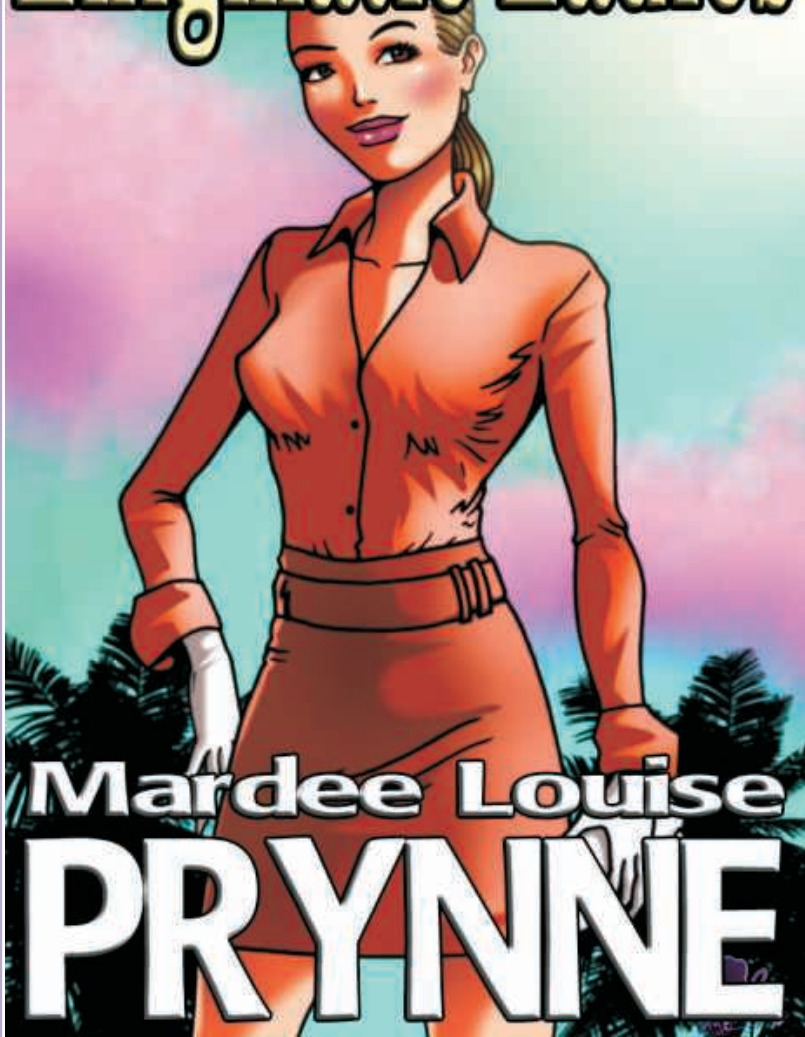


Enigmatic Ladies



Mardee Louise
PRYNNIE

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Enigmatic Ladies

By Mardee Louise Prynne

The phone jarred me, broke my concentration on what I was typing. I stared at the phone trying to will it to stop. It persisted until I picked. The telephone operator's voice announced "Person to person call for David Morris from Rena Gold." I knew it had to be she who was Rena Goldstein back in high school. I accepted with alacrity.

"Rena! You know I almost didn't pick up the phone." I hesitated, took another sip of bourbon and began to pull out of my funk. "Will you coming back to New York? If you are, we could get together. It's been how many years? But you couldn't have picked a better time to call me. I really should say a better time for me to hear from someone like you."

"I need a friend from high school, too. But to answer your question; No, I'm not in New York and

just too busy to get there. I just took a sublet on an apartment in Boston, Back Bay to be exact. That's where I landed after college and then life took me to England and the Continent. Now I'm back in Boston, which feels like home. There's a good chance of some big time, long-term activity. I promise to fill you in but you sound glum, very, very glum. How about opening up to your old buddy?"

"Give me a second to light up." I pulled a Lucky Strike from the pack, tamped it on the desk and reached for the lighter. Rena and I had always been a special pair right from grammar school through high school. She was thought of in school as a gifted dancer who had little interest in boys; no interest in dating them to be exact. Too focused on her art was the impression she gave. We enjoyed each other's company, liked the same music and art, and were both Brooklyn Dodgers fans. I was one of those guys who was a good athlete, an above average student, a competent musician as far as the high school orchestra went and, for reasons I still don't understand, always attracted to girls who ended up hurting me emotionally. Fair to say it was a two way street; as often as not, we hurt each other.

Rena and I went to movies, museums, baseball games and school events together; we even practiced French kissing together but it would be wrong to say we were dating in any real way. By doing things together we kept the girls at school from figuring out that Rena wanted to get into their panties. At the same time we made it look as though Rena and I were dating. Rena was satisfied with this strange status quo because it kept her parents off her back.

"Rob, are you still there?"

"Sorry, Rena, just day dreaming, thinking back."

“We’ll have plenty of time for reminiscing if you’re willing to go along with this idea I have. It’s much too long to discuss over the phone and I can’t possibly get down to New York for more than a day or two. Can you come up here for a couple of weeks? I know it’s a lot to ask.”

“Rena, you couldn’t have picked a better time to tempt me away from New York. Give me a few days to finish up a few projects and deliver an acquisition: then I’m yours for a week. Give me your number and I’ll phone you with my train schedule.”

“Can you possibly drive up? There are a few places I’d like you to see that aren’t in town and I don’t have a car. I can arrange for indoor parking for your car. If it’s a problem for you, I can rent one.”

“It’s not a problem at all.”

Rena promised to call once she had a phone installed in her new apartment and that was that. Cynic that I am, it didn’t long for me to wonder if I would ever hear from her again. Then I turned away from my desk to stare the granite box sitting on the bookshelf. The little brass plate on the top had only her name, date of birth, and date of death. Gianna Urbino was the most recent in that long line of women who were wrong for me. My sad, mad lover was Gianna on the dotted line but was always Gia over intimate dinners and more intimate settings.

She was a redhead, Italian descent from the hills on the Adriatic coast, the area whose women Titian used as models. Gianna was too otherworldly, too gentle to survive. Once upon a time she had slashed her wrists but in the wrong direction and so she lived on in pain just long enough to die by deliberately consuming a combination of psychotropic

medications and alcohol. Having loved her and having taken care of her, I accepted the request she made of me both in her will and in her suicide note that I take care of her ashes until I could find her brother. After that I was to scatter her ashes but she never said where. She trusted me to sense the right place at the right time.

Gianna's attorney assured me she had never met Gia's brother Lorenzo who had been kicked out of the house "likely for not being macho enough." Last known whereabouts was a restaurant and inn somewhere in northern Fairfield County, Connecticut. The attorney's attempt to contact the brother at that locale had come up blank except for "some idea the kid went up to Massachusetts maybe." A vague recollection of having seen a photograph of Gia and this brother sitting on a rock together reminded me that in their very early teens they could have passed for identical twins. So all I had to do was find a guy who looked almost exactly like Gia. Not an easy task even if he was still going by the name of Lorenzo Urbino. Like a lot of guys with the very ethnic name of Lorenzo, he was probably going by Larry. Impossible is a better way to describe my chances of finding him.

"It's rather a major challenge but if it can be done, you're the man to do it." At that moment, Gwen Loren seated herself on the corner of her desk and crossed her legs in a most unlawyerly manner. I flattered myself that she might have been flirting. Even through the still fresh wound of losing Gianna in so sudden a tragic manner, Gwen Loren's attractions were enough for me to notice through my haze.

"You're one of the best in your trade if not the very best. I've read articles about how you managed

to locate the rarest of lost books, letters, and manuscripts, not to mention all sorts autographed pictures and other literary memorabilia.

“Oh, yes. There is one more thing right now. I’ll arrange for the royalties on Gia’s books to be paid to you. That recent one was her breakthrough and will no doubt generate significant income, maybe even lead to a movie. As her attorney and literary agent, I have discretion over such things. Although I would be within my legal rights to use the income myself, I knew Gia well enough to know she would want you to have that income.”

I nodded and wondered how well she had known Gia and what had they shared between them. There had to be something closer between them than simply a lawyer/client relationship. Very few people ever called her Gia.

Unsettled as I was with that thought, I decided that was enough thinking about that conversation with Gwen Loren.

* * *

RECALLING PHILLY

I finished typing my notes and was about to leave the office when the phone rang. Another long distance call from Rena.

“David, it’s me. Sorry to bother you again. Remember my cousin Philly? Please do it for me: please stop off and pick him up when you drive up. You must remember him from high school. He was always kind of different and you stood up for him when he was teased and picked on. Philly’s found a niche and having a good life but really doesn’t like to travel alone.”

“For you, anything,” was my terse commitment. Rena always had a great telephone voice and it had improved over time, gotten sexier. Picturing her over the years made me resolve to make a move on her if she ever became less exclusively committed to female lovers. I guessed the wound suffered when Gia killed herself was healing.

“You’re a real pal. Say, Philly works in an inn and restaurant in Connecticut. Why not plan to stop over and take a day or two to get to know Philly again? Listen, I’ll get in touch with you again as soon my apartment is set up and the phone’s connected.”

Rena had to be hatching something but I wasn’t about to speculate on what. The clock the wall showed 9:30. The morning papers would be out about now so I figured on taking a walk; get some fresh air and a pack of cigarettes. (The early editions of morning newspapers in the New York City of that era hit the newsstands around nine the night before.) After telephoning my answering service to start picking up any calls, I closed the office and headed upstairs to my apartment to get a jacket and cap.

Better make a note to get in touch with Gwen and find out if she knows where the place Lorenzo had worked was in Connecticut and what it was called. It’s a long shot and too much of coincidence to hope for but I can’t help wondering if Philly could possibly be working at the same place where Lorenzo worked. Funny, I’m remembering more and more about Philly. Oh, to hell with the news papers. I want to look at some old pictures.

I found my high school yearbook in a cabinet in the spare room of my apartment. Of course Philly

wouldn't have an individual shot in there but he might be in one of the club pictures. Other guys and even some girls might have been in team pictures as well but not Philly. He just wasn't the type; didn't have the personality, the heart or the body for athletic competition. Sure enough, he was in several club pictures. Dance and drama had been his favorites. In Shakespeare's time when boys played all the female parts, he would have been a star. He was that nice looking. Unfortunately in the nineteen-fifties his looks worked against him. Just too pretty, too slender, too graceful in his movements to ever be taken seriously by anyone in anything.

Me, I thought he was an okay kid. I once told that to Rena when she was really angry at some girls who took teasing him a little too far. She confronted those girls eye ball to eye ball and even punched one as a "sample of what you creeps might get." The next day she was stopped in the hall by two of the boyfriends of girls in that nasty clique. She was in no mood to back off, never was. Rena punched the oaf square on the bridge of his nose and then stomped his foot with her saddle shoe. His buddy began to laugh which only called Rena's wrath down on him. He backed away from her half joking, half frightened until his back was against the wall at which point Rena kned him in the balls.

"Thanks for not stepping in to help me," she said to me smiling.

"I didn't think you needed any help."

"Right, but I need a favor from you."

"Cousin Philly's going to fail gym if he doesn't qualify on this ridiculous boys' fitness test. Please work with him. I'll understand if you're afraid to be

seen hanging around with him or going over to his house. Do it of me.”

“Sure I’ll do it but not just for you. I’ll do it for Philly, too.”

* * *

ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

I called Philly that evening. I asked his mom if I could please speak with Phil only to be questioned on who wants to speak to him and why which was fully understandable considering how vulnerable this poor kid was to all sorts of bullying, verbal and otherwise. I explained who I was and that Rena had asked me to help Phil get through his gym requirements.

The next voice left me totally bewildered because I had always thought Phil was an only child but it seemed his sister had picked up the phone by mistake. There was a musical lilt to this mellow voice that enthralled me from the start. There was a bone I had to pick with Rena; why had she been hiding the owner of this charming voice from me?

“This isn’t Phil, is it?”

“In one sense it isn’t but I’m the person you asked for. It is me, David, but I hate to be called Phil. It sounds like I should be a taxi driver or something like that. Philly suits me so much better, don’t you think?”

I was so charmed by the voice that I would have agreed to almost anything. Philly’s image popped up in my head but just a little bit different from the way he really looked in school. In my mind’s eye his hair

was a tiny bit longer and combed in the sort waifish style made popular by several French movie actresses. His eyes looked larger. Makeup?

Philly was talking on the phone in this strange momentary vision. He sat on the edge of bed covered with a frilly edged comforter. His shapely legs were crossed and I could see he was wearing white short shorts.

What the hell! I must be going queer over this kid's voice. No, not me. It's just that the voice surprised me. Even so, it sounds really nice. No backing out now unless I really want to hurt this kid. Nah, might as well be nice to him and help him pass gym.

I told Philly we could meet at the athletic field early Sunday morning. "Almost no one shows up that early on Sunday on account of they don't want anyone to think they didn't have a late date on Saturday night. It'll give us plenty of room," I explained.

"That's fine. I thought you might not want your friends to see you with me, see you with the fairy."

"Philly, don't ever say that about yourself. And why would I care if anyone sees me helping out a good kid?"

I rode up to the field on my bike just as another bike was approaching from the opposite direction. After chaining my bike to the fence, I watched the other bike pull over. The rider stepped off the bike in a way that made to clear this was a girl's bike. Her back was to me as she tugged the hem her short shorts down in back. That wasn't enough to keep me from noticing her firm shapely legs, well toned the way Rena's were from dance classes. Then she

turned to greet me. Only it wasn't a she, it was Philly!

Philly took a white soft hat from the bike basket and put it on as she walked toward me looking too much like the fantasy image I had of him when we talked on the phone. White short shorts and a baby blue tee added to Philly's girlish image, an image that was just too natural, too unaffected to make Philly seem like an oddball. It was so convincingly femme that I swallowed hard hoping that this unique being wouldn't make me hard.

"David, you really kept your word. I can't begin to tell you how happy that makes me. Oh, I hope you don't think my hat looks silly. My skin's so fair that I burn easily."

"No, nothing about how you look right now could ever seem silly to me." My answer made her face light up and made me wonder where that answer really came from.

Philly put his hand lightly on my arm for a second or two before. "I'm yours for as long it takes. Say, so we loosen up or warm up before..."

"We can warm up by starting slowly."

Meanwhile Philly bent at the waist and put his palms flat on the ground. I was impressed by his flexibility as my eye drawn to the back of his thighs. The white shorts rode up just enough to uncover the hem of his white underpants. Pretty unremarkable for a boy except what showed was just a bit too shiny to be like what most guys wore.

We stood close as we started tossing a softball back and forth. Philly's catching was awkward but he quickly learned to hold the heels of his hands close together. Of course he stepped forward with

his inside foot as he threw which made look even more girlish. I had to stop myself from thinking he was cute in order to show him how to throw correctly.

After throwing against a target on a wall for a while, Philly's shoulder started to get sore. It was hard not to praise him for his rapid improvement as I massaged his cramped shoulder. "One thing for sure, you'll ace the softball throw both for distance and accuracy. We just got to work at it."

"Do you really mean that? Let's get out of the sun," she suggested without waiting for an answer.

We were in the shade on the side of the concrete grandstand when Philly sat down with her back to the wall and wrapped her arms around her knees. "Please be honest with me, David. You saw the hem of my panties, didn't you?"

"I saw the edge of your underpants, if that's what you mean."

"I mean panties, not underpants. You may want to hit me and I guess I deserve it for putting your reputation at risk I'm just so used to wearing panties around the house on quiet Sunday mornings that I put them on without thinking and then didn't realize it until I was almost here. Just promise me you won't tell..."

"Philly, I swear I would never tell anyone a thing that would hurt you or embarrass you."

I was beginning to realize just how odd, how different Philly was when he extended his hand toward me. I took it and helped the kid up a little too forcefully because he stumbled forward ending up right against me. The weird thing was that I didn't want us to move apart. Philly looked up at me, to my

wrists and planted my hands on her perky tush. (That was the moment when I admitted to myself that I was thinking of Philly as a girl.)

She looked up at me, rose on tiptoe and kissed me quickly on my lips. Looking shocked, Philly gasped. "Oh, my gosh! David, forgive me. That was just an impulse."

"There's nothing to forgive." My words were muffled by the open mouth kiss that followed. Her hand was behind my head pulling me harder and harder against her as if she couldn't get enough of my tongue into her mouth.

My hands were under her shorts now, feeling the sleek, smooth panties, tracing the seam at the rear of the crotch. Then I came.

"Maybe we better call it a day," Philly said dreamily. "Can you come over my house one night this week so you can show me how to do pushups? And if you never want to see me again, I'll understand."

"Pick the night," was all I said.

* * *

REVELATIONS

Philly greeted me at the door with an awkward and guilty grin as if she was about to announce a prank was imminent. The tilt of her head set off feelings in me that felt good but were not at all consistent with what a guy should be feeling for another boy no matter how femme a persona that other boy could assume.

“My mom’s at the movies so we’re alone. Does that upset you? Being alone with me, I mean.” There was a playfully challenging undertone to her question.

“Why should it?”

She pressed my hand in hers, glanced up and down the street before guiding me into the house and closing the door behind us. We’ll use my room.” I nodded and followed her up the stairs.

Philly wore tight white Bermuda shorts that skimmed over her dancer’s tush as she moved slowly up the stairs. Her tanned legs were toned well enough to make me wonder how much time she devoted to dance. The absence of socks had to be a deliberate attempt to show off her slender sculpted ankles, ankles that would be the envy of every real girl.

I held my breath as I followed Philly into her bedroom; unquestionably a girl’s bedroom right down to the French provincial furniture complete with upholstered chaise lounge and vanity table.

“Like it?” she asked.

“Pretty nifty.”

She had extended her leg, put her ankle over the back of a chair and was stretching like a dancer warming up at the barre. Hands grasping her ankle, she bent forward until her chin rested on her knee.

“Wow! You must take a lot of dance classes.”

“No, not any more,” she said wistfully. “Mother made me stop when I was seven.

She was afraid that continuing would make me more open to teasing and bullying. Rena kind of tutors me and helps me stay limber.”

Rena crossed her arms, grasped the sweat shirt she wore and pulled it over her head. She wore a powder blue tank top style undershirt, except for its color, very much like the kind men and boys often wore back then. Then I noticed the tiny appliqué flower at the center of the neckline. That and the total absence of hair on her body and arms further enthralled me. I was reacting her as I would to a real girl, more and more so by the second.

“Thank you for not being shocked at my underthings. I thought of not, not...Well, you know what I mean. It’s just that if we’re going to be around each other for a little while, I have to be honest about what I really am, whatever that is.” She sniffled as if trying not to cry. “Except for Mother and Rena, I’ve never dared to let anyone know how weird I can be when I’m by myself or....” Her voice trailed off into silence before finishing the last thought.

“Come on, Philly, don’t say things like that. You’re more than okay in my book.” I was surprised to hear myself say that and even more surprised that I meant it.

“Then we don’t have to have to be concerned that one of us might snitch or something.”

“I guess that’s right. Never thought about snitching ‘cause there’s no reason to, nothing to be gained and a whole lot to be lost.”

“You’re really such a special guy. Thanks for taking time to help me. You don’t mind of I get comfy.” It was both a question and order.

Even as she spoke, Philly was unzipping her Bermudas. She turned half away from me and lowered the shorts to reveal black stretchy panties!

“Dance trunks,” she said as if to let me know she was too much a lady to walk around in her panties in front of a guy who, despite his better judgment, was finding himself attracted to her like he never was to a real girl.

I followed Philly’s every move as she folded her shorts and laid them over the back of a chair. She paused momentarily in front of the vanity table to brush her hair. In a few deft strokes she transformed her hair style into the cute gamine cut that was becoming popular.

“Come in here, more room.” She led me into the adjoining room that held her desk, bookshelves and a couch.

“I’m really good at vee sits and I can do a whole bunch of sit-ups but not a single pushup, at least not the way boys are supposed to.”

She sat on the floor and by way of demonstration extended her arms and raised her legs together holding a perfect vee. Philly went through several different abdominal exercises that required both strength and control. She finally laid back, hand under her head, feet parted, knees bent. I stared at the crotch of her dance trunks the way I might have eyeballed a girl sitting that immodestly. My reward was a knowing look from Philly.

Her arms and shoulders were soft, firm but not well muscled. It didn’t take this lithe sprite to learn the correct form for regulation pushups. She promised to do at least five each morning and evening until I could come over again.

“Can I use the bathroom?” I asked awkwardly.

“Sure thing. Use mine.” Philly led me back into her bedroom, opened the bathroom door and

switched on the light. As the door was closing behind me, I heard Philly giggle and screech, “Oops, I should have closed the shower curtain. But, hey, you already know my secret.”

In the bathtub was a drying rack festooned with a fascinating array of panties! I couldn't resist touching them, feeling the soft cotton, the sleek nylon and satin made all the more alluring by the knowledge they had caressed Philly's most intimate parts. All my inhibitions about queer sex were dissolving as my urge to make out with Philly increased.

I peed, then washed my hands and face with cool water hoping to relieve the flushed feeling caused by seeing Philly's panties in such wonderful array. I resolved to figure out a way to ask her to let me have a glimpse of her in panties without getting my face slapped.

My stepping back into the room made Philly screech again. She stood on front of her open closet pulling on a pair of panties. She froze just at the point where the waistband of the yellow cotton panties was bunched at the base of her tush. My cock started to stiffen as I eyed her perfectly smooth bottom and the back of her thighs.

“I must sound so corny yelling out like that. You already know what I am and no doubt you've seen enough dicks in locker rooms and besides all that, you're just not the kind of guy to get hot over a skinny boy's dick.” She hooked her thumbs under the legbands and adjusted the panty to cover her perky bottom. This classic feminine gesture fixed my attention on the cleft between her muscular dancer's cheeks and the curved seam at the base of that fascinating nether cleavage. That the soft cot-

ton flowed gently over these forbidden curves added to the allure of this girl/boy.

Philly moved with excruciating slowness as she turned to face me. It was excruciating because it prolonged my view of her beguiling derriere while being removed from view. She stood facing me now clad only in her blue tank top, the yellow panties and her sneakers.

Her movements, her smooth hairless skin, everything about her had me thinking of her as completely female. Of course I knew she was a boy but with every second I was reacting to her more and more as female so that I was all but startled at seeing the outline of her cock through the flimsy cotton of the everyday panties.

It was something between a smile and sneer that flashed across her pretty face as she reached into her closet and took out a skirt flowing skirt. Already feeling like Alice must have felt in Wonderland, I was not too surprised. Turning her back to me, Philly donned the skirt by slipping it over her head and slowly lowering it into place, slowly enough for me to appreciate her panty covered bottom before it was covered by the skirt.

“Time for you to go. School tomorrow but do you think...Forget it. I’m being too forward, getting ideas about you that are unfair. Time to leave.”

I followed her down the stairs to the front door. Philly paused as she unbolted the door, opened it and stepped back into the shadows. It figures he wouldn’t want any of the neighbors to see him dressed like bit nobody could mistake this adorable cutie for the skinny, ineffective boy named Phil. Besides the door way was in darkly shadowed and no

one from school was likely to pass by on this short dead end block I guessed a boy who dresses up as a girl can't be too careful.

“David, come here.” Her voice was firm and broached no refusal even while sounding soft and sexy. She pulled me away from the door. “Just in case Mother comes home early. Besides I'm more worried about your reputation than mine.”

Philly held me by both hands and smiled; this time with no with no hint of a sneer. Her hands moved to my waist as she stood on tiptoe and closed her eyes. Our mouths met as her hand cupped my balls through my jeans.

Her arms were around my neck as I grasped her bottom and lifted her as we each tasted the other's mouth. “I want to taste every part of you...” she whispered and the suddenly shook herself from my arms and pulled away.

“I've done it, ruined any chance before it could even start. Oh, David, just go and if you want to hit me go ahead. I deserve what ever you do to me. But it's horrible. Just the thought of you hating me...”

“Philly come off it,” I said as I grabbed her shoulders forcing her to stop flailing and look at me. “I could never hate you so stop being so emotional.”

“You don't hate me for losing control, for showing you how weird I am inside? Honest?”

“Now when are we going to get together for the next session?”

A peck on the lips and I walked down the porch steps, turned and blew her a kiss. She couldn't have been more surprised by that gesture than I was.

* * *

AN INSPIRATION

I walked home as if my feet didn't touch the ground. At some level I knew I should feel guilty about what went on between me and Philly, which I should have felt threatened by not being repelled by this kid who described herself as weird. Using 'herself' was an indication of how much I was taken with this unique creature; strictly speaking I should have been as 'itself.' *Okay, so she's different, I reasoned silently. But no one's going to know and no one would ever believe it. Besides that, it can only go so far. It's not like we can go steady or be pinned. And she gets me really hot, hot like no real girl ever did.*

It was still pretty early when I got home to find a note from my father taped to the side door.

Rena called. Call her when you get home if it's not too late. Otherwise meet her in front of the school before homeroom.

Dad

After glancing at the kitchen clock I decided to give Rena a call. Her mom was the kind who was easily pissed off by any little thing she considered rude or vulgar but, what the hell!

Rotten luck was my first thought when her mother answered but, to my puzzled surprised she was quite cordial. Go figure!

Rena picked up the upstairs extension and waited for her mother to hang up before speaking. “Just one sec while I take the phone into my room.” Then a pause.

“You’ll never guess who called.” Without waiting for me to answer, she continued on. “Philly called as soon you left her. She couldn’t wait to tell me she let you in on her secret and that you were so sweet about it and didn’t get upset in the least. Now she has something to look forward to in her life. I have an idea but I won’t tell you just yet. I need to think it through. We need to talk, just not now, not on the phone.”

I got into bed and lay thinking about Philly. Why was she in such a hurry to tell Rena about our time together? Rena knew how to keep things to herself so there was no chance she’d blab all over school. But what was so private about this idea she had that she couldn’t say it over the phone? I stopped wondering about all these petty things and just kept picturing Philly as I dropped off into a deep and restful sleep.

I woke up feeling both excited and anxious about meeting Rena. A cold shower couldn’t get me to stop thinking about how swell Philly looked as a girl, swell even when her dick was visible in her panties. Even the cold water couldn’t prevent my dick swelling to full erection as I soaped myself. The only thing to do was to adjust the shower to warm and jerk off. I couldn’t have fantasized about even just making out with Philly, let alone actual sex in a bed since I hadn’t the least notion of what we would do

together. The recollection of kissing her and petting her tush was enough for me to get myself off in record time.

Rena was waiting for me on the steps in front of the main entrance. She waved to me as she reached into her pocket book to pull out a pack of cigarettes. “Sit down and give me a light and don’t remind there’s no smoking on school property.”

“Okay, but don’t hand me the cigarette if...”

“I won’t and you know it.”

Rena looked around and then leaned closer to me.

“Here’s why I called last night. When Philly called to tell me how great you made her feel, she went into a lot of detail about how she looked and that got me more than a little hot. I’ll hate you forever if you tell anyone about what I’m going to say to you and I swear I’ll get back at you sooner or later if you do tell.”

“Rena, you have enough to tell on me that’ll ruin me in this school forever so we’re even. No telling.”

“You probably figured out that I get off by finger fucking myself while looking at sexy ads in teen fashion magazines. Now I want to know what it feels like to have a cock inside me but I can never give myself over to a boy.”

“But how do Philly and I figure in the solution to this problem your have?”

“If I made out with a boy or a girl like Philly, however you want to think of her...Get it? Someone who has a real working dick but can look sexy as hell in a bra and panties, I’m sure I’d get off on her dick.

“It’ll work like this; you start making out with Philly when she’s in girl clothes and undies and then I join you two then get into making out it with you and her. I read about that kind of sex; it’s called ménage a trois in French. Don’t answer me now but think about it. Maybe start a little petting with Philly. I know it’ll be hard, I mean difficult for you...”

“Not as difficult as you think.”

* * *

REVIEWING MY NOTES

A glance at the clock reminded me that I had spent a lot of time reminiscing about Philly, Rena and what transpired way back then. I had been taking notes on my recollections and reviewed them as my mind bounced from one incident, one visual recollection to another. It was necessary to force myself to stop or I would never have gotten enough rest to cope with my morning appointments. There were memories that needing sorting out before I wrote them down for a retrospective journal I knew I must write, write to clear my conscience and to reassure myself that this was a one time thing, that I was never really queer.

My business was growing along with my professional reputation. Along with success and increased income came increased pressures and demands on my time. I had already contemplated hiring a full time secretary but believed it would be, at best, more of a convenience than a necessity. It could also turn out to be a major inconvenience.

But now that I would be spending time in the Boston area with Rena, I would need someone or something more directly attached to the business than an answering service and a stenography and typing agency. That was something I had to plan in detail before I spent more time on this half formed idea a journal chronicling what happened between Philly and me so long ago.

I wondered why I was so stuck on mentally reliving what should be something I ought to try to forget, to bury from anyone's view. There was no reason to believe that Philly hadn't either straightened out or beaten to death by someone who had mistaken her for a real girl until he found out otherwise, or any of a hundred other possibilities mostly negative if not tragic. *What a waste of uniquely beautiful being. No, can't say that for sure. I hate to admit it but it was more of a wasted opportunity for me, an opportunity for something special that I had let slip by.*

A shower and then to bed.

While dawdling over breakfast, I drafted a few want ads for the secretary/bookkeeper I decided I needed. Then I phoned the Brooklyn Eagle and placed the ad to run for a week.

Then it was down to the office to get ready for handing over a validated original print of the photograph of Charles Dickens taken by Jeremiah Gurney in 1867. Its provenance was impeccable which added to the value. It was going to be a great payday. Neither the seller nor the buyer was going to be present, only the attorney and agent for the anonymous buyer.

The photo was handed over to the agent and I took the cashier's check in return.

The attorney put all the papers belonging to her client in her brief case and glanced over her shoulder as if to make doubly sure her client's agent had left. Gwen Loren's poker face slowly warmed, warmed so far that it seemed enticing.

"I hadn't planned to be at this transaction." She sounded more than little awkward for a female lawyer back when law schools discouraged women from applying and no firm worth its salt hired them. That may have been why Gwen had developed her own private practice. Her uneasiness in talking might have been faked for unknown reasons. It had to be something personal that made a female lawyer seem hesitant back when only the sharpest and most determined women even got into law school.

"Truthfully, I was surprised to see anyone else at this transaction let alone a lawyer and certainly not you."

"I hope I didn't offend you. You see I wanted an excuse to see you so we could talk privately, off the record..." She didn't end her sentence as much as let it fade. It meant there was more to come. Whatever it was not something that Gwen was comfortable talking about.

"You didn't offend me but at risk of offending you, I would never take offense at being with a woman as attractive as you at any time in any context. Now, out with it. What's on your mind?"

Maybe I had gone too far in pressing Gwen Loren to open up. The ex-cop attitude might not do for a classy lady like Gwen who surely had to put up with a lot as a law student and survived. I had to remind

myself that she was probably as tough as she was classy.

Gwen dropped onto the couch like a little girl who was about to be chastised. Her sitting posture became closed, her hand moved to her face and rested there as if she was going to suck her thumb. To prevent her from doing that and embarrassing herself, I offered her a cigarette. That brought her out of her momentary mood.

“Thanks but I have my own.” She pulled a box of Benson & Hedges from her pocketbook, put one in her mouth, and then took it out as she groped for her lighter. I lit the table lighter I kept on my desk and held it out to her. Her hand shook as she steadied the lighter.

“David, may I call you David?” I nodded and she continued. “This is so hard for me to say so please just listen and not judge.

“When I was a child things went on that resulted in me being fascinated by transvestism, crossdressing. I’ve never lost that fascination or my interest in the realities of transvestism. This business with finding Lorenzo brought it all to the surface. You may have seen a lot of kinky stuff when you were a police officer so I’m hoping you’re not shocked.

“You see, I knew Lorenzo and Gia years ago. He enjoyed pretending to be a girl and fooling young men. There’s more to it than that but I’m not yet comfortable talking about it. Just give me time.”

“Would you like to be reunited with Lorenzo when I find her?”

Gwen was laughing now. “That’s so ironic; you called Lorenzo her.”

“Gwen, there’s something I must ask you to read.”

She nodded. I took the notes on my recollections of Philly and Rena and handed them to her. “There’ll be more.”

Gwen read the notes, looked up at me with an expression that was both curious and perplexed. She immediately reread the notes.

“David, I was attracted to you when we first met, more so than I would ordinarily admit. That you would share these notes with me tells me you’re confident in who you are. The way you treated Philly means you’re sensitive and caring. Perhaps my woman’s intuition gave me insight into just how kind you are.

“I would love to spend time with you, get to know you. Be nice if something came of it.

“Sweet Jesus, I’ve said too much. Pretend you didn’t hear my silly schoolgirl ramblings just now. That isn’t why I came here.”

“It’ll be hard for me forget what you just said, hard even to pretend for even one minute that you didn’t say it. But I can force myself if that’s what you want. Okay, now it’s back to business.”

“Thank you, David. There is need in my practice for someone with your skill in locating rare books, antiques, and so on. I won’t go into details unless you’re interested but it would be of great value to me if you had a New York State private investigator’s license.”

“Gwen, I would be delighted to work with you. Tell me more.”

There was a long as she organized her thoughts. My guess was that she was at least a competent lawyer which led me to think she was planning the best way to tell me why she wanted me to work with her while maintaining confidentiality. Her gaze shifted from direct eye-contact to studying the smoke of her cigarette as it drifted toward the ceiling to admiring her shoes. All of which was fine with me as her smoking technique was intriguingly sensual.

What she said was even more intriguing. She had a number of clients whose wills and estates she had set up. The clients in question all had valuable objects that had gone missing. For the most part these objects were the sort I dealt in.

Anticipating the obvious question, Gwen explained why these clients would not go to the police. Each client had a child in their very late teens or twenties who had precipitously left home or had broken off all contact if they were already living away from home. Each family noticed their treasures had disappeared at around the time their offspring had taken off for parts unknown. There was no reason to believe foul play was involved in the departure of the young people. It was likely that the runaways as the families called them, had taken the missing objects although in a few instances the families were positive at least some of the objects had gone missing weeks or months after the offspring went missing.

“There’s another reason why these families don’t want police involvement. Every missing kid has what the shrinks call an ‘inversion.’” (Inversion = an archaic term for sexual difference e.g. transvestism, homosexuality, and other variations that are just that; *variations*.)

Gwen took a deep drag on her cigarette, held the smoke deep in her lungs. This gave me a chance to interrupt. “So you see me as still understanding and empathic enough to approach these so-called inverts without panicking them.”

She nodded, exhaled the smoke and looked at me sadly. “God, I hope so.”

Gwen rose, smoothed the skirt of her tailored suit and extended her hand. “Please promise me you’ll at least think it over.”

“No need,” I said as we shook hands. “You’re on. Only I have to be out of town for a few days. Somewhere in or around the Boston area. Do you still want me even if it means waiting a week or two to get started?”

The look on her face when I mentioned Boston suggested she had reason to believe the at least some of the missing progeny and/or objects were in that area or else somewhere in Massachusetts. I also mulled over why she used “has” instead of “had” or both when mentioning the so-called inversions attributed to the runaways. Her usage suggested that Gwen may have reason to believe they are alive.

“David, you’re definitely worth waiting for.” She leaned forward and skimmed lips over mine.

* * *

AN EVENTFUL DRIVE

As I packed for a week in Massachusetts it occurred to me that I wasn’t going to be around to monitor responses to the ad I had placed in The

Brooklyn Eagle. It didn't take much effort to convince Gwen to call any applicants who seemed appropriate and ask those that sounded like a possibility to send a resume and expect and interview. "Of course I don't mind doing this. Anything that makes me more important to you is worth doing." Then she added with a lilt in her voice, "David, I'm only doing this so I can control you." She burst into laughter. "But seriously, I know we can have a very good relationship, business relationship."

Leaving very early Saturday morning to beat the weekend traffic, I took the Merritt Parkway to Route Seven and headed north toward Bethel. I had been there before with Gia at the start of our relationship. It wasn't as hard as it might have been because it was a place where she had been happy.

I had hoped to stay at the small hotel where we had spent that happy, intimate winter weekend and use it as the base of operations in my effort to find a clue as to where Gia's brother had ended up. The hotel was closed for alterations and would reopen at some vague date referred to as "the near future" under name of The Janus Inn. The sign also suggested that "travelers to the Berkshires, Tanglewood and Jacob's Pillow Festivals might enjoy the Janus Inn North convenient to these and other cultural & artistic destinations." A little heavy on its push for the arty crowd, I thought.

I checked the note I had made of where Rena said where Philly was working. My road map told me it wasn't that far away so I continued on to the Janus Inn North. The first time I heard the name of the inn it sounded odd until I recalled that Janus was the double faced god of the hearth. It was right

across the Massachusetts-Connecticut state line between Great Barrington and Stockbridge; close enough to the recently opened Mass Pike which would ease my drive to Boston.

After checking into my room and showering it was time to ask the desk if they could direct me to Philly. The cute young girl on the desk frowned as she answered my first question.

“I’ve been working here on and off since I was a kid but I never heard of a Philly working here...Oh, unless you mean Phyllida. But she doesn’t work here any more. She’s still around though. Has a dance school down Main Street and she sings while accompanying herself on piano at one or two cabarets. I don’t feel right giving you her phone number or address unless I check with her first. Mind waiting until I get her on the phone?”

I thanked her and smiled warmly while trying to appear calm despite my eagerness to see Philly after all these years. Could it be that it was this anticipation was similar to what one feels when about to reunite with an old flame? Best bet would be to mull that one over in the bar. The desk clerk’s accent was definitely not New England or nearby upstate New York which led me to guess that she was older than she looked but not by much. Midwest would fit with that accent was my decision which led me to wonder how a young girl like that came to be in this area.

It was quiet in the bar as I ordered a gin and tonic. The barmaid seemed to know Phyllida and thought she had a lot more to offer the world than would be appreciated in this town or anywhere in the Berkshires even with its seasonal cultural scene.

Like the desk clerk, the barmaid had an accent that announced she was not native to western Massachusetts. "Where are you from?" I asked as if I was making small talk but more to satisfy my curiosity.

"Berryville, Virginia. It's pretty close to Gettysburg, where the battle took place."

"Isn't anyone here a local? Must be a few. What brought you up here?"

Robin, the name on her badge, smiled and started to answer only to be interrupted by the desk clerk. "Sorry to interrupt, Mr. Morris. I did get Phyllida on the phone. She asked that you come by her place around six. She's teaching a class but you can wait in the studio and watch if you care to. Here are the directions."

"Say, you must be the guy who's driving her to see her cousin. Never saw her so excited to have a visitor before. You must be a really special guy."

"Flattery will get you everywhere," I quipped. "Does Phyllida get many visitors?"

"Almost none except for an occasional visit from her cousin. What's her name; Rena? She comes up a couple of times every summer or two for one of the festivals. Never with the same man twice or even for more than a short time. Seems odd she never went after you."

"We were kids together. It'd be like dating my sister." The news that Rena was accompanied by men on summer getaways was encouraging. Maybe we were meant to be together after all. That information did nothing to decrease my enthusiasm for the Phyllida.

* * *

MEETING PHYLLIDA

I didn't get much more out of Robin except some pleasant small talk and the eerie feeling that I was attracted to her in some special way and would have followed up that attraction had it not for my date to meet Phyllida. But why did I use *eerie* to describe the attraction I tried to ignore? After charging my tab to my room bill, I started to drop a generous tip on the bar. Robin thanked me and as she picked up the tip, she put her finger tips on the back of my hand. "Look me up when you're up this way again. I honestly mean it."

Robin spoke softly and leaned toward me as if to kiss me. Then she pulled back.

"Please," she repeated. I didn't know what to make of that but it suddenly dawned on me why the attraction felt eerie. It was the same kind of attraction I had felt for Philly the first time we were alone together so many years ago.

A generous dose of mouth wash and a close shave was all that was needed to prepare for my highly anticipated meeting with Philly. I checked the directions the desk clerk had written out for me, got in the car and set off.

Phyllida's studio was on the border between the village's commercial district and a neat year round residential district that could have doubled as a setting for "Our Town." A discreet sign on the road announced "Phyllida Mount, Dance Instructor /Small Classes."

A few cars were pulling away from the parking area as I drove up, a signal that the dance class had ended. A two story building with an outside stairway on the side housed the studio which was clear from the number of adolescent girls exiting, some accompanied by a parent, others greeting parents who waited in their car.

I sat in the car trying to get over my ambivalence at seeing Philly and wondering what she looked like. *Has her figure become more like that of a grown woman or does she still have the androgynous appeal that so attracted me back in high school? Am I convinced nothing could possibly happen between us or am I afraid we'll go all the way this time? Can it be that underneath all this wondering, I want to go all the way with Philly? Might not be a bad experience if she's as cute as she was as long it doesn't become a habit. But how do you go all the way with a girl who has a dick instead of a cunt?*

That last question put a smile on my face. I got out of the car and looked around the property. A couple of smaller outbuildings might serve as a garage and for storage.

It wasn't until I neared the studio that I noticed what had to be a home a little way off on a rise that sloped toward a lake. If Philly owned all the entire property, she had to have done well.

“David Morris, it really is you! It's really wonderful seeing you after all these years and that you've gone out of your way to drive me to see Rena.”

It was, of course, Philly still beautiful but less androgynous. Did I say less androgynous? She was convincingly one hundred percent female and beautiful. Okay, so maybe a little padding and the right

foundation garments added to the illusion but any natural born female using every enhancement ever invented would be hard pressed to come close to the image Philly projected.

She stood on the low wooden porch in front of the studio, waved as the late afternoon breeze blew through her long burnished brown hair and played with the hem of her skirt. I turned to face her and walked as quickly as I could to meet her. "Stop being so controlled," she laughed and ran toward me. It was then I saw she had donned a loosely tied wrap skirt over her blue leotard, slipped off her ballet flats and stepped into penny loafers. The white tights she wore added to the casual suburban style she carried so well.

A burst of speed by Philly brought us literally together as she leapt into my arms, threw her arms around my neck and began kissing my face, ears and neck. It was an effort to keep from being bowled over by her spontaneous display of affection.

Philly wrapped her legs around my waist and warned "Don't dare drop me, and if you stop hugging me I'll scream." My arms wrapped under her to keep her from slipping down. The friction of our bodies against each other, her breath and kisses on my neck and the pressure of her powerful legs around my waist were getting me hard.

As Philly shifted to stand on her own feet, her tummy rubbed over my now hard dick. "Oh, David, you don't know how happy you just made me. I mean it, really. Just to know that you can still respond to me like this, you know what I mean." She paused to put her arms around my neck once more and to explore the inner reaches of my mouth with her tongue. As I returned the compliment, she pulled

away and continued. "I can't tell you how often I think what it would be like for us making love, slow, romantic, passionate love. But that can wait because once we're inside I'm going to jump you but only as a prelude to the rest of the week."

We hurried hand in hand to the cottage. As soon as we were concealed behind the studio Philly put my arm around her waist, pressed her hip against mine and smiled up at me. Her eyes seemed to light up as a half smile flashed briefly across her perfect cupid bow lips.

Once inside the house Philly released me long enough to light a couple of nineteenth century oil lamps. "Dreamier than those harsh electric lights. The standard script calls for me offer you a cocktail or a glass of wine at this point but I've waited too long to waste even a second. Maybe it's too much to wish for but it would be super swell if we both have been waiting for this moment."

That said, she pushed me onto a couch and quickly shed her skirt before straddling me. Her hands were in my shirt feeling my chest. "Still don't wear undershirts..."

"You remember that much about me! I'm flattered."

Philly was standing now as she slipped the leotard off her shoulders. The breast forms in her modest soft cup brassiere did nothing to cool my arousal. If anything, they had become almost a fetish since my affair with my ill fated love, Gia.

She paused in her undressing to open my belt and undo my trousers before yanking them down to my knees. She grabbed my balls through my red

cotton briefs and snarled, “Don’t make me wait for you to undress.”



I stared at the perfectly feminine contours of her lower torso as she pulled the leotard down over hips and thighs before kicking it aside. The look on my face must have said what I was thinking. “Just relax. All my apparatus is down there and in excellent working order. Something called a gaffe gives me those feminine contours.

“Say, you look disappointed. I got it! Last time you saw me in panties there was nothing between me and the panties. Just a sec and I’ll fix things. Close your eyes.”

This was not a time to say no. In a minute or two I heard her say “Now you can open them”

Philly was a couple of feet in front of me clad only in bra and panties. It didn’t take Sherlock Holmes to deduce that she had hurriedly taken off her panties to remove the gaffe and get back into her panties. The white cotton barely concealed her circumcised cock which she hadn’t even bothered to tuck down. To keep from staring at her cock, my gaze shifted to her face. Despite my best intentions my eyes wandered quickly to her bra. The breast pads showed above the hem of the bra which had no other padding.

There was little doubt that Philly was well aware of my fascination with the breast pads. She bent forward to kiss me but paused halfway there. As she looked lovingly into my eyes her bra gapped away from her chest. I was astounded and enthralled by the small but very noticeable mounds of flesh that surrounded her nipples which were not the nipples one expects to see on a boy no matter how closely that boy resembles a girl. Seeing that my attention was now riveted to her breasts, she stood up with a triumphant smile, half turned away from me em-

phasizing her sassy tush, reached up behind her back and proceeded to unhook her bra!

I needed to take her in my arms as she faced me but she pushed me back onto the couch. Philly took my hand and guided it to her breast, placed my fingertip on her nipple and shuddered as my fingers circled her areola. Then she straddled my thighs and pushed my face to her breasts. She shivered as my tongue swirled over her now hard nipples.

Suddenly Philly jumped to her feet, pulled me up and smothered me with kisses as she quickly removed my clothes. “Oh, David, you’re as beautiful as you’ve been in my dreams all these years.”

Her hands were on my shoulders forcing me to my knees. Leaning forward, she kissed me deeply and then turned her back to me and slowly lowered her panties. I reached in front of her and held the high points of her hip bones as I kissed her nether cheeks, ran my tongue over the base of her spine before easing it between her cheeks. Philly shuddered and turned to me an instant before I pulled her to the floor. We landed in a sixty-nine position.

I gasped as Philly grasped the base of my dick and ran her tongue around my cockhead. My tongue ran along the bottom of her shaft to her knob which I greedily took in my mouth. Her cock began to vibrate in my mouth even as an uncontrollable energy overtook us both. Our limbs thrashed as we each simultaneously exploded into the other’s mouth.

Somehow we shifted so that we faced each other in an intense hug. Then our mouths opened and met in a long deep cum soaked kiss.

“We waited to long for that. It was wonderful and I’ll always remember our first time. But, David,

promise me this won't be the last time. And that we'll make it last and last."

* * *

DINNER & A TOUR

Philly stepped into her panties, pulled them up and adjusted her cock. She gathered her skirt, leotard, tights and bra as I lay resting on my elbow. Her movements were quick, efficient, effortless and graceful. Her small firm breasts were enthralling especially when her very adequate and functional cock was viewed along with those distinctively female endowments. I could easily see myself making love to Philly forever. Then I caught myself. Under it all, I reasoned, Philly is still a boy. Besides that, we hadn't gone all the way.

"David, time to get ready for dinner. Go back to the inn and shower. I'll pick you up in an hour. Just dress casually." I reached up for the hand she extended and was surprised by the strength she showed as she helped me to my feet.

"Oh, one more thing. They're all mine."

"Huh," was my surprised response.

"You're staring at my tits and if you're not wondering now, you will be sooner or later. They're all mine and all me. No surgery. They didn't just happen. An herbalist supplied me with things that stimulated my female hormones while suppressing my male ones. I can see you like the result. Now hurry."

The desk clerk called my room to let me know that Phyllida was here and that she would wait on the porch.



I hurried down and went out onto the porch. Philly must have herd the screen door open because she rose t greet me. She wore a peach colored shirt-

waist dress with a loosely fitted self-belted skirt. White kidskin gloves, off white pumps and matching purse gave her a fashionable and innocent look. Her hair was pulled back over her ears and held in place by a tortoise shell headband. The warm smile she gave me made me more interested in a long term affair with her and less concerned over whether that would make me a queer.

The clouds that obscured the setting sun drifted away allowing the sunlight to pierce her skirt revealing the shadow of her superb legs through the light fabric of her modest skirt. I knew instantly that the image of Philly at that magic moment would stay with me forever.

She took my hand, tilted her head and winked at me before kissing me on the cheek, pausing and then kissing my lips. We walked hand in hand to the Pontiac convertible. I held the driver's side door for Philly and then got in on the passenger side. Philly took a scarf from the glove compartment and tied it over her hair. Cat eye sunglasses were next.

"I made reservations at a small place. Basic American comfort food well prepared and good wine list. That's not the only reason I chose it for tonight. There's a kind of antique and secondhand place nearby. I thought you might like to see it since they always have a few books that might of interest to you. Something strikes me as fishy though. Certain books and objects seem too low priced. You would think the people who run the place would know what these things are really worth."

"Yeah, does sound a little strange. I don't know if you meant to or not but you've piqued my curiosity."

“Good. Now that you’re curious we can hang around for a few days before we go to meet Rena. And I’ll bet that’s not all you’re curious about from the way you’re appreciating my legs. The answer is no. No gaffe but I am wearing a panty girdle.”

There was something that was natural and unaffected in the way Philly looked at me in the tone of her voice when she answered my unasked question. My resistance to a long term affair with Philly was further eroded. I had to keep reminding myself that Philly had so far only shown an interest in having sex with me over the next day or two.

“David, we’re a little early for our reservation so we can stop for a few minutes at one of these shops. How about it?”

“Just drive slowly so I can memorize the way in case I want to go back tomorrow.”

“We’ve only time for one or two tonight; an antiquarian book and print seller and the craft shop next to it. I’m willing to bet you’ll want to see all of these places. Not that there are so many of them. Just promise me you’ll wait for me to visit them.”

“You don’t have to ask me twice. Philly, I want to spend as much time with you as possible before we head to Boston.”

Philly started the engine and put the car in gear but not before hiking her skirt above her knees. “Freedom of movement” she explained. “Makes it easier to work the pedals. Got into the habit when I drove stick shifts.”

She pulled onto the secondary road, her skirt rising further as she drove. She took her right hand off the wheel and rested it on my left hand. It felt good but I didn’t think too much about it until I realized

she had moved my hand onto her thigh. She took a hard right which almost spilled me against her and made my hand slip dangerously close to her crotch. I started to move my hand to a less personal part of her but she slapped it saying, Don't you dare move it."

There were a few cars with out of state license plates in the parking lot shared by the two businesses that Philly had talked up. The antiquarian dealer's wasn't what you might find in Manhattan or Brooklyn Heights but the stock was a cut above average for even a high class vacation area. Some of the 'rare photographs' were definitely modern copies but the attached blurbs never said they were originals and they weren't priced even close to what originals might be worth. Philly must have read my mind because she wrapped her arm around mine, leaned close and whispered "Caveat emptor."

"When did you get an eye for what's real..."

Her response was to elbow me and say "Shush. There is some quality merchandise but you won't see it if they think you're onto them."

Half an hour later we walked across the parking area to the craft shop.

"I like browsing in these places. Takes me back to bookseller's row on Fourth Avenue when we were in high school. This place and another one always seemed to get new quality merchandise right around when a new girl started working in the area. And David, as far as I could tell, these new girls were girls like me.

"There has always been a coterie of us since before I got here. But we were always discreet and

lived quietly if you get my drift. The new kids were often uncomfortable in their personas with a need to be noticed for what they are. It's starting to attract curiosity seekers along with men and couples looking to act their fantasies with these girls. There's more to it than this but it's too complicated to talk about right now. I just know that some of the, let's call it *merchandise* for now, has been stolen from the families of some of the newcomers by the girls themselves to pay for their training and keep until they can pay their own way. These girls end up as little more than sex slaves. They come here as run-aways with stars in their eyes and end up as trashy sluts with a thin veneer of class.

"I know I sound all hoity-toity but that could have been me if not for having your kindness when we were in high school. You treated me like I was a human being. It gave me self respect. Without you I couldn't have made it on my own in the real world. This area was the real world when I first came up here. It's being turned into a kinky slum.

"I'll shut up now. This tirade has gone on too long and I never meant to saddle you with my discontent."

We each took a deep breath at the same time which made us giggle. Philly pressed my hand in hers. "Thanks for listening."

"Philly, honey, listening is the least I can do for you. Now here's something you can do for me. Let me use your phone tomorrow morning and maybe again on Monday. It has to do with your suspicion of those books being stolen. And you don't have to be beholden to me over what went on between us in high school. I should be thanking you for opening

me up to wider possibilities.” *And I’m pretty sure I’m falling in love with you.*

Philly slipped her arm around my waist and bumped me with her hip. The crafts store, it turned out was more a jewelry store than otherwise except that many of the pieces were hand made in exotic or ethnic designs with a number of American Indian pieces prominently displayed. This was anything but mass produced tourist stuff. There was a ring bracelet and necklace set that would have been perfect for Philly and I pointed it out to her.

“David, this isn’t necessary especially when we’re just reconnecting after all these years. You’re being too generous.” Then she looked warmly at me and spoke softly. “Maybe this has something to do with those wider possibilities you mentioned. Let’s just be sure that this isn’t a passing infatuation before we explore some possibilities.” Her voice and the touch of her hand made me blush thinking of what might be between us. Then with sudden urgency, “Oh my gosh! We’ve got to run or we’ll be late for our dinner reservations.”

Philly drove silently for a few miles. She kept to the speed limit which was surprising since she hurried us out of the shop on the pretext that we might be late for our dinner reservation. The obvious conclusion was that she didn’t want me to buy her any jewelry at this point in what was hopefully or budding relationship. Another point was that this was not tourist season so that small, off the main road restaurants would not be overwhelmed with diners. Something had motivated Philly to get us out there.

“David be a dear and light me up. There’s a pack in the glove compartment.”

I used the car's electric lighter to light to both our cigarettes at once, a technique considered suave back then.

"I lied to you just now. We're not late for our reservation but here was a good reason why I needed to leave. A car pulled into the parking lot, a car that belongs to a couple I once worked for. It would have been awkward to say the least if I ran into them. Not that I can't deal with them but it might have been awkward, even embarrassing for you. As you can guess, I do have a past. I will talk about it, I must before we get too involved."

"I'll listen whenever you're ready to talk. Never forget, Philly, that there's not much in this world that will shock me and it's a sure bet that nothing about you that will make me less attracted to you or stop me from falling in love with you."

By now Philly was pulling into a parking space in the nearly deserted parking lot. The place was comfortably busy for off-season. The hostess, a late fortyish well put together woman, greeted Phillida who introduced me as an old high school chum who "was a very special friend."

We were seated at a quiet table next to a window overlooking a stream that was running high with snow melt. We ordered cocktails while Phillida went over the menu with me. Potato and leek soup to be followed by pot roast was her suggestion. Phillida, as she was universally called by the staff, knew her way around the wine list as well which got me to wondering what she had done in the dozen or so years since I last saw her. She was still Phil, an awkward boy who was a misfit in his own body, whose only expression of the lovely and lovable girl within him was a few hours each week when he

clandestinely dressed in girl's underthings. It was just my luck to be asked to help Phil pass the boys' physical fitness test. Even then I couldn't decide if that luck was good or bad and I hadn't the foggiest notion of what kind of luck it was that had us together again for however short or long a time.

"A penny for your thoughts," as she reached across the table for my hand with a pensive look on her face.

"I was thinking how much you've changed. You're still the kid I had a crush on in high school but grown up, sophisticated, stylish, independent, and making your way in the world quite well."

Then her face grew stern but there was playfulness in her eyes. "David Morris, why didn't you tell me you had a crush back then? I don't think there was much we could have done about it but it would have been nice to know. That's that. No more longing for what might have been."

The hostess brought the wine and appropriate glasses. After showing Phyllida the label, she drew out the cork with a practiced deftness. Philly swirled the wine in the glass, sniffed it and then tasted it before passing the same glass to me. I wondered whether she was seeking my agreement or measuring my knowledge of wine.

I commented as I nodded; "A very fine St. Emillion."

"I agree," Philly responded and nodded approval to the hostess who shocked me by adding "With our compliments. I usually don't play this late on a night like this but what would you like to hear."

"How about 'These Foolish Things?'"

“My pleasure,” the hostess added and went to the baby grand piano on the opposite wall. Her technique was impressive and her improvised variations on the melody indicated she was classically trained. She paused briefly to acknowledge the applause of the diners and then went into “The Way You Look Tonight.” I wondered why this attractive, personable woman, so obviously a gifted and well trained musician was spending her life in this small restaurant so far off the beaten track. I wondered if it was performance anxiety that made her avoid larger more crowded venues.

She returned to our table but declined Philly’s request join us in a glass of wine.

“Thanks but not now; perhaps some other night. Have to write up the order for the weekend.”

“I’ll hold you to that,” answered Philly. “And thank you for playing for us. It was perfect for our mood.”

“Please, the least I can do is further a sister’s romance.” She put her fingers on Philly’s list and smiled warmly before leaving us to attend to business. Calling Philly “sister” had to mean she was the same kind of girl as Phillida which explained why she had to avoid most venues.

“David, I hope you’re not upset that I told Nadine that I’m still head over heels in love with you.”

Our soup was served before I could answer.

“Don’t put in our main course just yet. I need a cigarette. Just give us five minutes”

The waitress nodded.

Philly led me on to the porch soon as the soup was eaten. She slipped her sweater over her shoul-

ders and took her handbag. I took her hand in mine only to have her drape my arm around her waist as soon as we were on the porch. It was good we had moved to a shaded, secluded corner of the porch or Philly would have seen how intensely I blushed as she moved my hand from her waist to the midline of her derriere.

“I didn’t really want a cigarette at all.” Her tone was as if she were admitting some great act of deceit. “I feel chilly, David. Please hold me, hold me close.”

She faced me now, pressed her body against mine as her arms draped over my shoulders. Looking up at me wistfully, her face suddenly tensed as if she had seen some thing potentially frightening.

“Something’s bothering you, isn’t it?”

“Don’t talk, not now.” She brought her face to mine. Our lips lingered lightly and then opened as our tongues flicked tip to tip. I lifted Philly so that our heads were at the same level and then slipped my arms under her to keep her from sliding down. The kiss lasted a long enough for my hold on her to relax. We both became aware of her slipping lower so she placed her legs under and stood with my arms still around her. Her skirt rode up as she moved down, rode up high enough that my hands now rested on her pantygirdle. A shiver ran through me as soon as my hands made contact with that wonderful bit of intimate apparel. I drew my hand away and started to rearrange her skirt to a modest level before anyone happened to see us. To my surprise, Philly slapped my hand and put it back on her tush!

“We had better go back inside,” she suggested after a minute or two of building sexual tension. “Thank goodness I’m wearing a panty girdle or my hard-on would be dripping precum.”

We sipped wine as we waited for our comfort food to be served. Conversation was mainly reminiscing about the positives of the past and regretting what might have been. Phyllida, despite her genuine warmth and allure, declined to talk about anything that transpired since we last met and this wonderful interlude. Her affect became clouded and then she reassured me.

“I promise to tell you how I got to be who I am, where I am but just not yet. David, I swear I’m not going to hide my past from you; I just need to be sure...Don’t ask “sure of what’ because I don’t know the answer.”

The cloud lifted and the conversation moved on to speculation about what Rena might have in store for us.

We finished dinner with apple pie and ice cream and very well brewed coffee. Nadine credited it to good coffee and a clean percolator. Her solicitous attitude toward Phyllida impressed me as coming from one who had been both a lover and a mentor to my inamorata.

It wasn’t our waitress but Nadine herself who returned to offer us more coffee and asked if she could join us for a liquor. “I would love you to join me in toasting what I see is developing into a special relationship.”

Phyllida blushed, something I thought she could no longer do, and ordered Grand Marnier while Nadine and I had Drambuie. Nadine kissed us as we

left. Phyllida got a kiss on each cheek and then a perfunctory peck on her lips. I got the same sendoff but with a lingering and very moist peck on my lips. Matter of fact it was more than a peck.

Phyllida's reaction was subtle look of tolerance. It could just as well have been seen as a look of intolerance.

We held hands in a casual but manner with Phyllida swing her arm as if she were a little girl at play. This spontaneous display of seeming innocence added to Phyllida's seductiveness.

As I held the driver's side door open for Phyllida, she paused, placed one hand on the roof to steady herself and slipped off a shoe to shake out a pebble.

"Damn it all, my garter slipped open," she announced as she stood with one foot in front of the other. "Excuse me while I readjust. This is the sort of inconvenience I never anticipated when I was struggling to break out of that awful boy fate that had been imposed on me. Oh, don't be pride and turn away or avert your eyes."

With deliberate, beguiling slowness Philly hiked her skirt along her leg and thigh until it was just above the edge of her short leg panty girdle. She looked at me, winked, refastened her garter and stood up straight still holding her skirt at that very immodest and alluring level. She reached out slowly, took my hand and placed against where her pubic mound would have been had she been a natural girl. I held my breath as I felt the outline of her cock through the less restraining fabric at the crotch of her pantygirdle. Her testicles seemed to have vanished which puzzled me since she had told me she avoided a gaffe in favor of the pantygirdle. My puz-

zled confusion must have been evident because Phyllida answered my unasked question.

“I’ve hidden them but I’m not going to tell you how. A girl needs to keep some mystery around her.” Another wink from Philly as she shook her skirt to the appropriate level, sat down in the driver’s seat facing out of the car. Then with practiced skill raised her feet keeping her knees together and pivoted behind the wheel.

* * *

A RESTLESS NIGHT

Phyllida drove back to her home and invited me in. “If we go to your room at the inn, I’m afraid our lovemaking will wake the entire house.”

She unlocked the door and I stepped past her as she closed and locked the door behind me. “Darn, I was hoping you’d brush up against me as you passed me. Like this.” Keeping her back to me, Philly took my hand and pressed it to her bottom, then guided it over the delectable contours so easily traced under her light frock. We faced each other, for a few seconds our eyes met with intense longing, not just for the night of sex we knew would happen but for a chance to share moments of tenderness and caring.

She turned on the indirect lighting that surrounded the great room. In true Frank Lloyd Wright style the large fieldstone fire place as the heart of this modern yet rustic room. Seated on a couch facing the series of glass doors that opened onto a porch overlooking the moon lit lake, I draped my arm around Philly as she snuggled against my

chest, her head resting on my shoulder. She looked up at me critically.

“You look sleepy and that will never do. We both could do with some coffee. It won’t take long with my new drip coffee maker.” She sat on the coffee table and took off my shoes before measuring some beans into a coffee grinder. Once the machine was set up and the button pressed Philly excused herself. “Got to get out of this girdle. I’m supposed to say ‘it’s just too uncomfortable’ but it isn’t uncomfortable in the least. My real motive in taking it off is to allow you access.” She unbuttoned the front of the shirtwaist dress as she spoke but turned and left the room before she revealed very much.

I wondered what kind of ensemble she had in mind that would allow me more access. There were loads of possibilities that flashed through my mind. One thing for sure was that Phyllida would never wear something trashy.

It didn’t take long for Phyllida to return. She wore a long paisley wrap skirt that fell open just enough to reveal her shapely dancer’s calves and sculpted ankles. The silk of her off white blouse was not so opaque as to prevent the outline of her bra from being seen. Bringing her hand to the open collar of the blouse, she remarked, “This should be worn with a full slip or camisole but I’m sure you don’t mind.” She then opened two more buttons on her blouse so that the soft silk fell open to reveal the lacy edge of her bra.

“Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’ll fetch the coffee. Stay where you are and leave the serving to me. Still take it black, no sugar like in high school?”

“Impressive memory for details, you’ve got there. What else do you remember about me and about us?”

“Darling, my memory for details is only impressive when I’m motivated to recall times worth remembering.” She chatted on from the kitchen to the accompaniment of rattling cups. “It may be hard for a nice guy like you to understand but what you did for me gave me enough hope and confidence to face a very vague but none the less terrifying future. I had already resolved to kill myself in the event I failed that fitness test. You not only coached me through it but you made me feel like I might belong somewhere and with someone down the road. Now come and carry the tray.”

Phyllida stood on tiptoe and kissed me letting her moist lips linger before she turned quickly, picked up the tray with coffee things and handed it to me. She led the way back to the couch carrying a tray of pastries cut into mouth size bits. As we set the trays on the coffee table, Phyllida suggested we sit down and relax; “Shoes off, collar loosened.”

She did a sort of half kneel as she poured the coffee but made no effort to keep her wrap skirt from parting enough to reveal her thighs. Philly left the filled cups on the tray as she sat down close to me and crossed her legs while draping her arms over the back of the couch. She bent forward and handed me a plate of pastry pieces then took one in her fingers and put it in my mouth.

“I’m feeling the effects of the wine and cocktails. David, you must be totally exhausted after driving all the way up here from the city.” She didn’t wait for an answer but crossed her legs so that her skirt opened enough to expose her not so modestly

crossed legs high enough to show more than a glimpse of the luminescent white silk briefs. “Poor baby, lie back on the couch and rest your head.”

There was no need for her to convince me. Her fingers massaging my face and neck felt both relaxed and stimulated me by creating a sensation akin to tickling. She undid two or three more buttons of my shirt, slid her hand into it. “You still don’t wear undershirts. Just like in high school.” And she began to fondle my nipples.

“Just sit up for a sec. I need to shift a little.” Again I complied and felt Phyllida rearrange her skirt. She guided my head back onto her thighs but a little closer to her knees. I turned my face toward her body with the intention of kissing her lower tummy through her panties. A surge of adrenalin ran through me as I felt her panty covered penis against my cheek. My heart was racing as long sublimated desires surfaced.

I sat up and turned to face her and for an instant we looked at each other. Then Phyllida’s mouth opened as I covered it with my own. She guided my hand to her balls then raised her hips and lowered her panties just far enough to free her now hard dick. Pushing her knees apart, I knelt between her legs and gently kissed the tip of her prick.

Wrapping my fingers around the base, I ran my tongue around the rim of her that beautiful cockhead. Somehow her very intense hard-on didn’t seem incongruous on this very beautiful and otherwise unequivocally female being.

Soft whimpers came from Phyllida as my mouth engulfed her cockhead. “Fuck me, David, please, please fuck me. I need to feel you inside me.” My

own cock was straining against my briefs as I released her cock from my mouth. I paused long enough to flick her precum into my mouth. I savored that drop; let it linger on my tongues as Phyllida pulled me to my feet, unzipped my trousers and yanked them down to my feet. She clutched my balls hard enough to bring me to that strange line between pleasure and pain while she ordered me to get rid of my shirt.

Her skirt and blouse were off now. The falsies showed above the edge of her bra intensifying the arousal I felt for this unique being. Phyllida reached behind her back and unhooked her bra. Her small but real breasts were perfectly proportioned to her slender dancer's body. She wrapped her arms around my neck and her legs around my waist.

"This may sound stupidly romantic but I want you to carry me to my bedroom. I don't want to give up my virginity on the floor or on a couch." She then proceeded to caress my neck with her tongue.

"Careful with that, Philly. I don't want to drop you. And I sure as hell don't want you to make me cum before I'm in you."

"Oh, my gosh, you really are going to fuck me!" A pause before she added softly. "David, I love you."

Phyllida lay back on the pillows and stretched languidly. Her hair spread fall across the pillow, glistening in the dim light. "No leave them on for now," was her softly spoken but firm reaction to my attempt to ease her panties off. Putting her hands to the sides of my face, she guided me closer to her waiting mouth and then rose to meet me. The kiss

was deep, intense bit short lived as she pushed my head away only to guide it to her breast.

Kneeling on the bed while my tongue caressed her very sensitive nipples, I felt her hand reach between my legs and tug hard on my cock. Then her fingers drifted lazily over my ball sac so lightly I barely felt their pressure. What I did feel were electric tremors that spread from her finger tips to spots that had never known sexual stimulation. These sensations lingered even as Philly's hands moved to the waistband of her panties. Her hips lifted just long enough to allow her to slip the panties to her thighs. The heel of her hand was against my chin forcing my mouth from her nipples and turning my attention to her rampant hard-on.

Philly rested on her elbow and reached toward the night table for a tube of lubricant. With surprising speed, she dumped me onto my back and straddled my chest facing my feet. Her bottom was close to my face but just far enough out of reach to keep me from tasting the cleft of her nether cheeks. That Philly was able to thoroughly lube my cock without making me cum led me to wonder if she wasn't quite the virgin she had led me to believe.

Philly rolled onto her back and drew her knees close to her chest. I knelt between her legs as she handed me the tube of lubricant. "Squeeze some out, spread it around my hole...Don't be stingy. Now work some into my sphincter...Ouch! Slowly, slowly. I'm so tight down there."

She began to move her hips up and down in a slow rhythm as my finger explored as deep inside her as I dared. Her hand grasped my wrist forcing me to pull my finger out of her. "It felt so good, almost made me cum."

Now my cockhead was pressing against her tight sphincter. Philly smiled up at me as she raised her hips and put her hands on my tush. In an instant my cock head slipped into her and past the tightness of her rectum which still exerted pressure on my shaft. My cock was now buried deep within her. Inside her was a warmth and softness that coupled with the tightness of her hole was heavenly beyond anything I had ever experienced with a real woman.

Again her hips began to move in a slow but subtly increasing tempo punctuated by the tensing and relaxing of her body's grip on the base of my shaft. Philly began moaning softly as her rolled from side to side even as her hips rose and fell. Her tongue probed my ear adding to the overwhelming ecstasy that was building within each of us.

Electric vibrations started in my balls and in my groin as Philly began to thrash and whimper. I gasped as her hand grabbed my balls. She squeezed hard digging her finger nails into the skin of my ball sac.

The tingling vibrations spread rapidly through legs until I lost control and screamed in tandem with Philly's shrieks. My legs and body thrashed out of control as I exploded in an intense prolonged orgasm in perfect sync with my lover whose orgasm had covered my tummy with copious amounts of cum.

We lay aside by side basking in the afterglow of our simultaneous and intense orgasms. As my ecstasy faded I understood why the French refer to orgasm as ***la petite mort*** (the little or small death). Phyllida was a little ahead of me in her recovery judging from the fact she was leaning on one elbow and smiling down at me. A smile that might have

been of one of adoration or of triumph as she reached between my legs and lightly caressed my ball sac. The zenith of our lovemaking had left my skin so sensitive that Philly's feathery strokes verged on painful. Verging on painful, yes, but also hinting at how very exquisite pain might be.



“Hurt can be so nice, so pleasurable,” observed Philly who no doubt read my face.

With surprising speed and grace, Philly twisted, swung her body and legs around so that her knees were on each side of my head and her bottom inches from my face. She leaned forward bringing her face close to my tummy and proceeded to savor her own cum using her tongue to lap it up from where she had cum on me. Her delectable tush moved closer to my face hinting at what I must do to please her. Raising my head to her hole, I tentatively flicked some of my own cum into my mouth before losing any inhibitions that remained and abandoning myself to performing oral-anal sex.

* * *

EVENTFUL MORNING

It was barely light when I was awakened by my distended bladder. I staggered into the bathroom and for some inexplicable reason sat down to pee. No sense washing my hands, I reasoned silently. There was a bottle of mouthwash on the counter of the sink which suggested that the least I could do for my lover would be to get rid of morning breath. As I watched the mouthwash run down the drain a vision of my remarkable lover sleeping angelically popped into my hand. How wonderfully romantic it would be to awaken her as if she were sleeping beauty by kissing her lips. Standing in the doorway leading to the bedroom, I was chagrined to see an empty bed.

Philly must have gotten up to go and went to a different bathroom. That's got to be it. No option but to

get back into bed before I was too wide awake to get back to sleep. I was too far into sleep to react to the sound of a car engine starting somewhere near the house.

A long time went by when I was suddenly awakened by sunlight streaming through the window. A slender woman was silhouetted by the sun as she opened the blinds. Her athletic body cast a shadow through the man tailored shirt she wore.

It took a minute or two for my eyes to adjust to the sudden brightness and to notice that this ever surprising beauty was wearing skin tight white cotton panties. Despite the exertions of the night before, Philly's seemingly thrown together get-up was more effectively seductive than the most expensive gown and peignoir could ever be.

Phyllida either hadn't noticed that she had awakened me or didn't care. She turned from the window, stepped into the hall for a moment and returned with tow shopping bags. "Good morning, morning glory," she said with a smile brighter than the morning sunshine.

She yanked the covers off me and tickled my tummy. "No kisses until you brush your teeth and shave. I took the liberty of going to the inn to fetch some of your things. Your toiletry case is in the bathroom and I'll put fresh underthings on the dresser. I imposed on a friend who has a clothing shop in the next town to open up and let me have some men's shorts and polo shirts. We can get you some Keds. No sense to for you to go around looking like a city person who didn't know what to pack. No shower while I make breakfast. We have a fun day ahead."

I swung my feet to the floor and sat looking at Phyllida. She was totally female with no hint of the exaggerated mannerisms of effeminate males. The one exception to this near perfect image was the outline of her cockhead visible through the gossamer panty. This only added to her allure. Whatever that said about me was of no consequence. It was clear that to me that I was well on my way to falling totally in love with Phyllida.

I started for the bathroom as Philly looked at me with a discerning eye. "Very nice" was all she said. As I passed her, she darted behind me and attempted to yank down my briefs. My attempt to hold them up was foiled by a very sharp slap to my balls. It wasn't quite hard enough to bring me down but it was hard enough to make me reflexively grab my aching balls.

My hands being thus occupied gave Philly the chance to tug my briefs down over my butt exposing that part of me to the hail of slaps which Philly quickly and firmly delivered. "What was that for?" was my only response to this playful assault.

"That's for nothing. Imagine when you do something."

Just as I stepped into the shower Philly opened the bathroom door and announced she was putting some fresh towels and a pair of clean underpants on the vanity for me.

"I'll lay out a couple of different ensembles in the bedroom. I'm sure at least one will be to your liking."

Fully awake when I stepped into the shower, it felt that much better to anticipate the day ahead with Phyllida. Somehow it would feel sexier to put

on the underpants Philly had chosen for me before shaving. The one pair of underpants I could see were not typical men's briefs; no fly, lower on the waist and blue cotton. Two things reassured me that these were not panties. The tag inside the waist band read "pour les hommes," meaning "for men" in French. The front was cut differently from panties, cut to accommodate a man's attributes.

In for a dime, in for a dollar, I thought for no reason other than I had never even thought of wearing any thing as androgynous as these underpants. Rather than making me appear effeminate my male contours were enhanced by this surprise left by my very unique lover.

Phyllida showed an exceptional sense of timing by coming into bathroom just as I finished shaving and applying witch hazel. Silently coming up behind me, she ran her finger tips over my face and purred into my ear, "Mm, as smooth as a baby's bottom."

A pleasant chill ran through me as her bra rubbed softly over my back while her finger tips moved over my face to my lips. Gently sucking each finger tip as she offered them to me in turn heightened my sensitivity. Philly's hands dropped to my chest and rested on my nipples. Her breath felt both warm and cool as she leaned closer to me. Philly, several inches shorter than my five ten, had surely slipped on heels.

Her tongue poked around my ear, teased me with the expectation that she would dwell on this often unappreciated erogenous zone. Then she moved her face away from me, moved her hands to my tummy and pressed against me. Her not quite flaccid dick pressed against the lower edge my rear. I drew a

deep breath as once again a feeling of arousal unlike any I had ever known well up inside me.

“Oh, David, please forgive me. This isn’t the time for us to make love. What we’re both feeling, what we both want deserves hour and hours to explore. But we have work to do this morning. Remember what we talked about last night. You were going to get some information about rare books that had been reported missing. That information may hold the key as to what’s going on with these kids and who might be behind it.”

Phyllida was showing a talent in controlling me. Subtle promises of undreamed of ecstasies were cut short by the imposition of more practical concerns. It was a very effective way to keep me interested. In the few seconds it took for me to go back into the bedroom, Philly had vanished from sight.

While I got dressed in a dark blue polo shirt and chinos, I reflected on Phyllida’s concern over the girls she claimed were being exploited. Was she more committed to assisting them out of their plight or getting me solve the problem of stolen rare books that might or might not be the price these girls pay for acceptance into this group? Then there was that couple that she avoided last night. They had to fit into this situation. Was whatever had passed between that pair and Philly enough to motivate revenge on Philly’s part?

“Gosh, what a slowpoke you are. Breakfast is on the table.” Philly’s voice ended my ridiculous speculations. She had fully dressed in white slacks and a navy blue and white striped French sailor’s blouse with a wide neck that barely concealed her bra straps. (Reminder: Lingerie was not meant to be seen except in very intimate settings at the time this

story takes place.) Navy leather pumps added to her height. Her slacks were well tailored but fell across her bottom to subtly reveal the shadow of her panties as she moved.

A substantial breakfast cooked from scratch by Philly did nothing to lessen my fascination with this ever surprising androgyne.

“That was great, Philly. Another one of your talents but one that’s dangerous. I might gain weight if you keep feeding me like this. With all your talents, 44you could be anything you want.”

I had distanced myself from my dark speculations of half an hour ago to be able to say this with no intent other than to communicate my joy at re-connecting with Phyllida in ways that were unexpectedly romantic. But Philly’s response was unanticipated.

“David, I know you mean what you’re saying and I love hearing you say it because I know you mean every word.” She paused as she seemed to be looking at something that was miles in the past and years into the future. Her voice was pensive, almost melancholy when she again spoke. “You’re wrong. I can’t be anything I want to be. There so few places where I can even begin to be who I am. Sure, I’m a good dancer, maybe even good enough to make it with a dance company but who would risk having me. Think of the scandal that would attach to any legitimate dance company if my biological nature were discovered. My fate would be unendurable. Ending up in prison is worse than a death sentence for girls like me.

“I’m being so unfair to you. We’re dangerously close to being in love but living together in any place

where you can pursue your career...Never can happen.

“Forgive me for trying to control you like I just did. We’ll do what we have to do today and then you’ll go back to the inn tonight.

“Now don’t interrupt. Once you think about what’s happening, you’ll agree I’m right. We’ll think back on these few days as a fun, romantic interlude.”

“You’re right, Philly. Take what we can out of this aspect of our relationship is the best we can hope for.” That was all I said to Phyllida at that moment but that was hardly all that was going through my head. *She’s right on an intellectual reasoning level but that’s not how emotions work; especially not emotions like love and passion. Damn, that name you’ve adopted suits you. ‘Phyllida’ just conjures up images of an aloof ice-lady who may or may not be seething with repressed sexuality. I can stop seeing you if that’s how this plays out but I don’t think I can forget for a moment how passionately in love with you I am.*

After we cleared the table Phyllida rinsed the dishes while I put them in the dish washer, not yet common appliance which suggested that Phyllida was doing very well. Her mood had suddenly become less somber, more spontaneously flirtatious. Was she often given to such sudden changes of mood or was this an expression of her plan for us to remember this affair as “a fun, romantic interlude? One thing was certain and that was that it was time for me to take Phyllida at face value and stop second guessing her motivations.

We walked hand in hand to the dance studio where according to Phyllida, it would be easier for

me to make the calls necessary to track down a list of stolen or missing rare books, prints, and photographs. "I could take notes, be your secretary or assistant. It'll be easier than you trying write everything down while hanging onto the phone. Think of yourself as Sam Spade and me as Effie. David, what is so amusing about what I just said?"

"I wasn't laughing at you or anything you said. This is the second time in a week that a beautiful woman suggested I become a private detective."

I tried my primary contact at NYPD. Detective Sergeant Joseph Marino was unavailable but I put through to his 'aide', a youngish sounding woman who assured me she would get my message through to him and that he would call me back if I would leave a contact number. The call left me wondering if the aide was a police officer or a civilian clerical employee. Joe called back within the hour.

He was able to give me a more complete list of missing and/or stolen items that I was interested in. "The thing that doesn't fit at all is that as we checked into this we were told that a large number of missing items had turned up in their owners' possession as suddenly as they had vanished. Often the missing young offspring had returned for a surprise visit just about when the missing article turned up. Pretty obvious the kid had 'borrowed' it. In each case the family was more than a little vague about the kid who went missing and popped up again. Just that the kid went off to find himself or herself but refused to give names. Weird thing was that they referred to the kid in question as 'he' or 'him' and sometimes 'she' or 'her.' They insisted everything was now okay and we should close the case. That doesn't resolve all of them. Might be some in-

surance fraud behind this. Nothing more to tell at this time. You just let me know if you came hear about any of the stuff that's still missing. Better still; let me know what's happening with you when you get back to town. By the way, Serena, the one you spoke to, thought you have a real sexy voice. Told me to tell you that you ought to meet her for a drink. You could do a lot worse."

That ended the conversation. I was mildly amused by the way Phyllida's nostrils *flared when Joe was touting Serena. Jealousy, no doubt. Maybe, just maybe Phyllida* wasn't as quick to think of our affair as short but romantic fling.

Phyllida looked at me quizzically. Then she spat out her thoughts.

"That cop gave you some interesting information. Could be helpful. But how could he possibly think that guy with your calls could ever be interested in a female cop?"

"Forget that for now," I answered. "We've got to shop around all the rare bookstores and antique places that are open this time of year. One question, though. How far do you want go in chasing this down and why?"

Phyllida squirmed uncomfortably for a brief instant. She bit her lower lip and then answered.

"Because it's the right thing to do. There is no reason on earth for these girls to go through what I had to endure and maybe worse. That's all I can say now without falling apart. I told you I have a past and that I would tell you about it. Just not yet."

A flash of insight brought myself-induced romantic delusions about Phyllida to an abrupt halt. Philly was throw-

ing up all sorts of smokescreens to cover what was going on around her and in her. It was a sure bet that much of this veneer of *mysterious femme fatale* was part of an effort to keep me interested in her. It was effective until that moment but even though I still had a thing for Phyllida, this ploy was about to rapidly lose its effectiveness.

Before I could say a word about Philly dropping her guise of mysteriousness, she reverted to cute, unaffected coed mode. The change was instantaneous, cute, and convincing.

“Excuse me for a sec. Be back in two shakes.” As she stepped through the doorway leading from the kitchen to the hall, Philly paused, turned back to me and blew me a kiss.

True to her word Philly was back quickly. She had changed to an ensemble which reflected her newly adapted character. The sleeveless dress with loose comfortable waist. A circle pin above her bust was the only ornament on the dress. Neutral hose and ballet slipper styled flats added to the tastefully fashionable effect. She projected the image of a junior or senior at a prestigious women’s college in town to visit an art museum as part of project. I wondered if she had been born female if she would be at the same point in her life as the persona she had so suddenly adopted.

The cat’s eye sunglasses she held in her hand could be used simply as sunglasses but I had already figured out that the chameleon-like Phyllida would use them as a prop to keep attention focused on herself in much the same way Victorian era ladies flirted using a fan. Despite the cues that told I should be on my guard with Phyllida, I was enthralled by her ability to shift swiftly from one per-

sona to another. Not all could possibly be facets of the real Phyllida which I knew lay hidden beneath these many guises, hidden perhaps even from herself. It was necessary for me to remind myself that I was not her therapist and therefore had no business trying to help her discover who she really was.

Philly put her hands on her miniscule waist, turned slowly and with a charmingly innocent smile asked “Do you think I look okay in this dress? That grin on your face says it all.”

She took cordovan leather shoulder purse from the table, checked its contents, then grabbed my arm and led me to her car. She slid behind the wheel, lowered the top and took a scarf from the glove compartment. “If I don’t put this on, my hair will end up looking like a bird’s nest.”

“Doubtful,” I responded. “Nothing about you can be less than adorable.” *Why did I just say that when I’m trying to be...Damn, I’m not even sure what I’m trying to be.*

Got to admit that she’s keeping me interested. The momentary pressure of her hand on ‘my knee ended my reflection.

“You do want to visit some of the used book-stores and auction barns so you can inspect the merchandise, right?”

“Depends what you mean by **merchandise.**” My misguided witty emphasis

on merchandise might have amused some of the naughty sophisticated types back in New York but not Phyllida who was always ladylike except in the bedroom. Her reaction was a hard slap aimed at my hand but missed and caught me in the crotch. It might have been meant as playful but, had I been

standing, would have come close to doubling me over.

A labored “sorry” was the most I could manage.

“David, I’m more than simply annoyed...hurt.” Phyllida managed to sound truly hurt. She started the car, put it in gear and sped off. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see the hard expression on her face as she bit her lower lip.

The car slowed as we neared the first store which carried New England antiques as well as used books. “David, bear with me. I can’t go in the way I m. Just give me half an hour or so and...We’ll get this done today.” Everything about her voice betrayed her agitation; nothing of her facial affect nor her body showed any sign of her agitation, nothing except a sudden rigidity. “Cigarette,” she said a few seconds later. Her tone was now calm, self-possessed, and confidently making it clear there was no refusing this simple demand.

I took the pack of Parliaments from the glove compartment, lit one and handed it to her. “Thank you,” she said in a calm impersonal tone which convinced me that Phyllida was reacting to more than my tasteless quip.

From the corner of my eye I could see the tension drain from Philly. Moments later the car stopped at a large pond at the end of a dirt road. Philly got out and turned toward me. “You can get out if you like but wait at the car. Give me a minute or two by myself and then it’ll be okay to talk.” Her bittersweet smile is something that will stay in my mind’s eye forever.

Philly stopped a few yards from the car, raised her skirt above her knees but not to flirt. She simply

adjusted her slip and smoothed her skirt into place before walking to the edge of the pond and beckoning for me to come to her. Philly hurried toward me as I neared her, took my arm and clung to it. Her smile was warm yet enigmatic as she looked up at me. Something about that moment filled me with something like anticipation but what it was that I anticipated I couldn't explain and still can't.

“David, we need to talk or at least I need to talk...and I need you to listen.”

* * *

CONFESSIONAL TALK & A NEW ASPECT TO PHYLLIDA

We held hands as Phyllida led the way along a level walking path around the pond. “David, you do know I'm very much in love with you and have been since you gave some attention to a very odd teen who had a schoolgirl's crush on you for what seemed like forever. You're kindness and acceptance of the weirdo who was so despised convinced me that things might get better and maybe there would be others who could treat me as human.

“After you graduated and left the neighborhood...This is so hard for me to say...I was raped.” The malice with she spit out those last three words was palpable and understandable. I reached out to her but she flung my hand away. Philly paused to dab away the tears that were on her checks. She used the back of her wrist which made her seem more vulnerable, more like a little girl who was punished for something she could neither understand

nor help. She took a few steps, kicked a stone and turned to face me as she reached her hand out toward me. We walked in silence for several yards before Philly resumed speaking.

“The rape I suffered over and over again wasn’t physical except for getting my bottom pinched or patted in the hall between classes. The real rape was an ongoing assault on what I was and what I wanted to become. I knew better than to expect protection or even support from teachers. I just needed to talk to someone who could listen to me, hear me sympathetically. You were gone so that left only Rena. My wonderful cousin did listen to me but then she told me to ‘stop walking around like you’re asking for it.’ Of course I walk like a girl and sit like a girl but Rena told me that was just my excuse for acting like a slutty little tramp.

“That wasn’t the first time Rena hurt me and it wasn’t the meanest thing she ever did to me. Oh, she kept using me as an emotional punching bag but it was never as hurtful as the first time. You’d never guess when that was in a thousand years. It was when we started spending a little time together when you got me through that fitness test.

Rena swore you were seeing me on a dare and that you thought I was good for laughs. I knew it wasn’t true.”

“No, it wasn’t the least bit true.” *This is hard to believe. Rena went out of her way to get me to help Philly get through that fitness test. This whole story makes no sense. Philly goes from bubbly and with it to angry or sad in no time flat. Scary sometimes.*

“Rena was a fraud from the get go; pretending she was into girls and all that. Oh, she loved it when

boys drooled over her but she was scared of them, petrified really. That's why she played at being a dyke. But there was one boy she had a real intense crush on and it bothered her to see him getting cozy with someone else even if it was... even it was someone he could never date."

"I get the picture. Rena was jealous of the attention I was showing you."

"That's why I hate her with a passion. David I can't go with you to meet Rena in Boston. The few hours we've been together have shown me how close to perfect things might have been.

"This arty resort area with its bohemian crowd, its queers, its summer music and all is a safe place for a freak like me. I can pass as a girl most of the time and if someone reads me, so what? There's too much for me to lose by opening myself up to Rena's viciousness. It would be nice for you if things work out between you and Rena, business wise and otherwise. Not that I wish you ill but I couldn't stand to see you with Rena.

"Funny thing is that I'm still not sure what kind of style I want adapt, what kind of image I want to project. It's like I'm some sort of chameleon when it comes to how to clothing, shoes, hairstyles, jewelry even makeup and lingerie. My personality changes, too. I so want to be sure of who I am. Simply being a girl leaves that wide open. If you saw me for the first time ever, say at a museum or an afternoon concert...What would you think I'm like?"

"There's an attractive young lady, classy. Smartly dressed and I'll bet she bright and well read. Smacks of prestigious women's college. Recent grad? And you know what, Phyllida? I'd look at her

hands, try to see if she had an engagement ring because if she didn't, I would be thinking of some way to strike up a conversation."

By now we were back at the car. Phyllida reached into the car and took the pack of Parliaments from the glove compartment and offered the back to me. I declined and watched her take one from the box, tamp the cigarette and light it. She had a way of making the simplest everyday moves seem sensual in subtle ways that defied analysis. Having lit the cigarette, Philly reclined against the trunk of the car, leaned back on one elbow and blew a perfect smoke ring. I was so intrigued by the casual way in which she inhaled and shaped her lips in preparation for another smoke ring that I almost didn't notice her arm as she extended her hand toward me, her hand lowered almost imperceptibly at the wrist.

David, love," she began as if annoyed but tolerant of me having not responded to her gesture. "Help me up." As I stepped closer to her, she rested her heel on the bumper of the car and used my hand as leverage to place herself squarely on the trunk lid. "Oh, my gosh!" She exclaimed half giggling like an early adolescent on an amusement park ride. "I just had the car waxed and it's so slippery. David, save me."

Never one to refuse a damsel in distress, I stepped in front of her as she braced herself with her hands on the trunk lid. Philly's legs flailed for a few seconds before I could hold her ankles. She lay back on the trunk lid with her arms extended as if she were about to make snow angels. Her skirt had slid over her thighs to a level that not even the most liberal observer could consider modest. Fortunately there were no observers. Those virginally styled white panties flowed over the vee at the base of her

torso to highlight the outline of her very sexy cockhead. It was all I could do to keep from resting my fingers on what had so recently become the object of my desire.

As I stood immobilized by Phyllida's bizarrely androgynous beauty, she sat up and put her arms around my neck even as I held her ankles. Her face was close to mine as she freed one of my hands from her ankle. Her tongue poked lightly at my ear sending shivers of arousal to my groin. Those shivers were the start of my erection which was accelerated by Phyllida guiding my free hand to her panty crotch. My fingertips rested lightly on her panty covered cock which slowly swelled to fullness.

My belt and zipper were opened as her hand slipped into my briefs and weighed my balls on her palm. Her legs, no longer in my grasp, were draped over my shoulders as I eased her panty crotch aside and moved my face toward her magnificent hard-on. Philly's gorgeous dick twitched as my tongue reached out to the tip. My anticipation of the taste of the baby-soft skin of her cockhead was cut short as she placed her hand on my forehead and pushed me away.

She arched her back, removed her panties and tossed them over her head and into the back seat of the open convertible. She moved swiftly, gracefully even as she admonished me. "Oh, David, you look like a fool standing there with your pants around your ankles. You'd fall on your butt if you had to move quickly." This was said with a tone that may have meant to convey tolerance or intolerance but the sneer on her face assured me that it was not tolerance.

Despite calling for my help a few minutes before, Philly had no difficulty maintaining her seat on the trunk lid. Her feet rested on the bumper far enough apart for her to easily maintain her balance but making it less easy for her to keep er knees together in ladylike manner. While revealing her unusual attributes, unusual for someone otherwise so feminine and attractive, the overall effect was one of careless and innocent exposure.

Mesmerized as I was by Phyllida's unique combination of attraction, Philly had no trouble grabbing the lower edge of polo shirt and yanking it up over my head leaving me vulnerable. The aspect of Phyllida that I hadn't anticipated confronted me.

"You look so vulnerable. It would be so exciting for me to overpower you now, to force you to submit to my whims, to humiliate and embarrass you." Her implied threats had the effect of bringing my cock to a full and almost painfully intense erection. As I struggled to remove the offending polo, Phyllida mocked me. "Poor Davey. Think about how many times I could have mauled your balls without even getting to my feet." I felt her foot tapping my balls as she continued her harangue. "Stand closer," was both an order an invitation which I obeyed.

Her hand again weighed my totally exposed balls and applied a tentative squeeze, a squeeze that promised pleasure and pain to come. Having managed to remove the polo shirt, I stood naked and vulnerable before this very imaginative and ever more desirable androgyne.

Placing her hands on the sides of my face, Phyllida pulled my mouth toward hers beginning a deep, intense kiss as our tongues flickered over the most sensitive parts each other's mouth. I felt her

push against my face, a signal that this exquisite kiss was to end.

I felt more than anything I needed to taste her nipples but was foiled before I could even start.

“Yes, baby, I understand and I want to enjoy what your tongue can do my boobs bit I just can’t allow you to ruin my dress.” Phyllida’s whispered comment was convincing enough to tell me I had no choice but to obey her wishes. A thought flittered through my mind as I raised my body and looked into her eyes; “There is no rational reason not to submit to Phyllida’s every whim.”

She was sitting erect now, her thighs parted enough to remind me that any intimacy between us would be far beyond what any ordinary girl could offer. Philly’s hands rested on my naked shoulders, pressing down she forced me to my knees as she slid off the trunk lid and rested her tush against the edge. Her foot lifted to the bumper. I massaged the arch and then held her foot to my mouth and sucked gently on each toe.

Phyllida drew a deep breath and then pushed me away. “That’s too kinky even for me, you pervert.” She then spread her legs as if offering her cock to my mouth. My first reaction was to try to take her cockhead into my mouth only to have her gently move my face away from my desired object.

“Make this last,” she purred. “Prove to me that you have the instincts to satisfy special girls. Show me you know every sensitive spot and use those instincts to bring me off so that we’ll remember it forever.” Phyllida allowed me to rest my tongue on the underside of her shaft. “Slowly, slowly,” was all she said as my tongue flickered along her shaft to the

rim. "Taste me, tell me how delicious I am." The precious drop of precum disappeared onto the tip of my tongue and into my mouth.



An approving glance from Phyllida more than hinted we were on the right track.

She quivered as my tongue circled the rim of her cockhead before taking into my mouth. Her hand closed around her shaft even as I sucked gently on her cockhead. She was breathing deeply almost panting as she jerked herself off even as my mouth pleased her cockhead.

I could feel her cock vibrate as she began to moan and whimper. A minute later she screamed as she geysered what felt like quart after quart of cum into my mouth. She recovered quickly only to rebuke me. "That was anything but great sex. Oh, sure that would have been hot stuff in high school but you didn't even try to share yourself with my cock remained hard. Don't you dare cum. You'll regret if you do." Her venomous tone was more than intimidating and yet seductive.

Phyllida stood up, adjusted her skirt and said to no one in particular, "Look at how wrinkled this is. Now I have to get it cleaned and pressed." An accusatory stare from Phyllida reduced my hard dick to a state of near flaccidity. She had used me and then humiliated me while creating a longing that might fade but never entirely disappear. Dormant though that longing might be, it would easily be reawakened by Phyllida's imperious attitude. This was as far as Phyllida would lead me down this newly discovered path for now. But how far might she take me at another time and how far would I follow?

"You look ridiculous sprawled out naked with your dick trying to decide whether to deflate or stiffen. Get dressed so we can get on with your business."

Phyllida kept my attention on her as she raised her skirt and stepped into her panties. She was more serene than she had been since she began her denunciation of Rena and her anger fueled need to control what was happening between us.

“David, if you forgive me for my awful behavior toward you, I swear it will never happen again. It was just that my anger at Rena burst through and you were the only person at hand so I took it out on you. Give me a chance to show you that who you saw isn’t the real Phyllida.” Her hand rested lightly on my inner thigh as she spoke. As she finished her apologizing, her fingers glided slowly toward me knee before withdrawing completely.

“Phyllida, there’s nothing to forgive,” was all I said in hope of ending the discussion. *Rena, you still fascinate and it might not be a bad thing at all to have a long term affair with you but if you’re still peeling away the layers to find out who Phyllida really is, how can I know which layer to fall in love with?*

She put her finger tips to my cheek, leaned across to me with her face close to mine. Then she shifted to face the steering wheel, sighed and put the car in gear.

DÉJA VU

Moments later we were back on the blacktop with little conversation between us. Phyllida broke the silence.

“I just know you’re going to find these shops fascinating. They remind me of those little places in the

Village or off Lexington that carry all sorts of delightful old things. It'll be fun even if we don't find any clues."

The car soon pulled into the parking lot of a small complex of shops including a ladies fashion boutique that had not yet opened for the tourist season. A café serving light meals announced on its signboard that a songstress performed there on weekend evenings. Phyllida was right about the store that was our destination. It did take me back to certain shops around New York City. Used books and bric-a-brac were artfully displayed in the windows. It made me wonder if there was a connection to the disappearing/returning rare books.

The door opened just as we approached but it wasn't to greet us. Two couples emerged, each with purchases. Classical music drifted through the doorway with just enough volume to tell me that quality speakers were in use which added to it being reminiscent of out of the way New York shops patronized by the artier and more intellectual types. Once inside we were greeted by a willowy cashier seated on a high stool next to the register. In the dimness I was unable to make out whether this was a young man or a young woman. As my eyes adjusted to the dimness after coming in from the bright sunshine, I was overcome by an eerie sense of familiarity, a disconcerting sense that I knew this person or that I had known someone very much like her. This was true *déjà vu* in the psychological sense. I was seeing someone who I could not possibly have known yet it triggered anxiety!

The nameplate near her perch said "Loren Townsend." Loren, as it was spelled could belong to a male or a female. Neither name belonged to any-

one from my past. It was an assumption, perhaps invalid, that the cashier was Loren Townsend.

“Welcome to the shop. Can I direct you toward any particular items or would you prefer to explore?”

That simple and probably standard greeting momentarily resolved the conundrum of the cashier’s sex. The voice was soothing and mellow. It was as if a cello was speaking as a woman. It was at that moment that she and I made direct eye contact. For a split second I thought she startled. If she did, she instantly recovered her aplomb. But why am I referring to this person in the feminine?

My eyes adjusted to the dimness of the store, a stark contrast to the early spring sunshine outside. I studied Loren Townsend hoping to see what resemblance to someone my past had triggered that disconcerting sensation of *déjà vu*.

“We’re offering a new line of quality reproductions of rare books; well collectible books not all that rare.” Her hands flew to her mouth as if she just committed a *faux pas*. They were graceful hands with long slender fingers and delicate wrists. “Do forgive me for sounding like the worst sort of high pressure salesperson. I had no right to assume you would be interested in old books...” Her voice trailed off awkwardly. Had I had the same effect on Loren Townsend as she had on me? There would be no way to explore the reasons for this possibly mutual effect with Loren while Phyllida was around.

“There’s no need to apologize. You weren’t far off the mark considering I am interested in old things.” Now it was my turn to feel awkward. Might Loren Townsend think I meant that she was one of the ‘old

things' to which I was referring? Before I could recover from my own faux pas, Loren had come down from her perch and was facing me with her hand extended. Her handshake was firm yet gentle. "Loren Townsend, and you are?" "David Morris," I replied.

Rather than simply release my hand, she let her fingers glide slowly over my own and rest briefly over my fingers. Surprised as I was by this flirtatious move, it was a disappointment when she finally dropped her hand away from mine. This should have diverted me from the intense discomfit that resulted from the vague feeling that this was not the first time I encountered this lovely sylph. It only heightened the pervasive underlying anxiety evoked by the impossibility of us having ever encountered each other before.

Loren looked over my shoulder and smiled at whoever was behind me. The short hair on the back of my neck stood up as I realized Phyllida was the one who so stealthily came up behind me.

"Mr. Morris or may I call you David? How about introducing me to the lovely young lady you're with?"

"Loren Townsend, meet Phyllida..." My voice faded as it occurred to me that I hadn't the least idea of what surname Phyllida had adopted in her haven in the Berkshires. Loren, whether by design or chance saved me from embarrassment by simply saying "So very nice to know you. I just love your name, so elegant, almost aristocratic. It has such ladylike overtones. Suits you perfectly."

"You flatter me, but thanks all the same."

"Not flattery at all. Your dress is tasteful, attractive without making you look cheap or ostentatious.

Since the shop is empty at the moment, let me show you around.”

Phyllida wrapped her arm around mine and held me possessively close to her. “That’s awfully kind of you, Miss Townsend, but we’ll browse on our own. I’ve been a customer of this shop for years. Being so new, you’re not aware of who tourists are and who the regulars are.”

Phyllida’s very rude dismissal of Loren failed to flap Loren Townsend which no doubt got Phyllida’s goat. “As you wish. But feel free to call me if you have any questions.” She folded her arms and looked straight at Phyllida who turned away after a moment of Loren Townsend’s subtle but very withering stare.

My doubt about knowing who the real Phyllida was increased and my fascination with Loren Townsend increased by that brief exchange.

Loren kept hold of my arm pressing herself even closer to me as we started to drift though the store. “David, that awful girl frightens me.”

We remained in the store long enough for me to peruse the rare book reproductions that Loren had called to my attention. As good as they were, it was clear that they were not meant to pass as genuine. Phyllida left the shop under the pretense of needing a cigarette which allowed me spend more time than necessary to complete my purchase with Loren.

I dismissed the fleeting notion that Loren might be a runaway; far too old, to self-possessed. Neither could I shake that creepy feeling that came with brief and unsubstantiated recognition.

Phyllida threw down her cigarette and aggressively ground it out as I exited the shop. Oh, David,

I've been so awful to you. It isn't your fault in the least." She stood on tiptoe and kissed me on the cheek.

"David, this area is not nearly as nice as when I first came here. I don't like it anymore. Can I change my mind and ask you to take me to Boston with you?"

"For you, anything."

I regretted my choice of words as soon as they were out of my mouth. It was no surprise that Phyllida was now grinning from ear to ear.

A vague plan was forming in my mind. After dropping Phyllida in Boston, I would insist that I had to get back to New York to take care of some business which was true enough but there would be a detour to spend time with Loren Townsend. For some inexplicable reason I knew I had to discuss Loren Townsend with Gwen Loren. Was it the similarity of their names or something else?

Phyllida dropped me at the inn at my request. My excuse had been that I needed to start packing. True enough but I really wanted to contact Joseph Marino without any chance of Phyllida eaves dropping on the conversation.

CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

Robin, the bar maid, was seated on the verandah of the inn watching me get out of Phyllida's car.

"Hello, David. I hope I'm not being too familiar by calling you David. Forgive me for saying so, but you look like something's on your mind. Have a seat."

Robin came across as so natural and unaffected in a way that was refreshing especially after the twists and turns of Phyllida's moods not to mention the unsettled mood that I experienced on seeing Loren Townsend.

"I'd treat you to whatever drink you need right now but the bar doesn't

open for another hour or so. How about a cigarette instead?"

Robin was on the shorter side of average with jet black hair cut in Louise Brooks bob. She had left an extra button undone on her white uniform blouse which afforded a liberal view of the soft round curves of her ample breast nestled in her low cut bra. She caught hold of the hem of her skirt as she recrossed her legs. Despite my intimate exertions with Phyllida over the last couple of days, I found myself thinking how wonderful it would be to enjoy plain vanilla sex with a real girl like Robin.

"Robin, maybe you could help me out."

"Depends on what you would like me to do for you." Was there really an understated change in her tone when she answered or was it wishful thinking on my part?

"I came across a young woman in a bookshop today. It was as if I had met her before. It was very disconcerting. Nothing she said or did could account for that. Do you know anything about this Loren Townsend?"

"I could see why you might be drawn to her. She's different in a New York kind of way. Different, too, from most of the other arty types who drift in out of this area. She first came up here to waitress during summers. Then she stayed on most of the

time. Still goes off to God knows where every now and again. Stays away for months on end and then returns. Social enough but never really opens up. The kind who has plenty of close acquaintances but no close friends, if you get my drift. Been featured as a folk singer in some of the late night seasonal cafes. Sorry I can't be of more help."

"You've been more helpful than you know. There's a really big favor I need from you. If you're uncomfortable with doing it, say so and I promise no hard feelings."

"David, you're the kind of guy some women feel they can trust. And I'm one those women. Ask away."

I explained that I needed to make a secure phone call to a friend in New York City and that I would charge the call to my home phone.

"I live in a cottage on the grounds. You can use my private line that's in no way linked to the inn... And I promise that no one will ever know you used my phone."

"Robin, you're areal pal."

"Thanks for the compliment but I was hoping we might be more than pals if things..." She paused and blushed. "David, forget what I just said. It was wrong of me to say anything like that."

"No need to apologize. But I must tell you, blushing becomes you."

"You flatter me, but don't stop. I love every second of it." She tilted her head toward the ceiling and took a deep drag on what was left of her cigarette. Then she snubbed out the cigarette in the ashtray that rested on the table between us. Robin again

tugged the bottom of her tailored skirt as she got up. She turned toward me and paused before taking my hand and all but pulling me to my feet. “I thought you wanted to make an important phone call. Let’s go or are you afraid to be seen with hired help?”

Robin led me to the far side of the parking lot but paused at the beginning of a path leading into a wooded area. “It’s a bit of a walk to my cottage but if you’re in a hurry one of us can drive.”

“I don’t mind walking but I really don’t want you to be late for your shift. Before we go any further I want to thank you for taking the time and trouble...”

“Don’t even mention it. It’s a relief to be able to do something to help a gentleman who isn’t out to get something from me. Not that I wouldn’t welcome attention for someone like you but It looks like you’ve got something going with Phyllida ...”

“You were going to say something about Philly.”

“I lost my train of thought. That’s so unlike me. Honestly, I know very little about Phillyda other than that she’s more independent than any of the other women who operate a business in the area.”

As we walked Robin made a few attempts at small talk which led me to ask her about herself and how she landed in this inn that was just a little too far off the beaten track to be part of the mainstream of the Berkshire resort area. Her answers were vague at best. It was as if she was ambivalent about sharing anything personal. Her recurrent theme was to try to get me to tell her how much I knew about the inn and the surrounding area.

In the few minutes it took to reach her cottage, I was convinced that she was a real, honest to good-

ness female and that the inn offered services that had appealed to a very specialized clientele.

Robin's cottage was more than adequate for one person. The décor was eclectic early American with enough feminine personal touches to reassure me that Robin was very different kind of girl from Phyllida. Why else would she have a box of sanitary napkins on the vanity in her bathroom?

"You can use the phone in the kitchen or the one in my bedroom. There's a sitting room with a phone and desk that might work better if you need to take some notes. Make all the calls you need to make. I've got to get back to begin my shift. This switch turns on the lights for the path back to the inn. It's on a timer but it'll give you enough time to get back before they go off. Bedroom's at the end of this little hall. This door leads to the bathroom in case you have to answer the call of nature.

"Just promise me that you'll stop in the bar on your way up to your room."

I nodded and was about to thank her again when she kissed her finger tips and put them to my lips.

The sitting room surprised me. Built in bookshelves left room for framed family pictures. The nude of a two or three year old Robin left no doubt that she was a real female. There were enough photographs to form a pictorial bio of this fascinating girl. A handsome father and gracefully beautiful mother doted on her at every age. Why then was she alone here in a little traveled corner of southwest Massachusetts? I didn't dwell on that question but continued to look over the collection of personal photos. Robin in a field hockey uniform, in a leotard and tights. Her grammar school class picture next

to her high school class picture and diploma. The college diploma with its magna cum laude seal added to my curiosity about why this cute, bright and well educated young woman. I shrugged my shoulders, then dialed the long distance operator.

My eyes wandered around the room as I listened to the operator make the connections. The room with its collection of personal memorabilia and photographs might have belonged to a family vacation cottage, the kind of place that would provide warm memories to generation after generation. It utter normalcy was so out of place in what I could no longer deny was a community peopled by some very unusual types. The economy may have depended in large part on summer tourists but they were, I was convinced, tolerated as the bread and butter of the year round inhabitants.

My reflections ended when a female voice answered the phone and the operator confirmed the number reached. "Who is calling?" asked the vaguely familiar female voice.

"This is David Morris. I'm trying to reach Joe Marino. To whom am I speaking?"

"Oh, David. This is Serena. Do you remember when we spoke briefly on the phone a few days ago? Joe's right here. Say, where are you calling from?" Then she called to Joe, "Pick up the phone, Joe. It's your pal David calling long distance."

"Don't hang up, Serena. This call isn't just social so stay on the extension if there is one."

Serena volunteered to take notes once we got into the situation in the Berkshires. Joe agreed to get me all the information he could find on the disappearing/reappearing books and girls. He agreed to mail

everything to me as soon as I could give him an address in the Boston area. "Send copies to Gwen Loren. She's a lawyer I know. Seems like I can trust her."

"Better than that, Serena can hand deliver the packet to her."

"One more favor and this has nothing to do with the rare books or the lost girls. There's this girl I ran into up here. Name of Loren Townsend. She's driving me nuts. ...Don't get ideas. Nothing romantic or sexual is happening. It's just that I thought I recognized her but we never met before and it's got me feeling weird."

Serena, who had been silently taking notes, interrupted. "Are you talking about a *déjà vu* experience?"

"That's precisely what I mean."

"Will you two talk English?" Joe's voice was a mixture of good natured humor and frustration.

"I'll explain later," offered Serena.

"Thanks," answered Joe. "So what you're about to ask is for us to search all public records for information on Loren Townsend. How about a birthdate or social security number to narrow it down? If you can't get that for me, try guessing at her age. Does she have a regional accent you can place?"

I thought for a minute or two and was as surprised as Joe was by what I came up with. "She has no regional accent of any kind. First I thought I heard a hint of New York but that was maybe imagination, maybe something else on my part. No regional idioms either. No one's language is that free

of accent or regionalisms unless they made it a point to shed every hint of their past.”

“We’ll get on it right away, offered Serena at which Joe ostentatiously cleared his throat. “Well, I for one will,” concluded Serena.

I very much wanted to tell Serena that if she did a good job, I would reward by asking her to do a similar job on Robin. *Better not. Why bother since I’ve already got too many women to sort out, ladies of all kinds come to think of it. And besides, Serena is piquing my curiosity. Hey, maybe this is a good sign. Between being fascinated with Robin and curious about Serena, it could be that I’m drawn to genuine women again. But what about Loren Townsend? Wish I knew what she’s all about.*

After hanging up the phone, I looked around the room once more. Judging by the mementoes on display it was more than obvious that Robin had some feelings for her family. That she was living year round in this isolated part of Massachusetts when a move of a few miles would have put her in a more active, more cultural milieu, just didn’t fit. Mine not to reason why....I turned off the lights, set the lock on the door and left.

True to my word, I stopped off in the lounge to say good-night to Robin, thank for the use of the phone and for her trust in leaving me alone in her cottage. She had was chatting with a couple at the bar while mixing cocktails for the restaurant waitress. After the waitress left with her tray of cocktails, Robin greeted me and suggested a “Rusty Nail for openers.” It wasn’t ever my usual but I wasn’t about to refuse an attractive curvaceous woman who had been so willing to accommodate my needs.

I sat at the bar watching her put the cocktail together. My hand wrapped over hers as she set the drink in front of me. "Robin, I need to thank you for the use of your phone and for trusting me to be alone in your cottage." She leaned over the bar as she gently tugged me toward her. Our lips met in a soft moist and gentle kiss that lingered and still lingers in my memory. Her tongue brushed against my lips as the kiss ended.

"You're very welcome."

After cashing out the couple she'd been chatting with, she looked around and winked at me. Her hand went to the hem of her skirt which she raised pretty high by the standards of those more modest times, then proceeded to smooth out her stocking and refasten it to the clasp at the cuff of her white panty girdle.

"See, I trust you with more than just being left in my cottage." Robin again looked around before leaning closer to me and saying softly, "I need to thank you, too. You've awakened a hunger in me that I thought was dead." There were tears in her eyes as she turned away.

It was an awkward moment for us both. Robin squared her shoulders as she took a deep breath. A second later she turned to face me with brightness in her still moist eyes. After another deep breath, "Thank you, David. That hunger may fade again but it's nice to know there's at least one man who can reignite it."

I had thrown a five on the bar to cover my Rusty Nail but she handed it back to me saying "My treat and if we ever meet again I'll show you how the appreciation you deserve."

My head was swimming with all that Robin's words implied. The conversation shifted to small talk and why I was going to Boston with or without Phyllida. There was no choice but to be vague as Rena had told me almost nothing about her business proposal.

"Are you like so many men who can't pack neatly?" This was blurted out with a burst of little girl enthusiasm. She paused to take a breath but not long enough for me to answer. "Cause if you are, I'll come and help you pack when we close. Ten's not too late, is it?"

"Robin, that's awfully kind of you to offer, but don't places like this have rules against fraternizing with guests?"

"You poor sap. The big attraction here is that singles or couples can associate with some very special, very different staff members. And you can bet that some of these associations are very intimate, if you get my drift.

"Please, David, don't think for one second that I'm that kind of girl. I'm just an ordinary girl who works as a barmaid."

Robin's comments about the intimate goings on between girls employed in the hotel and visitors set my mind racing. It was a sure bet it wasn't only girls working at the inn but other special ladies in the surrounding area who offered visitors the chance to fulfill their special needs. This explained why this out of the way locale managed to support the inn as well as the boutiques, restaurants and antiquarian shops year round. It seemed like a pretty straight forward set of arrangements. It also provided the kind of safe haven that saved Phyllida and gave her

a life for the last several years. The thought of organized crime profiting from this strange little world crossed my mind and began to darken the very upbeat, sunny view that I had developed. That sunny view might well have been based on wishful thinking made real by Phyllida's ladylike appearance which stood in stark contrast from her very unladylike but very gratifying sexual antics.

"I call as soon as I close. If you decide you don't need me, well, that's okay."

"Thanks for the offer, kiddo. I just might take you up on it."

The desk clerk on duty greeted me as I walked into the lobby area. "Mr. Morris, there's a phone message for you from Miss Rena Gold. She was quite adamant that I get it to you as soon as humanly possible. You can ignore the note we slipped under your door. It's just a request to check at the desk. Here it is." She then handed me the note and as our hands brushed against each other I felt the very tender softness of her skin. Her hands were tiny, well proportioned. Not likely to be the hands of a young man, however small and slender, dressed as a woman. Was I becoming fixated on the idea that every attractive young woman might be a transvestite?

I opened the envelope and unfolded a typewritten message. "Miss Gold warned me the message was lengthy so I wrote in shorthand and then typed it out for you," commented the desk clerk. The recurring question passed through my mind as it did when I talked with Robin, when I met Loren Townsend, and when I was spending time with Phyllida; Why is this attractive, capable girl staying in this back of the beyond wilderness?

Rena's phone message was a relief. She had found a more or less permanent apartment in brownstone on Exeter Street between Marlborough Street and Commonwealth Avenue. The location would have impressed me had I known anything about Boston. She included her address and phone number as well as directions. An order to phone her as soon as I got in was politely worded as a request but knowing Rena, it was a command.

I thanked the desk clerk and went up to my room, lit a cigarette and phoned Rena who was genuinely effusive on hearing my voice. It was an effort to keep from laughing when she made it clear she hoped Phyllida would not get in the way of our picking up where we left off but "with the missing pieces filled in." Rena emphatically just had to take me up to the north shore to show me the sites for her new venture. Her comment about filling in missing pieces made me wonder what pieces she had in mind. There was a lot we shared back in high school but sex was not any part of it.

It was relaxing to just sit in front of the open window and watch the stars appear as my mind traveled back to those quiet study sessions at Rena's when so often we took brief breaks from studying to practice French kissing. I almost laughed out loud thinking back on those times when I fancied myself the initiator of these sessions and how I even managed to run by hand over Rena's tits. Nothing funny about that except it was now obvious that Rena had been on control all the way.

A glance at my watch told me it was time to start folding my clothes. Robin was pretty close to the mark when she wondered if I couldn't fold clothing

very well. It always seemed that I packed the clothing correctly but they always came of the suitcase wrinkled. A knock at the door and in walked Robin, iron in hand, ready to help. (Hotels and inns in those days rarely provided irons and ironing boards in the rooms.)

“Thank goodness I’m not too late to help. Besides it gives me a reason to spend another hour or two with the man who rekindled...who is so nice and polite.”

Robin immediately took charge by having me clear the dresser and then looking around for a blanket. “No, not the one on the bed. I’ll take the spare from the bottom drawer.” More supple than I expected her to be, she bent at the waist and opened the drawer. I swallowed hard as her skirt pulled taut across her girdled bottom. Her legs were shapely, her chiseled ankles enhanced by the lightly tinted stockings of her uniform.

Robin then knelt to free the blanket which somehow was wedged in the drawer. Her skirt rose above her knees as her stockings pulled across her knees. She was agile enough to twist so that I was denied even the smallest glimpse of stocking tops. It was as if she read my mind as she looked and smiled coyly. The blanket was playfully tossed at my head which obscured my view long enough for Robin to get to her feet without further exposing her enticing legs.

Once the blanket was spread over the dresser, it was obvious that Robin had set up a substitute for an ironing board. After plugging in the iron, she checked over my shirts and trousers and decided that just a little touching was needed.

“Darn, this iron gets too hot too quickly. Thank goodness this won’t take but a few minutes. No sense in being uncomfortable though.” She started to unbutton her blouse. “Don’t get any ideas,” she said firmly and then with a half-smile, added, “at least not yet.”

I stared in utter disbelief as she untucked her white uniform blouse and, as if this was the most ordinary occurrence, proceeded to iron the first shirt. “Be a dear and fill a glass with water so I can steam out the wrinkles.” She turned to face me as she spoke. The blouse was wide open revealing the powder blue foundation garment which I guessed was an all-in-one based on the color match when she gave me a glimpse of her panty girdle earlier. Her very shapely breasts nestled in the cups added to the impression that this was a natural woman.

The sexual exercises that Phyllida and I shared earlier were no barrier to the tingling I felt in my crotch as Robin announced “This is silly. False modesty always is.” She then took off her blouse and hung it over the back of the chair.”

She quickly touched up the shirts and sharpened the creases of my pants. Her movements gave me allowed me to fully appreciate how the elastic fabric of her all-in-one gave her a sleek curve that narrowed her waist and emphasized the fullness of her womanly hips and the roundness of her tummy.

Robin kept eyeing me from head to toe as she re-folded the blanket and put the ironed clothing on the dresser.

“There, that’s done.” She looked wistful as she spoke. David, I was right when I sensed you were a gentleman but there is such a thing as being too

much of gentleman at the wrong time. Or is it that I've lost what little sex appeal I ever had?" Tears had welled up in her eyes. "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. Isn't that the old cliché?"

Speechless was a condition I experienced very few times in my life but this was one of them. Robin stepped closer to me, turned her back as if ready to walk away, but then unzipped her skirt before letting it fall to the floor. Some women are built for speed, others for are built for comfort. Robin combined the most appealing attributes of both types in her curves.

She half turned toward me, lolled over her shoulder and remarked that "One gets so stiff just standing around all evening." Robin put her hands on her waist and slowly ran them down over hips which called my attention to the very visible silhouette of her white tailored panties under the not quite opaque elastic fabric of her pantygirdle all-in-one.

Raising her arms overhead, Robin bent at the waist and planted her palms on the floor. My eyes remain fixed on her delectably full derriere made even more yummy by the restraining foundation garment. "Come snuggle me," she said as she slowly stood up. I stood behind her and wrapped my arms around her tummy. Robin moved my arms higher on her torso so that weight of her breasts rested on my forearm, a simple act which gave me a raging hard-on.

"This feels as good to you as it does me, doesn't it?" She pressed her tush against my crotch then slipped her hands behind her and undid my belt and fly. My pants were down around my ankles as she cupped my balls through my thick cotton briefs. "Ugh, those underpants just get in the way." She

yanked them off my hips and then moved her girdled tush slowly and lightly over my now sensitive hard-on. With astonishing deftness Robin slipped behind me, unbuttoned my shirt and lowered it along my arms leaving me nude except for my shoes and socks. Robin reached in front of my and ran her fingers around my nipples, making them as hard as a girl's when she's in the midst of enjoyable foreplay. It felt better than I thought it would!

It was, I felt, time for me take the initiative, to take control of this situation which was certain would end in a shared, if not a mutual orgasm. An attempt to turn Robin so she faced me was met by surprising speed and incredible strength from this petite and shapely girl. She slipped to my side, wrapped her arms around me and lifted effortlessly off the floor before setting me down so that she was now behind me. Still holding me tight with one arm, she clutched my balls in her free hand and slowly twisted.

“Robin, I’m sorry if I ...”

“No, David... Don’t try to explain. It wasn’t something you did that made me act like a wild woman. Sudden moves like that scare because of something that happened a long time ago. Someday I may be able to talk to you about it but not now.” She was breathing heavily as she spoke but I could feel her relax, her breath slowing as minutes passed. Her hands returned to my breasts as she again fondled my nipples.

“All that tension made me physically tight again.” I didn’t dare respond or move as she dropped her arms. In seconds she was in front of me once more, now leaning lightly against me. She raised and extended her leg in what ballerinas called *battement*.

The reflection I caught in the dresser mirror seemed impossibly incongruous. The surreal image of a deliciously full bodied girl in a seductive bra and panty girdle combination that should have restricted her movement yet she maintained a pose that would challenge some ballerinas while she leaned against a nude man. I longed to run my hands over every inch of body, to taste every part of her, to explode with my cock gripped tightly by her well trained vaginal muscles. It was hard to clear this intensely passionate fantasy from my mind. To do so would allow me to relish the moment.

Robin slowly moved her leg down from the battement she had so sensuously demonstrated. I tried not shift our pose so that I might catch a glimpse of her mons which, though concealed by her panties and the girdle, would be emphasized and enhanced by the contouring restraint. Her beautiful face looked serene until a gentle smile moved slowly across her lips before fading back to serenity. Gentle though it was, her smile had a tinge of triumph as if she gloated over my failure to view her mons. Was she hiding something? No, everything about her cried genuine female. I swore to myself that I would return as soon as I and learn the truth about Robin.

Robin reached back, took hold of my cock and guided to the seam that defined the cleft of her ample bottom. The sleek firmness of her panty girdle against my cockhead was like nothing I had ever felt before. Somehow we had moved close to the bed. Robin put her hands on the bed and moved onto it in a kneeling position guiding me with her as she moved.

Her knees were apart affording her room to reach back between her own legs and grasp my balls. A

brief yelp of pain as she squeezed my balls and dug her sharp nails into the tender skin of my ball sac.

Supporting her weight on mine on one hand, she took my hand guided it to her breast. She parted my fingers just enough so that her erect nipple could fit between. Then began a rhythmic rocking, slowly at first, imperceptibly increasing as I followed her cues. The intensity of my arousal increased in keeping with the increase in tempo. The world around me was fading into oblivion until nothing existed but the movement of Robin's girdled body against my throbbing cock.

Robin ceased moving and angled her body so there was only the slightest contact between her my dick and her voluptuously girdled bottom. My cock twitched as if reaching out toward her. Her arm wrapped over mine as she raised her self so that she sat on her feet, her body erect. With an effortless sweep, she rolled me onto my back. In an instant he lay over me pressing my cock between us with her groin. Gyrating her hips created a wonderful friction between her lower tummy and my very sensitive erection. She bucked hard, reached between us and milked my balls as I spontaneously send burst after burst of cum onto my own belly.

Recovering from this oddly satisfying orgasm, I saw that Robin was not entirely unaffected by what she had just done to me. She sat on her haunches, knees apart. There was a small but unmistakable wet spot showing through the crotch of her girdle. She was breathing deeply as she leaned forward and kissed me gently on the lips. Her lips lingered on mine long enough this demonstration of affection to grow into a deep, probing kiss.

As Robin came up for air, she looked down at me tenderly and said simply, "Thank you." It was a strange new experience for me to lie naked on my back while a beautiful female clad in a sexy girdle leaned over, kissing me as a reward for allowing her to give me a very intense orgasm.

Lying on my back watching Robin dress revived me from my post orgasm lethargy. She moved with effortless grace as she sat on the chair, extended first one leg, then the other as she smoothed her stockings before refastening the garter clasps. Pausing for an instant here and there as gathered her clothing allowed more than fleeting glimpses of her every contour which convinced that Robin was indeed a natural woman.

The all-in-one that so enhanced her already magnificent figure intrigued me almost to the point where of becoming a fetish. One thing did not fit the experience we had just shared; there wasn't the smallest spot of cum on anywhere on her! Robin had had adequate practice performing the scene we had just played.

My dismay may have shown on my face Robin winked at me as she lay her clothing over the chair and moved to the bed. "Poor tired darling," she said in a breathy whisper. "You've got a long day ahead of you so let me get you ready for your shower."

Before I could respond she knelt over me and with tormenting slowness, licked every bit of cum from my body. She then dressed, kissed me tenderly and left after saying, "Promise me you'll stop off to see me on your way back from wherever it is you're going. I know it's out of the way but we both know this is may be the start of something special."

Robin and I had spent only a few hours together. Granted that those few hours culminated in an incredible orgasm, the result on neither oral not genital sex. Robin had maneuvered her body to give me an orgasm that may have been one of the most intense of my adult life; certainly the most unique. Surely Robin had been around long enough to know that a few hours, however exciting and gratifying, would rarely amount to the start of something special. One thing for sure was that I would never ask a girl to take off her girdle again. You might even say that girls in girdles would be my new fetish.

As I turned on the shower, I smiled at the realization I still wasn't sure whether Robin was a natural girl or a uniquely passable and very attractive transgirl.

There was, I concluded, plenty of time to decide if I wanted to return and pick up where Robin and I left off. A mental image of Loren Townsend popped into my head. The thought of sharing a bottle of wine with her as she told me her life story was as great a motivation to return to the inn and its environs as a maybe affair with Robin.

I would call Joe or Serena right after breakfast and ask for the Reader's Digest condensed version of any information they gathered on the oddly disturbing Loren Townsend. That left only the issue of Phyllida. That was resolved when the phone rang as I stepped from the bathrooms into the hotel room.

"David, Rena here...Okay. I know she's moody and maddening but I just got off the phone with Philly. She promised to be a good girl on the drive to Boston...You'll give her another chance! ... That's swell of you."

* * *

I fell asleep quickly and woke up rested. A leisurely breakfast at the inn and it was off to pick up Phyllida. She looked fresh, unspoiled as she waved to me from the porch of her cottage. The breeze ruffled her loosely fitted skirt which he held down with a well-practiced hand. I chuckled to myself as I wondered if she were wearing a pantygirdle. Robin had definitely left an impression on me.

She grabbed her valise and makeup case as I opened the car trunk. After taking off her very fashionable jeweled cats-eye sunglasses, Phyllida stood on tip toe and kissed my cheek. "See, I really am keeping my promise to be a well-mannered and proper young lady. I hope you won't find me too, too boring."

"Phyllida, you could never be boring."

"Do call me Philly like when we first got to know each other. Phyllida is okay for formal occasions and for people who didn't know me when... well, you know what I mean."

Philly tucked her skirt tightly under her and rested her feet on the dashboard. "I think I'm going to look into selling the dance school and the house. That town isn't turning out the way I thought it would." She folded her arms across her chest as if closing herself to any attempt to dissuade her or even discuss the issue.

That left only Robin and Loren Townsend to lure me back to the inn. Time would tell if their attractions were that strong. Each was a unique enigma, but all shared one driving question. Just what did each of these enigmatic ladies have in her panties?

I was determined to solve that problem by a hands on investigation.

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