



Reluctant Press presents:

Living A Secret



Heather Berdrow

A 'SPECTRUM' E-BOOK

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Living a Secret

By Heather Berdrow

It had taken Maria nearly her entire shift but she finally finished the last cubicle. She had a difficult time understanding how just a few people could make such a huge mess. Every night, Maria would start work on the twelfth floor of this new office building; when she finished, everything was clean enough to eat off it. But by the next evening, most workstations looked as though a bomb had gone off, and she would have to start all over again.

Maria had emigrated to the country more than five years earlier as a political refugee so she was given permission to stay on a permanent basis. She worked for a large company that did commercial and residential housekeeping. Her shifts usually lasted for more than twelve hours and she worked at least four of those shifts every week. The work wasn't hard, just time con-

suming. Taking out the trash, mopping and vacuuming the carpets, and dusting places no one would ever see, except for her boss.

On her days off, she would pick up work with friends, usually in large, mansion-sized homes. There would be at least two other girls and herself who would begin cleaning, and not get done well into the evening. Often, she would look around the homes of the very rich and famous. She'd dream that someday she would live in a place just like the one she was working in, and take care of the children she would have with a handsome, wealthy man.

Maria was a tall girl, standing nearly five feet, and ten inches. She weighed a solid one hundred and thirty pounds. Many of the other girls she worked with would give her a hard time about how she dressed. Where they would wear pants and a uniform top, Maria would always be in a uniform dress with comfortable shoes. When the weather turned cold, she would add a pair of matching tights to keep herself warm.

Maria did okay with her finances. She made enough money to rent a small apartment and to purchase a small used car that she would maintain herself. She lived alone and rarely dated; she dreamed that one day she would meet Mr. Right who would take her away from all of this. At the same time, she wasn't a wall-flower. When the weekend came around, Maria would be at her peak of energy. After soaking in a hot scented bath, she would shave her legs and pits, before drying and beginning to put her makeup on.

She would then pick out some of her more colorful lingerie, and show it off in revealing dresses and skirts. When she wasn't working, she was partial to high heels

of all types. Wedges, stilettos, and peep toe pumps were lined up in her closet, where she could match them up with her favorite outfits. Those would be made from the finest of laces, silks, and satins. And they would sparkle with sequins, rhinestones, and glitter. Her favorite dress was short, with a hem down to about mid-thigh.



The skirt portion was made from French lace, and had several tiers. The bodice was made of silk and hugged her every curve. It was midnight black with crystal rhinestones. Any time she wore it, she felt feminine and sexy; it gave her a sense of confidence.

She would get all decked out on days off and head to the nearest dance floor. She loved the traditional Latin dances, like the fox trot, samba, or tango. If it had the right beat, she could move to it. When she first moved here, she took a few dance lessons and just fell in love with it. She never had to sit out any dance because she hadn't been asked. Every man there knew Maria, and tried very hard to be on her dance card. You had to be selected, then wait in line, for there were many chosen before you.

If her clothes and curves weren't enough, Maria just had a way of moving her body, causing men to drool, even if they were with a hot girlfriend at their side. She never had to pay for a drink either. She would smile coyly and pout her lips to drive guys crazy. Sometimes there would even be fights and brawls over who would be next to buy her a drink. But Maria only drank iced tea or soda, as she knew she had to be in control of herself at all times, especially at the clubs. Feeling her body move, or how her skirt would flash across her thighs were as much of a turn-on for her, as they were for the men.

But when Last Call was over, and the lights came on, Maria always left the club alone. This was strictly by choice. Men would use their best pickup lines, hoping to be the first to spend the night in Maria's bed. She had begun to count how many phone numbers she could collect by the end of the night. The current record was twenty. They came from the young and the old,

the handsome, the not-so-handsome, the single men, and the married ones as well.

But Maria always resisted the temptation. When she got home and undressed, she would shower; the temperature in the clubs was always hotter than the music, causing Maria to sweat profusely when she danced. She would lose anywhere from three to five pounds by the end of the night. She then would lotion and powder, slip a silky pair of panties and a short nightie in her favorite color, usually pink or grey, and very sheer, on before crawling into bed.

She would lie there, reliving every dance, feeling herself getting excited all over again. One hand would find a breast with a hardened nipple. The other would slowly trace a line down her soft but tight belly, and into her panties. Her body was alive all over. She would lower her panties, so the leg openings were tickling her inner thighs. Then she would begin to touch herself, slowly at first.

As her breathing and heartbeat began to rise, the touching would become more vigorous. Then, when her body and mind could take no more, every muscle would tense. Her passion would be released, spilling a milky white and sticky fluid onto her heated belly. Then, with one finger, she would touch the drops, place the fluid on her tongue, and taste the salty sweetness on her finger.

Once the waves of pleasure had passed, she would pull her panties back into place, turn to her side, and think, "Someday, the right guy will come along and I will be the happiest girl around."

She would shut her eyes and picture this guy; he never seemed to have a face, and drift off to sleep. Before she knew it, the alarm was ringing, alerting her

that it was time to get cleaned up and start her day all over again.

But Maria's story is quite different from your average girl's. When she was born, her parents named her Miguel Jose. Then just a couple of years later, Rosa Marie was welcomed into the family. The mother was a school teacher, the father the town's magistrate. For the first fifteen years, Miguel and Rosa were raised very traditionally. Then one day, Miguel's father was given some key information about a local drug cartel, which was doing business worldwide. That information was passed along until it reached the federal authorities. A raid was soon carried out which nearly broke the back of the cartel. Besides losing several of its top members, the cartel also lost millions of dollars.

Not long after the raid, the cartel was informed about where the government had gotten most of its intelligence, putting a target directly on Miguel's family. Just in the nick of time, they were moved into this country and given new identities. Miguel was now fifteen, and Rosa was nearly twelve when their parents were discovered and murdered. In order to protect Miguel and Rosa from suffering the same fate, they were separated. Each was given a new look and home, far apart from each other. Neither knew about the changes in the other, improving the chances that at least one of the children would survive. It would be a very long time before Miguel would see his sister again. Surely, she would be in for a big surprise.

Miguel had been whisked away to another state, where he would be placed in the care of a government worker. After much discussion, it was decided that Miguel would be turned into a girl; she would be taught by this worker everything she would need to

know. In the early morning hours, a very sleepy Miguel was introduced to Mrs. Peterson, one of the government's top educators, in all things that related to femininity.

She was an older woman, but Miguel thought she dressed much younger, more like his mother. Her hair was styled, her makeup perfect, but she looked quite stern. The federal agent who had been charged with Miguel's safety spoke very quietly to this woman. She kept looking over at Miguel, as she shook her head in acknowledgment. The man then turned to Miguel.

"This is Mrs. Peterson. You will now live with her. She will educate you on the finer points of being female. Listen carefully, young man, to all that she has to say, as your life will depend on it." He then shook Miguel's hand, smiled and bowed to Mrs. Peterson, before leaving hurriedly out the front door.

Mrs. Peterson turned to Miguel, reached for his hand, and led him into a sitting room, where she asked him to sit. She sat down opposite from Miguel, sweeping her short skirt under her in a very practiced manner. Her face had changed from stern-looking to a softer, knowing gaze.

"I know your situation and I am very sorry about the loss of your parents. I also know that your sister, Rosa, is far away, in the hope that you both will be safe. I am here to be your teacher and mentor. I'll be hard on you, but it is for your own good. But in the end, you'll be able to function in society as a young lady, and no one will be able to tell that you were ever anything but one," she stated. Her eyes were wide and bright, and Miguel could feel the warmth she was trying to show him.

“From this moment on, I will only address you as Maria, and you will learn everything that you could possibly need to know about being a girl. Do you have any questions before we get started?” she asked.

Miguel could feel the fear rise in the back of his throat, keeping him from speaking. He could only answer with a shake of his head.

“Very well, young lady. If you will please follow me, I will show you where you are going to live for now and we can get you dressed more appropriately.” She rose and went up the staircase, wearing heels that were about three inches tall. Miguel followed and nearly fell over, as he watched her hips and behind sway sexily, side-to-side.

Once at the top of the stairs, he followed her into a bedroom that had been freshly painted in pinks and yellows. A four-poster bed with a ruffled canopy sat in the middle of the room, with the rest of the furniture surrounding it. Dressers, night stands, and a student desk and chair were to his right. A completely stocked vanity with a mirror and built-in lighting sat to his left. The closet doors were ajar, and he could see that the closet was filled with various styles and colors of girl’s clothes, with many pairs of shoes on the floor. Just beyond the vanity was a door that led into a bathroom. Inside, he saw an old-fashioned tub, with several shelves above it that held many different colored bottles of lotion and bath salts that he would later find out about. There was no shower head or curtain for privacy. This room too, had been freshened up with paint and wallpaper.

Mrs. Peterson turned to Miguel and startled him as she began to talk. “I would like you to get undressed and put all of the clothes into the plastic bag I have pro-

vided for you. I have drawn you a nice warm bath that I would like you to soak in. Take your time as the water will help to soften your skin. When you are done, there is a robe on the back of the door for you to wear. Nothing else, please. Do you have any questions?" she again asked. Miguel still was unable to answer and gave only a shake of the head. "Very well, I will be right here once you are done, and I will lay out the clothes that you will be wearing after your bath."

As asked, Miguel went into the bathroom and followed Mrs. Peterson's directions to the letter. After removing his clothes and placing them into the bag, he stepped into the scented tub. The water was hot, which relaxed Miguel nearly to the point of falling asleep. A knock on the door kept that from happening. Mrs. Peterson walked in and picked up the discarded clothes, briefly looked towards Miguel, then left the bathroom. This was all new for him. No one had ever seen him naked in the bath before. His parents and sister had always respected his privacy. Miguel couldn't help but blush at this intrusion.

About twenty minutes later, Miguel got out of the tub, found a large fluffy towel, and dried himself. He put on the robe, pulled it around him, and tied the sash belt. The robe was very silky to the touch and quite short, barely covering his private parts. His heart raced as he exited the bathroom and went into the bedroom where Mrs. Peterson was sitting on the vanity chair, waiting for him to finish the bath.

He looked at her, then to the bed, where a splash of colors caught his eye. There were several articles of clothing, many of which he had never seen before. He didn't know what they were.

Mrs. Peterson then got up smoothly and gracefully, took Miguel by the hand, and led him to the bed and the assortment of clothing. "I am quite sure that you have never seen many of these items before. I will tell you about each item, its name, and what it is used for as you put them on. I will help you each step of the way," she said firmly.

The first item she picked up looked like the athletic supporter he had worn when he played soccer. "This is called a gaff. You put it on just like underwear, but it is very tight. You tuck your privates up inside of you, and this will keep them hidden," she described. Miguel could only blush as Mrs. Peterson opened his robe and helped him into the gaff. He tried to turn around as he stepped into the item but Mrs. Peterson would have none of that.

"We are all girls here, there is nothing to be embarrassed about," she said. She then turned him back around, pulled the item up, and showed Miguel how to tuck in his equipment. "There is a small area that your testicles can be safely tucked into, then you pull your penis back up as you pulled the garment tightly against yourself." She touched him, causing him to jump as she put things where she wanted them. It was very uncomfortable and Miguel began to complain. Mrs. Peterson put a finger to his lips and said, "Young lady, beauty is never easy or comfortable. As women, we have many things to do that most men would never understand."

Next, she handed him a pair of satin panties, which he put on. He continued to blush even with everything she had said. The soft material felt good to Miguel as it stretched tightly around his hips and behind. When he looked down, there was no evidence at all that he was a boy, just a flat area like all of the girls he had ever

seen had. Mrs. Peterson then helped him put on a simple training bra, which she told him he would have to learn how to place himself. Mrs. Peterson then placed small, jelly-like false breasts into each cup, giving the illusion of real breasts. He put on a short denim skirt and a short-sleeved silk blouse that had the buttons on the wrong side. It was difficult, but he was finally able to button the blouse up to where Mrs. Peterson had indicated.

She took Miguel over to the vanity, where she sat him down with his back to the mirror. She then placed a towel around his shoulders before she began to cut and style his hair. He had always enjoyed the attention when he had his hair cut in the past, but this time was different. She wasn't cutting very much off, and it seemed to take her forever. When she was done, she removed the towel and placed it on the floor.

Mrs. Peterson then gathered several bottles and brushes, as she began to apply makeup to his face. He had not yet begun to shave which made his face the perfect canvas. "As time goes by, you'll be able to do all of this yourself," she said as she applied product after product. When finished, she put everything down and took a step back to see what her creation had become. A wide smile crossed her face and she said, "Very pretty." She then turned Miguel around to face the mirror for the very first time as Maria.

Miguel was stunned by what he saw. The image was one of the cutest girls he had ever seen, but it was strange at the same time. When he blinked, she blinked. When he turned his head, she did the same. "Is that really me?" he asked in a tiny voice.

"Yes Maria, that is you," Mrs. Peterson replied, smiling. She then stood Maria up and placed her in

front of a wardrobe mirror, where she could see herself from head to toe. Maria was really cute and had long and shapely legs. Maria turned to the side and saw the denim skirt as it hugged her lower parts.

“From now on, into the foreseeable future, this is what you’ll look like every day,” Mrs. Peterson declared. “As you can see, Miguel will no longer exist. Maria has taken his place. The better you get at presenting a feminine face, the better your chances are that those who are after you will never find you.”

Maria looked at every part of herself. She had breasts that weren’t too big, a waist that seemed smaller than before, and hips that gave her a nearly hourglass figure that was very attractive. Maria smiled as she felt where everything was placed and enjoyed the vision before her.

Mrs. Peterson then put out a pair of low heeled shoes, and asked Maria to try them on. “I usually wear socks with shoes,” Maria said.

“Remember Maria, you’re not a boy anymore, you’re a girl. Girls rarely wear socks with heels. As you become more comfortable, we will have you wear taller and taller heels. Soon you will be like any other girl your age, able to wear just about any kind of shoe that is fashionable,” she said. “This is just a small part of what I have to teach you. There is so much more for you to learn about your new life. It is time for dinner. Shall we head downstairs to eat?” Mrs. Peterson gestured.

Mrs. Peterson escorted Maria to the stairway where she began to tutor Maria on the proper way of doing even the simplest of tasks. On each step, Maria had to grab the rail tightly to keep herself from falling. By the last step, she had kind of gotten the rhythm. As she

walked across the living room, she could feel her hips sway and the skirt's movement as it brushed across her thighs. Each step brought a click of her heels on the polished wooden floors. The skirt was tight on her legs, so her gait was shortened. Along the way, Mrs. Peterson explained the how's and why's of what she was doing.

When they finally arrived in the kitchen, Mrs. Peterson pulled out a chair, and had Maria sit. Of course, having never worn a skirt before, Maria just clunked down, with her legs wide apart. Mrs. Peterson saw this and without warning, reached down and pinched Maria high up on her inner thigh. Maria twitched in pain. "If you had sat properly, I wouldn't have been able to pinch you," she said. "Now stand up and I'll show you just how a lady sits."

Maria did what she was told and watched and listened carefully, as Mrs. Peterson had her sweep her skirt under her thighs, keeping her knees locked together, and gently place her bottom on the chair. She had to do this several times until she could do it effortlessly. Mrs. Peterson placed a serving of food on a plate and set it down in front of Maria. Maria thought back on how her mother and sister used to eat their meals. After placing one hand in their laps, they would take small portions, then put the fork down between the bites. She tried very hard to imitate her mother.

Mrs. Peterson complimented Maria on her efforts. "I see that you have watched your family eat and tried to copy their habits. You did very well, not like a boy at all. If you do that with everything we have to show you, you'll have a much easier time," Mrs. Peterson declared. She then told Maria that she would be putting female hormones into her food, as well as having her

get injections of those same hormones, to get her started down the road to womanhood.

This was just the first day, and Maria knew that there was much more for her to learn. After an hour of watching television, it had become time for bed. Mrs. Peterson followed Maria upstairs and into her room. She then pulled out a short nightgown for her to wear to bed. Maria disrobed down to her bra and panties and began to remove those as well. Mrs. Peterson stopped her. "You will need to wear those every night and every day, so that you become used to them."

Maria slipped the flimsy gown over her head and let it fall into place. She loved the feeling of the soft material on her skin. Maria then pulled back the comforter, gently hopped into the bed, and pulled the covers up to her neck. She had never worn so little to bed and her room was cold. Mrs. Peterson bent down and kissed Maria on the forehead.

"Good night princess, sweet dreams," she said as she turned the lights down and left the room, closing the door behind her. Maria began to go over everything she had learned on her first day of being a girl and smiled. Within minutes, Maria was fast asleep.

The next morning, Maria heard a faraway voice. "Good morning sunshine, time to rise and shine." Her eyes were still closed; she thought she had heard her mother's voice. She smiled and stretched. Maria then felt the clothes that she was wearing; the nightie, the panties, the bra. She opened her eyes quickly and saw Mrs. Peterson smiling down on her. It took a few seconds for Maria to realize that she was not home in her own bed. She blushed as she realized just where she was and what she was wearing.

"Come on sleepy head, we have lots to do today."

Maria half-smiled, pulled her covers down, then noticed that she was in a quite excited state. "Now go bathe and I'll set out your clothes for today," the older woman said. Maria got out of bed, and headed for the bathroom. As she passed by, Mrs. Peterson gave her a gentle tap on her panty-covered bottom, urging her to get moving. In the bathroom, Maria got undressed and stepped into the tepid and fragrant water.

With her bath over, Maria was once again nude again under her short robe, standing in front of Mrs. Peterson, who was holding another gaff out to Maria. "Come now, don't be shy. Nothing has changed since yesterday. Please put this on," she said.

Maria continued to blush but took the item, pulled it up her legs, and repeated what Mrs. Peterson had told her to do the day before. It was still uncomfortable, but the pain subsided more quickly than before. She then pulled on a pair of panties before putting a sundress she had been given on over her head. Mrs. Peterson then put an ointment on the breast forms and applied them to Maria's chest, where they were held in place for several minutes. When the hands were removed, the breasts stayed in place. Maria slipped a pair of low-heeled sandals onto her feet.

The two then went to the vanity, where Mrs. Peterson instructed Maria on how to style her own hair. The first couple of attempts went miserably but soon she was able to do an adequate job. The next exercise was the application of makeup. Mrs. Peterson explained each step in detail and had the new girl try over and over again until Maria was able to complete each step without prompting. When she was done, Maria saw the same girl as yesterday. It had taken her more than three hours to accomplish what Mrs. Peterson had

done yesterday in twenty minutes. Maria vowed to get better at her new tasks each day until she could do it faster than her mentor.

Maria and Mrs. Peterson went downstairs and made a simple breakfast of toast, some fresh fruit, and juice. They then did the dishes together, cleaned up the kitchen, and began the hard work of turning Maria into a young lady. She needed to learn how to walk properly and gracefully, how to sit without the world seeing her panties, and how to talk and gesture like a girl of her age. Maria had just a few months to learn what genetic girls have years to perfect before she would be enrolled at the local high school.

As promised, Mrs. Peterson was very hard on Maria, as she expected Maria to be proficient in everything she did. Mrs. Peterson also showed Maria the things she would need to know if she was ever lucky enough to be with a man in a relationship. Cooking, cleaning the house, and doing the laundry and ironing. She also taught Maria how to keep her lingerie from wearing out too quickly from not taking care when they were washed.

By the end of the first month, Maria now did girl things out of habit and instinct, not conscious thought. The hormones she had been taking were also having an effect on Maria, both physically and mentally. Her body was changing rapidly; she was developing her own breasts and didn't need the silicone forms any longer. Her hips and bottom were now much more lady-like. One evening while the two were eating dinner, Maria asked Mrs. Peterson how she knew so much about turning boys into girls.

"Well Maria, like you, I was born a male. I had an aunt who had always wanted to have a daughter. But

she never had the chance to have children. When I was about ten years old, both of my parents died in a plane crash and my aunt was my only living relative. Shortly after the accident, I went to live with her. It didn't take long for her to change me into what you see today. I have lived as a woman for more than thirty years now but I don't regret even one minute of my time in lingerie and dresses. So you see, young lady, we have much in common." Maria was quite taken with her story, and now understood why Mrs. Peterson was so hard on her.

The days passed quickly and Maria now felt more girl than boy. Her body had made its own journey as Mrs. Peterson had a friend that was a doctor, and knew of Maria's plight. He was able to surgically change Maria to a more natural girl. She still had all the same parts from before, but now they were inside and Maria would no longer need to wear a gaff. This made a great change in Maria's attitude as well. Even though Maria still had all the memories of her boyhood, she now looked forward to school and the rest of her life as a girl. At night, when Maria was alone in her room, she would undress and look at her changing body without clothes. She could picture her mother and her sister, as she was built just like them. The area that had changed the most was her hips and her bottom. They had become well-rounded, and protruded just the right amount.

Maria had mastered high heels in just a short time as well. Three- and four-inch heels were no problem for Maria, and she loved how they made her legs look long and lean. Her wardrobe now consisted of about ninety percent dresses and skirts, and only about ten percent low-rise jeans and shorts. There was just something that attracted Maria to short dresses and skirts. She

could never put her finger on it, but she still had the same feelings when she wore them that she did that very first day.

Mrs. Peterson would take Maria out as often as possible to restaurants, shopping at malls, and little trips for grocery shopping. Maria became much less worried about being seen as a boy in a dress. She now looked at other girls, and tried to emulate how they dressed and acted. When Maria was at home and Mrs. Peterson didn't have plans or chores for her, she would read all of the teen and fashion magazines.

On the day Maria turned sixteen, she was enrolled in high school as a junior. By this time, Maria was comfortable being a girl, so going to school in a skirt or dress was no big deal. She had been assigned the usual classes of English, Math, and Geography. She also had a free period where she could choose any class she wanted. Maria had always loved to dance so she enrolled in a traditional dance class that would take the place of Phys. Ed., at Mrs. Peterson's prompting and intervention. Maria fell in love with music and how her body reacted to it. Every form of dance was studied and performed, but Maria had a special talent for the Latin style. She was a natural at it.

By her senior year, Maria was about five feet, eight inches tall, and weighed in at a respectable one hundred and twenty pounds. She had a dancer's figure and legs. Mrs. Peterson made sure that Maria focused on her other school work. Her dating experience was minimal; she was asked out frequently, but her mentor always had an excuse for her to stay home and not out getting into mischief. Mrs. Peterson made sure that Maria was safe at all times.

During the time when Miguel ceased to exist and Maria was born, the cartel that murdered her parents had continued to search high and low for Miguel and his sister, Rosa. After several surgeries by plastic surgeons and a couple of other cosmetic procedures, Rosa now looked more Caucasian than Hispanic. Her name had been changed to Antoinette Simmons and she was now living in the New England area. She married her high school sweetheart not long after graduation. Her new husband had enlisted in the military and was assigned to a stateside duty station.

Antoinette had gone to college; she now had a degree and worked as a nurse. She worked at a local community hospital full-time, until she became pregnant and had her first child. The surgeries and cosmetic procedures could not change Antoinette's genetics. Her children were born with dark black hair, olive skin and beautiful dark brown eyes. Maria would find out about all of these only years later, thanks to a secret government agency that had the task of watching over Maria and her sister.

A year or so after graduating, Maria decided to move out, on her own. She rented a small apartment not far from Mrs. Peterson and was quite content. Even though a lot of her expenses were being subsidized by the government, Maria found that she still needed to work to make ends meet. She had not yet gone to college, so her choices were very limited. The economy had been depressed for some time so the only work Maria could find was in the service industry. It took some time but she was finally able to pick up a full-time job, working for a large company that had contracts to clean commercial buildings. She also found a part-time position cleaning the homes of the rich and famous.

Once money was no longer an issue, Maria began to escape to the dance clubs on her days off. For a while, she enjoyed the hip hop scene, but wasn't satisfied. Quite by accident, she found a little out-of-the-way place that played nothing but Latin dance music. Maria began to frequent the club. She was soon hooked and went there every free night she had. She also began to collect dance costumes, mostly from second-hand stores.

Her favorites all had glitter and sequins, and short, flowing skirts. Each costume would be matched with the appropriate color shoes, and she began to style her hair in a more traditional cut, long and shiny, with barrettes, bands, and fresh flowers.

When she arrived at the club, she never had to wait very long to find a partner. The men would line up for the chance to take her for a spin. Like many Latin-inspired dances, most called for emotion, the movements to be precise, and have close contact between the pairing. Time after time, Maria would be molested by her partners, as they would grab a breast or a handful of her lovely bottom. She could feel the men's excitement as they would usually poke her with it, time and time again. But Maria would just turn away from them; she just wanted to dance and feel the beat flow through her body.

Maria had been eyeing one particular outfit for some time. It had lots of sequins, and rhinestones, was low-cut, and had a short sweeping skirt with cutouts that complimented her olive skin. It was in a fiery red, a color that she always liked. Most of the things she had were either in black, royal blue, or a bright pink. Those colors seemed to attract the most attention. This outfit was better than all of the rest combined, Maria

was sure of that. She had stopped by the dress shop as often as possible just to admire her dream dress. The owner of the shop took note of this. One day, as she passed the window, the shopkeeper motioned for her to come inside.

Maria could never pass up the opportunity to try on a dress or beautiful gown, even though she could never afford it. But a girl does have her dreams. The shop owner, an old Hispanic seamstress, began to talk with Maria in Spanish. Of course Maria was fluent and was able to answer all of her questions without pause or problem. The shop keeper, a Senora Gomez told Maria that she had seen her looking at the dress for some time. Maria could only smile and blush. Senora Gomez then asked Maria for her dress size. Maria told her she usually wore a size six in most dresses, but sometimes, a size eight was more comfortable.

Senora Gomez's face lit up as she told Maria that the dress she was so in love with was a size eight, and asked Maria to try it on for her. Maria just couldn't believe what she was hearing. Then the Senora took the dress down from its perch in the window and showed Maria where the fitting rooms were. Maria didn't need to be told a second time. She quickly stripped down to just her bra and panties and pulled the dress up into place. It fit perfectly, which nearly brought tears to Maria's eyes; she knew that she didn't have the means to purchase such a lovely creation.

When Maria stepped from the fitting room, Senora Gomez smiled widely, knowing her creation had finally found its owner. Each dress she made had its own personality; it would only look its best on the right person, and this one had. She oohed and aahed over the fit and how lovely it looked on Maria.

Maria told Senora Gomez she agreed with her, but couldn't afford such a beautiful dress. Senora Gomez just chuckled. The owner then told Maria that if she told everyone where she got the dress, Maria could have it for free. The blood rushed from Maria's face and she nearly fainted, right there in the middle of the shop. Senora Gomez saw what was happening and helped Maria to a small couch, where she could recuperate, and have a glass of water.

It took several minute for Maria to recover. She asked Senora Gomez if she was just joking with her. Senora Gomez shared her idea for advertising her business. Most of her customers had been referred to her by other satisfied people; she wanted to share her newest work to the rest of the world. An added plus was that in this community, word of mouth was far better than any newspaper ad. Maria still had a difficult time believing her luck but once the shopkeeper had wrapped up the dress and handed it back to Maria, it was clear that the owner was quite serious. So Maria agreed to the owner's request, took the package, and rushed home.

After she hung the dress up, Maria made her way to a department store. In order for the dress to be complete, she needed several pairs of lace top thigh-high stockings in a dark midnight black, as well as a panty brief to hide her more delicate parts when she was spun across the dance floor. Some of the stockings she picked up had a long, dark seam in the back. Maria thought they looked just too sexy to pass up. She also picked up a couple of pairs of dance tights that were sheer, in a beige tone.

When she completed her shopping, Maria made a beeline for home, took a long hot bath, and put the out-

fit back on in the privacy of her home. Once she added all the things she had purchased, Maria realized that Senora was right. It did fit perfectly and it had a personality that matched Maria's to a tee. She wore the dress for the entire evening. She loved that dress, so much so that it was difficult for Maria to take it off when it came time for bed. Her next day off was Saturday, and today was Wednesday. Could she wait till then to wear it again?

On Saturday she was assigned two floors, not just her usual one, due to sick calls by a couple of the girls she worked with. That meant she would have to work twice as hard in her twelve-hour shift. By the time she got home, her legs, back, and feet were killing her. She had a nasty headache and felt like she had a fever as well. She first took a bath, then drank some medicine, before she went to bed. She had hopes that when she woke up that afternoon, she would feel well enough to go to the club in her new dress.

Maria faintly heard the alarm clock go off. She opened her eyes but her head felt fuzzy and heavy. Maria rolled over, switched off the alarm, and sat up at the side of the bed. When she finally made it to her feet, she moved slowly and deliberately towards the kitchenette to brew a small pot of coffee. After the first cup was down, she felt a little better but the thought of spinning across the dance floor and having some man putting his hands all over her just didn't sound very appealing. She had a second cup, but was still on the fence about going. It was early enough to get ready without rushing but she was still having second thoughts.

She parked herself in front of the television set and switched over to the news, hoping she would be able to

wake up a bit more. The club she was planning on going to had been fire bombed, just minutes ago, by a rival cartel. A gun fight had broken out between the gangs from that area of town. Many people were wounded and several killed. A police spokesman said they were very sure they knew which cartel had been involved. It was the same one that had killed her parents.

Just then there was a loud knock on her front door, which scared Maria silly as she was so intensely watching the coverage. She slowly got up, moved towards the front door, and looked out through the peephole. A tall man in a dark suit was waiting. Maria backed away and went to her room where the phone was. She called the government agent in charge of her case. When he answered, she asked him if he had sent someone to her apartment. He confirmed that which was a great relief to Maria. She hung up, went to the door, cracked it just a bit, and asked the man for some ID. After he showed her his badge and ID, she opened the door and invited him in.

Maria showed the agent, a young man maybe in his late twenties, to the kitchen and offered him some coffee. He accepted, and sat down at her small kitchen table. This tall, quite handsome, man was the first man who had ever been inside of her place. They both had difficulty not staring at each other.

Maria excused herself and went into her room to change into something more appropriate, as she only was wearing a pair of sleep shorts and a T-shirt. The agent, whose name was Sam, watched Maria as she walked away, admiring the swing of her hips. Even without makeup or her hair done, she was gorgeous.

Maria slipped on a pair of jeans and an oversized sweat shirt before returning to the man to hear what he had to say.

“Maria, I am Sam Green, a field agent for the government. Mr. Stock sent me over to make sure you were okay, but he failed to mention just how beautiful you were,” he complimented her.

Maria blushed wildly. It had been a long time since Mr. Stock had last seen her and there had been many changes. She was still Miguel then, still a boy.

“Thank you, Mr. Green. I haven’t seen Mr. Stock in some time. Many things are different since our last meeting,” Maria replied.

“Please call me Sam. I’ll continue to call you Maria, if you don’t mind of course,” he said.

“Sam it is then. Just what was Mr. Stock so worried about that he felt he needed to send someone here?” she asked.

“Well, as I hope you are aware, the cartel that took your parents from you has been linked to a fire bombing at a local dance club not far from here. There were also some shootings in the area. He was just concerned about your safety,” Sam stated.

“I saw what was going on on the news. It’s very scary for me. I go to that club all the time. In fact, I had planned on going tonight,” Maria said.

“So you’re a dancer?” Sam asked.

Maria just smiled, as she knew what coming next. “Yes, I like to think I am. I took a few classes when I was in school, and kind of got hooked,” she said.

“Same here. Maybe we could go out some time. I know of another club that is in a much better area,” he replied.

“I would like that. Call me some time and if I am free, you’ll have a date,” Maria said.

After they exchanged cell numbers, Sam left as he had a report to file. The sexual tension between them was obvious. After shutting the door behind him, Maria was now wide awake; she couldn’t stop thinking about the tall, handsome man who had flirted with her. She blushed, knowing she had returned the flirting. Maria had never found herself in this position before, as most men she had met had just thrown themselves at her, hoping something would stick. Sam was different; something down low in her belly had told her so. As she continued to think about it, the warmth continued to grow. But Maria had to consider just how to tell Sam about her history; she was sure Mr. Stock would have sealed her file a long time ago. Maria knew that she had to get some advice on this matter.

The next morning, Maria picked up the phone, and called her mentor, Mrs. Peterson, to ask her what she should do. When the phone was answered, a young, light voice answered. Maria realized that Mrs. Peterson had a new pupil living with her. Maria asked who she was talking to.

“My name is Veronica.”

Maria asked if Mrs. Peterson was available after introducing herself to the young girl on the other end.

“Just one moment please,” Veronica said as she put the receiver down.

Maria heard the clicking of heels, as Veronica walked across that familiar wooden floor. She then

heard some muted sounds, but the voices were too far away to hear what was being said.

“Maria, how lovely it is to hear your voice again,” Mrs. Peterson said.

Maria then heard Mrs. Peterson cover the receiver with her hand as she told her new charge to go bathe and put on the party dress she had just gotten as the event had been planned for later that evening.

“I was just talking about you to my new charge, Veronica. Your ears must have been ringing,” she said.

“They didn’t, so you must have said something nice,” Maria replied.

“You must know that you were my favorite student,” Mrs. Peterson replied. “I think of you often. So tell me, how are things?” she asked.

“Things are just fine, I guess. I work a lot these days but on my days off I try to improve my dancing, which brings me to why I called,” Maria hinted. “You see, I met a handsome young man.”

Before she could finish, Mrs. Peterson was laughing heartily. “I know exactly why you called, my dear, and what’s on your mind.”

“It’s just that our histories are so similar, and I think of you as the ultimate expert on the subject,” Maria said.

“Experienced? Yes. Expert? Well, I’m sure that there are others out there that know more than I do. But I can tell you what I would do in certain circumstances,” Mrs. Peterson declared.

Mrs. Peterson and Maria had a long talk about men and how to share The Secret without scaring them off. Mrs. Peterson’s advice came down to being honest and

up front, letting the chips fall where they may. Maria had to agree, as that was her intention all along. They ended their call with a promise to get together over lunch sometime in the near future. After Maria hung up, she felt a lot better and was now ready to be asked out by Sam.

Later that day, Sam did call. After they compared schedules, they planned on a date night the following Friday. Now Maria began an internal debate. Should she wear her new dance outfit for a first date or something a little less revealing? She chose the latter, as she wanted Sam to want her for her mind, not her body, like so many men had in the past.

Maria was distracted the entire week at work. Some of the older women she worked with saw what was happening to Maria and began to tease her about the new mystery man in her life. It was all in good fun. Maria would blush at every comment, even though she had never said a word about any guy. They just knew the signs of young love and were very happy for Maria.

Friday morning arrived, Maria had just gotten off work. Her plans included a few hours of sleep before she would start to get ready for her date with Sam. But sleep would not come to Maria this day as she was just too excited. She tossed and turned, then dozed for just an hour or two, before deciding to get up and start her preparations. Sam had planned on being at Maria's by six o' clock to pick her up for dinner, then to his club for dancing. She had planned to play things low key for the first date, so her special dress would have to wait just a bit longer to make its debut.

She started by taking a long, hot, scented bath with lavender and citrus salts. She then shaved her legs

closely and checked her face for any imperfections. She could find none. She softened her skin more with lotion, then began to collect the things she intended to wear.

Maria grabbed her favorite bra and panty set. They were jet black, made of the finest silks and laces. It made Maria feel sexy when she wore them. Next, she pulled on a pair of sheer dance tights and panty brief that would shimmer in the dance floor lights. She chose a short wrap dress with fluffy skirt and fitted bodice. Maria then parked herself at her vanity, slowly and expertly put on her makeup and did her hair. After she spritzed a floral perfume on all her selected areas, she grabbed a pair of black patent leather heels that were about three inches in height. The last step Maria did was to put a large Hibiscus bud in her dark black hair. The contrast of the deep red flower and her shiny black hair was striking. Maria was now ready for her first real date as a woman.

Sam was just as excited and distracted as Maria. He'd even been scolded by a supervisor for wandering off into thoughts of Maria and their date. Friday, he got off early and ran home to get himself cleaned up for Maria. He shaved closely, showered, and put on his favorite cologne. He then put on a pair of loose fitting jeans, a silky floral, short-sleeved shirt, and some comfortable shoes. He then checked himself out in a wardrobe mirror. Once he was satisfied, he picked up the phone and called Maria, telling her he'd be there in no more than twenty minutes. Sam tried to picture Maria and what she would be wearing and found that he was getting quite physically excited. He almost caused a couple of wrecks and ran at least one red light as he made his way to Maria's apartment.

Sam knocked on the door and waited for her to answer. When she opened the door, Sam was very pleasantly surprised by the vision that stood before him and her intoxicating fragrance. With her hair done up and her three-inch heels, Maria was just a little shorter than Sam. She grabbed a shawl, threw it around her bare shoulders, then closed and locked the door before she grabbed Sam's arm. They jumped into his car, and headed for Sam's favorite date restaurant.

When they arrived, both Maria and Sam ordered a light salad and iced teas. Maria was satisfied listening to Sam go on about his high school and college days, his time in the military, and how he had been recruited by the agency shortly after his discharge.

Before either of them realized it, they had spent more than an hour having a leisurely meal. Sam then paid the bill before he escorted Maria back out to the car. As they left, everyone in the restaurant stopped eating, as they watched the couple leave. They were a perfect couple and it didn't hurt that they were both very attractive as well.

They then made their way to the club Sam had told Maria about. Sam knew the owner and was given a VIP welcome and a table just off the elevated dance floor. The DJ was spinning some of their favorite tunes, so it didn't take long for them to find the dance floor. After just a couple of dances, Maria realized that Sam was an excellent dancer, especially for someone so tall. He was able to move smoothly and had the strength to spin, twirl, and lift Maria with little effort. Sam noticed that Maria was really in her element as well. He had a difficult time keeping his mind on the dance and not staring at the athletic and beautiful creature that was his partner.

Sam and Maria performed an Argentine Tango, a Samba, and a Fox-trot to perfection. It was as if they were in their own little world. Many of the couples thought they were professional dancers and just sat off to the side and enjoyed the show. There was another table, just off the floor, with four men and three women seated at it. They watched carefully as the couple performed. One of the men, very large and balding, watched with particular interest. Maria looked very familiar to him; he just couldn't quite remember from where or when. Sam and Maria were enjoying themselves and were quite oblivious to the people watching their every move.

During one of the breaks, Maria and Sam were each having a cold glass of wine. Maria looked up and scanned the room, watching other couples moving to the music. She then saw a large man on the far side of the room staring directly at her. This made Maria feel very uncomfortable.

As she continued to look, she recognized him from years earlier. At that time he was a lieutenant of the cartel that ran the drug operation in her town. Suddenly, she realized he may have been responsible for many crimes, maybe even the deaths of her parents. When Sam asked her if she wanted to take another spin on the dance floor, Maria made the excuse that she had gotten tired and would prefer to go home. As Maria and Sam left, she saw the man's puzzled expression had not changed. She was sure that he would not remember where he knew her from and was equally sure that he was not a very nice man.

Antonio Garza watched the handsome man and the gorgeous woman leave the club. He decided he wanted this woman and would have her whether she wanted

him or not. He was quite used to getting everything he wanted. He told another man at the table to follow the couple and find out where the woman lived. The man followed orders, leaving just seconds after Maria and Sam. He saw the man help the woman into the car and drive away. He waited for several seconds before putting his car into gear and following the tail lights out of the parking lot, into the street. He kept a close eye on the car but never got too close. He had followed too many people in his career to make mistakes like that.

As they drove, Sam could see that Maria had changed. She looked a little frightened and not as happy as she had been earlier in the evening. Sam then noticed the car behind them had been there for some time. He put two and two together and made the connection. "Is there something you would like to share?"

Maria was quiet and stared straight ahead for several minutes. She then turned to Sam, who saw a darkness cross her face. "Can you find a place to park? I really need to tell you something," Maria said.

"Sure babe, anything you want," Sam replied. Sam saw a well-lit parking lot, pulled in, and parked. He kept a trained eye in the mirror. The same car that had been behind them shut off its lights and parked not far away from them.

Ernesto called his superior. "Hey Boss, they just parked. It looks like they're talking more than they're making out."

Antonio liked what he heard. "Just keep a close eye on them. I want to know where she lives."

"You got it," Ernesto said as he hung up. He grabbed a beer sitting in his cup holder, popped the top, and sat back. He hoped that they wouldn't be here

all night, as he really wanted to hit the sack as soon as possible.

As soon as Sam turned off the ignition, Maria grabbed his hand. "Sam, I'm sure you have read my file, so you know that I was relocated here after my parents were killed in my home country. I was very young when all of this happened. What is not in my file was that my name was Miguel then. She paused before continuing. "I was born a boy. I have been through a lot of education and I've had some medications, so now I am mostly woman. But tonight at the club, I saw a man that I am sure was responsible for many crimes. He may have had a hand in my parent's deaths. I don't know for sure if he recognized me as I was a boy then I've gone through quite a few changes since then," Maria explained.

Sam was listening carefully and watched Maria's face as she confessed to her past. He was in professional mode now and realized they were being followed by someone, acting on orders from a cartel boss. Sam saw that Maria was silently weeping.

"You're the first man I have ever considered dating. I have danced with many men but that was for the dance, not the man. I wanted to be upfront with you, Sam. I didn't want you to think that I was trying to deceive you," Maria sobbed.

Sam reached over, and took Maria's hand in his. "Don't worry about that now, we have bigger things to worry about. Someone has been following us since we left the club. I think it best if we get you home and safe," Sam stated.

"Whatever you think is best," Maria agreed.

Sam started the car, and headed directly for Maria's apartment. Along the way, Sam shared his plan with Maria. The car that had followed them from the club was just a few yards behind them. When the couple got back to Maria's, Sam saw the car turn off its headlights and coast to a stop just up the street.

"Okay, I am going to walk you to the door. To keep things convincing, we'll need to kiss goodnight. Are you okay with that?" Sam asked.

Maria agreed, hoping it wouldn't be the last time they would kiss. Sam helped Maria from the car and walked her to her door. She turned to Sam, put her arms around his neck and pulled him towards her, as she reached up with her lips to touch his. With one hand on the small of her back and one resting on her hip, Sam cocked his head to the side and met Maria halfway. It was as if the kiss was charged with electricity.

Maria parted her lips and invited Sam to explore, which he did readily. Sam pulled Maria closer and slid a hand down to gently massage Maria's behind. Maria could feel Sam grow larger by the second and knew he was getting very excited. After they had been kissing for several minutes, Sam and Maria parted. They looked longingly into each other's eyes before Sam turned. Maria shut the door behind her.

Ernesto had been watching the entire scene. Once the man left, he called Antonio to let him know the girl was now alone. "Stay there until I get there," Antonio ordered.

Sam got into his car and acted as if he was driving away. Once he was out of sight, he pulled over and snuck back to Maria's. While she waited for Sam to return, she quickly undressed, put on a night and robe,

then brewed a pot of coffee. It looked like it was going to be a long night. Maria then heard the soft tapping signal at her back door. Making sure there were no lights on, she let Sam in, then closed and locked the door. When she turned around, Maria found herself in Sam's strong arms again, with his lips attached to hers.

Sam then used his cell phone to call his supervisor and explain what was going on. Mr. Stock understood right away and began to gather other local agents to protect Sam and Maria from the cartel thugs. Within just minutes, the area was flooded with law enforcement agents.

All the while, Antonio was en-route to Maria's. She was all he could think about. He was as hard as a rock by now and his pants were getting wetter by the minute. Thinking of lying between those creamy thighs and tasting those lovely breasts was all he cared about, at least for the moment. He arrived at the address Ernesto had given him, parked the car, then signaled Ernesto to keep a sharp lookout, as he wouldn't be very long.

With all the lights off, Maria snuggled up to Sam as they sat together on the couch. At Sam's suggestion, they didn't speak but were able to touch one another. They heard the window on her back door break, the door squeak open, then close again quickly. Sam had taken out his service weapon and was poised to take down this criminal. They then saw a small flashlight go on and silently made their way to behind the sofa. Sam peeked around the far side and saw a figure move through the apartment, looking for the bedroom.

What Sam didn't see was the large hunting knife that Antonio had in his hand. Antonio had brought it with him just to insure that Maria would be compliant

with his wishes; when he was done with her, he planned on eliminating her. Sam saw the flashlight beam swing towards Maria's bedroom which could be seen from the doorway that Antonio was standing in. He lowered his zipper, pulled out his hardened member, and stepped towards her room.

Sam stood up and yelled at the figure, "Freeze. Police officer," Sam exclaimed.

Antonio turned towards the voice and saw a man with a flashlight and that he had a gun pointed directly at him. In one, well-practiced, move, Antonio threw his knife at the figure, standing in the light. Sam saw what was happening, and squeezed the trigger, sending a bullet straight at the man's head. A bullet will always travel faster than a knife. Antonio never saw his knife enter the man's shoulder as the bullet slammed into his forehead, killing him instantly. Antonio slumped to the floor in a lazy heap.

The other agents heard the gun shot and descended on the apartment and the lookout's car at the same time. Ernesto froze as a large caliber handgun was placed at his temple. He dropped his cell phone. The other agents stormed Maria's apartment, entering both the front and back doors, breaking them down, as they began to yell commands. By this time, Mr. Stock had arrived on the scene.

Mr. Stock quickly looked around. He saw Sam lying in a pool of blood with a large knife sticking out of his shoulder and a young woman holding part of her robe on the wound, trying to stem the flow of blood. Another agent had gone to the body and checked for a pulse. He reported that there was none to be felt.

Mr. Stock looked at the girl and thought, "No wonder Sam has been so distracted. This girl is something

else." He could see right through the thin material of her gown and could only shake his head. "If I was only younger," he thought.

He knelt down by his fallen agent and looked up into the girl's tear-stained face. "Do something," she screeched. "He could be dying."

Mr. Stock said, "Help is on the way, young lady. Can you tell me your name?"

Maria wiped her face with the back of her hand, then said, "Mr. Stock, I am Maria, but you may know me better as Miguel."

It was like someone had slapped him across the face. "You're little Miguel?" he gestured with his hands.

"I was. A lot has changed since then," she replied.

"I should say so," he declared.

A medic arrived and began to work feverishly. Sam's head was resting on Maria's thigh as she held pressure to the wound. The medic quickly moved Maria's hand, expertly removed the knife and placed a gauze patch on it. It was soaked in seconds. By this time the ambulance had also arrived. The attendants put Sam on a gurney, then into their waiting vehicle. Maria tried to get in with Sam, but Mr. Stock held her back.

"Come on, Maria. Let's get you dressed, then we'll get to the hospital"

The ambulance left with a police escort, lights flashing, siren blaring. Mr. Stock took Maria back inside her apartment and helped her get cleaned up. Suddenly, he felt like a father and helped her get dressed before putting her in his car and racing to catch up with Sam.

When they reached the Emergency Room, Maria tried to rush to Sam's side, only to be kept away by a couple of nurses.

Moments later, the doctor came out to Maria and Mr. Stock with good news. The knife had missed all of Sam's vital organs and major blood vessels. After some stitches, antibiotics, and rest, he should be as good as new in no time at all. Maria began to cry as she collapsed against Mr. Stock. He and a nurse sat her down, and gave her a cup of water, as well as moral support.

About an hour later, Maria was allowed to see Sam. His left arm was in a sling and there was a large dressing high up on his chest. He looked a little groggy, but was awake enough to recognize Maria. Maria rushed to him, threw her arms around him, and began to kiss him wildly in front of everyone there. This wasn't an unusual sight for the ER staff, but it was for Sam and Mr. Stock who were the only ones there who knew that Maria had been born a boy.

After his release, Mr. Stock drove Sam and Maria back to Sam's house. Maria's apartment was still considered a crime scene, and would require a large amount of cleanup. A woman agent had packed up some things so Maria would have something to change into. Maria stayed at Sam's place until hers was ready to move back into.

Maria asked for some time off to help Sam get back on his feet. But since they weren't legally married, her job would be in jeopardy if she took a leave. Sam told Maria she should just quit the job, and come live with him. And that's just what she did. Maria moved from her apartment into one of Sam's spare bedrooms which was larger than her old apartment. It even had its own bathroom. Maria tended to all of Sam's needs during

his recuperation. She cooked for him, cleaned his house, basically becoming his wife. Sam tried to help but the injuries kept him from doing very much.

Ernesto was interrogated and Antonio's home was searched. They found a gold mine of information about the cartel he was associated with and its operations. Not much later, many agents descended on many of the cartel's hot spots and distribution houses. After the raids, the cartel was no more, and Maria and her sister were safe from further danger.

It took more than a month before Sam was well enough to work, then only on limited duty, writing reports. Being assigned to desk work was far from Sam's favorite thing. Each night when Sam got home, the house would be spotless and his dinner was always ready. One of Sam's return-to-work conditions was that he get counseling to help him come to terms with being injured on the job. Sam had gone to a couple of sessions and was convinced he was getting better. At one of these sessions, Sam brought up Maria. The counselor congratulated Sam on taking the initiative of hiring help. Sam corrected the counselor, saying Maria was much more than just hired help. She was his love interest. It was at that point that Sam explained Maria's condition as well as her situation.

Sam's therapist had very little experience with this type of situation, so he referred Sam to someone who did. Her name was Susan; she was a transgendered woman herself. She was able to give great insight to Sam, about his present and possible future relationship with Maria. Sam loved Maria deeply but was very unsure if he could make a commitment like marriage to her with her not being a biological female. Their intimate life was still in its infancy so Sam had no experi-

ence to compare it to. Maria was a wonderful kissing partner, and was very giving in other ways. Sam was always satisfied after spending time with Maria.

Shortly after that, Sam was sent away for some specialized training. He would be gone for more than two weeks. During the day, his training was hard and he had to learn many new techniques. But in the evenings when his buddies would go out to party, Sam would stay in his room. He had a lot to think about, mostly what to do with Maria. He searched the internet and found many sites that gave him a bunch of information. He also saw some sites that gave him cause for concern.

Meanwhile, Maria had her own thoughts on her relationship. A long time ago, when she was offered an opportunity to have surgery to become more of a woman, she had decided to decline. Maria still had hopes that one day, she could return to being Miguel. But after years of hormone therapy, Maria could never return to her former life. Too many changes had taken place. Her private parts had shrunk to near nothing and she had developed way too many curves to ever consider wearing men's clothes once again. Her fate had been sealed a long time ago. Maria decided that if she wanted to have Sam as a permanent part of her life, she would have to share a lot more of herself with him. After all, he was a man, and had his needs.

The next day, Maria headed for the mall and her favorite lingerie store. She had seen so many pretty and very sexy things there. She would flush brightly just thinking about wearing anything like them. She owned several nighties and sexy pajamas, but had never ever considered buying something so revealing. She began to browse through the racks, looking at all of the fine

articles that hung there, waiting to be chosen. She had yet to pick up even one item after several minutes of shopping. A young, very pretty sales girl was watching Maria, and decided to come to her rescue.

Her name was Julie. "If you tell me what you are looking for, or the occasion you are planning, I can help and make some suggestions that you might find interesting," she said.

Maria began to explain that she wanted to surprise her boyfriend. Maria started to giggle as she thought of the word "Boyfriend." Julie took Maria to another part of the store and they began sifting through the racks. She first pulled out a very short teddy, with matching thong panties. Maria just shook her head no, as she turned bright red. Julie then showed her a peekaboo gown in an inky black, with full coverage matching panty briefs. The bodice was sheer and the cups nearly so, with only lacy inserts to cover a minimum amount of flesh. Maria was intrigued by the outfit, and told Julie to wrap it up.

Julie then suggested a pair of kitten heeled mules, which Maria also purchased. Maria then rushed home to try on her purchases.

Sam was due home on Friday afternoon. Maria made sure everything was where it was supposed to be. She then headed for the bathroom, where she shaved her legs closely and took a long, hot bath before wrapping up in a big, fluffy towel. She selected a pair of pastel pink, nylon panties that hugged her hips and bottom. Next came a lacy bra that left little to the imagination. She then put on Sam's favorite skirt. It was very short, which showed most of her legs and had tiers of lace. It was in black.

Then Maria put on a short-sleeved silky blouse in ice white that allowed her camisole top and bra to be seen clearly. Lastly, she stepped into a pair of black, three-inch heeled pumps.



After she put on earrings, a bracelet, and necklace, Maria then sat down to do her nails in a flaming red. Her hair was then swept in an up-do with small curls hanging down, framing her face. Her makeup, as usual, was perfect in every way. Maria had just finished dressing when she heard Sam's car pull into the driveway.

The first thing Sam saw, as he entered the front door, was an angel flitting about the kitchen. When she saw him, she grinned widely, then ran into his arms, where they began to kiss for several minutes. Sam was enjoying massaging Maria's ample bottom, under her skirt. Maria backed away and ordered Sam to shower and get dressed up nice, as she had made reservations for dinner. Sam didn't need to be asked twice. He was ready in record time. They then drove to the restaurant. All along the way, Sam had a difficult time keeping his eyes on the road as Maria's skirt had ridden up just enough to show Sam just a peek at her pink panties.

Both could feel the tension in the air. Neither could eat much, very unusual for Sam, as he usually had a massive appetite. They talked in generalities before and during the meal, as well as on the ride home. Once they entered the house, Maria told Sam to pour a couple of glasses of white wine while she changed. Sam watched, with great interest, Maria's behind, as she walked away. Sam returned to the sofa to wait for Maria's return.

He wouldn't have to wait for very long. Maria quickly changed; before redressing, she splashed some light floral perfume on her neck, chest, and wrists, just like Mrs. Peterson showed her. She even gave the insides of her panties a spritz before heading out to Sam.

Sam saw the lights go off in Maria's room just as her door opened. Sam's eyes nearly popped right out of his head. Maria had watched enough fashion shows and beauty pageants to know how to walk sexily and seductively. She marched right up to Sam, took the glass of wine from his hand, and parked herself right on his lap, facing him. Her knees were on each side of his hips and her bottom was resting right on his excitement. Maria could feel it and knew that Sam was very close to being completely excited.

Maria then placed a hand on each of Sam's shoulders and looked him right in the eyes. "I have been giving our relationship a lot of thought lately," she began. "And I want to be with you for a long time. I know we both have needs as well as reservations but I want you to be happy." With that said, Maria leaned forward, and began to kiss Sam passionately. Not only on his lips, but his ears and neck. Then her mouth traveled down past his chest and stomach. Sam was speechless as he watched his angel become a sexy devil.

Maria then expertly undid Sam's belt, pants button, and lowered his zipper, before freeing his fully erect member. She knelt down between his legs and started kissing his excitement. Sam nearly lost it several times. He had to ask Maria to stop before she went too far.

Sam then helped Maria to her feet, easily picked her up, and carried her into his bedroom where he gently deposited her on the soft and silky comforter. He was out of his clothes before Maria had time to readjust. Sam then lay beside her and returned the kisses. He could taste her perfume, which further excited him, before he placed his mouth on the dark brown and swollen nipples of Maria's breasts.

The waves of pleasure traveled down Maria's body, zeroing in on a deep spot, low in her belly. Sam had played with Maria's breasts before and given her a great deal of pleasure, but not to this extreme. She then felt his hand travel down her smooth, flat, belly and onto her panty-covered crotch. Having someone other than herself touch her there sent Maria's heart racing. Her breath became coarse and harsh. Sam then moved back up, then on top of Maria. In one swift move, she felt her panties go down to her knees, then off, only to land on the floor, out of sight. Maria spread her legs wide and wrapped them around Sam's waist. Maria had brought a tube of lubricant with her and applied some to her bottom and some onto Sam's member.

Maria guided Sam towards her love hole where, slowly, Sam began to push himself into Maria, allowing her time to accommodate his size, which by this time was huge. Once he was all the way in, he rested and enjoyed the feeling of Maria being tightly around him. Maria began to find pleasure in having Sam deep inside her as well. Once the initial pain had subsided, she was ready to proceed.

Maria and Sam began to move together, establishing a rhythm they were both comfortable with. It had been some time since Sam had been in this position. Maria could feel Sam get bigger by the second. Soon, Sam began to spasm, filling her bottom with his hot juices. Sam had been stimulating Maria to the point that she began to leak heavily, which was new for her. They stopped moving until Sam became more flaccid and slipped out of Maria's bottom. They turned towards each other with Sam holding Maria's head close to his chest. Maria snuggled up to the warmth of Sam's body. She could smell her man's essence, which seemed to bring him closer to her.

They stayed locked together for some time before Maria opened her eyes and looked up into Sam's. "Thank you, darling. That was wonderful," Maria whispered.

Sam smiled, then said, "I should be thanking you. You were marvelous."

Sam reached over Maria and opened a drawer in his night stand. He then removed a small box. When she saw it, she froze, not wanting to spoil the moment.

"I have been thinking a lot. I know that you weren't born a girl and it wasn't your choice to be in this position. I love you, just the way you are. Would you accept this ring and say you'll be my wife?" Sam asked. Sam felt warm tears fall onto his bare chest. Maria had difficulty taking her eyes off of the ring. Without a word, Maria extended her ring finger and let Sam slide it into place.

"Yes Sam. I would be honored to be your wife. I just want you to remember, I can never give you children. We have never discussed that, so I don't know how you feel about it," Maria replied.

"That's something else I was thinking about," Sam said. "When I was in college, I suffered an injury that left me unable to have children. If you are open to it, I would like to adopt. You're a loving and caring woman; I just know that you'll be a great mom."

Maria snuggled up closer to Sam. "I love you," she sobbed. After a few minutes of silence, Maria asked Sam, "When would you like to do this?"

Sam hugged Maria and said, "I have vacation time I need to take next week. How about we fly to Vegas and get married there?"

Maria was shocked then replied, "That sounds perfect to me."

Maria and Sam made love frequently during that special weekend. Each time was easier and more satisfying to both of them. Come Monday morning, Sam went to Mr. Stock to ask him for the time off and told him what he had planned.

"Wow Sam, you don't mess around much," he said, chuckling. "Of course I'll approve it." Sam grinned and shook Mr. Stock's hand wildly.

After Sam left his office, Mr. Stock began to think about a wedding present. Then an idea struck him like a rock from outer space. He placed a few phone calls, and made all of the arraignments he could. Sam had told him where they had planned to have the ceremony, so Mr. Stock was happy with the plans he had.

By the end of the week, the whole office knew about the upcoming nuptials. Before Sam left that last day, many of the agents had pooled their money and gave Sam and Maria a gift card worth several thousand dollars. Sam was very touched. He couldn't wait to get home and tell Maria what his friends had done. Meanwhile, by the end of the week, Maria had everything packed and ready for their flight to Las Vegas. Sam had gotten off early, came home, and helped Maria with all the last minute things that always seem to pop up.

The taxi arrived promptly and whisked the couple to the airport. Just a few hours later, they were checking into the hotel and unpacking for the week. They then went to a chapel and paid for everything, before heading to the courthouse for the license. Back when she had been placed in federal protection, Maria had been issued a new birth certificate, indicating her gen-

der as female. All was now ready for their 3 PM appointment.

Maria and Sam dressed for their ceremony. Sam wore a three-piece suit in navy blue with light grey striping. Maria had found a prom dress that was ice white and quite short. It was strapless and hugged her curves like a glove. It was made from a heavy satin material, with lacy overlays on the back of the dress, as well as around the hem. Maria put her hair up, using some traditional combs she found at a store that catered to her birth country's culture. She did an extra special job on her makeup and nails, and finished everything off with silver bracelets, necklace, and an anklet. A couple of sprays of the floral perfume that Sam so enjoyed on their first weekend together completed her preparations. Maria then tucked her arm under Sam's and they went to the lobby to wait for the courtesy limo.

Maria and Sam climbed into the expansive back seat, where Maria found a bridal bouquet waiting for her. The ride was brief, as the chapel was just a few miles from the hotel. Sam exited the limo first, then helped Maria out. Maria saw that there were other couples there. Most of the couples were there alone, but there were a few with family members waiting as well.

Maria and Sam's names were called and they stepped inside for the short walk down the aisle. Just off to Maria's right side, a younger woman with a couple of children stood waiting. Maria thought the woman looked familiar, but was unable to remember where she might know her from. The woman suddenly called out, "Miguel, is that you?"

This caught Maria off-guard. She then realized that it was Rosa, the sister that she hadn't seen for many

years. The two women came together and hugged warmly.

“Oh Rosa, I have missed you so much. I think of our family every day,” Maria said as she began to tear up.

“My name is now Antoinette now. I am married to a wonderful man. These are my children. I have told them our story many times. God, I have missed you so much. Mr. Stock said that you looked very different now. That is some understatement,” Antoinette said, laughing, then tearing up herself.

Maria introduced Sam as her fiancée, then showed her sister the gorgeous ring Sam had gotten for her. “I am so glad you are here. Since we were separated, I have felt like an orphan. But you’re here now to share this wonderful moment with me,” Maria continued.

Antoinette stood back, maybe an arm’s length away, and surveyed the person that used to be her brother. “You make a beautiful woman, Maria. You may not realize it but you could be a twin to our mother,” Antoinette declared.

Maria immediately saw what Antoinette was comparing her to. Maria was much taller but everything else was the same.

The music began to play and Sam held out an arm. Maria blushed the entire length of the aisle after Antoinette gave her a quick joking wolf whistle, as a compliment to Maria’s backside. Maria put a little extra swing into her hips, giving Antoinette a great show from behind.

Maria and Sam stepped before the minister and the music stopped. He opened a well-worn book and began to recite the wedding ceremony. Sam was first to

declare his love and he slipped a wedding ring onto her finger. Maria then gave her promise and gave Sam a simple gold band. They kissed and were introduced to all of the people in the chapel as the newly married couple.

Maria and Sam then walked back down the aisle and out the chapel doors. Antoinette and her kids; Roberto, who was ten years old, and Sylvia, who was eight, were waiting just outside. The children were a little hesitant at first but soon warmed up to their new aunt and uncle. The group was then taken back to the hotel where they spent the rest of the day together.

Before Antoinette and her children left, she told Maria that she and the kids were there as Mr. Stock's wedding present. He had provided the flight to and from, as well as the ground transportation. Antoinette wished she could spend more time but her children had things that they needed to attend to at home. It was a tearful but happy goodbye, as they all hugged and kissed.

Both Roberto and Sylvia had fallen hard for Sam. For Roberto, it was that Sam was in the Bureau; for Sylvia, it was that he was just so good looking. They swapped phone numbers and addresses, as well as promises to be a family again, just as the van sped Antoinette and the kids off to the airport.

With Maria's family gone, Sam and Maria turned their attention onto each other. Maria went to take a bath, then put on her wedding night gown and panties. Upon exiting the bathroom, she saw Sam lying on the bed, completely naked, except for a large red bow tied around his more than adequate member, and a wide smile.

Maria had to laugh. She jumped onto Sam, playfully removed the bow with her teeth, then went to work on her new husband with her mouth. Maria and Sam spent more than twenty-four hours in bed together, only getting out to use the bathroom and for room service.

After the first day or two, the newly married couple began to explore Las Vegas and all that it had to offer. During the day, they would lounge out by the pool. Maria had never worn anything but a one-piece bathing suit. Sam convinced her to buy a teeny bikini. After putting it on, Maria turned a bright red. She did like how it fit and showed her curves, though. Sam literally had to drag Maria out of the room, and towards the pool.

Once there, she was able to calm down and enjoy the freedom the suit gave her. She was still very conscious of people around her but wore it for Sam. In the evening, they would spend some time in the casinos. They had dinner out every night, got all dressed up, and took in a few of the more popular shows around town. All too quickly, the week came to an end. Reluctantly, they flew back home where they could start their lives together.

The following week, as Maria was moving her clothes into the master bedroom closet, she came across the dance dress she had always wanted to wear. Maria began to search the internet, hoping to find a traditional dance club that wasn't too far away. Maria clicked on a website for a dance competition in an area less than an hour's drive away. She got very excited as she always wanted to join a competition, but circumstances had never allowed her the opportunity. She

printed out all of the forms and rules and tried to wait patiently for Sam to come home.

Sam had hardly gotten in the door when Maria jumped on him, giving him a grand welcome home. She had cooked his favorite meal, steak and fries, and had it ready for him. She then escorted Sam into the dining room, where she served him his meal. While Maria was putting together her salad, Sam saw the stack of papers at the far end of the table. He looked over his shoulder, making sure Maria couldn't see him, and scanned the top page or two.

He had to laugh to himself as he realized what Maria was up to. This was her first attempt to butter up the hubby for something she wanted. Sam knew that all she had to do was ask and it would be hers. But he decided to let her go on and on with her plans.

When dinner was done, Maria took Sam to the couch where she helped him undress, then gave him a back and neck massage. He couldn't hold back any longer; he let out a throaty laugh and told Maria he had seen the forms for the dance gig and knew what she was trying to accomplish. The look on Maria's face was priceless. She jumped up on his lap and playfully began to beat on his chest, before surrendering to his kissing.

"Honey," Sam began. "If there's anything in my power to give you, all you have to do is ask." After her color returned to normal, they both had a good laugh.

After Sam left for work the next morning, more than satisfied, Maria began to fill out the forms and send them in. The event was three weeks away, so there was not much time for Maria and Sam to practice. Maria would dress up in some of her older outfits during their sessions, as she was saving the best for the

special night. After dinner, they would practice all sorts of different dance routines, covering most of the Latin-influenced ones. Each night when they were done, they both felt just a little better about their chances of at least placing in the competition.

On the day of the competition, Sam called Maria, telling her he had to stay late for work but would meet her at the club. Maria understood and began to collect the things Sam would need to change into. As was her habit, she took a long bath, shaved closely. Then she set out the costume she had always wanted to wear. First came the bra and panty set, followed by the seamed thigh high stockings and the full-coverage panty brief.

She then sat at her vanity, put on extra makeup and pinned her hair back with decorative combs and several fresh flowers. She looked closely at the image in the mirror, and saw what Antoinette had said about her looks. She was the twin of her mother. This sent both good and bad emotions flowing thru her. She put the negative out of her mind, and finally donned the outfit. It still fit perfectly in all of the right places. She checked carefully to make sure the seams of her stockings were straight and slipped on her dancing pumps. She was satisfied with the way everything had turned out. After putting on a long coat, she got in the car and drove herself to the club.

When Maria arrived, she saw that Sam was already there. He met Maria, helped her from the car, grabbed his clothes from the back seat, then escorted his wife into the club. While Sam was changing, Maria finalized the entry form, and paid the remaining balance. She then checked her coat, and when she turned, she saw that all eyes were on her, including Sam's. He was nearly drooling as he looked over his wife. Time was

short so Maria pinned a number on Sam's back, then Sam did the same for her.

When their names were called, the couple rushed to the floor, where they drew from a hat, the dance they were to perform to. It was to be a lively jive, one of Sam's favorite. Everyone at the club watched as Sam and Maria swung to the beat, hitting every mark with precision. By the end of the music, they were winded but happy with their performance. They now had to wait for the other three couples to do the same dance. Maria recognized one of the other couples from the club she used to frequent. They did a great job with their take on the jive.

The third couple had a problem. The girl's dress had been made just a bit too long. She caught a heel in the hem, causing her to fall into her partner. They both fell to the floor. They got back up and finished their dance, but that was clearly going to hurt them. The final couple then completed their dance and they all waited for the judge's decision. Maria and Sam had tied for first place, the last couple was now in third, and the couple that had fallen was last, therefore eliminated from the competition.

Maria and Sam had to wait for the other first place couple to finish before it was their turn. The Argentine Tango was next. Their practice was really paying off. They were synchronized, emotional, and spot-on with their moves. The final couple to compete did poorly; soon it was clear who the two couples that would move on to the final round were.

Maria and Sam would be picking the dance for the final leg of the competition. Maria reached into the hat and pulled out a folded piece of paper with "Samba" written on it. The other couple then chose their dance;

it would be a Tango. Both couples were given time to catch their breaths, have something to drink, and plan their dance.

There was a lot on Maria and Sam's side. They had practiced the Samba over and over, and Maria's costume was a perfect match for the music. The dance was called and when it began, Maria and Sam put everything they had into it. Sam was able to effortlessly spin, twirl, and lift Maria flawlessly. As for Maria, the skirt portion of her dress would flash just the right amount of leg. The top of her thigh-high stockings would be visible, as well as her panty brief which showcased her rounded hips and bottom. The number lasted only three minutes long, but it left Maria and Sam breathless. The judges were writing furiously, critiquing every move made.

The final couple of the evening began their routine. It was technically sound but didn't flow as smoothly as Maria and Sam's did. When the last note sounded, the crowd began to hold its collective breath, awaiting the judge's results. When the announcement was made, the audience erupted. Maria and Sam had won soundly. Maria jumped into Sam's arms and they kissed madly, right there on the stage. They won a large, glittery trophy, and a twenty-five hundred dollar check. As Maria and Sam left the stage, they were given a thunderous round of applause. Even the second place couple congratulated them. Maria and Sam then left the club, with neither of them touching the ground, they were so happy. It was a most memorable night.

By the end of the following year, Sam had been given a couple of promotions for his work and dedication. Maria had gone back to school, and was working

on an interior design degree. Maria and Antoinette had kept their promises and visited each other as often as time would allow. Maria finally had the family that she had always wanted.

The couple visited with Sam's family as well. He had a younger brother and sister who still lived at home while they studied at the local university. His parents were very well-off and lived in an exclusive gated community in a large house that had ten bedrooms and bathrooms. It stood back from a narrow street, surrounded by old trees and shrubs.

Maria was very nervous the first time they had visited. She had cleaned houses this big, but had never slept in one as a visitor. Sam's parents were wonderful people and graciously accepted her into the family with open arms. They went out of their way to make Maria feel welcomed.

Sam's father was a stockbroker and had made millions of dollars as an investor. He had talked about it for some time, but had finally made the move to retire. When the day came for him to leave the firm he had worked for more than thirty years, he received an unbelievable severance package. With that money, Sam's parents bought of their children a large house, in the area of their choice. His brother wanted to move to California, so a parcel of land just north of L. A. was purchased for him and a massive house was built on it.

His sister, the ultimate fashion nut, wanted a place in New York. A penthouse suite at the top of a new luxury skyscraper was bought. Sam's taste was more realistic and moderate. He had planned to stay with the agency until he retired, so a place near D. C. had been chosen. Sam asked Maria to design and furnish the home any way she wanted.

It had taken more than a year to build but the massive log home was finally done and was soon on the cover of many home magazines. Maria received many prestigious awards for her work.

Only one thing was missing from Maria and Sam's lives: children. After much planning and investigation, they adopted two girls, ages one and two. The first girl was named Alicia; the second they called Catherine. They were both of Hispanic heritage.

It didn't take long for the girls to be completely spoiled by their father and grandparents. Maria had to work hard to give the girls a good, sturdy foundation. She taught them everything that she, herself, had learned from Mrs. Peterson, and from her own experiences. Mrs. Peterson never had the opportunity to see just how well her charge had done in life as, sadly, she had passed away shortly after their last meeting. She did, however, know that she had a hand in creating a loving, caring, beautiful woman.

Sam has reached into the upper levels of management at the Bureau. Maria started and maintained a busy interior design company, and the girls are nearing their teenage years.

Maria, as she sat on the porch of the home that she designed, often thought of all of the ups and downs of the life she has lived. It began much differently than anyone could have imagined. Maria often thought of Miguel, the boy she used to be, and what would have been if things had been just a little different. From pauper, to princess, to mother, it has been a rocky ride, to say the least. But thinking about it, Maria wouldn't have changed a thing. She has a family she loves with her whole heart. The only thing missing was her parents. She would love to share her joys with them.

Keeping it Real

By Heather Berdrow

My story began many years ago. My mother was a real clothes horse; many things were available to an inquiring mind. This was in the late 50's and early 60's. Silks and satins in many colors, skirts and blouses; so many pretty things to peak interest in a child hungry to experiment.

I began my explorations of the fairer sex in a time before pantyhose, when silk stockings and garter belts were all the rage. Because both of my parents worked, I had a lot of time to myself. I did have a sister and brothers at that time, but they were too young to become a distraction. It was only a matter of time before the calling arrived.

I remember the first time like it was yesterday. I knew that my parents wouldn't be home until late and

I found myself in my mom's and dad's room. Her drawers always smelled wonderful. I picked the silkiest of panties, most elaborate of garter belt, the most beautiful bras, and the softest half-slips. I didn't know the names of these articles, only that they felt so good next to my skin. My mother had exquisite taste in fashions. I found nearly transparent blouses in many colors that showed just the right amount of lingerie to be intriguing.

I chose a pink bra with matching panty. I really didn't care that none of the clothes really fit at all. They felt great next to my nearly hairless skin. Next came the stockings and garter belt. I had watched my mother dress dozens of times, so I knew just what had to be done. I was very careful as I rolled the stockings up my legs. There was that feeling again. Addicting, as we all know. It felt so natural, so right. I pulled the slip up and the elastic snapped on my sides. "This is Heaven," I thought to myself.

The ice white blouse was followed by a sea green corduroy skirt that fell to just above my knees. I then slipped a pair of low-heeled pumps on and I was done.

I had seen my mother in this outfit and truly loved everything about it. I turned to the mirror on the wall. Here she was, the girl I had dreamed of being for so long. I was hooked. In an instant, I knew this was the real me. Not the boy in the T-shirts and jeans. Before I could stop it, a warm feeling welled up inside of me. I was powerless to stop it. The growing wet spot in my panties took over my mind, completely. I was a girl now, never to be a boy again.

This scenario played over and over in my mind, as I lay in bed at night. Hard as I tried, those feelings, the sight of the girl in the mirror, were always in the fore-

front of my mind. Every night, as I was about to sleep, I prayed that I would be a real girl when I woke up in the morning. And every morning I suffered the disappointment.

During the summer of my 8th year, I was sent to day camp. We were to have swimming lessons so the boys were sent to their locker room to change and the girls to their own. As I was changing into a swim suit, one of the older boys saw my private area. He told all the others that I couldn't be real boy, because I was so much smaller than everyone else. I really should change in the girl's locker room. To this day, I remember those comments as if they just occurred. They were just one more indication to me that I should be a girl.

Not much changed in my life during those early years. I found that my sister's clothes fit much better but they didn't feel nearly as good on my body. I continued to dress at every opportunity. Then, not long after my 10th birthday, my world was rocked.

On many weekends, my parents would go dancing and to dinner, with one of my aunts and my uncle. I stayed with an older cousin for those evenings. This particular Saturday night began like many others. My parents kissed me goodnight and told me to listen to my cousin and stay out of trouble.

Shortly after the grown-ups had left, I was sitting in front of the T.V. Out of the blue, my cousin told me how I looked like a girl he knew at school. I blushed but loved hearing that. Later he gave me a pair of his sister's panties and short nightie. He told me to put them on for bed. I was both scared and thrilled at the same time. I did what he said to do. "Boy, you really are cute in those clothes," he told me. He said that I

should be a girl. I went to bed happier than I had ever been before.

This routine repeated itself every time my cousin baby sat me for a few months, then just as suddenly, it ended without explanation. In retrospect, I'm glad that things never went any further between my cousin and me. Maybe he just enjoyed seeing me in girl clothes. I don't know, but I do know that *I* certainly enjoyed it.

A couple of years later, the next incident occurred. My family traveled from southern California to the Northeast where my father had grown-up; his family still lived there. All went well until we visited the family of a cousin my dad was close to. They didn't live far from where we were staying. There, we were introduced to the children. There were two girls near my age. They lived on a lake and we went swimming quite often.

On one of those trips, during a visit to the bathroom, I discovered a clothes hamper next to the commode. I was curious and peeked inside. I found several pairs of lovely panties, right on top. I finished my business, then put them on. Again, I was in heaven. I wore them for hours as I just couldn't part with them.

After dinner that night, my sister became quite ill and we hurried home. I was still wearing the panties; I hadn't had the opportunity to return them to the hamper before we left. Once back at home base, my sister began to feel better so no trip to the emergency room was required. I was in luck, I had dodged a bullet. I went into the bathroom, removed the panties, and hid them behind the commode tank. I thought they would be safe there and my secret would be kept.

The next morning, I was up before everyone else. My thoughts went back to the hidden panties. Maybe I

could wear them some more. When I went to retrieve them, they were gone. "Oh no," I thought. "Where did they go?"

As I left the bathroom, both my parents were standing at the door, holding the panties. I am sure they knew from the expression on my face that I was the culprit. Nothing was said until that afternoon. My sister and brothers had been put down for naps and the relatives had gone to the store. It was just my parents and me in the house. They sat me down and asked me about the theft. They asked me where and why I had taken them. I was scared to death. All I could come up with was that I was curious about how they felt to wear. My parents looked at each other silently, then at me. I was hurt and terribly embarrassed.

The rest of the trip nothing was said about the incident. It was uneventful but very tense. The day following our return home, I was taken to see a psychiatrist. After a few sessions, the doctors informed my parents that they shouldn't worry. I was just a gay teen. After this so-called revelation, I was determined to show just how wrong he was. I had no feelings for boys. I liked girls. I just wanted to be one.

The next dagger into the heart of my inner girl happened during the summer of my 13th year. I had grown nearly 8 inches over a span of 3-4 months. At the beginning of summer I could still wear my mom's or sister's clothes but by the end, I had become too large for them. I tried but couldn't even pull a pair of panties on. I was devastated. At that point in my life, the girl inside of me just slipped into limbo.

I still dreamed and prayed about being a girl someday but my crossdressing went the way of the Dodo bird. By the age of 17, I was 6'4", and 250 lb. I was just

way too large for a girl. I played football in high school. Of course, there were the cheerleaders. I loved them. I hated them.

Soon thereafter, high school was over. Thank God. I was such a loner and painfully shy. I had a total of 3 dates in high school; all were disasters. Even when I was able to muster the courage to ask a girl out, rejection followed. One girl told me I was too ugly to date. Talk about breaking my spirit.

What to do with the rest of my life. I had no idea. Should I go to college? Which one? How would I pay for it? I worked as a stock boy in a market. No chance for advancement there. I didn't think I was smart enough for any kind of higher learning. What was a guy to do?

After too many days spent at the beach and too many nights drinking alcohol, my life seemed to be spiraling downward. I needed help, direction. The military. Every member of my family; dad, uncles, had all joined the Navy. I wanted to break tradition. The Marines beckoned. The U.S.M.C. Now there was a true Man's World. Toughness, Grit, Esprit De Corps. Everything I felt I didn't embody. Remember, I was supposed to be gay. My Inner Girl continued her long hibernation.

All that you've heard about Marine Corps boot camp is true. It was the most difficult, demanding, challenging thing I had ever attempted. It was at this point that I was introduced to the girl that would become my wife. I had never had a girlfriend on anything even close to that. She wasn't the best person on the planet, but she showed interest in me. I really latched on. I didn't think that I would have many opportunities with women. I had a very poor self image and a total

lack of experience. We began dating. Several months before my discharge, we were married. My Inner Girl remained dormant. I thought that by getting married, I would be cured of wanting to cross dress. Boy, was I wrong.

One day, while my wife was at work, I was bored. We lived in an apartment and didn't have much extra money to go out and splurge. I don't know why, but the curiosity returned. I found a pair of silky panties and a light support girdle that my wife wore. I put them on and had an immediate physical reaction. I realized She was back. Not knowing how my wife would react, I kept the secret girl hidden. I began to experiment at every chance I could. I soon graduated from just panties and girdles to a complete set of dainties. I even mustered the courage to buy my own with saved lunch money. This included short nightgowns, and pantyhose. I was in Girl Heaven once again.

Finally, the desire to share my inner girl with someone else brought things to a head, as I shared the girl with my wife. She was mortified. She cried, ran into the bathroom, and locked the door. She wouldn't talk about it. She wanted no part of it. She told me that she always knew she would never be enough for me. I felt like crap. I even went as far as promising that I'd never do it again. But deep inside, I knew I would never be able to walk away from my Inner Girl.

The marriage lasted for 10 years. During that time, I was able to convince my wife that dressing-up wasn't such a bad thing. It was on *Donahue*, for Pete's sake. She relented and we bargained. I would only dress when she was away. She never wanted to see the 'other' girl. I remained in the closet, with time to dress severely limited.

The best thing that came from that relationship was a wonderful little girl. After the birth, we grew apart. She wanted to stay home and have babies. I went back to school. Luckily, we had no more kids together. Our divorce was long and bitter. Many of the demands she made were prompted by her vindictive mother. She had known all along that I was from the wrong side of town and wasn't good enough for her 'little girl.' I'm sure that my dark secret had been shared with everyone in my wife's family.

I lived alone for the first time in my life. It was wonderful. I wore panties every day and a night gown to bed every night. With the divorce final, I began dating again. I was still very shy and intimidated by women. Before long, I met and fell in love with what I thought was the one true love of my life. We soon moved in together.

She had two children from a previous marriage. Once again, my Inner Girl went into hiding, as my new girlfriend had very strong feelings about it. I was quite in love and would do anything for this woman. I found out that she was a strong, very dominating woman, who wanted everything her way. There was no dressing for me during this relationship. Finally, this marriage ended too, after but a couple of years.

After we parted, I once again found myself living alone, in my own condo. It became a wonderful time in my life. I dated, but not too seriously. I dressed whenever I wanted. I was my own man/girl. I spent a lot of time with the lights off, the stereo on low, lying on the couch, pondering what I wanted out of life, and how I wanted to live that life. It was quite the journey of self-discovery, one that I needed to have. I decided that if I were to get into another long-term relationship with

someone, my Inner Girl would never again be put in the back of the drawer. She would be with me for the rest of my life.

I had a series of brief encounters but none that seemed worthy of further exploration. Until I met her. She was a student, doing an internship. I fell for her as soon as I laid eyes on her. After a couple of aborted attempts, we finally had our first real date. To this day I am not sure what prompted me but during that date, I shared my Inner Girl with her.

I laid everything out on the table. She was slightly taken aback but recovered quickly. She expressed to me what I had waited a life time to hear. She told me she saw nothing wrong with my "hobby" and that it wasn't a problem for her. It was no big deal, she said. Wow. A dream, now reality, had come to pass. She knew that I didn't drink, take drugs, or abuse those close to me. I wasn't a user. She had had a long line of those in her past. I was a responsible, educated, individual with an unusual hobby.

Up until this point in time, except for sneaking out with panties on underneath my male clothes, I had never ventured outside my sanctuary, or shared a dressing experience with anyone else. We began shopping for the 'Girl'. I collected just about anything I desired. Lingerie, dresses, and miniskirts. I was able to buy shoes, jewelry, and several wigs. I was also able to buy the makeup I had always wanted.

Dealing with the makeup would turn out to be a little difficult. My girlfriend was a natural beauty and needed little makeup. It wasn't her strong suit. I had to learn by trial and error, with lots of cold cream and lots of practice. I still wasn't very good at applying it. My girlfriend suggested a makeover to learn the proper

techniques. I agreed and was soon was sitting in a beauty shop being taught the proper way of making up. After the lesson, I felt much more confident in the image I projected.

Halloween was fast approaching. I had learned of a bar called, 'The Queen Mary.' I had heard it was very popular and accepting of girls like me. I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to take 'her' out. That Saturday afternoon, I shaved my face and my legs. Then I showered and powdered. Time to dress. First came the panties, then the bra and pantyhose. I put on a black half-slip. I had purchased a jacket dress just for this occasion. And being a pseudo-slut, I had the hem altered to about 6" above the knee. I would have to be careful bending over. Lots of leg would be on display.

Next was makeup. I really took my time applying it. Foundation, blush, eyeliner, and mascara. This being the 80's, blue eyeshadow was still in fashion. Next was lip liner, then the lipstick and gloss. I had styled a dark brown pageboy wig that I applied and adjusted. I slipped on a pair of 2" slingbacks in a smoky gray. I finalized everything with a little bit of jewelry, then a set of press-on nails, painted red to match the lipstick. I was ready. I placed ID, touch-up makeup, brush and mirror into a purse, then headed for the door.

It was then that I received a frantic phone call from a co-worker. A specialized piece of equipment had malfunctioned and needed attention. My boss was on vacation, so it was up to me to deal with the problem. I took a few deep breaths to calm my nerves, then walked out my condo door to the carport. I got in the car without a problem, but both my legs had turned to Jell-O. This was a problem. I drove a stick shift. It took some time to get the hang of driving in heels. I arrived

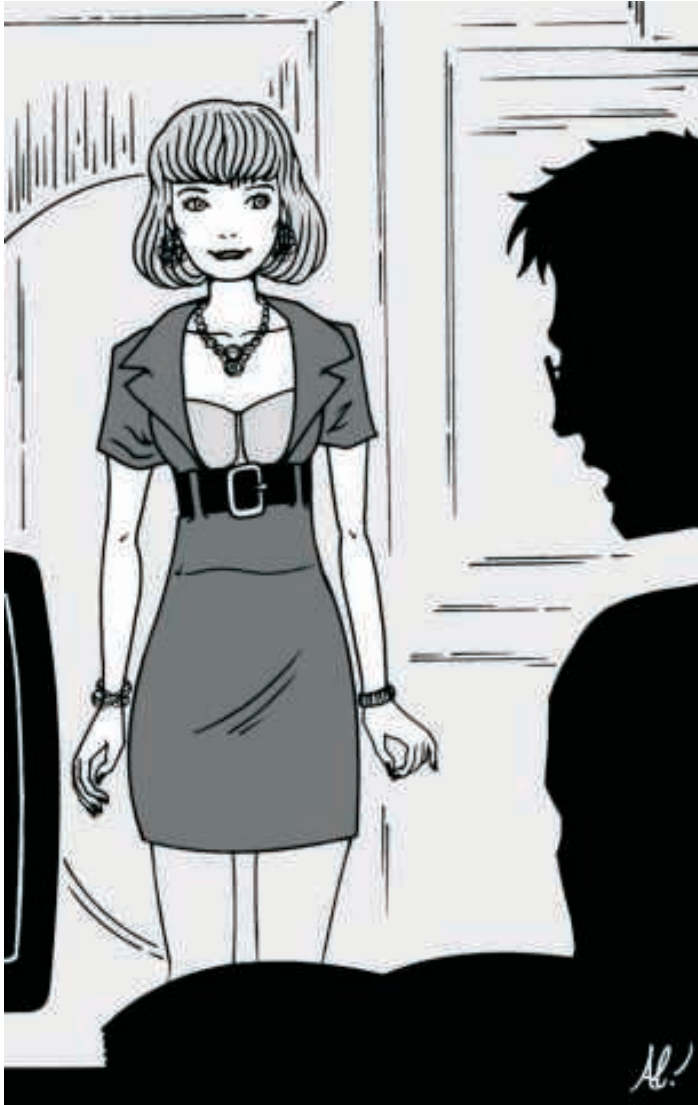
at work and put the car in employee parking. I was glad it was Saturday. The parking lot was quite empty. It took some time for me to leave the safety of my car but I finally managed. I had never thought about it before but the entryway was covered in grass and a stone path. You try to traverse these in heels for the first time and not break something.

I finally reached the door. The employee entrance was on the far side of the building from my department. The hallway leading to the office looked at least a mile long, at least from my perspective. I hung my purse on my shoulder, held up my chin, and began the trek to rescue a co-worker. When I arrived, I found him sitting in the office with a troubleshooting guide on his lap. As I entered, he looked up. "Can I help you, Miss?"

In my normal voice I said, "It's me. What do you think?" as I did my rendition of a pirouette in front of him.

After he pulled his chin up from the floor, he looked me up one side, then down the other. "Wow. You look great," is all he said.

I thanked him and explained that I was on my way to a costume party. I then asked what had gone on with the machine and where was he in the repair process. He ignored my current state of dress and shared the error codes he had observed. We got down to business and in about 20 minutes or so had the equipment up and running. A few times while we were working on the equipment, I caught him out of the corner of my eye, checking me out. He seemed particularly interested in my legs and faux bustline. I confess that his attention gave me a little thrill.



Several co-workers from other departments had seen me come in. Before long, word had spread and everyone working had to stop by and check me out. There were quite a few questions, lots of smiles, and some laughter. Several of the women I worked with asked about the dress, where I had bought it, and could

they buy it from me when I was done with it? Goodness me.

I didn't receive any negative attention and my confidence level rose. I left the building with an escort and headed for my car. I jumped in, started it, put on a pair of sunglasses (pink of course), and headed for Studio City. I hadn't realized until I was nearly there that the combination of stick shift, clutch, and a short hemline, showed a lot more leg than I was comfortable with. I happened to look down and saw the pink of my panties just above the hem of the dress. A very valuable lesson learned.

I parked the car and walked gingerly to the entrance. The clicking of my heels on the pavement was eye opening to me. These were all experiences I had only dreamed about. I never thought I would live them. I tugged the hem down, straightened my dress, check my makeup, and entered the bar. The butterflies in my stomach were as large as elephants. I had arrived before the big rush. The girl at the door asked for the cover charge without batting an eye. Once inside, I ordered a Coke and headed for an isolated corner.

What a great place to people watch. It became obvious just who was comfortable in public and who was not. Several 'girls' looked around a lot, and the wetness of their armpits and their running makeup were dead giveaways. I really wanted to be a wallflower, but at 6'5", and 250 lb., wearing a short dress, it just wasn't going to happen. I knew enough to know that a visit to the powder room wasn't a very good idea. I nursed my soda as I watched the tranny chasers try to pick up on the 'girls.' I heard quite a few very sorry pick-up lines but the 'girls' still to want to hear them.

I stayed for several hours. I didn't want to be out too late alone in a dress so I headed home. It took about 45 minutes or to drive home. I loved it. It was now well after dark so I drove in a much more relaxed environment. That was the first time that my Inner Girl was ever out. It would be followed by many more trips over the next several years.

Not long after that night, my girlfriend went to an alternative book store. As she moved from one section to the next, a small pink booklet caught her eye. The author was Virginia Prince, a pioneer in championing crossdressing. She bought the book, brought it home, and read it cover to cover, before giving it to me. She wanted to get a different perspective than the one I offered on transvestism and crossdressing.

The subject began showing up all over the television. Phil, Sally, Oprah. The word was getting out, but the stigma remained just as strong. I began to purchase everything I could find on the subject. I videotaped all the shows and shared them with my girlfriend.

By this time in our lives, my girlfriend and I had moved in together. It didn't take too long to realize that she was the one. We decided to make it legal. We headed to Vegas and got married over a long weekend.

About this time, I started to correspond with other crossdressers from around the country. I looked forward to the letters I would get nearly every day. Many of those envelopes contained photos of their 'girl'. I still have every letter I ever received and have made an album of the photos. I also discovered Tri-Ess, the sorority for crossdressers. I wrote for info about the organization and soon learned about the local chapter. Deciding to attend a meeting was never in question.

What was in question was how to dress. I was still very uncomfortable in social situations.

So the boy me attended my first few meetings before a comfort level was obtained. I met a lot of great people, one of whom was Virginia Prince. Could she ever dominate a conversation! The meetings moved from a private home in the San Fernando Valley to an alternative church in West Hollywood. It was there that I became more of a core member than just an attendee. I was able to establish several personal relationships with people from deep closeted individuals to those that transitioning to live full-time as a woman.

After but a few meetings, we needed to find somewhere else to hold the monthly meetings. We also needed a chapter president. I offered my condo for meetings, and nominated myself to lead the chapter. This was both a blessing, and a curse. I had little experience in a leadership role but I got help from many of my new friends. I loved the idea of dressing up and being around others. But having the girls change and apply makeup in the tiny bathroom of the condo became very trying. Never ever attempt to stuff 20 to 30 people into a one-bedroom condo.

We held the meetings on the third Saturday night of the month. But the third Sunday morning of each month, my motorcycle club held its meeting at 7:30am, sharp. Talk about culture shock! Try going from mini-skirts and heels in the evening to chaps and cowboy boots the next morning. I always had to be extra careful about makeup and nail polish removal. I don't think the good ol' boys would have appreciated it.

My wife and I hosted quite a few meetings. She was a huge help. All was going great, I thought, until my wife suddenly told me she would no longer help host,

or even attend, the meetings. She would just go to the movies. I pressed her for a reason. It seems as though Virginia had given her and a few of the G.G.'s (genetic girls) a hard time about how they dressed and about not wearing the correct makeup at all times. Why did they wear pants? They should wear dresses and skirts as an example to the other 'girls'.

At this point, my wife, along with several other ladies, said they would no longer attend any meetings. They had been insulted and no longer wished to participate. It was not very long after this that I resigned the presidency and held no more meetings at my home. I never found out what happened after my departure from the chapter.

Later that year, we moved into a single family home. Other problems began to crop up. First on the list were my daughter and the ex-wife. Then we wound up with several new additions to our growing household. More to come about that. My ex's poor impression of me leaked into my relationship with my daughter. It seems every time my daughter would come over to spend anytime with us, my ex would be terrified that I would corrupt my daughter, by sharing the 'girl' with her. I wish I had a nickel for every time I tried to allay her fears. This went on for several years.

A few years after moving into the house, my wife and I took in two girls. My wife had taken care of them, growing up. They were 14 and 9 years old at the time. Both girls had been abused by a stepfather; the 14 year old had been raped by him.

We became surrogate parents while the biological mother remained with the stepfather during his trial. We worked very hard trying to establish a stable home life for the girls. This meant putting my 'girl' away for

awhile. No big deal. When my ex found out about the girls living there and why they were there, it became a big problem for having my daughter stay over. This all came to head soon thereafter.

My ex told me she had reservations about the girls all staying in the same house. When I ask her why, she said she was afraid that that our daughter would be overwhelmed by the sexually active 14 year old, and by me sharing my 'girl' with her. She figured I was going to tell her about that part of me sooner or later. It would have gone better had my ex talked to me. Instead she made these comments to my current wife. In no uncertain terms. The next time my daughter came over, I sat both girls down, and explained my Inner Girl to them, I showed them pictures I had taken from the beginning. Both the girls loved it and had no problem at all with it. They even wanted to meet 'her' as soon as possible. Aren't kids great?

My ex informed me that she found my lack of good judgment appalling. How could I expose her daughter to such a seedy environment? Life's a bitch, then you divorce one.

The fact that my daughter saw nothing wrong with my hobby and didn't run screaming into the night convinced me to let my Inner Girl' out of her confinement in the closet. I was less fearful of people knowing my hobby. In fact, I began to tell everyone I knew. Most found the subject fascinating and wanted to know more; some even wanted to meet the 'girl'.

I was now brave enough to pierce both ears, as it had become quite commonplace to see men with multiple piercings. One has to love those long, dangling earrings.

1994 found us riding out a 6.8 earthquake. Our home was structurally okay, but the interior was totally trashed. It took several weeks to get everything cleaned up and back to where it belonged. We sold that home soon thereafter. I had maintained a few friendships within the local CDer's. We continued to meet, write each other, and go out together. I was able to meet some friends in San Antonio at the Texas T Party, a big crossdressing convention. It was great, a whole week in dresses and skirts.

We soon found a new house that would fit our future plans. We needed a bedroom/bathroom combination to reserve for future in-laws. My father soon moved in for what turned out to be the final year of his life. We found that he had cancer. My father and I had a strained relationship for quite a few years. That last year, we were able to reconnect on so many levels. During one of the many conversations that we had, I shared my feelings for the Inner Girl. I showed him photos and explained my desires. About a week before he passed, Halloween landed on a Tuesday night. My wife and I had planned a trip to the Queen Mary.

After dressing that afternoon, in a short skirt (of course), nice blouse, and heels. I walked into my dad's room. "Ta Da!" He scowled, and took me in with a critical eye. He told me that if I was smaller and had blonde hair, I would be the picture of my mom. Oh, by the way, I had a great pair of legs. I thanked him from a blushing heart. He left us the following Sunday.

Both my adopted and biological daughters were now over 21 I had a long running date in August, for my 'girl's' birthday. This year, I invited both my daughters out to share my special day. My adopted daughter lived with us and my biological girl lived

with her mother. They both had invited their B.F.F.'s to join us. We all piled into the car, and headed for the Q.M. I guess going out with a crossdressing dad stimulates real girls to compete. They all wore beautiful dresses, heels, and a ton of makeup. It was my day so I did the same.

Once we arrived, we met up with my other daughter and her aunt. They were blown away. Even though they both had seen pictures, they were not prepared for a real-life meeting. We all kissed, and I accepted their praise and compliments. It was truly a great evening. I still keep the photos of that night at the Q.M. on my Wall of Honor. There wasn't a pair on pants on anyone in the room.

My wife and I were headed for our 10th wedding anniversary. We wanted to do something different, like re-do our wedding vows. I had been talking for some time about being a bride with all that that entails. We decided to have a double-dress ceremony. We went out and bought matching dresses, then attempted to find someplace to hold the ceremony that wouldn't cost an arm and a leg. We found that more difficult than we had imagined.. A friend suggested that we decorate our home and have the ceremony there. What a great idea.

We invited family and friends to share in our joy. We placed a flowered gazebo in our formal living room and played wedding music through the stereo. We wrote our own vows and exchanged them before the group. We videotaped the whole thing. What special day, with such special ladies.

Now we come to today. I am a mature, middle-aged grandpa. We have an eight-year-old grandson. He is just a little too young to meet the 'girl'. I am still mar-

ried to the same great gal. I have traded my miniskirts and heels in for multi-tiered long skirts and wedge sandals. I've been thinking back and I realized that I haven't bought male underwear in over 20 years. I still have an obsession for nylon panties, with a preference for pastel colors. I don't go out very often anymore. Too much work, both at my job, and here at home. But I still dress as often as possible. If the weather is even close to nice, I wear tank tops and sport bras. I love to buy and wear swim skirts with the attached brief. Match that to a tank and that is my Spring, Summer, and Fall outfit of choice. Even to do the yard work.

I have put an enclosed spa in our back yard. My favorite outfit is a floral swimdress I wear to lounge in. My 'girl' has her own room. I still buy too many women's clothes. Most of what I have collected over the past few years may never be worn, but I still just had to have them. Even the two-string bikini's that no one, even the wife, will ever see me in. I still buy and read everything I find on the subject of crossdressing or the "T" movement. It doesn't matter if it's fiction or nonfiction. I really love to read it all

Then there is the World Wide Web. God, I wish it had been available when I was growing up. It sure makes shopping for your heart's desire easier. Maybe too easy. And the contact sites and blogs! I can only dream that I could ever look as good as some of the 'girls' found there. Lovely and cute.

Looking back over my life, would I have changed anything? Sure. Lose the negatives, expand the positives. But those are the experiences that have shaped the me of today. I like me now more than any other time in my life, flaws and all. Will I ever be that fantasy girl I have dreamed about being my whole life?

Nope. But I still picture her everyday. And I love her too.

My only wish is that society will find that we are just like everyone else with the same fears and same dreams. We are productive members of society. We build highways, and skyscrapers. We teach the children and heal the sick. We love our families just like everyone else. We are no different. If you put a porno book cover on a Bible, does it change the contents?

Okay. Soap box put away. My wish for you, the reader, is that you see yourself on these pages and that you learn from my life story that you, too, can be a happy, productive, member of society, even while indulging and loving *your* Inner Girl.

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