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# Living In Another World



Louise Paynter

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AN 'ADULT TV' E-BOOK

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# LIVING IN ANOTHER WORLD

**By Louise Paynter**

One can never predict what's going to happen on our journey's through life, but I thought that I had my future mapped out fairly well in general terms. I was certainly not prepared for what actually happened to me in my mid-twenties, and how my life completely changed from that point on.

Let me start at the beginning by telling you a little about myself and what I had done before the dramatic events happened. I grew up in a completely normal,

loving family with my father, mother and an elder sister. I had a typical childhood with all the things that a healthy, outdoor-loving, sociable boy could wish for. I loved school and although I was never a swot, I did well enough in my exams to get to University. When I graduated a couple of years ago, I joined a large company based in the North of England as a project manager in the product development department, which was a fabulous job. Like every other guy of my age and background, I had a full social life of clubs, drinking, sport and just generally hanging out with my friends, enjoying ourselves. So you can see why I was fairly confident that my life was settling into a pattern for the future with good chances of career progression, good friends; maybe one day I would meet the right girl and we would get married, have kids, etc., etc. Great, that's just what I wanted.

However, all of those plans and ideas about my future were completely turned on their heads a few months ago when Simon and I went to a computer fair at the local University. Simon was my best mate and he worked for the same company as me in the IT Department. It had been Simon's idea to go the computer fair, and I went along with him, as I didn't have any better plans for that Saturday afternoon. I soon reached my saturation level of interest in looking at all the new bits of computer hardware and software and games. I was wondering how much longer we needed to stay there, so I was not pleased when we bumped into one of Simon's work colleagues, a guy named Kevin. Kevin's a typical computer nerd; not too strong on inter-personal skills, always coming up with crazy ideas, or weird information about subjects that he's read about on the Internet. He's been mad keen on several conspiracy

theories in the past, and currently is really into paranormal sightings, UFO's and aliens.

Apart from all that, Kevin thinks that he is God's gift to women and is always trying to chat up the girls at work, although I can't recall him ever having a serious girlfriend. I reckon that his normal about psychic or astrological events frightens them off. He drones on and on about whatever his latest craze happens to be, and it is almost impossible to shut him up, or to shake him off. Unfortunately, he joined up with us whilst keeping up a non-stop flow of facts and opinions about the products on show, obviously gleaned from magazines or websites.

The majority of attendees at the fair were male; they were crowding out the stalls to look at the latest gadgets and gizmos, and talking to each other in a techno language that included words and acronyms I couldn't understand. I told the other two that I needed a drink and made my way towards the coffee bar, figuring that I would take my time over a long cappuccino before another stroll through this Tower of Babel. However, on my way to the coffee bar, I came across an exhibit that was there for fun rather than for the techno-wizards. It was called a morphing machine; according to the information displayed outside the stand, it worked by taking a high-resolution digital picture of you. They could apply their software to it and produce an image of you as a younger or an older person, even as someone of the opposite gender.

I wasn't rushing to go anywhere so I joined the queue. When my turn came, I chose the opposite-gender/same-age option just for a laugh. A few minutes later a colour print appeared, showing me what I would look like if I had been a girl. She was quite at-

tractive and I could see the family resemblance to myself, but 'she' had a softer jaw line and a more delicate bone structure. She could easily have been my sister; I thought the guys running the morpher had done a good job. Needless to say, I got a lot of ribbing from Simon and Kevin over having gotten the picture but I liked it very much. When I got home later, I stuck it on the wall in my bedroom.

I looked at that picture every time I went into my bedroom, as her eyes seemed to follow me around the room. I admit that I got a bit obsessed by her and even gave her a name, Jessica. I actually started to think of her as a real person, even as my sister, and thought that I would like to meet her.

A few weeks later, Simon and I went out for a drink with a couple of other friends on a Saturday evening; somewhere along the way we met Simon's colleague, Kevin, who had been at the computer fair. He was on his own, so he tagged along with us even though a couple of us did try to encourage him to go elsewhere. After we left the pub, we decided to get a takeaway, go back to my flat to eat and have some more beer.

Kevin was still with us; he had been quite excited all evening as a lunar eclipse was scheduled to happen that evening about two o'clock in the morning. He tried to persuade us all to stay up and watch it with him, as our part of the city was along the line of the absolute epicentre of the eclipse and so we would experience the maximum effect and duration of the eclipse. Apparently, a lunar eclipse is caused when the sun, earth and moon are in-line with the earth in the middle so that it casts its shadow on the moon, thus obscuring the moon's reflected light, making everything look a strange red colour. The epicentre is the position where

the exact centres of the three bodies are in a perfect line so the effect is maximised.

Whilst we were eating, Kevin proceeded to drone on about his latest discoveries on the Web about eclipses and the effects that they can produce. There's been a lot of research in the U.S. on parallel universes and how they can be triggered by external events like eclipses or other rare planetary events. We all know that the sun and the moon have an effect on gravity, for instance, affecting the height of the tides when they are in different alignments, so it is possible that they could also have an effect on the electro-magnetic fields around the earth.

I think he said that these electro-magnetic fields are what determine our universe, so that if we disturb them, we could flip into another universe. He said there were people who claimed to have led two or more separate lives at the same time. It all sounded typically Kevin. However, our luck was not in and it became cloudy about eleven o'clock with some light rain so there was absolutely no chance of seeing the moon or the eclipse. I was really tired and quite glad when the other guys decided to call it a day. We all packed up, not too late for a change, and I flopped into bed, dreaming of Jessica as usual.

The next morning I woke up late with the sun streaming through the curtains and was immediately aware that something was different. I normally sleep in my skin as I don't like pyjamas. I was sure that I wasn't so drunk the previous night that I had forgotten to undress before getting into bed, but I was definitely wearing something. I lifted the duvet a bit and looked down to discover that I was wearing a white cotton strappy T-shirt with a pattern of pink roses on it, with loose

shorts to match. That's weird, I thought, someone's played a practical joke on me, but as I sat up in bed, I could feel the upper part of my arms brush against my chest, which seemed heavy in some way. I pulled the front of the T-shirt forward and looked down to find two female breasts pushing against the fabric.



I leapt out of bed as if it was full of scorpions, ran across to the wardrobe, and looked at the mirror. I was completely bewildered because, instead of seeing my normal self, there was a girl looking back at me. There was no doubt it was a girl, and there was no doubt that it was me because she moved her arms when I moved mine, and turned around when I did. I couldn't explain this at all, so I took my T-shirt and shorts off to examine my reflection in the mirror. Instead of my short brown hair, this person had medium-length blonde hair. Instead of my flat chest with a few strands of hair in the middle, this person had beautiful shapely breasts (36C as I found out later by looking at bras in the underclothes drawers) that I had already discovered. There was no sight of my penis; instead I now had a neat triangle of soft pubic hair. Instead of my slightly overweight body and hairy legs, I now had a slim waist above gently flaring hips and long slim legs. "What on earth has happened to me?" I cried out in shock.

I looked around the flat and out of the windows; it was definitely my flat but it was a lot tidier than mine normally is, and some of the furnishings were more feminine. There was no sign of me, my clothes, or other belongings anywhere. Instead of beer glasses and plates left lying around in the lounge from the night before, there were four neatly stacked wine glasses by the kitchen sink.

If this was a practical joke it seemed to be pretty complicated. I rang Simon in panic. "Hi Simon, it's Andy."

"Andy who? I don't know anyone called Andy. You must have gotten a wrong number, darling, but feel free to call me anytime," and he rang off. With a start, I

realised that I had been speaking in a female voice, so it was not surprising that Simon had not recognised me.

I tried ringing another friend who had been with us yesterday evening, but I got a similar response. I was totally confused by this time and I couldn't understand what was happening to me. Everything seemed to be real, I was sure it was not a dream, but I kept coming back to thinking about what Kevin had been talking about the previous evening. I hadn't been paying much attention to what he had said, but were there really parallel universes, and did the lunar eclipse trigger some event where I had transferred from one to another? I needed to check it out somehow. I had an idea and decided to look up my entry on Facebook on a laptop that was in the bedroom. I was not there. Well, actually there were three hundred and ninety six Andy Pembertons in Facebook, but not one of them was me. It was as if I did not exist.

That was a very scary conclusion and it took me a few minutes to come to terms with it. If I'm not Andy Pemberton, who am I? I looked around the flat for any information that would help me and found a handbag on the sofa in the lounge. Inside was a notebook; the name and address on the front page was Catherine Pemberton, living at my address. How spooky was that? I went to the laptop and got back into Facebook to look up Catherine. Amongst the other four hundred and twenty seven Catherine Pembertons, there she was. Or, rather, there *I* was. The picture on the screen was the same girl that looked back at me from the mirror. I also realised that she was the same girl in the print from the morphing machine that used to be on my bedroom wall. Or more correctly, Andy's bedroom wall.

Well at least I had a name, I thought, but what good is that? I don't know anything about who I am, or what I do. There was also a Blackberry in the handbag; by looking through Catherine's diary and her mobile phone logs, I reckoned that her best friend was a girl called Alice. I rang her.

"Morning, Kate, I was going to ring you this morning as you looked a bit tired last night."

"Can you come over? I think I've got a problem and I need to talk to someone about it."

"Are you OK? You sound a bit stressed, are you feeling alright?" she said.

"I'm OK at the moment but I need some help, and I can't really explain on the phone. Can you come?"

"Of course. I've got a couple of things to sort out and I'll be over in half an hour. Is that OK?"

"Thanks, see you then."

I was in a state of shock at having been transformed into a girl overnight and was decidedly unhappy with the prospect. Up until yesterday I had been happy being a man and I wanted to stay that way. Being a girl was something I had never thought about before and I didn't want to think about it now either. But I didn't want to stay in these girlie pyjamas all morning, so I decided that I'd better have a shower to wake myself up and get dressed before Alice arrived.

Showering was straightforward but it took a long time to dry my head, as I wasn't used to having long hair. Then came the problem of getting dressed. I really was not comfortable with the thought of wearing girl's clothes, so I found some plain white cotton pants without any frilly bits on them in the drawer. They looked far too small and thin, compared to my normal pants,

but fitted perfectly. I didn't fancy putting on a bra, but my breasts had been bouncing around a bit from walking around the flat, so, reluctantly, I decided I'd have to wear one. There was a great selection of all shapes and colours, many with lots of lace or embroidery but I found a plain white one that didn't look too girlish. It was more difficult than I thought to put on as I couldn't get both little hooks to go in the loops at the same time. I had to finally resort to taking my arms out of the straps, pulling the fastener around to the front, clicking the hooks in the eyes, twisting it round to the back, pulling the bra up to my breasts and putting my arms through the straps again. What a palaver.

It was most uncomfortable to have a tight band of material around my chest, although I did welcome the support it provided for my breasts as they didn't feel so floppy any more and my nipples weren't rubbing on my clothes. I guess there's always a trade-off for being comfortable, but I was not at all happy with being a woman, having to wear these feminine underclothes. I had found a pair of loose-fitting jeans and I pulled them on only to discover that the zip on the jeans was left-handed instead of being the right way round. I'd just managed to put on a loose shirt and was struggling to fasten the buttons because they also fastened on the wrong side, when the doorbell rang.

It was Alice. I recognised her as the very attractive blonde who worked in Overseas Marketing in our company. Although I knew who she was, I had never had the opportunity to talk with her before.

"Hi, Kate, I came as quick as I could, as you sounded desperate. What's the problem?"

"I need some coffee for a caffeine boost before we start but I've got lots to tell you. But first of all, would

you tell me everything that happened last night. What did we do?"

"It was just a fun night out with you, me, Helen and Nicki, very similar to other nights out we've had."

"OK, but tell me every little detail of what happened. Was there anything unusual? Did I seem strange?"

"Well, we had a meal in the little Italian restaurant near Helen's flat. Then we went on to a club where we danced till nearly midnight. Then we all came back here for a coffee and some wine. We packed in early-ish about one o'clock as you looked tired. You've been working hard recently and you're a bit rundown, so I thought nothing of it. Why do you ask me what happened? Have you lost your memory or something?"

We sat in the lounge and I told her everything about the previous evening and about that morning that I could think of. I told her all about being a man, the life I had as Andy, and all about waking up and discovering that I looked like a girl. About how I had discovered my name was Catherine, how I had found her name and telephone number, and how I had contacted her in desperation to find out if she knew what had happened to me or to Catherine.

"You certainly looked tired last night. Did you drink any more of that wine after we all left?"

"I don't know what Catherine did after you left because I wasn't here. Last night I was Andy, but I don't think I was drunk. I was very tired and went straight to bed after my mates left."

Alice agreed that it all sounded totally weird but that there must be a simple explanation somewhere. I

told her about Kevin's theories concerning parallel universes and how people can jump from one to another when an event is triggered. She was not impressed. "That has got to be the craziest story I've heard for a long time. Who is this Kevin? Is he one of those Internet anoraks, always reading about conspiracy theories and weird unexplained events? If so, I think we can discount that explanation as just plain nonsense."

I nodded agreement because I didn't want to argue with her but at that moment it seemed to be the only possible explanation, however far-fetched it might seem.

"Well, however I got here, I'm here with a brain that thinks I'm Andy but a body that looks like Catherine. I'd rather be Andy if I could, as I don't want to be a woman or to dress up as a woman and pretend to be one, but I don't seem to have any options. I need your help to tell me who I am and what Catherine does, please."

"Gosh Kate, it does sound like a crazy situation, but you're my best friend, so I'll help you all I can. By the way, everyone calls you Kate. Catherine's a bit too formal for every day. Where do we start?" Alice gave me a detailed rundown on Kate. It turned out that she worked in the same company as Alice, the same company as me. Or Andy. On closer discussion, it was determined that Kate worked on the same project team as me, sitting at the same desk and doing the same job as me. When we talked about Kate's family, we discovered that she had a mother and an elder sister, Claire, who were exactly the same as my mother and sister. Same names, same ages, same addresses. In fact, we concluded, Catherine was Andy. Or should that be

Andy was Catherine? But Alice had never heard of Andy, either at work or in conversation with Kate.

But I had no memories of being Kate, only memories of life as Andy. How was I going to cope with being Kate instead of Andy? And how was I going to cope with being a woman instead of a man?

We stopped for lunch as I was exhausted and my mind was in a whirl, but I was aching to find out more about Kate, so we continued through the afternoon. After an hour, we needed a break. Alice said, "You're going to have to accept that you are a woman, even if you don't think you are. Therefore you'd better think and behave as a woman."

So she made me walk around, sit down and stand properly so that I didn't look masculine in any way. Clearly, there were no problems with the way I looked, but I didn't want to make people think I was acting in an odd manner. After that exercise, we went back into Facebook to check out the friends I had there. I could recognise all the family members on it, and Alice filled in details for all the people that she knew. There were a few faces of old school friends, some of whom surprised me. "Oh, I remember him. What's he doing here?"

"Who's that?"

"Rodney Fuller. He was a girl chaser even at school. I'm surprised Kate has let him anywhere near her. I haven't seen him since school and don't want to, thank you. But I would have liked to have seen the next one."

"Ah, I can see why. She looks very attractive."

"Always did, even as a schoolgirl. All the boys fancied her, but she was out of our league and was going

steady with a lad in the year ahead of us. Oh yes, I remember Veronica Gatenby."

Near the end of the list, we came across a friend called Charles Frobisher. He seemed a pleasant enough chap but Alice seemed very excited. "Ooh, I wondered if he'd still be here."

"Who's he then? You seem to know him."

"Charles? He's the love of your life. You two were very close; everyone thought that it was going to be a permanent arrangement but something happened and you finished with him. You said he had no commitment to a future together, so you dumped him. He was very upset, and I think he went abroad shortly after that. I wonder what happened to him. I know that, even though you had finished the relationship, you were very miserable after he left."

"It seems I've got quite a lot of history to learn about. You better tell me some more about Kate and her life." And so we settled down to analyse what Kate did, who she was friendly with, what she liked and disliked, as many details as Alice could think of, or as many as I could absorb. We'd nearly finished when the phone rang. I jumped out of my skin, but I had to answer it.

"Hi, Sis. It's Claire. It's just a quick call to say that Tom, Harriet, Alfie and I are going down to Mum's in three weeks time for her birthday. We wondered if you would be free that weekend to come along too."

Tom was her husband, Harriet was four years old and Alfie was their six-month-old baby who I hadn't seen yet. Oh goodness, I thought, what can I do? Three weeks hardly gives me time to get into the role of Kate. I'll be really exposed under the view of my sister and

mother. They'll be sure to find me out, and then what do I do? But there was no way I could refuse. I knew Claire well enough to know that she wouldn't take no for an answer, and I wouldn't have wanted to miss Mum's birthday, so I smiled and said, "That sounds like a wonderful idea. I'll put in my diary. I can't remember the last time I was down there."

"Weren't you down there six weeks ago for your birthday? I'm sure Mum told me you'd been down."

I knew that I'd visited Mum when I was Andy, but I didn't know that I'd been there as Kate as well. This is too confusing, I thought. "I'd forgotten. I seem to be forgetting a lot of things at the moment. Must be pressure of work or something."

"Don't work too hard. We'll look forward to seeing you there on the Friday evening."

By now it was early evening, Alice and I were exhausted and hungry so we agreed to go out to the local Italian restaurant for a plate of pasta. "I guess you'll want to freshen up and change before we go out," said Alice.

"Mmm, are these clothes not OK?"

"You're joking. I'm not going out with you dressed in those scruffy things. They're just about passable for lazing around the house, but not nearly smart enough to be seen out. And your hair is a mess. It's normally neat and tidy, what have you done with it?"

"I just washed it this morning, and it seems all over the place now."

"Did you use conditioner?"

"No, I don't normally do that."

"You'll find you need to. And how did you dry it?"

“As usual, with a towel.”

“I thought so. Ever heard of a hairdryer?”

“They’re just for girls. Ah, I see what you mean. I think I need a bit more coaching.”

“Boy, I can see it being a steep learning curve. Lets see what I can do with some mousse.” She rooted through the large selection of pots in the bathroom to find what she was looking for and combed the stuff through my hair to make it more manageable and tidier. “Now, shall I suggest some clothes for you?”

“I think you’d better as I don’t know what to wear.”

Alice rummaged through the wardrobe and came out with a black skirt. “This always looks good,” she said.

“I can’t wear that. It’s far too short. Is there something a bit longer?”

I was adamant that I wasn’t going to wear a dress or skirt. I just couldn’t imagine me doing that, but I didn’t tell Alice that that was the reason. In the end, she dropped the idea of a skirt and we agreed on a pair of bootleg jeans and a blouse worn over a vest top. I refused to wear a pair of strappy sandals that Alice showed me. I eventually got her to agree to a pair of black flat pumps. At least I don’t look too girly, I thought. I felt much happier in my choice of clothes, although I knew that Alice wasn’t very impressed.

After our meal, Alice sorted out some clothes for me for work the next morning and said that she would be round to give me a lift to work. I thanked her for all her hard work during the day and we wished each other goodnight. I went to bed early but couldn’t sleep well as my mind was racing over the events of the day.

I still couldn't believe what had happened and kept pinching myself to confirm that it wasn't a dream.

The alarm bell rang at seven o'clock. I looked under the bedclothes, but it was still Kate's body down there. No magic reversal of the situation overnight then, I thought. I had a shower, washed my hair and tried to dry it using the hairdryer but it still looked a bit wild. I looked at the clothes Alice had put out for me, which included a medium-length skirt and shoes with a small heel. I still couldn't face the prospect of wearing a skirt so I put on the jeans and top I had on the previous night. There was just time for a coffee and a slice of toast before Alice arrived. "What have you done to your hair?" she said in horror.

"I used the hairdryer and a brush like you showed me, but it didn't seem to work."

"You need to give it some volume. Go and get me that mousse that I used last night. And you can't wear those clothes. What happened to the skirt I put out last night?"

"I can't wear a skirt. I feel strange and people will look at me."

"You're a girl and girls wear skirts. There's nothing strange about it."

"Well, I'm not going to change."

"OK, but on your head be it. Are you ready to go? Have you had your breakfast?"

"No, I looked in the fridge but it was full of low fat yoghurts and fruit. I didn't fancy any of that stuff so I'll get a muffin on the way and I'll have a meat pie at lunchtime."

“You wont. Kate always sticks to a moderate diet, without loads of cakes and pastries. That’s why you’ve got such a good figure. You’re not going to spoil it by eating junk food. I’ll come to lunch with you and we’ll have a nice salad. You’ll enjoy that.”

“Salad! I never touch the stuff.”

“Salad. That’s what the doctor ordered. You’ll get to like it, I promise you. And it will do you good.”

It was a lovely morning with the sun shining in a pure blue sky with small fluffy clouds floating about but neither of us seemed to be in a particularly sunny mood. I could tell from Alice’s attitude that she was annoyed with me; I wasn’t that overjoyed either and I was worried about going to work as a girl. We got into Alice’s car and set off for work without talking to each other. Alice tried to break the ice by telling me about her job. I was a bit more relaxed when she had parked the car and we were walking to the office building, but I was terrified as to what it would be like in the office itself. Alice had planned to tell me quietly who each of the individuals were, but I discovered I knew them already from my life as Andy, so there was no need. In fact, everything seemed normal, people said hello to Kate just as normal, my desk was just as before, except that it was a lot tidier, the F1 racing car on my PC screen saver had been replaced by a picture of little lambs in a field, but the passwords were the same. It was really spooky, but I was getting used to that feeling by now. I sat at my desk, staring at the screen and trying to work out if there were any differences in the way Kate was doing her work on the project and the way in which Andy had done it.

“Morning, Kate.” I heard a voice behind me but I had forgotten that I was Kate and I thought they were

talking to someone else. "Good morning, Kate," the voice repeated. I wish they'd go away, I thought to myself. "Good morning, Miss Pemberton," said the voice more loudly.

With a start, I realised that *I* was Miss Pemberton, and spun round to find my section manager, Eric, staring at me. "Oh sorry, Eric, I was concentrating and didn't hear you. Good morning."

"You seem to be in your own little world. Is everything all right? You look out of sorts. Would you come into my office for a minute, please."

"When I sat down, he said, "What's the matter? You don't look yourself."

Little did he know. "Uh uh, I didn't sleep too well last night."

"Have you got any problems you want to talk about? I don't want to pry, but can I help? You look dreadful, not at all like the smartly-dressed young lady you usually are. If you're not feeling well, do you want to take the day off and go home?"

"No thanks. I'd rather stay at work and finish the section I'm doing."

"OK, but if there's anything I can do for you, just tell me. Now go and have a good sit-down somewhere, put on some lipstick or whatever you girls do, and have a cup of coffee before you go back to your desk. And let's see you looking a bit happier, a bit smarter, and a bit more like the Kate we know tomorrow morning."

I left Eric's office in a daze. I was letting myself down by being so despondent; I hadn't realised that it was so obvious to everyone. I needed the loo and walked through the door of the toilets along the corri-

dor. By force of habit, I had walked into the men's toilet. There were lots of blushes from me and embarrassed looks from two guys in there before I beat a hasty retreat. I hadn't even thought about where the female toilets were but I found them and slipped inside. I was grateful to sit down with my head in my hands to review the situation. I clearly needed to shake myself up and get more focussed on being Kate, so I resolved to brighten up, be more confident, and smile. After all, there was nothing else I could do. It seemed that I was stuck with this situation and would have to accept it. I did take Eric's advice and have a cup of strong black coffee and a walk around the building before I returned to my desk.

Alice and I had lunch together and I apologised for not taking her advice on what to wear. I realised that my choice of jeans was not a good idea; reluctantly, I resolved to wear a skirt tomorrow. She had heard that I'd not been very communicative in the morning and reckoned that the guys in the office would put it down to 'women's problems,' but someone had speculated that I had just found out that I was pregnant, so she had scotched that rumour before it went any further.

"That reminds me. Did you take your pill this morning?" she asked.

"What pill?"

"Oh no! I can see that I'm going to have to do some more training on the practical side of life as a girl. I completely forgot to tell you about contraception. We'll sort it out this evening after work."

That evening, Alice said, "I guess I owe you an apology as well."

“Of course not, you’ve been tremendous looking after me and helping me so much. What is there to apologise for?”

“Well, the problem for me is that when I see you, I see Kate and I assume it’s Kate there in front of me. I can’t get my head round the fact that you think you are Andy and are not even a girl so you don’t understand the things that come naturally to girls or are learnt over years of experience. I need to figure out what those things are so that I can teach you. It’s not easy, you know.”

“Hey, don’t get upset,” I said, suddenly realising that it had been a pretty traumatic weekend for her as well and she hadn’t complained one bit. “You’ve had a big shock and I’m truly grateful for what you’ve done so far.”

“OK then, the first thing we need to do is introduce you to a skirt and teach you how to wear one properly.”

We tried on every skirt in Kate’s wardrobe. After a while, I began to appreciate the differences the length made to the way I felt. The long ones felt a bit formal at first but then I noticed that they made me look slimmer and swished around as I walked. The medium-length ones ranged from wide skirts that felt very informal and party-ish to slim pencil skirts which were tight and figure-hugging. From a guy’s point of view I had always liked them, but from my new position of wearing them, I wasn’t too sure about them. I was even more wary of the short skirts. As a bloke, I loved looking at girls in short skirts, but I didn’t feel I had the confidence to wear one myself and expose so much leg to the public.

“You may change your ideas,” was all that Alice would say.

Having chosen a skirt to wear the next day, Alice insisted on a lesson in how to wear it, with an emphasis on not displaying one’s underwear to the world when getting into and out of cars, and how to sit correctly in a chair.

As Alice was leaving that evening, I asked her if I had a car and if so, where was it.

“Yes, you’ve got a nice little car. There it is, over by the tree in the corner of the car park.”

I looked but all I could see was a little two-door saloon in a bright yellow colour. “Do you mean that yellow thing?” I asked, hoping she would say no. I was thinking about Andy’s wonderful GTXi sports saloon in deep midnight blue.

“Yes, that’s it, it’s lovely inside. I was surprised when Kate bought a car in a colour like that as it seemed a bit extroverted for her, but you can’t lose it in a car park. You’ll love it.”

“Hmm, I might get used to it, I suppose,” I replied, wondering how soon I could get rid of it and get a decent car again.

The next few days passed without any incidents; I was getting more used to wearing Kate’s clothes and acting as a woman all the time. I picked up a difference in the way my two fellow co-workers on the project at work behaved towards Kate and how they had responded to Andy. Fundamentally, Terry was not very clever and he passed all the hard stuff to Kate, whilst taking credit for doing the work; Jason was just plain lazy and would pass on all the dull stuff to Kate. Obviously, Kate had been too kind and helpful, not asser-

tive enough to put them in their place. I'd been through all their manoeuvrings before as Andy, so I did it all again and got Terry to get all offloaded work approved by Eric before I would touch it, and got Jason to understand that there would be long lead times for completion of any work offloaded to me. I knew that would not be acceptable. And so at a stroke I had eliminated Kate's workload that wasn't of any credit to her, thus allowing her to spend more effort on her own work.

Actually, it was easier for me to manoeuvre the two guys into agreeing my plan as Kate than it had been as Andy. Previously we had gotten into a bit of a macho stand-off when we were all trying to boss each other around but as Kate I knew all their arguments. I smiled sweetly at them, not getting into any confrontational positions, and they eventually crumbled and agreed to my suggestions. Perhaps there really is something about the power of feminine charms, I thought with a smile.

The girls were all going out that Saturday evening as usual, except for Alice whose boyfriend was going to be at home all weekend, as he wasn't working away again. Much as they tried to persuade me to come out, I refused as I couldn't face the prospect of dressing up and being seen in public. It was bad enough being in conventional office clothes, but I was not prepared to wear clothes for parties or clubbing. And I certainly didn't want to go anywhere where there was a prospect of being chatted up boys.

They were a bit upset; Alice must have said something to them, so they didn't press the idea too much. I spent a pretty miserable weekend on my own. It was my first weekend as a girl, and I just sat at home watching TV, drinking wine and getting more and

more melancholic. I did have to go shopping for food, and I also went into Marks and Spencers to buy another plain white bra and some plain white pants as, although there was a wide choice of underwear in the drawer, I didn't have many pairs of the plain white things I was wearing each day.

When I got to the checkout, the cashier looked at me in a strange way, as if I was a man buying these clothes, but it was probably in surprise that a young girl would be wearing such plain things. I'm sure I blushed, which probably made her suspicions even firmer, although nothing could be further from the truth.

The next week at work was a bit more normal. I had gotten used to dressing in a skirt and blouse or even a dress, although I kept it very understated. I was less sensitive about what I looked like, but I still hadn't used any makeup apart from a bit of lipstick as I wasn't sure what to do and I didn't want to go over the top and look wrong. I had opted for the minimal look. Which, as it happens, was totally right for Kate.

Since the first week when I explored my re-done flat in my new life as Kate, I had been intrigued by the varied array of underwear in the clothes drawers. I'd wondered why on earth a girl should want to own so many bras and knickers. The white set I had bought the previous Saturday sufficient to me. But I continued to imagine what it would be like to wear them so on the Thursday evening, I opened the drawer and put everything on the bed to have a good look. First of all I sorted them out into colours – black, white, cream, pink, cerise, blue; then I looked at the different styles.

The bras ranged from covering the whole breast to ones that seemed to be just a tiny platform the breasts

would rest upon. They were either plain, embroidered, or lacy, and some had inbuilt padding in the cups, presumably to give an extra bit of volume. Each one seemed to be a work of skill and engineering to perform its task efficiently and still look good. The pants were also of varying styles with some of a full size, but others had only a narrow bit that went between the legs and nothing at the back. Some were small and delicate-looking, consisting of nothing more than a triangle of fabric and strings attached. I couldn't see how they would be of any use, but then I remembered that I didn't need pants to support my male bits; the decorative effect might be the most important feature of the garment.

Having looked at them and felt the lovely soft fabrics and embroidery, I thought that I ought to try a set on to see what it felt like. I chose a set in a soft pink colour. The bra was under-wired, lightly padded and made of a delicate lace material which extended about halfway around the sides and up the straps a little way. There was a slightly darker pink ribbon threaded through the lace at the top of the cups and up the lace on the straps, where it ended in a small bow of pink ribbon. There was a similar bow at the front between the cups. The matching thong was made of the same lace with the ribbon threaded through at the top with a pink ribbon bow at the centre. I thought they looked very pretty.

I put my arms through the straps and lifted the cups up to my breasts to let them gently nestle in the silky material. Then I hooked the bra together at the back and stood back to look at myself in the mirror. I had, by now, gotten used to putting a bra on and didn't have to resort to twisting it round to the front to fasten it. The bra was designed to push my breasts together

slightly and to give them some uplift. I was impressed by the improved shape and the swelling breasts I suddenly had. I wasn't too sure about wearing a thong, but I was really pleased when I put it on as it fitted perfectly and was actually very comfortable once I got used to it. I especially appreciated the rather sexy feeling of having my bottom completely bare. I had to admit that they were considerably more eye-catching and exciting than the underwear I had been wearing to date.

I stood in front of the mirror for ages trying on other different bras and pants to see which ones were my favourites, but I liked nearly all of them equally. I enjoyed trying on all the different items and looking at the half-naked girl in the mirror. I think it was Kate that was enjoying trying on the underwear and Andy that was enjoying just looking. Whatever, I realised that I was getting aroused and excited. I had previously found a vibrator in the back of one of the drawers. I took it out and examined, it thinking whether I needed to see what it would feel like as a girl to experience the sexual stimulation it could provide.

Lying back on the bed, I switched the toy on and nervously started to hold it against my clitoris. I wasn't sure if I should push it fully inside me or to concentrate on the outer areas. After a few exploratory moves, I found what seemed to be the most sensitive area and concentrated on moving the vibrator gently around that area. It took about ten minutes or so (I hadn't realised that women don't come as quickly as men), then I had this build up of sensation in the lower part of my body. Suddenly, I had a massive orgasm, which was slightly different from a male orgasm but equally, if not more, fulfilling. Was this what it was like to be a woman? Perhaps it wasn't too bad after all.

The following weekend, Harry was working away again so Alice dropped in to see me after she had been shopping on Saturday afternoon. She had asked me if I had wanted to accompany her, but I had declined as I wasn't really interested in wandering around and I didn't feel the need to buy anything.

"Hi, you look pleased with yourself. Did you have a good shop?"

"Great, thanks. Pop the kettle on, I'd love a cup of coffee, and I'll show you this fabulous new dress I bought. I'll just go and put it on in your bedroom."

As I brought our coffees into the bedroom, Alice had stripped down to her bra and pants and was standing in the middle of the room. I couldn't help but look at her and admire the beautiful body she had. She became conscious of me looking at her and her expression was one of amusement and puzzlement. "Are you looking at me as Kate, or as Andy?" she asked with a smile. Then she walked up to me until we were breast to breast. I could feel her fingers undoing the buttons on my blouse. Then she pulled it open and I let it slide off my shoulders onto the floor.

"Eurgh, what have you got on?" she asked, as she stepped back in horror. "That bra looks like something my mother would wear on a bad day." She pulled my skirt off. "And those pants are designed to kill anyone's ideas of a sexy moment. Why on earth are you wearing those?"

"I bought them last week. I didn't feel like wearing anything too girlie and these are all I could find."

"Nonsense, these things look awful. You've got a lovely body and it deserves to wear lovely clothes. I

know that Kate has got some lovely lingerie. Why don't you wear it?"

"I tried some on last Thursday and it was very sexy," I stammered, realising that I was blushing, "but I felt a bit embarrassed to wear them again, because it wasn't a very manly thing to do."

"I don't want to hear you going on again and again about being a man and not wanting to be girly" Alice said angrily in a loud and determined voice. "I'm fed up with it. Do you hear me? You're my best friend and I'd do anything for you but you're trying my patience. If you're playing a practical joke, pretending to be a man, it's not very funny. If you're having a nervous breakdown or something, then you'd better say so quickly. We can sort it out, or it will be the end of our friendship."

"It's not that. I really am a bloke."

"I know you've told me all about that, but it's the most stupid story I've heard in a long while. The best thing you can do is go back to whatever planet you came from and send Kate home to where she belongs."

"I've not come from another planet. It was a parallel universe that got linked up at the lunar eclipse. I've told you that."

"Whatever, don't interrupt me. Why don't you go back at the next eclipse of the sun?"

"Err," I was about to correct her but thought better of it when I saw the angry look in her eyes, "the next lunar eclipse in the U.K. is in sixteen months time. I looked it up on the web."

"OK, then you'd better sort yourself out. Sixteen months is a long time to go around being grumpy and complaining. Why don't you make the most of it and

enjoy life? I don't want you messing up Kate's life and friendships in case she comes back. Now, get those naff underclothes off and put on something more exciting." She opened the underclothes drawer. "How about these?" she said as she handed me a black lace bra and matching knickers.

Reluctantly, but with a twinge of excitement, I stripped off my old things and put on these new, more delicate, more alluring items, adjusting the bra so that my breasts swelled up within the cups.

"Now, do you look like a girl or a boy?" asked Alice as she stood me in front of the wardrobe mirror.

"Girl."

"Do you look like Kate or Andy?"

"Kate, but I still think like Andy."

"OK, I hear what you say, but you look like Kate, so act like Kate, and enjoy being Kate. You'll soon be relaxed and comfortable with being Kate, and you'll *be* Kate. You are a girl, so stop fighting it. It's not going to work." She stepped behind me and I felt her undo my bra, slide the straps down my arms and let it fall to the floor as she put her arms around me and cupped my breasts in her hands. "You've got a lovely body. Enjoy it. Do you feel like a girl or a boy now?" she whispered softly as she gently squeezed my nipples until they stood out firm and erect like buttons. "Can boys feel like this?"

"Err, no. I do feel like a girl," I replied, noticing that she had slipped off her bra and pants and was now completely naked.

"And do boys have a beautiful pussy like yours?" she asked as she slid her hands down to my knickers

and eased them down to my ankles. "And do they like it stroked like this?"

"Err, no," I stammered as I stepped out of my knickers on the floor. "Don't stop, that's nice."

"I wasn't thinking of stopping," she said as she put her hands on my hips and turned me round to face her, where she kissed me fully on the lips.

I could feel my body tingling from the top of my head down to the ends of my toes. I felt her kiss me and I started to gently run my hands over her smooth, womanly curves, down to her neat little bottom. We fell onto the bed together and started to kiss each other all over. My head nearly exploded when she crawled on top of me and kissed my breasts and sucked my nipples. They became as hard and sensitive all over, as I became desperate for more and more.

I twisted around until I could find Alice's pussy with my tongue and thrust it into her after having kissed and licked all round that delightful area. She obviously loved it and twisted and squirmed to let me reach the locations where she felt most sensitive. Soon I heard little noises of delight coming from her as she reached the first of several orgasms that afternoon. Repaying the pleasure, it was her turn to work on me; she brought me to a passionate frenzy using her fingers and tongue at different times. We didn't want to stop; soon my vibrator came out of the drawer. We used it on each other in so many ways that we eventually fell back, exhausted but tingling with pleasure all over.

"Did you and Kate do that regularly?" I gasped as we lay back on the pillows.

"We only did that with each other a few times. And neither of us did that with anyone else. It all started af-

ter you split up from Charles. Harry and I had temporarily split up as well, although we're back together again now, thank goodness. You were so unhappy and needed someone to comfort you. I guess I needed some comfort as well. I thought it might be good for you this afternoon."

"Wow, you're right on that point. It was fabulous. And the sexual experience as a girl is tremendous. Thank you."

"No need to thank me. I enjoyed it as much as you did. You're a lovely girl. But now we need to think about this evening. I think I've neglected the most important part of your education."

"What's that? You've helped me so much and taught me so many things. You've filled in all the back history about Kate, and you've taught me how to wear women's clothes properly so that I don't make a fool of myself. What else is there?"

"That's the problem. There's not much else to teach you, but I haven't given you the sense of enjoyment and fun of being a girl and getting all dressed up to go out on the town."

"Oh, no. I don't think I need to do that."

"Oh yes, you do. We are going to get ourselves made-up and dressed-up, then you and I are going to hit the clubs this evening and have ourselves a ball. After that, there is no way that you are going to be thinking like a boy all day. So, go and have a relaxing bath, whilst I pop back home for a couple of things. I'll only be fifteen minutes. Just wash your hair but don't dry it. I'll do that for you when I get back. Put one of those aromatic bath oils in the water to relax you "

As I lay in the nice warm bath with the smell of rose petals all around me, I thought about what Alice had said. Looking at my body, it was obvious that I was a girl and there was no sense denying it. I stroked my hands with their long delicate fingers along my smooth legs and over my full breasts. Yes I was a girl all right, and after that afternoon's activities I felt like a girl. I had enjoyed the afternoon very much and this session of pampering and relaxing was making me feel quite feminine. I had just finished drying myself, wound a towel around my wet hair like a turban and had put on a soft towelling bathrobe that I had never felt like wearing before when Alice arrived back.

"You look relaxed and glowing. Did you have a good soak?"

"Yes. There must be some magic in those oils because I have to say that I feel a bit girlish at the moment. I'm looking forward to what you've got planned for us this evening."

"I'm glad to hear it, so we need to start at your toes and work our way all over till we finish the glamour process. Are you ready? Let's have a look at your stock of nail polishes and choose a good colour."

Alice started with my toes, giving them a pedicure and two coats of a dusky pink varnish, which I thought made them look pretty. Pretty? That was not a word I would have used last week, but I had to admit that it felt right at that moment. Then came a manicure and two coats of a darker red colour. "I think it might be too much of a shock for you to go for black or green tonight, but you'll grow into liking them." Alice assured me, although I thought it unlikely.

Then Alice unwound my turban and dried and styled my hair into a wonderful arrangement of curls

that fell around my face perfectly. I was very impressed with her skill, but a niggling thought struck me. "How on earth am I going to be able to do this on my own? I'll never get the hang of it like you."

"We've all learnt how to look after ourselves and look our best. It's a bit trial and error, but I'll show you so that you minimise the error stages. OK?"

"I'm in your debt again. Thanks. Can we get onto the makeup stage? I can't wait to see what you're going to do."

Alice assembled a whole array of pots and tubes and brushes and started work. First, she got me to smooth moisturiser all over my face, then she applied foundation with a small sponge, dabbing and blending it to give an even finish. After that, she brushed on some powder to set the foundation. Then she got out her blusher brush and blended in some dark bronze blusher along the line of my cheekbones, followed by some pale highlighter above it.

"Now it's time for your eyes," she said, and picked up a pair of tweezers to remove a few stray hairs beneath my eyebrows and to improve the shape. She refined the shape a little by using a small flat brush to apply a dark eyeshadow, following the lines of the brow. Then she applied a base eyeshadow over the whole eye area and a main colour over the eyelid itself, a dark shadow in the socket line and a very pale colour in the area just below my brow at the outer ends. These colours were all blended together to give a smooth effect.

Then she picked up the medium eyeshadow and used a small brush to apply a little beneath the lower lashes, from the outer edge to the inner eye area. A small pencil came next, to apply a line above my upper

lashes from the inner corner to just beyond the outer edge. This was gently smudged, then redrawn to give a soft look.

Just when I thought we had finished with eyes, Alice picked up a frightening looking tool and approached my eyes. Seeing my look of horror, she said, "Don't worry, it's only a eyelash curler. It won't hurt." After that, I had a couple of coats of mascara applied to both top and bottom lashes and she pronounced that the eyes were done.

"Are you ready for some lipstick?" She drew round the outer shape of my lips using a darkish pencil, then filled in the middle using lipstick on a brush. "It's more accurate and consistent this way," she said. She then got me to blot my lips on a clean tissue and reapplied the lipstick to give an even colour across the lips. The final touch was a spot of white highlighter in the centre of my lower lip.

I sat on the bedroom stool staring at my face in the mirror, utterly gob-smacked. It was a stunning vision in front of me. I knew that I was basically attractive but I didn't think I could look so sexy as well.

"Not a bad job, even if I say it myself," said Alice, obviously pleased with her work.

"Fantastic, I'm lost for words. But I'll never remember how to do all that myself."

"Of course you will. It just comes with practice."

"It's such a fabulous feeling to just use a few paints and colours to utterly transform oneself. I'm so happy to be able to do this as a girl. Thank you, thank you, dear Alice."

"That's what friends are for. I'm glad you like it. The old Kate was a bit more conservative in her ap-

pearance and clothes but I always thought you needed to be a bit more adventurous, so tonight was a good time to try it out on you. But you can't go out like that. You need some clothes. Have you thought about what to wear?"

I hadn't given it a thought but Alice obviously had and chose some very sexy black underwear from the drawer. "How about these? Or are they still too girlie for you?"

"Oh no, they look absolutely right for me. The way I feel right now, they're perfect." And they were. As soon as Alice gave them to me, I was excited by the soft feel of the fabric and the little details of lace and small bows that decorated them, also by the delicacy and lightness of the garments themselves. "I think you've made a very good choice."

"Now the last item we need before getting dressed is some perfume. What do you fancy tonight?"

"I haven't got a clue. Choose something for me." To be honest, I never used after-shave or smelly stuff. I had never bothered with it as a bloke but when Alice sprayed some flowery perfume on me and I could smell the lovely aroma wafting up around me, I was in Seventh Heaven. This was lovely.

Alice could see I was enjoying it but she brought me back to the task in hand by saying, "We'll just check out some shoes first. I know you've only won flat shoes these last two weeks so you need to get used to walking in heels. Try this pair of low heels on and walk around a bit."

I was a bit wobbly at first but soon was walking around with no problems at all. Alice thought I was doing all right. Then we tried on a pair with slightly

higher heels and I was fine, but she appeared holding a pair of shoes with vertiginous three-inch heels. "No way, they're positively dangerous," I said but she persisted. After a little while, I stopped worrying about falling over and twisting my ankle and was confident enough to walk around naturally.

"I've had a quick look through your wardrobe and there's nothing that's sexy enough to match your makeup. Would you like to wear my dress that I bought this afternoon? We're the same size, so it will fit you perfectly."

"But you haven't even tried it on."

"I know but I think your needs are greater than mine at the moment, and I brought another dress from home to wear."

The dress fitted like a dream and I knew that I looked fabulous. I not only looked fabulous, I felt fabulous. I really felt like a girl. I couldn't wait until Alice had done her own makeup, and had dressed. It was time to go out.

Our taxi arrived on time and we entered the club to meet our friends Helen and Nicki. "Wow, Kate, you look great," said Helen. "We were worried about you when you wouldn't come out last weekend. I'm so glad you've come tonight. Have you been working on a new look, because you look so much more sexy than usual. Or is it a new look to attract a new man?"

"I've not been feeling myself recently," I replied with a smile, "and I thought tonight would be the start of a new chapter in my life. I'm glad you like it."

"I haven't seen that dress before either, it really suits you. Is it new? Where did you get it?" asked Nicki.

“Yes, I got it this afternoon from, er...”

“We saw it in Next,” said Alice, “and it suited Kate better than me, so she bought it.”

When we ordered drinks, I nearly made a mistake and ordered a pint of lager, which is what I normally drink. Just in time, I realised that the other girls were drinking white wine, and I ordered that instead. But my biggest mistake of all was later on in the evening when Helen made some appreciative comments about the prominent bulge in the front of the trousers being worn by a guy called Damien who I knew when I was Andy.

I thought back to a recent evening in the locker room at the gym and remarked, “That bulge owes more to Calvin Klein underpants than Mother Nature.”

The conversation went horribly silent and all eyes turned to me, I felt trapped and knew that I was blushing again, “How do you know?” Helen asked.

“I have it on very good authority from a friend of mine.” I said, realising that I was probably digging myself in deeper with every word I said.

How was I going to get out of this one? Alice leant forward and said “And that good friend has a brother who goes to the same gym. I owe you another one, Alice, I thought, and resolved to be a lot more careful of what I said in the future.

Apart from that, the evening went fine and we all had a really good time, chatting and dancing in our group or with several guys in the club. When I was dancing, I copied the other girls and was pleased to find myself making the same graceful movements that they made. I much more graceful than I was when I danced as a man. I was a bit wary of dancing with one

of the boys but Alice whispered to me that I'd be all right; she'd watch to make sure I didn't get into too tight a situation. Eventually I accepted an invitation to dance. It was strange dancing with another man while I was still thinking I was a man, but I knew that everyone saw me as a girl and treated me as a girl. Throughout the evening, I could feel myself becoming more accustomed and familiar with the role. Even so, I was a bit nervous when he put his arms around me, but after a few minutes it felt comfortable and strangely exciting.

Sunday was a day for thinking. I had so enjoyed getting made-up and dressing up to go out, the company of the other girls and having fun with them. I was starting to see all the advantages and pleasures of embracing the fact that I was Kate, not Andy, and that I was a woman and not a man. I decided that from that point on, I would not moan and whinge about being Andy. I would try not to suppress my female persona; I would become Kate fully and actively develop my feminine side. Therefore I looked through my clothes and put all the trousers and plain skirts I had worn over the last two weeks at the back of the wardrobe and pulled forward the more stylish and feminine clothes. I was going to wear them next week to work, I would wear a little makeup, and I would use some of that lovely perfume. I was going to think like, act like, and be like a proper woman from now on.

In the middle of the evening, the phone rang. "Hi Kate, it's Charles."

Charles who? I thought. Oh my goodness, it must be Charles Frobisher. But I thought Alice said he'd gone abroad. "Hello, it's a long time since we've spoken, how are you?"

“Fine, how are you? I’ve just returned back to the U.K. from my secondment in the US, and I’m getting my things sorted out from the move. I thought it would be great to get in touch with you again and see how you’re getting on.”

“I’m good. A few things have changed over the last year since you left but I’m pretty much the same,” I lied. “How about you?”

“Great, I’d love to see you and meet up some time. Harry has told me that the Rugby Club Dinner Dance is at the end of next month. He’s offered to get me some tickets if you’d agree to be my guest. Harry and Alice will be going, although Alice doesn’t know about it yet. What do you think?”

Oh, this was a shock. I didn’t know how to respond but it would be mean to refuse him. Besides, I wanted to meet this guy after all the stories I heard from Alice about him. “That would be super. I’d love to come. Thank you.”

“Wonderful, I was on tenterhooks in case you said no. But we ought to get together soon to catch up on each other’s lives. I’m away on a few business trips this week, but are you free next weekend?”

“I’m afraid not. I’m going down to see my Mum and my sister. But could we manage something after next weekend?”

That would be fine. I’ll book a table somewhere on Wednesday and pick you up at seven o’clock. Is that enough time for you to get ready?”

We talked a little more and when I put the phone down, I was shaking all over. What on earth had I let myself in for? I thought.

The next week at work was much more comfortable than the previous two since I had become Kate. The weekend had been so much fun and my mind was becoming so in tune with my body that it felt perfectly natural for me to wear women's clothes all day and to enjoy wearing different styles each day. I did make a mistake one day when I wore a loose low-cut blouse and I leant over the desk between myself and Eric. I nearly gave the poor chap a heart attack. All part of the learning process, I said to myself. I soon became more confident in wearing dresses, skirts, high heels, and understanding what bits and pieces to use with different clothes to make them look something special. In short, I was learning quickly how to be a woman and to make myself look my most attractive.

On Friday afternoon, I took a half-day holiday from work and drove down to my mother's house in the country for her birthday. My sister, Claire, and her husband, Tom were already there with their two children. Harriet who four and the baby Alfie was six months old. Although I was now very relaxed at being Kate, I was slightly nervous at meeting them as Kate, terrified that I would say something that made me seem to be an impostor by not knowing my childhood history.

But I needn't have worried. "Hello Aunty Kate," cried Harriet as she ran towards me as I got out of the car. "We've been here ages." I was about to pick her up and swing her in the air as I used to do as Andy, but stopped myself just in time. I was sure that wasn't a very lady-like thing for Kate to do.

And then I was introduced to Alfie, who I hadn't seen before. He was lying on a rug on the floor and I knelt down beside him. "And hello, gorgeous. Aren't you a lovely baby?"

It was good fun for us all to be together again. A lot of the talk about family things were about events that I had been at, albeit as Andy and not as Kate. I gradually relaxed and when the children had been put to bed, the four of us sat down to a superb meal cooked by my mother.

After a couple of glasses of wine, Claire started to quiz me on my social life. "How's the boyfriend situation going? Is there a significant man lurking in the background?"

"There's no one around at the moment. My life is quite busy enough as it is without a man around, thanks."

"Whatever happened to that nice young man that you brought down here last spring," asked my mother.

"Who?"

"Was his name Derek? Oh, no it wasn't that. It began with a C. Colin? Charles? Yes, that's him. Charles."

"Oh, Charles. He was seconded to a job abroad and we parted company."

"What a pity. I rather liked him. So pleasant and very good-looking as well."

"Well, as a matter of fact, he's just returned to the U.K. and he's taking me out to dinner next week."

"Is he now?"

I noticed a knowing look between Claire and my mother as Claire said, "Just back in the U.K. and the first thing he does is make a date with you. Sounds as if he's really keen to meet up with you again."

"I suppose so, but it's just to catch up with each other. There's nothing to it really," I said, although I could feel myself starting to blush slightly.

"If you say so. But I reckon you're looking forward to seeing him again."

"Well, I'm sure he's changed a lot since he went away. I'm sure I have. Now let's change the subject and talk about something different."

The next day I was talking to Claire when it was time for Alfie's feed. I was going to leave her and go out into the garden, when she said, "There's no need to interrupt our chat. Come on upstairs and watch Alfie have his milk and we can carry on. You can learn how to do the feeding as well."

So we went upstairs, Claire gave Alfie to me to hold whilst she got everything ready. I had never held a baby before but he was lovely and cuddly and snuggled down in my arms against my breast. "You look like a natural," smiled Claire as she took him from me. I noticed that she had unbuttoned the front of her blouse, exposing one of her breasts that looked full-to-bursting with milk, which she guided Alfie's mouth towards. He found her nipple and proceeded to suck and gurgle with all his strength to take in the milk. I was fascinated by the whole process and couldn't take my eyes off the pair of them. I was so engrossed that I completely forgot what Claire and I had been talking about five minutes earlier.

"What does that feel like?" I asked Claire.

'Life-giving, motherly, warm, bonding with my child. Just lovely," said Claire. "Although at three o'clock in the morning, those aren't exactly the words that spring to mind."

“When he’s nearly finished, can I have him so that I can feel what it’s like as well? Though my breasts don’t have any milk, I’d like to know what it’s like.”

Claire laughed, “I do believe you’re getting a bit broody now. I’ve never heard you express an interest in children before. Look, he’s nearly finished now. You can have him for a few minutes, then I’ll let him have some more.”

I sat there with this little baby in my arms snuggling up to my breast, with his mouth clamped around my hard and erect nipple. I could feel the suction he pulled with his mouth and waves of emotion surged around my body. How wonderful it would be to have a little baby like him and to be able to look after and care for him like Claire. I didn’t say anything of this to my sister, as she would have been sure to have pulled my leg. Reluctantly I gave him back to Claire after a few minutes so that he could finish his feed.

“Isn’t he lovely? It must be wonderful to have a baby like him.”

“I definitely think your hormones are getting to you. You didn’t seem too bothered about babies the last time we talked a few months ago.

“A girl is allowed to change as she gets older, you know. And I know that I’ve changed in the last few months,” I smiled.

“Well, whatever’s happened has done you good as you seem very happy at the moment, and you’re looking absolutely fabulous. Now I want to ask you a favour. We are going to have Alfie christened in two months time. How would you like to be Alfie’s godmother?”

“Me. Being a godmother. Gosh, I don’t know.”

“You won’t have to do anything at the service apart from holding him. And it’ll be a good excuse to buy a new dress, maybe even a hat.”

“A hat. That settles it. Alright, I’d be delighted to be godmother.”

Claire and Tom had to leave after lunch on Sunday; they wanted to be home early to put the children to bed at a reasonable time, so I had the afternoon free to talk to Mum on her own. I guided the conversation around to my childhood and let her remind me of all the things I had done as a youngster and as a teenager. Except that she wasn’t reminding me at all and I was learning all about this new person I had become. I do seem to have been a model child. I’m sure there were bits that my mother didn’t know about that weren’t quite so blameless. “What about my birth?” I asked. “Was there anything strange about that?”

“No, it was perfectly ordinary and straightforward,” she said but after a moment she added, “there was one funny little incident, but it wasn’t strange.”

“What was that?”

“Well, the day you were born coincided with another special event. You remember your father was always interested in stars and planets and things, so he was quite excited about an eclipse of the moon that was going to occur that night. We were going to stay up to watch it, but neither of us saw anything because I got rushed into hospital about lunchtime; you were born in the early hours of the next morning. Anyway, you had just been born; I’m sure I heard the nurse say, “It’s a boy,” but just then, the lights went out. I suppose it was a power failure or something.

It took a few seconds for the lights to come back on, then the nurse said, "And here's your lovely baby girl, Mrs Pemberton". I remember being a bit confused at the time, but your father said I must have dreamt it or inhaled too much gas. We had hoped that you might be a boy as we already had Claire; it would have been nice to have a girl and a boy. But we were very happy to have a lovely little girl like you, my dear."

It was like a Eureka moment. Could this be the time at which our two parallel universes were created, leaving Kate in one and Andy in the other? I had no idea, but it seemed a workable theory. I had no time to think about it, though, as Mum continued on to give a run-down of everyone in our class at school.

"And Veronica Gatenby got married last year. Her mother was telling me that she is expecting a baby next springtime. I think nearly all your school chums are married or engaged. You'll be one of the last ones. That's assuming that you do get married, of course"

"Oh, Mother. Don't go on about it. I'm fine as I am, anyway I need to find the right man first."

I left after tea and as I drove home, I thought a bit more about the lights failing at my birth. It did seem strange, but I couldn't explain it. When I got home, I was feeling a bit tired and my stomach was sore, so I had a bath and an early night. One mystery I hadn't worked out was why there were red rings drawn around some dates in Kate's diary. There was one around tomorrow. Then it dawned on me that they were at four-week intervals. No problem, how bad can that be?

Bad. Don't believe what anyone tells you. I suppose that on the grand scale of things, it wasn't *that* bad but it was certainly a shock to the system. I couldn't believe

that women put up with this every month, but I limped through Monday morning at work; by lunchtime I was a lot better.

“Sorry, I should have thought about that and warned you,” said Alice. “Are you OK? I assure you you’ll get used to it.”



I spent all Tuesday evening debating what to wear the following evening for my date with Charles. I didn't want to be too casual, but then I didn't want to be too OTT, so in the end I settled for a fine wool dress that flattered my curves and had a fairly low neckline. I also chose some shoes with three-inch heels and some barely black, fine denier tights that would make my legs look sexy. I left work early on Wednesday to get a bath and get ready for the evening. By now I was getting much better and quicker at doing my makeup so I was ready when the doorbell rang at five minutes to seven. The butterflies in my tummy were fluttering madly as I opened the door to find an extremely good-looking man standing there with a big smile on his face.

Tall, dark, and handsome was the perfect description for this lovely man in front of me. I stepped back to look at him better; he was obviously doing the same to me as his eyes widened with delight when he came through the door. We kissed each other politely on the cheek and smiled at each other, but I was lost for words. Strange emotions were running through me based on what my body felt as this man put his arms around me, offset by a reaction from Andy that this was odd. Kate won the conflict and I melted into his arms and kissed him again, this time on the lips. "Charles, I'm so pleased to see you again. Do come in. I'm nearly ready."

"Kate, you look fabulous. Even more fabulous than I remember. I'm so pleased I plucked up the courage to call you. I was worried that you'd still be mad at me and hang up on me."

"Nonsense, it's great to see you again. I'm dying to hear all about your adventures overseas." I picked up

my bag, checked my lipstick in the mirror, and said, "I'm ready, where are you taking me tonight?"

When we entered the restaurant, I noticed that Charles spoke to the headwaiter briefly. The man nodded and showed us to a small, secluded table in an alcove where there were candles alight already. Very romantic. I could see that Charles was trying to impress. "How romantic. Isn't it a just a tiny bit too romantic for just-good-friends?" I said laughingly, and he joined me with a chuckle.

The food was good, the wine was lovely and the romantic mood definitely got to my head as our conversation ranged over all the things we had done in the last twelve months. Obviously, I had had to invent several things or modify things that Andy had done to make them fit into Kate's life, but I was getting fairly good at that now. At one point Charles asked me if I remembered something or other. I couldn't, of course so I covered myself by saying, "Let's pretend that we don't have any past history together and that we're on our first date. We do have lots of happy memories, but things have changed over the last twelve months, and we both have changed. I know that I have and I've got a different outlook on life, so let's enjoy finding out about each other again as if it was from the beginning. Does that sound weird?"

"You mean we start with a clean sheet and there are no recriminations about the past?"

"Sounds good to me. Let's say we've just pressed the 'erase past history' button on the website of life."

Thereafter I was able to relax and not have to pretend to know what he was asking me about. It gave me carte blanche to ask some questions about him that I should have known the answers to already.

Charles took me back to my flat afterwards and I invited him in for a coffee. When we had finished our drink, there was a bit of a silence, as neither of us knew how to continue. I think Charles would have liked to take me to bed but I wasn't mentally ready for that so when he looked as if he was going to suggest it, I said, "Charles, you wouldn't expect me to do anything like that on our first date, would you? And, anyway I'm afraid this week is off-season for those activities."

He looked a bit crestfallen and I was regretting it, but I needed to be ready. I put my arms around him and kissed him fully on the lips. "But there's nothing in my diary for this weekend. Would you like to come round here for dinner on Saturday evening?"

"So you'd like to see me again?"

"Of course, silly. I'm looking forward to it already. But I do need some sleep before tomorrow morning, so I think it's time to say goodnight."

When he was gone, I flopped down on the sofa, mentally and physically drained. It had been a lovely evening, he was a gorgeous companion, and I had enjoyed being a woman, being looked after and gently flirted with all evening.

Dinner on Saturday. How crazy was I to invite him to dinner? Andy's culinary skills extended to boiling an egg or opening a ready-prepared meal pack. How was I, Kate, going to cook a half-decent dinner?

I shouldn't have worried. As usual, Alice came to the rescue. We pored over some of her cookery books, and came up with a tasty, but simple menu. We even did a little practice session on Friday night. Then on Saturday afternoon, Alice came round to supervise me making the starter and the pudding and getting every-

thing ready for the main course so that I just had to do the last-minute cooking before we sat down to eat. I made a mental note that I needed to read some cookery books and find somewhere to learn to cook. It could be a useful skill to have as a woman. But our main topic of conversation was the evening ahead, not the cooking, tidying the flat, or laying the table with proper matching cutlery, nice wineglasses, candles and a clean tablecloth, but what should I do afterwards. "What do I do? How do I respond to him?" I asked.

"Do whatever your body tells you," she said. "Respond to him in the same way that Andy would have liked a girl to respond to him. And make sure that you encourage him to maximise your pleasure as well. Just like we did together."

"I suppose so."

"You're worrying too much. As they say, it'll be alright on the night."

"But *the* night is *tonight*."

My heart was pounding when I opened the door that evening to find Charles standing there with a bottle of wine and an enormous bouquet of flowers.

"For me?"

"Of course they're for you. Beautiful flowers for a beautiful lady."

He really does know how to make a girl feel good, I thought. I had taken a lot of care to choose my clothes that evening and had put on a short dress with a low, but still reasonably modest, neckline, and I was wearing high heels. I wanted to look at my most attractive and sexy, but still wanted to be sophisticated. I could see from the look in his eyes that all my preparation had been successful, and that he was impressed.

“Thank you, Charles,” I said as I kissed him, “come in and sit down, and let me get you a drink.”

“Mmm, something smells good in the kitchen. Can I open this wine for you?”

As he opened the wine, I searched the cupboards for a suitable vase to put those flowers in. Having found one, I put them in and shuffled them around a bit. Not brilliant but it seemed to be OK. I think I’ll have to have some practice flower arranging as one of my life skills, I thought. The meal was perfect. All of the work that Alice and I had done that afternoon made everything so easy. I even managed to produce the main course on my own without spoiling it. Charles was very impressed, “I can see one thing that has changed in the last year. Your cooking is a lot better than I remember. Have you been taking lessons or something?”

Oh dear, I thought. I didn’t know that Kate wasn’t all that good. Maybe I’ve set the standard too high for the future. Oh well, I’ll worry about that later. “Just a little more domesticated as time goes on,” I lied. “I’m glad you liked it. It’s so nice to cook a meal for you again that I thought I’d do something special.”

We were by now sitting side-by-side on the sofa, drinking our coffee and eating some truffles that Charles produced from somewhere. The lights were dimmed and there was some soft music playing. I was feeling very pleased with myself and very romantic as I leaned back into his arms. I snuggled up to him and kissed him on his chin. I was conscious all the time that this felt like the most natural thing in the world. I was responding to Kate’s body and Kate’s hormones, not to Andy’s mind. In fact I had almost completely forgotten

about Andy in that blissful moment. "It's been a long time," I whispered.

The next morning, we woke up to the sound of birds singing outside and the sun shining through the window. It was a glorious morning and it was so good to be alive. "Did you sleep well?" I asked as I ran my fingers through the hair on his chest and kissed him.

"Like a log, which is not surprising after all that good food and all that exercise afterwards. Have you been reading books about sex as well as cooking? That was really fantastic last night."

I had been worried about how to act in bed because I had no idea what I should do or what Kate did, but I seemed to have passed with flying colours on that test as well. Everything seemed to be going perfectly. Most of all, I was having a fabulous time being a woman. How lucky I am, I thought. "Don't worry, I enjoyed it just as much as you. It was almost like it was the first time," I smiled.

Following another session of lovemaking, this time a little more relaxed and slower, we spent the day together with a late brunch and a walk in the park afterwards. Charles had to leave in the early evening as he had to be away off the next morning for a business trip. I think both of us would have liked to spend another night together, but it looked like there would be plenty of more opportunities to do so in the future.

Alice was eager to hear all the news at lunchtime on Monday; I gave her a full blow-by-blow account of everything. She was very happy for me.

During that week I realised how much I was enjoying being a woman instead of a man. I loved wearing women's clothes and dressing up. The feel of the dress

fabrics, soft and draped around my body instead of being stiffly tailored with lots of silly pockets like men's suits, was lovely. When the weather, was warm I could wear thin and airy clothes, not worrying if they were a little see-through, and I could go barelegged so the air could waft around my legs as I walked. In colder weather I could wear luxuriously thin and soft materials that were still warm because of the fibres, like cashmere or angora, in them.

The wealth of detail in the clothes was also exciting for me, with the variety of hooks or buttons used to fasten some clothes, and the lovely embellishments of ribbons and lace, bows and embroidery, particularly on underclothes. The feel of fine silk against my skin was a source of pleasure that lasted all day. I used to compare the clumsiness of men's socks and heavy shoes with the wonderful feeling of smooth tights and delicate ladies shoes with their myriad variations of straps or buckles or laces, and infinite variety of styles and heights of heels. I counted myself lucky that I could indulge myself in all this choice.

A week or so later, Eric, my boss, asked me to stay back after a project meeting for a quick chat. "I'm very pleased with your current progress, Amanda. The project is going well and I think your contribution is key to that. You seemed to have changed gears over the last few weeks from a competent member of the team to someone who is driving it along. I think I detect a change in the relationships among the team members, and they seem to respect you more. Is that so?"

"We've had a few discussions about workload and we've rescheduled things. We've assigned the tasks that Terry can't do to me and offloaded some of the routine tasks to Jason. This means that we are all work-

ing towards our own targets, which is much more efficient, instead of the others passing on bits of work to me, which interferes with my productivity.”

“And are the other guys happy with that?”

“They have to be. I told them that I’m not covering for them anymore.”

“Well, at the annual review, I told you to be more assertive and stand up for yourself. I’m pleased that you took my advice.”

Ah, so I was right, and Kate had been a little too helpful, even to the point of it impinging on her work. Well, I’ve done something positive about it, I thought. I returned my attention to Eric who was continuing.

“I’d like to confirm your position officially as Team Leader for this project. From now on, you’ll be in charge of work schedules, assignments and time scales. I think you can handle it; if all goes well, we will be looking at a promotion for you at the end of the year.”

Wow, that was good news. I certainly seemed to be doing well in my new persona as Kate. Perhaps even better than I did as Andy. Maybe I wasn’t being so aggressive and pushy, and maybe being a woman helps me listen to everyone else’s point of view a bit more. I’ve had a lot of learning to do and a lot of adapting to my new life. By now, I really did see myself as a new person and was almost fully comfortable with being a woman, as my work, my social life, and my love life all seemed to be going very well.

“You seem to have gotten over that sticky patch a few weeks back. Can I assume that has all turned out for the better, and you’re back to normal again? You seem to be a new woman since that tearful chat in my office.”

“Well, things are not really exactly back to normal, but you’re correct in thinking that I’m a new woman since that date.”

And with that enigmatic comment, I smiled and got up to leave the office.

Alice and I were busy over the next few weekends visiting dress shops, looking for new evening dresses for the Dinner Dance. After much consultation, we finally both found dresses we were comfortable in. My dress was a deep pink colour with a fitted bodice and bra top with narrow spaghetti straps. The skirt was a bouffant balloon shape from a tightly fitted waist in layers of silk chiffon and was about mid-thigh level. I bought some new black heels, which were really just strappy sandals but I reckoned they would be comfortable enough to wear dancing all evening. I certainly intended to show off my dress as much as possible by being on the floor. And I wanted to make a big impression on Charles. Not that I needed to as he and I were spending as much time as possible together, and enjoying every minute of each other’s company.

The dance was fabulous. Charles couldn’t keep his eyes, or his hands, off me all evening. Most of the other men in the room couldn’t keep their eyes off me either. Andy would never have wanted to be a centre of attention, and I don’t think Kate would have either. Somehow I overcame any worries about it and I was revelling in it, loving the looks and the mild flirting, just enjoying being my liberated self.

As we sat down for our meal Harry said that they had something to tell us, “Alice and I are going to get engaged. You’re the first people we’ve told apart from our parents. And we’re going to get married next year.”

“So will you be my bridesmaid, please?” Alice asked me.

“Congratulations, that’s terrific news. I’m so pleased for you both. I’d love to be a bridesmaid” I said as I felt Charles squeeze my hand under the table.

We danced all night but eventually all good things come to an end. We crawled into bed, tired but very happy. I fell asleep in Charles’ arms, blissfully happy to be with such a wonderful partner.

The family party for Alfie’s christening was great fun. I just fitted in as Kate with all my elderly and far-flung relatives; it was just like I had always been Kate. Charles came with me, which put my mother in a flummox. “Do you want to sleep in separate rooms?” she asked me on the phone a week or so before the event.

“Don’t be silly, we’re grown-ups, you know. A double bed is what we’re used to.”

Charles was a great hit with all my family. With his confident, easy-going manner, he got on quickly with everyone he met. I noticed a couple of aunts having a deep conversation with my mother, which was quite obviously about us, as they kept looking at us and nodding their heads. I didn’t mind at all; I rather liked their gossipy attention, and I very much liked the implied conclusions in their discussion. As we drove home that evening, I remarked, “You know, you’re not really settled in that flat of yours. You’ve talked about looking for a new one.”

“Uh huh,” he muttered, with one eye on the road.

“Well, what about moving into my flat, which ought to be big enough for the two of us? It would be

great to have you around every day. And every night as well."

"I like the idea of every night," he replied with a laugh. "I like the idea altogether. When shall we do it?"

"Might as well do it as soon as we can," I replied eagerly. This seemed like a dream come true.

And so we settled down to a comfortable existence living together and sharing our lives with each other. We saw Alice and Harry frequently; it was on one of those afternoons out that we visited a Media Exhibition Harry was interested in. As we walked around, I had a shock when I saw an attraction called the Morphing Machine. It was exactly like the one Andy had seen all that long time ago, in another universe.

"Hey, what a cool idea," said the two guys and they hurried over to check it out. "Come on girls, let's have a go."

Alice knew what I was thinking, "Kate, you've gone very pale. I'm going to sit it out as well. I'm sure that you don't want to use that thing, do you?"

"It's the last thing I want. I don't want any chance of spoiling what I've got."

So Alice pleaded a headache. We said we'd rather go for a coffee while the boys played about. They eventually joined us, clutching pictures of themselves about twenty years older.

"I'm not sure I want to marry you if you're going to look like that in twenty years time," Alice said to Harry with a laugh.

On the other hand, I thought Charles looked quite distinguished and still very attractive. I think I could live with that, I thought.

But that made me think about the future a bit more; that evening I did some Internet research. "What are you doing, darling?" asked Charles as I printed off a long list of dates and places.

"I've developed this fear of being in a lunar eclipse," I replied. "I know it sounds nonsense, but I think an eclipse could turn my life upside down. I want to make sure that I know where they are going to occur in the next fifty years, so I can avoid them."

"You're funny," he said, putting his arms around my waist and giving me a gentle squeeze, "but if that's what you want, then I'll volunteer to look after you and keep you away from them. Would you like me to do that?"

"Is that some roundabout way of making a proposal?" I asked

"You know," he replied, "I think it is."

"Then my answer would be 'yes please'," I replied, giving him a big kiss. "But I think I ought to tell you about something weird that happened to me a few months ago. In fact, it's so weird I sometimes wonder whether it really happened or if it was just a figment of my imagination. After I've told you the story, you can ask me again. If you still want to. But a bit more romantically next time, please."

# THE WRONG SUITCASE

**By Louise Paynter**

Standing in the airport arrivals area, Brian asked himself again why on earth he had managed to get himself into this situation. It had been a crazy idea to book a weekend break by himself in some Godforsaken European city where he didn't know anyone. He wasn't that keen to follow the slightly-bored-but-trying-to-be-enthusiastic tour guide round dingy and dusty cathedrals, or to visit museums about the local history containing second-rate artifacts from the local leather tanning industry in the seventeenth century. But here he was, standing at the carousel, waiting for his suitcase to appear out of the hole in the middle of

the ring and slide down the chute to join the others on parade until it came to him.

The day had already started badly, and he was not really in the right mood to have that terrific weekend the brochure assured him that he would have. He had been delayed on the motorway to Manchester in the early hours of the morning. When he finally arrived, there was an enormous queue at the check-in with only two very slow clerks to process all the other fun-loving travelers. There were at least two groups of guys going on a stag party weekend and three equally loud hen parties whose over-excited and loud behavior had made him even more depressed.

As usual, the security checks were another bottleneck; they went through the usual routine of making passengers take off their shoes and belts and doing anything else the security people could think of to inconvenience them or make them feel uncomfortable. It was a relief to get through and sit down in the lounge by the departure gate, although that was hardly quiet, as one of the hen parties were intent on starting their party right there, not waiting until everyone arrived at their destination. He offered a short prayer that they wouldn't be in his hotel.

Brian realized that they had been waiting for their bags for about ten minutes and nothing had happened. Surely nothing could go wrong with the baggage. You can't lose all the bags for a whole plane full of people, can you? He rather enjoyed that ten minutes, though, as he was watching a very attractive girl on the other side of the carousel who was also waiting for her bag. She was the first bright spot of his day, the only thing worth looking at in the whole airport complex.

She was tall and slim with long dark hair, wearing a fake fur jacket over a cowl-necked top with tight blue jeans and high-heeled boots. She was an elegant and well-dressed contrast to the brightly-colored, slightly vulgar and common looks of the girls in one of the hen parties. He offered a short prayer that she might be in his hotel.

At this point it would be helpful to explain the events that led up to this weekend and to explain why Brian was standing alone at this particular luggage carousel. Two weeks previously, Brian's long-term girlfriend announced that she had decided that she didn't want to continue to share their flat and their lives together and that she was going to move out. She said she felt that he was a male chauvinist pig. He wanted to be in control too much and wasn't caring enough or responsive to her feelings. Their relationship would work better if he stopped always being so macho and thought a bit more about the feminine point of view. Brian thought this was all a load of feminist bullshit, and he tried to tell her so. Despite that, to his surprise, she moved out. Lock, stock, and half the wine rack. Well, not literally; she left quite a few clothes and other feminine things, as she didn't have enough room in her temporary new place where she would be staying with a friend until she could find a permanent place of her own.

Brian had been devastated by her leaving as he loved her and thought that they had a good future together, so he was a bit depressed. Then he saw an ad for a cheap weekend in Europe; he booked it up on the spur of the moment in the hope that it would cheer him up. However, the omens were not good at the moment and he was about to go into terminal depression at the thought of being in this city for the next three days. His

only hope seemed to be that the beer was drinkable and reasonably cheap, and that he didn't get entangled with any of those hen or stag parties. He didn't fancy being embarrassed by watching the activities of his fellow countrymen and women who had overindulged themselves on an excess of cheap alcohol.

Whilst in this mood of depression, he reflected that perhaps he had not been very cooperative on the weekend before his girlfriend left. He had been dragged around the shops all Saturday afternoon, then she had spent an age in the bathroom getting ready to go out in the evening for a meal with their friends. He had made a few terse comments about the time she had taken, and she was a bit annoyed that he hadn't complimented her on her top, although he recalled that she had looked fabulous in it. The situation had been exacerbated by all the compliments she got from their friends when they eventually met up with them. He knew that he'd been grumpy and not very understanding, but thought she spent too much time thinking about herself anyway. He couldn't understand why she had taken so much exception to his attitude, and wished that things had turned out differently.

Just then there seemed to be some activity down below; the conveyor belt clattered into motion and the crowd edged forward to get a glimpse of the approaching bags. Just when Brian thought it would be easy to get his bag, two or three big guys pushed in front of him and almost completely blocked his view. A bag appeared on the carousel, then another, then three pink ones and four other brightly-colored ones. They must belong to one of the hen parties, he thought. He was right as the girls screamed with delight as they plucked their goodies from the belt and teetered out in their high heels. Then he thought his bag had finally ap-

peared but it belonged to the attractive girl he had been watching earlier. She lifted it off the belt and glided away to Immigration. Brian's bag was almost the last one to appear. Typical. Well, at least it hadn't gotten lost, so that was better than his current run of luck, thought Brian as he set off for Immigration.

Having gotten through immigration, he found the transfer minibus easily enough. He was the last person to arrive, of course, and they set off straight away for a half-hour drive to the city centre. There had been two buses for the tour group but the other bus had left ten minutes earlier. They arrived at the hotel which looked small from the outside but was quite large inside as they discovered when they gathered in the reception area for a free welcoming drink of local liqueur. The porters distributed the room keys, took everyone's bags, wrote the room numbers on them in chalk and took them up to their rooms. The group engaged in a little small talk amongst themselves as every group of perfect strangers does on these occasions. That's good service, he thought, perhaps this isn't going to be so bad after all. Then he noticed the girl from the airport was also in the tour group, standing at the other side of the room, talking to the tour guide. Things were definitely looking up.

After a brief introduction from the guide and a brief talk about the program of optional guided tours around the city, the group dispersed. Brian went up to his bedroom to unpack and change to go out for the evening. His suitcase was on the bed. The lock on the case looked a bit unfamiliar, but his key fitted it easily. He unlocked it and opened up the case. The case did not contain his clothes. All he could see were ladies clothes, including some very sexy underwear.

Just when he had thought that the weekend was starting to improve, it did the opposite and went from bad to worse. Then he thought, "Where's *my* suitcase?" He checked the luggage label in the zipped pocket in the front of the case to see to whom this one belonged. Just then, there was a knock at the door. It was the girl from the airport.

"Are you Brian Davies?" she said in a deep, husky, sexy voice, "I think that I've got your suitcase. Your case is identical to mine but when I opened it in my room, I found that it wasn't mine. We must have got them mixed up at the airport. I checked with the porters and they gave me your room number. Have you got my case by any chance?" Then she noticed the open case on his bed, "Oh, I see that you have," she said and blushed.

"Come in," he said, thinking that maybe the weekend was starting to get better after all, "but the label on the case is for a Mr. Robert Johnson. Is that your husband or boyfriend. Err, I'm sorry, I don't know your name."

"Neither, I don't have a husband or a boyfriend. I'm Robert, but please call me Lucille," she said with a smile.

It had not been a good day at all so far, a minute ago it looked like it was getting better, but now the prospects for the weekend had suddenly plunged back down to rock bottom. He'd just met a good-looking girl and it was possible that they could share the weekend together in this town when it turned out that she was really a he. A week ago it had seemed like a good idea to come here for the weekend, but everything seemed to be conspiring against him. He felt that the only option left for him was to go and get blind drunk, but

then he realized that he didn't even know where to go to get a drink. "I don't suppose you know this city at all, do you?" he asked his visitor. "I think I need to go and get several drinks this evening. This whole weekend has been a disaster so far and you are the straw that breaks the camel's back."

"I'm really sorry that your weekend is starting off so badly because this is a fabulous city for fun. I'm sure you'd enjoy it if you knew where to go. I don't know any drinking bars but I'd love to help you. You're welcome to join me this evening as I'm going to a couple of clubs." She'd looked closely at him for a long moment, then said, "But you'd have to have a change of clothes before coming out with me."

He thought she was being a bit rude about his casual, slightly scruffy traveling clothes. "Of course I'll change before going out. These are just for traveling. If we're hitting the town, then I can do smart."

"No, no, you misunderstand me. That's not what I meant," she said, "I think you'd make a lovely girl. I've got enough spare clothes to lend you some. I'll show you parts of this city that you'll never find in the guide-books. You'll have some great fun, as well as a totally new experience."

"Thanks, but no thanks. With respect to you, I'm a bloke and real blokes don't go dressing up as girls and swanning about the place."

"I hear what you say. I'll ignore your rude remark about real blokes not dressing up but you'll never know how much fun you're going to miss if you don't try it. You can have the experience of a lifetime and meet some of my good friends tonight, or you can be as miserable as sin and get blind drunk and suffer a hang-over for the whole of the weekend. It's a no-brainer."

Look, I've got plenty of spare clothes. Trannies never travel light. We're about the same size so there's no problem. I'll look after you and make sure you don't get into any trouble. No that I expect any, anyway."

The prospect of having a fun evening on the town sounded good, but he wasn't too sure about the dressing-up bit. "Let's have a drink in the bar and talk about it a bit more."

But she wouldn't hear of it. "We've got far too much to do to get you half-decent before we go out this evening. I need to change my clothes and get made up before I'm ready as well. So, is that a yes?"

Five minutes later, he was in the shower, shaving his legs and arms, followed by a close shave of his face and a slight trim of his hair around his sideboards. Lucille had gone back to her room with her case in order to get herself dressed. He sat on his bed waiting for her to return, wondering if he'd gone completely mad and what on earth the evening going to be like.

When Lucille returned, she looked even more stunning than earlier with a very sexy dress and dramatic makeup. He wouldn't have believed that she was not a girl if he didn't know. "Right, let's see what we can do for you now," she said as she sat him down and proceeded to give him a very professional makeover starting with shaping his eyebrows a little, then foundation, blusher, eyeshadow and mascara and finally a deep ruby-colored lipstick. The final item she produced was a short-haired wig with a floppy fringe and long side pieces which she fitted carefully onto his head. She adjusted the back and front and teased out the shape with her fingers.

"I'm afraid it's the only spare wig I've got. I brought it just in case I wanted to go swimming in the

hotel pool, but it looks fine on you." He was amazed at his new appearance and realized that Lucille had been right when she said that he would make a good-looking girl. However, he still felt like a man.



Lucille had also chosen some clothes for him to wear, which she laid out on the bed. "We need to begin with the underwear," she said, "starting with tucking away the Crown Jewels." She showed him how to tuck everything away in order to hide his bulge. As he slipped on the knickers followed by some sheer black tights, he felt excited by the feel of the soft, silky material over his smooth skin. It was so different from wearing his normal male clothes and much more sensual. Lucille helped to fasten the bra for him and filled the cups with soft silicone inserts to make it look as if he had a bit of a bust. He pulled on the tight glittery top with narrow shoulder straps Lucille had chosen and she rearranged his bra so that it looked as if he had a cleavage. Then he stepped into a short black skirt and fastened that at his waist. The final item was shoes and he looked at the strappy sandals with three-inch heels in horror.

"How on earth do you think I'm going to be able to walk in those?"

"I'm sorry, I don't have any other shoes with smaller heels. It's not that difficult once you've had a bit of practice."

He spent the next fifteen minutes walking around the room and along the corridor, trying not to fall over and break an ankle, and trying not to look like a tranny. Although, as he recognized, he *was* a tranny. But he didn't want to look like one.

Finally, Lucille reckoned he would be OK. "It's only a short walk to our first stop; by the time we get there you'll be perfect." They went down to the hotel reception in the lift as he wasn't going to risk trying to walk downstairs in those heels. He was terrified when the lift stopped, the doors opened and they had to walk

across the foyer. He imagined that everybody's eyes in the place were turned on them and were following them across the foyer.

"Where are we going?" he asked, when they had gotten through the revolving door and were out on the street.

"You'll see when we get there. Now just concentrate on swinging your hips a little more, like I showed you. You're doing well. We've forgotten one thing. What are we going to call you? I can't refer to you as Brian."

Brian had thought about this whilst he was showering and he said, "Gina. I've always thought it was a nice name. I don't know anyone of that name, so it seems like a good choice."

When they entered the club, he could see why he was dressed up as a girl. The place was packed with other cross-dressed men. Some were all too obviously men, and some needed more attention to their clothes and/or make up. He was glad that Lucille had been so good in doing his makeup and choosing his clothes. There were also quite a few girls who looked absolutely fabulous, almost like film stars. He was so amazed at how good they looked and also by the number of people that were there.

Lucille introduced him to lots of her friends and they danced and talked all night. Everybody he met was so friendly that he felt that he'd known them for years. Lots of people were surprised that this was the first time he had ever dressed and that he looked so good. "I've got an expert fashion and beauty advisor," he replied, smiling at Lucille who was standing beside him. Even though he looked good as a girl, he couldn't put it out of his mind that he was still a man. He was

just reveling in the pleasure of wearing a skirt and being able to be more relaxed in his clothes than he had ever felt before in men's clothing. He was even enjoying people looking at him and, hopefully, admiring how he was dressed. He couldn't understand what had happened to him in the space of a few short hours. It was like a revelation. But it felt really good.

They got back to the hotel totally tired out and, in his case, with sore feet, but having had a wonderful time. It certainly had been an experience to remember, just as Lucille had promised. "Goodnight, Gina," said Lucille, "I'll see you tomorrow morning for breakfast. Do you want to come shopping and sightseeing with me tomorrow, or do you want to join up with the tour guide for the official city tour with the rest of our party?"

"I can't think of anything I particularly want to see on the tour, so I'd be happy to wander around with you. You seem to know where to go and what to see in this city."

"Right then. Do you want to be in drab or en femme?"

"Drab?"

"Dressed as a boy. But if you come en femme, then we can go to some nice dress shops and get you something special for us to go out again tomorrow evening."

"You mean you'll take me out again?"

"Well you did seem to be having an enjoyable time this evening. And this time, we'll go to an even more exciting club, where you'll meet some really interesting people."

Well, why not? It was already a crazy weekend and he was enjoying it but it had just started to get even crazier. "OK, that's a deal. I'll see you at breakfast."

"Uh, uh, I'll come to your room before breakfast to help you get dressed and do your makeup for you. I don't think you can do that yourself yet."

After breakfast, they made their apologies to the tour guide and told him that they would not be on his tour that day, as they wanted to be independent. He seemed a bit upset that he was missing two lovely girls and just had the usual sort of group of middle-aged and older tourists. Then they stepped out into the city for a whirlwind day of looking at a few tourist spots, sampling the delicious cakes and coffee in one of the famous local teashops, and, of course, some doing some serious shopping. Lucille was very experienced and they looked around many shops until she found just the right things she was looking for that would suit Gina perfectly. Brian's credit card took a hammering but by mid-afternoon, he had some beautiful, sexy underwear, some fabulous shoes and two gorgeous dresses for that evening and the next.

He also bought some inexpensive jewelry so that he could look more girlish, including some dangly clip-on earrings. He hadn't been able to borrow any of Lucille's the previous evening as she had pierced ears, but now he had his own and he loved the way in they gently moved along with him and occasionally bumped into his neck or cheek. The most important item was a gorgeous medium-length wig of light auburn hair, which suited his face perfectly and made him feel even more feminine. Until that shopping trip, he had never understood why some women liked shopping so much and paid so much attention to choosing the right clothes

and the right accessories, but by the end he was totally hooked and loving every minute of it.

After a final coffee with delicious chocolate cake, they returned to their hotel laden with bags, just wanting to climb into a hot bath for a long soak.

Finally it was time to get ready for their evening out. He had already put on his new bra and knickers and was delighting in the beautiful lace around the bra cups and around the edges of the knickers when Lucille knocked on his door to come in and help him with his makeup and wig before he got dressed. He thought Lucille had completed his makeup and was admiring himself in the mirror when she produced a packet of false nails that she had bought that afternoon. It was a bit fiddly and he was glad that Lucille was doing it for him but the effect when they were finally in position was tremendous. They made his hands look a little smaller and he couldn't get over the feeling that his fingers were just a bit longer and looked a bit more delicate. Then he put on his new dress and shoes and looked at himself in the mirror. He felt fabulous; more importantly, he knew that he *looked* fabulous. Although he had looked passable on the previous night, he had felt a bit awkward, but after a full day outside dressed as a girl, he was beginning to think girly and paying attention to the details like posture and movement that would help to give him a more feminine look.

"You look lovely, Gina," whispered Lucille, "and with a bit more practice and confidence, you'll be able to pass as a regular girl anywhere."

"Where are we going to tonight?" he asked, but she would only say he would have to wait and see, it would be different but fun.

And it was. The club was similar to the one on the previous night, but the crowd was a wide mix of the gay community, not just crossdressers. As before, Lucille introduced him to several people she knew and they danced to the hot disco music that filled the whole room with noise. It was a wonderful atmosphere, vibrant and lively, full of people just wanting to enjoy themselves. They found themselves dancing with two real girls that had introduced themselves and asked them to dance. They chatted over a drink and the girls said that they lived together and sometimes liked to meet crossdressers. So much for his perfect makeup and appearance, although they admitted that it had taken them a few minutes to check out their suspicions that he was a crossdresser and therefore it was likely that Lucille was one also. Towards the end of the evening, they invited Lucille and Gina back to their flat for a drink. Before he could say anything, Lucille accepted their offer.

“What did you do that for?” he whispered to Lucille. “What sort of trouble are we likely to get into?”

“Relax,” she replied, “and enjoy. You might learn something.”

The girls’ flat was very comfortable and stylish. They quickly got everybody a drink and they all sat down on two large sofas. One thing led to another and soon he was kissing Greta as their hands wandered over each other’s bodies. He looked up to see Lucille disappearing into a bedroom with Helga. He thought that was a good idea, so Greta and he ended up in another bedroom together. He kicked off his shoes and she gently eased off his tights and his dress so that he stood there in his underwear. He did the same for her and they held each other tightly as they kissed passion-

ately. They continued with their foreplay for a long time, and she showed him where and how she liked to be touched and massaged during that process.

He was desperate to enter her and would have curtailed all the foreplay a bit but she held him back until she was completely ready for him. Finally she fell back and opened her legs wide so that he could penetrate her beautifully moist pussy. Several minutes later, they came together in a magnificent climax that was better than anything he had ever experienced. Pretending to be a woman and having sex with another woman was one of the weirdest experiences he had ever had, but it was also one of the most memorable experiences as well. It was certainly a night to remember.

When Lucille came to his hotel room the next morning, she was pleasantly surprised to see that he was fully dressed and had done his makeup as well. "I can see that you're keen to start the day early," she said, giving his hair just a couple of touches to give a bit more volume. "Let's go and have breakfast, then we can join up with the rest of the group." They'd decided to join the rest of the party for the day's tour as the shops were closed and Lucille thought it would be fun to mix with ordinary tourists and see if they could have some fun. Also the tour included a good lunch in one of the city's beer cellars, so that was another good reason to join in.

They were both wearing leggings, short dresses and medium-heeled ankle boots so they were bound to attract some attention from the male section of the group. The guide looked very pleased to see them and started to chat them both up as soon as they arrived. The tour was interesting but Brian got a real kick out of being looked after by some of the men. The older ones in-

sisted on opening gates or doors and wanted to chat to them as they walked along. He thought some of the younger ones would have liked to have talked to them more, but were inhibited by their wives. Lunch was a noisy affair as they all sat at a long table together and there was plenty of food and beer. Although normally as Brian he would have chosen one of the enormous steins of beer, he kept himself firmly in the role of a girl and he stuck to a small glass of wine. He figured there has to be a downside to every situation and missing a glass of beer couldn't compete with the great fun of being a girl. They finished their tour in mid-afternoon just in time for tea and more cake with three or four of the other couples in the café in the square on the way back to their hotel. This weekend was doing his waistline no good at all. This time he was quite happy to be a girl and ask for a small piece only, as he couldn't have managed the normal-sized portions.

“Are you ready for a gay club this evening?” Lucille asked him as they walked back to the hotel.

“I'm not really sure about that,” he replied. “Is it safe? Are they friendly to crossdressers?”

“You'll be fine. In fact, you'll be a centre of attention and you'll have lots of fun. I can almost guarantee it.”

“OK, I'll give it a go. This weekend has been such a collection of new experiences that I might as well try everything I can. As long as you're there to look after me. I guess I can always leave if I don't like it.”

So later that evening, two glammed-up girls entered the club that Lucille wanted to take him to. He was sure that his knees were knocking so loudly that they could be heard across the other side of the room above the dance music. He needn't have worried because they quickly joined a group of several of Lucille's

friends and he could see that there were several other crossdressers in the room. They didn't look out of place at all and he loved being a girl and being flirted with and flirting back. Several of the boys danced with them and he loved all the attention and being able to dance without any inhibitions.

When the club closed, two of the boys that they had danced with a lot walked them back to their hotel. Lucille asked them in for a nightcap drink. While the boys were at the bar, Lucille whispered to him, "Do you want this to go any further, or shall I send them home after we've finished our drinks?"

He didn't know what to reply to Lucille's question. He had enjoyed being treated like a woman all evening. Even though the guys knew they were male, they treated them absolutely like women. He had lapped up all the attention and flirting and casual but deliberate little touches on his body, although the first time someone stroked his bottom, he was a bit shocked. He didn't want to stop this experience and was throbbing with excitement at the prospect of continuing his role-play to the ultimate. "Oh, don't send them away. I really want to experience what it would be like to be a woman. I think Kurt is just the man to show me, don't you?"

And thus it was that half an hour later, Kurt and he ended up in his room. They had kissed in the lift going up to his floor. As they embraced each other, his hands had explored Brian's body and his bottom, making Brian's body tingle all over with a mixture of excitement and fear. When they were in his room, Kurt slowly undressed him and kissed him all over. By now, Brian could barely contain himself as Kurt stripped off his shirt and jeans. Kurt either sensed, or perhaps Lu-

cille had told him, that he was a virgin as far as sex with a man was concerned. He was very gentle but forceful, mindful of Brian's needs and worries, whilst encouraging him to continue his illusion of being a woman all the time. Because he was nominally a woman, he didn't play with his manhood at all, but allowed Brian to take his cock in his mouth and give him oral sex, which he had never done before. Another new experience for the weekend, he thought.

"Would you like that for yourself or would you like something different?" Kurt murmured when they had lain back on the pillows again.

"Can I keep on pretending to be a woman and have sex like that if you can?" Brian replied, not really knowing if that would be possible. Of course it was and when Kurt had recovered his strength, which didn't take long, he pushed Brian gently onto his back, separated his legs and lifted his knees so that he could enter him with his rather large cock. When Brian first saw it, he couldn't believe that it would all be able to go inside him, but little-by-little Kurt moved further inside him until Brian could feel his muscles relax and stop resisting. Eventually he could feel Kurt's pubic bone tight against his skin and then he was able to move freely inside him. It was a completely different sexual experience and he wondered what was going to happen when he felt a surging orgasm inside and then a second orgasm and he realized that Kurt had climaxed inside him. He was completely emotionally drained and was tingling all over, but absolutely on top of the world.

When they had rested and recovered their breath, he said, "thank you, Kurt. That was amazing and I'm so glad to have done that with you."

“Believe me, it was a pleasure for me too. I’m so glad to have been your first man. Even if you have many more, you will always remember me as the first. But now I must go and you must have some well-earned beauty sleep. If you ever come back to our city, give me a call and we can meet up again.”

The next morning, Brian was a bit tired as he hadn’t slept too well, thinking about the fabulous weekend that he had had and all the new and exciting things he had done. He was a bit concerned about going through Immigration dressed as Gina, so he was wearing his normal clothes when he met Lucille for a late brunch. It was the last morning of their stay and they had a walk around the old cathedral and some shops until it was finally time to bid their farewells to this lovely and exciting city before they got the minibus back to the airport. They chatted all the way home about the things they had done. Both agreed that it had been a wonderful weekend and that they’d meet up again to do some proper shopping at home.

As they waited at the carousel for their bags, they both made very certain that they picked up the correct suitcase this time. Lucille’s clothes were nice but Brian didn’t want to lose his own, newly-acquired clothes.

On the Saturday afternoon after Brian had gotten back from the weekend trip, his girlfriend came round to collect some of the clothes she had left in the flat. Before he could think of an excuse to stop her, she went into the bedroom and opened the wardrobe door where Brian’s girly clothes were hanging up alongside hers. “Well, you haven’t wasted any time to get someone else to move in, have you? Whose are these?” she demanded angrily.

His immediate thought was, "What business is it of yours? You're the one who moved out." But he was pleased to see her and didn't want her think that he had found another girlfriend that he decided that truth was the best policy. "They're mine," he said. "It's a long story, so let's sit down and I'll tell you all about it." He told her all about the weekend, how much he had been missing her, about the mix-up with the suitcases, about meeting Lucille, how she had taken him to a few clubs, how he had gone shopping. Naturally there were several episodes that were heavily censored or omitted altogether, but the main aspects of the story were covered.

"I think I'm beginning to understand the feminine aspects of life and I've started to discover the feminine part of my personality," he said, hoping that he hadn't blown all credibility with his girlfriend. Was it better to have gotten fixed up with another girl to replace her, or to be a crossdresser? "Anyway, I'd like to continue to develop the new feminine part of myself, as I'm sure it would make me a better person to live with." That should impress her, he thought.

And she *was* impressed. She had been missing him as much as he had been missing her, and was quite miserable about it. "I'm so glad you took my complaints to heart and have done something about it, but I didn't think you'd go to these lengths to respond to them. I've missed you. That is, I've missed the old-style macho man, but I'm intrigued to find out about the new feminine side of you as well. The combination of the two sounds promising."

That was music to Brian's ears; he wanted her back but he didn't want to lose the newly-discovered fun of

being Gina as well. "Does that mean you'll move back in with me, then?" he asked hopefully.

"Uh uh, I didn't say that. I'll have to see. But I would like to meet this other side of you and see if you really do have a feminine persona. I've got an idea. I'll pop out to the shops and get some food for us to cook here this evening. You can put on your new clothes so that I can see what you look like. How about that?"

How can I disagree? thought Brian, as he hastily agreed to her plan. The chance to dress up and show himself off to her, coupled with some good food and drink sounded great. "Great, you'll have to give me a couple of hours. You'd never believe how long it takes a girl to get ready," he said laughingly.

He watched as she smiled knowingly and nodded her head in silent agreement. "Perhaps you have learnt something after all," she replied.

As soon as she had left, he was about to rush into the bedroom to strip and have a shower, but stopped as he thought about a way to impress her with his new, more sensitive, approach to life. Grabbing his wallet, he dashed down to the local supermarket to buy a bunch of flowers and some chocolates. "This has got to be the start of the way to impress her," he thought. Although it had cost him about twenty minutes preparation time, he reckoned it would be time well-spent to create a good impression.

He showered, shaved, changed into his girly underwear and put on his makeup in the same way that he had done the previous weekend. As he looked at himself in the mirror after putting on his wig, he was very pleased with the result. He really did look like an attractive girl. He gave himself a spray of perfume, painted his nails with a deep shade of pink nail var-

nish, then it was time to put on his dress and heels. A final look in the mirror was confirmation that he had done a good job. He had just enough time to unwrap the flowers and attempt to arrange them in a suitable jug before there was a ring on the doorbell.

She had obviously been back home as she had changed into the very sexy top she had worn on the last weekend before she left, with a short skirt and high heels. She looked fabulous and he wanted to put his arms around her and hug her and give her a kiss, but he suddenly realized that it would spoil his makeup, as well as hers. In any case, she was standing there open-mouthed. "Is that really you, Brian?" she gasped. "I wouldn't have believed it if I had seen you out somewhere. You look..." She broke off as she searched for words. "Amazing, fabulous. You look just like a real girl. I don't know what to say."

"You look pretty good yourself. That top is really cool. I think you look fantastic. But let's not stand on the doorstep. Come on in. I see you've got several shopping bags so we've got lots to talk about as we cook something."

But she wouldn't do anything until he had given her a full parade of his clothes by walking around the flat several times whilst she looked at him in an approving sort of way. "I wouldn't have believed it possible," she said several times.

Finally they agreed they were hungry and it was time to eat. Normally, Brian would stay in the lounge and watch TV whilst the meal was being prepared but he felt that would not be in character as a girl so he helped in the kitchen by making the salad, opening the wine and laying the table. He was conscious that his efforts had been noted and approved of. The flowers on

the table and the chocolates afterwards were also commented on favorably, and he was pleased that he had thought of both things. He realized that his behavior had subtly altered whilst he was dressed as Gina, and he was actually quite pleased with it.

They spent the evening quietly together on the sofa with another few glasses of wine, until it came towards the end of the evening. "I think it must be time to go to bed," she said. "I'll just go and get my things from the car."

When she returned, Brian said, "what things? Do you mean you're staying?"

"Of course I am. I wasn't sure I would when I came over, that's why I left them in the car. But after such a lovely evening being with you, you don't think I'm going home now, do you?"

"I hadn't asked you because I thought you might still be mad at me for being a male chauvinistic pig."

"That's all in the past. You've proved to me that you've found the lovely soft, feminine side of yourself, and I love you for it. Come on, Brian, take me to the bedroom."

"Brian?"

"Yes. Brian. I really like Gina, but just tonight I think I want Brian. Is that OK with you?"

"Anything's OK with me. I'm so glad you're back."

The next morning, Brian had dressed in his normal clothes and they were talking about the week ahead over breakfast. "I'll have to arrange to pick up all my things some time and move back in here. Then on Saturday I'm going clothes shopping. There are a lot of things to get."

“Do you want me to come with you?”

“Absolutely not. I’m taking my new best friend, Gina. She needs to get a whole set of new clothes for the next season. I’m going to have the time of my life helping her to choose them. Does that sound like a good idea?”

“You bet it does.”

And so they settled back into their flat together quite happily but it was more like three of them in the flat as she encouraged him to cross-dress, and they regularly went out as a couple of girls.

Brian often thought back to that weekend which had started out as a disaster but turned out to be the best, most life-changing, weekend of his life.

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