

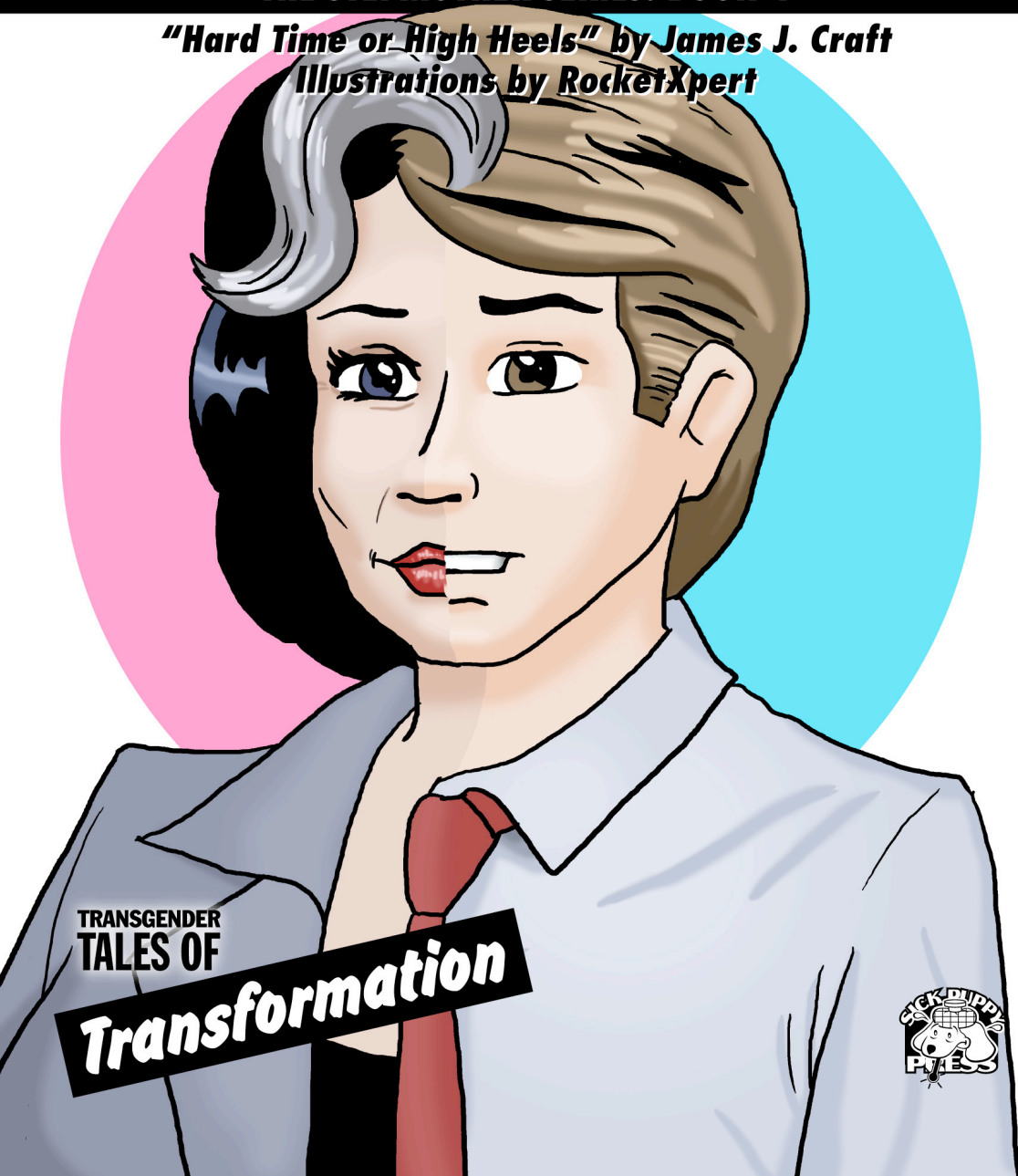
ADULTS ONLY

74 pages 20 illustrations

# I'M TURNING INTO MY MOTHER

THE STEPMOTHER SERIES: BOOK 4

"Hard Time or High Heels" by James J. Craft  
Illustrations by RocketXpert



TRANSGENDER  
TALES OF

Transformation



**J A M E S J C R A F T**

# ***I'M TURNING INTO MY MOTHER***

***THE STEPMOTHER SERIES: BOOK 4***

**“Hard Time or High Heels” by James J. Craft**

**Illustrations by rocketXpert**

**Art effects & cover by Joe Six-Pack**

**A Tales of Transformation Story**



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## HARD TIME OR HIGH HEELS

Colby Deeds had an impulse control issue.

The slow fuse that usually took place in most people – between the moment the emotions create a need or want, and when the brain logically determines whether or not it was actually viable or warranted – was clearly missing in his head.

If Colby wanted something... He got it.

If he wanted to *do* something... He *did* it.

It was just the way that he was wired, and he had learned to deal with it. It had made him a popular kid in college – the one who could always be counted on to ‘shotgun’ a beer can, or to go streaking through the campus. However, it had also made him a bit of risk taker in another way. Having no impulse control had made Colby a bit of chronic gambler. Worse still, he had surmised at an early age that there was no use in trying to fight his need to gamble, since there was essentially nothing he could do stop his urges. As far as Colby was concerned, it was just a part of him. He didn’t have a gambling *problem*. He was just a gambler – *by nature*.

The need to gamble started early in Colby’s life. People were always betting him that he wouldn’t do this or that, so much so that they began to put a cash prize on it. Winning *cash* made the process that much more exciting for him. So through high school and into college, he began to wager more and more on whatever he could. Soon he was visiting the racetrack, then began to move towards the casino floor. It was *there* that his ‘hobby’ (as he referred to it as) really began to overtake his life. Whether it was the throw of a craps table, or the spin of the roulette wheel, or for that matter the ringing bells and flashing lights of a slot machine, it was for Colby an adrenaline rush that he couldn’t be without. It was just a part of who he was.

So while others would acknowledge that they had ‘problem’ and deal with it, Colby just kept pushing forward into the great gambling abyss, until he was no longer welcomed in the local state-run casinos. State-approved casinos had to worry about things like ‘liability.’ If they allowed a person like Colby to continue to wager, it was possible he could litigate them for not stopping him.

“Like I’d ever sue a casino for *not* stopping me from gambling,” he lamented over a drink to his friend Melvin at a local pub. He had just been asked to leave, after being notified that he was no-longer welcome at the local racetrack, the last place within a reasonable driving distance that he had been able to wager at. “I should sue them for not *allowing* me to gamble. It’s my constitutional right to be able bet money on stuff, isn’t it?”

Melvin chuckled, “I’m pretty sure there’s an amendment in there somewhere about the ‘right to bear arms and lose money.’” The two men snickered together for a moment before taking drinks from their beer steins.

“You know...” Melvin said after a long pause, “There’s always Casino Electra.”

“Casino what?” Colby replied. He knew the name of every single gaming-house in the tri-state area, but he had never heard any Casino called ‘Electra.’

“Casino Electra,” his friend repeated, “think of it as the Casino that you’ve been practicing for.”

“Oh?” Colby said with a chortle. “Well if that were really the case, you’d think I’d have known about it. Right?”

“True,” Melvin began, pausing to take another drink, “But Electra isn’t exactly open to the public. It’s kind of an ‘invitation only’ deal.”

Colby raised an eyebrow and set down his beer glass. Suddenly, he was *very* interested, “Oh?” he grinned. “Go on...”

“Well, it just so happens that since I’m already a regular patron there...” he paused, “I *could* get you an invite... If you like.” He brought his pint of beer back up to his mouth for another ‘swig,’ “I know people there.”

Colby paused to ponder the offer. “Well, I don’t know,” Colby said, knowing perfectly well he desperately wanted in. “What if I end up breaking the house, what would your *people* think about me taking all their money?”

The other man laughed, “Oh their *people* are pretty well financed.”

“So this is like a ‘private’ casino?” a curious Colby inquired.

“You might call it that,” the acquaintance grinned. “Though the occasionally public figure has been seen there... But I’ve probably said enough. Are you interested or not?”

Colby’s face gave the answer before his mouth could open. “Oh yeah! I’m there! When do we leave?”

“Take it easy. I’ve got to make a call first,” Melvin said. “But let’s say I meet you tomorrow night, ten o’clock,” he finished off his beer and stood up, handing Colby a small purple business card. “Meet me here.” Colby took the card and read it over. It said simply ‘Electra – 454 Crone Street, Unit E.’

“Where the heck is...” Colby stopped mid-sentence, when he realized that his friend was no longer standing beside him. For that matter, his friend was nowhere to be seen.

His ‘friend’ was someone that Colby had gotten to know from the high-roller sections of the local Casinos. They had somehow consistently ended up at the same gaming tables, and over time had developed something of a friendship, though other than his name and favorite brand of whiskey, Colby didn’t really know *much* about Melvin. He wondered for a moment if he knew him well enough to trust that this ‘Electra’ idea was really a good one.

But Colby Deeds had an impulse control problem.

So while he may not have known much about ‘Melvin,’ he knew enough to know that his ‘friend’ had just given him a chance to see how the *real* high rollers lived – that was all he needed. Besides, with his being barred from entering any Casino in a hundred-mile radius, it wasn’t like he had a lot of other options. So without another thought, Colby spent the next twenty-four hours eagerly waiting to meet Melvin at the address that was written on the card.



The next night, at nine-fifty-eight, Colby was looking up and down a very quiet and dark Crone Street. If there *was* a casino nearby, it was *very* well hidden. The exterior of the building at 454, was less than Colby had expected. It was old, *very* old. So old in fact, that it still had the name of the original occupant carved in stone above its front door, 'Tri State Electric Company,' it read. The original doors and windows had been removed and capped with steel. A nondescript entry door around the side of the building was labeled 'E,' where Colby was standing and waiting. He noticed several cameras mounted on the side of the structure, and the parking lot was surrounded in tall fencing, and full of expensive cars, to the side.

*This must be the place*, he thought to himself. Expensive cars and security cameras could only mean one thing – high-rollers.

At nine-fifty-nine, Melvin tapped him on the back, "Ready?" he asked.

Colby jumped, then turned to his friend, "I was beginning to think you weren't going to show."

Melvin cackled a laugh, then turned to the large steel door in front of them. He turned the handle and nodded at the very large bouncer who was posted on the other side. "Good evening gents," the large man said as Colby and Melvin passed by, "Good luck tonight."

Colby followed Melvin inside the building, where Colby discovered more of the same. It was dark, musty and run-down, with dusty hallways lined with seemingly abandoned offices. At the end of the hall, another sturdily built bouncer, who nodded at the pair of the men as he opened the door for them, "Good luck tonight gents," the man repeated the message of the first bouncer.

*Where the hell is Melvin taking me?* Colby wondered to himself as he stepped through the doorway.

All was revealed in moment as he was hit with the sound of loud techno music, mixed with the familiar chime of slot machines and the hum of excited conversation. The noise filled Colby's ears before his eyes could see what lay ahead. However, once his eyes had passed the doorframe, his sensory inputs were filled with the vision of the most elaborate and lavishly decorated gaming floor that Colby had ever laid eyes on.

Tall roman columns and brightly lit fixtures of neon and L.E.D.'s were everywhere. Ornately decorated walls and plush carpeting abounded. Most important were the excited expressions on faces of the casino patrons.

Clearly, Electra was 'electra-fying.'

There were card tables, roulette wheels, and endless rows of slot machines of every type and sort. Everything was as state of the art and gleamingly new as could possibly be imagined.

Colby felt faint.

This was the Casino that he had been dreaming of.

“Well?” Melvin asked him in a rhetorical tone, “What do you think?”

“I think this is what heaven looks like to gamblers!” Colby joked.

“Well then, welcome to heaven!” The other man smiled as they walked across the gaming floor. Pretty barmaids in tight-fitting miniskirts and high heels were scurrying about with trays of drinks, while the patrons smoked and drank and gambled.

Wow, Colby thought, *you don't see that in a state-monitored casino.*

Melvin's direction changed suddenly, and his posture became rigid and uncomfortable and he kept glancing over at a group on the far side of the floor. There two tall men with sunglasses on were walking with a very large man in a dapper suit with beard and ponytail. It was obvious that he was the man-in-charge, as others seemed to be shaking his hand and air-kissing his cheeks as he passed them.



Colby shrugged and continued to look around the floor, planning where he would go first. Would he play some cards? Colby noticed the many different versions of poker that were being played, in addition to baccarat, blackjack, and even some he never seen before. Maybe he would hit the slots, or maybe some dice games – they *all* seemed to be here.

“Wow!” Colby said to his friend, “Where do we even start?”

Melvin continued to act nervous and anxious, as he watched the large man in the dapper suit. He made no reply, as preoccupied as he was..

“Maybe a drink?” Colby asked, spotting a nearby waitress with a tray of liquor. But his eyes kept scanning the room, as his mind raced.

“Um,” Melvin stammered, still looking nervous. “Sure.”

Before the two could place their order, a voice called out behind them, “Mister Kane!” it said.

The two men turned around to see the dapperly-dressed ponytailed man and his entourage standing before them. Melvin’s face looked like all the blood had drained out of it. Colby snickered to himself, realizing he had never even known Melvin’s last name until then.

“Big Pete” Melvin coughed, forcing a smile.

The man looked disapprovingly at Colby for a moment before his face turned to a jovial smile,

“Well hello there!” the big man chuckled, “And who do we have here, Melvin?”

“This is Colby...” Melvin motioned uncomfortably to the large man.

“Colby Deeds,” Colby extended his hand for the large man to shake.

“Colby,” Melvin continued to speak, “This is Peter Saints.”

“Welcome to my little gaming house Colby,” Mr. Saints smiled, looking down at Colby’s extended hand. He nodded, but didn’t shake it, “People ‘round here call me ‘Big Pete,’” he said in a shockingly squeaky voice, “probly ‘cuz of my personality.”

Colby was taken aback by how high-pitched a voice the man had. It was like a puppet’s voice box had somehow been planted inside a linebacker’s body. The contrast was staggering.

Big Pete giggled softly, looking around his group to make sure they were all still laughing with him. “If you need anything at all just ask okay?” He smiled at Colby before pulling Melvin close and whispering something in his ear. Melvin – looking terrified – nodded twice before the big man released him. Then, as if nothing at all had happened, he turned and gave a wave befitting of a teenaged beauty-queen, before heading off in another direction. “Toodles!” he chimed as he left the two men standing, one in fear, one in confusion.

“He’s a little...” Colby paused for a moment, “different... Isn’t he?”

Melvin laughed nervously, “That’s one way of putting it,” he motioned towards the gaming floor, “But trust me, you don’t want to see his bad-side. There’s a



reason why this place is hidden away from the real-world. It isn't exactly... Uh... Conventional."

Colby nodded, reading into his friend's comments. There was obviously something 'going on' and it was best that he didn't ask what. He let his eyes return to scanning the Casino from side to side, as he picked his 'poison.' Conventional or not, he intended to make the Casino it his new favorite place.



Good Deeds Automotive Group was bustling, which was the way Eileen Jones liked it. The relentless TV ads, newspaper ads, community promotions, radio spots, direct mail and billboards made sure of it stayed that way. Good Deeds was known throughout the area, and it was almost impossible to buy a car that wasn't sold by Good Deeds. They owned dealerships up and down the highways and interstates, both under the Good Deeds valuable brand name and under others.

At the hub of the enterprise was Eileen Jones. She was the one who had inherited the run-down dealership from her husband Walter Deeds and turned it into a syndicate of 27 dealerships. She still worked at the original location, still at her original desk, shaking hands with the customers in a gleaming, sparkling showroom that was cleaner than an operating theater.

Appearances were important to Eileen, and she made sure her showrooms were the cleanest and most modern in the industry. Customers often came to her dealerships just to set foot inside the impressive, awe-inspiring buildings. Not a day went by that Eileen didn't take a moment to look around and be impressed with what she had built.

But these days, she also would look around and see something that punched her in the gut. Colby.

Eileen glared at her step-son with expression of contempt and disappointment that only a parent ... or step-parent ... could have. He was seated behind his desk, as always, typing into his computer, as always, while she was on the sales floor hustling the staff and brokering the deals.

She shook her head. *What a disappointment*, she said to herself.

"Ms. Jones?" One of her salesmen approached her with a stack of papers and a serious expression.

"What's up, Ron?" she smiled politely. Ron was, next to her, the most experienced and most productive salesperson at this dealership. He had been a loyal employee since the beginning, and had been a great friend and supportive figure after the passing of her late husband.

Ron spoke in a low tone, "It's that red Malibu, they offered five below list, I countered with eighteen, but they're stuck on like... Sixteen." He stopped to let her catch up before continuing, "We've had that thing for months. Our cost is about fourteen five. If I..."

“\$14,356,” Eileen interrupted.

Ron was always impressed with her knowledge of the business. “If I can get sixteen five...” His voice trailed off, anticipating an answer

Eileen nodded. She had faith in Ron’s instincts. “Route them through our financing. Not the bank. Don’t sacrifice a cent more.” Selling the car through Good Deeds Finance would net more profit than through the financing companies. As long as the customer didn’t know her interest rate was higher, and had a higher down payment, that was their loss, not hers.

She glanced back at her step-son’s office and quietly lamented that fact that he possessed no such instincts. “Do what you have to, Ron,” she said with a smile, “I trust your judgement.” Ron nodded and returned to his client under Eileen’s watchful eye. There were a few words exchanged, and some hemming and hawing, but eventually the deal was struck and handshakes abounded.

Eileen smiled again then returned her focus to her stepson. *She* had given him *every* opportunity to *avoid* being the man that his father had been... But to no avail.

She thought back to the early days when she had first been hired to work at ‘Good Deed’s Car Sales.’ Eileen was a young hotshot bitch – by her own admission – and Walter Deeds was a recent widower who didn’t have a clue how to run a business. His wife had done it all, and now with her having passed, things were starting to come apart. Walter was lazy and disorganized – the last person on earth who should ever run his own business. But he had a dream of self-employment, and a love a cars. His late wife’s father had loaned him the money to get started. So selling cars is what Walter started doing. But it wasn’t until he hired Eileen, that things *really* took off.

She knew how to make things work. She had the mind of a steel trap as the saying goes, and quickly became Walter’s number one asset. So much so, that a beautiful romance developed between them.

Walter became a figurehead of the company, and Eileen was the one that made it all happen. Often, Walter would stay at home, taking his son to ball games, while Eileen made the money.

When Walter died suddenly, Eileen barely took a week to recover. She dusted herself off and went back to work, with the intent to turn the dealership into the largest in the state... While her step-son waltzed off to an expensive school.

He wasn’t a total lout. He did well with numbers, and managed to squeak out of college with a finance degree, which Eileen thought would make him the perfect man for the job of company CFO, or head accountant, as she often called him.

But it was looking like he was even somehow screwing *that* up.

Eileen sighed and marched into his office, completely catching him off guard.

“Eileen... Hi...” he muttered, as he tried to look like he hadn’t been playing online poker for the past hour, “What’s up?”



“At least *look* like you give a crap about the business, Colby! Can you at least do that for me?” She sneered. “Have you found out where that money disappeared to yet?” She said with a firm tone.

“Uh,” he stammered, “No... Not *yet*. But I’m sure it didn’t get far,” he chuckled.

Eileen didn’t see the humor. “Colby,” she began, “When ten thousand dollars goes missing,” she paused again to choose her words carefully, “it becomes your number one priority to *find* it. Now quit playing poker and get to work!”

Colby scoffed, as if trying to look indignant at the suggestion that he had been playing online poker since the moment he sat down that morning. “I... Wasn’t! I was...” he paused, realizing that it was useless to argue. He sighed, “Okay. I’ll figure it out.”

“See that you do! I can’t have that kind of incompetence in my organization! Good Deeds Auto Group has a spotless reputation, and I don’t need our name in the news!” Eileen glared a hole through Colby’s noggin , and then left his small office.

Colby lowered his head into his hands on the desk top. He knew *exactly* where the ten thousand dollars had gone. In fact, the number was closer to twenty, and would have been completely hidden if not for that snoopy old salesman *Ron*. Colby scoffed again. *Ron*, that goody-two-shoes and his stupid bonuses.

The business was half his anyway, at least it would be in five years, if certain sales targets were met, or something like that – he hadn’t read his father’s will very carefully. The point was, that the missing money was really out of his half anyway. So what was the big deal? He was just loaning it to himself, basically.

Besides, if he hadn’t made the payment in cash, Big Pete would probably have broken his legs already.

Things at the casino had not exactly gone well in the last several weeks.

It had been a few months since Melvin had first introduced him to the illicit gambling house, and Colby’s losses had mounted up. All-told, he was into the house for over twenty-five grand. Big Pete had demanded a payment if he wanted any more credit extended, hence the money he had ‘borrowed’ from his stepmother’s company.

*His* company. Or at least half of it.

He started to get the itch again. He needed to cut work early and head to the casino. He felt a lucky streak coming on, and this time – for sure – it would be *his* turn to win big. He looked around the dealership, and saw that everyone was occupied with a client or task. No one would see him leave, or know that he’d gone. He grabbed his coat and headed for the door.

Colby had an impulse control problem.

From across the showroom, Eileen caught a glimpse of her step-son exiting. She grunted in disgust as her blood boiled. For all the stress Colby had caused her over the years, for some stupid reason, she cared deeply about his well-being. She knew that one day he would need her help, and when that day arrived, she would make certain that he paid dearly for it.



The bartender smiled as he handed Colby and Melvin their drinks. Canadian whiskey and cola with a spritz of lime. The activity, noise and light of the casino was filling them both with energy and hope. Both men had been given new leases on life, thanks to extended credit from the house. Big Pete had been quite pleased to see substantial payments made on their accounts, and had authorized the advances.

Melvin had sold his house and moved into a shady apartment to bring his 'tab' down to under fifty 'G's,' while Colby's contribution, illegally removed from a business he currently had no claim to, had reduced his balance to just over ten. Both men were feeling lucky, and ready to gamble.

They started on a craps table where things started off well. They turned ten grand, into fifteen, before heading to roulette. There, they each added another seven to their winnings.

"Wow!" Melvin gushed, "We are on *fire* tonight!"

Colby slapped his partner on the back. "You got that right! Where to now? Poker? Blackjack?"

Melvin shook his head, "Blackjack's not my thing and a friend told me the poker tables are cold tonight. I'm hitting the slots."

"The one-armed bandits? Are you kidding? What are you... 70 years old?" Colby teased.

"No... I'm just following the money, man," he replied, "We should stick together, I think it multiplies our luck."

Colby took a drink of his whisky concoction, then shook his head, "No-can-do. That one-eyed Jack is calling me..." He motioned towards the blackjack tables.

"Suit yourself." Melvin shrugged. "But nobody I know has ever, *ever* made money on those tables. Did you see the Bentley that Big Pete has? Rumor has it that he bought it in cash with a week's earnings from the card tables, poker and blackjack together. I'd steer clear of those games if I were you."

Colby snickered. "Not tonight Mel," he proclaimed, "No risk – no reward. And I feel a *big* reward coming my way tonight." With that, he took his lack of impulse control and headed to the blackjack tables. It was a five-hundred-dollar buy in, and the table was quiet, just him and the dealer.

It was a good sign. Or so he convinced himself.

He went a few rounds, playing it safe, and made a couple of grand. *Melvin's such a sissy*. He thought to himself, as he doubled his wager to a grand.

"Hit me," he flashed a smile at the dealer who dealt himself an eight and Colby a ten. Then placed a card, face-down next to them. "I'm going to stay."

The dealer turned Colby's card to reveal a smiling jack of spades, "Twenty-one" the dealer said with a slight smile, then turned his card over. It was a king. Colby won.

This continued for a few more rounds. 19. 21. 18. 20. Win after win came until Colby's confidence got the better of him. He bet everything he had on the next hand, some forty-thousand dollars. The dealer paused for a moment, as if wanting to make sure that Colby was certain of his wager, but Colby was cocksure in his decision. "Deal me in," he said, with a glinting smile.

The dealer turned a ten, then turned an ace for himself, and placed another card face-down on the table next Colby's. Colby tapped the table and the dealer turned the card over. It was another ten. The crowd that had developed around Colby's table 'ooooed' as the card was revealed.

"Split," Colby said, and the dealer separated the two tens and placed new cards, face down, next to each. By splitting his pair, he had given himself the chance to increase his winnings substantially. The dealer revealed the first of the two cards, it was a six. Colby motioned for another card, which turned out to be a four. He stayed at twenty. The dealer then revealed the card next to the second ten.

Another ten.

The crowd gasped, some clapped, assuming that he had won. The dealer, however, wasn't finished. He turned his card to reveal a ten, and those who knew what it meant, knew it was bad.

Colby skin lost all of its' color and the room began to spin.

He met up with Melvin on the slot machine floor, who had earned himself a respectable sum there. He could tell by Colby's expression, that his experience at the card tables had not gone well. He tried to think of something reassuring to tell him but all that came out was "I told you those tables are cold."

Melvin realized that his words were not very comforting, at all.



Alone in her house, Eileen clicked through the online dating profiles for the third time in a row, hoping to find someone that stood out for her. Like the first two times, she found nothing but disappointment, so she closed her laptop and put it aside.

Here she was, in her late forties, with fifty and menopause coming at her like a freight train. She was just so damn lonely. Ever since Walter had passed away, she'd thrown herself into the business with everything she had. She had built that place from a shady dump into a local institution. What did she have to show for it? Graying hair and wrinkling skin.

"Old maid," she said to herself. That's what she had become. An old maid. When she was a teenager, she had lived in fear of the term. "Be social or you'll become an old maid," people said. "Smile and look pretty or you'll be an old maid." Now it was true. She was an Old Maid.

She got up and went to the bathroom mirror. She wasn't so bad. She still had some good things going for her. Her body was in great shape, her face hadn't creased too badly, and her breasts hadn't dropped yet.

*Yet.* How much time did she have left until she was hunched over and using a walker? How long until she was spending her days finishing crossword puzzles and canning preserves?

But like every night she thought about such things, she managed to turn away the dread of being alone and find a way to fall asleep.



That week, Colby's productivity hit an all-new low. He now owed the casino over fifty grand, on top of the money he had already 'borrowed' from his Step-mother's coffers. The thought of trying to find that kind of money made him sick, as he knew the consequences if he *didn't*.

He spent the week trying to find ways of syphoning more money from the dealership, without his stepmother noticing. He was good with money, she had always said that – but what she didn't realize is that he was especially talented at *losing* it.

Eventually, he found a way to slip another ten thousand dollars out of the books, and was fairly certain he could hide it. A week after that, he went off to the casino to make a deposit at on his debt.

But things had changed.

When he approached the doors, the bouncers didn't let him through. Instead, they guided him towards another part of the derelict building. One that Colby suspected not many people knew about.

In a dark and quiet abandoned office, Colby eventually found a very unhappy looking Big Pete and one of his henchmen. Pete motioned for him to come in as his goon looked on from behind his sunglasses.

"What have you got for me?" Pete asked, his usual chipper tone having been replaced by a very deep and serious voice.

"Um," Colby gulped, "It's ten grand. It's all I could get at the time..."

"Ten grand?" Pete asked, "Did you say ten grand?"

Colby nodded, "Um... yeah..."

Pete moved closer to where Colby was standing. "I crap bigger than ten grand. You better find some money *somewhere* or your little problem is gonna become a *big* problem, you understand?" Pete's vocal tone had gone from unusually high and soft to very low and growly. It was as if his voice and body finally matched.

Colby found him to suddenly be *quite* intimidating.

"I..." Colby started say, but he quickly lost his nerve, instead choosing to sigh and lower his eyes, "Yes Big Pete... I'll find it... somewhere..." his voice trailed off.

Big Pete seemed elated, and his strangely unfitting voice returned. "Fantastic!" he said in a seeming chirp. "I just *knew* you were resourceful like that," he said, patting Colby on the shoulder. "You bring back what you owe and we'll be fine, capisce?"



Colby mindlessly nodded. He dared not argue with the man, yet he knew full well that coming up with the money would be damn near impossible. But he had no choice at this point.

The very next day, Colby went into work earlier than he had ever gone in before. Eileen was quite surprised to see him waiting in the parking lot when she unlocked the door in the morning. Colby was often the last one in, so the sight of him walking in behind her was something of a novelty.

"Good morning," she smiled at him with an amused expression. "You're awfully early today..." she let her voice trail off as if hoping he would fill in the blanks for her – which he soon did.

"I just wanted to get to working some month-end stuff." He smiled with an odd expression. "You know, early-bird gets the worm kind of thing, right?"

Eileen had known Colby for most of his life, and never, *ever* had she seen him trying to be early *anything*, bird or otherwise. She shrugged as he walked past her to his office without saying another word.

*Maybe he's turning over a new leaf?* She optimistically hoped to herself, even though she was pretty sure that much more than a leaf would be needed to make any change in *that* boy's life.

More like turning over a whole *tree*.

Colby spent the morning, and much of the afternoon, working busily in his office. Eileen, still in a state of disbelief, dropped in to check up on him often, figuring that he was playing solitaire, or surfing the internet for porn, or playing some silly online role-play game – all things she had caught him doing before.



But to no avail. He seemed, by all accounts, to be actually working on real stuff. Real, actual accounting-type stuff.

Eileen shrugged and went on with her day.

The trend continued for most of the week. Colby was now the first one in, and last one out, barely stopping for lunch. He had surrounded himself with files and documents – mostly to make his step-mother think he was doing actual productive work, but partially to help him with his ‘scheme.’

Colby needed to pilfer fifty-thousand-dollars from his stepmom’s business by Friday, or he was pretty sure he was going to become fish-bait in the local river. If fear is a good motivator, then Colby was extremely motivated, as Big Pete had effectively scared him half to death. By Friday, he had cleverly skimmed nondescript amounts from several company accounts, but it wasn’t going to be enough, and he didn’t have much time left to wait. He needed another thirty-thousand dollars – pronto.

He was scanning through different files trying to figure out a way to raise more money, when he stumbled across various personnel documents, including some very sensitive information for his stepmother Eileen.

He held up the file, and paused for a moment. He had all the information that would be required to someone to apply for a credit card right in his hands – Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Current Address, copy of a signature.

Colby took a deep breath. If he did this – and anyone found out – he could go to jail. On the other hand, if he *didn’t* do it, he was pretty sure that Big Pete was going to have him ‘offed.’ The choice looked pretty clear.

Besides, Eileen was a successful business person – she must have a great credit rating. Getting a quick loan for thirty-grand would be a snap.

Colby took a big breath, and let out a big sigh. He knew what he was about to do was extremely illegal, but Colby Deeds had an impulse control problem.



A week had passed since Colby had falsified not one, but *three* credit card applications for ten thousand dollars each. The cards had been express-delivered to him, and that night, he had used them to get cash advances at three different local banks. He had then driven over to Big Pete’s casino to hand deliver the ill-gotten cash, along with the rest of the money that he owed.

“I knew you’d come through.” Pete smiled as he counted the money slowly and carefully. Once he was certain that all was accounted for, his smile changed to a stern expression, “But now that we’re square, let me be perfectly clear,” he leaned forward and spoke deeply and softly to Colby, “I don’t ever wanna see your face again, capisce?”

Colby looked shocked, but nodded affirmative anyway. A part of him had half-expected that Big Pete would allow him to return to the gaming floor now that his debt was repaid.

"You're a bad risk," Pete continued, "So if you ever see me coming towards you – you better make every effort to hide, or at least get the hell out of the way, because I might not be able to control my temper, and god knows what I might just do."

Colby gulped, then nodded again. He could tell by Pete's expression that he wasn't messing around. He had seen enough gangster films to understand the 'code.' The debt was repaid, but the dishonor he had caused could never be forgiven. To Big Pete, Colby was dead.

The drive home was a watershed moment for Colby. He understood that his gambling habit had nearly gotten him killed, and that it had turned him into a petty thief in the process. He swore off gambling forever, and made a pact with himself to refocus his energies into repaying the money he had 'borrowed' from Eileen as soon as he could, so that she would never know it had happened.

But Colby's luck would continue to be nothing but bad.

Monday morning, a very somber looking Eileen was at the dealership earlier than usual. Colby arrived at his new-normal time of an hour before open, but was surprised to see both Eileen and Ron waiting by his office door when he entered.

"Got a moment?" Eileen said with a stern expression, pointing at her office.

Colby nodded. He hoped that his wasn't what he thought it could possibly be.

A trap.

He entered the office and took a seat, with Eileen and Ron following behind him. Eileen shut the door and took her place behind the desk, with Ron standing beside her.

"Colby," she began, "I don't even know what to say to you."

Colby could see tears starting to well up in her eyes, something that never, *ever* happened. She took a moment to collect herself before continuing.

"I have given you *every* opportunity here. I've paid for your schooling, I bought you a car, I gave you a job," she paused and swallowed her emotions with a enormous 'gulp,' "I've loved you like my own son. I have done everything that I can to help you, to love you... And in return I've asked for nothing. Nothing but your respect," she paused again, "respect and honesty."

*Uh-oh*, Colby thought to himself.

"Your Stepmom and I spent the weekend going through the books Colby," Ron piped in, "And we found some very..." his voice wavered as he looked at Eileen for a moment, then turned his focus back to Colby, "very *irregular* figures. To the tune of thirty-thousand dollars," he then paused to make sure that Colby was following, "That's *twenty-thousand* more than we originally thought Colby. Twenty-thousand!"

"And all of the irregular transactions were linked back to one person," Eileen now chimed in, "You."

Colby sighed and sat back in his chair, *At least she doesn't know about the credit cards*, he thought.

"And then I got a call from First Central Pacific Mid-West Bank," she continued, watching Colby's eyes for a reaction.

*Oh-crap*, he thought to himself.

"I don't do any business at FCPM," she continued, "So you can imagine my surprise when they welcomed me to the 'FCPM Family' on Friday night. And when I discovered that I had obtained a ten-thousand dollar credit card there, and already made a cash advance on it... Well, you can see how I'd been a little concerned."

Colby's face began to feel cold. He was pretty sure it was due to the blood leaving it.

"And I'm sure you would understand how I'd be even *more* concerned when I called my friend Maggie, who's a vice-president at FCPM and she forwarded me a security camera video that showed *my* stepson making that cash-advance at an ATM on Friday afternoon, right?"

Colby felt instantly both ill and faint. The only saving grace he could think of in this situation was that she had only found out about *one* credit card of the three that he had received.

He prayed it stayed that way.

"I suggested that Eileen call the police right away," Ron blurted out, "But she wanted to hear from you first. Give you a chance to explain."

Eileen looked Colby square in the eye, "Well? Can you? Can you explain all this Colby?"

Colby sighed and slumped forward in his chair, "Well..." he began, "I..."

The pressure got to him. He was as cool as ice when gambling away thousands of dollars, but when it came to face-to-face confrontation, he caved in quickly. He let the air escape his lungs in defeat, and began to tell the story of Casino Electra, Big Pete, and his huge debt. By the time he was done, Eileen looked extremely disappointed, while Ron was shaking his head repeatedly.

"See," Ron exclaimed, "He's involved with the mob! I told you we should have called the police. *Now* what are we going to do? We don't need this kind of trouble Eileen."

"Ron?" Eileen looked over at her top salesman, "Give us a moment please." She glanced at the door, then back at him.

"But Eileen, he's a..." Ron began.

But Eileen cut him off. "I know what he is. But he's also my stepson. Please, give us a moment" She now pointed at the door.

Ron sighed and slumped forward with a defeated expression. He rolled his eyes at Colby, then headed for the office door. Eileen waited for the door to close before she continued.

“He’s right you know,” she said, “he wanted to throw you right under the bus. He had already dialled ‘nine-one,’” she chuckled, “and his finger was on the other ‘one,’ ready to dial it, too. I literally had with talk him out of it.”

She watched as Colby smiled and sat back in his chair, as if he was starting to relax.

“And by all rights I should have let him!” She shouted with a somewhat more serious tone. The sound of his stepmother scolding him caused Colby to resume his original tense position.

“Do you know what you’ve done Colby?” She asked in a half-yelling, half-asking voice, not expecting an answer, “You’ve committed a federal offense, a felony. You could go to prison for this, Colby. *Prison!* Whatever it was that this mobster said or did to you, must have been pretty serious for you to have done something like this. Am I right?”

Colby nodded.

If it weren’t for the fact that you were Walter’s son – Walter’s *only* son – I would have called the police myself. But I’ve always considered you as a son myself, Colby, and I know that a boy like you won’t handle prison very well...” Her voice trailed off, and a sad expression over took her face. “And I know that you can’t help it, because your Dad couldn’t help, it either.”

Colby looked shocked. Had Eileen just suggested that his father had been a problem gambler too?

“Regardless of that,” she regained her composure, “Some sort of justice must be served here, either in prison, or here, under my roof, so this is what I’m going to offer you...” Eileen reached under her desk to retrieve a garment bag and a shoebox.

“You stole from me because you thought I had enough to go around, you thought I had so much that I wouldn’t notice it missing, didn’t you?” She demanded.

Colby sighed and nodded. She had read the situation pretty accurately.

“You think what I do is easy?” she asked rhetorically, “You think that all of this just *happens?*” she motioned around the office with her arms. “You must think that all I do is walk around all day bossing people around and taking our customer’s money, huh?”

Colby noticed her face starting to get flush with anger. He kept his facial expressions to minimum and shook his head, ‘no.’

“Well, Colby,” she continued, “You’re about to find out. From now on, until your debt to me is repaid, in addition to your duties as my Chief Financial Officer, you’re also going to be my personal assistant. You’re going to spend the next few weeks, months, possibly years in *my* shoes, seeing what *I* do.”

She lifted the cover off the shoe box and tilted it towards her stepson. Colby gasped.

“Or I can call the police, right now,” she growled, “It’s your decision.”

Colby's eyes grew wide as he looked inside the box. Eileen then unzipped the garment bag for Colby to view the contents. Thankfully it wasn't what Colby had expected.

"Well?" Eileen asked impatiently, "What's going to be? Hard time in a state penitentiary? Or these?" she reached into the shoebox and held up a pair of bright pink platform pumps. Colby gulped as she swung the shoes back and forth tauntingly in front of him. "You've got ten seconds to decide, and then I'm calling the cops. This is the best offer you're going to get Son. No hard time, just high-heels."

Colby sighed and nodded. He imagined it very plainly in his mind. He was being given a choice – not a choice he thought was reasonable – but a choice. It was one or the other.

Eileen smiled and stood up from her desk. She walked around her office, closing the venetian blinds, then turned back to her stepson, "I'll give you a minute to get changed," she smiled wickedly, "Ron and I will be waiting out in the showroom. Oh, and take these papers with you." She pointed at the binder on the desk. "And then bring me back some coffee. Black. No crap in it. Straight black."

With that, she exited the office, leaving Colby with his thoughts... And his new pair of pink footwear. He pondered his Step-mother's offer. Prison would be right thing to do, but it wouldn't be the easiest. His first impulse was to just

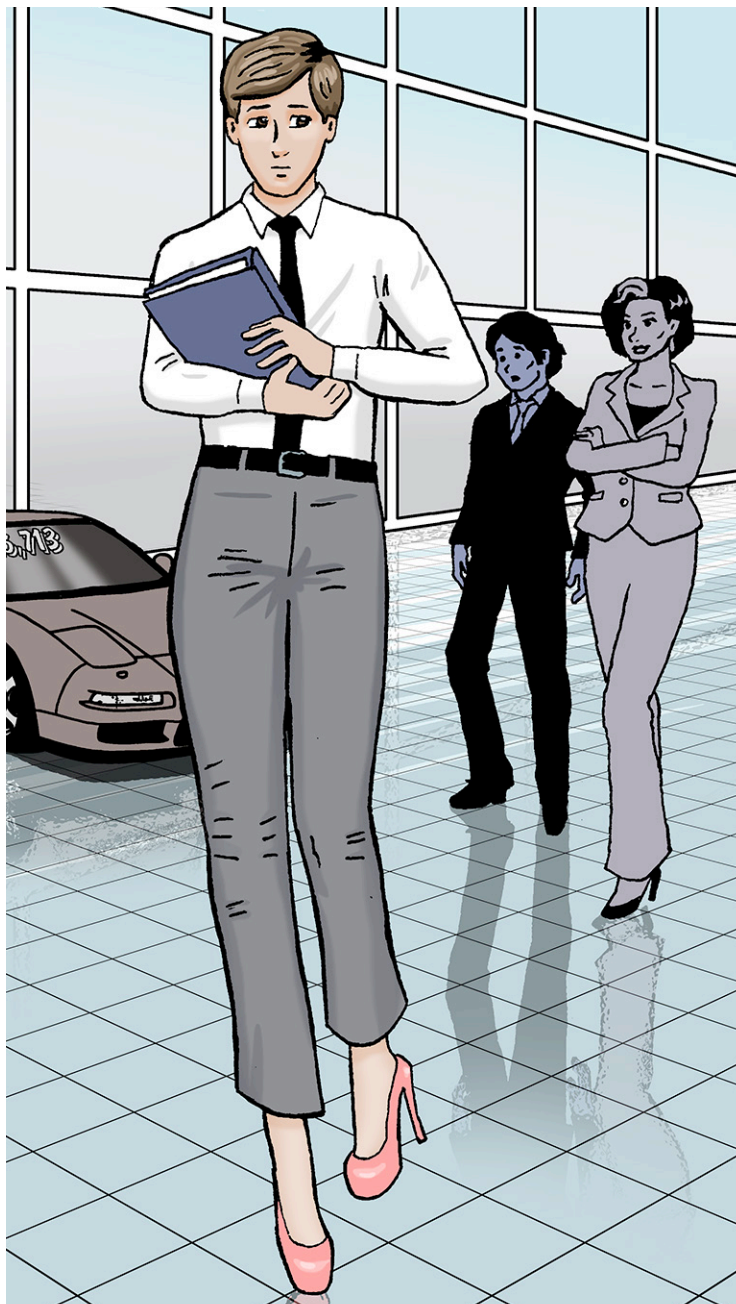


wear the silly pink shoes, and Colby had a *severe* impulse control problem. He lowered his head and groaned, hating himself for what he was about to do and slipped off his shoes.

A few minutes later, Colby emerged from Eileen's office, carefully clutching the binder as he haphazardly twisted and turned, clip-clopping noisily, as he attempted to walk in the ridiculously high heels across the showroom floor. He felt his face turn flush for a moment as he spotted Eileen and Ron across the room, watching him intently.

In addition to the heels, Eileen had supplied him with a number of new pants to wear in his new role as executive assistant. They were most obviously designed for women, being slender and snug in their fit, and ending just above his ankles. Colby was thankful that he wasn't a particularly hairy man, or his bare lower legs would have looked ridiculous.

He focused on his walking, taking slower wobbly steps, and tried to ignore the fact that he was be-



ing watched. Hopefully, if he complied with Eileen's demands, she would let her punishment end sooner than later, and he could go back to being her head accountant.

But he figured that wouldn't likely be the case.

She remembered all the times while he was growing up, that he had done something stupid, and how his Dad would usually let him off the hook, only to have Eileen step in and dish out a more severe punishment. This kind of humiliating act wasn't new to him. She had been forcing compliance through embarrassment for years.

He remembered the time he had stolen a candy-bar from the corner store only to have to return it to the shopkeeper that same day, with an apology letter, and full payment, and wear a hand-drawn sign that said 'I stole from this man, shame on me' inside the store, for an hour, next to the counter.

There was the bad report card that he had hidden from Eileen and Dad, forging his father's signature, that landed him a month of doing all the laundry, including hanging up his stepmother's underthings on a special clothesline that she had set up on the *front* lawn, where Colby had to sit in a lawn chair and watch clothes dry while the other neighborhood kids played on the street, taunting him.

Then there was the time that he had puked all over himself after a night of heavy drinking while in college, only to have Eileen lock him out of his room, forcing him to go to class the next day smelling of hard cider and vomit.

All of these incidents had been caused by his inability to control his impulses, and all of these incidents had resulted in his stepmother trying to humiliate him into making better decisions the next time.

It obviously hadn't worked.

Eileen was as strict a person as Colby had ever known, and she always got her way. So, as Colby tripped and stumbled his way to the file room, he thought to himself, *I should have seen this coming*. Even though he would happily trade his current punishment for a day of humiliation in a convenience store, or an afternoon beside a clothes line full of panties and bras being laughed at by his friends, or even spending the day in rancid smelling clothing, he knew that this was better than going to jail, so he better get used to it.



After watching her stepson stumble for most of the day in his new heels, Eileen suggested that a night of practicing would be in order, and gave him some links for online videos he could watch that would show the proper way to sashay in his new shoes.

"Do I really need to?" Colby complained, "These things are already killing my feet."

Eileen glared at him, "Do think that prison would be more comfortable?"

Colby sighed and headed for his car. He removed the heels to drive home. After dinner, he had brought up the suggested video on his tablet, and was now in the process of squeezing his swollen, partially blistered feet into the tight pink shoes.

He practiced with the video for over an hour, before he could bear no more. Every piece of his foot was in excruciating pain. He wondered how women could wear such tortuous things every single day?



The next morning, he didn't arrive quite as early as he should have. He was finding it very difficult to walk.

Eileen was already buzzing around the dealership, easily gliding in her heels as if they were cross-training sneakers. She looked at Colby with an unhappy expression when he entered the room, "You're late," she scowled.

"Sorry," he sighed, "It's these shoes... Are you sure there isn't another way we can do this?"

"Another way?" she scoffed, "Was there another way you could have repaid your mobster friend for all your gambling debts?"

Colby sighed again, this time louder. He knew she was right. He had stolen from her. She had caught him. She had offered him a punishment that didn't include prison or a criminal record.

He had no other options.

"I expect you here the moment I arrive," she informed him, "A proper assistant is available every moment of every day – am I understood?"

Colby sighed a third time and nodded. "Yes Ma'am."

Eileen smiled, "Ma'am... I like that. I think you should keep using it, whenever you're addressing me. Understood?"

Colby sighed so hard that his lips flapped. His punishment was not likely to get any easier. In fact, it was very likely going to be the opposite.

"Yes Ma'am," he said in a soft compliant tone.

"Excellent." Eileen smiled. "Now show me what you've been practicing all night," she pointed at his shoes.

Colby nodded in compliance and began to walk across the showroom floor. His stride was ridiculously exaggerated and slow, as he had learned to swing his hips with each mincing step, but he didn't stumble or trip up once.

He turned, with one hand on his hip, as the video had suggested for balance, and waited for Eileen's approval. At least he *hoped* it would be approval.

"Not bad," she said nodding her head, "but you still need more practice. I can't have an assistant walking around like some kind of silly drag queen, now can I? You need to be able to maneuver as well – or better – than any girl you've ever seen in heels."



“As well as you?” Colby asked.

“Better,” she replied, straight-faced, as she leaned forward onto the toes of her left foot, planting it solidly, then pivoting on it in a perfect half-circle. She then began to walk away, with Colby obviously watching how she walked.

“I’ve got a long way to go,” he muttered under his breath, “But at least I’m not going to jail.”

With that, he planted his right foot, then leaned forward, centering his body over it, before trying to pivot on it like he had just seen his stepmother do. The results were less than spectacular, as he quickly lost his balance and toppled over onto his rear, with a distinct thud.

“Keep practicing,” he heard Eileen call from her office, “And bring me coffee! Black! No crap in it!”

Colby exhaled in frustration and stood up. For a brief moment he wondered if prison would have been easier.

The rest of the day was spent doing his normal accounting functions whilst fetching coffee, filing files and copying copies for his stepmother. By days end, Colby’s feet felt bruised, swollen and blistered. He could barely walk himself to his car, even in the black dress shoes that he had changed into after everyone had left.

That night he stopped at the local pharmacy to buy some insoles for high-heels. He had seen the commercial on TV once, and figured that they would be the answer to his prayers. The girl at the checkout gave him a curious eye as she scanned the box and read him his total.

“They’re for my mom,” he blurted out, feeling his face turning flush red.

“Lucky her,” the girl muttered as she counted Colby’s money and completed the transaction.

Once home, he soaked his feet in warm water before slathering them in ointment and wrapping them in bandages. He’d try the insoles tomorrow – for tonight he was going to try and let his feet heal.



The next morning, a far more comfortable looking Colby was in the dealership the moment Eileen opened the doors. She commented on his punctuality, *and* how comfortable he looked in his shoes that morning.

He blushed and lost his train of thought, causing him to stumble instead of glide, like the online video had instructed him on how to do.

“Whoops,” Eileen chortled, “Spoke too soon.”

Colby didn’t reply. He just righted himself and continued on his way. He was already humiliated enough, in his pink platform heels and capri-styled ladies trousers. Stopping to let Eileen brow-beat him would have been too much to bear.

As his day continued, the insoles proved invaluable. His feet didn't hurt *nearly* as much as they had, and in fact, at some points during the days that followed, he even forgot he was wearing four-and-half inch stiletto heels.

That is, until he saw a strange look, or snicker, from a dealership employee or customer. Their low-chuckle or giggling grin instantly brought him back to reality. He was a full-grown man wearing narrow pink platform pumps and girl's pants. He did so because he had stolen from his stepmother. He had stolen from his stepmother because he didn't want to wear the 'concrete shoes' that Big Pete was likely to fit him with moments before throwing him into the river.

Yep, he was wearing heels at work because the thought of going to prison was worse.

Later that week, prison started to look good.

It started Thursday, when Eileen called him into her office. He could tell by her expression that she was not in a happy place. Shortly after she opened her mouth, he knew why.

"You lying little shit!" she exploded, "How much *more* did you steal from me?"

Colby looked shocked, then groaned and looked down. He figured his lenient punishment was about to end. He started listening for the sound of police sirens. He was mentally preparing himself to be led away in handcuffs, and four and a half inch pink platform heels.

He was pretty sure that his life was about to be over.

"Jesus, Colby!" she barked, "When were you going to tell me?"

"I..." he opened his mouth to answer, but she wasn't actually prepared to listen at this point. Instead, she reached into her desk and retrieved three odd-looking articles of clothing.

"Apparently, walking a mile in my shoes isn't going to be enough for you," she said as she handed him the unfamiliar garments. "So I've decided that if you're going to act like a silly fool, than you're going to *dress* like one." She paused to wait for his reaction. "Unless you'd rather go to prison..." She left the sentence open ended.

Colby took the new outfit from her and looked at them with an expression of disbelief. He felt panicked and grasped at his necktie to loosen it up and allow him to *not* pass out.

Eileen had handed him a pair of short ... *really short* ... black shorts, a pair of black tights, and pink necktie. It occurred to him that she intended for him to keep his white dress shirt, which would make him look like some kind of foolish cross-dresser wannabe.

"Well?" she scowled.

"Um..." he stammered, "I... guess..."

"Good." She smiled. "Because there'll be one for you to wear every day from now on. I'll have a bag for you to take home with changes of clothes for every day of the week. Now go get changed!" She pointed in the direction of the bathroom. Colby looked at the new garments with a shocked expression, but he

knew he didn't really have a choice.

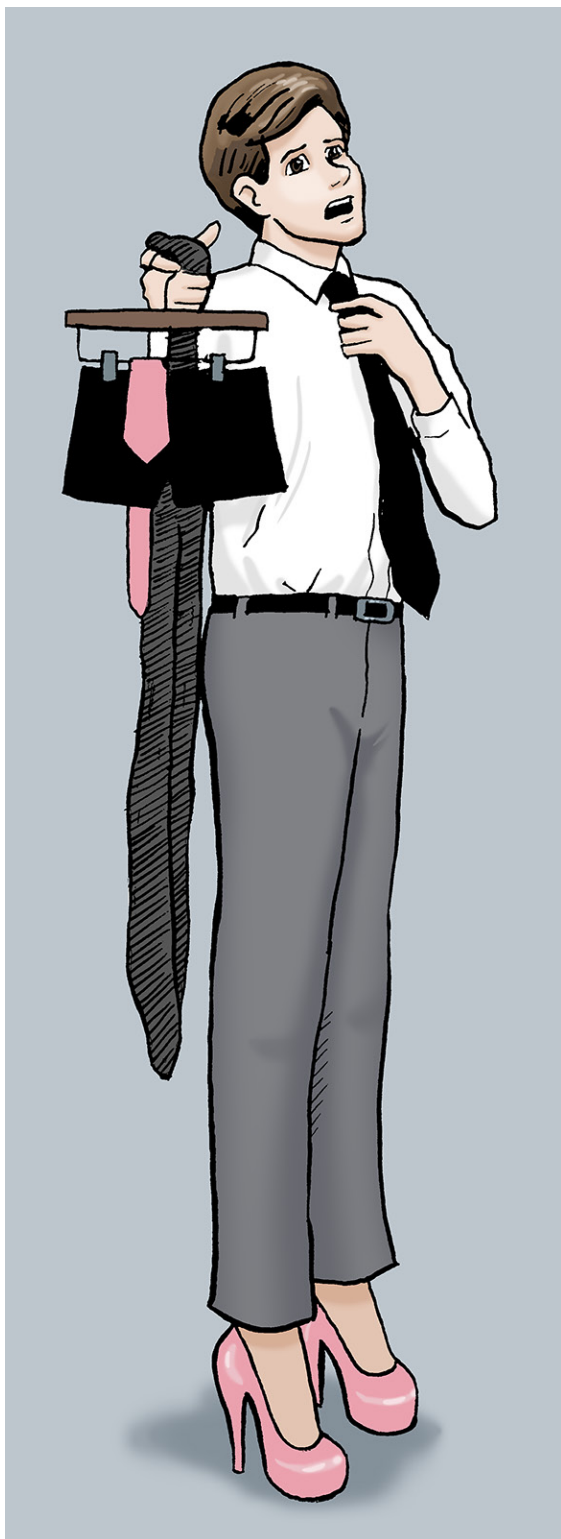
He took a deep, sad breath and headed to the bathroom. There, he proceeded to remove his pants and shoes, and started to tug the tights up his legs like you would a pair of pants.

"No-no-no!" Eileen's voice startled him, "I figured you'd try to do that!"

She reached forward to grab the black opaque tights out of his grasp. "You'll ruin them if you do it that way, you need to roll them up like this," she said, as she began to form them into two black nylon 'donut' shapes. Colby watched carefully but absorbed nothing. He couldn't see the logic in rolling them up before you put them on. Eileen could read the expression on his face and proceeded to explain her stepson how delicate the material was, and how women had been rolling hosiery up their legs since the beginning of time, before she handed them back to him.

"Now, one leg at a time, point your toes into them, and gently *roll* them up your legs," she instructed. Colby followed her direction as best he could, handling the thick nylon like it was somehow made of glass, "Good lord, haven't you ever seen a girl put on tights before?" she scoffed.

Colby grunted indignantly and continued to slowly roll the stretchy material over his hairy legs.



“Thank god I got you opaque. Just look at those hairy stubs,” Eileen yapped as she pointed at his legs. Colby groaned and rolled his eyes. He didn’t think that they were *that* bad. In fact, as far as men went, he thought he didn’t have very much body hair at *all*.

“Get yourself a razor and deal with those ‘things,’” Eileen ordered, “tonight, understand?”

“Seriously?” he queried.

“Are you questioning your punishment here?” she quipped, “Perhaps I should give my friend Judge Silverson a call and see which prison is the darkest, dirtiest, toughest and *least* tolerant of men in high heels in the state.” She narrowed her eyes and glared at him.

He huffed loudly then continued to roll his new nylons, “Fine... I’ll shave my legs tonight,” he muttered.

“Good,” Eileen said, “And don’t you *dare* question me again, understood?”

“Yes,” Colby groaned.

“Yes what?” Eileen snarled. “Show a little respect Colby. I’m doing you a *huge* favor here. And all you seem to be doing is complaining about it.”

Colby grumbled again, he realized that she was right. She was pretty much saving his life.

“Yes... Ma’am,” he sighed.

“That’s better,” she said, as she turned and left the bathroom, leaving Colby to finish redressing.

Wearing tights and shorts took some getting used to. The familiar feel of pant legs was now gone. In its place, the strange sensation of his new nylon second-skin. It wasn’t entirely *un*-comfortable, but it was hardly something he had expected. The biggest problem that he encountered was the bunching up of his boxer-briefs. They made the tops of his otherwise smooth legs look rumpled and silly. Like a baby girl looks when wearing tights over a diaper.

Eileen had already prepared the solution.

Inside the garment bag she sent home with him, were pairs of very skimpy briefs, if you could even call them that. They were high-cut at the sides, and made of sheer nylon, or some other kind of thin girly material. They were colored in pink, white and black, which further led Colby to believe that they were not intended for men to wear.



His suspicions would be affirmed the next day when his Stepmother gave him the ‘once-over’ upon his arrival.

“How do the panties fit?” she asked with a cheshire-like grin glancing at his smooth black legs in their semi-opaque encasement. Colby had obeyed her instruction and shaved his legs the preceding night, and thank goodness he had.



The remaining black tights were *not* as thick and opaque as the first pair. What little leg hair he had would have easily shown through upon inspection.

“Okay, I guess,” Colby shrugged. He was not looking forward to spending the day in this ridiculous outfit, being glared and snickered at by those around him.

But he was still pretty sure it was better than prison, and certainly better than whatever Big Pete would have done to him.

“I see you shaved,” Eileen giggled. “Feels nice doesn’t it?”

Colby blushed. He had to admit that one of the (very minor) benefits of shaving was the heightened sensitivity he now felt when wearing his new hosiery. He had first felt it that morning when he was rolling his black nylons meticulously over his newly-smoothed legs. It was unlike anything he had ever felt.

It was extremely embarrassing.

“You’ll get used to it,” she smiled as she headed off to her office to start her day.

It took Colby most of the week to get used to the feel of his nylon covered legs rubbing against each other, or the touch of something brushing against them. It was roughly the same time it had take to get used to the ogling stares and snarky looks that customers and staff were given him.

He tried to minimize the amount of time he left his office, but it was hard to do when Eileen kept calling him in ‘file this’ or ‘copy that’ or ‘call this client back.’ At one point he lamented the constant walking back and forth to the point that Eileen suggested that they could simply move his desk to sit outside her office, like a proper secretary. To which he moaned and exhaled with a slumping of the shoulders, “No... its fine.”

Eileen’s secretary was the *last* thing he wanted to be seen as.

So instead, it continued to be a constant back and forth between his office and hers, in his smooth black nylons, short black shorts, pink tie and pink platform pumps.

Each time, Eileen would simply smile and glance him over as he approached her desk, files in hand, watching as Colby sashayed in his four-and-half inch heels – which he was becoming quite proficient in walking in – blushing fiercely as he felt her judgmental eyes on him.

He would close his eyes and breathe slowly, telling himself that high-heels were better than hard time, high-heels were better than hard time, no matter *how* humiliating it was.



Eileen tried to look interested in what her date was saying, but her mind kept drifting. Sure, her companion for the evening was nice enough, with a wise smile, freeing at the temples and he seemed genuinely interested in her. Gerald, who she had been trading messages with all week, was a nice guy. Still, he was so... Old.

Was she really old enough to be dating men like Gerald? He was older than her father when she was in high school. He was older than her professors in college. He was older than the priest who had married her to Walter. How could she had ever let herself get this old?

“Are you enjoying your salmon?” Gerald asked her.

“It’s delicious,” she replied. To tell the truth, she wasn’t even paying attention to what it tasted like. She should have been taking it all in, her night out. She hadn’t been on a date in years. Decades?

The restaurant was wonderful, Gerald had a nice car, and he was a gentleman – but she just couldn’t get into it. Besides her date, of course, Eileen was wondering about that son of hers. Maybe it was going too far, torturing the poor boy like she was, but she deserved some kind of vengeance for what he had done to her. Yes, she could easily afford the loss, but still, the boy needed to be taught...

“What about the wine?” Gerald asked.

“I’ll have a white. Dry white,” Eileen replied.

“You already have a glass. You’re holding it.”

Eileen looked at her hand, holding the full wineglass. “So I do,” she said, sheepishly.



Being forced to be your stepmother’s assistant, dressed in a short pink tie, black nylons, hot pants and pink heels, will force a man to rethink his position in life, which is exactly what began to happen to Colby as the days bore on. A few short weeks ago, prior to having stolen fifty-thousand dollars from Eileen, he had considered himself something of an ‘important’ person. He was the heir-apparent to one of the best-known and fastest growing car-dealerships in the city. He was treated like a VIP at the local mob-run casino, rubbing shoulders with other well-to-do businessmen and high-level politicians – who were likely on the take. He had flirted heavily with the casino’s pretty waitresses in their brief, body-hugging outfits and towering shoes.

He had even had a couple ‘flings’ with some.

Of course, once they discovered the truth, that he was essentially the head bookkeeper for his Stepmom’s car business, and that he lived in a small apartment that *she* paid the rent on, the relationship ended.

In retrospect, Colby realized now, he should have seen the writing on the wall back then, and done something about it when he had the chance. *Now* it was too late.

His role had been diminished even further at the dealership, as the head bookkeeper *and* executive assistant and coffee-fetcher to his stepmother. She had further reduced his status when she canceled his apartment’s lease, forcing him

to move back in with her. She also took away his car, which the dealership and owned anyway, and forced him to get a ride with her each day.

“Unless you want to take the bus,” she snickered when he complained, “I’m sure you’d be okay, what with your pretty legs and sexy heels. You’ll blend right in with the factory workers and

gang members that use public transit.”

Then, as if that wasn’t all enough on its own, she *did* move his desk from his office, to outside her office door, further cementing the reality that Colby had *nothing* of his own. Eileen essentially *owned* him.

Everyone took note of how quiet and withdrawn he had become, how his face looked gray and tired, and forlorn. How his posture was that of a defeated man.

Defeated... Yet determined to ride his punishment out, no matter what.



A week later, an animated Eileen rushed out to Colby’s desk. “Get your purse,” she exclaimed, “Let’s go.”

Colby looked at his stepmother with an expression of disbelief, unsure if she was being serious, or if she had suddenly lost her mind.

“Let’s go!” she repeated in a louder voice.

Colby nodded and grabbed his ‘purse,’ the pink leather handbag that she had purchased for him the day he realized that his tiny little black shorts lacked any pockets. He followed Eileen to her red sports car, his rump wiggling with each high heeled step, and got in.

She fired up the engine and tore out of the dealership parking lot and onto the main street.

“Ron and I finished looking through the books last night,” she said, breaking the odd silence that had filled the air inside the little red car. Colby thought back to yesterday and recalled that she had dropped him at home, then returned to the dealership for most of the previous night.

“Want to guess what we found?” She turned and said with a bit of an angry snarl.

Colby could feel the blood draining from his face. “Wh... What?” He stutted.

“Another ten-thousand dollar credit card in *my* fucking name taken out by my idiot stepson to pay off his stupid gambling debt!”

Colby gulped. Eileen was driving faster than he had ever seen her drive, and he wasn’t sure where she was going. He prayed it wasn’t to the Casino.

“Oh,” was the only response he could seem to muster.

“You want to know what I think that tells me?” Eileen continued in very low quiet voice. “It tells me that my stepson, who thinks he can walk a mile in my



shoes, who thinks I'm a fool, also thinks I'm a goddamned stupid bimbo who wouldn't find out that he had stolen fifty-thousand dollars from me. That's what that tells me."

Colby gripped the door handle as Eileen rounded a corner at a very high rate of speed, "Eileen, I..." He started, to try and explain.

"Oh save it," Eileen growled, "If you think I'm such a bimbo, then perhaps *you* need to be one too!"

Colby was confused for a second, but as Eileen pulled that car into the parking lot of a very up-scale looking salon, he began to put two and two together.

His stepmother's punishment was probably about to get a whole lot worse.

Colby followed her inside the swanky salon, keeping his eyes low, hoping that no one would notice that he looked very girlish from the waist down, and not at all girlish from the waist up.

"Ms Jones!" the receptionist glowed as Eileen approached, "Is this Colby?" She motioned at Eileen's blushing stepson.

"This is him," Eileen smiled, "I'll be back in an hour, Fay."

With that, she turned and left the salon, leaving a very, very embarrassed Colby standing before the receptionist.

"Well, well, well..." Fay smiled. "We haven't had a boy like you in here for a while." She motioned with her hands for Colby to follow her into the salon, "This is going to be *fun!*"

Colby wasn't so sure.



The woman was furious. Her own step-son! Stealing, lying, *cheating!* She locked the door of her car, closed the windows and then punched the dashboard, shaking the entire car like it had been in a collision.

Eileen was heaving with every breath, like a wild animal. Her blood rushed to her face and was radiating heat. She grabbed her desk chair, picked it up and slammed it back onto the floor. As she tried to calm herself down, she did what she always did up when she was about to lose her temper. She lit up a cigarette. She kept a hidden pack in the glove compartment. Eileen claimed to have quit cold turkey ten years ago, but the truth was she still had one or two smokes a week – but that didn't really count, in her opinion.

She took a deep, deep breath of smoky warm air, held it, and then shot it out of her nose in a quick blast. With every draw on the cigarette, her nerves calmed. Five minutes later, she could think clearly again, and laid back in her seat.

"That boy obviously hasn't learnt his lesson," Eileen said, flicking her ashes into a spare coffee cup. "He'll wish he had, you can believe that," she said, "you can believe that for sure."

She dropped her head to rest on the steering wheel. "I'm too old for this crap."



Fay led Colby right to back of the salon, where she instructed him to remove his clothes and don a pink fuzzy terrycloth robe. He immediately protested, but only until the receptionist threatened to call his mother.

"She's not my mother," Colby corrected her as he grabbed the pink robe and headed into the change-room, much to the amusement of Fay.

Moments later, a terry-clothed Colby was shown into another room and asked to lay on what looked like some kind of surgical bed. He soon learned that it wasn't surgery he was about to have, but a procedure nearly as painful.

Two women, dressed in white clinical gowns, proceeded to apply hot sticky wax to various location of his body, only to then unceremoniously 'rip' them off, and take any remaining body-hair with them.

Colby screamed in pain as the two technicians worked their way up his legs, around his groin, then over his chest, back and under-arms, ending with a small 'rip' to his sideburns and eyebrows. They then applied a sweet-smelling lotion to his skin, which helped to make the pain of the tortuous process subside. Somewhat.

After that, still dressed in his robe, he was taken out into the salon, where they worked on trimming and styling his plain brown hair into a more feminine version. Large clip-on earrings were affixed to his earlobes, before they began to apply a neutral base foundation over his face.

A hint of blush, some mascara and eyeliner, and rich, rose-colored lipstick were all added on afterwards. He was then led back to the change-room where he had started. Colby re-dressed in his pink panties, black nylons and white button-down shirt, but noticed that his shorts were *gone*. In their place lay a dark-gray pleated skirt.

"Oh no," he said aloud.

"Put it on Colby," a voice from outside the dressing room commanded, as if knowing exactly what he was thinking.

Colby groaned, and slowly lifted the brief skirt over his thighs. Unlike the shorts, the skirt was completely open underneath him, which in some ways felt freeing and great. In other more obvious ways, it caused instant, intense anxiety.

He slipped into his pink platform heels and took a deep breath, before exiting the stall.

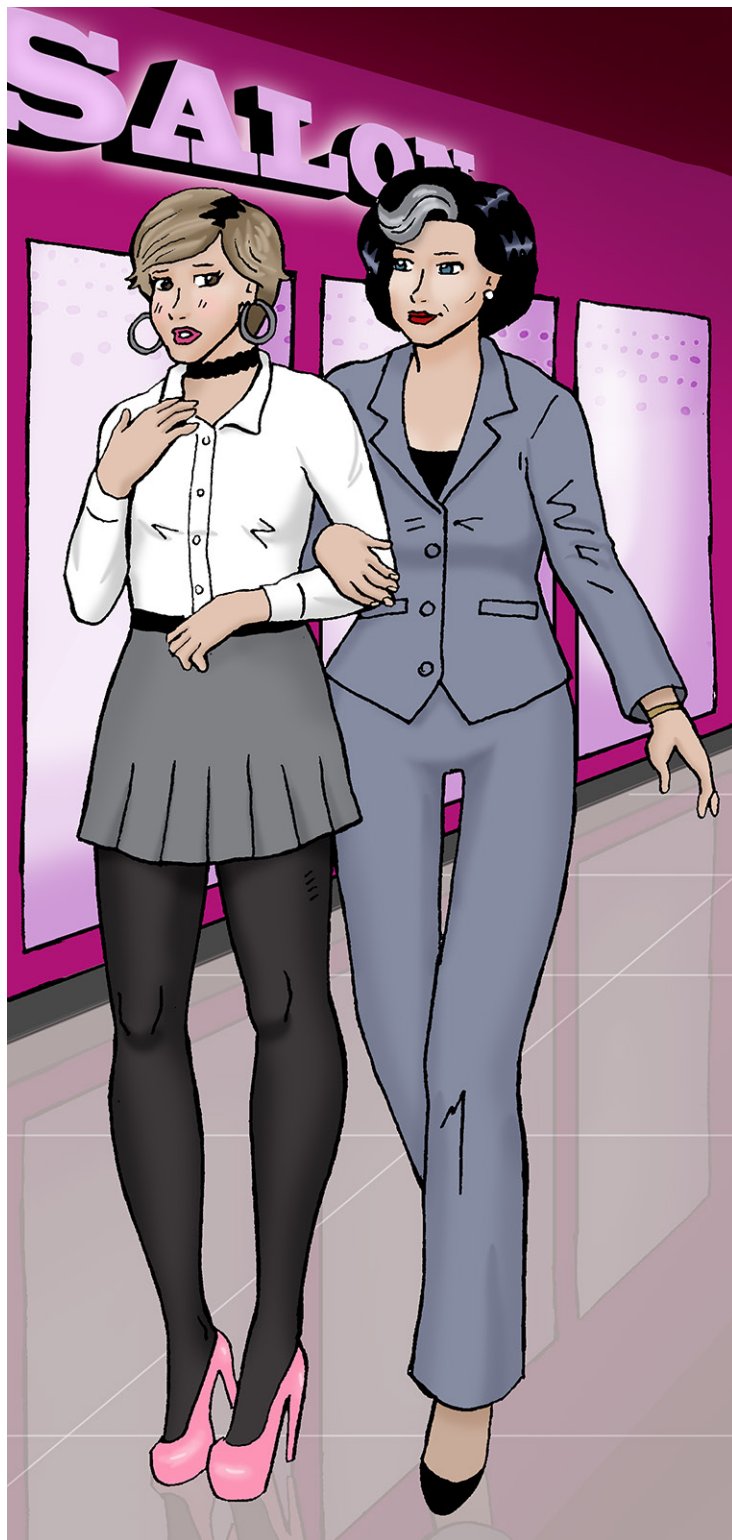
"Wow!" One of the beauticians exclaimed as he re-entered the main room. It seemed that the entire salon staff had gathered to watch his debut. All of them looked very pleased with their efforts and gave Colby reassuring smiles.

"Eileen's going to love it," Fay-the-receptionist said and grinned as she led the furiously blushing, skirted boy, back to the salon's main lobby. Her guess of Colby's stepmother's reaction was correct. She covered her mouth with her hand as her eyes widened upon Colby's approach.

"He's beautiful!" Eileen exclaimed as she looked him over, "Thank the girls so much for me dear, we'll see you again in two weeks" she said taking Colby's arm and leading him out the salon door.

"What happens in two weeks?" Colby asked in a quiet voice.

"Why, you come back for your next appointment," she smiled, "You think maintaining this pretty look will be



easy?”

Colby gasped. His impulse was to run, to get away from his evil step-mother and her humiliating punishment. He could feel his muscles tensing up, as his body prepared to dash away.

However, he didn't. Instead, he realized that his pink high heels wouldn't allow him to run very fast, and in fact, he would likely trip and fall after his third or fourth stride. Plus, even if he *did* get away from her, dressed in a super short skirt, wearing makeup and earrings, he wasn't really sure where he would go to.

So instead, he opted to say nothing. He was already in enough trouble.

A sudden rush came over him as he realized that possibly for the first time ever, Colby had had an impulse to do something, and his brain, his logical thinking brain, had actually overwritten it.

His impulse had been controlled.

He was so stunned at what had happened that he didn't even notice Eileen opening the door to her sports coupe, or her helping him into it.

“You seem anxious,” Eileen said as they drove back to the dealership.

“Ha!” Colby exclaimed loudly, “You think?”

“Well, it could be worse,” she grinned, “You could be some gang member's boyfriend in prison right now.” She chuckled at her statement.

“I look more like a girlfriend than a boyfriend,” he motioned down to his nylon covered legs and pink platforms.

“True,” she nodded as she continued to drive. A few moments later she reached into her purse with one hand and rustled around for a moment, before retrieving two pill bottles. “These should help,” she said, handing them to her step-son.

Colby took the pill bottles in his hand and looked down at them. The labels listed some chemical compounds that he had never heard of. “What are they?” he queried.

“Oh...” Eileen paused to make a left hand turn, “Just some stuff to help you adjust. Take them twice a day, one in the morning, one at night. Take your first dose when we get back to the shop, then put them in your purse.”

“But Eileen,” he began to protest, “I don't...”

His step-mom cut him off. “I don't care... You take them when I tell you to. It's all part of it.”

Colby sighed quietly and nodded. His first instinct was to refuse, but his new-found logic-based thinking overrode that. Refuse, and Eileen calls the cops. If she calls the cops, he goes to jail, dressed in drag. If he goes to jail dressed in drag, than he really *would* become some gang members boyfriend ... or girlfriend ... or both!

Colby Deeds had his impulses under control.



The days and weeks that passed since Colby's first visit to the salon were, by in large, easier than the time spent *before* the salon visit. Eileen had ordered him to pack away his boy-clothes, and helped him to restock his wardrobe with flirty skirts and pink-colored blouses. He had let his hair grow fairly long and had it styled into a completely feminine 'do.' He had also allowed his ears to be permanently pierced, since it was apparent that his big gaudy pink earrings weren't going to go away any time soon. Eileen had added thickly padded bras to his attire, stuffed with rubbery breast forms. 'For realism,' she had told him.

Colby had been taking his pills, one pink and one yellow, twice a day, religiously, as directed, under Eileen's supervision. Whatever they were had thrown his system out of whack for the first days, but after seventy-two hours of vomiting and nausea, his body seemed to have adjusted.

Whatever it was that he was taking did in fact reduce his anxiety, and also seemed to be helping him to accept his punishment better than he ever had.

"Dressing like this isn't so bad," he smiled at Eileen one day out-of-the-blue one day, "And it sure as hell beats prison."

The two of them burst into giggles for a moment before carrying on with their day.

On one particular day however, no amount of medication would relieve the anxiety that Colby felt as a familiar-looking, and not-so-friendly face entered the showroom.

The figure, uncharacteristically alone, began to browse from car to car, stopping on one of the more expensive models. Eileen, sensing an air of importance from the prospective client, and also noting that all of her other staff were otherwise preoccupied, approached the man with smile, "She's a beaut, isn't she?"

"I presume we're discussing the car," the man smiled, "Though the present company is quite attractive as well."

Eileen giggled like a schoolgirl, "Well you certainly know how to start a negotiation, now don't you."

The man returned the smile and ran his hand over his slicked back hair and pony-tail.

Colby had spotted the figure the moment he entered the showroom and ducked into Ron's office to avoid being seen.

"Colby," Ron said with a stern tone, "Can you take this to Eileen?" He handed the skirted young man a file, "I need her signature." Colby accepted the file without looking, his eyes still locked on the figure in the showroom.

"Um," Ron raised his voice, "Now please!"



He tried to scurry up to his stepmother's side without being seen by the client. He could hear the man's high-pitched voice in deep conversation with her as Eileen coolly leaned against the sport roadster.

"Excuse me Eileen," Colby said in a near-whisper, "Ron needs these signed, he said it was urgent."

"And who do we have here?" Big Pete asked, "My, my... There's pretty things all over this place."

Eileen giggled, then turned towards Colby, before turning back towards the large man. "Peter," she began, "This is my..."

"Daughter!" Colby blurted out in as girly-a-voice as he could muster. He extended his slender-looking manicured hand for the mob-boss to shake. *Damn*, he thought, *there goes that impulse control again*.

Both Eileen and Pete looked shocked but his outburst. Big Pete's look of surprise turned to a look of curiosity as he looked Colby over. "Have we...?" He began to say.

Colby cut him off. "I'm pretty new here, have you been in before?"

Big Pete laughed, “No, but your lovely mother here was just about to sell me this fine automobile. He pointed at the candy-red two-door behind Eileen. “What did you say your name was?”

“This is Col...” Eileen started, but Colby would interrupt her also.

“Leen!” He announced. “Col-leen” He offered the sweetest cutest, most girly smile he could muster, knowing full-well that if Big Pete ever realized who he really was, there was good chance that even his step-mom wouldn’t be able to save him.

“Well, Colleen,” Big Pete said with a grin, “Aren’t you just a little fire-cracker!”

Eileen and Colby both burst into nervous laughter. “You could say that” they ended up saying in unison, inadvertently.

“Well, I best be going,” Colby giggled in his fake-girl voice.

“It was a pleasure to meet you Colleen.” Big Pete smiled. “I hope we’ll cross paths again.”

Colby blushed and smiled, secretly hoping for the opposite. “Oh, I don’t get out much Pete,” he said, as he minced away as quickly as his heels would carry him.

“She’s delightful!” Colby heard him say, as he left. He could feel Pete’s eyes on his backside as he hurried off, his pleated skirt fluttering with each step.

In an effort to disappear so quickly, Colby had walked right out the front door of the dealership and almost into the arms of Big Pete’s two henchmen who were standing beside his sedan. Realizing his mistake, he flashed a smile, then re-entered the building. The two goons leered hungrily at him, eyeing him up. As Colby left them, he heard one of them whistle.

Part of him was terrified of the experience. Another part of him was pleased with the fact that he had now blatantly fooled three people that knew him as Colby into believing that he was Eileen’s daughter Colleen.

A few minutes later an equally elated Eileen caught up with him.

“Wow!” she exclaimed, “What was that?”

Colby blushed, fearing an additional punishment. “I’m sorry” he groaned, “It’s just that...”

“Never mind that!” Eileen chimed, “You were fantastic! And ‘Colleen’? Where did *that* come from?”

“Part Colby, part Eileen I guess.” Colby shrugged. “It just kind of ‘happened.’”

“It was brilliant!” His stepmother cried, “I couldn’t believe it!” She leaned into Colby and wrapped her arms around him, “I’ve never been more proud of you.”

Colby felt a sudden surge of emotion washing over him. He had never heard his step-mother talk to him that way, and he had certainly never been hugged by her before. Tears began to well up in his eyes.

Eileen saw his emotions creeping up his face and a tissue off the desk. "Here," she said, "Don't wipe, dab... you'll ruin your makeup." She then proceeded to carefully dab his eyes in a motherly fashion so-as-to prevent any damage to his eyeliner and mascara.

"I'm sorry," Colby finally said after his tears receded, "I don't know what came over me."

"It's probably your hormones kicking in," Eileen offered.

Colby snorted a laugh. "Mommmm," he said in a mocking tone, "I'm pretty sure I'm done with that stuff. My puberty ended years ago."

Eileen became quiet, "That wasn't what I was referring to. Its not *your* hormones that are kicking in. At least not your natural ones."

Colby raised an eyebrow, "Huh?"

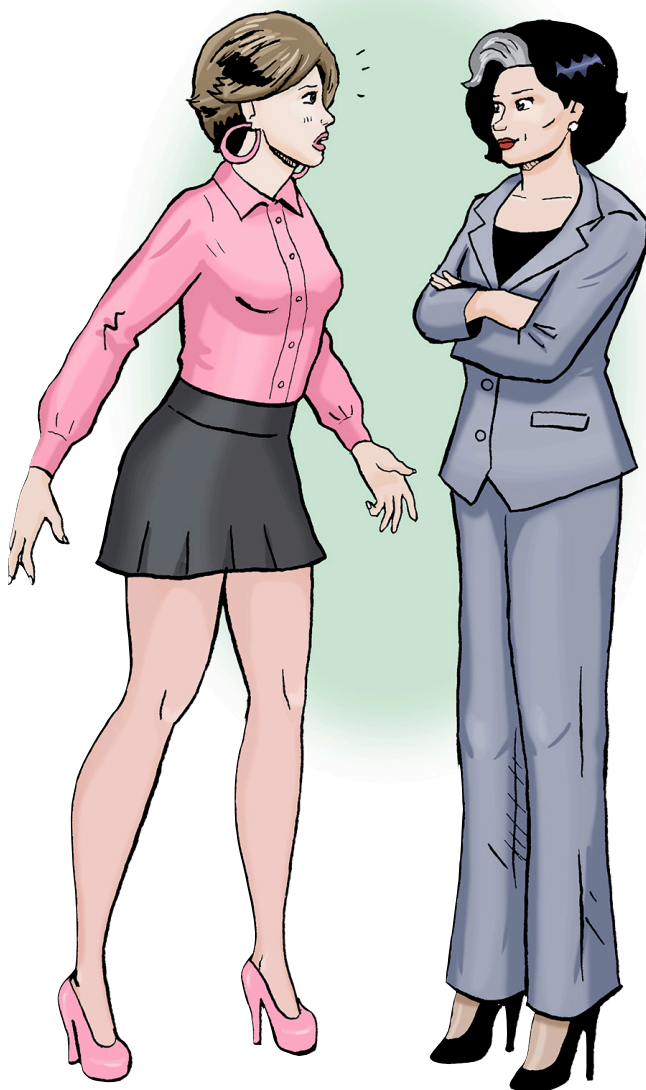
"Those pills that you're taking," Eileen said, "One of them is a strong experimental female hormone replacement and testosterone blocker."

"What?" Colby shouted, "You put me on hormones?"

"It was for your own good, to relieve the anxiety," Eileen replied.

"Hormones don't do *that!*" He cried, "Where did you even get those? Are they even legal?"

Eileen lowered her eyes and remained silent. She wasn't exactly proud of the fact that she had duped her stepson into taking the pills, but she





knew that part of his success today was due to his taking them. "Never mind all that, just think of how well you did today."

"But Eileen... Do you even know who that guy was?"

"Big Pete?" She giggled.

"He's the guy that was going to break my legs if I didn't pay him. He's the reason I stole the money in the first place!"

Eileen shook her head. "Oh no you don't," she scolded. "You don't get to blame *him* for *your* problems. *You* rang up the debt with *him*. Then *you* stole the money from *me*. All he did was..." Her tone softened a little. "All he did was the same thing that his father did... To *your* father."

"What?" Colby's eyes grew wide with shock.

"Peter Saints, Senior, offered a line of credit to your Dad to help him buy some new inventory, only... It had some strings attached. Suffice to say, the stress of having meet with Pete Senior's conditions is what ultimately did your father in."

"What? Strings? Conditions?" Colby sputtered.

"Your father was laundering Pete Senior's money. Pete's 'associates' would come in and buy a car for three times what it was worth, only they never *actually* took the car, just the bill. Then Pete would drop by and collect the cash. It gave Walter high blood pressure, and I'm certain it caused his heart attack. That's why the Saints started the casino, once your father died. Pete wanted to keep going with his 'deal,' but I told them that the debt was repaid. And that was that. I haven't seen Big Pete since he was a little kid. Hell, I don't even know if he remembers me." She paused and looked down to gather her thoughts. "All I know is, he wants to buy that car. And he wants *you* to deliver it."

"What?" Colby's expression grew from shock to all-out rage. "Are you *nuts*? He'll kill me!"

"To the contrary," she quipped, "I told him that you're *my* daughter, not Walter's son. He doesn't have a clue that you're really Colby. He thinks you're Colleen, and I think you can pull it off kiddo." She smiled. "All you have to do is dress up pretty and deliver the car... Oh, and maybe have dinner at the casino with him."

"I... I..." He stuttered. He was furiously mad and wanted to storm out of her office in a huff, yet his new-found controlled temperament had returned. So instead, he stayed and argued.

"Eileen," he said in an angry tone, "I know you think this all cute and everything," he motioned at his feminine appearance, "But what you're suggesting is just *mad*. He's a *mobster*! He kills people that piss him off! If he even *thinks* that something's fishy, he'll shoot me... Or worse!"

"All you need is a little practice," Eileen replied in an overtly calm voice, "You've got the walk down-pat, and your voice is almost perfect. A few hours of

practice learning girly mannerisms and such, and you'll be *perfect*. I know you can do it Colby, or rather... Colleen."

"Argh!" Colby shouted in frustration. "I don't think you understand!"

"No!" Eileen shouted back, "I don't think that *you* understand! I gave you an option, you could take your chances and go to jail, or you could stay here and accept the punishment that I dish out. It's true that I never anticipated that you'd be standing here, dressed as a girl, pretending to be my daughter in order to get a sale. But that's the reality of it Colby! If you had just been honest with me and told me about *everything* that you had stolen from me, we might not be here in this situation right now. But *you* didn't. You were sneaky and you kept hiding things from me, so this is how I've decided that you'll be punished. If you're going to *act* like a silly girl trying to hide things from her mother, than I'm going to *treat* as such."

Colby was dumbfounded. He knew that everything she had said was true. He *had* acted like a teenaged kid trying not to get caught. He hadn't been honest with her. And she was *still* good enough to *not* call the cops on him. He wasn't sure that he would have been so generous if he was in her shoes.

He paused and looked down. He spotted the pink four-and-a-half-inch platform heels on his feet, and realized that in fact, he *was* in her shoes already. She was giving him a second chance to redeem himself and all he was doing was complaining about it.

He sighed, shuffling in his towering shoes for a moment then looked back up at Eileen, "Okay," he mumbled, "You're right. I'll do it."

Eileen grinned, "I knew you would." She spontaneously wrapped her arms around him and gave him a hug. "Let's get to work."



The delivery of the sports car was set for the end of the week, which gave Colby a few short days to practice his posture, walk, talk and gestures. He needed to get them all perfect if he wanted to avoid raising any suspicions with his former debt holder. He also needed to familiarize himself with being called Colleen, which was made easier when his step-mother announced to the dealership staff that he was to be addressed as Colleen from then on.

"You're not smiling, sweetie!" Eileen shouted at him during one of the training sessions.

"Fine," Colby said, and tried to put a smile on his lips. It wasn't easy with all the things he was being drilled to do.

"A smile is a window to a girl's heart, sweets," his mother chided. "A smile is a shield and a weapon."

Colby just shook his head. He literally had no idea what she was talking about. "I'm smiling already!" He said, through his gritted teeth.

For the rest of that week, he went out of his way to greet every person that entered the showroom, practicing his girly smile and prose. He walked with his wrists turned outwards, and his chest and buttocks thrust up – the latter easily done on account of his high heels.

He was focused and determined that when he entered the casino, no one would suspect that he was anyone other than Colleen.

When the week's end finally arrived, Eileen arranged for another appointment at the salon, to ensure he looked his girly best. They touched up his nails, trimmed and styled his hair, and carefully painted his face in a more dramatic fashion that he was accustomed to, with much paler foundation, heavier blush, darker pink lips, and longer feathery fake lashes.

They then redressed him in a pink pleated miniskirt, dark-gray blouse, and dark fur bolero jacket. Instead of his usual nylons, they rolled sexy fishnet tights over his slender legs to give him a sexy 'edge.'

"Are you sure?" he worried out loud, "I know I want to fool him, but I don't really want to get raped by him."

Eileen chuckled as she escorted a freshly made-over 'Colleen' to the sports car that was waiting out front. "Don't worry," she said, "Not with Big Pete. He'll be a perfect gentleman. Besides, you know how to protect yourself, right?"

Colby looked at her with a confused expression.

"Smile," she said. "It's a shield and a weapon. It'll disarm him."

"And if that doesn't work?" Colby asked.

She leaned in and whispered to him that the surefire way to disarm a man was to kick him in a not-so-comfortable place.

Colby gasped, covering his mouth with his painted fingernails in surprise that his step-mother had actually suggested such a brutal act.

She helped him into the car, reminding him to sit first, legs together, then pivot his legs inside the vehicle. She also suggested that he drive the car in his stocking feet.

"Driving a six-speed is tricky enough," she told him, "but driving a six-speed in five-inch heels can be deadly."

Colby nodded and slipped his shoes off, then took a deep breath. It was 'showtime.'



The casino was buzzing with excitement that night. Colby had never seen it so busy. Big Pete was waiting at the front door as he pulled up in the shiny sports car. He graciously opened the door for the feminized young man and extended his hand. "Beautiful, just beautiful," the mobster chirped in his high-pitched voice, "and the car is pretty too!"

Colby giggled girlishly at Pete's lame attempt at breaking the ice. "Thank you," he smiled, "I had them use extra wax just for you." He rubbed his mesh-covered leg playfully, inferring that either the car was extra-shiny, or that his legs were extra smooth.

Pete looked shocked for a moment, then guffawed. "You're just like your mother! How charming." That wasn't the first time someone had said that, Colby thought to himself. He had always been compared to his dad – before wearing women's clothing.

The large man extended his hand for Colby to take, and helped him out of the car. Colby was careful to pivot and keep his legs together. The tiny pleated skirt he was wearing would do little to protect his modesty. Even though he had been wearing a special concealing gaff for weeks now to protect his 'secret,' he didn't want to take any chances.

Pete was unabashedly forward as he watched 'Colleen' get out of the car, scanning 'her' over like a hawk scans over a mouse, just prior to devouring it. Colby knew the look, and felt a tiny bit unsure about whether he actually had what it would take to pretend to be Colleen in Pete's presence. Now wasn't the time for doubts. He was too far into this ruse to cop-out now. He needed to refocus his energy and resist his natural impulse to run in the opposite direction.

*Besides, he nervously laughed to himself, I can't run in these heels!*

"Care to share what you find so funny?" Big Pete inquired. Colby realized that he might have laughed a little louder than he had thought.

"I just..." he said softly, his voice dying out. He realized he better not let a single thing slip that night, or he was going to end up in pine box. Pete was expecting Colleen to be like her 'mother,' Eileen, and Eileen wasn't one to mince words. Thus, he had a character to play, and he had better be convincing.

He cleared his throat and took a breath, and in the best 'Colleen' voice he could muster said, "I just can't figure out why a big important man like you can't come pick up his own car? I mean, I drove it here in heels," he lied. "Seems a little fishy, don't you think?" He turned up the corner of his pink-painted lip in a sarcastic expression.

Pete paused for a moment, looking shocked. Colby hoped he hadn't overdone his impersonation of his step-mother.

The big mobster then smiled and began to laugh in his odd, high pitched tone. "Ha!" he burred, "I like you... You're are truly just like your mother."

Colby felt his anxiety level drop. Apparently his acting job was pretty convincing.

"Maybe I was just looking for an excuse to get you out to my club in a pretty dress?" Pete continued.

It was Colby's turn to smile. "Well you could have just *asked* me," he flirted, "I probably would have said yes. You didn't have buy an expensive car just to get a date with me, though I certain appreciate that you did."

*Oh my god*, Colby's inner monologue said, *What the hell did I just say to him?*

Big Pete smiled again, this time wider. "I like a girl with expensive tastes," he offered 'Colleen' his arm. "Let me show what else I have that's expensive."

Colby realized that Big Pete was under his spell. He thought that he was a she. He didn't see Colby at *all*, just Colleen. He had done it – so far anyway. He had *become* Colleen. Now all he had to do was to keep Colby hidden away for the rest of the night, and he'd be free and clear. He took the mobster's arm and allowed himself to be escorted into the casino.

Casino Electra was very much the same as he remembered it, except this time he was seeing it from the perspective of 'the girl on Big Pete's arm.' Whenever they passed by someone, they would look him over and whisper, "Who's that with Pete?" The men were giving him hungry looks, assuming that if 'she' was with Pete, that 'she' was worth pursuing.

It was a little unnerving.

Even *more* unnerving were the evil glares and dagger-throwing looks that the *women* in the casino were throwing his way. He could plainly see the envy and anger that the other girls were clearly feeling towards him as 'Colleen.' It was a little scary and made him cling to Pete just a little tighter than he had planned.

Getting bitch-slapped by a jealous female patron now seemed to be of more concern to him than having his true identity found out by Pete. Or at least it was of *equal* concern.

Pete was clearly pleased to have 'Colleen' hug him tightly, especially as he introduced 'her' to others.

That night, 'Colleen' was introduced to roughly ten politicians who were 'on the take,' seven local prominent business owners, five of the top ringleaders in the local drug trade, the top brass from two rival bike gangs, and roughly thirty assorted thugs, thieves and gang-bangers. Each time, 'Colleen' charmed them or flirted with them, and offered to give them a good deal on a car if they were ever in the market. Each time, Pete gave the dealership his personal seal of approval, which seemed to be considered by most to be as good a recommendation as you could get.

Colleen was also introduced to a man named 'Melvin,' a quote-unquote, "loyal patron of the casino," as Pete put it. Colby swallowed hard as he forced a smile and extended his delicate-looking hand to Melvin, trying not to make extended eye contact with his old gambling friend.

"How are we doing on our account Melvin?" Big Pete asked.

Melvin looked nervous. "Uh, good Pete. It's all looking good."

Big Pete smiled. "Good to hear. Have a nice day, Melvin." He turned and led 'Colleen' off towards the bar.

"What's with him?" Colby asked in a mock-curious tone.

"Melvin has had some..." Big Pete paused to choose his words carefully, "let's call them 'cash flow' issues."

"Ohhhhh," Colby nodded, "He owes you money."

Big Pete nodded and smirked. "You catch on fast. I like that."

Colleen batted her eyelashes and smirked back. "I'm a quick study Pete," she winked at him.

*Why did I do that?* Colby wondered to himself. He was clearly taking his role as 'Colleen' seriously, but perhaps a little *too* seriously.

"Well then," the big mobster continued as he motioned the bartender to fetch him two drinks, "You should know that once I'm sold on something, I usually don't stop until I get it."

The barkeep slid two tumblers of amber liquid across the bar to Pete, who passed one to Colby. They then 'clinked' the top of the glasses together before drinking the liquor down. Colby did the same, coughing as the strong alcohol burned the inside of his esophagus.

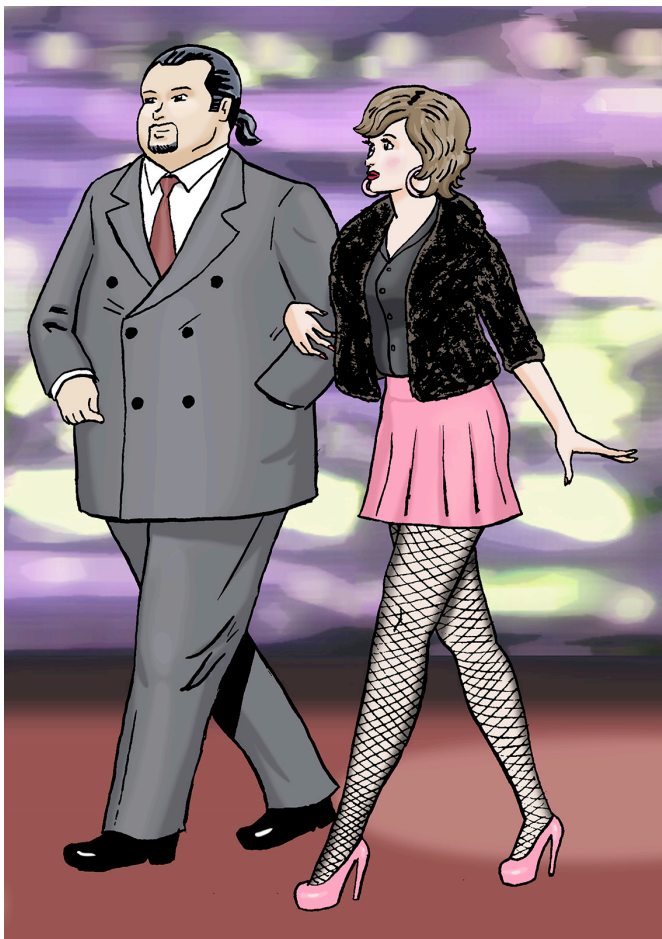
Pete snickered playfully, then ordered another round.

"So," Colby continued in his most playful 'Colleen' voice, "Is that what happened with the car we sold you? You didn't stop until you got it?"

Pete nodded. "Uh-huh."

Colby felt his character taking over as Colleen leaned forward playfully, "Is there anything else around here that you might be sold on?" She pouted her lips and cocked her head in a flirtatious manner.

Big Pete ogled her over, leering in a lustful manner. "I think there might be." He handed Colleen another tumbler of whiskey. Colby smiled playfully and toasted the big mobster. He realized that he had not only fooled Big Pete into believing he was 'Colleen,' but that the man was now lusting over him – as *her*.



He let the cool amber liquid slide down his throat, he realized that as hard as it had been to *create* the illusion of Colleen, it might be even harder to get *out* of being her.



True to form, in the days and weeks that finished, Big Pete began to actively court Colleen.

Large bouquets of flowers began to arrive almost daily. Invitations to have dinner with him were almost as frequent. As the days passed, a skeptical Eileen couldn't help but wonder if her stepson was beginning to enjoy the attention, just a little.

"Not at all!" Colby retorted when she suggested it to him one day.

"You say that," she chuckled, "But I know you very well. There is a certain amount of Big Pete's lavish lifestyle that you would find very appealing. Am I right?"

Colby scoffed. "No way... It's not like that at all!"

Eileen scoffed back. "Psh!" she rolled her eyes, "Please... You're as big an opportunist as I've ever known. I know you think you're just trying to fool him into not knowing that you're really Colby. But there's a side of you that know that you get something out of this, so you might as well try and get what you can, while you can."

Colby looked a little shocked. Was his stepmother suggesting that he be some kind of transvestite gold-digger?

He paused, and thought about the concept. He really hadn't pondered trying to get anything out of Big Pete, but now that she had mentioned it, the mobster *was* a little unfair to those he extended credit to. He would lead them along believing that everything was okay, and then suddenly – *bang* – he would suddenly collect.

A tiny smile formed on the outside corner of his painted lips. Maybe he *would* try to get back at Big Pete.

Eileen had been watching her feminized stepson's facial expressions, and realized that he might *not* have considered playing the mobster for his own gain – until just a moment ago.

"Oh my goodness," she said with a surprised tone, "You really *weren't* trying to play him, were you? Until just a moment ago."

Colby grinned, "If Big Pete wants a girlfriend, then I'll give him a girlfriend." He shrugged as if what he was saying made perfect sense. "It's not like I'm going to *sleep* with him or anything. I'll just let him believe that the possibility exists." *And when he's almost to the point where he thinks he's about to get lucky,* he said to himself, *Bang! I'll suddenly change my mind and leave him wanting.*

“Just be careful,” Eileen pleaded, “He may have a soft-spoken voice,” she said, “but I can assure you that he’s got a very hard soul.”

Colby nodded, but his smile did not fade. Hard soul or not, Big Pete was falling for Colleen hard, and he intended to gamble on being able to exploit it.



The next day, another invitation arrived for Colleen to join Big Pete for dinner held by one of the politicians that Colby had seen at the casino. It wasn’t the kind of thing that Colby would have expected Big Pete to attend, as he was a rather well-known figure – in the wrong sense – so attending a politician’s dinner seemed to be somewhat ill-conceived.

Still, it *would* be an opportune time for Colby to show that Colleen wasn’t afraid to be seen in public with her mobster boyfriend. Plus, he’d never been invited to any quite as swanky as a dinner for movers and shakers. So with the tiniest bit of trepidation Colby, as Colleen, called the mob boss to accept his invite.

“Excellent!” Big Pete chirped on the phone in his unusual tone, “We’ve got a couple of weeks to get you ready, so I’ll be in touch.” With that, he hung up, leaving a confused Colby on the other end of the line.

“So how’d it go?” Eileen asked in passing later that morning, “Are you going to go with him to the dinner?”

Colby nodded. “Yes,” he began, then paused for a moment, “But he mentioned something about having to get me ready. I’m not sure what he meant by that.”

Eileen giggled. “Well obviously he wants his ‘girl’ to have a certain ‘look,’ right?”

Colby stared back at her blankly. He didn’t follow.

“Colleen,” she called him by his ‘girl’ name, “You’re a pretty girl, but hardly mobster-girlfriend material. He’s probably going to get you an appointment at a salon, and get you some new clothes, things like that.” She waited for Colby’s mind to catch up. She could see he was having trouble processing this all. “He’ll want you to look the part, I’d be surprised if he doesn’t have a whole makeover planned for you.” Colby’s eyes got wide for a moment as he realized that she might be right. Big Pete might be taking this seriously – *too* seriously! Eileen watched a panicked look come over Colby’s face.

She tried to put a positive spin on what was likely about to happen. “But don’t forget, he’s probably going to try and spoil the *hell* out of you,” she said, “Fur, diamonds, dinners, all that stuff that men think that women want, he’ll probably try it. So in a sense, you’re about to find out just how ridiculous men become when they are courting a pretty girl.”



She giggled at her own statement. “Ha! You should take notes! Who knows, it might come in hand for you later,” she paused again, “You know, when this is all over and everything’s back to normal.”

*Ha!* Colby laughed inside his head, *can anything really ever be normal again?*

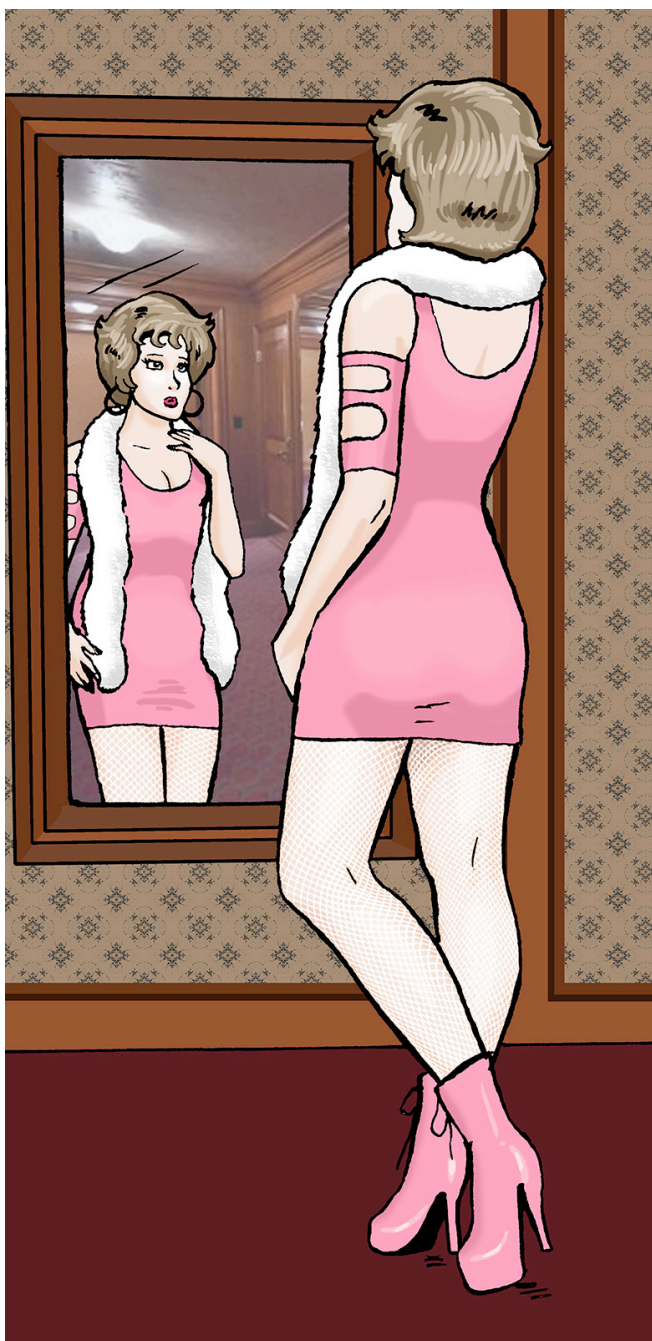


Colby was having that same thought three weeks later as he stood in front of the mirror in the private V.I.P bathroom at Casino Electra.

Even though he knew it was his reflection, he was still constantly dumbfounded every time he saw it.

*How can that be me?* He’d wonder, *How could I have allowed this to happen?* He’d lament. *How can I ever go back to being normal again?* He would panic.

He stared mindlessly at the girl in the mirror. Her hair had been stylishly coifed into a very feminine do. The smooth skin on her face, made pale by thickly applied foundation, was flawless, and had the consistency of porcelain. Rosy cheeks and thick lashes had been dusted on and filled in, with perfectly puckering pink lips that looked inviting and entirely perfect to kiss.



He shuddered when he realized that it had been *him* that had applied the makeup so flawlessly to *her* face earlier that day, just like he had done every other day for weeks and weeks now.

Just like a girl would do.

Colby had grown used to seeing Colleen's reflection in the mirror. More and more, he wasn't even bothering to remind himself of the difference between Colby and Colleen. The girl in the mirror was who he was.

He no longer worried about looking "like" a girl. He no longer worried if he did his makeup "right." Now, he worried if he wasn't the best looking girl in the room. He no longer worried that eyes were evaluating him, he worried that every eye around him *wasn't* evaluating him.

When he put on his lipstick, he couldn't help but think that his lips were lush and kissable. Would it really be so awful for a handsome man to tell him that he had great lips? If he didn't get some kind of compliment for how great they were, what was the point of having such fabulous lips? Given the chance, he knew he could be as good a kisser as any girl.

Not to mention his eyes. It wouldn't hurt for someone to give him a compliment about his deep, bewitching eyes.

Looking at the image of the girl, Colby was experiencing an out-of-body moment. He had little claim to his own flesh anymore. He couldn't. That was the body of a young woman, a body that had nothing to do with anyone named "Cody." Her hair was shiny and lustrous. Her figure slim and curvy. A white fur boa hung over the girl's shoulders, framing her exposed chest – *and what a chest it was.*

One of the visits that Big Pete had planned for 'Colleen' had been to a clinic in the City that owed him a 'favor.' Big Pete had cashed in said outstanding debt by having his 'girlfriend's' breasts augmented.

His girlfriend – Colleen.

Colby had awakened that day from the procedure unsure of what had transpired, only to see a smiling Pete. "If you don't like 'em you can always take 'em out," he shrugged after Colby burst into a screaming fit over the non-consensual surgical procedure. "I like my girls to have boobs. So sue me."

Colby wished that he could have, when Eileen tried to explain to him that the breasts were all part of what she thought was an 'appropriate punishment,' he knew that he didn't have any other choice but to just play the part.

This new outfit he was wearing tonight was part of that realization. Colby, after days of reflection, had decided that if he was going to play the part of the mobster's big breasted girlfriend, he was going to do it with gusto. The dress was a body-hugging pink number and showed off the curves that Colby's body was beginning to develop. It showed off his new breasts particularly well, with a low cut neck, and shoulder-less, slitted sleeves. The hem of the dress was cut dangerously high and barely covered the bottom of his thong-pantied rear. Thankfully a double dose of hosiery in the form of smoky sheer hose under white mesh tights, served to cover any exposed spots that may have been

flashed as he moved through the gaming house in his towering pink platform heeled ankle boots.

In short, Colby was about as sexy a mobster's girlfriend as ever there was.

So in all reality, Colby had *become* Colleen.

"Are you going to just stare at yourself all night?" Big Pete's voice startled him as he looked himself over.

"Oh! Don't you knock?" He exclaimed, or maybe more appropriately, *she* explained.

"It's my casino," Pete chortled, "I don't *have* to knock."

Colleen rolled her eyes, a mannerism that Eileen had taught her a week before. "*Men*," she muttered.

Big Pete grinned widely and extended his hand to her. "Shall we?" he asked, "I've been waiting to show you off all week."

Colleen smiled and took his hand. "Okay. But you're going to buy me a drink," she winked at him.

"Didn't I just tell you that it was *my* casino?" He puffed out his chest. "You can have any drink you want. You can have *every* drink you want!" He let out a little giggle, then took Colleen's arm in his and lead her towards the door, but before they could leave, one of the bartenders burst into the room. "Jodie just quit!" the animated server cried.

"Jodie?" Big Pete asked.

"Yeah," the barkeep replied, "The brunette with the nice legs, she just got pissed off and left. The other girls say she's been thinking about it for weeks, but I guess today was just the breaking point or something..." The man paused to catch his breath. "What are we gonna do?"

Pete chuckled. "What do you think we're gonna do, Gus? We're not gonna close the bar just because some bimbo walks off the job. No one will ever notice that she's gone. In fact, I can't even remember what she looked like. So just go back out there and pour some booze, and when the right girl walks in, we'll hire her as a replacement. Until then, just carry on."

"Yes, sir." Gus nodded, glancing at Colleen then back at Pete, before heading back out to the game room floor.

Pete sighed. "Seriously, I wonder how this place could ever function without me."

"You are a pretty important guy around here Pete." Colleen took the opportunity to stroke the Mobster's ego a little. She watched as his face lit up with a wide smile. Clearly he liked to be complimented.

A few minutes later and the couple were back out in the casino. It was a particularly busy night, full of players, hustlers and known criminals. Pete insisted on stopping to talk and introduce Colleen to every single one of them. It was something that she had come terms with as part of her agreement with Eileen. Pretend to be the mobster's doting bubble-headed girlfriend, or be sent to jail.

Jail, for a seemingly gender-confused male like Colby appeared to be, with breasts the size of large grapefruit, would not be pleasant. So 'Colleen' gave it her all. She smiled and flirted and glad-handed as her mafia boss boyfriend guided her through the casino, just like a proper bimbo would be expected to.

Thankfully, Big Pete was a total gentleman, and never copped a feel or otherwise behaved in an ungentlemanly way, much to Colby's relief. Her mother was right about him. Even though it struck him odd, Colby was relieved that Pete seemed to be more pleased to have a pretty girl on his arm to show off, than to actually touch or engage with her in any form of personal or sexual way.

On this night, and every other night that week, Colleen was simply eye candy. But a week later, circumstances changed.



The night had begun like every other, spending well over an hour styling hair and applying delicate makeup. Colby sat down at his makeup table, trying not to even think about what he was doing. With every stroke, dab and rub, he was feeling a sharp stab of humiliation in his gut. He knew the routine well enough by now, he was even good at it. Just as his mother had trained him to do, he did his face step by step. Cleansing, plucking, clearing blackheads and zits, a foundation, a powder, blush, eye-liner, mascara, shadow, lipstick and then little bit of fragrance.

A set of lovely dangling earrings adorned his lobes, and his nails, *her* nails, were freshly manicured, elongated to well over a half-inch, and painted in thick shiny pink.

He donned a sexy pink minidress that Big Pete had purchased for her. It was an *extremely* short-hemmed outfit with a single shoulder strap that Colby had elected to wear with very thick white opaque tights and the original pink platform pumps that Eileen had first made him wear weeks and weeks ago.

The saddest moment of all was when he was done. He didn't recognize himself in the slightest. He was shockingly attractive as a woman. His face was pleasant and pretty. Worst of all was how natural it looked. He didn't look like a man in makeup. He looked like a girl. A woman.

Once a disguise is no longer detectable, when does it stop being a game of pretend? Colby didn't want to know. He didn't want to think about it – but from time to time, he couldn't help it. If he was convincing everyone he was a girl, even himself when he looked in the mirror, did any other notion matter? If everyone really believed he was a woman, did that not, in effect, make him one?

So by the time he left the house, he was no longer Colby. She was Colleen.

She was at the casino again tonight, and was trying even harder to play the part of a mobster's girlfriend. She had been smoking at little bit, knowing it would make her look tough. She also liked it when Pete would light her cigarette for her.

Gus the bartender was complaining again about not having enough girls to serve booze, and even suggested that Colleen could grab a tray and help out.

"I don't think so Gus." Pete frowned. "My girl isn't going to be a barmaid. She's too good for that." He turned and smiled at her and patted her on the bottom. Colleen forced a smile and pretended to be happy for the attention, as she drew a breath of smoke for her cigarette. Pete then put her arm in his as she followed Pete through his 'circuit' of acquaintances. It was his last 'conversation' that gave Colleen the most discomfort.

Melvin, Colby's old gambling buddy, had run up his tab again, and as was Pete's house rule, needed some sign of payment before anymore credit would be extended. Colleen, who was careful not to stand too close to the heated discussion, lest Melvin recognize him, could see the look of terror on his former friend's face, and new in an instant that he had no way to paying the mobster back.

He pleaded and promised several times, but Big Pete was firm in his resolve. Pay up by next week, or else.

Colleen remembered being in Melvin's shoes, and tried not to look sympathetic to his plight, but it was hard to look the other way when he knew all-to-well what was going on inside the other man's head.

Let me be clear," Big Pete finally said, "The debt by Friday, or I deal with it my own way? Capisce?"

Melvin looked completely defeated, "Yeah," he muttered, "I get it."

Pete smiled and patted Melvin on the shoulder as he took Colleen's arm and walked away.

"What was that all about?" Colleen whispered to him, as they left Melvin strembling in fear.

Pete looked at her with a confused glance. "What was *what* about?"

"That man you were talking to," she asked sweetly, "It looked like you were pretty mad at him."

The Mobster howled, his ponytail shaking as he laughed. "Let's just say that he and I are not seeing eye to eye on a certain matter."

"What matter?" Colleen probed, trying to look as innocent and naïve as she could. She already knew the answer, but liked the idea of making the mobster admit it aloud.

Pete sniggered to himself. He had had pretty girls on his arm before, but never ones so nosey. A part of him wanted to tell her to mind her own business, but her Mom's late husband has been a help to the family, so there was a respect that was due. Telling Colleen to butt-out wouldn't have been respectful. "He owes me some money," he said finally, "and we disagree about when he's going to pay me back."

"Well, maybe he just hasn't got it?" Colleen replied.

Pete rocked his head back like he had just been hit in the face. Respect or no respect, there was a line that she had just crossed. He raised his hand as if he



was going to give her a back-handed slap, but for some reason he wasn't able to follow through. Maybe it was because she was so pretty. Maybe it was the expression on her face, holding her breath as if waiting for him to smack her. Or maybe it was the fact that she was the daughter of the wife of the man who was his father's best money launderer. That had to count for something.

Instead, Pete relaxed his hand and smiled at her. "Well if that was the case," he growled, "He should have thought about that before he asked for more."

Colleen exhaled slowly, knowing that she had just avoided being beaten by the mobster. Yet, she still wanted to push his boundaries, so she flashed a little smile and asked, "What happens if he doesn't pay?"

Pete chuckled loudly, then turned to his straight-faced henchman, "What happens to him if he doesn't pay, Phil?"

The henchman smiled, arguably for the first time in Colleen's memory, then spoke in a quiet menacing tone. "We take care of him."

Colleen tried not to look shocked, but on the inside, she was. The big mobster had more-or-less just admitted to her that he was planning to have Melvin killed if he didn't pay his debt. The realization washed over her that she had been dreadfully close to a similar fate when she, or rather when *Colby*, had failed to pay Big Pete back.



Later that day, Colleen was lamenting her former friend's terminal situation to her stepmother during a visit back to the dealership. Since becoming Big Pete's 'arm-candy,' Colleen hadn't been working much at the business. She spent a few hours a day filing and doing some paperwork, but she was hardly 'active' in the daily goings-on of the business. Not that Colby had ever been particularly 'involved' either.

"I think Big Pete is going to have Melvin offed," Colleen said with a heavy sigh to Eileen. "I don't know what to do!"

"Offed?" Eileen asked, looking confused.

"Yeah," Colleen shrugged, "You know, offed, capped, 'taken care of.'" Colleen made quotation marks with her fingers as she spoke. It still didn't seem to be clear enough, so she clarified it. "Melvin's going to be killed!"

Eileen looked shocked. "Oh my!" she gasped.

"I know!" Colleen exclaimed. "I feel like I should try and stop him, but... How?"

"Why do you want to save this Melvin guy so badly?" Eileen asked. "Isn't he the one that got you into this mess in the first place?"

Colleen sighed again. "Well, sort of." It was true that Melvin had introduced him to Pete and his underground, mob-run casino, and if not for him, he never would have ended up in debt, and never would have stolen money from his Stepmother, and never would have been forced to choose between going to prison or dressing as a girl. So in some ways this whole ordeal was a little bit his fault.

*Wasn't it?*

Colleen exhaled and shook her head. "No... All he did was get me in the door. Everything else that happened was entirely *my* fault."

Eileen smiled. She was pleased to see her step-son was starting to realize that he was responsible for his own actions, and that it was nobody else's fault but his that he was in the place he was in.

"I just want to try and help him, you know?" Colleen groaned, sounding defeated. "Kind of like the way you helped me..." She let her voice trail off as she looked down at the floor.

Eileen's smile doubled in size. Taking responsibility for his actions, showing appreciation for the good turn that she gave him, *and* wanting to do a good turn for another? She felt overjoyed with pride in Colby's miraculous moral about-face. "Well, you could ask Pete to spare his life."

Colleen guffawed. "Ha! Yeah, right. I already tried that, he almost slapped the life out of me."

Eileen slouched forward in her chair. "Oh. Well, I'm not sure what to tell you dear," she said, "I mean it's not like you can convince Pete to turn Melvin into a girl instead of killing him like I did with you."

Colleen paused for a moment. Eileen's statement was correct... *Or was it?*

She knew that she had gained some sense of control over his crazy impulses, developed a certain amount of feminine charm in her few weeks as a girl, and had already gotten the mobster to give her jewelry and designer clothes – who was to say that he wouldn't allow her to transform Melvin into a girl to spare his life?

"I don't know, Mom," Colleen said with a grin, "Maybe I can..."

Colleen still had an impulse control issue.

The slow fuse that usually took place in most people, between the moment the emotions create a need or want and when the brain logically determines whether or not it was actually viable or warranted, was clearly missing, or at least functioning slowly in her head.

If Colleen wanted to do something... She would do it.

She wanted to try and save her friend's life, any way that she could.

"I have a plan." She turned to her stepmother. "Will you help me?"

Eileen laughed out loud. Taking responsibility for his actions, showing appreciation for the good turn that she gave him, wanting to do a good turn for another, *and* having a plan to do it. For a second she wondered if she was candid camera. "Of course I will," she finally replied, "That's what moms are for, right dear?"

Colleen's face lit up. She leaned in and gave her stepmother a big girly hug, then decided to put her plan into motion.

First step, convince Big Pete to *not* kill Melvin.





Later that day, a very confident Colleen checked her reflection in the mirror. She was once again wearing the body hugging pink mini-dress that she had first shown off her newly augmented breasts in weeks ago. The shoulder-less one with the low cut neck and slitted sleeves. She had added over-the-elbow length white opera gloves for dramatic effect, along with over-the-knee opaque white socks over her smoky sheer hose and white mesh tights, with her towering seven-inch heeled platform ankle boots.

She had coiffed her hair in a classic starlet style and applied a coat of perfect dramatic makeup. Heavily weighted dangling earrings hung from each lobe – one of many gifts from Pete. She took a deep breath and sauntered out to his private office to meet him.

Pete's eyes grew wide when he saw her enter. "Wow, look at you!" He smiled.

"I just wanted to show you how much I appreciate everything that you do for me." She said with a smile as she modeled her outfit for him, before approaching. She beamed back and placed a hand on his shoulder, then another on his arm. "Do you like what you see?"

Pete's expression turned from interest to confusion, with a hint of discomfort. Colleen had seen it before when she tried to flirt with him. It was like he liked to look at her, but did not want to touch.

"What are you up to?" He muttered in his squeaky



voice, clearly uneasy with her advances.

“Me?” Colleen teased. “Oh nothing. I just appreciate how generous you are with me, and with everyone else around here. You’re such a giving soul. I’m so lucky to have you in my life.” She leaned in as if to accept a kiss from the pony-tailed mob boss, but he was nowhere close to being on the same wavelength as she was.

“Uh-huh,” he mumbled, “What do you want?”

“I don’t want anything dear.” She smiled then paused. “Well, there is one tiny little thing that’s been bothering me a little tiny bit...” She picked a cigarette out of her purse and held it out. Pete obediently lighted it for her. “This whole thing with that Melvin guy. It’s got me all confused and upset.”

Pete rolled his eyes. “There’s nothing for you to be concerned about. Melvin owes a debt, that’s it. It he can’t pay back what he owes than I have to deal with him in a different fashion. That’s all. It’s nothing personal.”

Colleen puckered her lips into the biggest pout she could muster. “I know it’s not. But you’re such a giving soul, Peter. It just seems so wrong to kill someone because...”

“Kill?” Pete interrupted her, his eyes wide. He looked around to see if anyone had heard her, then continued on in a hushed voice, “Who said anything about...”

“It’s okay Pete,” it was Colleen’s turn to interrupt him, “I know how things work around here. But I was just thinking that if you’d let me, I could spare his life *and* who knows, maybe even help to give something back to you like you’ve given to me.”

Big Pete looked intrigued. “What do you have in mind?”

“Bring me Melvin for a few days and I’ll show you.” Colleen said with a smirk.

Pete raised an eyebrow. He had never been put in his place by anyone like this before – especially not a chick! He was wary of her motives, yet strangely titillated but her offer. He paused for few more moments of thought, rubbing his chin as he considered her proposal.

“Fine,” he said eventually, after taking several long minutes to ponder, “He’s all yours.”

Colleen smiled widely. “Oh-my-god! Thank you, Pete!” She leaned in and gave him a kiss on the cheek, then recoiled for second when she realized what she had just done. *I just kissed him*, Colby’s shocked voice filled her head, *I kissed a man’s cheek*. Colleen noticed an equally unsettled look on Pete’s face.

“I’ll have Phil pick Melvin up and bring him to you,” Pete said in an uneasy voice, “I presume you’ll be at your mother’s business?”

Colleen hadn’t given it that much thought, but now that he mentioned it, it sounded like as good a place as any to work on Melvin. “Sure, sounds good,” Colleen said.

With that, Pete uncomfortably shuffled off to do some paperwork, leaving Colleen to fully grasp the reality of what she was about to do. She was going to

give Melvin a second chance, a ‘stay of execution,’ just the way Colby’s step-mother had done it for him.

But the nagging question remained: *Will it work? Can I really do it?*

Colleen sighed and headed for door.

She had stuck her neck out with Pete to get the opportunity. She didn’t have a choice. She wanted to show Eileen that she had an altruistic side too. The interaction she had had with her step-mother as ‘Colleen’ had been good. She felt closer to Eileen than Colby ever had, and now *wanted* her step-mother’s approval more than anything.

And if Colleen *wanted* something, she would get it.



Later that night, bound in rope, with a pillowcase over his head, a subdued Melvin was delivered to the back of the dealership by Big Pete’s henchman Phil.

“He’s all yours,” Phil muttered. He sat the sobbing debtor in a chair that Colleen had set out in the middle of the parts room. He pulled the pillowcase off him then quietly left, leaving a whimpering Melvin to squint and blink as his watering eyes adjusted to the light.

“Do you know why you’re here?” Colleen lifted his chin and looked him in the eye with stern glare.

“You’re...” Melvin stammered, “You’re here to kill me?”

Colleen laughed. “No Melvin – I’m here to *save* you.”

Colby’s former gambling partner looked confused, “S... Save me?”

“That’s right.” She smiled warmly. “But you’ll have to agree to do *everything* that I ask of you. If you don’t, I’ll have to have Phil come back here and pick you up. And if that happens...” She let her voice trail off and shrugged her shoulders.

Melvin wasted no time. “Okay. I’ll do it. I’ll do anything you ask.”

Colleen cocked her head to one side and raised an eyebrow. “Anything?”

Melvin nodded. “Yes, anything.”

Colleen took a step back. “Okay girls!” she shouted, “He’s all ours.”

The sound of multiple pairs of high-heeled shoes walking on the hard concrete floor filled Melvin’s ears as a half-dozen attractive women carrying various brushes, boxes and bags entered the room.

“Wh... Wait...” he sputtered, “What’s going on? Who are these people?”

Colleen giggled again. “These people,” she pointed at the various ladies that had congregated around Melvin, “Are going to save your life Melvin.” They were the staff members of the salon that Eileen had first taken Colby to months ago.

Melvin looked panicked as the beauticians moved towards him like lionesses stalking a wounded impala. They overwhelmed him with ease as they began to ply their trades, hiding the nervous-looking problem gambler under dusts, creams and polishes.

Colleen grinned and walked away with the sounds of her former friend whimpering in the background filling her ears.

It was a sound that was strangely pleasing.

Then an odd thought struck her. This was almost exactly what his Eileen had done to her. Was she turning into her step-mother?



As Colleen watched Melvin go though his paces, the boy looked tired and beleaguered. “You’re not smiling, sweetie!” She shouted.

“Can’t we take a break?” Melvin whined.

“In a bit. Remember that a smile is a window to a girl’s heart, sweets,” Colleen chided. “A smile is both a shield...” Where had she heard this before? It didn’t matter. “...and a weapon.”

Two weeks had passed since Melvin had first disappeared.

Two weeks had passed since Big Pete had last seen Colleen.

He was quite surprised to see her in the casino that night, dressed to kill in a very cute pleated pink miniskirt, acting like nothing was wrong. She wore over-the-knee opaque white stockings on her legs, while her feet were laced into her favorite pink platform stiletto heeled ankle boots. On top, a simple white shirt that hugged closely to her augmented curves. Her hair was styled in the retro style that she had been engaging in lately, and her makeup was carefully and delicately applied.

She was, in short, a knock out.

But to Colleen’s surprise, the reaction from Big Pete was more of ‘meh’ than a ‘wow.’ And a wow was what she was looking for.

“I wasn’t sure you were coming back,” Pete said as she approached him.

“I’ve been a little busy,” Colleen replied, leaning in to kiss the mobster’s cheek. He allowed the peck, but quickly moved his face away, further causing Colleen to wonder why she had bothered to get all dolled up.

“So I understand you’ve been taking care of Melvin for me?” He asked.

Colleen sighed. “You could say that.”

“And did you find a way that he would be repaying his debt?” Pete continued to question.

“He’s paying you back right now as we speak,” Colleen’s said as her unimpressed expression turned to a slight grin.

Pete looked confused. “How is that? He lost his job, from what I understand.”

"He did," Colleen huffed, "So I got him a new one."

"What?" Pete scoffed, "Where?"

"Here," she replied with a matter-of-fact tone, "He's got Jodie's old job."

"Jodie?" Pete inquired, as if about to ask *who is Jodie?* Colleen opened her mouth to speak, but Pete raised his hand to stop her from talking. "Wait a second, wasn't Jodie one of the barmaids?"

Colleen nodded. "Yup."

Pete's expression was beginning to look angry. He had let this girl have her way a little too much, he thought to himself. "So your solution is to have him fill the job of a pretty barmaid? Just how many patrons do you think will appreciate being served by a disheveled gambling addict?"

Colleen shrugged. "I dunno, why don't you ask them?"

"Don't get smart with me!" Pete boiled, "The only reason I even listened to you was because of your family background. I should have gone with my original plan and dealt with Melvin like I've dealt with all my other debtors!" He paused to catch his breath. His face was bright red as he rubbed his forehead.

"I think you're being a little over dramatic," Colleen said, "He's doing a fine job. No can even tell that it's him."

"What are you talking about?" Pete asked with a snarky tone.

"See for yourself." Colleen grabbed the arm of a passing barmaid. "Can you tell Melanie to come see me?" she told the girl.

The waitress nodded and headed off.

"Melanie?" Pete repeated, "We don't have a Melanie here."

"We do now." Colleen grinned impishly. Seconds later, a shy looking server dressed in the Casino's well-known pink minidress and white tights approached. Her hair was short and her chest was small, and she seemed unsure of herself as she walked in her high platform heels, but her gait was near-perfect as she approached, swinging her hips as she took slow mincing steps.

"Yes, Miss?" the girl said to Colleen in a soft but scruffy voice.

It was a voice that Big Pete was very familiar with. It was Melvin's voice.

Pete's eyes grew wide with surprise. He grabbed the bottom of his chin to prevent it from hanging open as 'Melanie' blushed furiously and looked away.

"Melvin?" The mobster finally asked.

Melvin blushed again, harder than before, and tugged nervously at the short hem of his skirt, unsure of what to say.

Big Pete was equally speechless.

For a moment, Colleen felt quite proud of her accomplishment. She had managed to turn Melvin into so convincing a girl that even his former debt-holder didn't recognize him.

Until he opened his mouth, at least. With a little more training and practice, Colleen was sure that she could make Melvin completely turn into Melanie.

Pete stood silent, looking the transformed former-man over. The expression on his face was one that Colleen hadn't seen before. I looked like he was impressed by what he saw. Not just impressed, but curious and intrigued... And even a little... Aroused? It was that last expression that caused an expression on Colleen that *she* hadn't had before.

Jealousy.

"Melanie," she broke the awkward silence, "Can you get Peter and I a drink please? White wine, medium dry?"

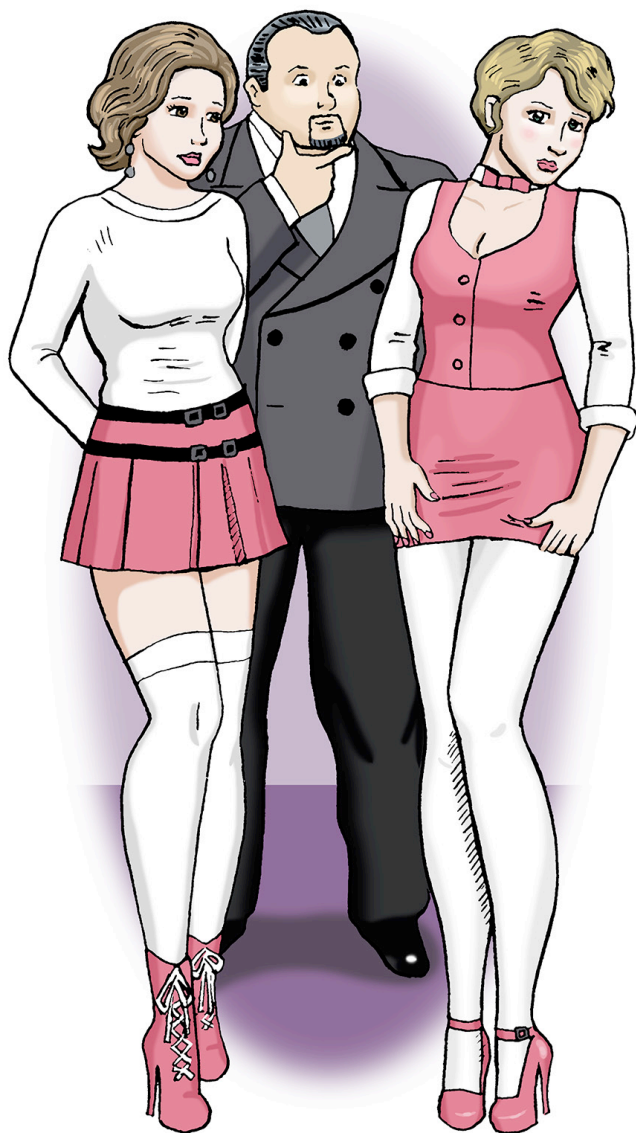
Melvin nodded and headed to the bar. Pete's eyes were locked on the feminized man's buttocks the entire time he was within the mob boss's sight lines.

"Well?" Colleen asked, "What do you think?"

Big Pete smiled widely, his eyes still trailing 'Melanie' as 'she' stood at the bar, waiting for her order to be filled. "I think she has some great potential. I can't believe that's the same person. How did you *do* that?"

Colleen grinned to herself as she remembered the long days of forcing Melvin to walk lines in his new high-heels in the back of the dealership, over and over and over. He must have tripped a hundred times, and even broke two pairs of heels, before he got it right.

"Oh, I have my ways," Colleen said finally, as she mused to herself about her successful transformation.



It had certainly gone well. But maybe that was the problem. Could it have gone too well? Pete seemed to be in a trance as he watched the feminized Melvin at the bar collecting his 'order.' Soon he took the server's tray and began to strut, just as he had been trained to do, back to where Pete and Colleen were standing. Melvin blushed again, but smiled, as he handed Pete his glass, "Here you are, Sir," he said sweetly.

Big Pete smile was as wide as a mile.

Colleen shook her head. If saving Melvin's life had been the plan, then it had been a success. However, something else was at play here. Something that Colleen couldn't quite put her finger on.

But she knew someone that would know.



Eileen saw Gerald had left three messages for her. They had been dating regularly for several weeks now, and Eileen had gradually warmed to his charms. But she hadn't completely defrosted.

It wasn't his fault. She knew she just wasn't giving the man a chance. Whenever she had a date with Gerald, she always felt that she was going out to make up for the last date. Every night out ended with her making an apology.

Maybe it was time to break it off. Her mind was telling her she needed someone in her life to be intimate with, but she knew her heart wasn't in it. She didn't want to string the poor guy along.

But for the moment, she had bigger worries.

"You should have seen the way he was looking at him!" Colleen complained as she stood in her stepmother's office, "I can't believe it. I was hoping that he was going to be happy with my work, but not *that* happy."

Eileen looked up from her desk and laughed. "You sound jealous, sweets."

Colleen scoffed. Maybe it was all the female hormones that were coursing through 'her' veins that was making her feel this way. Colby certainly wouldn't have cared. In fact he probably would have been relieved that the mobster was more attracted his friend than to him.

But Colleen wasn't Colby anymore, and Colleen was more than a little perturbed about it. "I guess," she pouted, shrugging her shoulders, "Is it a crime to want a man to look at you like that?" She asked her grinning step-mother.

Eileen chuckled again. "I suppose it isn't. But if its Big Pete's affections that you are after, I'm afraid you've gone about it all wrong my dear girl."

Colleen looked insulted, "What?" she guffawed, "What are you talking about?" She looked down at the short pleated pink and black polka-dotted mini-dress she was wearing with her opaque white stay-up stockings and pink platform heels. What wasn't to like about her? She was catch. She was a hottie. She would make men's heads turn.

But not Big Pete's.

"Big Pete isn't your type" Eileen continued. "You're too much girl for him."

"Are you saying I'm fat?" Colleen gasped. "Cause that's not my fault. Those stupid hormones that you put me on have been thickening up my thighs and making my hips..." Eileen cut her off mid-sentence, "No-no," she interjected, "That's not it at all dear."

"Then what?" Colleen said in a panicked tone. "How can Melvin already be more of girl than I am when I've been a girl longer?"

"Well you certainly *sound* more like a girl right now," Eileen snickered, "And very jealous one at that."

"Mo-om!" Colleen whined like a teenager, exasperated with Eileen's failure to answer her directly.

"Sweets, I've known the saints family for years, and I can tell you that he's just not into girls, if you understand me. Believe me, I learned it the hard way."

"What?" A confused Colleen replied.

"Sweetie," her stepmother finally continued, "Big Pete isn't into a girl like you, because he thinks you're a real girl."

Eileen could see her former stepson's thought process taking place inside her pretty head, "But if he..." she paused for a moment, then her eyes grew as wide as dinner plates, and her jaw dropped open with surprise.

"He's..." she began to say.

Eileen nodded, satisfied that she finally understood where she was going with the conversation.

"Oh my gawd!" Colleen gasped. "He's gay?"

Eileen nodded. "He is, though he likes to keep a pretty girl on his shoulder so no one will suspect it. That's probably why he's so gaga over Melvin, because he looks like a girl, but is undeniably a man underneath."

Colleen was stunned.

It certainly explained Big Pete's soft-spoken voice and even-softer demeanor. And it also explained why he showed absolutely no interest in her what-so-ever.

"Wait a minute, how did you find this out?" Colleen asked.

Eileen looked uncomfortable. "I need a smoke," she said. She was shocked when Colleen offered her a cigarette and a light. "Like mother like daughter," she said.

"What do you mean?"

"Never mind. Like I said, I've known Peter and his father and his father for a long, long time. I was one of his original girls, as a matter of fact."

"You worked at the casino?"

"Well, the first one they had, years ago..." Eileen's attention momentarily drifted as she reflected back on her past. She quickly snapped back to the pre-



sent. "I worked as a barmaid, and Pete Senior decided he needed a pretty young thing on his arm, and..."

"You were..." Colleen stumbled across her words as she tried to digest everything. "You... Worked... You... Were..."

"I was eye candy for Pete Saints Senior, yes. He loaned money to Walter... How do you think I even met your father? At the casino, of course." She looked at the cigarette hanging from her fingers. "I think that where I learned to smoke, too. To look like a mobster's girlfriend."

"This isn't true," Colleen said, in denial.

"I'm sorry dear," Eileen said in a reassuring tone, "I really thought you knew. It isn't a terribly well-kept secret."

"But you... You wanted me to be Big Pete's girlfriend. Why?"

Eileen smiled. "Because I figured it was about the safest thing you *could* be."

Colleen shook her head, still unable to full comprehend what she was being told.

"So this was your plan all along?" Colleen asked, "To turn me into a girl so that Big Pete would never find me?"

"Well," Eileen rocked her head back and forth in an indecisive way, "Sorta-kinda." She realized that was a poor answer, so she expanded on it. "I was really upset that you had stolen money from me. *Really,*



*really, really* upset. And initially I just wanted to punish you. But once Big Pete came in here, I realized that as long as he thought you were a real girl, you would be safe.”

Colleen shook her head in disbelief. She felt a little bit betrayed by Eileen, though she knew it had been for her own good. If she had known about Pete’s sexual preferences in advance, it might have changed how she interacted with him, which could have led her down a different path. Perhaps even a path of being found out by Big Pete, which likely would not have ended well for her.

“I need a drink.” She sighed as she headed for her stepmother’s office door.

The next few days found Colleen doing a lot of reflecting.

She had allowed herself to be wholly transformed from Colby into what she was now, under the premise that her Stepmother *wanted* her to be transformed. Now to find out that becoming a girl wasn’t necessarily her plan, but more of a ‘whim,’ was deeply disturbing.

Even more disturbing was the fact that transforming Melvin into Melanie had been somewhat of a ‘whim’ for her as well. It seemed to Colleen that since she had allowed herself to be transformed from boy to girl, she had began to exhibit some very telling characteristics of her step-mother. In some cases, she was starting to wonder if she was actually ‘blood’ related to Eileen instead of her late father.

Then she had learned that she had followed in her step-mother’s footsteps. She was in the same position that Eileen had been in years ago, being a pretty decoration for a mobster. What did this mean? Was she just becoming a carbon copy of her step mother? Was that what was happening to her?

She sighed as she took a sip of her drink, as she sat at the bar watching Big Pete openly flirt with her ex-gambling buddy. She had worn her newest outfit that night, just to see if it would garner any interest from the big mobster.

It hadn’t.

The body-hugging pink mini-dress was super short and super short, and was worn with a pair of sexy soft pink nylons and her hot pink platform ankle boots instead of her usual white stay-up stockings. She had even put her hair up in a cute ponytail, just to change up her look and attract more attention.

She had started more attention, from every other guy in the building *except* Big Pete. The mobster was clearly interested in only thing, and her name was Melvin.

Curiously enough, Melvin seemed to be enjoying it.

He had padded his bra to somehow fill out his chest, and was careful to give Pete a flirtatious smile every time he walked past him, which he seemed to do at every chance he got. Colleen sat back in chair and shook her head at the blatant display of attention-getting.

“I should have let you kill him,” Colleen muttered.

“What was that?” Big Pete asked.



Colleen realized that she had said that louder than she had planned. Now that she had said it, there wasn't any taking it back.

"I said that I should have let you kill him," she repeated, "Look at him, prancing around here like a drag queen..."

Pete chortled. "Looks like someone's become a little jealous."

*There's that word again!* She thought to herself.

"Well good God, Pete," she scoffed, "I frickin' saved his life and he's strutting around here like 'I'm so pretty, look at me!'" She sighed, thinking she might have gone a little overboard. "It's just my opinion."

Pete was still chuckling, "Is that what you think I do with my debtors? You think I have them killed?"

Colleen stopped and looked at him, "Well yeah. Isn't it?"

"Oh heavens," his snicker turned into a full-blown laugh, "That's what my father used to do. But I haven't got the stomach for all that violent stuff."

"Well I figured it wasn't *you* that was doing the dirty work Pete," Colleen continued, "You get Phil to do it for you, right?"

Pete laughed again. "Oh dear me," he wiped tears of laughter from his eyes, "We don't do that anymore dear. This is the twenty-first century, not the stone age."

Colleen was confused. If Pete wasn't going to kill Melvin, then why had she worked so hard to save him. "Come on Pete," she said, not fully believing what he was saying, "People who owe you money disappear. If you're not having them killed, where do they go?"

"Heck if I know." Pete said in a very nonchalant fashion, "They probably just hit the rails or move back in with their folks."

"*What?*" Colleen exclaimed, "You can't be serious. You mean you don't kill anyone... Ever?"

"Gracious, no! We just report them to the credit bureaus. It destroys their credit. Their cards are cancelled and they can't pay for anything after that. You know how the modern world is. They lose their house, their job, and probably just try to hide from the collection agencies." Pete shook his head. "They just vanish on their own. It's all part of the act I suppose. It helps to keep people in line."

Colleen's head was spinning. She had fought hard to 'save' Melvin's supposed life. She had turned the man into a woman under the guise of protecting him, only to find out that his life had never been in jeopardy in the first place. For that matter, her *own* life had probably never been in jeopardy back when she had been threatened by Big Pete before she became Colleen.

Back when she was Colby.

The realization that he had stolen money from his mother, then allowed her to transform him into Colleen, then helped him to transform Melvin into Melanie, all to avoid a car-ride out of town with Pete's henchman, made her stomach turn upside down.

"Are you okay?" Pete asked, seeing the color drain out of Colleen's painted face.



Colleen called in sick for most of the next week to the dealership. Then she just didn't show up. She was still living at her stepmother's house, so Eileen knew where to find her. She even knew *why* she was spending her days in her pajamas, eating chips and watching reality television. Colleen had told her the whole story, of how the fear of having a 'hit' put out on you by the local mobster was all for show. Further, how much of pansy Big Pete truly was.

"I've ruined my life, Mom," she mumbled on the phone one morning when Eileen called her to check up on her.

"Nonsense, sweets," Eileen replied, "I think that you've actually made it better. Since all of this happened, you've been more productive at work, you're never late, you work harder than you ever have. Sales are reflecting that. We've never had such a strong third quarter. All the staff are highly motivated, and it's all because of you."

Colleen sighed, holding the phone against her ear. "I guess," she muttered, "But I just don't feel like I know who I am any more."

Colleen could hear her step-mother sighing on the other end of the receiver.

"Dear," Eileen said, "On top of that, I feel like the two of us have never been closer."

Colleen smiled. "Well that is true..." She had enjoyed the closeness she had been feeling with her step-mother, but was frightened about just how close they were getting.

"I tell you what," Eileen said finally after letting a few quiet minutes pass, "Get dressed and come into work and we'll finish this chat, okay?"

Colleen slowly exhaled into the phone with a deep sigh, "Okay."

A few hours later, dressed in her standard gray pleated miniskirt, pink hosiery, hot pink platform heels and a matching form-fitting button-down blouse, Colleen was standing in her step-mom's office at the dealership. She had made up her face as if she was going to work, with pink lipstick, soft blue eyeshadow, black liner, and blush. Nothing too dramatic, but rather she wore what she believe to be a sensible amount of makeup.

Sensible like her step-mother wore.

"Dear," Eileen began after closing the door, "I know you've had a rough go of it over the last few weeks and months, and I know that I might be partially to blame. And although I can't help but *love* the way that things have gone," she stopped and paused, looking her stepson-turned-stepdaughter over, "I know that it might not be the way things were meant to happen. So I've decided to end your punishment, and allow you to go back to being Colby." She paused again as she retrieved an outfit from her closet and handed to a very surprised looking Colleen. "That is, if you *want* to go back being him."

Colleen looked down at the shirt and tie that her stepmother had handed her in her right hand, then turned and looked at the gray slacks that she had handed her in her left. She was suddenly reminded of how masculine she had once been.

Masculine and boring.

But nonetheless, she nodded to her step-mother and took the outfit with her as she returned to her home, where she vowed that she would allow herself to return to the boy that she once was.

"I'll be out tonight," Eileen said. "I have a Chamber of Commerce banquet I'm required to attend. You think about it and let me know, all right?"



Colleen was trying desperately to take her mind off her problems when the doorbell rang. Looking around for her mother, she remembered that she had said something about going out for a while.

She checked herself in the mirror. She looked dishevelled and didn't have much makeup on, but still passably female. Satisfied enough, she then opened the door. "Is Eileen home?" Asked the older man on the other side of the door. "I was hoping to talk to her."

"She's out," Colleen replied. "You are...?"

"Gerald Mulroney," the man answered with a winning grin. "We had a date planned..."

*A boyfriend!* Colleen thought to herself. *Eileen never mentioned this...*

He gave an inquiring glance at Colleen. "You must be her sister! She didn't tell me."



"Sister?" Colleen replied. Did he look *that* much like his step-mother? "I... Don't think..." Colleen stopped herself. There was no sense in trying to explain the situation. "Eileen will be out for a while."

"I see," Gerald replied. He looked heartbroken. "She's been avoiding me lately."

There was obviously some drama going on here, and Colleen didn't want any part of it. Eileen was obviously dumping the poor guy. "If you call tomorrow, she should be back." He was a handsome man, although definitely in his fifties. Why would Eileen give him up?

"Yes, yes..." Gerald said, the disappointment obvious in his voice. He then took a second look at Colleen. "Has anyone told you that you have the prettiest eyes?"

Colleen blushed. "That's nice of you to say." She smiled.

"And what a smile. Your sister must be jealous of all the attention you receive."

"Me? I don't..." Colleen had a hard time finding the words. "There's not many..."

"Let your sister know I stopped by," Gerald said.

Colleen wondered if Gerald made her step-mother felt the same way she did right now. Vulnerable, shy... Intrigued. "Sure," she replied.

Gerald backed away. "I don't want to take up any more of your time, beautiful."

Impulsively, Colleen put her hand on his forearm to stop him turning away. If she was going to be the Eileen's carbon copy, she was going to be a damn good copy. This was the right place to start. "Would you like a drink?" She asked. "I was just going to pour myself one..."



"Well, Colleen, this makes it official," Eileen said, to her former step-son. She signed the documents in front of her with little fanfare. "You're the co-owner of Good Deeds Auto Group."

It was time, after all. "Colby" was now 21 and had qualified, under the terms of his father's last will and testament to inherit half the business. This had happened by meeting the sales targets set forth in the will. Though those targets had been blown away long ago. In fact, "Colby" hadn't sold a car in months. Those numbers were met and surpassed. It was clear that a promotion was in order, so Eileen had handed over some responsibility for running the business.

"Congratulations, Colleen," Eileen said, with a feminine hug and a peck on the cheek.

Colleen wasn't emotional about it. She knew she had earned the business. If anything, she was mildly perturbed that Eileen even wanted to do this signing



ceremony. She had reports to go over, and cars to move. After all, not only had Eileen been handing over more and more responsibility to her, but Eileen seemed to be allowing her free reign these days. For all intents and purposes, Colleen was running Good Deeds Auto Group.

Eileen poured the both of them some champagne. “To Walter,” she said, “and keeping the business in the family.”

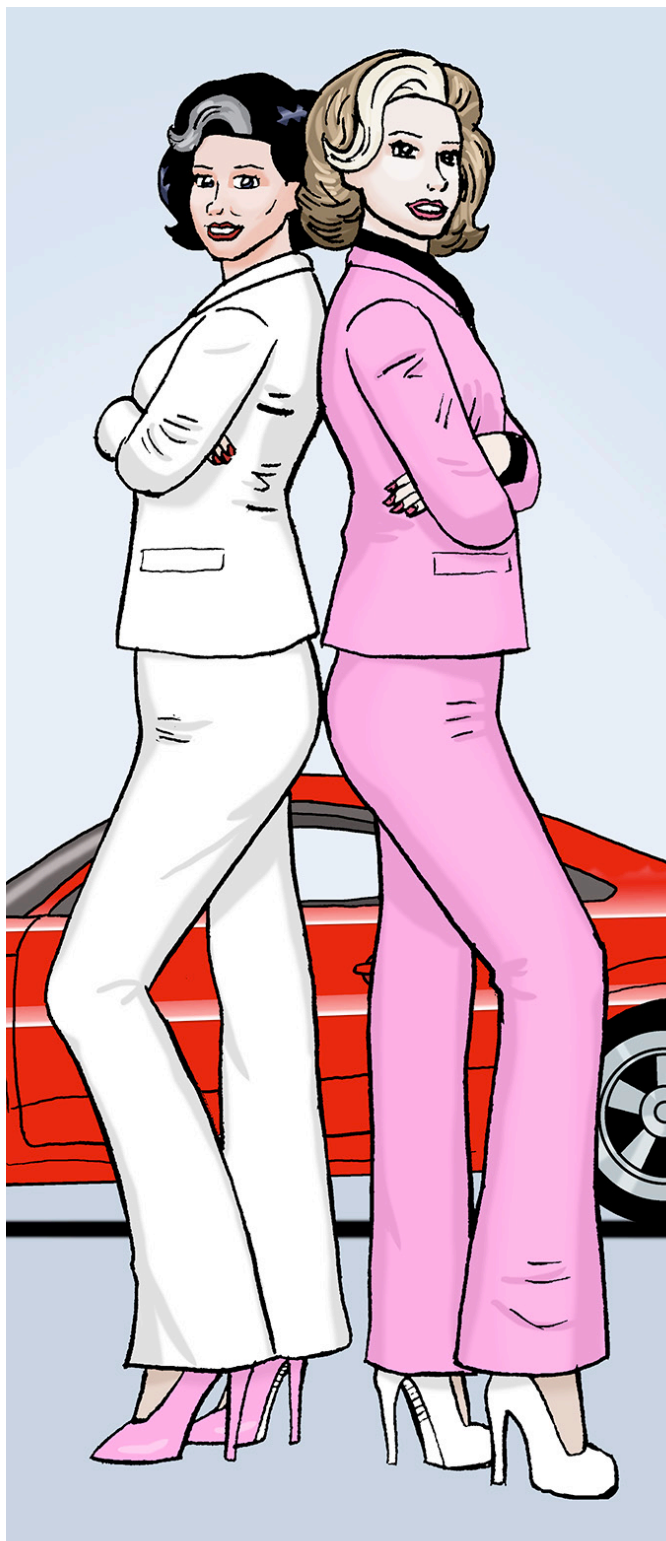
“To Walter,” Colleen replied, clinking their glass flutes together. It didn’t seem odd at all to call his father “Walter” instead of “Dad.” After all, it seemed ridiculous for a mature person like herself to use such a term.

“I want to pose for a photo,” Colleen said.

“Really, Eileen?” Colleen sighed, “I do have a lot of work to do.”

Eileen clicked her tongue. “This won’t take but a second.”

She checked his reflection in his compact mirror. She had just purchased the suit he was wearing and wanted to make





sure it fit properly. She turned from side to side, modeling it in the mirror, then checked his hair to make sure it was perfectly in place. She had just gotten it styled.

Colleen spotted Eileen standing with the photographer on the other side of the showroom floor. She was dressed in a sleek white pantsuit with bright pink heels. She smiled when she saw her approach.

"Everything look alright?" She said. "Are you ready?"

Colleen nodded and stood in his place with his back against Eileen, then turned towards the camera and smiled.

"Say cheese, ladies" the photographer said as he clicked the shutter.

Colby smiled widely as he spoke, "cheese." He was glad that he borrowed the long-wearing lipstick from Eileen. It looked like it was going to be a long day.

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Colleen was going over the sales reports as she smoked a cigarette. The numbers were up, both in terms of raw units and financing returns. But the margins were still a little thinner than they should have been, and someone was going to have to crack the whip with the sales staff.

She highlighted some numbers and jotted down some notes in the margins. "Eileen," she said, as she entered the office across from hers. "I wanted to go over some figures. Do you have a moment?"

Her co-owner was obviously preparing to go home. She sighed and looked up. "Of course, sweets."

"You aren't heading home, are you?" Colleen asked. "It's only ten!"

It was unprecedented for Eileen to leave so early, but she had often been beating her roommate home these days. It was Colleen who burned the mid-night oil every night, and who was grinding through reports and numbers like she used to.

"I thought I'd get a start on planning my Jamaica trip," Eileen said.

Colleen hadn't believed her when she had first suggested it. A vacation. She had never known Eileen, in all her years, to even think about talking any time off from the business. "Well, before you go, let me show you what's happening to our margins," Colleen said.

Eileen shook her head. "Look, Colleen, whatever you think we should do, do it. You own half the business and you run most of it. You don't need my approval."

Colleen didn't disagree with that. "I'd still like your input. You have a great instinct for this, and..."

"You're twice the salesperson I ever was," Eileen interrupted, "and you run the place so much tighter. I'm jealous, really." She took a deep breath, signaling she was about to say something profound and important. With a look into the eyes of the person she had once known as a foolish, impulsive and childish

young boy, she now just saw intensity, focus and maturity. Sometimes, it was like looking in a mirror, seeing the driven woman she used to be.

"You want me to buy out your half of the business," Colleen said.

"How did you know?" Eileen replied. It was strange how they operated on the same wavelength, like they were sisters more than step- mother and step-son.

"Sweets, I've seen it on your face for a long time," she said. "You know I can read you like a book." She produced a cigarette from the pocket of her pants suit coat, and handed it over. Their glossy long nails clicked as Eileen took the cigarette from Colleen. She lit it and took and relaxed, the weight of the world off her shoulders.

"I just don't have it in me anymore. I'm not getting any younger and I'm just so alone." She tapped some ashes off her cigarette. "It's time for me to step away and focus on my needs. You know what I mean?"

For her part, Colleen couldn't have been less understanding, being a mature businesswoman was more fulfilling than anything she could imagine. The more she became like Eileen, the happier she was. Why anyone would want to walk away from this was beyond her. Still, if it meant she could take over, she was going to try and at least look sympathetic. "Of course I do," she said, reaching over to touch Eileen's hand in sympathy.

"I was so worried you wouldn't want me to go," Eileen said.

"If you must, you must. There's no stopping you once you've made up your mind, Eileen. I'll have our lawyers draft up a buy-out agreement." She let a moment pass. "May I suggest that you just make this vacation permanent?"

"How do you mean?"

"You'll have more than enough money to do what you want. You can buy houses, take cruises, go anywhere and never worry. You don't need to stick around here. Just go where you like. Chase the sun."

Eileen bit her lip in thought. Colleen could see she was really thinking about it. "Do you really think I could?" Eileen asked.

"You know you want to, and it makes sense. Why come back here? It's just going to be about the business. Leaving it all behind is both fun and practical."

Colleen was indeed picking up the torch. She was not only going to own Good Deeds Auto Group outright, but she was now winning over the supreme salesperson with a sales pitch of her own.

"Why not?" Eileen replied with a smile. "I'll do it," she said, impulsively.

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Colleen Jones woke at five sharp, beating her alarm, as usual. She wasted no time as she carefully and quietly got out of bed.

She walked over to her closet and picked out her pants suit for the day. It was, actually, not her closet of clothes, but Eileen's closet. It was filled with her clothes and shoes, just as she had left it.

Colleen picked out a salmon one she liked. After showering, she dressed in her underthings, picking out a beige bra that fit him nearly perfectly. It smelled like Eileen and cupped his breasts firmly. She then selected a pair of matching “granny panties,” a style she had grown to like. She used a fresh absorbent pad and fastened it in place. She didn’t need it, but she felt more confident using the adult feminine napkin, just the same.

Her face was a simple affair, with heavy amounts of cover and powder to hide the old liver spots and blemishes she wouldn’t have for several years. Colleen used a few tricks to make her eyes look a little more set in, and emphasize the wrinkles and laugh lines that still had decades before they would be obvious. It added years to her face, just as she wanted. She finished with a heavy coat of Eileen’s preferred lipstick and perfume, A thick layer of hair spray and she was ready to dress.

She added a pair of suntan colored knee-high nylons and black silk camisole, enjoying the slick and cool feeling against her skin. Once she had on the pants suit, she stepped into a matching pair of Eileen’s pumps. They were the same size, although Colleen sometimes found her toes pinched, but she didn’t mind so much.

She transferred her things into a matching purse and headed downstairs.

When she finally convinced Eileen to head off for a new home in Jamaica, her former step mother took little with her. “Start fresh,” Colleen encouraged her.

“It sounds wonderful,” Eileen replied. “Just leave everything behind and don’t look back. I like it.”

So when Eileen had gone, Colleen was left with her house, full of her furniture and clothes. Colleen just locked up Colby’s old room and moved into Eileen’s without hesitation.

She made a quick breakfast of toast and coffee, and then set it aside. She returned to her room where she quietly walked over to the other side of her bed and bent over, whispering in the ear of her husband, “Shnookie lumps, there’s breakfast on the table when you get up.”

Gerald rose slightly and kissed his wife on the lips. “You’re too good for me, tootsy-wootsie.”

“I know, but I like to keep you around anyway,” Colleen smiled. She paused for a moment, remembering the passion of the previous night, as Gerald’s powerful, grey-haired arms held her down as he relentlessly pounded her cunt into submission. “I’ll see you tonight,” she said with the desire dripping from her voice.

They had married just four months ago, and were still in a honeymoon phase, although Colleen had put off any real honeymoon to focus on the business. Her husband didn’t object. That was what she liked about Gerald, he was not afraid to have a woman in charge. Plus the sex was mind blowing.

The surgery was done quietly, and Colleen barely missed a week at work. She wasn’t going to allow herself to be haunted by her errant past as a male. She

was a woman now, and she was going to go all-in. She was glad to see her former self surgically removed and discarded.

She now not only had a driver's license and papers to say she was a female, but thanks to a little help from Pete's contacts, she was now legally Colleen Jones, age 48.

As she got into Eileen's red sports car, she lit up a cigarette, and placed her coffee in the cup holder. It would be gone by the time she got to the dealership. Colleen was good for at least two pots a day. She tuned to the oldies station and was off to work.

At the next stop light, Colleen checked her hair, to make sure it hadn't fallen apart since leaving her house. It was still fine, and she kept it looking immaculate. Appearances were very important to Colleen.

Fay at the salon did give her a double-take when Colleen had asked for her hair to be done like Eileen's, but nothing more was said of it. "This is my new usual," she said to the hairdresser. "Do you have a problem with that?"

"No, Ms. Jones," said the woman.

They didn't say anything at the showroom, either. Of course, they all understood that Colleen was the new boss, and would let them go if they caused any trouble. So they just kept on acting like nothing was amiss when Colleen came back that afternoon with Eileen's style. They also didn't object when she asked to be addressed as "Ms. Jones," nor when she just started using Eileen's office.

She didn't change a thing about it. She just walked in one day, sat down, and began her workday in Eileen's chair. No cleaning out of the desk or taking down the pictures on the wall. She even used Eileen's mug. No one dared ask any questions, and that was the way Colleen wanted it.

This morning, she was the first to arrive at work, as was her habit, but by ten, the sales were already underway. Colleen watched her salespeople work as she strolled through the showroom.

"Ms. Jones?" Ron said, approaching her.

"What's up, Ron?" she smiled politely. Ron had stayed surprisingly loyal, staying on after Eileen left. He was a supremely talented salesperson, and she could understand why Eileen had made him the highest paid employee.

"It's the gunmetal grey F-500, they offered six below list, my counter was twenty-two, but I don't think they'll go above 20."

"Offer a base price of 19.9," Colleen said. "Then make sure that they understand that the showroom model has options that take it to twenty-two. If they want to stay on 19.9, let them know that it'll be a month or two before we can get it from the distributor."

"Good idea," Ron said, nodding his head. "They seem like they want it now." He was always amazed at how much Colleen had learned in such a short time.

As she watched Ron return to his customers, she turned to her secretary. "Can you get me some coffee, Sweets?" She asked.

"Right away, Ms. Jones," the girl replied.



“Black. No crap in it,” Colleen added.

She wondered if her step-mother was enjoying her new life, no doubt pretending she was ten years younger than she really was, talking pool boys into the sack. That was all the thought she gave to Eileen these days. She had virtually disappeared for her life.

She also checked her phone to see if Gerald had been sexting her. Three messages, the scamp. She’d get back to him as soon as she got her coffee and could lock the door.

Returning to the office, Colleen Jones sat down in the chair and began to review paperwork. She was exactly where she wanted to be, and who she knew she was born to be. She had Eileen’s job, her look, her house, her clothes and even her lover. She had truly turned into her mother and was loving it. She almost had those credit cards paid back, too.

The End

**Upcoming Books in James J. Craft's Stepmother Series:**One Year in Tokyo

Mickey has a problem. Actually, a few problems. First his Mom went on an extended honeymoon around the world with her new husband after selling their house.

*Then* Mickey had to go live with his Dad, who he hasn't seen in years... in Japan. *Then* he found out that his Father had also remarried – without even telling him. And to make matters worse, his new stepmother seems to *hate* him! Why else would she be constantly making him do silly things like wearing silly clothes? To add to his stress, his Dad insists that he 'Just go with it and stop making waves.'

But just how is a skinny American boy supposed to survive... One Year in Tokyo.

*Illustrated by Kwon Lee Tran*

A Family Femmed

As the oldest brother of three, Jake is trying to be supportive of his Father's choice to marry Deborah. But after a while he can't help but think that there is something very 'different' about her. And even more concerning are his younger brothers, who are acting more and more 'different' themselves.

He better figure it out soon, before whatever it is that's going on, gets to him too!

*Illustrated by sortmid*



# Titles by Sick Puppy Press

## **Sick Puppy Comics**

### **Making Friends**

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. Three college students sign up for a six-month isolation experiment. Things start to get a little strange, and they begin to lose their masculinity day by day. Yet, they don't seem to even notice... Full Color Comic Book / 38 pages

### **The Pet Sitter**

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. Asked to look after a supermodel's pet for a while, James finds himself thrust out of his own apartment and into hers. Day by day, it seems like circumstances adapt James to become the resident of a supermodel's lifestyle. Full Color Comic Book / 29 pages

### **A Curious Curse**

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. When teen goth Brandyn gets his drivers' license, he thinks it's a ticket to adulthood. Unfortunately, he's already cashed a ticket in the opposite direction. Full Color Comic Book / 27 pages

## **Teens Transformed**

### **She Made Me Into My Sister**

"A Little Too Clever" by Joe Six-Pack. Wyatt wanted to help his girlfriend get revenge, but at what cost? As it turns out, a cost greater than any boy could have imagined. Book / 88 pages / 20 illustrations

### **Gone Girly for Good**

"Big in Japan" by James J Craft. Mike and Ken were one-hit-wonder rock stars. Then they discovered they had fans in Japan, so they left to become famous. Then they discovered that the Japanese didn't know they were guys. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

### **Students, Exchanged**

"French Dupe" by Joe Six-Pack. Kelley Sue's convinced a French exchange student to disguise himself as a girl. What happens when she realizes he has no intention of returning back home? Book / 57 pages / 15 illustrations

### **He's a Valley Girl, Fer Sure**

From the files of TGStories.com: "Corey Taylor's Big Bodacious Adventure" by Joe Six-Pack. For Corey, the only way he can get into college is to pretend to be a girl. But when does it stop being pretend? When he's cheerleader? A girlfriend? A beauty queen? Book / 78 pages / 17 illustrations

## **From Boys to Bridesmaids**

"Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Groom" by James J Craft. Two spoiled and privileged boys are about to be put in their place by their new step-mother. And their place is by her side as her bridesmaids and daughters. Book / 77 Pages / 16 illustrations

### **Little Mis-ter Popular**

"My Two Moms" by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Thanks to his aunt's "Confidence Club," Leon will find a way to become popular, and to get over all his hang-ups... Including his masculinity. Book / 77 Pages / 17 illustrations

## **Tales of Transformation**

### **He's the Wrong Girl**

"Office Chemistry" by Joe Six-Pack. James had to fill in at the reception desk. Problem is, the business is a bio-genetics company. And all of the sudden the coffee tastes funny. Book / 53 pages / 14 illustrations

### **City Boy, Country Girl**

By Joe Six-Pack. Richard's long-forgotten aunt is sick, and he goes to care for her. His calls back home leave his wife Janice confused and unsure about his return. So she goes to find him. But is there much left to be found? Book / 64 pages / 25 illustrations

### **Thames Greene**

By James J Craft. Ira wanted something better for his family. A new start. But in Thames Greene, everyone's getting a new start, whether they want it or not. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

### **Hiding in High Heels**

"How Not to be a Sissy" By Joe Six-Pack. Vince was on the run from people who wanted their millions back. Howard was a friend with a funny little idea and a knack for making subliminal CDs. Mini-Pix / 48 pages / 15 illustrations

### **I'm Your Dolly**

"Barbie-in-a-Box" By Joe Six-Pack. Tyler wasn't much of a boyfriend anymore. Jessica wanted to throw him out, but then a better idea came to her, in the form of the Barbie-in-a-Box service. Tyler better get used to pink. Book / 103 pages / 20 illustrations

### **His Life as a Trophy Wife**

"The Puppy Mill" by Joe Six-Pack. Nick had a great life, but then it evaporated. Now he's down on his luck. In steps a wealthy executive willing to pay him handsomely to pretend to be his wife. What can it hurt? Book / 210 pages / 16 illustrations

## **Male Monday, Girl Friday**

"Hey, Cutie!" by James J Craft. Daniel is going to be promoted from his average life to an exciting executive position. At least, that's what his bosses are telling him. They may not be telling him everything. Book / 58 pages / 20 illustrations

## **The Happiest Place on Earth**

From the files of TGStories.com: "The Fairest One of All" By Joe Six-Pack. Will is a kid looking for a job. He gets one, performing as Snow White at a theme park. For Will, he doesn't suspect that playing the role and wearing the costume is slowly changing him, day by day. Book / 51 pages / 21 illustrations

## **Hello, Nurse**

From the files of TGStories.com: "Quality Health Care" Dane is filling in as a nurse for his pal Jimmy at his new office. Although both are doctors, Dane begins to take to his new role as a nurse. Soon, he feels compelled to be the ideal nurse. Book / 44 pages / 15 illustrations

## **My Boss, The Bimbo**

"If I Were a Betting (Wo)Man" By James J Craft, illustrations by blackshirtboy. CEO Lucas has a superiority complex. When his long-suffering secretary is able to feed into Lucas' competitive nature, he'll make any bet to prove his dominance over women. Book / 38 pages / 10 illustrations

## **He's the Girl They Want**

"Rallies" by Joe Six-Pack. Spencer has a great new executive job in the food service industry, but first he's got to learn the ropes of the business by waiting on tables. He just doesn't quite fit in with the cheerleader theme. Yet. Book / 63 pages / 22 illustrations

## **Demoted and Degraded**

"Trixie the Secretary" by Angela J. Cindy didn't much like Tom Jones attitude and his advances, so when she has the opportunity to help take the wind out of his sails, she takes it. But she had no idea that it was all designed to make Tom into Trixie the secretary. Book / 87 pages / 17 illustrations

## **I, Candy**

"Sissy Sweets" by James J Craft, illustrations by rock-etxpert. Inheriting his family's bakery requires this young man to become the new face of the business. A female face. Book / 45 pages / 15 illustrations

## **Stories of the Supernatural**

### **Changed and Rearranged**

"Wrongs Make Wright" By Joe Six-Pack. Chris and Matt were rivals. Then, Matt decided to show everyone how smart he truly was by impersonating a teacher. But the disguise becomes more and more real, much to Chris' dismay. Book / 74 pages / 19 illustrations

### **From Pals to Gals**

From the files of TGStories.com: "Mandate of the People" By Joe Six-Pack. Teens Jeremy and Stewart are good friends, but a bit thick in the noggin. When they jokingly nominate each other for Prom Queen, they slowly become the perfect candidates, thanks to some magic. Book / 45 pages / 16 illustrations

### **Crossed Fiction**

#### **Sisters for the Summer**

"Camp Counseling" By Joe Six-Pack. Brock McCade always thought of himself as a real man, or at least he would be one, someday. After summer camp, he's no longer so sure. Book / 76 pages / 17 illustrations

#### **They're the Girls for the Job**

"Peace and Harmony" By James J Craft. Illustrations by blackshirtboy. Pete and Harmon need jobs bad. How far would they have to go to get them? Book / 64 pages / 19 illustrations

### **Seriously Sissified**

#### **Revenge of the Cheerleaders**

"Pansy Cheers" By Angela J. Patrick Sears was a football player trying to sleep with every cheerleader at his small college. He'd have to pay for his conquests. Book / 116 pages / 19 illustrations

### **Web Classics Revisited**

#### **Two Forms of ID**

By Joe Six-Pack. Harvey had the unusual ability to convincingly imitate a teenage girl. In desperation, he has to use that talent to make some money. But when is enough enough? Paperback / 194 pages / text only



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