



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part One

by Valerie Hope

YOU LEARN ALL KINDS OF shit mopping floors in a college. Which professor is fucking which student, which member of the Board of Regents has a prescription drug problem, which undergrad to find to get the best pot. And with a master key that let me get in basically any room of any building on campus, I could supplement my shitty income pretty handily swiping the occasional iPod or laptop computer, that kind of stuff. Nobody ever caught me, so I kept my job – which sucked, to say the least, but at least it kept me close to where the action was. And these bookworms were so fucking lost in their own little worlds, it really wasn't a huge problem to fade into the background and rob 'em blind while their noses were stuck in books.

I didn't think of myself as a janitor, or a custodian, or any of that stupid shit. I was a thief, and a pretty damn good one. I'd 'supplemented' my own income since I was fifteen, and I had no trace of a criminal record, because I thought things through before I ripped someone off, and those few minutes of foresight were usually enough to keep me from getting caught. That, and I never got caught up on the big score. Most thieves got pinched because they got greedy. Me, I expected to have a long and illustrious career nabbing other people's shit, and jail time was not among my long-term goals. Mrs. Ryan's oldest boy Murray wasn't no fool. And in the meantime, I got to ogle lots of hard-bodied co-eds while I pushed my mop half-assed around the vaulted corridors of academia.

But I'd been noticing a strange vibe around the campus lately, particularly in the library. Lots of professors – the high-power, tenured type, the guys that published papers whose titles I couldn't even comprehend, much less the actual text – were coming and going at strange hours, meeting behind closed doors, whispering to one another and giving each other knowing looks and significant glances. I told myself that now wasn't the time to get sticky fingers, not with something obviously going on around campus, but I was behind on my rent and I could really use something to tide me over until the BCS Bowls, where the money I'd laid on bets would probably come through and keep me in Fat City for a little while. So my eye started roving of its own accord, looking for things that would fence easy and provide a mid-size payoff, even though I hadn't made much in the way of a plan.

“Hello, Murray,” a deep bass voice said from behind me. I jumped, snapped forcefully from my consideration of a couple flat-panel computer monitors, still in their boxes, in a storage room right off the main hallway of the biology building. I turned quickly to see Dr. Hazelwood, one of the chief muck-a-mucks here in the Biochemisry Department. Rumor had it that he was a mile smarter than anybody else in the department and he'd forgotten more about how the body works on the molecular level than most of his colleagues had ever known. I tried to stay away

from him, mostly because smart people intimidate me, but also because he was one of those department heads who believed that he should know every single person in his building and keep an eye on everything that went on. It's one of the reason I avoided ripping off this department.

"Oh, hey, Doctor Hazelwood. You startled me."

"Sorry," he said, settling a leather-bound folder under his arm. "I was wondering if you'd like a little overtime tonight."

"Overtime?"

"Yes," he replied. "We're having a meeting – some other department chairs and I, up on the fourth floor. Last time we did this, we made rather a mess. I was wondering if you'd like to come in around, say, eight o'clock this evening and tidy up? I've cleared it with your supervisor, if you want the hours."

I rubbed my chin. This could be my chance to transfer some high-end electronics into the trunk of my car, while all the eggheads were lost in thought with each other, and get time-and-a-half while I was at it. It was almost too good to be true.

"You bet," I said. "I could really use the cash."

He patted me on the shoulder. "How well I remember, Murray. Well, then. I'll see you tonight."

"Eight o'clock," I confirmed. "I'll be there."

"You'll be doing us all a tremendous favor," he said. "Thank you."

"No problem, doc."

He set off down the hall again in his determined, mow-you-down stride towards the elevators, already lost in some incomprehensible thought that I wouldn't begin to understand. Shaking my head, I continued my mopping, thinking about what I could swipe tonight. I didn't work the third floor much, but I seemed to remember a lot of equipment up there. I could probably get my hands on a laptop or two, maybe a microscope or one of their high-resolution printers or something that could bring me a couple grand. I couldn't repress a smile. It was gonna be a good night after all.

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"He's the one?" Dr. Willis Redmond, the chair of the nanotechnology department, asked as Dr. Hazelwood rounded the corner by the elevators and pressed the 'up' button impatiently. "He doesn't look like much."

"He isn't. Petty thief, no family, nothing of consequence in his life. He doesn't even have a pet. He's the perfect candidate, and he will rid the university of a rash of thefts at the same time," Hazelwood grunted.

"Jerry, do you think we're doing the right thing?" Redmond asked quietly.

Hazelwood put a comforting hand on his shoulder and patted him soothingly. "We're doing *something*, Willis, and that's more than most. We don't really have a choice in this. Mr. Ryan is a drain on society – we can all agree on that, even not knowing him – and it's time he gave back. I know enough to know he would never do that willingly. Unfortunately, it falls to us

to have to force him, and maybe we can wring some good out of him, which is more than the prison system could ever do.”

“Well, we can't say there hasn't been due process,” Redmond commented, entering the empty elevator after its *pinging* arrival on the ground floor. “You've researched him thoroughly.”

“I followed him for six weeks,” Hazelwood said. “Believe me, he will not be missed in his current incarnation. A thoroughly deplorable man.”

“It still feels as though we're playing God,” Redmond said.

“Willis, we've discussed and debated this for months,” Hazelwood said with a patient tone. “We *all* share your concerns. But if Sarah's research is correct – and I see no reason whatsoever to doubt it – our time for reluctance and caution is at an end. We have to *act*.”

Redmond sighed heavily. “I know. I know. It just seems so... *final*.”

“It doesn't have to,” Hazelwood replied, stepping out as the doors opened on the fourth floor and turning back to address his colleague over one shoulder. “You could do as I do, and choose to look on this as a new beginning.”

* * *

The digitized sounds of gunfire and screams greeted me at ear-wrenching levels as soon as I opened the door to my crappy walk-up apartment. Heath Martinson, my roommate, was flopped on the couch in a pair of boxers and a Metallica t-shirt, his feet on the coffee table, surrounded by a miniature landfill of soda cans and junk-food packages playing *Call of Duty* on the Xbox with the sound cranked up to the level where the roaches were becoming sterile. Without preamble, I grabbed the remote and turned the volume down to the level where my ears wouldn't bleed.

“What's up, man?” Heath asked, his mouth full of Cheetos.

“Same old shit,” I grunted, throwing down my coat beside the door.

“We going out tonight? UFC's on at the Hula Hut.”

“Nope,” I said, reaching into the old dorm fridge – stolen, of course – that contained my beer and popping one open. “I got some overtime on campus. Thought I might liberate some stuff from the biology department.”

“Awesome!” Heath crowed, not taking his eyes from the game. His lone contribution to our living arrangement was a disability check he got from his old job. All he had to do was bribe a doctor friend who was very partial to the pot that Heath dealt to recertify his long-ago-healed back injury every six months. He rarely left the couch except to go drink and chase girls, and his expanding midsection made it much more of the drinking than the chasing. Not to hear him tell it, though – he was the lothario's lothario in his own eyes, with a string of hot women left by his wayside, well loved and subsequently left.

“You need some help, dude?” he asked me.

“Nah, it would look weird, me bringing a friend,” I told him, slugging Budweiser. “I can handle it. Besides, you don't want to stand there and watch me push a mop while I'm casing the place. You'd get bored and do something fucked up, get us caught.”

"It wouldn't be like that," he said sullenly.

"I work alone, Heath, I told you," I cautioned.

"Yeah, yeah, whatever. Kiss my ass," he said, shooting me the bird. All done while never missing a beat on the video game. "I'll think about your mop-pushing ass while I'm getting hammered at the 'Hut watching the fight and surrounded by all that young, prime pussy."

"And they say romance is dead," I grunted.

"Don't get mad at me, just 'cause you ain't had none in years," he shot back.

"Ain't had none 'cause I don't *want* none," I said evenly. "Women are just a fucking hassle. I can go pay for some tug at a titty bar if I need to scratch the itch. The last thing I need 'round here is a fucking woman."

"You're a freak," Heath riposted. "What the fuck kinda guy who ain't queer don't want pussy? You fucking think too much, dude."

"I just think with the right head," I replied. "Can we talk about something else?"

"Sure, fine. Don't get like that," Heath said. "Want to meet up someplace when you're done? All that talk about titty bars got me thinking."

"Nah, don't really feel like going out," I said. "Probably just call up Benny the Fence and dump off whatever I get tonight and then come home and get drunk. I don't really feel like company."

"Dude, it's Friday night, brother!" Heath whined. "What the fuck is the matter with you, anyway?"

"Shit, I dunno," I said, lighting a cigarette and putting my feet on the coffee table next to Heath's. "I see all those professors, right, all day every day, and sometimes it just gets me thinking. I mean, they're all walking around doing this important shit, figuring shit out, and then look at me. Ripping people off and scrubbing toilets. I mean, I know I have it good, but still... you ever feel like maybe you were meant for something else? Something bigger?"

"Like being Jessica Alba's personal pussy lick?"

"I don't know why I even bother talking to your dumb ass," I snorted.

"Dude, seriously," Heath said. "There's two different kinds of people in the world. There's the people who do shit like your professors and then there's us. The people who clean up after the people who do shit. You've always been the second kind, you're always gonna be the second kind, no matter if you get another job, go to college, get married, whatever the fuck. You're a cleaner-upper, dude, and you need to get used to that shit. You'll be a lot happier."

I belched. "Yeah, I guess you're right," I said, closing my eyes and rubbing the bridge of my nose. "Just worrying over nothing. I should just rob the fuck out of 'em and leave it at that."

"Fuckin' A," Heath seconded.

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I got back to the university about seven forty-five, just as the sun was going down behind the manicured trees on campus, walking briskly from the staff lot to the biology building, trying to

ignore all the students who were ending their days of class and heading for a meal and then partying. I swiped myself in with my ID badge and made my slow way up to the fourth floor.

The place was locked down and empty, it seemed like, but then I was a little early. I took the opportunity to do a little looking around, for a likely candidate to boost. Lots of computers, sure, but those were hard to move. I needed something a little smaller, a little more portable. Whistling and pushing my mop bucket, I made tentative swipes at the tiled hallway while poking my head into office after office, looking for what might be good.

Then I saw it – the Shangri-La. Open on Dr. Hazelwood's desk was a box containing a diamond-studded Movado watch, easily worth six grand from the ice alone, much less the mechanism. It was a woman's watch – a gift for a wife, maybe, on a landmark birthday or anniversary – and I suppose it was pretty, but all I could see was what Benny the Fence would give me for it. Even with his crazy markdown for stolen merchandise, I could easily clear four grand. My fingers twitched and I started to walk in, but I stopped myself.

A thing like that, it would be missed. And Hazelwood knew I was in the building tonight, I'd be one of the first places he'd look. Plus, it probably had some form of theft protection – an engraved serial number, even maybe some kind of electronic locator – to stop small-timers like me from nabbing it. It was probable that Benny wouldn't pay me a dime for it, he might not even touch it. Giving it a last, long lingering look, I closed Hazelwood's door quietly and walked away, looking for an easier, less visible score.

A deep voice from behind me made me jump and yelp, bringing up the handle of the mop like a quarterstaff, for all the flimsy protection it would afford me.

“Mr. Ryan, I presume,” the voice said, and a dark-haired man about six foot three stepped out of the shadows from around the corner. He had a lean, smooth and dangerous look about him.

“Yeah, what can I do for you?”

“You're smarter than Dr. Hazelwood gave you credit for,” he said with a wry, lopsided grin. “I tried to tell them, but they had their own ideas. You do understand that you were never intended to be able to resist stealing that wristwatch, don't you?”

“Steal that... what the hell are you talking about?”

“My name is Anthony Reynolds,” he said calmly. “Dr. Hazelwood left that watch there purposefully, you understand, to try and lure you into stealing it. He was under the impression that a small-time thief like yourself could never resist it. I argued, told him you'd been at the theft game for too long to steal something that visible in this environment, but he seems to think you're a bit more stereotypical of the average street thief than you actually are.”

“Mister, I don't know what the fuck you're talking about. You've got me confused with someone else,” I protested.

“Please, we've both been at this far too long to waste time with the typical 'it wasn't me' arguments, Mr. Ryan,” he said. “We both know what you are.”

“So he thought I'd steal the watch,” I said with narrowed eyes. “I didn't. You can't prove a goddamn thing, so unless you have something else to accuse me of, I suggest you get the hell away from me and go about your business.”

“Oh, I have plenty to accuse you of, Mr. Ryan, I just have no interest whatsoever in hearing whatever flimsy excuses you intend to offer,” he said. “You see, you were meant to handle that watch, so that the short-acting neurotoxin that Dr. Hazelwood covered it with would render you unconscious and paralyzed. Now, it seems, we have to do this the hard way. I'm sorry.”

“Sorry for what?” I asked hotly.

I never even saw the taser he brought out from behind his back, I only heard a pop and felt the sting of the barbs high in my right shoulder, and then I didn't know anything as the cold, damp tiles rushed up to meet me.

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I work up hazily, one of those instances where I wasn't really sure if I was coming to or just sinking deeper into a dream. I was in a darkened room, lit only by blinking LEDs in green and red on the walls – I assume they were walls – in no pattern that made any sense to me. I was on a comfortable bed, covered only by a thin cotton sheet, and I was naked. I tried to move and found myself restrained at the wrists, ankles and forehead.

“What the fuck?” I cried out to the darkness.

“Ah, Mr. Ryan. You're awake,” a disembodied voice spoke out of the darkness. Even without the strange detachment that intercoms and radios gave to the human voice, I could recognize that cold, mellifluous baritone.

“Dr. Hazelwood? What the hell have you done to me, you son of a bitch?”

“Done to you? Nothing, yet,” he said. “Better to ask what we *intend* to do with you, Mr. Ryan. You see, as best we can detect, you – as a human being – serve no purpose but to live like a parasite on the efforts of others. Everything you have, everything you are is stolen from someone else. Our goal is to give you a purpose, a grander and more noble purpose than someone like you could probably even imagine.”

“What are you talking about, you psychopath?”

“Now, Mr. Ryan, you shouldn't throw around words to which you don't know the meanings,” Hazelwood cautioned. “As I said, you're about to be given – wholeheartedly – to a purpose which could affect the lives of our children's children. You're going to be in the vanguard of a wave that will change the very shape and nature of this world, and the instrument of that change. You should be honored.”

“Untie me, you bastard, and I'll show you just how fucking honored I am.”

“This is unfortunate,” Hazelwood lamented. “I'd hoped you might listen to reason and somehow make our goal your own. I should have suspected your vision would be too narrow, and your point of view too self-centered to ever stretch to that. Oh, well. I tried. It doesn't change the end result. If you don't do what I ask, then you will do what I demand. It really makes no difference to us from a technological standpoint.”

The green and red LEDs on the walls blinked more rapidly and I could hear some machinery begin to whirr and buzz more insistently in the background. I felt something cold travel up my arm, under the skin, and then it dissipated.

“It shouldn't be long before those take effect,” Hazelwood said.

“Before what take effect?”

“I'm really not the one to ask, the nanites we just released into your blood are more Willis Redmond's department. He designed them, as a matter of fact. It's my understanding, though, that this particular batch will help put you in a more, shall we say, *compliant* state of mind?”

“You fucking bastard! Once I get loose of here, I swear I'm gonna hunt your pasty white ass down wherever you go and fucking...”

“Shut up, Mr. Ryan.”

My jaw clicked shut in mid-rant. My eyes bulged in terror.

“As I said, a bit more compliant,” Dr. Hazelwood said. “Relax, Mr. Ryan, I can't command you to do anything self-destructive, such as do away with yourself or intentionally harm yourself. I can just help keep things on a much more civilized level than detailed descriptions of what you intend to do to myself and my colleagues once met down a dark alley. But I can compel you to follow basic commands – such as 'shut up,' as you just experienced – and also to do basic physical tasks, such as 'stand up' or 'sit down' and also to answer questions truthfully. They're wonderful, actually, Dr. Redmond's nanites. They'll change the face of humanity one day. But not if we get there first, as we intend.”

A muffled whimper escaped between my tightly clenched teeth.

“Oh, you needn't be so scared, Mr. Ryan. There will be benefits for you, I promise. We wouldn't just take from you, the way you've done with so many others. In being such a key part of our grand design, we'll gift you with eternal youth, vigor and health, almost limitless energy and a newfound position in the world. All we require in exchange is that you do the occasional job for us. I consider it to be more than a fair exchange.”

I grunted and screamed against the gag that my teeth and lips had become.

“You may speak,” Hazelwood said.

“If it's so damn great, you fucker, then why the hell aren't you doing it?” I spat.

“I offered,” he replied calmly. “But it was necessary for us, as a group, to choose a subject who had no ties to the world. No children, no real paper trail to speak of, no one depending on him. I have a wife with multiple sclerosis, you see, and if I were to undertake this mission there would be no one to look after her.”

“Cry me a fucking river,” I hissed.

“I'm not looking for your pity, Mr. Ryan, far from it. In fact, it is I who pities you. I'm giving you a second chance, if you choose to look at it that way. If not, then, that's unfortunate, but you'll do what we require of you regardless. I should think it would be better to just, how do you say, 'go with it?'”

“Go with what, you evil fuck?”

“I suppose we've put this off long enough. I should warn you, Mr. Ryan. This next injection may hurt a bit.”

I lost count of the endless spiraling eternity of seconds that I screamed and thrashed uselessly against my restraints. Squirming needles of fire burrowed their way through my skin and into my eyes, my guts and my lungs. Searing cold and furnace heat warred inside my body for dominance, leaving me sweating and shivering at the same time, gasping for breath in a twisted heap. The LEDs on the wall blinked madly in silent counterpoint.

“Oh God,” I panted. “Oh, Jesus.”

“That was the worst of it, Mr. Ryan. The new glands we just installed in you needed to push some of your other organs around in order to make room for themselves. It won't be that bad again, I promise.”

“What did you *do* to me, you bastard?” I groaned.

“It's really quite innovative,” Hazelwood said breezily. “Dr. Redmond and his team designed a way to mimic protein production in the human body to design nanites instead of the usual method, which involves a factory and dozens of highly trained people. You now have a sac-like organ, located just beneath your diaphragm, which can custom-design nanites in sufficient numbers to re-structure and re-design other organisms. Theoretically. The lab trials have been very promising, though, and we've minimized the danger to you. Now we just have to finish customizing the delivery system.”

“Delivery system?” I asked, suddenly frightened. Something about the way he said that last just chilled me, along with the realization that he was right – I didn't have anybody in this world who was gonna come looking, nobody who was gonna raise much of a stink if I just disappeared. I was this man's plaything. I was *completely* at his mercy.

“You, of course,” he said. “We'll deliver the last injection momentarily, Mr. Ryan, and then you're going to go to sleep for a while. Dr. Stephen Wallace will come in a few hours and wake you, to take you through the next phase of the project. I trust you'll be as compliant towards him as you are to me?”

“Go fuck yourself.”

“Ever the charmer, Mr Ryan. Every second I spend with you just convinces me more that we're doing the right thing.”

The LEDs picked up blinking speed and I heard another hiss and whirr. “Good night, Mr. Ryan. I guarantee, when you wake, you won't even recognize yourself any more.”

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I tried to open my eyes and groaned. My voice sounded strange to me. I screwed my eyes shut tight and tried to roll my head away from the light which was trying to tear its way through my eyelids and burn my brain.

“Relax,” a soothing, soft voice told me, and I did.

“How do you feel?” it asked again.

“Terrible,” I said. My voice was husky, but high and squeaky to my ears. My mouth tasted foul, like I'd vomited. I smacked my lips loudly.

“That will pass,” the voice told me. “Don't worry. I'm Dr. Wallace.”

"What did you people do to me?" I half-yelled, making my head pound. It sounded like a cross between a whine and a screech to my ears.

"We need you. You're vital to our plans. But in order to work for us, we had to augment you somewhat. You'll get used to it, I promise."

"Augment me?"

"Make you better. More effective. More able to do what we're asking you to do."

"I don't know what the hell you're talking about."

"Open your eyes."

With an effort, I pried my gummy eyelids apart and gritted my teeth against the stiletto of pain that stabbed into me when the light hit my retinae. As the white haze began to fade and resolve itself into my field of vision, the first thing I noticed were two proud, spherical mounds on my chest pointing at the ceiling in defiance of gravity, viewed through a wispy haze of blonde hair across my eyes.

"What the fuck..?" I breathed, now recognizing my voice not as a squeak but as a perky, cheerleader-y soprano with a little "airhead" drawling lilt.

"I should think it was simple, wouldn't you? We've turned you into a woman. A very attractive and beautiful woman, I should add," Dr. Wallace explained.

"But... *how? Why?*"

"Nanotechnology is how. We injected you with millions and millions of little machines that rewrote your DNA and cell structure into what we needed. And why? Because we need you to be a woman, that's why."

"I don't want to be a woman," I complained. I sounded like a little whiny girl.

"I don't care," Dr. Wallace replied. "It's not about what you want. It's about what we *need* from you. In order to do what we expect you to do, we needed you to be a woman. So you're a woman. You would do well to keep that in mind, my dear. Whatever we want, we get. You can either get on board with that or you can get ground under the wheels."

"Fuck you," I hissed.

"Somehow that doesn't sound threatening any more when you say it," Wallace said. "Look, you have a choice. You can either try to make the best of this, let us train you to be the woman we need you to be, or we can make you. Choose wisely, young lady. Either choice has consequences."

"You may've changed my body, but my mind is mine," I said as resolutely as I could. It still sounded like a little girl begging Daddy for a new dress. "You can't make me do a goddamned thing I don't want to do."

"You think not?" Wallace said. "What's your name, sweetheart?"

"It's the same name I always had, you fuck. Merri Ryan."

"Are you sure about that?"

“Of course I'm sure, it's the name I've had my whole fucking life,” I yelled hoarsely. “Merri Charlotte Ryan.”

“Don't ever remember being Murray Charles Ryan? Ever answering to that name?”

“Why would I answer to... oh. Oh my God,” my voice faded to just over a whisper at the end as the full weight of what he'd just done to me sank in.

“Exactly,” Wallace said. “So we can *easily* make you, Merri. Easily.”

“Fuck it,” I said. “Whatever you want, you can go fuck yourself. I ain't cooperating with you crazy bastards no matter what. If you gotta make me – if you think you can – then you just go ahead and make me.”

“Fair enough,” Wallace said, and the world fuzzed as my head exploded in razor-sharp needles of pain. I screamed – it sounded impossibly feminine – and thrashed against my bindings, I could feel my breasts shaking back and forth pendulously on my ribcage. After a breathless, agonizing eternity, the pain subsided and I sagged down against the cold table beneath me, panting like a dog and tiny little-girl whimpers escaping my lips.

“Unpleasant, wasn't it?” Dr. Wallace chided. “Believe me, Merri, it's much better for you if you just do as we tell you. I don't like hurting you like that.”

“But you don't have a problem with taking my cock off and giving me tits,” I hissed. “You're a real fucking humanitarian.”

Wallace sighed loudly. “I suppose you're bound and determined to be a hard-ass about this. Very well. We're going to get you dressed and send you home, Merri, and start prepping you for your first mission. It's a dry run, so we can work out whatever bugs we need to, so you shouldn't get too stressed out about it.”

Without warning, the restraints on my wrists, ankles and across my belly slithered back into recessed slots on the table. Gracefully, I swung my legs over the side – my feet dangled about a foot off the floor – and dropped lightly to the cold tiles, my tits jiggling heavily on my chest and a curtain of white-blond hair floating near-weightlessly around my shoulders and across my face. I cleared it with an instinctually sexy toss of my head. I brushed it casually behind my ear with fingers now tipped with inch-long nails burnished in a glossy, white-tipped French manicure. I struck a sexy pose, most of my weight on one foot and one hand on a rounded, smooth hip.

“This isn't possible,” I said. “You can't do this. This would take, like, a fucking room full of computers or something. It's not *possible!*”

“Not a room full,” Wallace said. “Just several pounds of a remarkable new form of microprocessor that uses organic cells as the basis for circuitry instead of switches and wires.”

“Horseshit,” I spat.

“No, very true, actually,” Wallace said. “I couldn't begin to explain the engineering to you, but Dr. Lennox pioneered it and assures me it works as well, if not better, than your room full of supercomputers.”

“Then where the hell is this supercomputer stuff, then?” I asked belligerently, but it sounded just petulant and sassy in my new soprano voice.

“Look down,” Wallace told me. “They’re lovely, aren’t they? 38DD worth of pure computing power, and they’ll never sag. Remarkable, no? Now, quickly, my dear, go make yourself presentable. You have a mission to complete.”

“What fucking mission?” I challenged.

“An easy one,” Wallace assured me. “You’re going to be a very busy girl for the next few months, and you’re bound to need some help. We’re going to have you go recruit your new assistant.”

* * *

It actually got old – or I got numb, I couldn’t decide which – screaming frantically inside my head while my body moved and acted of its own accord independent of my conscious mind. I got a long time to study my new face – heart-shaped, with flawless skin and a wide, toothy smile full of blindingly white, Osmond teeth, plump, wet-looking lips in a permanent sexy pout, dominated by two very large, very guileless sapphire blue eyes framed my long, cheek-brushing eyelashes and delicate, arched brows. High cheekbones and a delicate, soft chin set off a slender, aquiline nose. My eyes were heavy-lidded and sleepy-looking, giving me a permanently sultry, smoky look. I’d gotten to stare at that beautiful – breathtakingly so, I had to admit grudgingly – face for nearly an hour as my long-nailed fingers expertly dipped brushes and sponges into paints and powders, applying a thick line of black liquid liner around my upper and lower lids, a heavy coat of mascara and then a thick, glossy layer of pink lipstick over the professionally-blended foundation and concealer I’d worn. Sparkling silver shadow brought out my eyes even more. I was slutty and trappy looking, but in a very sophisticated way, like a porn star made up by a Hollywood makeup artist. My bleach-blonde hair shone with light and health, shot through with golden highlights and lowlights, framing my face with gentle feathery bangs. I’d dressed down a little – a pink baseball cap tilted to one side, decorated with a rhinestone Playboy Bunny head, wraparound sunglasses, thick silver hoop earrings through the lowest of the four holes in each earlobe I’d never had before, a pink lace-trimmed satin bra and matching thong under a skintight pair of bluejeans tucked into white leather ‘pirate’ boots with a five-inch spike heel and a curve-hugging pink baby tee with a vintage ad for ‘Slinky’ straining across my huge breasts.

I slung a big pink patent leather purse over one shoulder and waited in the automated medical room, unsure what to do next. A silent man in a white lab coat and thick glasses came in about ten minutes later and handed me a thick, bulging manila envelope which I slit open with my talon-like nails. Inside was a thick sheaf of documents and a pile of cards which I sorted through quickly. A driver’s license – under the name of Merri Charlotte Ryan, born the 12th of April 1985 and 23 years of age, and a cute picture. Insurance cards for health and auto, a Visa and a MasterCard and cards for Nordstrom’s, Neiman Marcus and Macy’s as well. There was also a birth certificate, Social Security card, voter registration and a passport, all under my new name and identity. They even gave me a little pink Blackberry smartphone and a ring of keys with a big silver puffy heart as a fob. I stuffed them all in my purse – something fuzzed between my eyes, I felt a momentary dizziness and disorientation, and then realized I was holding a very expensive Louis Vuitton tote that had used to be *just* a purse. The boots I’d been wearing were now unmistakably Jimmy Choo’s and my regular, garden-variety blue jeans were

now recognizably Calvin Klein. I shook my head roughly, tossing my artfully arranged blonde hair in all directions, but I couldn't shake the feeling of no longer being *alone* inside my head.

A tall, dark-haired man with stylish designer eyeglasses – Armani, I was certain – wearing a dark suit stepped into the room just as I was applying a last-second coat of lipgloss before letting myself be seen. He smiled warmly.

“Hello, Merri. You look beautiful.”

I felt a strange flush of pride and flattery, feeling my cheeks color slightly under the dusting of Bare Minerals makeup I had on. “Thanks,” I said shyly and – God help me – teasingly.

“I'm Steven Kelly,” he said. “I'm your identity guy. I'm the one who gets all the documentation for you in order when you make a change. My number is in the phone we just gave you. I need you to call me just as soon as you finish with a mission, okay?”

I smiled. “Okay,” I said, still unsure what my missions would entail. *Make a change?* I wondered. *What does that mean?*

“I'm going to take you home and then help you find yourself an assistant. We've already programmed everything you need to do to recruit them into you already, when you find yourself a likely candidate all you'll need to do is do what comes naturally to you. Then, once it's finished, gather up all the person's old documents – driver's license, birth certificate if you can find it, Social Security card – and give them to me. I'll take care of all the rest.”

“That's really sweet,” I told him, not meaning it but flirting with him all the same.

“Not at all,” he said. “If you're ready, we should get you home.”

He offered me an arm, which I took gladly, walking out to his black Mercedes arm-in-arm and leaning heavily against him.

* * *

The drive from the college to my apartment was short and familiar, but I still looked around at the streets and shops as they went by my window as if I'd never seen them before. Until today, I'd only looked for things like coffee shops and ATMs and where to buy lottery tickets. Now, I *oohed* and *aahed* at every little boutique or tanning salon or gym, my nose pressed against the tinted glass of the Mercedes. We pulled up to my apartment in style – he walked around and opened the door for me like I was some kind of princess, making me giggle and blush – and I click-clacked up the steps in my high heels, my butt swaying in a luscious figure-eight behind me and my tits bouncing deliciously on my chest. It was odd, how proud those spheres made me feel. Like I was better than the other people I saw. I felt myself slowly falling in love with them – and I wasn't sure if that was the programming, or if that was actually me. I'd always had a thing for big breasts, before the college professors had done what they'd done to me. Now that I had a pair of my own spectacular ones, I felt an affinity towards them I'd never even known before.

Dimly, in the back of my head, I was wondering what everyone had been talking about finding a suitable assistant. They all seemed to hint that I'd know a good one when I saw one. I was still mulling that over as I turned my key in the rusty lock of my door and opened it to reveal my roommate Heath, in a pair of boxers and a dirty t-shirt, sprawled across my couch and playing video games. He looked up at me in utter shock, his eyes glued to my perfect tits.

Before I could even open my mouth to tell him not to worry, that it was his old friend Murray underneath the makeup and the designer clothes and the overwhelming tits-and-ass presentation, my vision fuzzed and I got that weird, disoriented feeling again. Then my vision seemed to sharpen beyond what it had ever been, taking in every single detail of Heath with a clarity and focus I'd never experienced. I felt as though I knew every square inch of him, and I felt an overwhelming sense of *rightness* about him. Without conscious thought, I suddenly knew I'd found everything I'd ever wanted in an assistant.

A light sheen of sweat covered me in a fraction of a second, releasing a musky, feminine scent that overpowered the faint aroma of Dior 'J'adore' I was wearing. Heath leaned forward and stared at me harder still.

"Can I help you?" he asked, his voice breaking.

I smiled, and I could feel something strange in my mouth, stranger even than the silver stud I'd put into my tongue-piercing before coming over: like little hair-fine needles coating my tongue, standing up at rigid attention, making it feel a little furry but still sensuous. I was almost drooling and my mind was filled with sudden, quasi-disturbing pictures of Heath naked and doing *very* pornographic things to my unclothed, sweating body while I screamed and squealed my pleasure. My nipples stiffened and I could feel the crotch of my silky panties getting very damp and a very empty feeling beginning below my navel.

I licked my lips with my strange-feeling tongue. "No, baby," I purred, "but I can help you. *A lot.*"

"Help me how?" he asked.

"First, let's get out of these clothes," I said huskily. "Then, I want to talk to you about a job."

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Two

by Valerie Hope

I'LL ADMIT. I'D DONE A lot of crazy, ill-advised shit with my roommate in the past. But I'd never imagined I'd be doing what I was doing now – straddling him, grinding my sopping wet crotch against his stiffened cock, my long-nailed fingers threaded in his longish, slightly oily hair and my mouth wide open on his, our tongues tangling together like fighting snakes. The little furry things on my tongue – I had no idea what they were, but right now I really didn't care – scraped against Heath's tongue and the insides of his cheeks, and after a few moments I felt this overwhelming sense of *knowing* him, knowing every little nook and cranny of him inside and out. I suddenly realized that he had a history of heart disease and diabetes in his family, that he tended towards nearsightedness and was due for male pattern baldness to kick in a few months from now. I loved the feeling of utter certainty, of being so close to this other human being. It made me even more wild as I ground against him, frantically massaging his neck and shoulders, trying to pull him closer still to me, jamming my tongue into his mouth and taking both our breaths away so that we panted like animals.

As the feeling of knowing him grew, so did the feeling of warmth which grew into wildfire heat in the synthetic tissue of my bouncing breasts. It didn't hurt, even though it felt as though it should, somehow. The once-soft tissue seemed to harden, a little, and felt like it was pulsing a little. It felt weird, and a bit unnatural, but did serve to fuel my already uncontrollable desire.

“Jesus,” Heath rasped, fumbling with the buttons of my skin-tight designer jeans. “You're fucking *wild*, girl... I don't even know your name.”

“It's Merri,” I breathed. “My name is Merri.”

“Merri, I'm Heath,” he said.

“I know.”

“I don't know why the fuck you're here,” he said. “But I really don't care.”

“I didn't think you would,” I said, lifting myself up to push his boxers down his thighs and expose the bobbing, purple-veined length of his cock to lie warm and hard against my crotch. I took it in my hand – I'd never held another man's cock before, it was warmer than I'd expected, and smoother – and began to stroke it gently up and down.

Heath finally undid the button-fly of my jeans and pushed my pants down to expose my pussy, which dripped with lubrication and flooded the air around us with the thick, damp smell of aroused woman. Kissing him deeply again, I lowered myself down on him, feeling the delicate and oh-so-sensitive tissues of my insides part and stretch around him, every delicious bit of

friction sending waves of pure pleasure up and down the entire length of my body. I pushed up my shirt and pulled down the cups of my bra, feeding him my nipples one at a time as I rocked back and forth on him.

In all my experience, I had *never* felt anything close to what I was feeling at that one shimmering, golden moment. My entire body was alive – I believed I could feel every nerve ending in my body vibrating and shivering with excitement and waves of pleasure – and I literally couldn't push him deep enough inside me to suit. It was as if I wished I could swallow him up with my hungry pussy, to push him completely inside me and carry him like a baby. I groaned and panted, squealing pure delight and pleasure with every thrust and every contact of my hardened, exposed nub of a clitoris against the soft hair above his cock.

“I've never met a girl like you,” Heath said.

I bit my pouty bottom lip as I rode him, passionate almost to the point of tears. A feeling like being filled up, like a cup, and then brimming over filled me and drove me to new wild heights of abandon, bucking on top of him like a madwoman as I screamed my first blindingly intense female orgasm. The huge tidal wave of pure sensation poured through me until I thought I might burst, unable to breathe or see or think or do anything except impale myself on his thrusting cock and scream like a banshee, tightening my fingers in his hair until he cried out from pain. And just as it began to subside, I had another, and then another. My juices coated his balls and between his legs and soaked into the stained upholstery of the ancient couch I'd found on a sidewalk nearly ten years ago and stuffed into the bed of a borrowed pickup before it rained.

He began to buck and grunt himself, picking up speed and urgency and tightening his grip on my narrow waist, slamming me bodily down on him with wet slapping sounds.

“In my mouth, baby,” I begged him. “Do it in my mouth.” I'm not sure why it seemed so vitally important to me to taste his cum, but I knew I could have it no other way. I slid myself off of him – disappointed at the feeling of being empty inside again, and the distance now between me and more of the earthquaking orgasms I was having – and pushed my head down on his cock hungrily, relishing his own thick, musky taste and my own sharp juices mingling together. He jerked spasmodically a few times and then thrust himself deeply down my throat, his hands forcing the back of my head roughly down in a way that made me feel completely at his mercy as I tried not to gag on his length. I never in a million years would have guessed how much I would adore feeling like that. Hot, salty jets filled my mouth and I began to swallow convulsively.

At the same time, I felt my tongue swell in my mouth and the little furry, needlelike hairs along its length go stiff and sharp. I ran my tongue roughly against the underside of his spurting cock and felt the little hairs sink into his flesh, and I felt a sort of release, an easing of the swelling and pressure in my tongue leaking out.

Dimly, my mind registered what had happened: *I just injected him with something!* As the wild, out-of-control desire I'd been feeling subsided, my ability to think and try to figure out what was going on with me increased. Breathlessly, I released him from the warm, wet embrace of my mouth, giggling a little as a thick strand of cum dribbled out of my mouth onto his deflating cock like a garland. Teasingly, I licked at it. The feeling of the little needles on my tongue was completely gone.

“Oh, God,” Heath moaned, breathless, sagging against the couch completely spent. He was covered in sweat and my own special-recipe girl goo, with a Cheshire-cat grin on his face. “That was *incredible*.”

I wiped off more cum from my pouty bottom lip with a finger and licked it clean. “Yeah, it was. I’m really glad you liked it. How do you feel, baby?”

He seemed to think for a minute. “Actually, I feel a little funny. Not bad, really, just... *funny*.”

He gave me one last panting, grateful smile before his eyes rolled back in his head and he slumped backwards, his head lolling.

I stared at him for a long moment, feeling the strange heat and twitching in my tits that I’d felt before. I caressed them but it didn’t feel sexual, just soothing, so I sat there rubbing my sweaty, swollen breasts as I watched Heath’s chest heave up and down. As I did, I saw images in my head of what I thought I might want in an assistant. Cute, definitely, and cheerful. Peppy and optimistic, energetic and very organized. I pictured a hot little cheerleader-type with blonde curls and big blue eyes with a tight little body and perky tits, always giggling and laughing but not having any other gear than ‘high’ when it came to work. A wide, blindingly-white ear-to-ear grin of genuine happiness. Long legs and a tight bubble butt, not an ounce of fat on her. I was still musing over that picture, enjoying it, when the feeling in my tits stopped and I just felt swollen and a little sore.

I gazed at Heath’s sleeping lips and couldn’t stop myself from moving closer. I gave them the tiniest of kisses. He looked... *softer*, somehow. Like all the hard lines in his body – and there weren’t *that* many to start with – were now rounded. Even his dick looked smaller, his balls shriveled. And was it my imagination, or did his chest hair look thinner? Puzzled, curious, I didn’t even realize I’d slipped one of my nipples into his sleeping mouth until I felt his lips close around it and he began to suck, gently.

The terrible feeling of being swollen began to ease, and I could feel something being drawn out of my nipple. It was a glorious feeling – I could almost sense myself glowing and whatever I was making inside my body was flowing physically into Heath’s mouth. I watched his throat swallowing automatically and rhythmically as he nourished himself on me. I stroked his damp hair as he suckled me, feeling impossibly *right* and *loved* as I did so. The swollen, full feeling left me after a while – a peaceful eternity – and I popped my nipple from his mouth, watching fascinatedly as the stretched, reddened nipple healed itself in moments before my eyes, returning to the pristine, un-stretched state it had been before I let Heath suck.

I stood, easing Heath’s head back onto the stained upholstery, and shimmied back into my skin-tight jeans, pulled up the cups of my bra and my shirt down, then slid my discarded boots onto my delicate feet, then curled up next to the sleeping Heath, my cheek against his warm forehead, my legs drawn up Indian-style and my hand stroking his hair again.

So slowly as to be almost imperceptible, Heath began to transform as I watched from my peaceful, satisfied state. His brow began to recede, becoming softer and smoother as his cheekbones raised and his chin became narrower and more delicate. The mild rosacea on his cheeks and forehead subsided into a tanned, healthy amber which fairly glowed with health. His eyelashes thickened and almost doubled in length, looking almost like face eyelashes now, and his lips became puffy and pouty, soft-looking and plump like my own. His neck seemed to lengthen as his formerly broad chest narrowed and shrank. His pot belly

melted away to reveal a flat, very well-muscled narrow waist which flared into slim but womanly hips. His legs, once shot through with varicose veins and patchy hair, became long, graceful stems ending in delicate, adorable feet.

His hair, once damp and limp, lightened perceptibly in color to a rich, honey blonde that flowed across his sleeping face and over his narrow shoulders, shiny and healthy for a moment before kinking into a thick mane of soft, natural curls that framed his now delicate, oval face. Firm, high breasts capped with pink nipples and silver-dollar sized areolae rose from his chest, proud and spherical although not as big as my own, with the gravity-defying 'done' look of being *too* perfect. At the base of his flat belly, his pubic hair lightened and softened as his penis shrunk, tucking itself backwards and downwards in between the soft, pouty flesh of his scrotum which was dividing itself into two thick labia. With a soft, almost girlish slurping sound, I heard his vagina open.

He sighed against me in a sweet, breathy soprano even higher than my own, burying his face in the thick lush curtain of curls it nestled in. I smiled at my creation – my *baby* – in my arms, watching to the very last second as the crude skull-and-crossbones tattoo he'd gotten drunkenly several years ago faded away, leaving only healthy, tanned skin where it had been.

I looked adoringly at the beautiful, sweet-faced girl I'd made and felt a connection and a love unlike anything I'd ever come close to experiencing. I kissed her soft lips, just a feather touch, and the eyes fluttered open, a brilliant sapphire blue that took my breath away.

“Wha... Merri? Is that you?”

“Yeah, baby, it's me,” I whispered.

“What happened?”

“You got reborn, sweetheart,” I told her softly. “You're mine, now.”

“Yours?”

“All mine,” I said. “You're gonna be my new assistant, they told me. Work with me on my missions, help me and keep me organized. Does that sound like fun?”

“I don't know,” Heath said. “I feel strange.”

“That's because you're a girl, now. A *beautiful* girl who I love very much.”

“A *girl*?” The sapphire eyes opened wide.

I pushed her gently back down as she tried to sit up. “Yes, baby, I made you into a girl. I needed you to be a girl. You have to trust me, okay?”

“Why? Why did I need to be a girl?” Heath asked, a little frantic.

“I'm not really sure,” I said. “You just *did*.”

His – *her* – voice became very small, like a little girl's. “Am I going to be okay?”

I kissed her soft cheek. “Of course you are, honey. I promise. I'll take care of you, no matter what.”

“It's weird,” she mused stretching her arms and looking at her new, slender fingers and delicate wrists. “I have all these ideas, now. I don't know where they came from. I know I

should be upset – I should be freaking out – but I'm not. I'm just thinking that my nail place is on Sixth and Union, right next to my gym. But I don't have a nail place. Or a gym. But they're mine. I know exactly where they are, and I know my manicurist's name is Kimberly. How do I know that?"

"It just comes to you, sweetheart. It was the same with me."

"You weren't always a girl?"

"Nope," I said. "I was your roommate. Before. We've known each other our whole lives. Now, just relax, sweetie, I have to make a phone call. I'm gonna call a really cute guy named Steve and he's going to come over and get us started."

She stretched, arching her back and making my mouth water at the sight of her nubile, athletic body. "I should probably take a shower or something," she said, yawning in a way that made her voice go up an octave as she spoke. "I guess you want to hit the ground running, so we probably have tons to do."

I smiled proudly. She was the perfect assistant – keeping everything on track. "We probably do," I concurred. "Go get cleaned up. I'm sure Steve will be here shortly and we can get going."

She hopped up. "Sounds awesome," she bubbled happily, trotting towards the bathroom with a resilient, peppy stride.

* * *

"Oooh! It's just like my old name, only way cuter!" my assistant cooed happily, bouncing up and down and clapping her hands as she showed me her new driver's license: Heath Cade Martinson, born male on March 28, 1975 was no more, proudly replaced by Heather Kay Martin, born female on March 28, 1988.

"It's a pretty name for a very pretty girl," I said proudly, hugging her. She bounced lightly against me and kissed my cheek.

"I love you so much, Mommy," she told me fondly, her eyes sparkling bright.

I melted a little when she called me that. It was both true and not true at the same time, but when she looked at me with such open gratitude and admiration like she was now, I couldn't begrudge her the sentiment. Besides, I *did* think of her like she was my little girl. I made her, after all, and I had to take care of her and teach her how to be a woman. And I couldn't be prouder than to have such an energetic, happy, beautiful little girl.

She'd taken a little time after her shower to fix herself up – she wore similar makeup to mine, since she'd used the touch-up supply I kept in my purse because she didn't have any of her own right now. Just a light dusting of mineral power, pink gloss and three generous coats of mascara over black eyeliner and silver shadow that made her enormous eyes just *pop*. Steven had brought her some clothes – just a short yellow sundress and some white platform flip-flops, a pair of panties and a sports bra, something that could be fudged a little as far as sizes went – until we could get something better.

"Since you're going to be assisting Merri," Steven explained, "I have a little more for you than the typical new recruit package. There's a MacBook Pro here, and a Blackberry, a dayplanner,

and a lot of resource material that you and Merri are going to need. I took the liberty of renting an office for the two of you, as well, downtown. Here are the keys.”

He passed over a laptop case, a thick manila envelope and a ring with two keys dangling from it.

“What's the other key for?” Heather asked brightly.

“There's a silver Audi parked outside on the street,” he said with an impish smile. “You're going to need a way to get around, and you can't be depending on cabs or public transportation.”

“OhmyGawd!” Heather squealed, jumping up and down. “You got me a *car*?”

“Inside the glove compartment is an envelope with around twenty thousand dollars in cash. That should be enough to get you set up with some clothes, decent furniture, cable, that sort of thing. When you receive a mission, I'll credit this numbered account with money to cover your expenses until it's complete.” He handed me a folded slip of paper.

“When do we get our first mission?” I asked.

“We already have one for you,” he said, “but we figured you'd both need three or four days to get set up and figure out your system. Other than me, neither one of you is to contact the university, Dr. Wallace or Dr. Redmond. If you're asked, you don't even know those people, understand?”

We both nodded.

“Now, go get yourselves squared away,” he told us mock-sternly. “You two girls have an *awful* lot of work to do, and time's a-wastin'!”

I kissed his cheek and ushered him out the door, leaving Heather to sort through the massive stack of stuff he'd deposited on her. She was already showing an instinctual knack for organization, sorting it all into piles and priorities and making notes in her dayplanner with a pink pen whose cap she sucked on distractedly while she thought, one of those unconsciously sexy things that used to drive me wild before my change. I made a mental note to develop that habit.

“You all done?” I asked when she started tidying up her piles of stuff.

“Mm-hm,” she said. “I totally need a whiteboard.”

“That's not all you need,” I said. “You're *way* overdue for a manicure, baby. Let mama take you out shopping.”

She beat me to the car.

* * *

I sat back on the leather sofa in our small but very chic office. “Radical Redesign Partners, LLC” could be read backwards through the frosted glass of the door, and the rich aroma of expensive fresh-ground coffee brewing filled the little foyer. Heather looked incredible – a tailored charcoal-grey pinstriped Dior business suit with Manolo Blahnik wingtip pumps and black stockings, little rimless Gucci eyeglasses perched on her immaculately powdered nose, just beyond the reach of her luxuriously long eyelashes, her mop of unruly curls pulled back into a tight ponytail. The pen she sucked now was a gold Montblanc and her dayplanner was

now bound in maroon alligator with a twenty-four karat clasp. She always dressed up like this for work – I'd been used to seeing her in jeans and a tight sweater during the week we'd spent buying office furniture and new clothes. I toyed idly with the lid of the rosewood humidor which sat on the coffee table in our foyer, remembering the week I'd spent with her and smiling dreamily.

Heather brought me back into focus by tapping a long, French-manicured nail against the page of her book. "Mama, we have a *lot* to get through today," she said cautioningly, sounding a little whiny in her effort to not sound critical or frustrated. She didn't have a lot of patience with my daydreaming, I could tell. My little girl was all business when she had the Dior suit on.

"Sorry," I said, blinking rapidly to clear my head. "Go ahead, baby."

"Steven sent the first of the mission documents yesterday, Mama. There wasn't a lot to go on – the professors are just sending overviews, really. Our first job is to find some kind of musician. A singer."

"Any singer? Or, like, an opera singer, or a rock singer, what?"

"Steven didn't specify," she said. "I guess it's up to us. Other than the basics – no family, not a lot of friends, a loner type – Stephen prefers that we stay local and not make the first mission a road trip. He also said that we should find a *good* singer, a talented one, but noboy that has any kind of a successful career or a following, even an indie following."

"Good," I said. "The last thing I wanted to deal with was plowing my way through the hipster scene with a body like this. I'd get hit on by *all* the wrong guys."

"I have a few candidates, Mama – I started at the college."

"Baby, you have to be careful there. We can't let anybody know we have any connection to that college, you know that."

"I was being careful, Mama," she protested. "I found some decent prospects in the local coffeehouse scene."

She dropped a folder on the table in front of me. I opened it to reveal pictures of three different boys – all looking hip and disaffected, dressed in black and carrying acoustic guitars in cases over their shoulders. I looked them over carefully, running my manicured fingers across the faces, studying them on a level I wasn't entirely aware of. Choosing a swarthy-looking boy with limp black hair hanging down across his narrow hatchet of a face more by my gut than anything tangible, I handed the picture back to Heather.

"This one, sweetheart. I like *him*."

She smiled at me – she knew sometimes I did things I didn't entirely understand – and flipped the folder back open. "Daniel Ellis Kellerman, born November 22nd, 1986. A junior, studying music composition, with a 2.98 GPA. He's from Omaha, Nebraska originally, an indifferent student at best, raised in foster care since he was 9, taken away from a drug-addicted mother who hasn't seen him since. No father, no known siblings. No girlfriend or real social contacts – his roommate said he barely sees him, doesn't know a thing about him. He's frequently gone for days at a time, reputedly he sleeps in some of the practice rooms at the music building."

"Sounds like a really lonely guy," I commented.

"I listened to him perform at Bean There Done That, over on Liberty Street, a few nights ago. He's actually really good. His lyrics are kinda boring – he'll never make it big or nothing – but he has a nice voice and plays really well. He also has a nice butt."

"That's a plus," I giggled. "Where can I find Mr. Kellerman?"

"He's playing at Club Raza on Richmond Avenue tonight at nine," Heather said. "It's a five dollar cover."

"Did you scope out what kind of girl he's into?" I asked.

"You could probably guess," Heather told me. "Just this side of Goth – tattoos and piercings and dyed black hair, thrift store clothes and clove cigarettes that drink way too much coffee and take too much X."

I sighed heavily. "I don't think I can pull that off," I said. "I'm too *Playboy* to be a Goth girl. Think he'll go for a blonde with big tits?"

Heather giggled. "Mama, you could talk a gay guy out of his pants," she teased. "Just sit in the front row and turn those baby blues on him full blast, and he'll be in bed with you, no matter what you look like."

"Still, I need an excuse to be there," I said. "Maybe a college professor?"

"No, do something that'll really get his attention," she said, passing me a small stack of fake business cards. Merri Ryan, Talent Consultant for Lost Souls Records. I looked back at her and grinned widely.

* * *

Danny Kellerman walked out of the men's room at the dingy coffee shop with his eyes on the floor, never even noticing until he'd bumped into me and jumped back, startled. I ran my eyes appraisingly over his lanky, lean body and took a long drag from a skinny white cigarette before flashing him a very white, very open smile.

"Hi," I said huskily. "You're Danny Kellerman."

"Hi," he said, shaking my offered hand nervously. "Have we met?"

"No," I reassured him. "I'm Merri Ryan. I represent a small independent record label, and I usually do the club rounds looking for new talent. Looking for people like *you*, actually."

"You liked my stuff?" he asked, unsure.

"I did," I said, taking his arm and leading him towards the bar. This kid was all thumbs when it came to come-ons. I was going to need liquid assistance to seal this deal. "Why don't you let me buy you a drink and let's talk, shall we?"

* * *

This time felt a little different than it did with Heather. I had the same uncanny *sense* of him the whole time after I'd kissed him – that was still the same, I was happy to say, because that was pretty much my favorite part after all the orgasms I had – and that faint sheen of sweat I broke out in still seemed to drive him absolutely *crazy* for me, to the point where he was all but tearing off my designer clothes and kissing me as hard as he could, so hard it hurt my lips. I'd

fucked him like a wild woman again – on my hands and knees like an animal, bucking back against him in time with his thrusts so that our hips slapped against each other with a wet firecracker rhythm – and then jacked him off into my mouth for me to swallow hungrily. And again, that strange sense of my tongue being covered with fur, and the sense of injecting his cock with something, a sense of something being released out of me and into him. And he sagged backwards against the headboard of the cheap motel room I'd rented soon afterwards and I fed him my nipples, one at a time, releasing the pleasant blast-furnace heat I felt in my synthetic tits into his convulsively swallowing mouth.

But there the similarities ended from Heather. Danny seemed to be deflating in front of my eyes, the rounded definition of his muscles and the hard angles of his bones seeming to go soft and rubbery, like I was holding a poorly-built mannequin instead of a human. Slowly, the chest stopped rising and I began to worry that I'd killed him, but instead of the rhythmic rise and fall of healthy breathing, I saw a strange squirming beneath the waxy, lifeless skin, and muffled sounds coming from deep in the flaccid throat.

I was so content that I barely even moved – even if he had died, I don't think I would have minded very much – but the squirming got insistent. I pried open the mouth and saw a tiny little blue eye peering back at me. I stretched the mouth wider, tearing the skin a little, and soon had a tiny, pink and squirming newborn baby in my arms, her wide little eyes twinkling with recognition as she kicked against my naked skin, soaking up my warmth and softness. My heart positively brimmed over and bright tears sparkled on my mascara'ed lashes.

She was *perfect*.

I pulled her tighter against me and just stared into her eyes, making a wonderful connection like I'd never felt before – not even with Heather. I bounced my baby girl and cooed to her, and she responded with a little high-pitched baby giggle and a wide smile that revealed dimples.

As the haze in my happy, delirious brain finally subsided, I remembered that I was under orders to call Heather and Steve as soon as the transformation occurred. I fished in the purse that was under the wadded pile of my discarded clothes and dug out my cellphone, dialing it with the corner of a very long, manicured fingernail.

“Steve,” I said in a soft voice, so as not to disturb my precious baby. “She's done. She's absolutely *beautiful*. Perfect.”

“That's what we're going for. Keep her warm. We'll be there in a few minutes.”

I pulled her tighter against me, making cooing happy noises and rocking her back and forth, and was doing the same when Steve, Heather and a crew of people arrived about forty-five minutes later.

* * *

It was a wild time. I held the baby, still naked, with the juices of my arousal drying on my thighs and my hair and makeup wrecked, as the crew emptied out the house in record time and set up various blue- and green-screen photo setups while Steve set up a very sophisticated and expensive computer system in the corner. They took a few baby pictures, some portrait-type and others more candid with me included, which required me to change clothes several times. Then Steve would hand her back to me gently and tell me to nurse her. She would attach her little infant lips to my swollen nipple and I'd feel the blissful easing of the sun-like

heat that had built in my breasts into her body. And she would grow, right in front of my eyes, from an infant to a toddler. Then, back to the photographs – where Steve and his technicians were manufacturing a childhood for my baby – and videos, then nursing her from a toddler to a preschooler, and so on and so on until a very beautiful, wide-eyed eighteen-year old woman stood before me, her hair arranged beautifully and makeup perfect, in a cheerleading uniform with little red-and-black pawprints painted on her cheek and her straight, shiny honey-blonde hair tied up with a red-and-black ribbon.

We'd taken hours of video of her in beauty pageants and talent competitions that showcased the breathtakingly pure and silvery soprano voice she had developed. Steve was running off reams of certificates and awards for vocal competitions from his computer station.

I hugged my erstwhile daughter tight to me. "I can't get over how beautiful you are, baby," I whispered into her fragrant hair.

She was a little breathless from having just filmed an extended video of a cheerleading competition, but I could feel her bright smile without actually seeing it. I loved her more than I ever thought I could love anything.

"Thank you, mommy," she whispered back, and even her winded whisper was melodic and haunting.

I brushed hair away from her eyes with the tips of my manicured nails. Her eyelashes were longer than mine, and thickly mascara'ed along with heavy makeup which would show up on the sidelines while she cheered. She had a long, heart-shaped face with perfect cheekbones and wide, overlarge blue eyes that twinkled with mischief and humor. She had a generous mouth with very white teeth and thin but soft and expressive lips and a little cleft in her chin. A long swan's neck and the taut, nubile body of a teenage athlete. Her nails were short-ish (especially compared to the talons I wore) and square-cut, French-manicured and perfectly maintained. She glowed with a healthy, even tan.

"What am I gonna call you, baby?" I asked. "I can't call you Daniel any more."

Heather, who had been directing the whole endeavor like an orchestra from her position at the door, handed me a thick envelope and smiled. "It's all there, Momma," she said brightly. "Birth certificate, drivers' license, social security."

I opened the envelope and pulled out her birth certificate. Danyelle Elizabeth Kelly – a beautiful name for a beautiful girl – was now official, and Daniel Ellis Kellerman was no more.

Heather had taken Danyelle by the arm. "Are you ready for the last little bit, sweetie?" she asked. "We need to pierce your bellybutton and give you your boob job."

"I get a boob job?" she asked, a little giggly.

"Well, *our* kind of boob job. No surgery. But we're gonna report that you did have surgery. That's the kind of thing the tabloids love to gossip about."

"The tabloids?" I asked.

Heather smiled. "Steve's working out the recording contract details right now," she told me. "Danyelle's gonna be the biggest pop sensation since Britney, Momma. That's what we've planned for her all along."

“A recording contract? *Me?*” Danyelle gushed, her eyes even wider than usual.

“You betcha,” Heather said fondly. “You’re going to spend all day tomorrow in the studio. We have some *really* hot tracks for you to lay down, and then the day after that you go into rehearsal. You need to have the choreography down before you start your U.S. Tour.”

“A tour?” Danyelle said, her voice rising with excitement.

“All part of the plan, baby,” Heather told her, leading her towards a curtained-off medical area in the back.

* * *

I had to admit, Steve knew his job. In a matter of short weeks, where my precious Danyelle was either deep in rehearsal or fast asleep, she had a major record release and a U.S. tour scheduled, and the media looked at it as though it had all happened naturally – “he who controls the media controls the universe,” Steve had joked as he planted yet another press release in such a way as to make it look as though Danyelle had been discovered naturally instead of having her career completely fabricated in a matter of days. A manager, a vocal coach, a choreographer, a producer and an entire crew of stylists, backup singers and dancers and musicians had been hired almost overnight, and soon Danyelle’s small apartment had been traded in for a capacious loft full of designer clothes, high-end recording equipment and tasteful décor. Even though the birth certificate did list Merri Charlotte Ryan as the mother, we decided it would be best to keep our distance from one another while the public eye was turning towards us.

Dani had been transformed by her stylists and manager from a fresh-faced young vocalist into a sultry, smoky-eyed teenage sexpot who danced like a stripper on a pole and moaned out steamy, fuck-me lyrics over thick, thumping sexual tracks. Heather had been extremely busy while it was all going on, lining up interviews for her *A&E Biography* and *Behind the Music* appearances and getting contracts prepared for her *Rolling Stone* cover. I’d been left alone, mostly, and had been hitting the club scene hard. But mostly I was just lonely as hell, wishing I could see my precious babies and spend time with them. I called Steve and asked if I could take home someone from a club one night and make them into a best friend, someone not associated with the Danyelle process who I could just hang out and go shopping with, maybe eat her pussy when I needed to scratch the itch and didn’t feel like going out. He told me he’d pass the idea along, but in the meantime I just tried to pass the time running up the balances on my AmEx and Neiman Marcus cards and watching a lot of Food Network. I was actually starting to turn into a decent cook because I got off so hard just watching Giada De Laurentis and picturing her naked.

I was very near to going out of my mind, eyeballing a very cute waiter at a local bistro where I sat on the sidewalk smoking cigarettes and sipping espresso and trying to read *Vogue* and wondering what he’d look like as a petite redhead with mosquito-bite titties and long, pale legs, when my phone *dinked* to signal I had a text message.

“Album cumz out 2morro. Danis ready 2 shit. Where r u? We miss u n luv u”

I grinned, texting back immediately, my long-nailed thumbs dancing across the tiny little keys: “Redy 2 see u. Meet 4 drinx? Luv u 2!”

I was already getting my car back from the cute valet – the one I'd imagined as a sultry-eyed Latina with long black curls and huge tits as I'd come in – when Heather sent me the name of a local bar. I left in a chirp of abused tires.

* * *

We met in a booth in the back of the loud, smoky bar – Heather in a designer suit with a plaid schoolgirl skirt that made my mouth water for her creamy thighs and Dani in a baggy sweatshirt, with her hair pulled back behind a bandanna and big 'bug-eye' Chanel glasses on. They'd both gotten vodka-cranberries already and Heather was just lighting one of her long Virginia Slims cigarettes with a gold lighter when I dropped my purse on the table and slid in next to Dani with a huge hug.

“You look great,” I told her. “I feel like I haven't seen you in years.”

“I know, right?” she bubbled happily, kissing my cheek. “It's really cool to see you, Momma. I've missed you so much.”

“I'm proud of you. Are you ready to go on tour?”

“I think so,” she told me. “I mean, I have all the songs and choreography down 'n' stuff, but I'm hoping I don't get too tired to, like, do nothin' while I'm traveling. I've, like, always wanted to travel, but the schedule is a *total* killer.”

“You just take care of yourself and drink plenty of water,” I cautioned. “And email me whenever you get the chance, okay?”

“Sure,” she said. “I'm gonna be on the tour bus, like, a lot. I can IM you all day if you want.”

“I do want,” I said. “With you rehearsing and being so busy, and Heather too, I'm so lonely I don't know what to do with myself. I feel like I'm going fucking crazy just looking for something to do. I watched, like, the whole *Sex and the City* in two days. I am so fucking bored.”

“Well, I hope I can help with that,” Heather said. “I got a call from Steve.”

“And?”

She put a fat envelope on the table and slid it across. “We have a new assignment. Something to do while we're waiting for Dani to come home.”

I all but bounced in my seat, but forced myself not to open the envelope. Heather raised an immaculately waxed, arched eyebrow in question.

“Tonight is about Dani,” I said. “I'm not gonna get to see her again for months. I can look at this stuff later.”

“Steve said he wants us on it right away,” Heather said cautioningly.

“It's okay,” Dani said. “I have to start working on songs for the new album anyway, I could always head over to the studio. I have a song I wanna write about you, anyway, Momma. It's called *Make Me Again*.”

I sniffled – tears almost wet my eyes and ruined my makeup, but I stopped them and waved them dry in time – and kissed her, mashing our tits together roughly in a hard embrace. “You

are so sweet. But no. Steve can wait a few more hours. It's not like we're gonna have a damn thing better to do once Dani leaves, anyway. And she can write her song tomorrow."

I raised a long-nailed, diamond-ringed forefinger at a passing waiter – one who I envisioned exactly like he was, for a change – and said brightly, "Crown and Coke, please, with a cherry?"

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Three

by Valerie Hope

I PUSHED MY SUNGLASSES UP into my bangs and yawned. “I still can't figure out why in the fuck we're supposed to be here.”

Heather sighed heavily and took a long drag of her Virginia Slims cigarette, leaving a red stain on the white filter from her glossy lipstick. “Dammit, Momma, we've been over this. Steve was very specific...”

“...he wants a sexist pig,” I finished. “I get that, baby. I just don't know why we're looking here in particular. Why not a strip club or something?”

I gestured across the busy street where we were parked at the big stone church we'd been watching for the last three hours in the hot car. “I mean, what makes you so certain we're gonna find the sexist pig we want in there?”

Heather tapped the folder that was laying in the center console of her BMW. “Averil Kent is in there, Momma,” she said. “He's the most likely candidate. Most guys in strip clubs, well, they're not really pigs. They act that way 'cause in a strip club you're allowed to be sexist. They kinda expect you to be. But you find somebody like that in a church, hell – they're that way 'cause they want to be.”

I took a deep swig of the Mocha Frappuccino I'd bought at the convenience store earlier, when it was my turn to get out of the car and stretch my legs. “Okay, so, you do know that I have to fuck this person to change him, right? It's pretty tough to fuck somebody who's that into church.”

“We don't know how into church he is, Momma,” Heather said patiently.

I sighed. “He's been in there at least three hours, baby,” I said. “C'mon. The only people who stay that long – on a Tuesday, too – are church addicts.”

Heather shrugged. “Maybe you're right. Of course, you could just go in there and see what he's up to inside,” she said for the ninetieth time.

“Like I keep saying, baby, I'm dressed a little slutty for church,” I said, looking down at my see-thru stretch lace top and my little abbreviated leather miniskirt with the belt of silver, heart-shaped links.

“We're not going in, Momma,” she said with the exasperation of the frustrated teenager, even down to the little snort at the end of the statement.

I giggled. "I'm just teasing, honey," I said, squeezing her hand. "Look, there he is. He looks kinda creepy."

Across the street, the service was letting out, and a tall man with greasy, limp hair and deacon's robes was taking a position on the stone stairs to greet the parishoners as they exited. He had a stapled-on quality to his smile, and the look of disdain I saw on his narrow face every time a woman shook his hand was apparent. It made my skin crawl a little.

"Eww," Heather said, wrinkling her nose. "Momma, you actually have to do him? Are you gonna be able to stand it?"

I narrowed my eyes. "Yeah, I can probably stomach it, but he's never even gonna give me the time of day dressed like this. No, I gotta come across as strong, powerful, in control – somebody he can take down a peg. And I'm probably gonna have to see him three or four times before he tries to get in my pants, I probably won't be able to do it in an evening like I did before."

Heather puffed out her cheeks and exhaled. "I couldn't do your job."

"It's not that bad," I said. "Everybody's got something inside them that's beautiful. I just have to spend a little time finding it with Mr. Kent, there."

"Have you seen enough?" Heather asked me. "I have."

"I think I've got enough to go on, sweetie," I said.

Heather turned the key and brought the powerful Mercedes' engine to life, the radio picking up in mid-track from her pink iPod the Blackeyed Peas' "Don't Phunk With My Heart" as she pulled away from the curb. I pulled my chic Chanel sunglasses down over my eyes again, careful not to smudge the lenses with the heavy mascara on my long eyelashes.

"I just wish I knew what this was all about," Heather said as we pulled into traffic, on our way back to our office. "We just get these phone calls, saying 'find this kind of guy' or 'find that kind of guy' and we just have to, like, go out and do it."

"I'm sure it all means something," I said. "They wouldn't've spent all this time and effort on us and what we can do if it wasn't leading up to something."

"Like what?"

I shrugged. "How should I know, baby? We're talking about, like, eight or nine super fucking crazy geniuses. Who knows what they have in mind?"

"I wish I did," she said, pouting a little and pushing out her glossy red bottom lip. It was so adorable when she did that. I couldn't deny her anything when she pouted, and she knew it. She was my oldest 'daughter' – the one I made first, that is – and she knew her Momma all too well. Sometimes I thought she was playing me like a fiddle.

But I knew her pretty well, too. "You're bored, aren't you, baby?"

She sighed. "I guess so. I mean, tracking down these guys that Steven wants, it's pretty easy, especially with all the crazy computer software and databases he gave us access to. I spend the rest of my time just hanging out, playing FreeCell and waiting for the phone to ring."

"I'll talk to Steven about it, okay?" I said. "You're right. You totally need more to do, and you're so talented, baby – you're not being used like you should be. Maybe they can find more work for you."

"I don't want to bother anybody," she said. "I mean, I have a lot of friends, I can usually kill time hanging out with them, y'know, texting back and forth and hooking up for drinks, that kind of thing. And I can usually find a good time out at the clubs most evenings."

I patted her hand. "Shopping and one-night stands aren't the same as having something important to do, sweetie. It's settled – I'm gonna talk to Steven."

She gave me her shy smile, the one I treasured most. "Thanks, Momma."

I smiled back. "But, hey – speaking of one-night stands. I didn't get dressed up all slutty for nothing. Let's find ourselves a party."

* * *

Sometimes it's nice to just fuck, I decided as I snuggled deeper into the mink-soft cascade of vanilla-blond curls fanning across the sweaty chest of the gorgeous square-jawed police officer who'd bought me drinks and danced with me at the club Heather and I had found earlier that night. I'd given brief thought to changing him, turning him into a friend I could use to fill up my days and keep me company, especially with one baby bored and trying to amuse herself and my other baby Dani starting the European leg of her world tour. I listened to her album – called *Workin' My Magic* – every day, loving her sweet husky voice and hoping she was having a good time, dancing and singing in her sexy little outfits for all the screaming fans she was amassing the world over. I occasionally got glimpses of her on Entertainment Tonight or Access Hollywood when I flipped channels at night, but even seeing her on camera wasn't the same as having her in the same room. I missed her terribly.

But Doug – that was the guy's name, I dimly remembered – had talked about his three-year-old son over drinks, and even though he didn't have custody I couldn't in good conscience deprive that little boy of his daddy, no matter how lonely I was. But it didn't preclude taking him back to a no-tell motel on the Interstate and fucking his brains out. He was every bit of twenty-four, and largely all thumbs when it came to women, but he was very enthusiastic, in great shape and had a nicely large cock which stretched me out in all the right places.

I traced circles on his chest with a long fingernail, feeling sore down below and very, very pleased with myself. "I had fun," I whispered to him.

He was almost asleep. Poor little lamb – Momma'd worn him out. I suppressed a giggle. He mumbled, "D'you really have to go?"

"Mm-hmm," I said. "I have to get home to my daughter. She gets lonely."

He stroked my hair. "That's sweet. I bet you're a real good mom."

"I try to be," I told him.

"Can I at least get your number, Merri?" he asked me.

I pulled a pen and pad out of my purse – crumpled at the foot of the bed – and penned my cell on it in my huge, bubbled handwriting, surrounded it with hearts and transferred what was left

of a lipstick kiss on the bottom. I pulled the post-it off the pad and stuck it playfully to the end of his cock.

“So, I guess I'll wait and hear from you whenever,” I said, pulling on my silky thong from where it had resided loose around my left ankle.

“What are you doing on Friday?” he asked me.

“Oh, honey,” I said, stroking his cheek gently. “Let's not make this more than what we both wanted it to be, okay? I was just really lonely and really horny tonight. And you are really, really cute. But I'm not looking for somebody to date, okay? I don't mind the occasional booty call, y'know, but I really don't have the space in my life to go out with somebody just yet – not even somebody as cute as you are.”

“So, what? You're talking, like...”

“Fuck-buddies,” I said. “Friends with benefits. That kinda thing. Does that sound okay to you?”

He nodded enthusiastically, obviously shocked at my revelation. But it wasn't like I'd told him anything shy of the truth. I didn't have room in my life for dating. Really, all I cared about was my babies and making more of them. If he could be counted on to occasionally come and stretch my pussy out for me, then he was more than fulfilling his purpose in my life.

I finished dressing and gave myself a once-over in the mirror, trying to salvage what I could of my wrecked hair and makeup. Finally making myself presentable but obviously just fucked, I kissed Doug on the cheek and slid out the door, waving to him with just the tips of my fingers. I made my way to my car and headed home through the empty late-night streets, thankful that I'd kept my drinking light this evening so I wasn't at any risk of a D.U.I. or the like on my way home. As it stood, though, I chewed several pieces of gum and smoked four of Heather's borrowed cigarettes just to get the acrid cum-taste off my tongue. I actually wasn't that big a fan of swallowing cum when it wasn't for baby-making. When it was just me, it tasted kinda funky. Not bad, certainly not good, just bitter and salty and kind fishy. I supposed it could grow on me, like an acquired taste, but right now at this moment it just wasn't something I really enjoyed. But the boys really dug it when I ate their jizz, so I kept doing it. I liked how happy it made them.

I pulled into the covered parking next to my condo and saw a light burning. I checked the chic platinum Tag Heuer that Dani had sent me from Switzerland and saw that it was nearly four o'clock. I wondered why Heather was still up.

I walked in and saw her in a pair of white pajama bottoms covered over with little pink and red hearts – sooo cute – and a little pink camisole with “Fast Asleep” stitched over her gorgeous, firm titties. Her nipples were prominent under the soft cotton, denoting excitement, and she had her hair in two big poofy pigtails, one over each ear. Her phone was pressed to her ear and she had her glasses on – chic little rimless Armanis – so she'd been in bed when the phone rang, since she always took her contacts out last thing. She waved me in excitedly, smiling ear-to-ear as she carried on with the conversation I'd walked in on.

“...of course. I can totally do that. No, I'll take care of that first thing. When do you think the papers will be delivered? Okay, no problem. I'll be sure I'm home.”

I raised a quizzical eyebrow, and Heather forestalled me with an upraised finger.

“Absolutely, Steven. No, I'm sure it won't be a problem. I'll see you tomorrow, okay? Great. I totally can't wait,” she said, and then pressed “End” with the corner of a luxuriously manicured fingernail – not as long as my huge claws, but still glamorously long.

Her face lit up, her eyes twinkling and dancing as they went to half-moons and she gave me the high-beam smile, where I could see both rows of chalk-white teeth. She started a high pitched squeal behind her teeth and began to bounce up and down with excitement rapidly, making her delicious silicone boobies dance deliciously and threaten to escape the confines of her loose camisole.

“Momma, you rock! You fuckin' rock! Steven just called me, he said he talked to you and he just gave me a new job!” she squealed, grabbing my forearms and pulling me into her ecstatic up-and-down bounce.

“What is it? What job?” I asked insistently, barely even remembering my earlier conversation with Steven. If I recalled, it centered around him saying “I'll see what I can do” a lot in a rather lusterless, subdued monotone.

“We're starting a new magazine, Momma, and he wants me to be editor-in-chief!” she said, laughing hysterically. “Editor-in-chief of a new women's magazine! He says we're gonna be in direct competition with Cosmo and he plans to have us be the highest-selling periodical in the world within six months! And guess who's gonna be our first cover model?”

“I have no idea,” I said.

“Dani! He's gonna fly Dani in for a cover shoot in six weeks! Momma, isn't it incredible! And I owe it all to you! I can't believe it!”

I kissed her cheek. “We have to celebrate tomorrow night,” I told her. “Champagne. Clear your schedule, honey, we're going out five-star.”

“OhmyGod, d'you have any idea how fuckin' rich we're gonna be?” Heather blurted, her eyes wide and jaw dropped over a sudden gasp.

I finally managed to extricate myself from my overjoyed daughter's grip and sobered quickly when a sudden thought hit me – “Am I gonna have to find myself another assistant?”

She shook her head emphatically. “Of course not, Momma! You, like, engineered me to need only a couple hours sleep a night, and I can totally keep up with the magazine and everything you need me to do. All I do is find these guys, after all – it doesn't take, like, any time for me to track down...”

I held up my hands, laughing. “Okay, okay, okay! Relax! I was just asking, that's all!”

“Oh, Momma, I'm so happy! Thank you so much for asking Steven for me! I can't believe I told you not to bother! You're the best Momma in the whole world!”

I hugged her close. “It means a lot to hear that from you, baby.”

She rocked me back and forth in the hug for a while, then finally disengaged. “I have to shop tomorrow. Get a whole new wardrobe. Gotta look professional.”

“You're right, you do,” I said. “Look, honey, I know you're excited and everything – I am, too, you have no idea – but I do have this mission to take care of, and...”

“Oh, right,” Heather said. She picked up a thick manila folder from her desk. “Here's everything you ever wanted to know about Averil E. Kent. Be careful with this guy, Momma, I still don't like him. The reports I found say he's never been actually convicted of stalking, or anything like that, but he's been arrested twice and complained against six times by women in that church. He's a creep.”

“I know he is,” I told her, thumbing through the medical records Heather had somehow penetrated God knows how much legal red tape to acquire. “Momma's gonna fix him, baby. He's gonna be a great sister.”

* * *

I lost track of Heather for the next few days, my only contact with her really through quick emails and text messages. I never really saw her, only got what little bits of information on Averil Kent she was still managing, somehow, to dig up in between ordering office furniture for the enormous suite of offices on one of the uppermost floors of a downtown high-rise and interviewing writers and photographers and salespeople right and left. The money for the endeavor was pouring in from one of Steven's “slush funds” where he seemed to have unlimited cash. I only saw her briefly at home as she showered and changed clothes, usually while chain-smoking her signature white Virginia Slims cigarettes as she applied makeup with one hand and text-messaged a potential someone-or-other with the other. But she didn't look tired. She looked happier, more vital and more altogether alive than I'd ever seen her. She was literally born for this.

I stayed busy by familiarizing myself with Averil Kent. He was a loner, usually only going to church and then home. He was a web developer to pay the bills, so he worked from his not-too-shabby-but-not-too-nice nondescript apartment. His only real outings consisted of going to the grocery store once a week and walking his dog every morning and afternoon.

That's where I found my “in.” I visited the pound the next day and adopted Muffin, an adorable little toy collie who was adorable, amiable and well-behaved. I started taking her for walks around the same time as Kent, staying just far enough away to be distant but close enough to where I could attract his attention. I gave him the distinct impression of being powerful and in-control – wearing business suits and having staged conversations on my cellphone about what sounded like very important, urgent things. I could tell I was having an effect on him. By the end of the first week, he was gravitating closer and closer to me as he walked his sweet-eyed Golden Lab, and his eyes never left me.

It was tough for me to not do overtly sexy. I was a blonde bombshell by nature with a va-va-va-voom body that I loved to show off with low-cut, tight and revealing clothes. I loved to mince around in skyscraper platform heels and “accidentally” drop things so I could bend over to pick them up and give guys either a long and informative look at my pert, firm ass or a lovely vista right down the middle of my deep, inviting cleavage. I liked to suck lollipops and make eye contact and not use anything approaching subtlety when I tried to attract a man. I liked big hair and slutty makeup, big sparkly jewelry and bright colors. But tactics like that were guaranteed to frighten off someone like Kent, who was obviously both disdainful and very intimidated by women.

His reaction upon seeing me in his church, singing along with one of the hymns from a blue hymnal rather half-heartedly and looking troubled, was exactly what I'd designed it to be – sanctimonious, solicitous to the point of being patronizing and a little bit possessive. Perfection.

I was just helping myself to some rather bland coffee in the fellowship hall when I heard a creaky baritone clear its throat behind me. I turned and there he was.

“I know you from somewhere,” he said. “The park. Walking your dog, a little collie, I think. I see you there all the time.”

I gave him a calculatedly shy smile. “Right,” I said with just the perfect amount of uncertainty, making me appear just the slightest bit vulnerable – irresistible bait for a man like Averil Kent. “You're the Golden Lab, right?”

He nodded and smiled. “Right. His name's Polo. Short for Polonius.”

“From Hamlet,” I said, refusing to let him out-intellectualize me. He was testing me to see if I was a dumb blonde. What really galled me was that I was a dumb blonde and was having to pretend to be something else to attract this guy. “My dog's name isn't nearly as imaginative. Muffin.”

“Cute,” he said dismissively. “I didn't know you went to this church.”

“I just moved here and needed a little company,” I confessed, like it was some big secret. “My name's Merri. I'm an editor at Flirt magazine.”

I extended a hand, now with a conservatively-short but still glamorous French manicure, which he took in a hand that was slightly damp and gripped a little too tightly. “Averil Kent,” he said. “I'm one of the deacons. Did you enjoy the service?”

“I did,” I said. “It's not quite what I'm used to from back home, but it's lovely.”

“Where is home?”

“Chicago. I've only been here a few weeks. Yourself?”

“Born and bred right here,” Kent said. “You're finding your way around all right?”

A little too obvious, but I'm tired of the repartée, to be honest, I thought as I smiled and said, “Not really. I have an appalling sense of direction. I spend most of my time lost, actually. I've managed to locate a pharmacy, a supermarket and a bank, but I'm losing hope of ever finding a nail salon, a gym or a post office.”

“I'd be delighted to help, if you'd like,” he offered, his eyes showing triumph.

Gotcha, I thought happily. “That would be so kind of you,” I told him, changing my body language, leaning towards him, showing my neck by brushing my hair behind one ear and standing a fraction closer. I changed my breathing to be a little deeper to make my fantastic big tits move tantalizingly up and down beneath my fuschia silk blouse. The effect was not lost on him, I noticed as his eyes were drawn downwards as if by a magnet.

I left the fellowship hall about thirty minutes later, after an interminable meet-and-greet of all the blue-haired church ladies and young single men who were trying a little too hard to be

accommodating, welcoming and helpful. But I caressed my pink Blackberry as if it were warm and furry, because now it held the number for Averil Kent.

I dropped myself into my Mercedes, opened the top three buttons of my blouse to show some titty, shook out my long wavy hair from its confining bun and stuffed the fake eyeglasses I'd been wearing into my Gucci handbag. I applied three thick coats of mascara and some fuck-me bubblegum pink lipstick, lit a cigarette and drove off to find myself a sleazy bar. After all that knees-together enforced goodness, this bitch needed to find a place to go and seriously sin.

* * *

With all the fucking complications involved in massaging the relationship between me and Kent, in not appearing too obvious that I was after him, there was a lot of downtime in my life. I couldn't just call him the same day I met him, I needed to just bump into him a couple times at the park with my dog and make meaningless small talk, then wait a day or two before calling. I found myself wishing I could make myself a friend, someone to hang out with, again. I texted Heather and Dani as much as I could, shopped until my closet literally wouldn't hold any more, cleaned my condo until it sparkled, drank a lot of vodka and watched a lot of America's Top Model. This was turning into the most boring job I'd pulled so far.

That's why I nearly jumped with startlement when my phone rang and the caller ID showed Averil Kent's number. I'd honestly forgotten I'd even given it to him.

"Merri, hi. It's Averil Kent," he said once I received the call.

"Hi, there," I said, clicking my nails on my computer keyboard meaninglessly as I played a .wav file of office noise to give myself a convincing background. "What can I do for you?"

"I was just talking to someone at church about you," he said. "Wondering how you were getting along, whether you were having any luck with finding your way around town yet. I thought I'd give you call, see how you were doing."

"That's really sweet of you," I said. "I'm okay, I guess. Just really busy, I haven't had two seconds to myself these days, it seems like."

"All work and no play..." Kent said.

I banished images from *The Shining* from my head and gave a throaty chuckle. "I guess you're right. I'm pretty caught up in the new job, though."

"You should get out, have some fun," he told me. He would've sounded smooth if the stress hadn't been making his voice nearly shake with tension. "Tell you what – why don't you let me take you to dinner tonight? I can show you around a little, help you find your way around... does that sound at all appealing?"

"It really does," I told him. "But I thought there was a service tonight."

"There is," he said, "but I'm taking a little time away from the church for a few weeks. Just to get my life in order, you know?"

You're clearing your schedule so you can stalk me, I thought. The police reports I'd read about him from Heather as much as told me that was his M.O.

“That makes sense. Yeah. I'd love to go get a bite with you. Can I meet you someplace?” I asked.

“No need,” he told me. “I'll come pick you up at your apartment. I wouldn't want you to get lost or anything.” He chuckled like it was a grand joke, but he was already disregarding my opinions, my safety and cutting off any method of getting home other than him. He was trying to isolate me. Maybe his mind was already working in terms of raping me tonight. I tried not to react. The surprise, I knew, would be on him – and the world would have one less creep-a-zoid to deal with, and I would have another new, beautiful perfect little daughter in my life.

I rushed to the bathroom and took a long, hot shower, washing my long hair (which took a while), shaving, exfoliating and then doing a deep moisturizer, and using the vibrating shower nozzle to get myself off about four times as well. I thumbed through the latest Vogue and smoked a cigarette while I waited for the towel I'd wrapped around my hair to draw out the most of it, then moussed liberally and dried my hair upside down to give it volume and lift.

It dawned on me, as I started threading hot rollers into my lush, damp locks, just how amazing it was that I'd had no idea how to style hair, or do makeup, or the slightest inkling of what was involved in skin care before Dr. Redmand and Dr. Wallace had worked their magic. It was like I was born a woman, never knowing anything different.

I actually hoped Averil Kent's adjustment would be a little less easy.

* * *

Dinner had been full of uncomfortable silences, awkward pauses and so many inappropriate questions and comments that I'd actually started keeping count just to amuse myself – eighty-seven – before I finally finished my dessert and made noises as though I wanted to leave the restaurant. Averil had been everything I'd thought he would be – he monopolized every conversation, persisted in telling me what I should think and that any opinion I had was wrong or brainless, he ordered for me when the waiter came and tried to ply me with cheap wine and fake compliments. I groaned inside – I'd met nineteen-year-olds in clubs who were smoother than this guy – but forced myself to smile and give my most convincing approximation of falling for his bullshit. As we left, he guided me out with a hand in the small of my back and stood very close to me, ensconcing me in his cluttered blue Mercury and locking me in before he turned on the engine.

We chattered and made more small talk – where he told me what I should think about no less than six current events – on the way home, and more out of exasperation and wanting it to be over with, I asked him up.

His eyebrows rose. Oops. I fucked up – he was supposed to ask me. I pushed too hard. He was just starting to irritate me so much, I wanted to jump the gun.

“You're really direct,” he told me. “I like it.”

“Well, I know what I want and I don't believe in wasting time,” I told him. “Are you coming up, or what?”

He beat me to the front door.

* * *

Averil Kent was exactly the sort of lover I thought he would be. Urgent, unskilled and very demanding of the lesser partner in the relationship: me. He was pushy, too, telling me exactly what to do as if I didn't know my way around a man's body, much less my own. He pawed at me, grabbing me roughly in a way that might have turned me on, if I'd had the time taken to get me in the mood for the rougher stuff. My tits hurt from his squeezing, I would have bruises on my neck from his bites and hard kisses, and his fingers on my pussy, even through my clothes, were far too rough for such delicate anatomy.

Still, I managed to get what I needed through just acting submissive and controlled. I knelt before him and pushed his slacks around his ankles, sucking him deep into my throat to get the sense of him that signalled the beginning of it all. I kept it up – I found I really didn't want to fuck him – and just pistoned my head up and down on his skinny, acrid cock, making sucking and slurping noises as I grabbed his ass cheeks and caressed his floppy balls. I couldn't say I was enjoying myself, per se, but I did love what I knew would happen and it kept me going rather enthusiastically. The wildfire heat built inside me to the point where I forgot my distaste at my sexual partner and gave myself to the wild, abandoned blowjob I was giving, reducing him in my mind to just a cock that I was sucking. Before I knew it, he shot thick jets of cum down my throat, making me choke and gag a little, and then I felt the little spines on my tongue slip into his skin and I felt the sensation of lessening pressure, the feeling of injecting him.

I held him against me as I felt his body seem to deflate. I could feel the strong, squirming little life inside the empty skin, kicking and wiggling against my arms. Joyous to the point of tears, I tore away the old shell that was the sick, twisted man Averil Kent and revealed the squalling pink baby girl that was now and forever mine, mine, mine. I pulled her against me and reveled in the feeling of being complete again. I kissed the soft little hairless forehead and gazed into the guileless brown eyes, and got a wet, gummy little baby smile for my trouble. I loved all my children, but this one – this one was something special.

I called Steve and Heather and sat, making faces and smiles at my new daughter, for an indeterminate amount of time waiting for the technical crew to show up. They set up the green- and blue-screens and we began the long process of taking pictures and then waiting while I put her to my burning, full-to-bursting breast and letting her suck until she grew, inching her life forward about a year at a time while Steven documented everything in the background.

I'd had a feeling that she would grow into a beautiful girl, but I had no idea just how beautiful. As she grew from a big-eyed toddler to a lissome teenager, my breath continually caught in my throat at just how striking she was – overlarge brown eyes with a mischievous sparkle, a long oval face with a very delicate chin and nose, a pouty-lipped mouth that begged to be kissed, all framed by rabbit-soft sable hair, soft and shiny and reflecting gold in the light. A lush, athletic body with long legs and willowy arms, possessed of a natural grace that rivaled any ballerina or ballroom dancer I'd ever seen. Even in coltish adolescence, with glasses and a mouth full of metal braces, the promise of her breathtaking beauty was enough to bring everyone in the room up short.

Then, just as she turned nineteen, there was a change. The promise of her beauty and sexuality changed, somehow, became more overt and much more real. Gone were the braces and glasses, the youthful attempts at makeup and hair and the adolescent early grasps at personal style. As she suckled me, a roses-and-thorns tattoo appeared in the small of her back as a 'tramp stamp,' her hair lightened from its rich sable to an almost-tacky bottle blonde. The makeup became trampy, heavy eyeliner and bold shadow with glossy

lipstick. The clothes became tight and revealing; piercings appeared in her tongue and navel and her fingernails lengthened into a long, white-tipped French manicure studded with rhinestones over airbrushed nail art. The next pictures and video were taken with my beautiful daughter – now very slutty-looking but still breathtakingly gorgeous – twirling around a pole in nothing but lucite heels and a g-string stuffed full of dollar bills. Her smallish, high breasts ballooned out into giant double-D silicone masterpieces, almost too big for her small frame but still managing to compliment her looks rather than detract. She was every bit the blonde bombshell her mother was, just shy of a mature ripeness as she ended the aging process my milk brought about at the tender age of twenty-four.

She rushed into my arms and kissed my cheek. “Momma, do I look okay? I wasn't sure you were gonna like it.”

“You look beautiful, honey, just beautiful,” I breathed. “I love it. I love you.”

She buried her face in my hair. “I love you, too.”

Steven's soft voice broke into our moment. “I hate to interrupt,” he said, “but these are yours.” He handed her the obligatory manila envelope, filled with documentation and credit cards, all in the name of April Erika Kent. A vast improvement over her former incarnation. The world wouldn't miss Averil Eric Kent very much, but I had a feeling it would never be able to get enough of April Erika Kent. I hugged her tight.

“Such a pretty name,” I told her.

She was threading the keys to her new apartment and Volkswagen Beetle onto a rhinestone-encrusted heart keychain, studded with her name in pink crystals, when Steven passed over another document, a legal contract.

“What's this?” she asked in her melodious soprano.

“The contract you have with your agency and the production company,” he said. “You start on Friday as a contract star with one of the largest pornographic producers in the United States. The stage-name we picked for you is Apryl Raines, if that's okay.”

“I'm... I'm gonna be a porn star?” April asked, her voice cracking a little.

“You're going to be the porn star,” Steven said. “We have you positioned to be one of the biggest and most famous stars in history. You'll be running your own production company within three years, and in the mainstream within five. You're gonna be huge, April.”

“Wow,” she said, her eyes even bigger than normal. “Bigger than Jenna?”

“Much,” Steven said. “But you have to start low-budget. Internet stuff. You're going to be working an awful lot for the first three or four months until we can engineer your breakaway. Heather's got your schedule.”

“I can't wait,” she said, her eyes sparkling. “Momma, I'm so excited!”

“I'm excited for you, baby,” I told her, and I truly was. Somehow, whatever stigma might have been attached to my daughter being the biggest porn star in history just never entered into my thinking. Besides, if my little girl loved to fuck half as much as I did, she'd probably be happy for the rest of her days in a job like that. I kissed her cheek and rubbed the lipstick kiss I left there off with a long-nailed thumb.

“Apryl Raines,” she said, giggling and wrinkling her nose. “That’s really cute, don’t you think? Sexy and cute.”

“It is. And it suits you, I think,” I replied. “You don’t start work until Friday?”

“That’s right,” Steven confirmed from behind his computer. Behind him, Heather was trying to talk on her phone while staring goggle-eyed at the raving beauty that was her new sister.

“That gives us just enough time to get you settled in,” I said, taking her arm and leading her towards the door of my condo. “Let’s go see your new place.”

* * *

Heather and Steven went into overdrive for the next two days, planting April’s doctored records all over town so that her work records and medical records all existed at the places we said they did. I spent my time with my new daughter – shopping for stripper clothes and sexy lingerie, buying the little things for her new, cute apartment that Steven’s people missed like toilet brushes and dustpans and can openers and staying up late into the night, gossiping and chattering almost until dawn like a couple of schoolgirls.

She was a little nervous, actually, about starting her career, since she was technically a virgin. To remedy this, we both got slutted up and hit the clubs together, finding a very lucky young man named David at a chic dance club downtown in the warehouse district whom we took to a motel nearby and shared. I was simply there in a supervisory capacity, but I managed to have my fun. He was sweet, enthusiastic and extremely well-endowed, and April never should have worried. The nanites in the milk I’d given her had programmed her brain with everything she needed to be an incredible lay. She fucked and sucked like she’d been doing it for years.

I never expected, watching her ride him reverse-cowgirl with her sweat-damp hair flying all around her face, to feel so proud. I didn’t really know what Steven and his collegiate bosses had in mind for my precious baby, but I did know that if she was to be the world’s greatest porn actress, I was glad she enjoyed fucking as much as she did.

There was no trace of Averil Kent left in her. The brooding, controlling misogynistic man I’d found and seduced was gone competely, replaced by a beautiful, open-minded and happy young girl.

I told her as much as we sat over breakfast at a very posh little bistro, sipping espresso with our long-nailed pinky fingers stuck out and smoking long, skinny women’s cigarettes. She looked like the cover of a magazine in her tight Armani dress and spike-heeled Jimmy Choo’s, a pair of black Chanel sunglasses that she’d borrowed from me nestled in her blonde bangs. She toyed idly with one of the oversized platinum hoop earrings dangling from her earlobes and watched the world go by, not unmindful of the lingering glances we both were receiving from the men who passed us by. It brought a shy smile to her face.

“I have to admit, Momma, this takes a little getting used to,” she commented.

“Does it make you uncomfortable?” I asked.

“No, not at all,” she said, rummaging in her scandalously expensive Vuitton purse for another cigarette. “I like it. Actually, I love it. I’m so fucking turned on all the time, I barely know what

to do with myself. It's like, I could rip off my clothes and start jacking off here on the table any minute.”

“I know the feeling,” I told her.

“But it's weird. Like calling a woman who's obviously only a few years older than me – you couldn't be a day over twenty-seven – 'Momma.' Walking in heels like I could run a marathon in 'em, and knowing I'd never worn anything higher than a cowboy boot before two days ago. Answering to 'April' automatically and dotting the 'I' with a little heart just as naturally as anything.”

“It was the same for me, honey,” I said. “After a while, you just stop thinking about it. Besides, the ride is so much fun, what line you stood in to get to it really stops mattering pretty fast.”

She giggled and blushed a little. “Yeah, I'm starting to get that.”

I looked deeply into her doe-brown eyes, leaning across the table and taking her soft hand in mine. “Are you happy, baby?”

She took a long time to answer.

“Not yet,” she said, lighting her cigarette. “But I know I will be.”

The end...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Four

by Valerie Hope

I COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW AMAZING the new building looked. Everything was ultra-modern but still had a classy, chic art-deco flare – the reception area was all blacks and whites with bright red accents, and the area behind the desk was dominated by huge black-and-white photographs of models and the word “Flirt!” in chrome letters standing in front of them, lit from behind. I could see just past a wall of glass block a huge bullpen full of cubicles and tasteful art, interspersed with low sofas and chairs, all in the chic black-and-white-with-red-accents color scheme. Heather was positively beaming at me, standing with arms wide like a spokesmodel, dressed for success in a charcoal Armani power-suit with a beautiful African-print scarf around her neck. She still wore her hair and nails predominantly the same way, but they now had the sense of being much more expensive than they'd been before.

“Well, Momma? What do you think?” she asked, her face positively glowing with expectation and excitement.

“I'm speechless,” I said. “Heather, darling – it's perfect. It's absolutely perfect.”

“I can't believe it's mine!” she squealed, unable to suppress her little-girl up-and-down bounce in her Manolo Blahnik pumps, clapping hands now decked with obscenely expensive Tacori diamond rings.

I hugged her tightly. “You deserve it, baby,” I whispered into her soft hair. “I can't think of anybody who'd deserve it more.”

“How do you like the mansion?” she asked, brushing a stray lock of blonde hair out of my face. I'd been moved from our upscale townhouse just a few short weeks ago into the sprawling 120-room mansion on the outside of town. Truthfully, I didn't like it very much. It was far too large for me, alone, and I hadn't had a lot to do lately. I was hoping for a mission from Steven soon – I was bored.

“It's lovely,” I said smoothly, trying to hide the lie. “But I wish I had more to do.”

Heather patted my hand. “You should join the country club or something,” she told me. “Go out, make some new friends, have a little fun. You could take up tennis or golf and buy cute new outfits.”

I made a face. “You know what I mean, Heather,” I grumped. “You have the magazine now. I want something, y'know... something to do.”

“Oh, right,” she said. “Well, I’m sure something will come along. Listen, I have a lunch meeting, Momma, I really must get going. Are you going to be okay?”

“Of course I am,” I said, patting her wrist. “You go do what you do, baby. Momma’s very proud of you. I can’t wait to read the first issue.”

“Neither can I!” she said, bouncing towards her luxurious office with the teenage cheerleader enthusiasm that no amount of designer clothes could ever mask. She blew me a happy, if airy, kiss. “Ciao!”

I waved at her, long fingers wiggling, as she disappeared into a knot of editors and photographers and writers, all clamoring for her attention. I marveled, watching her calm them down and line them up to present their requests to her one at a time. Whatever Dr. Redmond and company had done to her, the inborn ability to organize they’d given her was truly staggering.

I dug in my purse for my sunglasses and car keys. Little fly-by, five minute stretches seemed to be all the time I ever got to spend with my precious Heather any more, but I tried not to let it get me down. She was a busy girl – she’d been designed that way – and I was just her indolent, nothing-to-do mother. Never mind that the purpose I’d been designed for seemed to be lying useless by the wayside. I suppressed a frustrated groan. A country club! As if! The last thing I wanted was to be involved with a group of bored rich housewives and divorcées who would hate me and snipe behind my back because they were jealous of my flawless body and cover-girl face, my youthful figure and my wealth. And even more, I didn’t want any of these women – who as a general rule had far too much time on their hands – digging into my past. Stephen was good – very good – at his job of manufacturing personal backstories, but I didn’t want to put that to the test any time soon.

I stepped onto the curb and pressed a ten-dollar bill into the valet’s hand. I pulled imaginary wrinkles out of my Kenneth Cole sundress as I waited for him to bring around my lipstick-red BMW M6 Roadster convertible, the high-performance engine idling mightily as I slid my flouncy skirt behind my thighs as I sat down, knees together and slid my shapely knees under the wheel. I lit a cigarette distractedly as I pulled into traffic, racking my mind for something to divert me from the crushing ennui I was feeling. When my Blackberry rang merrily with Tila Tequila’s “Stripper Friends” I jumped – I’d not heard the ringtone I’d assigned to Stephen’s number for a very long time.

I pressed the smartphone to my ear to clack loudly against my big silver door-knocker earrings which swung lazily against my white-blond hair. “Hello?”

“I have something for you, Merri,” Stephen said without preamble. “I’m sending you the data now. You’ll like this one. We need someone shy. Someone you’re really gonna have to work to get out of their shell.”

I couldn’t keep the smile from my face. “Can’t wait. I’ll be back at the house soon and start looking.”

“Great,” he said. “Be careful.”

* * *

The gigantic mansion wasn’t secured very well, Bobby Morrow thought as he slipped a knife blade in between the window casings and was rewarded with a squeak and a pop as the lock

slid out of its seating. He pulled the window open with a self-satisfied grin and stepped through into the large conservatory, decorated primarily with a huge grand piano with a bust of some dead composer on it and a book of music open on the stand.

“Jesus,” Julián Espinoza said, his eyes wide as he stepped through the open window. “We’re gonna need to go rent a U-Haul to boost all this shit.”

“What’d I tell you?” Gene Starling said as he came in last and pulled the window shut behind him. “Bitch that lives here is always gone. Got a good look around when I came in to hook up the satellite. Cash and jewelry – lots of fucking jewelry – all up in the safe in the closet upstairs, master bedroom. I got a look at the combination while Brinks was installing it. Dumb cunt used her birthday.”

“God bless people who think it can’t happen to them,” Bobby said. “C’mon, though, we need to move. High-dollar shit only – leave the electronics unless it’s a laptop or something. Just the big money.”

They split up, rummaging through room after room – offices, a gym appointed better than the Bally’s around the corner from Bobby’s house, a media room, a spa, an indoor pool, even a little nightclub with a lighted dance floor. Their sacks were laden heavily by the time they met back up in the foyer and started upstairs towards the bedrooms. Bobby glanced at his cheap watch – they’d only been inside about fifteen minutes. He’d picked this crew because they were pros and because they didn’t get greedy. They’d all walked right past expensive electronics and art which would have gotten greedier burglars caught trying to move them out.

“Shit, will you look at this place?” Gene whispered as they threw open the woman’s closet door. Shoes and designer clothes lined the floors and walls, and a big padded bench in the middle faced a full-length 3-way mirror. Through a small door they could see a dressing table piled with expensive cosmetics.

“Check this out,” Julián said, holding up a scandalously expensive Tiffany & Co. picture frame from the bedside table. “She’s got a picture of that porno bitch – y’know the hot blonde with the big titties, what’s her name?”

“Apryl Raines? Get the fuck outta here,” Bobby said, taking the picture. “No fucking way – it is her! It says ‘To Momma, all my love, April.’ Bitch gotta be fucked up to send a naked picture of herself all slutty to her fucking Mom, y’know?”

“Fuck it, I’m taking it,” Julián said, stuffing it in his sack. “We can fence the frame, but I’m keeping the fucking picture.”

You better, Bobby thought. Shit like that’s too easy to track.

“Apryl Raines’ fucking mom,” Gene said, pushing aside an antique mirror above the dressing table to reveal a small but very secure safe. If not for him seeing the combination when it was installed, a bunch of small-time smash-and-grab guys like those three wouldn’t have stood a chance against it.

The light changed from red to green with a chirp and the door swung open.

“Fucking jackpot,” Gene breathed. “Fucking MegaBall lotto.”

Stacks and piles of high-denomination bills and jewelry cases crammed the safe. Everything in there was diamonds, rubies or some other high-dollar stone, all platinum and pure

gold. Some other jewelry littered the little dressing table, but it was strictly small-time and we ignored it. I was running my fingers across a choker encrusted with more diamonds than I could count when we heard a noise downstairs.

“Fuck,” Julián swore softly. “Gene, you said she was never home!”

“It's just one bitch lives here, nobody else,” Gene said, pulling a knit ski-mask over his hard-edged features, leaving just his flinty blue eyes exposed. He pulled a silver revolver – I knew it wasn't loaded, we didn't do shit like that – out of his jacket pocket and stationed himself beside the door to the bedroom, alongside the hinges. Julián and Bobby hid themselves in the closet.

They could hear the click-clack of high heels on the marble tile in the hallway and a high voice singing not unpleasantly: “Don'tcha wish your girlfriend was hot like me...” The voice entered the bathroom and we heard water running.

“Now's our chance,” Bobby urged in a stage whisper. “Go. Go!”

Much preferring a clean getaway to any kind of confrontation, we broke and ran for the bedroom door. Right into the path of a big-breasted blonde with blue eyes wide from shock and the most incredible body any of them had ever seen in person. She gasped and jumped, her tits jiggling deliciously. Bobby and the others couldn't help but notice, since the blonde wasn't wearing a stitch.

“Who the hell are you?” she shrilled, and even that sounded sexy.

Gene pointed the gun at her. “Don't move. Get up against the fucking wall!”

She put one hand on her bare hip and struck an exasperated runway-model pose. “Are you guys serious? Really? You're robbing me?”

“Wrong,” Bobby growled. “We already robbed you, bitch. Now we're getting the fuck out of here and you're making that difficult for us. Now get against the wall like the man told you to.”

She huffed and backed against the wall. “Whatever,” she said.

Gene wasn't impressed with her attitude at all and jammed the gun against her temple – pressing his body firmly against hers, Bobby noticed, in the process. “Listen, bitch, shut your fucking mouth or I'll...”

“Shoot me? With an empty gun? Puh-leeze.”

In response, Gene backhanded her hard across her flawless, supermodel face and sent her sprawling across the tile, her face hidden behind a wild curtain of flying blonde hair. She pushed herself up and tossed her head to clear the hair from her face – there was a little trace of blood on her bee-stung bottom lip – and gave Gene a hard look.

“You're gonna wish you never did that, sweetheart,” she purred, deep in her throat.

“Really? Get something to tie this bitch up, willya?” Gene said to no one in particular. “Now if you don't want another smack, lie face down on the fucking floor and... and... what the... what was I saying?”

Bobby might've been hallucinating, but he thought he could almost see some kind of vapors rising off the woman's smooth, sweat-slick skin. The air had taken on a sweet-salty fragrance

and Bobby was having trouble concentrating and keeping his balance. He sank to his knees slowly, rubbing his head.

“Y'know, I've been thinking I could use some help around this place, as big as it is,” she commented, more to herself than anyone. Langorously, she rolled onto her back and spread her legs, exposing the plump, juicy pussy that all the men had secretly wanted a glimpse of since they'd first seen her. She stroked it open, making the lips swell invitingly, with long-nailed, manicured fingernails.

“Which one of you boys wants to be first?” she purred throatily.

* * *

“Dammit, Merri, you can't just do this whenever the hell you want!” Stephen exclaimed, running hands through his thick brown hair in exasperation.

I ripped the cigarette from between my pink-glossed lips and stabbed him in the chest with a long acrylic French-manicured nail. “The hell I can't, Stephen. These fuckers were robbing me, they threatened me at gunpoint. I have one way – one fucking way – to defend myself, and damned if I'm gonna think about how much paperwork it makes for you before I fucking use it!”

“But...”

“You've got me cooped up in this huge house, nothing to do all day but wander around aimlessly while you and Dr. Redmond and the others maybe cook up a mission for me and maybe not. I'm bored out of my fucking wits. And the least I need around this giant gilded cage you made for me is some fucking staff. Maybe a friend or two. Y'know, while I'm waiting to do the job you fucking designed me for, the one you completely changed my life and everything I ever knew to do?”

Stephen deflated visibly with a long, tired sigh. “You're right. Of course you're right. We got too used to thinking of you as an asset and forgot you're still a person. We need to put you to better use, Merri, and you were perfectly justified in using your, um... abilities to defend yourself. But promise me you'll do some research beforehand if you decide to use this for personal ends, okay? What if these guys had families? People who were gonna come looking for them?”

“I know,” I said, holding up a hand to forestall any further explanation. “Let's chalk this one up to an emergency, okay? I won't do it again unless I'm certain the person I pick has no family or close contacts.”

“Agreed,” he said. He passed over a very thick manila envelope. “It's all there. Work visas, passports, birth certificates, the works. Just like you wanted. It was a rush job, Merri, so I don't know how well they'll stand up to close scrutiny. Play it safe with these three, willya?”

“Of course. They won't be leaving the house much,” I said. “I kinda did a number on them. I don't think they could function very well on their own.”

Stephen clicked his tongue. “Yeah, you did. But at least we've got them covered. I'll go back later and get them some better cover stories in case there's ever an investigation. In the meantime, have you gotten any leads on our latest mission?”

“Heather's working up some possibilities,” I said. “I've been a little busy with this, haven't had much chance to do any digging on my own.”

He gestured to the three silhouetted figures in the other room. “I didn't bother cooking up any phony history for those three. You made it so they hang on your every word, anyway, so they'll believe – and support – basically anything you tell them, as long as you don't try to convince them they're from Mars or something.”

“Silly boy,” I said teasingly, kissing his cheek. “Men are from Mars. Women are from Venus.”

“If you say so,” Stephen shot back, turning towards the door before shooting a mischievous glance over his shoulder at me. “As far as I'm concerned, men are from Lab 220A and women are from 220B.” He gave me a sly wink and ducked out the door with his usual self-assured hurry.

Was Stephen just flirting with me? I wondered idly, smiling to myself before going into my solarium to view my newest creations. They were standing in a loose line, staring blankly into space.

Each was a perfect vision of beauty. I'd made one bleach blonde like me, a second with a head full of coppery red kinky curls, and a third with thick raven's-wing black wavy hair. Each was tall, leggy, athletic and their slender torsos were crowned with huge, volleyball-size gravity-defying breasts. Their eyes – blue for the blonde, green for the redhead and deep chestnut brown for the brunette – were all but vacant, and vapid little smiles graced their gorgeous, flawless faces. Each touched up her hair absentmindedly with fingers tipped with fetish-length, two-and-a-half inch painted fingernails.

“Good morning, ladies,” I said brightly, rummaging in Stephen's envelope. “I hope you've had a little chance to explore your new bodies. I wanted you to have a little time before I put you all to work.”

“Yes, ma'am,” the brunette said. “We had fun.”

“We licked each others' pussies,” the redhead chimed in, giggling.

“That's good,” I said with a kindly smile. “You'll have lots of time to do that. And to lick mine. It's one of the things I wanted you all around for.”

They giggled and bounced and clapped their hands with tittering excitement. I'd given each of them the intellectual capacity of a six-year-old as punishment for their rough treatment. Lucky they hadn't hurt me or threatened one of my babies. Then I would've left them with full realization of what they used to be as torture.

I turned to the muscular, enormous-breasted bimbo brunette who had once answered to Gene Starling and passed her the folded documents that Stephen had produced for her. “Gina, honey, here's yours. It's a drivers' license, a social security card and a G.E.D. Just basic identity documents. Put them in your room, someplace safe, and keep your drivers' license in your purse, okay?”

Gina Starr smiled and nodded enthusiastically. “You mean, like, I can drive 'n' stuff?” she bubbled.

“No, baby,” I said. “But you'll need it in case you get carded for drinks.”

“Oh. Okay!” she perked, clapping her hands happily.

On a whim, I decided to test whether my mastery of the nanites that transformed these girls from violent, degenerate men was complete. “Gina, honey, what's four times four?”

She twirled a lock of dark brown around one long-nailed finger and stared up at the ceiling, her lush-lipped mouth in an adorable moué of concentration. “Um... like... I dunno... like, eight? Ten? Math is hard.”

I patted her shoulder companionably. “But what conditioner works best for split ends?” I asked her.

“Trichoptilosis – split ends – are caused when the protective cuticle at the end of the hair is destroyed, either physically or chemically. It causes the hair shaft to separate into one or more different strands. Lots of products are out there that claim to re-bind the hair or restore the cuticle, but that's mostly bullshit. The best thing for split ends, unfortunately, is a pair of scissors.”

“Good girl,” I said to my new stylist and manicurist. “Go get dressed, okay?”

“Okay,” she bubbled, bouncing happily into the small room I'd designated as hers. I heard her clattering around and rummaging through the miniscule closet, and chuckled. The only thing in there was the uniform I'd chosen for her – white platform eight-inch heels, white fishnet stockings and an obscenely short white tube dress with a white lab coat (tailored to make her breasts even more obvious) over, and a white headband to keep her abundant hair out of her eyes. I'd filled her largely empty brain with an exhaustive knowledge of hair, nails and cosmetics. She'd make sure I looked my absolute red-carpet best every morning before I went out.

I moved to the next girl in line, the green-eyed redhead with the creamy-pale skin who had once been Julián Espinoza. I handed her the documents Stephen had generated for her. “Juli, sweetie, here's yours,” I said. Juli Mosier smiled prettily at me, taking her documents in long-nailed hands.

“Can you tell me how to spell 'redemption?’” I asked her.

Her pretty face screwed up in thought. “Um... R... E.... D.... M.... S.... H....”

I held up a hand. “That's plenty, baby,” I said. “Can you tell me how to make a port wine reduction, though?”

“Oh, that's easy, ma'am,” she said brightly, her eyes sparkling merrily. “I use about a half-cup of chopped carrots, a half cup of diced onions, bay leaves and about 3 cups of port wine. Bring it all to a boil, stirring, until it boils down to about three-quarters of a cup. About 45 minutes, total. Now, if you were thinking about a sauce to go with fish or poultry, you'd want to think about...”

I held up a hand to forestall her cheerful chattering. Conditioned to obey my every command unquestioningly, she stopped in mid-syllable, her smile wide in expectation. “Go get dressed, honey, and get down to the kitchen,” I told my new chef. “I'll expect you to give me today's menu for approval in one hour.”

“Okay,” she perked, dashing into her small room to put on the short double-breasted white coat which barely covered her thighs and the white micro-mini skirt underneath, the white

platform shoes identical to Gina's and the white beret which I'd specified to be her uniform. She'd spend her days happily managing my kitchen, preparing all my meals and food for any of the guests I might have over. She was also programmed to be a first-class sommalier and manage my soon-to-be-extensive wine cellar, as well.

I moved to the last one in line and handed over the last of the documents – this one thicker with a visa and passport and citizenship application. The statuesque blonde with the vacant sapphire eyes who'd once been Bobby Morrow curtsied quickly, making her enormous breasts bob and jiggle, as she took them.

“Babette, dear, since you were so quick to empty all my shelves and my safe, as soon as you're dressed I expect you to clean up the mess you girls made and set everything to rights.” I told her. “Then, the new dining table has been delivered and I'd like it waxed.”

Babette Moreau bobbed another quick curtsy. “Mais oui, maitresse,” she said breathily. She continued in a thick French provincial accent. “Straight away. Shall I lay out the black silk Chanel for you today?”

I smiled. “Yes, and the Cartier locket.”

She curtsied again and rushed into her room to clothe herself in the black eight-inch heels with the three-inch platform, the black fishnet thigh-high stockings with white lace trim, the stiff crinoline petticoats beneath the black satin skirt, a black satin corset which shoved her prodigious breasts together almost comically, covered over with a white apron with lace trim and a little lace doily pinned in her lush blonde hair. Black lace fingerless gloves completed the ensemble I'd put together for my perfect little French maid who would clean my house and lay out my clothes and do all the menial tasks I found so distasteful.

“Too bad there weren't four of you,” I muttered as I went back to my office. “I could've used a personal trainer, too.”

* * *

Life with company – even empty-headed bimbo slave-girl company – was considerably brighter than it had been before. They weren't much in the way of conversation – Babette, Gina and Juli could pretty much either talk about their specialties or about clothes, makeup and fucking – but they were fun, lively and vivacious. They kept the house beautifully, just as I'd designed them to, and were someone to talk to as I dragged through the information I was digging up on my intended target, a very shy photographer named Adrian Collier. I was having a delicious lunch of sea scallops in a white wine sauce and a mouth-watering crème brûlée prepared by the skillful manicured hands of Juli with Apryl, who was taking a much-needed long weekend between video shoots.

She was watching Babette dusting the books in the library with an appreciative and somewhat hungry eye.

“You sure made them hot,” she commented, drawing on an imported cigarette languorously as she sipped her Turkish coffee. “But why did you make them so dumb, Momma?”

I grinned. “Call it an object lesson.”

“So tell me about Adrian Collier,” she told me, tossing her long blonde hair over one shoulder in an unconsciously sexy motion and pushing her Versace sunglasses up her slender nose with a long-nailed finger.

“He's a piece of work,” I said, lighting a cigarette from her pack where it sat on the table. “I found an old Meyers-Briggs personality profile of him from his college while I was digging. He's in the top quarter-of-a-percent of the population for introversion. He seldom talks to people, he never goes out and he prefers solitude to any kind of company. I think his darkroom is his favorite place on earth. He's in there for literally hours at a time.”

“Poor thing,” Apryl commented, sipping coffee. “Something terrible must have happened to him when he was young.”

“You'd think so, but no. It's just the way he is. We're extroverts, baby, we get most of our energy and experience from other people. He's the exact opposite.”

“So he doesn't have any social interaction?”

“I didn't say that,” I went on. “He has several valuable social interactions. He's in a photography club, for one thing, and is a member of a co-op gallery. His art shots are quite gorgeous, actually, I took in his latest show yesterday morning. But most important of all, he's into underwater photography, and he's a scuba diver. His dive club meets the first Saturday of every month.”

Apryl's nose crinkled adorably in thought. “Why is that most important?”

I smiled an evil, self-satisfied smile. “Because I don't give a shit how introverted somebody is, nobody – I mean nobody – can resist me in a bikini.”

* * *

Ady Collier broke the surface slowly, paying more attention to his camera than even to his dive buddy, a short-timer named Luke that he didn't know very well and had nothing in common with. He pulled the regulator from his mouth and looked around, trying to get his bearings. He'd followed a particularly striking silver fish – he didn't even know the variety, he'd just known he liked the colors – trying to get a shot and had lost track of his dive party. He surfaced near a public swimming area, which could have been dangerous since there were Jet-Skis around, but it was during the week and the lake crowd wasn't in full force. Not that Ady would've dove during peak times anyway. Too many people.

He raked a hand through his sodden brown hair and looked around, trying to find his dive party, when a breathy soprano reached his ears.

“Lost?”

He spun around in a shower of bubbles to see a Playboy centerfold come to life, stretched languorously on a wooden pier, my tanned skin set off strikingly against the second-skin white bikini I was wearing, her long white-blonde hair throwing highlights in the sun that were hard to look at directly. I was pulling a pair of white designer sunglasses down her long, slender nose with fingers tipped by an expensive manicure.

“A little,” he grunted, his natural reticence to communicate with other human beings making it come out as little more than a grunt.

I pointed across the water, towards a tree-lined bank. "I saw some other scuba divers over there, someplace," I said with a small smile. "Were you with a big bunch of people, honey?"

"Yeah," he said.

"That's a long way to swim, baby," I told him. "You look pretty worn out. Wanna sit up here and rest up a second?" I held up a fresh bottle of water from a small personal cooler next to her towel in long-nailed fingers suggestively.

He thought about it for a moment. Women made him nervous, beautiful women like her doubly so, but he was very tired and it would be nice to catch his breath for a few minutes before tackling the half-mile or so between himself and the bank. Nodding, he pushed himself up onto the dock, hoping I didn't notice the slight bulging in the crotch of his wetsuit the sight of my flawless, tanned body was causing. He sat with his legs over the side of the pier and accepted the water from me with a grunted thanks.

"I'm Merri," I told him amiably.

"Ady," he said back, trying not to make eye contact. I made him very nervous, even more than before now that there was so little distance between us. He'd masturbated to women who looked like me when he was a teenager, and I stirred feelings of urgent, guilty lust that he'd not felt in many years deep inside himself. He retreated from me a little more, hoping I couldn't sense his wild, panicky discomfort.

I did, but dismissed it airily. "Relax, sweetie, I'm not gonna bite you," I told him. "Is that digital?" I asked, pointing at his underwater camera.

"Yeah," he said. "More exposures, y'know, without having to surface and reload."

I smiled. "I still like the look of thirty-five, though. Digital just doesn't have the same texture, I think. I like it, don't get me wrong, but there's just something about film."

"You're a photographer?" he asked, brightening.

"No, baby, I just dabble," I told him. "No, I'm a model. But I'm around photographers an awful lot."

"Oh," he said, a little disappointed.

"Looks like you are, though," I commented, looking at the camera again. "That's a pretty expensive rig."

"Worth it," he said. "I really like underwater shots."

I sat up a little straighter, my perfect breasts glistening under the thin coating of tanning oil I'd applied. "What other kinds of work do you do?"

"Whatever I can get. Portraits, sometimes, some gallery stuff. I'd take drivers' license photos if it paid the rent," he said to his navel, still unwilling to look this gorgeous creature in the eye.

"Well, baby, I'm always looking for new talent," I said. "I'd love to see some of your work, and if I like what I see, maybe hire you for some shots. Glamour stuff, mostly, and some swimsuit work, maybe even a couple nudes if they were tasteful. I get work all the time – there could be a lot more than just rent money in it for you if I like your stuff. Interested?"

He cleared his throat and blushed beet red. "I, uh... my portfolio's in my car."

"Awesome," I said, bouncing a little and making my anatomy move in a deliciously terrifying way for him. "Tell me where you're parked, honey, and I'll meet you there."

He tried desperately both to look and not to look as I stood and bent – my pert ass mere inches from his face – to gather up my iPod, towel, tote-bag and cooler. I slid my painted toes into a pair of high-heeled cork wedges with white – of course – vinyl uppers. He stood in a torrent of droplets and a clatter of dive equipment, raking his hand through his hair nervously and slipping his feet out of the fins he was still wearing. With a start and a bout of near-panic that made him slightly nauseous, he realized I was waiting for him to offer me an arm. I took it lightly, pushing my divine body against his, firm in all the right places, yielding in all the others, and gazed at him levelly with clear blue eyes.

"You're taller than you look," I said with a hint of a smile.

"My car's over there," he said, motioning with his head.

"Lead on," I said, pressing my breasts against his arm, and he spent the walk in meaningless small-talk and pleasantries, fighting the urge to run from me while wishing beyond hope that the walk would never end.

A breathless, uncomfortable eternity later, we made our way to his somewhat-the-worse-for-wear Honda Accord. He slung his tank and regulator unceremoniously into the trunk, adding his fins and mask as well, and then quickly shucked his wetsuit while leaning against his back fender. He'd actually forgotten I was there for a moment, so lost in the repetitive, habitual tasks of stripping off after a dive, but snapped back to reality with a jerk when he noticed me looking at him appraisingly from across the trunk.

"Nice bod," I said in a sort of throaty purr. "You work out."

"Just a little," he mumbled, completely flabbergasted. "There's, uh... my dad had a heart attack when he was forty-two. I try to exercise."

"You do more than try, honey," I said, my eyes narrowed a little hungrily. "So, where's this portfolio you were telling me about? Why don't we grab a drink up at the club, there, and you can take me through it?"

"Uh... okay. I guess."

I fake-fanned my face. "I ask you for a drink and get 'uh, okay I guess.' You sure know how to make a girl feel appreciated," I teased gently.

I'd thought he couldn't retreat his chin any further into his chest, but I was wrong. "Sorry. I, uh... don't meet a lot of new people."

"So you're bad at this," I told him, taking his arm again. "I'm okay with that."

We walked into the little run-down bar and bait shop that overlooked the parking lot of the boat ramp where Ady was parked. I got immediate service with a glittering smile to the hippie bartender, ordered two beers and sat near the end of the rickety bar with Ady, leaning intentionally close to him so he could see big expanses of my tempting, oiled cleavage.

"This is really impressive stuff," I said, leafing through his rather well-done portfolio. He had talent, that was certain, but there was a self-indulgent air to his work; his lack of contact, his

isolation from the people and the world around him showed in the images he captured, as though he were taking these just for himself and then displaying them for everyone and expecting them to appreciate the world the same way he did. I was able to overlook that, however, in light of the fact that he was quite a talented photographer. I particularly liked his landscapes and nature photography.

"Thanks," he mumbled into his beer.

"Ady, I'd like to set up a shoot with you," I told him. "My last guy's stuff didn't really do anything for me. You play with composition and color more than he did, and I like your natural eye."

"Really?"

"Mm-hm. I work out three hours a day to sculpt and tone this body, and I consider it to be a work of art. I'd appreciate having a photographer who shot me with the same appreciation, instead of just cheesecake," I told him. "I don't pose for auto parts calendars for a reason. Besides, I've seen the way you look at me. I don't have any trouble believing that your shots of me wouldn't be very appreciative."

He blushed again and looked away. "I'll do my best," he said in a strangled gasp, his nerves stretched almost to the breaking point.

"I know you will. How's your Thursday?" I asked.

* * *

So not only did I now have a brilliant set of photographs for my reel – bikini shots, headshots and some really delicious nudes – but I was holding my newest, beautiful daughter as she squirmed warmly against my sweat-slick breast, her little green eyes sparkling up at me merrily and with total devotion and love. She'd giggled and squirmed with every new voice and presence that had come into the room as Stephen has come and set up his equipment and ushered in his technical crew, the crippling shyness she'd known in her former life now completely gone.

"This one's going to be a little tougher, Merri, for both of us," Stephen was explaining as I set the baby to my breast to suck after the first round of baby pictures. "You're going to have to spend a lot of time apart from her, since we have to film her."

I looked at him with something like shock in my blue eyes. "But I'm just getting to know her," I complained, holding her closer to my naked breast protectively.

"I know," Stephen said patiently. "And there will be time, I promise. But not now. This little girl is easily going to be twice as much work as your others. And I already have another mission for you to pass the time, and I've decided to go ahead and let you change yourself a best friend or two so you won't be so lonely."

"That doesn't help much," I grumped, watching the infant suckle me and turn, inexorably, into a cherubic little apple-cheeked toddler with a shock of red curls.

"I know," he sighed. "I'm sorry. But it has to be this way. We have to be very careful in how we construct this one's career, or the whole house of cards could come down around our ears."

I looked at the smiling, freckle-faced toddler who'd once been the socially inept Adrian Michael Collier as I accepted the obligatory manila envelope from Stephen's hand. I pulled

out the birth certificate and other identification for Adrienne Michelle Colt, my newest daughter, soon to be on track to be Hollywood's newest A-list actress. Heather had been on the phone day and night trying to set up her 'career,' which would consist of several very good and very edgy independent films which were due to start shooting tomorrow. My job was almost done, and she'd be taken from my arms and pushed onto film sets before I'd even gotten to hold her, it seemed like.

"I'm not okay with this, Stephen," I warned him as he began taking more photographs so I could change her into a snaggle-toothed six-year-old who would star in the school play the techs were setting up in the next room.

"I know you're not, Merri," he said. "But this is important."

"They're all important," I shot back. "Adrienne's gonna need her mama."

"And she'll have her," Stephen said, taking the smiling child away from me. "Juts not now."

I fought bitter tears as Stephen handed her off to a slender brunette with thick glasses who was dressing her in a Snow White costume.

* * *

"So it was just that, Momma? Just for my career?" Adrienne asked, her Hollywood-glam face losing a bit of its uncharacteristic darkness and lighting up into a bright smile. She placed a warm hand over mine and squeezed.

"I was afraid you'd think I didn't love you or something," I said in a small voice, sipping wine to cover the lump in my throat. Adrienne was now a lissome, willowy fantasy, high-breasted and long-limbed, toggled out in her scandalously expensive clothing and jewelry, but her trademark mop of windblown red curls – even tucked into a Calvin Klein baseball cap as they were right now – gave her away. The trade magazines were buzzing hotly about her casting in the newest summer blockbuster, the one that would put her on the red carpet by summer, and the indie movie she'd shot while several years younger was a strong runner for a prize at Sundance. Stephen had constructed her career beautifully. No one could possibly know that Adrienne hadn't been doing films since her eighteenth birthday. But in the month since I'd seen her, she'd changed, going from the wide-eyed girl I'd handed to Stephen to a polished, almost-too-smooth Hollywood starlet who was one the fast track to being a paparazzi darling. I'd missed so much.

She puffed on an imported cigarette and gave me a comforting smile. "Of course I didn't think that, Mama. I could never think that. Stephen explained most of it to me, and kept reminding me. I just needed to hear it from you, that's all."

"I know you're busy," I said, lighting a cigarette of my own and sitting back from the table on my back porch where we'd just finished one of Juli's exquisite lunches, "and I know the paparazzi won't let you come over and hang out without raising a lot of questions about who the hell I am. But can we spend a little more time together, d'you think? I feel like I barely know you."

"I'll make the time, Mama," she said. "We may be shut-ins, just to avoid cameras, but we can hang out all you want. I promise."

"Shut-in doesn't bother me, baby," I told her. "I have a Playstation."

“I get the drums,” she told me happily, bouncing up and running into the house on her expensive Ferragamo slides. I was trotting happily right behind her, giggling, her hand still in mine.

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Five

by Valerie Hope

I LOOKED AROUND THE LADEN dinner table, groaning with the efforts of Juli's finest work, but my mind was far away from the sumptuous fare that my little culinary slave-girl had put out. It was the first time since I'd been changed from a two-bit petty thief named Murray Ryan into the luscious blonde bombshell of "Typhoid" Merri Ryan that I'd been in a room with all my beautiful, perfect daughters at the same time. I couldn't keep the ecstatic smile from my face, just watching my beautiful girls standing around, chatting happily, sipping wine from my first-class wine cellar and just generally enjoying both themselves and one another.

Heather Martinson, of course, was the centerpiece of any gathering. My first – and sometimes I found myself thinking finest – daughter since my transformation, the petite blonde in the tailored slate-grey Versace business suit, her natural honey-blond curls pulled back in a stylish chignon, dominated any room she walked into without effort. She had a no-nonsense, self-assured air that just screamed "I'm in charge" and everyone else just seemed to fall in behind her as a matter of course. No matter that she was editor-in-chief of Flirt! Magazine, the highest-circulating women's magazine in the world right now and quickly becoming one of the richest and most influential women in the city, her pure effervescent personality and computer-enhanced knack for organization cast her in a leadership role no matter where she was or what she was doing. To my knowledge, the only person on earth that the stacked blonde executive took anything resembling an order from was me. But any good girl should listen to her Mama. I could barely remember the lank hair, ripe smell, pot belly and total lack of ambition that had been Heath Martinson, the lump on my moth-eaten couch from a lifetime ago. I was so proud that I'd helped that person become such a shining, bright star.

She was talking to Dani Kelly, the hottest young pop star in music right now. She was the typical bubblegum-pop teenybopper blonde, with a perky little tight body and 'done' tits which struggled constantly to pop out of the top of her spaghetti-strap pink tank with 'Princess' picked out across her breasts in rhinestones. Second-skin jeans hugged a body that fueled adolescent fantasies the world over, and her smoky voice and suggestive lyrics even drew in the older crowd, as well as her innovative beats and background as a club DJ that we'd manufactured for her. No trace of the sullen, withdrawn songwriter she'd been when I met her as Daniel Kellerman remained. Her bright, infectious smile and tinkling laugh rose above the general hum of chit-chat like a joyous chorus every time Heather cracked a joke. Those two girls had a special bond, my Heather and my precious little Danyelle – Dani was very fond of her big sister, depending on her for advice about careers and boys and publicity, and Heather had put Dani on the map by doing a huge feature on her in Flirt! only a few short months ago.

The tallest of my girls, April Kent leaned against my antique Edwardian sideboard with a glass of wine in her hand, idly playing with her platinum blonde, teased coiffure with a long-nailed finger as she smiled and nodded to the conversation she was having. Diamonds sparkled against her tanned neck, wrists and fingers and dangled teasingly from her ears and a low-cut burgundy cocktail dress hugged every luscious, tempting curve tight, exposing smooth, well-muscled thighs and a deep valley of cleavage between two perfect, spherical breasts. Her nipples poked teasing little tents in the cups of the designer dress and the black platform stiletto heels she wore on her dainty feet made her seem even taller. In my mind, she would always be April Kent, the perfect girl I'd made from the sleazy stalker and misogynist Averil Kent, but the rest of the world knew her as Apryl Raines, the most popular porn star in history. She'd been filmed in every conceivable sexual act with every kind and number of partners, her naked sweating body carpeted the Internet and her videos were the highest rented and bought in the industry. Far from the typical mother, though, her exploits made me proud and happy, and I'd seen my beloved daughter in several of her movies, thrilled at her prowess and lack of inhibition and also encouraging of her desire to learn to act, to bring some sense of drama and formal training to the afterthought scripts she was given in her films.

She was talking with a much shorter woman, a slender redhead with playful sprays of freckles across her shoulders and her button nose. She had a way of moving and speaking that drew every eye, even standing next to the sparkling, statuesque April, and even though she was dressed down in an understated Chanel black cocktail dress and had dark bug-eye glasses pushed into her dark auburn bangs which had hidden most of the porcelain perfection of her face, she was still magnetic in her ability to draw and hold the eye. Of all my daughters, she was the one I knew the least well, having had her taken from me early in order to launch her impressive career – three independent movies which had taken awards at Sundance and Cannes and a summer blockbuster which was the highest box-office draw of the year. I'd seen it four times. We'd only just been able to connect with one another the way we both wanted, since she had a two-month hiatus in which to rest and recuperate before starting principal photography on a film which would surely put her high in the running for her first Oscar. She'd agreed to an exclusive interview and cover shoot for Heather and Flirt! later this week, but other than that her goal was to hang out with me in my palatial mansion – bought for me with Heather's millions – and keep a very low profile, away from the flock of relentless paparazzi that followed her every move. Yes, Adrienne Colt was a household name, with dozens of Internet shrines in her honor and a lucrative contract in the works with L'Oreal Paris cosmetics. I remembered her as a painfully shy, reclusive but talented photographer so socially awkward that he couldn't look people in the eye. I felt Ady Collier's change was definitely for the better – the man she'd used to be was miserable in his anxiety and seclusion. Even the constant hounding of the tabloids and the everpresent adoring attention she received on a daily basis couldn't dent Adrienne's everpresent good mood and heartfelt smile.

To one side of the room, in a satin dress puffed wide with crinolines that exposed her creamy thighs, a white lace apron and fishnet thigh-high stockings, her white-blonde hair piled in elaborate curls and sapphire eyes downcast to the significant expanse of her enormous tits and her face made up garishly, somewhere between cartoon and whore while still remaining sexy and not ridiculous, was the ringleader of the trio of men who'd once tried to rob and beat me. My perfect little oversexed, submissive French maid now, Babette awaited the chance to fulfill my, or any of my guests', slightest whims. She would brand herself like livestock if any of us told her two, and be delighted enough to have a shuddering orgasm to do it. She was far

and away the most sexually submissive and brainlessly vapid of my staff, Gina Starr who did my nails, hair and makeup and Juli Mosier who cooked my gourmet meals. Even though they'd once tried to do me harm in my own home, I found myself thinking of them as beloved pets – not daughters, not like my girls, mostly because I fucked them on a regular basis – or sometimes even students, since I'd made them all stupid enough to need help mastering the most trivial things. But I loved them nonetheless, even though they were a product of my vengeance. I treasured their devotion and their company, and was beginning to feel something akin to a possessive friendship towards them all.

I tapped a knife against the side of my crystal champagne flute and got the room's attention with the clarion chiming. Dozens of beautiful, bright eyes – doe-brown, emerald and sparkling sky – turned towards me with utter love and acceptance that made me almost want to cry with the sheer happiness of it.

“My babies, my darlings, I'm so glad you are all here,” I said in a voice husky with unspoken emotion. “I wanted to have a little party, just to say how glad I am you're all in my life. I love you all so much, I just can't even tell you.”

“We love you too, Momma,” April said, tears sparkling in her long eyelashes.

“And I'm so proud of you all,” I said. “You're all so gifted and talented, and so dedicated. I hope you all know, when you're out there doing what you do so well, how much your Momma loves you and how often she thinks about you.

“Anyway, enough of the mushy stuff,” I continued. “This party isn't just an excuse to see you. It's actually a celebration. It's to congratulate Heather, whose circulation just passed thirty million, making Flirt! the most popular and widely-read women's magazine in the history of American publishing.”

Lushly-lipped mouths turned to wide oh's of excitement and surprise as every eye turned to Heather and bright smiles lit up my dining room. They rushed at her in a knot to gather her up in congratulatory hugs and kisses, and the hum of best wishes echoed in the wood-paneled room.

“Now, everybody, let's all sit down and enjoy ourselves,” I bade. “You all have to tell me everything you've been doing since the last time I saw you. Babette, have Juli bring in the first course, please?”

Babette bobbed a quick curtsy and a melodious “Oui, Maitresse” as she ducked out the door towards the kitchen. My daughters took their seats in a happy babble of disparate conversations which I tried to follow as best I could, finally subsiding in a happy fog as I just looked from one beautiful face to another, so happy to just be near them again.

* * *

“So you see the problem, Momma?” Heather was asking over brandy and Cuban cigars in my botanical garden after dinner. The other girls were watching me intently, having listened carefully to Heather's dilemma and anxious to hear my answer.

The dilemma, if it could be called that, was Esoteric Publishing, LLC. It was the company that owned Flirt! and was not staffed. And it was now swollen with a massive influx of cash from the success of the magazine. Heather was stretched very thin as editor and as my assistant, even with her genetically-designed improvements such as hyper-concentration and a

decreased need for sleep. She needed someone to manage the company, and the charitable foundation, and the growing number of subsidiaries that Esoteric was going to need in order to do what it was designed to do; to finance my ongoing missions and the huge expenditures involved in manufacturing identities and pasts for these women who, although fully adult and mature, were none older than six months.

“What has Stephen said?” I asked, thinking fondly of the dark-haired, quiet man whose job it was to supply the pasts and documents for my girls on the days of their birth. His flawless work was already under scrutiny and holding up incredibly, as the videos and photographs taken were being used now in Dani's episode of *Behind the Music* and Adrienne's episodes of *A&E Biography* and *E! True Hollywood Story*. I had a bigger-than-normal crush on him, I'd found, but I'd never even begun to express it. Our jobs were far too important. Still, the thought of him naked delighted me more than I expected, as did the thought of him volunteering to one day become Stephanie and move in with me as lover and best friend. But I doubted he'd go for either option. Actually, I didn't know much about Stephen at all. He came from the mysterious, shadow organization based at the university which had originally created me. I was under strict orders to ask no questions or make no inquiries as to who they were or why they were doing any of the things they were doing. I was assured that they had a plan, and I was a huge part of that plan.

“He said it was up to you,” Heather said. “Please, Momma. I could hire someone, of course, find someone to manage that money and not ask too many questions, but it would be so much easier if you just, y'know, made me one.”

I smiled and patted her hand, which was clutching my forearm in supplication. “Of course, baby, of course. Do you have someone in mind?”

She giggled and bounced – not many people got to see the eternal little girl inside her, and I was honored and amused – and dug in her Louis Vuitton purse, clamping the Cuban Montecristo cigar between glistening pink lips in a sexy pout as she handed me over a thick folder.

I leafed through it as the other girls gathered around tightly behind me, their breasts pressing into my back, to look over my shoulder.

“He's perfect for what I need, Momma,” Heather was saying, puffing on her cigar. “His name is Holland Brody, and he's a money launderer for illegal drug manufacturers. He's forgotten more about moving money around – legally and illegally – than most people have ever known. And he's never been caught. That's how good he is. I want him, Momma.”

I looked at the balding man through narrowed eyes. Even the photograph gave me a sense of sleazy and dangerous that both alarmed me and made my pussy wet with anticipation. He was a slightly overweight, balding man with a pronounced squint and a total lack of compassion in his dark eyes.

“How do I get to him?” I asked Heather.

“Oh, he'll be easy,” Heather said, giving me a bright smile. “He likes strippers.”

I grinned. “Better go find my clear platform heels,” I said, grinning evilly.

* * *

The thundering backbeat of the club was infectious, and I found myself moving to it subconsciously, even though I'd just finished my turn on stage. I'd twirled around the pole and found my g-string stuffed with dollar bills until it looked like a bizarre tutu, and had several in the ankle-straps of my eight-inch heels with the three-inch platform as well. I was loving every second of this, my 'cover identity,' as a brainless hard-drinking stripper with the stage name of "Ashlynn" who brought down loads of cash every night and did cocaine in the bathroom with all her sexy, topless friends. I got to make out with girls for twenty-dollar bills for the amusement of male patrons, and make out with them more in the dressing room just because it wasn't entirely for the amusement of the men. I'd even used my talents of transformation to give some of them a little boost – I took away what would one day be cervical cancer in a sweet black girl stage-named Alexxis and wiped away the beginnings of diabetes in a cute willowy Asian flower stage-named Allisyn, and given a cellular-level 'boob job' to a gorgeous but somewhat shy little pale-skinned teenager named Kaycee (stage- and real name) who was hands down the most spectacular kisser I'd ever encountered in either of my incarnations.

And I'd made huge inroads into the area of Holland Brody. He was by far the easiest of my marks up to date – I'd simply walked up, plopped my tight, muscular ass into his lap, given his cock a squeeze through his pants, lit a cigarette and ordered a tequila sunrise, and he was pretty much mine from the time I said "Hi, I'm Ashlynn" and he mumbled a long-forgotten reply right to my sweet-scented cleavage. It had been a while since I'd gotten the chance to play, actually, so I dragged it out a little, filling his fantasies with my steamy, just-this-side-of-getting-us-thrown-out-of-the-strip-club lap dances but not making the offer to take him home with me.

I made my way across the club on my titanic heels and slid my ass into his lap, which was already hardening just at the sight and scent of me, kissing his sweaty cheek. He put an arm across my lap and signalled a waitress for my usual – Patrón and orange juice – without my even having to ask. I took one look at his shifty eyes, hearing the increasingly desperate and irritated voicemails I'd been getting from Heather in my head, demanding to know what was taking so fucking long, and decided that tonight was the night.

I lost track of the conversation several times, just going with the flow of being an airheaded stripper bimbo, which was where my mind actually longed to dwell, but making sure that I drank too much so that Holland would have his "in," an offer to drive me home that would have been chivalrous if not for the hungry glint in his eyes. I accepted and piled into his Porsche, making all the requisite noises of admiration, and buying his lame excuse that he needed to drop by his place "just for a second" for something important and then following him to the front door with wide, innocent eyes because I "could come in for a second if I wanted."

I willed myself to steady up, concentrating through the pleasant haze of alcohol and the three bumps of coke I'd done in the bathroom and forcing myself to exude the sweat I knew, now, held some kind of synthetic pheromone that made men absolutely unable to resist me. I'd played with the idea of using it to make male retail clerks give me discounts and maybe try to use it to talk people into doing what I wanted them to do, but so far it only made them highly aroused and interested only in tearing off my clothes the way Holland was doing right now. I kissed him and sank to my knees and laved attention on his smallish cock with my lips and tongue until I got that unerring sense of him I knew was the key to his transformation. He was an evil fucker, to be sure, I thought as he sawed his cock into me on my hands and knees, ruthless and domineering and completely uncaring of anyone else in his quest for riches and power. I grunted and squealed to please him but I felt little of what I was expressing – Holland

was a very selfish lay, interested primarily in his own pleasure and in allaying his own deep-seated fears of sexual inadequacy – I doubted he cared if I was having any fun at all. I doubt he even viewed me as a person.

Which all meant that I felt not a moment's remorse as I slid his hard cock into my waiting mouth and dragged the little hairlike 'needles' on my tongue into the underside of his member and let go with whatever it was I injected into my intended targets to start their transformation, even before he came – usually the intensity of the orgasm was enough to mask the pain of my 'venom,' but this time I didn't care.

He hissed and his eyes grew wide. “Ow! Shit! You fucking bitch, you bit me!”

“Oh, way better than that, baby,” I purred, watching his eyes roll back into his head and helping him sink to the couch, where he slumped unconscious and began to physically deflate in the way I knew so well. I wiped my spit from my chin with a Kleenex and dialed Stephen as I waited for my newest daughter to be brought into the world.

Usually my daughters became exactly the way I pictured them when I let myself fantasize. But I'd left Holland's picture intentionally hazy, just to see what would happen, concentrating primarily on personality. I wanted my newest daughter to be very little like Holland Brody if I could help it, but I needed her to have the ruthlessness and killer instinct of a successful business executive. So I tried to temper it by making her sweet, compassionate and utterly dedicated to good work and the benefit of others, a truly selfless person. I was very curious to see what would happen, and tore through the useless, boneless skin that had once been the money launderer to reveal a pale, squirming baby with a lusty cry and a shocking mop of thick black hair. Brown, twinkling eyes sparkled up at me and she smiled a wet, gummy smile as she kicked her fat little feet in joy at being alive, and released from her fleshy prison.

Stephen was there quickly, his crew loading in their equipment silently as always, looking a little the worse for wear at the late hour. I watched them happily, their presence associated in my mind with the birth of a new little girl. Stephen stopped in front of me, an enigmatic smile on his face.

“You look beautiful like that,” he told me quietly.

I smiled, a little breathless. “I do?”

He nodded. “Happy. Like there's nothing wrong in the world.”

I held the squirming, kicking baby against my breasts. “There isn't, right now.”

He stroked my shoulder – the first time he'd ever touched me – and then shook himself, snapping himself back to his brisk, all-business personality. “Right,” he said, clapping his hands softly. “First things first. Let's get this little girl some new identity.”

He passed me the obligatory manila envelope – the same unadorned, plain jacket that held the identification papers for all my girls – and went to his place in the middle of the silent bedlam of his crew. I slit the top of the envelope, my strange sort of ceremony that heralded the end of Holland Victor Brody and the fresh, new beginning for Holly Victoria Broding, my precious daughter, my little angel full of new hope and beginning. That same swelling, all-encompassing happiness suffused me until I felt sure it must be leaking from every pore in my body as I passed the baby to the crew to take pictures and begin their painstaking construction of her past and childhood. I knew, from conversations with April and Dani, that any 'memories'

that the team constructed would be as real to her as if they'd really happened, so I made my way back to Stephen's side, wrapping my naked body in a warm robe handed to me by one of his silent crew members.

"I didn't really flesh out her personality this time," I told him, watching the baby portraits the photographers were taking. "I was in a little bit of a rush."

"That will be interesting," Stephen commented.

"So I was wondering," I told him, "Could you give her a happy childhood? Make it fun for her?"

He smiled and put his hand back on my forearm. I couldn't suppress a little thrill of contact. "Sure," he said. "I'd be honored. Brody was kind of a miserable prick, wasn't he?"

I nodded. "I didn't like him very much, but then again, he had a pretty crappy childhood. Foster homes, abusive parents, drugs... he may have even been molested once or twice in there. I want to give Holly so much better than that."

"It'll make a huge difference in who she is," Stephen agreed. "Merri, you're a real soft touch, you know that?"

"Can I help it if I want the best for my baby girls?" I asked in return.

He leaned in and kissed my cheek, and I jumped a little. For the last six months, Stephen had never even touched me, now three times in one night and one of them a kiss? Was the great Wall of Ice finally starting to warm up to me, or was it just that he was beginning to succumb to my sexual charm? The air in the room was still full of my pheromones – I could smell the sharp, musky scent – and maybe they were finally starting to take effect on him?

"What's gotten into you?" I asked him, eyes wide.

He chuckled, a very warm sound – I realized I hadn't heard him laugh before – and laced his fingers behind his head. "Just been thinking, is all."

"Thinking about what?"

"Your offer," he said. "I look at you, Merri – you're so happy now. Nothing like you were, you know, before. Life for you is an exciting, joyous thing. And when I see you sitting there, those little babies in your arms. You... glow. I've never felt anything that could make me look the way you look, so utterly content and at peace with the world."

"I can't even begin to describe it," I told him.

He scrubbed a hand across his beard stubble. "You just got me thinking, is all."

"Thinking?"

"Yeah," he confirmed. "I don't have a lot in my life, you know. This job, and you and your girls. That means a lot to me, don't get me wrong, but I still go home to an empty house, no wife and no kids, nothing but my work. I suffer from depression, you know. I take pills, and they help a little, but... they don't fill up my house, or take away some of the choices I've made."

I put an arm around him. "I'm so sorry, baby," I told him softly.

“You know, I've given you a lot of those envelopes since we've met,” he said, nodding in the general direction of the discarded manila envelope that had held Holly's birth certificate and Social Security card. “I guess I'm still wondering if I should give you this one.” He pulled another plain envelope out of his coat partway, just enough to let me see it.

“Whose is that?” I asked.

“Mine,” he said. “You offered me a new life, in exchange for being your best friend. I can't say the offer isn't tempting.”

My eyes must have been like saucers, because he laughed and gave me a reassuring squeeze. “Don't worry, I haven't made up my mind just yet,” he chuckled. “I don't want to rush into anything, particularly something irreversible like this. But I did want to tell you that I was intrigued, and curious enough to stay up half the night making myself a set of documents. But compared to the life I lead right now, Merri, I have to say – the thought of being around you and your daughters all the time, of being like you – it's pretty fucking tempting.”

“Oh, honey, I would make you so beautiful,” I told him, holding him tight. “The most beautiful girl you've ever seen. And so intelligent, and strong...”

He caressed my face, and I almost melted. “I know you would. You're a kind soul, Merri, no matter who you used to be. But it's a big decision.”

“Of course. Sorry.”

He chuckled again. “I want to talk to you some more about this,” he told me. “I have some questions I want to ask you. But in the meantime, we have a long night, and it sounds like Holly's getting a little hungry.”

I nodded, and bared a breast as I stepped through the crowd of photographers and technicians towards my fussy little girl.

* * *

Holly finished at the mirror set up in her old place by straightening the silk scarf she wore around her slender neck, spraying a little mist of Chanel #5 on her wrists and the sides of her neck, and perching her designer rimless Armani eyeglasses on her slender nose. As the first of my daughters who wouldn't be in front of a camera her whole career, she was the first who didn't have flawless skin, and an adorable little-girl spray of freckles adorned her cute nose. Not as va-va-va-voom as my other girls, Holly was elegant – tilted eyes whose so-brown-as-to-be-black depths reflected a staggering intelligence, high arching eyebrows and a very slender face, a wide expressive mouth with thin lips and a ready smile, and a truly awe-inspiring cascade of dense chestnut curls which hung halfway down her back unless, as they were now, restrained in a twist, bun or chignon. She was slender and small-breasted (well, at least compared to my other girls, Holly sported a full B cup), trim and athletic. She had a poise and polish that made the Dior suit she was wearing look right on her, and the slim attaché case in her elegantly manicured hand suited her. She wore a black alligator Gucci purse over one shoulder and dripped with expensive but tasteful jewelry. Only Stephen and I knew about the pierced navel and tattoos, about the well-hidden and unsuspected 'wild side' she'd developed since I hadn't tried so hard to script her every personality trait.

“You look wonderful, darling,” I told her with a bright smile. “Absolutely gorgeous.”

She offered me a shy smile that transformed and brightened her entire face. It had been a long night and a long morning, and we were all a little the worse for wear. I touched up my disheveled hair and she stopped me with a soft hand on my wrist.

“Don’t,” she said. “You look beautiful.”

“I suppose you’re ready to start getting yourself settled in your new place.”

“Actually, I’m more concerned with my new office,” she replied.

I nodded. “Of course. That would be your first thought. I’m sure Stephen will get you set up.”

She kissed my cheek, leaving a tiny smudge of terra-cotta pink Lancôme lipstick on me that she scrubbed gently with a thumb. “Just as soon as I get acquainted with my staff, Mother, I want to have lunch with you. Stephen told me how upset you were when he had to take Adrienne away so quickly. I’m not going to let that happen with us. We’re going to spend lots of time together, I promise.”

“You’re so sweet,” I said with a tinge of relief – I’d made her into a ballbreaker of a business tycoon, a ruthless and no-nonsense robber-baroness, and I’d hoped that Stephen’s touches in constructing her childhood would give her a sweet and soft heart. I had not been disappointed so far.

I gestured to some of the pictures they’d taken of her – Halloween costumes, a school play where her cherub-faced 8-year-old incarnation was dressed as an adorable ear of corn, a knobby-kneed colt of a teenage girl in a cheerleading uniform and a mouth full of braces smiling widely – and smiled. “You have quite the happy childhood to reflect on,” I commented.

“Yeah,” she agreed. “But – strangely – I don’t like thinking about it very much. I’d rather focus on what’s happening today, and what’s going to happen tomorrow.”

“It’s natural,” I said. “All my girls are like that.”

She straightened up and tugged her tailored blazer straight, then selected a white rose from a bouquet in a vase on the dressing table and tucked it into her lapel with a private, secret smile. “I suppose I should get to work,” she said. “I have a lot to do, and Heather’s already sent me, like, seventeen emails.”

I chuckled. “The two of you are cut from the same cloth.”

She fixed me with a level eye. “You know, Mother, she is my big sister. And sisters fight. We’re supposed to. I don’t want it to upset you, okay? She and I are going to get into it with one another – we’re two very different people with very different ideas – but it’s nothing personal.”

I nodded. “Just as long as you both remember that you are sisters,” I warned her. “Family comes first, before money and before business and before boys.”

“Of course it does,” she reassured me.

“And you should both probably be careful not to let your arguments get to the point where Momma has to step in,” I went on. “Neither one of you would enjoy the solutions I’d come up with.”

She giggled, a tinkling happy sound. "I'm sure. Look, I promise, Mother – when we're off the clock, we're sisters. But when we're on the clock, we're executives. We have to do business, Mother. It's what I was born for."

"No, baby, it wasn't," I told her. "You were born to be my daughter, and to be happy and healthy and satisfied. That's the only thing I care about, Holly, no matter how many millions you make, or how many you lose."

She hugged me. "I'll see you at lunch, Mother," she said, but it wasn't a dismissal – she'd been shooting quick little glances at the platinum Rolex on her slender wrist since we'd begun talking. I'd given her a near-obsessive drive to manage her time.

"I can't wait, baby," I told her, determined to get at least one Momma out of her before it was all said and done – she was the only one of my girls that called me Mother and I was going to baby and sweetie and princess her until she cracked.

She was gone in a flash, a cellphone already against her ear and her quick, bowl-you-over stride made her staggeringly expensive Gucci pumps click-clack loudly against the tiles in the entryway. She shouldered fearlessly past burly workmen who were bringing in her new furniture and removing the old. I watched her go with a distant, faraway smile.

"She's really something, isn't she?" Stephen asked as she disappeared behind the crowd of workers and technicians.

"She really is," I replied. "Funny, I don't feel quite the same about her as I do my others. She's more her own woman. It's a different kind of connection."

"Well, you let her develop more on her own. She's much closer to the man she used to be than your other daughters," he told me.

"I hope that doesn't go too far," I mentioned.

"It won't," he said, giving me another of those rare smiles. "Holland Brody's only mother was a meth-addicted, abusive prostitute. Having a mother who loves you makes an incredible difference in a person's life."

I leaned my head against his shoulder and sighed. "So. About, um..."

"Our friendship?" he offered.

"Right. Our friendship," I confirmed. "You said you had some questions to ask me. Well, take me to breakfast and ask them."

He put a hand on my shoulder and turned me to face him, brushing a stray strand of blonde hair out of my face and riveting me with a searching stare. "Really, I only have three questions."

"Okay, then, shoot," I said, a little breathless, wishing he would lean in and kiss me but completely focused on his questions.

"First is... will it hurt?"

He looked so vulnerable, so like a little boy at that moment that I had to caress his face. "I don't know, honey," I said. "I mean, I don't think I would regress you all the way back to a baby. The only ones I've changed that way are Heather, Gina, Juli and Babette. The last three,

they wouldn't even know – I didn't leave a brain left in their pretty little heads, I'm afraid to say. But Heather never mentioned that it was painful, or even uncomfortable. I could call her and ask her, though – we haven't talked about her birthday very much.”

“Maybe later,” he said. “Second, do I have any input into what I look like, what kind of woman I'd become?”

“Of course you would, baby,” I said softly. “I have to imagine what you're going to be, and you can totally help me do that. I mean, I'd have to leave you good at your job, right, because we couldn't find anyone else to do it in any reasonable amount of time.”

“Oh,” he said. “I hadn't even thought about that. Mostly, though, I was wondering if I'd be able to have a baby of my own. Y'know, the proper way. I see how happy it makes you, after all, and I just found myself wondering...”

I put a finger across his soft lips. “We're real girls, baby. In every sense. Now, what's the third thing?”

He blushed scarlet but didn't look away when he said, “You know how you change people, right?”

“By fucking them, you mean?”

“Right,” he said. “I was wondering... is there any way we can do it for fun before we did it for the transformation?”

* * *

He'd been everything in a lover I'd wanted him to be – shy, grateful, masterful and a little nervous. I'd been straddling him, riding him with my white-blonde hair floating around my shoulders even with its slight sheen of exertion-sweat, and I collapsed against his chest, the aftershocks of my last screaming orgasm still making me tremble, and listened to his heart beating in his ribcage.

“You're amazing,” he whispered to me.

“No,” I said, my blush disappearing into the flush of my arousal across my cheeks and the tops of my bouncing breasts. “I'm just me.”

“I like just you,” he said.

I looked deeply into his fathomless eyes. “Are you sure you want to do this, baby? I can't take it back, once it starts. You have options, you know – you can move in with me, we can be lovers...”

He kissed me in mid-sentence. “No,” he said. “As wonderful as this has been, I really want this. The more I think about it, the more perfect it sounds.”

I had no need of pheromones this time, and I'd been suffused with a sense of him since our first tentative kiss in my entry hall. Sliding off of him – he was still delightfully hard, and I missed the stiff invader the moment it was gone from inside me – I knelt before him and gave his cock a few gentle strokes as I gazed up at him adoringly. I wouldn't go so far as to say I loved him – I barely knew him, after all, but he had been gentle and kind and a beautiful lover, so I couldn't resist feeling a touch of devotion.

I closed my eyes and focused on the picture of the woman he'd described to me. Long-limbed and athletic – an ex-gymnast and ballerina, he'd said – with porcelain skin free from the slightest blemish, milk-white and smoother than smooth. Delicate feet and hands, slender wrists and ankles. A tiny wasp-waist nipped in from slender hips, a flat-as-a-plank belly dimpled only by a muscular six-pack that screamed feminine softness.

I'd argued for half-an-hour about the size of the woman's breasts. Stephen believed that less was more, but I'd persuaded him that his height and his build was better suited for larger; I'd finally won out by my description of just the sheer femininity of big tits, how undeniably woman they could make a person feel. We'd compromised on D-cups, a little shy of what I found attractive but still big enough to make a pleasant double handful. I imagined them high on her chest, perky and firm, youthful and tight.

She had a very long, slender neck made for seven-row chokers, supporting a delicate heart-shaped face dominated by almost-too-large green, sparkling emerald eyes. A full mouth, with bee-stung lips in a permanent pout, and high cheekbones. High, arched eyebrows and a narrow forehead. All in all reminiscent of Jessica Alba, to be honest, but much paler and the face framed with a thick, shiny mop of tight copper-red curls that hung down past the bottoms of her shoulderblades.

I imagined her in motion, with an energetic, peppy stride with just a touch of slink to make the boys' eyes pop. She was a happy woman, according to Stephen's design, a little easily distracted and somewhat bubbleheaded but still able to concentrate on the business at hand if warranted. She would rather laugh and smile than do anything else. She was an active girl, a dedicated swimmer and bicyclist, an avid nature-lover and hiker, and she fairly glowed with good health and energy. She was unfailingly positive and upbeat – no more of the dark depressions that she'd suffered as a man. If anything, she had a tendency towards anxiety, but not enough to blunt the open, happy extrovert Stephen had designed for himself.

That picture firmly in mind, I slipped his cock into my wet, warm mouth and gave him the last blowjob he would ever get, giving my all to make sure it would be memorable. I intended to send him hurtling out of masculinity on a high note.

His head sagged against the headboard of the bed, eyes closed, and a powerful groan escaped his compressed lips. I urged him further, faster, with tongue, lips and hand, pulling his orgasm out of him inexorably, tipping him slowly over the edge into ecstasy.

His hands threaded into my damp hair and clutched tightly as he shot hot jets of cum across my tongue and deep into my throat, a strangled cry on his lips and I dragged my tongue – and the little probosci that now resided there, the tiny little needles that injected him with whatever I secreted that would change him forever – across the base of his cock, the pain of it lost in the subsuming pleasure of his climax. He sagged against the bed, his limbs twitching spasmodically and his eyes screwed shut, as the billions of nanites coursed through his body, reforming and restructuring it according to the blueprint I'd imagined.

I sat back, still tasting him, and momentarily felt a pang of how much I would miss him. But it took nothing from how much I was looking forward to the new woman he was becoming, or the never-ending sense of wonder at watching my ability actually work. It would never get old or commonplace, I knew, watching male turn female in front of my eyes, watching age give way to health and youth, in direct contravention of nature's dictates.

The sparkling green eyes opened slowly, taking a little time to focus – Stephen had opted to need reading glasses because he thought women in glasses were sexy, so his first exposure to less-than-perfect vision took a moment of adjustment. I was pleased to be the first thing they ever saw.

A glittering, ear-to-ear smile full of milk-white teeth greeted me, and the breathy soprano that said “Hi” to me made me melt a little bit.

I brushed a mischevious red curl from her forehead into the thick pillow of red where her perfect doll's-face rested. “Hi, Stephanie,” I said back. “Nice to meet you.”

She sat up and her generous breasts bobbed deliciously on her chest, causing her to look down and giggle, grabbing them and bouncing them playfully with her slender, elegantly fingered hands. “These're gonna take a little getting used to.”

“Not really,” I said. “I didn't even realize I had 'em after the first day. Until somebody starts playing with 'em. Then they're the center of the universe.”

“I'll have to take you up on that,” Stephanie said. “I feel... I feel wonderful.”

“You should,” I said. “You are wonderful.”

She bounced up, unconcerned with her nakedness, and started digging around for something she could wear.

“What's your hurry, baby?” I asked her.

“Because I can't wait to see what's next,” she said, holding a pink racerback bra up against herself in a mirror before wrinkling her nose and tossing it to one side. “We have so much to do, Merri. I can't wait to get started!”

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Six

by Valerie Hope

“THERE YOU ARE. WHERE THE hell have you been, Momma?” a much shriller version of Heather's soft alto demanded from somewhere behind me. I spun quickly, dropping the handful of hangers, draped with expensive clothes, onto the floor. Heather stood before me with hands on hips, wearing an adorable Valentino blouse with pushed-up sleeves and a red pencil skirt draped with three belts of brass links that I thought was Balenciaga. She tapped the pointed toe of her Miu Miu spike-heeled pump in exasperation.

“Heather? What are you doing here?” I asked, honestly surprised. I moved quickly when I shopped, and I hadn't expected to be found deep in the heart of Neiman Marcus.

“I left you two messages and texted you six times,” she complained, rubbing her temples. “Momma, what have you been doing?”

“Just shopping,” I giggled.

Stephanie, my red-haired best friend and lover, burst out of the dressing room with her hands behind her back in a skin-tight Kenneth Cole sheath dress, fighting to reach the zipper.

“Merri, dammit, can you help me zip this fucking thing... Heather! Hi!” she said, interrupted in mid-rant by the appearance of my eldest daughter.

“Hi,” she said. “Momma, why aren't you answering your phone?”

I dug in my purse, finally finding the pink touch-screen in the bottom of the cavernous Gucci bag. “Oh, shit,” I said. “The battery's dead.”

Heather let loose a long-suffering sigh. “Oh, Momma.”

“Well, you're here,” I said, trying to lighten the mood a little. “Steph and I have been shopping this morning, we were about to head to lunch. Wanna come with, baby?”

“I can't,” Heather said. “I have a meeting in half an hour. I was trying to reach you to tell you that we have a mission.”

“Really?” Stephanie said, digging in her own purse. “My phone never rang.”

“I was contacted by someone from the university,” Heather said. “They said that your, um, reliability was in question since you've become so close to Momma.”

“You mean since I decided to become Stephanie,” she corrected darkly.

“Look, Steph, don't shoot the messenger,” Heather said, hands up. “I'm just telling you what they told me. You know how I feel about you, I know you're still the best in the biz. It's the Powers-That-Be that made the decision, not me.”

Steph sighed. “I know, I know. It's just really unfair, that's all.”

“It is. Holly said the same thing.”

I smiled at the vision of the slim brunette that served as CEO of Heather's publishing company. “How is she doing?”

“Busy,” Heather said, softening a little. She knew how much I loved my girls. “She said to tell you she loved you, though, and that she wants to get together with you this weekend.”

“That sounds great,” I said. “Anyway, the mission?”

“Not sure,” Heather told me, passing me a thick folder. “But I do know it's big. They wanted it aggressively investigated. They said it twice – aggressively. I guess that means you're supposed to really do your homework.”

“I'd say tell them I'll get right on it,” I said, “but I think I'm gonna let Stephanie do it. I'm really pissed about them cutting her out.”

“Okay, then,” Heather said briskly, stepping in to give me a kiss on the cheek. “I've gotta run, Momma, but I want to get drinks later. Maybe tonight, late? Feels like I haven't seen you in ages.”

“I know,” I said. “Tonight sounds wonderful, baby. I'm having dinner with Dani and April, at the house, and you're welcome, of course. Or we can meet somewhere afterwards.”

“I'll call you,” Heather said. “If you decide to answer your phone.”

“Smartass.”

“I am my mother's daughter,” she said, blowing me a playful kiss, before turning on her designer heels and hurrying away, the sexy sway in her walk making more than one man's head turn as she hurried towards the exit, a phone already pressed to her ear.

“I guess this cuts our shopping trip a little short, Steph,” I said apologetically. “I really need to get dug into this new mission.”

Stephanie favored me with a glittering smile. “Well, I guess I really don't need any more shoes right now,” she told me coyly. “Besides, I really want to help. I never got to see how you worked before, I just handed you the names and you did the rest. I'm curious to see how this works.”

“Okay,” I said, bending to replace all the clothes I'd dropped on the racks where I'd originally found them. “Let's go get a bite and we can start working our way through it.”

* * *

“I'll be damned,” Steph said, sipping wine while I smoked a lazy cigarette, thumbing through the thick dossier and passing points of interest to her.

“What? What did you find?” I asked, craning my neck.

"It's the target," Steph said. "Have you noticed the sense of irony surrounding the targets that get chosen? A nowhere folksinger becomes a bubblegum pop sensation. A total couch-potato becomes a driven, hyper-organized publishing tycoon. A sexual predator becomes a porn star. The people behind this, they have quite a sense of humor."

"I guess so," I said, tapping my long nails against my bottom lip in thought. "I never really thought about it."

"So this guy, Jesse Wright," Steph said, tapping his photograph. "Complete ne'er-do-well. Small-time dealer, long rap sheet of penny-ante crimes. Habitual offender. A total scofflaw – an amateur anarchist."

"Okay, I'll buy that," I said. "So what does this mean to you?"

"Think about it, Merri," she said. "Take this little rulebreaker, what's the ironic thing to make him into? A rule maker. A politician. A Congresswoman."

"You think?"

"I do," Steph said, sipping wine, eyes positively twinkling. "With the resources we have at our disposal, we could easily rig an election. Hell, we might not even have to, given our PR machine, and you. You could easily convince the opposition to bow out, or get himself involved in a sex scandal. These guys we're working for, Merri – they're making their first real grab for power."

I looked harder at the photograph. "I don't know, Steph – that's kind of a stretch. They've never reached that far before."

"But they have. They just work slowly. Heather's magazine, the company behind it that Holly runs... that's a powerful public relations machine, and the other girls are in positions to exert enormous influence over large demographics."

"So these people – they're trying to take over the world?" I asked, wide-eyed.

"Have you – have any of us – ever thought to ask just why all this money and effort is being spent on us? On why you were even made in the first place, much less why you're making all these people so I can place them in these positions? What the hell are these people up to?"

"I was told that I was never to contact any of them, not to set foot on the campus. Dr. Redmond and Dr. Wallace seemed to imply that something terrible would happen if I crossed the line, that I was replaceable."

"Replaceable, sure," Steph said, "but at what expense? Look, Merri, I have an idea. It's a little radical, but..."

"What is it?" I asked, taking her hand. I was starting to get a little scared.

"We need to have a little mission of our own, baby. Off the books," she said. "We need to have someone on the inside, someone who they don't know and don't suspect, who works for us and not indirectly for them."

"So, like, a private eye or cop or something?" I asked.

"A cop would be missed, and raise too many questions. No, I think a P.I. would be perfect, and I think I know just the guy. I don't even want to involve Heather in this, as weird as that will

be. I wouldn't want her to let something slip by accident. We have no idea who might be watching."

"Steph, baby – I'm scared."

"I think I am, too," she told me, squeezing my fingers tightly. "But that doesn't mean we're helpless, Merri. Let me talk to this guy. It might take me a while to get the identity papers cooked up, since I won't be able to use my team."

"And then what?" I asked.

"Then we send the University's newest co-ed to her new grad school," she said, slugging the last of her wine.

* * *

I put the binoculars I was using into my lap and wrote some quick notes in the spiral notebook in the front seat in my rounded, bubbly script. Jesse James Wright was a redneck's redneck – sleeves torn from his work shirt to show his trucker's tan and Confederate flag tattoos, Copenhagen snuff bulging his lower lip as he worked on a greasy diesel engine in the rundown auto shop he'd found that hired ex-cons. He wore a bedraggled Marlboro cap turned backwards as he tinkered – obviously not very dedicated to his job – and sang along with the county music blasting tinnily out of the garage's one-speakered boom box.

He took a hit out of a pewter hip flask he kept in the pocket of his grimy jeans. Wright was a loner, didn't talk to any of his coworkers, and the sneer he barely hid at the Mexican mechanics who shared the shop with him spoke volumes. Probably cozied up to the white supremacists when he was inside, I noted in my little book. He'd be a very easy seduction – that much I could tell by looking. No, the problem with this one was what to do after I'd changed him. If Stephanie was right – and she was seldom wrong, she was one of the brightest people I'd ever met – then this white-trash throwaway was going to become the group of university doctors' first real grab for tangible power. Steph and I had taken to calling them The Cooperative, since that was what they were – a loose association of disparate disciplines working together on a single project.

I flipped over to the notes I'd made earlier. We'd identified several of them, just from the minor contacts we'd had with them in the project's infancy. Dr. Willis Redmond, the Nobel laureate who'd pioneered the nanotechnology that created me and all my beautiful daughters, and Dr. Jeremiah Hazelwood who was a world authority on biochemistry and was probably the mastermind behind my pheromones and the nanite-infested breast milk that transformed my girls from infants into grown, fully-formed women were the two I was certain of, as well as Dr. Stephen Wallace, one of the foremost minds in the field of behavioral modification, who'd been personally involved in my forced acceptance of my new femininity. Stephanie had been able to add Dr. Elizabeth Hutchison to the list, whose insights into psychology and psychopharmacology must have been part of what made my daughters so naturally accepting of their new roles, and Monica Lennox, who Stephanie said was the only person in this hemisphere capable of constructing the biological supercomputers that made up my generous breast tissue and were able to custom-build and program the nanites I secreted.

But we still had no clue who was actually pulling the strings. None of these geniuses, no matter how brilliant they were, would have had the wherewithal or even the interest to combine their research into a project like this, much less the insight and long-term planning

necessary to place the new women in the positions they occupied. And none of them seemed truly cognizant of the Big Picture. Steph was right – all these women in all these positions, it was leading up to something. The questions were what and why. And that left another mind, one capable of seeing the overall structure of the whole thing, who was behind it all, and Steph and I didn't know who that was.

I was more or less at Steph's mercy right now, anyway. The way they'd restructured my brain, I could only really concentrate on one thing at a time, and my concern and love for my daughters – no matter how genuine it felt – was all-encompassing and very specifically engineered. I couldn't force myself to think about anything else for very long, before I was wondering how Dani's rehearsals were going or what Heather had found to wear to her gallery opening or whether Holly was getting enough to eat. Steph didn't have those kinds of restrictions, thank God. She was able to keep her eye on the ball a lot better than I was. So I basically put myself into the position of doing whatever she told me to do, no questions asked. It would've been a little scary if I hadn't been so used to working that way, and if I didn't trust my best friend in the world so utterly and completely. She was busy scouting her own little mission, one we hoped that the Cooperative would never find out about. It was taking much longer than usual – Stephanie was having to engineer the documentation and the past by hand, instead of having access to her whole team the way she usually did.

She told me to concentrate on Jesse Wright, anyway, so I raked long-nailed fingers through my soft hair and tried to focus. It wasn't like this was going to be a tough mission, anyway – just some Daisy Dukes and a too-tight Nascar shirt, a pink cowboy hat and trashy makeup my biggest problem would be keeping all the other white-trash losers in the country bar off of me long enough for Jesse to make his move. I steeled myself for the quantities of Budweiser and Jack Daniels I'd probably have to drink, my palate way too accustomed to fine wines and liqueurs thanks to Juli's tender ministrations.

Impatient, I speed-dialed Stephanie's number on the disposable “burner” cellphone we'd gotten to discuss our off-book mission, since we couldn't trust any piece of electronics that had been originally supplied for us by the Cooperative. It rang several times before Steph's dusky voice answered.

“Hey, bitch,” she said brightly, using the playful tone-of-voice we'd taken to using with one another. I'd not programmed her nanites to be so familiar and easygoing with me. It delighted me that we just settled into the roles of best friends so easily. “What's up?”

“Oh, just hanging out watching this redneck,” I said airily, lighting a cigarette with my free hand. “He's gonna be, like, so easy. I just have to figure out where I'm gonna pick him up. How's, um... your thing going?”

There was a long pause – sounded like she was going someplace she could talk a little more privately. “I looked up my old friend, the private eye,” she told me. “He's in bad shape. His wife left him, turns out, and he's crawled into a Scotch bottle and hasn't come out. He's bankrupt and flopping on friends' couches. He's got a temp job doing criminal background checks for a staffing firm, and he's drunk, like, ninety percent of the time.”

“Sounds like we'd be doing him a favor if we changed him,” I said appraisingly.

“Yeah,” Steph said. “It's really making me sad, seeing him like this. We went to school together, and he was like one of the smartest guys I ever knew.”

“How do I get to him, baby?” I asked.

“In a bar, most probably,” she told me. “If he's not sleeping at work, then he's in a bar getting blasted. I don't think it's going to be too tough, Merri, he's not exactly thinking his decisions through these days. I think you could probably just wait until he was three sheets to the wind and then picking him up wouldn't be a problem. I don't think he'd even bother asking your name.”

“And the money for all this? How are we gonna deal with that?” I asked.

“I've been thinking about that a lot, baby,” she said. “I really wish we could use Holly for this. I'm no good with money. But if we don't use any of my discretionary money, they shouldn't be able to track us.”

“How much do we need, anyhow?” I asked.

“About fifty thousand dollars to do it right,” she said. “We'll need to set him up in a new place, new identity, new clothes... well, you know the drill. Fifty grand is lowballing it, actually, baby.”

“I know,” I said, sighing. “We'll have to find it someplace. And we really can't go through any of the girls. Honestly, sweetie, I never prepared to have to find money on my own. It was always just there, y'know?”

“I know, I put it there,” I said. “Look, even if we have to nickel-and-dime it, baby, we need to move on this soon. I can put him up in my place, and share clothes, that kind of shit, if we have to.”

“I just feel a little weird, believe it or not, to change him against his will. Somehow, just seeing his name on that folder makes it okay for me,” I told her.

“I know, it's all how you're programmed, baby,” Steph consoled. “And believe me, I'm so touched by how much you're willing to trust me on this. But I can tell you this, he's on a quick road to either jail or dialysis at the rate he's going. Changing him might very well save his life, and give us access to one of the finest investigators I've ever known.”

“How do you know this guy, baby?” I asked.

“Before I got recruited by the Cooperative, I used to consult. I helped police organizations trace people who'd changed their identities. Kenny tracked some Hezbollah operatives who were recruiting in the U.S. to South America for me. Followed these guys halfway around the world, all the way back to Lebanon, on about six high-end fake passports. He's good.”

I clicked my pen back open and found a fresh sheet in my notebook. “Tell me some more about him, Steph. What's his name?”

“Oh, yeah,” Steph said, giggling at her uncharacteristic oversight. “His name is Kenny Traynor. White male, 37 years old, six foot two, roughly 250 pounds. Blue eyes, brown hair...”

“No, baby, no,” I said, laughing hard enough to make my tits jiggle. “I mean, what's he like?”

“Well, now, he's a drunk. He's mean, and sick all the time, and angry. But before, he was great. Funny – a practical joker – and really perceptive. A little devious, but in a good way. Helluva card player. I remember he used to be a big college football fan, and really dug jazz. He was devastated when he found out that his wife couldn't have children. He tried to get her to adopt, but she left him. He really wanted to be a dad, and it really fucked him up

when he found out he couldn't. He was never really the same after that. All the twinkle was gone out of his eyes."

"That tells me a lot," I said, still writing in my book because my rounded, bubbly writing took a lot of time to make look so cute. "Thanks."

"When can you... I mean..."

"Do him? Oh, anytime. I don't have to prepare or anything. How about tomorrow night?"

"I need more time than that," Stephanie told me. "Give me 'til Friday."

"Okay, but I think I'm gonna have to do Jesse Wright before that," I said. "You know how antsy Heather gets when the Cooperative starts putting pressure on her. And antsy Heather means our lives are a living hell."

"No worries," Steph said. "I'm sure my team can handle it. But you remember what we talked about, right?"

I blew out a deep lungful of smoke before replying, "Right. I imagine her with a really deep sexual appetite. Something dark, something deviant, but something she can't turn off. If she has a secret, and we know about it, then we can control her if we have to."

"Right," Steph said. "Think you can pull it off?"

I narrowed my eyes at the spitting, cursing, ball-scratching piece of criminal human refuse that was pretending to flush a radiator across the street from my car, and gave a dark smile. "Sure I can, baby," I reassured her. "Couldn't happen to a nicer guy."

* * *

I tried to tune out the overwhelming smell of unwashed bodies that permeated the air of the low-rent honky-tonk where the working stiffs congregated after their jobs. Everyone in the place seemed to be from the same mold – sunburnt, skinny, wearing thrift-store clothes along rockabilly band or Confederate themes and "gimme" ball caps that seemed to glorify fishing entirely too much. Every conversation stopped and every eye swung towards me as I walked through the door, backlit by the fading afternoon sun, wearing a pair of brown Ropers with a blocky heel, "Daisy Duke" cutoffs that left the bottoms of my cheeks bare, a bandanna for a belt and a pink Nascar baby-tee that exposed my flat midriff, dangly earrings that nestled in my straight white-blonde hair and a crushed-brim straw cowboy hat over pink plastic wraparound sunglasses. Everything I wore could be easily found in a truck stop or gas station, and I felt as cheap as I looked. In fact, it was kind of fun to be so tacky. My makeup was done expertly but very over-the-top, heavy eyeliner and shadow and frosted bubblegum pink lipstick straight out of the late '70s. I bellied up to the bar with an exaggerated swivel in my walk, almost feeling the eyes caressing my Stairmaster-sculpted ass as I made my way towards an open spot at the rail that almost magically appeared.

The bartender's eyes were buried deep in my cleavage as I ordered a Michelob Ultra – best to give the impression of a girl who looked after herself, here – and leaned teasingly against the greasy bar, giving a great view of cleavage through the little scissor-cut in my tee-shirt and a very informative view of my derrière to the men seated at the tables behind me.

“Hey,” a random trucker-type asked from my left as I sipped my beer. “Haven't seen you around here before.”

I smacked my gum loudly and responded in a very carefully rehearsed East Texas drawl. “I'm just in town for a little while,” I said with a vapid smile. “I'm s'posed to meet my friend here later.”

“Can I buy you a beer?” he asked me.

I wasn't even all the way into my guileless smile when a gravel-in-a-bucket baritone spoke from over my other shoulder: “She's already got a goddamn beer, Hank, can't you see that?”

Hank started to stand up angrily, but saw who it was and sat back down, subdued. “Just tryin' to be nice, Jesse,” he mumbled sullenly.

“That don't mean you got to be a goddamn idiot,” he said as I turned to face my target. He sported a smug, alpha-male smile at his mastery of the other man. “Hey, I'm Jesse.”

I offered him a slim hand. “Kelly Ann,” I said, using the name I'd made up.

“So when's this friend of yours s'posed to get here?” he asked. “Is she as pretty as you?”

“How d'you know it's a 'she?’” I teased.

“‘Cause if you had you a man, he wouldn't let you come in a place like this by your damn self,” he countered, as close to smooth as he could get, adding a dark and suggestive smile that might have been sexy on anyone but him. Just being this near him made me want to take a shower. I couldn't wait to get him naked so I could wipe his slate and start over.

“Well, okay, you're right,” I said, letting him feel every inch the manly-man. “But she met this new guy two weeks ago, he's all she can talk about. I was s'posed to meet her here five minutes ago, but she ain't around. She's prob'ly off runnin' around with him.”

“She left you on your own?” Jesse asked.

“Yeah, I guess so,” I said, putting a cigarette between my perfumey, sticky lips. He lit it for me with a “Git 'R' Done” disposable lighter from his shirt pocket.

“So, then, you ain't got no plans for tonight,” he continued, scooting a little closer. I fought the urge to squirm from the his intrinsic oiliness.

“Nope,” I said, blowing smoke and sipping my beer, trying to look interested.

He leaned even closer. “You do now,” he said.

* * *

I felt it best to forget the lackluster sex we'd had leading up to the divine moment. He was a self-absorbed, stingy lover under the illusion he was some sort of Casanova. I'd been so dry – which was difficult in a girl as horny as I was – when he penetrated me the first time that it actually hurt a little, but the selfish shit couldn't be bothered to even kiss me enough to get my juices flowing. Still, I made all the requisite moans and gasps, feeding his ridiculously overinflated ego as World's Greatest Lover, long enough to get the sense of him – which I almost hadn't wanted. I'd spent a great deal of time imagining the girl he'd become, taking

pains to leave nothing to chance – I wanted no shred of the original person to remain in my beautiful baby.

The baby I held to my breast right now. I seldom lit cigarettes around my darlings – even though their nanites would never let any health problems occur, it was such a hard-wired response – but I really wanted one right now, hoping that it might shift the sour taste of Jesse Wright's cum which two gargles with Listerine couldn't quite eradicate.

The new team – well, not so new, since most of the faces were familiar, but without the rugged and calming presence of Stephen there, it seemed as though I'd never worked with them before – was efficient, but I still kept searching for the slightest mistake on their part, anything to reassure me that Stephen did it better. I fed my new daughter slowly, inching her up through the years to give her more and more contact with me, to imprint on me as an infant and build a stronger bond of trust than I had with any of my other daughters. This one had to come to me with anything, to trust me implicitly, for Stephanie's and my plan to work. I desperately hoped that I would never have to betray that trust.

The shock of deep auburn hair on her head was growing and thickening in front of my eyes as I felt her weight drag against my arm, feeding on me and lessening the bonfire heat in my breasts, as she advanced from infancy to a beautiful little rosy-cheeked toddler. A kind-faced woman whose name, I thought, was Karen dressed her in a beautiful little Easter dress and knee socks with patent-leather Mary Janes. They moved her to a nearby bluescreen for photographs, and this time I pulled a robe shut around my bruised and bitten body – Jesse had been very rough with me, almost pathologically so – and smiled at her, shooting little waves and funny faces at her while she sat for the photos of the past she'd never actually had. She smiled and giggled at her Momma.

I tried to make myself believe that it was only for the furtherance of Stephanie's grand plan, but it wasn't true. The main reason I was doing it was because I loved and adored that little girl, and making her smile and laugh made me giddy beyond reason.

I kept deepening the connection with her throughout her forced childhood, from the little curly-haired five-year-old dressed as a kitten for Hallowe'en to the skinny, disaffected adolescent with acne in a Catholic parochial school uniform modified to show off budding breasts and smooth legs, a young bubblegum-blowing Lolita with too much makeup and no idea what she was getting herself in for. She came and lay in my arms, against my naked skin, while the techs set up the next round of photographs.

I didn't get the manila envelope until she was nearly eighteen, in a cap and gown graduating with honors as valedictorian of her high school. Jesse James Wright was now Jessica Jamielynn Reilly, a young up-and-comer with a ride to Princeton and the world as her oyster. And yet there was a darkness in her, one that I'd put there intentionally, which hid behind her wide, toothy smiles and her coquettish glances in every picture and video. A deep need for leather, for chains and pain and bondage which I'd imagined in her, something she could no more deny than her need to eat, drink or breathe.

It was by far the longest transformation I'd ever done, since Jessica would be the oldest – in years, at any rate – of any of my daughters. The more remarkable part of it, however, was when she was given an injection at about age twenty-two and progressed through a rapid pregnancy to give birth to a beautiful daughter – my granddaughter – named Lisa. This time, it was

Jessica's milk (infused with my nanites, of course) that raised her from a pink, squalling infant to an angelically beautiful six-year-old girl in a matter of hours.

I noticed, as she began to progress through her thirties, that Jessica was shaping up into a campaign manager's wet dream. Young, idealistic and attractive, with large blue eyes that gave her the appearance of earnest innocence that appealed to cameras. She was slim and stylish, with long legs and pale skin, a long elegant neck and full lips, delicate features and long auburn-brown hair that shone in the sunshine through the windows with red-gold highlights. I watched her carefully as she dressed in a chic but not too expensive business suit, made feminine with a bright green silk blouse and an African-print scarf around her slender neck, perching rimless eyeglasses on her nose and putting tasteful jewelry on her fingers, ears and neck.

They'd constructed a history for her that would virtually win an election for her: widowed early from a young pilot who lost his life in the Iraq War, leaving her alone to single-handedly raise a young daughter, working two jobs and attending night school to get her political science degree.

A worker crossed between us, holding freshly-printed yard signs brightly emblazoned with "Reilly for Mayor, a choice that makes sense" in bright blue letters.

She sat next to me, drawing Lisa into her lap. "Do you like the signs, Momma?" she asked.

"They're pretty," I said, putting an arm around her. "Are you sure it's what you want to do, though, running for office like that?"

"Of course it is," she said, smiling brightly, her eyes full of ambition and promise. No trace of the hideous redneck drain on society she'd been before remained as she stroked her daughter's reddish curls gently with manicured fingernails.

"Just as long as you're happy, baby, that's all I care about," I said.

"Momma, I had something I want to ask you," she told me seriously, her voice lowered. "Lisa, baby, will you go get Momma a bottle of water, honey?"

The little girl kissed her cheek and bounced away happily into the press of people. I leaned closer to my newest daughter to hear her secret words.

"I have these... urges, Momma. Big ones. I don't know what to do with them."

I squeezed her hand tight. "I know you do, baby," I whispered. "It's the way you are. You shouldn't be embarrassed, or frightened."

"I'm not," she told me. "I'm turned on. I remember – somehow, it's kind of hazy – that my husband... that James... used to do those things to me. He tied me up and spanked my ass and made me do things, things I wanted to do so badly..."

"Shh," I said, putting a slender finger across her soft lips. "It's okay."

"No, it's not," she said. "Everybody's gonna be watching, now. Scrutiny, media attention... if anybody found out... but Momma, I don't think I can stop."

"I know you can't, baby, it's who you are," I told her. "You're just going to have to be very careful and very discreet. I can help. I can find someone for you, someone who will keep your secret and also help you get what you need."

"You would?" she said, eyes bright.

"Of course I would," I said, giggling a little. "That's what Moms are for."

"You know I can't call you Momma, not when I'm in public," she told me. "You know that nobody can know about you. They'd ask too many questions."

"I know," I said. "None of that matters to me. I know the truth, and you do, and my other girls. We're all a family, no matter what we have to make it look like, and you're still my beautiful little girl. We can find plenty of time to be together where the cameras won't see. I'll see to it."

"Momma takes care of her babies," she said, leaning against me.

"She sure does," I affirmed, closing my eyes and leaning my cheek against her soft hair.

* * *

Even though the transformation process usually exhausted me, I still managed to kiss Jessica goodbye – promising to see her later that night for dinner at my house, Juli making her favorite pasta primavera – and climb into my car and drive across town to the little dingy warehouse that Steph had rented under a dummy corporation. She was leaning against a public mailbox on the sidewalk, puffing nervously on a long white cigarette. I parked close and walked quickly – I couldn't shake the feeling that I was being watched, somehow – kissing Steph's soft cheek and ushering her inside the run-down warehouse.

A large man was waiting inside, sipping coffee from a styrofoam cup. He looked like hammered death – dark circles under his eyes, unshaven, waxy skin and a slightly slack-jawed, exhausted appearance. He slouched tiredly against the folding card table set up as a desk, one hand buried in his lank, thinning hair. The smell of cigarette smoke and stale booze assaulted my nose from across the room. He was leafing through a thick folder of pictures of the men my beloved daughters had been before I'd changed them.

"You're telling me all these guys have gone missing?" he growled, his voice thick with dehydration and unbrushed teeth. "What's the connection between them?"

"That's what we're hoping you can tell us," Steph said. "This is the lady I was telling you about, Kenny. Merri Ryan."

He ignored the hand I'd extended. "I charge two hundred fifty a day plus expenses," he said without preamble, rubbing his red-rimmed eyes.

I looked him up and down. "I don't hire drunks," I told him sternly.

"I can hold it together," he told me gruffly. "As long as your checks don't bounce. And what I do when I'm off the clock is none of your damn business."

This was the funloving practical joker Stephanie told me about? I wondered as I nodded in agreement. The bottle – and the tragedy that had driven him to it – had taken a horrible toll on this man.

“I don't do checks,” I said. “I'll open a numbered account for you and transfer the money there. I don't want a paper trail. Discretion is of the essence. I don't want anyone knowing you work for me, understood?”

“Fine,” he said.

“Now come with me,” I said, taking his arm and giving it just the tiniest, teasing stroke. “I have to get you looking presentable. A haircut, and new suit. I don't want you representing me looking like that. I'll deduct it from your first payment.”

Steph gave me a sly wink as I led him out of the warehouse towards my car.

* * *

Kenny Traynor had been a very difficult seduction. His alcohol-fueled numbness, disaffection and all-around anger made him difficult to approach. But the drinks I allowed him to “sneak” behind my back from a pint bottle in his coat pocket and ragged persistence eventually found us kissing hungrily in a cheap motel room near the Interstate. Since I didn't need to regress him physically to a baby and then raise her anew, the way I did with my real daughters, all I really needed to do was kiss him, concentrate on the young British co-ed I envisioned her as, and then kneel on the dingy carpet of the no-tell motel room and pop his thick, veined cock into my waiting mouth. I actually treated him to a rather spectacular blowjob for a few minutes – he was a nice guy, once you got past the exterior of defeated ennui surrounding him, and Steph thought he hung the moon – before I let the spiny little proboscis on my tongue extend and inject him full of whatever it was I made in my body that would begin his new life.

He shuddered and sagged against the bed, his flesh crawling as if there were bugs scurrying underneath it as his paunchy beer-belly tightened into a flat abdominal six-pack with a piercing above the navel, a deep even mocha tan with pale triangles of tan-lines over the budding breasts and widening hips. She was compact, like a gymnast, with proportions that made her look long-legged and willowy without detracting from her petite 5'-2” frame. Long, honey blonde hair spilled out of the retreating hairline to tumble in shining layers along her shoulders, and the ravaged, slightly jaundiced skin of his face reformed to be firm and youthful over very full, “cocksucking” lips and strikingly white teeth, a delicate chin and long aquiline nose under an adorable little spray of freckles and with a tiny little piercing in the left nostril. High arched eyebrows separated a high, unfurrowed forehead from large, shockingly ice-blue eyes. Firm C-cups bounced on her narrow chest, youthful enough to defy gravity without looking “done,” and her pink silver-dollar nipples stiffened in the air conditioning. She cupped them gently, looking at them in something akin to pride, her long-nailed fingers with their French manicure squeezing gently and eliciting high-pitched little-girl whimpers of pleasure from between her pursed lips.

“What... what did you...” she gasped in a breathy soprano with a thick London accent, just a little 'posh' while still reflecting her working-class roots.

“I changed you, baby,” I told her. “We need you, and we need you like this.”

“Like this? Like what?”

“Like a girl,” I told her. “I changed you, just like I did Stephanie. You're one of us now, and I have a very important job for you. Do you remember who you are?”

“I think so... didn't I investigate?”

“You did,” I told her. “You're a very talented investigator, darling girl. And we have a hell of a mystery for you to help us unravel.”

I handed her the manila envelope – Steph's trademark – that held her new identity, irreversibly and untraceably changing Kenneth Lyle Traynor into Kendra Layla Traynor, British national and graduate with honors from Oxford. Her visa, passport and other documents as well as a sizeable chunk of money, all that remained of my under-the-table sale of some of Apryl Raines' earliest screen-tests and x-rated scenes on the Internet, funneled through no end of dummy corporations and tax shelters. We were hoping the ongoing Internet sales would finance the investigation, off the books. But all that was in the future. First I had to help my newest baby into her tight-as-sin blue jeans, to help her thread the glittering rhinestone belly ring and nose ring through her piercings and do something with her hair and makeup before taking her to the new apartment we'd rented and furnished for her. She began graduate school in three weeks, in the biochemistry department where she could begin the long and arduous process of snooping around and trying to find out who the Cooperative were and what they were planning. I began to worry about her almost immediately – hers was the most dangerous job, and hers the highest likelihood of being harmed. But I'd left her skills as an investigator – including her veteran years as a cop – intact when I'd changed her, which Steph assured me would leave her more than capable of taking care of herself.

She was stuffing her new purse – all cheap, Wal-mart clothes and jewelry, but enough to make her look sufficiently like an attractive, happy young girl – with her passport, visa, money, brush, makeup and cigarettes, everything she needed, when I took her hand and chafed it between mine.

“You're beautiful, Kendra,” I told her.

“So are you,” she replied. “I feel like I should thank you, Merri. Like somehow, maybe... you might have saved my life.”

“Only to risk it again,” I said sadly, kissing her fingertips.

She lit a cigarette. “You let me bloody worry about that, yeah?”



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Seven

by Valerie Hope

“THIS IS FUCKING RIDICULOUS,” STEPHANIE muttered under her breath as we both tried to ignore yet another pimply-faced teenage boy who was making a lame-assed excuse to stare at our tits in the crowded shopping mall. Still, Kendra had a point – anyone not moving would be blatant, helping us spot people who might be tailing us, and the cavernous echoes of the incessant babble of hundreds of people would make us impossible to bug.

But the mob of teenyboppers – boys who tried to impress us or attract our attention when they didn't stare outright, girls who whispered behind their hands and sneered with open jealousy – were a constant annoyance that served to put both Steph and I, dressed in our typical sexy, skin-tight and very eye-catching fashion, in rotten moods.

“At least she could've picked a place where we could smoke cigarettes,” I grumped, shouldering past three teenage girls who were looking at us with open contempt. I bumped one of them intentionally with my gigantic tits, the same tits this girl dreamed of having at night.

“There she is,” Steph said, pointing across the food court. Her stride quickened and I had to hustle in my four-inch wedges to keep up with her, our arms lengthening to keep our slender fingers intertwined as we walked. We finally stopped, a little breathless, in front of one of the tall metal tables in front of the Sbarro. Kendra looked beautiful, her white Dolce & Gabbana sunglasses in her meticulous blonde hair, a spaghetti-strap white tank setting off her deep tan beautifully, and tight hemmed Daisy Duke shorts setting off her long, shapely legs to devastating effect. She twirled a dainty foot, shod in six-inch platform wedges, in a lazy circle as she scanned the crowd, sipping lemonade through a straw in an unconsciously sexy way.

“Hey, ya,” she said brightly as we arrived, bounding up in a jiggle of firm, youthful tits, pressing herself close to both of us in turn, kissing our cheeks lightly and giving a quick but affectionate embrace before gesturing us both to sit down.

“Do you want something?” she asked us.

“No, thanks,” I said, showing her the large bottle of water I'd brought with me. “What's up, baby?”

She played with one of the big white plastic door-knocker earrings that dangled against her long neck idly. I noticed she had decal hearts and stars in silver glitter applied to her long, manicured nails. So she was going past her programming and starting to really enjoy all the little girly, happy things. My nose wrinkled in a satisfied grin. I wanted her to be happy and bouncy and carefree, remembering the man she'd used to be in a way she'd gratefully forgotten.

"I've been doing a spot of digging," she announced just above audibility in her broad British accent, leaning across the table to give me a very pleasant view of tanned cleavage. I noticed she'd tanned with a heart decal on the top of her left breast, leaving a pale outline on the luscious, smooth flesh.

"And?" Steph pressed, taking her hand, her expensive diamond ring clicking against the huge acrylic heart that Kendra wore on her index finger.

"They play it cool, yeah? It's hard to track them coming and going. I had to break down and buy a scooter, y'know, just to stay with them. You're right. Wallace and Redmond, we knew, and you nailed it on Hutchison, Hazelwood and Lennox. I think there's someone pulling the strings, for certain, but he or she stays far away from the actual go-to men," she said. "As far as I know, the ringleader works in a different department, and I think it's one of the Humanities. I've started dating a cute boy who's after a masters' in history, he knows the faculty over there really well. I've got him snooping for me without even knowing. Plus, I took a part-time job as a waitress at the faculty dining room. I overhear a lot that way."

"Any leads on how they're choosing their targets?" Steph asked.

"You're dating? Honey, that's wonderful! What's he like?" I asked at the same time. Kendra looked from one to the other of us and back again, and laughed. Her boob-jiggling belly laugh lit up her whole face and made Steph and I both smile in response.

"He's sweet," she said, answering me first. "I'm not as interested in him as I am in what he can do for me, so I'm using him a little, but I don't think he minds so much. His name's Will Sullivan."

She turned to Steph. "As far as I can see, love, there's not a system in place for choosing the actual people involved as there is for choosing the position they're being recruited for. It all happens in Monica Lennox' lab, and it's a bitch to get in there unattended. She watches everyone in there like a fucking hawk."

"Is there anything we can do to help, baby?" I asked.

"You're probably due for a new mission, soon," she said. "Just make sure I see that file before you do anything. The system's un-hack-able, according to some of the computer geeks I work with, but maybe I can find something if I know who's next on the agenda."

"But I never know what they're going to become," I said.

"We have some clues, baby," Steph said, nudging me with her shoulder. "You just get really excited about having a new daughter and don't always look for the obvious."

"I try," I complained, pouting a little.

"No you don't," she said. "It's one of the things I love about you."

"We'll figure it out," Kendra said. "We just have to put our heads together. Remember, just as soon as you get a new mission, give me a call, yeah?"

"Of course I will," I said, sitting back. "Now, about you and this young man."

She laughed again. "I told you, it's not serious," she said, hands up in mock surrender. "I'm not in the market for a boyfriend, honestly."

"But you've... you know. Haven't you?" I asked.

She wrinkled her nose. "I did. It was fun, but... unfulfilling. Maybe I just haven't met a bloke I fancy, or maybe I'm gay. I haven't given it much thought. Mostly I've been working, and shopping – you made sure I can't get enough of that, obviously – and working out."

"Working out?" Steph said, an eyebrow raised towards me. Those kinds of tendencies usually began with me and the way I programmed my nanites.

"I've gone a bit fitness mad, I'm afraid," she said. "I just feel so bloody good all the time, I swear. I barely know what to do with all this energy I have. A few weeks back I just popped off to the gym because I couldn't sleep, and it felt wonderful. I'm up to twice a day, now... pilates, free weights, dancing, yoga, running, rowing... I can't bloody stop, it feels so good."

I tapped a long nail against my pink-glossed bottom lip in thought. "Strange," I said. "I didn't do that."

Steph nodded sagely. "You didn't have to," she said. "Kenny – the man she was before – he used to be real active. Rock climbing, kayaking, mountain biking. When he started drinking, he declined very fast. I'll bet he got to the point where he couldn't do it anymore – probably couldn't climb a flight of stairs without getting winded. A part of you, Kendra, wanted that activity back. Desperately, it sounds like. And now that you can do it again, well, you do it all the time. Just for the joy of being able to."

"Like a guy in a wheelchair," I said. "If he could suddenly walk again, he'd never take the bus, would he?"

I kissed Stephanie's soft cheek. "You're so smart," I told her.

"Well, however it happened, I'm glad," Kendra told us. "I was mad, at first. Well, upset, really. But now I see what a huge favor you've done for me, and how much better my life is compared to before. It's the greatest kindness I've ever known, Merri, and you have my eternal gratitude."

I blushed. "You deserved it," I said. "If the man you were is a tenth of the woman you are, baby, you deserved it completely."

Stephanie sniffed loudly, dabbing her eyes with a napkin from the dispenser on the table.

"Enough of this mushy stuff," she mumbled, her voice thick. "What else can we do to help you, Kendra?"

She shrugged. "I'm making most of this up as I go along," she said. "One thing I do need, though, is a really good computer. I'm keeping most of my notes on paper, and it's not very safe. I need something I can encrypt and keep private."

"Done," I said. "Go by the Apple store on your way home and get whatever you want. I'll wire the money to your account as soon as I get back to the car."

"You're a love," she told me, standing. "Now, wait a few minutes after I leave and don't follow me. We can't be too bloody careful."

"Don't you think this is a little bit of an overreaction?" I asked, gesturing to the milling crowd of adolescents.

"It is, until it isn't," she said, disappearing into the crowd.

* * *

I stood on the sidewalk, keying frantically with my thumbs on the backup phone Stephanie and I had bought once we went “off the grid,” transferring a few thousand dollars from our secret account into Kendra's while Stephanie and I shotgunned a very long overdue cigarette. Outside where we stood, the soccer moms were queueing up to pick up their children and take them home to their responsibilities and homework, idling minivans and SUVs stretching from the parking lot entrance to the front door. Stephanie and I tossed our butts as soon as we finished and bee-lined for Steph's brand-new lipstick red Lexus SC430. She dropped the top as she lit another cigarette – I joined her – and pulled into traffic, gunning it a little too enthusiastically and pushing us into the leather seats. She was really enjoying her new car. I'd been so happy to get it for her – again, I felt as though she truly deserved it – and her “thank you” that night had left my legs trembling for hours.

My phone – my normal phone – rang and I pressed it to my ear to click against my oversized hoop earrings. “Hello?”

“Hey, Momma,” Heather's bright voice said. “Where are you?”

“Coming home from shopping with Stephanie,” I said brightly. “Where are you? Still at work?”

“Naturally,” she said with a self-deprecating giggle. “Listen, Momma, you got a mission. I thought, if you weren't doing anything for dinner, I could give it to you then? Holly and I want to take you out tonight, someplace fancy.”

I smiled. “That sounds fantastic, darling, I'm looking forward to it. Can we do it a little late, say, around eight or eight thirty? I've been on my feet all day and I have a very long massage scheduled with Gina when I get home, and I need a fill on my nails, and could really use some deep moisturizing.”

Heather laughed. “I forget that you live at a five-star spa. Eight thirty sounds great. I'll confirm it with Holly and we'll see you there, okay?”

“Love you, baby,” I said.

“Love you, too,” she said, and the line went dead.

I turned to Steph. “Well, that didn't take very long, did it?”

* * *

Holly, Heather and I stayed out very late and I lost count of the number of vodka-cranberries I'd downed, on top of the two bottles of wine over the excellent, five-star dinner. The two powerhouse executive women got tables without reservations all over town, since one bad review in their magazine or on the companion website could ruin a restaurant utterly in the space of weeks. And now with the rumors that Flirt! magazine was about to begin a news network that focused on human rights abuses and women's issues around the world, a network that would employ no pundits whatsoever and go back to the days of Edward R. Murrow in its treatment and approach to reporting the news – Heather and Holly were both on the cover of Forbes last month and were being written about in the Wall Street Journal. Two very powerful women indeed. I got swept along in their wake, mostly – they did the arrangements and the ordering, all the commands came from their lips and waitstaff and valets leaped to obey.

With the new developments in my life, however, I found myself increasingly more and more content to let them treat me – and think of me – as their pretty but dimwitted mother, concerned

with her clothes and her appearance and nothing else, who was important to the Cooperative for her abilities but not for anything she could contribute mentally. I played the dumb blonde to the hilt, and unfortunately they ate it up – Heather should have remembered, at any rate, that I was once a very successful career thief, in my other life, and my record was completely free of arrests or convictions. That slyness and ability to sneak and mislead hadn't gone anywhere just because I grew some spectacular tits. But they were perfectly content to overlook that.

Still, I was very heavily drunk by the time the limo dropped me outside my front door and Heather pressed a folder into my hands and a kiss on my cheeks, promising to get together soon for cocktails and massages. I staggered to up the front steps on feet that no longer seemed entirely able to perch on five-inch Prada heels and risked a broken ankle several times on the short hike to the door. Unable to navigate my key into the lock, I had to rely on ringing the bell.

Babette, my nymphomaniac French maid and butler, answered the door, her little satin dress and lace apron immaculately starched and pressed, her patent-leather six-inch heels polished to a mirror shine, not a hair out of place or a single snag in her thigh-high fishnet stockings. She took my arm as I took two very unsteady steps into the foyer.

“Mon Dieu, ma'm'selle,” she tsked at me. “You are très drunk.”

“And you are très sexy,” I slurred, laughing and pawing at one of her magnificent tits and planting a sloppy kiss on her long neck that made her giggle. “As soon as you get me undressed for bed, I want you undressed for bed right on top of me.”

She giggled nervously. “But of course, Ma'm'selle,” she said with a small bobbing curtsy. “But first, we have the stairs to worry about, non?”

“And bring Juli and Gina too,” I slurred as she half-dragged me up the stairs. “I want all you bitches naked in my bed tonight.”

“I will tell them straight away, ma'm'selle,” she said with another curtsy. “Only a few more steps to the top. We are almost there.”

She half-pulled, half-dragged me into my bedroom and dropped me like a sack of millet on my huge four-poster bed. She pulled off my Dior dress and my Prada heels, leaving me on my bed in just my gauzy stockings, lace bra and thong. She buzzed the intercom for the rest of my bimbo staff, telling them that Ma'm'selle required them, and by the time she turned to me with a hungry light in her eyes, loosening the laces of her tight satin dress, digging with one long-nailed hand in the top drawer of my bureau, I was snoring loudly.

“Ah, well,” Babette said to the ceiling exasperatedly. “I did wake them both up, after all, no sense in wasting the opportunity, non?”

She lifted her stiff crinolines and pulled up the strap-on dildo she'd pulled from my bureau drawer anyway, waiting for Juli and Gina to finish dressing in sexy lingerie and come to the mistress' bedroom.

* * *

I pressed the icepack to my forehead a little tighter, wishing even my scandalously expensive Gucci sunglasses could do a better job of keeping the harsh morning sunlight from burning the retinae out of my eyes. I sipped halfheartedly at a bloody mary and hoped beyond hope that my head would not explode from the force of the pounding it was doing.

“My God, those bitches can drink,” I moaned.

Steph ignored me, puffing on her cigarette as she leafed through the folder that Heather had given me last night. “This doesn't make any sense.”

“What doesn't?”

“The target,” Steph said, not looking up as she sipped at a mimosa. “Who the hell is this guy? Why him?”

“I told you,” I groaned, massaging my temples. “He's one of several. Heather picks them out, not the Cooperative. They give personality traits, mostly. Shy, or outgoing, or good with numbers, whatever they need. Heather does whatever the fuck it is Heather does and finds, like, six or seven likely candidates.”

“There's only one guy in here,” Steph said.

“Well, Heather and I used to check them out together, back in the beginning, before the magazine. Now she staffs it out. I just get the one name, now.”

“But why him?”

“Because he has the personality traits the Cooperative wants and he has no family and no real social contacts,” I said. “He won't be missed.”

Steph was scanning frantically, her face wreathed in a cloud of fragrant blue smoke as she puffed on her cigarette nervously. “I just don't see it.”

“You're looking too hard at where they come from,” I said, sipping at my drink. “You need to look at where they're gonna go once I'm done with them.”

Steph looked up, and it seemed like she was only just seeing me for the first time. She set her long cigarette in a crystal ashtray and put her hand on top of mine. “You look like shit,” she said gently.

“Then I look exactly how I feel,” I said.

“Look, baby, I need to get a copy of this to Kendra right away,” she told me. “Why don't you eat something and then go back to bed, okay? I'll have Gina come up and give you a massage.”

“No,” I said. “I'm up. I need to get started with the day. If I don't investigate this guy, then it's gonna raise questions. And it'll put Heather on my ass, which is something neither one of us needs right now.”

“Poor baby,” she said, caressing my cheek.

I stood heavily and took a moment to steady my dodgy balance. “I'm gonna go upstairs and get dressed. The file says that this guy hangs out at this Internet café over on Tripp Street. We can get a look at him there.”

“Sounds good,” Steph told me, closing the file and standing. “I'll call Kendra, have her meet us there. Maybe the three of us can figure out what they have planned for Kenny Smith.”

* * *

Our intended target exemplified everything I knew about the word nebbish. He was so eminently overlookable that it almost seemed as though my eyes tried to slide past him, that they were drawn to the backgrounds behind him rather than the human being. He was tubby and short, with thinning brown hair and oily skin, thick Coke-bottle glasses and nondescript clothing of khaki cargo shorts and a salmon-colored pocket tee, Birkenstock sandals and a cheap digital watch. He slumped in front of a computer, slugging some smoothie concoction out of a plastic cup that looked positively revolting and typing frantically, not looking to the left or the right. Moisture beaded on his narrow, pock-marked forehead even though it was cool inside in the air conditioning.

“This is schlock,” Stephanie said disgustedly, looking with distaste at the computer she'd rented. The garish colors of Kenny Smith's blog, *The Real Congress*, reflected against the lenses of her stylish glasses. “He's just making this shit up, I swear.”

Kendra was on another computer nearby, fending off the advances from two pimply-faced teenage nerd-types with very good but long-suffering grace. She leaned closer to me and whispered, “You really have to fuck this guy?”

I nodded with a small smile. “That's how it works, honey,” I said. “It's really not bad, though. And the payoff is totally worth it.”

She turned her attention back to the computer she was using, sending a long rambling email to me, just random words and phrases so that she would look busy and have a reason to be there if no one tried to read it over her shoulder.

“Have you seen enough?” I asked Steph softly, nudging her with my elbow. “I really need a fucking cigarette, and I have everything I need. He'll do fine.”

Steph's eyebrows beetled in concentration a little. “How do you know?”

I shrugged. “Honey, I wish I could tell you. I look at them and I just know. That's how it's always worked. I took a look at him, and boom – I knew he was the one. I'm already starting to get mental images of the woman he's gonna become.”

Kendra giggled loudly, stifling it suddenly by covering her mouth. She was gesturing to Kenny's blog, now on her screen. “Did you read the bit about Medicare?” she asked, snorting. “He hasn't a clue, does he?”

I logged off the computer, slung my Prada purse over a tanned shoulder and stood. “I'm going,” I announced. “We can meet up later if you still need to watch him. I need to call Heather and Holly and let them know we have a mark.”

Steph and Kendra stood with me. “Let's go get a bite,” Steph said. “We can talk about what's next while we eat.”

“Excellent,” Kendra said. “I'm bloody starving.”

One of the pimply-faced fan club looked crestfallen, giving a lost-puppy squeak to Kendra as she arranged her purse on her shoulder. “You're going?”

“Have to, sweetheart,” she said with a long-suffering smile. “I have to get to class. You were really sweet to help me so much.” As if the woman studying for her doctorate in biochemistry really needed their assistance on how to log on to the Internet. Still, Steph, Kendra and I were

probably the most exciting thing to walk into this place in weeks. I supposed we were a real high point.

“Well, come back and see us,” he persisted. “I’ll show you World of Warcraft.”

“I just might,” she said, giving him a flirtatious wink before turning towards the door. As soon as her face was no longer visible by her admirers, she blew out a long exasperated breath and rolled her eyes. I tried hard not to giggle.

We walked to the sidewalk where Kendra's new secondhand Honda Accord was parked on the street. I'd gotten her the car last week – how badly I'd wanted to get my hot-as-sin new friend a convertible Jaguar XJS with leather seats, but we'd agreed she should have a car that a graduate student would drive. The back seat was crammed with books and papers, as well as a pair of rollerblades and seven or eight CD cases. I slid it to one side and sat down, rolling down the window and lighting the long Virginia Slims cigarette dangling from my pink-glossed lips which I'd put there as soon as my foot was outside the door. Steph dropped her divine ass into the passenger seat as Kendra slid behind the wheel and buckled her belt.

“It's bloody amazing, what you do, Merri,” she told me, taking her sunglasses off the sun-visor and sliding them onto her nose. “I have no recollection of ever being anything else. Flirting with that bloke – my God, it was the most natural thing in the world.”

“Well, it should be. You're a beautiful girl,” I told her.

“I wasn't always,” she said. “I look in the mirror, sometimes, and try to remember my old face. It's like I was born this way.”

“You were,” Steph said.

“You know what I mean,” Kendra objected.

“I wish I could tell you more about how I do it,” I told them both. “But I'm in the same boat you are. I just woke up this way, and I barely remember being any other way. It's like the man I used to be is some strange kind of dream.”

“I wonder why we can remember and Heather can't?” Steph pontificated. “She was changed the way we were – I mean, she didn't get turned back into a baby – but she doesn't seem to have any recollection of her life before.”

“She has a little,” I told her. “Just a lot hazier than my memories. And it seems like she cares about them less, if that makes any sense.”

“The other girls who were changed the way we were – I call it a primary change, and the girls who became babies again a secondary change – don't seem to have as strong a connection to their pasts as we do,” Kendra said. “Babette, Gina, Juli – they don't even remember ever being different. Heather barely does. What's different about the three of us?”

“I have a theory about that,” Steph said, tapping her bottom lip. “It's a little radical, though.”

“Go for it,” I said.

“Before, when I was a man,” she said, “I had a secret. A big one. It's a large part of the reason I asked you to change me, Merri. It's because I always wanted to be a girl, ever since I was little. I even used to dress up a little, when I was younger. I tried to fight it, but I dreamed about it all the time. I never imagined I could actually have that life until I met Merri and saw what she could do.”

“And you think we all wanted to be girls?” Kendra asked.

“I’m not saying it was conscious, like it was with me. Maybe for the two of you, it was buried and repressed deeply,” Stephanie went on. “It’s not something a lot of guys talk about or think about, really. But did the two of you seem to do a lot of very manly things before? Serve in the military, have dangerous hobbies or play rough sports, things where you constantly had to prove your manhood? Did female things make you really super uncomfortable?”

Kendra nodded. “You described me pretty bloody well,” she admitted.

“Me, too, I guess,” I admitted.

“Classic signs of repressed transgenderism,” Steph said. “They’ve determined that there are biological differences in transgendered brains. Maybe that has something to do with how we retained our memories.”

“Interesting,” Kendra said.

I blew out my breath through pursed lips. “Interesting, yeah, but it doesn’t really help us. And the question still remains: do I or don’t I change Kenny Smith? Do we keep going with the Cooperative’s master plan or do we start rocking the boat?”

Steph sighed. “Yeah. I guess that is the question.”

“I say keep going,” Kendra said. “Look, I know these professors are up to something. But we’re no closer to what that is than we were when we started. The more we work for them, the closer we get to their bloody reasons why. It’s not like we’re hurting these guys. If you look at the girls like April and Holly, we’re actually helping them, making their lives better. I don’t see the harm.”

“I just hate not knowing,” Steph said. “I feel like Merri’s just a puppet, and that pisses me off.”

“I’m not gonna be much help, girls,” I told them. “You know how I get. I’m so focused on having a new daughter, it’s all I can do to think about anything else.”

“Then we should just keep doing what we’re doing,” Steph decided. “Maybe we can find out something else in the process.”

* * *

“I know they’re immune to basically everything,” Stephanie whispered softly to Kendra from her spot across the room from where I held my newest daughter, a happily smiling and cooing infant, against my sweat-slick breast, “but I still just can’t make myself smoke around a baby. C’mon, step outside with me.”

“You read my mind,” Kendra muttered back, smiling. “I’ve been bloody gagging for a fag for nearly an hour.” She gave the black wig she was wearing a little adjustment tug, hoping that no one of the techs who might be connected to the university recognized her. She’d taken a big chance in coming, but she increased the likelihood that they’d discover something at the scene of the transformation. Two sets of eyes were always better than one.

The two beautiful women pushed through the largely silent crowd of techs and photographers who were setting up their magic – Steph knew the intricately choreographed routine by heart, having once been in charge of it – to generate the little girl’s past. They found a back exit to the cramped little rental house where I’d seduced Kenny Smith and stepped out into the small and

very dark backyard. Kendra lit a cigarette and held the flame for Stephanie, who inhaled gratefully.

“That's the first time I'd ever seen Merri work, other than firsthand,” Kendra said in awe. “It's brilliant, actually. Bloody fantastic.”

“And it makes her so happy,” Steph said with a faraway smile. “I love seeing Merri like that. She's so happy and so whole – it makes me want a baby of my own, actually.”

“I was just thinking that,” Kendra said. “Strange that the thought doesn't freak me out at all. I should be a gibbering wreck even having those thoughts.”

Stephanie was about to reply when Kendra shushed her abruptly, pointing to where one of the techs had stepped outside. The two women ducked behind the corner of the house where the glow of their cigarettes wouldn't show – much more effective than trying to rapidly extinguish them – and checked to make sure that they were upwind. The tech – Stephanie remembered him as a rather odious lout of a fellow whose breath always reeked of garlic named Adam – lit a cigarette of his own and pressed a cellphone to his ear.

“It's done,” he said flatly. “No problems.”

A pause. “She should be finished in a matter of hours, you know how fast the bitch works,” he said. “Looks like she's gonna be a winner, too. Dr. S & M should be over the fucking moon.”

Dr. S & M? Kendra mouthed to Stephanie silently. Steph only shrugged, playing idly with a lock of her hair as she leaned forward to hear better.

“She brought that slut with her, and some other bitch,” he said. “They've just been standing around looking pretty. Shame. Stephen was a badass, back in the day. Now he's more interested in showing off his tits – nice as they are, they still don't make her what she used to be, know what I mean?”

Another, longer pause. “We should be wrapping it up around dawn, Dr. Hazelwood,” he said. “Merri's gonna do all that touchy-feely shit she does, I'm sure, but the magazine bitch and her new pet will be meeting with her tomorrow. The network goes live in a month, and our new baby girl will be the lead anchor.”

Of course, Steph mouthed. Kendra nodded.

“That takes care of most of your media plan,” the man continued. “Just one more, which she shouldn't have any trouble finding someone. It's the next phase – the political stuff – that worries me. Without Stephen in the mix, finding likely candidates is a real pain in the ass. We don't have his contacts.”

He paused. “You think that's safe, including him – shit, I mean her – in the selection process again? We don't know what Merri did to her brain. She comes across as a total fucking airhead now.”

He grimaced. “You're the boss, doc. We'll go ahead with finding the next one and then include Little Miss Titties in the selection process again. But I'm gonna insist that she be watched. As far as I'm concerned, she can't be trusted for anything. And I reserve the right to yank the plug on her ass whenever I see fit, doc, non-negotiable. This bitch can't seem to plan past her next trip to the fucking shoe store. I'm not gonna risk an entire operation because her fucking earrings don't match her purse, understood?”

He nodded in what looked like satisfaction. “Understood. Listen, I gotta get back inside, Merri's starting the age progression process. She'll be a toddler any second now.”

Another pause. “Yeah, I'm on it. I'm set to pick Burton and Grant at the airport tomorrow afternoon, and the meeting's set for that night.”

He pushed “End” on his phone with a soft tone and tossed his cigarette, stepping back inside. Steph and Kendra relaxed visibly, sagging against the wall for a moment, just taking relieved drags on their smokes, lost in individual thought.

“What a git,” Kendra whispered. “He needs a good kick in the bollocks.”

“Oh, he talks a good game,” Steph said. “But I've seen how he watches us. He'd cut off a fucking leg for a chance to see either one of us naked. Total poser.”

“What do you think he was on about?” Kendra asked.

“Well, it confirms this is a big plan with multiple phases. The 'media plan' sounds like it might have country-wide or even world-wide connotations,” Steph said. “And now that we know our lame-assed blogger is going to be a news anchor, it lets us get a little bit more of a plan. Think about it. An actress, a singer, a porn star, a magazine editor, a C.E.O., a politician, now an anchorwoman? This puts their people in positions to exert an enormous amount of influence on the public. I think the Cooperative is positioning to start trying to influence public opinion in some way.”

“But who is Dr. S & M?” Kendra asked. “And Burton and Grant?”

Steph sighed out a long plume of smoke into the cool night air. “Can't help you with S & M. Sounds like another of Adam's unflattering nicknames. But Burton and Grant, I've heard of. Carl Burton and Eddie Grant, to be exact. They're political campaign managers. National campaigns.”

“Shit,” Kendra said. “Jessica's not even mayor yet.”

“She'll win it in a walk, even if the Cooperative isn't doing any tampering,” Steph said. “She's ahead nearly thirty points in the polls. Shit, I early-voted for her on the issues, not just because she's one of Merri's girls. But these guys coming in – that only means she's slated to move into the national arena. They're gonna want her to be high-profile. I'm thinking Senate.”

“You really think it's that big?” Kendra asked, her eyes wide.

“I think they spent a lot of fucking money on this thing,” Steph said. “And I think they're gonna be looking for an even bigger payoff.”

“We have a lot of work to do,” Kendra said, adjusting her wig again. “I'm going to head back to campus, love. See if I can figure out anything on who this mysterious Dr. S & M might be.”

“And I'm going to act real dumb and big-eyed and try to get a line on who might be next, and what the Cooperative wants,” Steph said. She leaned over and gave Kendra's cheek a quick kiss, before they parted ways.

Stephanie wished she could shake the feeling of dread she carried back into the house, resolved to bury it deep and let Merri have her happy time.

* * *

Merri hung all over the newly-minted tall brunette as Juli set out a sumptuous breakfast of eggs benedict and freshly-squeezed orange juice. The new girl was wide-shouldered and somewhat of an Amazon – nearly six feet tall and athletically muscular while still staying undeniably feminine – but with the most strikingly beautiful face Stephanie had ever seen. Her pale complexion was utterly flawless and glowed with health, her wide blue eyes were in perfect proportion with the full lips, narrow rosebud mouth, toothy smile and slender nose. Even her ears were perfect. Stephanie found it very difficult to keep from staring, slack-jawed, at her perfect face.

“Ooh, honey, I love the new name!” Merri exclaimed, clapping her hands like a teenager as she passed over the new drivers' license from the late-arriving manila envelope. Stephanie couldn't repress a stab of self-satisfaction at the lapse in efficiency since “Little Miss Titties” had been forced from her post. Steph always had the identity documents ready long in advance.

She took the drivers' license and looked at it, the photo looking like the cover of Glamour just on the new girl's stunning looks alone, checking the birthdate which aged her as twenty-five. Kenny Nicholas Smith was gone forever, replaced by the stunning future news anchor Kennedy Nicholle Smits.

“It is a pretty name,” Steph confirmed.

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Eight

by Valerie Hope

"I WISH I HAD BETTER news for you, Merri, but we're no closer now to figuring out what the hell is going on than we were a week ago," Stephanie said sadly, puffing on her cigarette distractedly. Her eyes kept gravitating to the very cute ass crammed into the tailored pants of the waiter at the chic little coffee shop where they were meeting Kendra later. I suppressed a smile. I'd been running my own eyes over that ass for quite a while myself, every time he walked by with another tray.

"It's okay, honey," I said. I meant it. I'd gotten to spend a lot of time lately with Jessica – now the mayor – and my beautiful granddaughter Lisa, as well as Adrienne, the A-list actress who was always away on the West Coast on one film set or another. I was still glowing, having the chance to spend time with the daughters who would suffer the most if the public knew of their relationship with me. We had to be clandestine about our visits, and they were few and far between. That's why I treasured them so much.

"No, it's not," Steph shot back, sipping chai tea. Her thick wet-look pink lipstick left a sexy stain on the rim of the porcelain cup. "You enlisted Kendra and me specifically to find out what's going on, and we're letting you down."

"Bullshit," I said, waving her comment away dismissively. "I enlisted you, like you say, because you were both sad and depressed, your lives weren't working out the way you wanted them to, and I could give you both a second chance to be young, beautiful and happy again. I don't give a damn about the rest of it."

"Well, you should," Steph cautioned. "Merri, I don't like the idea of you being used by these people, whatever their reasons. They treat you like you're their personal... plaything or something."

"I'd like to be his plaything for a little while," I murmured, eyeing the waiter again.

Steph giggled and choked on her cigarette. "No fucking lie," she said. "Seriously, though, Merri..."

I held up a long-nailed hand. "I know, I know. Kendra's been over it all with me, a million times. I'm not a baby factory, I'm a human being, no one has the right, blah, blah, blah..."

Stephanie rubbed the bridge of her nose. "Merri, dammit, this is for real."

"I know it is!" I said, without rancor. "Sweetheart, honestly. I don't mind what I do. I love you and Kendra, I love all my babies so much."

“That's because they made you that way, Merri. Don't you even wish there was something more for you? A job? Maybe a real kid, one you carry yourself?”

“Not really,” I said. “The babies I do have are more than enough.”

Steph sighed. “Well, I need to know what the hell they're up to.”

“And me,” a warm voice said from behind us, and we both turned in our seats to see Kendra in a vision of teenage-girl glamor. She favored us with a very warm smile, her full lips wet with pink gloss. She had big plastic barrettes in her luxurious hair, holding it in two playful pigtails which hung over her tanned shoulders. She wore a pink tank with spaghetti straps and a little glitter heart between the valley created by her firm, taut breasts, and a skin-tight pair of blue denim “Daisy Dukes” which did incredible things to her already firm bubble of an ass. Her long, slender dancer's legs were tanned and smooth, her dainty toes painted a mischievous purple through the thong of her pink, platform flip-flops.

She threw her Coach purse on the table and set her cigarette in the ashtray alongside Stephanie's long enough to give us both kisses and tight hugs before taking her seat. She ordered a mai-tai from the cute waiter – giving him her own very appreciative once-over and a suggestive smile – and sat back with an exasperated rush of breath before taking her cigarette back between manicured fingers and taking a deep drag.

“Kendra, baby, you look fantastic!” I gushed, unable to get enough of looking at her. She looked so different from the alcoholic, near-suicidal basset hound of a man I'd changed her from. She was a portrait of youth, health and joie de vivre, her beautiful face split with a genuine, heartfelt smile.

“Ta very much, Merri,” she said, blowing out a thin streamer of smoke. “I feel fantastic.”

Steph gave her a narrow-eyed look. “You're glowing,” she said accusingly. “What's his name?”

Kendra blushed a little and lowered her eyes. “Well, uh... her name is Allison,” she said, a little abashed but still appearing very happy.

“Baby, I'm so happy for you,” I said. “Where did you meet?”

“Library,” she said, her indefatigable British composure recovered. “Y'know, I do have to work on a masters' thesis while I hunt for these wankers. She's another grad student, working on her masters' in Sociology.”

“What's she like?” Stephanie said, her eyes still twinkling a little teasingly, as if she were still looking for a way to twit our adorable little English rose.

“Well, she's a bit quiet,” Kendra said. “Very intense, but with a wonderful sense of humor. She just slides them in, very quietly, you have to listen very closely. She's tall and a bit on the skinny side, brunette, with glasses and these amazing brown eyes you can just get bloody lost in. The most brilliant kisser.”

“She sounds wonderful,” I said. “I hope I get the chance to meet her, soon.”

“I've not really mentioned you, Merri, sorry to say,” she said. “Y'know, trying to keep our secret mission an actual secret. I wanted to talk to you, piece together some kind of believable story about how you, me and Stephanie would know one another before I invite her to dinner.”

She sipped her drink, which had just arrived. "And it will be dinner, too," she said mock-sternly. "I'm positively gagging for some of Juli's souvlaki."

"Just say the word, baby," I said with a very happy smile. So far from the man she was. No one could convince me my ability to transform men, no matter how nefarious Stephanie might believe the reasons behind it were, was anything other than a positive force.

"Anyway, sweetie, I did want to tell you that Allison's given me a bit more than just a rapid heartbeat," she went on. "I told you she studies Sociology, yeah?"

"Mm-hm," Steph said, suddenly interested.

"Well, she was talking about one of her professors, over dinner last night. She mentioned one in particular, this bird whom she describes as God's Word made bloody flesh. Utterly fucking brilliant, she says."

"And?" Steph pressed.

"Her name, Allison tells me, is Dr. Lisa Stanton-McLean," Kendra said.

"Lisa Stanton-McLean... Dr. S & M?" Steph asked.

"It must be," Kendra said. "Granted, I was only looking among science and engineering faculty for anyone could conceivably be a Dr. S & M. But she's the closest thing we have so far, don't you think?"

"Sociology?" Stephanie asked. "What would a Sociology professor have to do with this plan surrounding Merri?"

"Well, you said it was big," I mentioned, playing with my hair. "Worldwide consequences, you said. Who'd have better theories about how to influence the world than a Doctor of Sociology?"

"You may be onto something," Stephanie said. "Ever met her, Merri? Kendra?"

"She's been on sabbatical for eighteen months in Berlin," Kendra mentioned. "Rumor has it that her work is involved in the Peace Prize, somehow."

"I've heard the name," I said, "y'know, from before. I think I actually might've ripped her off, once. It's hard – everything from before I changed is very hazy, baby, you have to forgive me. She struck me as a little frightening, somehow. Hard as nails, and very determined."

"That's essentially what Allison says," Kendra confirmed.

"Curiouser and curiouser," Stephanie said. "So we might actually be looking at some kind of worldwide thing after all."

Kendra poked her in the short ribs with a long fingernail. "You're bloody loving this, aren't you, Steph?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean you watched far too much bloody X-Files and now you finally have your giant conspiracy," Kendra teased, making a pouty moué at her friend.

"Yeah," Stephanie laughed, "I guess I am."

“The good news is, you're back in the club,” I said. “Now that you're gonna be running the show whenever I have a new baby, you can start quietly asking questions again, trying to find out what's going on.”

Stephanie's eyes widened. “That reminds me,” she said, digging in the capacious Fendi purse I'd gotten her last week on one of our shopping excursions and digging out a thick folder. She slid it across the glass-topped table to me with a single manicured finger. “We have a new mission.”

“Oooh!” I said, bouncing and clapping my hands. “Perfect!”

“The Cooperative is looking for a nerd,” Steph said. “You know, the basics – no family, no real friends, no social attachments. But they're looking for socially awkward and unattractive.”

“Ugh,” I said. “I keep hoping they're gonna send me out after a cute one, one of these days. I do have to fuck them, after all.”

Kendra giggled. “They have been a bit... unfortunate looking, haven't they?”

I nodded. “They really have.”

“Well, relax, sweetie,” Kendra said, squeezing my hand companionably. “There's a hot-bodied young Salvadoran boytoy in my department I can set you up with.”

“Interesting,” I commented. “I've never taken a Latin lover before.”

I noticed Stephanie was blushed a bright red and I raised an inquisitive eyebrow. “Steph, honey? What's wrong?”

She blushed an even brighter crimson and lowered her eyes behind long mascaraed lashes coquettishly. “I'm still not used to this kind of talk,” she mumbled.

“Bullshit,” Kendra teased. “You hear us talk this way all the time.”

“Steph?” I prompted.

“It's really embarrassing,” she confessed.

“You're among friends, love,” Kendra comforted.

“Hearing Merri talking about all these guys she fucks, and you and Allison, it just, I dunno, kinda brings it home.”

“Brings what home, baby?” I pressed.

“That I haven't... I've never...”

Kendra gasped, the whites of her eyes visible all around her vivid sapphire. “You're a virgin?” she whispered.

Steph could only nod, once, abashed.

“Oh, baby, that's nothing to be embarrassed about,” I said, going into 'Momma' mode almost instantaneously. “You've had other things on your mind.”

“Well, that's just it,” Stephanie said, lighting another cigarette. “It's been on my mind pretty much constantly since I changed. At first, I just tried to ignore it, y'know? All that 'I shouldn't be

feeling this way about boys' stuff. But I couldn't quit thinking about it, no matter how hard I tried."

"Well, of course you couldn't," Kendra said, taking Steph's hand. "You're a red-blooded, healthy girl, love. It's only normal."

"Well, I could argue with that," Steph laughed, "but I take your point."

"Well, it's an easy enough solution," I told her. "It depends on what you want, darling. If it's just to get laid, well, that's simple. As beautiful and sexy as you are, any bar in town will give you your pick of hot, willing boys. But if it's a boyfriend you're looking for... it's just as easy, baby, but you just have to go about it a little differently."

Kendra gave her a side-on hug. "Or if you'd rather a girl your first time, I know lots of very attractive ladies who'd be willing, too."

"No," Steph said, wiping her nose, her voice thick with unshed tears. "I'm fairly certain it's a boy I'm interested in."

"How about this, love?" Kendra offered. "There's a little house party that some of my grad-school friends are throwing this Friday. Come with me. I've already told many of them that I'd been an exchange student before coming to college. I can introduce you as my host sister. They're fun people, love, you'll have a wonderful time. And I know two or three likely boys for you for a quick fling, and two or three for potential boyfriends."

"I dunno," Stephanie said. "I'm not real good at parties."

"Oh, pooh," Kendra said, waving a dismissive hand in a streamer of cigarette smoke. "It's not the kind of college party you're thinking, sweetheart. Just a few friends having drinks and cooking out. Very relaxed."

Stephanie looked at me plaintively and I gave her a reassuring smile. "You should go, sweetie. If anything, you can have a good time, meet some new people. And I'm sure you can cook up a cover story, as good as you are."

"But I don't know how to talk to boys," she said.

"I can help you with that," Kendra said.

"Could you come along, too, Merri?" Stephanie asked. "Hold my hand?"

I looked at Kendra. "Would that work?"

Kendra gave her mischievous smile. "It'll be difficult for anybody to hook up with someone as hot as Merri there, you know that, yeah? But I'm sure we can make that work, love."

"And I'll take you out the day before, find you the perfect little outfit," I said.

"You guys are the best," she said, sniffing a little and then blowing her nose.

"You're totally worth it," I said.

"Stop, or you're gonna make me cry," Stephanie said. She took a deep, cleansing drag off her cigarette and a deep drink of her Chardonnay. "But we should concentrate on what's right in front of us."

"Agreed," Kendra said. "Let's focus on the job in hand."

"Do we have candidates yet?" I asked, opening the folder to the summary page.

"No, I'm still waiting for Heather to come through on that front," Steph said. "But I was referring to the ongoing quest to figure out what the Cooperative is planning. Like, why would they be so interested in a socially inept nerd?"

"Well, we heard that this transformation is going to be the last one of the 'media phase,' from that tosser in your crew," Kendra said. "So far, we have a national political candidate-to-be, a porn star, an anchorwoman, an A-list actress..."

"...oh! I forgot to tell you, she's going to be nominated for a Golden Globe!" I interjected, causing happy smiles all around.

"...and a pop idol," Kendra finished. "What else can they need to round out a field of media celebs? An athlete?"

"That would jell with their ironic choice of candidate," I mentioned.

Steph was looking through the window, across the street, and snapped her fingers. "Nope," she said. She pointed to a big billboard, a slender and gorgeous bikini-clad woman posing next to a luxury car.

"A model, you think?" I asked, tapping my bottom lip.

"A supermodel," Kendra said. "If it's as big as Stephanie thinks, then she's no good at all unless she's on the cover of the SI Swimsuit Edition."

"You're right," Steph said. "She would need to be in a much more visible position to exert the kind of influence the Cooperative seems to want from your girls."

"Awesome," I said brightly. "I love models. So sexy. I bet I'm gonna make a way beautiful one, too."

"Of course you are," Kendra said. She patted Stephanie's hand. "All your girls turn out beautiful, Merri. You have a real talent for it."

I dug my phone from my purse and pressed it to my ear to click against my large plastic dangling earrings after pressing Heather's speed-dial with a long French-manicured thumbnail. "Well, I can't get started without a target," I said, sipping the last of my wine.

* * *

Well, they'd said they wanted me to go after a nerd, and a nerd is what I got. I peered through the binoculars from my car, careful not to let my long, mascara-coated eyelashes smudge the eyepieces, as I swigged mochaccino from a paper cup and chain-smoked cigarettes. Brandon Taylor didn't stir unless he had to, that was for damn sure. He only got off his stained couch to go to the bathroom or the refrigerator, apparently, the rest of his time spent glued in front of a computer.

Where the hell does Heather find these guys? I wondered idly, trying to overlook Brandon's lank, greasy hair and his prodigious pot-belly, his disgustingly unwashed t-shirt and sweatpants and his constant sweating. It wasn't working. For the first time since I'd begun my

journey as Merri, I found myself unable to find anything redeeming about my target. I really didn't want to fuck this guy.

I brought up the tap that Heather's people had placed on my iPhone and watched the real-time data that the keylogger was spitting out. He'd been on several online forums, posting things that nobody seemed to read on a variety of thoroughly boring but easily-obsessed-about topics, and had spent a great deal of time playing against twelve- and thirteen-year-olds in World of Warcraft and Red Faction.

I lit the latest in a long line of Virginia Slims and started filing my nails. As far as I could tell, Brandon was the same as the other three men on the list I'd been given from Heather's office. Complete shut-ins, so far divorced from actual human contact that they could barely function in society as I understood it, instead dwelling in an online realm of their own creation where they could be anyone they wanted, so long as it bore no resemblance to the actual person behind the keyboard. It was sad. A part of me did want to save these guys, but none of them seemed good enough to receive the honor of becoming one of my beautiful, perfect daughters. They concerned themselves with things that could not have mattered less to me if they'd tried, and their pitiful online attempts to flatter their own egos and self-images – usually measured in how many pointless arguments they won with whom they considered their peers – just made me a little nauseous.

But I persevered. Dragging my laptop from its case in my passenger seat, I propped it against my steering wheel and logging on to one of the message boards for one of the online message boards concerning one of the games that Brandon frequented. I posted a message he would not be able to resist; that of a neophyte to the game, wide-eyed and earnest as I could be online, who just wanted help with something simple and was obviously a little dim. He'd offer his sage advice, oh-so-smugly, and I would be able to ooh and ahh over his wisdom and superior knowledge, strike up an online conversation, ask to meet him and then blow his mind when he saw me, a bombshell blonde straight off one of the porn sites he visited who would promptly feed him a few drinks and then take him home to fuck him. He'd at least get to live out one of his reality porn fantasies for a little while before I catapulted him out of his narrow, overly-confined little life and into a real society.

If Stephanie was right and she was destined to be a model, I found it a little ironic, enough to make me chuckle deep in my throat, that his online buddies would spend their evenings jacking off their sweaty cocks while looking at her picture. Somehow I preferred it being her picture instead of April's, for some reason. Just reading some of the posts these guys were putting out there, I felt like they were nowhere near worthy of my precious April.

I shook my head roughly to clear it, flinging blonde hair across my face to stick in the thick, perfumed lipstick I was wearing. I dragged it out of my face with long nails and then flipped down the mirror in my sun-visor to repair my coiffure with quick flicks of my fingers. Setting the computer to notify me on my phone when Brandon replied to my post, I closed my laptop and threw the car into gear, pulling into traffic and away from the run-down bank of lofts near the city's tech sector. I had no idea where I was going. All I knew was that I needed it to not be where I was.

* * *

Allison Reese struggled under the heavy load of hardcover books she was trying to wrestle back to the cart to be reshelfed in the stacks. She'd had a good afternoon, throwing herself bodily at her dissertation with no distractions for the first time in weeks.

Well, no external distractions. Her mind floated happily to a place dominated by blonde hair, a ready smile, smooth skin, baby-soft sighs and a marked propensity for truck-stop profanity when sexually aroused several times while she was trying to read and concentrate. But she didn't mind the happy daydreams. This was her favorite time of the relationship – everything was all new and shiny right now. She liked the other parts, too, but this was her favorite. Even the things Kendra did which would eventually annoy her and need to be addressed – right now in the new and shiny phase, they were just cute. Even her farts were charming.

Just as she was gathering up her computer and her notes – she still wrote most of her notes by hand, it just seemed more intimate to her – her new girlfriend strutted in with her catwalk slink and a bright, toothy smile on her flawless face. She was wearing her usual bargain-bin chic, a tight long-sleeved tee in teal that showed off her delicious breasts, off one smooth shoulder to reveal the black strap of a bra teasingly, a skin-tight pair of jeans with a wide white leather belt and woven platform wedge sandals. Her honey-blonde, shiny hair was tucked stylishly under a white knit newsboy cap. She was overly made-up, as usual, but instead of it making her look slutty, Allison – never a fan of cosmetics, a leftover from her femi-Nazi days – found it just added to Kendra's semi-trashy allure. Big white plastic dangly hoops swung from her ears.

“Heya, sweetheart,” she said brightly, lowering her voice out of respect for the library. She'd accused Allison of considering the library to be a sort of church to her, and she wasn't far off. “You look gorgeous.”

Allison blushed. Kendra never went long at all without telling her how good she looked. Allison had never really put much stock into her appearance, but somehow when Kendra said it, she couldn't pretend that it didn't matter to her – she liked that Kendra thought she looked good. She wanted to look good for this girl. It was why she'd worn a dress today – a flouncy white sundress with big yellow flowers; because Kendra said offhand that yellow was a good color for her. She was even considering wearing a little makeup and shaving her legs more often. Allison doubted she'd ever get to the point Kendra was – getting up two hours before she needed to be somewhere to do her hair and face, working out every morning not for her health but to keep her figure, shopping and tanning and manicures and facials every week. But she didn't mind making a little effort.

Allison leaned in and kissed her deeply, leaning in and snaking her arms around Kendra's lissome, graceful frame. Their breasts flattened against one another in a scandalous and delicious way.

“Hi,” she breathed when they finally parted. Allison could taste her lipstick.

“Did you get a lot done?” Kendra asked.

“I did.”

“Good! I'm so glad, I knew you were worried about falling behind,” she said. “I just popped by to see if you fancied some dinner.”

“God, yes. I'm starved.”

Kendra helped Allison with her bags and they began the long walk through the stacks towards the elevators. "Bloody things are heavy," Kendra grumped, readjusting the laden book-bag on her slender shoulder. "Why did they have to put the bleeding lifts so far away?"

Allison patted her firm rump playfully. "Poor baby," she teased.

The brushed-metal doors opened with a merry ding and a tall, almost-painfully slender woman stepped out. She was dressed in a 'thirties-style pencil skirt and hose, thick clunky shoes and a white blouse that set off the painful slenderness of her body. She was adjusting her glasses on her long beak of a nose and studying her silver Blackberry intently, so rapt in her examination that she bumped right into Kendra and knocked her back a step with an outrush of air. The stack of books Kendra had been holding scattered across the floor noisily.

"Oh!" the woman exclaimed, snapped from her reverie with a shock. She knelt gracefully to help Kendra pick up the scattered books. "My goodness! I didn't even see you! Are you all right?"

"Not at all," Kendra breathed. "Yourself?"

"Fine," she said, her crisp, businesslike voice warming a little. She extended a slim hand, decked with expensive rings. "Lisa Stanton-McClean."

Kendra favored her with a very warm smile. "Kendra Traynor. A pleasure."

"Likewise. You're an undergrad?"

"Masters' candidate. In Biochemistry," Kendra told her.

Lisa chuckled. "Funny, you don't strike me as the lab nerd type."

"Oh, get me around test tubes, you'd be surprised," Kendra joked.

"Well, it's nice to have met you," she said with an air of dismissal, standing. Kendra made a few pleasantries, trying to look detached. She didn't want to draw any attention to the little sleight-of-hand she'd pulled, dropping a very small microphone she kept hidden beneath the band of her watch – a habit she'd picked up as a private investigator, always carrying a bug within easy reach – into Dr. Stanton-McClean's open briefcase as she'd knelt to help Kendra pick up books.

She threaded her arm through Allison's as they boarded the elevator, very pleased with herself. Merri and Stephanie would be over the moon.

The doors closed and Allison favored her with a deep, passionate kiss which wrecked Kendra's carefully-applied lipstick. "You have a very cream-in-whiskers look on your face," Allison said when they broke.

"I'm just having a really good day," she replied, smiling happily.

* * *

The day passed quickly for Kendra, and before she knew it she was in front of her little dressing table, fixing her hair and applying fresh makeup for the party she was scheduled to attend in just a few short hours. She teased her hair a little, just to add some glam and volume, and did her eyes a little thicker and sluttier just because she was feeling a little sexy-trashy, dressed casually in a short khaki skirt and cream-colored off-the-shoulder top, platform gladiator sandals and a very cute little purse she'd found at a thrift store last week. She took the stairs of

her little walk-up studio apartment quickly enough to make her tits jiggle painfully against the confines of the little fuchsia push-up bra she wore, excited to see Merri and Stephanie and give them the news that she'd planted a listening device on the infamous Dr. S & M they'd been tracking. She walked to the parking lot, their prearranged meeting place, and was drawn up short by the woman she saw waiting beside the little white Nissan.

Stephanie had obviously been the beneficiary of Merri's – or more to the point, her stylist Gina Starr's – devoted attention, obviously. She'd always had kind of a windblown, careless 'tomboy' look, despite all Merri's tireless efforts to make her more girly, favoring jeans and low heels, her lustrous hair usually pulled back into a loose ponytail, minimal makeup and no real style of her own. But not this time – she was decked out in four-inch cork-soled platform wedges which showed off her long tanned legs and pert ass, which was just barely encased in an abbreviated little denim miniskirt with rhinestone detailing on the seams and pockets. She had a low-cut lavender top which pushed her delectable boobs together perfectly, showing a very teasing amount of cleavage, the spaghetti straps seeming to be stretched to the point of strumming from the effort of holding up her generous breasts. Her hair had been lightened a little from its usual fire-engine red to a soft strawberry blonde and some very light highlights gave her a sleek, shiny multi-tonal look. Gina had given her some playful bangs which hung down to her eyebrows, which had been waxed thin and arched, and made her eyes look huge behind their curtain of long, thickly mascara'ed lashes. She wore her makeup light, but still dramatic, her emerald eyes lined with a soft brown pencil and earth toned shadows, a lip tint just a little lighter than her tanned skin – Merri had obviously talked her into an airbrush tan, she looked like she'd spent hours on the beach in a barely-there bikini – and lustrously wet-looking. She had a shellshocked, overwhelmed look on her delicate and beautiful face as she puffed nervously on a cigarette, held clumsily between fingers that now sported half-inch acrylic extensions and a French manicure.

“Oh my fucking God,” Kendra gushed, her eyes wide and both hands covering her jaw-dropped mouth. “Stephanie, is that actually you?”

“Don't make fun,” she pouted.

“I'm not,” Kendra protested. “You look absolutely amazing! I've never seen you like this... you're... you're...”

“I'm what?” she demanded, a little defensively.

“You're fucking gorgeous!” Kendra exclaimed.

“Isn't she spectacular?” Merri asked from behind the wheel through the open window. “Such a beautiful girl!”

“How do you feel, baby?” Kendra asked, hugging her friend.

“Like everybody's staring at me,” Stephanie confessed.

“They are,” Merri half-sang. “Everybody stares at a beautiful girl like you.”

“I wish you'd stop calling me that,” Steph grumbled, but with a satisfied smile.

“No fucking way,” Merri shot back. “I'm only saying exactly what everyone's thinking. Stephanie, honey, you are gorgeous. Like the cover of a magazine, I shit you not. I'm not letting up until you feel as beautiful as you look.”

“My friends aren't gonna stand a bloody chance against you,” Kendra said. “Now, come on, let's hurry. I still need to pop 'round the liquor store and pick up a bottle of wine for the party, yeah?”

Stephanie opened the door for her and they all piled in, slowly working on Stephanie's reluctance to admit that she was a raging beauty. By the time they got to the liquor store, about a quarter mile away, she'd stopped blushing and had begun to respond to their prodding with a shy, but very hopeful, smile.

* * *

I'd decided, after the party was winding down, to just go by Brandon Taylor's apartment on my way home, just to see if anything had really changed. I was still flushed and happy – Allison, Kendra's very devoted and very bookish girlfriend, was an absolute doll, and completely in love with the vivacious blonde nymphet who hung on her arm. Kendra, for her part, had been the absolute social butterfly, introducing everyone to everyone else, including the debut of a still shy but definitely-warming-to-the-idea Stephanie to a room full of strangers, in particular a tall and wide-chested doctoral student in Applied Computer Science named Will Stratton who had melt-me dark brown, intelligent eyes, a lantern jaw and a head full of shockingly red, close-cropped hair. His eyes had fairly bugged out at the very sight of her, and he'd sidled close to Kendra almost immediately to press her for every drop of information about her 'host sister.'

I'd left the two of them standing in a corner of the small backyard, sipping drinks from plastic cups and making a lot of eye contact and shy smiles. I could scarcely contain my excitement for Steph. She so deserved a good first experience with a guy, whether or not it ended in sex. I just wanted her to have a good time, no matter what she wanted, and couldn't wait for tomorrow's phone call to grill her for every sordid detail of her encounter. I was also strangely relieved that she'd picked 'boyfriend' over 'easy lay' for the type of guy she was looking for. Steph just struck me as the monogamous, long-term relationship type.

Brandon was still in his apartment – I couldn't be sure, but I don't think he'd even changed his clothes, which made my pouty lip curl in distaste – playing his PlayStation and stuffing potato chips into his mouth so fast that he had a continuous trail of them down the front of his stained t-shirt.

God, how I just wanted it over with. I would've gone in and knocked on his door right that second, tackled him to the ground and fucked him as quickly as I could manage and still transform him, if it hadn't meant that Stephanie would have to cut her evening short. Instead, I just shouldered my purse and walked across the street quickly. I'd originally thought to find Brandon via the Internet, to strike up an online conversation with him and net him that way, but I decided that I didn't want to wait that long, that I would much rather rush the job so I could get back to my life and my babies. So I decided to go for broke.

I walked past his window in full view – I felt as much as saw his eyes drawn to me through his dirty blinds – and put on my very best drunken stagger. Just as I was in the center of his living room window, I staged a fall into some soft grass – glad I wasn't wearing stockings or hose, which would have torn terribly – but managed to roll around and scream so convincingly that Brandon put down his game controller and walked outside, holding a first-aid kit he'd retrieved from somewhere inside.

“Are you okay?” he asked in a very gravelly voice.

“No! Ow! Shit!” I slurred faux-drunkenly. “I fucking twisted my ankle.”

He knelt beside me. I noticed he smelled faintly of spoiled food. “Here, let me see,” he bade, and his hands trembled a little as I thrust a very sexy foot in a very sexy platform designer shoe on the end of a very sexy leg into his hands, giving him an unobstructed view of my pink lacy panties.

“It doesn't look swollen or anything,” he told me. “Can you wiggle your toes?”

I showed him. He fussed over me a little more and then helped me to my feet, where I took a few hobbling steps designed to make my tits bounce nearly out of my top. His eyes never left them.

“Better?” he asked me, even though he'd not done a damn thing.

“Yeah,” I said. “My hero.”

His grin was actually a little endearing. “Aww, shucks, ma'am.”

I returned his grin, which was a little infectious. “I'm Merri,” I told him.

“Brandon,” he replied, blushing.

“Brandon, thanks,” I said. “Like, six or seven people just walked right the fuck by me and didn't do a thing. You're the only one who even paid any attention.”

“Well, you could have been hurt.”

“Tell you what, baby. Let me at least buy you dinner tomorrow night, okay? Just to say thanks for being, like, the only gentleman in the fucking town. Will you let me do that, at least?”

He hemmed and hawed a little bit, but it was difficult for him to argue with my tits for very long, and he agreed to meet me at a little bar & grill about six blocks from his apartment. And at least the thought of meeting a beautiful, seductive woman someplace in public might prompt him to shower and put on clean clothes.

I limped away until he was safely out of sight, then returned to my normal, sexy, self-assured stride and hustled my butt back to my car.

* * *

He'd been so easy. I'd fed him a couple drinks, fed him a meal, then walked him back to his place and had his pants down before the door had even shut behind us all the way. He was actually kind of charming, in a very socially inept way, and when he'd cleaned himself and made a little effort, wasn't even very bad-looking. Still, I didn't think I would have traded him for the pink, squealing little wiggle-worm of a perfect baby girl in my arms, sucking greedily at my nipple. The warmth and rightness of that, couple with the taking of the manila envelope from Stephanie's hand once more, made this one of the most satisfying transformations I'd done in a while.

All my girls were here, this time, watching the newest of their sisters grow up in front of their eyes, as Stephanie's team staged all the school plays and soccer games and Hallowe'en costumes she would need to have a past. None of them had ever seen a transformation up close, except for Heather and Stephanie, and they were all transfixed, from the brisk and businesslike Holly in her tailored suit to the bubbly and effusive Dani and April in their skin-

tight dresses and platform shoes, from the smiling and outgoing Kennedy to the glamorous but detached Adrienne.

I watched my newest daughter transform from a gangly, knees-and-elbows adolescent with a mouth full of braces and an unfortunate haircut into a slender, high-breasted panther of a woman, with almost abnormally long legs and a rosebud mouth in a permanently sexy, haughty pout. Her sable brown hair with its red highlights was cut short, in a tousled pixie cut, and she had piercing pale blue eyes. Heather was already on her phone, setting up a cover shoot for the next big thing in fashion models, while Kennedy was working up a story about the young supermodel out of nowhere who was taking the fashion world by storm, while Holly used her business contacts with the magazine to force several top design houses and cosmetic firms who really enjoyed their lucrative relationships with Flirt! magazine to hire her for national ads.

I looked over the ID I was about to hand to the stunning tall woman who was sipping expensive champagne and smoking a cigarette, wearing a scandalously expensive Dior cocktail dress and Gucci pumps worth more than I used to make in a year, thinking that Brandi Adelle Taylor was a very marked improvement over Brandon Taylor, from her sultry smile to her musical laugh to her outgoing, effervescent personality.

All my girls together, and me positively glowing with satisfaction and maternal love, I missed the obvious, but Stephanie and Kendra didn't:

They were all perfect for whatever jobs they were slated to have, utterly flawless examples of femininity and beauty, and they were definitely designed with a purpose in mind.

A purpose we couldn't begin to guess.



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Nine

by Valerie Hope

“NO THANKS,” I REPLIED TO the umpteenth guy who offered to buy me a drink. “I just want to sit here and watch my friend glow.”

Stephanie blushed bright red and hid her face behind her hands yet again, and I laughed. She wasn't dealing well with having everyone around her knowing – and being entirely too open about, by her standards – that she'd given up the pussy for the first time last night, and in the process had had her world rocked. She couldn't get the big shit-eating smile off her face no matter how hard she tried, announcing to the entire world that she'd just gotten some.

The little sports bar she'd chosen for a meeting spot was loud and garish, with a different game that I couldn't have cared less about on every screen – perfect for our clandestine meetings. Kendra was out with her now-very-serious girlfriend Allison tonight, a well-earned night off from the cloak-and-dagger mission the three of us had undertaken. She was using her relationship with Allison to get closer to Lisa Stanton-McLean, the mysterious “Dr. S & M” who could be pulling the strings behind the scenes of everything that was happening, the powers that had changed me from a petty thief named Murray Ryan into the curvaceous blonde bombshell Merri who changed the lives and genders of the social outcasts she encountered, under the orders of the university cabal who'd originally changed me. Now I'd changed a dozen or so men into beautiful, sexy women and had seen them placed in the public eye, in positions of influence in the media and politics, and was no closer to a reason why than I'd been the very first day of my womanhood, the day I'd made my precious Heather out of the useless, good-for-nothing lump that had once been my roommate.

“So, are you gonna give me details or what?” I pressed the blushing Stephanie, sipping my light beer and giving her a suggestive smirk.

“You and Kendra had told me about it,” she said softly, her blush deepening, “but you never really told me about it, y'know? My God.”

“That good, huh?”

“I don't have much to judge it by,” she confessed, “but yeah. I'm still a little wobbly in the legs.”

“Did he have a big... y'know?” I asked.

“Average, I guess,” she said. “But from where I was, the damn thing looked enormous. Y'know, considering what I wanted him to do with it. It looked like it was about the size of a truck.”

“I know that feeling,” I said, “but trust me, you get used to it.”

"I never want to get used to that," she said.

"So I'm guessing it was good," I said, immensely satisfied with myself.

"In my limited experience, yeah," she said.

"How many times did you cum?" I asked bluntly.

"Jesus!" Steph said, ducking instinctively and looking around to see if anyone had overheard.

"You don't beat around the fucking bush, do you?"

"I told you I wanted details," I said, playing with my hair, the portrait of innocence.

"I, um... kinda lost count," she said. "It was a lot."

"Excellent," I said, patting her hand fondly. "You deserve it, honey, you really do. I'm so happy for you. And he seems like a real sweetheart."

"He is," Steph said. "I mean, I guess my transformation wasn't as comprehensive as yours, or any of your babies. I'm not used to things like men opening doors for me, or pulling out chairs, any of that kind of things. Hell, I didn't even realize I liked flowers until he brought me some."

"He brought you flowers? Nice. A gentleman," I said.

"Yeah, lilies," Steph said. "I think they might be my favorites. I never thought I'd have favorite flowers."

"I like roses, but I'm a little old-fashioned that way," I said. "But, you were saying?"

"Oh. It's just weird for me, y'know, the way men treat me now. Shit, I'm still not used to having guys stare at my tits and ass when I go jogging in the mornings, on top of not being used to having the energy to go jogging in the mornings. And nothing could've prepared me for actually finding men attractive."

"He's an easy one to start on," I said. "He's cute, baby."

"I never looked at men that way, even after I transformed," she said. "But when I look at him, that little-boy smile and those shoulders and that tight little butt... oh, Jesus, Merri, it gets me all wet just thinking about it."

"Good for you," I said happily.

"I am going to miss all the stuff that you and I did," she said, mentioning our fiery but brief sexual relationship right after her transformation. "It was wonderful, Merri, really nice. But I don't think that Will would understand if I had something on the side, even if you and I are both, like, really open-minded about things like that. I'm really sorry."

I waved a hand in an airy dismissal. "I figured it would happen, sooner or later, baby," I told her. "Sure, I'm going to miss sleeping with you, but we were always more into hanging out together and being friends than in fucking. And besides, I have Juli, Gina and Babette if I need a little girl-on-girl action, and I can have a guy any time I want. I'm much more of a one-night-stand kinda girl, anyhow, I don't think I could do the boyfriend thing the way you are."

"Funny," Steph said, "I can't imagine doing anything else right now."

"Relationships are awesome when they're all new and shiny like yours," I said.

Steph slugged her beer and put the empty on the oak bar. "Let's step outside, okay? I have some, um... confidential stuff to talk to you about, and I'm fucking dying for a cigarette."

I finished my own beer and stood on my five-inch stiletto heels. "The parking lot looked pretty empty," I said. I took her hand in mine as I scooped up my Gucci purse with the other and led her through the crowd, trying not to make eye contact with the gaggle of after-work thirtysomethings in loosened work clothes who kept giving me the once-over-lightly.

We found a patch of wall behind the silent rows of parked cars and leaned, both of us lighting and sucking long drags off of our long, skinny white cigarettes. A faint cloud of smoke surrounded us before we turned to one another and started a hushed conversation. A bartender – a cute little brunette with an adorable little newsboy cap and a lovely little jiggle in her walk – stepped out of the back door to light a cigarette of her own, but she was far enough away for us to speak in private. We exchanged shy waves and exasperated "who the hell thought it was a good idea to ban smoking in bars" look before returning to our respective spheres.

"Kendra got Stanton-McLean's schedule from Allison," Steph said without preamble. "I know when she's going to be off-campus or out of her office. I'm planning to break in sometime tomorrow and get a look around, maybe plant another bug on her phone."

"Stephanie Renée Kelly, I expect you to be careful," I warned, my programmed maternal instinct kicking in strongly and spilling over in my stern use of Stephanie's full name. "I mean it."

"I will be, Merri, I promise," she said. "But even Kendra agrees we need a lot more information. Stanton-McLean is careful, she doesn't talk business on her personal line and doesn't keep anything at her residence. The bug Kendra planted has given us nothing."

"Her residence? You broke into her house?" I asked, wide-eyed.

"No, Kendra did," Stephanie said, blowing a long plume of smoke skyward. "She's the best, Merri, and with the enhancements you gave her, she's even better than she used to be. I guarantee you, S & M will never know."

"You just said she was super careful," I countered.

"Sure," Steph shot back. "But so are we. And her office is going to be much easier to crack than her house. But I did want to talk to you about something else. A little matter of recruitment."

"Recruitment?"

"We need another person. A computer geek. Kendra and I can't hack the university network, and we can be relatively sure that the Cooperative has some pretty top-notch security."

"You think it's a good idea to make this conspiracy of ours any bigger, baby?"

"No, but it's becoming a necessity," she said.

I sighed. "It's not a problem for me," I said. "Do you have anybody in mind?"

Steph shrugged. "I have a few possibles," she said. "But I also have it on good authority from a contact in Heather's office that you're going to have a new mission soon. Maybe in the next day or so."

“So would it be better to wait?” I asked.

“No, just the opposite,” Steph said. “Trust me, baby, when there's a new background to be generated, my office is in a fucking uproar. It's chaos. You could transform twenty people into a line of Vegas showgirls right in the middle of the bullpen and nobody would even realize it until it was all over.”

I grinned. “Showgirls sound like fun,” I said.

“It may be a drive-by, though,” Steph said. “Once Kendra and I pick one out of our possibles, you may only have fifteen minutes or so to make your move.”

I struck a centerfold pose against the wall, one hand bunching up my hair to spill sexily over my face, eyes half-lidded and smoky. “Think I can't get a guy out of his pants in fifteen minutes, baby doll?”

She giggled. “Oh, I know you can. I wanted to know if it was okay with you.”

“I trust you, baby,” I told her. “Kendra, too. Don't even sweat it. You say we need a computer nerd, you say you have a good candidate, then all I need is his dick in my mouth, baby, and I'll do all the heavy lifting. Just let me know when and where, and remember I can't do it on campus. I'm not allowed anywhere near there.”

“I remember,” Steph said. “I'll get back to you as soon as we have somebody.”

“You're going?” I asked. “But you just got here.”

She tossed her cigarette to the pavement, grinding it out beneath the toe of a very expensive burgundy calf-length boot with a four-inch spike heel. She let the smoke in a long plume between pink-glossed lips. “Sorry, Merri,” she said sheepishly. “I'm, um... I'm meeting Will.”

I grinned knowingly and couldn't suppress a giggle. “Poor baby,” I teased. “Can't go too long without a little cock to scratch that itch, can you?”

“It was your fucking idea,” she shot back.

I gave her a tight, tit-smushing hug and kissed her cheek, inhaling the lovely herbal fragrance of her shampoo in the dense curls of her red hair. “Damn right it was,” I said. “I'm so happy for you, baby.”

“I think I'm happy, too,” she said. “Wish me luck.”

“Luck? Why do you need luck?”

“I told you I was really attracted to this guy, right?” she asked. “Well, it dawned on me last night that I might just be so attracted than I'm willing to give cocksucking a try.”

“You don't need luck, then,” I told her playfully. “You may need an Altoid later, but you're not gonna need any luck.”

* * *

It was a little disconcerting, moving from the noisy, boisterous sports bar to the elegant, exclusive five-star restaurant. I'd gotten the call from Heather on my way home, and had just granted enough time for me to change into the black, low-cut Oscar de la Renta I'd had Babette set out for me, have Gina do my hair in a glamorous up-do which let little platinum-

blonde ringlets escape the tight chignon to frame my face, deck my fingers in about sixty grand worth of diamonds and platinum and jump back in my Mercedes to meet the first of my daughters in the swanky restaurant. She poured me a glass of wine and handed me a copy of her magazine without preamble, a huge glowing smile on her face.

"Doesn't she look amazing?" Heather gushed.

My newest daughter, Brandi Taylor, was on the cover of next month's Flirt! magazine in a gorgeous Dior cocktail dress, her makeup and hair done to absolute perfection and a glowing smile on her flawless, pouty-lipped face. My breath caught in my throat. All my girls were beautiful, to be sure, but Brandi... she left me utterly speechless, bright tears clinging to my long lashes.

"I... I don't..."

Heather placed her beaming hand over my own and patted it fondly. "Momma, you really outdid yourself with Brandi," she told me. "I'm so glad my magazine is going to be the one that launches her career."

"She looks so beautiful," I whispered.

"I know," Heather agreed. "I couldn't believe it when she came onto the set. I can't lie, I just started crying, right then and there. So did Holly."

I picked up the magazine. "Can I have this?" I asked.

"Of course, that's why I brought it," Heather said. "She's going to be a very busy girl over the next three months. She has the covers of Vogue, Elle, Cosmopolitan, Allure, Sassy and InStyle, and Holly's hard at work closing the deal to get her the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit cover. She's also got shows for New York Fashion week with Valentino and Isaac Mizrahi and is high in the running for the new Revlon campaign this fall."

"Is she happy?" I asked, still transfixed by the magazine cover.

"Of course she is, Momma! Everywhere she goes, she's smiling. She told me she can't wait to wake up in the mornings, and she has so many friends now she can barely keep track of them all. Think about the person she used to be."

I did. The lonely hermit I'd found was nothing like the woman Heather was describing. I tucked the magazine on the floor beside my purse, since I knew if it was on the table I wouldn't be able to look at anything else. I folded my hands over my plate and gave Heather a clear, happy gaze.

"It's really good to see you, baby," I told her honestly. "I don't see enough of you these days, as busy as you are. Any chance of taking a vacation for you?"

"Not any time soon," she said honestly. "Honestly, though, Momma, I wouldn't take a vay-cay right now even if I could. I'm having way too much fun running the magazine."

"That's good, sweetheart," I said. "I'm glad you're happy."

"I am, I really am," she said. "So, anyway... I want you to know, Momma, I called you because I wanted to see you. I miss you. But I do have a new mission for you, too. But it's not the reason I asked you to meet me."

“Oh, honey, I know that,” I said. “What's the mission?”

She dug in her stylish attaché case and slid a thick folder across the table. I didn't even look at it, I just slid it on the floor next to the magazine – I stole another quick look at my gorgeous daughter while I was down there – and returned my gaze back to Heather.

“We're looking for a slacker,” Heather told me. “Tragically Gen-Y, disaffected, coffee-shop crowd. We were specifically told to look for someone who didn't give a shit about anything, which was tough right at first. We usually start searching for possibles by using the voter registry.”

“How many did you find?” I asked.

“Oh, a bunch,” she said. “But I have to tell you, the guy we tagged for you left all the other possibilities in the dust. Look up Gen-Y in the dictionary, and you'll find a picture of Gentry Pratt next to it.”

“Gentry Pratt?” I asked.

“Gentry Cassius Pratt,” Heather clarified, grinning behind her hand. “Apparently, his parents had much grander plans for their little boy than being a night-shift barista at a barely-solvent local kaffeehaus-slash-hookah bar in the warehouse district.”

“What's he like?” I asked.

She gave me a co-conspiratorial smile. “Okay, Momma, are you asking what he's like as a person, or whether or not he's cute?”

I giggled. “It would be really nice if you picked me a cute one for once,” I said. “You and Holly and whoever we work for seem to forget that I actually have to fuck these guys to get the job done. And the last couple... yuck, baby.”

“I know, I know,” Heather said, laughing. “He's okay. I mean, I wouldn't put a naked picture of him up on my closet door, but I certainly wouldn't boot him out of bed for eating crackers, either.”

“Finally,” I said. “Hell, I'm to the point where I'll just be glad if he bathes.”

Heather laughed aloud, turning some heads in the snooty restaurant, before she covered her mouth with her hand and blushed scarlet. I snorted laughter in response to her dismay.

“Momma, you're awful.”

“Enough business,” I said briskly, patting my long-nailed hands on the table. “Now. Have you met anybody yet?”

“Who the hell has time for that?” she chuckled. “No, nobody special, and I'm not even out there looking. Holly and I use a very discreet, very high-class escort service once or twice a month to handle those kinds of things.”

“Really? The boys are nice?” I asked.

“Very nice,” she said, a self-satisfied smile spreading on her beautiful face. “I can give you their number, if you'd like.”

“Yeah, I would like that,” I said. “I’m getting a little tired of the club scene, and I’ve had a run of very lackluster lays with the boys I’ve brought home lately. It would be nice to find one who actually gets paid to have foreplay, y’know?”

“Absolutely,” Heather said. “I’ll have my secretary send you their number in the morning. Ask for Thomas. He’s by far my favorite. Tall, dark ebony skin, not an ounce of fat on him, and a pecker the size of a small import car. And the stamina of a marathon runner. I highly recommend him.”

I think even I blushed a little, but my curiosity was definitely piqued. I knew well the level of sex drive I’d implanted into my oldest daughter, and what kind of a man it would take to satisfy her so thoroughly.

We chatted a little more about nothing, while the waiter came and took our orders. We sipped superlative wine – I asked the label of the sommalier, so that I could get Juli to lay in a stock of the excellent pinot grigio in my own personal cellar – and enjoyed a sublime dinner, finally ending up on the outdoor deck, smoking cigarettes and drinking one-hundred-year-old brandy to the gentle strains of a string quartet playing Beethoven. A slightly chilly breeze had kicked up from the east, the first little breath of autumn after the balmy summer, and I crossed my arms beneath my breasts, suppressing a chill.

“Momma, something occurred to me,” Heather said, puffing on her imported Turkish cigarette and absent-mindedly playing with the hair at the nape of her neck, a telltale sign she was nervous.

“Mm? What’s that?”

“You ask me – well, you ask all your girls – all the time if we’re happy,” she told me. “I was just wondering. Momma, are you happy?”

“Me? Well, of course I am, baby. Why would you ask that?”

“I don’t mean content, Momma. I mean really, really happy, like Holly and I are. I mean, we’ve tried to give you what we think you want – the money, the cars, the house and jewelry and clothes – but we’re all so caught up in our new lives, in doing what we do, that none of us really stop to ask whether or not you’re happy being who you are and doing what you do. And even though I may not say it very often, Momma, that matters to me. I love you.”

I teared up a little. “I love you too, honey.”

“Well?” she asked, her own voice thick. “Are you? Happy, I mean?”

“It depends,” I said carefully. “When I get to make a new daughter, you know, hold her in my arms and look in her eyes, then yes. I’m incredibly happy. The rest of the time, I dunno. I mean, I love spending time with you girls, and with my friends, and I have a good life, but compared to how I feel when I make a new daughter, everything else just seems kinda... I dunno, pale.”

She nodded. “I think I can understand that.”

“When you finally have a baby, you will,” I said, patting her hand.

“Funny,” Heather mused, “I’ve never even thought about that.”

“You should,” I said. “Heather, baby, you would be a fantastic mother.”

"You think?"

"Of course I do," I said. "That should go without saying, baby."

Heather stood in silence, framed by the city lights and her thick blonde hair ruffled by the wind, eyes faraway. I just left the silence alone, puffing on my cigarette and trying to ignore the chill, struck by her windswept beauty.

It seemed like a very long time before she spoke, and her voice sounded different to me.

"Maybe I should go home, Momma. Do some thinking."

"I didn't mean to kill your buzz, baby," I said.

She smiled, a glittering affair. "You didn't," she told me. "You just put some ideas in my head that hadn't really been there before. That's not a bad thing."

I kissed her cheek. "Well, I guess I should start looking for this Gentry Pratt, anyway," I said.

"Baby, call me if you need to talk."

"I will, Momma. I promise."

* * *

Gentry Pratt was everything that Heather had told me he'd be, and less. Long, scraggly hair and a long, scraggly goatee outfitted a long, scraggly body decked in thrift-store clothing that was either too big or too small. But it was all too-carefully chosen for effect, too deliberate in its quest to further his persona. Even through his carefully detached and meticulously-tailored ennui, just his choices of clothes and music alone showed him for the outright poseur he was – it wasn't that he listened to music that no one else liked, it was that he purposefully listened to music that sucked because no one else liked it, and pretended that his was the more advanced mind, the more insightful intellect and only he could find the hidden messages and nuances in the shlock indie complaint-rock he preferred.

Maybe he could've pulled it off if he didn't spend so much time fucking crowing about how only he truly understood the artistes to his less-forceful slacker friends at the oh-so-shabby coffee shop and hookah bar where he pretended to work.

I hated him almost instantly, but at least Heather had been right – outside of the poorly-done tats that decorated his arms and the pale, sunless skin, he had a nice body and a marginally cute face. The problem was, in his total world-weariness and feigned disgust at all things mainstream, his refusal to accept anything that someone else might show an interest in, he would studiously never go in for an all tits-and-ass, va-va-va-voom blonde like me.

Unless there was a hook.

I could feel his eyes on me – overcheated blondes like me always drew looks and fantasies, no matter how jaded the man on the other end. And he was a poser, no matter how carefully-constructed his persona, because I could see in his eyes just what he thought and felt when he looked at my artfully-displayed cleavage and tight skirt.

I walked up to the counter, smacking my gum and playing with a strand of my hair, not even making eye contact. I'd specifically told Gina, on my whirlwind run home after dinner with Heather to change clothes and makeup – to go for the heroin-chic look: last season's designer

clothes, not too expensive, limp and lifeless hair and too much eye makeup. I looked like an utter and complete skank.

“Hey,” I said in a bored monotone, stifling a yawn. “Gimme a tall house with two shots of espresso.”

His pierced eyebrow quirked upwards in mild shock. “One tall caffeine bomb,” he called to the back.

I looked everywhere but him, and I could sense how much it was bothering him; he began to subconsciously preen and prance a little. After a while, I gave him the hook he was looking for, giving a very subtle and seemingly-subconscious little dance to the music playing over the tinny speakers.

“You like Judas Kiss?” he asked.

“Whatever,” I said, disinterested. “They're all right, I guess.”

“Oh, come on,” he said. “These guys have their finger on the pulse.”

I smacked my gum and snorted derisively. “Whatever,” I drawled.

“Oh, okay, then, who do you consider real out there?” he pressed.

“Honey, nobody's real. Everybody's just in it for the fucking money,” I said, sighing, looking for all the world like I was suffering just answering his question.

His eyes widened. A girl more jaded than himself? Clearly, he considered that impossible. “I don't think that's true. Take Dylan, for example.”

“Look, I don't wanna argue with you, I just want my coffee,” I said.

He snorted. “You're one to talk about being in it for the money, anyway,” he said with a poorly-concealed sneer. “You, with your designer clothes and your silicone boobs.”

“Never said I wasn't,” I said. “In it for the money, I mean. Guys pay to see my tits, they pay more if they're bigger. It ain't rocket science.”

“They pay? You're a stripper?” he asked.

“Used to be,” I said, popping my gum loudly. “Now I do videos. Pays better. Is there, like, any hope of some fucking coffee in my future or what?”

“What? Oh, right,” he said, pushing a cup of dark, steaming brew towards me. I passed him a folded bill and took it to a table in the corner, where I took out my Blackberry and lit a cigarette and pretended to ignore him. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see him staring at me hungrily.

Gotcha, I thought.

To his credit, he gave it the better part of an hour before he made his way over to my table.

“Need a refill?” he asked me, tearing me away from the free community protest paper I'd be pretending to read.

I gave him a level stare. “Look, do we really have to do this?” I asked. “This whole, 'I'm cooler than you' thing that I fucking hate. You're obviously into me, you want to see me naked and

wrapping my tits around your cock, and you feel like you gotta impress me or some shit to get it.”

“Uh...” he said, obviously flabbergasted.

“Look, baby, I fuck for money. I’m as big a whore as you are, except I’m honest about it. I don’t care if you think you should only be into skinny, pale goth chicks with sleeve tattoos or whatever. I know when somebody wants to fuck me, and it doesn’t fucking bother me. If you want to fuck me, just say so, otherwise just leave me the fuck alone in peace, okay?”

He stared at me, slack-jawed, for a long beat. “Okay, then, fine,” he said. “I want to fuck you.”

I looked him up and down consideringly, just to make him sweat a little, then looked at my watch. “Sure, what the fuck. I don’t have any place to be until tonight anyway.”

* * *

After the initial seduction – which had actually been easier than I’d thought it would be, but horny guys pretending not to be horny were actually pretty easy – everything had gone just like clockwork. I’d taken him back to a motel room off the interstate and gained that otherworldly sense of him from the kiss, fucked him nearly to insensibility (he was actually a reasonably good lay) and then sucked him so aggressively he never even felt the tiny needles on my tongue that injected him with the nanites that affected his transformation. I made the call as I sprawled sweaty on the coverlet, holding the little squirming baby against my chest, pushing the discarded skin that used to be Gentry Pratt away with my bare toes. The furnace-like heat of the milk that would progress the darling, bright-eyed little girl on my chest was burning in my breasts as I willed Stephanie and her team to hurry.

I stayed in my usual happy, loving haze as I fed her in intervals while Stephanie and her silent team set up backgrounds and situations to document my darling little girl’s childhood. It was my favorite part, watching her progress from a bald, squealing infant to a precocious, smiling toddler, then a tow-headed child and a knobby-kneed preadolescent with a mouth full of braces to a coltish but self-assured little bespectacled teen with a playful spray of freckles across her perpetually suntanned nose and her straw-blond hair pulled back into a high horsetail. I clapped gleefully as she performed in a school play, watched her win high-school debates staged in front of a green-screen and give a valedictory address at a high-school and a college graduation.

She stood in front of me with a bright, earnest smile on her face, taking both my hands in both of hers and swinging them back and forth between us like a little girl. She was a portrait of health and vigor, tanned and energetic with a ready smile. Her straw-blond hair, lightened by long hours in the sun, was in two braids behind her ears and her lightweight, rimless glasses were creeping their way down her slender nose – I knew she’d soon be pushing them up with a shy smile, a nervous habit of hers that just melted my heart every time she did it.

She was the first of my daughters not slated for constant media attention, so she was the first of them to not look like the cover of a magazine. Her complexion wasn’t flawless like her sisters, nor was she tall, big-breasted or statuesque. In fact, if it wasn’t for her infectious, bright smile and twinkling eyes, she’d be a little bit on the mousy side. I could feel a pull to try and pretty her up, to plunk her firm little well-toned ass into Gina’s chair and get her kelp-wrapped and waxed and protein-packed and highlighted until she looked as much of a movie star as her sister Adrienne, but I also sensed that I’d always tried to get her to act the part of

the pretty girl and she'd always resisted me. Other things mattered more to her than the way she looked. She did show a few things to mollify me, though – a French manicure on her short, utilitarian fingernails, some pink lip gloss, and the little diamond solitaire pendant I'd put around her neck when she was six years old (about forty-five minutes ago) for a birthday present.

"How do you feel, baby?" I asked her as she watched the choreographed bedlam around her. Stephanie gave her a friendly wink as she passed in a cloud of cigarette smoke, a cellphone pressed to her ear and a clipboard in her slender hand.

Her raspy soprano was a nod to a lifetime of being outdoors, yelling and screaming with her friends until her voice was normally gravelly and hoarse. "I feel wonderful, Momma, just wonderful."

"You look great," I told her, tugging at her hair in a futile attempt to give it volume. "I just wish you'd let me do something with your hair, baby, you're such a pretty girl..."

She pulled away with a patient but genuine laugh. "Mom-ma," she whined.

"All right, all right," I laughed. "But at least you have to let me take you out and get you some clothes. Something to go with your coloring."

She looked down at the layered tank-tops, olive drab over white, the black-and-white plaid flannel shirt tied around her waist and the secondhand Levi's and hiking boots that did little to show off her slim figure and high, apple-sized breasts. "What's wrong with what I have on?" she asked, genuinely wondering.

"Oh, honey..." I laughed. "I keep telling you, nice clothes are an acquired taste. You have to give them a chance."

"But they don't do me any good at all. I can't work outside in what you have on, for instance," she said, gesturing to the blue off-the-shoulder sweater and white denim micro-mini I was wearing along with four-inch spike heels and wide vinyl belt across my flat belly.

"Well, at least let me try, honey-bug, okay?"

"Okay, you win, Momma. We can go play dress-up tomorrow if you want."

I clapped my hands and bounced. "Oooh, I so want. I'm gonna go call April, or Kennedy, or somebody, see if they want to come with, okay?" Without waiting for a reply, I bounced out the room, digging in my white woven Versace purse for my cellphone, buried beneath the tons of makeup and other sundries I carried with me at all times. The girl who used to be Gentry Pratt watched me go, an amused chuckle and that bright-as-Vegas smile on her pretty face.

She jumped a little when she realized Stephanie was standing next to her, the same amused smile on her face, watching me scamper out to the back porch to start trying to herd my daughters into the same place at the same time.

"Oh!" she gasped. "Hi."

"Hi," she said. "Your mom, I gotta say – she's a real force of nature."

"We couldn't be more different, her and me."

"You have the same eyes," Stephanie commented, dangling her cigarette off a pink-glossed lip and handing over a manila envelope. "Here, these are for you."

"These are?" she asked.

"Your new identity," Stephanie said. "History, records, that kind of thing, and some money and credit cards to get you started."

She dug in the envelope excitedly, finding first her passport and opening it with the look of a youngster on Christmas morning. The small folder was completely encrusted with stamps and the vinyl sleeve was dog-eared and folded, the mark of a true world traveler.

The woman who used to be Gentry Cassius Pratt read aloud with a sense of wonder off the first page: "Jennifer Cassidy Pruitt."

She folded it carefully and dropped it back into the envelope. "Jennifer Cassidy Pruitt," she repeated. "I like it."

Stephanie smiled. "I do, too."

"Think anybody'd mind if I went by Jenny? I think it suits me a little better."

Stephanie looked at her appraisingly. "Yeah, I think it does, too, Jenny."

"What was that look for?" Jenny inquired.

"All Merri's other daughters, well – they're intimidating as hell. You'll understand when you meet them. Every one of them is tall, freakin' killer beautiful, huge tits and perfect skin and flawless bodies, rich and successful... well, you're the first of her daughters that's been, I dunno, well... normal."

Jenny smiled – her nose wrinkled – and blushed a little. "Wow."

"I think I'm really gonna like you, Jenny," Stephanie said. "I haven't made this offer to any of the other daughters – I don't think they'd've accepted, even if I had – but I think I want to be your friend."

"I'd like that, Stephanie," Jenny said.

"Call me Steph," she replied, smiling. "All my friends do."

"Steph," she repeated. "Wanna come shopping with me and Momma tomorrow? I could use somebody to help keep her from dressing me up like a Barbie doll all day. I think she's trying to get April to come with."

"Oh, wow, sounds like you could use some help," Steph said. "I'll be there, but I have to cut it short around five or so. I have some things I need to take care of."

"That's okay, so do I," Jenny said. "I have a fundraiser to arrange for Amnesty, then drinks with the local branch of the Peace Corps, and I have to be out at a Habitat build tomorrow morning early."

"You and your causes," Steph chuckled. "Merri really outdid herself. By the way, your medical license and your degree are in there, but they might not stand the same scrutiny as your Social

Security and drivers' license and passport. I never had to fake ID from the American Medical Association before.”

“Oh, don't worry, Steph, I won't be waving it around very much,” Jenny said. “Nobody pays that much attention to us Doctors Without Borders types anyway, the ones who run away from all the money here in the 'States.”

“Well, c'mon, I should get you the keys to your car and apartment,” Steph said. “An electric car, of course, and a solar array on your townhouse.”

“I was gonna ask,” Jenny said. “You know me well.”

Steph took the young activist's arm and led her through the throng of workers towards the front of the room, saying, “I should. I know the woman who designed you.”

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Ten

by Valerie Hope

“BUT WHY WOULD A BUNCH of computer and biochem geeks be dancing to the tune of a sociology professor?” Stephanie asked aloud, her brow furrowed in the adorable way she had that denoted deep thought.

“Haven't a clue, love,” Kendra shot back, blowing a bubble with her gum, her icy blue eyes scanning the crowd around us restlessly, even though the chances of our being overheard or followed in the crowded department store were slim to none.

“She's got to be the one,” I mused, tapping the pointed toe of my Miu Miu ankle boot against the thick-pile carpet. “Nobody else could possibly be our mysterious Dr. S & M. Kendra said so.” I cast my eyes again to the closed door of the dressing room. April, my porn-star daughter, was lounging against the wall, an impatient look on her beautiful doll's face as she toyed with a strand of her platinum blonde hair, teased out today in a windblown, quasi-80's “big hair” style, and sucked on the earpiece of her white-framed Chanel sunglasses.

“Come on, Jenny,” she said, exasperated, through the slatted door of the changing room. “You've been in there, like, forever.”

“Jesus, will you just hang on a minute?” a very frustrated voice called back through the door, sounding a bit breathless. “I'm not – ugh – quite used to wearing stuff like this, okay? Besides, I'm not the – oof – one who said I should get it tight to show off my boobies, okay?”

“Just hurry,” I chimed in. “I'm dying of suspense out here.”

“I can't get the fucking thing zipped all the way,” Jenny called.

“Never mind that, just get your hot little ass out here!” April shot back, giggling and thumping on the flimsy door.

“In a minute! God!”

“She doesn't have that much pull at the university,” Steph went on as if nothing else was happening. “She would've had to've been onto something. Something big, to convince all those stodgy scientists to work together and trade all that technology without any shit about patents or publishing.”

“Look, I'm getting to know her a little,” Kendra said, chewing madly on her gum to offset her wicked craving for a cigarette. “She doesn't talk about her work much. But I do know her schedule, now, well enough to break into her office and snoop 'round a bit.”

“And we still need that computer whiz,” I said distractedly, eyes still glued to the changing-room door. “Any ideas when that's gonna happen, baby?”

Steph sighed and stomped her foot in impatience and exasperation. “The one I had all picked out has just up and disappeared. Some trade conference in Los Angeles, I think. He won't be back for six more days.”

“We could always fly me out there to take care of it,” I said, suddenly all excited at the thought of being turned loose on Rodeo Drive with no adult supervision.

“Yeah, but how would we get her bloody background sorted? She'd have to have ID to get a flight back, love, and her return ticket would be no good,” Kendra commented.

I pouted. “I guess you're right,” I huffed. “Jenny, come on!”

“Okay, okay!” she shouted. The dressing-room door clattered open on squeaky hinges, and all our jaws – even the deeply distracted Stephanie's – hit the proverbial floor as one.

“Oh my God,” I breathed. “Jenny, baby... you look... you look...”

“The word is hot,” April supplied.

Jenny – Dr. Jennifer Pruitt – was blushed beet red as she pranced out of the changing room in the second-skin red satin Valentino cocktail dress and the skyscraper four-inch red patent Gucci stilettos with burnished gold accents. She executed her best approximation of a model's turn – basically a very bouncy and graceless turn-in-place which looked absolutely little-girl-playing-dress-up adorable – with her hand flared out at her hips. She was wearing her hair down today, a rarity for the practical Jenny, and the sun-bleached highlights seemed to sparkle.

“You're so gorgeous, baby,” I whispered. “Such a very pretty girl.”

She looked awkwardly down at the dress. “I feel like I'm gonna pop out of this thing at any moment,” she grumped.

“You won't if you keep your back straight,” April supplied. “And besides, even if you do, you can turn that into great press if you spin it right.”

I giggled. “Like your wave to the crowd at the Video Music Awards?”

April giggled back, a twinkle in her eye. “It's not like everybody in America hasn't had a peek at my tits at one time or another,” she said. “My publicist said it made my numbers shoot up on the Internet.”

“Yeah, well, for a porn star, that's all well and good,” Jenny chuckled – the motion plus the tight dress made her little handful breasts bounce deliciously, “but I'm more interested in a Peace Prize someday, actually, and I hear the Nobel committee frowns on topless candidates, I hear.”

“Aw, I'll blow 'em all for you and they'll overlook it,” April shot back, laughing.

“You're so getting that dress,” I told her.

“I can't afford this, Momma!” she protested. “This little scrap of fabric costs eighteen hundred dollars! I know whole villages on the east coast of Africa that can be immunized for that!”

“Which is why I had Holly cut you a check for three hundred thousand dollars,” I shot back good-naturedly. “You can immunize all the little African babies you want, but you're doing it in a decent wardrobe for once in your life. There is no fucking way I'm letting you walk out of here without that dress and those shoes.”

“What would I possibly need them for in El Salvador, Momma?”

“You might get asked someplace nice,” I said. “To dinner with some warlord or some Minister of Finance whose help you need and who'll be a hell of a lot more receptive to an offer from a girl who makes his pants a size or two tighter.”

“That's not...” Jenny began.

“You're not changing her bloody mind, Jenny,” Kendra laughed. “Just give in and take the bloody dress or we'll be here ages.”

“Okay,” she said. “It is a pretty dress.”

“It's a dress,” I corrected. “It only works when it's on a pretty girl, sweetheart.”

“Okay, okay, I give in,” Jenny said. “Just like I have on all the other clothes you've bought me today. Just how much have we spent, anyway?”

“Exactly what I wanted to spend, honey,” I replied. “Don't worry about it. Your African babies are gonna get their shots and your Honduran refugees are gonna get their schools and you can go drill wells in Cambodia and build houses in Angola and give away shoes in Bangladesh to your heart's content.”

Jenny smiled. “I wish more people would give like you,” she commented, going back in the changing room and taking her little pink cotton 34B bra – two cup sizes smaller than anyone else in the room, but it didn't seem to matter to her, and there was no way I was going to win the silicone implants argument without getting her drunk – off the hook as she wrestled with the zipper of the dress, all clearly visible through the cracked door.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Well, Holly and Heather have raised nearly three million,” she said. “You yourself gave me three hundred grand out of your personal funds, and April's give me another two-fifty. Adrienne is cutting a check for one-fifty and Dani's in for the same. Brandi's said she'll give me seventy-five K of her personal funds and will be raising funds for me during Fashion Week, and Jessica's going to put in the good word for me on some state grants, with the promise of federal backing once she gets into office. And Kennedy's going to do a feature on our work for national syndication, she says she thinks she can get us on Nightline or 20/20 once it's finished.”

“Well, you do important work,” Steph said.

“I know, and I almost cry thinking of how many people you're helping all over the world,” Jenny said. “But there's always more. I mean, we want to tackle AIDS in Africa, and there may not actually be enough money out there, even with the Warren Buffetts and Bill Gateses of the world. I just wish there were more people like you.”

“Y'know something, baby?” I said. “I think that can be arranged.”

Steph's eyebrows shot up. “Merri, no. We can't.”

I look her hand, my eyes bright. “Why the hell not, Steph? Honestly. You still have contacts inside the organization. They always tell us who to find and what to do with them. And we’ve served them without question this whole time. Why the hell shouldn’t we be allowed to put in a request?”

Kendra tapped her bottom lip in thought. “You know, Steph, she has a point,” she said. “The worst they can do is say no, after all.”

“See? Kendra thinks it’s a good idea.”

Steph looked at her phone. “They contact me, that’s how it works,” she said. “I don’t know how to contact them.”

“Bullshit,” I shot back. “You’re the smartest person I’ve ever met in my life. If anyone can find a way to track down a phone number, it’s you. Please, honey? Can you at least promise me you’ll try?”

I turned on the puppy-dog eyes as hard as I could, and Steph’s face cracked into a slow, loving smile. “I can’t make any guarantees,” she said at last. “But I promise I’ll try, okay?”

I kissed her soundly, smearing her red lipstick with my dark pink in a cool swirly pattern. “You’re such a doll,” I told her.

Jenny stepped out, once more in her trademark Goodwill blue-jeans – at least this pair had a stylishly ripped-out left knee – and a shapeless tank-top with a baggy overshirt, her hair gathered into a careless ponytail and her glasses sliding down her nose, and Kendra bounced immediately to her feet.

“Finally,” she grumped. “Now, will you go pay for this lot so we can bloody well go outside for a fag?”

* * *

The party broke up all too quickly for me once we carted all the bags to the car. Kendra was off to case Dr. Stanton-McLean’s office, Stephanie was in a big hurry to meet her new boyfriend Will at a party they planned on attending – even though they might just stay in and have crazy, passionate sex and just give it a miss, the way things usually developed between them – April had a photo shoot for her latest movie and Jenny was only interested in a glass of wine, a hot bath and an early bedtime. So that left me with too much time on my hands, and no one to share it with; Dani was in L.A., as was Adrienne, both hard at work on their latest projects, Heather and Holly were in their usual frenzy of work, meetings and appointments, Brandi was on her way to Milan for a photo shoot and was somewhere over the Atlantic right now, Kennedy was in makeup for her six-o’clock broadcast and Jessica was busy preparing for her campaign for the open Senate seat in November.

Poor Merri, I grumped to myself, sitting in my convertible Mercedes puffing on a cigarette, all dressed up and no place to go.

This was ridiculous. I was young, hot, single and rich – the last thing I should be feeling was lonesome and bored. I toyed with the idea of going out, finding some lonely guy and just forgetting about it in the haze of sex and sweat and passion that would follow, or just going home and diving into the willing, naked heap of Juli, Gina and Babette and escaping my

troubles that way. But none of it could penetrate the numb haze of boredom that had settled on me.

I just wandered, window-shopping until the stores closed for the evening, not even truly enjoying the desirous looks I got from the men I encountered the way I usually did. It was like life had just lost its luster, and it reminded me painfully of the depressions I used to have as a male petty thief, in what seemed an eternity ago. It dawned on me that I needed something more in my life than just waiting for the Cooperative to give me a new mission, to have something other than just my daughters and Steph and Kendra's clandestine quest to uncover the people who were behind the transformations and to get an insight as to what their plans might be.

Maybe I needed a job. Once, as a cover to seduce the man who became Holly Broling, the C.E.O. of Heather's company, I'd taken a job as a coke-snorting party girl stripper, and had the time of my life. The thought appealed – partying all night, paid to be sexy and alluring and glamorous – but could seriously interfere with my work and cut into the time I had with my beautiful, talented daughters. Maybe April could get me into one of her pornos, where I could satisfy my near-constant desire for well-hung, sexually-motivated young men, but it might make me too visible and raise questions as to what I did in my spare time which I didn't want to answer.

Hell, at this point, I'd take retail, if it would just stop me feeling like this.

I hadn't been paying much attention to where I was going, lost in thought the way I was, and found myself a little bit shocked to see I was several blocks from my car, in a loading area behind one of the furniture stores in the shopping center where I'd been wandering. Feeling suddenly vulnerable, I tossed the cigarette I'd been absently smoking and picked up my pace, the click-clack of my designer heels loud in the deepening night. A chill that had nothing to do with the rapidly-dropping temperature was crawling up and down my spine.

It was almost a relief when I heard the gravelly voice behind me. “Are you lost, miss? Can I help you find something?”

I turned to see a rough-looking man, who could have been much younger than the late forties he appeared from the rough life he lived. His friend, a grizzled-looking black man with an evil scar across one eye, swigged something foul-smelling from a bottle hidden in a paper sack. They were slowly trying to encircle me. The first man was smiling at me, and there was no trace of kindness in the hazel eyes dully reflecting the light away from the distant streetlights.

“No, thank you, I'm fine,” I told him.

“Bet she can help us find something,” the black man said, barking a phlegmy laugh and spitting on the pavement. “Like that purse she got, and those diamond rings.”

“Now, Roger, that's no way to talk to a lady like this,” the first one cautioned. “After all, if we're nice to her, maybe she'll get it in that pretty blonde head to be nice to us.”

I sighed. “You two should really work on your technique,” I told them. “Why don't the two of you just fucking say you're gonna rape me and rob me? Why do you always have to try and make it sound like you're doing me this big favor?”

“Boy, you're a smart-ass bitch, ain't you?” Roger asked.

"I try, honey," I told him.

"You won't be so fucking sassy when I wipe that grin off your face," the first one said, pulling a rusty knife from his tattered waistband. "Now I suggest you get down on your fucking knees so we can get this thing started, you snooty cunt."

"Oh, I don't think I need to go on my knees," I told him. "I'm wearing some pretty expensive stockings, you see, and I don't want to put a run in them. So I'll stand, if it's all the same to you."

"Oh, you're going on the fucking ground, bitch," Roger told me. "One way or the other. You just gotta figure how much you want it to hurt when it happens."

"Oooh, big scary guy," I told him. "Let me ask you two something. How big do you want 'em, anyway?"

"How big do I want what?" the first one asked, taken a little bit aback.

"Your tits, honey. How big do you want 'em?"

"My... are you on something, bitch? What the fuck you been smoking in those fancy cigarettes I been watching you gun?"

"Nope, not on anything," I shot back. "Now, are you two big scary guys gonna come over here and beat my ass and rape me, or are you gonna stand there and talk me to death?"

With a wordless growl, both men launched themselves at me almost simultaneously. I hadn't even needed to re-imagine them, I'd been thinking long and hard about what I wanted in a friend, someone who'd never have anything better to do than to hang out with me. The picture was still very clear in my head. The problem was, I wasn't sure if I could get both of them dosed before one or the other beat me senseless. I'd kinda let myself get carried away.

I don't know if it was the fear and adrenaline, or some aspect of the awesome technology that comprised me that I'd never discovered before, but suddenly I felt my mouth fill with a thick, metallic-tasting liquid. Without even thinking, I spat it through pursed lips, atomizing it into a thick mist which hit both the advancing men in their snarling faces. They both roared in shock and what sounded like pain, falling backwards to clutch at their faces and roll in agony on the uneven pavement.

I wasn't sure what was going to happen – I'd not imagined two different women, for one thing, and I didn't know if the nanites would even work if they weren't injected directly into the bloodstream. In a strange detached haze, I lit a cigarette and dug for my cellphone, pressing the speed-dial for Stephanie.

It went straight to voice mail – she was almost certainly on her back, sweating underneath Will. I didn't leave a message, moving straight to Kendra.

"Hello?" her very sleepy voice answered on the eighth ring.

"Hey, Kendra, baby, sorry to wake you up," I said. "I, um... got in a little trouble."

"Trouble?"

“Yeah,” I said. “Two guys tried to jump me, and I sorta transformed them. I didn't really even mean to. It was just instinctual.”

Her voice lost all trace of muzziness. “Oh God, Merri, are you all right?”

“Yeah, baby, I'm fine. They never even touched me. But there's about to be two very confused girls in this parking lot who are going to need identities.”

“Did you try to call Stephanie?” she asked.

“Of course. She didn't answer. I think she's getting laid.”

Kendra snorted. “Okay, then, where are you?”

“The shopping center where we were this morning with Jenny,” I said.

“You're still there?”

“I was just kinda lonely,” I said. “I didn't have anything else to do, so I just kinda walked around. I lost track of time.”

“That doesn't sound like you, Merri. Are you sure you're okay?”

“Yeah, totally,” I said, puffing on my cigarette. “I just need someone to come by and help me get them home. I can't just leave them out here, and Juli, Gina and Babette can't drive.”

“They're not finished transforming?” Kendra asked. “You didn't regress them to infants, did you? I thought it only took a little while unless they were babies.”

“I, um... I kinda did it a little different this time.”

“Different how?” she pressed.

“They were gonna rape me,” I said, almost sounding like a protest. “I just reacted, honey. Before I knew what was going on, I just got a mouthful of weird-tasting liquid and I just kinda spit it at them.”

“It was the nanites?” Kendra asked, shocked.

“Apparently so,” I said. “They just fell down and started writhing around. Now they're just lying there, real still, and if you kinda stare at them, you can see their hair growing and little changes here and there. They almost have boobs now.”

“Merri, did you know you could even do that?”

“Nope,” I said. “But I'm a little weirded out at what's gonna happen. I never gave the same set of nanites to two different people, before. I'm not sure what's gonna happen.”

Kendra cut the explanation short. “I'll be there in ten minutes,” she said. “We'll take them to your place and wait for Stephanie. I'm gonna call and leave her a message.”

“That sounds good to me,” I said. “I'm not going anyplace.”

“Just sit tight,” Kendra said. “Help is on the way.”

* * *

By the time Stephanie finally arrived – we'd been right, she'd not answered her phone because she'd been in the middle of a very athletic sex marathon with her boyfriend Will – the two thugs had finished their transformations. Spraying them with identical nanites had transformed them into identical twins, two perfect specimens of wet-dream womanhood. Long, tanned legs, tiny waists, flat muscular bellies and enormous, almost disproportionate tits weighing in at around the 40G bra size, spherical and gravity-defying. They even had identical little hearts-and-tribal 'tramp stamp' tattoos in the smalls of their respective backs that were very nearly covered by the thick, lustrous curtain of honey-blond hair that hung to the tops of their cute, perky bubble-butts.

I'd dressed them in what clothes I could find in my closet that would fit over their mammoth tits, two stretchy Lycra tube-dresses that had been a part of my short-lived stripper wardrobe, one in baby pink and the other in baby blue. They lounged sexily on the couch in my library, sipping champagne from crystal flutes held in extremely long-nailed fingers and sucking suggestively on long, skinny white Virginia Slims cigarettes filched from my purse.

"Wow," Stephanie breathed as she looked into their vapid eyes and regarded the mirror-image, enamel-white smiles that regarded her.

"You're cute," one of them commented in a bubbly, airhead soprano.

"Yeah, totally," the other echoed. "Are you, like, one of Merri's friends?"

Steph regained her composure quickly. "Yeah, I sure am. I'm Stephanie."

I took Stephanie's hand. "Please don't be mad," I asked her urgently.

She smiled. "I'm not, really," she reassured me. "After what happened with Gina, Juli and Babette, I had a few 'blank' identities drawn up just in case you ever needed to defend yourself again. Like the others, they probably won't stand up to very close scrutiny, so they'll have to stay out of trouble, but it will be enough."

"We're, um, not so good at stayin' out of trouble, baby girl," one told her, giggling.

"Well, we need you to try extra hard," Steph said. "Because if anybody does a background check on you, like cops or something, you're gonna get Merri in trouble, and everybody could wind up screwed."

"Oh," the other twin said. "That would suck."

"Totally," her twin agreed.

"Aren't they gorgeous?" I asked. "I've started calling them Haylee and Kaylee."

"Very pretty," Steph said, opening her laptop and her briefcase on the coffee table. "I think it suits them."

"Us too," the twins said in unison.

We chatted about nothing, all my girlfriends and I – Kendra and Stephanie got along with the new girls wonderfully, and not just because Haylee and Kaylee were naturally sweet, gregarious and easy to be around, but I think because they genuinely liked the two happy, funloving but not-too-bright twins. For their part, Haylee and Kaylee seemed to adore Kendra's

sexy, party girl attitude and Stephanie's brisk, no-nonsense approach. I could see – to my great happiness and excitement – that we were all going to be good friends.

“It may take a little while to find them places to live,” Stephanie was saying. “I can't really find anything close together right now that's in our database of safe places for new transformees to stay, and there's certainly nothing for two people.”

“That's okay,” I told her. “Actually, I was kinda thinking they'd stay here.”

“Oh, wow, Mer!” Haylee cooed, still looking at her new drivers' license in wonder and criticizing the picture. “How awesome would that be?”

“I would so love that,” Kaylee said, clapping her hands.

“It'll do for now,” Steph said, “but you girls will eventually need to find a place of your own out there. We need you to at least have a rental history, credit, those kinds of things to reinforce your identities. Right now, one speeding ticket would cause this whole thing to unravel.”

“Lighten up, sexy girl!” Kaylee laughed. “It'll all be good. But we're totally cool just hanging here with Mer for now, 'kay?”

“Sounds good,” Stephanie said. “Now, ladies, I need to talk to Merri alone for a second, is that cool?”

“Oh, yeah,” Kaylee said, rising smoothly. “Hey, Mer, I'm, like, gonna borrow a swimsuit from ya and, like, check out your jacuzzi, 'kay?”

I smiled. “Bottom drawer, far left, baby. Save me some champagne, I'll be there in, like, ten or twenty minutes.”

“Send your maid in, too,” Haylee giggled. “She don't need a swimsuit. You coming, Kendra baby?”

The three girls disappeared into my cavernous walk-in closet, giggling and swaying. I watched them go with a little pang of jealousy – I wished I was with them – but duty called. I lit a cigarette and passed it to Stephanie, then lit another for myself.

“Believe it or not, honey, your plan worked,” Steph told me, smiling.

“What plan?”

“We got the go-ahead for the transformation from the Cooperative,” she told me. “They said they'd allow us to create someone to help Jenny.”

“Oh my God, that's incredible!” I gushed. “We need more champagne, we have to celebrate! Do we have any targets picked out yet?”

Steph laughed. “Hold your horses, Merri, one thing at a time. This is going to be a hard one, since anyone in a position to help Jenny the way she wants is gonna have to be rich. And I mean rich. Like a billionaire.”

“Whoa,” I breathed. “How the hell're you gonna pull that off?”

“By finding somebody who's that rich to start with,” she said. “Somebody who's willing to part with all their money in exchange for the one thing they can't buy.”

“And what's that?”

“Another shot,” Steph said. “Youth. Life. We're gonna transform a dying man, Merri darling, and this time we're gonna let him do it willingly.”

* * *

Christopher Scott looked out his window onto the green lawn, where he used to tend his garden and throw the ball for his beloved dogs. He thought backwards – he did that a lot lately – onto his past, the women he'd loved and the times he'd had. Strange, the things that mattered now. Just what he'd be willing to part with, the chunks of his massive fortune that he'd be willing to forego just for an afternoon of golf with some buddies or a drive into the country.

That damned money. He'd sacrificed his life for it, and what the hell good did it do him now? There was no way to fend off death, he knew, even though in his youth he'd thought he could. Now the damned doctors came every day, sticking him with needles and pushing pills down his gullet, hooking him to the machines and the scanners over and over just to tell him what he already knew:

He was dying.

Ninety-two years on the planet, and all he had to show for it was a big house and a gigantic net worth that he couldn't take with him. Now, the women he'd loved, the buddies he longed for those eighteen holes with, they were all gone or in the ground. He'd never had children – he couldn't envision loving anything the way he'd loved that goddamned money, back then – and now he just sat in two rooms of his one-hundred-room mansion and wished he'd done it differently.

It just served to make him angry, and that just shaved minutes off his already dwindling life. The ever-present heart monitor registered the elevated rate, and he took several deep breaths through the oxygen hose to calm himself.

A soft ahem caused his head to turn. Serafían Mendoza, his prim assistant, was in the doorway, the leather binder that Christopher believed fused to his hand tucked under the arm of his tailored suit.

“Yes, Ser? What is it?”

“Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Scott, but your eleven o'clock is here.”

“Ah, yes. Of course – the young woman from the university, isn't it?” Scott said. “Please show her in. Have Christina bring in some refreshments, please, and will you be so kind as to help me sit up a little?”

Serafían attended to him swiftly and efficiently – the reason he'd been on the payroll for the last eighteen years – and got him presentable, even giving his wayward fringe of hair a lick with a comb before hustling out with his clipped, dry stride. Christopher was just starting to drift back into memories again when his assistant led two young women into his solarium. They were both visions, enough to stir long-forgotten urges in him, but his body was far too frail to actually pursue those desires. The tall, high-breasted red-haired woman in the sleek business suit fixed him with a direct, green-eyed stare as he folded his hands in his lap, while the tall,

buxom blonde in the pretty yellow sundress stood behind her, silently regarding him with what seemed a measuring eye.

"Please keep it brief," Serafían said quietly, "Mr. Scott needs his rest." He slipped silently to the corner of the room to await any needs of his employer.

"Mr. Scott, my name is Stephanie Kelly," she said in a warm voice, shaking his hand firmly. The scent of clean woman intermingled with a hint of Chanel #5 – his favorite – and cigarette smoke in his nostrils, sharp against the clinical, antiseptic smell of the oxygen. Scott decided he liked this girl.

"I represent a unique opportunity for you, sir," she went on. "We searched several wealthy men towards the ends of their lives, using certain criteria, and finally we came up with you as the best person to approach."

"You have me at a loss, Ms. Kelly," he told her. "What is this regarding?"

She cast a look at Serafían. "Could we have some privacy, sir?"

He cleared his throat. "Serafían is my most trusted employee," he said. "Anything you have to say to me, you may rely on his discretion."

To her credit, Stephanie didn't argue. "Of course," she said. "Mr. Scott, I've read your autobiography, I've examined your public life – and what I could find of your private life, as well, you cover your tracks exceedingly well, one of the reasons we chose you to approach. You seem like just the man we're looking for to further our ends, and we have something rather unique to offer you in return."

"Go on," he said.

"Mr. Scott, this is my associate, Merri Ryan," she said, gesturing to the blonde, who nodded her head in greeting. "Ms. Ryan can do something for you that no other person on the planet could offer."

"And what is that?"

"A second chance," I said in a melodious soprano that seemed to warm him from the inside out. "Another shot at youth, health and vigor."

"And how do you propose to do this?" he asked, disbelieving.

"Nanite technology," I said. "You see, Mr. Scott, I've been extensively modified by a cooperative of scientists attached to the university. My body can create nanites which I can then inject into a person which will restore them to youth and health with no side effects."

"I'd read some conjecture about that kind of technology," Scott said, "but it's decades away. You're discussing science fiction, Ms. Ryan."

"Seriously, I'm not," I countered. "We have proof. It works."

"And the catch? What would something like this cost me?" he asked shrewdly.

"Your entire fortune, for one," Stephanie told him. "We'd insist that it be placed at our disposal, with you in charge."

“With access to the businesses and investments, my dear, that really doesn't leave me very put out,” he said. “I asked what it would cost me.”

“Not much,” Merri told him. “Only your identity. And, of course, your gender.”

* * *

“Remarkable,” Scott said, handing the laptop computer back where he'd just viewed the videos they'd taken of the transformations of Kennedy Smits and Brandi Taylor. “Even having seen it, I still don't believe it. I would say you'd faked this footage, Ms. Kelly, but for the life of me I can't imagine why you would do that and bring such a thing to me.”

“Your own transformation would be different,” I told him. “I wouldn't regress you to infancy. Part of what we need is your keen head for business, and you have more than enough resources of your own to generate an identity. You actually wouldn't even need us – which is a risk we're willing to take – so we would consider this more of a partnership.”

“This is madness,” Mendoza said sharply, stepping between Stephanie and Christopher Scott. “Mr. Scott, you can't be seriously considering this.”

“I can, my friend, and I am,” Scott said. “Think about it, Serafían. Youth. Vitality. A chance to live a life with the energy of a young person and the wisdom of age. And if it costs me my manhood, well, that never did me all that much good to start with. Half the world's population is female and they don't seem to have that many complaints.”

“You would be missed,” his assistant countered.

“I could die within a week, Serafían, and everyone knows it. It would not be difficult to arrange a bequest of my entire fortune to an estranged daughter that I'd only discovered late in life, or some such nonsense. It's not as though anyone on the board of directors has seen nor heard from me in years.”

“You're serious about this,” he said.

“I am,” he said. Scott gestured at the medical equipment surrounding him. “What on earth could it possibly cost me, Ser?”

The small, slender Argentinian stepped in front of the two women, barring them from his employer. “I don't trust you,” he said flatly. “I think you're charlatans and you're only after Mr. Scott's money.”

“I hope we can manage to change your mind,” Stephanie said gently.

“You'll have your chance,” he told us. “Whatever you plan to give Mr. Scott, you'd better prepare two doses, because I'm taking it first.”

“Serafían?” Scott said.

“If it kills me, then you can arrest these people,” he said. “And if it works as they say it will, then, I've always said where you go, I go. Even if that means into a dress, Mr. Scott. Mendozas do not give their word lightly, sir.”

“You are a good friend, Serafían,” Scott said warmly, clearly touched. “Well, then, I guess I should ask just how this works.”

Merri was already unbuttoning her blouse. "In the most pleasant way possible."

* * *

She stretched her long, slender fingers towards the window and the sunlight streaming through antique lace curtains, the long nails glowing iridescent with the amber rays. Playfully, she tossed the thick curtain of her auburn hair over one slender shoulder to fan across one of her large, firm breasts, one erect nipple poking through the shiny, soft curtain. She laughed loudly – it was a high, melodious and tinkling affair – and turned a quick pirouette in the center of the room, kicking her heels high towards her firm, toned butt. She was about twenty-four years old, conservatively, and bore a striking resemblance to the film star Katherine Heigl, with her long limbs, pouty lips and overlarge brown eyes. Her breasts were considerably larger, though, and her skin a dusky olive, betraying a hint of Mediterranean ancestry.

"I can't believe it," she whispered, staring down at the smooth, flawless skin that had so recently been covered by liver spots, skin tears and ecchymosis. "I'm beautiful. And I feel so alive."

"You are alive," a warm, silky contralto said from behind her. She was very dark-skinned, with sandy blonde hair and an angelic face, wide-eyed and flawlessly beautiful, a portrait of South American beauty. The bulky robe she clutched around herself did little to hide the firm curves of her exquisite body.

"I'm so happy for you both," I said warmly, still sweaty and pleasantly spent from the work of the transformation. "You're so beautiful. I can't wait to get to know you both. I love you so much."

"And we you," the vivacious girl who had so recently been the dying husk of Christopher Scott said. "Momma."

The two women – Christopher Dennis Scott had chosen to name herself Crystal Denise Scofield and Serafían Emilio Mendoza was now Sara Amelia Mendoza – favored us with glittering smiles.

"I plan to spend the day shopping," Crystal said happily. "Sara and I, we need everything."

"I can help with that," I said. "I have a lot of experience helping new girls get everything they need."

"That sounds wonderful, Momma," Sara said. "But after that..."

"Right," Crystal said firmly. "After that, it's time to get to work."

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Eleven

by Valerie Hope

“AND WITH SEVENTY-TWO PERCENT of precincts reporting, the WNBK election center can now predict that incumbent Republican senator Charles Remington has lost his seat to independent candidate Jessica Reilly,” Kennedy said from the anchor chair, her exquisitely beautiful face hiding her satisfied smile admirably from the unforgiving eye of the camera.

A high-pitched cry raised from behind me, and I heard a champagne cork pop. All my girls were assembled at my house to watch the results. Although Stephanie, Kendra and I were pretty much assured that she'd win the senate seat – the Cooperative would never leave something like that up to chance, after all – but the suspense and the ups and downs of the election results over the course of the night had still gotten to us.

I joined in the group toast, led by Heather and Holly, and watched as the gathering broke back up into the little, encapsulated conversations that had been going on before the results came in. Strange how they gravitated towards the ones whose jobs were the most similar: April, Dani and Adrienne tended to stick together, whereas Brandi's usual cohort Kennedy was on television, she'd appended herself to the media darlings for the evening; Holly and Heather tended to stick with Crystal and Sara, the other business moguls, and Jenny just flitted back and forth between the two groups and the little clique formed by Stephanie, Kendra, Kaylee, Haylee and me.

The twins were dressed to kill, as always, wearing photonegative outfits – Haylee in a skin-tight sheath dress in white with black sequins along the bodice, and black opera gloves and Kaylee in a black dress with white sequins and white opera gloves. I didn't regret making them as horny as I had, either – they'd been hanging on my all night, nibbling my earlobes and whispering dirty little suggestions for what they wanted to do to me against my slender neck, making my silk panties wetter and wetter as the night progressed.

Juli, my huge-breasted bimbo redheaded chef, had laid out an impressive spread, Spanish tapas and hand-made sangria to go with the champagne, and everyone present was pleasantly drunk and outgoing. It wouldn't be long before my darling porn-star daughter April would be dancing on a table. But still, I had important work to do tonight, work that superseded my desire to spend every available moment with my gorgeous daughters and my desire to rip Haylee and Kaylee's clothes off with my teeth and just do them on the buffet table. I decided, with nods of tacit agreement from Stephanie and Kendra, to start cutting the evening short.

It took the better part of an hour to say our goodbyes and make a promise to the twins that I'd be by their place later to explore some of the interesting permutations of the number three they'd suggested and get the house cleared out. Babette and Juli were hard at work cleaning

up in their sexy, revealing little outfits, and Gina – my stylist – was long since passed out from overindulgence. My staff had little in the way of self-control, as I'd designed them. Still, if I told Gina to wake up and go lie down in traffic, she'd stumble through her drunken haze and go do it. My slave-girls were nothing if not obedient. They couldn't even survive if it wasn't for me, which was exactly the way I'd designed them to function.

Steph kicked off her designer heels and stretched out in one of my overstuffed chairs in the sitting room, puffing on an expensive Honduran cigar from my walk-in humidor and sipping brandy. Watching her dark-red glossed lips wrap around the thick robusto as she drew on the fragrant smoke made me think just how lucky her boyfriend Will was. Stephanie toyed idly with a curled strand of her bright red hair as she just enjoyed the decadence.

Kendra was much more energetic, however, drawing her knees up underneath her on my sofa and digging in my carved mahogany tabletop humidor for a long, slender cigarette which she fitted into an ebony holder – part of her 1930's 'Hollywood Babylon' glamor ensemble for the evening – and puffing it alight from a crystal lighter I kept on the coffee table. She was still bouncing and excited about Jessica's narrow victory in the polls, and was still frantically texting her friends on her iPhone with long-nailed, manicured thumbs to spread the word.

I plopped down unceremoniously in an armchair and lit a cigarette of my own, breathing a deep sigh of tipsy satisfaction. I took the bobby-pins from my elaborately-coiffed platinum blonde up-do and shook it to fall in tight ringlets around my narrow shoulders, fluffing it up from my scalp with inch-and-a-half long fingernails that scraped deliciously against my sensitive scalp.

“Good night,” Steph commented, cream-in-whiskers. “Excellent party.”

“Yeah,” Kendra agreed. “You really know how to entertain, Merri.”

“Thanks,” I said. “You girls okay? Did you get enough to eat, to drink?”

“More than enough,” Steph said. “I'm never gonna be able to fit in my jeans tomorrow. That trifle was so good.”

“God, I know,” Kendra seconded. “And those little crab puffs, oh my God.”

“I'll pass that along to Juli,” I said happily, “she'll be over the moon.”

“Kendra broke into Dr. Stanton-McLean's office yesterday,” Steph announced without preamble. “Bugged the phone, snooped around and planted a keylogger in her computer. But I doubt she keeps anything sensitive on her work computer. I think we're going to have to try and get our hands on her laptop to find anything worthwhile.”

“Agreed,” Kendra said. “And even then, we'll need our intrusion expert in place to make that happen. But I did find out something interesting from the transcripts I got from her phone. She does have a connection to Willis Redmond.”

Dr. Redmond was the mastermind who'd invented the amazing nanites that had transformed all the women in the room from luckless, socially-outcast men, manufactured deep inside my very own body.

"She called him yesterday evening," Kendra went on, "and sounded like she was concerned. She arranged to meet him at the campus coffee shop. I just happened to pop by for a cuppa at the same time."

"What did they talk about?" I asked.

"It was hard to eavesdrop in that place, they crank the bloody music so loud," Kendra pouted. "But the general impression I got was that they needed someone to fill some kind of demographic gap."

"Someone? You mean she admitted to knowing about the transformations?" Steph said, suddenly alert and curious, eyes sparkling.

"Not in so many words," Kendra said. "I mean, she never came out and said anything. Just that they needed someone to cover an age range – I couldn't hear which one. But here's the interesting bit: she said that Dr. Hutchison had been the one to bring it to her attention. Mentioned her by name."

"So that's two," Stephanie said. "She's got connections to Redmond and Hutchison now, two known members of the Cooperative. If we could only place her with Hazelwood, Wallace or Lennox."

"But that means, love, that maybe focusing all our attention on Stanton-McLean might be the wrong thing to do," I said gently. "This all may be her idea, like we thought, but maybe she's just the theoretical mastermind. It sounds like she's got the other people doing the actual legwork."

"Merri's right," Kendra said. "We know now, if Hutchison's making those kinds of suggestions, that she's got knowledge of the entire plan. And she may be a much easier target for surveillance than Dr. S & M."

"Dammit," Steph swore. "We don't have anyone in the psych department close to her. We're going to have to start all over."

"Not necessarily," Kendra said. "I took a bit of initiative, you see, and I have an idea. It's a bit risky and all, but it might pay off big."

"Initiative? What did you do?" I asked.

"I hacked Heather's computer," she said. "And before you start in on me, it was easy. She doesn't use a great deal of security on her personal laptop. She's the one who gets the first requests from the Cooperative, after all. And I found out they're after a technophobe for the next transformation. Merri should be getting the file in the next day or so."

"A technophobe?" I asked.

"I think I see where you're going," Steph said, her face brightening. "Given their flair for irony, assume that they'll have Merri transform this technophobe into some kind of software or electronics guru to cover this mysterious demographic."

"And if Merri were to quietly 'raise' her as one of us, instead of just a normal woman doing the job she was designed for..." Kendra said.

"...then we could recruit her to be the systems specialist we need," I finished.

“Exactly.”

“You'll have to micromanage the shit out of your team on this one, Steph,” Kendra said. “But it does save us one more risky transformation on the side that we have to generate an identity for on the cheap, and possibly give us someone that we can use to infiltrate the university, maybe even get close to Dr. Hutchison and hack her security.”

“I love it,” Steph said.

“Yeah, it is pretty bloody brilliant,” Kendra said smugly, very satisfied with herself.

“So all we need now is this mysterious technophobe and an outfit that will make his eyes pop,” I said, giggling. “Sounds like fun.”

* * *

Gery McKenzie Quentin was a real piece of work, I had to admit after observing him for the better part of a day. He was irascible, to be sure, and very demanding – he hassled the waiter at the little coffee shop where he was currently sitting, making him go back and remake the same chai tea over and over again several times; the water wasn't hot enough, the blend wasn't strong enough, something wrong with the milk, and a couple of things that I was pretty sure he was just making up. But I had caught his eye, at least. I was wearing a low-cut peasant blouse and a long, flowing print skirt with ankle boots – a quasi-hippie ensemble (I'd never be able to fully pull off the Mother Earth look no matter how much patchouli I wore, I was far too centerfold) that blended in with the coffee shop crowd well enough to make me look as if I belonged but still drew eyes to my well-displayed cleavage and my long, sexy legs. I busied myself with a paper and a cup of quite decent coffee, trying not to seem as though I noticed him. But the seat I'd chosen kept him well in my peripheral vision and I caught him giving me the once-over several times.

He definitely got on everyone's nerves, bitching loudly about the volume of the music (which my club-accustomed ears found pleasantly understated) and casting ugly looks at the laptop users who were there for their caffeine fix and the free Wi-Fi. He seemed much more interested in disapproving of the people in the place than he did in the thick, poseur art book he'd brought to read. He had a high-pitched, grating voice and this nagging inflection in his speech that raised instant dislike in me, but it was nothing I couldn't overcome.

I didn't feel comfortable making my move right at that moment – I still had surveillance to do – but the choice was taken out of my hands. As I dug in my purse to pay for my refill, the waiter shook his head at me.

“The, uh... gentleman over there has taken care of it,” he told me, jerking a thumb in Quentin's direction. Gary was looking at me intently.

“Oh,” I said, trying to pass my nervous flush off as a coquettish blush. “Well, that was unexpected. Thank you.”

He gave me a leering grin. “My pleasure, miss..?”

I sipped the coffee to cover my discomfort. He'd put me off my game – I was used to being the hunter in this scenario, not in being pursued. I resented his jumping the gun and making contact with me before I was ready.

“Ryan,” I told him smoothly. “Merri Ryan.”

“Gary Quentin,” he said. “Do you mind if I join you?”

I looked at my watch. “Not at all, Gary, if you don't mind a quick visit,” I told him. “I won't be here very much longer, unfortunately. I'm having dinner with a friend in just under an hour.”

He picked up his book and his tea and slid into the seat opposite me. He was long and lanky – not an unattractive body, to be sure, but it was because of genetics and not because he worked at it, I could tell – and wore decent clothes for off-the-rack, but the disapproving sneer on his thin, long-nosed face and the dull glint in his washed-out blue eyes gave him an air of assumed superiority that I found instantly unattractive. At least if he kept drinking the chai blend here, kissing him wouldn't be unpleasant. Their masala blend was actually quite nice and gave his breath a sweet, tangy aroma.

“That's a shame,” he said. “You seem to me like the kind of person that I'd like to spend time with.”

“You certainly are smooth, I'll give you that,” I told him flirtatiously.

“Among other things,” he shot back.

“And what makes you think I'm interested in playing this game with you?”

“Oh, just little cues you've been giving me, here and there,” he said. “I've noticed you looking at me, trying to hide it. I'm very sensitive to that kind of thing.”

You certainly are, if you twigged to my surveillance, I thought. I'm pretty good at it. But I hid my shock perfectly behind a shy smile. “I'll give you that. But how do you know I wasn't just interested in the book you were reading?”

He smiled. “I just knew, Merri.”

“Ah. You're one of those guys, then,” I said.

“Apparently so, even though I don't have the faintest idea what you mean by 'one of those guys,'" he told me.

“I mean one of those guys who makes wild assumptions about the intentions of any woman who looks at him longer than a passing glance,” I said. “Who just automatically interprets passing interest as some sort of sexual hunger.”

“Am I wrong in that assumption?” he pressed, leaning closer.

I hid my satisfied smile behind my coffee cup. Gotcha, I thought smugly.

“Ask me again in about half an hour,” I told him teasingly.

* * *

I'd had selfish lovers before – both in my missions and in my lonely-night club scene conquests – but Gary Quentin took the prize. He comported himself as though he was some privilege for me, like I should be grateful and humble at the idea of even being in the same room as his skinny, meager cock. We were barely inside the door of his run-down apartment before he'd pushed me to my knees by my shoulders and was working the fly of his trousers. Licking my lips, intoxicated by the otherworldly sense of him I'd had, anxious to meet the delightful new

daughter that had been filling every crevice of my imagination, I didn't let it bother me, taking his cock into my warm, wet mouth all the way to the root, his floppy balls coming to rest wetly against my smooth chin. He never even felt the tiny ciliac needles slip into him or the cold flush of the nanites. It was a thankfully short time later that I was holding a beautiful, bright-eyed baby girl and pushing the slick, shapeless sack of his discarded male skin off of the threadbare couch with one toe. I didn't even have all my clothes off.

The team that showed up about an hour later was a definite skeleton crew – just Stephanie, Kendra and a few hand-picked others. I'd concentrated long and hard on the kind of woman I wanted my precious baby daughter to become, and I hoped I'd provided the kind of person that Steph and Kendra needed so desperately to crack the mystery they'd been pursuing since I'd made them. I personally didn't care what the answer to all their burning questions were – I was completely happy just to make and spend time with all my daughters, no matter what nefarious plot was behind their births – but I cared about them so much, and I wanted them to be happy, so I did what they asked me to do and made my baby girl just the kind of woman they needed to put the pieces of their puzzle together.

“She's beautiful, Merri,” Kendra said, placing her warm hand on my slick shoulder and cootchie-cooing at the giggling baby, who squirmed and squealed in delight.

“All my babies are beautiful,” I said tenderly, kissing her cheek. She blushed.

“Steph's got everything ready for us,” she told me. “We can get started just as soon as you want.”

“Okay,” I said. Kendra didn't move, instead fixing me with a nervous, searching gaze which I found a little puzzling. “Do you want something, Kendra?”

She cleared her throat and looked very embarrassed. “Can... Can I hold her?”

I smiled. “Of course you can, honey! Here... hold her little head up. Just like that,” I said, handing the baby over carefully and supervising Kendra's inexperienced treatment with an eagle eye.

“I can see why you love us all so much,” Kendra said quietly, bright tears quivering in her lashes.

“Want one of your own, huh?” I asked her gently, stroking her shoulder as she gazed, enraptured, at the baby. She could only nod silently, unable to tear her eyes away from the little girl.

“Later,” she told me a bit sadly. “When all this is over, Mer, then I can think about being a mother. C'mon, we have work to do.”

She handed the smiling girl back to me – her green eyes were flashing sharply, a sign of the keen mind I'd imagined into the nanites forming her – and I stroked the little thatch of gold-brown hair softly with my long manicured nails. I stood smoothly and carried her into the big bedroom just off the cluttered living room to where Steph and her small crew were putting the finishing touches on their equipment.

“Here you go,” Steph said cheerfully, handing me the everpresent manila envelope. I opened it and shook out the identification, that little ritual I enjoyed so much, ridding the world of Gary

McKenzie Quentin and introducing my little beloved Keri Mackenzi Quinn in his place, to fill the world with the light and joy that I felt just looking at her. I kissed her warm forehead.

“Hi, there, Keri,” I whispered. “You ready to get started?”

She squealed happily and yanked a lock of my white-blonde hair in response.

Since the formation of Keri's past was much more under our control than in the times previous, I gave a lot more instruction to the techs and photographers that constructed her past than I normally did. This time, Momma intended to have more baby pictures than with any of my other daughters, and some pictures with me in them for a change. I fed her the burning milk that was stretching me internally, growing her from a chubby little infant into a knobby-kneed little girl in pigtails taking her first ballet class and playing soccer.

Keri was in her little pink leotard and tutu, a spray of flowers in her golden-brown hair, coming from the pictures documenting her fictitious first dance recital, when Steph knelt gracefully in front of the long-limbed four-year-old, smiling encouragingly.

“Hi, Keri, I'm Stephanie,” she said.

“Hi,” Keri answered brightly. “Are you a friend of Momma's?”

“I sure am,” she said. “I guess you could say I'm your aunt.”

Keri looked at me inquisitively for confirmation, and I nodded.

“I liked your dance, sweetie,” Stephanie said. “In fact, I liked it so much that I have something for you.”

“A present?”

“Yep,” Steph said. She pulled her hands from behind her back and handed her a laptop computer. “This is for you. It's a computer.”

“Cool!” Keri squealed, clapping her hands. “Momma, can I play with it?”

“Sure you can, baby, but not too long,” I said. “We have a lot to do tonight, okay? So if Aunt Stephanie or Aunt Kendra say you need to get dressed and do something, you have to promise you'll put the computer away and do it right then, else I have to take it away.”

“I promise,” she said.

The three of us stood in awe as the little girl, preprogrammed by the nanites I'd injected her with, opened the computer and booted it and began to master it right before our eyes, her little fingers dancing across the keyboard as if she'd typed for years. By the time I'd fed her and advanced her age to nine years old, she'd already written her own database-driven household chores management software and a little “parachute” game where a skydiver had to jump from a plane and land between two flags to get points. She reluctantly left it behind to go and pose for pictures and video of swimming lessons, another dance recital and a gymnastics meet, the nanites in her blood increasing her power, stamina and balance to where she shone like a junior Olympian on the balance beam and floor exercise even though she'd never in her life had a moment's training. As soon as Stephanie said she was done, though, she was back to her computer like a rocket and back to work. This time, she took it apart and reassembled it in the time it would have taken me to turn it on, a beaming smile on her face.

Next she was twelve and starting to show the telltale signs of being a raving beauty, wearing lightweight, stylish eyeglasses and with a mouthful of braces. She also was starting to exhibit some tendencies of being a “bad girl,” too – all according to the way I’d imagined her, of course – with a rebellious streak manifesting in her early life as a bright pink strand of hair on the left side of her face and an eclectic conglomeration of mismatched jewelry.

By then she’d already designed and programmed her own website and was learning to program in Java and C++. Stephanie was busy installing the development environments she’d asked for on the little pink, bumper-sticker encrusted laptop while Kendra and the crew got her ready for the next round of photographs.

Her next growth was to a coltish fourteen – avoiding the normal adolescent problems of acne and the like – with overlarge, little-girl eyes and an infectious smile. She wore the look of teenage disdain well, though, as she plopped next to me on the couch in the living room and stole a Virginia Slims cigarette from the pack sitting in my open purse, tucking her knees to once side and her feet beneath the pleated blue-and-red skirt of her cheerleading uniform.

“Baby, ask,” I cautioned her. I’d known she would start smoking – I’d all but ordained it with her programming – but it was still a bit of a shock to see my teenage daughter taking a long, French-inhaled drag off the skinny white cigarette and send a long plume of smoke billowing to the ceiling.

“Sorry,” she mumbled. Behind us, Stephanie was compositing the photos they’d just taken of her first cheer competition. They’d won second place. “Mom, when can I get my bellybutton pierced? And I really want a tattoo.”

I chuckled. “Probably by the next time you grow,” I told her. “They happen when I imagine they’ll happen, and I didn’t see you that way until you were at least sixteen, baby.”

“Oh. Okay,” she sighed. “Have I lost my virginity yet?”

“What’s the hurry?” I asked her.

“I dunno,” she said, puffing smoke. “It’s just important, I guess.”

“I know it’s important, baby, but I didn’t imagine you giving it up so young,” I told her. “I don’t think I thought of you not being a virgin for a while.”

“Can you imagine it different?” she asked me. “I mean, I know you’re my mom and all, and you probably don’t like me fucking, but I’m just so horny all the time.”

“That’s just being a teenager, baby,” I said. “And no, I can’t imagine it any differently. You’re already on the track.”

“That sucks,” she grumped.

“It’s not that bad,” I told her. “I think you’ve already given your first blowjob.”

“Really? Was it a boy named Richard?” she asked. “I remember a boy named Richard. I think I really like him.”

“That’s all up to you, baby,” I explained. “I don’t fill in the gaps, you do all that. I just direct how you grow and more or less what you’ll be like when you’re finished. Like how smart you are.”

“And you imagined me this horny?” she asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Yeah, I kinda did,” I told her. “Are you mad at me?”

She laughed. “Oh, hell no. I love it. But, y'know – you're my mom...”

“You're gonna find out, baby, I'm nothing like other moms.”

“I already figured that out,” she told me as if I were some kind of idiot.

My breasts were starting to grow uncomfortably warm again, and it made me squirm a little. Holding it in like this, taking the extra time, was wonderful, but it did lead to a lot of pain.

She picked up on it instantly. “Are you okay, Mom?”

I hissed in discomfort. “Just getting full,” I told her. “Finish your cigarette, honey, and then it'll be time for you to grow a little more.”

She started puffing away, shotgunning the long, slender smoke in an attempt to finish it faster. She stubbed it out in an ashtray with a considerable amount of tobacco left, then popped my left breast unceremoniously from the confines of my peasant blouse and fastened onto it hungrily. I felt the unrelenting, hot pressure inside me ease almost instantly, and watched the subtle but unmistakable changes come over my daughter, watched her coltish, skinny figure begin to ripen and gain curves, her features start to soften into a more and more feminine contour, and her silky hair lengthen from shoulder-length to mid-way down her slender back. Her nails grew, as did her eyelashes, and her limbs began to become more slender and elegant as womanhood began to settle onto her rapidly-changing frame. Holes for piercings began to appear on her smooth skin – four in each earlobe, three in the cartilage above the ears, one in her left nostril, one in her tongue, one above her navel and one through each nipple. A thick-lined tribal tattoo surrounding a pink, puffy heart appeared in the small of her muscular back and a band of roses and thorns appeared around one ankle while an image of Tinkerbell appeared on the other. She sighed in satisfaction as the nanites cycled down, stopping her growth at a very Lolita-sexy seventeen.

She sagged a little against my breast. “Mmph,” she sighed. “That hurts a little, growing like that.”

“I'm sorry,” I told her honestly.

She kissed the tip of my nose playfully. “It's not your fault, Mom,” she said kindly, stroking a wisp of blonde hair away from my face. “Besides, it's kind of a good hurt.”

“Well, you should only have to do that once or twice more,” I told her. “You're almost finished growing. You're going to be twenty-two when it's all done, baby, and you start aging normally.”

“Cool. Old enough to drink, anyway,” she said happily.

Two of Steph's techs had come over, one bearing a metal tray filled with sterilized dumbbell jewelry and one pushing a plastic cart of manicure supplies. Behind them, a hairstylist was mixing colors in a plastic tub and laying out foil.

“Looks like you're due to get your look changed, baby,” I told her. “Can't wait to see how you're going to end up. I mean, I imagined it, but it's never as good as seeing the real thing right in front of me.”

She smiled – it made her nose wrinkle in the most adorable way – and pushed herself back upright. “Mom?”

“Yes, baby?”

“Thanks,” she said. “Thanks for all this.”

I sniffled. “You have no idea what a pleasure it all is.”

* * *

I had to admit – Keri certainly was noticeable by the time she was done. She was tall, about five foot nine, with long legs and a pert butt, a flat and hard belly and long, willowy arms. She was decorated with all her piercings – she favored rhinestone jewelry, and it glittered against her dark, olive skin – and her tattoos, and wore tight and revealing clothing that was just a little bit ghetto. Her face had flourished past the wide-eyed little Lolita she'd been at seventeen into a lush-lipped, sleepy-eyed temptress with long Marilyn Monroe lashes and a slender, oval face framed by long, silky-soft and shiny hair as black as a raven's wing. She still had a smile that could light up a room, but her standard expression was one of smoky, sultry desire. She just always looked like she was ready for a fuck – and if my nanites had made her as I'd imagined her, nineteen times out of twenty, she was.

The only thing lacking was in the chest department. Keri only had a pair of shallow B-cups, and no matter how she padded or pushed they were small. Her biggest goal – especially now that she was a stripper in order to pay for her computer science degree at the university, where she was a junior – was to get implants, and her singular genius at all things digital seized on a unique way to get it – she started her own online blog-slash-porn site, inspired by the runaway success of Melissa Midwest and the like, but this time with a telethon-style “money thermometer” soliciting donations towards her boob job.

It was truly brilliant, and with Steph's contacts and know-how the word was spreading like wildfire across the Internet – on top of a gorgeous “bad girl” stripper who posted pictures and video of herself naked and having sex in public, making out with other girls, and generally being a huge cocktease, she also authored a very insightful and intelligent sociopolitical blog. Once a week she read off several of the hidden or buried stories in the local paper which could be of great import down the road on video, wearing nothing but a pair of platform skyscraper heels and her glasses, while doing a pole-dance or something similarly sexy.

It all served to make her the biggest Internet sensation since Tila Tequila. In a matter of only a few short weeks, pictures of her were on every hard drive owned by an American male (and quite a few females, too, since her blogging on women's issues was very well written and compassionate) and she was being contacted by both local and national news for a piece. And she had the money for her breast augmentation plus a little, as well, having posted an Internet poll to her viewers to choose the size, which averaged out to a top-heavy 38DD. She'd already taken the before pictures and done a few sets with her in bras padded out to different sizes, and had the surgery scheduled for a month from now, in the midterm break at school.

She also did a masterful job of dressing down and altering her appearance just enough to avoid the notice of the frat-boys and posers on campus who would have hounded her no end if they'd known that she was, in fact, Keri Quinn, the young odalisque they masturbated to frequently in their dorm rooms. But her days of anonymity were numbered – once she started walking to class with that enormous rack, she wouldn't be able to escape public notice for

long, and one of them was bound to accidentally look at her face and make the connection. I told her repeatedly to enjoy it while it lasted. She just smoked her cigarettes and drank her beer and smiled.

At least she was staying with me for the time being, instead of in some dinky apartment near campus. I got three wonderful weeks of hanging out, dancing at clubs, shopping and just general mother-daughter time that I'd never gotten the chance to enjoy with any of my other girls. The only times we were apart were when she was in class, or one of us hooked up while at a club, or on the times when Stephanie took her to the dilapidated warehouse they'd set up as a command post to start her intrusion of the Cooperative's computers. Keri ate that stuff up, though – I brought them meals and drinks and those kinds of things while they were on their marathon sessions – and it was incredible to see my little flaxen-haired daughter in her element like that.

It was on one of my trips to see them all fed and watered that I noticed a frenzy of activity inside the warehouse. I entered quickly – one hand on the little .32-caliber automatic inside my Prada tote – and locked the door behind me to see Stephanie, Kendra and Keri flitting back and forth from computer to computer while the twins, Kaylee and Haylee Thompson chattered away high-speed on their individual cell-phones.

I caught Kendra's arm as she sped by and turned her to face me.

“Kendra, what's going on?” I asked, a little freaked.

“It's brilliant, Merri, just bloody brilliant. Keri's in!”

“She's in what?”

“The Cooperative, love, she hacked the Cooperative!” she said, hurrying back to her computer. Beside her, a very tired but satisfied-looking Keri stretched luxuriously in her Aeron chair, a cigarette dangling from her pouty, glossed lips.

“I'm so proud of you, baby!” I said happily, hugging her tight.

She hugged me back distractedly and turned to the conversation I'd interrupted between her and Stephanie. “I can't copy the whole drive, Steph, the connection will reset long before then. I'm just grabbing the stuff that looks important, 'kay?”

“Whatever you can,” Steph said, covering the mouthpiece of her phone with one hand. “My people in the university say none of the Cooperative members we know about are acting any differently, or have received any phone calls.”

“If anybody's gonna, like, get us, it's gonna be that Monica Lennox girl,” Kaylee said, cradling her own phone into her cavernous cleavage to silence it. “She's, like, super computer geek 'n' stuff. My girl Sandy is in her class right now, y'know, and she says Lennox isn't acting tweaky or nothing.”

“But my friend Rudy says she looks, like, totally distracted,” Haylee amended. “So, like, it could go either way.”

“It doesn't matter,” Keri said. “Even if they know they got hacked, I'm totally swiping credit card files and shit like that to cover the data mining, making it look like a simple robbery. And even though Lennox was shit-hot enough to write that crazy bitch of an encryption package, I don't

think she or anybody else can figure out just who the hell hacked 'em. I covered my tracks fuckin' good, baby."

"So we just gotta get out of their system before anyone notices," Steph said.

"Does anybody want coffee?" I asked, already bored with all this.

I started distributing cups to the raised hands – it was everybody, of course – and making sure everyone had eaten and slept and bathed, the basics that people who got obsessed like this often overlooked. No one so much as looked in my direction – which pissed me off, since nobody'd said a word about my new white Prada boots – while the digital theft was taking place.

"That's it," Keri called, snapping the silence so abruptly that everyone jumped. "The connection's been reset. Can't get in again unless I break that encryption again, and that will take at least twenty-four hours."

"But you got the data," Steph said.

Keri bounced a pink metallic thumb-drive in her palm and tossed it to Stephanie, who looked at it in her hand like it was the Holy Grail Cure for Cancer. "I swiped about a gigabyte of files and then erased all traces of the transfer. I'm forcing a routine reboot of their servers right now and they'll never know I was there."

"Enjoy," Kendra said playfully to Steph, nudging her with a sexy hip. "See you in about a week, yeah?"

"This could break everything wide open," she said in a faraway voice.

I slid my arm around Keri, who had stood to stretch her lithe body free of the kinks and stresses of sitting in front of her computer for so long. She squeezed me back companionably and kissed my cheek, leaving a little smudge of pink lipstick that she wiped away with a long-nailed thumb.

"So what if it does?" I asked Steph seriously. "What if it does break everything wide open, Steph? What then?"

She looked at me as though I were speaking a foreign language. "What do you mean, what then?"

"I mean, what do we do once we know what the Cooperative intends? Do you mean to try and stop them, or change their plans? What possible difference does having their plan going to make in the long term?"

Steph looked crestfallen. "I don't know, Merri. I really don't. But at least we'll have some leverage, some way to negotiate with them, maybe get you out of the trap they've put you in."

"If it's a trap, then it's a gilded cage," I told her honestly. "I love what I do, baby, and I'd still love it even if I had a choice to do something else. Look around you, baby! Look at Kendra – see how happy she is, how alive? Compared to what she was when we found her? What about Keri? Can't you see how beautiful she is, how happy she is, and remember what she was like before? How different it is for Kaylee and Haylee? Can't you remember what it was like for you?"

"I chose this. They didn't," Steph said flatly.

"Maybe it was wrong, forcing this decision on them," I admitted. "But I don't know of a single one of you girls that has any complaints about their lives after they met me."

"I sure don't," Keri said, squeezing me tight. "I'm happier than I can ever remember being, Aunt Steph. Honestly. Meeting Momma was the best thing that ever happened to me."

"Me, too," Kendra said.

"Same for me 'n' Kaylee," Haylee chimed in.

"But doesn't it eat you away inside, not knowing what they're up to? What they're planning? What if it's bad?" Steph protested.

"What if it isn't?" I riposted.

"Well, we won't know until I look at this," she said, holding up the disk drive. "And I'm gonna sleep a lot better, knowing."

"Well, then, that's enough for me," I said. "Steph, honey, all I want is for you girls to be happy. If knowing this plan makes you happy, then that's what I want for you. But just be prepared, okay? Be prepared to let it end with just knowing."

Steph offered me a tremulous smile. "I will, Mer. I promise."

"Fair enough," I said. "Now if you're done with my newest daughter, I promised to take her to Neiman's. None of you bitches noticed my new Prada boots, but you're sure as shit gonna notice hers."

To be continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Twelve

by Valerie Hope

“YOU'VE GOT TO BE FUCKING kidding me,” I breathed, looking at the folder that Heather had placed in front of me. “Don't these people realize what I have to go through?”

“I'm so sorry, Momma,” Heather commiserated, squeezing my hand tightly with bejeweled fingers. Every time I saw her, the girl seemed to have more and more ice dripping from her fingers, neck and ears. There was probably a quarter-million dollars worth of Elie Tahari, Tacori and Harry Winston on her today. I was actually a little bit jealous, which didn't help my mood at all.

“They're actually telling me, straight out, to go find and fuck a great big fat slob,” I groaned. “I can't fucking wait.”

“At least he looks like he might be a nice guy,” Heather consoled. “Look here. He's into charity work, he's a doctor in a free clinic... he might actually not be an asshole, like the last few.”

I sighed. “I guess you're right,” I said at length. “I just wish they'd pick me a hottie every once in a while. It gets a little old, all the losers they make me hook up with.”

“Well, this guy certainly isn't a loser,” Heather said. “And truth be told, Momma, you might be saving his life. He isn't healthy the way he is right now. A night with you might clear up a lot of health problems.”

“Okay, okay, you sold me. It's not like I wasn't gonna do it, Heather.”

“I know,” she said with a warmhearted smile. “You always manage.”

“Maybe I need a boyfriend or something,” I chuckled. “A real shallow bastard, y'know, a real pretty-boy. Somebody who spends more time on his hair than I do.”

She laughed. “I can't see you spending a lot of time with somebody like that.”

“I wouldn't have to,” I said. “When I wasn't fucking him, he'd be in the gym working on his six-pack. The only time I'd ever have to see him was when we're both naked. And if he ever pissed me off, then I'd just change him into a sweet little twenty-year-old lingerie model and send him on his way.”

Heather laughed out loud. “Sounds like you've given this a lot of thought.”

“I get bored easily,” I explained. “But enough of my problems, honey – how are you? I never get to see you or Holly any more, it seems like, as fast as the network and the magazine are

growing. I worry about you two girls, you know, as hard as you work. You two need to take some time off, have a little fun.”

“Running the business is fun, Momma,” she protested. “But yes, we are planning to head to St. Bart's in a month or so. Nothing but tanning and mojitos, I promise. I'll let you hold my Blackberry hostage if you want.”

“I might,” I laughed.

“About the other thing,” she said briskly. “Why do you need to liquidate some assets? What's the 250K for?”

I shrugged, a little sheepish. “It's not for me, actually. It's for Haylee and Kaylee. They've been hanging out with Gina, y'know, my personal stylist? They've got it in their heads to open an upscale salon. Hair, makeup, nails, spa, the works. They even asked me if I could, um, custom make a couple of stylists to speed things along, but I didn't give them an answer.”

Heather smiled. “And you think this is a sound business decision?” she asked.

“No,” I said. “They're cute as shit, but they're not exactly poster children for long attention span. But I think I could hire a manager that could make the place solvent, at any rate. I'm doing it mostly because it sounds like fun. And the thought of having someplace private to do our little transformations has some appeal, too. Stephanie could just leave her equipment set up, for instance. We could save a lot of time and money not having to have everything mobile.”

“Hmm,” Heather said. “Sounds like it might be worth it.”

“So you'll free up the money for me?” I asked.

“Sure, why not,” she said. “Holly will probably bust an aneurysm, but oh well. If it makes you happy, Momma, I don't see any harm in it.”

I clapped my hands excitedly. “Excellent, baby, that's wonderful. The twins'll be thrilled, and so will Gina, I think. Who knows, maybe I will transform a couple of drug dealers or something to staff it up. We could save a bundle on salaries.”

Heather looked at me askance for a second, just to see if I was kidding. I couldn't keep a straight face and gave the joke away with a snort, which she joined in quickly. “Momma, you're impossible.”

“You love it,” I shot back.

“I really do,” she said brightly, taking my hand.

* * *

Morris James was tired. It was no big deal, though, because Morris was always tired. Weighing in at just under five hundred pounds, just walking to the bathroom was enough to exhaust him, bathe him in sweat and leave him panting for breath that wouldn't come. The options he'd thought would be open to him were closed – a clotting disorder prevented him from gastric bypass or any of the other bariatric surgeries, and his runaway diabetes made weight loss through diet all but impossible – the anti-hyperglycemic medications made him pack on the pounds relentlessly if he ate or not. His weight alone made exercise all but impossible, the pounding on his joints and bones from simply lugging around all the excess weight causing as many problems as exercise solved. So he tended to sit in front of his computer and imagine

that he was someone else. His job as a freelance web designer and journalist just barely paid his medical expenses and left him a modest apartment, a broken-down car and a mountain of debt. He knew that death resulting from complications of diabetes or obesity was only a matter of years away, no matter how hard he tried to circumvent it, and was starting to believe that it would be a relief from the constant medications, the aches and pains and the overall humiliation of being so fat and just trying to exist in the world.

Even the names of the equipment that the doctors had to use to move him – Mega-Mover, Rhino Lift – were slaps in the face. The looks he got just walking down the street – when he could walk, that is, without wheezing for breath or nearly collapsing under his own weight – never let him forget for a moment what an aberration he was. He felt like Frankenstein's monster most days, even the good days. A torch-and-pitchfork wielding mob storming his door was not beyond the realm of imagination.

It was with no small amount of surprise that Morris answered his doorbell that Monday morning – no one ever visited him but his home health nurse, and he wasn't due for another two days. He levered himself off the couch slowly – his knees were killing him more than usual today – and puffed and panted his way across the floor. He opened the door just a crack to reveal a vision of centerfold loveliness and sex appeal, a platinum-blonde bombshell in a hot pink cocktail dress and expensive-looking stiletto heels. She was absently playing with a strand of her hair and chewing her gum loudly, looking up and down the shady breezeway of the cookie-cutter apartments where he lived. When he opened the door, she slid her bug-eye Dolce & Gabbana sunglasses into her soft hair to reveal wide, guileless blue eyes and favor him with a bright, toothy smile.

“Hi, are you Morris James?” she asked in a perky soprano.

“Yes, can I help you?”

“My name is Merri Ryan,” she told him, extending a slim hand with long, acrylic fingernail extensions that glittered with rhinestones. “I was wondering if I could have, like, a few minutes of your time. Maybe buy you a cup of coffee?”

Morris considered a moment. Beautiful women did not show up and his door and ask him to come out for coffee. He gave a subtle glance up and down the breezeway, looking for the cameras which would no doubt be capturing this sad excuse for a joke that was being played on the fat guy.

“I'm not kidding,” Merri said softly, catching his furtive glances. “It's not a set-up, I promise you. I really do need to talk to you.”

“Okay,” he said. “D'you want to come in?”

He pressed himself against the wall of the foyer and she still had to turn sideways to squeeze past his bulk. In the process, she rubbed her divine body against his and he felt a stirring in his loins that was usually reserved for internet porn and racy dreams. He led her into the living room, moving a stack of folders and magazines off of his single armchair – too small for him to sit in, he just used it as an extension of his filing system – and ushering her to a seat, which she took with a graceful dip of her knees, smoothing her tight skirt against her thighs and crossing her legs demurely at the knee, showing off her dancer's calves to excellent effect.

“What's this about?” Morris asked straightforwardly after the niceties of offering her a drink were out of the way and he'd collapsed onto his couch, breathless.

“You probably won't believe this,” she said simply, “but I've been watching you for about a week. Normally, I tend to try and find ways into the lives of people like you, ways to innocently get to know them and get close to them. But you're so insulated, and you have so little in the way of social contact, that I really don't have any choice but to just walk right up like this and tell you straight out.”

“Tell me what straight out?” he demanded.

“I have a proposition for you,” she said. “A second chance...”

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Morris sat back heavily, his fat-folds jiggling, when I'd finished my tale. He was looking at me with a mixture of puzzlement, outright disbelief and the tinge of attraction he'd shown me when I first knocked on his door.

“I know it sounds out there,” I said.

“That's one way to describe it,” he replied, rubbing his temples.

“I didn't mean to freak you out,” I told him. “I'm actually serious.”

“I believe that you are,” he said. “That's what freaks me out. Look, Ms. Ryan, I'm not sure what it is about me that makes you think I'm going to believe a word of what you just said. I'm a huge science fiction fan, but this is pushing it.”

“I get it,” I told him. “But look at it this way. Assuming what I say is true, and you'd be into it, then you get a second chance at life. And if I'm lying, well, then at least you get a Class-A blowjob out of the bargain. The way I see it, Morris, you really can't lose.”

“Why can't you give me this second chance as a man?” he asked.

I bit my bottom lip in thought. The same thought had crossed my mind several times since I'd been transformed. But no matter how I tried, I couldn't make the same feelings occur in myself when I imagined a son. The nanites, and whatever process in my head that triggered their manufacture, only responded to the mental picture of a woman. Another mystery of what the Cooperative had done to me – why only girls? Why not a boy? Steph was right. Nothing they did seemed to make the slightest bit of sense, but it was all pieces in a larger puzzle.

“I don't think it works that way,” I told him honestly. “Nope, it's a girl or nothing.”

He sighed. “Can I think about it?”

“Of course you can,” I told him. “But I do feel obliged to let you know, it's not a standing offer. I'm on a time-frame – why, I can't really explain to you, but you just have to trust me. If I don't have an answer for you in a few days, honey, then I'm going to have to move on to the next person on my list.”

“You certainly are mysterious,” he commented.

“That would be true if I had the faintest idea why I was doing any of this,” I told him. “But that's not the case. In a lot of ways, Morris, I'm only a puppet in this.”

He searched my eyes. "I think you're telling me the truth," he said.

"I haven't lied to you yet, believe it or not," I confirmed.

"If you leave me some way to contact you, Merri, I promise I'll get in touch one way or the other within a few days. I just need to think things over. If you're somehow actually telling me the truth, then this isn't something I want to rush into."

"I understand."

He tried to lever himself forward, off the couch, but sagged back after a few attempts, puffing hard, sweat breaking out on his forehead. He swallowed the humiliation that twisted his face into a pained rictus and sighed. "Can you show yourself out?"

"Of course I can, sweetie," I told him, patting his wrist. "I'll look forward to your call."

* * *

"That poor man," I said sadly, lighting a cigarette as I leaned against the quarter-panel of my Mercedes. Steph and Kendra were sitting in the open side-door of a minivan in a parking lot two blocks away. The lights and LEDs of the high-tech surveillance equipment I'd bought for them blinked warmly inside, behind them.

Stephanie looked incredible, even after being cooped up in the back of the van for God knows how long. Her curly red hair was scooped into a long ponytail which hung well below her shoulder-blades and she wore a pink-and-white Playboy bunny baseball cap backwards over her slightly-damp tresses. She wore pink wraparound shades and even a hint of lipstick to match, a tight-fitting Henley tee with pink three-quarter sleeves and a sinfully tight pair of pale blue skinny jeans tucked into white ankle boots. She'd started paying much more attention to her dress and appearance, I'd noticed, since she'd gotten serious about her new boyfriend. Apparently, he liked seeing his little redhead spitfire decked out in sexy, revealing clothes and didn't mind footing the bill for it. I was so glad she was putting in the effort. Stephanie was such a pretty girl when she tried.

Kendra was her usual fashion-plate self, even dressed down as she was. She wore black bullhide cowboy boots under stylishly distressed boot-cut Levi's, a belly-baring purple-over-blue layered top with a scoop neck that showed her delicious tits to excellent advantage. Dark wayfarer shades perched on her perfectly-made-up nose and her honey blonde hair was in two meticulous braids, one behind each ear. Several silver chains and leather thongs hung around her slender neck, holding pendants and charms and even a large pewter crucifix, and huge silvery hoops dangled from her ears. She was taking time off from fiddling with one of her myriad necklaces with long, French-manicured nails to light a cigarette of her own.

"It is very sad," Kendra agreed in her lush London accent. "Devastating, actually. I do hope he says 'yes,' Merri. Poor bloke could use a bit of salvation."

"I agree," Steph said. "And your idea of just walking up and asking like that."

"I couldn't think of another way. I mean, there are some other likely candidates in the folder Heather gave me, but poor Morris in there is probably only a few months away from losing his sight, or a foot to diabetes. He's likely to die within a couple years. And he's such a sweetheart – he posted some poetry on the 'Web that I found and it's completely touching. I can't think of anybody I'd rather save."

“If he gets transformed, though, with the full knowledge of what's happening – will he be like us, even if you regress him to infancy?” Steph asked.

“I have no idea,” I said. “I think – I'm not sure, but something just tells me – that I don't have to take him all the way back to a baby. I think I can start him off as a little girl, maybe even a teenager. I don't want him to completely lose his identity, y'know – he's one I wouldn't mind keeping around.”

“Me neither,” Stephanie agreed. “You know, though – something did occur to me. When you transform somebody, Merri, how do you know what specific talents and inclinations to give them? I mean, take Heather for instance. You made her the ultimate businesswoman. Focused, super organized, doesn't need much sleep, able to do, like, six things at once... how did you know to make her like that?”

“I don't know,” I said. “I just knew, somehow.”

“Steph and I've been talking, thinking about that,” Kendra said. “Everybody you transform except the accidental ones – me, Steph, Haylee and Kaylee, your staff – they all fit into the Cooperative's plan. I mean, they all have their part to play, and you just automatically know what kind of woman to make them, right?”

“Pretty much,” I said. “I imagine them a certain way, and that way just always seems to be what the Cooperative needs. I've never given it much thought.”

“When you transform someone into a baby again,” Steph pressed, “does it feel the same as transforming one of us?”

I took several drags off my cigarette while I thought, sending plumes of smoke into the air above my blonde head. Finally, I said, “No. It feels different. I'm not real sure I can even tell you how, but when it's one of you, it feels less... complete, somehow. There's a lot more of who you used to be, you and Kendra, because I didn't want to change you that much from who you were before. With the servants, and Haylee and Kaylee, I pretty much wiped 'em clean. And they turned out more, I dunno, like, stereotypes. They really don't have personalities of their own, they're pretty much just big smiles and big tits and not much else.”

“And the babies?”

“My babies, I don't have to think much,” I went on. “I just seem to know who they are and who they're going to be. Like they just pop into my head all fully formed. It's hard to think of anything different than what's in my head, like when I gave Jessica her dirty little secret.”

Stephanie nodded, thinking of the photographs in the safety-deposit box we rented where now-Senator Jessica Reilly was dressed head-to-toe in leather, tied and gagged on a brass bedframe, bucking like a wild animal on a ten-inch double-headed dildo while a hooker put her in nipple clamps and spit on her clit. It was leverage, in case we ever needed it to control her. I didn't like it, but Steph was convinced that it was necessary. I tried not to think about it, other than just hoping that rough sex and bondage made her happy and fulfilled in her busy life.

“Think it'll be like that with Morris, if you transform him?” Kendra asked. “Keeping more of him in his new form, fighting against the picture in your head?”

“Probably,” I said. “But I think he's worth it.”

Stephanie smiled. "You're such a softie," she chided me fondly. "Listen, Merri, d'you think you could sleep over at my house the night before you do the transformation?"

I gave her a sultry leer. "I thought you and your man were exclusive. You thinking threesome?"

She giggled – I gave her that sexy little-girl giggle, and it drove me wild. "No, Merri, not that. Kendra and I think that the Cooperative must transmit what they need into you, somehow, before you transform someone. And if they do, that means there's a signal. And if there's a signal, then we can track it."

"Oh," I said, more than a little disappointed that I wouldn't be sleeping with Stephanie again. I missed having her in my bed – not that my servants, or the twins didn't satisfy me utterly, it was just that I was more than a little bit in love with Stephanie Kelly. I was happy that she was in a healthy relationship, and was beginning to understand the finer aspects of riding a big hard dick every night, but I missed her. It seemed like all we talked about these days was work.

"So, could you?" she asked.

"Sure," I said. "But it's all pretty dependent on Morris, I guess."

"I have a feeling he's going to say yes," Kendra said. "He's no fool, Merri. He knows his life is in danger the way he is. I think he realize what a unique opportunity you're offering him and that he may not have another chance."

"I hope you're right," I said. I checked my watch as I took my final pull from my cigarette and tossed the smoldering butt into the storm drain. "I'm late for lunch with Dani, so unless y'all want to come with me, I better motor."

"Nope," Steph said. "That's it."

"Okay, then," I said, giving them quick hugs and kisses and hustling my way back towards my car, my high heels making me do an exaggerated Peg Bundy mince and working my tight ass through jiggling figure-eights.

"What was that about?" Steph asked as I drove away. "She, like – blew us off."

Kendra shook her head. "You really are clueless sometimes, Steph," she chided. "She offered to come home and sleep with you and you didn't even react other than to laugh. Remember why she transformed you, yeah? Because she cared about you so much? And now you don't even call her unless it's about the bloody Cooperative."

"Oh," Steph said. "Oh, God."

"Think you might ask her out to dinner or something," Kendra told her. "Just remind her that you still love her past what information she can provide on the Cooperative. You know, because she's a person and not a power tool."

"Enough, enough, I get it," Steph said, raising her hands. "I've been a thoughtless bitch, we've established that."

"So you'll call her?" Kendra asked.

"Of course I will," she said. "I just got distracted. I still care about her."

"Don't tell me," Kendra cautioned, climbing into the driver's seat of the van and shutting the door to talk through the open window. "Tell Merri."

* * *

I was just starting some high-intensity car flirting with a cute cowboy in a blue pickup at the stoplight next to me, about a mile from my home when my phone rang. I had to dangle my cigarette from a dark-red stained glossy lip and dig in my Fendi purse for it, almost missing that the light had changed. I gunned my Mercedes into motion as I pressed my iPhone against my ear to click softly against my signature hoop earrings.

"Hello?" I chirped, using a long-nailed thumb to turn down my stereo with the steering-wheel mounted controls.

"Hi, I'm trying to reach Merri Ryan," a familiar voice said.

"I'm Merri," I said. "Is this Morris?"

"Yeah," he said. "I'm, uh... I thought over your offer."

"That's fantastic!" I gushed. "What did you come up with?"

"Look, I don't want to seem like I'm taking advantage of you," he said. "I mean, I think you might have some issues. Some of the stuff you seem to believe, seems like, you might need some help. If you want, Merri, I can help you find somebody to talk to, maybe, y'know, find someone who can help you. So you don't feel like you have to do... y'know, what you're doing."

"You are so sweet," I told him. "But Morris, I'm telling you the truth."

"I know you believe that," he told me.

"Look. Humor me," I said. "Just assume, for a second, that I'm not crazy. Assume for argument's sake that I'm on the level and can actually do this thing I claim I can do for you. What would your answer be, then?"

He cleared his throat loudly. "If I could have it to do over again, only I had to be a girl to get the second chance? Then I'd say 'yes.' I mean, being male really hasn't been all that fantastic for me, it's not like being female would be that big of a sacrifice for me. But..."

"... but nothing," I said. "Look, Morris, I'll cut you a deal. This isn't a dare, this isn't a set-up, none of what you think, and I'm not crazy. I actually want to suck your dick, okay? You're a tremendous sweetheart and you deserve something like that to happen. Nobody's making me."

"You do?"

"I really do. You're one of the nicest guys I've ever met. And if I'm wrong, or lying, then you'll know for sure. Okay?" I said.

"You're very persistent," he told me.

"Because I like you, silly," I told him.

"Well, I guess I should take you seriously, then," he said flatly. "If you're sure you still want to be with me, that is."

“Honey, I wouldn't have offered if I wasn't sure,” I said. “How's tomorrow?”

* * *

I showed up at Stephanie's later that afternoon with an overnight bag and my laptop – at least I could update my Facebook status while she was tweaking all her surveillance equipment. With all the work she'd been doing towards figuring out the Cooperative, I figured I'd do that, watch Kardashians and do my toes and then go to bed.

I didn't expect to find her there in a sleek red cocktail dress with a very sumptuous-looking candlelit dinner spread out on the table behind her.

“Steph?” I asked, confused.

She smiled. “I just thought that maybe we could have dinner like we used to before we had to get down to talking business. All work and no play, y'know.”

I dropped my bag on the chair beside the door, wide-eyed as a little girl. “I don't know what to say. I mean, I'm not even dressed right.” I cast a disdainful look at the belly-baring tank and yoga pants I was wearing with platform flip-flops.

“You look beautiful, Merri,” she said. “You always look beautiful.”

My face warmed with a blush and I cast a long-lashed gaze at my painted toenails until I could regain my composure. “So, what's for dinner?” I asked huskily, trying to overcome the lump that had appeared in my throat.

“Nothing like the spread that Juli puts out,” she said, “but I do my best. I made broiled chicken and asparagus, au gratin potatoes and a spinach salad. It was on Food Network this afternoon and I did my best.”

“It smells heavenly,” I said. “I'm famished.”

“Then sit down and pour yourself some wine,” she said. “I just have to take the bread out of the oven.”

“Did Kendra say something to you?” I asked suddenly, desperate to know about her sudden change of attitude and where it came from emotionally.

“Yeah, but it's nothing I didn't need to hear,” she said. “And she was right, I've been a clueless bitch, and it's something I need to take care of right away. I've gotten real obsessed with this Cooperative thing, Merri, and I've completely lost sight of the fact that I love you and you're one of my dearest friends. I'm sorry.”

I wiped a tear out of the corner of my eye before it made my mascara run. Strange, the things girls had to worry about. “It's okay, honey,” I croaked, very near the point of no return regarding some chest-wracking sobs. “I love you, too.”

“Now sit down and let's eat,” Steph said.

I took her hand and let her lead me to the table.

* * *

"It's been too long since we did this," I commented, touching the tip of my long white cigarette to the match that Stephanie was holding out for me. I blew it out with a long feather of smoke.

"You're right," she told me, taking a drag of her own cigarette and giving me a dazzling smile. "I promise, we're going to do it more often. Still, it feels kinda weird for me to not have Kendra here. We're kinda like the Three Musketeers."

"Yeah," I said. "But I have missed this. Just you and me. Even if we aren't sleeping together any more."

"Yeah, well, I have to admit, I've discovered the joys of cock," she said with a cute giggle. "As much as I loved what you did to my body, I don't think there's much chance I'm ever going back. At least not exclusively."

I laughed. "Yeah, I get it. I mean, I'm more dyke than not, but there's just something about a big, fat dick damn near splitting your shit in half."

"True," she said, sipping her wine. "For me, too, it's that feeling I get the next morning, like I'm walking funny from getting my little pussy tore the hell up the night before. It's like everybody can tell I got fucked, and I dig it."

"Sounds like you picked the right man for the job, then," I said.

"Oh, hell yeah, I did," Steph said. "I think I love him."

My eyebrows shot up. "Really? Love love?"

"Yeah, love love. Like, get married and have kids love," she said.

"Wow," I said. "I wish I knew what that was like."

"Maybe when this is all done, you'll get the chance," Stephanie said. "That's if there's anybody out there who could begin to settle your partying ass down."

I laughed. "You never know," I said. "Maybe I can find some dude on a street corner and make my perfect mate."

She set down her empty wine glass and dropped her cigarette in the ashtray. "I need to get out of these shoes," she said with an adorable pout. "As great as they look, I don't know if I'm ever gonna get used to heels."

"Get some platforms," I told her, smoking languidly. "They're not as steep but they look crazy sexy. I could run a marathon in mine."

"Seriously?" she asked. "Maybe I should go pick some up."

"You can borrow a pair of mine if you wanna try before you buy," I said. "Now, then. I can tell it's driving you crazy, Steph baby. What do I need to do for you to track this signal?"

She laughed self-deprecatingly. "It's that apparent, huh?"

"Yeah," I laughed. "But you'll never know how much I appreciate this."

She finished her cigarette and stood barefooted. "All you have to do is go to sleep, baby," she told me. "I'll do all the rest."

“Just as long as you crawl in next to me,” I said, standing and kissing her cheek. “You may be able to get away with not fucking me, but damned if you're weaseling out of stroking my hair 'til I drift off.”

* * *

I woke up alone – Stephanie had warned me, but it didn't make it any less lonesome – and dressed quickly, headed home for breakfast and a long, hot bath and the tender ministrations of Babette's tongue. I smoked a little weed with Haylee and Kaylee, took a nap, just made it a lazy day all around, since by the time six o'clock rolled around on my little silver-and-gold Movado watch, it was time to slip my massaged and moisturized body into something slinky, strap on some skyscraper heels and head over to Morris James' apartment.

Kendra and Stephanie were already there, waiting.

“Did you manage to track the signal?” I asked Stephanie after hugs and kisses were distributed all around.

“Yes and no,” Steph said cryptically. “I'll talk to you about it afterwards. Morris is waiting. I think he – I mean, she – is gonna want to hear this, too.”

“Okay,” I said perkily, already aglow with the thought of a new daughter. I puffed a few more drags off my half-smoked Virginia Slims and tossed it behind a bush before I knocked on the door.

Bless his heart, he'd tried to clean up. I could tell it took a toll on him – he looked pale and the bags under his basset-hound eyes were darker and heavier – but he was wearing a nice argyle sweater, clean khakis and he'd tried his best to do something with his hair. My heart melted a little bit.

“Are you ready?” I asked him happily, kissing his cheek warmly and gathering him into the best hug I could, considering my arms wouldn't fit around him.

“I guess so,” he said. “Really nervous, I guess. Who are they?”

I looked over my shoulder at Steph, Kendra and the tech crew in their unmarked vans and cars. “They're for later, honey,” I said. “Now, you gonna invite me in or what?”

“Oh, yeah. Sorry. Want something to drink?”

“Nope, just you,” I purred as he shut the door behind me.

“I still can't really believe this is happening,” he said. “How do we start?”

I ran a long nail across his chest. “Sit back,” I teased, “and leave the driving to us.”

* * *

I wiped sweat from my forehead with the towel that Stephanie handed me and puffed out my cheeks from the exertion. On top of the acrobatic lengths I'd had to go to just in order to have successful sex with Morris, the transformation seemed to take more out of me than ever before, mostly because I had to concentrate so hard to transform Morris into the woman I wanted rather than the image that just popped into my brain fully-formed. It was hard for me to concentrate anyway – the Cooperative had made me very much the dumb blonde, with a short attention span and easily distractable, vain and more than a little bit shallow. But I managed to

form some kind of compromise between the woman who was essentially a female version of the sweet, kind man I'd met in the shut-in apartment and the woman that the Cooperative wanted me to make for them. But it had taken quite a toll. Normally, I didn't smoke in front of my babies, but this time I had to make an exception, lighting my cigarette with shaky hands while the adorable, freckle-faced ten-year-old girl stared at her skinny arms with open disbelief. I missed not being able to hold her as a squirming infant, but the eyes that looked back at me were the eyes of the man I'd just fucked into a second chance at life.

"It's amazing," she lisped between missing front teeth. "Incredible."

"I'm glad you approve," I panted.

This time, Stephanie handed the ubiquitous manila envelope to her, not me. She tore it open and looked at the documents inside. "This is me?" she asked.

"Yep," Stephanie said.

"Okay, the name I get," she said. "Morris Sydney James becomes Morgan Sydnee James. But the driver's license says that I'm twenty-nine years old, and this says I'm a registered nurse. I can't be more than ten or eleven and I never even took anatomy in high school."

"For the first part, sweetie, Merri has a little more magic for you," Kendra said, stroking her soft chestnut hair. "And for the second part, well – what's the correct dosage of lidocaine for cardiac arrhythmia with a narrow QRS complex?"

She didn't even blink. "For premature ventricular contractions, begin with a loading dose of 1 to 1.5 milligrams per kilogram of body weight, then a bolus of 0.5 to 0.75 milligrams per kilogram followed by 2 to 4 milligrams per minute infused by IV," she spouted. "Oh. Oh my God. How do I know that?"

"Only Merri knows for sure," Steph said. "It just works."

"But what about my age?" Morgan asked.

I toweled off my swollen, erect nipple. "Hungry, honey?" I asked her.

She looked at me strangely and appeared to think hard for a moment. Then she took a step towards me, arms wide. "As weird as it sounds, Momma, yes."

* * *

It was a rocky transition for everyone. By the time she turned fourteen by sucking the hot, nanite-infused milk from my swollen breasts, Morgan had ballooned out to nearly a hundred and seventy-five pounds, and was a whopping two hundred twenty-five by the time of her eighteenth birthday. She looked at me with such betrayal, but I knew it was the Cooperative's doing and as such I was basically helpless to intervene. But then she turned twenty-two, and things started to change. For one, she got her RN degree from a local college and began working as a nurse while beginning work on her doctorate in psychology. And then she started dropping weight. The pictures from Stephanie's crew came fast and furious – a snap here, after losing eight pounds, then a snap there after five more had melted away, then another after gaining two and then another after dropping ten. And slowly, inexorably, over the span of what would have been a year had her life progressed at normal speed, she shrank from a personal high of two hundred forty pounds to the most slender, curvaceous and altogether fuckable weight of one hundred twenty-seven for her graduation from graduate school. The smile that

was on her face in the last photographs positively glowed, and it's one of the only times I'd ever requested copies to carry in my wallet.

"I can see it, Momma," she was saying to me as we sat at IHOP later that night, once everything had been packed up and moved away to wherever Stephanie kept it when not in use. "It's a weight-loss plan, but it's more than that. It addresses what all the diets and the exercise programs don't."

"And what's that, honey?" I asked, sipping my coffee.

"The reason we eat so much is because we're trying to get full," she said. "Emotionally, physically, spiritually. Food just gets used as a substitute for what we really need, so we cram it into ourselves trying to fill that hole. If you can fill that hole with something else, something better, then you don't need to overeat."

"Makes sense," Kendra said. "Perfect sense, now that I think about it."

"And you'll be writing a book, authoring a website and blog and taping an infomercial to that effect in the next two weeks," Stephanie said around a mouth full of pancakes. "The Fullness Plan is due to be on bookstore shelves by the end of the month, sexy. It's all set up for you."

"Wow," she said, running a hand through her shiny, lustrous chestnut hair. Her hazel eyes sparkled with intelligence, insight and happiness and her flawless café-au-lait skin shone with health. She was an absolute stunner, long-legged and full-breasted, the stuff of centerfolds and adolescent fantasies. Her pre-programmed hours in the gym during her weight loss gave her a soft, feminine-edged six pack that she couldn't resist showing off, borrowing a midriff-baring baby tee from Kendra just for the late-night IHOP crowd. I was taking her tomorrow to get it pierced, and to get her a whole new wardrobe, a manicure and a waxing. She was already only half-joking about going clubbing later and getting herself thoroughly laid.

"Wow, indeed," Kendra said. "Welcome to the sisterhood, Morgan."

"I'm glad you're here," I said, hugging her tightly.

"Me, too," she said. "I feel like I belong here."

"We were hoping you'd say that," Stephanie said, lighting a cigarette. "Because we have some things we need to tell you about a group of people called the Cooperative..." Ω



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Thirteen

by Valerie Hope

“THE FACT THAT IT COMES from the University isn't the interesting part,” Stephanie said, puffing her cigarette as she talked and gesturing grandly with her long-nailed hands, finally able to be animated over the coffee and pancakes we were getting at IHOP after transforming my newest daughter, the lovely Morgan James, an up-and-coming weight-loss guru due to take the world by storm in a few short weeks with her combination diet, exercise and life plan. Her big, liquid hazel eyes were riveted on Stephanie's every word, her fine mind absorbing every word and nuance.

“It's that it was transmitted from a satellite,” Kendra supplied. “A privately-owned satellite, to put a fine point on it. Which means that the Cooperative extends well past the University. And it also means that we can jam it, which means that Merri will have loads more control over her transformations.”

“Won't that cause suspicion?” Morgan asked.

“We don't think so,” Stephanie replied. “So far as we know, the Cooperative doesn't keep tabs on Merri's little girls. As long as they fulfill their roles – and for the life of me, I don't know what those criteria are – I don't think the Powers That Be are going to poke their heads out of their little cozy holes.”

“And you have no idea what, exactly, all this effort is being put towards,” she said. “And we don't really even know the answer to my original question, which is why Merri can't transform anyone into a male.”

“No clue,” Stephanie said.

“But at least we have a place to start snooping around. The PeriStar XII satellite that gave Merri her instruction signal is owned by a company called Orbitech. They have offices locally, and it should be child's play for our dear Keri to poke about in their corporate computer system to find the Cooperative's agent.”

“And then what?” I asked.

“We're still trying to put the pieces together, find all the players in the game,” Steph said, putting a warm hand over mine. “All we need is one who has some kind of an 'in' – gambling, drugs, sex, the usual suspects – and we'll have leverage. We'll have a way in.”

“I still don't see why we can't just go in and ask Dr. Stanton-McLean what she's up to. She made us all into girls at the cost of a lot of time and money. She must feel like we're on her

side, anyway, and she might just want us to know the answers to all these questions. She doesn't seem like a bitch, after all, she's kind of nice from what Kendra says."

"That's mad, you know," Kendra laughed. "Completely barking. She won't be as easy to approach as Morris was, for one thing. And for another, even though I wouldn't begin to know what the charges would be, it's safe to assume she's committed a crime with all these bloody transformations. She probably would react a bit strenuously to someone running off at the mouth."

"I still think she'd be cool if we just asked," I muttered.

"I just don't think we can take that chance, baby," Steph consoled me.

I sighed. "Steph, honey, is there anything I can be doing?" I asked, exasperated. "You seem to have some idea of what you're going to do next, but I sure as shit don't. How can I help?"

She shrugged. "Right now we have two goals. Find a way to get Keri some access to Orbitech, which means finding somebody on the inside, and keep trying to get close to Lisa Stanton-McLean. Figure out why this plan of theirs needs women only. Hell, figure out this plan of theirs."

"Okay," I said. "It's easy enough to get Keri that access."

"How so?" Kendra and Morgan asked simultaneously.

"Well, it's a company. Companies have men in them, and some of those men are bound to go to strip clubs, right? One night with his head sandwiched between Haylee and Kaylee's matched titties during a double lap-dance and we'll have all the access we need."

Stephanie laughed aloud. "There you go with the direct approach again," she chuckled. "We're the ones thinking of how to get someone hired there, working secretly on our agenda, or how to do sophisticated electronic surveillance, and you're the one that comes up with 'get 'em by their dicks.' I love you, Merri."

"Love you too, honey," I said. "So, should I call the twins or what?"

* * *

"His name's Roger Everett," I said, sliding the black-and-white photograph across the glass-topped coffee table with a long fingernail and tapping it twice. "Steph says he goes to Tailfeathers once or twice a week to blow off steam."

"Ooh, I like Tailfeathers," Kaylee said, clapping her hands softly. "They have that really cute door girl, y'know, Tina? With the little Tinkerbelle tattoo?"

"Oh, God yes," Haylee gasped. "She's so hot. She looks like Paris Hilton."

"So, do you know this guy?" I pressed.

"Baby, we see hundreds of guys a night," Kaylee said with a little pout. "I'm sure I've seen him around, but fucked if I can remember."

"Me neither," Haylee added.

“Look, I’m not saying you guys have to, like, blow him or nothing,” I said. “Just show him a real good fucking time. Then see if he’ll take you to see his work. Y’know, act all interested ‘n’ stuff.”

“But what if I want to blow him?” Haylee asked, picking up the photo. “He’s kinda fucking cute, y’know?”

“You’re a grown woman,” I said. “Do what you want, girl.”

“So, like, what happens when we get to his office?” Kaylee asked, twirling a lock of hair around one finger and smacking her gum loudly.

I passed a USB drive across the table. “Keri says that if you plug this into any computer that’s on their network, it’ll install itself and that’ll be it,” I said. “Oh, and like, it’s got to be a computer that’s on.”

“Oh, okay,” Kaylee said, dropping the slender thumb-drive into her temptingly-displayed cleavage with a smile. It was definitely Keri’s handiwork, too – cutting-edge technology and programming and the drive was hot pink and decorated with rhinestone bling and big red puffy hearts. It made me smile.

“Think you can handle it, baby?” I asked.

“Sure, no prob,” Haylee laughed airily. “Sounds like total fun. Besides, for the bitch who bankrolled Clypz, we’ll pretty much do anything. Me ‘n’ Kaylee’re gonna be eating your pussy for the next twenty years saying thanks.”

Laughing – the new spa and salon they’d opened hadn’t done much business but they were having the time of their lives – I dug my cellphone out of my purse with a wide grin, anxious to get done with the business portion of the visit and on to the girly stuff – a planned excursion to a day spa, followed by shopping and then, knowing these two, an extended naked romp in my hot tub afterwards.

“Steph honey? Merri. The twins are in. We’re a go.”

* * *

“It’s just not working,” Heather said, running a hand through her elaborately-styled honey blonde hair in a clatter of jeweled bracelets. Beside her, Holly Broling, her CEO, was tapping her pouty peach-glossed bottom lip with a long, French-manicured fingernail, looking at the same report she was on her laptop.

“We aren’t getting these women visible enough,” Heather went on, opening her sterling-silver cigarette case and selecting a white cigarette before offering one to Holly. “The magazine, and Kennedy’s work, they’re great. But they’re just not netting the market share we need. We have to get these women nationwide and keep them in the public eye. Our network is still expanding, and there’s only so much Internet work that Keri can do without it looking staged. She has to keep that indie edge, she can’t be seen to have any backing from the corporate mainstream.”

“Agreed,” Holly said, blowing out a lungful of bluish smoke towards the ceiling and toying with one of her scandalously expensive Tacori earrings. “But I see it as more linear, Heather – we have the network. What we need is to grow that network faster than it already is, and for that we need a hit.”

"We can influence public opinion, Holl, but only up to a point," Heather said.

"Think about it," Holly continued. "We need to place these women in highly-visible, highly-influential positions. Who's the most influential woman on television?"

"Easy. Oprah Winfrey," Heather said. "But she's already established."

"So we call Merri and we make our own Oprah," Holly said.

"We can't compete with Oprah starting from scratch," Heather complained.

"Who said anything about competing?" Holly said. "It's better to make her an ally. If Oprah says our girl is worth watching, then everyone's going to watch her. So now we're not influencing public opinion at all – we're just influencing one woman and letting her do the heavy lifting."

"You're brilliant, you know that?" Heather said with a nose-wrinkling smile that showed off her chalk-white veneers.

"God knows I try," Holly shot back, blowing her a playful kiss.

* * *

"She'll have to be something," I said, winding the towel around my glistening naked body. The oily scent of my airbrush tan still hung in the air around me and made me feel slightly greasy. I started rubbing the setting lotion and moisturizer into my skin, which was turning a lovely shade of glowing amber. "Charismatic, funny, intelligent and gorgeous. We can't just have somebody who half-asses it, or gets by on looks alone like so many of them."

"True," Heather said, scooting over for Gina, my huge-breasted stylist, so she could put lotion on my back. Usually, these rub-downs ended up with both of us naked and me sweating off my tan on the floor of the booth I'd had installed in my house just off my well-equipped home gym. Heather was dressed to the nines, in a stylish Armani business suit with Gucci pumps and briefcase in a dark maroon alligator print, dripping with diamonds as usual.

"But I think it would be good if we had a hook, too, don't you think?" Heather went on, smoking a cigarette idly. "Like, what if she was a lawyer, and gave legal advice? Or a doctor?"

"No, then it might run the risk of turning into Judge Judy or Dr. Phil, and that's been done," I said. "No, if we were going to do something gimmicky like that, then we'd need something that everyone can relate to. Nothing specialized – the networks are sick with lawyers and doctors and personal trainers and financial advisors and life coaches and no one really listens to them anyway."

"What do you have in mind?" Steph asked from her perch on the edge of my massage table, also browned to a glowing golden hue and smelling like cocoa butter, wrapped in a towel with a cream-in-whiskers look on her beautiful face. Gina had just given her a top-notch Swedish massage with a lovely little happy ending, right before Heather had arrived.

"She's going to be a talk-show host," I said. "Which means she needs to ask good questions, questions that nobody else asks or thinks about asking. Like the old Dick Cavett show. Just a really smart, insightful woman who asks what people want to hear. That's what got Oprah where she is."

"But we don't want another Oprah," Heather said. "We can't compete with her."

"We won't be," I said. "Not if our girl is only twenty-four. She's going to reach an entirely different demographic."

"But how will we launch it? She's got to have some kind of fame beforehand. Sports star? Actress? Model?" Heather asked.

"It's all been done," Stephanie said.

"I was kinda thinking we could go off the reservation," I remarked. "What about a scientist? I mean a real prodigy, one of those people who goes to M.I.T. When they're fourteen. Smart is sexy, after all, and nerdy is even more sexy."

"Interesting," Heather said. "If she was a theoretical physicist, like Einstein, then she would also be a better-than-average philosopher, too. Those guys think about the nature of the universe all the time, trying to explain it."

"But are people really going to want to watch some super-smart girl interview movie stars?" Steph asked.

"I think they will, because our super-smart girl is going to ask questions that nobody else asks," I said. "Think about it. Could Tyra Banks interview a Nobel laureate? Could Oprah, or any of them? Our girl could, and if we give her the knack of breaking it down, putting complicated scientific concepts into language that anyone could understand, then she's going to help bridge a big gap."

"And if she looks good in a bikini, well, then..." Heather said with a smile.

"And who knows? Maybe she'll get little girls interested in science," Steph commented. "God knows we could use something like that in this country."

Heather tapped her bottom lip with a manicured fingernail, her telltale sign of deep thinking. After a long moment, she smiled. "I think you're onto something."

"So what kind of person are we going to need to scout for this?" I asked. "Knowing the way it usually works, it'll be a high-school dropout or something."

Heather laughed. "You're noticed that, then," she said. "Yeah, the requests tend to be a little ironic, don't they?"

"Yeah they do," I said. "So who do we start looking for?"

"You're probably right, some kind of dropout or slacker-type," Heather said. "I just have to wait for confirmation."

"Confirmation from whom?" Steph said, a very predatory light in her eyes and a slight edge to her voice, but thankfully ones that Heather didn't seem to catch.

"The University," Heather said airily, puffing her cigarette. "I have a number that I have to call when we have something like this come up. I call, leave a message, and they call me back in a day or two with instructions."

"Wow," Steph said, affecting a very bored, bubblehead air that didn't suit her very well.

"Sounds kinda James Bond."

"It is, a little," Heather said.

"So, Heather, are you gonna get a tan, while you're here? Or a massage?" Steph asked.

"Oh, honey, you totally should," I urged. "You work too hard, you should treat yourself. I have a suit that would fit you, stay and get yourself a tan! Gina has magic hands."

Gina giggled happily at the praise.

"I really can't," Heather said. "I have a board meeting."

"Heather, sweetheart, I don't think they'll start without you," Steph teased. "You should stay and relax a little bit."

"Please?" I begged in a little-girl whine, complete with elaborately batted eyelashes that made Gina, Steph and Heather all giggle.

"Yeah, please?" Steph said. "I never get to see you any more."

Heather looked at her Blackberry for a long moment, then sighed. "Oh, okay. Sure. What the hell," she said. "Just let me go get changed."

She dropped her briefcase, purse and phone on the little side table and followed Babette – who answered the little silver bell that I'd rung with her customary enthusiastic speed and cute little curtsy – out the door towards the bedroom.

Steph was on the cellphone like a shot, pulling it apart rapidly and digging in her own purse for some of the high-end surveillance equipment she usually carried in a makeup compact. In an alarmingly small amount of time, she'd bugged Heather's cellphone, replaced it exactly where she'd found it, closed and stored all her own tools back in her own purse and was back lounging idly on the massage table, leafing through a new Flirt! magazine and smoking a cigarette, a portrait of indolent, bored beauty.

I rolled my eyes elaborately. "I can't believe you just did that," I said.

"How could I not?" she shot back in a stage whisper. "You heard her same as I did, Merri. She's going to be expecting a call from the Cooperative. If we can trace that call, listen in on it..."

"I get it, I get it," I said, holding up an exasperated hand. "But it's Heather, for goodness' sake. I don't like the idea of us tapping one of my daughters' phones."

"Would it help if I asked next time?" Steph offered.

"Not really," I said.

Heather came back in a few moments later, dressed in a peppermint-striped thong bikini that was losing in its valiant efforts to restrain her perfectly-shaped, silicone boobs. She had removed her makeup – which didn't detract from her beauty or flawless complexion a bit – and scooped her honey-blond hair into a loose ponytail. She gave us a shy smile – she wasn't used to showing off her nearly-perfect body, usually dressing in her customary tailored business suits which covered her and just suggested at her figure.

"Wow," I said with a bright smile. "You look so hot, baby."

She blushed. "I'm really not used to having so much skin showing," she said.

"You should be," Steph said. "Girl, if I looked like you, I'd wear as little as possible wherever I went."

"You're sweet," Heather said.

"Not being sweet, being honest," Stephanie said. "We should totally borrow some of Merri's stretchy barely-there club dresses and go dancing. Get those spectacular titties of yours jiggling out on the dance floor."

She stepped out of her flip-flops and into the airbrush booth where Gina was waiting with a net cap to cover her hair. "You know, Stephanie, that actually sounds like a hell of a lot of fun," she said. "Are you serious? Do you really want to go out together sometime?"

Steph brightened and bounced a little. "Hell yeah I am! Do you want to?"

Heather laughed. "Believe it or not, I actually think I do," she said. "It's as much of a surprise to me as it is to you. It's weird – I only ever seem to hang out at work, with Holly. Going out to some crowded, noisy club and shaking my ass just sounds like an incredible amount of fun."

"You should see if Holly wants to go, too," I offered.

"I'll ask," she said, postponing Gina's efforts to tuck her hair under the net to grab her recently-bugged Blackberry and checking her schedule. "How's this Friday for you, Steph?"

Steph shrugged. "I don't have any plans unless Merri decides to make another daughter that night," she said.

"Believe me, I'll wait a day," I told her.

"So, cool. We can meet here, around eight, get dressed and then head out?" Heather said. She giggled suddenly. "I feel like such a girl right now."

"That's a good thing," I told her.

"I'm really looking forward to it," Steph said.

* * *

I waited outside the little campus radio station for an hour, smoking cigarette after cigarette and gently dismissing the attentions of the occasional passerby who angled for a conversation with the pretty, top-heavy blonde on the park bench. Even with the 'special dispensation' from Heather's call to the Cooperative, I was nervous as a cat being on the campus where I'd been caught and transformed from a two-bit petty thief into the sexpot blonde bombshell I'd been for six months now. I felt as though my every move was being watched – ordinarily, I liked that feeling, because I was usually being watched by someone who wanted to get my panties down, but not this time. I felt weighed and measured and awaiting some horrible verdict. I tried not to shudder.

Still, the changes were overwhelming from the last time I'd been on this campus. I'd entered a husky man, unshaven with a receding hairline and fast approaching middle age, with a paunch ballooning the front of my polyester polo shirt with the university's seal on the breast pocket and my rumpled navy blue work pants. I'd smoked Camels from a crushed paper pack and sipped beer out of a tall-boy can in a paper sack from the convenience store across the street, I listened to the classic rock station on a battered jam-box on my cart as I pushed a mop around the buildings, ate dollar-menu greasy cheeseburgers for lunch and wore a ball-cap low

over my eyes to hide the redness from the voracious pot-smoking I'd typically done the night before.

I returned now a lissome, long-legged female with a bubble butt and belly that was flat as a board, a trim little waist and oversized silicone tits. The receding hairline was gone, replaced by long, silky locks of naturally wavy, shiny vanilla blonde hair which hung almost down to my elbows. I was preened and powdered to my utmost, unable to leave the house without at least lipstick, eyeliner and two coats of mascara, my legs and armpits meticulously shaved and my hair styled to perfection. I literally couldn't bear the thought of being seen anything less than ready for a centerfold shoot. Gone were the rumpled and dirty work clothes from my previous life, replaced by the clothing that dominated my life; it had to meet the criteria of tight, revealing and designer before it would ever touch my silky, smooth skin, and I preferred pink because it set off my eyes, or white which looked great against my airbrush tan. I smoked long, skinny Virginia Slims whose filter tips because stained with my lipstick and sipped spring water from an eco-friendly reusable bottle, I listened to Lady GaGa and Christina Aguilera on a little pink iPod, ate green salads and tuna for lunch and never covered my face or eyes for any reason, so that anyone who looked at me got the whole picture, from the cute little button nose and wide, surprised little-girl eyes to the porn-star body, the ditzy bimbo voice to the long, manicured fingernails that tapped idly on the weathered wood of the bench.

Today I was in a precious little workout ensemble that Babette had laid out for me, a pink belly-baring tank with spaghetti straps and darker pink hip-hugging yoga pants with "Juicy" silkscreened across the rump, a loose white hoodie that I wore open to show off my tanned and slightly sweaty cleavage. The only thing about the outfit I disliked was the lack of a four-inch heel on my Reebok cross-trainers. Oversized platinum hoop earrings tickled the tops of my shoulders – another signature look for me, one I adored – and my hair was back in a meticulous French braid which clung to my neck and temples in sexy, sweat-damp ringlets, leaving only wispy bangs loose to frame my face.

I'd actually gotten up early to get in two miles on the track, which was another huge change. When I'd been male – which seemed an eternity ago, and hazy like a half-remembered dream – I couldn't have run twenty feet without wheezing and collapsing. My new body could run two miles without feeling much exertion at all, and still be ready for panting, gymnastic sex at the end of the workout. There was not an ounce of fat on my body that wasn't strategically placed there to give me the va-va-va-voom curves I showed off so proudly. I could stretch properly now, as well, inhabiting a body which could do the splits effortlessly both back-to-front and side-to-side. I could easily bend in the middle and place both my palms flat on the floor with elbows bent, and not feel the slightest discomfort.

It was in the midst of all this musing on my past life that I noticed my mark coming out the radio station. He was tall and skinny, with a prominent nose and Adam's apple, his long and stringy hair and goatee making him look a little like a wild forest creature. He wore thick horn-rimmed glasses that made his eyes hard to see and walked hunched and slumped forwards, his hands thrust into the pockets of his thrift-store jeans and his bony frame barely filling out the faded Pink Floyd concert tee he wore.

Brett Snow fancied himself a journalist, but came across as a crackpot. Stephanie, Kendra and I had laughed ourselves hoarse the night before, listening to his program, which he ever-so-seriously presented as hard-hitting news and editorial and came across as bad public-access conspiracy rhetoric worthy of any three a.m. slot on public access television. The utter lack of

a sense of humor about the whole thing was what sold me on him as a mark. The boy couldn't laugh at anything that I could tell, he was so angry at 'the corporations' that were doing their level best to suck every penny out of the poor, downtrodden peasants and ruin any chances at happiness or betterment they had. The whole 'Robin Hood' angle was priceless. He truly believed that he was on the front lines of some war against corporate America and was a lantern-jawed champion of the public weal.

The fact that he had a background in physics, even as an undergrad, didn't hurt either. We wanted someone we could make into a cute, sexy scientist, and he fit the bill nicely. And people like him were so easy to get to. Waiting for him to turn the corner and head towards his dorm room, I got up from the bench where I'd been waiting, stabbed my half-finished cigarette into the public ashtray, took a second to gloss again and make myself presentable, then stuffed the ear-buds of my iPod back in my ears and made a wide circle on the hike-and-bike trail which snaked through the center of the campus, setting the pace I'd measured out two days prior to be sure and bump into him just as he crossed my path.

And bump into him I did, taking us both down in a windmilling tangle of arms, legs and long blonde hair. I gave a startled squeal and let him get a long and informative 'accidental' feel of some of my more interesting topographical features.

"Oh my God, I'm so sorry," I yelped, scrambling to my feet. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine," he said.

"I know your voice," I said, plucking my ear-buds out to dangle around my neck. "Don't you do that radio show? What They Don't Want You to Know?"

He blushed a little. "Yeah," he said. "You listen?"

"All the time!" I squealed, bouncing a little for his benefit. "You're Brett Snow?"

"Yeah," he said.

"I love your show, sweetie," I told him. "It's so cool. Is it really true, all those things you say on it?"

"There's no proof that they aren't," he said to me.

"Wow," I said. "I wish I understood half of what you say, though. You're, like, a little over my head 'n' stuff."

"What don't you understand?" he asked, intrigued. Too easy, I thought.

"Um, like when you said the other day that Turner Networks and Fox all were working together to influence the way people vote? You said they were, like, circumcising democracy 'n' stuff..."

"Circumventing democracy," he said.

"Oh, yeah," I said airily. "But you started talking about some congressman and campaign contributions and how they'd put some commercials on the air and some they wouldn't, and I got way lost."

He gave me a shy smile. "It can get pretty complicated," he told me. "I could try explaining it to you, if you wanted me to."

My eyes got wide and I closed the gap between us, letting the synthetic pheromones that my body could exude at will fill the narrowing gap of personal space between us and flood his system with desire for me – not like I actually needed it, I could see how hungrily he looked at my cleavage – but I didn't like to take chances with these dodgy pseudo-intellectual types. They had a nasty habit of talking themselves out of fucking me by deciding they were so far above me intellectually that I wasn't worth their time or effort.

“So, um... I was just gonna go to Bean There Done That and get a mocha,” I said, running a long nail up his forearm. “Wanna come with, keep talking?”

He licked his lips, and shifted his weight in that way I knew meant he was making room in his pants for an urgently changing shape down there. “Sure,” he coughed, scooping up his book bag from the running trail and following along in my wake, his eyes devouring me with every step.

* * *

The club was thumping with hip-grinding bass, packed with gorgeous men and sexy women wearing their low-cut, revealing best. The dance floor was a tangle of limbs and the heavy scents of sweat, perfume and arousal, dark as pitch lit only by the lightning-strike flashes of the strobes and colored lights that pulsed in time with the music. Steph and Heather hadn't had to stand in line very long – the bouncer took one look at the gorgeous duo and moved the velvet rope aside for them immediately – and were in like a shot after getting their hands stamped and the cover charge paid.

Stephanie Kelly had changed a lot since she'd first changed a lot – from a shy and secretive technician in the employ of the University to a wide-eyed, sultry redhead with lithe curves and an incredible ass, and now from a nervous and awkward sexual explorer to a dedicated and very enthusiastic rider of the cock. Her first sexual experience with a woman had been with Merri, however, and no matter how much she thought her days as a lesbian were behind her, watching Heather move to the beat on the dark, sweaty dance floor awakened feelings in her crotch that she'd thought long gone.

They stationed themselves at a small, tall table on the outskirts of the action after a breathless three hours of excellent house mixes. Steph had lost count of how many times she'd been hit on, rubbed up against and felt up by men and women alike. The little stretchy tube-dress she'd borrowed from Merri was damp and clinging to her and her meticulously-coiffed hair was stuck to her face and neck in little damp ringlets. Heather looked much the same, in the white dress – also Merri's – with tempting keyhole cutouts at the shoulders, breasts and flanks. They ordered some scandalously overpriced champagne and sat for a moment to catch their breath and to spend a few precious minutes looking gorgeous and getting in a quick cigarette.

“Wow,” Stephanie told her friend, yelling to make herself heard over the earsplitting beat. “I had no idea you could dance that way.”

Heather smiled. “I think Merri sees to it that all her girls can dance,” she said back. “Just so we can go out clubbing together. I don't even have to think about it, I just do it.”

“Same here,” Stephanie said. “I'm really glad you came out tonight.”

“Me, too,” Heather told her. “I really like you, Steph, and I love how good a friend you are to Momma. She gets so lonely.”

"I know," she said.

"I also wanted to get the chance to talk to you, one-on-one," Heather went on. "We don't really know one another that well, considering we work together."

"I regret that," Stephanie shouted.

"You know how much I love Momma," she said. "Right?"

"Of course I do," Stephanie replied. "You were the first."

"Yeah," Heather said. "So this isn't really necessary." She slid the electronic bug that Steph had planted in her phone earlier that week across the table with a long fingernail.

"Don't look so shocked," Heather laughed. "You're not that smooth, y'know."

"Heather, I'm... I mean..."

"Forget about it," Heather said. "You're trying to look out for Momma, I get that. And you're worried about how the people at the University are treating her, what they're making her do, what kind of plan they have, right?"

"Right."

"So, don't bug my phone," Heather said. "Just ask me what I know."

"What do you know?" Steph asked without hesitation.

"Holly and I have been making discreet inquiries for months now," Heather said, her voice just audible over the music. "I think we should go someplace, um... off the grid and talk about what we've all found out."

"What are you saying?" Steph said, eyes a little narrowed with suspicion.

"I'm saying that you're investigating the University," Heather confirmed, "and I want in on it."

* * *

It was the first time in a while I'd gotten the luxury of some carnal experience of a man before the transformation. It removed a little of the slam-bam-thank-you-ma'am aspect of the transformations and made me feel a little bit closer to the squalling, red-faced baby I held in my arms, cradled against my perfect breasts.

I'd been true to my word, refusing to transform Brett Snow straight away so as not to ruin the night out that Heather and Stephanie had planned, taking him instead to the back seat of my car and enjoying sex with a young man in his sexual prime. Brett had been a surprisingly good fuck for such a self-involved egotist, and had a definite fetish for cunnilingus that was rare in the men that tended to gravitate towards me. I'd thoroughly enjoyed myself and made another date for the next night – beginning with meeting me at the salon where I claimed to work, Clypz, the same salon and day spa I'd bankrolled for Haylee and Kaylee, and ending with a precious, screaming little baby against my sweat-slick skin. Steph was far less stressed than before, having been able to get all her equipment set up long beforehand and not needing to clean it up afterwards, since we were set up in the little "identity studio" we'd set up in the basement, far away from the spa facilities and any prying eyes. We weren't worried about any of the salon's employees stumbling into the operation, either, since we planned to staff the

place exclusively with girls I'd transformed over the next few months to become Clypz' hyper-sexy stock of stylists, colorists and masseuses. There were even tentative conversations about ways we might be able to apply tiny little micro-doses of my nanite brew into the clientèle to increase the number of perfect bodies and flawless heads of hair in the general population.

But thinking about the plans that the twins had for Clypz was only a distraction, something that interrupted the precious early minutes with my new daughter. For me, the old adage “they grow up so fast” was more poignant than with natural parents, because my girls went from infancy to adulthood in a matter of about fifteen hours. The time I got to spend with them as newborns was the most precious time, the time I hungered for the most. I'd even started to wonder if it was possible for my modified body to have children the old-fashioned way, with a swollen belly and food cravings and back pain and gas and a normal infancy and childhood for me to appreciate and enjoy.

Steph came to me quietly, not wanting to disturb my treasured time, the ubiquitous manila envelope in her hand. She peered over my shoulder at the tiny little red, wrinkled face that had been the first thing I'd seen poke through the dessicated skin on the floor that had once been Brett Snow.

“So beautiful,” Stephanie breathed.

“I know,” I said. “You all are. Every one of you. What's her name?”

Stephanie looked down at the false paperwork she'd generated. “She used to be Brett Alan, so we thought Brittany Elaine,” she said. “Do you like it?”

“A beautiful name for a beautiful girl,” I said. “I guess we'd better get going, huh? I could keep you and your poor crew here all night long, otherwise.” I started to maneuver my aching, turgid nipple into the questing mouth.

Steph put a soft hand over mine. “We won't mind a few more minutes.”

* * *

In the space of hours, the little red-faced newborn had passed through her phase as a chubby, sweet-natured toddler through coltish, knobby-kneed childhood and awkward adolescence into a flower of womanhood. She was just changing out of the cap and gown she'd posed in for the pictures of her Ph.D. ceremony and into a short skirt, wide vinyl belt and snowy white blouse which molded deliciously over her pert, upturned 36C breasts, a short starched lab coat over that. Her remarkable strawberry blonde hair, which was easily her most striking feature, hung past her shoulderblades in a careless ponytail held with a gold clip. Her face was slender but lush-lipped, quick to smile, with wide dark brown eyes with a wealth of depth and character shining out of them. She wore lightweight, stylish rimless glasses perched on her long, slender nose that slid down constantly and forced her to push them up with a nose-wrinkling motion that would surely be the most adorable thing on daytime television within months. She had a mellow contralto voice, was incredibly poised and well-spoken, and utterly gorgeous with her red-gold hair and long butterfly-wing eyelashes, perfect body and long dancer's legs.

Steph was proudly showing off the pictures we'd taken of Brittany, going off to M.I.T. at the age of fourteen on a full scholarship and then receiving a doctorate in applied physics at the age of nineteen from CalTech. She'd received another doctorate in theoretical physics three years

later from Rice University and had done most of her post-doc work at the FermiLab particle collider in Chicago. There hadn't been much in the way of documentation as far as a social life for her, since we'd designed her to be a bookish young girl, far preferring her studies to the people around her, and socially disadvantaged by being so much younger than the other students in primary school and high school. She'd never gotten the chance to be a cheerleader or go to a prom, but we had the documentation to show that she'd made up for it in college and graduate school by being a party animal. Steph had even argued about planting a drunken weekend in Miami's South Beach that showed up on Girls Gone Wild for some potential scandal-press in the future, but Kendra and I had shouted it down. I'd rather she showed up in something reputable and consensual like Playboy than a parasitic, take-advantage-of-the-drunk-girl-with-daddy-issues skeeze production like GGW. So we decided to make her a Playboy Cyber Girl, which would increase her geek credibility a bit and also showcase her lush curves and tight little belly.

"This technology is incredible," she was saying, just staring at the smooth, nearly-hairless flesh of her slender arms. "There's no way to tell I was anything else."

"As far as I'm concerned, you weren't," Stephanie said. "You're always going to be Brittany Snow and you always have been Brittany Snow."

"It's funny how certain I am of that," she said. "I mean, I can clearly remember my foster parents, even though I know fully well that I was never in foster care. But I can recall every detail of growing up with Luke and Alice, even though I don't think I've ever met them."

"Just be careful who you tell," I cautioned. "We walk a pretty fine line, here."

She laid her soft-as-rabbit-fur head of strawberry blonde on my shoulder and squeezed me tight. "Oh, Momma," she said with infinite patience and affection. "You should know me better than that."

"I hope I will, and soon," I said fondly, caressing her cheek.

To Be Continued...



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Fourteen

by Valerie Hope

THE AMOUNT OF BRAINS AND beauty surrounding the table in the little warehouse that Steph and Kendra had rented to be Conspiracy Central was truly staggering. I tapped the ash from my Virginia Slims cigarette in the little glass ashtray in front of me and just looked around at the gorgeous women who I'd recruited over the last months to crack the plan of the shadowy group of university dons who'd transformed me into a woman six months ago and facilitated the transformations of every woman in the room since.

Stephanie Kelly sat beside me, sipping a Monster energy drink from a tall black can. Her curly red hair was pulled into two big poufy pigtails above each ear and dangling silver hearts hung from her ears. She'd originally been the man who'd furnished the new identities and pasts for the women I'd transformed, before a brief love affair between us had led to her transformation into the leggy redheaded beauty sitting next to me. And her determination to get to the bottom of the conspiracy which led to my transformation from a two-bit petty thief into the blonde bombshell nanite-factory which was now transforming men into high-profile, influential women was the reason why every one of us was here today.

I could barely even remember the burnt-out, alcoholic private detective who'd once been Kendra Traynor, the vivacious British blonde who sat next to Stephanie. She was dressed to go clubbing after our little get-together, in a curve-hugging fuchsia tube-dress covered in sequins and with a huge keyhole cutout that bared the inside slopes of her delicious breasts. Her honey-blond hair had been teased and volumized to the extent that it made her face look small, and she was wearing dramatic, slutty makeup which made her wide eyes look even wider and her lush lips even more kissable. She puffed on a long cigarette of her own, staining the filter with her pink frosted lipstick. She was the inside girl of our little operation, working inside the University proper to gather information, at great personal risk. There was no telling what the Cooperative – the name we'd given the secret organization that pulled all the strings – would transform her into if she was caught. I didn't even want to think about it.

Black-haired and with flashing green eyes, Keri Quinn sat next to Kendra, laughing quietly at some joke the two of them had shared earlier. She was a statuesque, wet-dream beauty with long legs, a tight belly, a perfect little bubble butt and her brand-new, silicone-enhanced 38DD boobs which jiggled and bounced with her every move. She'd solicited donations from her enormous Internet following for her boob job and documented every bit of it in her blog and on her website for the fans who'd donated five dollars here and ten dollars there to help her afford the surgery. She obviously loved them – she couldn't keep her eyes off her new tits, much less her French-manicured hands – and the glowing, nose-wrinkling smile on her gorgeous face showed how happy and satisfied she was with the end product. I couldn't have been more

thrilled for her – I couldn't imagine life without my proud, 36DD beauties and the wonderful, hungry looks they got me from the men who saw me, building up my confidence and my sense of personal beauty and desirability. I hoped she got as much from hers as I got every second of every day from my own. She looked casual but beautiful, wearing jeans and a Bebe top, her black hair in a high horsetail tied with a pink scrunchie, and she chewed sexily on the stir-stick from her coffee.

Beside Keri sat Morgan James, the weight-loss guru whose diet, exercise and emotional health regime was about to be released, catapulting her into the public limelight. She was her usual healthy, beautiful self, her long chestnut hair teased out and her makeup slutty, in a red halter dress studded with rhinestones that hugged her bombshell curves, all set to go out with Kendra to the clubs. I'd noticed, since she'd been given her new lease on life through her transformation into my beautiful daughter, that she'd taken to wearing tight and revealing clothing wherever possible to celebrate her new, tight and muscular body. She'd once been a terribly unhealthy, dying four-hundred pound man, and was never going back to that state. Her whole life was a riot of fun, activity and living life to the fullest. Seeing her the way she was made me happier than just about any other of my transformed daughters, because she'd once been a sweet, thoughtful man and I'd managed to save that as I'd been able to save her life.

Next to Morgan sat Heather Martin, the first of my daughters, once my pot-smoking, ne'er-do-well slacker roommate and now editor-in-chief of Flirt! magazine, now the third-largest circulating women's periodical in the United States and the second-largest in Europe and the UK. Her honey blonde hair was about the same shade as Kendra's, but hers was worn up, in a very professional-looking executive chignon. Lightweight rimless eyeglasses perched on her slender nose, doing little to offset the large, striking sapphire blue eyes which seemed to see and take note of everything going on around her, framed by long eyelashes and subdued but excellent eye makeup. She wore a scandalously expensive Donatella Versace business suit in maroon silk and dripped with diamonds from her fingers, ears and throat. A high-powered silver MacBook Pro sat open in front of her, and she tapped against the touch-pad with her long, French-manicured fingernails.

Beside her sat her C.E.O., Holly Broling, her silken, shiny black hair pulled back in a stylish ponytail which gave her the same professional, elegant air as her partner. She was the money manager for Heather's company, living in a sterile world of figures and projections, but her ooh-la-la body and big brown eyes with their irrepressible sexual glint betrayed her cool and composed exterior. She wore a designer suit as well, a black silk Armani with a silver blouse, dripped with as many diamonds as her partner, and pulled elegantly on an imported Sobrani cigarette as she conversed quietly with Heather.

Beside her sat the twins – Haylee and Kaylee Thompson, identical bleach-blonde, green eyed sirens straight from an adolescent wet-dream. They wore their long hair down and elaborately curled, had dramatically slutty makeup with bubblegum pink lipstick and heavy black eyeliner, and wore identical skin-tight tank tops which barely restrained their huge, silicone tits – Haylee's in pink and Kaylee's in lavender – and low-rise, sprayed-on blue jeans with flared legs and rhinestone-studded leather belts, and clear Lucite stripper heels with two-inch platforms and spike heels and rhinestone-studded uppers. They smacked their gum loudly and made elaborate, French-inhaled drags from their long Virginia Slims cigarettes, held in fingers with manicured nails so long I wondered how they could even write their names, much less button the flies of their too-tight slutty jeans. They laughed and drank vodka-and-Red Bulls, their bubbleheaded, sophomoric humor seeming loud and brash against the subdued, more subtle

ways of the other women at the table. Still, they were crucial to our plans for the moment, and I loved them both dearly for more reasons than just what their pierced tongues could do to my sensitive pussy. They'd been two street toughs who'd once had the misfortune of trying to rape me. I felt the twin strippers I'd transformed them into were a vast improvement over their former lives, and at least they brought happiness and fun to the world now.

"It's a bit strange," Stephanie was saying, "having all these people in the loop."

"It's the only hope we have," Heather countered. "The Cooperative – love that name, by the way – have so much more in the way of resources than we do, we have to expand this organization in order to keep up with them. Now, where do we stand?"

"Right now we only have a few leads," Kendra said. "We have a lead on the signal that the Cooperative uses to give Merri the 'blueprints' for the new transformees. We also have surveillance in place on Lisa Stanton-McLean, who we are fairly certain is the ringleader and is the keeper of whatever master plan the Cooperative has. We also ran a trace on the call that Heather received giving her instructions and have a location for what may be one of their bases of operations, if not their primary base."

"Bring me up to speed on this McLean person," Holly said matter-of-factly.

"She's pretty bloody insulated," Kendra said. "I've tried to get close to her several times, both by myself and with my girlfriend. Dry hole, every time."

"How much press does she get?" Holly asked.

"Not much," Keri put in. "I've pulled her entire history. She publishes just enough to keep her tenure, keeps a barely-publicized blog about her courses for her undergrads and isn't extravagant when it comes to spending. She's the poster child for a low profile."

"So a spread in Flirt! wouldn't be any incentive," Heather said. "Everybody has a weakness. Sex, drugs, money... there has to be a way in."

"She's careful," Kendra replied evenly. "I think she knows how much a mistake could cost her at this stage. Although I'm at a bloody loss as to who I'd even report her to if I could. I don't know if anyone would even bloody believe me if I told them what the Cooperative was actually doing."

"Any gut feelings over a way in?" Holly pressed.

Stephanie took another slug from her energy drink and licked her lips. "We think it might be her pride. She considers herself smarter than everyone else – how else could she keep a project like this secret? And as far as we know she runs the organization like a terrorist cell, no one arm of the organization knows what the others are doing, so no one person can break the secrecy. Psychologically, we believe that's indicative of some kind of megalomania, or extreme egotism at the very least. If there's a way in, that's got to be it."

"Y'all use way too big of words," Kaylee interjected, twirling her blonde hair. "D'you, um, wanna explain what all you just said 'n' stuff?"

Steph smiled. "She thinks she's all that 'cause she pulled this off. We think we can use that to get close to her."

“Oh, totally,” Haylee said. “Bitches like that always fuckin' start fronting 'n' shit when you get all up in their shit. Be all, like, 'bitch, you're stupid 'n' you can't do this for shit' and I guarantee you she'll be, like, wide open 'n' stuff.”

“From the mouths of babes,” Heather muttered.

“Thanks, honey!” Kaylee chirped. “I totally think you're a babe, too. I love your earrings, where didja get 'em?”

Heather smiled and started to answer, already captivated by the wide-eyed, open charm of the twins, when Keri cleared her throat pointedly.

“Hate to interrupt, but I still don't have a mission yet,” she said. “Y'all recruited me – not that I'm complaining, I've never loved life more than I do now – but y'all recruited me to hack Dr. S & M's laptop, and I'm not sure if we're any closer to getting our hands on it than we were when I got changed.”

“That's my fault,” Kendra said. “I thought I could use being a student at university as a way to get close to her, personally, but either she's way too careful or I'm complete rubbish when it comes to espionage.”

I reached across and patted her hand. “You're not,” I soothed.

“So do we keep on with Kendra, or do we use someone else?” Steph asked.

“Um, I got a question,” Haylee said, raising her hand like she was in school. “Don'tcha think she'd, like, know 'n' stuff? That we're Merri's girls, y'know? I mean, we already know that her little nano-thingies can get signals, how do we know they don't give off signals too? Don'tcha think she'd test for that 'n' stuff?”

“We didn't think about that,” Steph said, smacking her forehead lightly. “Of course she would. Any nanite-transformed woman would be at risk of detection, we have to assume that.”

“So we either need, like, a girl who was totally born a girl,” Kaylee said.

“Or a transformed woman who Stanton-McLean knows is transformed but she doesn't know is a double agent,” Steph added. “I think that's far easier than trying to recruit someone new. Heather?”

Heather opened her leather-bound notebook to the front page of one of the dossiers I knew so well. “The Cooperative contacted me day before yesterday. They're looking for someone antisocial and lazy and connected with the University. I have a few candidates.”

“Which means she'll be some kind of social butterfly, if they stick to their pattern,” Steph said. “But how do we get this person close to Stanton-McLean?”

“Do we really need to plan that out?” I asked. “Just enroll her in one of the woman's classes as an undergrad. She'll have access to lectures, study groups, all kinds of chances to befriend Dr. S & M and get close to her, and hopefully close to her laptop in the process.”

“I don't like leaving that much to chance,” Steph said.

“You're not going to get a guarantee,” Holly pointed out. “Merri's way might be the best shot we have, and there are ways we can massage the odds.”

"Massage the odds?" I asked.

Keri smiled. "That's the next little bit of news I have," she explained. "I analyzed the signal you received the night before you made Morgan. Heather and Holly let me use some of their supercomputing resources."

"We own controlling interest in several research and development labs," Holly explained. "Genetics, biotech, computing and data analysis, you name it. I thought it was a smart investment."

"Turns out you're right," Steph chuckled. "Keri?"

"So I got my hands on all that well-hung computing power and decrypted their signal. The genetic stuff was easy, but the binary encoding for personality, specialty, that kind of shit – it took a while, but I did it. Along with this really cute crypto guy that Heather sent me... thanks, baby, by the way."

Heather smiled. "Glad you liked him."

"I liked him a whole bunch of times," she giggled, "and I owe you for a new couch in the break room. Anyway, turns out we can hijack the Cooperative's signal the night before a transformation and substitute it with one of our own. In essence, we can transform one of Merri's daughters into exactly what we need her to be instead of what they need her to be."

"I only want her to be what she needs herself to be," I pouted.

"Don't be like that, Momma," Kendra said softly. "There's not a girl at this table who isn't loads happier being who she is than who she was. What you did for us, it was brilliant. Wonderful. I personally can never thank you enough for my life."

"I just don't like all this talk of using people," I said.

"That's what we're trying to get stopped, Merri," Steph said.

"Two wrongs don't make a right," I shot back.

"I'm not talking about brainwashing anyone," Steph argued. "Far from it. I would never do that. And so far as I know, neither would Stanton-McLean. What I'm talking about is giving your daughter certain traits that would be valuable if she decides she wants to help us."

"What kind of traits?"

"A knack for espionage, mostly," Heather said. "Sharp hearing, increased alertness, empathy and deductive skills. Maybe some natural silence to help her sneak around, agility, ways to help her hide really well."

"Oh," I said. "Those don't sound so bad."

"But I'm not going to make her do anything she doesn't want to do," Steph said. "It's her choice whether or not to spy on Dr. Stanton-McLean, her choice to take that risk or not. I'll ask her if she wants to help, and hope she says yes."

"I'm okay with that," I told her. "Who do you think is the most likely candidate, Heather?"

She held up a file page. "I think our best bet is going to be Dustin McLaren. He's a sophomore..."

* * *

"At least he's cute," I said, looking through the long telephoto lens that Stephanie had set up to keep an eye on Dustin McLaren. He was tall, with a lanky Jim Morrison body and a huge crucifix tattooed on his ribcage beneath his left arm. He had a boyish mop of reddish-brown curls and a ridiculous soul patch on his narrow chin, a blasé look in his brown eyes and an utter lack of ambition that he tried to play off as being disaffected and bored. He sat around his dorm room smoking grass from a blown-glass bong and playing acoustic guitar badly, avoiding any real responsibility. He occasionally attended classes, preferring to spend his time in the quad tossing a frisbee or just generally vegetating. I disliked the way he refused to engage with the world around him. It was so foreign and alien to the woman I'd become – the life of the party, surrounded by three or four hundred of my closest friends, a bubbly, effervescent extrovert – that it saddened me to see someone who chose not to participate in the world.

Steph's phone rang, and she stuffed her cigarette between her bee-stung lips to dangle while she dug it free from her jam-packed Vuitton bag and pressed it to her ear to click softly against her dangling earrings.

"Got it," she said happily, and hung up. "That was Keri. She successfully intercepted the signal that the Cooperative sent you. She's about three hours away from modifying it and retransmitting it to you. All the special modifications we want will be included, and this daughter will have much more freedom of choice than any of your others. She'll be her own woman rather than what the Cooperative chooses to make her."

"But she'll still be different than the man, right?" I asked. "She won't be a slacker like that?"

"She shouldn't be. We're not changing the Cooperative's role for her, just adding some new, unexpected wrinkles," Steph said. "Feel like getting started?"

I tossed my cigarette and looked down at my outfit. I was dressed as a sorority girl, in a pink blouse with a pastel pink and yellow argyle sweater over it, a short white tennis skirt and pink Chuck Taylor high-top converse tennis shoes. I carried a pink Prada backpack over one shoulder and big oversized Dolce & Gabbana sunglasses with white plastic frames on my nose. I wore my hair straight, sleek and shiny with big white plastic hoop earrings.

"I guess so," I said. "I actually feel a little silly like this. I'm dressed way younger than I usually do. I kinda feel like one of those soccer-mom types that dresses like her teenage daughter and just looks sad, y'know?"

Steph blew a raspberry and waved her hand dismissively. "Whatever," she huffed. "Merri, you could look hot in a HazMat suit. You look incredible and you don't look like some middle-aged poser, okay? Dustin McLaren is going to shoot a load in his jeans when he sees you."

I grinned. "You know just what to say," I told her.

Steph winked at me as she turned back to the bank of computers and flashy-light machinery set up in the little mini-van that served as her mobile tech center. "Now get in there and fuck that guy 'til he's a girl," she said, giving me a light smack on the ass that made me shiver all over with excitement.

I set off across the quad with a peppy, wiggling stride that drew plenty of eyes from the college boys – and a few of the girls – walking across the campus on their ways to and from class. I shimmied and wiggled down the halls, this time actually eliciting some catcalls and rude comments that managed to turn me on and make me 'work it' a little harder still, until I came to Dustin's room and knocked sharply on his door. He didn't answer, but Steph had surveillance on him and I knew he was there. I knocked again, more insistently.

"Who is it?" a gruff voice said from inside.

"Um, my name is Ashley, from Alpha Chi Theta," I said perkily. "D'you, like, have some time to answer a survey?"

"Not really," the voice said.

"Look, so – I'm totally pledging, okay? If you answer the questions, then I'm supposed to show you my boobs," I said.

There was a gratifyingly short pause. "Okay. Gimme just a second."

There was a little bit of clattering and banging from inside – I think he had to stash his bong – and I struck an intentionally sexy pose, arms crossed behind my back to thrust out my tits girlishly, and a sultry smile on my face for maximum effect when he finally opened the door.

"Hi," I said. "Can I come in?"

"You said something about a survey?" he asked, a little bit leery.

"Yeah, it's totally stupid, but it's for pledge week 'n' stuff," I said. "I have to get pictures of ten guys' cocks, and every guy who does it gets to see my tits."

"Really?"

I held up a small digital camera. "You into it, or what? No faces or anything, just a quick picture of your junk and then I'm out of here," I said, giggling. "I even let the last couple guys get a little bit of a squeeze 'cause they were so nice."

He just stared there, goggle-eyed.

"So, can I come in, or what?" I asked.

He stood aside almost immediately, gesturing welcomingly.

* * *

"She's gorgeous," Stephanie said, stroking the soft hair that stuck up from the infant's head in wayward tufts. She smiled and giggled, grasping at the outstretched, manicured fingers and cooing to herself. The big blue eyes tracked every movement.

"She is," I confirmed, a little breathless. The sex had been athletic and gymnastic on my behalf – he'd just kind of laid there. It had also taken forever to get him hard; the sheer amount of pot he smoked on a daily basis had already begun to affect his potency and sex drive.

"Does she seem different?" Kendra asked, tickling the baby's chin and smiling at her delighted giggle. "You know, from your other girls?"

"I think so," I said. "She reminds me more of Heather than anybody else."

"She's perfect," Stephanie confirmed, making silly faces at the baby, who squealed in delight and reached for her with chubby little hands. "I've always loved your girls, Merri, but this one – she's really special. I can just tell."

"She seems happier than my other girls," I said. "She hasn't cried once. It's almost like she knows who everybody is and feels safe."

Stephanie looked around and got a very tender, almost dewy-eyed look. "Hey, Merri? Do you want to do this some other time?" she asked softly.

"Do what?" I asked.

"Grow her up," Stephanie said. "We can do all this tomorrow, honestly, at the salon. Why don't you take her home and just enjoy her as a baby for a little while? You never get to do that."

"You mean keep her this way? Get a night being – a real mommy?" I asked.

"D'you want to?"

"More than I've ever wanted anything in my whole life," I whispered, looking down at the little cherubic face smiling up at me.

"Then it's settled," Steph said, nodding to Kendra, who dialed her phone to wave off the cadre of technicians and photographers who were waiting for the signal. "Off you go. We'll call you in the morning."

"What... what am I going to feed her?" I asked, choked on the lump in my throat. "She can't have my milk until tomorrow."

"We thought you might want a night with her," Kendra said. "There's diapers, formula, a bassinet, everything you'll need waiting for you at home. Babette told me she has it all set up for you."

"You girls are the best," I sobbed.

"We come from good stock," Steph replied, stroking my cheek.

* * *

Getting to spend the day with my new daughter as a baby was glorious to say the least. For someone who was a mother nearly two dozen times over, it was my first time getting to change a diaper and give a bottle, to fall asleep with a warm baby in my lap, to feel that wonderful weight of her sleeping form against my shoulder and the little baby noises that changed me, somehow, inside every time I heard them. It was my first time to well and truly feel like a mother. I didn't even mind being woken up several times that night, or the little messes she made when she spit up or dirtied a diaper. I even enjoyed them, a little.

Steph, Kendra and the crew showed up to pick me up – they brought a high-end infant safety seat, and I had a wonderful confused ten minutes trying to sort out the rat's-nest of straps and closures to secure the tiny little form – and take me to Clipz to begin my baby's accelerated childhood. Steph still got to name her, though – as much as I'd wanted to do it, I could tell that the ex-investigator got something truly profound out of establishing the names and foundations of the newly-minted girls, and I didn't want to take that away from her. She gave me the ubiquitous manila envelope with her customary solemn smile, waiting for me to tear it

open with my long fingernails and draw out the birth certificate that heralded the end of Dustin Asher McLaren and the beginning of Destynée Ashlynn McLaren, my precious baby daughter.

Destynée was gorgeous to say the least – one of the most personable and photogenic babies I'd ever seen. The camera loved her, and the staff snapped more film on the precious apple-cheeked baby than they'd done on any of my other daughters. I had several suitable for framing, just for my personal collection. The rosy little cheeks, the infectious gummy wet smile, the twinkling green eyes and the little unkempt thatch of russet-red hair on her head – she charmed the socks off of everyone in the room. Everyone seemed a little disappointed when I gave her my breast for the first time – it burned like acidic fire, from the effort of holding in my nanite-infused milk for the whole night – and transformed her from a cherubic little baby into an energetic and curious toddler with her hair in pigtails.

I dragged the process out, leaving her as an adorable, sweet-natured two-year-old for much longer than I usually let my daughters linger there, just to enjoy every stage of her life, holding in the burning milk until I could barely stand another second of keeping it inside me before giving it to her hungry mouth. But she did grow, and let herself be photographed and filmed every step of the way, even though it broke my heart to bid her latest incarnation goodbye.

She was a coltish, skinny-legged ten-year-old when she grinned her infectious grin, missing its two front teeth, and took my hand in hers.

“Mommy? Am I going to be pretty when I finish growing up?” she asked in all innocence.

“Of course you are, baby,” I said.

“As pretty as you?”

“Way prettier,” I told her.

“How come I have to grow up so fast?” she asked me.

“Because the special girls, like you and Aunt Steph and Aunt Kendra – it's just the way it is for you. You don't get to be children for very long,” I told her. “Mommy's very sorry about that.”

“Don't be sorry, it's fun to grow up,” she told me. “I just wondered why.”

“Because we have a job to do,” Steph told her.

“What job?”

“We're not sure,” she replied. “We haven't figured it out, yet. There's a lady – Dr. Stanton-McLean – who knows everything, but she won't tell us.”

“How come?”

“It's a secret, moppet,” Kendra told her. “We want to find out, though. We're trying. But she's really good at keeping secrets.”

“She won't tell you?” Destynée asked.

“Nope,” I said.

“Would she tell me? If I asked please?”

“Maybe,” Steph said. “Do you want to try asking her, maybe when you're bigger?”

"I'll try, do you think she'll tell me?" Destynnee asked.

"I don't know, sweetie," I said. "Maybe you could find out without asking, if you felt like you wanted to. You're good at finding out secrets."

"Like, how I know that Mike over there," she pointed to one of the photography techs in a yellow sweatshirt, "thinks Kendra is really hot and wants to kiss her? Or how Bobby is afraid that Kevin will find out he's gay?"

I giggled. "How did you find out all that?" I asked.

"I listened," Destynnee said. "And watched. It's not hard, Mommy."

Steph gave me a triumphant look and a long-nailed thumbs-up. I nodded. "I'll tell you what, angel. When you're finished getting big, if you still want to help us find out Dr. McLean's secrets, then we'll let you. But if you change your mind at any time, baby, promise Mommy you'll tell her and we won't make you do it."

"Okay," she said, climbing into my lap and pulling at the cup of my bra to free my burning breast, ready to transition again. The soft-skinned thirteen-year-old with the braces and the budding breasts, and an adorable spray of freckles across her button nose, looked up at me adoringly, brushing shoulder-length red-gold hair out of her wide, guileless eyes.

"I still want to," she told me happily. She turned to Steph. "Time for more pictures?"

"Yep," Steph said. "You ready?"

"Mm-hm," Destynnee nodded enthusiastically. "I love getting my picture taken. And I feel like I want to dance, too. Do you want to dance with me, Mama?"

"Sure, baby," I told her, "but I bet you're better at it than I am."

"Don't worry, Mama, I can teach you if you don't know," she said, tugging me by the hand for my very first mother-daughter picture session since I'd begun the journey.

She had that affect on me, I noticed after my sixth or seventh mother-daughter photo op with the now-slender, tall and leggy redheaded seventeen-year-old in her varsity cheerleading uniform. She'd just finished getting her picture taken for a yearbook, homecoming queen, regional and state cheerleading finals, two gymnastics competitions and a prom, and was ready for another cheerleading action shot on the sidelines of a football game that would be Photoshopped onto the blue-screen behind her later. She was sitting very still while a tech painted a black-and-red pawprint onto her left cheek.

"You sure seem to like cheering," I told her, holding one hand.

"I really do. It's so fun," she agreed. "I was talking to Kendra a minute ago, she says I'm totally good enough to be a professional. D'you think so too, Mama?"

"I really do, angel," I told her. "But don't you want to go to college?"

"Oh, yeah, sure," she said. "I can cheer there, too, and take dance. But I think I can try out for the Silver Girls and do that at the same time, too, right?"

"As long as you're happy, baby, you can do whatever you want," I said.

“Cool,” she said. “‘Cause I think I want to be a professional cheerleader. Do a year or two local, until I graduate college, and then go try out for one of the big leagues. I really want to try out for the Cowboys Cheerleaders.”

“They're the best,” I agreed. “I know you'll make it.”

“Maybe not the first time,” she said. “But I can keep trying, and maybe get on the squad for another NFL team in the meantime. Kendra says it's really hard to make DCC and lots of girls have to try out a bunch of times.”

“You're not a bunch of girls,” I told her. “You'll make it. I just know.”

She squeezed my hand. “So you're not mad? I kinda got the feeling you wanted me to be all about college and stuff.”

“Only if you wanted to,” I told her. “I only care that you're happy, baby, you should know that by now.”

“I have the coolest mom in the world. I promise I'll get you season tickets for whatever team I wind up on, so you can come see me dance at every game, okay?”

“Sounds wonderful, baby,” I told her. “I can't wait.”

“Me neither,” she said. “So I only have to stay in school long enough to find out all Dr. Stanton-McLean's secrets for you, and then I can go start trying out. It should take long.”

“You still want to do that?” I asked.

“Well, yeah,” she said as if it had just occurred to her. “Her classes sound kinda cool, y'know, and I want to help you and Aunt Steph and Aunt Kendra like I said I would. I don't want to just ditch you. It shouldn't take me long. I'm getting really good at finding out secrets. I don't even have to hear people talk, I can just kinda tell. By looking.”

“Just by looking?” I asked.

“Sure,” she said. “Like how I know you're in love with Aunt Steph but she doesn't really feel the same way, and how Aunt Kendra thinks you're really cute but she doesn't say anything because she loves her girlfriend, and how that guy over there – his name is Adam – is cheating on his wife.”

“Be careful with that talent, Destynee,” I warned her. “You can make a lot of enemies, or get yourself in real trouble, doing what you do.”

“I know, Mama, I promise,” she said. “I'll be careful. But I can't really turn it off. It just kinda happens. But I'll only use it on people like Dr. McLean, people that we all think are keeping dangerous secrets. I promise I won't do it unless I run it by you, Aunt Steph or Aunt Kendra first. Unless I use it to find out if a boy likes me or something.”

“You're a good girl,” I told her, stroking her soft cheek. “Now go get your picture taken, okay? We're gonna be here all night if we don't get a wiggle on.”

She smiled – it wrinkled her nose – and blew me a kiss, getting her 'wiggle on' with an exaggerated belly-dancer hip-rolling sway that made a lot of the male techs look twice as she made her way to the green-screen.

"I think we may have created a monster," I chuckled softly.

"Or she's the best thing that's happened to us yet," Steph amended, squeezing my shoulder.

* * *

We timed it perfectly – Destynnee had her identity completed and ready before the deadline to apply to the university, and with the grades that Stephanie and company had manufactured for her, she made early enrollment with no problem whatsoever. Heather called her contact within the Cooperative – just a voice-mail, no way to really trace it except to an unused lab storage room under Dr. Willis Redmond's office in the biotechnology building – and let them know that Destynnee would be matriculating for the fall semester. There was no problem, and not even a raised eyebrow when she enrolled in Dr. Stanton-McLean's Intro to Sociology 101 class, which fit in well with Destynnee's intention to get a liberal arts degree in dance and fashion.

Our spy was in, and Dr. Stanton-McLean knew she was transformed. She wouldn't have to worry about being detected by any strange technological means. Destynnee intended to be at every lecture, every study group, every homework review and be a regular during office hours, soaking up every bit of information she could for us and reporting back via an encrypted website that Keri had set up. All we had to do was wait until the semester started and hope that no one suspected we were on to them.

That, and shop. I took it upon myself to ready my newest daughter for college, taking her out for everything from dorm furniture to clothes to a little shower caddy to carry her soap and shampoo. We gleefully flitted from store to store, buying frivolous stuff we didn't even need and flirting with the sales staff. I knew our time together was drawing to a close – I could almost hear the clock ticking – before we had to get to work finding the *raison d'être* of this strange conspiracy, so I intended to milk every last second of the time I had with my daughter to its fullest extent. She even helped me recruit some new 'staff' for Haylee and Kaylee's spa and salon – her talent made her excellent at spotting undesirables like sex offenders and spouse abusers who could then be enticed into fucking my luscious body for their last sexual experience as a male. I made their bodies flawless and beautiful, their heads empty and distractable and their memories full of the latest skills and information pertaining to the fields of hair-, nail- and skin-care. Before the week was out, Haylee and Kaylee had three new huge-breasted staff members named Tiffany, April and Staci who would be doing massage, facials, nails and airbrush tanning. Steph took time out from her busy schedule of obsessing about the Cooperative and fucking her boyfriend into a boneless putty to set them up with cover identities and some cheap-but-nice apartments in the city near Clipz.

But the time passed too fast, and it seemed like only minutes before I was helping Destynnee take her boxes from the back of my rented BMW and into her freshman dorm room. Her roommate was a sweet but nerdy girl named Karyn whom Destynnee was already grooming for a transformation – a normal one, this time, no nanites involved – into a hot babe who went to all the right parties and never lacked for dates. I gave her a tearful hug and kiss goodbye before leaving, making her promise to call and email and update her Facebook status, and come home on weekends when she could, before climbing back in the rental – Destynnee's own black BMW 3 Series was parked on the on-campus lot – and going back to a house that seemed emptier than it ever had before.

“Ma'm'selle, what is wrong?” Babette asked me, taking my jacket and rubbing my shoulders as I slumped into a chair, sobbing. “You are missing Ma'm'selle Destynee so soon?”

“Of course, Babette. If I would've known it would hurt like this, I swear I never would have taken her home that first night,” I sobbed.

“But then, you would never have had the weeks before she left, n'est-ce pas?” Babette countered. “Didn't you say they were the happiest of your life, Ma'm'selle, or did I just get confused again?”

I patted her hand. “No, Babette, you're right. I'm just feeling sorry for myself. And she'll be home in two weeks for a visit. I should get myself cleaned up and do something.”

“I will run ma'm'selle's bath, then,” Babette said with her usual curtsy. “Does ma'm'selle wish for Babette to be in the bath, as well?”

I wanted to tell her 'no,' that I just wanted to be alone and to mope, but I knew that wasn't really me. “I think so, Babette, and Gina too. I'd like some champagne and a Cuban cigar during my bath, and then lay out my new Michael Kors dress. I think I may go out to a club, maybe find some new employees for Haylee and Kaylee.”

She curtsied again, huge breasts bobbing, and there was no mistaking the carnal glint in her eye when she rose. “Right away, ma'm'selle,” she purred. Ω



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Fifteen

by Valerie Hope

“IT’S REALLY NOT A BIG deal,” Destynnee said brightly to me over coffee the next morning, her permanent glowing toothy smile seeming to light up the little diner near campus where we agreed to meet for breakfast. “She’s nice, Mama, and her class is super fun.”

I nodded happily, already sucked in by her positive, bubbly personality and constant cheer that left me smiling as widely as she did more often than not. I’d been concerned, right at first, that she wouldn’t feel comfortable or happy in Dr. Stanton-McLean’s Intro to Sociology class at the university, but I needn’t have worried. Destynnee could find the positive in anything and probably manage to have a good time at an insurance seminar.

“So how’s the squad?” I asked, moving on to the subject that really excited her. I thought she might bounce right out of her seat with her overwhelming happiness.

“OhmyGawd, Mama, it’s so awesome, I can’t believe it! The other girls are completely cool and so sweet and they’re all really good dancers and in great shape,” she gushed in her high-speed soprano. “We have the coolest tumbling coach – she was in the Olympics back in the eighties, I think – and our choreographer is way talented, she’s done shows on Broadway and danced backup for Britney Spears for a little while when she was first getting started. When I told her I knew Dani Kelly she, like, almost fainted, I swear! I totally have to call Dani later today and ask her if she’d come by and say hi someday, or even, like, record a single or something just for our squad. The girls would pee in their pants or something!”

I laughed. “I bet they would.”

“But the main thing is, I got into the study group that Steph wanted so I can keep an eye on Dr. Stanton, and I have plenty of time to practice for tryouts in three weeks,” she said, referring to the professional cheerleading squad she had her eye on. I’d imbued her with so much nanite-driven dance ability and knowledge that she’d probably make the squad without breaking a sweat, and her personality was tailor-made for professional cheerleading. In fact, any squad would be lucky to have her. Her energy and talent were truly staggering.

But it was her secondary set of abilities – the traits Steph and I had given her which made her possibly the best natural-born spy in the country – which I tried to get her to focus on now. I leaned a little lower across the table – the edge shoved my cleavage up towards my chin temptingly as my double-D beauties nestled on their new perch – and put my hand on her wrist.

“What have you found out so far, baby?” I asked in a stage-whisper.

She leaned in as well. "She's private, like Steph said. She doesn't really hang out with the other faculty and tends to go straight home after classes and office hours. I 'accidentally' bumped into her at the little organic grocery store she goes to yesterday and struck up a conversation with her. I noticed from the magazines she looked at in line that she's into environmental issues and she has an Amnesty sticker on her car. She didn't actually buy any, and bagged her own food in canvas, so she practices what she preaches – she's pretty green, drives a hybrid or rides her bike. She's got that activist vibe, if that makes any sense. She just feels like one of those people that's into causes in a big way. She's also straight but unattached, from the way she was checking out this cute guy in the produce section."

"See any way in so far?" I asked.

"Well, I figure I'm just gonna be guessing until I can find a way over to her house," Destyne said. "She likes me – we hit it off at the store and at her office. I think I'm going to ask about volunteer opportunities, join one of her causes and see if I can work an invitation to her place that way. Some of the girls in class say she used to host fundraisers for the Komen Foundation at her house, and one even said she does political stuff, too, and raises funds for certain candidates. I think if maybe I could talk Jessica into coming and speaking at the college about women's issues or something, I bet Dr. Stanton would throw her a party or a reception afterwards and I could find some time to snoop around."

"I can call Jessica this afternoon and set that up, if you want," I said. "I haven't talked to her in a while. She's been in Washington for two weeks, and I miss hearing from her when she goes out-of-town."

"Okay, then, call her up and see if she'll let me set up something for her," Destyne said. "Whatever issue she thinks needs the attention, just as long as it's left of center. I don't think Dr. Stanton will go for it if it's not a liberal cause."

"I'll see what Jessica has," I told her. "Now, down to the real important stuff. Have you met any boys you like?"

* * *

"This doesn't look good," Kendra commented darkly, taking a deep draw on her cigarette and narrowing her dramatically-made-up eyes. "It looks like they're making some kind of a grab for power."

She was looking at the ragged, patchwork assortment of newspaper clippings, Internet articles, photos and handwritten notes, with lines of colored string connecting this one to that one and that one to another, which served as the brainstorming center of all the attempts to figure out from context just what the Cooperative was planning. In the center was a grainy mugshot of a career criminal, Eugene Kyle Allen, a fell-through-the-cracks drain on society with an arrest record several pages long, everything from vandalism and drunk-and-disorderly all the way to grand theft auto and burglary. He'd done time here and there, but at least he never tried to hurt anyone that we could tell. Given the Cooperative's penchant for irony, we figured I'd be transforming the ne'er-do-well criminal into some kind of law enforcement or security type, which raised Kendra's waxed, arched eyebrows in dismay.

"You see, with Jessica in the Senate and people like Crystal, Holly and Jenny in the mix, it's not just a media blitz any more. They're putting people in positions where they can drastically influence public policy and even make laws," she said, pointing to the melange of pictures and

news clippings with a long, manicured fingernail. I personally didn't see much but the cute pictures of my daughters, but I acted like I followed her. I did that a lot where Steph and Kendra were concerned. They talked above my head most days.

"So, should I not do it?" I asked, a little sad. Making new daughters was the most important thing in my life.

"No, of course not," Kendra said, giving me a melting, compassionate smile. "We don't dare tip our hand to the Cooperative yet, love."

I couldn't repress my smile. "I'm glad," I breathed.

"I wonder what she'll look like?" Kendra said.

"She'll be beautiful, of course, just like all my babies," I said proudly.

Kendra dug in her purse and fished out a long, slender cigarette which I lit for her from the book of matches on the table behind me. She sent a long plume of smoke – glowing soft blue in the lights of the warehouse – towards the ceiling as she tapped her chin with a long nail in puzzlement.

"Something just doesn't fit," she said. "I can't make sense of what a sociologist – and from what Destyneee tell us, a tree-hugger at that – would want with a plan that looks so much like world domination. I can't see what she's going to get out of it."

"Well, aren't tree-huggers out to save the world?" I asked. "Wouldn't that be what somebody like Dr. Stanton-McLean be trying to do?"

Kendra's eyes got wider and wider. "My God, Merri, you're a bloody genius. We never even looked at it from that angle," she breathed. "We never suspected that this might be altruistic. I have to call Steph. This could bloody well change everything."

"Is that good?" I asked.

She kissed my cheek. "It's wonderful," she said.

* * *

I felt a little bad about not using Gina, my personal stylist, or any of the girls at Clipz salon to get me ready – instead, I'd used Juliette Grant, the natural-born woman who styled Heather and Holly to their slick, hyper-professional looks. I couldn't risk looking the slightest bit slutty for this affair, since it was going to be in front of cameras and could directly impact Senator Jessica Reilly – one of my daughters, even though we couldn't publicize the fact – and she was close to getting a seat on several important committees. Heather had told me repeatedly that any mistakes could really compromise the position she was fighting for, so I was bound and determined to be on my very best behavior. I was going to be buried kind of deep as a staffer in the Flirt! magazine coterie. Hopefully I wouldn't attract much notice and would be able to steal a few precious minutes with my baby girl. I hadn't seen her since a few weeks before she left for Washington.

Gina had given me the pouty bottom lip and the puppy-dog eyes when I'd said I was going someplace else, so I had to think of a way to make it up to her – maybe letting her style me for some red-carpet event or something. Dani, one of my oldest girls, was up for a Grammy later this year. Maybe I could finagle an invitation to the awards and let Gina glam me up for that. As

it stood, I had to spend the better part of half an hour drying the huge-breasted hairstylist's pouting tears and trembling chin, smoothing her hair and pressing little kisses and whispered apologies around her ears. She finally let me soothe her – holding her firm body against mine for all that time stopped feeling maternal after a while, and I had to call Babette to my room for a quick, don't-muss-my-hair carpet munch just to let the pressure off – and I tucked my Fendi clutch under one slender arm and headed out to the fundraiser for my darling Jessica. I bounced a little in my Jimmy Choo pumps, excited at the prospect of seeing my daughter, who'd been out of my life for nearly a month. I saw her on television – even though I hated C-SPAN – occasionally, but it wasn't the same. And I'd have to pretend that I didn't know her that well, since I was going into the belly of the beast for this. I'd be at Lisa Stanton-McLean's house, the woman who more than likely had engineered my change into womanhood. I hoped that I was far enough down the totem pole, as a random magazine staffer, that I wouldn't be noticed. But it was my job to be the distraction. It was our plan that my presence at the fundraiser – ostensibly just to see my beloved daughter – would cause enough of a commotion among the Cooperative who'd be present that they'd completely overlook Destyne's snooping.

The white limousine was waiting for me in my driveway, and I'd no sooner piled in than Holly had pressed a glass of Dom Perignon into my hand and a soft kiss on my cheek. Heather gave me a glittering smile by way of welcome.

"You bitches ready?" I asked happily.

"As ready as we're gonna get," Holly replied. "Nervous, but ready."

"Why nervous? What can Dr. S & M do to us that she hasn't already done?" I asked.

"Well, I don't know about you, Merri, but I happen to like being incredibly rich and powerful," Heather said, and Holly nodded assent. "She might not be able to do anything to me physically, but she's got more than enough oomph behind her to see me turning tricks at the Holiday Inn next to the airport if she suspects something."

I shrugged. "We can always call it off," I said.

"Not on your life, sweetie," Holly said. "I have to know what they're doing. I'd never be able to sleep at night if I gave up now."

"Then we should go, and try to have a good time," I said. "Besides, all we have to do is be ourselves. Destyne and Steph are doing all the heavy lifting."

"I suppose you're right," Heather said, lighting a cigarette, still distracted.

"Heather, honey, relax," I bade her. "Nothing to it."

* * *

Stephanie actually managed to forget, on several occasions at the fundraiser, that she was there to do espionage and found herself having a good time. The people there were all unfailingly intelligent, glamorous and witty, and she found herself sucked into many conversations which she'd intended to just smile and nod through, making insincere apologies and moving on, but instead stayed to listen to the very learned and very insightful opinions of the participants.

It was when she ducked out onto the bricked back patio, under the hazy starlight, to sneak a cigarette, when she noticed Dr. Stanton-McLean making a furtive phone call. Steph tried to edge her way closer – hard to be stealthy in four-inch Ferragamo pumps – without looking too obvious, in hopes of overhearing. She was counting on anonymity, no one involved in the Cooperative had really seen her since her transformation, and she was eons away in appearance from the mousy, bespectacled man with the prominent Adam's-apple she had once been. Now, five-foot-six of pale-skinned, leggy redheaded allure, she hoped that no one really looked past her temptingly-displayed breasts to notice any resemblance to her old male self. And her cover identity – a freelance journalist for Vanity Fair named Julie Douglas – was watertight.

“I told you, Elizabeth, it's covered. You should come to the party, loosen up. There's no need to worry about those kinds of things right now,” Dr. Stanton-McLean was saying, sotto voce.

A pause. “I know there are discrepancies in behavior, Liz, but we planned for those eventualities. They're not going to turn out all the same, Willis and Jerry said so a million times during development. We're not in the business of turning out robots, after all. They have to be able to think for themselves, or the whole plan falls apart.”

Stephanie's plucked eyebrows went up. Liz must be Elizabeth Hutchinson, she thought excitedly, puffing on her cigarette. The psychology professor. And Willis is Willis Redmond, the biotech guy, and Jerry must be Jeremiah Hazelwood, who did all the biochem. She's actually talking Cooperative business!

“Merri's here,” Dr. Stanton-McLean went on. “She's functioning perfectly. I let her come to the party under an alias so she could see Senator Reilly. You know how maternal we made her, Liz, I couldn't keep her from seeing one of her babies, you know that.”

Another, longer pause. “If you say so. I still think you're overreacting. So the new daughters have behavioral discrepancies from what you originally imprinted on them. I don't see what the big deal is.”

They're onto us? Steph thought with alarm.

“No, I don't see what the big deal is, Liz,” Stanton-McLean went on. “Didn't you, yourself, say that they should begin asserting their own independence and individuality within a few days of the process? As long as they do what they're supposed to do, I don't see a problem.”

Another pause. “Fine,” she said at length. “Merri is still connected to all of them. Monica can use her master code and run diagnostics on all the daughters she's currently transformed before we move on to the next in line. I'll have Wallace bring her in tomorrow.”

Oh, shit, Stephanie thought, beginning to edge away. She began frantically keying in a text message into her iPhone with a long fingernail. The Cooperative couldn't get their hands on Merri and this 'master code' Dr. Stanton-McLean was referencing. If they discovered what Steph and Kendra had been doing, it could all come unraveled. She only just tapped 'Send' when a very soft, very menacing voice sounded in her ear, making Stephanie jump.

“Hello, Stephen, it's good to see you.”

Stephanie surreptitiously swiped her thumbnail across the 'delete' icon on her phone, deleting her recent text message, and turned to face Lisa Stanton-McLean, trying to control the surging rush of adrenaline in her body telling her to either run or fight. She took a deep breath.

"You startled me," Steph said evenly. "I didn't think you'd recognize me, honestly. I go by 'Stephanie' now."

"Funny, I thought you went by Julie Douglas," Dr. Stanton-McLean replied evenly. "At least that's what it said on the guest list. Why all the subterfuge?"

"Honestly, I didn't think I'd be welcome here," Steph replied. "I was worried about Merri. She was frightened to come here alone, considering that you'd warned her about ever coming near any of the people who transformed her."

"Ah," Dr. Stanton-McLean said, a small smile quirking up a corner of her lush mouth. "That, Stephanie, is a very solid cover story. Except for the fact that Merri isn't supposed to know that I was one of the people who transformed her."

Stephanie's breath caught, and Lisa Stanton-McLean's firm grip closed around her forearm. "Come with me, sweetheart," she said in a tone that brooked no argument. "There's someone I think you should meet."

* * *

"Where's Steph?" Destyneer whispered to me at the bar, where I was going to refresh yet another glass of white wine. I was far from tipsy, but it still helped me steady my nerves, being in the lion's den, as it were.

I scanned the room quickly. "I don't know, baby, I haven't seen her in a while."

"She texted me just a second ago," Destyneer whispered. "She told me to get you the hell out of here right away, Mama. Kendra's got a car waiting for you across the street. Go. I'll make up a story."

"Is everything okay?" I asked, starting to feel the first little tickling feelers of panic in my face and upper chest.

"Fine, Mama, but Steph said not to wait around," Destyneer said. "Now scoot. Kendra's waiting. I'll call you as soon as I'm alone, okay?"

With a hustle that drew every male eye in the house to my jiggling ass, I grabbed my coat and made a hurried apology to Jessica, saying nothing more specific than "something's come up" as my Manolo Blahniks click-clacked out the door and onto the sidewalk. I don't think I breathed again until I slid into the front seat of Kendra's car.

"What happened?" I demanded.

"Dunno, love," Kendra said, scanning the surrounding as she drove away. "Steph just sent a text saying 'get Merri someplace safe' and we moved. I lost contact with her shortly after that, she's not answering her phone any more."

"Is she all right?" I nearly-whined.

"I don't know, love," she said. "Honestly. As soon as I get you to the safe-house with Haylee and Kaylee, I'm going back for her. You've got to be patient."

"I suck at patient," I pouted.

* * *

"He's really something, isn't he?" Dr. Stanton-McLean said, gesturing grandly at the shirtless Adonis in the glass-walled room in her basement. "One of our earliest experiments. Unfortunately, there's not much to him except the way he looks and how well he fucks. His original name was Randall, but we've just taken to calling him Cum-Pump."

Stephanie fought to keep from licking her lips. The tall, panther-muscled brunette with the lantern jaw and the olive complexion who was doing high-speed pull-ups on a bar in the small room was easily the most blisteringly attractive male that she'd ever seen. Her nipples had stiffened uncontrollably at the very sight of him and the crotch of her silk panties was unmistakably moist and clingy.

"Oh, you think he's hot now, sweetie, wait'll you get a whiff of those pheromones we gave him," Stanton-McLean went on. "They'll have you panting like a dog in heat before you know what's happening. You see, we'd originally intended to use him in Merri's role, but we couldn't quite get the nanites right. No, all the people Cum-Pump transforms tend to turn out the all the same."

"How..." Steph swallowed hard. "How do they turn out?"

Stanton-McLean pushed a control on the glass wall and a section slid into the basement floor, forming a door which she pushed Stephanie through unceremoniously. "See for yourself," she said as the glass slid back into place, sealing Stephanie inside.

An overpowering scent assaulted Stephanie's nostrils, more intoxicating than anything she'd ever experienced. Every pulse of her heartbeat seemed to make her more aroused, until her pussy throbbed with pure heat and her nipples threatened to tear the fabric of her bra. Her breath only came in shallow pants as she turned, her back pressed against the glass, to face the man the Cooperative called Cum-Pump, who was advancing on her steadily, a glint of hard-edged lust in his striking hazel eyes.

"Pretty," he grunted at her.

"Gorgeous," she whispered back, not fully conscious of what she'd just said.

He began to fumble at the drawstring of his exercise pants, and without totally realizing what she was doing – she doubted her conscious control of her body right now – Stephanie was undoing the zipper of her designer dress and letting it slither down her smooth skin to the floor.

* * *

Kendra had to suppress a smile at just how difficult it was to walk in flats now, much less the tactical boots she'd bought for just such an eventuality about three weeks prior. She wore black BDUs and a skintight black turtleneck, and a black slouch cap pulled low over her blonde hair, which was pulled back into a sleek ponytail which hung between her shoulderblades. She had the majority of her old S.W.A.T. gear left over from her days as a male cop, which had been tucked in a dusty steamer trunk in the storage rental space she'd had, but

she knew that if she actually had to draw the 9mm Sig Sauer tucked into the shoulder-holster beneath her generous left breast, something would have gone terribly wrong.

She looked over the floor-plan of the house once again on her iPhone, puffing on a long white cigarette and trying not to notice just how sexy she looked with her long French manicure and the fingerless black Kevlar shooter's gloves she was wearing. It wasn't the time to lose focus on something like that. When she'd been male, she'd even gone so far as to rub one out really quickly before going on an operation, so that nothing could distract her from the life-or-death business at hand.

It wasn't that this operation was particularly dangerous, Kendra surmised, it was just that she was working alone and had little-to-no intelligence on the place she was breaking into. The party was in full swing – lots of handy distractions – but that meant that Stephanie had either been moved from Stanton-McLean's house or was being held somewhere else in the residence. Committing the floor-plan to memory quickly, Kendra dialed her phone and waited for Destynée to answer.

“Hey, girl, how are ya?” she squealed happily, her cover as the infectiously bubbly cheerleader intact as ever. “Hey, sweetie, hang on while I go someplace I can hear. It's totally loud in here, 'kay?”

Kendra waited as the sounds of music and conversation in the background dwindled to a more manageable level. “No one in or out, baby girl, and she's not on the ground floor. This place has a basement, though, and the stairs are in the kitchen which has French doors leading out the patio.”

“Any guards, cameras, stuff like that?” Kendra asked quickly.

“Didn't see any,” Destynée said. “Just, like, be careful 'n' stuff, 'kay?”

“I will,” Kendra replied. “I'll be in and out before you know it. If your phone rings once and then hangs up, it means I need a distraction.”

“Oh, no prob, sweetie,” Destynée said. “Listen, babe, I gotta get back to the party before people wonder where I am, 'kay? Be careful. Love ya!”

The line went dead. Kendra tossed her cigarette, popped in a stick of gum to help fight the urge, and moved off at oblique angles to the backyard, staying well out of the light and moving like a shadow, making no more noise than a light evening breeze.

* * *

Devotion and raw desire flooded through every nerve in Stephanie's body, flooding her mind and bringing her breath in little squealing gasps as Cum-Pump's monstrous dick sawed in and out of her sopping twat, stretching her wide nearly to the point of pain. She moaned and dug her manicured fingernails into the hard muscles of his shoulders. Every bit of him – his look, his presence, his smell – was so quintessentially masculine, so every bit what she wanted so desperately.

She found herself wanting, wanting more than she'd ever wanted before, to swallow his pistoning cock to the root with her hungry body, wanting to be as quintessentially female as he was male, to be everything he wanted her to be in response to the utter and total satisfaction he was pumping into her body with every savage thrust.

She came again – what was that, fifteen times now? – and surrendered to her desire, giving in to her soul-deep longing to become his fantasy as he was hers with a total, wild abandon that lifted weight from her heart she hadn't known she was carrying.

Oh, how much she wanted to thrill him, to satisfy him the way he did her.

Her orgasm began to build again, and it completely overrode her perception of the subtle changes that began to reshape her body and mind.

* * *

Kendra ducked in behind a covey of waitstaff who'd gone to the kitchen to refill trays with nibbles and return outside to circulate. Only the sommalier, who looked as though he'd been sampling heavily of his assortment, and the caterer were in the kitchen, absorbed completely in the work they were doing. Kendra slipped past them through the French doors like a ghost, gliding down the narrow staircase to the basement. The thick, metal-core door at the foot of the stairs had a formidable-looking electronic lock, one of the best that money could buy.

It held Kendra up for almost three minutes. A very good lock indeed. Thankfully, the hinges were well-oiled and smooth, betraying very little noise as Kendra opened it just wide enough to accommodate her generous tits and slip inside.

The interior of the basement didn't quite fit with the sophisticated electronic lock, stocked with musty shelves piled with cardboard boxes, paint cans and Christmas decorations. One of the shelves against the far wall was cleaner than the others, however, and a large patch of dust on the concrete floor was disturbed in a wide arc in front of it. Kendra slid the hinged shelves out of the way and picked the lock of the door behind it, slipping into the clean, tiled hallway behind it. The space beyond stretched back into shadows, lit only intermittently by small recessed bulbs in the walls. Kendra made very little noise, ghosting down the hallway and keeping to cover as best she could, watching everywhere at once for sensors, surveillance cameras or other traps. Finding none, she opened the first door she came to. It was a small office. Working quickly, she took pictures of all the documents she could get her hands on without even looking at them and copied everything on the computer there on the desk to a portable thumb-drive before shutting the door and returning to the corridor. The next door was just a simple medical supply closet. The last was locked, but the simple 5-pin tumbler lock was the work of only seconds for the experienced woman.

She walked into a capacious room, the area nearest the door laid out with lab tables and monitors. Farthest from the door, glass walls cordoned off a large, very well-lit area containing a bed, a small chest of drawers, about ten grand worth of exercise equipment and a small sofa.

Bent over the sofa was Stephanie, whose long, slender fingers dug into the cushions which were rapidly dampening with her sweat. Her hair clung around her face in sodden ringlets and she grunted and groaned, biting her bottom lip, while a tall, extremely handsome and well-muscled man pumped a truly titanic cock into her savagely from behind. Stephanie's complete abandon and pleasure was evident from her muffled squeals and bitten-back shouts.

With a prolonged grunt of release, the man stiffened and began to cum, thrusting himself painfully deep into Kendra's best friend. Thick, white rivulets of semen burst from Stephanie's overstuffed pussy, running in thick channels down her thighs and onto the floor between her

spread legs. It gushed out of her – much more cum than any normal man would generate, Kendra estimated there was nearly a pint – to splatter loudly on the concrete floor.

Stephanie bucked against him wildly, making his cum splatter out of her in little fans of glittering droplets, and slowly – right before Kendra's wide, amazed blue eyes – she began to change.

The orange-red hair began to lengthen and the loose curls began to get wilder and kinkier, spreading down her back in a dense cascade, wider than her shoulders and so full of volume that it made Steph's face look tiny. It also lightened, taking on golden streaks until she was less the deep-toned, copper-top redhead from before and more of a shocking strawberry blonde. Her eyebrows, once rather thick, became high and arched and the same color as the hair on her head. Kendra didn't have to see to know the hair above her wide-stretched pussy was the same as well.

Stephanie's legs seemed to lengthen at the same time, becoming sleekly muscled and firm, the little bit of 'cottage cheese' on her inner thighs melting away to nothing but taut, firm muscle like a professional dancer. She'd gained height, as well – Kendra estimated her friend now stood around five foot eight or nine, an easy three inches taller than before. She'd easily be over six feet in heels, a real Amazon.

Everything on Stephanie's body seemed to tighten up until she didn't have an ounce of fat on her, but still possessed of lushly feminine curves. Her ass was a perfect, flawless bubble which jiggled playfully at the small, dying-of-the-light thrusts the man drove into her dripping pussy, and her belly was so flat and tightly-muscled that Kendra could scarcely believe it. She'd have to go to the gym and do nothing but crunches for six weeks to have a belly like that.

Stephanie's face changed, too, but much more subtly. Her wide, expressive mouth shrank to a little girlish pout made from the thickest, puffiest, poutiest bee-stung lips Kendra had seen this side of plastic surgery, and her crystalline green eyes had widened to a point where she looked perpetually surprised. Eyelashes that could easily have passed for falsies now ringed them top and bottom, brushing her cream-colored cheeks with every blink. The teeth in the open, panting mouth were as white as chalk and perfectly straight. The little breathless kitten noises coming from her open mouth seemed to spiral gently up, the original warm contralto giving way to a breathy 'Jayne Mansfield' soprano.

Most noticeable was the changes taking place on her friend's narrow chest. Stephanie's firm, natural C-cups were ballooning out, inflating and stretching into huge, firm globes with the unmistakeable look of being 'done.' The new bouncing, perfect silicone spheres topped out at an easy 40F cup, capped with proud pink nipples the size of mini-marshmallows.

Kendra watched in something akin to horror as she locked eyes with her best friend and watched the observant, sharp-edged light fade from the brilliant emerald green eyes. The blanker, duller stare that met Kendra's had a mischievous twinkle and a playful quality, as well as a quality of perpetual smoky arousal, and a vapid, happy smile spread across her kissable new rosebud of a mouth.

She hefted her new tits in hands now ending in two-inch long fingernails – the former polish ended at just about the tips of her fingers, they'd grown so long and thick. Something about the weight and size of her new additions delighted her, because she giggled happily and gave them a playful squeeze, even though her slender hands could barely fit around them.

With the lack of apparent effort that bespoke incredible flexibility, she arched her back to thread the fingers of one hand into the damp hair of her lover and kiss him over her shoulder, never letting his deflating monster cock out of her cum-drenched pussy. Kendra estimated she was now one of those 'Gumby' girls who could put both ankles behind her head with no discomfort.

“Mmmm, God, baby,” she purred in her little-girl soprano, breathy and guileless. “That was sooOOOooo good, honey, how you, um, fucked me 'n' stuff.”

With a wet pop, she finally let him slip from her honeypot, giving a little pout of disappointment, and stood smoothly to face him, putting his thickly muscled arms around her impossibly narrow waist. With one long nail, she traced little circles in the sweat on his swollen pectoral and stuck out her bottom lip in a vampy pout.

“So, um, was I good, baby?” she nearly whined, just this side of 'baby talk' to her lover, while his copious cum oozed out of her gaping pussy in long, ropy strands. “Did I fuck you good? Did I turn into the girl you like 'n' stuff?”

“Mmm,” he grunted, seemingly in the affirmative.

“You're so fucking hot,” she said, kissing his throat while one hand began to play expertly with his flaccid – but still huge – cock in an attempt to bring it back to life. “C'mon, baby, get all hard for mama. Fuck me again.”

Kendra moved quickly towards the door in the glass wall but stopped short at the red warning placard above the knob, which briefly explained the need for airtight precautions around this mysterious man due to the powerful pheromones he exuded. Kendra swallowed quickly at the mental image of herself, now an empty-headed, huge breasted blonde bimbo, trapped forever in a glass box with her equally as inane best friend, each now the helpless fuck-toy of this horse-dicked sex machine and his pheromones. She slipped on one of the respirators hanging next to the door and pressed the button beneath it, marked 'containment.' The button lit yellow, and the man inside sat down on the sofa, extricating himself roughly from Stephanie's entwining arms, and by the time the button lit green he was fast asleep.

Stephanie just stood there, looking beautiful and confused, as the door opened.

“Steph, honey, it's me,” Kendra said.

No recognition dawned behind the sparkling green eyes for a moment, then, slowly: “Kendra?”

“Yeah, baby. I need you to get dressed, okay? We have to go. Now.”

Stephanie giggled. “But I don't wanna go. I wanna stay here with Cum-Pump.”

“Cum-Pump?” Kendra goggled. “That's his name?”

“Uh-huh,” Steph nodded vacuously with a huge smile. “He's my new boyfriend.”

“He's nice,” Kendra said. “But there are lots more boys out there, sweetie, and you're keeping them waiting. C'mon, get dressed.”

The mention of unlimited sex jump-started Stephanie's resolve. She began to feebly tug her white dress over her hips and tried to get it to fit over her massively increased bustline. She finally gave up in a fit of giggles.

“My dress doesn't fit no more,” she tittered. “My, um, titties are, like, way too big now, Kendra.”

“We'll get you new dresses, honey,” Kendra promised breathlessly, pressing a black fleece 'hoodie' at her incapacitated friend. “For now, just cover up with this, okay?”

“This is ugly, though,” Steph complained.

“I know, honey, but it's all we have, and we really have to go.”

“Okay, okay,” Steph pouted. “Jeez. You're so, um, pushy.”

She hustled the huge-breasted nouveau bimbo out of the glass prison, closing the door behind her, and dropped the respirator on a lab table carelessly. No need to cover her tracks any more, anyway – Steph's absence would more than alert Dr. Stanton-McLean to the fact she'd been burgled. Steph was hard to keep moving – she was somewhat less than stealthy with her clicking heels and constant giggling, and she was very easily distracted, whispering 'what's that thing?' and 'what's that do?' at everything they passed.

It seemed like forever before she finally got her friend outside, thankfully undetected, and in the van on the way home.

* * *

“She had these in her purse,” Kendra said sadly, handing over the manila envelope that had once been Stephanie's bailiwick. A complete set of papers was inside for Gina Kylie Allen, the woman that Merri was expected to transform soon from the raw material of Gene Kyle Allen.

“Don't be so bummed, girl,” Kaylee said, squeezing her arm. “She's not fucking dead, y'know. You and Keri and Jenny will figure something out, okay? You're all, like, killer fucking geniuses 'n' shit. And Holly and Heather are gonna bring in specialists. In the meantime, Steph's okay, all right? She's actually pretty fucking fun, if you try to get to know her.”

“It's not like she's really Steph, though, love,” Kendra said. “One of the reasons I loved her so much was that sharp bloody mind. And now that's gone.”

“Yeah, but she's totally sweet like she didn't used to be, and funny, and she's really fucking fun. So she's a little dumb. So are me 'n' Haylee. That doesn't mean you can't like us, right?”

“I guess not,” Kendra said. “But I never thought I'd hear her ask to start using the name 'Stefanee' simply because it's easier to spell.”

“Well, it's way cuter, too,” Kaylee protested. She took Kendra's hand and pulled her to her feet. “C'mon. She's in with Merri right now, and she's been asking when you're gonna come and see her. She misses you.”

Kaylee led her through from the back porch where Kendra had been chain-smoking and trying to make sense of it all and into Merri's luxurious sun-room. Keri was sitting cross-legged on a chair behind four separate laptop computers and Jenny was putting the vials for a full blood panel into her black bag before starting to clean up her medical equipment. Merri was holding Stephanie's – Stefanee's – hands in hers, while the buxom redhead stuck out her bottom lip at the residual discomfort of Jenny's near-painless and accurate needle-stick.

“I told you it wouldn't be so bad,” Merri consoled.

"I miss Cum-Pump," she whined.

"Look who's here, honey," Kaylee piped.

Stefanee bounded to her feet and bounced across the carpet, her huge breasts bouncing almost painfully as she cried, "Kendra!" and launched herself into her friend's arms. They just held each other that way for a little while, then Kendra allowed herself to be taken by the hands and led back to the sofa to sit beside her transformed friend.

"As best I can guess without hard data, the nanites that the male introduced into her bloodstream are altering the nanites Merri used to originally transform her," Jenny said. "It seems like the new nanites are programmed to make her into what he wants her to be, like Merri's, but his desires seem a bit more... visceral."

"Obviously," Kendra said. "How long before you know something?"

"I'm headed to the lab now," Jenny said. "I should have some preliminary stuff by morning, and I'm scheduling an MRI, CT and PET scan for tomorrow."

"Thanks," Kendra said, relieved that their little cadre's best minds were on the case, now. "What should we do in the meantime?"

"Well, Merri is scheduled to make another baby in the next day or so," Jenny said. "I suggest you do that."

"I can coordinate the team for her past," Keri said. "Steph's notes on her laptop here are pretty self-explanatory."

"If you think that's best," Merri said, looking a little confused and rudderless without Steph's guiding hand.

"A baby?" Stefanee piped, eyes happy and twinkling. "Can I hold it?"



SUMMARY: As part of a master plan, one guy is the first to inject with nanos that transform him into a woman to be used as a secret weapon.

MASTER PLAN

Part Sixteen

by Valerie Hope

I WASN'T ALTOGETHER THRILLED WITH the new apartment we'd taken in another state – it was smaller than the palatial mansion I'd grown very accustomed to, and I was constantly tripping over Gina, Juli and Babette just trying to do my day-to-day routine. Add to that the constant hum of activity and the incessant come-and-go of the "nerve center" established in my dining room, where Jenny, Keri and Kendra worked twenty-four-seven to try and crack what had been done to Steph – *Stefanee*, now, I had to remind yourself – and make an attempt to reverse the "bimbo-ization" process that had resulted from the constant war between my nanites, which had transformed her from a mousy, bookish man into a svelte, athletic woman and the nanites of the first-generation attempt made by the Cooperative, an oversexed, mindless fucking machine known only as Cum-Pump that had transformed her from the sharp-witted, bright young woman into the giant-breasted airhead who sat cross-legged in my designer Italian leather chair, wearing only a barely-there exercise suit and engrossed in an article in *Seventeen* magazine, following the words with an inch-long manicured fingernail and moving her glossed lips while she read.

The pain in Kendra's eyes – Stefanee's best friend before she'd been made into the sexually insatiable bimbo she was now – was almost more than I could bear. She was dealing with grief as acute as if Stefanee had died in the basement of Lisa Stanton-McLean's townhouse rather than having simply been transformed. She hurt so badly she couldn't even meet her former friend's gaze.

I met her on the balcony of the condo we'd bought, where Kendra was leaning heavily over the wrought-iron rail smoking a long, slender white cigarette and staring morosely into the sunset. The wind tugged at her honey-blond hair, giving her a windblown, romance-novel-cover look that made her so tragically beautiful that my heart almost broke just at the sight of her.

"How are you holding up, baby?" I asked gently.

"Bloody wretched, Merri," she breathed, her London accent thick. "This medicine, this bloody technology... it's so sodding far beyond me. I'll never sort it out."

"Of course you will," I comforted her. "I have so much faith in you, baby."

She managed a weak, disbelieving smile. "You're a love."

"I mean it," I continued. "You're one of my daughters, Kendra, and you're all the brightest, most determined and most beautiful and strong women in the world. If anyone can figure out how to fix this, it's you."

"I could," she whispered, her voice trembling near the point of breaking into sobs, "if only Steph were here. She could help me figure this out, I know she could."

"Honey, she's *here*," I said, brushing errant strands of rabbit-soft blonde from her flawless face. "She's right here. She can't all be gone."

"I miss her so much," she sniffled.

"I do, too," I said. "But this new her – she's lonely, Kendra. She misses her friend, y'know, even though she can't be with you the way she used to."

"I wish I could go find this Cum-Pump bloke," she said. "I'd have him fuck me legless and then I could be just like her. We could be together again."

"Don't think that way, Kendra."

"It's true," she said. "If she can't be here on my terms, then I can be here on hers. It makes a perverse kind of sense, yeah?"

"No. No, it doesn't," I said sternly. "You're stronger than that, Kendra. Stop feeling sorry for yourself and go in there. Go *talk* to your friend, for God's sake, let her know you still love her and still care about her. She may come across all bubbly and happy, but I guarantee you she's scared. She doesn't understand what's happening to her, Kendra, and it's terrifying her. I can see it in her eyes."

"I can't see anything in her eyes any more," Kendra moaned.

"Well, go *look*, for fuck's sake," I shot back, a little hotly. "Your friend is still in there. And she needs you. More than she needs a cure, or me, or anyone else, she needs her best friend, and you're letting her down."

Kendra's brows lowered as if she were about to lose her considerable temper, but then she let out a pent-up, sobbing sigh and sagged into my arms, her long nails clutching painfully at my bare shoulders.

"You're right, of course," she breathed into the hollow of my neck. "I'm so bloody lost in my own pain, I'm not even thinking about hers."

"She needs you," I said, stroking her softer-than-soft hair and pressing little glossy kisses into her scalp. "We all do, Kendra. Stefanie most of all."

"I should go and clean up, before I talk to her," Kendra said, suddenly self-conscious and a little embarrassed. "I must look a fright."

"You look beautiful," I said.

"You're my mother," she teased. "You *always* say that."

"And I always mean it," I told her.

* * *

The phone call we'd all been dreading came about three hours later, and we were all clustered around the conference-style speakerphone in the middle of the cluster of tables where Keri

had set up her huge network of computers in my dining room as I swiped a long fingernail across the "Answer" key.

"You've been a very busy girl, Merri," a cultured, unnerving contralto said. Dr. Stanton-McLean. I took a very deep drag from my cigarette to steady myself and blew it towards the ceiling before I answered.

"You couldn't have expected me to just sit still, Lisa, and not try to figure out what was going on," I said evenly. "You had to know I'd try."

"Oh, I knew you'd try," she answered smoothly, "I just didn't expect you to get so close to success. I have to say, Merri, I'm impressed. Dr. Hutchison and myself had you pegged as nothing but a two-bit thief and ne'er-do-well. You've surprised us all."

"I wouldn't go around thinking you knew all my secrets, either, Doctor," I said. "You shouldn't peg me as a maternal, empty-headed bimbo, either."

"I won't make that mistake again, Merri, I assure you," she told me. "Speaking of empty heads, let me take this opportunity to express my sorrow and concern over what happened to Stephen – *Stephanie*. It was a most regrettable accident, and my people are doing everything they can to reverse the effects. I have always been quite fond of Stephen in both of his incarnations."

I was a little taken aback. "You're trying to reverse the effects?"

"Of course I am," Stanton-McLean answered. "I wouldn't wish that on anyone, Merri, I hope you believe me. But in the meantime, I hope you can take some small measure of comfort from the fact that our early data shows that women who were affected the way Stephanie was are quite happy and content. She's in no pain or discomfort."

Kendra whipped out a note on a Post-It pad in her elegant, flowing script and passed it to me. It read, simply: *She's lying*.

I decided to simply change the subject. "So now I know, Doctor, and you know I know. I can't help but wonder where we go from here."

"Perfectly understandable," Stanton-McLean said. "What do you suggest?"

"A meeting," I told her, "on neutral ground. A public place, I think, you and two of your colleagues and me with two of mine. You tell me what's going on and then I decide whether or not I want to continue this association."

"I can't simply give you that," Stanton-McLean said. "Merri, you represent far too considerable an investment of time, money and effort. You have to offer me something in return for this little heart-to-heart."

"I have only one thing to give you," I replied. "At the time you discovered that I was on to you, I had two active transformations pending. I'll give you those two, then we meet."

"And if you decide against me?"

"Then we'll negotiate," I said. "Something along the lines of no more transformations from me, and you leave my daughters alone."

"I suspected as much," Stanton-McLean said with a sigh.

"Lisa, we're not convinced that whatever you're up to is necessarily malicious," I told her. "I may not decide against you, if you're honest with me. But I can't stand by and let my daughters be used like this without knowing what's at stake. I hope you understand that."

She chuckled richly. "Perhaps we tweaked your maternal instincts a little *too* much," she commented. "But I suppose it's the best I can hope for. Very well, I accept. I'll take your offer to my people and have an official answer for you by close of business today. In the meantime, you'll transform the two men we've requested?"

"I've established contact with both subjects already. The identity team is in place, it should only take tonight to have them both ready," I said.

"Very good," she said. "I look forward to speaking with you again, Merri. You've been a real challenge. I've enjoyed it."

The line went dead, and I shivered a little. Kendra squeezed my shoulder tightly, lending me strength I didn't know I'd spent.

"You were brilliant, love," she whispered.

"Why do you think she was lying?" I asked her, pointing to her note.

"Because I saw the closed environment where they keep Cum-Pump," she said. "There were warnings everywhere, and double- and triple-redundant safeties. Steph wouldn't – she couldn't have just blundered in there. She was *put* in there, and the only one Destyne noticed going in or out was Dr. Stanton-McLean. No, what happened to Stefanee was no accident."

"So how do we know that she's not going to bring Cum-Pump to this meeting, Kendra?" I asked plaintively. "How do we know we're not all going to end up with F-cup breasts and single-digit IQ's walking out of there?"

"We don't, pet," she told me. "But you're overlooking the fact that Stanton-McLean now has an idea, via Heather and Holly, of what you were able to do to Haylee and Kaylee, Juli and Gina and Babette. You're able to do exactly what Cum-Pump does, possibly even better than he does. Stanton-McLean will have to undergo the same risk. It's not a guarantee, but it's something. Either we all walk away from this meeting as hopeless featherbrains, or none of us do."

"That isn't very comforting," I said.

"It wasn't meant to be," she said, lighting a cigarette.

* * *

I pushed the "End" button on the conference phone with a freshly-manicured fingernail (I'd submitted to Gina's tender ministrations of a massage, manicure, pedicure and a facial to help myself relax, waiting for Stanton-McLean's next call) and let out a breath I hadn't known I was holding.

"It's done. The meeting is set for two o'clock tomorrow afternoon," I breathed.

"Who are your two?" Keri asked, taking her eyes off of the complicated computer model she was running on a nearby workstation. She was referring to the two colleagues who would accompany me to the meeting.

"Kendra, of course," I said smoothly, getting a nod from the pouty-lipped blonde in response. "And I was thinking either Heather or Destyne. I don't want to blow Destyne's cover, but I could really use someone that observant, in case she sees something I don't. Heather would be the next best thing. But I'm not taking either of them unless they agree to it. I think this meeting might be a little dangerous."

"I think Destyne is too valuable an asset where she is," Heather said. "I'll go."

I didn't miss the look of concern that crossed Holly's gorgeous, tanned face at the thought of Heather in danger. It went a little further towards convincing me that my theory that Holly and Heather were becoming a bit more than just friends and co-workers was right on the money.

"Then it's agreed," I blurted before Holly could argue. "Now all I have to do is go make some babies." I couldn't keep the excited smile off my face for long.

"Gene Allen is waiting by your pool," Heather told me. "And the other guy – I'm blanking on his name – will be here in two hours."

"Corey Dylan Houston," Holly supplied, looking at the file in front of her, conspicuously missing Steph's everpresent manila envelope. "He's just what Stanton-McLean ordered up: the biggest damned bore I've ever run across. He's an accountant in a giant multinational firm, a cog in the huge machine, and he's completely without measurable personality."

"He sounds delightful," Keri grumped, pouting adorably.

"*She* will be," I said, with no small amount of pride. "*She* is gonna be fantastic."

"I love your babies, Merri," Stefanie chirped in her bubbly, bimbo soprano, followed by the trademark giggle that she couldn't hold inside any more. "They're, like, soooo pretty. I love it when you make your babies."

I smiled warmly. "I do, too, sweetheart," I said, taking her hand. "I'm gonna need a lot of help, this time. 'Cause I'm making a *lot* of babies in the next couple days."

"Oooo, that sounds sooo fun!" Stefanie squealed, clapping her hands and bouncing up and down in such a way to make her mammoth boobs jiggle and jounce deliciously. "Can I, Kendra? Pleeese?"

Kendra smiled, with just a hint of long-suffering in it, and kissed Stefanie's smooth, porcelain cheek. "Of course, petal. Anything you want."

Stefanie bounced up and minced quickly out of the room, saying, "I have to go change! This is so, like, exciting 'n' stuff!"

We all laughed a little after she'd gone, and then got down to the business of changing the identities of our newest recruits to Dr. Stanton-McLean's 'cause.'

* * *

It seemed a little strange to me, considering how quickly my girls developed, that they would actually be *able* to take influence from their environment and have any of the 'nurture' qualities

that most natural-born girls had. But they did manage to imprint and learn a little, and as a result of 'growing up' around Stefane, both of my newest daughters turned out a little ditzier and shallower than any of my others, since they'd been cared for in their brief, twelve-hour childhoods by such a bimbo. Still, they wore it well, smiling and giggling their way through the accelerated histories we'd forced upon them. They just seemed to take a little longer choosing the clothes they wanted for the pictures of them we were taking to generate their pasts, and a touch of extra time on their makeup and hair before their photo sessions.

I thought it was cute, actually, and so did Kendra and Keri, who were overseeing the transformations and the fabrications of their pasts.

For Eugene Kyle Allen, formerly a rough-looking, unshaven brute of a man with a penchant for lawlessness and flaunting of society's rules, the short, curvy little brunette with the milk-pale skin and the piercing, ice-blue eyes named Gina Kylie Allen was a marked improvement. She was a real ray of sunshine, finding humor and levity in the most stressful of situations, managing to keep us all laughing and relieved even when computer glitches, late deliveries and underexposed pictures had us all but redo the ages of four to eight for her. She was constantly interrupting the process of photography and videography that was going on around her to run over and give hugs, kisses and playful jokes to me, Keri, Kendra and Stefane.

Hers was far and away the most interesting backstory we'd concocted for any of the girls we'd created – something Keri, new to the 'history-making' department of our enterprise, took a lot of pride in – and Holly and Heather were already chomping at the bit to get reporters from *Flirt!* over to begin interviews and had Kennedy, our anchorwoman, and Brittany, our wildly popular talk-show host, already flooding us with calls to schedule appearances.

Gina, all five-foot-four, one hundred and twenty pounds of her, was a hard-case. In and out of the foster system from the age of six, she had struggled throughout her childhood with the problems facing so many young people like her. She had finally found herself at the awkward age of thirteen with foster parents who recognized her potential and lobbied the public school system to get her into accelerated programs, where she began to amass college credits and excel in things like history, literature and public speaking.

Her financial situation afforded her only, at best, a berth at the local community college, but between her skill at soccer and some generous academic scholarships, she enrolled at a prestigious private university instead. The financial drain was too much, and she took a job dancing topless on a pole just to make ends meet and pay for her books. She stripped for seven years, to pay for her undergraduate education and then for law school, where she became a young assistant district attorney after graduation. She moved from there to a seat on the bench in the 19th District Court after three years – one of the youngest in a very long time – and had recently been raised to the Superior Court. She was also a highly progressive and high-profile feminist, her views on women's rights and equality in the workplace were setting very visible precedents throughout the country. She made no secret of her past vocation, saw no shame in it, and worked hard for the rights of women in the sex industry.

As for our boring, bland-as-bathwater accountant, Corey Dylan Houston, the childhood of her new self was a bit more eventful than the smiling, cheerful bounce of Gina. Her 'bounce' tended to be more of a 'launch,' as the little boisterous girl with the perpetually skinned knees jumped off of, crawled under, ran around or climbed on top of everything in the house. We assigned Stefane to be her 'handler' early on, and the big-breasted strawberry blonde was glistening with a fine sheen of sweat from chasing the girl after only a few short minutes. But

we did manage to corral her long enough to get pictures from her childhood and grow the boring, officious nebbish into a tall, athletic woman with deep, soulful brown eyes, a quick and infectious smile, and white-blonde hair worn quite short (at least compared to all the other women in my life), just below the level of her jaw. She had a gorgeous figure, all soft curves and hard muscles, reminiscent of Megan Fox, and 36D tits that were 'done' so well no one could really tell whether or not they were man-made. A cute little teddy-bear tattoo adorned one ankle and a flirtatious belly-button piercing showed out of a well-but-not-masculinely-defined abdominal six-pack. She was fit, trim, utterly luscious and sexual. All of the pictures we'd taken of her showed her in some form of potentially dangerous pursuit – waterskiing, snowboarding, skydiving, horseback riding, skateboarding, kickboxing – or sport like gymnastics, fencing or soccer. Most of the 'mundane' pictures of her, like school events and family portraits, had her in a cast or with some kind of bandage showing.

It was small wonder, then, that Corey Dylan Houston's life of complete and utter dullness and drudgery would give way to Courtnee Diane Houston's life of constant adrenaline-pumping excitement. She was already on her way to becoming the next breakaway action star of film, after some very promising stunt-work and not-too-abysmal acting in some YouTube videos she'd starred in at 'college.' The bleach-blonde hair, along with huge shoulder-brushing hoop earrings, were like a signature for her – girly and sexy enough to keep reminding the audience she was gorgeous, but not getting in the way of her ass-kicking, smash mouth attitude and approach. She was slated, shortly after meeting Stanton-McLean, to go and begin work on a series of cardio kickboxing and yoga videos, and begin to put together the women's self-defense series she was slated to tour around the country.

Shortly after we finished the last of Courtnee's graduation pictures, we all piled into the SUV that Keri had rented for us and got ready to go and meet Stanton-McLean. Kendra had us all supplied with pocket respirators, in case we were exposed to Cum-Pump's pheromones in some kind of a double-cross. We'd worn the most sensible clothing we could, given our hard-wired proclivities, and tried to be prepared for anything. Heather was in a scandalously expensive designer Ralph Lauren workout suit and wore no less than \$10,000 worth of diamonds. I was in a tight Lycra tube-dress with only 3" Ferragamo heels. Kendra and Courtnee wore jeans, sneakers and t-shirts, and Gina was in a loose-fitting sweater and a plaid, knee-length "schoolgirl" skirt with saddle shoes. If it came to anything action-packed, I surmised as I sucked on a cigarette and looked pensively out the open window, I was going to hide behind Courtnee. I sincerely hoped that Lisa Stanton-McLean didn't have anything nefarious planned for us. We were drastically underprepared.

We'd chosen a busy spot – an open downtown park, just at the time when the tall buildings would begin disgorging workers for lunch. High visibility and multiple ways in and out, Kendra had said, her old cop instincts breaking through and coming well to the fore. The light denim jacket she was wearing did very little to disguise the shoulder-holstered Sig Sauer nestled in her armpit beside her firm breast, and the way she power-smoked her everpresent Virginia Silms cigarettes bespoke a very high level of tension and alertness on her part. Kendra was here expecting the very worst, and I couldn't help but pick up on it.

Lisa Stanton-McLean had beaten us there, sitting on a bench in the courtyard, her legs crossed primly beneath her charcoal-grey business suit, engrossed in something on her black iPhone.

Beside her, Willis Redmond sat in his rumpled suit typing on an expensive laptop, his unkempt hair and unshaven jaw speaking poignantly to a series of very late nights and high stress. The

painfully-slender, coltish form of Elizabeth Hutchison, the Cooperative's brilliant psychologist, paced nervously behind the pair, jotting quick notes periodically in a little leather-bound book.

We fanned out, facing them across the limited space afforded to us by the masses of people scurrying out to find food before having to return to their jobs. Many of the 'worker bees' were pausing to light cigarettes and get their lunch-hour fix, so I took the opportunity to dig in my little Vuitton hobo bag and fetch one of my own, trying to ignore the little .38 Smith & Wesson that Kendra had insisted I carry for this meeting. My phone's message light was blinking, as well – meaning that Keri had managed to hack into the security cameras overlooking the courtyard and had eyes on us right now. It made me breathe a tiny little sigh of relief.

"Hello, Merri," Stanton-McLean said evenly as we arrived within earshot. "It's good to see you looking so well. Are these your new daughters?"

I couldn't repress a smile of pride in accomplishment. "Yes. This is Gina, and this is Courtnee. Girls, this is Lisa Stanton-McLean, the woman who ordered up your new lives."

"Hi," Courtnee said, giving a shy wave.

I'd hoped that would be the end of it, a simple introduction and then I could hustle the girls out of there, but Gina had other ideas. She was as I'd made her, after all.

"Do you have *any* idea how many laws you've broken?" Gina hissed in her room-commanding mezzo with a tiny hint of Tennessee backwoods. "One phone call – just *one* – and I can have you and everyone who knows you indicted."

"Gina, honey, please," I said soothingly, stroking her arm.

"No, Momma, it's unconscionable," she said, pulling away from me. "She's a criminal, and she needs to be prosecuted."

"Maybe so, petal," Kendra said, "but she's holding all the cards right now. We have to play by her rules, or Merri suffers."

Stanton-McLean gave Kendra a level look. "You must be one of Merri's side projects," she said in a clinical, detached tone. "I haven't had the pleasure."

"I prefer that you not know my name," Kendra replied. Her tone and stance bespoke extreme danger, and I hoped Stanton-McLean didn't push any more buttons. My blonde companion was riding very close to the ragged edge of violence.

"Fair enough," McLean said, taking no offense.

"You girls need to go," I told Gina and Courtnee. "We'll meet you where we said we would, okay? Please, babies, let us handle this."

"Okay," Courtnee said, being remarkably pliable, considering her personality. I guess she was uncomfortable with the whole situation. She turned easily to McLean, and fixed her with an icy stare I didn't know the happy girl was capable of. "If you hurt my Momma, I swear to God and sunny Jesus you can *never be dead enough*, do you understand me?"

"Perfectly," she replied, but the silent gulp betrayed by the up-and-down bob of her smooth throat showed that the threat had struck home admirably. "Merri has nothing to fear from me."

"C'mon, Gina, let's go get a falafel," Courtnee said, pointing out a push-cart across the courtyard, still within easy approach. A flush of warmth spread across my chest. *My babies.*

As soon as they'd left, McLean let out a breath I don't think she knew she'd been holding. "Formidable," she commented.

"Merri doesn't make 'em any other way," Heather commented. "Now, do you want to tell us what the hell you've gotten all of us into?"

"I'm not making another daughter until I'm convinced that you're not up to something sketchy," I told her flatly.

Redmond grunted, somewhere between a chuckle and a cough, and Kendra's temper nearly collapsed. "You have something to add, you fat fuck?" she hissed.

He goggled a moment, unused to a beautiful woman being so intimidating, before fussing with his rumpled tie and mumbling an apology. "Sketchy," he said softly. "As if anything about this enterprise isn't sketchy."

"You sound like you don't approve," Heather accused.

"Look, I'm just in it for the science," he said. "I wanted to know if my technology would actually work. Once we created Merri, Jerry Hazelwood and I wanted to be done with it. Our goal is to cure cancer and birth defects, not create... *you.*"

"I see," Kendra said. "Not Hitler. Just Mengele."

"I don't think Nazis are a very fair – or astute – comparison, my dear," McLean said. "Yes, there was human experimentation involved. But we took every precaution, installed every safeguard. We eliminated every unknown possible before we began our work."

"So Cum-Pump was eliminating unknowns," I said. "Nice."

"It was him, or have all of your babies run the risk of turning out just like him," McLean said. "If you'd known him before our work on him, you wouldn't be quite so quick to judge us."

"He was abhorrent," Hutchison piped up. "In my clinical estimation, completely irreparable. An utter sociopath with no hope of redemption, just this side of serial killer or serial rapist. What you saw was actually an improvement."

"Who gave you the right to judge?" I shot back.

"No one," Stanton-McLean said. "But if you'll notice the world around you, Merri, you'll see that judgments like that happen every minute of every day. No one has the right, but it seems that they seem to happen nonetheless. No one gave use the right to judge. We took it."

"And how does that poke holes in my Nazi comparison?" Kendra pressed.

"You want to know what we're doing?" McLean said a little hotly. "You're so damned curious to make sure we're doing the right thing? Aren't you judging? Doing the same thing you accuse us of?"

"Enough," I said. "We're getting nowhere. I'm here for an explanation, not an argument. You girls stop attacking her. Lisa, start talking."

"Ever the mother," McLean commented, and Hutchison smiled in agreement. "Very well. It's rather a long story, Merri. Won't you and your friends have a seat?"

There was no hope of getting Kendra to sit down, but Heather and I took up a bench across from them as Stanton-McLean cleared her throat.

"You know the old university adage, 'publish or perish,' I assume," she began. "Well, my late husband – the 'Stanton' in the Stanton-McLean – and I had just begun a study, about seven years ago, about the dissemination of information in a modernized society. It promised to be a work that would keep us tenured for quite some time. Everything was going wonderfully, all of our data collection methods were in place, there was nothing to do but wait for the numbers to come in. That was before my Jonathan was killed."

"I'm sorry," I told her, seeing the pain in her eyes.

"Thank you," she said. "One of the most brilliant minds in modern sociology, one of the kindest human beings I'd ever met, and he was shot to death while jogging. A mugging, you see. He died face-down in a bush, next to a sidewalk, for twelve dollars and a cellphone that we got for free."

"Lisa was a wreck after it happened," Hutchison took up. "She came to see me. The two of us worked together for the better part of a year, trying to help her heal. That was when the data began to come back. And the conversations started."

"The studies were about how information gets spread through a society, if you'll remember," McLean reminded us. "And we found something we didn't expect."

"And this was?" Heather pressed.

"Any given piece of information – our test samples were a cross-section of facts, rumors, and outright untruths – would test out to be viewed as an unarguable fact in about a month, when the information was given out by an attractive female."

"What?" I asked.

"That was my reaction, as well. I redid the study twice, but the data bore it out: people believe anything that an attractive woman tells them, and over a period of time, anything an attractive woman says will come to be interpreted as truth."

"Lisa was telling me this in session," Hutchison said. "We'd been talking over the past weeks about everything that was wrong in the world. Crime, poverty, hopelessness, lack of faith in our leaders, racism and sexism, the environment... and with Lisa's new data, we began to see a way to fix it."

"But we needed control," McLean said. "Societies are very complex systems, Merri. We needed someone with the knowledge of how they worked – someone who could visualize in the long term – to orchestrate any changes. And we had to start small."

"I'd heard some of what Hazelwood and Willis, here, had been doing from their own sessions. I couldn't break confidentiality by just telling Lisa what was going on in the nanotechnology section, you see, but I could make the introductions."

"We started with Lee Parsons, an ex-con who worked as a gardener for Jerry Hazelwood," Lisa said. "The man you know now as Cum-Pump. He'd done many horrible things, we found as we

began investigating. Rapes, abuses – a thoroughly reprehensible excuse for a human being. Jerry and Willis started with him as a way to bring natural-born women into our plan. But it didn't work out. His desires were too strong to overcome, you see, and we needed the raw processing power of his brain to help make the nanites for the transformation."

"All the nanites he made were influenced by what he wanted," Redmond interjected. "After the fourth promising young co-ed he made into a huge-breasted, sex-crazed bimbo, we decided to go back to the drawing board. The local strip club was thrilled with us, however, for all the new talent we'd sent their way. It was all the poor girls could do, after he was done with them."

"And before you say it, Merri, we placed money in trust for them. They're well set up and as taken care of as we can manage. And we *are* working on a cure. The girls that Cum-Pump transformed were volunteers. We owe it to them to try and rescue them, even though they're completely content and happy in their new lives," McLean said. "I actually don't believe they *want* to be rescued, but we're not going to stop trying."

"Stephen Wallace, our behaviorist, gave us the idea of the maternal figure, that a degree of nurturing, along with the adjustments we'd made in the nanites, would prove valuable to the women in the long run," Redmond said. "And a mother's desires for her children would make nanites that would help the women, not simply convert them into sex objects."

"I'd noticed you stealing," he went on, "and we did a little digging into your past. We considered you a prime candidate for our first male-to-female transformation and the mother of all our other subjects."

"They're not subjects, they're *people*," I argued.

"Excuse me," Redmond said, holding up a placating hand. "Understand, I've only been associated with the science of it. This is the first time I've really *met*, face-to-face, any of the women who've been transformed."

"I'm not much of a people person," he ended by way of muttered explanation.

"It was then we started creating women – extremely attractive women – to be placed into positions where they could get information out to the public," McLean said. "Women brought up in a family structure, and with a solid female role-model, who believed that the world can be a better place."

"And to spread the word of how," Hutchison said. "Furthering environmental responsibility, higher education, political reform, equal rights. Fixing the problems that plague our society, one step at a time."

"Imagine in," McLean said passionately. "If societies believe what attractive women tell them – every word – then an army of attractive women, telling them to recycle and reduce emissions, to eat right and exercise, to go to college and get good grades."

"To take care of our elderly and care for one another," Hutchison added, with the same fervor. "To end violence and help those less fortunate."

"All the data supports it," Redmond said, his lack of passion glaring against the zeal of the other two women. "It will work, Merri."

"This is what you want my babies for?" I asked. "This is your big plan?"

"Is there anything bigger?" McLean asked.

"Then you better give me more folders," I said. "I need to make more babies."

"You mean it?" McLean said. "You want to help?"

"Of course," I said. "All you had to do was ask, instead of just *making* me. I'm not an unreasonable woman, and I want to help people as much as anybody."

"I have a question," Kendra spoke up, grinding her spent cigarette under the toe of her sneaker and blowing out a long plume of smoke. "This social plan. The steps you're going to take to fix the world. Is it written down somewhere?"

"Of course," McLean said. "I keep it in my safe, at home. Do you want to look at it, make sure all my ideas are beneficial to society?"

"I'm sure they are," Kendra said. "I just wanted to make sure that anybody could run the show, in case something happened to you."

"What would happen to me?" McLean asked.

"You could be hit by a bus," Kendra said, "or drop dead of a heart attack. Or..."

She loosed the aerosol spray she'd had me prepare earlier, a pure concentration of my nanites, right into McLean's upturned face.

"...you could be punished for what you did to Stefanee, you bitch."

* * *

"I believe you," Elizabeth Hutchison said simply, sipping the exquisite white that I'd had flown in from Napa just that morning. "Lisa was my patient first, and my friend second. I knew she was obsessive, and I knew she was capable of hurting people, or forcing them into her plan against their will. I guess I just chose to overlook it. Her plan was so exciting, and had so much promise. I have children of my own, you see. The thought of giving them a better world..."

"I understand," I told her. "And her plan will continue. I've looked it over, and it's a good one. We even had some of our own additions."

I gestured over to the newest of my daughters: an olive-complected, tall woman with generous breasts and a huge windswept cascade of shiny, dark curls halfway down her back, pushing a pair of stylish, lightweight glasses up her slender, aquiline nose; a petite young blue-eyed beauty with elaborately-styled sandy-blonde 'big' hair and a stylish blue business suit and an infectious smile; and a bombshell-curved pale-skinned redhead with huge green eyes and a body that made me think of all things naughty, wearing a pair of skin-tight skinny jeans, cowboy boots and a loose flannel work shirt which strained over her creamy, firm breasts.

"And they are?" Hutchison – whom I'd taken to calling 'Liz' now, as we'd started to become friends – asked, bumming one of my cigarettes and lighting it from a crystal desk lighter.

"The brunette with all the curls is the last of Lisa's. Used to be a drug dealer named Samuel John Everett, a real scumbag. Now she's Dr. Samantha Joan Everett. She's the public front for Jerry and Willis' work, and will be the one to 'cure' – or at least develop the vaccine for – breast cancer," I said. "The blonde next to her used to be George Michael Randall, a former hell-and-damnation preacher who fell from grace because of his interest in little boys. I made him into

that pretty little girl, Jordyn Michelle Randall, to reach the Christian Right. She's a television preacher, but hers is a message of hope and tolerance. And she doesn't take a penny of the money she raises. It all goes to help the homeless."

"They're beautiful," Liz said. "And the redhead?"

"Jackson Carl Endicott," I said. "Used to be active in the music censorship program here in town. Jaclyn Karla Endicott writes songs, now – she goes by 'Jaci' and is going to be the next big thing in country."

"Excellent," Liz said. "I always thought we were a little light in the old plan with liaisons to Nascar Nation. I think you solved that problem for us."

I waved to my newest daughters and they waved back – Jaci going so far as to blow me a little flirtatious kiss. Past them, at poolside, Haylee and Kaylee were arranged artfully on the chaise lounges, working on their already flawless tans in barely-there white bikinis. Kendra and Stefanee were beside them, sipping mai-tais and thumbing through *Cosmo* and *Flirt!* in full-on "hot girl" disinterest in their surroundings. Kendra had embraced the bimbo lifestyle in order to be closer to her best friend, and the incremental work that Redmond and Hazelwood had been doing were slowly bringing some of Stefanee's intelligence and insight back, here and there. I doubted she would ever have her old body back, or the keen focus she'd once had, but I knew she'd be happy.

Lisa Stanton-McLean – who now went by Lisa Mac – minced out of the kitchen in a tiny little strip of bikini straining over the enormous 40FF silicone knockers which bobbed deliciously over her narrow ribs, her ass-length long bleach-blond hair falling in thick tendrils around them. She was never seen in anything less than full makeup, two-inch fingernails and six-inch heels, and could barely finish a sentence without either giggling or forgetting what she meant to say. She'd been inside, watching *Jersey Shore* and getting her hair done, and was now ready to come outside and spend time with her new BFF's, Stefanee, Haylee and Kaylee. She was one of the highest-earning strippers at *The Toy Box* where Haylee and Kaylee danced, and seemed completely happy hanging out with Brandi, Ashlee, Brittni and Staci – the four co-eds who'd been their earliest failures – and getting twenties stuffed down her g-string. Haylee told me that she earned as much as she did because of her predilection for giving head under the tables in the VIP section.

"It seems a shame," Liz said.

"Maybe," I said. "But it's no less than she deserved, I guess."

"She's done a lot for the world," Liz argued, sipping her wine.

"So have we all," I told her. "But fair is fair."

I watched Lisa give Stefanee a long, snail-tongued kiss and a gentle, caressing squeeze of her perfect, tanned breasts. Kendra said she was getting very little in the way of sleep these days, kept awake all night most nights by the screaming, squealing and panting of the noisy, wet and very athletic sex in the room next to hers. Stefanee and Lisa were quite a pair, and made each other very happy as lovers.

I took a deep drag off my cigarette and listened to the brainless babble, of who was fucking who and who was a backstabber and a bitch at work cropping up between the girls by the pool.

Yes, fair is fair.

The End...!!!