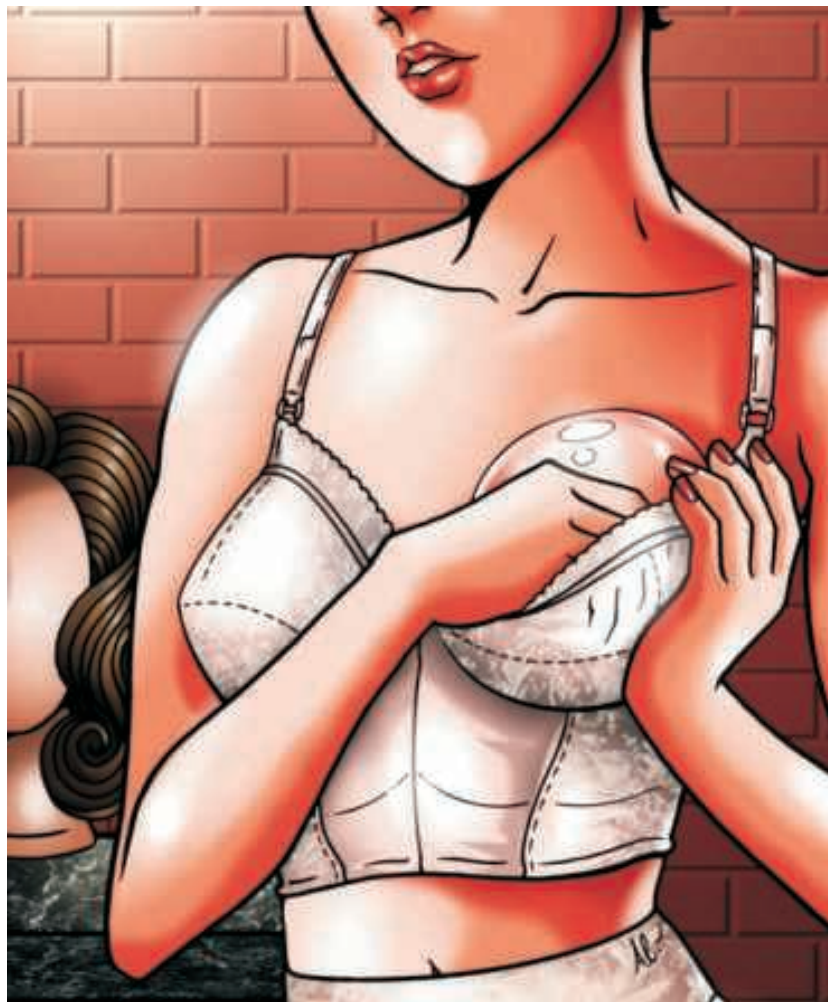




Reluctant Press presents:

INCOGNITO *For Life*

Norman Way



A 'HER TV' E-BOOK

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Reluctant Press TG Publishers

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INCOGNITO FOR LIFE

By Norman Way

I stopped running at my usual spot and sat down on the bench. I bent down and tightened my shoelaces. There were a few ducks on the lake. The ice was gone but there were still a few patches of snow left here and there thru out the park. The air was still a bit chilly for April. Winter had stalled out and wasn't quite ready to leave us just yet. Upstate New York could be like that.

I sat there for a few more minutes contemplating things. I was just about to finish my second year of college. I liked crunching numbers ever since high school. Manufacturing had been on its' way out since the eighties and high tech had too many ups and downs since their bubble burst in the early nineties. Opportunities in accounting and finance hadn't always been the best but with my dad in the banking business I had an inside look and felt it would be a good fit for me as well.

I spent the last two summers working in the bank where my dad worked. I wasn't really crazy about being a junior teller but it was a start. My personal interest was in auditing, forensic accounting or maybe international finance, though that would require more schooling than just a four-year degree.

I stood up and did a couple of squat thrusts and some knee bends. I held my arms out and did some windmills and then dropped to the ground and did some pushups. I got back up and started running again. I felt good. Not just physically good but good over all.

I was fairly bright so my studies had not presented much of a challenge to me. I had coasted easily thru high school and the college curriculum hadn't slowed me down at all. While some of my classmates dropped out and others struggled a bit I was able to grasp things quickly and after taking my finals next month I was confident that I could maintain

my 4.0 average. My excellent time in the mile run and cross-country assured me a place on the track team.

I had enjoyed running since I was a child. I never liked to run the short distances in the dashes but preferred the mile run. I liked “the solitude of the long distance runner” It was a way for me to clear my thoughts as well as exert myself in getting the occasional frustrations of life off my chest. I always felt better after a run and a hot shower. The physical demands of a long run “cleaned my mind” just as the shower cleaned my body.

I was always thin. “Lithe” was one of the coaches descriptions and I guess it fit me best of all. I tried lifting weights but the results were disappointing. I kept working out on the stationary bike and treadmill in the basement in addition to, weather permitting, my jogs around the lake in the adjacent park.

I arrived back home and checked the mail. I tossed the junk mail away and took my fathers mail into his small office off the dining room. I set them on his desk and went into the kitchen. It was just after four. I peeled some carrots and potatoes, then added them to the roasting pan. The beef roast was nearly done and in another hour so would the vegetables.

“Bankers’ hours” are a joke to most people. Unfortunately for the people who work in a bank they are not so funny. My father had spent many Saturdays like today working to finish whatever needed to be done. His salary divided by the hours he put in was a lot less than most people think.

I went into my bedroom and undressed. The hot needle spray of the shower felt good and I felt genuinely refreshed as I put on clean clothes. I watched part of a football game and then after turning the oven down at five I opened a bottle of beer and read the paper.

Things had been really falling apart in the financial world the last couple of months. My father had been at Manhattan Trust almost thirty years so I wasn’t concerned about it affecting him so much as other families in the area.

It was just before six when the doorbell rang. I looked out the front window and saw a police car parked at the curb. I felt my pulse jump as I walked to the front door. When I opened it I faced two police officers.

“Max Landon?” the one in front asked.

“Yes, I am Max Landon,” I answered quickly with a dry mouth.

“I am sorry to inform you that your father, Richard, died about an hour ago. I need you to go to the morgue and identify his remains.”

He had spoken his words in a matter of fact tone with out displaying any emotion. My heart was pounding and I felt like my knees were going to give out.

“Alright, I will go right down,” I answered him in a shaky voice.

I closed the door. I couldn’t imagine what might have happened to him. I turned the stove off, took the roasting pan out of the oven and set it on top of the stove. After putting on my jacket and stocking cap I locked up the house and drove down to the hospital’s morgue.

After identifying myself I was shown his body. He looked like he was sleeping. A calm, peaceful sleep, like I had seen him so many times at home when I had gone into his bedroom to wake him. This time of course he would not be waking up. I turned to the detective standing next to me.

"That is my father, Richard Landon. What happened?"

"We don't know exactly. The janitor found him slumped over his desk and called 911. Until we get the autopsy results we can't say,"

I nodded and signed the papers for the autopsy.

"Thank you Max, we will notify you when you can have your father's body for burial.

I left the morgue and drove home. The house had never seemed so empty. I cut off a piece of the beef roast and put it on a plate with some vegetables. While it heated in the microwave oven I poured myself a glass of cold milk. I ate everything though it had no taste to me at all. After putting the leftovers in the freezer I did the dishes.

There were a lot of things running thru my mind as I sat down at his desk and began drawing up a "to do" list. We had no relatives here and my fathers' sister was in a nursing home in Schenectady. I called them to notify her though she wouldn't remember her brother now that Alzheimer's had taken her mind.

When I finished the list I went into his bedroom and picked out a suit, shirt and tie the undertaker would need. I placed them in a box and then proceeded to box up the rest of his clothes to take to the thrift store. I wanted to keep busy with things. I called a local funeral home to make arrangements once the autopsy had been completed. The funeral director said he would see me Sunday afternoon at two pm.

Sunday morning my father's boss called and we arranged for a time for me to come down and fill out the paperwork for the life insurance and pension monies. I went to the funeral home that afternoon and planned a modest funeral for Friday of the next week hoping that my father's body would be released by then.

I stopped for a burger and fries on the way home. After eating I began to pack up the rest my father's things. I had done the same when my mother died unexpectedly only three years ago. My dad had simply said "you take care of it." Except for the family album there were no mementoes. I kept a picture of the three of us at my high school graduation as well as 8X10 individual pictures of both of them. Everything else was boxed up for the thrift stores. I drank half a bottle of wine before going to bed to help me sleep.

My classes on Monday and Tuesday seemed longer than usual. I still hadn't heard from the police about my dad's body by Wednesday's meeting with my dad's boss. I signed all the papers and got the checks from his salary and pension money. The life insurance check would not come until they got the death certificate listing the cause of death.

Thursday afternoon the detective that I had talked to at the morgue was waiting for me when I got home from school. I unlocked the door and we went inside. He took a seat on the couch while I hung up my coat. I sat down next to him and he looked at me with a serious look on his face.

"Did your father have any enemies?" he began.

I was quite surprised at that question as I knew my father had been well liked by many people not only as their banker but his involvement in many civic affairs.

"I don't think so," I answered. "Why would you ask something like that?"

"The autopsy report states that a chemical substance was found in his blood. Your father was taking medication for high blood pressure and this stuff apparently accelerated his heartbeat enough to give him a heart attack or possibly a stroke. There was barely a trace of it in his blood. In fact the pathologist almost missed it."

I was stunned. I couldn't imagine why anyone would want to kill my father.

"Did your father gamble or have debts or obligations that he wasn't able to meet?"

"I haven't gone thru all his papers yet but to answer your question, no I don't think so. He was always conservative with money and so was mom. I am too for that matter."

"I see. Do you know anything about your fathers' work?"

"He had been with the bank a long time and at one time or another had worked in just about every department. The last six years or so he had been in audit. The last year or two he was working more directly with the main bank in Manhattan with international accounts."

"International accounts? Like what exactly?"

"I really don't know. I guess you would have to talk to his boss about that."

"Ok. I appreciate your time Max, again my sympathies for your loss."

He got up and I walked him to the door.

The phone rang and the coroner was on the phone. I could now take my dad's body to the funeral home. I thanked him and called the funeral director to pick up the body. The funeral would now be on Sunday instead of Friday. I was looking forward to putting all this behind me.

That night as I consumed some more of my fathers' wine I wondered about the detectives' question regarding his work. Was he killed over money laundering? Was a drug cartel responsible? Maybe terrorism was involved? I couldn't begin imagine what was going on here. I finished the wine but it didn't help me very much in getting to sleep.

The funeral was very nice. There weren't many people there that I knew. A few of my classmates and some from the track team came to pay their respects. The audit department was small so there were only a few people from the bank but the other employees had sent a very nice bouquet of flowers.

I returned to school and things got back to normal. I received the check from the insurance company and deposited it in my account. I took the last of my exams just before Memorial Day weekend. Instead of coming straight home I stopped off at a college hangout for pizza and beer.

I got home about seven that evening. I immediately sensed something was wrong when I entered the kitchen. It was one of those gut instinct things that you can't explain. With my heart pounding I walked into the living room. Everything seemed to be in order.

I walked thru the dining room to the entrance to my father's office and surveyed the mess before me.

A tornado couldn't have done any less damage. It was like the whole office was turned upside down. I turned around and walked to my bedroom, and then into his. Once again the room had been torn apart. I checked the basement but everything was ok there. I called the police and sat down on the sofa to await their arrival.

The officer was just finished taking my report when the same detective I had talked with earlier showed up. Standing behind him was a woman in a dark blue pantsuit. They both had those grim looks on their faces as they came up the walk. They showed the other cop their ID's and walked in the house.

"Detective Broderick what are you doing here?" I asked politely.

"This is agent Louise Jackson of the FBI. She will be assisting me in this investigation," he replied.

I couldn't image why the FBI or a homicide detective had been notified of this. Things were getting stranger by the day and I was getting concerned that somewhere down the line I was going to be involved more than I wanted to be. My mind was racing with all kinds of possibilities as I led both of them to my father's office.

"Do you know if anything is missing?" agent Jackson asked.

"No. I haven't touched anything. The bedroom is messed up too. I wanted to wait until the cops showed up before I did anything."

"I'll take the bedroom," Detective Broderick said as Agent Jackson began sorting thru the mess.

"Max. Why don't you have a seat in the living room and try to relax until we're finished?" He said as he walked past me to my fathers' bedroom.

I walked back to the living room and sat down on the couch. I turned on the TV and tried to get interested in the movie but finally shut it off. I got the paper from the front steps but about halfway thru it I tossed it aside. The pizza and beer had made me a bit sleepy. I was hoping this would be over soon so I could clean up and go to bed.

When they were both finished they stood over me as they removed their latex gloves. Detective Broderick spoke first.

"After you have everything back in order make a list of anything that is missing or you think is missing. Don't leave anything out, no matter how trivial."

"Another thing," interrupted agent Jackson, "If you notice anything unusual let me know right away."

"Unusual?" I asked. "Like what?"

"A car in the neighborhood you don't recognize. Someone walking around here or maybe someone you see at the grocery store and then later at the mall or pharmacy. Like you are being followed or watched"

"Why would they be interested in me?"

"We don't know, yet."

“Do you know something about my father that I don’t? Am I in any danger?”

“We don’t know that either but we will be in touch. Remember now, anything unusual.”

They both turned and walked out the door. I sat there a few minutes trying to get my pulse down to a more manageable level. I was now more concerned than ever. I consumed more of my father’s wine and took a hot shower. Between the shower and the alcohol I was finally relaxed enough to fall asleep.

I spent the next morning going thru the office very carefully. I looked thru my fathers date book but couldn’t find anything out of the ordinary. After lunch I went to the bedroom and spend several hours there without finding anything either.

I had everything back in order so I decided to water the plants before planning my next move. The last plant was the one hanging from a chain in the window. I moved his chair over so I could stand on it to reach it.

It was much lighter than the others and as I stepped down on the floor I saw that it was a plastic flower. I set it on the desk. For whatever reason, and I don’t really know why I pulled the plant up. Just underneath was a computer disk in a plastic cover. I removed it and put the plant back in the pot and hung it back up again.

I pushed the chair back to his desk and sat down. I booted up his computer and put the disk in. A pop up asked me for a password. I knew there was no way to guess what password my father might use so I simply put the disk back in the case. I called Agent Jackson and left a message for her to call me.

I spent the rest of the day packing up more of my fathers’ things. I made two trips to the local thrift store and when I got back from the second trip the answering machine was blinking. Agent Jackson left a message for me to call her back.

I called her number and she answered right away. I told her about the disk and she gave me the address of the building where her office was located. She offered to buy lunch as well so I agreed to meet her the day after tomorrow.

I spent the next day inventorying the furniture. I decided not to keep anything and rent a furnished apartment. A realtor friend of my fathers came up and appraised the house. I signed the contracts and he left. I did a walk thru and satisfied myself that everything was in order for an estate sale. I would keep just my clothes, some bedding, dishes and my exercise equipment.

I met Agent Jackson at the restaurant around the corner from the FBI offices. She seemed in a good mood as I handed her the disk.

“Call me Lou,” she said as we went inside.

We sat in a booth and the waitress brought us a menu.

“Is there anything more you can tell me about what my father might be involved in?” I asked.

“No, I am sorry but the investigation is continuing,” she replied.

“Will I ever know what is on that disk?”

"Probably not. We are pursuing a number of avenues and I am not at liberty to reveal any of them at this time."

The waitress came back and we placed our order.

"I understand you are working this summer at the bank under one of their apprenticeship programs?"

"Yes. I start in about two weeks. Until I found the disk I was planning to spend it getting rid of my father's things and getting the house ready for sale."

"What does your work there involve?"

"I am a junior teller but I hope to use my education to do what my father did. I like the audit department."

"What about the international end of things?"

She surprised me by this question as well as the fact that she was expressing interest in what I was going to be doing.

"I don't know about the international end of things as that takes more education than my four years would give me and it is very hard to get into."

The waitress brought our orders. As we eat she continued to pump me about my knowledge of the banks operations, particularly what, if anything, I knew about my father's dealings. I stayed focused on eating my lunch and answered her questions as honestly as I could. We finished up and left the restaurant.

She walked up the street to her office building while I walked around the corner to where I had parked my car. As I did so the cold steel of a gun muzzle pressed against my neck.

"Keys!" said a low voice as I was pushed against the building's wall.

I held out the keys in my right hand.

"Which car?" the voice demanded again.

"Black Mustang, over there." I pointed up the street.

"Run around the corner, NOW!" he screamed and gave me a push.

I ran back to see Agent Jackson just opening the door to the office building. She saw me coming and stopped with a puzzled look on her face.

All of a sudden there was a loud bang behind me. I turned around and saw pieces of metal flying out into the street. Agent Jackson ran towards me. She caught up to me and we both ran around the corner. There was a fireball where my car used to be. Sirens wailed in the distance.

The fire trucks arrived and shortly the fire was out. There wasn't much left of my car or the guy who was trying to steal it from me. When I was finished being interviewed by the police Agent Jackson gave me a ride home. I had come within an eyelash of being killed and I was now more concerned than ever. What had my father been involved in that would get him and nearly me killed?

I invited Agent Jackson in but she declined. The next morning I explained what had happened to my insurance claims agent. He cut me a check for the car's wholesale value. It wasn't much but I was in no position to negotiate. I could drive my dad's old Buick until I was settled.

There were several visits from realtors that week with prospective buyers but still no offers. I cleared out his computer and then donated it to a Senior Learning Center since I was using a laptop for school.

I began to take more notice of people around me. I made it a habit of checking my rear view mirror more frequently. Nothing seemed to be out of the ordinary. But I wasn't sleeping well most nights. I finished the last of the alcohol my father had. Some nights I just took a couple of aspirin to help me sleep.

Another month went by. I was enjoying my job at the bank. I began to relax a little more. There were several more visits to the house by realtors but no offers had been put forth. Between getting my father's retirement, final paycheck, life insurance, and my car settlement I was in no immediate danger of insolvency by any means but I wanted to get rid of the house and move to an apartment before winter set in and I would be faced with those high heating bills.

I had not run in the park for about two months but used the treadmill in the basement. I was a bit unsure of running by myself. I guess I was afraid that at some point I would be accosted by another jogger or perhaps shot from a distance by whoever was behind all this. I decided to play it safe and stay home most of the time. I truly missed running thru the park but better safe than sorry.

I had a month left before college would start. I would be a junior this year. My summer job at the bank was good experience but relatively boring. I wanted so badly to be doing other things. Things I thought were much more important than being a teller. That would have to wait however, as now my career was not my only concern.

The weekend before I was to register for school I thru caution to the winds and ran in the park. It was a great feeling to be out in the fresh air. The warm breeze felt good as I ran along the lake's shoreline. I stopped at my usual spot and bent down to re-tie my shoe-laces.

Behind me there was a loud "THWACK". Startled, I turned around to see a section of bark from the tree behind me had broken loose. There was no one around but on closer examination I saw a small round hole in the center of the area where the bark of the tree had been broken away. I took out my cell phone and called Agent Jackson.

She arrived along with a police cruiser. One of the officers took a jack knife out of his pocket. He dug the slug out and handed it to Agent Jackson. She drove me back to the house and we went inside.

"Have you gotten any offers on the house?" she asked.

"No. I guess things are pretty tight in the housing market here or maybe getting the loan is the hang up."

"Well you are going to have to move. Whoever is doing this knows you pretty well. Have you noticed anything unusual in the people around you like we asked you to look out for?"

I shook my head.

"Has your investigation turned up anything?" I inquired

"No. The guy who tried to steal your car was an ordinary street punk. He had quite a rap sheet. It was one of those "wrong car at the wrong time" type of things. He sure paid a high price for trying to steal your car."

"Look I don't mean to complain, I mean I know you and the cops are doing all you can but I can't go on like this. I am not sleeping well and I have lost some weight too."

"So I have noticed. Actually I was on my way up here to talk to you about a solution when I got your call. It would involve some sacrifices on your part."

"What sort of sacrifices, I mean I have been thru quite a lot lately. There's the mysterious death of my father, the break in, two attempts on my life, to say nothing of the cops or the FBI's inability to make any progress as to just who or what is behind this. I feel like I have a bulls' eye on my back.

"I understand. Now I have a proposition for you that may solve both your situation and your father's murder. It won't be easy but based on the education you already have and the fact that you are a thin young man with a very clear complexion I think we could kill two birds with one stone."

"Well I am about at my wits end. Let's hear it and what does having smooth skin have to do with it?

She smiled at me and had this funny look on her face. I wasn't sure what she was about to propose but I felt I had no choice but to hear her out. I mean what did I have to lose? I had nearly been killed twice, could it get any worse than that?

"Whoever is behind this knows you and enough about you to keep you at risk. Now if you were to somehow "disappear", so to speak, you would be off their radar until we can get a handle on who they might be and why they are after you as well as what your father has to do with all of this."

"You mean like witness protection?"

"Not exactly."

"Then WHAT exactly?"

"You could stay in the New York area, attend school and still work in banking, just as somebody different."

"You mean sort of in disguise?"

"Yes."

"If I am still in the area, still going to school, and still working in the local bank, how long will it take for them to put two and two together and still find me? The house is not sold yet, and I will be in an apartment when it does, so just what did you have in mind?"

“Don’t take this the wrong way but you are a slim young man with feminine features. You have small hands and feet, a very clear complexion, very little facial and I would guess body hair as well, correct?”

I was quite surprised at this as I had never considered myself to be effeminate in any way. I wasn’t sure if I wanted to be a part of whatever she was about to suggest.

“Are you suggesting I live as a woman?” I asked.

She looked directly into my eyes. She was smiling as she spoke to me.

“I will help you with your clothing, wigs and makeup. It’s not like it will be forever. Once I assist you thru the transformation process you will be seen as a young woman not a young man. The one place they would not be looking for you is in an apartment building for women only. Your schooling can continue but you will come to class as a woman. Similarly your apprenticeship can continue but you will be coming to work dressed as a female. They simply will not be looking for a woman.”

“You make it sound so plausible but I don’t know anything about being a woman. I mean I date women occasionally but I never thought of trying to look or act like one. Once in high school I and two other guys dressed like a girl group from the fifties for a gag at a homecoming party. That was one thing but trying to pass myself off 24/7 and actually live as a woman is a whole other thing.”

“To be truthful I think you would do quite well. I would see to it that before you “crossover” you would be adequately prepared to live and work as a woman. No one will know except you and me. Remember they are looking for a young man not a young woman.”

I shook my head. This seemed a little too weird. The idea that with clothes, make up, and some instruction I was suddenly going to be seen and accepted as a young woman was a bit of a stretch. My whole life had been spent as a male. To “unlearn” that and conduct myself like a female seemed an almost impossible task.

I had seen impersonators once in New York’s Greenwich Village. They were very feminine men to begin with. Even without glamorous dresses or costumes and makeup, just dressed in women’s casual clothes, they would be seen by the general public as women.

In a nightclub setting they were as pretty and as feminine as any female performer. But this was not a show I would be putting on temporarily. I was going to have to live this way all the time and I wasn’t sure I wanted or could do this as a lifestyle.

“No, I don’t think that is an option,” I replied honestly.

“Well ok. It was just a thought that might keep you alive.”

She got up and left. I got a call from a real estate that afternoon and made plans to go to the library that evening so the agent could show the house. I kept my eyes peeled as I drove to and from the library but it appeared that I was not being followed.

That night I stood naked in front of the full-length mirror on my closet door. I did the “tuck” and imagined myself as a female. I leaned in to look more closely at my face. Agent Jackson had been right. I had very little body and facial hair. Once I shaved myself smooth and applied makeup I guessed I would probably look ok.

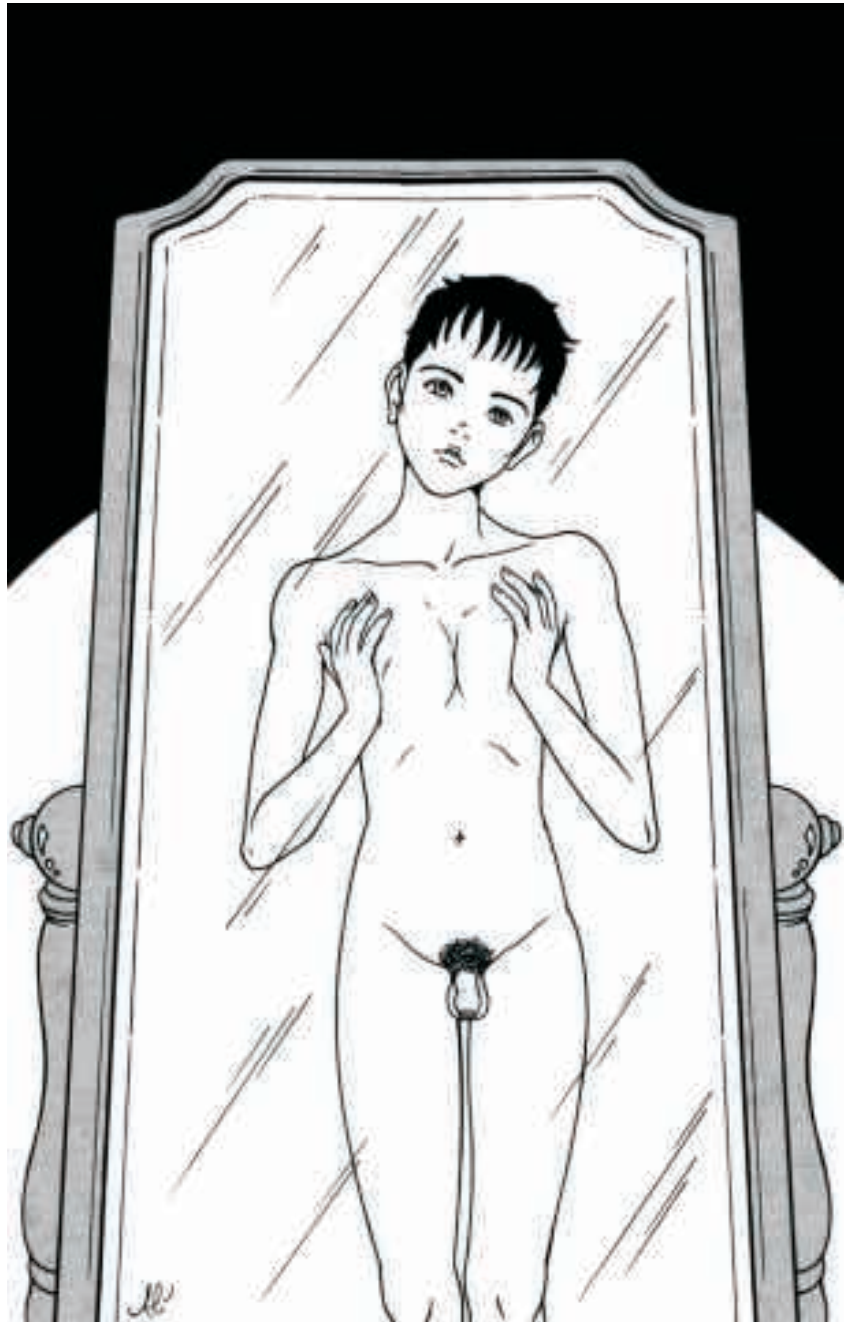
I put my hands on my chest and pushed up the skin under my nipples. I tried to imagine myself with breasts. I normally kept my hair short but by brushing it over my forehead I saw that with a wig or longer hair it was possible for me to create a passable feminine appearance.

I slept fitfully that night. There were so many things I kept going over in my mind. What to do? Should I listen to Agent Jackson? Should I relocate to another state or stay here? I could get tired just thinking about what I should do. Obviously I was going to have to do something and soon.

I finished my summer internship at the bank and shortly thereafter started school again. The courses at the junior level were a little stiffer for some but I plowed thru them nonetheless. I enjoyed the challenges and met each one head on. I was still careful about going places, checking the rear view mirror and being observant of the people around me whether I was on campus or not.

In late October I got a call from a realtor with an offer on the house. It seemed to be a rather low offer so I made a counter offer and they accepted that. I had about three weeks to move out of the house. It was a relief to get it sold as I had not been looking forward to spending the winter in that big old empty house, especially with the cost of heating oil expected to be going up.

I spent several nights looking at various apartments. I selected a small two bedroom fully furnished duplex that was near campus but far enough away to avoid the campus noise and congestion. I got my utilities hooked up and moved my stuff in.



That weekend I had the estate sale. The papers for the house were all signed and I got my check. I was hoping to get back to a "normal" life if there was such a thing for a college student. I wanted to get rid of Dad's old Buick too but figured I would wait until spring.

It was just after the holidays when I was leaving an old bookstore near campus with a classmate. I bent down to pick up a penny on the sidewalk and the window of the bookstore behind me exploded into pieces. The sound of the gunshots faded as a car raced up the street. I turned to look behind me and then at my classmate lying on the sidewalk.

Minutes later an ambulance arrived and took my friend to the hospital where he later died. I found myself talking to the cops again. There had been a few people on the sidewalk as we had left the bookstore. No one else had been hurt. I wasn't certain if this drive by had anything to do with me, my late friend or anyone else who was in the vicinity that day.

Later that night Agent Jackson called me. I related the incident to her and she reminded me of her plan but this time there was more urgency in her voice. I asked her to come by that weekend to discuss her plan in more detail and she agreed.

Enough was enough I thought to myself. Just about the time I think I can relax something else happens. I was on the verge of becoming a nervous wreck and if spending some time dressed like a woman well I guess any port in a storm.

Saturday night I ate a light supper. I didn't know quite what to expect when Agent Jackson stopped by that night and I was a little bit apprehensive to say the least. I guess I just couldn't see myself as a woman, let alone living as one 24/7.

It was just about seven when the doorbell rang. I peeked thru the curtain and then went to the front door to let her in. I hung her coat in the closet and we sat down on the couch. I guess she could see my uneasiness as she began.

"I want you to relax and listen carefully to what I have to say. When I am finished I will answer any questions you might have and then you will have to make a decision. Understood?"

"Yes, I understand," I replied.

"All right, now I believe you have one semester remaining in your junior year. This will give us plenty of time to get you trained and transformed for your new identity. I want you to let your hair grow. Three months from your last school day let your nails grow. Continue your exercise routine. You are thinner than when I first met you and while the stress of your situation may have caused that I don't want you to put on any weight. I want you to study the books I have brought you and pay close attention to the lessons on the accompanying DVD. You must begin electrolysis immediately. There is a business card in one of the books. Make evening appointments and give them my card. A portion of the costs will be paid by the agency. You have a soft voice but modulate a little more so you sound more feminine. I will be back tomorrow morning at eight am. I want you to wear only your athletic support under your clothing."

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"Shopping. There are some things you will need initially to get you started. Be ready."

She stood up and I retrieved her coat from the closet. After she left I looked over the three books. The first was about makeup, nail and hair care. The second was about fashion and how to dress properly for any occasion. The third had to do with manners as well as feminine behavior. I paged thru the books without reading everything in them for about an hour and then set them aside.

I put the DVD in the player. A beautiful blonde, speaking in a soft, melodic voice, walked in front of the camera. She smoothed her skirt with one hand as she sat down and began describing what the course was about. Over the next hour she explained what "feminine deportment" was all about. Learning how to walk, sit and in general behave in a ladylike and feminine manner. She pointed out that practice makes perfect and that it was important to give the appearance of femininity without "acting" per se. "Women", she said, "don't ACT feminine. They ARE feminine, and they are feminine naturally. Follow my instructions and you won't be seen as a man acting or impersonating a woman you will be seen AS a woman."

She continued until part one was concluded. I ejected the DVD and shut off the machine. I got a glass of wine and sat down to think about what I had just seen and what I was going to have to do to emulate that woman in the DVD. I had never really paid much attention to what makes a woman a woman. Now my life just might depend on it.

The next morning I put on my athletic support and got dressed. I drank a glass of juice and made two pieces of toast. Agent Jackson pulled into the driveway at ten minutes of eight. I locked the duplex and got in her car. She was dressed casually in a sport shirt, jeans and sneakers.

"Where are we headed?" I asked.

"Remember to modulate your voice," she cautioned. "The more you work on it now the better off you will be."

"Ok," I said in a softer voice. "Where are we headed?"

"The Big Apple, there are some shops there that cater to special needs for men like you."

I wasn't sure exactly what she meant by "men like you" but then this was all new to me anyway so I thought I might just as well keep my mouth shut and enjoy the ride.

We stopped for a sandwich just outside the city then drove straight thru Manhattan. I knew we were somewhere in the village but just where was beyond me. Lou zipped into a parking place and we got out. We walked about two blocks to a four story gray building. The lobby was empty when we entered and as we walked to the elevator I wondered what kind of a place this was.

It was a rickety ride to the fourth floor. We got out and walked down the hall to the only occupied suite there. Above the double glass doors was a brightly lighted pink butterfly, hence the pink letters on the door that read "The Pink Butterfly."

Lou opened one of the glass doors and I followed her in. She walked straight to the shoe department. A short effeminate man walked, actually he almost floated, up to us and asked if we needed any help. Lou shook her head.

“Sit in that chair,” said Lou.

I removed my sneakers and socks. I put on two nylon footies and tried on various pairs of shoes to find my size. She set aside two pair of three-inch heel leather pumps. We walked over to the wig section. I sat down at a small table and looked at my reflection in the large mirror. Lou selected a black and a brown shoulder length wig. After I tried them on she replaced them in their respective boxes. We walked to the rear of the store where there were several dressing rooms. She opened the door to one.

“Step in here and take off your clothes.”

I did as she asked. Several minutes later I heard her ask me to step outside. I was a bit nervous but I did so and she measured my bust waist and hips. From a shelf several feet away she removed some boxes and handed them to me.

“Try these on and step back out.”

I re-entered the dressing room and opened the first box. It was a black panty girdle. I stepped into it and brought it up to my waist. It was a tight fit and I noticed it had side panels. The next box contained a black long bra. I slipped my arms thru the straps and closed the six hooks in the front. Strangely I didn't feel at all odd in these foundation garments in fact I found them to be quite comfortable. I took a deep breath and stepped out to face Lou.

She smiled at me and then placed two weighted breast forms in the bra cups and adjusted the straps. She held up a pair of panty hose and I put them on. I was surprised how good the nylon felt against my skin. Next she had me try on a slim black skirt, a long sleeve white ruffled blouse and finally a pink shirtdress with a matching wide pink belt. All these items had fit me as if they were made for me. After taking off the dress she instructed me to put my clothes back on.

I slid off the panty hose and handed them to her. I returned to the cubicle and put the foundation garments and breast forms back in their respective boxes. I got dressed and stepped out handing the lingerie to Lou.

We walked to the counter and Lou put the all the items on a credit card. As we left the limp-wristed salesclerk waved and said “ta ta” in a soft womanish voice. We rode down the elevator in silence and then walked back to where the car was parked. Lou put the things in the trunk and then we walked further up the street and around the corner.

Halfway down the next block we stopped in front of a single glass door. “Sylvia's” was in white lettering on the front. Lou opened the door and I followed her up the stairs. At the landing we turned right and walked down a short hallway.

A heavy set black woman was behind the counter as we entered a brightly lit room. She had been reading a tabloid magazine and looked up as we walked in. Lou showed her badge and announced us as:

“Agent Jackson and Max Landon, two o'clock.”

"This way," she said as she put her tabloid down and walked to the back of the small office. She pulled a length of white cloth from a roll at the top of an exam table and stepped out of the room.

"Take off your clothes and lay down on the table," ordered Lou.

I undressed and put my clothes on the nearby chair. The black woman came in and turned on some electronic equipment. Now she was wearing gloves and a surgical mask. She stood at the foot of the exam table and picked up a wand like device. An hour later I got off the table to find my arms and legs had been lasered free of hair. I got dressed and after Lou used the credit card we left the building. It seemed cooler on the way back to the car and when I mentioned it to Lou she burst out laughing.

The drive back to Albany was long and I was tired as Lou pulled into the driveway of my duplex. She helped me carry the stuff inside. She held up some Velcro strapped ankle weights.

"Put these on when you practice walking in your high heels. They will help strengthen your ankles. An hour in the morning before school and an hour before you go to bed in addition to your regular workouts on the stationary bike and running. This basic wardrobe will get you accustomed to wearing women's clothes and shoes while you are home though you will continue to dress as a man at school."

She left. I took a hot shower and stood in front of the mirror when I had dried myself off. I had to admit if I didn't think I had a girly body before, I certainly had one now. The hair removal had certainly made a difference in the way I looked. I rubbed some hand lotion on myself as the black woman had suggested and marveled at how good my smooth skin felt now that it was hair free.

I poured myself a glass of wine. I drank half of it while I contemplated what I was getting into. I was in unfamiliar territory to be sure. My survival, as well as solving the mystery of my father's death, was riding on this. I returned to the bedroom to survey my purchases.

There were two panty girdles, one black and one white, both with side panels to give me some hips. Two matching long line bras and one set of breast forms, two pairs of panty hose along with the two wigs, one brown and one black and the two pairs of three inch heel pumps.

The clothes I put on hangers and hung them in the closet. I put the lingerie in my bottom dresser drawer and the wigs on their respective heads on the top of my dresser. I set the two pair of high heels on the floor of my closet and closed the door.

That night as I got into bed I thought about what lay ahead. I had never thought of myself as feminine before but looking at myself after a shower and imagining myself in lingerie, a dress or skirt, one of the wigs and my high heel shoes even without makeup I knew I was going to pass easily for a woman. I fell asleep quickly and dreamed of going to school in my brown wig, skirt, blouse and heels.

The first month was the hardest. Lou came over and coached me as I began walking on the treadmill in my high heels. I practiced everything I had seen in the department DVD as

well. She was pleased with my progress. I read and re-read the books on makeup and nail care even though I couldn't put those things into practice just yet.

Another month went by and I felt just as adept at walking and sitting like a woman as I did as a man. In fact it was getting harder to be both. My electrolysis had gone well and the technician had made the comment that with my light facial hair I should be done in no time.

Friday night I got home from school and found a message from Lou on my answering machine. I was to meet her in her office Saturday at eight am sharp. I thought maybe there might be some news about my father or my two close brushes with death. She could have told me over the phone instead of my coming down to her office so my curiosity was definitely aroused.

Saturday I skipped breakfast and drove to Lou's office. I parked in the visitor lot, remembering the last time I had parked down the street, and walked to her building. Once inside I went right to her office on the next floor. She was on the phone but beckoned me to come in and sit down.

"I have some good news and some bad news," she said as she hung up.

"Bad news first," I said.

"There is no news about your fathers' death or the attempts on your life. The disk you gave us had a lot of information about transfers of funds, much of it coded. Even in this computer age with our experts it will take some time to sort it all out. Your father was definitely on to something but just what it was is still up in the air."

"And the good news is?"

"Your summer internship has been changed. There is an opening in the international department of the main bank in Manhattan. I know that is what you are interested in and your education so far qualifies you to get the job. However the person who was to assume the job has not been able to take it due to illness and because it was for a female this year they want a woman candidate."

"This is a win-win for you and us. You will be in disguise at work and at home. I have located a small furnished apartment in the village on the bus line. It's a "women only" building. You will be able to live and work as a woman."

"At work you will follow your supervisor's instructions of course but be on the lookout for anything that smacks of money laundering or transferring of funds that seems out of the ordinary. You will report to a Ms. Delores Conti as Maxine Landon. We will help you move after your finals in May so you can begin work about June 10th."

I sat back a little stunned. This had all happened very quickly and while I was pleased to get the opportunity to work in my chosen field I was concerned about my ability to be accepted as a female.

What if I slipped up somewhere along the line and I was "outed" so to speak. Seeing the concerned look on my face prompted Lou to reassure me.

"I know this is a lot at once Max but believe me it is the only way. You will be fine once we finish your female training. I have every confidence that things will go without a hitch. Now then I have to take you down to the basement for a bank required physical to accompany my investigation of your background which will be sent to Ms. Conti."

I got up and followed her out of the office to the basement stairs at the end of the hall. We walked downstairs and then to a small room to the right of where we entered. A woman in a white coat with a stethoscope around her neck smiled as we entered.

"Disrobe and sit on the exam table please," she instructed.

Lou left us and I began taking my clothes off. After a complete physical she held up a large needle. It looked big enough to use on a horse not a human.

"You will get one of these a month," she said.

She swiped my left buttock with an alcohol swab and jammed the needle in. As I got dressed as she made some notes on her clipboard, then handed me two bottles of pills.

"Take the little yellow ones at bedtime and the large pink ones after breakfast. Come back here for your refills. These will help you with your weight loss and help keep you fit and trim."

She put the bottles in a small plastic bag and handed them to me. I took the bottles from her and went back upstairs to see Lou. She was on the phone again as I sat down in front of her. When she finished she looked at me with a serious expression on her face.

"I want you to continue to do what you have been doing. Remember to modulate your voice, practice your walk and mannerisms like your life depends on it because it does. Take those pills without fail and be back here in a month."

I got up and left the building. I had meant to ask about the pills but seeing her serious look decided not too. At this point I had to start trusting somebody and if you can't trust the FBI and a doctor, whom can you trust?

Another month passed and the date of my final exams was getting closer. Lou came to the house and I made up my face for the first time. I dressed in my women's clothes and we went out to lunch as two women. We had walked thru a shopping mall first. As we walked thru the mall and several women's department stores no one had even given me a second glance.

I had managed to do everything right without a single prompt from Lou. My walk, my voice, the way I ate my lunch and touched up my makeup afterward was exactly the way she thought it should be. "Very ladylike" she had said.

When I got home it seemed a shame to take the makeup off. Looking in the mirror I saw the perfectly made up face of a young woman from my eyebrows to my lipstick. It was getting close to the time when I would "crossover" as she put it. I felt a combination of excitement as well as apprehension.

I called the track coach that I wouldn't be running this year for personal reasons. I saw Lou again in another month. We had a short meeting, no new information yet and then I went down stairs to get another shot. After a stop at the DMV we went shopping and ate

lunch. I was much more confident now and I guess it showed as several men had made admiring glances in my direction.

“Be careful Maxine,” she said with a smirk.

I notified my landlord that I was going into the city to work there over the summer. I began packing my things in boxes for the big move in a few days. I took and passed my finals. I had about a week left before I was to leave for the city. Lou arranged for a small moving van as I didn't have much to take with me.

After a shower that night I looked at myself in the mirror. My skin appeared to have taken on a softer appearance, almost a glow. My beard, what little I had, was now gone. I had a face and body that was as smooth and as soft as any girls. My weight was down several pounds but except for peeing a lot more lately I was in very good health

At the previous night's appointment my electrologist had thinned my eyebrows out and then tapered them with a slight arch near my nose, to a fine line at the end. At a local beauty salon I was given my first haircut in almost six months. Lou had called it a “Pixie” style.

“Short hair is much easier to care for and your wigs will fit easier over shorter hair when you want to change your look,” Lou explained

I also got a supply of shampoo and conditioner. The pampering of a manicure and pedicure gave me a very girly feeling as I looked at my bright pink finger and toenails.

“We will get you a complete supply of cosmetics, nail care products and of course a new wardrobe once we get you settled in the city,” Lou added.

I closed out my bank account with half of it going back to Lou's expense fund for the things they couldn't or perhaps wouldn't cover. I gassed up the Buick and checked the oil. That night I ordered a pizza and finished off the last of the wine.

When I got into bed that night feeling I was as ready as I will ever be. When I got dressed the next morning I noticed that the breast forms fit a bit tighter in the bra cups so I had to loosen the straps. The skin around my nipples had become fleshier. I wondered if the shots or pills I had been taking might be responsible for this. I made up my face and waited for Lou and the van to show up.

My move went off with out a hitch. Because so few people drive in Manhattan I sold the Buick to a dealer and would have to be content with mass transit for a while anyway. The apartment was quite small and the rent was twice what I had paid in Albany but that was to be expected I guess.

Our shopping trip consisted of another visit to the Pink Butterfly to purchase new foundation garments that included two girdles in addition to the panty girdles and some cheap cosmetics. My new wardrobe however, came from an upscale department store and consisted of some skirt-jacket combinations, very frilly blouses, slim straight skirts, several sheath dresses and matching jewelry and accessories.

The pricey lingerie of pantyhose, stockings, lacy slippers, camisoles and half-slippers had a very luxurious feel to them. Two pair of four-inch stiletto heel pumps would replace the three-inch heel pumps I had been wearing. They say clothes make the man but in my new position they had to make the woman.

Another half of my cash had been spent but I knew I had to look good in this professional environment if I was going to carry this off. Lou helped me arrange everything and reminded me once again about my voice and feminine deportment.

“Wear the full slip with the sheath dress at work or your shirt dress at home. The camisole and half-slip are worn with a blouse and skirt or jacket and skirt combination. Periodically check your appearance and touch up your make up even if you don’t think you need it. It’s a reflection of your femininity. There’s a lot riding on this. Ms. Conti wants to see you Friday at ten am. Your job starts Monday at nine am but there are some things she wants to go over with you. Don’t be late and remember you are a lady now, a professional woman. Act like it. Everything you do whether at work, socially or at the grocery store on your day off reflects on you, not just as a person but as a woman. There is no margin for error,”

She handed me a large paper clip with a shoestring tied to it.

“Hook the clip thru the zipper of your dress or blouse. Put the garment on, bring the shoestring over your shoulder and pull up the zipper. Reverse the procedure when you undress.”

I took the clip from her as she got up to leave.

“Before you go I wanted to ask you about those pills. I seemed to be getting larger breasts and at night I get up to pee a lot.”

“You can stop taking the yellow ones when they run out. The pink ones are still necessary as are your monthly shots. This gives a very soft feminine sheen to your skin though your bust line will increase somewhat but it is nothing for you to worry about. “Good luck Maxine. I’ll be checking in with you periodically. If anything comes up let me know right away.”

She had been calling me “Maxine” for some time. I reminded myself that I had better get used to answering to a girls’ name. With that she left me alone. I put the clip on my vanity and surveyed the pink bedroom. There were eight apartments in the women only building. They were all about the same size and design as this one.

I had left the boxes containing my male clothing in the basement storage area. For the time being at least I would be living, working, and in essence “being” feminine all the time.

I was up early Friday morning. I wanted to have plenty of time to get ready for my first meeting with Ms. Conti. I slipped two foam inserts in the cups of my white long line bra. The weighted plastic breast forms were no longer needed as my breasts had expanded enough to nearly fill the cups. I put on the bra, girdle and sheer stockings. After applying my makeup I put on a pair of small pearl earrings, the brown wig, a lacy pink camisole and half-slip.

I choose a soft pink blouse with a larger spray of ruffles down the front and a black skirt. I stepped into the four inch stiletto heel pumps and walked over to the full length mirror on the back of the bedroom door. Looking back at me was one very pretty young woman.

I put my ladies wallet and makeup in my purse and slipped on a rain/shine coat. With my purse over my arm I checked my appearance in the mirror once more and then walked out the door.

The warm early morning breeze felt good on my nylon encased legs as I walked to the bus stop. The click of my high heels on the sidewalk was the only sound on the side street.

I waited only a few minutes at the bus stop before mine came and I boarded it with only two other people. I took a seat about halfway back and watched a major city come to life as the twenty minute ride took me uptown.

The main bank building was right on the bus line and I walked quickly to the front door. I went up to the fourth floor and identified myself to the girl at the front desk. I waited a few minutes before Ms. Conti came out to meet me.

She introduced herself and extended her hand. I almost shoved my hand in hers in typical male fashion but managed to hold back slightly and instead I dropped a limp hand in hers and squeezed it slightly.

Ms. Conti was a short dark skinned woman typical of Italian extraction. Her short jet-black hair was pulled back in a conservative style. Her face was not made up and her skin appeared to be oily. I followed her back to her office and she closed the door as I took my seat opposite her desk. She pulled the slack out of her pants as she sat down. After glancing at my application she looked straight at me.

“Maxine I am glad to welcome you here to Manhattan Trust. As you know the previ-



ous applicant was not able to be here and finding someone qualified on short notice has not been easy. In some respects you are a bit under qualified. Here in the international audit division we usually have people who have completed college and are working towards their masters. Never the less I feel we can keep you busy for a couple of months."

"To begin with my secretary has left to have her baby. I will need you to fill in for her until she returns after the Fourth of July weekend. You will be paid the normal salary as an auditor of course. When she returns you will be immediately begin working with me. The girl out front is a temp so I want you to come in Saturday and Sunday to get a head start on how we do things here."

"Please remember that your appearance is very important even at the receptionist level. For the month you will be out front I want you to be dressed like you are here today. Blouses, skirts and pumps, conservative hair and make up, no perfume please. Once the month is up and you begin working in my office you should wear only a jacket and skirt or the sheath type of dress with a hemline no higher than two inches above the knee. I believe Agent Jackson has helped you in this regard."

I nodded my assent. I was wondering why this conversation seemed to be centered more around my appearance than what the job involved but I didn't want to say anything at this point. She had been eyeing me over and that sort of puzzled me too. I was wondering if Lou had told her everything.

"Now then let's go back out front and I will go over a few things with you."

In the next two hours I became familiar with the phone and computer system. When the temp took her lunch break Ms. Conti let me fill in and I managed to do everything properly. At one we both had lunch at a small restaurant around the corner from the bank and then I spent the rest of the afternoon working with the receptionist.

That night when I got home I was tired from the strain of the new job and the unexpected delay in getting into the audit department. I ate a salad for supper and drank a half of bottle of wine. By nine my nerves had been sufficiently calmed so I took a steamy perfumed bubble bath, donned a pink nightgown and went to bed.

The weekend was much slower than the normal workdays would be. By five pm Sunday I was confident of my ability to handle anything. I liked the image I saw in the mirror and enjoyed the looks I got from some of the men that weekend.

The whisper of my half-slip against the taffeta lined skirt along with the click of my high heels gave me a girly feeling I didn't know existed. I wondered if women felt the same way I did.

For my first day of my first full week I decided to wear a peach colored blouse, brown skirt with matching pumps and purse. I decided not to do my nails in peach but did use peach lipstick. That whole entire week was a killer. I was much busier than I thought I would be and I had to skip lunch on several occasions.

I rarely saw Ms. Conti and when I did it was only to say hi and answer the "how's it going?" question. I had not made any mistakes either in my work or my deportment as Lou had called it. I was talking in a more girly voice with no effort just as I had mastered walking in four-inch heels. I kept my elbows in and my hands dangling at the wrist as I

walked. I checked and rechecked my appearance before leaving for work, at work, when returning from my break, and before leaving work for home. I made certain I was what Lou called a “perfect picture of femininity.”

The doorbell rang at six Friday night. I slipped on a filmy chiffon robe over my lingerie and walked to the door. It was Lou. I opened the door and she handed me a bottle of wine as she came in. I was quite surprised to see her pop in.

“Have a seat Lou, what is the occasion?” I asked as I went to the kitchen to open the wine.

“Well you have had quite a week. I wanted to stop by and see how you were doing.”

I returned with two chilled glasses half full and handed her one of them as I sat down next to her on the couch.

“So far, so good. Unfortunately I am Ms. Conti’s secretary until the end of the month. I won’t be able to get started in audit until then.”

Lou nodded and took another sip of the wine.

“There is no further news about your dad either. The disk was quite a quagmire even for forensic accountants. The money transfers are not particularly large but when you put them all together they have begun to add up to a significant sum. Most of them have to do with offshore accounts. We’re still trying to piece a lot of it together.”

I nodded and took another sip of my drink. She slid closer to me and put her arm around my shoulders.

“I know how difficult this must be for you but I want you to know I appreciate what you are going thru for us and your father. It’s not every man who would even consider something like this, let alone going thru with it.”

I was about to answer her when she leaned in and kissed me on the mouth. I was very surprised by this but offered no resistance as she forced my lips apart and I felt her tongue probe inside my mouth. Her arms pulled me closer as the kiss deepened. When we broke she looked deep into my eyes.

“You liked that didn’t you?” she asked.

I nodded.

“I trust then that you are also enjoying your femininity?”

“Yes I am,” I answered quite frankly.

“Good. I’m glad to hear you say that. I had a hunch about you when I first met you. My training and six years as an agent has given me a good insight as to what makes people tick. Believe me there are a lot of men who have a feminine side but are too ashamed or afraid to explore it. You, on the other hand, are the exception.”

Her straightforwardness surprised me but she was right. I was enjoying my disguise or charade, whatever you wanted to call it. I did have trouble figuring out why a woman would be attracted to a feminine man. By the way Lou had acted I guess I just assumed she had liked men. She took another sip of her wine.

"Some women are passive, some are aggressive and some like me can play either way. I do like taking charge. I can tell by the way you reacted to my kiss that you have no trouble being a submissive partner. Am I right again?"

I took a mouthful of wine and swallowed hard. I hadn't ever thought of myself that way but the combination of the shots, lack of body and facial hair and being encased in feminine finery must have unlocked some hidden desire in me. I had no other explanation for it so I simply smiled and nodded.

"That's wonderful Maxine. Now shall we continue with your training then?" she asked with a smile as she got up.

"Do you know how to perform oral sex on a woman?"

"No. I don't recall that being covered in orientation," I joked.

She took a DVD from her purse and put it in the player. As we sipped the wine I watched two beautiful women take turns performing oral sex on each other. Lou ejected the disk and drank the last of the wine in her glass.

"Do you have any questions before we go to the lab Maxine?" she asked with a grin.

I set my glass down. I wasn't sure about this. Lou was supposed to be helping me. I hadn't counted on her being any part of my life. I shook my head and stood up. She took my hand. We went into the bedroom. I was nearly dizzy as we undressed. As we stood opposite one another she smiled again.

"Good, the doctor said you were small."

She wrapped her arms around me and kissed me hard. I liked the softness of her skin and the feel of her larger breasts against my smaller breasts. I was getting pretty steamed up when she broke away from me. I had barely managed to become semi erect.

She spread her legs apart and motioned me to get on my knees. After locking her fingers behind my head she guided me to her sex. I closed my eyes and saw the two women in the DVD as I followed her instructions. I heard her moan and then I was covered with her juices.

"That was very good Maxine," she said as she looked down at me. "I see you no longer can get much of an erection. That is a good thing. It will not be as noticeable under your lingerie."

She reached down and fondled my breasts. Then bent over and kissed me hard. We went over to my bed and lay together. The feeling of girl on girl gave me a great deal of pleasure. A short time later I performed oral sex on her again. When I finished she took my hand and led me to the bathroom where we showered. We soaped each other up and embraced. The sensuality of each other's soft skin was something I had never experienced before. After we rinsed and dried ourselves off she got dressed and I put my nightgown back on.

"Just so you know in case it should come up, Ms. Conti enjoys the same things I do," said Lou.

She kissed me on the cheek, picked up her purse and left.

I sat on the couch for awhile and finished the wine. I was in a conflict of sorts. I had been seduced, sort of, by a dominant aggressive woman. I hadn't resisted. I had been trained in giving oral sex to a woman instead of having normal male/female intercourse.

What stood out more than anything else I guess was the fact that I liked being the submissive one. I liked it when she took charge and told me what to do. I enjoyed being the feminine partner. I began to wonder what this was going to lead to. I knew I was becoming more and more feminine. Would I ever be able to get back to the masculine person I used to be or more importantly I guess was a bigger question. Since I had enjoyed my time with Lou would I ever WANT to go back to the masculine person I used to be? And what about that remark, "Ms. Conti enjoys the same things I do"?

I went back to work and for the next two weeks was very busy. I got another shot at a downtown clinic but had heard nothing from Lou. I was becoming totally feminine. I was doing things in a natural way not in an "acting" way. I kept my hair, nails, and make up impeccable at all times. Everything I did was done in a feminine manner. It was now second nature to me.

Ms. Conti asked me to see her for a few minutes before leaving Friday. It would be the end of my third week as her receptionist. I was hoping her secretary would be coming back early and I could get started doing the job that I was here for in the first place. I had proven myself to be a competent secretary/receptionist but I wanted to get my teeth into a "real" job. The more time I spent as a secretary the less time I would have to help investigate my father's death.

At four thirty that Friday I shut down the phone and computer systems. I walked to her office and stood in the doorway. She was on the phone but motioned me inside. I took a seat across from her and waited for her to finish her call. After hanging up the phone she smiled as she leaned back in her chair.

"I need your help this Sunday, have you made any plans?" she asked.

Rule#1 in the workplace is that unless you are having brain surgery, getting married, or some other momentous, once in a lifetime thing taking place in your life you never have plans when your boss asks "Do you have plans?"

"No. I can work Sunday if you need me here," I answered

"This doesn't have to do with work. I am having some business associates, several of whom are from other countries, to my home for an afternoon get together. Would you mind coming to my house Sunday morning about eleven and help me get things ready for them?"

"I would also like you to assist me in serving a light lunch. After the lunch I will have a short business meeting and then they will leave. I will need you to assist me cleaning up afterward."

"I would be happy to help you out," I replied.

"Good. Here is the address. Come casual as I have proper attire for you at home."

With that she turned away from me and picked up the phone again. I got up and went home. Her request had seemed harmless at the outset, though the expression "proper attire" had me a bit puzzled.

I spent Saturday touching up my pink finger and toenails. I got a few groceries and washed my lingerie. I watched the department DVD again and re read the books Lou had given me. I wanted to be at my very best feminine behavior tomorrow afternoon.

As I sat in my perfumed bubble bath that night I went over my arms and legs with a disposable razor. The laser and electrolysis had taken care of just about every hair I had on my body but I wanted to be sure I was hair free and girly smooth all over.

The next morning I ate breakfast and put on my make up. I wore the black wig with a denim skirt, pink peasant blouse and a pair of four-inch wedgies to show off my freshly painted pink toenails. At ten fifteen I took a cab uptown and arrived at her prestigious address about a quarter of eleven. I pushed the button for her apartment and she buzzed me in. The elevator took me to the sixth floor and I walked down the hallway to her apartment. I rang the bell and a few minutes later she opened the door.

"Come in Maxine, I am glad you are here."

She stepped aside as I walked in. To say her apartment was magnificent would not do it justice. Even with a fairly good vocabulary I couldn't come up with anything better. While the surroundings came as no surprise her appearance did. She wore an all leather black pantsuit, highly polished black leather boots with flat soles, and a white leather shirt with a small black leather bowtie. With no makeup and her jet-black hair pulled back she presented quite a masculine appearance. As I had walked in I detected the faint aroma of after-shave lotion.

"Follow me please. I have everything in a back bedroom."

I followed her thru the living area to a hallway and then left to a small bedroom. This bedroom was all done in pink and white. The queen size bed had a pink bedspread and I had no doubt pink satin sheets and pillowcases underneath it. The pink chiffon drapes matched the deep plush pink carpeting.

"Your lingerie is on the bed. After you put them on come and get me."

She turned around and left as I walked over to the bed. I undressed and put on a black bra, a pair of black satin panties, a black garter belt and fishnet stockings. I went out to the living room. Ms. Conti's face brightened when she saw me. She got up from the couch and came back to the bedroom with me.

"Sit at the vanity please," she instructed.

I sat down in the pink cushioned chair and looked at myself in the large mirror with a pink border. She stood behind me with her arms crossed.

"Curl your eyelashes, and then apply the dark blue eye shadow, eyeliner and mascara. Wipe off your pink lipstick and apply the dark red lipstick and the matching dark red rouge."

I followed her instructions and when I finished she clipped two long earrings to my earlobes. Next she sprayed my neck, bust line and wrists generously with some very ex-

pensive smelling French perfume. At the top of my black wig she pinned a white maids' cap.

"You look absolutely gorgeous," she cooed. "Now let's get you in uniform."

I got up and followed her over to the massive closet. She opened the doors and removed a short white petticoat from the hangar. I stepped into it and pulled it up to my waist. She unzipped a black satin French Maid mini dress and held it up by the hem. I put my arms thru the puff sleeves and slipped it over my head. I turned around and she zipped me up. She added a white tricot apron tying it in the back with a large bow. Next she fastened a white lace choker around my neck and then two wristlets around my wrists. Last she placed a pair of black five-inch heel stiletto pumps at my feet. I stepped into them to find they were a perfect fit. She had somehow known my exact size in everything I was wearing.

"There you are my dear, just the perfect image of a very feminine French maid. You do know how to curtsy don't you?"

I wasn't sure exactly how to do it but I grabbed the hem of the dress and petticoats, placed one foot behind the other and squatted down a little and then back up again.

"That's pretty good but you need a little more practice to be perfect. Now follow me please."

We walked back to the main hallway. I was just a bit unsteady in the five-inch heels and the petticoats had made the skirt of the dress bounce as I walked behind her. She stopped at a small door.

"Take the feather duster and dust the living and dining room. Then come back here and get the vacuum cleaner and do the dining and living room carpets please."

I took the feather duster and while she sat on the couch and watched me I dusted both rooms. I returned with the vacuum cleaner and completed the job. When I returned from the hallway I stood in front of her.

"Curtsey again for me please," she asked.

I repeated my curtsy several times until I had performed it exactly the way she wanted it done.

"That's fine. That's the way I want you to do it. I want you to be a little more coquettish though. Remember to let your hands dangle at the wrist in front of you when you walk. Now lets' go into the dining room."

I walked ahead of her and stopped at the beautiful wood table. She removed a white muslin sheet from a drawer beneath a massive china closet and I helped her put it on the table. On top of that we placed a gorgeous white tablecloth. We set the table for six places and then we were done

"Now to the kitchen," she said.

I followed here out to the huge kitchen. It was as big as my whole apartment. She showed me the wine bottles in the giant refrigerator and the wine glasses cooling on the lower shelf. A large tray on wheels was off to one side.

"I'll open the wine bottles just before my guests arrive and then you can put them on the cart with the frosted glasses. Now come over to the sink."

At the sink she handed me a wine bottle and picked up a wine glass.

"The bottle contains water. I want you to pour the water in my glass as if it were wine."

I poured very carefully until her glass was half full, and then stopped.

She nodded approvingly.

"That's perfect. Always pour half a glass unless the guest asks for more."

I set the bottle down and she dumped the water in her glass down the sink.

"We have some time before my guests arrive so lets' go into the living room and sit down."

I followed her back to the expansive living room. With both hands behind me I pushed the skirt and petticoats out a little, sat down next to her and crossed my legs. The look on her faced indicated she was pleased with my feminine actions as well as my ability to perform according to her instructions in the traditional manner of a good French Maid.

"My secretary will definitely be back after next week so we can get you started in audit. I know it's what you want to do and even with only eight weeks I am sure we can give you some meaningful work experience," she said.

"Thank you I am glad to hear that," I replied

The doorbell rang. I got up, fluffed my skirt, and then walked to the door. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Ms. Conti smile as the skirt of my uniform bounced as I walked to the door. The five-inch stiletto pumps made no sound in the deep pile carpeting.

When I opened it I was surprised to see Lou. She was dressed in a bright pink mini skirt, over the knee pink spike heel boots, a pink satin puff sleeve blouse and a large pink sissy bow in her hair. Her nails were a bright pink to match her pink lipsticked mouth. She had a dainty pink purse on a gold chain dangling from one shoulder.

She walked in, stopped in front of me, and looked me up and down. With both hands she suddenly grabbed the hem of the dress and petticoats. She yanked them up and grinned at me. It took me by surprise.

"Very nice Maxine, I knew you would make a terrific French Maid."

She let go of the hem and walked to the couch where she sat down next to Ms. Conti giving her a peck on the cheek. As they looked into each other's eyes Ms. Conti turned to look up at me.

"Please station yourself near the door Maxine as our other guests may be arriving soon. When they do arrive please escort them in here to the living room."

With that she turned her attention back to Lou. I turned around and walked back to the small foyer at the front door. I could not hear their conversation but there were several bursts of giggles as I waited.

While waiting I looked at my reflection in the large mirror on the wall next to the door. The pretty French Maid smiled back at me and I did an impromptu courtesy. The women were right I definitely made a terrific French Maid.

I didn't have long to wait. The three couples arrived with in minutes of each other. I guess I should not have been surprised that they were composed of three women like Ms. Conti, middle aged, without makeup in leather pants boots and shirts and three like Lou, all very feminine women dressed in hot pink sissy outfits with matching pink nails and lipstick.

When everyone was seated I poured the wine and then was directed to wait in the kitchen. I sat there for about thirty minutes when Ms. Conti rang a small bell and I returned with the cart to refill the glasses. Another forty minutes went by and the bell rang again.

I returned to the living room and refilled the sissies' glasses as they all looked me over. Ms. Conti and the three other mannish looking women were seated at the table, each with their own notebook computer. As I passed by them on my way back to the kitchen her three guests looked me over as well.

I wondered if I had been invited here to be put on display or because Ms. Conti really did need some help. I did not get a real close look at the sissies except Lou. Maybe some of them were men or had been men too. It seemed to be a rather strange situation to say the least.

A half hour passed and Ms. Conti rang the bell. I wheeled the cart into the dining room to find the couples were just leaving. After closing the door she walked back to me.

"You did a fine job. Now please pick up the glasses and take them back to the kitchen."

I began picking up the wine glasses as she removed the tablecloth and pad. After folding them up and putting them away she joined me in the kitchen.

"There's a pair of latex gloves in the drawer on the left side of the sink. Put them on and fill the sink. You wash and I'll dry."

I put on the pink latex gloves and filled the sink with hot soapy water and a plastic tub with hot clear water. I washed each glass carefully and then placed it in the rinse water. Ms. Conti then dried each one and set it on the counter. When we finished she led me back to the bedroom.

"I almost hate to see you change," she said. "You look so delightfully feminine in that uniform. Next time I think I'll have you wear the pink one."

Next time?, I asked myself as she removed the maids cap and choker. What next time? I removed my wristlets as she unzipped me. She hung up the dress as I slid the petticoat down and too it off. She hung it up and I stepped out of my pumps. I was about to unhook my fishnet stockings when she placed her hand on mine.

"Leave them on please," she said softly.

I looked at her as she stepped closer. My heart was beating faster as she wrapped her arms around my waist and kissed me hard. It was a forceful masculine sort of kiss unlike Lou's that had been soft and feminine. I didn't know what to do. She was my boss. She moved her hands up and unhooked my bra.

"Lou was right. They are very nice," she laughed and kissed me again.

She undressed and shortly I was on my knees between her legs. Later on the bed she caressed me and murmured something in Italian. I looked at her to see her eyes were closed. She had fallen asleep so I got up and dressed.

As I passed the dining room table I saw the laptop. I walked over and opened it up. There were numerous files in the documents section. Her calendar had my name on today's date and the word "friends". Everything else was password protected. I turned it off and closed the lid.

That night I lay awake. It was hard to relax and go to sleep when I was in the middle of something like this. As much as I enjoyed my role-play as a mincing French Maid I probably shouldn't have performed oral sex on Ms. Conti. Then again if I hadn't what would happen when I went to work for her the next week?

Lou had said previously Ms. Conti liked the same things she did. Lou enjoyed being dominant to me as much as she enjoyed being the submissive sissy to Ms. Conti. I wondered about the three couples that had shown up. What the relationship was between all of them? Was it business or some sort of "sex club"?

What, if anything, did this had to do with my fathers' death? I had one week left as a secretary and then I might be able to find out. I closed my eyes and drifted off to sleep.

The next week went by quickly. Ms. Conti had not said anything to me. She was her normal, cool, professional self. Her secretary stopped by to show off her new baby girl. Everything was fine with her new little one and she would be in Monday as scheduled.

I felt more relaxed that weekend. Monday I would begin my training and I was anxious to get started. I was still a little fearful of what kind of relationship I was developing with Ms. Conti. I was in a difficult position. I wanted to help Lou get to the bottom of my father's killer. At the same time being intimate with her and Ms. Conti, then finding out they were intimate with each other was something of a conundrum since I was working with one and for the other.

This was quite a mess I had walked into and I wasn't sure just how I was going to extricate myself from it and return to my former life. I mean I doubted if I would ever be the same again after what I had been through. The only thing I could do I guess was continue to play it by ear.

I reported for my first day of audit training wearing a brown jacket, matching skirt, pumps, purse and mid length leather gloves. A barely visible splash of white lace peeked above my jacket from my peach camisole and matching half-slip. I wore soft peach lipstick and kept my nails pink.

Ms. Conti eyed me closely up and down as I walked in. I was certain she was scrutinizing me for more than one reason. I had taken great care in getting dressed and putting on my makeup. My work was the important thing but I knew she also expected me to be perfectly feminine too.

The computer system was easy to learn. I picked up the check and balance software easily so that by the end of the week I was already proficient in the compilation of the internal audit reports of cash flow and small customer accounts. The next week followed with small business accounts. Another week of the same thing and then I began a week of

corporate audits. I was working longer hours and Saturdays but the more she threw at me the more was driven to complete it accurately and on time.

Lou stopped by on the Saturday night after I had completed my first month. I was quite tired after a long day of work and then stopping on my way home to get another shot but the wine she brought had loosened me up a little.

It wasn't long before our conversation was in bed. There was no more news about my dad. The forensic accountants had not produced anything either but they were in her words "closing in on something that looked pretty big."

Lou was quite pleased with the quality of my work and the size of my breasts. I was on the verge of having to replace my bras with a larger cup size. She fondled them and idly remarked that it probably wouldn't be very long before I was bigger than she was. I failed to hold back my giggle and she squelched it with a kiss. After I went down on her again we showered. She delighted in soaping them up as well as rinsing them off.

The last month began with my first look at the international end of things. This was more complex and I was spending more time at the office. I had my first teleconference with the London branch and was introduced to the manager, a Mr. Leeds. His New York liaison, a Ms. Wilshire, sat in with us.

When I had entered the room she too had taken her time looking me up and down. Apparently my navy jacket, slim skirt and stiletto pumps met with her approval. In fact it was embarrassingly similar to the one she was wearing. The navy lace at the top of my powder blue camisole peeked just above the top button of my jacket. My light pink lipstick and blusher matched my pink nails nicely. All in all both women seemed to be pleased with my appearance though nothing was said of course.

Friday of the second week I ran into what might be best described as an anomaly. I stumbled on it quite by accident. It was something I hadn't even been looking for but it was late and Ms. Conti had already left so I wasn't sure if I should pursue it. I was careful to document what I had found and then proceeded to shut down the computer. I wanted to start again in the morning when I would be fresh.

That night as I soaked in my perfumed bubble bath, something I had become accustomed to enjoying after a long arduous day, I thought about what I had found. It was the first clue in almost a year that might shed some light on my father's death. I pondered the significance of this find. Maybe I could be out of here by the end of the month and I could return to just being a college student. I slept well that night with the hopes that the next day would bring me some answers.

Because it was Saturday I came to work wearing a soft pink chiffon blouse, black slim skirt and my black pumps. I booted up the system and began running some basic checks that all had dead ends. I continued using other methods and found I was in files that involved large sums of money but the accounts weren't located anywhere in our system.

I decided to phone Ms. Conti at home but she didn't answer. I tried Ms. Wilshire but couldn't reach her either. I decided to call the London branch to see if Mr. Leeds happened

to be in and he was. I gave him the information I had and in less than an hour he called me back.

“Do not pursue this any further,” he said in a very serious voice. “Do not talk to ANY-ONE about this and have Ms. Conti call me immediately when she gets in Monday.”

He hung up abruptly. I sat there and looked at the data in front of me. I knew I had found something of importance but exactly what was the million-dollar question. I continued working on other things for the rest of the day.

Sunday was a hell of a day. I couldn't seem to focus on anything. I almost felt like maybe I had stumbled on the plans to finance a major drug deal, a nuclear weapon for terrorists or God only knows what. My head was full of “maybes and what ifs” as I tried to keep busy. Finally I took in a movie to take my mind off things. Monday morning would come soon enough and I would find out what just what I had stumbled into.

That morning, except for my seamed stockings with Cuban heels, I dressed all in black. Foundation garments, half-slip, camisole, jacket, skirt, stiletto pumps, gloves and matching purse. I stayed with pink lipstick and blusher.

The bus ride to work seemed to take forever. I didn't know what I was walking into and felt inadequately prepared for what I might have to face. I didn't think that I had done anything wrong thinking that it was appropriate to notify somebody of what I had found.

As I walked into the main office Ms. Conti was standing in the doorway of her office.

“In my office, NOW!” she said in a firm voice.

I put my purse and gloves in my desk drawer. When I reached the door way she was sitting behind her desk with a very serious look on her face.

“Close the door,” she barked.

My pulse began to elevate as I shut the door and took a seat opposite her.

“Do you know what “protocol” means as applied to hierarchy or chain of command?” she asked

“Well, I think so. It means to inform or talk to your immediate superior before taking any action that is outside of your authority,” I answered trying not to display the fear in my voice.

“Close enough. I got a call late Saturday night from Ms. Wilshire regarding the anomaly you have found. Apparently you had called Mr. Leeds on Saturday morning, is that not correct?”

“Yes, but I had tried to get both you and Ms. Wilshire to no avail. I didn't know just how serious this thing was but I felt it was the proper to let someone in authority know right away. Was I wrong?”

My voice trailed off as she waved her arm. The expression on her face didn't change. I guess I now had at least one answer to all the questions that had been jumping around in my head all weekend. This had to be something big.

“I understand you thought you were doing the right thing but actually it would have been better to wait until I got here Monday morning. You are forgiven but don't make that

mistake again. Always clear things with me first and don't EVER make any international calls to a higher authority for as long as you are here. Is that understood?"

"Yes," I answered with a dry voice.

"Very well. You have done a great job so far and picked things up faster than many of your predecessors. There is going to be another conference call with Mr. Leeds of the London branch later this morning. Ms. Wilshire will be here with Mr. Granby of the British embassy as well. You will not be a part of it but I have some things for you to do. Follow the instructions on the top sheet and I will meet with you later in the day."

"Yes Ms. Conti."

She handed me a large brown folder. I took it from her and got up.

I walked out of her office and went back to my desk. I set the large folder down and took several deep breaths. When I felt my pulse return to near normal I opened the folder and took out the top sheet. I went over the list of instructions and then booted up my computer

It was a very tedious morning. There were four files in the folder and it took me an hour and a half to finish the first one. The hardest part was that I wasn't sure exactly what I was looking for. Ms. Conti hadn't spelled things out too clearly in her instructions. She had left shortly after I began the first file and didn't come back until I was nearly done with the second. She stopped at my desk only for minute to check on my progress and then left right away.

After I got back from lunch I started on the third file. This one and the fourth one were much thicker and would probably take much longer to finish. It was just after five when I completed my work. I replaced everything in the folder and left it on top of my desk. Ms. Conti hadn't come back yet so I went home.

Several glasses of wine calmed my nerves. I ate a light supper and watched some television. A steamy bubble bath and slipping into a recently purchased royal blue satin chemise made me feel a whole lot better although my head was in tomorrow's work.

I gave my toenails another coat of bright pink and touched up my fingernails. I was just about to shut the television off when on the ten o'clock news there was a report of a British embassy official that had been found dead at his residence. There were few details but "authorities were continuing their investigation"

I shut off the television and went to bed. The luxurious feel of the satin chemise on my hair free girly skin did not lessen the impact of the news story but the slippery blue cocoon I was wearing made going to sleep a little easier.

The next day I dressed all in black again. I didn't know what I might be doing or who I might be meeting with an embassy now involved. The morning news had no further information about the official's death. I wondered if this death had anything to do with yesterday's conference call. There were a number of questions I wanted to ask but I wanted to be careful not to get too nosy.

When I walked in the office the folder containing the files I had worked on the day before was gone. Ms. Conti was on the phone so I sat at my desk and booted up my computer.

Shortly she stood in the doorway of her office and wiggled her finger for me to come in. I walked in closing the door behind me and took a seat across from her.

"I don't suppose you might have heard about the death of a member of the British Embassy last night?"

"Yes I did. Is his death connected with any of this?"

"At this time the British Embassy is assisting the police in their investigation. They are also continuing to work with us, that is, me, in a parallel investigation regarding the things you have found. I cannot tell you more at this time since you don't have the necessary security clearance. I have some additional things for you to do the rest of the week in conjunction with what you did yesterday. I will be in meetings the next few days so if you have questions ask me now."



She handed me two large folders similar to the one I had worked on yesterday. I asked a few questions, then got up and went back to my desk. I set both folders down and took a deep breath. Now there was another death and the British Embassy was involved. How much deeper was this thing going to get?

Ms. Conti walked out of her office quickly and headed down the hall to the conference room. I opened the first folder and got started with my audit. I worked a little slower this time. It was like feeling my way thru a minefield. I had to be careful so I didn't blow myself up.

It was an arduous week to say the least. At least there was chilled fine wine and steamy bubble baths at the end of each day. I watched very little TV that week and slept more soundly. At work I saw Ms. Conti only once and awhile. She was in and out of her office and the conference room quite a bit, always with that serious look on her face.

My work was progressing but because I had no reason to talk to her I was still in the dark. Sometimes it was hard to concentrate on the task at hand. When you are "in the dark", so to speak, you don't see the "big picture."

Lou took me out to eat Thursday night. I was nearly late for work Friday morning after a night of good food, good wine and great sex. I began to have doubts as to whether or not I was ever going to be able to return to my "male self" again.

I had just sat down at my desk and opened the first of three thick files that were sitting there when Ms. Conti came out of her office and stopped in front of me.

"There seems to be a break in this case. There are still a lot of loose ends. Keep doing what you are doing and if you don't finish come in tomorrow instead of staying late to-night."

I nodded and was about to ask some questions but she turned around and headed for the conference room with a large briefcase. Lucky me I thought to myself. How did I ever manage to get myself into this mess? Was there ever going to be a way out of it?

I spend the rest of the day diligently going thru the folders and compiling the proper information for the reports Ms. Conti had requested. I decided that if I was to be kept in the dark about most everything maybe I shouldn't be busting my butt so hard. I slacked off a little, took a couple of breaks and a little longer lunch hour. I was nearly done by five and decided to follow Ms. Conti's advice.

I took myself out to eat, saw a movie and got home late. Another bubble bath and a good eight hours sleep made me feel very refreshed when I got up the next morning at seven. I got to the office a little after eight. Two accidents had caused the bus to run late.

I booted up the computer and then finished my work. Ms. Conti wasn't in her office and the conference room was empty too. I assembled the separate reports to give to her if she came in. Once again I stumbled across an anomaly. I used a red marking pen and noted a connection between all of the reports. I had just finished when Ms. Conti came in.

"Good morning Maxine," she said with a smile as she walked to her office.

I followed her carrying the folders with my reports on the top.

"Good morning Ms. Conti. I have found something unusual and have cross referenced it in red."

"Thank you. Please set them down on my desk. I will look at them before I go. I have a meeting at the British Embassy in an hour and that must come first. I have one folder left and then we will be finished with our end of the investigation."

She handed me the folder and I walked back to my desk. I wondered idly just how many "ends" there were in this investigation. She still hadn't been forthcoming with much information about this or my father's death. She left the office a few moments later and I

opened the remaining thick folder. I hoped this would be the last of the tedious work at "my end".

The phone rang as I opened the folder. When I answered it a voice with a French accent asked for Ms. Conti and added the words "French Embassy calling". I explained she was not here and asked to take a message. There was a pause, a single word answer: "no" and then the caller hung up.

I waited a minute for my pulse to return to normal before continuing my work. First my father's death, next three attempts on my life, then a British Embassy official is dead, now the French Embassy is calling.

Whatever my father uncovered, either by accident or by design, had implications far beyond the Albany branch of Manhattan Trust. I had been thrust into this incognito, to save my life, and maybe uncover the mystery of what was going on that had international implications.

I was here by default more or less but I began to feel like I was in an enclosed swimming pool with the water getting higher and higher. If I couldn't find the shut off valve or open the drain I was going to die.

There was just so much I didn't know and my only option was to keep plowing ahead. Plowing ahead in the daylight was one thing but I was doing it in the dark and I seem to be moving faster and faster without knowing what was ahead. This was the kind of thing that could get you killed.

Ms. Conti returned just after three pm. She seemed to be more relaxed and stopped at my desk.

"How are things going?" she inquired.

"I'm just about halfway thru the last folder. Nothing has jumped out at me yet," I replied.

"Good. Close it up and finish it Monday. I don't think we may need it. At any rate there is dinner at the British Embassy at six tonight. This is an executive's dinner party so formal wear is required Please stop by the Drummonds' department store where I have your clothes picked out. A limo will pick you up at five. Be ready."

"Yes Ms. Conti I will," I answered.

She turned and went quickly into her office. I closed up the folder and locked it in the bottom drawer. After shutting off my computer I touched up my makeup and left the office.

At Drummonds I identified myself to the sales clerk and was taken to a dressing room in the formal wear section. I undressed to my foundation garments and the clerk helped me into a stunning cocktail dress. It was black velvet from the waist up with short sleeves and the broad skirt was violet taffeta from the waist to the hem that was just above the knee.

The dress fit like a glove and so did the matching peep toe four-inch stiletto heel suede pumps. I tried on the gloves that came nearly to my elbows and they fit perfectly too. My

only concern was the large taffeta bow at the base of the zipper. This was kind of a “girly” thing and I didn’t think it was appropriate for an adult to wear to a formal dinner party.

I took off the dress and the clerk placed it in the bag. She mentioned that the purse had some personal items for me to wear that evening. The gloves, pumps and matching clutch bag were placed in the bottom of the dress bag. I signed for everything at the register and went home.

I checked the mail and found nothing but junk which I promptly tossed in the garbage. I hung the dress bag up in my closet and got undressed. After putting on my pink shower cap I enjoyed the needle spray of a hot shower.

Following the shower I used some perfumed dusting powder. I put on black foundation garments, sheer panty hose and my black wig. I removed the purse from the garment bag, sat at my vanity and opened it up.

There was a pair of mid length earrings which I put on right away. Next I attached the violet colored press on nails, and applied the violet lipstick and darker rouge to my face. I used violet eyes shadow, black eye liner and mascara to complete my look. A small spray of perfume behind each ear from the sample bottle in the purse and I was ready. I had to admit I did look stunning.

I got up and put the dress on. I loved the feel of the velvet top on my bare skin as well as the taffeta skirt on my nylon-encased legs. I stepped into the pumps, put the gloves on and then transferred my things from the purse I had at work to my evening bag. I watched some TV and then the doorbell rang.

The limo was on time. I walked out of the building and over to the curb. The driver held the door open for me as I smoothed the dress with one hand as I sat down and then swung my legs in. Ms. Conti smiled at me as I crossed my legs.

“You are absolutely ravishing,” she said with a smile.

“Thank you Ms. Conti,” I replied.

Ms. Conti was wearing a black pantsuit and black flat sole boots. She wore no makeup and made no conversation as we rode to the embassy. On our arrival the driver opened the door and I made a graceful and ladylike exit from the limo. I walked ahead of Ms. Conti and the doorman opened the front door.

“Straight ahead, past the reception area, and then down the corridor on your right,” directed Ms. Conti.

Halfway down the hallway she grabbed my elbow and we turned left into a large room. We were seated at one of the tables and shortly a waiter brought over a tray of half filled wine glasses. We each took one and he left.

“I feel a little out of place Ms. Conti. I am afraid I have never been to something like this before and you may find me considerably lacking in social skills. I am used to pizza and beer joints.”

“Relax dear.” “You are here to be seen and converse. I have to leave for a few minutes and then I will return.”

She got up and left. I surveyed the room. There were couples at other tables and a few well-dressed men at the small bar in one corner of the room. I sipped my wine slowly and Ms. Conti returned about twenty minutes later accompanied by a tall, thin bald man.

“Mr. Granby I would like you to meet my associate Ms. Maxine Landon. Ms. Landon this is Mr. Granby of the British Embassy.”

I smiled up at him. I let my gloved hand dangle at the wrist, placed it gently in his outstretched hand, and gave it a gentle, ladylike squeeze. He let go of my hand and looked directly in my eyes.

“I am please to meet your acquaintance Ms. Landon. Ms. Conti has told me what an outstanding job you have done. I am pleased to tell you that we are very close to, as you Americans say. “busting this thing wide open”. I don’t know what might have happened if you had not come upon it. Now please excuse me as I would like to greet our other guests before I must return to another meeting.”

He turned and walked away. Ms. Conti sat down and a waiter stopped by to refresh our glasses.

A waitress brought some hors d’oeuvres. Now there were more people at the tables. The conversation was muted and I began to wonder just what this was about. Once again I was in the dark so to speak.

Ms. Conti got up and left for about a half an hour and then came back smiling. We were served a salad and then a main course. I ate in silence. I didn’t know what to expect here. Dessert and coffee or tea was last. I enjoyed everything and was touching up my lipstick when Mr. Granby and another man walked by our table and nodded in our direction. Ms. Conti nodded back.

“Looks like things are coming to a head,” she whispered to me. “We’re expecting some good news from the London branch. Excuse me for a few minutes.”

She got up and left to join Mr. Granby and the other man. They disappeared into an office and here I sat wondering what the hell was going on. Twenty minutes went by before Ms. Conti returned and took her seat beside me. Mr. Granby walked to a lectern. The room grew quiet.

“Ladies and Gentlemen thank you for coming. I will be brief. First let me congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Edwards on the occasion of their fortieth wedding anniversary. Second, the finance meeting has been canceled with a new date to be announced sometime next week. Third, I am very pleased to announce that despite a number of recent mergers there will be no loss of jobs here or in Great Britain. While our financial position has been strained as of late we are weathering the storm and you should not be concerned. Thank you and have a pleasant evening.”

Mr. Granby walked from the lectern to a smattering of applause as people began to get up from their tables to leave.

Ms. Conti and I got up from our table. I turned to her to ask a question and she put a single finger to her lips. We joined the others in exiting the embassy.

At the curb Ms. Conti held the door for me and I got in. I slid over and was reminded how wonderful it was to be wearing a dress with a taffeta skirt. It felt so good on my

smooth nylon encased legs. Ms. Conti got in beside me and the limo pulled out from the curb. We rode in silence for a few minutes.

“Thank you for accompanying me this evening. I know it was on short notice. This was as ruse to get certain people away from their office and home computers. A lot of “snooping” has been going on and while we aren’t going to know the results until later you should know that everything is coming to a head quite rapidly.”

I simply nodded and said nothing. Nothing is exactly what I had been getting since this whole thing started. Zip. NADA. There were a dozen things I wanted to know and I wasn’t going to get the answer too. This could not continue for very long. At this point I didn’t want to bring anything up because I wanted to stay in Ms. Conti’s good graces.

The limo stopped a block from my building. Ms. Conti got out and held the door for me. I almost expected her to want to come in but she didn’t. I went inside my apartment and tossed my clutch bag on the couch. I twirled around and played with the skirt a little, sort of like a model would. I liked what I saw in the mirror. I liked the way I felt. For the first time I thought about NOT going back to my male self.

I undressed and stood naked in front of the full-length mirror. Except for the shrunken genitals I had a female body. I turned my bath water on and then sat at the vanity to remove my nails and makeup. As I slid in the sweet smelling pink foam I thought about what I should do when this all ends.

It wasn’t as if I didn’t have any choice. If everything was cleared up my life would no longer be in danger. I could continue my schooling and my life as a man. I held the bar of perfumed soap under my nose and then scrubbed myself all over. I closed my eyes and lay back in the tub awash in the sweet smelling suds.

I looked down at my breasts and felt them tingle as I thought of Lou. I would probably not be able to see her again, well not as a woman anyway. She would be assigned another case and that would be that. If my apprenticeship were going to continue would I go back to the bank in Albany or stay here in Manhattan with Ms. Conti?

I opened the drain, stood up, and showered the perfumed suds off my smooth womanly body. After drying myself off I put on my pale blue satin nightgown and slipped between the sheets. I could sleep well as tomorrow was Sunday. The knowledge of whatever was going to happen could wait until Monday. I closed my eyes and dreamed I was dancing with Lou in my new cocktail dress.

The entire week went by and there was not a word from anybody. On Monday I had finished the folder on my desk and took it into Ms. Conti. She smiled as she thanked me and set it aside. I went back to my desk and resumed my normal audit work.

The summer was drawing to a close and everything was still up in the air. I had hoped this would have been over with by this time as I was getting very anxious to say the least. I didn’t have long to wait.

The front page of the Sunday paper was splashed with a black headline: “Feds Nab Money Ring for Terrorists.” I sat back in my chair as I stared at the headline. There was a picture of Mr. Leeds and Mr. Granby as well as Jonathan Parks the CEO of Manhattan Trust. There were brief quotes from each of them about being “pleased with the co-opera-

tion of the international banking community to round these people up.” There were more pictures of arrests made in England and France. Near the end my father’s name was mentioned as the one who initially stumbled on to it and was murdered for his trouble. His killers were still at large.

The main story was quite lengthy and by the time I finished reading it straight thru I had to re-heat my breakfast tea. If my father’s killers were still at large, I wondered if that meant I was still at risk. If so, would I be continuing my disguise? And for how long?

Sunday went by slowly. I read the article again. No matter what I did I couldn’t get my mind off that story. Monday I would see Ms. Conti first thing. I was going after the truth about my dad and my future as well. Even with a soothing, perfumed bubble bath I did not sleep well that night

The next morning after I put on my makeup I looked at the image in the mirror. I had become an attractive woman. I had been living and working as a woman for several months now. I had been feminized to the degree that I could hardly be described as a man and yet that was still my biology.

I stood in front of the mirror in my foundation garments and full-length slip. I was all woman in that reflection. I stepped into a black sheath dress and zipped myself up. I liked the sheath dress as I felt it accentuated my bust waist and hips better. I put on my gloves, stepped into my pumps and picked up my matching purse. Once again I saw an attractive businesswoman looking back at me from the mirror.

As I walked effortlessly in my four-inch heel stiletto pumps to the bus stop I thought about what was going to happen when I gave all this up. Transitioning had taken several months and now that the reverse was imminent, it would take several months too. I boarded the bus and took my seat.

On the way to the bank I watched New Yorkers on their way to work. Everybody was moving quickly. New York was a bustling town. Albany and the surrounding area had been much quieter. I thought about that too as I rode uptown. Big city hustle, big money or smaller city, quiet, less money.

The sudden braking of the bus to avoid a cab brought me back to reality. I got off at the next stop and walked to the bank. As I rode to the fourth floor I felt my heartbeat accelerate. Today was the day I should have answers to all my questions.

Ms. Conti was already there. I went straight to my desk. After I put my purse and gloves in the drawer I booted up my computer and began going over some of the things I had been working on before I had gone thru the folders.

Shortly Ms. Conti came out of her office and motioned me to come in. I got up and as I walked to her office my pulse began racing again. This was the culmination of about a month of my work and several months of intense investigation by many others. I was full of anticipation as I closed the office door and took my seat opposite her. She shuffled a few papers on her desk and looked up at me.

“As you know by now there have been a number of arrests in this terrorist operation. I would like to share some details with you but I’m afraid I can’t due to the sensitive nature

of this and the fact that the FBI, Homeland Security and Interpol are involved. Trust me Maxine we believe we have everybody that was connected with this operation."

"In addition I am pleased to tell you that the contract cleaner the building uses reported the janitor who found your father had killed himself or was murdered the night before the day of the arrests. Speculation, and it is only speculation, is that he is the one who killed your father. I cannot delve into that any further either as the police investigation is still continuing."

"Now, as to your specific situation. In the few months you have worked here I have been very pleased with your work and I have notified my superior of that. Registration is just around the corner and I know you want to get back to school to finish your degree. Before you do however, Agent Jackson of the FBI is going to be here on Friday and wanted to talk to you before you go. I believe she mentioned 3pm. I will meet with you afterwards. You will be given a letter of recommendation for completing your summer apprenticeship. You will also receive letters of commendation, one from us and one from the British Embassy, for initiating the investigation which resulted in the breakup of this organization."

"In conclusion I know you have many more questions. Unfortunately I am not able to answer them for you. Please accept my and the banks apologies for this but due to the nature of what has happened and the international implications we feel it best to limit the release of information. Now please finish up what you have scheduled to do. I will be in more meetings most of the week."

I got up and went back to my desk. I was hoping that more of what I had helped accomplish could have been made known to me. Maybe the meeting on Friday with Lou would shed some light on things but I had my doubts. If Ms. Conti had to clam up I had no doubt that Lou would have the same orders.

It was a very long week. I finished the projects I had been assigned and turned each one in to Ms. Conti. I hardly saw her at all except when she stopped in her office for a few minutes or went to lunch. I was sure there were many loose ends to take care of as well as the implementation of measures to insure that this did not happen again.

Just before three on Friday Lou walked in the office and motioned me to join her in Ms. Conti's office. I took the last project with me and set it in the top basket of Ms. Conti's desk before sitting down next to Lou on the couch. I crossed my legs and Lou smiled as the hem of my skirt rode up. She handed me my letters of commendation, completion, and my last check.

"Maxine on behalf of Homeland security, the FBI, and Manhattan Trust I want to thank you for your help in this investigation. I know this has not been an easy time for you. Your father's death aside the way you have handled yourself, living and working as a woman has been nothing sort of outstanding."

"I know school will be starting up soon and your apprenticeship work has caused you to miss registration deadlines. I am prepared to help you with that but I need for you to answer a few questions first before we can move on."

"What do you mean?" I asked. "I thought we were done with all this. This ring has been broken up and my father's murder has been solved, at least to a degree. We may not

know who was behind it but that janitor's suicide was a sure sign of his guilt and complicity in this operation."

"We certainly feel the janitor was responsible for your father's death but suicide was just what was in the papers. When he took a dive off that office building roof we think he may have had help, but that investigation is still in progress."

"This next part is somewhat difficult as we have had a personal as well as business relationship. How do you feel about the way you are right now?"

I should have seen that question coming. I had immersed myself in my feminine role for almost six months. The transition part had been the hardest but now I felt quite comfortable in my femininity. I had become a female in almost every respect. My male libido had been limited to begin with and the introduction of female hormones had suppressed all of that.

I had become accustomed to the female lifestyle at home and at work with very little trouble. In all that time I hadn't thought much about what I was going to do when this was over because at the time my life depended on my ability to maintain this charade, living and working incognito, as a female, 24/7

"How do I feel? Well I am ok I guess."

"I see. Do you want to transition back to being a male? Yes or no please."

I thought about that question and my hesitation brought a brief smile to her face.

"You're hesitating. Perhaps you have enjoyed your incognito work more than you are willing to admit. If that's the case then tell me now because there may be a lot more riding on the answer than either one of us knows."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well simply put if you go back to being a man your transition will take some time and you would have to put off school until at least next semester. If the people who made the attempts on your life are still out there, and I believe they still are, you could be right back to where we were when all this started-a target."

"If you decide to stay feminized you could enter school as a female. Your records could easily be transferred, with our help of course, so they would show you as a female entering her senior year. Then just before graduation we could assist you in transitioning back and change your records accordingly."

I wasn't sure what to say. I hadn't missed being a man and now I wondered if I went back would I miss being a woman?

"I can tell you are torn between going back to being the man you were and staying the woman you have become. Actually you are still not a biological woman but that maybe an area where I could help you too."

She slid closer to me on the couch. With her right hand she touched the left side of my face and pushed it towards her gently until our eyes locked.

"Now look directly in my eyes Maxine. Be honest with me and yourself. Do you really want to give up those steamy perfumed bubble baths, the chiffon or satin nightgowns and sliding between satin sheets to get a good nights sleep? Or the confines of those founda-

tion garments that give your feminized body a more womanly shape? That girly feeling you get when you are applying your lipstick and blusher? How about the feel of that lacy nylon tricot camisole and half-slip under your lined skirt and frilly blouse? That feeling of sheer ecstasy the nylons or panty hose on your hair free girly smooth legs gives you? That thrill you get when you walk with a girlish gait in you spike heels as adoring men watch you go by? Now tell me Maxine, do you really want to give that all up?"

She had moved closer to my face and looking deep into her eyes I knew she was right. I had left behind a life of, well, nothing really. I had never had a real man's life. If I stayed en femme at least I would have a life. I would have Lou too, at a least I thought I would. She leaned in and kissed me hard. When we broke she sat back.

"Look, why not take the weekend to think about it. I will come over Sunday night and we will talk again."

"Ok. That's fair enough."

I got up and walked out of the office. My mind was racing as I walked to the bus stop. I lost track of time and missed my stop. The walk back to my apartment helped clear my head.

I didn't feel like eating anything so I sipped some wine as I went thru my mail. I looked at my elegantly manicured and polished fingernails as I flipped thru the envelopes. I had crossed a bridge to a different land and now I had to decide whether I should stay there or go back.

I walked into my bedroom and undressed. Standing in front of the mirror I saw what a woman I had become. I placed one hand on my hip in a girly pose and then reached down with both hands and smoothed the nylon stockings up my legs.

I did indeed look very feminine, very womanly. I started my bath water and then took off the stockings and my foundation garments. After finishing my wine I set the glass on the vanity and walked into the bathroom.

I shut off the water and eased into the yellow foam. There were many things running thru my mind as the sweet scent of lemons rose up to greet me. Looking down at my beautiful breasts buoyed up just above the level of the foam I had a hard time thinking about the decision I was about to make.

My relationship with Ms. Conti had been brief. The one with Lou was different. She had brought me thru this transition first as an agent, then as a friend and finally as a lover. I found myself thinking what my life would be without her. Just thinking about her made my nipples get hard. I wanted to stay with her in the worst way yet I was a man who should be making his way in the world.

I sat there for some time mulling things over. Finally I got up and let the water out of the tub. I rinsed off the sweet foam and dried myself off. I dusted myself with the lemon scented body talc and put on a yellow satin chemise. I went straight to bed and fell asleep immediately.

That weekend I tried hard to find ways to pass the time. Time may fly when you are having fun but it sure drags when you're not, especially when your mind is clouded up with all that had happened to me in the last six months.

After an early supper Sunday night I did up the dishes and took a hot soak in the tub. I put on my pink satin chemise and high heel slippers. I sat the vanity and applied a thick layer of pink lipstick. In the kitchen I filled my wine glass half full then walked to the living room.

There was nothing on TV that kept my attention so I shut it off. I took another sip of wine. Lou would be here in about an hour. I looked down at the pink chemise and my pink toenails peeking thru the open fuzzy toed high heel slippers.

The garment made me look and feel so feminine. I couldn't remember what it had been like to feel like a man. I closed my eyes and tried to think of what my life should become if I transitioned back, and what it could become if I didn't. The answer was not forthcoming.

When the doorbell finally rang I uncrossed my legs and walked quickly to the door. Lou was dressed casually in a polo shirt and jeans. She held out a bottle of wine. I took it into the kitchen and placed it in the fridge. I took an empty glass from the freezer compartment and from the bottle I had already opened filled it half full. I carried the glass and bottle back to the living room where I filled my glass with the last of the wine and sat down next to her.

We both took sips of wine. She slid closer to me again and was looking deep into my eyes.

"Have you thought about what we discussed?" she asked plaintively.

"I haven't been able to think of anything else," I replied.

She leaned in close and kissed me lightly on the lips, then pushed hard and forced her tongue inside my mouth. We stayed lip locked for some time and then broke apart. Her expression was one of pleasure.

"So then it is a go? You want to stay feminized for a while or were you considering something more permanent?"

"I don't know about permanent. It is just that everything you said has made a lot of sense. It's like there is some part of me that has become "unlocked" so to speak and now that is no longer a part of me, it is me. I'm sorry if that is not making any sense to you."

"It makes perfect sense to me. Remember what I said at the beginning about my training and my ability to judge people? Well it seems I was right and you, as you have no doubt discovered by now, were wrong."

I didn't say anything and she leaned over and kissed me again. When we broke she smiled brightly.

"I will get your school records and transfer them from Max Landon to Maxine Landon. Your registration will be done some night this week. I will help you pick out a wardrobe more suitable for a female college student. I have a small apartment on hold for you uptown closer to City College. It is another all female tenant building and a four-plex. This one is a bit larger than your current digs and a little more expensive but I managed to find you a better paying part-time job with the office of student records."

"Wow. This is fantastic. How could you have arranged all of this in so little time?"

“It didn’t take that much really. Between the FBI, Homeland Security, and the executives at the bank it can be done in no time at all. You should know it isn’t what you know but whom you know. I suggest you get started packing as the delivery van will be here Wednesday to move you uptown. Notify your landlord tomorrow. Your classes begin next Monday. I have someone waiting to move in here so the sooner we get you moved the better.”

I was surprised at the expediency of everything. It was like Lou had preplanned all of this from the start. Not that there was anything sinister about it but ever since I started down this road with Lou everything had fallen very neatly into place.

My move uptown to be close to campus was accomplished in no time. A shopping trip to some thrift stores for a wardrobe befitting a senior co-ed was the last on the itinerary. I packed away my dress clothes and shoes for another day, except of course for the lingerie.

Lou presented me with several bra and panty sets to wear instead of the foundation garments I had worn to work. She had bought them at The Pink Butterfly so naturally the panties were full briefs with rows of ruffles in the back and the bras were adorned with cute little bows. She insisted that I model each set with my high heel slippers before I could put them away.

“Makes a girl feel all the more feminine don’t you think?” she asked as she giggled.

I agreed, in fact I come to really “enjoy being a girl.” As I lay next to her that night I wondered what kind of a girl I was becoming. She was gone in the morning when I got up. I dressed, ate breakfast and went to school.

I got into the academic routine. I found myself being asked out frequently and had to refuse all comers of course. I claimed to have a boyfriend serving in Iraq and that kept most of the men at bay. It was quite a unique experience being on the other side of the fence. I had never considered myself a wolf but now I felt more like a lamb avoiding the wolf pack.

My senior level courses were the most challenging yet though I was never bogged down. I took whatever my professors dished out and came back for more. After what I had been thru in the last year I didn’t think there would be anything that would scare me.

I continued my exercise routines and of course getting my monthly shots. After the first of the year I would begin paying for them myself as the investigation was winding down. There had been no more arrests and the trials were set to begin sometime in the spring.

I had begun to feel safe again. I no longer felt the need to check my surroundings and look behind me occasionally. It was good to be able to relax and not have my thoughts encumbered with the “what ifs” that had clouded my mind.

I invited Lou over before the college closed for Christmas. I wore the red satin bra and panty set she had given me when I first moved in under a red velvet mini dress along with red patent leather stiletto pumps. I did my nails in fire engine red to match my new lipstick and blusher set.

She brought a bottle of Christmas cheer and a small red box topped with a large red bow. Despite my elementary culinary skills I managed a decent ham and potatoes dinner.

When our conversation dwindled she asked me to take the box into the bedroom and open it.

When I returned I was wearing the red satin baby doll with my red patent leather spikes and had pinned the large red bow in my hair. I twirled around and she smiled with delight. She got up from the table and kissed me hard.

"There is something I have been putting off for awhile," she said with a smile.

I looked at her quizzically. She grabbed me with one hand and her purse with the other as we headed for the bedroom. She undressed and removed a dildo from her purse. I must have looked pensive as she applied the lubricant. She set it down, put her arms around me, and kissed me hard. When we broke apart she smiled at me as she strapped it on.



"Now just relax Maxine and trust me. We'll take it slow. Lie back on the bed and spread your cheeks."

I slipped the red satin panties off and lay on the bed with my legs spread. She pushed inside of me. It hurt at first but as we got into a rhythm it became more enjoyable. I felt her shudder and after she pulled out we lay in each other's sweat without talking for some time.

"Now you are as close to being a real woman as you will ever be this side of surgery," she whispered.

I couldn't have agreed more. I had never been penetrated before and though it hurt there was a real sense of fulfillment. She leaned over and kissed me hard, then entered me again. This time as she climaxed so did I and that warm wonderful sensation cascaded over me.

We both slept hard and enjoyed the shower together the next morning. I made breakfast and she left for

work. I was still sore but I was overwhelmed by the experience. I had loved every minute of it. I felt very fulfilled and deep down inside the process of going back to being a man began to drift further and further from my thoughts.

With the two-week break at the holidays I had some time on my hands except for my work in student records. It would be my first Christmas alone. I thought about buying a small tree and some decorations. I changed my mind. It would just be clutter. More stuff to pack up and move when I graduated in the spring.

The time passed more slowly and despite the great weekend with Lou I did feel lonely. I had no family. Except for the people I worked with and my fellow students there was no one really close to me. When my mother and dad were still alive our Christmases were very modest anyway. I guess I missed being with some one more than anything.

Following the holidays there were some real bargains at the stores. I went back to Drummonds' and bought some fine lingerie and then back uptown to a thrift store for some more basic wear for school. It would be another five months and I would have my bachelors. After that I wasn't sure what I would be doing.

School started up and once again I was back in the mainstream of college life. I saw Lou on a Saturday that was Valentines Day. The red satin baby doll came out of the drawer and with some liberal squirts of the strawberry scented perfume she had brought we had a delightful weekend.

It was the middle of March when Lou called me again. She wanted to come over to talk to me. I knew the trial would be starting soon so I figured it had something to do with that. When she arrived she was wearing her dress business clothes. She declined a drink and sat opposite me on the couch.

"As you know it took us about three months to transform you from a male into a passable female. Since your crossover point was about nine months ago you are reaching a point where you are going to have to make a decision. This decision is irrevocable. I know that you have been through a lot and I doubt whether any other man could have done this as well as you did. Never the less you must decide by the end of the month which way you are going to live the rest of your life. Once you go back you cannot begin transitioning again. Once you have surgery you cannot return to being a male.

"Since the first the year you haven't been eligible for any financial assistance from us because you are no longer working with us. Your shots, laser treatments, clothes, cosmetics, etc. are now your responsibility entirely. The surgery you are looking at is expensive and then there is the postoperative period where you will be recuperating and not working. I know you are in good financial position with your fathers' inheritance and the sale of the house. This brings me to the real point of my visit."

"I am going to ask you two questions and I want you to think about them and then answer them with complete honesty. Do you understand?"

She had a very serious look on her face. It wasn't exactly a foreboding type of look but it was something I had never seen before and I was a bit surprised by it.

"Yes I understand," I answered her.

“Good. I want to be sure you are fully aware of what is at stake here. Now, do you want me to help you transition back to being a male or do you want to continue and become a woman after you graduate?”

The question had hit me between the eyes. I knew this day was coming but I had been putting off even thinking about it. There had been so many other things I had been involved in that even though this was on the “back burner” so to speak I hadn’t made any plans for whatever decision I was going to make. The decision that had been on the back burner was now on the front burner and I had to make the choice now then learn to live with it the rest of my life.

Her words from several months ago came back to me. Those perfumed bubble baths, the sheer hose, the lingerie, my girlish gait in skirt or dress and heels. Admiring looks from both men and women as I walked to work. Was I really going to give up all of that?

“I have decided to stay feminized and become a woman,” I stated flatly and without emotion.

“If the cost of this final step would be subsidized by someone else with the condition of employment as soon as you are recovered from your surgery would you want to go along with that?”

That question really hit me like a ton of bricks. I couldn’t imagine who would be willing to do such a thing just to hire me. Medical and recuperative expenses would cut deep into the money from my fathers’ estate. The amount left would tide me over until I obtained employment but I figured if someone else wanted me that badly it certainly wouldn’t hurt to let them pay all the expenses.

“Before I answer the second question just what type of employment would this be, where would I be working and for whom? I think I am entitled to know that much.”

“I agree. You would be working for me, incognito like you did this past summer and fall. You would be an internal auditor. Your paycheck would come from a dummy corporation set up by the FBI. The location is yet undetermined. Now look at me and give me your answer please.”

I was surprised by her answers. I knew I had done some good work for all concerned at Manhattan Trust. I mean I did find that anomaly that led to all those arrests. Was there another situation out there like that one?

“Yes I would agree to the terms you have just stated but I would like more details. In the previous job I was there more or less by default and I had been kept in the dark quite a bit. I trust that once I graduate and work full time for you there will be no more of that?”

“Correct. However I must point out that when you are inserted some where you may not have access to everything we know due simply to the fact that with an ongoing investigation you would not necessarily be the only one working on it and the information tends to come in bits and pieces that have to be fitted together. You will be updated on everything you need to know on each case.”

“I see. It still sounds as though you are leaving a lot of wiggle room when it comes to keeping me in the know.”

She shrugged.

"That's just the way it is. Are you in or out?"

I took a deep breath. There was no point in going back to a life I barely had. She had been right about several things. There was her initial appraisal of me, my love of my new-found femininity, and of course our personal relationship. Going back to the past was not a trip I wanted to make. My future was ahead of me and it would be a feminine one.

"Okay. I am in."

Her face brightened and she stood up.

"I'm glad to hear you say that. I have to attend a late meeting but I will get back to you shortly with more details."

She walked quickly out the door. As I sat there I began second guessing myself. I knew I couldn't sit here and mull things over because I could change my mind and then change it back again. I decided to take a long hot soak in some bubble bath.

After my bath I stood in front of the mirror. I did the tuck again though now there was much less to tuck. I placed both hands on my hips and swung briefly side-to-side. I tossed my head back and smiled. There was a naked woman standing in front of me. She had pink finger and toenails. Her Pixie haircut made her look even younger than she was. She was beautiful.

I walked over to my dresser and took out a pink chiffon nightgown from the top drawer. After putting it on I scented myself with some lilac perfume. Stepping into my high heel slippers I walked over and stood in front of the mirror again.

I had gone from being a male, to a feminized male, to nearly a woman in less than a year. My body had changed remarkably. I also knew that I was not thinking the same way as I used to. Perhaps the hormones had more effect on me than just my physical changes. The only thing I knew for sure was that I loved what I had become. I had stopped just short of being a real woman but that final step was only several months away.

I slipped between the satin sheets and closed my eyes. I dreamed I was a little girl wearing a pink dress, Mary Jane shoes and a pink ribbon in my hair. Then I was wearing a pink satin sheath and pink high heels dancing at the prom but I couldn't see who I was dancing with. I blinked again and saw myself standing at the top of the steps of a church on a bright sunny day wearing a broad skirted satin wedding gown and white stiletto heels. I tossed the bouquet to the waiting bridesmaids, then picked up my skirts with one hand and slipped the other thru the arm of someone in a tuxedo whose face I couldn't see.

When I opened my eyes I saw only the confines on my own bedroom. I got up and looked at the alarm clock. It was just before seven. I shut off the alarm and made myself breakfast. I got dressed and went to school. Lou did not call me that week. I stayed busy with the part time job and getting my assignments completed and on time. She finally called me the last Saturday in March. She rushed in my apartment around one pm.

"What's your hurry?" I asked as she sat down on the couch.

"Let's just say that it has been one of "those" weeks," she answered

I walked to the kitchen and brought back a can of soda and a glass filled with ice. She poured some in the glass and drank half of it. I sat down next to her and she took another drink then refilled the glass.

"I have been transferred to the Phoenix office. There is an opening at Western Financial in the internal audit division. Internal audit also works hand in hand with their international division. The department head is going to be in town in late May to interview you. There will be several others who will be interviewed also but obviously you are getting the job. That's the good news."

"The bad news is that except for being castrated you may have to postpone your surgery for a while. You will live and work en femme as you have done for me and Ms. Conti. Apparently the start time for the position is the first week in June. This doesn't leave much time to relocate out there since your final exams and the interview takes place the last week of May. Spring break will be coming up and I have arranged for you to accompany me to Phoenix for several days. We will get you a place to stay. You have no furniture so we will ship most of your clothes and personal items ahead by UPS. The landlord will hold the boxes for you and then you will just have one suitcase to take when you fly out for good."

I must have looked slightly dazed as she took another gulp from her glass and refilled it again. She reached over and ran her fingers thru my hair.

"It will be fine," she smiled. "I will take care of everything so don't worry."

"I'll try not to," I replied.

She finished her pop and left.

I felt a little bit overwhelmed by this turn of events. Within two months, more or less I would have a full time job two thousand miles from here as a female auditor. It was a guaranteed job but in the back of my mind I wondered if there could possibly be something else here. Maybe I was just getting paranoid again.

If the last two months were to have gone by any slower they wouldn't have gone at all. We had a nice trip to Phoenix, all expenses paid of course. I found a very nice furnished apartment close to work.

There was a small shopping mall within biking distance too. It had been an exhausting weekend and I was glad to be back in New York. My perfumed bubble bath never felt so good. I was castrated the next Friday night and was only uncomfortable for the weekend.

My interview with a Ms. Carla Diego was brief and very professional. She was a tall, attractive woman. I guess I had expected all Hispanic women to be short and fat. She seemed to eye me carefully as I walked in and sat down. I had worn my brown suit and heels for the interview. It was only for appearances sake of course since I already had the job. I was glad to get it over with and she seemed to be a very nice person. I was looking forward to working with her.

I took my finals and passed them with no problem. I got my last check from my part time job and closed out my bank account. A fellow agent took Lou and me to the airport and we took an early morning flight to Phoenix. It was a smooth flight. We deplaned,

picked up our luggage, and the rental car. Lou drove me to my place. As I turned to walk to my building she grabbed my arm.

"Everything will be ok," she said with I smile. "I will take care of you."

I nodded and walked to the front door of my building. It was another "female only" building. This one had ten apartments. I let myself in and put my suitcase in the bedroom. The manager had put the boxes I had shipped ahead of time in the middle of the living room floor. I spent the rest of the day getting my clothing and a few household items unpacked and put away.

I walked over to the mall nearby and bought a bottle of wine at a small wine shop. I put it in the freezer and ordered a pizza. I ate only about half of it and drank half of the wine. Despite the soothing bubble bath I did not sleep well but it was good to be in my own place.

After getting my phone and electric hooked up I spent the next couple of days getting to know the area. I didn't want to buy a car just yet. I bought a used bicycle and enjoyed the exercise as I pedaled around the neighborhood. I found several nice restaurants around the area. I planned to eat out rather than buy groceries but I did buy some basic items.

Lou called me Sunday night before my first day and wished me well. Her voice seemed a bit tight but when I asked her if everything was ok she laughed it off and said that everything was fine and I let it go at that.

I saved a couple of ads from the Sunday paper. The old TV set of my Dad's brought very little at the estate sale and I had been shopping for a new one to replace the small console I had purchased while I was in New York.

The nightly news had nothing interesting except the economy was continuing to spiral downwards. There were more layoffs but I was certain that even though I was a new hire my job would be safer than others since I was in the audit department and of course the fact that it was an "arranged job" made it a little more secure too.

I reported for work early. I wore my navy suit and a pink chiffon blouse. Western Financial was two blocks from the bus stop. Despite the early morning hour I was quite warm as I walked to their nearly new office building. The glass exterior shone in the early morning sun.

I walked in the building and was almost stung by the sharp cold air. The noiseless elevator took me to the sixth floor. Ms. Diego wasn't in yet. Her receptionist handed me a payroll form to sign and then directed me to the basement to be photographed for my ID badge.

As I rode the elevator back down to the basement I felt there was something just a little different about the receptionist. She was a very pretty blonde, with an ample bust line. She had pierced earrings, elegant pink fingernails, perfect hair and makeup. Her powder blue chiffon blouse had a huge spray of ruffles down to the waistline of her slim skirt.

When I returned with my new badge clipped to my jacket lapel she was standing next to Ms. Diego. As I approached she smiled and then minced effeminately in her stiletto

heels back to the reception desk She was holding a file in one hand at her side and the other arm was across her body with the hand dangling at the wrist. Very feminine, I thought. I wondered if maybe she was like me or perhaps she had been, but then Ms. Diego interrupted my thoughts with a hearty greeting.

“Good morning, Maxine. I trust you are ready to start work?”

“Good morning Ms. Diego,” I replied. “I guess I am as ready as I will ever be.”

“Excellent, come with me please.”

I followed her to an empty desk in a small cubicle next to her office. I took my seat, smoothing my skirt with one hand as I did so, and then I put my purse and gloves in the bottom drawer. After booting up my computer she spent the next hour with me going over some of the basics I needed to know about their system. It was pretty much standard stuff and I picked it up easily.

The week went pretty well all things considered. The department head was on vacation but I met the rest of the small staff. Everyone was cordial and I felt it wouldn't be long until I fit right in. Friday I got off early to go back to the basement for a drug test, brief physical and then another shot of hormones. The female doctor signed off on the physical form.

“You are lucky. You have blossomed considerably more than average. Most have enhancement surgery but you look like you will never need it,” she said with a grin.

I managed a quiet “thank you doctor” as I got dressed. I had the feeling she had looked me over in more than a doctor-patient way but I wasn't about to say anything.

I called Lou that night but she wasn't in. I would have another week of general stuff and then I would be trained in the specifics of the audit department. I couldn't wait. The sooner I finished that the sooner I could get started working on what I had been sent here for. Hopefully here I would have an easier time of it. At least here my life was not in any danger, or maybe wasn't at least for the time being.

Before I went to bed that night I couldn't help but think back to the receptionist. It had become apparent that Ms. Diego was watching me closely too and not just the way I did the work related things.

Several times she had glanced at me as I stood up or sat down at my desk, smoothing my skirt as I did so. Once out of the corner of my eye I saw her watching me as I applied my lipstick after a lunch break. On several occasions during the week she had stepped out of her office when she heard the click of my stilettos on the hard floor to watch me walk in ladylike fashion to and from the break room.

The next week I met the department head, Mr. Lionel Williams. Mr. Williams was a huge black man. He wore half glasses and was nearly bald. What hair remained was nearly all white. He stood up as Ms. Diego introduced us. I learned he had played football locally and would have been a high round draft pick had he not suffered a knee injury in his senior year. He still walked with a bit of a limp. He was due to retire in a couple of years and he was grooming Ms. Diego as his replacement.

As we got into the “meatier” details, things got a little more complex and I spent more hours at my desk. It made those late night bubble baths all the more pleasant. I called Lou again but she wasn’t home so I left a message on her machine. I thought she would have called me by now but with her new assignment I was certain she was just too busy.

By the end of the month I was fairly comfortable with everything and was making good progress. I got my monthly shot before going home. I was feeling good about myself physically too. I felt I was as much “woman”, if not more, than most women I saw whether at work or shopping at the mall.

Lou called me late Saturday night and said she would come by Sunday afternoon. She had some work related things to discuss with me. She sounded a little out of breath but I didn’t want to ask any questions. I decided not to mention my recent purchase of a purple satin floor length nightgown either.

I did some laundry and read the Sunday paper. There was no good news. Santa Anna winds had whipped up fires in California, unemployment was up, stocks were down and the war in the Middle East was still in a quagmire.

After lunch I touched up my pink nails, added a fresh layer of pink lipstick and squirted myself with the lilac perfume. I changed from my sneakers and jeans to three-inch heel pumps and a denim mini skirt. The doorbell rang just after four.

When I opened the door she rushed in and sat down on the couch. She had that harried look on her face again and I wanted to ask what was wrong but decided not to.

“Can I get you a drink?” I asked.

She shook her head no and padded the cushion next to her. I sat down and she cleared her throat.

“I have been juggling several things at once and as you know when you are understaffed things can get really busy. Ms. Diego said you are doing a good job and that she is pleased with your progress. The project you will be working on does involve money laundering. We don’t know for sure if it is drug related or something else. You will be starting this shortly. Whoever is behind this is smart. I have no doubt it may take some time for you to solve this. It may happen like it did the last time, just by accident or you may find a pattern of transactions that could bring everything to light. In any event you will be getting more information from Ms. Diego after you finished some more preliminary work.”

“It sounds like I will be feeling my way around in the dark again,” I replied

“Actually it won’t be that bad. You will have more help this time as you will be working with Ms. Diego more closely. Essentially you will be working in “parallel” so to speak. With two people working independently from two different directions we hope to get to the bottom of this sooner. Whether or not your separate paths may cross at some point remains to be seen.”

“I understand.”

“Look, I am sorry to be so abrupt but I have to run.”

She got up and left. I sat there for a few minutes and thought about the work that lay ahead. It was a challenging job and I had a good life here. I had met every challenge so far.

In addition I had found a deep and abiding love of femininity. I guess you could say I found my true self.

The next step, if I decided to take it, was in the future. For now at least, I would remain incognito. If it were to become necessary however, I guess I wouldn't mind being incognito for life.

THE END