

TC *More*
**SHORT
STORIES**



**CAROLLYN
OLSON
& FRIENDS**

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In Memory of:
Haleigh Labkon



Forever a Vanity Club Sister

“To have knowledge and acceptance of who you are is the first step to personal happiness.”

For a New Beginning

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly forming,
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.
For a long time it has watched your desire,
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,
Noticing how you willed yourself on,

Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.
It watched you play with the seduction of safety
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,
Wondered would you always live like this.
Then the delight, when your courage kindled,
And out you stepped onto new ground,
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,
A path of plenitude opening before you.
Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.
Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

*By John O'Donohue in Rememberance of Haleigh
Labkon*

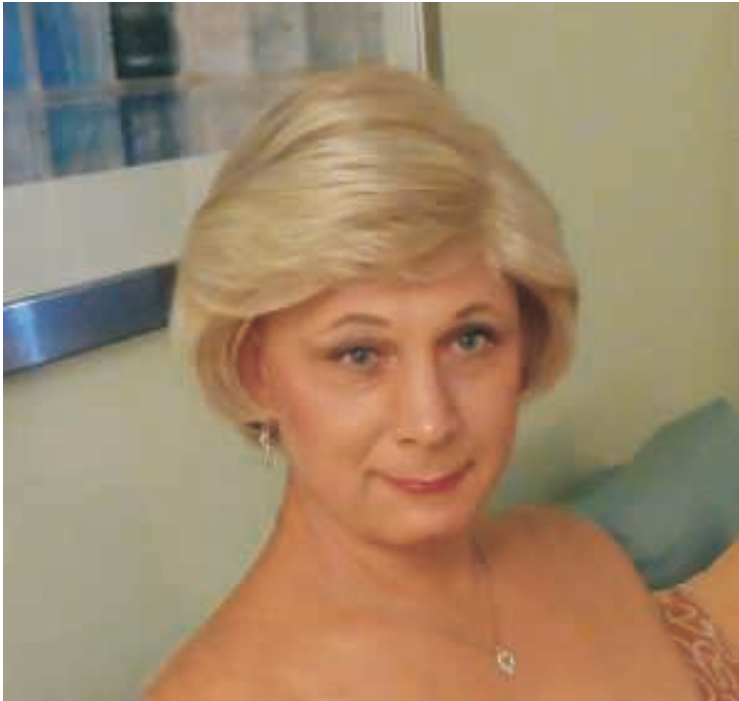
FORWARD:



This is Carolyn Olson's seventh book for MagsInc. Ms. Olson has been an ambi-gendered cross dresser for more than 30 years and is very active in the Northern California community. She is the Post Mistress of the Vanity Club (www.vanityclub.com) and the founder of the Mature Woman Group (www.groups.yahoo.com/group/maturegirls). Her latest full-length novel is "Look Through Any Window." You can write Carolyn at: carollynolson@yahoo.com



Danielle Mitchell has co-authored her first novel with Carollyn Olson and is featured on the cover. Danielle is 47 years old and resides in Connecticut. She has been dressing for most of her life but only recently started to enjoy her feminine side in public. Danielle is a very proud member of the Vanity Club. Her hopes and dreams are to somehow help people find their way in this life as her friends have done for her. Dani can be reached at: dani.mitch09@gmail.com



Paula Gaikowski is a transgender woman from New England. She began her struggle with gender identify at an early age and in 2009 at the age of 53 shed a lifetime of guilt and anxiety and began to explore and express her feminine nature. Her career with a major hi-tech company has her traveling to major cities around the U.S. on a regular basis. This allows her the opportunity for shopping, sightseeing and meeting other members of the transgender community. "Welcome Home" is her first published story but she is also a regular contributor to femulate.org. Through her personal and written outreach she hopes to support and guide others in the transgender community with their own evolution. You can contact Paula at: paula.gaikowski@gmail.com



Silke Loretta Martin's "Brigid's Story" is her second published novel. She also authored "The Third Kiss" in TG Short Stories, which was released in 2008. She is German by birth, but her name is not. "Silke" is Frisian, a language of an old European nation, rhymes with "silky" and its "international equivalent" is Sheila, or the more formal Cecilia. In March 2007 she obtained the documents that allowed her the title of Lady of Glencrannog, Scotland, and Tirana (Lady) of Kerry, Ireland. She has been cross dressing since early childhood when her mother put her in a dress and pantyhose. Silke's e-mail address is: silkelorettamartin@yahoo.de

Cindy Shelton (camera shy) has edited the last four Carolyn Olson books. Cindy is a happily married, ambigender, father of two, living in Northern California. She is blessed to have an understanding and accepting wife who encourages Cindy to always act as and present herself as the lady she feels inside. Cindy is a member of the Vanity Club (www.vanityclub.com), and the Sacramento-based River City Gems (www.rivercitygems.com). Cindy first began editing TG stories as a part of the edito-

rial staff for “The Mirror”, a monthly publication from the national organization Tri-Ess. Helping her sisters refine and prepare their unique stories for publication has truly become a “labor of love” for Cindy!. Her e-mail address is: cindyshelton04@yahoo.com
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Secrets In Lace

By Danielle Mitchell &Carollyn Olson

My name is Danielle and I WAS a cross dresser...and this WAS my fantasy.

I have always like wearing skirts, dresses and nylons that show off my incredibly sexy legs. Every day, to and from work, I would pass Eve’s Lingerie Shop and would see the lovely-looking owner glancing at the people walking by through the big show room window. I would say to myself, “You are absolutely beautiful and I can’t help but stare at you. I hope I catch your eye someday too.”

I never had the nerve to walk into her shop. I WAS very shy, even though I loved being a bit of a fashion plate and wearing stylish clothes, nylons and stiletto heels.

Before I go any further, let's go back about 5 years...

I had been a cross dressing since I was a child. For years, I dressed as a woman, but kept to myself and remained safe behind the walls of my Danbury, CN home. I would wander through the local department stores and buy woman's clothing for "my wife", but I would never step out of my front door en femme. I had paid for a couple of photo sessions with the famous Jamie Austin in Boston, and despite the fabulous poses captured in her camera, I could never get up the nerve to wander out my front door and in to the public.

I was in my mid-30s and single. I had dated a number of young ladies and had a steady girl friend for three years, but there was always something bothering me. I knew I wasn't gay since having sex with a woman was always enjoyable and there was never a problem satisfying my partner. I didn't know for sure what I was questioning until I ran across the Vanity Club website on the internet.

"Oh my goodness," I thought. "These women were beautiful and they aren't really women. They are men. Maybe this is what I have been looking for."

I got up the nerve to write the group Post Mistress, Carollyn Olson, and explained my plight. I sent her a few pictures, never expecting to hear back. Within minutes of my e-mail my computer rang "You've Got Mail." An internet friendship was born.

Within a month, the genie burst out of the bottle when my now-dear friend Carollyn came to my hometown for a visit. When we first met at the airport, I could not believe she was really a man. She presented herself as the true es-

sence of femininity. She stayed for a week, and oh what a week it was.

The first thing she did was to sit me down and discuss my feminine feelings. She asked me to dress up in my favorite outfit and she helped me a bit with my makeup. I was so excited and nervous as I walked down the stairs of my home and in to Carollyn's presence.

"You look fabulous," she said, running her eyes from my head to my toes. I was wearing a colorful spring dress and bolero jacket and pink heels. I had curled my naturally long blond hair at the ends and my bangs were hanging over my eyes.

Carollyn asked for a pair of scissors and hair spray. With a clip here and a clip there and a little spray, my hair was out of my eyes and Carollyn declared me "ready to roll." She handed me my purse and said "pictures first."

After a few photos, I offered to cook dinner.

"No you aren't," she insisted. "We're going out." I almost wet my panties.

"I can't, I told her." "I have never done anything like this before."

"Well, we're going out. No reason to waste a good thing. Look at you. You're beautiful."

"What if we run in to somebody I know?" I replied, ready to run back up stairs and hide in my room.

"Who cares," she countered. "Nobody will recognize you. Let's go."

I opened the door and looked right, then left, and right again. The butterflies were churning in my stomach. I felt pressure on my spine and wondered if Carollyn had pressed a gun into my back. It was only her French nail adorned index finger. I took my first step out the door

and within seconds, I saw one of my neighbors. Carollyn waved hello and he waived back. I almost melted.

As we walked to my car, I had problems navigating the path in my heels and almost fell. Carollyn took me by the arm and guided me to the passenger seat.

"I'm driving," she insisted. We were off to dinner at the local spaghetti house.

Oh what a night. Nobody recognized me or said one inappropriate word. In fact, the waitress complemented me on my dress. I had been so nervous, but after an hour out with Carollyn and two glasses of wine, I relaxed and enjoyed my first real night as Danielle.

Carollyn was a master in lighting my path that evening and week. She was cool, comfortable in her skin, and looked so pretty in her light blue cami, see-through knit sweater, multi-colored blue skirt and light blue heels.

The Genie definitely escaped from the bottle during those monumental five days. I had taken a week off from my position as an assistant manager for a computer software company and lived the entire time as Danielle. Carollyn took me every where and we did everything any other women would do. I also went way over my budget and maxed out my credit card with new clothes, shoes, hose and undergarments. I was becoming a new woman.

For years, I had let my hair grow almost to my shoulders, for in my line of work, nobody cared. I would just tie it back in a pony tail. Carollyn took me to my first beauty salon appointment and had my hair styled, slightly colored and curled. You can never imagine what that did for my confidence. I also seriously started studying hair styling on the internet so I could work on my hair at home, and continued to visit my new stylist friend, Stephanie Shaw, at the salon. Stephanie knew my secret, but could care less. In fact, we have become good friends.

After Carollyn returned to her California home, with the promise to return in three months, I decided what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I was going to eventually dump my male attire and lifestyle and start my transition to a woman. It was something I HAD to do. But, first things first...and as fast as I could.

I moved out of my rental home and in to a condo not far from my employer. With new neighbors, I would not have to worry about my past. I could start living as Danielle every night after work. And, I could drive or walk to work.

My second move was to find a counselor who specialized in sex change prospects. I called the Pennsylvania office of Dr. Sherman Leis, the noted sex change and plastic surgeon, and received a referral for a psychologist in my home town. After two comprehensive visits with Dr. Abby Lauren, I started hormone treatments with the hopes of having real breasts and shapely hips some time in the future. I also began laser treatments to remove my facial, arm and chest hair and trashed my glasses after Lasik eye surgery. I was on my way.

Third, I asked my boss, Steve Wilson, if we could meet for dinner at the same Italian restaurant where I made my debut. My boss was an open minded and wonderfully caring man. I told him to not be surprised with my appearance and handed him a dinner invitation, which included a picture of Danielle, one Carollyn had taken during her visit. He opened the envelope, looked at the picture, and nodded.

"It looks like we have a date," he concluded. I was so surprised and thrilled. Dinner with Steve would be above and beyond my expectations. Steve was tall at 6-foot-2, handsome and single. He was what the ladies in the office called "A Stud-muffin." Could I ask for anything more?

The dinner was wonderful and the company with Steve even better. I wore the same dress I had worn the first night out the Carollyn. He was the ultimate gentleman and presented me with a half dozen red roses and a kiss on the cheek as I entered the restaurant waiting area. I just about melted.

We talked for what seemed to be hours; or until the restaurant closed. He immediately put me at ease. He asked the questions, I gave him the answers. I was so relieved that I didn't have to start the conversation on why I dressed as a woman. He must have done his research, because he knew many of the answers to his questions before I could speak.

Finally, I had to ask him the ultimate question.

"Is it possible I can work as Danielle?" He scratched his head, looked at me with his dazzling blue eyes, and said "Yes. When can you start?"

I almost had a heart attack at the table. My boss said yes. When I gained my composure, I took his hand, leaned across the table and gave him a kiss on the lips. I still can't believe I did that.

"Before you come to work as Danielle, I must talk to the other employees," he insisted. "I will do so at the next staff meeting on Wednesday."

"Do you want me to come?" I asked.

"Absolutely, but not as Danielle. I will do most of the talking, but be ready to answer questions. I'm sure it will be a shock to a number of your co-workers. Do any of them know about Danielle?"

"No, I don't think so. One of the guys accidentally saw the picture I gave you on my desk, but that was just about it. I told him the picture was of my sister."

Steve laughed.

In preparation for the staff meeting, I composed a message to my co-workers explaining my desire to be Danielle at work instead of Dan. I saved the message in my computer, ready to send to those I have worked with since graduating from college. I sent Steve a copy of the e-mail and he said it was perfect, but to send it only if we both felt it was necessary.

The weekend came and I had plans to meet my hair stylist Stephanie Shaw for dinner. I awoke Saturday morning by a persistently ringing phone. It was Steve.

"Danielle?" he said in a clearly upset voice. I only thought the worst. And he called me by my female name.

"Are you free this afternoon?"

"It all depends. What's up?"

"You know Amber Dubois in accounting at the office? She just called me. She was going to accompany me to my friend's wedding, but she's got a migraine headache and is in bad shape.

"Can you go with me? I could pick you up at 3?"

Now this is a dilemma for me and Steve. I thought for a few seconds and said, "Aren't there any other girls in the office you could ask? They are surely more suited for a wedding than me."

"No I haven't," he gruffly replied. "However, I was so impressed with you the other night that I thought I would ask you first."

"You're asking me is a real surprise. Let me think about it for a few minutes. I'll call you back in five minutes?" He agreed.

I was shocked. I quickly raced to my closet to see what I could wear to a wedding. Would it be formal or casual? I forgot to ask.

I grabbed the phone and called Stephanie at the salon. Panicked, I told her of the "date." She was so excited and said she could fit me in her busy schedule whenever I could get there.

Steve was relieved when I accepted his offer. The wedding would be semi-formal; dresses for the women and shirts and tie for the men. I knew just what to wear.

I rushed to get ready and departed for the salon. Stephanie told me to bring my dress and shoes so she could do a little extra with my hair. I wanted to look perfect.

Stephanie did her magic and within two hours my hair was piled on my head with ringlets softly running down the side of my face and the nape of my neck. She guided me to the back room so I could try on my dress. I slipped on my strapless light blue knee length chiffon dress and stepped in to my 4-inch heels. Stephanie added a matching ribbon in my ringlets and a choker around my neck. When I looked in the mirror I was amazed. Not one sign of a man was in the mirror's reflection. Steve would be thrilled.

I changed back into my jeans and sweater and headed home to prepare for the date. I still had two hours before Prince Charming would arrive.

The time went so fast and before I knew it, the doorbell rang. I ran down the stairs and opened the door. Steve almost fell over.

"You look spectacular," he said with the emphasis on spectacular.

"So do you," I replied, as I noted his fine dark blue suit and coordinated tie. He handed me a small wrist corsage and leaned over for a kiss on my cheek and I caught him eyeing the little bit of cleavage I had.

“Let’s go,” he said, again giving me the once over. I wrapped my shawl over my purse and left arm and took Steve’s left hand with my right. I prayed to God everything would go well.

The wedding was at the local country club and was definitely a “high society” presentation. Steve’s friend, Jim, and his bride, the former Melody Phoenix, were two of the nicest people I had ever met. Melody complimented me on my dress and asked us to sit at their table. We declined as Steve was kind enough to not put any more pressure on me than he already had.

The afternoon turned in to evening and after the vows were concluded, dinner was served and the dancing began. We sat at a table with four other couples and exchanged pleasantries. Steve could not keep his eyes off me. I think, in the back of his mind, he was worried somebody might catch on to our little secret.

After 30 minutes, the music stopped and the bride and groom were formally announced. The garter and flowers were thrown and the “first dance” began. You would not believe what happened next.

The bride and groom danced for about a minute. I was talking with Steve when I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned and there stood Jim with a big smile on his face. He asked me to dance.

I looked at Steve and he nodded his approval with a big smile. I didn’t want to embarrass Jim so I took his hand and walked to the dance floor. There would be only four of us dancing as the crowd of over 250 people watched and applauded.

Remember, I had never danced as a woman before, except to prance around my home as if I was on American Bandstand. However, Jim did all the work and we danced as if we had been long-time partners. After 30-45 seconds,

we separated and went to select another partner. Obviously, I chose Steve. He was just as smooth of a dancer as he was good looking. He held my 5-foot-8, 150-pound frame close and whispered in my ear "You're prettier than the bride." I reacted by giving him a surprise kiss on the lips. I didn't want Cinderella's Pumpkin to arrive.

After the wedding party departed for their honeymoon, Steve reluctantly took me home. He complimented me with every breath he took and praised me on my presentation, style and femininity.

As we walked to my front steps, he spun me around and said "I know this is going to work." I knew what he was saying, but before I could say a word, he gave me a passionate kiss on the lips that caused me to lift my right leg off the ground and made my toes curl.

"We'll talk more tomorrow," he said before kissing me again. "Thanks for a perfect evening."

"And thank you for the Pumpkin ride," I replied. We both laughed as I opened the door and turned for one last kiss.

I stood with my back against the inside of the door, took a deep breath and screamed: "Thank you, God." Oh what a night!!!

Wednesday and the meeting could not have come faster. Steve and I had planned to discuss strategy on Sunday, after I returned home from church, but instead he asked me to meet at the nearby hamburger joint. I quickly accepted. He wore a golf shirt, jeans and tennis shoes. I wore a white cami, an open white long sleeve shirt, jeans and sandals. We did talk a little about the staff meeting and what he expected of me. I could tell that love was in the air, at least from his vantage point.

The staff meeting was surprising to say the least. Steve talked about the usual items, potential clients and current production goals, before he changed the subject.

"The other night, I met an exceptional woman," he began. "She's not a member of our staff, but then again he is."

It was almost as if nobody at the meeting realized the play on words...at least for 30 seconds.

"What are you talking about?" asked one of the women.

"Oh, you finally got what I was saying?" Steve queried. "Yes, she is not a member of our staff, but then again he is."

"Are you saying what I'm thinking?" the same lady asked.

"Maybe," he replied. "You see, I had an emergency the other night. I needed a date for a wedding. You all know Dan don't you? Well, Dan helped me out."

Much to my amazement, on the Power Point screen was a picture of me dancing with Steve.

"She beautiful," another of the ladies said. "Who is she, Dan? Your sister?"

I didn't know what to say.

"No," Steve exclaimed. "That's our colleague Dan, or should I say Danielle."

The women gasped and started whispering. The men were stunned. They could not believe the attractive woman in the light blue dress was their co-worker.

"Do you want me to continue?" Steve asked me.

I nodded. Everything was now on the table anyway.

Steve told the workers of my history and my desire to work as Danielle. I didn't know how they would react. Not one of the men questioned my request and the women appeared to be more than happy to have another woman in the office.

With no outward objections, Steve announced that I would eventually begin working as Danielle. Not one of the men questioned my request and as a group was at least cordial. The women appeared to be more than happy and receptive to have another woman in the office.

That afternoon I released my e-mail to all my co-workers. Immediately I received congratulations from most of the women, but the responses from the men slowly trickled in to my in box. I could tell a few men did not care for the decision, however, none of them objected face-to-face or uttered a nasty word.

Danielle was taking another big step in fulfilling her dream.

I waited a few days before going to work as Danielle. I wanted my co-workers to keep guessing when Danielle would walk through the door. One of the ladies even started an "Office Pool" with the winner not only collecting the \$\$\$ prize, but winning the right to take me to lunch.

Actually, I waited longer than I had planned. I was having so much fun teasing and taunting everyone at work as the "pool" became more and more of a guessing game. Finally, the following Friday, nine days after Steve's announcement, Danielle made her first appearance at work.

I was so nervous the night before my debut, but Steve, always full of surprises, stopped by my condo unannounced with take-out dinner and a bottle of wine. I was a mess. My hair was in cola can size rollers and my

makeup was virtually non-existent. It didn't seem to bother Steve, but it sure did me.

We had sorta been dating since the wedding, but I looked at the relationship as friendship and nothing more

I insisted I needed a few minutes to take out the curlers and put on a smidgen of makeup, but he gave me a kiss on the cheek and said "you look great." I took the curlers out of my hair as we ate and applied a dash of makeup after dinner.

Steve and I enjoyed the chicken wings, coleslaw and a wonderful tasting Grey Riesling as we looked through my wardrobe for what would be right for my big day. I didn't want to be over bearing, so we settled on a tan knit sweater, just below the knee paisley tan skirt, brown belt, sun beige hose and 3 ½-inch heel sandals.

"You are going to be the prettiest girl in the office," Steve insisted. I blushed and punched him on the shoulder. He responded by grabbing my arms and kissing my forehead before slowly working down to my lips. He slipped his tongue in my mouth and gave me the kiss of a lifetime. I was in seventh heaven.

It didn't stop there. My makeup was a mess and my hair wasn't much better. We fell on to the bed as the kisses got hotter and hotter. He slid his hand under my loose fitting sweater and began to caress my bra-less breasts; the little bit of breasts that had been formed by exercise and two months on hormones. He didn't seem to care and neither did I.

"We have to stop," I was forced to tell Steve. "I think the wine is getting to us more than anything else."

Steve backed off like the gentleman he was.

"I'm sorry," he responded. "I didn't mean..."

Before he could finish the sentence, I placed my index finger on his bottom lip and slid my hand down to his crotch on the outside of his jeans. He was as hard as a rock. I moved my hand up, down and around and unzipped his fly. I was tempted to go for the gold as he moaned for me to continue. I barely had enough restraints to stop.

"Now we are even," I passionately said with a cunning smile. He smiled back and said "Yes, we're even."

Friday at the office could not have been any better. Yes, I was scared to death.

I got up extra early, shaved, showered and dressed. I was so nervous I ran one pair of panty hose, then another, and I hadn't even applied my nails. I decided to cut off the legs that had the runners and wear two sets of one-legged nylons.

I also decided to wear my breast enhancers instead of my larger breast forms so I didn't appear to be flaunting myself in front of the other women in the office. I didn't eat breakfast because I didn't have the stomach to do so. Thus, within an hour, I was fully dress, fluffed and ready to go. Once last look in the mirror built my confidence even more, but little to settle my nerves.

"Let's do it, Danielle," I told myself, and out the door I went.

I decided to walk to work, as it was a beautiful morning in every way. It was still early, about an hour before I had to be to work. I took time walking in to town, my hair and breasts bouncing with every step, definitely nervous, but feeling as if I was walking on a cloud.

"Carolyn would be so proud of me," I thought. "I wish she could see me now."

I walked around the corner from my condo and on to the main downtown street. I could see my office building in the distance. As I walked, I looked in the store front windows and passed Eve's for the first time.



"I've never noticed this store before," I said to myself, remembering most guys had little use for lingerie. "I'll have to stop by some time." Little did I know what lay inside.

I stopped at the local Starbucks for a cup of latte in an effort to settle my nerves. Carrying my coffee and my purse, I took the final steps to my office and rode the elevator to the second floor. The elevator door opened and the office was empty. I was 45 minutes early. Whew!!!

I went to my cubicle and found a dozen roses with the sweetest card taped to the vase. It was from Steve, who I could see in his office, 30-feet away. I opened the card, read the lovely message, walked to his office and knocked on the door.

Steve looked up from his desk and his eyes brightened like head lights.

"Good morning, sweetheart," he enthusiastically remarked as he arose from his chair. "You look perfect." He gave me a hug and a kiss.

"Be careful," I responded. "Affection is not allowed in the office." He laughed and reminded me he was the boss.

We chatted for a few minutes before he took one of the many phone calls he received during the day. I returned to my desk to prepare for the day.

My co-workers slowly entered the office and greeted me as if nothing was out of the ordinary. I had prepared for the worst, but the worst never happened. Everyone was cordial and complementary.

Minutes before our 8 a.m. starting time, Amber raced in to my area.

"I won! I won!" she shouted. "I won the office pool."

Amber, usually a mild mannered lady, was ecstatic.

"I get to take you to lunch. Can we do it today?"

"Sure," I timidly assured her. "Can you afford it?"

She laughed.

"I need to find Maryanne. She has the money from the pool. Where is she?"

"I haven't seen her this morning."

"She probably ran off with the money. Oh, by the way, you look so beautiful."

"Thanks. See you for lunch?"

Amber didn't hear my response as she looked for Maryanne. The pool was over \$250 and she could use the money.

Fortunately I was not overwhelmed with co-workers wanting to gawk at the new girl in the office. Amber was another thing at lunch. We had a real nice meal, but she could not stop talking. She wanted to know everything about me and my desires to be a woman. I told her what I could, but after 90 minutes with her I was exhausted. I returned to the office and Steve told me to take off the rest of the afternoon. My work was done, so why not?

So, out the door and down the elevator I went, retracing my steps home, still in Seventh Heaven. As I walked past Eve's, I tried not to stare, but out of the corner of my eye I noticed the beautiful owner working with a customer. Yes, Eve was stunning, perfectly coiffed in every way.

"I bet her husband is happy to have such a beautiful wife," I said to myself. "Someday I will get the nerve to go in the store."

I walked up the front steps of my condo and opened the door. I kicked off my heels and walked in to the dining room.

"Aren't you going to say hello," a voice came from the other room. I turned around and found Carollyn sitting on my couch. I had walked right past her.

"That's a fine how-do-you-do."

In shock, I rushed over and gave Carollyn a big hug.

"What are you doing here? How did you get in? I hope you can stay for a while. I have so much to tell you."

"Steve called me and told me about your lifestyle change. He picked me up at the airport this morning. I plan to stay for a few days, if you want me to. I want to hear everything."

"Steve, that rascal! Of course you can stay, of course, of course."

The weekend was full of girl talk. Carollyn was her typical, beautiful self inside and out. We talked about everything I could think of. I wanted her to know what I had planned. My goal was to be a complete woman within the next 12 months.

"Are you really sure?" she warned me while we were enjoying breakfast the next morning on the patio. "Remember, you can never turn back. I should know."

"What do you mean by that?" I inquired. "You didn't, did you?"

"No, I didn't," she responded. "Follow me. I want to show you something."

Carollyn was wearing a lovely soft yellow nighty covered by a matching bathrobe. We walked in to the guest bedroom and she asked me to pull the string on her robe. It fell to the ground. Through her nighty I could see a pair of perfectly shaped breasts.

"You did it, you really did it," I exclaimed.

"I had implants right after I returned home," she replied.

"They're beautiful, so natural, so perfect," I replied as I started to cry. I was so excited for her.

"At my age, I don't plan to have SRS, but I decided to give myself a little gift. I was getting tired of breast forms and wanted to have something more permanent."

"Yes, they are permanent? They're so..."

"You're blushing," she interrupted. "Haven't you seen breasts before?"

"Not like yours. Where can I get a pair like yours?"

"Maybe, when you come to visit me in California."

Carollyn handed me a packet and said to open the envelope. Inside was a round-trip ticket to San Francisco the following month.

"I already cleared the time with Steve, but I didn't tell him why," she said. I also have an appointment for you to see my doctor in San Mateo. You can have the procedure done when you come to visit.

I gave Carollyn a big hug and lifted her off the ground.

"Thank-you. I can never repay you."

"Ah, don't worry about it. It was a 4-for-2 sale and I could not resist the bargain. I could only use two, so I left the other two for you," she said with a smile and a laugh. "Nothing like free boobies."

I started to cry.

"You have already paid for everything with your honesty, friendship and love. It's my privilege to do this."

"I've never been to California. I can't wait."

When Carolyn and I weren't talking, we were walking. We hit the town from North to South and East to West, stopping in just about every dress store and restaurant in town. I could not have asked for a better friend. Once I took her to the airport five days after her arrival, time could not go fast enough for my first trip to California .

California was fantastic. I had to change the ticket reservations and flew in to Oakland instead of San Francisco . I arrived at mid-day and Carolyn didn't waste any time as whisked me across the Bay Bridge , through San Francisco , and to meet her breast surgeon.

"Aren't we going to see San Francisco ?" I asked as we passed the San Francisco turnoffs.

"We will," she insisted. "We have so many things to do and so little time.

Dr. Samantha Johns was fantastic. She took pictures and measured me from every imaginable angle. She showed me computer images of what I would look like with different sized breasts. With my body structure, we agreed on 36C.

"I will see you early tomorrow," she informed me.

"Tomorrow? I asked in awe.

"Yes, tomorrow. Carolyn told me you were ready. Am I wrong?"

"No, I'm just surprised. I just didn't expect this to happen so fast."

By noon the next day, I had breasts. My hormone prescription would continue in an effort to feminize my body, but the dosage would be lowered. It would take about eight weeks for the breasts to fully settle in to place, but I had breasts.

We relaxed the next two days at Carollyn's lovely beach front condo in the cute town of Princeton-By-The-Sea , about 30 miles south of The City. The third day she took me to her favorite dress shop in Palo Alto , where she bought me three dresses to complement my new breasts. The dresses were sizzling, to say the least.

Steve called every evening while I was away and we chatted about our days. I did not tell him about the implants, as they would be a surprise.

One early evening, while Carollyn and I were taking a barefoot walk along the sandy beach near her condo, she asked me:

"Are you and Steve serious?"

"I don't know," I responded. "He is the nicest and most understanding man I have ever met. He's handsome, caring, loving and is a great kisser. But, I'm still attracted to women. My body may be changing, but mentally, I still like women. I'm confused, but I think my feelings will change as I continue to transition."

"You may and the feelings may not," Carollyn pointed out. "I know girls who are both ways."

"I can see why," I added. "I love it when Steve's puts his arms around me. Did I tell you that he has fondled my breasts a few times? He is so soft and comforting."

"Wait until he sees me now!" Carollyn laughed as I continued.

"We haven't had sex. I don't plan to do that until after I have SRS. I have no interest in anal sex, either."

"Good for you, but how do you keep him happy?"

"Well, what do you think?"

"Oh, I could never guess, but I can assume."

"I can tell you, he is more than a mouthful." Carollyn smiled and licked her lips.

Of course, I was kidding. Steve and I had never gone that far, but I had thought about it.

From the beginning of my revelation, Steve had been so accepting and interested in my transition. He could have any other woman in the office, if not Danbury. I had never thought about having an employee-boss relationship and still don't believe they are healthy in an office setting. However, other than Carollyn, Steve has been my number one supporter and we have become best friends and like a brother to me...and, a boyfriend.

"I'm also attracted to women," I continued. "Does that make me a lesbian? I don't think so. It's just a fact of life."

"You aren't dating a woman are you?" Carollyn inquired.

"No, but there is one woman I would love to get to know."

"Me?" Carollyn laughed. So did I, but the truth was YES. I've been having thoughts about having a relationship with Carollyn since I untied her robe. Yes, she was a dear friend and meant the world to me, but I could easily fall in love with her too.

"No, it's a woman I have never met. She owns the lingerie shop in town. I've only seen her through the store window. She is so beautiful."

"Do you mean Eve?"

"Yes, that's her. I just can't get up the courage to go in to her shop. I want to go in, but my feet just won't go in that direction."

"Maybe the next time I come for a visit, we can go in to the store together. Deal?"

“Deal.”

Carollyn always had the answers for everything.

I returned home after a fabulous week with Carollyn. I had not scheduled a date for my reassignment surgery, but that was next. Carollyn assured me she would be there when I went to see Dr. Leis. I cried as I said goodbye at the airport for my trip home. My dreams were coming true.

Steve met me at the airport with a kiss and some good and bad news. I didn't know what to expect. Was it something to do with work, or with me, or what?

He took me to our favorite restaurant, so I knew it wasn't me.

“Honey,” he said, after I had told him all about my trip, other than my implants.

“The company has offered me a promotion and position in New York City .”

I gasped not knowing what to say.

He continued: “The pay is about double what I get here and I would move up in management. The perks are great too. I really don't want to leave you and the job here, but it is something I've always hoped for.

“I have two scenarios to consider. One is to stay here with you, and the other is to take the job in New York , and recommend you for my position here.”

I didn't want to lose my best friend, but I understood his predicament. There was no assurance our “affair” would continue. He deserved the promotion as he had taken our office to the top of the company's production plateau, and I would love to be the first woman office manager in the company's history.

I finally said: "Do what you think is best. New York City is not that far away, and we can see each other on weekends."

Steve said he would think about the proposal and let me and those at the company know of his decision by the end of the next week.

"If I take the job, I want to make sure you are secure here. Let me see what I can do at this end and at that end."

He reached across the table and kissed my hand.

"You mean the world to me," he said.

"You are my best friend and my biggest supporter," I stated, trying not to show too much emotion. "I want you to do what you feel is best. I can always adjust. I'm doing a lot of adjusting right now anyway." Little did he know.

Steve made his announcement at the weekly staff meeting. He was taking the position in New York . I was summoned to the home office in New York as well to interview as the new office manager. Steve accompanied me to the Big Apple to find a place to live and for the first time I slept with a man in a 5-star hotel. We even registered as husband and wife.

Oh my, was he surprised the first time we slipped into bed. He knew nothing about my implants even though I told him I had a special present for him. He didn't know what to expect.

We drove to NYC and checked in to one of the many Marriott hotels. After a lovely late evening dinner, we returned to our room. I had worn a business suit for the trip as to not reveal the new me. Since it was late and we had to meet with the company brass early the next morning, I quickly changed in to a lovely soft pink camisole, which I had purchased in San Francisco .

Steve had already dimmed the lights and was waiting for me in bed. I walked out of the bathroom, I saw Steve smiling as he leaned against his pillow and the headboard. I had unraveled my now longer than shoulder-length hair, which had been rolled to the back of my head, and let the locks fall in front of my chest.

"You are gorgeous," he exclaimed as he climbed out of the bed to greet me. He wrapped his arms around me and gave me a tongue-filled kiss. I pressed my breasts, which were still tender and positioning, against his chest. He sighed and moved his leg between my knees.

I pulled away and he asked: "Is there something wrong?"

"Just watch and enjoy!"

I didn't say another word and slowly spun around on my tip-toes as he stared. As I turned, I began to unbutton my cami, one button every for every turn. I could see the bulge in Steve's shorts. I kept my back to Steve as the last button was released and told him to "close your eyes."

I turned, with my cami completely open and took his hand and placed it on my right breasts.

"Open," I said softly.

"Oh my goodness," he proclaimed. "What, where..."

I put my index finger on his lips, took him by the hand and guided him back to the bed where I gave him full access to my new toys. I lay on my back and told him: "Enjoy."

And, enjoy we did.

My meeting with the company brass was superb. Of course, I was nervous, but the chief executive was so calming through out the two hour interview. I wore a conservative skirt and blouse with heels and a jacket. Again, I had put my hair up in a secretarial bob. I was

never asked about my sexual identity, but I was sure Steve had not only put in more than a good word, but explained my situation as well. He had better or I would never let him touch me again.

We really celebrated that evening with dinner, dancing and my first exploration of his body. I was having such a good time that I decided to do my best to lead him on. It didn't hurt that I wore one of the dresses that Carollyn had bought me — a semi-breast revealing short black and silver dress with two-tone heels. Steve was so impressed that he couldn't keep his eyes off my cleavage during dinner and he literally swept me off my feet when we danced.

Yes, I got the promotion and a much larger salary, which was perfect timing for my future sex-change surgery. When I returned home I would work with my counselor and Dr. Leis to set the big date.

Steve was quite the gentleman again in bed. He once again enjoyed exploring my new chest, which was more sensitive than usual due to the activity the night before. However, I encouraged him to "rough me up" a little and not be afraid to play with my erect pink nipples, which were ready to be kissed and more.

Physically, I could not resist Steve any longer. As we passionately kissed and he fondled my breasts, I reached my hand down into his jockey shorts and found what I had been hesitant to touch.

It wasn't as scary as I thought. Oh, yeah, I had never been on this end of sexual activity and I was a rookie at all of this, but Steve patiently guided me along every step of the way. I won't go in to all the details, but he was more than ready and after a few minutes of tickles, caressing and strokes, he erupted with a more than pleasant stream of nectar in my hand. I licked my fingers to enjoy every

drop. I cuddled up next to Steve and fell asleep, but not before fanaticizing what it would be like to have him inside me some day. Whew!!!

We returned to Danbury the following evening, but not until we had found a place for Steve to live – a nice, but small and pricy condo. I had worn my second new dress, a crPme colored long-sleeved sweater dress with black ankle boots.

For the fun of it, we continued to role play as husband and wife with the realtor, teasing each other time and time again and with me warning him: “I don’t want to hear about any women spending the night here.” The realtor’s face turned red, not knowing how to react.

Back in Danbury , Steve helped me set up my new office, in his old office. Not much was changed, except for a feminine touch. I would be work with Steve for a few days before he would leave for New York City . I would surely miss him, especially as a boss, but I knew I could do the job. And, so did he.

I continued to walk to work and passed Eve’s just about every day. Walking was good exercise and along with a semi-regular regime at the local fitness center and the hormones, I had dropped 10 pounds and my hips and waist were quickly becoming more feminine. I even stopped wearing my Veronica-5, which I had bought from Classic Curves and Espy Lopez.

I quickly settled in to my new position and our sales continued to improve week-by-week. The home office continued to send projects our way which were more challenging than ever before. My co-workers were wonderful, not only by responding to my ideas to improve production, but they were more comfortable every day working with the new woman in the office. I could not have asked for anything more, except that I missed Steve.

Steve and I talked every day on the phone and internet. He was adjusting to his new job and loved the Big Apple. Before he left, we agreed to remain as "best friends." I didn't want to tie him down and I was still unsure of my sexual identity.

I wasn't a complete woman yet, but my male sexual activity, as well as my reproductive organ, had basically shriveled up due to the hormones.

With the help and approval of my counselor, Dr. Lauren, I set the date with Dr. Leis for my SRS. I had been banking my increased salary to pay for the surgery and would take my entire three weeks of vacation. Carollyn and Dr. Lauren would accompany me to Philadelphia for the procedure and Carollyn would stay with me for as long as I needed her help. Steve would have been with me too, but he had to fly to Europe on an assignment.

The surgery was a complete success. I was thrilled. Yes, I was very sore and spent a week in Dr. Leis' care center learning how to properly dilate two or three times each day. The dilating was painful, but necessary, and Dr. Leis said it would take at least six weeks for the dilating to create a perfect cavity. I didn't care how long it would take as I didn't plan to rush in to any sexual activity. I did not miss my male organ one bit.

Dr. Lauren stayed for two days and Carollyn was with me the entire time offering advice, encouragement and support. The first day I was home and able to get out, Carollyn took me to the local Social Security office, then the Department of Motor Vehicles to get new identity cards and licenses. I was so proud to see my name as Danielle, no longer Danny, on my paperwork.

Carollyn returned to California and I returned to work three weeks after the surgery. My breasts were now perfectly in place, my laser facial treatments were complete

and my dilating was ahead of schedule. I felt so good and my confidence level was higher than it had ever been before. I could not believe I had come so far in such a short time. In less than 18 months I had gone from an average, shy, quiet man to a beautiful out-going and personable woman. I continually thanked God for helping me make it through the process.

My work life continued to thrive. I received a significant raise after one year. Yes, I continued to stay in touch with Steve, who took a week of his vacation to come stay with me after Carolyn had left for home. We were still best friends, but some of the luster had come off the rose. Neither one of us could explain it, but it might have been the fact that Steve was 15 years older than me. New York City had changed him to some extent, but he was still a gentleman... and my best friend.

Carolyn had planned to accompany me to Eve's, but with my recovery, it wasn't possible. I continued to walk past Eve's and see her in the window, but I still could not get up the nerve to enter the store. Finally, that day came, one day as I was walking home from work.

I was wearing a black jacket, short A-line leopard print skirt with matching 4-inch heeled shoes. I had my usually long hair in an up-do, as the weather had been warm.

I spotted Eve from the distance. She was talking to a lady in front of the store. She looked amazing. Her shinny black hair, with one strand falling softly to the side of her face, was pulled back to show her perfect complexion. She wore a white blouse that barely concealed her breasts, a black knee-length skirt and heels. I would die to have legs like hers. She reminded me of a 1950s Hollywood starlet. The actress Bettie Page quickly came to mind.

The butterflies were churning in my stomach as I approached the store. Whew, she is still talking to her client. I hope she doesn't even acknowledge me.

She interrupted her conversation and waved to get my attention. I tried to ignore her, but it was impossible... like the spider and the fly.

"I've seen you walk by here everyday and have waited for you to come in," she said in a lovely, alluring voice. I melt and can't reply. I'm tongue-tied and my legs are weak. My heel catches a rut in the sidewalk and I almost lost my balance. I have lost my voice.

Eve takes me by the hand as she bids good-bye to her customer and guides me in to her store. It's past the 6 o'clock closing time, so she locks the door behind us and turns the window sign to "closed."

"Relax, my friend," she insisted. "I don't bite. May I offer you a glass of wine?"

She prepares a glass of a tasty white wine for both of us and we sit on opposite couches facing each other. We both instinctively cross our legs and we take a sip from our glasses. Her legs and figure are so dynamic. I feel like a 10-year old that has yet to go through puberty.

I looked around the shop and was amazed with the selection of beautiful lingerie and evening wear.

"What am I doing here?" I ask myself.

Eve breaks the silence by formally introducing herself. She is lovely and so gracious. Her hazel eye sparkle and her off-red pinkish lips glisten. Every move excites me. If I were still a man, I would have an erection just looking at her.

"I've seen you passing my store just about every day," she said. "Why is it a young lady as pretty as you has never come in to my store?"

I take a un-lady like gulp of the wine and try to respond. The words squeak out of my mouth as if I were a stumbling fool. I'm hyperventilating.

"What?" she replied. "I don't understand a word you're saying."

We both laugh and that appears to break the ice. I take a big breath and try to explain. This time, the words come out of my mouth with understanding.

I explain to Eve that I was scared to enter a store as stylish and luxurious as hers. "To the average girl, it can be intimidating." She shook her head as if she understood.

"What's your name?" Eve asks.

"Danielle," I respond. "You can call me Dani."

"OK, Dani," she said as she began to take notes on a 4-by-6 customer information card. "Tell me about yourself."

I wasn't sure what to say, so I didn't tell her too much.

"I know you are nervous, so let me ask the questions." I answer in short bursts and don't say any more than I have to and satisfy her question.

"You have beautiful features," she continued, measuring me with her eyes. "Let's see, size 12 dress, medium to large tops, medium skirt, size 10 shoes and a 36C-28-34 shape."

"How'd you guess?" I asked. "You're 100 percent correct."

"That's my job. I have to have an eye for my clients, especially one as beautiful as you. If I don't know my clients they will never come back. The market for top-line quality lingerie and clothes is small, so it hurts when I lose a customer."

"I understand," I said. "In my business, I face the same situation every day, except I'm in computers and you're in intimate clothing." In a way, we made a connection, if we hadn't already.

"What brand of nylons do you wear?" Eve asked as she continued to fill out her card. "Could they be L'eggs."

"L'eggs, is right," I responded.

"And, bra and panties?"

"Anything that fits well," I said with an embarrassing laugh as I was far from an expert.

The questioning continued for a few more minutes and Eve excused herself. She moved like a conductor directing her orchestra. She returned with an arm full of boxes containing Secret In Lace products. She handed me a packet of nylons. I noticed the price was \$25 a pair, about six times what I pay for L'eggs.

"I may be out of my league," I told myself.

Eve opened the package and removed the nylons.

"I don't sell pantyhose here, only the best quality garter-necessary nylons," she noted, holding a pair of hose in the air for me to behold.

They were beautiful and were not straight like my L'eggs brand, but had curves where the curves are needed.

"Try these on," she insisted and pointed to the dressing room. She handed me the most beautiful panty garter belt I had ever seen, one with three straps and not the traditional two.

I kick off my heels and walk into the dressing room. I try not to let my excitement show. When I close the dressing room door, I squeal "Oh, my gosh!" Eve asked if everything is OK. It was.

I almost run my panty hose as I tore them off my legs. I couldn't wait. I slide on the garter belt panty first and discover it is crotch less. I begin to shake with excitement. I could feel a little bit of wetness between my legs. I have never worn anything like this before. With my short skirt, if I don't sit carefully, Eve will see everything. Maybe that was her intention.



The nylons are elegant and the fabric felt so good on my legs. I had a bit of a problem securing the straps and the nylons, but finally succeed. I didn't feel it would have been appropriate to ask Eve. I may have never made it out of the dressing room. I was that turned on by everything. But, I had to remember to control myself. If she happened to make a move, I was ready.

I pirouetted on my toes to admire the shape of my legs in the mirror. The nylons did make a difference. Without my skit, the view was so sexy. The garter belt made everything work. I zipped up my skirt, took another look in the mirror and walked out for Eve's assessment.

"Now, put on your shoes and look in the mirror," Eve insisted. I did.

"Fabulous!!! Your legs may have never looked so good. And I love your French manicured toe nails. It's a perfect touch."

I smiled as Eve handed me my glass of wine.

"I love how the texture feels on my legs," I replied. "But, I can't afford \$20 nylons."

"Not too many women can," Eve replied. "Consider the nylons and garter belt a gift. Once you get used to the nylons you will never want to go back to panty hose."

"I can't do that."

But Eve insisted.

"It can be a down payment on your coming back. Maybe you can refer some of the other girls at your office to me.

"While you are here, why don't we measure you for a new bra too?"

"Why? Is there something wrong with me?"

“No, but have you ever had been measured properly?”

My heart skipped a beat. This is getting up-close and personal.

“Follow me.”

We walked in to a private dressing area in the back of the store where it appeared Eve and her seamstresses did their work. There were cutting tables with fabric and patterns, sewing machines and headless half manikins.

“This is where we do our repairs and special orders,” Eve explained, pointing to various sections of the room. “We order most of our products from the main suppliers, but we also make about 20 percent of what we sell.”

Eve asked me to remove my jacket.

“If you’re too modest, you can keep your jacket on,” Eve proclaimed. “However, it’s much more natural to take the measurements with you only wearing your bra.”

I complied with her request and stood anxiously at attention.

“Your bra is not worthy of your lovely breasts,” Eve replied as she studied my appearance. “Now stand straight.”

Eve began to trace the outline of my bra, which took my breath away. Her touch was soft and caring and she was a true professional. She was however turning me on again.

For a brief second, she inadvertently grazed the nipple of my bra-covered left breast with her finger. I almost hit the ceiling. I wanted to reach out and kiss her or put her head between my breasts, but I knew better. “Be good,” I said to myself over and over again.

Eve stepped back and gave me a second look. "Perfect," she proclaimed. "All done."

Eve was the perfect lady. Nothing seemed to interfere with her work.

"Would you like to see what a perfectly fitted bra looks like?" she asked. I nodded approval.

I expected Eve to use one of the showroom manikins, instead, I stood in amazement as she removed her blouse to reveal a shiny white 50's bra with pointed cups. The bra modestly covered most of her large breasts and was more of a turn-on than if she were walking around topless.

"See how it fits?" she asked without a blush. "This is how a bra should be worn. Of course, this bra is for every day use. We have special bras for sun dresses, evening wear and every other occasion you can think of.

"Now, we need to make an appointment for next week," Eve continued as she buttoned her blouse.

"Why?" I asked, although in the back of my mind I was hoping she would ask to see me again.

"I will need you for a bra fitting. Please bring three or four of your dresses, so I can be assured everything will fit properly. We can't have you out there in the world in the wrong size bra."

We both laughed. It was close to 9 o'clock. Where did the time go? I walked back to the couch to get my purse.

"I've gotta go," I said. "It's getting late."

"Would you like a ride home," Eve inquired, handing me a stack of her business cards. I wanted to say "Yes" but politely said "No."

"I only live around the corner and down the street."

"In the condos?" she inquired.

"Yes, I do."

“Do you know Michelle Popkov? She’s one of my best clients.”

“No, I don’t.”

“Maybe you can look her up.”

Eve went to her computer and found Michelle’s number.

“I’ll ask her first if it would be OK for you to contact her. If it’s OK, then I will exchange numbers.”

“That is so sweet,” I replied as we walked to the door.

I leaned over and gave Eve a kiss on the cheek. She reciprocated with a kiss on my lips. “She’s turning me on again and I bet she doesn’t even know it,” I said to myself.

I licked my lips over-and-over as I walked home in the last bit of the sunlight. I didn’t know if I could wait a week before my next fitting.

I wrapped myself in work, trying not to get too excited over the prospects of seeing Eve again. I intentionally walked another direction to work so I would not run in to her. If she was to ask, I would tell her I was out of town. In fact, I had to cancel the appointment when I was called to New York for a one-day corporate meeting.

I saw Steve for a short time while in NYC and he immediately noticed the shape of my legs. I briefly explained my encounter with Eve and he told me to “go for it” if I was so inclined. Only time would tell.

My new appointment day with Eve finally came. Eve had left a message on my answering machine while I was in NY confirming the date and assuring me my new bra(s) were ready. She did not mention the price, but I was ready to pay whatever was required to be alone with Eve again.

I arrived again at closing time, carrying the four outfits she asked me to bring. Once again Eve locked the door behind us and turned the sign. She was wearing a similar black and white outfit however the skirt was full and flowing, not A-line. I was wearing a flowery sundress under a bolero jacket and pink sandal heels. I know she was impressed.

She asked me to sit and I did so obediently. She was so captivating and I felt as if I was under her spell. Once again we both enjoyed a glass of her wonderful wine and a plate of crackers and cheese she had prepared. We start with a little small talk, before she said with a wink "where should we begin."

If there was anything I'd like to see at this point it would be her up close and personal. I thought, "Is there something wrong with that?"

She gave a little chuckle at my non-response, reached across the table, rested her hand on my nylon encased knee and left it there maybe a moment or two longer. She whisked a little hair from my face and dragged her manicured fingers along my cheek as she moved the misplaced hair behind my ear. My body starts to shake in her presence.

I remark at just how intoxicatingly beautiful she is.

"Let's go find those bras," she said to break the silence.

"Sounds good to me," I replied, barely getting the words out of my mouth.

The bras were beautiful, silky and shiny, similar to the style bra she was wearing the first night I was at the shop, but not as pointed. One bra was for regular wear, another

for sundresses and a third for casual wear. She was a master.

"Now, go in the dressing room and try one on," she insisted. I was so excited and I could tell she was as well.

It took me a few minutes to get the bra to fit just right. The bra has underwire and half cups, which pushed my breasts up in all the right places for the ultimate exposure in a sun dress. When I looked in the mirror, I was so excited and felt more like a woman than ever before.

"Splendid," Eve proclaimed as I walked out of the dressing room. She ran her fingers along the bra straps so they would align with my dress straps. "Let's take a couple of pictures."

I posed and posed. What was to be four or five pictures turned in to 20. I was so excited and so was Eve.

"Now try on the regular bra with one of your suits," she insisted.

The second and the third bras fit perfectly with my chosen outfits and Eve was impressed.

"Have you ever thought of modeling," she asked.

"I'd love to," I replied.

"Maybe you can be a part of my annual show."

"That would be so much fun. When is it?"

"The winter wear show will be in October. I'll let you know. Michelle is going to participate too. Oh, I forgot to tell you that she would love to get to know you."

"First things first," I thought.

I returned to the dressing room to change back into my sundress. As I started to remove the bra, the clasp stuck to my dress zipper and I could not get it to release. My arms are not shaped like the average woman's, so I

could not get my hands back to where they were needed. I was in a pickle.

“Eve could you help me?” I asked through the door in frustration.

Eve politely knocked and entered the cramped space. She used a little pair of pliers to release the clasp. My dress slipped to my waist and the bra straps began to slide off my shoulders. From behind, Eve placed her hands on my shoulders in an effort to keep the straps in position and preserve my modesty.

The opportunity I was waiting for occurred quickly and I became the aggressor. I took Eve’s hands in mine, wrapped them around my body and placed them on my bra-less breasts. She did not seem to be shocked by my actions and began to tickle my nipples. I pressed my buttocks into her groin area and felt a little bulge. She pressed right back. I arched my back and raised my hands towards the ceiling to get the full effect of her touch. The small room was getting hot and heavy.

I moaned and so did she. She whispers in my ear, “You haven’t seen anything yet.” My heart again skipped a few beats because I knew what we both wanted.

I turned around to face Eve and received a kiss square on the lips. Our tongues intertwined and I leaned back against the wall with my legs spread. My dress had fallen to the ground and I was standing face-to-face with the most beautiful woman I had ever met wearing only my garter-belt, panties, nylons and heels.

We continued to kiss as Eve pressed me against the wall. I began to undo her blouse. I wanted to get to her breasts. She did not resist. Off went her blouse and bra. Her gorgeous breasts were now in my hands and mouth. I licked, tickled, kissed and caressed. Oh what a sensation. I wanted her more than ever.

Eve took my hand and led me through the store. Luckily the window shades were drawn. What a sight it would have been to see two topless women wandering through the aisles.

Eve led me to a doorway and up a flight of stairs to her living quarters above the store. The bedroom was around the corner and I did not resist her lead. The bed was covered with pink satin sheets, which complemented the wallpaper and furniture.

We fell on the bed in a heap and continued the passionate kissing and feeling, even more intense than in the dressing room.

Eve ran her fingers along my legs from my toes to my inner thigh. I almost blew a gasket, I was so excited. I was laying on my back as Eve straddled over me, still wearing her skirt, nylons and heels. I could again feel wetness between my legs and wanted more. She moved her hand further up my legs and touched my clitoris. Oh, it felt so good. She spread my lips with her fingers then stuck one inside me. I started humping up and down and she got the hint. I closed my eyes and felt Eve's tongue lick up drop after drop of my first female orgasm.

Eve removed her skirt and lay on top of me so we could move in rhythm together. We continued to tongue kiss and we didn't say a word. I was shaking and my head started to spin in anticipation.

Eve asked me if I wanted more. Wasn't it obvious?

Suddenly, I felt something hard at the edge of my love spot. I didn't care what it was. If I could handle the pain of dilations for three months, I could handle anything. At least I hoped I could. This was my first time.

I reached down to help Eve move the projectile into me and discovered the unexpected.

I opened my eyes. Eve was smiling and looking as pretty as ever. Her usually perfect hair was hanging in her face. She put her finger on my lips and asked me not to speak. I looked down and found my hand clutching a penis. Her penis. From under her garter belt was protruding eight inches of rock solid tissue.

“Don’t worry,” she said in a sexy and loving tone. “I will explain later.”

I wanted Eve so much I guess it didn’t matter if she was male, female or she male. I spread my legs even further and moved a pillow under my buttocks. She cautiously entered. I reached around her with my hands and pulled her in. Having Eve inside me was the most sensational feeling of my life.

She road me for what seemed like an hour, but was actually a few minutes. She made me erupt again and sent shock waves through my body. I looked up at her glistening face and I smile back, knowing she was covered by my orgasm. Wowzah!!!

Eve rolled over to the other side of the bed and we held each other tight. I told Eve how perfect she was and we kissed again. I didn’t want the night to end.

Finally I came to my senses and began to feel ashamed of what I did.

“Why didn’t you tell me you were a man?”

“I wanted to, but I couldn’t. You are so pretty and I wanted you more than you would ever have anticipated.”

“I trusted you,” I said as my mood went from satisfaction to anger. “You took advantage of me.”

“Yes, I did, but you didn’t resist.”

“I don’t know if anybody could resist you. But, I feel betrayed.”

I got up off the bed and looked for my clothes. I remembered they were on the dressing room floor. I headed for the stairway.

"I'm out of here."

"Wait," Eve insisted. "I'm sorry. I never wanted to hurt you. If you give me five minutes, I can explain everything."

"OK," I said, "But this better be good."

Eve threw me a robe as I sat on the edge of the bed and listened to what I figured would be Eve's weak explanation. I was furious and felt I had been used. I wondered how many others she had taken advantage of in the past.

"The original name of the store was Adam's Fine Fashions," Eve explained. "I almost went bankrupt with a bad sales model and a lack of customers. I had to let my staff go, I moved in to the apartment upstairs and pondered what to do.

"One day, a valued customer and dear friend asked why I did not have any saleswomen. I explained my situation which did not satisfy her question.

"If you're too cheap to hire anybody, why don't you start dressing as a woman?" she insisted. "I bet your sales would go up immediately."

"I pondered the situation over a weekend and decided to give it a try. I studied the Secrets In Lace website and fell in love with their Bettie Page image. To make a long story short, in less than one month, Adam's became Eve's.

"I hired a temporary sales woman and went to New York to a feminine makeover school. I never knew one existed until I found the school on the internet. I was fortunate to be slight and petite so finding shoes and clothes was not a problem. I could order everything through the store. But, I needed help.

"I went to the school for two weeks with non-stop classes and experiences. It was expensive, but it was worth it. When I returned, I closed the store for two weeks, changed the name as well as my own. I started living as a woman during work hours and enjoyed it so much it evolved in to full time. I have never regretted what I did and the store and sales blossomed.

"I let my hair grow and Stephanie at the salon on 4th Street helped me develop my Bettie Page image."

"I go to Stephanie too," I interrupted. "She's wonderful."

"Yes she is. She has meant everything to me, until I met you."

I blushed as my anger began to cool.

"I continued to take feminization courses on the internet and in New York , and still do. One can never get enough education.

"I had implants about three years ago, but will never have reassignment surgery.

"So that's my story. I'm sorry if I hurt you. I only want the best for you. You are a very special person. It was just hard to resist you."

"The feeling is mutual," I replied, as I moved back towards the bed.

My feelings had quickly changed. I felt sorry for Eve, but also admired her. I had only come in to her shop to try on a pair of nylons and I got much, much more.

I lay down again next to Eve. She was crying. I held her in my arms and we cuddled. We fell asleep in each other's arms.

The next morning, I awoke. I had to get to work. Eve was not in sight. In fact, I was sleeping in my room, not hers.

“How did I get here,” I asked myself.

I brushed back my long hair from my eyes and walked to the bathroom.

“Oh my God,” I screamed as I walked past the mirror. “What happened?”

I was wearing only boxer shorts. My face was covered with stubble, my chest was flat and hairy and a penis hung between my legs.

I was in shock.

Where was Eve? What happened to my perfect female body?

I closed my eyes and prayed all this would go away. When I opened them again, nothing had changed. I staggered to a chair and collapsed in the cushions. My head was hurting and my brain was swirling.

I looked in my closet and fortunately found my old feminine items were right where I had left them, . I ran to the computer and did a Google search. The Vanity Club was for real and so was Carollyn Olson.

The phone rang.

“Should I answer the phone?” I thought. “Why not, this may be the answer.”

“Hey Dan,” the man at the other end of the line said as I picked up the phone. “This is Adam at Everett’s Auto Repair. You forgot to pick up your car last night. It’s all ready to go.”

I hung up the phone and smiled.

I realized it had all been a dream.

However, I knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to fulfill my fantasy with or without an Eve. I would begin doing so today.

I went back to the computer and viewed the Vanity Club site. I hesitated, and then e-mailed Carollyn Olson, who wrote me back immediately. I left a message with for my boss Steve that we needed to talk. Then, I redialed the phone and called the local hair salon.

“Hello, this is Stephanie. “May I help you?”

I smiled and tried not to laugh. We set an appointment for that afternoon.

I reopened my feminine closet door and chose what I would wear.

I was ready to take the first steps on the long and winding road to happiness.

*Editor's Note: The Bettie Page collection and other Secrets In Lace items can be viewed at:
www.secretsinlace.com*

Welcome Home

By Paula Gaikowski

The forces of nature would come together that year in suburban Atlanta . All the ingredients for a monstrous storm loomed. There was a bored pageant mother, the Atlanta Cotillion, and myself. As with many forces of nature such as hurricanes, earthquakes and floods, they shape land and change lives. Now the perfect storm was forming on the horizon, and once it touched the landscape, my life would be changed forever.

Thankfully another long night was over and the early morning light crept through the windows. Day break chased away the demons that had kept me from sleeping most nights. After 5 years in the US Army and 3 tours in Iraq and Afghanistan I was back home. There were no parades or parties, slaps on the back or free beers. I just know ever since I came home I never felt that I was truly

home. Something didn't click and at night I couldn't shut my mind off.

I was having trouble finding a niche in civilian life. The Veteran's Administration calls it Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I tried several jobs, then college, but found little joy or sense of belonging. It was more of a riddle, or a puzzle, than a fear. The only problem was I didn't have the pieces of the puzzle let alone the answer.

I tied on my worn running shoes and put my hair into a pony tail. I hadn't cut it since I got out of the Army. I guess it was my way of rebelling against the authority I had grown to resent. Things always seemed to be better when I ran, peaceful, rhythmic and in control. After 5 miles, I rounded the corner back to my mother's house. There were cars out front. It was a Saturday morning and the house would be filled with people, my Mom, Aunt Leslie and my older sisters all at the kitchen table. Here at their weekly rendezvous they shared the week's events. I envied them, their energy was so contagious and up lifting it was good to be around them. I grabbed a bottle of water out of the fridge and pulled up a chair, sitting just outside their circle.

My Aunt Leslie greeted me with a warm and genuine smile; her eyes were filled with affection. I could tell they had been talking about me. Oh yes, I thought, the prodigal son, the wayward boy, and his wasted youth, I'm sure they lamented.

My eyes darted around the room, "Okay what's up?" I asked?

Aunt Leslie spoke: "Well Rob, it's just an idea I really hoped you'd consider." She used her warm smile to soften her words.

“Well it’s just that, the Atlanta Cotillion is in two weeks and I haven’t found a debutante to sponsor at my modeling agency.”

The Cotillion is a very important fundraising event for AIDs in Atlanta .

“You have to understand that in my business it’s important that I am involved and supportive,” she added with emphasis. “I have several pledges that total over \$5,000 but that’s all for naught unless I have a debutante soon. And I should explain to you that the debutantes are... well they’re ummm.”

She waved her hand for effect and paused before spouting it out. “Men!”

The word just kind of hung there for me to digest.

“Typically one of my male models happily fills the role of a debutante. But it seems this year they are either all too busy or not interested.”

Before she could finish and grasp the strangely uncomfortable expression on my face, my Mom spoke.

“Robert, before you answer, I want you to consider how important The Cotillion is to Aunt Leslie. She has always been there for you.”

That was true. Growing up, my Aunt Leslie had helped my mother through a divorce and many times had been there to support the family emotionally and financially.

I stood up quickly, spilling my water bottle, my hands balled at my side, I glared at my Mom.

“You are either joking...or crazy! Either way I’m out of here!”

The look on my Mom's face confirmed her disappointment. My Aunt just sighed and rolled her eyes as I hurried out the door and back into a run.

I didn't get back to the house until early evening. I showered and change into sweats and sat down at my desk. After a few minutes my Mom stood at the door.

I could feel her eyes boring down on me; I ignored her for as long as I could, then looked up.

"Aunt Leslie has gone daft!" I spit the words at her.

My Mom leaned forward, a hand on her hip and her finger pointed at me like a laser. Her words were whispered but angry.

"Aunt Leslie is the reason you had a house to live in and clothes on your back Mr. Macho Army man! Right now she needs us to help her. This event is an essential part of her business and she is asking us to help for the first time ever.

"Nobody has to know about this. It's just one night. Your sisters and I will help you, and remember it's all for fun and for charity. It's about time you did something constructive, you've been wallowing in self pity for the last 12 months."

She turned from the door, and moved closer. Her eyes were so intense; they seemed to reach inside me. Now in an even softer more commanding whisper, she said. "I've left some things in the sewing room, I suggest you take some time and look at what you might be wearing. I'll expect an answer tomorrow morning, and by the way, if you decide not to help our family and household, I suggest you find somewhere else to live."

She made me angry. So be it I thought as I laid there sleepless that night; I'll find a place to crash, maybe visit an old squad mate in Florida .

As I laid there my mind kept going back to the sewing room, what had she left there? Maybe I should help? My curiosity peaked and at 3:00AM. I crept down to the basement sewing room. It was here in this room that my sisters and Mom stored all the dresses and accessories *they* needed to compete in pageants. Hanging in one corner was a royal blue gown with a note: *“Robert- I believe this would work for you. Please consider- Mom”*

I found myself oddly drawn to this beautiful blue dress. What harm could it do to give this a try? Besides, everyone in the house was sleeping.

The dress felt exotic as it fell down around me. It had a mysterious effect on me, it hugged my waist and accented my hips giving me an hour glass figure, and the cups curved forward giving the illusion of a bust. I combed out my hair and found a tube of lipstick. I was bewildered by the image that stared back at me in the faded mirror. My goodness it was a girl! I stood there fascinated, looking back at me was a younger version of my mother. Somewhere deep inside I felt a genuine pride and a sense of faint joy. I turned toward a sound and suddenly I met my mother’s eyes in the doorway.

I’m pretty sure time and space stopped as we both look intently at each other. I could see a mix of concern and then approval on her face.

She spoke first: *“I’m glad to see you’ve changed your attitude”*.

Still looking for a way out of my odd predicament, I smiled and said, *“I’m sorry about my behavior.”*

Mom sat down next to me and smiled; she adjusted my dress and fixed my hair. She spoke softly, *“What were you afraid of?”*

I evaded her eyes then looked forward and saw the both of us in the mirror. She smiled, and then I did too. "I was afraid of what people would say or think"

She gently held my hand, and thoughtfully began to speak.

"After your father left, I knew that I could raise your sisters, but always worried about you, we didn't have a lot in common. I couldn't take you camping or fishing and I don't understand sports." She ran her fingers across my dress and touched my hair, "But this, fashion, beauty, make-up and gowns, now that is something I understand, something I could share with you this one time.

"I'm hoping as odd as this maybe, that this could be our little adventure that nobody has to know about. I'm hoping you can maybe learn something about women and maybe about yourself. You've tried everything else so maybe looking at life from a different point of view could help you."

There was an awkward silence. "So what do you think?"

I couldn't hide my feelings; a smile appeared exposing my secret.

My mother smiled back, "I think I know what that grin means!"

Like a star athlete called out of retirement to save the day, my mother was prepared to show the Atlanta Cotillion that she could proudly turned a lanky, boorish ex-soldier into a proper southern lady. Her zeal frightened me, although I was learning that there was a small part of me that for some reason was drawn to this female realm of dresses, shoes, jewelry and make-up.

The two weeks leading up to the cotillion were full of activity. I spent most of the time with my Aunt Leslie

down at her agency. With the help of her and my sisters I readied for the big event. There were gown fittings, shopping, hair appointments, waxing, and modeling lessons. In due course I accepted the idea of being a debutante and tolerated my initiation into their world. Besides I was busy and enjoying my time helping Aunt Leslie run things at the agency.

Finally the day of The Cotillion came.

In the morning I went with my Aunt to get a manicure and pedicure. She chose a delicious deep red. Then it was home for hair and make-up. Two of my sisters helped with a makeover using their makeup and hairstyling skills, dark smoky eyes with long false lashes and red lips that matched my nails. They set my hair with curlers and after combing it out the curls bounced around my face and shoulders. I stepped into the dress and one of my sisters zipped it up. It felt magnificent as it hugged my body. I slipped on my heels and thought of Cinderella.

The dress was breathtaking; it fit my body as if it had been made just for me. The silk folds hugged my hips accentuating the curves of my undergarments and padding. The deep blue was brilliant against my auburn hair. The neckline was trimmed with jet black lace to match the peep toe pumps I wore, and the slit in skirt flowed out above my knees showing off my legs.

My hair that I had grown out of rebellion now hung delicately, its layers framing my face. My other sister finished the look with a ruby necklace and earrings that matched my nails and lips. We stood there stunned. I wasn't prepared for this nor were they. My Mom was right, this would certainly change the way I looked at the world.

We were startled back to reality by the sound of the door bell. It was my date. My Aunt had arranged for Dr. David Davenport, a family friend, to escort me to the ball.

My older sister went downstairs to answer the door and politely ask him to wait in the parlor while she went to see if I was ready. She came back upstairs and insisted I make him wait at least 10 minutes. Having been in his shoes before and now literally wearing a different style shoe all together I thought this was silly and wanted to spare him. I gave in, however, and spent another 10 minutes primping in front of the mirror. I did want to be perfect, didn't I?

The moment of truth had arrived. The last time I felt this pounding panic in my head was right before patrol in Iraq . I couldn't believe I was doing this.

Using all the movements and etiquette I had learned in the last two weeks I slowly made my grand entrance down the staircase. David was sitting on the couch holding a small box when he looked up. I stopped in the center of the room as my Aunt had instructed and smiled silently. I waited for him to make the first move. He jumped up nervously and held out the white box while timidly smiling.

"Here, I brought you a corsage," he stammered, not expecting a man to look as good as I did. "Leslie said you were wearing blue and this would complement it."

I politely thanked him and fumbled with the box. One of my sisters appeared suddenly and rescued me from my feeble attempts to open the box. She helped pin the beautiful mini-bouquet above my right breast and suggested some pictures.

David was not only a prominent physician in the Atlanta area, he was a hunk. He stood about 6-foot-2 and weighed about 190 pounds. He had dreamy blue eyes and soft dirty-dish water blonde hair. I felt honored that he accepted my Aunt's invitation to serve as my escort.

Arm in arm, then with David behind me with his hands on my hips, we posed several times for the camera. It felt so surreal, but wonderful to be the center of attention. I had said earlier that I had adjusted to the idea of being a debutante, but now embarrassingly I was beginning to actually enjoy it.

We both relaxed a bit on the car ride over. I told him all about myself, the Army, school, work, and how I was drafted for The Cotillion by my Aunt. Although he understood who I was and why I was going, there was no doubt that he was treating me as a lady and his date for the evening. He also explained, that as a sponsor for the event, he had "dated" other debutants in the past.

I decided to just go along with everything. If everyone around me wanted a debutante then I would be the best one I could. David looked over and said "You have the most beautiful hair and are much prettier than any of the others I have escorted to the dance."

I turned bright red and peeped out "Thank you!"

We arrived at The Cotillion arm in arm. After finding our table, David was the perfect gentleman and took his time to introduce me to his friends and business associates. Most gracious were the other women and debutantes like me, all were so beautiful and intrigued by my first time experience. I felt like I was in my element. Why I don't know, but I did.

The evening went quickly as we dined, danced and watched the crowning of the Queen. We finished the evening with a few other couples in the hotel bar at 3:00AM. A bit tipsy and in 3 inch heels, I was no longer uptight about holding David's hand as we walked to the car.

We chatted all the way home about so many different things, crazy roommates, the Braves and our favorite beers. It was all so effortless. I leaned across the seat and

put my head on his shoulder as he drove. It just seemed like the natural thing to do.

I thought to myself, "We could be buddies." But then I recognized that would never happen. As the car turned onto my street I realized that it would be time to say goodnight, and that he was going to walk me to the door. Would he try to kiss me? A wave of panic swept over me, and I realized it was not the thought of him kissing me that was troubling. It was the chance that he would not!

Why didn't I prepare myself for this possibility? My confused mind screamed. How could I have let this happen? Why did I let Mom talk me into this? Where did these feelings come from? I enjoyed it all so much; the glamour, the fashion and the attention. I had flown close to the flame and unleashed something that had been hidden inside me for too long. How did I let this happen? Now to my own disbelief, I sat there anxiously hoping and praying that he would kiss me tonight.

The car rolled quietly to a stop in the driveway, the kitchen light was on but the house looked still.

"Let me get your door," David said as he stepped out of the car. I quickly touched up my lipstick as he walked around the car to open my door. I gave him my hand and noticed his eyes on my legs as I stood up. I took tiny steps and he held me close as we walked to the door.

I turned to face him. My voice grew silent until it was almost too quiet.

"I want you to know tonight was wonderful; it was like a dream for me. I learned things I never knew about myself."

He reached out and held my hands between us. Not trusting himself to speak he hesitated.

“When I saw you come down the stairs tonight I was astonished! You were so beautiful. My heart melted the instant I saw you. You, Roberta, are a woman, a beautiful, sexy woman. You put the other women at The Cotillion to shame.”

He moved closer as I closed my eyes. Our lips met for an instant, then again. With his arms around me now, he took control and pulled me close, and covered my lips with an adoring kiss. He pushed me against the door kissing me again, his hands now under my dress and around my hips. I sighed with pleasure. Our passion grew, and at that moment I wanted so bad to be a woman, his woman.

Then something burst inside me, I felt my soul come to life. At that second it became clear, “I was a woman! I am a woman!” I had solved the riddle that had kept me awake those nights.

We both caught our breath as he reached over and kissed me gently. Saying “good night” he walked away into the darkness. I watched the taillights of the car disappear around the corner.

I stared into the hushed emptiness and then felt a puff of air behind me as the door opened. My Mom and my sisters had watched it all through the curtains. I stepped inside and they encircled me with hugs. I felt my Mom kiss my cheek “Welcome Home, Roberta, Welcome Home.”

I slept well for the first time in years. The bright sunlight woke me at 11:00AM and there was a smile on my face. When my parents were growing up, the school teachers would force left handed students to use their right hand. Awkward and unnatural, the students would adapt to the norm that society forced on them.

Last night I wrote with my left hand for the first time!!

I put on one of sisters robes, combed my still-styled hair and applied a little lipstick. I admired my shaped brows and beautiful red acrylic nails. "They're here to stay," I said to myself.

When I entered the kitchen the other ladies were gathered around the table reading the newspapers and enjoying their Sunday brunch. It grew quiet as I took my place at the table, intentionally selecting a flowered mug for my coffee. I sat down and couldn't stop smiling.

My older sister asked teasing me "Is he a good kisser?"

I know it was an attempt to make me uncomfortable, but I just smiled back "Oh yes."

"Why are you still dressed as a girl?" asked my other sister.

It was funny, but it was all so clear to me. It would take time for them all to understand that they would soon have a new sister.

"There's something I have to tell you all, it may come as a shock but if you think about the events of the last two weeks it should be clear.

"Deep down, I discovered last night, that I am a woman."

They appeared shocked, but didn't say a word. I kept talking whether they wanted to listen or not.

"For years I've struggled to adapt to a role that society forced on me. Tomorrow I intend to schedule an appointment with a therapist in Atlanta who specializes in gender identity disorder. This will begin a process that will see me through a real life test; hormone therapy, and finally surgery. I love you all very much and look forward to my new relationship with you as your sister. I hope I have your support?"

Everybody seemed mystified and looked at each other not wanting to be the first to speak. I looked toward my older sister, and spoke: "I going to need some clothes. I intend to go shopping early this week, but could I borrow a few skirts, maybe a dress or two?"

Trying to process all the information she had just received, she blurted out curiously, "You're going to start right now?"

I nodded my head in a positive way and smiled, "Yes I never intend to wear a pair of men's pants again!"

Meanwhile, my mom, who had been taking this all in, stood and shoed my sisters away with her hands.

"Go on girls, go, we need to have a talk."

The girls filtered out, still a bit confused. They kissed me on the cheek as they were leaving.

My mother slowly poured a cup of coffee and stirred in some milk. She seemed to be preparing her words. We sat in silence as she played with her hair. I ran my nail over the flowered design on my cup.

"My intention was for this little adventure to motivate you into action," she sternly said. "I wanted it to scare you into moving out and getting a job, maybe into construction or back in the Army. My theory was that all this femininity would send you running. I guess that theory didn't pan out?" We both erupted into laughter.

"I'm not going to try and talk you out of this," she continued. "I had a speech prepared about how one glamorous night doesn't make you a woman, how women are under paid, harassed by men, have higher poverty rates, responsible for child care, physical abuse, and constantly under estimated. You'll find out all these things soon enough."

She paused to reflect and gather her thoughts. She raised her voice a bit.

“I’m not really surprised, as your mother, and as a woman. I’ve always felt there was something different about you. Now it all makes sense.”

“It is my hope that you will learn the joy of being a woman and what it means to love deeply, to nurture, and to create beauty. My wish is that you come to benefit from the privileges of womanhood; the emotional freedom, the range of expression, the sexual and social power we can exercise over men. It’s a different way of life, a different way of living.”

She stood up and motioned for me to stand. She opened her arms and said, “Let me give my new daughter a hug.” As we embrace I heard her whisper, “Welcome to our world, Roberta.”

Most transgender people will slowly transition their social and physical role. Even before my first meeting with a therapist, I had decided on a total immersion philosophy. I spent the day moving Robert out of my room and Roberta in. I packed all my clothes in boxes and took them to Goodwill. I changed the bedding and curtains to a cheery flowered print. I pulled an old vanity out of the basement to use for my makeup. In my closet I hung a few dresses that my sister gave me, along with two pair of cute shoes. I was ready; I couldn’t wait until tomorrow and the start of my life. Finally!!!

I woke to the sound of an alarm clock the first time since getting out of the Army. I let the warm water of the shower melt away any uncertainty. That former part of me has surrendered, and there is no doubt, and now my life has purpose.

The feminine scent of the shaving cream and the smoothness of my legs helped calm me. I feel Roberta take hold inside me.

I dried myself off, and then sprayed on some perfume. I breathed in the aroma, the scent was gratifying, almost like a drug, I feel certain parts of my brain come to life, as if they were dormant, but now were born again, they burst forward igniting senses and desires no longer forced hidden.

As I put on my foundation garments, a female silhouette took shape in the mirror, the padding and forms did their job. I felt a slight disappointment that I needed them at all. My eyes went to the juncture of my thighs, the curvature of my lower abdomen, it looked so feminine.

Soon, I think, it will be.

I sit down and start my makeup. I've become practiced recently, better than my sisters. The foundation goes on with a MAC brush. Oh, yes, I think, I have all the girly stuff. Then I apply powder. I brush it off softly creating an even matte finish; next I contour, then I highlight.

Slowly I trace the brows; their arch brings another hint of femininity to my face. They came out perfect. I'm pleased.

My eyes are important; I take my time getting them just right, the shadow, the liner and finally the mascara.

The lips are next. I trace a cupid's bow with the lip liner bringing my upper lip closer to my nose, an important feminine feature. I finish with two shades of lipstick; my lips take on a fullness and depth. Some blush, and then a touch-up and I'm done.

Not bad, I think, but there's still more. I clip on my earrings and I remember that I must get my ears pierced this week, a gold bracelet, a watch, a birthstone ring, and

on the other hand a gold band with the symbol for Woman.

Today I'll be wearing a skirt with a red jacket. I step into the skirt, pull it up and then zip it. It fits nicely. I smooth it running my hands over the curves on my hips. I slip a dark blue blouse over my head I pull the buttons close over my bust, yes, "my bust"; I like the way they look. I hope future hormone treatments will help me reach my C-cup goal.

My blazer adds the final touch to my business-look ensemble.

Finally I comb out my hair, a deep auburn that has become my trademark and envy of my sisters.

I step toward the mirror; there she is "Roberta." A huge smile flashes across my face, happiness takes over, I have a sense of relief. Why did I wait so long? It was all so clear now. I primp in the mirror then pack my purse, credit cards, license, and cash. It was the first day of the rest of my life. I walked outside, feeling sure of myself for the first time in years.

Aunt Leslie was expecting me, and I'm sure Mom had updated her on my recent awakening and decision. However I'm not sure she was ready for the attractive, confident, young woman who greeted her.

Aunt Leslie jumped when I quietly knocked on her office door, her hand on her chest, and her mouth open wide. She came running over to me, and stopped short of a hug to consider what she was seeing. She spoke hesitantly, "Robert-ta, Roberta?" She quickly corrected herself. "My goodness, my goodness, if I hadn't seen you at The Cotillion I'd never believe it was you. You're so, sooo pretty!"

I blushed. "Thank you Aunt Leslie."

There was silence and then she again said "You're so pretty. I just can't shake seeing you in your Army uniform. It's hard to believe it's the same person."

I fiddled with my necklace and smiled, "It's really not the same person, it's the real me, not the façade I was forced to present for so many years."

She took a deep breath and composed herself; it was time for the serious talk. She curled her lower lip then spoke.

"Roberta I have to admit that you've impressed me in the last two weeks. You seem to have naturally adapted to life as a woman. That's what is so amazing to us all. But, I am a bit concerned that you may be getting swept up in the newness and the excitement of this and perhaps, you are making a mistake? I just don't want you to do anything rash that maybe can't..."

She slowed her speech and nervously added: "Something perhaps that can't be undone."

It was the talk of a future sex change operation that had got her in a dither. I let out a small giggle. "Aunt Leslie, that's at least a year away! Oh gosh, I not running out, and getting ahh ummm, you know."

I used a karate chop to make my point. "In fact I have to live and work as a woman at least for a year."

We both considered what was said, and to break the silence I said, "Now Aunt Leslie, speaking of work, I enjoyed working here the last few weeks and now need a job. Having you as a mentor, both professionally and personally would be a God send. And you could keep an eye on me; make sure I didn't do anything rash." We both laughed until our sides ached.

Once we both composed ourselves, Aunt Leslie, said "I'd love to have you here, you were so helpful last week,

I wondered if I could ever get you back. Come let's get you settled in. You can have the desk you used last week."

My life was changing so quickly. One day I was a boorish and coarse ill manner man and the next week I was a stylish and elegant woman working as an account executive at one of Atlanta 's top public relations - modeling firms.

Total immersion might be a good way to describe my transition. I totally embraced the art of womanhood and I was lucky to work with so many fashionable women. >From them I learned the finer aspects of wardrobe, make-up and deportment. After all, that was the business of being a model. Every day I wore either a dress or skirted suit with heels and pantyhose. I'd often hear other women complain about how uncomfortable they were. But at the end of the day, when my heels pinched at my toes and my legs hurt from walking in them, I'd smile to myself and was thankful that I now had the privilege of wearing beautiful clothes and shoes and of being a woman. To me they were a badge of honor, something one earned for being a woman.

My therapist was amazed at how quickly I had assimilated into the role of a working woman. She made the recommendation for HRT at the earliest possible time, three months. I filled the prescription for Estradoil that very day.

As my body blossomed over the next six months so did my career. I took on more responsibility at the office. I started to coordinated conferences and trade shows, arranging for the facilities, creating agendas and providing speakers and staff. I met people from all over the country in many different professions. A quiet joy flourished inside me, I was being respected and valued professionally

by men and women for whom I was meant to be. It was a time of renaissance and discovery for me.

Along with my spiritual rebirth came my new body now responding to the signals the estrogens sent through my system. My hair was always a beautiful auburn and it was now luxuriant. My skin had softened and my hips had rounded. As I looked in the mirror one morning while I dressed I ran my hands over my soft, almost C-cup breasts. This caused goose bumps. Deep down I yearned and desired to have someone else's hands caress and embrace me.

In the past I had always loved women, but now as I evolved professionally, socially, and physically so did my sexuality. I was surprised by my growing need to be desired by a man. I wanted to submit myself to a man as his wife. In my heart, I realized that man was my first date, Dr. David Davenport.

It was the end of a hectic week and I was looking forward to dinner and drinks with some of the girls from the office. However I had one quick meeting with the Emory Hospital Fundraiser staff to start their fall Emory Arts campaign.

I arrived late at the Emory administration building and rushed up the stairs. I started to doubt my resolution to always wear heels and a dress as I wobbled upward. I reached the meeting floor; I turned the corner and literally bumped into Dr. Davenport. There we were face to face as if we had just finished that kiss on that romantic evening nine months ago.

His eyes wide, his expression, one of uncomfortable surprise, "RRR-Robert?" he whispered.

Horrified, I snarled back, "It's Roberta, do I look like a Robert to you, doctor?"

Now embarrassed, he started to stutter as he pulled me off to the side of the hallway.

"Listen, about that night. I just thought it was a lark that you were forced in to participating in a charity event that night for your aunt. I thought we both got caught up in the moment."

"You said you were going to call me," I countered. "I waited and waited, but you never called."

"You have to understand I was confused by what happened that night," he explained. "I never...ah-ah-ah kissed a man before."

The confident business women took over.

"Listen David, obviously I've changed a lot over the last few months. That night was special to me for many reasons. I'll come right out and say you are one of those reasons. If you want to see me again here's my number. I handed him my business card and started to walk away, then I turned and said, "I'm late for a meeting."

He stood there holding the card with an expression of wonder on his face. He smiled and said "nice legs." I flirtingly curved my shoulder and said "well if you'd like to spend some time with them David, call."

I walked away quickly, my heart beating in my throat. I couldn't believe I had said what I did and how stupid it might have sounded! What the hell was coming over me? I didn't hear a word the whole time in the meeting.

Having incorrectly been cast in the role of the caller in the earlier part of my life I found it difficult waiting by the phone for David to call. There was that part of me who use to take action and call but now it was different. There was something inside me that needed him to call me, in that ancient ritual between male and female. I needed to be the one, lusted for, sought after, pursued, and finally

conquered. My aunt and sisters schooled me well in the feminine arts. Dr. Davenport didn't stand a chance. He had taken the bait once and the next time I would set the hook.

I imagine he thought about it all weekend because early Monday morning there was a "Please Call" message from Dr. David Davenport waiting for me at the front desk. I read it over and over all day fighting the urge to call. At 4 PM, not wanting to appear too aggressive, I called.

We met that evening for drinks at a downtown watering hole frequented by young professionals. I told him my story, the awaking of my feminine spirit, my new career, my girlfriends, and the physical transformation I was going through. We both confessed our feelings for each other and how that night, each of us was dealing with internal struggles that kept us apart.

By midnight the bar was empty and we both spoke of that kiss, that powerful sizzling kiss, that changed me into a woman and left him in love with a woman he didn't know existed. Here, tonight, all that had changed. Nature had achieved a balance.

I couldn't hold back a yawn, as I covered my mouth, then I felt his hand run over the back of my leg. He leaned forward and I could smell the scotch mixed with his after shave.

"The gentleman in me requires that I offer you a ride home, but the man you're speaking too desires your company at his home," he asserted. He continued to massage my leg and had taken off my heel. My foot was sitting in his lap and he was now caressing my tortured piggies. I rubbed my foot against his crotch and felt a well formed object inside his pants. I sighed with pleasure, "I believe your place is closer."

The two glasses of wine he poured were untouched; after all it was another thirst that needed to be quenched this evening. The trail of clothes to the bedroom telegraphed our destination, and was an indication that we almost didn't make it there. David did quench my thirst that night. Tenderly and softly his powerful frame crossed the threshold of my new femininity and I surrendered to him as only the woman in me could.

I woke to the smell of fresh brewing coffee; David appeared with a cup in his hand. He stopped at the end of the bed and wiggled one of my painted toes that was peeking out from under the sheets.

"I love those cute little red toes of yours," he said as he handed me the cup of coffee and then began to kiss my toes. I laughed and giggled and he roared in mock aggression. Slowly I put down my coffee because by now it was necessary. He crawled up behind me and my ribs creaked under his pressure. For a second time I experienced the joy of having that emptiness in me filled by the man I had fallen in love with that night nine months ago.

Thus began the torrid love affair that would be the envy of many of my girlfriends. Weekends and week nights would find us together. Everything from boating to ballet, we enjoyed our time talking, studying and working. Our love making was fantastic even though I was still not anatomically a woman. However, from gentle Sunday afternoon bedroom liaisons to scorching quickies in his office storeroom, we made things work.

After about three months of dating it became obvious that David had excluded me from that inner circle of friends and family. If we were to become husband and wife someday they would have to know who I was. I wanted to meet his family just as any other girl would. After all I had opened my life to him.

I was excited to be going to an engagement party for David's sister. This would finally be my chance to meet the people who might someday be my new family. It was a formal affair held on the grounds of his parent's upscale home.



I wore a plain black dress, pearls, and 4-inch heels while David wore the required tuxedo. I noticed a certain chill soon after we arrived. Introductions and small talk went well before David excused himself to talk with his uncle.

A beautiful young woman, who was in the bridal party, introduced herself to me. Her name was Cynthia and after some pleasant small talk she added with a phony smile "You know David and I used to date?" Finding myself in this awkward conversation I relied on my aunt's recommendation to always be gentle.

"Oh I'm sorry to hear it didn't work out," I smiled back.

Now her look grew mean, "He's quiet the tiger in the bedroom don't you think?" Remaining calm I replied softly, "I'm too much of a lady to answer that."

Her expression grew even colder and I was afraid of what was coming. "Oh really," she said in scornful way. "I heard that you're not 'really' a lady in true sense of the word anyway, if you know what I mean."

By now I had lost it, things were about to come crashing down.

"You bitch," I snarled the words at her.

Like a boxer ready to deliver the knockout punch, she tilted her head and with gritted teeth said in mean throaty voice, "Bitch? B-I-T-C-H, I believe it has something to do with females...something you're not. Nice meeting you SIR."

I stood there stunned and humiliated. I had been in combat before and survived but hadn't been prepared for this. Women struggled for position differently than men. I had just been taught my first lesson in how it was done. I

was searching for David to reappear when I saw his uncle coming toward me.

With a forced smile he stated, "I see you've met Cynthia?"

Regaining what little composure I had left and trying to hold back my tears, I answered demurely and cheerfully, "Oh yes, a charming girl, she is so pretty!"

He bit his lower lip in concentration, and said in a serious tone, "I'll be truthful, and tell you that David's parents and the rest of the family, for that matter, had hope for him to eventually marry." It was at this point that I felt the tears welling up in my eyes because I knew what was coming.

He continued with his patronizing tone.

"Can we have a...heart to heart talk here?" If he had said "man to man" I decided I would have used the skills acquired during over 1,000 days in combat to break his neck and both kneecaps. Perhaps he had better sense.

I breathed deeply and answered. "Certainly we can talk, what is it?"

He became a little more confident and began waving his finger at me. "I want you to know this family did some checking on you. We know all about who you are and what you really are. David is not going to soil the reputation of this family with such a twisted individual. You're a gold-digger as well!"

I felt a tear run down my cheek. I had always been up front with people about my life and sexual identity. At this point I only wanted David to come rushing out and save me, but he was nowhere to be found. Then his uncle dealt the final blow, "David has a choice his family and inheritance, or you."

I stood there in silence. Our eyes met. I could see the hatred deeply rooted in his. I just wanted out of there.

Then he spoke, "I've taken the liberty of calling a cab." As the cab slowed at the end of the driveway I could see David and Cynthia in the garden, her pitiful hand on his shoulder.

How could this have happen, I thought? I loved you, David. I've never loved the way I loved you. I was prepared to sacrifice everything I had if you had only let me. I guess he didn't feel the same way after all.

I walked to the awaiting cab, looking intently in David and Cynthia's direction.

With tears running down my face and ruining my makeup, I yelled. "Bitch, Bastard. You deserve each other!!!" They acted as if they never heard me. This had been a set up and I fell for it. I felt as if I was the fish who got hooked.

The beaches of Phu-ket , Thailand have miles of powdery sand, blue-green water, palm trees and blustery Mynah birds. They are the perfect place to honeymoon or perhaps mend a broken heart. I took a leave from work and just about wiped out my savings account. I needed to get as far away from Atlanta and the Davenport family as possible. It would be here that I would heal my broken heart and plan my future as I waited for my surgery, still about a month away.

A few days of sun and surf had me bored and made me even more depressed. I found myself back at Dr. Sanguan's clinic helping his assistant Kulap run the office and welcome patients. I was fortunate to meet so many other wonderful transsexual women and also found out that I wasn't the only girl with a broken heart.

I also was happy to help take care of two orphaned girls who lived in the clinic. Mali and Kim were 3 and 4

years old sisters. Their parents had worked at the clinic and were killed in an automobile accident. Not having the heart to send them to a Thai orphanage Dr. Sanguan's staff cared for them at the clinic. I enjoyed the girls immensely and would cook for them, read books to them and take them to the park during my free time. They became the joy of my life.

Ultimately my surgery day arrived. During my stay at the clinic I had the chance to sit with dozens of transgender women the night before their surgery. Most couldn't wait, but there were always a few, typically the younger patients, who confessed some fear in losing that last piece of masculinity.

I can truly say I had no doubt. I wanted to start living my life as a woman, the last year had been wonderful, except for David, and now I wanted complete confirmation and congruity with my body. I didn't want to be transgender any more I wanted to be a typical woman and live that way. On the gurney, Kulap held my hand and Dr. Sanguan had me count backwards. I fell asleep within seconds. Soon I would be a female.

The pain of SRS is infamous, except after waking up I didn't feel any pain, just a gentle tugging on my toe. There was someone there, pulling the covers. Was it Dr. Sanguan or Kulap?

Through the drug induced haze I tried to discern who was there and then I heard, "I love those cute little red toes of yours."

"David?" I croaked. What was he doing here?

He sat gently on the edge of the bed. I was in no condition to have visitors.

"Roberta, listen I heard what my uncle said to you," he confessed. "He told me you left and wanted nothing to do with me and the family. But I knew better. I went by your

work the next day but your aunt wouldn't tell where you went. I looked for you everywhere. I staked out your office, your apartment and the gym. Then, I remembered Thailand . I knew you would come here eventually. I hired a private investigator and traced you to Phu-ket."

"I told my parents my decision was made, I was going to marry you. It was never a consideration not to marry you."

He smiled and his voice took on an even more loving tone.

"Roberta, I had to lie to get in here. I was desperate. I had to see you."

"OK." I murmured, still not totally knowing what was transpiring.

He bit his lower lip in false distress, "I had to tell them that I was your fiancée."

At that point, David pulled out a small black box and got down on his knees. His glowing face now even with mine. He gently took hold of my hand and stared directly in my eyes. He spoke softly and romantically.

"Miss Roberta Hunter, I don't have much to offer, I have an old car and a small home. I have no inheritance and I'm up to my eyeballs in debt and student loans. What I can offer is my love and fidelity. I ask you to accept this ring as a symbol of my enduring commitment to you. Will you be my wife?"

Epilogue

Roberta Grace Hunter and Dr. David Allen Davenport were married June 25, 2012, at United Church of Christ. The Rev. James Gray performed the double-ring ceremony. The bride is the daughter of Ms. Karen Hunter of Norcross , Ga. The groom is the son of John and Karen Davenport of Atlanta , Ga. Roberta was presented in mar-

riage by her mother. She was attended by her two daughters, Mali and Kim, who also served as flower girls. The bride wore an ivory Vera Wang gown with a strapless swirling silk organza ball gown skirt and train with silk tulle, a diagonally draped bodice, accented by her auburn hair. Mrs. Roberta Davenport glowed in front of the guests who attended the garden reception. The bride is a graduate of the Emory University and is the Executive Vice President of Hunter Public Relations and Modeling in Atlanta , Ga. The groom is a graduate of Emory University Medical School and is the Director of Physicians at Emory Medical Center . The couple will reside in Decatur , Ga. with their two daughters and two Labrador Retrievers.

What's Up Jack?

By Carollyn Faith Olson

For the first time in his life, Jack Sherwood was in love with something other than his job. He couldn't keep his latest heart-throb Ginger out of his mind, let alone his bedroom.

The 30-year-old Jack had been a very rich and successful San Francisco commercial real estate broker who was riding high with the boom of the 1970s. Now, in 1980 he was unemployed, barely making it financially due to the downturn of the Jimmy Carter economy and its 20-percent interest rates. Jack had lost most of his major clients who had left the Bay Area for the more friendly business climates of Las Vegas , Phoenix and Houston . He was ready to chuck it all and look for another occupation.

Ginger was a perky free-lance photographer, who was as hot in bed as her waist length red hair. She had met Jack through a real estate acquaintance and they hit it off

immediately. Within a few days, Ginger, quite the manipulator, had a key to his Victorian-style apartment and that's when Jack's life would change.

Jack had a hidden life, which Ginger would soon discover. Jack was a cross dresser. That was one reason he couldn't keep a woman. He liked their clothes better than he liked their appearance or personality. And, he wanted to wear their clothes.

Jack had been cross dressing since his teen years. His was the typical storyline. He started wearing his mother's clothes, graduated to buying his own clothes once he went away to college and dressed on a regular basis and enjoyed the San Francisco night scene despite his status in the business field.

One morning, while Jack was out on a job interview, Ginger stopped past the semi-shared apartment with his dry cleaning. She loved running errands for her lover as he would pay her back with dinner and sex. Jack's cooking skills were probably even better than his bedroom prowess, so Ginger felt she had the best of both worlds.

Ginger could be described as a "babe." She had grown up in San Francisco, the only child of hippie culture parents. She was 5-foot-4 and weighed no more than 110 pounds when sopping wet. She wore tight clothes to tease men and highlight her 36-21-34 figure.

As she hung his clothes in the bedroom walk-in closet she discovered a slight crack in the wall in the far corner of the cubical. After moving a pile of Jack's un-ironed clothes and dirty underwear out of the way, she gave the opening a push, only to find a second storage area.

"What's this?" she asked herself as she carefully crawled through the small, dark opening. She stood to search for a light switch and finally found a string hang-

ing from a lone ceiling blub. One pull resulted in a big surprise and a whole new world.

Ginger found a number of carefully arranged dresses, skirts and sweaters hanging on a rack, many in her size, as well as shoes and boots and an assortment of wigs in the area which was bigger than the regular walk-in closet.

"Somebody must have cut the original closet in half," she said aloud. "Maybe the prior tenant left this stuff here. They sure can't be Jack's. He's taller and heavier than I am. I wonder if Jack knows about this."

Ginger continued to explore the area and spotted an old chest of drawers and a makeup mirror. Opening the top drawer, she discovered a stack of pictures which convinced her that Jack was more than Jack. He was Jacqui as well.

Ginger was furious as she held a picture of a stunning blonde in a tight sequined dress in her hand.

"How could he?" she barked. "I'm gonna kill him, then I'm dropping him like a hot potato. Once he gets home, I'm out of here."

Ginger sat on the couch and mulled what she would say. She wanted revenge. She clicked on Jack's old black and white television to waste some time and turned to Channel 2. A promo for an upcoming "Look Who's Talking" morning show caught her eye.

"I'm really looking forward to Friday morning," said long-time host Al "Jazzbo" Collins to his co-anchor Gina Lee.

"Why's that, Al?" she asked.

"Well, we'll have a special 90-minute visit with three of the female impersonators from Finocchio's."

"I remember the last time they were here," Lee added. "They were spectacular."

“Yes, they were. We hope to have Lavern Cummings, Carroll Wallace and David de Alba here for a visit, and hope you will be here too,” Collins continued as he pointed to the live audience.

“Tickets are still available for the show. Call our studio for tickets today.”

“Oh, by the way,” continued Lee, a perky brunette. “One of our audience members will be selected to be transformed in to a woman and be on stage with our guests.”

Ginger thought for a minute. “Humm, female impersonators! Cross-dressers! I’m going to give him some of his own medicine.”

Ginger picked up the phone and dialed the station to secure tickets.

“I’d like two front row tickets,” Ginger told the producer, who took down her name.

“Your name will be at the station entrance,” the producer replied. “Please be here by 8 o’clock.”

“I’d also love to sign up my boyfriend to be the one chosen from the audience,” she proclaimed. “Is it possible?”

“Why would you want to do that?” the producer asked.

Ginger gave the producer a quick off-the-cuff run-down on her boyfriend, even exaggerating about his ability as a cross-dresser and impersonator.

“He performs for me all the time,” she concluded.

“What’s his name?” the producer inquired.

“Jack Paul,” Ginger said, using his middle name as his last.

"I made a note of his name, but I can't promise you anything."

"That's all I can ask. We'll be there Friday."

Ginger decided not to wait for Jack to return and left him a note to call her. In a way, she hoped the job interview was a success, but with the latest revelation of his cross dressing, she hoped he fell flat on his face.

By the time Ginger returned home, Jack had left two messages on her answering machine.

"Good interview," he said in the first message. "They are very interested in me. I should know next week."

Ginger frowned.

"I'd like to cook you dinner tonight," said the second.

"No way," she said to herself. "I'm not having sex with that pig until he learns his lesson and he confesses to me."

Ginger returned the call and told Jack she had a headache and didn't feel too well. She had other plans.

Finocchio's was on Broadway in the heart of North Beach . Six nights a week, continuous hour shows began at 9, with the last show at 1. Ginger's interests were peaked, so she dressed in her favorite jeans, boots, sweater, jacket and scarf and headed to the club.

Ginger had been to North Beach many times, where restaurants and burlesque reigned supreme. Most of the restaurants served fabulous ethnic foods, while the strip clubs were dungy and sleazy. She had never been to Finocchio's which was regarded as "the place to go," especially for tourists, for a reasonably priced evening of cheap drinks, fun and entertainment.

Ginger was nervous as she walked down Broadway. The Finocchio's sign lit up the street. She ignored the strip

club barkers handing out invitations to various clubs. Finocchio's was located above Enrico's Restaurant, a famous spot for pre-and-post show dinners.

Ginger decided to take the stairs to the second floor instead of the elevator. As she approached the club's entrance, she was graciously greeted by the outgoing owner, Joe.

"Come right in!" Joe exclaimed as he escorted Ginger over to the ticket counter to pay the cover charge. "Is this your first time here? I bet it is. I usually remember a face."

"Yes, it is," Ginger softly replied as Joe put her hand on his arm and led Ginger to her table right of center stage.

"Is this OK? We're never too busy on a Tuesday evening, but I may have to ask you to share your table if we do."

"No problem," Ginger said with a smile. "I love making new friends."

"Enjoy the show," Joe said as he went back to his station to guide a group of visitors on a Gray Line Bus Tour to their seats. Finocchio's was a regular stop on the many City tours and Gray Line delivered a steady stream of patrons to every show six nights a week.

"This looks like fun," said Ginger, as she surveyed the club.

Ginger estimated the venue could seat 300 to 400 customers. Not only was there floor seating, but balconies to the left, right and front of the stage. The large hardwood stage was lit in purple. The three-piece band was warming up at the right wing, while the quick paced waiters and waitresses hustled drinks to the audience before the show began.

At precisely 9 o'clock, veteran emcee Carroll Wallace walked out from behind the curtain at the left of the stage wearing a spaghetti strap floor length dress and carrying a white fur that matched his platinum hair, which he wore in a French twist. Carroll was not only lovely, but a natural at stirring up the crowd with his high energy personality. He roamed past the front row of the late-arriving crowd telling jokes, answering questions and not hiding the fact he was a man in woman's clothing.

Editor's Note: The Female Impersonators at Finocchio's were always referred to as "he" not "she." The performers sang all their songs live. No lip-syncing.

"She's amazing," Ginger said out loud as she applauded and laughed. Carroll stopped at a nearby table and handed out all-in-fun insults to a male tourist who wasn't sure what he was witnessing.

"Haven't you ever seen a man before?" Carroll quipped as he stuck his long high-heeled leg through the side slit in his dress. "Well, get used to it. You're going to see a lot more of this tonight." The band began and Carroll instructed the audience to clap along with the music.

"Introducing The Eve-ettes," he proclaimed and five scantily clad dancers, named after Joe's wife Eve, crossed the stage to begin their chorus line routine.

"I can't believe they're all men," Ginger exclaimed to a couple who had been seated at her table. "They can really dance." The couple may not have understood what she said over the loud music, but nodded their approval.

Carroll followed The Eve-ettes with a cute novelty song entitled "I'm a Singer, Though I Haven't Got a Voice" which was especially written for him. The spirited audience roared when a giant gorilla rambled on to the

stage from the left wing. Carroll screamed, as if she was scared to death, and quickly exited through the crowd.

Inside the gorilla suit was Cuban dancer Bobby De Castro. In the middle of the act, Bobby emerged from the gorilla costume dressed in an outfit that left little to the imagination. He danced and did a strip tease, eventually taking off his bra, showing he did not have female breasts, and his wig. The crowd roared as he left the stage.

Carroll asked Bobby to return for an encore. He bowed, did a little dance, and departed.

After a joke or two, Carroll introduced Elton Paris, statuesque comedian who could also sing in high and low octaves. Elton sang two songs but brought down the house when his "falsies" fell out of his low cut silver dress. As if nothing had happened, Elton continued to sing "Little Green Apples", bent over, picked up the "falsies" and put them back in place on his chest. The applause and laughter continued long after he ran off the stage.

"This is one of the best shows I've ever seen," Ginger commented to her table mates.

"Wait until you see David de Alba and Lavern Cummings," the lady replied.

While the stage scenery was changed by The Eve-ettes, Carroll imitated Sophie Tucker and gave the crowd a run down on the background of some of the performers and the schedule for the remainder of the night.

Rene de Carlo entered the stage in an off-the-shoulder orange blouse and long multi-colored skirt and his brown hair done up in a bun. Rene was billed as the International Dancing Star and did not disappoint. He danced an inspiring and physically exhausting flamenco. The crowd stood in applause. However, the best was yet to come.

David de Alba was elegantly attired in a floor-length dark blue strapless gown and heels. Carroll turned to the audience and announced "And, now ladies and gentlemen, let's bring to the stage the warm and charming personality of David de Alba!"

As Boy-Chic, David had the audience in the palm of his hand before he opened his mouth. He sang his theme song "I'm Gonna Live Until I Die" and the Spanish classic "La Virgen de la Macarena." The crowd wanted more, so David responded with the Italian favorite "Arrivederci Roma." (Ginger later discovered David would perform as Judy Garland and Liza Minnelli later in the evening).

Lavern Cummings made his appearance to thunderous applause.

Lavern was the club headliner. Wearing a long figure-defining dress with a flowing black cape, he was the virtuoso of song. When he opened his mouth to sing, a lovely captivating soprano voice was heard.

"There's no way she's a man," Ginger said aloud staring at the marquee performer.

"Well she is," the man sitting across the table responded.

"Listen to her sing," Ginger replied. "She's perfect."

Lavern surprised the crowd by dropping from a soprano to a baritone as she sang "Green Eyes." The audience was amazed as Lavern switched his voice from female to male and back. He sang three more songs, ending the performance with the classic "As Time Goes Bye."

Lavern bowed to the cheers and standing ovation as Carroll returned with a hug and the re-introduction of all the performers. The stage lights brightened as Carroll reminded the audience "the next show will begin as soon as the band finishes its break."

About a third of the crowd headed for the exit, including the Gray Line group. Another bus group was outside waiting to take its place. Ginger wasn't budging. She ordered a drink and waited for the second show to begin.

While she waited, Ginger introduced herself to the couple across the table. She discovered Mitchell and Tammy Matthews were Finocchio's regulars.

As the lights began to dim again, Ginger had an idea. She scribbled a note on a piece of paper, folded it, and put it in her purse.

The second show was just as spectacular as the first and the appreciative crowd filled the club to its capacity. There were a few role changes, including David's outstanding impersonation of Liza Minnelli, and Rene performing a swirling Mexican dance. Lavern closed out a fabulous "Mame" medley.

"Whew, what fabulous performers," Ginger said to her table guests. "This is the best show I've ever seen. Even better than the ones I've seen at Lake Tahoe."

"They are the best in San Francisco for sure," Tammy responded. "We've been here six or seven times and the shows just keep getting better and better."

"One classy show and outstanding talent," Mitchell added.

"I plan to come back again," Ginger noted as she stood up to leave.

"Maybe we will see you again," the Tammy said with a wave good-bye.

Ginger walked toward the entrance door, reached in her purse for the note and handed it to Joe, who was guiding a couple to a table.

"Thanks for the wonderful evening," she said.

"My pleasure," Joe responded. "I hope to see you again. Remember, I never forget a face."

Ginger stopped past Jack's the following morning. He said he had not slept well; was in a bad mood, and upset she had turned down his dinner offer.

"Aren't you going to ask me about my migraine?" she asked.

"Oh yeah," he mumbled.

"You don't even care, do you," Ginger replied. "It kept me awake all night. Do you even care that I'm here?"

"I'm sorry," he stammered. "After you called, I went out to get some dinner. When I got back, I got the dreaded 'sorry' call regarding my job interview. I was so upset. I should have called you. Instead, I had a couple of drinks and went to bed. I'm so depressed."

Jack had lied to Ginger, but she hadn't told him the truth either. He had been told of the job decision during the interview. He was over-qualified for the position that was open, but he was assured he would be strongly considered for another job which was to open in less than a month.

Instead of staying home, Jack put on his favorite black party dress and high heels and transformed to Jacqui for an evening with a few friends at his favorite club in the Castro district. He was exhausted from singing, dancing and one too many drinks. His feet hurt, his voice was horse and he looked like he smelled.

Ginger had an idea that Jack may have dressed, but didn't say a thing. The light scent of cheap perfume was noticeable.

"I have to get to work," Ginger said in disgust, looking at her watch. "I'll call you later when you have your act together. Don't bother calling me as I will be tied up."

Ginger left for her appointment and Jack went back to bed.

“Without a job, why not sleep,” he thought.

Ginger’s revenge was falling in to line. Jack did not have a job and had no excuse to not accompany her to the television show, the tickets were secure and she hoped the contents of the note she handed Joe Finocchio would come to fruition.

Jack readily approved attending the TV show. He had nothing else to do and hoped that Ginger would forgive him for his bad attitude. Two days without having sex with Ginger was getting to his psyche. To make up to her, he promised to take her to lunch after the show at Jack London Square , not far from the Oakland-based studio.

Ginger did not inform Jack of the show’s topic and he didn’t ask, only that “a client gave me her tickets.” He did not learn of the content until he saw the station’s marquee.

“Sounds like fun,” Jack said to Ginger as they entered the studio where the live show was televised. The studio was sterile with about 150 seats and a small but comfortable stage with five empty chairs and an oblong glass coffee table. Powerful spot lights hung from what resembled oversized erector set scaffolding and the crew was making last minute changes. Three robot-like looking cameras were rolled in to place, their massive cables running under the bleacher seating platform.

Ginger and Jack found their seats and helped each other secure their name tags on his jacket and her sweater.

“Stop that,” Ginger barked, when Jack tried to get a little frisky when he pinned her tag just above her left breast.

“Ass hole,” she thought. “No sex for you for a week.”

Gina Lee emerged first from behind the stage, greeted the crowd and explained what was to come. Al Collins, a broadcast legend in the San Francisco area, followed and entertained the standing room only audience with a legendary story about Finocchio's and the performers who would appear. Ginger became concerned when neither Gina nor Al said one word about a member from the audience being selected.

Lee and Collins returned backstage and within seconds, the theme music began and show off stage announcer Bob MacKenzie gave the introduction. Lee and Collins walked out hand-in-hand and officially greeted the crowd.

"We have a very special show today," Collins announced. "Our guests are three of the most respected and talented female impersonators in the world. Please give a big "Look Who's Talking" welcome to Carroll Wallace, Lavern Cummings and David de Alba."

The three stars were dressed similar to Tuesday night when Ginger took in the two shows at Finocchio's, in beautiful long glittery gowns. They sat in the three seats to the left of Collins and Lee.

After about five minutes of banter, the first commercial break interrupted the proceedings. With two minutes to fill, David de Alba, dressed as Judy Garland, stood and led the audience in a quick singing of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow."

"We're back," said Collins as the singing and applause carried over. Looking at the camera, he said, "While you were away, David led the audience in a sing-along."

"And, we're only getting warmed up," Wallace chipped in.

Wallace stood and addressed the audience.

"I need a male volunteer," he announced, as the crowd wondered what to expect. "Who would like to become a female impersonator for a day?" None of the men in the predominately female audience raised a hand.

Ginger glanced at the un-responsive Jack out of the corner of her eye. He was looking up at the lighting fixtures and not at Wallace.

"I guess I will have to choose somebody," Wallace quipped. She asked Lavern to spin her around three times and "where I point will be our volunteer."

"I have a better idea," Lee announced, carrying a fish bowl. "The names of all the males in our audience are in here." She held the bowl out for Wallace to draw a card. After a bit of fanfare, Wallace read the winning name: "Do we have a Jack Paul in the house?"

Ginger screamed and the audience applauded as Jack shyly arose from his chair, his face blushing, and slowly walked to join Wallace and the others on stage. He didn't appear to be embarrassed, but he was unsure why he was the "lucky" one.

"Are you a good sport?" Wallace asked as the audience laughed. "Do you know what you're getting yourself in to?"

"I'm not sure," Jack responded.

"Have you ever dressed as a woman before?"

"No, but I'm open to try anything once."

The audience cheered as Jack was led back stage by Wallace and de Alba for his makeover.

Jack was greeted by David's mother, Tila, who was watching from back stage. Wallace returned to the show, where Lavern was wooing the fans by singing one of his two-voice songs. David, who owned a salon and was also

known as “Heri, The Hairstylist of the Stars” would remain back stage until he was to perform.

While the impersonators thrilled the crowd with their stories, antics and songs, Jack was quickly becoming a female, much to his delight. The station makeup artist, Kay Jorgensen, gave Jack a quick facial shave before applying the needed cosmetics, fake eye-lashes and colors to soften his complexion. With the help of two other staff members, Jack was fitted in to a prefilled bra, corset, a purple long gown and low-heeled shoes.

David prepared a blondish shoulder length wig for Jack to wear and Kay filed and painted his nails.

“You’re going to look wonderful,” David enthusiastically said over and over again as Jack continued to evolve.

Jack tried to appear as if he was nervous and unsure of each step in the transformation process. Inwardly, Jack was enjoying every second of the pampering.

“Is Jack almost ready?” Collins asked during the 10 o’clock news and commercial break.

“About 5 minutes,” David responded.

“Good. Have him ready for the last segment, which will start at 10:15.”

David covered Jack’s head with the stylish wig, added a pair of earrings and a necklace, and asked Jack to stand.

“You look fabulous,” David assured him.

Jack gingerly walked to a temporary mirror and looked at his reflection.

“Wow!!!” he exclaimed. “That’s me?”

“Yes, that’s you,” Tila replied. “You should be proud of yourself.”

Jack paused and admired himself, turning right, left and with his back to the mirror.

"Another happy customer," Kay said with a laugh.

"This is the best I have ever looked," Jack said to himself.

"It looks like you can walk well in heels," David noted suspiciously. "Are you sure you haven't dressed before?"

"No. Walking must just come naturally to me."

"Now you need a name. How about Jacqui DuVal?"

Jack nodded in agreement as Lee came back stage to check on Jack's status.

"You're gorgeous," Lee gushed with a big smile on her face. "I wish I could look as good."

"You already do," Jack responded, trying to hit a bit on the co-host.

"He's ready," said David, who returned to the studio and took his place next to Lavern, and was replaced by Wallace.

"What's your name, honey?" Wallace asked.

"Jacqui DuVal," Jack replied.

"Well, Jacqui it is."

Wallace quickly explained what Jacqui what to expect before the camera.

"I will introduce you and Al and Gina will ask you a few questions. Just try to relax and enjoy the moment. I will then introduce David, who will sing a song, before the three of us will wrap it up with another song."

With the commercial break complete, Collins said:

"Let's see how Jack is doing."

Wallace guided Jack out to the stage to sighs, screams and applause from the audience. Ginger stood up in her

chair and whistled. "My goodness, he looks better than his pictures. He is beautiful," she said to herself.

"I would like to introduce to you Jacqui DuVal," Wallace proclaimed. Jack curtsied and threw kisses to the crowd before taking his seat between David and Lavern.

Al and Gina asked the typical questions regarding his being dressed as a woman. Before David was to sing, Wallace announced:

"We want to thank you, Jack, or make that Jacqui, for your cooperation today. I would also like to invite you to be my special guest, on stage, tomorrow night at Finocchio's."

Jack looked at Ginger, who was nodding her head with approval, and quickly accepted.

"Should I wear a suit," he asked.

"On no girl," Wallace replied in mock shock. "No, I want you to wear what you have on today."

Jack smiled as David began his song and took his seat next to Cummings.

Ginger greeted Jack back stage following the show. Ginger was proud that he had not made a fool of himself.

"You're beautiful!" she exclaimed as she planted a kiss on his pinkish lips. "I can't wait to see you tomorrow night." Jack smiled.

"Do you mind if I accept the offer?" Jack asked Ginger.

"Of course not. I plan to be there in the front row. This could be more fun than today."

While Jack was changing back to his male self, Ginger learned from Wallace that he had received her note and that "Jack's name was on every card in the fishbowl." Ginger laughed and thanked Wallace for the "fix."

"I own you," Ginger said as she hugged Wallace.

"Jack seems pretty comfortable in his role as Jacqui," Wallace continued. "Can he dance or sing?"

"I don't know," Ginger remarked, reminding Wallace that she only recently discovered Jack was a cross dresser.

"Well, let me take care of everything. I have a couple of ideas. Please make sure he's at the club by 6 tomorrow night for makeup."

"We'll be there," Ginger replied. "See you then."

Wallace, Cummings and de Alba waved goodbye and headed to their respective dressing rooms. Their next show at Finocchio's was less than 10 hours away and the three stars had had less than four hours sleep after performing Thursday night and before arriving at the TV studio early that morning.

"That's show business," Cummings surmised.

Ginger complimented Jack in his role as Jacqui as they left the studio and walked to a nearby restaurant.

"You were fantastic. Did you hear the response from the audience? They were awestruck."

"I have to give credit to David, his mother and the makeup crew. They were the ones who made me look good. You know, I really enjoyed being dressed. I don't know why, maybe because it was something different. I'm really looking forward to tomorrow night."

"Did Carroll give you an idea what he will expect of you?"

"No. He just said to be at the club by 6. He'll probably just introduce me at each show and that's it."

Ginger knew more may be in store but didn't say a thing. She was still upset with what she found in Jack's back closet, but she wasn't going to give him any hints.

After a quick lunch, Ginger drove her Chevy Impala back across the Bay Bridge with an exhausted Jack sleeping in the passenger seat. She had an afternoon photo assignment and Jack planned to catch some sleep at his apartment and look through the San Francisco newspaper's Want Ads for another job.

"Nothing in the paper today," Jack noted after searching through the Chronicle and the Examiner. "I guess I'll take a nap."

Within minutes, Jack's phone rang.

"Hello, Mr. Phillips...yes, I would be interested...this afternoon...I'd love to...I'll see you in an hour."

The job Jack had been passed over for earlier in the week had become open again. A second interview was at hand. He quickly showered, put on his best suit and rushed off to the interview in downtown San Francisco.

Jack felt the interview went as well as the first and he received a number of compliments from his prospective boss, Mr. Phillips. He was one of three semi-finalists and the decision would be made by Monday. Fortunately, Phillips had not seen the morning television show.

"I think I have a very good chance this time around," Jack told Ginger on the phone. "Please pray that I will get this job. I really need to get back to a regular work schedule."

Ginger agreed.

"I haven't received one call from anybody about the TV show," Jack told Ginger. "Nobody must have been watching."

"I'm sure a lot of people saw you," Ginger replied. "It's the top rated morning show on TV. Remember, you didn't use your last name. So, how would anybody know it was you?"

"I guess you're right," Jack said, stopping himself just short of divulging his cross-dressing activities.

"What are you doing tonight?"

"I have a bridal dinner at 6, and the wedding is tomorrow morning."

"You'll be done in time for tomorrow night won't you?"

"No problem. The wedding is small and the reception will be a luncheon. I will be done by 3 or so. Don't worry your pretty head. Just get some sleep tonight."

"I will," Jack concluded. He had hoped to go out with his cross-dressing friends, but after his full day and the prospects of Saturday night, he decided to stay home and relax.

"See you tomorrow," Ginger responded. "Now get some beauty sleep."

Jack laughed and said "Good bye."

He rolled on the couch recalling his day. "The TV show, the job interview, and tomorrow night at Finocchio's. Life appears to be getting better."

Ginger arrived at Jack's a few minutes after 3. He had a towel around his waist and shaving cream on his face. Ginger discovered he had already shaved his arms, legs and chest.

"You're really getting in to this, aren't you," Ginger remarked.

"I just thought it would be a good idea," Jack replied. "I don't know what Carroll or the others will expect of me."

Ginger decided it was time to let him in on one of Carroll's comments.

"Carroll asked me if you could sing or dance," Ginger said. "Can you?"

Jack wasn't sure what to tell Ginger. He had experience singing and dancing as a woman with his friends at the Karaoke bar.

"Why would Carroll ask that?" Jack inquired, trying to change the subject.

"Maybe she has plans for you tonight. You just can't stand there."

"I wonder what he has up his sleeve."

"I don't know, but I thought I'd better warn you."

"I'll just go with the flow. I'm sure Carroll will say something when I get to the club. I don't want to make a fool out of myself."

"They are all very professional performers. I don't think they would ask you to do anything that you couldn't handle."

"I hope not. I don't want to be embarrassed."

Jack had prepared a light pre-show meal of sliced meats, cheese and vegetables for Ginger to hold them over for the evening. Jack didn't feel like eating too much. His stomach was already churning in a combination of excitement and nervousness.

Jack and Ginger arrived at Finocchio's a few minutes before 6 and were greeted by the club's security guard Roscoe, and Wallace, who was wearing his traditional grey suit.

"Welcome," Roscoe said.

"Yes, welcome," added Wallace. "Let me show you around."

The club interior was dark except for a couple of emergency lights. Wallace gave Jack and Ginger a tour of the

dressing room, the off-stage bar area where the servers order the drinks, the stage and the customer area.

"We bring in between 1,000 and 2,000 people every night," Wallace said. "Tonight will be extra busy with all the conventions in town. I understand we are just about sold out."

Jack was impressed with the club's layout and complimented Wallace.

"What a great place to work. You must really enjoy working here."

"I've been here for years and don't plan to retire any time soon. I enjoy performing and being around people. Plus, my wife is one of the drink servers. We are one big family here."

"I'd love to work here," Jack said to himself as the three of them walked up and on to the black and white checkered tile stage.

"We'll, Jack, we'd better start getting ready," Wallace reminded.

"I'm going to use the ladies room," Ginger said. She gave Jack a kiss and departed.

"What do you want me to do?" Jack asked.

"First, I need to know if you can sing or dance."

Jack, at first, seemed a bit uneasy with the question. He had to decide if he would lie or tell the truth.

"Can I tell you something that Ginger doesn't even know," he softly said.

"If it involves the show, you'd better tell me," Wallace responded. "I can keep a secret."

"Ginger doesn't know this, but I have been cross-dressing for years," Jack admitted.

Wallace faked being surprised and said: "Tell me more."

"I can dance and sing. I recently won the talent competition at the Castro Club."

"I know the place. Let me hear you sing."

Jack cleared his voice and sang an a cappella version of Brenda Lee's "Sweet Nothings" and did a fancy little dance across the stage.

"Do you think you can do the same thing tonight?" Wallace inquired.

"Of course I can, as long as I don't trip in my heels or on my gown."

"Let's get dressed and give it a try. The band will be here about 8. We can practice before the doors open at 8:30."

Kay Jorgensen, the TV station makeup artist worked her magic on Jack. The "Look Who's Talking" crew was planning to film most of the evening's activities as a follow-up to the Friday show. It took Kay less than one hour to transform Jack in to Jacqui.

Wallace stuck his head around the corner of the dressing room stall and asked: "Are you ready?"

"How did you get ready so fast?" Jack questioned. "You look fabulous."

"Practice, practice and more practice," Wallace laughed.

"He'll be ready in about 10 minutes," Kay replied, a petite red head with a radiant smile that could light up a room.

"I'll go check on the band."

The "Sweet Nothings" practice was perfect, as if the band and Jack had worked together for years.

"I think you'll be great," Wallace confirmed. "Just follow my lead."

Backstage the other performers on the evening schedule were checking their makeup and slipping in to their dresses and costumes. Show time was only minutes away. Jack would be introduced and perform after Wallace's opening monologue.

Ginger took her place at a front row table with TV stars Collins and Lee and David's mother Tina. She spotted, then waved to the Matthews' sitting a few tables to her right.

The club lights were on bright to allow the audience, which included two bus loads of tourists from Norway, to get settled. At precisely 9 o'clock, Wallace sashayed to the microphone to thunderous applause.

"Thank you," he said. "I can tell this is going to be a wild and crazy evening." He proceeded with his opening comments, stories and jokes.

"We have a little extra treat tonight. Yesterday, Lavern, David and I were guests of the "Look Who's Taking Show" over at Channel 2. Sitting in the front row are the show's hosts Al "Jazzbo" Collins and Gina Lee. Please give them a big Finocchio's welcome."

The crowd cheered as Collins and Lee stood.

"As part of the show, one male member of the audience was selected to be transformed in to a woman and sit with us on stage. The original plan was to introduce Jacqui to the audience, but we have discovered he is quite talented.

"So, with no further delay, I would like to introduce to you, Jacqui DuVal."

Jack strolled carefully out on to the stage to a band fanfare, careful not to fall. The TV cameras were already rolling to capture the moment.

"Welcome," Wallace said, taking Jack's right hand. Jack curtseyed to acknowledge the audience.

"What are you going to do for us tonight?" Wallace asked.

"Now about a little bit of 'Sweet Nothings,'" Jack replied.

"Go for it girl," Wallace insisted, as he handed Jack the microphone and the band struck the first chord.

Jack was brilliant. His natural voice resonated in a gravelly Brenda Lee-style, hitting the high and low parts perfectly. His blonde hair bobbed with the music as he danced leg-over-leg across the stage. The crowd clapped in rhythm as the two minute song ran to it's conclusion. At the end, Jack curtseyed and skipped off the stage, only to return at Wallace's insistence, to the loud hoots, hollers and applause.

"Fabulous, just fabulous!" Wallace confirmed, wildly waving his right arm to acknowledge a standing ovation. "The people love you. Can you come back for the next show?"

"Oh, yes, I'd love to, but I'd better check with my boss," Jack said, pointing at Ginger.

Wallace laughed and replied: "I'd better check with my boss too!"

Jack exited to another round of applause.

Jack received congratulations from ventriloquist Keny Stewart as their path's crossed at the corner of the stage. Two of the Eve-ettes also offered their praise as they waited their turn.

"You really impressed me," the usually somber Eve Finocchio said, as she checked The Eve-ettes, her pride and joy. "I'd love to have you do the same thing at the other shows tonight."

"Really?" Jack replied. "I thought Carroll was kidding."

"Yes, Joe and I are serious," Eve continued. "I already told Ginger and she is thrilled. The next show is at 10:15."

Jack went back to his dressing area where Paris, Cummings, de Alba and Castro were awaiting their turns to perform. The TV crew and reporter Bob MacKenzie had finished their work interviewing Cummings and de Alba. Collins and Lee would also come back stage following the show to offer their congratulations.

Jack slumped back in his chair as Jorgensen touched up his makeup.

"I got to see you on the TV monitor," Jorgensen quipped. "You were great. Do you mind if I stick around the rest of the night."

"By all means," Jack confirmed. "I could always use some help with my makeup. I've never done this before."

The Matthews' joined Ginger and Tila at their table after the TV personalities departed. Between shows, Tia entertained her new friends with stories of her past and her son David.

She and her husband, Heri Sr. and son Heri Jr. (David), escaped from Cuba in 1960, one year after the Fidel Castro revolution took control of the island nation. Cuba's loss was America's gain.

Tila earned six degrees, one was a doctorate in Pedagogy which she obtained in Cuba, and another was a Master of Arts from Loyola University in Chicago, where

the family settled. She taught school for a number of years before the family moved to San Francisco in the 70s.

Ginger and the Matthews' were intrigued but had little time to ask questions before the next show began.

"Come see me at our store," Tila requested, referring to David's hair salon in the Potrero District.

"I know where that is," Tammy recalled. "I've been there. I'll stop past next week to see you."

"I'd really enjoy that," Tila replied.

Jack completed the final three shows, seemingly getting better with each performance. At the end of the night, he was exhausted...and his feet were killing him after almost eight hours in heels.

It was almost 3 AM when Jack emerged from the dressing room and found Ginger alone and asleep at her table in the empty club. He bent over and awoke Ginger with a tender kiss on her forehead. If it had not been for her, the evening would have been just a dream.

"Thank you," Jack said as he helped Ginger from her chair. "I could have never done this without you."

"It's my honor," Ginger giggled.

"Let's go home," Jack insisted. "I'm so tired. I never thought performing would take so much out of me. I don't know how Lavern, David and the others do this day after day and year after year."

"Would you like to do this as a career?" Ginger questioned.

"I don't think so," Jack replied. "Once is enough, unless they paid me."

Ginger laughed and walked with Jack out of the club.

Sunday was anticlimactic. Ginger had spent the night and Jack cooked breakfast. Sex was not in the equation.

The day was spent doing absolutely nothing. Ginger departed for her apartment after a take-out dinner of hamburgers and fries. Jack went to bed before 8.

Jack awoke early and went for a 4-mile run around Golden Gate Park . He had figured he would have heard from Mr. Phillips by now, but his phone had not rung. As he ran, he relived his exciting and unexpected Finocchio's experience.

"I really enjoyed it," he said time and time again. "I wonder if I should tell Ginger about the real Jacqui? But, then again, maybe I shouldn't. I would probably lose her if she knew I was a cross dresser. I don't want that to happen. She is the first girl who has really made me happy."

Jack returned home and turned on the TV. He didn't want to miss "Look Who's Talking," in the event his performance was highlighted, or a possible call from Mr. Phillips.

As he stepped out of the shower, the phone rang. He raced to the phone and found a woman's voice, not a man's, on the other end. Thinking it was a solicitor, he was about to hang up.

"Jack?" the caller asked.

"Yes, that's me."

"This is Mrs. Finocchio."

"Hello, Mrs. Finocchio. It's a pleasure to hear from you."

Eve did not respond and went right to the heart of her call.

"One of The Eve-ettes broke his ankle while dancing last night. His replacement is sick and my last backup quit last week."

"That's too bad. Is there anything I can do?"

Jack listened intently.

“That’s why I’m calling. You were really good Saturday night and the audiences were stunned by your performances. We have had so many compliments on your singing and dancing. I usually don’t make calls like this, but I need your help. Would you be interested in auditioning to be one of The Eve-ettes?”

Jack remained silent for a few seconds before responding.

“When is the audition?” he asked, as if he had other plans.

“Tonight at 5.”

“What do I need to bring.”

“Nothing, we have everything.”

“OK. I’ll be there.”

Jack spun around on his toes as he hung up the phone. Before he could call Ginger, the phone rang again.

“May I speak to Jack Sherwood,” the caller requested.

It was Mr. Phillips. A job offer was on the table, at a higher pay than expected. If he wanted the job, he had to be at the office before 1 to sign the employment papers.

Jack’s head was swimming. He desperately wanted to work for Mr. Phillips, but being an Eve-ette was even more interesting. Maybe he could do both.

Jack flipped on the television just in time for “Look Who’s Talking” and a teaser announcement that his segment would run at the end of the show. Collins announced today’s show “will be on making the perfect pasta sauce.” Jack turned down the volume and dialed Ginger, who answered on the second ring.

"Guess what?" he shouted.

Ginger could guess, but did not reply.

"Not only do I have one job offer, but two."

"What do you mean, two?" a surprised Ginger reacted.

"Before I forget, my performance at Finocchio's will be at the end of the show today."

"I know," Ginger replied. "I was just going to call you. Now tell me about the job offers."

Jack explained he had returned from his morning run when Eve first called. "She wanted me to be an Eve-ette. Then within minutes, Phillips phoned with his offer "which is better than I could imagine."

"I don't know what to do!"

"Why not try both?" Ginger suggested. "You can work for Mr. Phillips during the day and at Finocchio's at night. Remember, Eve told you this would only be temporary."

"Yeah, but what if the gig becomes full time," Jack lamented. "I don't think I could do two jobs forever."

"Why don't you get the papers signed with Mr. Phillips first?" Ginger assessed. "Then, go to the tryout tonight and see what happens. You know the Phillips job is secure. You may not even be what Eve is looking for."

"That's what I was thinking," Jack agreed. "I'll go see Phillips this morning and go to Finocchio's at 5."

"Call me when you get home," Ginger requested. "I love you."

"Love you too," Jack reciprocated. He turned up the TV volume and fell on the couch. His fortunes had taken a 180 degree turn in less than 5 minutes.

The Channel 2 feature was excellent, a four minute combination of interviews with the Finocchio's stars and Jack's performance.

"I'm impressed," a now confident Jack said to himself. "Not only did I look great, but my singing and dancing were pretty good too."

Jack dressed in his only suit and tie and drove to Phillips' office. After a short conversation with his new employer, he signed the needed papers, was introduced to his counterparts and assigned a desk in the mortgage loan department. He still had to take a work place physical exam, which would come two days later. His first day of work would be the following Monday.

Jack walked out of the office and pumped his fist in the air. The job would pay \$300 a week (a comfortable starting salary in the 80s) plus shared office bonuses. He could not have been happier. He could pay off some of his bills, repay the small loan he received from Ginger, and maybe, just maybe, retire his 1970 VW for a car that would reflect his new position.

The Finocchio's offer was also very intriguing, if he could pass the audition. He could easily use the extra money too, and he looked forward to wearing the often skimpy outfits which went with being an Eve-ette.

With Finocchio's on his mind, he decided to seek some assistance. He drove to 18th and Kansas Streets and parked a short distance from a storefront proclaiming "Heri, The Stylist of the Stars." He hoped David would be there.

Jack entered the shop which was small, but busy for a Monday. He could see David in the back of the store working on a young lady's hair.

"May I help you," said Tila as she walked up to greet the visitor. "Would you like an appointment?"

“Well, I could use a haircut, but I’m really here to see David, if he has the time,” Jack stated. “Do you think he could spare a minute of his time?”

“Let me check,” Tila responded, checking David’s schedule on her desk. “It looks like he will be free in about 45 minutes. Can you come back?”

Jack nodded his head and asked if there was a sandwich shop in the area. Tila walked him outside and pointed through the window to a business further down 18th Street.

“What’s your name?” Tila asked.

“Jack, or should I say Jacqui. We met the other night at Finocchio’s.”

“You’re Jacqui?” she said with a surprised voice.

“Yes.”

“You did so well the other night. And, your girlfriend, Ginger, is a doll. I’ll make sure David has all the time you need to talk with him.”

Less than an hour later, Jack had finished his lunch and was sitting in David’s stylist chair, getting a haircut, discussing his whirlwind last few days, his upcoming try-out, and his new job.

David gave Jack a few hints about working with and for Eve and what to expect at the tryout, which was now less than three hours away. David’s pep talk was inspiring.

“You can do anything you want in life if you just set your mind to it,” David emphasized. “You can work two jobs too. Some of the guys work during the day and perform at night. Look at me. I’m a perfect example.”

Jack thanked David for his advice, walked back to his car, and drove back to his apartment. A suit and tie was not appropriate for the Finocchio's audition.

Eve had told Jack to come to the side door since the club was dark on Mondays. She was waiting for him, along with the four other young men who danced as The Eve-ettes.

The audition didn't take long. Jack was a quick learner and fit right in with the other Eve-ettes. Within 30 minutes he was a cast member. For another three hours he learned not only the various dance steps that the troupe would perform the next night, but how to dance in Mary Jane strapped heels.

"I need you to try on a few costumes before you leave," Eve requested as she excused the other dancers for the night.

Jack followed Eve backstage to the wardrobe room and was amazed at the number of dresses hanging in perfect order from the racks. Eve guided Jack to the area reserved for The Eve-ettes and selected the outfits worn by Robert, who had broken his ankle. Every item Jack tried on fit perfectly.

"I thought you and Robert were about the same size, but one never knows," said Eve, who after 30-plus years in the business could match any outfit by just eye-balling the performer.

"Everything is going to be perfect," Eve announced. "Follow me to my office so we can finish things."

Jack signed a provisional week-to-week contract. He would receive \$150 to start and would perform four shows a night, six nights a week. He wasn't sure if he could handle two jobs, but two were better than none. He would not reveal his relationship with Finocchio's to Mr.

Phillips. "It may never go anywhere anyway," Jack conceded.

Ginger was thrilled when she learned Jack had accepted both positions. Her only worry was that Jack would become too exhausted when working seven days a week, often up to 16 hours per day. And, they would have limited time together. However, she realized the money would be good, that Jack could get out of debt, and she looked forward to seeing him as an Eve-ette in those cute little outfits.

The Eve-ettes always opened the show. Jack didn't appear to be nervous but his stomach was churning. He had arrived at the club early to soak in the ambiance of his first night at work. He had shaved off all his leg and arm hair for the first time in his life. He wanted to be smooth like the other girls.

The Eve-ettes took the stage at precisely 9 PM to laughter from the audience. The Eve-ettes appeared with partial face makeup, no false eyelashes and their street pants rolled up under their skirts. As they would do a high kick on stage, you could see men's pants

instead of girlie type stage underwear. Ginger, sitting at a side table, laughed until her eyes watered.

As the shows progressed and the middle and final performances came and went, The Eve-ettes face makeup and costumes progressively improved between appearances, repairing it while Lavern, Eldon and David were on stage. By the last entrance, the cast was perfectly made-up and gowned, as though nothing had happened.

Jack loved the diversity, the quick changes and the sexy and semi-revealing costumes. He was in his element.

"That was great," Jack proclaimed to one of the other Eve-ettes at the end of his first evening. He was so pumped up that he could have danced all night. He did

have a few problems dancing in heels, but nobody really noticed except for Eve and another of the dancers.

“Don’t worry,” he was told by Eve. “You’ll get the hang of it. Just practice every chance you get at home.”

“I will,” Jack agreed. “Thanks for the opportunity.”

Jack met Ginger in the lobby, took her hand and gave her a kiss.

“You sure looked cute tonight,” she beamed. “I’m starting to like you more as a girl.”

Jack smiled.

Jack survived his first week at Finocchio’s and started his job with Phillips the following Monday. Working for Phillips was his “near dream job” in a high-scale environment with 8 to 4 hours. However, he enjoyed dancing, singing and performing at Finocchio’s even more. Life was good and he prayed every night it would continue.

Not only did it continue, but Jack prospered.

Epilogue

Jack would continue double-dipping and after six months signed a regular contract with Finocchio's at \$200 a week. Robert did not return to The Eve-ettes after his ankle healed. Instead, he took a position as a choreographer with the Jewel Box Revue, a traveling FI group.

Jack eventually quit working for Phillips to go full time at Finocchio's. In 1983, star performer Lavern Cummings lost her voice one night on stage and abruptly and surprisingly retired. She never appeared as a female impersonator or at Finocchio's again. Needing a replacement, Jack auditioned and eventually worked his way up to be the headline performer along side his dear friend and confidant, David.

Ginger becomes the Finocchio's official photographer and worked along side Rene De Carlo's wife as a cocktail runner. After much prodding from Wallace, one of the few married members of the Finocchio's performers, Ginger finally received the engagement ring she had always hoped for. Jack and Ginger married in 1985 during an elaborate ceremony at the historic Chinese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park .

Ginger never confronted Jack about his cross dressing. A month after her discovery and while Jack was working for Phillips, Ginger stopped past Jack's apartment. She found the closet to be double its size and the false wall and clothes missing. Jack told her that his landlord had "super-sized" the closet after discovering an empty space behind the wall. Ginger decided not to push the subject. She loved Jack too much to reveal her secret.

David, Lavern and Rene are the only stars from the Finocchio Club's Golden Day still living. David, who left Finocchio's in 1989, and Lavern, reside across town from each other in Las Vegas and Rene is living in Mexico . David continues to perform with two or three shows each year at the Onyx Theatre in Las Vegas , featuring Judy Garland, Liza Minnelli and Boy Chic characters.

Eve sadly closed Finocchio's after 63 years on Nov. 27, 1999 due to a major rent increase and dwindling attendance. Beat poet Lawrence Ferlingetti's only comment on learning of the closing was: "What a drag!"

Brigid's Wedding

By Silke Loretta-Martin

Today was the day.

George had transformed himself into Brigid and felt great. Everything was perfect - the mini kilt with the white blouse, the white gold and pearl jewelry she had inherited from her mother, the fine sheer tights and her makeup. Yes, we have to say "she" and "her", as no trace of George was left. Brigid was a perfect woman, and today was the day - the first day ever for her to leave her closet and go downtown.

As long as George could remember, he liked the wonderful fabrics of female dresses, underwear and pantyhose. He started dressing when he was a very young boy; when they played "disguise", as all kids do, he always wanted to play the princess. The princess was allowed to wear mother's fine silky slip - simply lovely. Well, the

kids, people said, they are so cute, now let him be the princess...



George, who had now become Brigid, posed in front of the mirror, smiled, turned round, walked on her 4 inch high heels. He clearly remembered the very first time being fully dressed in the 1960's. He had helped himself with his mother's wardrobe, as most cross dressers do, when they don't have a sister. He put on everything a woman wears - underwear, nylons, blouse and skirt. George was a cute teen with long dark blonde curly hair and a rather soft face. When he went to the mirror, his own look struck him completely and a girl was born. And what a thrill when he bought his very first pantyhose!

Brigid straightened her body, and the nipples of her perfect full silicone breasts showed through the white blouse, and continued to recall the 60's.

George never got "caught", though once he was almost trapped. His mom was shopping in town, so he immediately went into the parents' bedroom and to become a pretty girl, wearing her Bavarian dirndl (George's grandparents came over from Germany) and of course a nicely filled bra, nylons, and everything else. Then, he suddenly saw his mother passing by at the window. She came home earlier than expected. Never in the history of this Bavarian national costume did someone undress from a dirndl quicker than he did that day!

George-Brigid laughed at the thought of the long ago situation. And now, after all the years of dressing only at home, her heart beat faster. She was about to go out for the very first time, to feel the wind on her legs in nylons, to walk the street in high heels, to show two beautiful breasts, sexy curves and long hair.

Over the years, George became comfortable as a female with all curves necessary and desirable. He got accustomed to the soft and silky lingerie and to wearing a D-cup bra. He no longer got excited when he became Brigid's as she had developed into part of his personal-

ity. At times though, a shiver ran through him, which became even stronger when he rolled sheer tights up his long legs and saw the smooth fabric softly cover them. But all in all he became used to his new role as a woman when he was dressed.

As a guy, George was but a pale office manager. But as Brigid, she was stunning, gorgeous, outright sexy and desirable. George seemed to be decades away.

“Was I really meant to be someone else?” Brigid asked herself when she saw her image in the mirror.

She looked for an envelope and a letter she just had written. George had to mail it today, and had decided that Brigid would do the job.

She sealed the cover, put a stamp in the corner, slipped into her heels and went to the door. It was a sunny day, perfect for her kilts, white blouse, brown nylons and black pumps.

For a moment, George thought of Cecilia, the office beauty. All unmarried and half of the married men in the firm were in love with her. Except for an occasional friendly smile she never showed any interest or special affection for anyone. Of course George adored her too.

“Now I’ve become a beauty like her”, Brigid smiled. “And if I wore this to work, it would be an open race for who was prettier.”

Brigid was nervous, but she opened the door and stepped out. Would anyone recognize the man in woman’s clothes under the makeup? Would anyone see George, the office manager with a high reputation, in Brigid’s clothes?

He was anxious when he walked past a couple of the men on the street, but he only heard an occasional whistle or flirtatious word. He sighed, “So far, so good.” He put a

wiggle in Brigid's walk and walked toward the mailbox, all woman.

Brigid spotted Paul, standing beside the mailbox, staring in her direction. Any Paul in the world might have stood there, as Brigid had gained enough self-confidence to pass by a stranger, give him a smile and mail the letter. The fact that Paul was George's brother made it different. It was too late to enter a shop or pass on to a side street. "Why is he staring at me", Brigid thought and wished for a mouse hole to disappear in it.

Paul grinned as Brigid approached.

"Hello sweetie" he said and whistled. "Any plans for tonight?" Brigid felt 1,000 tons falling from her heart. Not even her own brother recognized her from short distance. She gave him a faint smile.

"Lots of plans, but none concerning you," She countered as she dropped the letter in the box.

Paul shrugged: "What a pity, hon, you're so damn cute."

She continued walking and looked over her shoulder. Paul was headed in the opposite direction.

"Whew," she said to herself. "I need an espresso."

The shock of confronting her brother and his comments were both nerve-racking and assuring. She thought of her legs and curves and sighed: "I'd do the same in male mode."

She walked into the coffee bar and came eye-to-eye with Cecilia.

Cecilia had taken advantage of the bright, sunny day, and had taken a day off from the office. She sat outside the coffee bar, sipping on a latte macchiato, admiring Brigid with her big brown eyes. Brigid gulped.

“She can’t have any idea. I am completely transformed”, Brigid thought. “Even my own brother didn’t recognize me.”

She smiled at Cecilia, and Cecilia smiled back.

“I’ll probably never be this close to her again, why not have a little chat?”, Brigid considered.

Although there were eight unoccupied tables, Brigid went to Cecilia’s.

“Is that chair free?”, she asked. “No”, Cecilia replied. “It is reserved.” And added with a wink and another smile: “For you.”

Brigid was puzzled by her friendliness. Cecilia, that untouchable block of ice that never melted under the smiles of all the charming office guys, was brightly smiling at her. And soon they were engaged in a little chat about weather, makeup brands, fashion and panty hose.

“And you really are wearing Silke’s Silkies?” Cecilia asked.

Brigid smiled. “I like the fabric. It is so, hmm, special. I really can’t describe it.”

“With your permission, may I touch your leg to feel it?” Cecilia asked.

“I can’t believe it, she wants to touch me”, Brigid thought. And replied, smiling: “Yes, of course. Feel free to feel them.”

When Brigid felt Cecilia’s fingers gently touching her leg and the pantyhose she thought she would explode.

It was as through a fog that she heard the compliments on the smooth silky fabric, the nice color and her beautiful legs. Cecilia’s hand slowly went up and down her leg. And she felt Cecilia’s fingers, long after they had been

withdrawn. While they continued to talk, their knees accidentally touched under the table, and neither Brigid nor Cecilia withdrew from the contact. Their knees softly rubbed against each other's through their nylons.

When she felt Cecilia's knee, Brigid realized that one can become aware of so many things within less than a second. Now she knew why Cecilia was so very reserved when it came to more than a smile at the office. She did not accidentally rub her knee against hers. She loved women. And Brigid realized something else. She was deeply in love with Cecilia. And Cecilia liked her, too.

Cecilia suggested a little stroll. She looked stunning in her white miniskirt and yellow blouse, with her long brown hair blowing in the wind.

When they realized that their beauty had almost caused a traffic accident while window shopping, Cecilia laughed. "Men! All the same. Let's go to the park around the corner. It might be less dangerous for them and us."

They approached a bench in the park and sat down.

"Do you remember what I said about your pantyhose in the café?" Cecilia asked. Brigid shook her head.

"I must admit I don't", she said.

"I thought so", Cecilia mused. Her fingers touched Brigid's legs again, tenderly, caressing.

It was as if a lightning went through Brigid's skin. The ladies looked at each other, their facial expressions sank deep into each other's eyes, and they understood. They left the bench and walked hand in hand on the park path. And George, deeply hidden inside Brigid, felt like he was in seventh heaven.

When they approached Brigid's apartment, she hesitated.

“Apparently we are the same size”, she mentioned. “If you want to try on a pair of Silke’s Silkies, we might go up to my place so you can do so.” Cecilia smiled.

“I should love to do so”, she exclaimed.

They entered Brigid’s apartment, and Cecilia was overwhelmed. It was first class, and luxurious in every way. Brigid showed her the rooms, and then it happened.

As the new friends walked out of the bedroom they bumped into each other under the doorway and their breasts touched. Although hers were only made of silicone, Brigid almost fainted. Cecilia smiled. “The first time, darling?” Brigid nodded. “The very first time.”

Brigid felt the sweetness of a woman’s lips upon hers and the touch of Cecilia’s hand on her silk stockings. They fell on the bed, two firm breasts upon her artificial breasts.

“I hope she does not realize they are only made of silicone”, George-Brigid thought.

Cecilia was too busy caressing Brigid’s legs through the pantyhose to notice. They kissed.

“Oh girl”, she whispered, “You know how to kiss. Almost like a man would kiss.”

Brigid could not help but laugh.

“It was meant as a compliment”, Cecilia added, blushing. They both giggled.

“Just kissing and hugging today”, Brigid requested in a whisper.

Cecilia smiled happily.

“You are such a caring woman”, she said. “In fact, you are the first one who does not want to see me naked on her bed, or in her bed.”

Had she known what George wanted, she might have revised her judgment. But George did not want was to reveal Brigid's secret.

"I want it, too", Brigid confessed and smiled. "But not today."

"You are great, Brigid", Cecilia replied. "You are the most beautiful and most caring woman I have ever met."

And she shyly added: "I love you madly. From the first sight I fell in love with you. I hoped you would come to my table. Oh if we only could marry!"

Brigid thought that her heart would explode.

"I love you even more, Cecilia. And I should love to marry you, too."

Cecilia smiled and shook her head. "You know that marriage between two women is not legal in this country. But one day I shall marry a dull man and have you as a girlfriend."

Brigid nodded in approval.

"At least we could be engaged", she suggested.

"What a great idea", Cecilia replied. "Let us become secret brides and exchange rings."

They exchange rings and sealed it with a long tongue filled passionate kiss. George could not believe it: Cecilia was his bride. "Oh yes," he thought, "She will get her dull guy, and Brigid, too."

After Cecilia left the apartment, Brigid found her new lover's bracelet on the floor. She smiled, and whispered to herself: "Thank you, hon, for giving me an opportunity."

The next day at the office, George found a spare minute to meet Cecilia alone.

"I see you are engaged", he said as he pointed at the fancy ring on her finger. "Who's the lucky one?"

"That's none of your business", Cecilia replied, cool as always with the guys.

"Are you sure?" he replied. George handed her the bracelet.

Cecelia was enraged.

"How did you get it?" she demanded.

"Because I am engaged, too", George said, as he displayed his left hand with her ring on his finger. "Do you still want to marry a dull guy and have pretty Brigid in your bed, too?"

She looked at him, her mouth open.

"It would be possible", he added.

Slowly she understood. "But... but the breasts", she stammered.

"Silicone, almost as good and perfect as natural ones", George explained, as she involuntarily nodded.

"George, you were... you are...?" he shook his head in agreement.

"You can marry a man and your best girlfriend at the same time", he smiled. "I am Brigid, sometimes and as often as you want her to be your lover."

Cecilia stood, smiled brightly and kissed him. "We're getting married," she shrieked, notifying the entire office.

Two months later they were married in an elaborate ceremony.

Near the end of the wedding reception, Peter, the good looking office sunny boy and regional tennis champion, took her aside.

"Listen, Cecilia", he frowned. "I am not jealous, at least not too much. You could have had every man in this

town, including me. And whom did you choose? George!
He's a dime a dozen!"

"You have no idea", she replied. "No idea at all."

And with a bright smile she turned towards her husband, who had just joined her.

"Come on George, we are late. Sorry, Peter, but my best friend Brigid is waiting for us."

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