

VENUS IN FUR AUDITIONS

THOMAS/KUSHEMSKI #2

Thomas is reading a part from his own play, so it can be a little stilted, but is still very well-known to him. The character of Kushemski is describing an incident, so the story should be told, first and foremost, but it also was a defining moment in his sexual life that turns him on to this day.

THOMAS/KUSHEMSKI. *She was a regal woman. Voluptuous, imperious, and terrifying. She refused in a thousand ways to indulge my moods, and I took against her for her majestic disdain. I needled her rudely, I insulted her, I called her Messalina. Well, she took her revenge. My parents went off one day and my aunt comes striding into the library. She's wearing an enormous Russian cape of black fox fur. On her head, a diamond tiara. And in her hand, a length of fresh green birch. The cook and the scullery maid follow close behind. My aunt throws off her fur and rolls up her sleeves revealing sleekly muscled arms. I try to escape, but the other two women grab me, overwhelm me, they fling me down onto the fur and pull down my pants. I try to be heroic, but those two hold me hand and foot while my aunt lays into me with the cane. The birch whistles in the air again and again as the blows descend. The backs of my legs and my naked backside are on fire, the lashes are like acid eating into a copper etching plate, each stroke laid on by a true artist. Meanwhile the servant women urge her on and mock me. They call me a little girl and laugh at my tears. I struggle, but it's no use. My aunt keeps whipping until I'm weeping outright, sobbing and begging her for mercy. When she's done, she forces me to kneel and thank her for punishing me. Makes me kiss the very rod with which she chastised me. Then, threatening to return for more, she takes her leave. All of this witnessed by the two laughing servants – and our cat. From that hour forward, a fur could never be just a fur, nor a length of birch an innocent switch. You see, in that moment, in that room, by that woman, I was made.*