



Reluctant Press

A Bust On The Way To The Altar

E. B. Stevenson



ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHAS

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

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Reluctant Press TG Publishers

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“A Bust On The Way To The Altar”

by E.B. Stevenson

One

It was the spring of 1999; the month of May, to be exact. I was thirty-seven years old at the time. My twin brother, Eric, had just moved to upstate New York after he married a genetic female fourteen years his junior. Being the oldest of two boys and two girls wasn't easy; both of my sisters lived in California, where one runs a modeling agency and the other is a freelance photographer. I was living in Chicago; my parents were just up the road in Milwaukee.

I had started an ecumenical ministry for the transgendered in the Chicago area two years earlier, after a successful career as a private investigator. I had hired Christy Wilson as my administrative assistant soon thereafter. Five-foot-ten with brunette hair and twenty-six years old, she had just received a Bachelor's degree in business from a local university. She started working for me while she was still living as a man, but began to live, work and dress full-time as a woman just three months after she started. She was six months away from having a sex-change operation. Not only was she my assistant, she was also my girlfriend. While my main business was tending to the spiritual needs of the transgendered, my past life as a private investigator came calling from time to time.

It was three-thirty in the afternoon on the first of May at my Wrigleyville office. I had just finished praying with a preoperative transsexual who was getting ready to go for her sex-change operation. Christy walked into the reflection and prayer room, and told me that someone was in my office.

“Derek?” she asked me.

“What is it, Christy?”

“A tall, brown-haired girl is in to see you. She has a pressing problem,” she replied.

I took the short walk to my office and found a girl with long, medium brown hair, six-foot-three, wearing a blue dress with matching chapeau and pumps. “Derek Ballard?” she asked me.

"I'm Derek Ballard," I said to her.

"My name is Cristina Miller, but you can call me Tina," she said in a low-pitched, feminine tone.

"What's your problem?" I asked her.

"Derek, it's this. You probably heard of Loose Larry Hillard," she replied.

"I've heard of him. One of this city's top pimps," I added.

"Several of my friends have worked for Loose Larry for some time now. They're all saving up for sex-change operations. I worked for him for two years before I had my operation last month," Tina said rather sheepishly.

"What's Loose Larry done now?" I asked.

"He's started to treat his transgendered escorts like trash. He's been forcing them to go out with his friends instead of letting them seek out their own clients, like the genetic female escorts have always done. If they don't do as he pleases, they are chained up and abused. A few of my transgendered friends have escaped his clutches; one of them reported him to the police. He not only has transsexuals employed by his service, but also full-time transvestites, too," she explained.

"Are you afraid that something bad will happen to the remaining transgendered escorts?" Christy asked her.

"I'm afraid that he may even kill some of them if they report him to the police," Tina cried in anguish.

"I'll get on the phone to a detective friend of mine and see what I can find out. In the meantime, please make full use of the reflection and prayer room. Christy will take you there," I assured her. Christy then took Tina to the reflection and prayer room to talk, while I got on the phone to call my detective friend.

When my call was answered, I said to the operator; "Detective Roy Martinez, please." I paused for a moment while the operator asked who was calling. "Derek Ballard," I said.

Roy was at his desk, reading Loose Larry's rap sheet. "Derek, how are you, brother?" he said in his Hispanic accent.

"I've got a problem. A former employee of Loose Larry Hillard came into my office this afternoon. Her name is Cristina Miller; she was employed by him until she had her sex-change operation last month. She told me that his transgendered escorts were being treated badly by him," I explained.

"I've got his rap sheet in front of me. Loose Larry's prostitution activities were brought to my attention by Michele Lang, a former transvestite escort. He has a long criminal history, starting with an arrest for shoplifting in 1978. Two years later, he was arrested for attempting to rape a sixteen-year-old girl. He was convicted in 1981 and spent six years in Joliet. He was arrested for cocaine possession six months after leaving Joliet and spent six months in federal prison. Upon his release in the summer of 1988, he laid low for a while. Then, in 1990, he was arrested for indecent exposure and lewd conduct; that earned him a ninety-day sentence in the Cook County slam-

mer. In 1993, he was arrested again; this time, for public drunkenness, attempted rape and assault. He had walked into a bridal shop and tried to rape a woman trying a gown on. In addition, he also brutally beat up her fiancé, who was being measured for a tuxedo. He spent four years in Joliet for this crime. Since he has been out, he's been working as a pimp for an escort service run by the notorious Shifty Sheldon LaFlamme. They work out of a storefront office on Maxwell Street. I'm asking my boss to have the place staked out and possibly organize a sting operation," Roy explained.

"With that kind of record, I hope we can put him away for a long time," I added.

After I got off the phone with Roy, I walked into the reflection and prayer room, and found Christy still talking with Tina. "No matter what happens, let me remind you that God will be with you always," Christy said reassuringly to Tina, before asking her, "Who would you like to call?"

"Call my boyfriend, Eddie," Tina replied.

Christy got Eddie's cell phone number and called him, while I received Loose Larry's rap sheet via fax from Roy.

"What exactly is the story on this guy," Christy asked me. "According to the rap sheet on him, Loose Larry was hired by Shifty Sheldon in 1997," I replied before the phone rang.

It was Roy, calling me about setting up a meeting. "Would twelve noon at Harry's work for you?" I asked him.

"Yes, that would work just fine. Feel free to bring Christy with you, Derek," he replied.

After I got off the phone, Christy asked; "What is it, honey?"

"Darling, Roy has agreed to meet us at Harry's at noon tomorrow. Later, we'll be able to talk to the girl that reported Loose Larry to the police," I replied.

"Will she be dressed as a woman?" she asked me.

"Of course. She's been dressing as a woman full-time since she was sixteen; she has just started hormone treatments. She'll be in a red dress and high heels," I replied.

"Babe, would you like to take your mind off your work and turn it to me?" she asked rather seductively.

"Of course, I will, sweetheart. Just for you, my love," I whispered before giving her a long, tender kiss. After we finished kissing, she whispered; "I love you very much, Derek."

"I love you, too, Christy," I whispered before kissing her again. We got so passionate, that we knocked over the wedding picture of my twin brother, Eric and his young bride, Rebecca.

"Did we knock anything over, honey baby?" Christy cooed.

"Just the wedding photo of my twin brother and my sister-in-law," I replied.

Around ten o'clock, Christy realized that she had to be back at her apartment. She was tired, so she needed some sleep. "Would you put a copy of Shifty Sheldon's rap sheet in my 'in' box in the morning?" she asked me.

"Sure, I will. Good night, my love," I replied.

"Good night, sweetie," she whispered before we exchanged a smooch.

Two

It was eleven o'clock the next morning. Christy, dressed in a red jumpsuit and matching high heels, was looking over her copy of Shifty Sheldon's rap sheet. Since I was also licensed as a justice of the peace, I had a wedding to perform in the reflection and prayer room. One of Loose Larry's former call girls, Laura Yancey, was tying the knot with photographer Ian McMillan. Laura was in a full-length informal wedding dress and a bridal tiara with an elbow-length veil; Ian was in a navy blue suit and tie. Laura had a sex-change operation three years before and became a business student. One of Laura's genetic female friends and Ian's youngest brother witnessed the union.

"Laura Amanda Yancey, do you take this man, Ian Thomas McMillan, to be your lawful wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?"

"I do," Laura replied with commitment.

"Ian Thomas McMillan, do you take this woman, Laura Amanda Yancey, to be your lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?"

"I do," Ian replied with the same level of commitment.

"With the power vested in me by the state of Illinois and the City of Chicago, I now pronounce you husband and wife. What God hath put together, let no man put aside," I informed them before pausing for a moment.

"Ian, you may now kiss your bride," I added.

After they kissed, they affixed their signatures to the marriage license, along with their witnesses and myself. After they left the office, Christy came in.

"Derek, isn't it time we started out for Harry's?" she asked me.

"Just as soon as I take off my cassock and put my suit jacket back on," I replied.

We took a taxi to Harry's, a restaurant near O'Hare International Airport. I noticed Roy right away. Five-foot-nine, built like a marathon runner and in his early forties, he was wearing a white shirt, black tie, and a pair of black leather pants with black shoes. Michele was with him. She was five-foot-six, wearing a red chiffon dress and matching high heels. "Derek, how are you today?", Roy asked me.

"I'm doing fine, thank you," I replied.

"And how are you, Christy?", Roy asked.

"I'm doing fine, Roy," Christy replied.

"Derek, this is the girl I was telling you and Christy about. Michele Lang, this is Derek Ballard and Christy Wilson. They run an outreach mission for the transgendered in Chicago; he also works part-time as a private eye," Roy said.

"A pleasure to meet you two," Michele added in a low-pitched feminine tone.

Once we got inside the restaurant, the four of us were shown to a private dining room, accompanied by guards from the Illinois State Police. We sat down at a table with fully-lit candles, while the state troopers stood guard outside.

After we ordered steaks and salads for the four of us, Michele began to tell her story. "It all started four months ago, after I arrived in Chicago from a small town in Iowa. My parents disapproved of my dressing in women's clothing, so I left my hometown and came here to Chicago, hoping to be a female impersonator. I was at a club called Monica's, which featured a female impersonator revue three nights a week. I went to watch Brittany Shores, a visiting female impersonator from Fort Wayne. She and I became very good friends. Loose Larry was there that night, recruiting new girls for Shifty Sheldon's escort service, LaFlamme's Girls. He complimented me on my looks and sex appeal and he told me I could make a lot of money, escorting male clients. Within a week, I was in tight dresses, miniskirts and stilettos. Anyway, two weeks ago, he began to force his transgendered escorts to satisfy his friends, or else he would threaten them with severe beatings, even death. He had me handcuffed to a bedpost and forced me to take off my panties. The next thing I knew, one of his friends was performing sex acts on me. Then, he forced me to stuff his fully-erect manhood into my mouth. I was humiliated beyond belief. Instead of staying in that situation one more night, I left LaFlamme's Girls, and took up residence with Melissa Zeller, a genetic female friend of mine. Melissa comforted me, and advised me to report his actions to the police," Michele explained.

"Tina Miller stopped by my office yesterday; she was saying basically the same thing. She was employed by LaFlamme's Girls until she had her sex-change operation last month. She has since taken a boyfriend, who has kept her on the straight and narrow. I married one of his ex-call girls and her new husband this morning," I added.

"Tina was very brave in contacting you. I have received several phone calls from other transgendered girls this morning, all saying the same thing. So, I think we may have enough evidence to start a sting operation. One of my fellow vice officers is Shifty Sheldon's younger brother, Chuck Lawrence. He is a virtual master of disguise. For example, in 1990, he infiltrated a white supremacist hate group on the North Side by posing as Josef Goebbels, the late Nazi Propaganda Minister. That resulted in forty arrests. Three years ago, he helped us bust a drug ring by posing as a Colombian drug lord; that sting netted thirty-two arrests. He also helped us bust two prostitution rings in the 1980s; one in 1982 by disguising himself as a bigwig executive, and another in 1989 by disguising himself as a hooker. The 1980 bust put twenty people behind bars; the 1982 bust netted fourteen arrests. His wife, Lauren, helps him with his disguises. She's a seamstress by trade," Roy explained.

"Will you try to get him assigned to a potential sting operation?" I asked.

"I definitely will try to get him assigned. We have another detective who is a master of disguise. Robert Mortimer is his name. He's primarily done his infiltrating dressed as a woman. Two years ago, he helped bust a ring of dress thieves while undercover as a bride-to-be. He has done some busts in male attire, too, including a pot bust where he posed as a hippie. I may need your help, and Christy's," he added.

"This might just be an adventure," Christy added.

“But, be prepared to risk your life in this task,” I whispered to her.

“You're going to have extra special preparation for this assignment, Derek and Christy. You two will have to sleep together in each other's beds for one night apiece. I know this may be contrary to religious teaching, but it's part of the assignment. I hope you two don't mind,” Roy briefly explained.

“In light of the nature of the assignment, we'll do it,” I assured him.

“As attracted as we are to each other, it'll be a pleasure,” Christy added before we exchanged a smooch.

After lunch, we went back to the office to catch up on some paperwork. After finishing my last bit of paperwork, I went to the reflection and prayer room. Christy joined me a few minutes later. We were praying about what was to come and for a successful outcome.

When we arrived back at our respective apartments, I decided to get a pair of boxer shorts and a change of clothes. I walked across the hall to Christy's apartment and knocked on the door. She came to the door in a pink nightgown.

“Won't you come in, baby?” she asked me.

I walked into her apartment and gave her a kiss. She had dinner prepared; a Caesar salad, spaghetti and meatballs and a chilled bottle of red wine. Before we ate dinner, I proposed a toast. “To you, Christy, for being the beautiful woman you are. You have shown me that I could love again. As we begin a very dangerous assignment, I drink this toast to the love that we now share for each other.”

After we took a sip of wine, Christy proposed a toast. “Derek, I never knew that an understanding man like you would ever come along. When you hired me to be your assistant, I never knew that God, in His infinite wisdom, would bring us together. You are the most handsome man I've ever met and I drink to our love on the eve of a dangerous assignment.” We took another sip of wine, and ate our dinner.

After dinner, we collapsed on her sofa, and watched a romantic movie on television. She was nestled in my arms throughout much of the movie and we whispered our most romantic thoughts and shared numerous kisses. When the movie was over, we watched the nine o'clock news. Around ten o'clock, I took her by the hand and we were holding hands as we walked to her bedroom. Christy walked into her bathroom to freshen up a little bit, while I took off my clothes and slipped into my boxer shorts. Christy came out of the bathroom a few minutes later in a pink babydoll nightie.

“Darling, that's sexy!” I complimented.

“I'm glad you like it, babe,” she cooed before laying down next to me and giving me a long, tender kiss. She glided her hand gently along my hairy chest and gently sucked my earlobes. I filed my fingers through her hair as she was doing all those loving things to me. After she finished sucking my earlobes, we kissed with passion.

Before we fell asleep, she asked me; “Babe, how would you feel if we were married?”

“I've always dreamed of being a married man, darling. But, I've never found the girl to do it with. To tell you the truth, I met too many 'gold-diggers' in my time. You're ac-

tually the first woman I've met that doesn't let a man's bank account stand in the way of true love," I replied.

"Would you consider marrying me?" she asked.

"Of course, I would, baby. But, we can't legally marry until you have your operation," I replied before engaging in another long kiss with her. Before we fell asleep, I whispered; "I love you, Christy."

"I love you, too, Derek," she whispered before we kissed each other good night.

When we woke up the next morning, I found one hand gently on her back, and the other gently on her buttocks. "Good morning, honey," she whispered.

"Good morning, sweetheart," I whispered to her before we exchanged a kiss. She got up and prepared oatmeal, sliced oranges and hot Earl Grey tea for breakfast. I took a shower, shaved, and got into my maroon suit and tie. I put my dirty clothes in a plastic grocery bag, washed my hands and went into the kitchen to have breakfast with her. She was in a pink negligee when I got to the breakfast table. I kissed her before sitting down to eat.

After breakfast, I went across the hall to my apartment to drop off my stuff. I picked up a fax from Roy and went back across the hall to her apartment. Christy put on a red nylon dress, white stockings and red pumps. "Did we get another fax, my love?" she asked, rather seductively.

"Roy wants us to meet at the office at two o'clock. According to our appointment book, we have that slot clear. I only have one wedding to perform today; a crossdresser marrying a genetic female at noon," I replied.

"I'm sure it's about the assignment," she added.

Three

After I married the couple, a crossdresser known en femme as Sherrie and her genetic female companion, Keely, Christy and I went into the reflection and prayer room to pray for the success of our assignment. Around two o'clock, Roy arrived in a navy blue suit and maroon tie.

We sat down in the conference room, a solarium in back of my office. Roy gave us the details of the assignment.

"Loose Larry and his goons usually meet at Monica's, a nightclub near the Loop, every Thursday night. Monica's features a female impersonator revue six days a week. Tonight is a special night, since two visiting female impersonators are performing there. Tonight, Brittany Starr is coming in from Indianapolis," Roy briefly explained.

"I'm familiar with Brittany. We did a bridal shoot together three years ago; I still have the calendar we were featured on," Christy added.

“Derek, I'm sure you're familiar with Melinda Spring, who performs under the stage name Raquel Roberts. She's visiting from Atlanta. She also performs at clubs in Birmingham, Chattanooga and Nashville,” Roy added.

“Her friends call her Mindy; she had a romantic relationship with my twin brother while he was living in Atlanta,” I replied.

“Well, anyway, Brittany and Mindy both had been propositioned on their last visit to Chicago in September. Brittany by one of Loose Larry's goons, while Mindy was propositioned by Loose Larry himself. Brittany and Mindy will both be protected by their boyfriends on this visit. Brittany will be in a red, sleeveless, full-skirted, sequined gown while Mindy will be wearing a baby blue Southern Belle gown. Loose Larry is easy to spot; he wears a blue pinstripe suit with a matching tie, always tied in a Windsor knot, porkpie hat and wingtip shoes. He also smokes huge, smelly cigars. He has two goons with him; both wearing bright red leather jackets, tight, black leather pants and black basketball shoes. Loose Larry always carries two black books with him. Around nine-thirty, he will leave his table to go to the men's restroom. Your objective is to obtain one of his black books, the one marked ‘T-Girls’. You will also question Brittany and Mindy on their dealings with Loose Larry. Be careful, though. The conference room at Monica's has been wiretapped. I will assign Detective Mortimer to ride shotgun with you; he will be undercover as a visiting female fashion model from North Carolina. You may stay in your suit for this one, Derek; I'm sure Christy has some club attire in her wardrobe. You will pose as a businessman from St. Louis. Christy will be posing as a fashion designer. A limousine will pick you up at the office at seven-thirty tonight; Detective Mortimer will be in a gold lame gown with black stockings and gold high heels. You may call him Stephanie,” Roy explained.

“We'll do our best, Roy,” Christy said with confidence.

“We'll get the job done, even if we get the son of a gun,” I added.

When the time came to get ready for our assignment, Christy walked into the closet at the office and found her party dress from the previous Christmas. A red dress with a tiered skirt and sequins adorning the bodice and short sleeves, it still fit perfectly. “You look more beautiful in that dress now than you did last Christmas,” I complimented.

“Thank you, my sweet,” she said whisperingly. She walked into the bathroom to put on a pair of white stockings, as well as red high heels. We decided to have a Chinese dinner delivered; the limousine arrived just as we finished cleaning up the conference room after dinner. Christy and I held hands as we walked out the door of our office.

We stepped into the limousine and found an auburn-haired girl sitting in the back, with her legs crossed in seductive fashion. Like Roy described, she was in a gold lame gown with black stockings and gold high heels. She was five-seven with a slender build. “You must be Derek Ballard and Christy Wilson,” she said as we sat down in the back seat.

“We are,” Christy said in introductory manner.

“I'm Detective Robert Mortimer, but tonight I am undercover as Stephanie McKenna, fashion model based in Raleigh,” she added.

“Did Roy cover all the bases with you?” I asked her.

“Yes, he did. But, I have some news for you. One of Shifty Sheldon's associates was gunned down a couple of hours ago,” Stephanie said.

“Who was the person and how did it happen?” Christy asked.

“The murder victim is identified as Paul Aziz. His bullet-riddled body was found in his 1998 Mercedes on Torrance Avenue in Calumet City. Witnesses saw two men fire at his car from a 1995 Range Rover going northbound on Torrance. Apparently, Paul was waiting for a nineteen-year-old prostitute outside an apartment building when he was gunned down. The State Police has an all-points bulletin out on the Range Rover,” Stephanie explained.

“When we get there, Roy has asked me and Christy to be lovey-dovey, as usual, while we are sitting at the table. You are to be chasing the girls, like you always do, in male attire. Your cover also includes being a lesbian, Stephanie,” I briefly explained.

“Gotcha,” Stephanie added.

We arrived at Monica's around eight-fifteen. The first show wasn't scheduled to start until nine o'clock. So, the three of us sat down in a booth. I was holding Christy, while Stephanie was scanning the crowd for faces that were familiar to her. A pre-op waitress named Candi, dressed in a red French Maid's outfit, came to our table.

“Good evening, my name is Candi and I'll be your waitress this evening. We have a three-for-two special this evening; buy two drinks, a bottle, or a pitcher of a selected beverage and the third glass is free,” she explained before asking, “May I take your order?”

“Do you have a wine list?” I asked her.

“Yes, we do,” she replied before handing us the wine list. Christy and I looked it over. “We'd like a bottle of white wine from Missouri,” I said to Candi.

“What would the lady in gold like?” Candi asked Stephanie.

“Scotch, on the rocks,” Stephanie replied.

Christy showed a portfolio of dress designs to Stephanie while I was scanning the crowd for any sign of Loose Larry and his goons. Christy helped her mother design dresses while she was going to college. We waited about twenty minutes before we saw anything interesting. Then we saw a goon in a black button-down shirt with the top two buttons undone and his hair done in a pompadour style. The guy with him was an African-American in a pair of black leather pants, a white button-down shirt with the top two buttons undone, a pair of black basketball shoes and his hair done in an Afro style. They sat down on the opposite side of the stage from where we were.

The show began on time at nine o'clock, with Brittany Starr being the first girl on stage. She was lip-synching to a female vocal selection from the jazz genre. She was dressed in a blue sequined gown with matching high heels. Her act took about six minutes, before the stagehand, a genetic female named Kathy, told her, “Miss Starr, a private investigator wants to talk to you in the conference room.”

“This must be about Loose Larry. I hear the police are after him,” Brittany said.

After changing into an ivory blouse, pink skirt and matching pink jacket with white sandal pumps, her boyfriend, Eric Bly, escorted her to the conference room, where I was waiting with a police stenographer and a genetic female detective, Dorothy Pinkowski. I heard a knock on the door. I let her in and asked Eric to stand guard outside with a uniformed male officer.

“Miss Starr, I'm Derek Ballard, a private investigator. This is Detective Dorothy Pinkowski of the Chicago Police. She's been assigned to this case,” I said in introduction.

“It's a pleasure to meet you,” Brittany said calmly.

“Miss Starr, we'd like to ask you a few questions about Lawrence Hillard, alias Loose Larry Hillard,” Dorothy said to her.

“I'll tell you anything you need to know,” Brittany added.

“First, were you propositioned by Loose Larry last September, on your last visit to Chicago?” Dorothy asked.

“He hits on every female impersonator that comes to Chicago. He hit on me last September,” Brittany replied.

“How did he hit on you?” I asked her.

“When I came off the stage after reading poetry, I didn't bother to change from the black sequined gown I was wearing. When I sat down to have a shot of tequila, Loose Larry approached me. He was in the same suit he's wearing tonight. Anyway, he asked if I wanted to go to work for him, giving his friends sexual favors. I told him that I wouldn't go to work for him under any circumstances and he kept forcing the question until I yelled for a bouncer. One of the waitresses, who had special martial arts training, yanked him away and kicked him in the groin. He then went on to Mindy and asked her the same inane question. When she threw her drink in his face, Loose Larry left the premises with three goons. Loose Larry just won't take no for an answer. Next thing I heard, he had kidnapped her and shackled her to a bed inside his love nest. She was forced to perform sex acts on a large number of male clients. When she was finally freed, she went back to her apartment, packed her bags and came to Indianapolis. She finally told me about his reputation as a man who mistreats the transgendered,” Brittany sheepishly explained.

“Where is his love nest?” I asked her.

“It's on Lake Shore Drive, just north of downtown. It's a three-bedroom job in one of the high-rise buildings,” Brittany replied, asked us, “Are there any more questions you want to ask me?”

“One more. What did he promise you when he propositioned you?” Dorothy asked.

“He promised me fur coats, clothes and an expensive car. Of course, I thought it was too good to be true. I remember an old saying I learned when I began living full-time as a woman: 'If it's too good to be true, it probably is'. I rejected his advances, despite all those promises,” Brittany replied with the air of a college professor.

“Miss Starr, if you're able to provide any more information that is pertinent to this case, feel free to call us,” I said before handing her my business card. Dorothy then handed her business card to Brittany.

When we finished questioning Brittany, Dorothy stayed behind in the conference room, while I returned to my table. Stephanie was able to obtain an important piece of evidence.

“What have we got here?” I asked Stephanie as I returned to the table.

“It's Loose Larry's black book with the names of transgendered women. Loose Larry left his table for a few minutes to meet another female impersonator backstage and he took one of his goons with him. I walked over to the table, put a sleep aid in his drink, as well as that of the other goon. When he took his drink, he passed out at the table. I left a copy of the search warrant at his table and took the book. This one is packed with names, many of which are no longer in his employ,” Stephanie explained.

“Where did Christy go?” I asked.

“She went to the restroom to get freshened up. You know how women are when they're madly in love,” Stephanie replied.

Christy returned to the table, sat down next to me and gave me a smooch. “Darling, Loose Larry is returning to his table,” Christy informed me.

“I wonder if he knows that his drinks are spiked with a sleep aid,” I added.

Loose Larry was aghast at what he saw. “Abdul, are you awake?”, Loose Larry asked the sleeping goon.

“Abdul's fast asleep,” replied the other goon, Paulie.

“I need a drink. That stupid Abdul is sleeping on the job again, Paulie,” added Loose Larry.

“I'll echo that sentiment,” Paulie said.

When they took their drinks, both of them passed out. Stephanie put a “Do Not Disturb” sign on their table, took the book and walked to the conference room. When we arrived, Mindy was waiting for us. A loveseat inside the conference room was needed to accommodate the huge skirt of Mindy's Southern Belle gown. “Melinda Spring, a.k.a. Raquel Roberts?” I asked her.

“Derek! How are you, dear?” Mindy asked excitedly.

“I'm doing fine, Mindy,” I replied and asked her, “How have things been with you?”

“Things are going great, except for being propositioned by Loose Larry again,” Mindy replied.

“That was before he was drugged,” I added.

“That's how we obtained this piece of evidence. I left a copy of the search warrant at his table,” Stephanie said.

“By the way, how's Eric these days?” Mindy asked me.

“He's doing fine. He's married to a genetic female and living in upstate New York now,” I replied.

“I'm glad he's finally settled down with a nice girl,” Mindy added, asked me, “Have you found your princess?”

“As a matter of fact, I have. I'm only dating her now, but it may get serious before too long. Her name is Christy and, like you, she's a preoperative transsexual,” I replied.

“I found my prince, too. His name is Christopher McBain, but I call him Chris. He and I live together in the mountains between Atlanta and Dalton,” Mindy added.

“Now that we've gotten caught up with our lives, would you like to answer a few questions?” I asked.

“Sure,” Mindy replied.

“Miss Spring, I'm Dorothy Pinkowski, a detective with the Chicago Police. I'd like to start with how you were propositioned by Loose Larry on your last trip here in September 1998,” Dorothy said.

“I was wearing a different dress that time; a blue sequined gown with a side slit to show off my legs. He approached me and asked if I would work for him in his so-called 'escort service'. I told him I don't do those kind of things. He promised me expensive clothes, fur coats, diamonds and cars. I told him that I was already taken and I wasn't interested in working for him. He kept pressing the issue until I threw my drink in his face. He pressed the same issue tonight and I simply told him to go away,” Mindy explained with a bit of anger.

“What were you drinking?” I asked.

“I was drinking a glass of Kentucky bourbon,” Mindy replied.

“How did you hear about his reputation?” Dorothy asked.

“Brittany Starr told me about him. He's probably the worst at treating women in the whole country. Handcuffing and shackling a girl to a bed is not my idea of sexual satisfaction. I feel that such satisfaction is best shared between a man and a woman in an intimate relationship, when they're madly in love with each other. He has threatened to kill anyone who refuses to do what he tells them to and those who have escaped from his lair; he and his goons have yet to make good on the threat. He doesn't treat his genetic female charges much better, either. This guy needs to be behind bars for life,” Mindy explained.

“Brittany told us that Loose Larry's love nest is on Lake Shore Drive. Can you confirm this?” I asked her.

“Not only is his love nest on Lake Shore Drive, but his boss, Shifty Sheldon LaFlamme, has his love nest across the hall from Loose Larry's. Many of his neighbors have complained about the noises coming from their places and the number of girls that have come out of their places,” Mindy replied.

“If you have any other pertinent information, feel free to call us,” Dorothy said before handing Mindy her business card. I handed Mindy my business card and she went back to the dressing room, with Christopher guarding her.

It was almost ten o'clock when I got back to the table. Two girls were flirting with Stephanie, while Christy was finishing her glass of wine. “Are we ready to go, babe?” Christy asked me in a seductive manner.

“Yes, we are. We have finished our questioning for the night,” I replied before giving her a kiss.

“Three bouncers took Loose Larry, Abdul and Paulie to Loose Larry's limousine. They stuffed the search warrant into the pocket of Loose Larry's suit. All three were very soused,” Stephanie replied.

“Not exactly soused. They were drugged,” Christy added.

We paid our bill and walked outside, where our limousine was waiting. Our chauffeur, Jenkins, had some news for us.

“I heard this while listening to my police scanner. The Range Rover that was involved in the drive-by murder of Paul Aziz was pulled over in Urbana thirty minutes ago. They were pulled over on the University of Illinois campus. The campus police searched the car and found a cache of weapons in the back. Most of them were AK-47 and M-16 assault rifles. The three men in the car were arrested and charged with illegal weapons possession. They may face murder charges in Calumet City, too,” Jenkins explained.

“Are they going to be brought back to Chicago?” Christy asked him.

“They're being held in the Champaign County slammer, pending extradition to Cook County,” Jenkins replied.

When we got back to our building, Christy went back to her apartment for some lingerie and a fresh change of clothes. That night, she would be sleeping in my bed with me.

When she walked into my apartment, I gave her a kiss. “How are you feeling, my love?” I asked her.

“I'm a little tired, babe. Let's get into something more comfortable,” she replied.

Christy and I held hands as we walked to my bedroom, stealing a few kisses along the way. She laid her clothes down on my dresser and took some baby blue lingerie. “I have a surprise for you, honey,” she cooed.

“I can't wait to see it, darling,” I whispered.

While she was changing into her lingerie, I changed into a maroon pair of boxer shorts. She emerged a few minutes later, in a baby blue babydoll nightie.

“Baby, that's gorgeous!” I exclaimed in awe.

“I'm glad you like it, love,” she added before sashaying to my bed. She laid down next to me and gave me a long, tender kiss.

When she covered up, she laid down on my chest. I was filing my fingers through her hair, while her hand was gliding down my chest. “My love, I look forward to every moment I have with you. It doesn't matter if we're sleeping together, or we're on a dangerous assignment. The more time I spend with you, the more I want you,” I whispered to her.

“Honey, I also look forward to every moment with you. The more we're together, I feel that I want you even more. At this moment, let me confess that I want you more than ever. A woman doesn't ask for much more,” she cooed.

“I love you, Christy,” I whispered romantically.

“I love you, too, Derek,” she cooed before we engaged in a very passionate kiss.

Four

We arrived at the office at ten o'clock the next morning. I didn't have to perform a wedding ceremony that day. That gave me plenty of time to look over Loose Larry's black book full of the names of transgendered women. I noticed several names that were familiar to both Christy and myself.

"Here's one you may remember, dear," I said to her.

"Who's that?" she asked me.

"Rachel Lawrence. She once worked for Loose Larry, even dated him for a while," I replied.

"What's she up to now?" she asked.

"After Rachel broke up with Loose Larry, she was able to find work as a fashion model, with the help of her roommate, Joyce Charles. She did modeling assignments for various businesses; bridal shops, specialty stores and even an insurance company before having a sex-change operation. She's married to Eric Thompson now; they have adopted two children. They've just opened a travel agency in Aurora," I explained.

"So, modeling and marriage got her out of Loose Larry's trap," she said.

"Joyce Charles also worked briefly for Loose Larry; she didn't like the life, so she switched to modeling, too. She also underwent a sex-change operation before marrying novelist Stephen Wyse. She moved out of Chicago after her husband landed a novel about Twentieth Century pirates on the best seller list. They live in Canada now," I added.

We reviewed the book further before Christy called Roy at the police station. He arrived around eleven-thirty. We turned the book over to him. Then, he had some news to tell us.

"Derek, Christy, one of Loose Larry's goons was arrested this morning near the downtown area," Roy told us.

"Who is he and what was he doing there?" Christy asked.

"His name is Abdul Yarborough," Roy replied.

"That's the African-American goon we saw at Monica's last night," I added.

"Anyway, one of our female vice cops, Detective Caitlyn Jones, went undercover as a student from Loyola University. Abdul was near the Loyola campus, trying to woo a number of college girls into a life of prostitution. Anyway, one of the priests at the university was complaining about his actions on campus. The campus police called us and we initiated a sting operation. It was around ten forty-five this morning when Abdul tried to proposition Caitlyn. She identified herself as a police officer, flashed her badge and put the cuffs on him. We're holding him in the Cook County jail without bond," Roy explained.

"That's one down," Christy added, asked him; "What about the rest of the syndicate?"

"We're preparing an undercover operation on the rest of the syndicate. We will be out and about beginning tomorrow night. We'll have personnel all over the place: their love nests on Lake Shore Drive, their sex palace on Maxwell Street, Monica's, even at O'Hare and Midway," Roy then explained.

"Looks like you're going all out for this sting," I added.

"The Department has made breaking up this prostitution ring a top priority. It's ruining the public image of the city," Roy then added.

"Will there be a role for us in this sting?" I asked.

"You two will be going undercover. Derek, you'll pose as a banker from out of town. Christy, you'll be posing as a call girl," Roy told us.

"I've never posed as a call girl before!" said a shocked Christy.

"This mission will, of course, be dangerous. So, if I were you, I'd be prepared for the worst," Roy added.

"That doesn't sound assuring," I added.

After Roy left, Christy sashayed toward me and sat on my lap. We exchanged a smooch and discussed the future. "What is it, honey?" she asked me with concern.

"Baby, I don't know if we're going to come back from this in one piece. I pray to God that we do. I hope you survive, so you can have the surgery you need to become a full-bodied woman. I hope I survive, too; I see a bright future for us together. You're the sexiest woman I've ever met. Christy, I've always loved you and I always will love you," I whispered lovingly.

"Ever since I began living as a woman, I knew that I've always loved you, Derek. You've made me the woman I am today. I hope we both can survive, so I can have my surgery and we can have that bright future together. Derek, I always will love you, no matter what. You're the sexiest man I've ever met," she cooed.

I reached into the top drawer of my desk and pulled out a felt-lined box. "Would you like to sit in my chair, darling?" I asked her.

"Yes, I would, babe," she whispered before kissing me.

We both got up, then Christy sat down in my chair. I got down on my knees, and asked her, "Christy, will you marry me?"

She was taken aback for a moment, then cried for joy. "Yes, Derek. I'll marry you!" she whispered blissfully. I opened the box and took an engagement ring out of the box. I slipped it on the ring finger of her left hand. "For you, my love. A reminder of how much we really mean to each other, in this moment and all the moments to come throughout the rest of our lives," I whispered. She then gave me a series of tender kisses.

I had a wedding to perform that afternoon; the wedding of Amber Lynn McKenzie and John Edward Thompson. Amber looked a lot younger than her forty-one years and had sex reassignment surgery back in 1979. John was thirty and looked rather boyish. This would be the first marriage for both. Christy took one look at Amber's bridal gown and thought, "That design would be just perfect for my wedding." Once the cere-

mony was finished, Christy had to help Amber with the train of her gown. After the couple left to spend their wedding night together, Christy dug a tight purple Lycra dress out of her closet. She walked into the bathroom to change into the dress and modeled it for me.

“That's so sexy, babe,” I complimented.

“I'm glad you approve, love,” she replied.

“Hmmm...I'll have to dig up my tuxedo from my brother's wedding,” I added.

“That's right! You had to buy your tuxes when he and Rebecca tied the knot,” Christy suddenly remembered.

The next night, we were told to report to police headquarters. Over sixty detectives and private investigators would be involved in the sting operation. Christy reported in her tight purple Lycra dress, while I reported in the tux I wore to my brother's wedding. After the briefing, we got our assignment from Roy.

“Derek, Christy, you will be with me and Dorothy on Maxwell Street. Dorothy has already gotten into disguise as a hooker. You two will go undercover as a couple seeking a threesome. A limousine is in the parking lot; Jenkins will be your driver. Shifty Sheldon's headquarters will be eyeballed and wired for sound. The phones will be wiretapped; we obtained a court order to do so this afternoon. We have a surveillance apparatus set up in the building across the street. The safety of Christy's transgendered sisters and all other women depends on the success of this mission,” Roy explained.

Christy and I held hands as we walked out to the limousine. Jenkins held the door open as we stepped into the limousine. Once we were situated, we began passionately kissing each other; our hands were all over each other's body. Roy and Dorothy were trailing close behind, in an old sedan. We would begin the most dangerous assignment of our careers.



Five

We arrived at our Maxwell Street stakeout around six-thirty. On the way over, we had found out that the other goon Loose Larry had with him at Monica's was arrested at Midway Airport. He was identified as Richard "Slick" Smith; he attempted to board a flight for New York, with his final destination being London.

Christy and I weren't there long when a woman with long, frizzy hair in a pair of blue Spandex pants and a tight pink shirt walked up. "You two care to get into a threesome?" she asked us.

"I'll have to talk it over with my girl," I replied.

I discussed this with Christy and she agreed. We told Jenkins to keep an eye on the area while we were inside.

We walked in with the woman. "What's your name?" I asked her.

"I'm Katrina," she replied, asked me, "What's your name, hon?"

"I'm Derek and this is my girl, Christy," I replied.

We walked into Shifty Sheldon's headquarters and into the basement. We were appalled at what we saw: several women in handcuffs and shackles, being fondled by their male customers. I saw a few of the bound girls fondling the men. "Are all of the bound women transgendered?" I asked Katrina.

"Some are genetic females," she replied.

"Now, I know that Loose Larry doesn't discriminate," Christy added.

She led us to the dungeon in back, where another girl, dressed in a frilly pink satin dress with bobby socks and Mary Jane-style shoes and topped with a curly blonde wig, was being whipped on the buttocks by a genetic female in a black leather bustier and matching miniskirt. She was fondling another man, entirely in the nude. "I thought it was illegal to keep a dungeon in Chicago city limits," I informed Katrina.

"How Shifty Sheldon gets around city ordinances, I'll never know," Katrina added.

Then, she led us upstairs to a secret hiding place, where she and Christy took off all my clothes except for my underwear.

"Mind if I ask how you ended up in this line of work," Christy asked.

"Well, is it okay to talk to you two?" Katrina asked

"Yes, you can confide in us," Christy and I said in unison.

"I had a problematic home life. I was born and raised downstate, in Fairfield. When I was six years old, a deranged man broke into our house one evening, while we were watching television. He was armed with a sawed-off shotgun and an ax. He bludgeoned my mother to death with the ax; blood was all over the carpet. Then he got out his gun and shot my father three times; once each in the back, arm and shoulder, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. Then, he trained his gun on my older sister, Zoe. He shot her once in the forearm before my older brother, Rex, disarmed him with moves he learned in karate school. One kick to the head knocked the man uncon-

scious. The next thing I knew, he got on the phone to the sheriff. Rex suffered a few bruises in the scuffle; I was the only one who wasn't physically injured. But the emotional scars still remain. I was glad that my big brother, Eric, was attending college in Carbondale at the time this tragedy happened," Katrina explained.

"What happened to you, Zoe and Rex as a result?" I asked.

"All three of us underwent counseling after the incident. But we had to go all the way to St. Louis to get it. Zoe and Rex did recover from the tragedy enough to go on to college; both are working on doctorates now. I had the hardest time recovering from this. After graduating from high school, I wound up coming here to Chicago, in hopes of becoming a model. Instead, I became a prostitute. I've been at it for six years now," she explained.

"What about your father?" Christy asked.

"My father is now confined to a wheelchair and lives with my uncle Hy in Hawaii. He's handling the books for his jazz club there," she replied.

"What about the man who killed your mother?" I asked.

"It took the authorities six weeks to catch him. Scotland Yard caught up with him outside Manchester, England. He had been on a drunken rampage in the English countryside, damaging mailboxes, cutting fences and physically assaulting people at random. He was sent back to the United States, where he was convicted of one count of first-degree murder, two counts of first-degree assault and assorted crimes."

After we explained what we were there to do, Christy and I escorted Katrina to an unmarked police car, where Dorothy was waiting to take her to the police station. "This girl's ready to talk," I said to her.

All of a sudden, a tall, redheaded girl in a tight pink Spandex skirt and a pink tank top sashayed up to us. "I'm ready to talk, too," she said in a low-pitched feminine tone.

"Christy, Derek, take her to your limousine," Roy told us.

We took the tall redhead into the limousine and asked Jenkins to drive around town. She sat down in front of us, crossed her long legs, tossed her hair and asked me, "Are you a private dick?"

"That's another word for a private investigator. That's my part-time job now," I replied.

"What's your name?" Christy asked her.

"My name is Candy Jones," she replied.

"Miss Jones, how did you get into this business?" I asked.

"Of course, jobs for women like me were scarce. Very few employers would want to hire a young, preoperative transsexual, especially one who is six-foot-four," Candy replied.

"Go on," Christy added.

"Anyway, I had just started hormone treatments and began to look for work anywhere they could take a girl like me. One night, while I was hanging out at a gay night-

club, I met up with Loose Larry. He promised me jewels and furs, so I took the bait. Little did I know that I would be performing sexual services for male clients. I needed some money for my sex-change operation and this provided me with a decent salary. I've been hoping to get out of the business after I have my operation," Candy added.

"Was it your idea to become a hooker?" I asked.

"No, it wasn't. I had hoped to be a waitress or a stage performer. I didn't want to become involved in the sex industry at all, yet, here I was. I always wore tight dresses and skirts, as well as extremely high heels. The tight fashions, the sexuality...it just isn't me. I was forced into this out of not only necessity, but I was also forced to do this by Loose Larry and his minions. If I had left him, he would have tracked me down and harmed me," Candy replied, trembling with fear.

"I'll tell you what, Candy. I'll order Jenkins to take you across the state line into Indiana. You have a reservation at a hotel in Michigan City, where you will have an everyday wardrobe waiting for you. Your room will be guarded by police officers. Just have a good night's rest," Christy added.

After Jenkins dropped us off back on Maxwell Street, he whisked Candy off to Michigan City. Christy and I walked into a building across the street from Shifty Sheldon's headquarters and monitored surveillance operations. Roy was appalled at what was happening on one of the hidden cameras.

"Christy, Derek, have a look at this," Roy said to us with concern.

"Good freaking grief! What in thunderation is going on here?" I asked.

"This young girl is being raped by an unidentified African-American male," Roy replied.

"Is he armed?" Christy asked.

"Only with a hunting knife," Roy replied.

"Should you send someone in on this?" I asked him.

"I'll radio two officers to take him," Roy replied.

While Christy and I were watching the appalling events on the second floor, Roy was calling a couple of uniformed officers. "Supreme Commander to Rodan and Godzilla," Roy said into a walkie-talkie. "Supreme Commander" was Roy's call sign, while the two uniformed officers, Jack von Schmidt and Tomas Enriquez, used the call signs of Rodan and Godzilla.

"Supreme Commander, this is Rodan, go ahead," von Schmidt said over the radio.

"There's a girl being raped on the second floor, room seven. Your instructions are to move in and apprehend the subject," Roy said into his walkie-talkie.

"Roger. Rodan out," von Schmidt said over the radio.

The two uniformed officers walked very fast into the building and ran up the stairs. They knocked on the door; there was no answer. The officers had no choice but to kick the door in. When they got in, they saw a white, brunette-haired woman in her early twenties with a scratch across her chest above the bustline. The perpetrator, an African-American man in his mid-twenties, had a huge Afro; he was armed with a

hunting knife. "Put your hands up on top of your head, scumbag!" yelled Enriquez. "Drop your weapon, idiot!" added von Schmidt. Enriquez frisked and handcuffed him, while von Schmidt took the woman to an awaiting car for her trip to the hospital.

The victim turned out to be a preoperative transsexual named Kelli Smith, a very close friend of Christy's. When we found out who it was, Christy requested a limousine to take her straight to the hospital. Roy was kind enough to lend her his limousine; his driver was a young Korean-American named Kwan.

Christy arrived at the hospital with a notepad in hand. As soon as Kelli was treated, she met up with Christy. "Christy Wilson?" she asked, not knowing if it was really her.

"Kelli, can we find someplace to talk?" Christy asked her.

"There's a conference room just down the hall," Kelli replied.

The two ladies walked down the hall to a small conference room, where Kelli, still in a hospital gown, sat down. Christy brought her a fresh change of clothing and a pair of flats. She gave her the clothes and asked; "How long have you been working for Loose Larry?"

"I've been working for him for three years now. It's the same promise; furs, jewelry and money. I met up with the fink at a nightclub where I was working as a waitress. The next thing I knew, I was in bed with another man, having sex with him. I made more money as a hooker than I did as a waitress. In the last couple of months, Loose Larry and his associates have been acting kind of strange. When I wanted to leave him for a better offer as a fashion model, he threatened to kill me. Little did I know that he was under investigation at the time. One of his thugs came to my room tonight and tried to rape me. All I got was this scratch above my boobs," Kelli nervously explained while slipping on a white knee-length skirt.

"What's the guy's name?", Christy asked her while finishing a notation on her notepad.

"Pedro Jackson. He's been working for Loose Larry for the past nine months. He's bad news," Kelli replied while putting on a red blouse.

"Has he had any prior criminal record?" Christy asked.

"He spent time in juvenile detention as a teenager; that's all I know of him," Kelli replied with a bit of anger.

"I'll have to check with my connections at the police department and see what I come up with. If I have any more information, I'll let you know," Christy added.

"What am I going to do?" Kelli asked while putting on a white jacket.

"I'll let you stay at my place tonight. I live across the hall from my fiancé," Christy replied.

"You're engaged to be married?" asked a surprised Kelli.

"Yes, I'm planning to get married. His name is Derek; he's my boss. I'm now an administrative assistant with his outreach ministry here in Chicago," Christy replied.

"How did you get into this mess?" Kelli asked.

“Derek was a private investigator before he started this outreach ministry for the transgendered. He was called into this case when one of Loose Larry's former hookers came forward to us about this case,” replied a somewhat exhausted Christy.

“When are you and Derek going to tie the knot?” Kelli asked, somewhat exhausted herself.

“Not until after I have my sex-change operation. I'm set to have it in six months,” Christy replied while Kelli was putting a pair of flats on her feet.

Christy escorted Kelli out the hospital door to a waiting limousine, headed for Christy's apartment. Once inside, both ladies sat down on the couch. Kelli cried as she looked into Christy's face; she then comforted her.

“I'm here now, Kelli. Everything is going to be all right,” Christy assured her.

“I came close to getting raped and killed tonight,” Kelli cried heartbreakingly.

I came back to my place around midnight, after I was relieved of duty for the night. I walked across the hall to Christy's apartment. I knocked on the door when I arrived.

“Is that you, baby?” Christy asked me.

“It's me, my love,” I replied.

“Come in, darling,” Christy added.

I walked over to embrace her. Then I held her tightly with one arm while filing my fingers through her hair with the other hand. “Sweetheart, what's on your mind?”

“I nearly lost a dear friend tonight. Thank God you, Roy and his colleagues rescued her in time. It could have been much worse,” Christy whispered with concern.

“Have you prayed with her yet?” I asked her.

“No, I haven't prayed with her yet,” she replied.

“Where is Kelli now?” I asked her.

“She's in my bedroom,” she replied.

Christy and I walked into the bedroom, where Kelli was sitting on an ottoman. “I saw what happened tonight,” I whispered to Kelli.

“That was a harrowing experience,” cried Kelli, trembling with fear.

“By the way, Kelli, I'm Brother Derek Ballard; I run an outreach ministry for the transgendered here in Chicago. I'm also Christy's future husband,” I added.

“I really need some prayers at this time,” Kelli cried, no longer trembling.

Christy and I linked hands with Kelli and we said a heartfelt prayer for her. We were praying for about fifteen minutes. After we finished praying, Kelli told us that she was hungry and thirsty. So, I went into the kitchen to prepare a ham sandwich and a glass of ice water; I took them straight to Kelli.

Christy's fax machine began receiving some information on the man who tried to rape and murder Kelli. When the transmission finished, I looked at it before calling Christy out of her bedroom to confer.

“The guy who tried to rape and murder Kelli has an extensive criminal past,” I told her.

“What's his record like, honey?” she asked me.

“Pedro Jackson spent two years in juvenile detention for weapons possession and assault when he was a teenager. At age fourteen, he brought a pocket knife to school and wounded six people, including the assistant principal. As soon as he was released from juvenile detention, he had to be homeschooled because no school in the Chicagoland area would take him. He did get his G.E.D., but was back in trouble before he was due to begin classes at a local community college.

Six

The second evening of the stakeout began at police headquarters, where we got our assignments. Christy and I were assigned to the luxury apartment building on Lake Shore Drive where Loose Larry and Shifty Sheldon had their love nests. Both apartments had hidden cameras. Detectives Mortimer and Pinkowski were assigned with us, along with a squad of uniformed officers. Again, Detective Mortimer would be dressed as Stephanie. This time, Stephanie was wearing a midriff-baring shirt, a tight pink skirt, white lace-top stockings and pink high heels. Dorothy was wearing a tight red Spandex dress, while Christy and I would be posing as a couple returning from a night at the theater. I wore a suit and tie, while Christy would wear a navy blue sequined dress.

Once we left police headquarters, we took a limousine to the luxury apartment building. Stephanie and Dorothy got out of the limousine; Stephanie was headed for Shifty Sheldon's love nest, while Dorothy's destination was Loose Larry's love nest. “Steph, are you ready to seduce Shifty Sheldon?” Dorothy asked.

“Yes, I'm ready to seduce him,” Stephanie replied.

Stephanie rung Shifty Sheldon's doorbell first. A redheaded genetic female in a pair of tight Spandex pants and a pink tank top answered the door. “You must be Stephanie Mortimer,” she said.

“I'm Stephanie Mortimer,” she added, then asked her, “Is your boss home?”

“He's in his bedroom, getting ready,” she replied, before adding, “By the way, I'm Paulina Baird.”

“A pleasure to meet you, Paulina,” Stephanie replied.

Shifty Sheldon was in a pair of black leather pants, a black leather suit jacket, white dress shirt, black tie and wing-tip shoes. He had gray hair with a little bit of black left. He approached Paulina and asked her, “Baby, would you like to go to the liquor store for a bottle of scotch?”

“Sure thing, Sheldon honey,” Paulina replied before she took a crisp fifty-dollar bill.

“You must be Stephanie Mortimer,” Shifty Sheldon said.

Stephanie sashayed closer to him and wrapped her arms around him. "What do you have in mind, honey baby?" she cooed.

"How about a long, lovemaking session, broadcast live on the Internet?" Shifty Sheldon asked her.

"That sounds reasonable, sweet stuff," she cooed.

Meanwhile, Dorothy was in Loose Larry's apartment. His assistant was Johnna, a preoperative transsexual. "Loose Larry will be with you shortly. He's got some business to take care of," Johnna said.

"I'll wait for him," Dorothy said.

Loose Larry emerged from his bedroom a few minutes later, wearing a pair of red leather pants, red leather jacket, black dress shirt, red tie and a black pair of wing-tip shoes. He had no sign of gray in his hair. "You must be Dorothy, my date for tonight," Loose Larry said.

Dorothy sashayed toward him. "What do you have in mind, baby?" she cooed.

"How about an evening of the hottest lovemaking you've ever experienced?" he replied.

"Let's go to your bedroom, hot stuff," she said seductively.

Loose Larry took Dorothy by the hand and took her to his bedroom, where they began passionately kissing each other. "You certainly know how to love a man," Loose Larry whispered.

"You're a fabulous kisser," Dorothy whispered.

She began to undo Loose Larry's clothing, while Loose Larry undid her dress. Loose Larry was wearing red boxer shorts, while Dorothy was wearing only pink panties, a matching garter belt and white lace-top stockings. "Would you like to get on your bed, lover?" Dorothy asked.

He carried her to his bed, where he fondled her breasts passionately. After he finished, he got the handcuffs. Dorothy then slipped off her panties, revealing her vagina. He then put one pair of handcuffs on one wrist, while the other pair of handcuffs were put on the other wrist. "What in blazes are you doing, Larry?" Dorothy asked him, rather frightened.

"I'm restraining you, so you can fully enjoy your experience," Loose Larry replied.

"The experience of lovemaking cannot be enjoyed under any kind of restraint," Dorothy yelled.

"Not in my case, honey," he added.

Meanwhile, Shifty Sheldon and Stephanie shared a number of passionate kisses in his bedroom. Then, Stephanie forcibly pushed Shifty Sheldon on his bed. "What was that for, baby?" asked a shocked Shifty Sheldon.

"I'm turning the tables on you, Shifty Sheldon!" Stephanie screamed.

"What do you mean?" Shifty Sheldon asked with a look of puzzlement.

Stephanie took off her skirt and panties and revealed her true self. "You're a GUY!", a disgusted Shifty Sheldon yelled.

She grabbed a billfold out of her purse and showed her badge. "I'm a police officer. Sheldon Lawrence, you're under arrest," she stated.

"I'm Sheldon LaFlamme," he said defiantly.

"You just stated your alias. Your real name is Sheldon Paul Lawrence and you're charged with promotion of prostitution, conspiracy to commit rape, conspiracy to commit murder, unlawful solicitation, soliciting a minor for sexual favors, illegal use of common carriers to promote pornography and illegal use of restraints, namely handcuffs."

Two uniformed officers came into Shifty Sheldon's love nest as soon as Stephanie handcuffed him, read him his Miranda rights and took him to a waiting police car.

In the meantime, Christy and I were in our limousine, looking for a young man named Rob Paulsen. He was a five-foot, nine-inch blonde-haired guy with a flattop haircut, wearing a pair of blue jeans with tears at the knees, a loose-fitting tee shirt and a pair of tennis shoes with holes in them. We spotted him near the band shell at Grant Park, trolling for girls to take to Loose Larry's love nest.

Christy and I stopped kissing for a moment to open the sunroof. Christy poked her head out the opened sunroof and asked Rob, "Are you Rob Paulsen?"

"Yes. And who might you be, baby?" he asked.

It was at that point I opened the door and crawled out of the limousine. I grabbed my identification as a private eye and while she was propositioning him, I snuck around the back of the limousine and then poked above the trunk. "I don't think this woman is worth your time, Paulsen," I said to him.

"And why is that, pig?" he asked me in a derogatory manner.

"Because she is engaged to marry me," I replied.

"And who might you be, fuzz?" he asked.

"I happen to be Derek Ballard. I'm a private investigator," I replied. "Are you working for Loose Larry Hillard or Shifty Sheldon LaFlamme?"

"I work for them, scouting certain areas for desperate girls," he replied.

"You won't find any here, now or ever," I told him in a serious tone.

"How come?" he asked me.

"Because me and my girl are making a citizen's arrest. In other words, you're under arrest," I replied.

"On what trumped-up charge, Junior?" he asked in a hateful tone.

"Promotion of prostitution, unlawful imprisonment, rape, unlawful solicitation, soliciting a minor for sexual favors, attempted kidnapping and assault. These charges aren't trumped up, Paulsen," I explained.

"And what if I refuse to get into those bracelets?" he asked, again in a hateful tone.

“Then I'll have to ask you to put ten fingers on the fender, scumbag!” I yelled before I drew my Australian hunting knife.

He put his hands on the fender. I frisked him to see if he was armed. My search turned up a switchblade and a box of condoms. I told Christy to have our driver, Kwan, call in uniformed officers to take Paulsen into custody.

After Paulsen was taken into custody, Loose Larry was still trying to get Dorothy into handcuffs. Dorothy kept kicking the handcuffs out of his hands, sending them flying across the room. Christy and I saw what was happening to Dorothy on the television monitor inside our limousine and told Kwan to race back to Loose Larry's luxury apartment building on Lake Shore Drive.

When we got there, Shifty Sheldon was being taken into custody. “Derek Ballard! I knew you were somehow behind this!” he yelled.

“You'll learn your lesson when you go down for life,” I added.

Christy and I took the elevator to the eighth floor, where Loose Larry still had Dorothy holed up in his love nest. Stephanie came out of Shifty Sheldon's apartment, none the worse for wear.

“How did you nail him?” Christy asked her, rather amazed.

“I just lifted my skirt and took off my panties. Once he knew, I told him he was under arrest, read the charges and put him in handcuffs,” Stephanie replied.

Five uniformed officers followed us up to the eighth floor. Christy and I pointed them to Loose Larry's love nest. Three of them began searching Shifty Sheldon's place for evidence. Two members of the SWAT team came up with a battering ram to bust into Loose Larry's apartment. Meanwhile, Dorothy was tiring of Loose Larry's attempts to force her into bondage.

After she kicked another pair of handcuffs clear across his love nest, she reached into her purse for her identification. “Do you want to know something else, baby-cakes?” she asked him in a seductive manner.

“What is that, pussycat?”, he asked her, his voice showing signs of fear.

She showed her badge and identification. “I'm a police officer. Lawrence Hillard, you're under arrest!” she replied.

“On what charge, lady?” he replied.

“Promotion of prostitution, conspiracy to commit murder, conspiracy to commit rape, attempted rape, unlawful solicitation, soliciting a minor for sexual favors, possession of pornographic materials, illegal use of common carriers to promote pornography and illegal possession of firearms.”

Once he was in handcuffs, the two SWAT team members were successful in breaking in the door to the love nest. Two uniformed officers arrived just as Dorothy was putting her clothes back on. “I'm also pressing rape charges against him,” Dorothy told the officers.

After Loose Larry was Mirandized, Christy and I came in to see how Dorothy was doing. “I am none the worse for wear,” she told us.

"In other words, you came out of this unscathed," Christy added.

"He did mess up my hair; I'll be able to fix that in a jiffy," Dorothy said to us.

"Shifty Sheldon and one of their associates, Rob Paulsen, are also on their way to jail. Stephanie arrested Shifty Sheldon by using a rather unorthodox method," Christy said to her.

"What, pray tell, was that?" Dorothy asked her.

"She raised her skirt, took off her panties and revealed her true self," I replied.

"I kept kicking every pair of handcuffs he tried to put on me across the room. The last pair went clear across this dwelling," Dorothy added.

"So, that's how he tried to get you to submit. By handcuffing you to his bed," Christy said, somewhat shocked.

"After I kicked the last pair of handcuffs away from him, I identified myself and colared him," Dorothy said with pride.

"Johnna, who was Loose Larry's live-in concubine, has gone to the police with vital information concerning their headquarters on Maxwell Street. With that information, they might be able to raid the place tomorrow night. She left this apartment just after you and Loose Larry started making love, under the pretense of going to the mailbox. I found a note indicative of this," Christy added.

"What about Paulina, Shifty Sheldon's live-in concubine?" Stephanie asked.

"She was going to the liquor store to buy him a bottle of scotch, but instead went over to a friend's apartment on North Michigan to seek safe harbor. She turned over some valuable evidence in Shifty Sheldon's case to her friend, who is a prosecuting attorney. We may have enough to put both of them away for life," I replied.

"Let's hope so, for our sake and for the sake of the city. Chicago has no room for the likes of those two sorry pimps," Dorothy added.

Roy arrived a few minutes later in his red Chrysler convertible, dressed in a tuxedo. "Where did you come from, Roy?" I asked him.

"I was at a family wedding in Elmhurst," he replied.

"Who was getting married?" Dorothy asked.

"My cousin Ernesto just tied the knot with his longtime girlfriend. He and Alexia have known each other since high school; they had been serious for a long, long time," Roy replied.

"Were you in the wedding?" Christy asked him.

"I was the best man," Roy replied, then added, "I hope the downtown area is safe for Alexia and Ernesto's wedding night."

"Two of the most dangerous pimps in Chicago are off the streets tonight, along with one of their goons," Stephanie said.

"I'd take it you and Dorothy sent Loose Larry and Shifty Sheldon to the slammer," Roy added.

“Not only are they behind bars, but Christy and Derek made a citizen’s arrest on Rob Paulsen tonight,” Stephanie then added.

“What’s next?” I asked him.

“The next thing is to raid their headquarters. With Loose Larry and Shifty Sheldon behind bars, that leaves Mistress Nell in charge of the compound,” he replied.

“What’s her record like?” Christy asked.

“I had her record faxed to Derek’s apartment,” he replied, then he added, “I am personally recommending Detectives Mortimer and Pinkowski for the Department’s highest honor. As for Derek and Christy, I’ll recommend them for the Department’s highest civilian honor.”

After Roy finished briefing us, he got back into his car and returned to police headquarters. Dorothy, Stephanie, Christy and I got into the back of our limousine and followed Roy back to police headquarters. Dorothy and Stephanie went back into the police station to change back into their regular outfits, while Christy and I were driven home by Kwan.

When we got back to our apartment building, Christy and I decided to spend the night at my place. I took Mistress Nell’s rap sheet and put it in my “in” box before changing into a pair of olive drab pajama bottoms. Christy went across the hall to her place to pick up her lingerie and a fresh dress for the next day. When she returned, she walked straight to the bathroom, where she changed from the sequined dress into a baby blue babydoll nightie and matching combing coat.

While she was changing, I lit half a dozen candles and took a seat near the window of my apartment, overlooking the lake. I was reflecting on the citizen’s arrest Christy and I made earlier in the evening. When she emerged from the bathroom, she sa-shayed toward the window. She grabbed the remote on the way and started the compact disc changer, loaded with romantic music. “Derek, baby?” she asked in a seductive manner.

“Yes, darling?” I whispered.

“I’m so proud of you for what you did tonight,” she cooed.

“I’m also proud of you for helping me arrest that bum,” I added whisperingly.

We held each other tightly and felt our hearts beating as one. “I’m glad you came out of this alive, my love,” she cooed.

“I’m glad we *both* came out of this alive. Tonight and forever, you are the love of my life,” I whispered.

“Derek, you’re the love of my life, now and forever. You are well worth the wait for me, honey,” she cooed, then whispered, “I love you, sweetheart.”

“I love you, too, babe,” I whispered before we engaged in a passionate kiss. I kissed and necked her with unbridled passion, something I hadn’t done with her prior to that particular evening. Doing it in candlelight made it extra special.

After we blew out the candles, we held hands as we walked to my bedroom. Just before we fell asleep, we were talking in bed.

“Looks like we may be seeing the end of LaFlamme's Girls,” she whispered.

“That ring will be busted before too long, that's for sure, darling,” I said to her whisperingly.

Seven

The sunlight shone in the diamond of Christy's engagement ring when I woke up around nine o'clock the next morning. She was still fast asleep in my arms. I planted a kiss on her cheek. She smiled as she was tenderly roused from her sleep. "Did you do that, honey?" asked a still-groggy Christy.

"I gave you a kiss on the cheek, love," I replied.

"Oh. Good morning, sweetheart," Christy said while rubbing her eyes.

"Good morning, babe," I whispered before exchanging a kiss with her.

I got into my robe, while Christy put on her bathrobe. She took a shower first, while I prepared breakfast. After getting a pitcher of orange juice and a couple bowls of oatmeal on the table, I started to read Mistress Nell's rap sheet. When Christy sat down at the table, with her hair hidden in a towel, we discussed the rap sheet.

"This Mistress Nell has a record almost as long as the three men we helped put away last night," I said to her.

"What's her rap sheet like, baby?" she asked me.

"Mistress Nell's real name is Liesl Maria Glaub. She was born in the former East Germany. She and her family were constantly persecuted by the Communist authorities there because of their apparent pro-Western attitudes. She had an older sister named Nell, who was killed when the Communists broke up a pro-Western demonstration in their hometown of Chemnitz, then known as Karl Marx-stadt. After her parents were jailed for their pro-Western views in 1982, she defected to the United States. She was sixteen years of age and lucky to have relatives in the United States.

"She settled in the Los Angeles area, finishing high school there. After graduation, she began to train as a dominatrix. Her training was interrupted when she got pregnant in late 1983; she married the father of her baby before the birth of their son in the summer of 1984. Her husband, Floyd Lucas, had no idea he was marrying a dominatrix-in-training. She resumed training after the birth and finished before she became pregnant again in 1985. After she gave birth to their daughter in 1986, she took the name of Mistress Nell and began to forcibly turn Floyd into a woman. The state was made aware of the situation and stripped them of custody of their two children," I explained.

"What about her parents?" she asked.

"Mistress Nell's parents, Lorenz and Sylvie Glaub, were expelled from East Germany in 1985. They also came stateside and settled in southern California. Lorenz took a job teaching German at a local university, while Sylvie became a homemaker. She originally had custody of her grandchildren after Liesl and Floyd were stripped of custody," I replied.

"What happened to the children?" she asked me with a touch of concern.

"Sylvie was arrested six months after taking custody of the children. She had been caught dealing crack cocaine. She spent eight years in prison for it. Their children

were placed in the care of two separate foster families before they were legally adopted six years ago. Their adoptive parents are a public radio personality and his transsexual wife, a top bridal fashion model," I replied.

"What became of Mistress Nell's marriage?" she inquired.

"According to this, Floyd sued her for divorce in 1987, claiming mental and emotional cruelty for forcibly feminizing him. The divorce became final in 1989; the Mistress relocated to the San Francisco area in 1990. He married a young post-op transsexual, Angela Paul, two years ago; they're planning to adopt a child," I replied.

She looked at the second page of Mistress Nell's rap sheet. "It says that her mother is divorced, too. What happened there?" she asked.

"Lorenz Glaub sued Sylvie for divorce in 1992, citing irreconcilable differences. When she got out of prison, she wasn't the same person. Embittered by her divorce, she spent the last eight months of her life living with her younger sister. She died of a massive stroke last year," I explained.

"What about Mistress Nell's criminal record?" she asked.

"Mistress Nell's first brush with the law came in 1988, when she was arrested for inciting a riot at an alternative lifestyle nightclub in West Hollywood. She spent six months in the Los Angeles County jail for that offense. In 1990, she was arrested in Santa Ana for assaulting a man with a bullwhip; he refused to obey a command to put on a frilly dress. She spent two years in the women's slammer in California for this offense. Later, she was arrested walking down one of the concourses at Sky Harbor International Airport topless. She spent a year in the Arizona women's slammer for this. In 1995, she was arrested again for public indecency; this time, it was in Dallas. She was caught taking a bathroom break in Dealey Plaza; she got an eighteen-month sentence in the women's wing of the Dallas County jail for that one. After her release, she relocated to Chicago, where she has been working as a dominatrix for the last two and a half years," I explained.

"What's her record like in Chicago?" she then inquired.

"As far as Chicago, Cook County and the State of Illinois are concerned, she's had a clean record since taking up residence in Chicago," I replied.

I looked at the time; it was almost ten o'clock. Christy got the papers into a manila envelope, while I went to my bedroom to get a white short-sleeve dress shirt, red tie, a pair of khaki pants, khaki socks and a pair of deep burgundy dress shoes. I took them into the bathroom, neatly hung them on the door and walked into the shower. Christy changed into her pink nylon dress with a lace-trimmed hem at the skirt.

I had a busy day ahead of me including a three o'clock wedding involving a postoperative female-to-male transsexual laborer and a five-foot-tall genetic female lawyer. I also prayed with several transgendered folks who were going through tough times. Christy prayed with Kelli, who was still looking for a straight job.

When I got back to my office around four o'clock, Christy told me about Kelli's situation. Karen Diller, the owner of a nearby bridal shop. Karen was looking for someone to help her with modeling and stocking bridal and formal gowns. Since Kelli had

indicated to Christy that she was interested in studying to be a bridal consultant, I got on the phone to Karen.

“Are you still looking for someone to help you out, Karen?” I asked her.

“As a matter of fact, I still am looking for someone to help me out. It’s been just me and my sister, Sara, since our assistant quit last month,” Karen replied.

“I have someone in my office that's not only interested in working at your shop, but also interested in training to be a bridal consultant,” I added.

“What's her name?” Karen asked.

“Her name is Kelli Smith; she's a friend of my fiancée's,” I replied.

“You're planning to get married, Derek?” Karen asked, rather surprised.

“Yes, I am, but not until my fiancée has her sex-change operation,” I replied calmly.

“Well, as you know, I am very transgender-friendly; so is my sister, Sara. We have a very transgender-friendly policy at this shop,” Karen added.

“Should I send Kelli over?” I asked.

“Send her over as soon as possible,” Karen replied in a businesslike manner.

When I got off the phone, Christy walked in to the office. “Darling, would you send Kelli in?” I asked her.

“Sure thing, babe,” she replied.

Kelli walked into the office, in a white skirt, matching jacket, blue blouse, a pair of white stockings and blue and white high heels. “Kelli, we've lined up a job interview for you,” I said to her.

“Where at?” Kelli asked.

“It’s at Beautiful Brides and Belles by Karen down the street. It's located two blocks south of here. You’ll find it on the left; it’s the shop with two mannequins in the window. One is dressed in a bridal gown and one is in a party dress. There are chartreuse curtains in the window and the store’s name on the awning over the door. You can't miss it,” Christy replied.

“If you land the job, you'll have me to thank for it. Karen Diller and I go back to our high school days,” I added.

After Kelli left for Karen’s bridal shop, Christy and I were preparing to leave for police headquarters; we were participating in a briefing on the raid we were to accompany the police on that night. I changed into a red golf shirt, while Christy changed into a pink tee shirt, a pair of blue stonewashed designer jeans and white flats. This time I drove my car, a brand new Pontiac Bonneville I had taken delivery of that afternoon, down to police headquarters, where Roy was waiting for us.

“Derek, buddy! Tonight's the night!” an excited Roy said.

“Let's hope tonight is the night,” I added.

Christy and I followed Roy into the briefing room, where the commander of the SWAT team, Lieutenant Carl Lawrence was giving the briefing. “With the arrests of

Robert Paulsen, Lawrence Hillard, alias Loose Larry Hillard and Sheldon Lawrence, alias Shifty Sheldon LaFlamme, last night, the time has come to raid their headquarters, located on Maxwell Street,” Lt. Lawrence said with the air of a professor.

“We analyzed the evidence seized from Loose Larry’s and Shifty Sheldon’s respective apartments and devised a plan of attack. Derek and Christy will be undercover as prospective clients. Derek will be wearing a special watch; when he touches a button on his watch, it will tell us to be ready to raid the place. Christy will be wearing a special bracelet; a touch of a button, disguised as a diamond, on the top of the bracelet will signal us to move in. We will then move in, make arrests and seize evidence vital to our case against the prostitution ring known as LaFlamme’s Girls,” Roy explained.

“We will cordon off a one square-block area around the LaFlamme's Girls building while we allow the police to have exclusive access to the area. We have investigated LaFlamme's Girls for six months now; this raid, if successful, will bring a climax to the investigation,” Lt. Lawrence continued.

“The plan is this. We will have four squads of officers ready to break in. There are doors in front and back, as well as on each side of the building. We will also have sharpshooters atop all the buildings in the area and several members of the SWAT team rappelling off the LaFlamme's Girls building. It is a three-story building with a basement. After Christy hits the button on her bracelet, we will rush our officers in to raid the establishment. Each squad may call for backup. Several paddywagons will be stationed in that one-block area on Maxwell Street, ready to send those arrested to the city jail. Each officer will be heavily armed with machine guns, police revolvers and billy clubs and supplied with as many as twenty pairs of handcuffs,” Roy continued.

“Are there any questions?” Lt. Lawrence asked us.

“How many arrests do we expect to make?” I asked.

“We expect to make several arrests tonight,” Roy replied and asked us if there were any more questions. When there weren’t any, the officers left to get their weapons and other equipment, while Roy escorted Christy and I to a waiting limousine. With Jenkins on vacation, Kwan was our driver.

“Glad to serve you two again,” Kwan said in a mild Korean accent.

We waited for a few minutes while a police escort was getting ready to go. Six motorcycles would escort us to Shifty Sheldon’s headquarters, now under the command of Mistress Nell. When the six officers started their motorcycles, we were on our way to the seediest part of the South Side.

We arrived just after seven o'clock and walked right in. Mistress Nell was there to greet us. A five-foot, nine-inch, larger-framed woman with strawberry blonde hair styled in a bun, she was wearing a sleeveless, tight, black leather dress with fishnet stockings and black stilettos. “What's your names, dearies?” Mistress Nell asked us in a thick German accent.

“I'm Derek and this is Christy. We're looking for a good time tonight,” I replied.

“Well, you came to the right place,” Mistress Nell added.

Mistress Nell showed us the entire operation. We were taken to the basement dungeon, where a forcibly crossdressed person was handcuffed to a bed. "May we have a word alone with this person?" Christy asked her.

"I'll be upstairs, in the office. I've had a lot of work piled upon me since Larry and Sheldon were arrested last night," Mistress Nell said.

I sat down on a stool next to the bed and asked the person's name. "I'm Marty Johnson," he replied.

"Marty, I'm Brother Derek Ballard and this is my assistant, Christy Wilson," I said, then asked him, "How did you get in this predicament?"

"Well, it's like this. I'm an investment banker, working out of offices in the Loop. I'm also a singer in a rock band here in Chicago. Two days ago, I was on my way home from work. I had just gotten off a commuter train near O'Hare International Airport and that was when two ladies came up from behind, in leather dresses, fishnet stockings and stilettos and they knocked me cold. The next thing I knew, I had my hair restyled in a feminine fashion, had my suit replaced with a tight Spandex dress, had prosthetic female anatomy on me and I was forced to perform sexual acts on other men. The ladies gave me the feminine name of Susan. I've resented every minute of this," Marty explained.

"Are you married or involved in a steady relationship?" Christy asked him.

"I just broke up with my ex-girlfriend two weeks ago," Marty replied.

"Was your ex a genetic female or a male-to-female transsexual?" I asked.

"My ex-girlfriend was a genetic female. We had dated for less than a year; we met through mutual friends in a singles group. Within the last month, we had doubts about our relationship. She had also been involved in a lesbian relationship with another genetic female; when I found out about it, I confronted her with it. She said that it was over between us. Somehow, I have the feeling she was involved in this," he explained.

"What's your ex-girlfriend's name?" Christy asked.

"Holly Dietrich," he replied.

"Mistress Holly?" I asked him.

"The very same," he replied, trembling with fear.

Just as I was getting the answer from him, I received a call on my cell phone from Roy. "Mistress Holly has just been arrested on the North Side," Roy informed me.

"What did she do now?" I asked him.

"She tried to assault a man coming from a ball game at Wrigley Field," he replied.

"Thanks for the information," I said before wrapping up the conversation.

"What is it, honey?" Christy asked me.

"Mistress Holly has just been arrested on the North Side. She tried to assault a man coming from this afternoon's ball game at Wrigley Field. She's being held without bond at the city jail," I replied.

All of a sudden, I heard a scream from one of the dungeon cells. A preoperative transsexual had just been whipped by another dominatrix, Mistress Ursula. She was a five-foot, three-inch African-American lady. "Why did you do that?" Christy asked her.

"Because she disobeyed me," Mistress Ursula replied.

It was then that I hit the button on my watch, telling the police to stand by. Another dominatrix, a five-foot, four-inch Asian-American they called Mistress Kei, walked by to check on her slave. Her crossdressing slave was asleep in the next cell. Christy pressed the big button on her bracelet.

Christy and I ran upstairs, where we found Marty's male attire neatly hung in a closet near the stairwell. She took his suit down to him and helped him remove his makeup. In the meantime, I ran to the door to await one squad of uniformed officers and members of the SWAT team.

When the first squad got to the door, I whispered, "In here, ladies and gentlemen." Roy led the squad through the front door. "Spread out!" Roy exclaimed to the first squad.

I pointed to three of the officers to go downstairs and rescue the slaves from their dungeon. One officer, Officer Tom Lobkowicz and I met Christy downstairs, where she was helping Marty get the last of his feminine makeup off. When he emerged, he was wearing his black suit, but his hair was still styled in a feminine manner. "I think it's time I got a crew cut," said an exhausted Marty.

"Officer, make sure he gets a crew cut," I said.

"We happen to have a barber with us. I'll make sure of it," added Lobkowicz.

Roy led several officers up to the office, where Mistress Nell was keeping the financial records on a computer. "Freeze!" exclaimed Roy, pointing an automatic pistol at her. She slapped Roy's gun out of his hand and said in a hateful tone, "Point that stupid gun somewhere else!"

Several other officers pointed automatic rifles at her while Roy picked up his automatic pistol. "Mistress Nell, this place is being raided and you're under arrest," Roy said in a serious tone.

"For what?" Mistress Nell asked.

"Aiding and abetting in the promotion of prostitution, unlawful imprisonment, rape, possession of pornographic materials, soliciting a minor for sexual favors, conspiracy to commit murder, assault, unlawful solicitation and illegal possession of a firearm," Roy explained.

One of the SWAT team members handcuffed Mistress Nell and took her to an awaiting paddywagon. The other two Mistresses were arrested as well, facing a variety of charges. The raid resulted in sixty-seven arrests, mostly male pimps. Some of the call girls were arrested as well, charged with prostitution. Detectives moved in and seized evidence, including computers, filing cabinets and other items.

Soon after our arrival at the police station, Roy escorted Christy, the lead officers in the raid and me to a briefing room, where we had a press conference. The officers an-

swered the reporters' questions about the raid. But, one reporter asked me about the exploitation of transgendered women.

“Since I started my ministry two years ago, one of the things I have been focusing on is the exploitation of transgendered women, especially by the sex industry. Shifty Sheldon LaFlamme and Loose Larry Hillard are part of a much larger problem in the transgendered community. This is especially true of the porno film industry; they really overpromote transgendered women, especially transsexuals, as sexual curiosities. What our society fails to teach them is that transgendered people, regardless of whether they are male-to-female or female-to-male, are just like you and me. They go out and make an effort to make an honest living. They're part of our society. I believe that God made them transgendered; they're special people to Him and He loves them the way they are. The real transgendered community consists of everyday people, just like you and me. I saw ministry to the transgendered as a mandate that I had to answer.” I guess that was a good answer as the jaded members of the press actually applauded me.

Later, when we were alone, Christy asked me what plans I had for the two of us. Assuming we managed to stay alive, that is.

“Hmmm...good question, babe. Let's get married in the spring. After all, it'll take several weeks to heal from the surgery. Besides, you need to be fitted for a wedding dress. We also have to select witnesses for our wedding, invite guests and get all the arrangements made for our wedding,” I explained.

Later, on the plane, she said: “I'd like your honest opinion on something.”

“What would you like your opinion about, darling?” I asked her.

“When you and I met, I was still living as a guy. Did you like me as a guy, or have you always been attracted to me as a girl?” she asked.

“To tell you the truth, I've always wanted you to be a woman. When we met, you had just started hormone treatments. Once you began living full-time as a woman, I started thinking of you as more than a friend and coworker. The more your body assumed a feminine shape, the more I fell in love with you. Now, as you complete the journey that we both have taken, I know that I will love you now and forever,” I whispered.

“I love you, too, Derek, in this moment and in the moments to come, for all eternity,” Christy whispered before we exchanged a tender kiss.

When we got into Portland the next day, Christy and I claimed our luggage and checked into a hotel near the airport. We would be staying there overnight before she went into the hospital for her surgery. We would have a room with two beds.

Later that evening, Christy and I were standing in front of a window overlooking the Columbia River. I was in a pair of pajama bottoms, while she was in a red nightgown with a matching combing coat. “Let's be honest now, baby. Will you be even more attracted to me after my surgery?” she asked me.

“Of course I will, sweetie. After all, it's the complete woman that you're going to be that's the attraction for me,” I whispered.

“Will you promise to hold off on making love to me until I'm healed from my surgery, at the earliest?”, she asked.

“Although I prefer waiting until our wedding night, I promise to hold off on love-making until you're healed from the surgery,” I said quietly. “But, that doesn't mean I can't share passionate kisses with you,” I added.

“Baby, you're so good to me,” she cooed before we exchanged one of those passionate kisses.

The next morning, Christy changed into a floral print dress, a pair of white stockings and a pair of white high heels. I decided to get into a suit and tie for her trip to the hospital. “You look smashing, my love!” I exclaimed in awe.

“You look handsome, babe,” she whispered before we shared a kiss.

We checked out of the hotel and made our way to the hospital. At eight-thirty, Christy was admitted to the hospital. We were in the hallway after she paid her bill; I was sitting on a table, while Christy was in a wheelchair. The surgeon, a tall, brown-haired man in his early forties named Terry Muller, approached us.

“Christina Heather Wilson?” he asked her.

“Just call me Christy,” she replied.

“Christy, I'm Dr. Terry Muller. I will be performing your surgery today,” he added.

“Dr. Muller, this is Derek Ballard, my fiancé,” Christy said in an introductory manner.

“A pleasure to meet you, Doctor,” I said to him.

“You two must have had some excitement before you came up here,” Dr. Muller said to us.

“We helped reign in a prostitution ring that was exploiting transgendered women,” I said with pride.

“Derek runs an ecumenical ministry that reaches out to the transgendered where we live,” Christy added.

“Mr. Ballard, if you can wheel Miss Wilson this way, we'll take her to get prepared for surgery,” he said.

I took Christy into the room to be prepared for surgery. A nurse came to help her undress and shave her genital hair for surgery. “I'll be there when you wake up, babe,” I promised her.

“I'll hold you to that,” she added before we kissed. It would be the last time I would see her for six hours.

After she was taken into the operating room, I went to the chapel to pray for the success of her surgery. Around noon, I went to the cafeteria to have lunch. I had a ham sandwich, bean and bacon soup and a garden salad with ranch dressing. Then, I called the office to see how things were. The only thing happening was that people had come in for prayer and counseling.

Around three o'clock, Christy was taken into a private room. I would have the bed next to hers. She woke up around five o'clock. "Honey, is that you?" she asked me, quite groggy from the anesthesia.

"It's me, my love," I replied before planting a kiss on her forehead.

"I feel something new in my body," she said quietly.

"Is it something you have always wanted?" I asked her whisperingly.

"Yes, it is," she whispered.

I grabbed a mirror out of her makeup case and she pulled the sheets up. It was covered in bandages but I knew that the surgery was a success.

"Darling, I have good news," I whispered.

"What's that?" she asked whisperingly.

"Your operation was a success," I added.

She would spend the next ten days in the hospital, recovering from her surgery. The more time we spent together, the more we discussed our future. Still, there was one thing sticking out in our minds from the bust.

It was the fifth day of her hospital stay. "Will we be asked to testify against Loose Larry and Shifty Sheldon when they go on trial?" she asked me.

"I'll most likely be subpoenaed to testify in the trial; I don't know about you, though. They haven't set a trial date yet," I replied.

One of Christy's transsexual friends popped in for a visit. "Christy Wilson?" she asked her.

"Sherri Mueller?" Christy asked her.

"How are you doing, girl?" Sherri excitedly asked.

"I'm doing good, thanks. You're still looking as youthful as ever," Christy complimented.

"Who's the young man holding your hand?" Sherri asked her.

"Sherri Mueller, this is my fiancé, Derek Ballard. Derek, this is my friend Sherri," Christy said in introduction.

"A pleasure to meet you, Sherri," I said in a mild manner before shaking her hand.

"I've heard a lot about you, Derek. Your work in ministry to the transgendered community, as well as your help in rescuing a large number of transgendered women from their exploitation by Loose Larry, Shifty Sheldon, Mistress Nell and their scrubs has made us proud of you," Sherri added.

"I work for improving the quality of life, both in a spiritual and a social sense, in the transgendered community," I added, before asking her, "How did you and Christy meet?"

"It was a long, long time ago. Christy was still living as a guy back then and she was unsure of whether or not to go full-time as a woman. At the time, I had just received final approval for surgery. She was not only looking at the possibility of going

full-time as a woman, but also looking for a job in which she could easily transition on the job. I went through the local transgender support group and found that an ecumenical ministry for the transgendered had started in the Chicago area. So, I pointed her in your direction,” Sherri explained before asking me how I met her.

“Well, Christy and I have you to thank, in part, for bringing us together. Christy was still living as a man when we started working together. The first day she came to work as a woman, I started to realize that we would potentially be more than friends and coworkers. The more feminine she became, the more I realized I was madly in love with her. Luckily, the feeling was mutual. My former life as a private eye came calling on occasion. We became engaged before we helped the police break up a prostitution ring that was exploiting transgendered women. We realized that not only did we want to spend the rest of our lives together, but also that God wanted us to spend the rest of our lives together,” I explained.

“So, you two also have God to thank for bringing you two together,” Sherri added.

“Derek has been the man I've been looking for all my life and he's said that I've been the girl he's been looking for all his life,” Christy added, smiling amorously at me.

“How have your families been about this?” Sherri asked with the air of a reporter.

“Her family has been unconditionally supportive of our relationship. At first, they weren't too crazy about their youngest son becoming their oldest daughter. She was the third of four children; she has two older brothers and a younger sister. As time went on, they were more supportive of her. As for my family, my twin brother Eric, my sister-in-law Rebecca and both of my sisters, Paige and Laura, were surprised that I was dating a transsexual woman; they have always been supportive of my relationship with Christy. My parents were rather nonchalant at first, but eventually became supportive,” I explained.

“How old are your siblings and your sister-in-law?” Christy asked me, wanting to refresh her memory.

“Paige is thirty years old, Laura is twenty-six and Rebecca is twenty-two,” I replied.

“I've heard of Paige Ballard, she's still one of the hottest models in the world,” Sherri added.

“She's still in demand with various fashion designers; she owns the agency she works for. Laura, on the other hand, is one of the top fashion photographers in the business. They're still looking for their Prince Charmings; while Eric and I have found our princesses,” I added.

“I hope Paige and Laura will find themselves a pair of good men someday,” Sherri said before the phone rang.

“Will you excuse me, Sherri?” I asked her.

“Sure thing, Derek,” she replied.

I picked up the phone. “Hello?” I asked.

“Derek, this is Roy. How are you doing?” he asked me.

“I'm doing great, Roy,” I replied before asking how he was doing.



“I'm doing great, Derek. I've got news for you and Christy,” he added.

“What is it?”

“Mistress Nell, Shifty Sheldon and fifty-five of the defendants in the bust back in May have all pleaded guilty to the charges brought against them. Many of them got off with sentences of ten to fifteen years apiece; they are ineligible for parole until they serve eighty-five percent of their sentences,” he explained.

“And what about Mistress Nell and Shifty Sheldon?” I inquired.

“Mistress Nell and Shifty Sheldon both got life in prison, without any chance for parole,” he replied, then added: “Loose Larry and seven others are still going on trial for their crimes. We may have to call you to testify in Loose Larry's case.”

“I hope his trial is a short one,” I added.

“By the way, how's Christy doing?” he asked.

“She's doing fine, five days after the operation. She's visiting with one of her transsexual friends. We'll be coming home in another five days. After we come home, Christy and I will start planning our wedding,” I replied.

“Well, she has my best wishes as she recovers from her surgery. Talk to you later, man!”, Roy added.

“Take care, pal!” I added before hanging up the phone.

“Who was that, honey?” Christy asked me.

“That was Roy. He had some news for us,” I replied.

“What happened?” Christy asked.

“Mistress Nell, Shifty Sheldon and fifty-five others pleaded guilty to their part in the LaFlamme's Girls prostitution ring,” I replied.

"I'm glad they finally got that jerk LaFlamme!" Sherri exclaimed with relief.

"Mistress Nell and Shifty Sheldon both got life sentences without parole; the others got sentences ranging from ten to fifteen years in prison," I added.

"I take it that super jerk Hillard will be tried for his offenses," Sherri added.

"He will. I may have to testify. No date has been set for his trial," I said in a rather serious tone.

"Honey, you'll help the judge put him away," Christy added before we exchanged a smooch.

"I'm going to visit several other transsexuals who have just had surgery. I thought I'd touch base with Christy and leave her this information," Sherri informed us.

"It's a real pleasure to meet you; feel free to drop by when you're in Wrigleyville," I said to Sherri.

"Derek, it's a real joy. I definitely will stop by when you get back to town," Sherri added.

Christy and I came home on November 16. Now, I had an added event to plan for: testifying against Loose Larry in his trial. But, the wedding would come first. On the plane home, we decided to tie the knot on May 27, 2000.

Eight

On February 14, 2000, I found a special delivery letter in my “in” box at the office. No, it wasn't a valentine from Christy. It was a subpoena from the court.

“What is it, babe?” Christy cooed.

“I've been subpoenaed to testify in the trial of Loose Larry Hillard. I will be testifying against him on March 3. I'll be the last witness to testify for the prosecution,” I replied.

“How have the trials gone for the other nine?” she asked me.

“Two of them have already been convicted of their crimes; three more have pleaded guilty, one is having her case deliberated by a jury and the trials for the other three are still going on,” I replied.

“At least they're not exploiting and terrorizing women anymore,” Christy added.

I had to be in court by nine o'clock on the morning of March 3. I was lucky that my calendar had been clear that day. Upon my arrival at eight-thirty, I ran into the lawyer who'd be handling the case for the prosecution. She was at the door to the courtroom. “Ebony, I'd like to present to you my fiancée, Christina Wilson. Christy, this is Ebony Kleven, attorney for the prosecution,” I added.

“A pleasure to meet you, Christy,” Ebony said with a hint of pride.

“The pleasure is mutual, Ebony,” Christy added.

Roy caught up with us before we were asked to enter the courtroom. He had the day off. “Don't tell me they've subpoenaed you two,” he said to us.

“I was the one subpoenaed. Christy wasn't,” I added.

“Who is this nice fellow?” Ebony asked.

“Detective Roy Martinez, this is Ebony Kleven, representing the prosecution. Ebony, this is Roy, the detective who led the investigation,” I replied.

“It's my pleasure to meet you at last. I've heard so much about you,” Ebony said admiringly.

“The feeling is mutual, Ebony. I'm glad someone like you has the guts to take on a scumbag like Loose Larry,” Roy added.

“The attorney representing him is a real loser, too. He's lost his last three cases,” Ebony added.

We were called into the courtroom at approximately nine o'clock. Judge Susana Lopez, who was presiding over the case, had developed a reputation for being one of the toughest judges in the country. It was nine-fifteen when she announced: “Ms. Kleven, call your witness.”

“Your Honor, I call Derek Ballard to the stand,” Ebony announced to the court.

I walked up to a spot in front of the witness stand, then Ebony, holding a Bible, asked me: “Do you swear that the evidence you will give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?”

“I do,” I replied.

The first question I was asked by Ebony was: “Mr. Ballard, what brought the defendant's actions to your attention?”

“It was the afternoon of May 1, 1999. A postoperative transsexual client of mine walked in to my office while I was praying with a woman who was about to undergo a sex-change operation. She told me about his starting to treat his transgendered employees badly . One of them mentioned that he didn't treat his genetic female call girls too well, either. He promised them furs, expensive clothes and cars if they took his offers; they didn't take the bait,” I replied.

“In one case, you were able to rescue one girl from the defendant's trap. When did this come?” was her next question.

“She was being raped by one of the defendant's pimps. I was with Detective Roy Martinez that evening; he ordered a pair of police officers into the building. The next thing we knew, the man attempting to rape the girl was arrested. We later found out that the girl he was trying to rape was a transsexual. She's a very close friend of my fiancée's; we helped her get a job at a bridal shop that a friend of mine owns,” I replied.

“Is she still employed there today?” Ebony asked.

“She is now a part-owner of the shop and is preparing to have her sex-change operation this spring,” I replied.

After asking a few more questions, Ebony announced that she had no further questions for me. Loose Larry's attorney, a court-appointed attorney named Jack Pauly, approached the witness stand.

“I have one question for you, Mr. Ballard. How did my client threaten the ladies in question?” Jack asked.

“He threatened them by tying them up, beating them with belts, bullwhips and other things that have the potential to cause bodily injury. This was if they don't do what he says,” I replied.

“No further questions, Your Honor,” Jack said to the judge.

“Mr. Ballard, you may step down from the stand,” Susana said.

We took a break before hearing closing arguments in the case. “What do you think the outcome will be?” Ebony asked us while we were waiting outside.

“I think he'll be eventually found guilty,” I replied.

“I agree with my honey,” Christy added.

It was after twelve noon when we were recalled to the courtroom. “Miss Kleven, please deliver your closing arguments,” Susana told her.

“Your honor, Lawrence Hillard has been a menace to society throughout his life. His record clearly states that he is a hardened criminal. He has robbed, shoplifted, assaulted, raped and promoted prostitution. The defendant is a man who is unable to control his sexual impulses, his tendencies to violence and who has not been able to kick a drug and drinking habit. The last straw was his mistreatment of women, both genetic and transgendered, in his position as a pimp. He has had several chances to

rehabilitate himself; he has not taken advantage of any of these chances. It is the opinion of the prosecution that Lawrence Hillard cannot be rehabilitated. The only way society can be satisfied, in my humble opinion, is to have the defendant jailed for life," she explained to the jury of three men and nine women.

Then, it was Jack's turn. He faced the jury and said: "What we have here is an attempt by the prosecution to assassinate the character of my client. Lawrence Hillard has been trying to rehabilitate himself for the past several years. He had a difficult life and he has done everything he could to try to deal with the effects of it. If you put him away, you will be committing as great a crime against him as he has been accused of," he told the skeptical-looking jury.

With that, the trial was over. The jury apparently heard all they needed to as they only took just over an hour to deliberate. The verdict: guilty on all counts. We were all relieved. One more scumbag would be off the streets. I was proud that I had had a part in his conviction. Christy looked as if she wanted to cry from happiness.

Later that evening, when we were alone, Christy asked me, "Honey, are you nervous about meeting my folks?"

"Well, you haven't told me much about your family," I replied.

"Babe, I'm an only child. My parents had me rather late. When I was born, my mother was thirty-nine; my father was forty-four. When I was younger, my parents disapproved of my dressing as a girl. I used to dress in my mother's dresses and lingerie when I was younger. It helped me build my feminine identity as I got older. When I graduated from high school, I left my home in Duluth and came here to Chicago to go to school. I supported myself by modeling both men's and women's clothes and working as a clerk in a department store. I kept in touch with my parents regularly; they had started to slowly grow more supportive of my dressing as a woman as I got older. When I was diagnosed as being transsexual, they told me that I would always have their full support. They were and will be even prouder when I take you as my husband in five days," she explained.

"My parents have not taken sides on the issue of my dating, let alone marrying, a transsexual woman. They feel that it was best left to me to make the decision on marrying a genetic female or a male-to-female transsexual. When Eric and Rebecca began dating, my parents didn't have much of an issue with him dating a much younger woman. It took a while for her divorced parents to get used to the idea of their daughter dating an older man. As you know, my parents haven't met you yet and neither have my sisters, brother and sister-in-law," I added.

"Are they looking forward to it?" she asked.

"They're really looking forward to meeting you," I replied.

"My parents are really looking forward to meeting you," she added.

That evening, Christy's parents arrived at Midway Airport from Miami, where they were spending their retirement. She embraced both of them before she directed them to me.

“Charles and Cathy Wilson, this is my fiancé, Derek Ballard. Derek, these are my parents, Charles and Cathy Wilson,” Christy said in an introductory manner.

“A pleasure to meet you at last,” I added.

“It's indeed a pleasure to meet the man who will be marrying our beautiful daughter,” Charles then added.

“You made an excellent selection, Christy,” Cathy said to her.

We went over to a downtown hotel, where her parents checked in. I helped her parents with their luggage. Once we were in their hotel room, I helped put their bags on the bed. Once they finished unpacking, it was down to the restaurant for some tea.

“Christy tells me you're not the only one in the family who has had to deal with a rather odd situation,” Charles said after we ordered our drinks.

“That's true, Charles. My twin brother, Eric, is married to a woman fourteen years his junior. He also had problems meeting women more his age before meeting his wife,” I added.

“How did your brother and his wife meet?” Cathy asked.

“They were students at a college downstate. He had just started to finish his junior year, while she was a freshman. At the time they met, she was eighteen and he was thirty-two. He had not had a steady girlfriend in six years at the time they met. He had been through a broken engagement brought on by the divorce battle between his ex-fiancee's parents. Anyway, Eric and Rebecca were good friends at first, but it became more and more intimate as time went on. She had dated and dumped three other guys before she started dating him in the middle of her junior year; they got serious soon thereafter. He took a lighter class load than she did, therefore, they graduated at the same time. It was about the time they graduated that he proposed marriage to her. While my parents were thrilled that he would finally get married, her mother was especially surprised. As she said later, it was the sweetest surprise either one of her daughters had ever given her. They got married last year; they found out last week that they're expecting their first child around Christmas of this year. Both have just been transferred to St. Louis. Rebecca is a physical therapist, while Eric has just started his own business,” I explained.

“What business does he own?” Charles asked me.

“He runs a deejay service,” I replied.

“How did you and Derek meet?” Cathy asked her.

“I was still living as a man when I met him. He had been looking for an office assistant after I graduated from college. When I told him that I was a transsexual, he was very understanding. He even prayed with me. When I began living full-time as a woman, I began to realize that the more feminine I became, the more attracted he became to me. The hormones had just kicked in when I realized I was in love with him and he with me. We have established a loving, intimate relationship; not even my sex change and his past life as a private eye got in the way of true love. Before we helped out on a prostitution bust, Derek asked me to be his bride. He was with me when I

had my sex-change operation last November. We love each other very dearly and we're looking forward to our lives together as husband and wife," Christy explained.

"I'm glad you've finally found a man who will love you, no matter what," Charles added.

The next day, Eric and Rebecca arrived by car from St. Louis. Eric had his deejay equipment crammed into the trunk of their car; they had their bags in the back seat. They knocked on the door of the apartment around two o'clock in the afternoon.

"Eric, Rebecca, come on in," I said to them before they walked in.

They sat down on the couch, while I prepared some hot Earl Gray tea for them. I brought three cups of hot tea out; one each for me, my brother and sister-in-law.

"How do you feel about becoming a married man at last?" Eric asked me.

"As a matter of fact, I feel just as giddy about marrying Christy as you did when you and Rebecca got married. When I met her, I did not know that this would develop into such a loving relationship. Now that I'm marrying her, I'm glad I am finally off the market," I replied.

"What made you decide to marry a transsexual?" Rebecca asked me.

"Well, I had not been as successful with genetic females as Eric had been. I had dated genetic females exclusively until the opportunities started to dry up after I turned twenty-five. After breaking off a long-term relationship with a developmentally disabled woman, I started dating a mix of younger genetic females and male-to-female transsexuals who were near my age or older. After tiring of the life of a private eye and starting my ministry, I was lucky to meet Christy. She was still living as a man, but as she assumed a more feminine shape, I became attracted to her. I did not know that it would lead to a trip down the aisle," I explained.

"Darling, he has always been attracted to women, without regard to their birth sex. All he sees in Christy is a beautiful woman and he's madly in love with the woman she has become," Eric added.

Just as he finished that statement, Christy walked in the door. I got up and walked toward her.

"Hi babe," I whispered to her.

"Hi honey," she whispered before we exchanged a kiss. I took her hand and walked her to the coffee table.

"Eric and Rebecca Ballard, this is my fiancée, Christy Wilson. Christy, this is my twin brother, Eric and his wife, Rebecca," I said to them.

"He's told me a lot about you," Christy added.

"Likewise with you," Rebecca then added.

Christy sat down on the loveseat. "You're as beautiful as Derek described in his E-mail to us," Eric complimented.

"Thank you, Eric. You and Rebecca make a beautiful couple," Christy added.

"So do you and Derek," Rebecca added.

After we had our afternoon tea, I took them to their hotel downtown. Christy went to her parents' hotel room to visit. When I got back to the office, I found two messages on our voice mail. The first was from Karen Diller, informing Christy that her wedding gown was all ready. The second one was from my sister Paige, telling me that she and Laura would be arriving at Midway Airport at six o'clock. They would be in town on an assignment. I also looked over my calendar and realized that my parents were due in town the day before the wedding.

That evening, I took a cab to Midway Airport to pick up Paige and Laura. "Derek, how have things been?" Laura excitedly asked me.

"It's been great, especially since I proposed to Christy," I replied.

"We weren't surprised to hear that you are marrying a transsexual. We have worked with a number of male-to-female transsexual models at our agency. A lot of them thought you were attractive," Paige added.

I took them to the apartment, where Christy was waiting. She had just gotten back from the apartment across the hall. Kelli, the transsexual we rescued from the clutches of a rapist, had moved into Christy's apartment. She had entrusted Kelli, her maid of honor, with her wedding gown. When we arrived, she had a bottle of wine chilled.

Christy sashayed toward me and greeted me with a kiss. "These must be your sisters," she whispered.

"Paige and Laura Ballard, this is my fiancée, Christy Wilson. Christy, these are my sisters, Paige and Laura," I added.

"Which one is which?" she asked me.

"The blonde is Laura; Paige has red hair," I replied.

The girls sat down while I poured the wine. "Derek has told me a lot about you," Laura said to Christy.

"Likewise with you two," Christy added.

"Laura and I have worked with several women like you at our agency; both those who have had the surgery and those who haven't," Paige added.

"What accounts have you used your transsexual models for?" Christy asked.

"It depends on who has had the surgery yet and who has not. Those who have had the surgery have done practically every type of female fashions imaginable, while those who haven't had the surgery usually model gowns and dresses. This is more out of the models' preference than our own. Our accounts are primarily with lesser-known designers of contemporary female fashions, lingerie, bridal and formal fashions, but we have had some bigger names sign on with us. We don't sign contracts with designers of risqué fashions and lingerie, nor do we do business with fetish fashion designers. We have always had a preference for what's in fashion, both yesterday and today," Laura explained.

"So, for example, now that I've had the operation, I would have my pick of fashions to model," Christy added.

“Yes, you would,” said Paige.

“My maid of honor hasn’t had the surgery yet; she’s told me that she would prefer modeling the dresses and gowns prior to her surgery,” Christy then added.

“Where does she model?” Laura asked.

“Kelli models for Beautiful Brides and Belles by Karen. A high school classmate of Derek's owns the place. She has just become certified as a bridal consultant,” Christy replied.

I heard a knock on the door at around eight-thirty. Kelli was at the door; she wanted to talk to Christy.

“Darling, Kelli wants to talk to you,” I said softly.

“Paige, Laura, I'll be back in a few minutes,” she told them.

I sat down with my sisters while Christy and Kelli were talking outside the apartment. “May I speak to you outside?” Kelli asked her.

She stepped outside of the apartment. “Christy, Karen just called. She told me that my bridesmaid's gown was ready,” she whispered, before asking her: “Would you like to go with me for the final fitting?”

“What time do you want me to meet you there?” Christy asked her.

“Twelve-thirty tomorrow afternoon,” Kelli replied.

“I'll be there,” Christy added.

During this time, I was talking with my sisters. “What made you decide to marry a transsexual?” Paige asked me.

“I’ve explained this to just about everyone, but the opportunities for me to meet and date genetic females had basically dried up. It didn't really matter to me whether she was born a boy or a girl; as long as she is a beautiful woman in my eyes, then I will see her as only a woman. It so happened that I had fallen in love with Christy as she assumed a more feminine shape, due to hormone therapy,” I replied.

“What was it about Christy that attracted you to her?” Laura asked.

“It was her natural, feminine beauty, warm, loving personality and her strong femininity that attracted me to her. She’s more feminine, more beautiful and more loving than any woman I’ve ever met, genetic or transsexual,” I replied.

Christy returned after I finished that sentence. “What did Kelli need, babe?” I asked her.

“She told me that her final fitting for her bridesmaid's gown is tomorrow; she asked me to go along with her,” she replied.

“Why couldn't Kelli's mother come along instead of Christy?” Paige asked.

“She's still not on speaking terms with her parents. They disapproved of her feminine ways when she was growing up; so much so that she left home after she finished high school. They know that she is working on a sex change, yet they don't accept her as their daughter. The only immediate family members she’s on speaking terms with are her two brothers and big sister. One of her brothers is married to a transsexual

woman; he was also disowned after he eloped with her a few years ago. Her oldest brother lives in Australia with a genetic female companion; her big sister is the only relative that lives close to her,” Christy explained.

“Where do her parents live?” Laura asked.

“They live in a small town in South Carolina. It's a very conservative town; they never heard of one of their own changing sexes or marrying someone who changed sexes,” Christy replied.

“Sweetheart, what about her big sister?” I asked her.

“She lives in Madison with her husband and three children,” she replied.

Around ten o'clock, I took my sisters to their hotel; they were down the street from where Christy's parents were staying. I had to help them bring their photographic equipment, empty portfolio books and notebooks to their room.

The next day, I went to work as usual. I performed a wedding involving a genetic female and a male-to-female crossdresser and prayed with a number of women preparing to have sex-change operations. I had given Christy the last few days off before the wedding, so a volunteer minister filled in for her. Around three o'clock, Cristina Miller stopped by. This time, she was in a red summer dress. She was showing off her engagement ring.

“Who's the lucky guy who's going to make you his bride, Tina?” I asked her.

“The lucky guy is my longtime boyfriend, Eddie. We'd like for you to marry us,” she replied.

“When would be a good time?” I asked.

“July 4,” she replied.

“Christy and I will be back from our honeymoon by then,” I replied.

“Eddie and I will be at your wedding this Saturday,” Tina added.

It was early in the afternoon on May 26 that my parents arrived by car from Milwaukee. They arrived at my apartment around two o'clock.

“Derek, when are we going to meet the girl you've always been telling us about?” my mother asked me.

“You'll meet her tonight. She's at the office right now. I have set up a dinner date for the three of us, plus Christy and her parents,” I replied.

“Derek, your mother and I didn't know what to think when you started dating a transsexual. We hadn't met a transsexual woman in our lives, even though we've heard about them through the media. But the media doesn't portray the transsexual community as accurately as meeting a transsexual in person. Since Christy is as beautiful as you described her, we will be happy to welcome her as our new daughter-in-law with open arms,” my father explained.

“We also didn't know what to think when your twin brother married a woman more than ten years his junior. But when we met Rebecca, we thought she was the sweetest girl we've ever met. We still think so. What impressed us about her was that she was

mature for her age. I hope we can find the same things in Christy that we found in Rebecca,” my mother added.

Christy walked in the door around two-thirty. “Who is this beautiful young woman who just walked into your apartment?” my mother asked me.

“Christy, these are my parents, David and Lauren Ballard. Mom and Dad, this is your soon-to-be daughter-in-law, Christy Wilson,” I replied.

“We've heard a lot of good things about you,” my father added.

“She's more beautiful than you described her to be,” my mother said.

We told them the story of how we met and how we fell in love. I remember hearing the same story when Eric and Rebecca were getting married. After we finished telling the story of how Christy and I got to this point, my mother asked us, “What are you going to do about children?”

“Derek and I plan to adopt. Since I am a transsexual, I cannot conceive a child. As soon as we get back from our honeymoon, we plan to talk to a counselor at one of the adoption agencies. We also plan to retain the services of a lawyer for any possible adoption,” Christy replied.

Later in the evening, my parents, Christy and I met Christy's parents and the wedding party at a hotel ballroom for the wedding rehearsal. Afterwards, the rest of the wedding party went dancing, while our parents, Christy and I went to an expensive restaurant.

After we ordered our dinners, Charles told my parents; “You certainly raised your son right.”

“We taught him that prejudice can damage a friendship or a relationship. We also taught that to his twin brother. Derek isn't the only one who's been romantically involved with a transsexual; Eric was involved with a transsexual while he was living in Atlanta. Even as he's married to a genetic female fourteen years younger than he is, he's kept that lesson in mind. So has Derek,” my mother explained.

“Christy couldn't have found a better man for her than Derek,” Cathy added.

“I agree. Derek couldn't have found a better woman than your beautiful daughter,” my father complimented.

Christy had her head on my shoulder as our parents continued the conversation. “Darling?” I asked whisperingly.

“What is it, honey?” she asked.

“I couldn't have found a woman better than you, my love,” I whispered.

“I couldn't have found a man better than you, sweetheart,” she whispered before we exchanged a kiss.

After dinner, my parents checked in at the hotel; they took a suite down the hall from Christy's parents. Christy and I went back to our apartment building; we arrived around eleven o'clock. We talked briefly before going to separate apartments.

“Are you looking forward to being my wife, dear?” I asked her.

“Of course. I’m sure you’re looking forward to being my husband,” she replied.

“I am looking forward to getting married, that's for sure,” I added. We then exchanged a passionate kiss before she went into Kelli's apartment.

“Good night, baby,” I whispered.

“Good night, my love,” she cooed.

This would turn out to be the final act of our unmarried lives.

The Day of Our Wedding

I woke up around nine o'clock on the morning of May 27, 2000. After having a nice, leisurely breakfast, it was time for me to get ready for the wedding. I decided to take a nice, long, hot bath. It was around ten-thirty that I began to get dressed. I finished dressing within half an hour and managed to go outside my apartment door to pick up the morning paper.

Around eleven o'clock, there was a knock on my door. It was my twin brother, picking me up for the trip downtown. He was dressed in a navy blue suit, navy blue tie with white pinstripes and a pair of burgundy dress shoes. "You look sharp, bro," he complimented.

"You look sharp, yourself," I complimented.

"Shall we go?" he asked me.

We walked down to the car, where Rebecca was waiting. She was in a red trapeze dress and red flats. The doctor recommended that she not wear high heels while pregnant. I took off my tailcoat and sat down in the back seat.

"Have you set up the deejay equipment?" I asked.

"I spent all morning setting it up. I started at seven-thirty this morning; I finished the setup an hour ago," Eric replied.

"Yet, he still had time to change into his suit," Rebecca added.

We arrived at the hotel around eleven-thirty. Eric and Rebecca took us to our parents' room, where we would await the call from the minister who would officiate the ceremony. Paige and Laura showed up around quarter to twelve, after checking their equipment for the following week's series of fashion shoots. Paige was in a mauve sequined party dress with white high heels, while Laura was in a fuchsia sequined tea-length dress with matching high heels.

"Are you ready to become a husband?" Paige asked me.

"I was born prepared to be a husband," I quipped.

"Little did you know that your bride was born a boy," Laura added.

When the clock struck noon, we got a knock on our door. It was the Reverend Sharon Quentin, the genetic female who was the volunteer minister that filled in for me when Christy had her sex change. "Are you ready for your special day?" she asked me.

"I am, Sharon," I replied.

My five groomsmen were waiting outside. My best friend from high school, Gregory Manlius, would be the best man; Roy would be one of the groomsmen. My cousin, Tony Ballard and my college roommate, Phil Brown, would be the other groomsmen. Christy's fourteen-year-old cousin, Kerry Wilson, would be the junior groomsman.

The six of us followed the minister to the ballroom, on the first floor of the hotel. The place was decorated beautifully for the ceremony. We had several tables reserved

for the hundred guests that would be attending. The room was almost full by the time we arrived.

My cousins, Gerry and Tom Ballard, were the ushers. They were charged with seating the guests. The groomsmen were all wearing blue cummerbunds and bow ties with their tuxes; the ushers wore black bow ties and cummerbunds. Our tuxes were all the same color: navy blue with white pinstripes.

Around twelve-thirty, the flower girl, Christy's five-year-old cousin Lori Zachary, made her walk down the aisle, spreading the flower petals. She didn't need any prodding; she knew what she was doing. Leo greeted her near the flower-covered arch where Sharon was standing, holding an open Bible. Then, the bridesmaids came, all in baby blue bridesmaid's gowns with full skirts, open necklines, lace-trimmed hems and holding identical bouquets. They all wore pearl necklaces and pearl drop earrings.

The first bridesmaid down the aisle was Tami Fredericks, Kerry's thirteen-year-old girlfriend. She was the junior bridesmaid in the wedding and the only genetic female in the party. She was followed by Dana Melton. She was a big, beautiful, six-foot-tall pre-operative transsexual. Phil, who was six-two, met her near the arch. They smiled at each other and took their assigned seats.

Soon enough, the minister asked Christy to repeat these words: "I, Christina, take thee, Derek, to be thy wedded husband. I will always be faithful to you, I will forsake all others and I will love you with all my heart for the rest of my life." She paused for a moment while the ring bearer walked up to Kelli to hand her the ring. She took the ring and handed it to Christy. She then faced me, then was asked by Sharon to repeat these words: "Derek, with this ring, I thee wed." Christy then slipped the ring on the ring finger of my left hand.

Then, Sharon turned toward me and asked me to repeat: "I, Derek, take thee, Christina, to be thy wedded wife. I will always be faithful to you, I will forsake all others and I will love you with all my heart for the rest of my life." Again, Sharon paused for a moment while Greg reached into the pocket of his tux for the ring. He handed it to me before I faced Christy. Sharon asked me to repeat: "Christina, with this ring, I thee wed." I slipped her wedding ring on the ring finger of her left hand.

Toward the end of the ceremony, Sharon asked Christy: "Christina Heather Wilson, do you take this man, Derek Edward Ballard, to be your lawful wedded husband; to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?"

"I do," Christy replied with commitment, looking straight in my eyes.

Sharon turned to me and asked: "Derek Edward Ballard, do you take this woman, Christina Heather Wilson, to be your lawful wedded wife; to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?"

"I do," I replied with the same level of commitment while looking into Christy's beautiful eyes.

"With the power vested in me by the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, I now pronounce you husband and wife," Sharon declared. Christy then turned to face Kelli,

so she could lift up her blusher. Christy and I then faced Sharon. She told me: “Derek, you may now kiss your bride.”

“I love you very much, Christy,” I whispered to her.

“I love you, too, Eric,” she whispered before we exchanged a long, tender kiss and a warm embrace.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I now present to you Mr. and Mrs. Derek Ballard,” Sharon announced to the guests.

We met with the guests; some of whom had to leave after the ceremony. Seventy guests stayed for the reception. We signed the marriage certificate in a secluded section of the room. I signed my full name, while Christy signed the certificate as Christina Heather Wilson-Ballard, although she would be known as Christy Ballard.

After having a buffet of grilled chicken, pasta with butter, garlic and Italian seasoning, garden salad and apple crisp, Christy and I shared our first dance as husband and wife. The first song played was the song that was playing on the radio the night we fell in love: “When Somebody Loves You”. After we danced for several hours, we opened our presents. Eric and Rebecca would have a major surprise for us.

“Derek, Christy, you've been looking forward to this day all of your lives. When Rebecca and I got married, her father surprised us with a honeymoon. Well, we have that same surprise for you,” Eric announced before handing me an envelope.

I opened the envelope in front of Christy and found two plane tickets, hotel and rental car reservations inside. “Honey, looks like we’re going to England,” she whispered.

Don’t misunderstand but I couldn’t wait for the festivities to be over. It seemed as if the reception would never end. Everyone there wanted to wish us good luck in our futures together and so on. I think you will understand that I had “other” things on my mind, especially every time I looked over at my beautiful wife, sitting next to me on the dais. Wife. What a word. What a path we had both taken to be where we were at that moment, especially Christy. Who could have predicted that the shy boy she once was would eventually become the beautiful woman—my wife—that she now was?

Eventually, at long last, the reception petered out and Christy and I were finally alone. I carried her all the way to our room, following a hotel manager. There, we were shown all the amenities. A bottle of domestic champagne was waiting for us, with a note in front. I picked up the envelope and opened it. I read the note, which said: “To the beginning of your lives together. May your married lives be happy and romantic. Love always, Kelli.” Christy removed her bridal headpiece, then opened a drawer to find a white babydoll nightie with another note. She read it to me.

“Dear Christy, we thought this would make your wedding night extra special. Your mother wore the same color lingerie when we got married. May you and Derek make your lives happy. Love, Mom and Dad.”

“They're hopeless romantics, just like us,” I whispered.

I poured two glasses of champagne and gave one to Christy. I proposed a toast. “To the most beautiful woman in the whole world, for making all my dreams come true,” I whispered before we clicked our glasses and took a little drink.

Christy would then propose another toast. “To the most handsome man in the world, for making this girl’s ultimate dream come true. You’ve made me the happiest woman in the whole world,” she whispered before we took another drink.

Then, she asked me: “Now that we’re married, would you like to make love to me?”

“Now’s the best time for our first lovemaking session,” I whispered before giving her a hotly passionate kiss.

“Baby, it will be *my* first lovemaking experience as a woman,” she whispered, laboring for breath before passionately necking her.

To say that I was nervous would be an understatement. To tell the truth, I was more afraid of disappointing Christy than I was about her disappointing me. Truth be told, I didn’t think it was possible for her to disappoint me. She was beautiful and everything I had ever wanted in a woman. I was just worried that her first time with a man wouldn’t be everything she had anticipated, everything she deserved. I loved her so much! I would hate to not be the lover she deserved.

My passion was at its peak. We had been through so much together. God knows it was entirely possible, given the assignments we had been on that we would never have reached this point in our relationship, together in our marital bed as man and wife. I wanted everything to be just perfect—more than perfect—for my sweet Christy. Our time had finally come. We were together. Christy was the total woman she had always



dreamed of being, the total woman I had always wanted her to be. This was *our* time. No more dressing up and moving in shady circles. At this moment, on our wedding night, we existed for each other and ourselves alone. The world could wait. We would return to it soon enough.

While I was passionately necking her, I unzipped the back of her bridal gown. I reached into her gown to caress her back. She stopped a moment to remove her arms from the sleeves, revealing a longline strapless bra. I resumed necking her, reached into her dress and undid her bridal slip. Her gown dropped to the floor, revealing a white garter belt, matching lace-top stockings, G-string panties and high heels. "Oh, Derek, you're making me feel like a woman in love!" she exclaimed in ecstasy. I stopped necking her long enough to have her undo my bow tie, cummerbund and the shirt of my tux. She reached in and caressed my chest with her hand.

After I took off my shirt, she undid my pants. When my pants fell, a pair of white briefs were revealed. We returned to passionately kissing each other, this time with lots of tongue. While we were kissing, I unhooked her longline bra. Her breasts held it up for a few seconds, then it slowly fell to the floor. More and more, the beauty of her body was revealed. I swept her off her feet again and gently laid her on the heart-shaped bed.

"Is there more to this, honey?" she asked me in a seductive manner.

"Of course, there is. Remember, this is the night for us to consummate our marriage," I replied whisperingly, before resuming our passionate kissing. I proceeded to fondle her breasts with the hottest passion.

"Baby, that feels good," she whispered ecstatically. I concentrated on the left breast for a few minutes, before it surprisingly gave milk. Then, I concentrated on the right breast; it also gave milk.

"That was delicious, babe," I whispered after tasting the milk of her breasts. I got up and walked over to her side of the bed. She sat up while she took off my briefs. When I stepped out of them, she gave my manhood a massage with her silky tongue.

"Darling, you make me feel like a complete man," I whispered.

After she tasted my essence, I sat down on the bed, while she got up. I licked her belly button while I took off her panties. Once her panties were off, a beautifully done vagina was revealed. After I finished licking her belly button, I got up from the bed, while she seductively laid down. When I laid down next to her, she got on top of me and nibbled at my earlobes.

"Baby, that feels so good," I whispered.

After she finished nibbling my earlobes, she used her fingers to spread her vagina enough so I could lick and nibble it. "Honey baby, that feels heavenly!" she cooed laboriously. After I tasted her delicious essence, it was time for me to insert my manhood into her vagina. It would be the first time that she had genital sex with a man; it certainly wouldn't be the last.

She moaned in ecstasy as I continued to work my manhood in her vagina. "Baby, you make me feel so much like a woman!" she said, laboring for breath. Then she

wrapped her long, sexy legs around my waist and I picked her up off the bed. When we climaxed in each other's love organs, we were headed for a heart-shaped hot tub. I gently set her down on an ottoman near the bath, removed my manhood from her vagina and got up slowly. She then stood up and sashayed toward me. We exchanged a long, tender kiss while I undid her garter belt. After a few moments, she removed her garter belt and stockings and we walked into the hot tub for the first time as husband and wife.

"How was your first lovemaking experience?" she asked me.

"It was great, my love. No woman satisfied me better than you," I replied.

"No man satisfied me better than you, honey," she cooed before we passionately kissed each other.

"We weren't the only ones madly in love today," I whispered.

"I noticed that Dana has fallen in love with Phil," she whispered in my ear.

"Phil's like me. It doesn't matter whether his girl was born male or female; Dana is beautiful in his eyes. They'll be seeing more of each other, that's for sure," I added.

After fifteen minutes in the hot tub, we got out and dried each other off. I reached into the suitcase for a pair of white pajama bottoms while she went into the bathroom to change into her babydoll nightie. After I put on my pajama bottoms, I laid down on the bed. She sashayed out of the bathroom a few minutes later, in a white babydoll nightie with lace adorning the bodice and trimming the hem, a matching pair of bikini panties and a white combing coat. "What do you think, honey?" she asked seductively.

"You're sexy!" I exclaimed excitedly.

She laid down next to me, while I reached for the remote control. I turned the stereo system on and found romantic music in the compact disc changer. I also found another note on the nightstand. It read: "This music is for your enjoyment on your first day of married life. You have entered a new stage in life and I hope and pray it lasts forever. Derek and Christy, best of luck. Love, Dana."

Christy and I kissed and caressed each other as we listened to the music. We fell asleep in each other's arms around midnight, but not before we said good night for the first time as a married couple.

"Good night, Derek honey," Christy cooed.

"Good night, Christy, my darling," I whispered before kissing her good night.

The End