't doubt it," he said, grinning. "But for now, I think I'd like to see you convince me to use you."

Mere begging wasn't what he wanted; he could have just taken me up to my apartment and had me beg for cock. Or right there on the street where he'd found me. I'd obey him anywhere, any time. But Seth had brought me here, to this particular place, for a reason. He didn't just want a pretty girl desperate for his dick. In fact, I had a pretty good idea what he wanted.

"I'm sorry I was always ragging on you for flirting with me, Seth. I want to make that up to you. Let me show you my body. I've made it so much sexier, just for you."

I pivoted to roll off his lap and onto my hands and knees, my ass pointed right at him, my pussy easily visible between toned thighs. "Look at it, Seth. All those times I caught you checking it out? I was wrong to complain, and you were right. This is *your* ass. It belongs to you now, and I want you to look at it whenever you want."

I arched my back, shaking it slowly from side to side. He watched, mesmerized by my rolling hips. "How many times have you stared at my butt right on this spot, wondering what it would look naked? It's better than you thought, isn't it. I made it this way, just for the man who would someday claim it as his own. You did this for me, so I could do this for you. Thank you."

I turned to face him. Both our eyes had adjusted to the dark, and I could see he was staring transfixed by my dangling breasts. "Do you like them? Of course you do. I must've caught you looking down my shirt a hundred times. Back then, I was stupid and selfish and scolded you for it. Wore high-neck shirts to stop you. Now, this body is yours. You can dress it and undress it however you want. I'll never stop you again from looking at me. I exist to be looked at by you. To be used by you, in whatever way would make you happy."

I crawled into his lap, straddling him so that his cock was nestled in between my pussy lips. My hips swayed softly, massaging his cock but not daring to take him inside me until I was commanded to. "I know you fantasized about fucking me here under our tree. How did you imagine it happening? With me straddling you, like this, your hands groping at my cute little

titties?” I put his hands over them, moaning sincerely at his touch. “Not so little now, though, but still cute I hope.”

When he didn’t start fucking me after a moment, I withdrew, turning to once again show off my ample ass cheeks. “Or like this, on my hands and knees in the dirt, face taking on little grass smudges as you fuck me face down on the bare ground?”

Looking back between my legs, I saw him take to his feet, staring down at me cock in hand. I rose to a kneeling position with his cock before me. “Or maybe you didn’t fantasize about my pussy, but about a blowjob? It had to have crossed your mind, having my pretty face impaled on your big dick, shutting up all my nay-saying with a mouthful of your cock... I can’t believe how selfish I was to not suck you off every time I saw that boner cropping up in your shorts. But I’ll do it now. Whenever you want, however you want.” I nuzzled at his cock, rubbing it against my cheeks, my nose.

He still said nothing. I rose to my feet then. “I know you, Seth. I know you didn’t want me to just...” I pressed myself against him and raised one knee as high as it would go. With one hand Seth grabbed under my thigh to hold it up, and the other cupped my ass to hold me against him. I bent his cock so it rested between my legs, his enthusiasm pressing it right up against and ever-so-slightly inside me. Just the tip. Each step of the way, I described in lurid detail what I was doing, what I was letting him do to me.

“I know you wouldn’t want to just fuck me like this, face to face,” I finished, then with great care for his cock’s well-being, I lowered my leg and took a step back. I stepped up to the tree then, stopped about a foot away and leaned forward to press my tits against the smooth bark. A soft wind blew over the hilltop then, teasing my wet, exposed pussy.

“No, I bet your fantasy was this – my ass presented like a little slut, the little boobies I had then mushed against the tree as you came up behind me. Pinned against the tree, helpless to keep resisting you any more as you finally gave me the fucking I so obviously needed to loosen up, silently thanking you over and over not just for making me come but for letting me keep my back to you, letting me hide from you how relieved I was that you were finally—”

And then it was happening. Seth, my erstwhile friend and now owner, slid inside my pussy – his pussy – and fucked me against our tree. I closed my eyes and let myself enjoy his cock, my mind adrift on a sea of memories. I thought back to my old guidance counselor, how she’d thought I’d just wind up a trophy in some guy’s case, never to realize my dreams. As Seth’s cum flooded my pussy for the first of countless times to come, I couldn’t help but smile.

If only she could see me now.



