



Reluctant Press presents:

MY LIFE, Part III

Wedding Bells

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALEXANDERSSON

A 'HER TV' E-BOOK

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My Life: Wedding Bells

**Part three of the DRESS CIRCLE trilogy
By Charlotte Mayo**

CHAPTER ONE

1996 was a strange year as I drifted in and out of the TV scene, depending on whether or not my brother was around. By March he'd flown off to California to be with his girlfriend and as soon as his back was turned I was up the stepladder collecting my suitcases and boxes from the loft and unpacking my creased garments. I contacted Mary about my wigs as they were now in an awful state, having been screwed up in a case for months on end. Mary had set up a small business retailing wigs to TVs and also re-styling them. I dropped my two wigs around to Mary but she felt that they were beyond repair so I agreed to return, dressed, and try on some different styles. That way I could see exactly what was really 'me', or Caroline to be more precise. On the day before the appointed time with the wig specialist I went on a shopping spree in Hanley. Amongst my purchases were tights (Superdrug), false nails and varnish (Boots), slip, bra and panties (Littlewoods) and, pure luxury, a pair of earrings for my newly pierced ears, for when I had returned to Stoke from South America I had taken the bold step of having both ears pierced and was now reaping the benefits in terms of being able to buy any ear-rings I wanted and not just clip-ons. They felt a lot better and they didn't come off when I moved my head.

After my shopping spree I returned home and shaved the whole of my body for the first time in over a year. It took three tubes of hair remover, two razor blade heads and one

and half hours. And then I needed to go back over every part of my body with an electric shaver.

Having applied baby lotion to my skin, I dressed in silky panties and pulled a pair of ten-denier black tights onto my legs, over which I fastened my waist clincher. Then, I attached my matching bra, popped my false breast forms inside the bra cups (having rubbed them between my hands to warm them) and put on my peach-coloured silk slip. Wrapping my cream coloured negligee around me, I sat down at my mirror and started applying make-up. When I was satisfied with my 'look', I buttoned up a new rose-petal pink silk blouse and the black leather pencil skirt that had been made for me in Bolivia. I tried on both my blonde wig and my brunette one before finally settling for the black wig I usually wore. I slipped my stockinged feet into black court shoes and picked up my handbag. By 7pm I was ready. I had run the bath to shave at 3pm! Do girls really take this long in the bathroom?

I checked the windows to see who was outside and then I left the house. Driving over to Stella and Mary's felt wonderful; slipping the car into gear and feeling my feet on the pedals, pulling up at traffic lights and the neighbouring car driver thinking I was female, boy; it was good to be dressed again. Or should that be 'girl', it was good to be dressed again?' When I arrived, Stella was dressed, too. He was seated at his computer typing out invites to the latest TV bash at Blackpool.

After some friendly banter, it was straight down to business. Mary gave me invaluable advice on what style and colour of wig I required and, with her careful guidance; I selected and ordered a reddish, brown bob. My hairpiece sorted, we started talking about my clothes,

"You'd look better in brown or tan colours as you've got reddish colouring," Mary said. To prove the point she let me try on a brown leather skirt of hers and a pair of low-heeled brown shoes. There was no doubting it - I did look better.

"I think your make-up should be reddish brown," she said. She wrote down some different colours that would suit me.

Then we chatted for a while about the scene and the forthcoming trip to Blackpool. Unfortunately though, she wasn't feeling well and went to bed early,

"Oh, and you can keep the clothes," she said casually as she went upstairs to bed.

In fact, I wore the skirt a few weeks later when I ventured out to Stella and Mary's party. By this time my brown bob wig had arrived and it made a huge difference - I really looked the part.

On the day of the party, I ran a bath in the morning, added in plenty of bubble bath and then shaved my body. Later, when it was time to get ready I applied make-up and slipped into my underwear, but, because it was daytime and my neighbour was in his back garden watering his plants (the neighbour on the other side this time), I wore a loose tracksuit over the top of my blouse and put the skirt, shoes, wig and breast forms in a bag so I could carry them from the house.

I drove to an industrial estate and got changed before going on to Stella and Mary's house. This time I parked in a side street a short distance away from the house so I could

take the evening air. It was mid- April and still light – the clocks had gone forward a few weeks previously - but I was confident that I looked convincing. I put my shoes on, checked my look in the mirror, applied a little more lipstick, sucked in my lips, pouted – then I left the car. My shoes clipped uneasily on the pavement. I walked on, up the slight incline to Stella and Mary's house. As I neared the corner of the road I passed a woman and a boy. They took no notice of me at all. Then it was down the steep drive to ring the bell of the famous white front door.

The party was quiet and, as usual, most of the guests were congregated in the kitchen. There was no Sandra or Alison but some of the Birmingham people had arrived, as had Della and Claire, a leggy, attractive TV from Liverpool; most of the others I didn't recognise; I'd been away too long.

Natasha arrived later with the drag queen Angelina, who owned The Club. Natasha had some sad news for me; apparently, whilst I'd been off the scene, Alison had died of a heart attack, possibly caused by the hormone pills she had been taking.

Later, we all went to the Club, at least Natasha, Madeline, Angelina and myself. I drove up on my own and parked in the car park.

The feel of cold air circulating around my legs was fantastic. I've always loved those walks to pubs, to houses, to clubs and tonight was no different. I felt very confident with my new look and felt sure I was more convincing than I had been for years. Once in the Club, I stood around the bar, chatting and drinking and making light-hearted conversation with Melvyn. I really liked the Club – the best TV venue I had been in - and the closest; whilst I had been away I had missed the personalities and the characters in the place.

That Wednesday night Natasha and I went back for more. There were a lot of students around and they kept casting furtive glances at us. It was like the early days when Wednesday night had been student night in Mates and we had received looks and comments. It was quieter at the bar, though, and I was able to have a long chat with Melvyn about my South America trip as well as the usual banter about football – not withstanding the insults we always exchanged. I reminded him of the time I had thrown an ice cube at his head to attract his attention and he had returned the favour by spraying me with lemonade from the hand-held siphon. That had been downstairs in the disco area, one night when I had too many.

Soon I was back in the swing of it again. And buying clothes too. One Friday I went to a small clothes shop near to where I lived and asked the assistant about a white blouse. The woman who served me showed me the blouse and said it cost £74 – a bit of a price for someone on the dole. I said,

"It looks a bit old fashioned!"

The woman snorted and walked off to put the blouse back on the rail. I left the premises. The shop's not there any more.

Quite often I would dress on my own in the house and on one such occasion Vicky came around to see me and knocked on the back door. My neighbour, who was out in the garden, very kindly informed her that I was in as he had seen me park my car in the garage. I heard this exchange through the open bathroom window where I was delicately trying to hold the eyeliner steady as I drew a neat line under my eye. Vicky banged on the

back door again and shouted my name. I ignored her and continued applying my eye make-up. Well, she wouldn't want to see me dressed in a peach coloured silky slip and boobs, would she? After a while she went away but such incidents bring it home to the TV what a tenuous path we all tread – how close to discovery we always are and, how bloody nosey neighbours can be.

A little later a similar incident occurred with my plumber. He had called around to service my central heating and having serviced it he went to walk into the back room to check that the radiator was warming up. Unfortunately, when my brother was away, the back room was used as my dressing room and garments and make-up were all over the bed. So I quickly said,

"I'll do that!" and walked into the room before him. He must have thought it odd, for I called out that the radiator was warming up and then didn't leave the room for ages as I packed away the things that were out just in case he did come into the room.

A few weeks later and Natasha and I were back in the Club, this time with Donna and Madeline. It was the usual good night with a return to the brisk banter and excellent repartee of Melvyn and his usual, "Look what the cat's dragged in!" greetings.

It was one of the last times I went there before my brother re-appeared from America and the TV gear was lofted once again!

By mid-June I'd completed my teaching course but still couldn't get a job. Apart from my articles for the spanking magazine, I'd got no further with writing commercially, except the odd letters to newspapers and magazines – 'fillers' as they're called in the trade. I was disappointed because after having had high hopes and dedicating a lot of time to writing I was achieving very little to justify the amount of input. I did have some surprising writing windfalls, though. Once I earnt a £100 from the Sunday Mirror for a true life confession about a girl who had slept with her best friend's boyfriend, who was a bit of a womaniser. He had then finished with his girlfriend but continued to sleep with the girl under threat of exposing her to her friend. It was a true story, but the "I" of the story was me and not the actual person. Of course, the cheque came made payable to "Caroline Marchment" and so I had to open a bank account under a female name, saying I was a writer. From 1995 onwards I managed to get a number of such snippets published though the £100 was the highest amount received. An amusing incident occurred when I wrote a letter to the Daily Express bemoaning working mothers and saying that I had a degree (true) and used to be a working mother (false) but was now at home (true) with the children (false). A few days after I had written the letter I answered the front door to find a young man standing on my doorstep with a camera wrapped around his shoulder.

"Is Mrs Marchment in?" he asked.

Fuck, thinks I, "No," I say.

"Only I'm from the *Daily Express*, she wrote a letter – we want to do a feature."

Now, I can bullshit with the best of them but this little fix called even my powers into question.

"She's taken the kids to MacDonald's." (Where else do kids go?)

"When will she be back?"

I looked at my watch, swung the door back and forth nervously. "I'm not sure."

"You know about the letter she wrote to us, do you?"

"Oh, yeah, sure."

"You didn't write it, did you?"

"No, no, of course not!"

"OK then, when would it be convenient to call around to do a feature?"

"I'd have to ask my wife."

Eventually, I got rid of him, only for him to call back a few minutes later.

"Have you got any family photographs we can use?"

"No," I said, unconvincingly, "all the photo albums are in the loft."

Surprisingly, they published the letter, but didn't pay me for it, which made the whole thing pointless. Mrs Annoyed from Hastings wrote to me to say what a wonderful letter it was and that I was setting a good example to working mums by giving up work and staying at home. Not if you could see me, Mrs Angry, not if you could see me!

To generate some extra cash, I invested my energies in a few ventures that cost more than they earned. One was a small writing book entitled 'Write to Sell!' What do they say about teachers? Those who *can't*, teach? And my IT-literate brother created a writers' database and a word search game when he finally came back from America for the last time. These projects took hours of our time and getting the booklet published was expensive. In both cases we only sold a few copies and were massively out of pocket. The final tally was that I sold about six of my booklets and actually had one of them stolen. I went to a writing fair and set myself up on a stall with the books, my brother's writers' database discs and accompanying advertising literature. After a couple of hours I'd not made any sales nor had any interest shown in my wares so I sloped off to the bar for a pint. When I returned, I found one of my books missing from the pile of samples I'd brought with me. The others were sold through a local bookshop, but that was about it.

Still, as the dressing world was unavailable to me until my brother left my house again (he was, by this time, looking for jobs in the UK, having split up with his girlfriend in the States), I turned my attention to my male wardrobe and making myself more attractive to women. Its strange having more females clothes than male – more skirts than trousers, more women's shoes than men's shoes, more women's coats than men's coats – but in fact, apart from my shirts, it was actually the case, so, as much as I could on my limited finances, I spent time updating my male wardrobe and going out on the town with my friends.

I also started trying to meet women through the lonely-hearts columns of newspapers. The local rag had proved unsuccessful so I branched out and started buying the *Sunday Telegraph* each week because I figured that women who read the *Telegraph* were sure to be well-educated, comparatively wealthy, classy and well-groomed. I started looking for girls in the Kindred Spirits column. The adverts did not let me down. I loved reading them and some were quite revealing. One I particularly liked read,

“BIG BOSSY boots wanted to show 37 year old beauty a thing or two! London/South-East”

But the best of the lot was,

“WEALTHY GENTLEMAN sought by a beautiful, sophisticated and feminine lady, 25, to spoil and pamper her and lavish her with light luxuries. NE England.”

I couldn't resist. I wrote out a response and phoned the voice mail in reply to 'Annou-ska's' message. A few days later she phoned me. She said she picked me out of the hundred or so calls because I sounded genuine on the phone. I told her that my brother and I were virtually Internet millionaires (the emphasise being on the word 'virtually') and I was looking for an attractive blonde to play hostess at my black tie dinner parties. We had a great conversation about taffeta ball gowns, lingerie (which I promised to buy her by the bucket load), British men being unappreciative of feminine beauty (she was French Swiss), dinner parties, skiing and horse riding; I can do the former but have never touched the latter, the closest I've ever been to a horse is reading down a list of names of runners at Cheltenham and trying to pick a winner. It was fantastic stuff though and she gave me her mobile number and asked me to call her but of course I couldn't. Meeting some saddo who received about £47.50 a week on the dole was not what this Swiss miss had in mind. Money maketh man.

Even so, my investment in my male wardrobe paid off for one evening, in a nightclub, I met a middle-aged blonde. She was a divorcee who had a job in a factory. We agreed to meet a few nights later in a pub in Stafford town centre. I turned up feeling nervous and apprehensive, partly because a few weeks earlier I had started dating a girl I had met on the teaching course I had just finished. Anne was my first date for a few years and it's surprising what a girlfriend does for your confidence, because I happened to be in the nightclub (which was the same one Natasha and I used to visit) when I was approached by this blonde who asked me for my phone number. I told her that I had a girlfriend but she insisted - honest! (I've always believed that the three greatest aphrodisiacs for a woman are: Money – having it, Power – being able to use it and Other Women – nothing attracts women more than a man who is already 'spoken for'.) Anyway, a few days later we met up in a pub in Stafford. When I arrived Josephine was already there, sitting on a bar stool kicking out her long legs, encased, as luck would have it, in leather trousers. She sipped her drink in a casual, confident manner that suggested she liked to be in control. I knew straight away that this was a game to her, that I had been seduced and she enjoyed the power relationship of bedding a younger man who might just get slapped by his regular partner if she ever found out. There was never anything else on the agenda but a bout of raw sex and, after a few drinks, I couldn't wait to get back to her place and peel off those trousers. We ended up at her flat sitting through a film on cable TV about the early life of boxer, Mike Tyson whilst she teased and tantalised me with the prospect of what lay ahead. Not that it was ever in doubt for as soon as we had entered her flat she had locked and bolted the front door and conveniently forgotten to show me where the fire exit was.

When she was finally ready she led me to her bedroom and at last I was able to take down those trousers. We ended up having a superb session, during which she told me she wanted to tie me up and whip me. (Why do people always say that to me? Weird). The

next day I dropped her off at the factory where she worked and went home a well-satisfied man.

Meanwhile, I continued to see Anne who was none the wiser about my brief encounter with the blonde in the nightclub. I had started dating Anne because we had kept in touch after the course had finished and had met up a few times with other students from the course. After one night (ironically in the same nightclub as I had met Josephine) we started kissing and romance blossomed.

Anne was a hairdresser and a mother of two, a boy and girl. One of her previous partners, the father of the little girl, had been violent towards her and he and his family plagued Anne, her family and friends with telephone calls at various times of the day and night. It wasn't long after I had started dating Ann that I too, started receiving the mystery phone calls.

Despite all the hassles, it felt great to be dating again and doing simple things like going to the pictures, theatre and restaurants. Also, Anne was a great source of human-interest stories; being a hairdresser, women would tell her everything, treating the salon like some great confessional. She told me how she used to cut the hair of both the wife and mistress of the same man and the wife would tell her she was suspicious about her husband and the mistress would tell her about her lover.

Though it was good to date, it curtailed my dressing. My brother, by this time, had found a job down south and had moved away, so I was back on my own.

Occasionally, I would take my cases down from the loft and have a private *en femme* session or sort through my clothes. The black leather skirt I had bought in Middlesbrough and the leather trousers bought in Newcastle-upon-Tyne didn't fit me, so I gave them to Anne. She didn't question where they came from, though she knew they weren't new.

Anne's ex-partner was still threatening her and fighting an increasingly acrimonious custody battle over their little girl. The abusive phone calls from her ex and his family increased. He was able to discover my ex-directory number due to his contacts at the telephone company. These contacts were able to access the phone numbers on Anne's 'Friends and Family' menu, so the fact that I changed my number four times in three months to stop the abusive calls was futile; in the end I ditched the land line and just used my mobile phone. It's good to talk.

Having spent so long on the dole, I thought there would be more likelihood of me finding work in the south; Stoke wasn't bearing much fruit as far as the labour market was concerned. I persuaded Anne to move with me and to help her get a job I wrote a CV and a covering letter for her. I sent it to colleges that trained hairdressers. Result? She soon found a job as a trainer of hairdressers down south and moved away. I started seeing her weekends and, what with the daily phone calls, the dressing was almost completely curtailed. Still, our sex life was very good – and it was spiced up further when I introduced Anne to the joys of spanking and mild bondage sessions.

Then, just as I was concentrating all my efforts on moving away from Stoke so I could be with Anne (and, after some 27 months of unemployment) I got invited to an interview. I had actually applied for the post some three months prior to the interview so had thought I had been unsuccessful. However, as luck would have it I was appointed. So, in February

1997 I finally started another full-time job. I hadn't worked since being sacked from my previous employment in November 1994 and, not surprisingly, I was reluctant to continue my search for jobs in the south, especially as my new job was far from being uninteresting.

Anne and I still dated. Mostly I travelled down to her house on a Friday night but at other times she would come up to my house for the weekend. Unbeknown to me, she discovered my stockpile of dairies in my chest of drawers which dated back to when I was eighteen and were page-a-day affairs. Of course, she started reading them as any curious person would. Now, I can say in all honesty that a diary is best kept unkept, bar official appointments, for Anne read not about my dressing but about my liaison with Josephine. This occurred because I had gone to the pub with my friends whilst Ann had stayed at my house claiming to be ill. She had then gone through my drawers and read my diaries. So one dirty, wet, horrible Saturday night she came up to the crowded pub where I was watching a very important football match (Italy V England in Rome – 1998 World Cup Qualifier) with my brother and a friend and told me to come outside where she promptly punched me in the face.

"You *****," she yelled.

Well, you can guess the rest, it wasn't very pleasant. To add to my woes she read words that seemed to question my commitment to her. She began to pressurise me to get engaged or move south and live with her and, as I'd been the one to encourage her to move away with my 'grass is always greener on the other side' philosophy (that's what comes of being a Taurean – I'm full of bull) I felt a bit guilty. When I did neither she set me ultimatums. When I broke them she asked me why.



"Because, because....be.....cause, be.....bloody... cause, be.....bloody.....I don't know."

I couldn't tell her. So I wrote her a letter.

"I'm a transvestite," I boldly declared on the last of four pages. "A bloody, fucking transvestite!"

"You're a dirty, two-timing fucking shit pushing bastard!" she shouted at me on the phone when she read my letter. "I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man alive. WEIRDO!"

And so it went on. Abuse. No doubt learnt from her abusive ex-partner. And what did I do? I kept in touch with her. Partly because I felt responsible for her moving away to the sunny south, partly because I wanted to explain the dressing, partly because I felt nervous about a new partner who had moved in with her with amazing alacrity and partly because she phoned me too, - sometimes to see how I was doing, sometimes to see if I had dressed recently, sometimes to ask me questions about the dressing and once, when she came up to see her parents, she called in to see me and insisted on looking at my TV photograph album and seeing my clothes. I don't think she really believed it until then as she kept saying, "I would never have guessed!"

Within two weeks of us splitting up, an Asian taxi driver called Aslam moved in with her. Ironically, she had met him in a service station on the M6 shortly before we had separated, when we were going through the difficult phase of her discovering my diaries, reading them and realising I had cheated on her and I had my doubts about a long term commitment. On her first date with Aslam she had worn the black leather trousers I had given her and Aslam had been very impressed. Aslam was twenty years her senior and had been married twice before; once to an Asian lady with whom he had four children, and the second time to a white woman, ten years his junior, for whom he had left his first wife. That relationship had produced three children. However, the second wife had repaid the compliment by leaving Aslam for another man and, at the time of Anne meeting Aslam, he was living in a hotel, his wife having won the family home in the divorce settlement. Of course, Anne told him all about me and even showed him my letter. Apparently, he confirmed her belief that I was a dirty little pervert and said that under Islamic Law or Shite Law or something I'd be stoned to death! Great! According to Anne, Aslam's second wife had been unfaithful to him before they had married and he had given her a good hiding with a leather belt and then phoned her dad and told him to take his unfaithful slut of a daughter home. That was why I feared for Anne's safety.

In many ways though, Aslam was just the type of man Anne liked, for she enjoyed a sense of danger (God, knows what she saw in me, then) and I have no doubt that the fact that Aslam was very controlling, possessive and dominating and believed that the man was very much the head of the household appealed to her.

Anne would phone me up and tell me about Aslam taking her to the casino and not letting her gamble, opening her mail, not allowing her to wear thongs or G strings as well as not allowing her to buy value products from Tesco! One time, she left the house to go to work in a suede mini-skirt (I had bought her that) and he had grabbed hold of her and told her to change or else. She had pushed him away and rushed out of the house. That night,

when Aslam had arrived home from work, he had given her a dozen skirts and dresses he had bought that day which were, in his opinion, appropriate for her to wear. He then rooted through her wardrobe and threw out anything that he felt was offensive to Islam or Aslam or both. Thongs and G-strings were first to go. After that he bought most of her clothes and told her what to wear whenever he took her out.

In truth, I quite enjoyed Anne telling me these stories, especially when she told me that Aslam had made her change her clothes or that they had been to visit Aslam's family or friends and he had told her to wear a shalwar kameez or that they had gone to the casino and he had insisted that she wear her leather trousers or some item of clothing he had just purchased for her.

That Christmas (1998) Anne went late night shopping in Lakeside with her son, Pat. When she got back Aslam was furious. He had expected her to be in when he had arrived home from work and was so annoyed he had even gone out looking for her. He rowed with her over staying out late and accused her of going to a disco.

Apparently he said, "You are dressed like you are gone to a disco – that's disco clothes! You been to disco to fuck with other men. You fuck with other men, I know!"

And what was she wearing?

Yes, you've guessed it! Anne was only wearing the very same black leather skirt I had worn all those years ago on the occasion of the Stockton Taxi Incident (and high heeled, black leather boots that had been a birthday present from me – don't girlfriends do well from me clothes wise – no self interest – honest). I laughed when she told me that story, I know Anne never guessed that I had once worn the clothes I gave her; if she had of known she wouldn't have worn them, and that gave an added edged to the stories she told me because she hated the 'TV thing' and in a strange kind of way I saw it as revenge for her massive over-reaction when confronted with my transvestite confession.

After I broke up with Anne, I spent a lot of time writing a book, a thriller partly based on my experiences in Manchester and the Gay Village. Occasionally, I made excursions out dressed but mostly I was writing in the evenings and going out with friends on the straight scene.

Work wise 1998 wasn't a great year; my boss, John, who happened to be the best manager I'd ever worked for, was diagnosed as having cancer and died in 1999, whilst his manager, our overall boss died in a car crash in September 1998. As Fate would have it, we, that is those of us who worked for John, heard his cancer was terminal in the first week in September 1998 and two days later, on the Wednesday, his manager died in the car smash whilst going to a meeting at work. That was the longest week of my life. Truly terrible.

To take my mind off the sad events, I continued writing my novel with the hope that it might be published and make me a mint (Imperial probably) and was so committed to it that my clothes were stashed in the loft so that I could not succumb to temptation. In June 1998, I went to France for the World Cup Finals and witnessed the worst display of football violence I'd ever seen. Tunisians and Algerians ambushed us England fans coming out of the match in Marseilles. Every British number-plated car was smashed to bits and there were more green bottles flying around than arrows at Agincourt. I later read that

Osma Bin Laden's Al Qaeda network had planned to launch a terrorist attack on the England players and supporters at the match using terrorist elements amongst the Algerians who lived in Marseilles. Though there were not real bombs and bullets flying around it certainly felt frightening enough; at one point I had to duck behind a garden wall whilst glass shattered on the pavement all around me. I remember looking up to see a large, bare chested, beer-gutted skinhead standing in the road, facing us cowards and shirkers. He was shouting,

"Come on, England! Don't take this crap! Attack!"

Bottles rained down all around him, but he was completely oblivious to the danger he was in. His voice was hoarse with shouting,

"Stand up, England! Come on!"

He was the general and this was his war. It did make me reflect though (not at the time, I hasten to add, as I was too busy cowering behind a wall) the difference between an England shirt and a skirt. Both are greeted with a large amount of prejudice, suspicion and misunderstanding; the funny thing is that the England football fan is more despised than the guy in the skirt for on my travels abroad I have been left in no doubt at all that the English are the most hated nation on the planet (after Americans). Certainly, in Marseilles all the English fans were treated like criminals, as they had been on my excursion to Rotterdam all those years before.

From Marseilles I caught a slow train back to Aix-en-Provence where I was staying. I had travelled to France on my own and on the way back to the campsite in Aix-en-Provence I got chatting to a small group of supporters. One was a real character from Sunderland. He was telling stories about his antics following England when the train stopped and for no apparent reason he stood up and said,

"This is my stop."

"Looks like a builder's yard to me, mate," someone said.

The Sunderland lad didn't hear or didn't care; with his programme rolled up in his hand like a baton he marched off the train. As the train pulled away from the station our friend was standing on the platform, his hands on his hips, like a latter-day Mussolini, watching the train disappearing into the distance. He had got off in an industrial site or something which was a very close approximation to one. Still, there was another train along at 18:36 – the following day.

To round off the trip, a French lad came up to me while I was waiting for a bus in Aix-en-Provence to take me the few miles to the campsite where I was staying. He hawked and spat on my back. Nice.

CHAPTER TWO

I split up with Anne at the end of January 1998 but didn't go out dressed until the end of February 1999. A week before, on my first excursion back on the scene, Natasha and I went out 'in the male'. We called in to see Melvyn at the rundown Three Tuns public house in Hanley that was now attached to the Club via a rear exit and alleyway. Angelica owned The Club and The Three Tuns and did a DJ act in both. The Tuns was full of older

fags, who tended to smoke excessively. The place was always smoggy and I didn't much care for the décor. Still, it was good to talk to Melvyn and Natasha in a quiet local.

A few days later my neighbour handed me a package that had been delivered to his address because I was out. He passed it over the fence to me.

"I zink it's zee suit that had been dry-cleaned," he said in a strong, Polish accent.

In fact, it was a brown leather skirt ordered from a catalogue company. Later, he gave me a black funnel coat in a transparent bag. There was no disguising the fact that it was a woman's coat and, as he handed it over the fence to me, he didn't say a word, so I saw the agent, who lived up the road and said I'd collect direct from his house if he left a card. Well, I didn't want the neighbours talking, did I?

That Saturday Natasha and I ventured out to the Club dressed – during the week I'd shaved for the first time in years.

Primrose, the doorman, was doing the honours at the entrance,

"Bloody hell, she's evil," he said as I approached swinging my hand-bag. I was wearing a tight leather skirt and wearing way too high high heels that were giving my toes no end of aggro - I'd forgotten just how hard it was to walk in them. "Miss Mates winner is barred from the Club."

Although this was the normal 'mincing voiced' banter Natasha and I enjoyed so much, I got the feeling there was an undercurrent of truth in it. Well, to their eyes I had taken the money I'd won that night from the Miss Mates contest and run! They weren't to know that I had been fired from my job, my subsequent excursion to South America, my time on the dole, my brother staying with me and dating Anne.

Even Melvyn was a bit more subdued than usual. He told me that he'd been ill of late.

The following week we were off to Stella and Mary's for a TV party. Mary provided the normal superb buffet and, during the evening, retailed wigs. The party was good fun but there were a lot of people there I didn't recognise. The next morning I was out in my garage sawing a ring off my finger, as I couldn't remove it after the night out. I had bought my ladies' jewellery from a 'fell-off-the-back-of-a-lorry' street suitcase trader and of course it was complete rubbish. I think the jeweller, Gerald Ratner, once said that the jewellery sold in his shops wouldn't last as long as a Marks and Spencer prawn sandwich; well, it was the same for this collection of nonentity necklaces and rings. Once I got the ring off I resolved to buy some jewellery of a reasonable quality and, with that in mind, visited a jewellers and bought a necklace and bracelet. Easy purchases for a man. The rings are more problematic as without knowing your finger size you're stumped.

Early in March I went off to Blackpool for the weekend. It was one of Mary and Stella's TV get togethers and by this time they had become so popular they took over two hotels. I arrived in Blackpool without incident having driven up straight from work with all my TV kit in the boot of the car. I checked into a compact room which I was sharing with a tall, scrawny TV called Faith who was a smoker (a lot of TV's smoke) but friendly enough.

He was already dressed and went out to see his friends. Alone in the room, I made myself up and pulled on a lovely, black chiffon dress; tight at the waist and long and flowing to the knees. I slipped into high-heeled strappy sandals from Faith and picked up my

matching handbag. Happy with my appearance I went in search of Natasha and Madeline who were still getting ready. They were a bit off with me, probably because of my 'drifting in and out' of the TV scene and so I had dinner with Faith and another group of TV's I had met that afternoon. The evening entertainment was a cabaret, after which I sat in the lounge talking to Stella and Mary. Stella assured me that I would get a parking ticket when the pay and display ticket ran out on my car because the wardens were 'shit hot in Blackpool'. I decided to walk out of the hotel, still dressed, with the intention of moving my car. Unfortunately, out on the pavement I bumped into a big group of drunken youths and so hotfooted it back to the hotel to change back into the male. Though I would have probably got away with it, self-preservation said that walking past eight or nine plastered youths at 10.30 at night, dressed as a woman, was probably not a good idea. Anyway, I moved my car and came back to the hotel to change yet again.

The following day I left the hotel in my black pleated skirt, leather jacket and boots and went for a walk on the promenade. The wind blew in from the Atlantic and caused my black curly wig to resemble a bale of hay that had been hit by a hurricane. I had chosen to wear that one rather than the bob and it was obviously the wrong decision for artificial hair went in my eyes and sand in my mouth. I tried to brush the wig back but it was just too windy. Some lads across the promenade laughed at me whilst some girls hurled abuse from the safety of a car, not that I could run after them, even if I had wanted to. I ignored both groups and stumbled along in my boots, which were destroying my feet. At last I could stand the pain no longer, so I turned around and shuffled back towards the hotel. My feet were hurting so much I started to limp. My saviour came in the form of a clairvoyant in one of those half-open stable-like rooms which are so much a part of the English promenade. She sat staring out to sea, completely unfazed by the tatty transvestite who was resting on her stable door, out of breath and in no fit state to walk anywhere.

"Want your fortune read, love?" she said as I grabbed two minutes respite.

"Yeh, why not?" I said. I didn't really want my fortune read, I wanted a rest.

I went inside and sat down on a hard wooden chair that felt like a throne. Bliss. I would never brush past a gypsy selling heather again.

The weather-beaten old crone pointed to three sizes of glass ball. Each ball cost a different amount of money.

"Will they all tell the same fortune?" I asked.

"Yes, but the big one is a lot clearer, love." The gypsy sucked in her lips.

"What about the small one?"

She moved her hands around the outside of the glass without touching it.

"Well, love, the future's not so clear on this one, not so clear. You're better off with the big ball."

I took the medium.

"I see a lot of men fancying you, and you feel quite flattered. You don't know which one to pick," was her opening gambit, and in fairness it wasn't a bad assessment considering I was a 34 year-old man, sitting in her tiny room wearing a skirt, silk blouse, leather

jacket, make-up and a black, curly, messed-up wig - not to mention high heeled boots which were about as comfortable as horseshoes nailed onto bare flesh.

"But I'm straight!" I protested.

She looked me up and down, drinking in my appearance. It was a hard concept to take in and many people before this Gypsy Guesser had made the same mistake. A man dressed as a woman wants to be a woman and therefore fancies men. If her mouth hadn't been so immobile she would have smiled. As it was she said, "Ah, but I know your sort."

I rest my case.

The next thing she said was accurate.

"Your favourite colour is blue."

She then went and ruined it. According to Madam Palm my lucky number was 22. (It's actually eight, as any casino I've visited will testify).

Next she said I lacked confidence and needed to believe in myself a bit more. She'd obviously dispensed with the fortune telling half-way through the session and had become my life coach without informing me. If she had added that I would get two enormous blisters from this little jaunt along Blackpool's far-from-Golden Mile and be off work for two days I might have taken her a bit more seriously. As it was, I reached down to my hand-bag and pulled some notes from my purse. It cost about £20 – the same amount as a blowjob in Amsterdam and about as quick. My feet still ached. I hobbled back to the hotel and bathed them in warm water. Then I got dressed in male clothes (how fantastic to wear trainers and socks) and spent the afternoon shopping in Blackpool.

I came back to the hotel in the early afternoon and dressed for dinner, again in a skirt and blouse. I sat at a table with my roommate Faith and some other TV's including a real girl, a nurse called Justine. She told an amazing story about how her parents had died in a car crash when she was 19. She hated her mum so much she had refused to identify the body. Years later her mum turned up, alive and well. Her dad had been having an affair and they had buried the "wrong" person!

A small group of us took a taxi down to the Flying Handbag pub where a TV called Denise another real girl to me, by the name of Julia. Charlotte had met her at an Elvis Presley Convention and they were 'just good friends'. Julia and I talked for most of the night and I seemed to be on for a one-night stand when some other TV muscled in and ended up taking her back to his room and bedding her.

I left on Sunday and went home where upon I had a phone call from my volatile ex-girlfriend – all I needed after a sexual blow out.

In fact, Anne and I often used to phone each other. We kept in touch right up to and beyond her marriage to Aslam in January 1999. Contact between Anne and I did diminish after that but I did see her just before Christmas 1999. I had phoned her and suggested we meet up when I came back to my parents' house for Christmas. On the agreed day I drove to where she worked and met her one lunchtime. She was very smartly dressed but typically abrasive. She boasted about how well Aslam treated her; how he gave her money to buy clothes and that he bought her presents of clothes and jewellery and took her out to dinner every Saturday. Apparently, after Christmas, he was going to take her to India to

visit his family, as he came from Bombay. Then she asked me about the dressing. She said she didn't believe I was a transvestite and it was like a drug addict saying they took crack cocaine but you never saw them do it – it didn't make sense.

"But I have my quiet periods, Anne," I insisted. "I do it occasionally."

"What about the shaving?"

That was the one thing she couldn't stand. She'd made that clear to me on several occasions.

"It's part of it," I said.

"It's perverted. It makes me feel physically sick."

And that's how we left it. Only not quite, to make me feel even worse she told about a Millennium Ball Aslam was taking her to in Southend. She described the beautiful red taffeta ball gown he had bought for her after a shopping trip to London and how he was escorting her to this black tie event.

As it turned out the Millennium was the worst New Years Eve of my life. The thought of Anne in a beautiful dress was too much; I stayed at my parents' house and sat in front of the TV all night with my parents and brother watching Blair and Hague at the Millennium Dome. What a yawn. Later in the night, true to form, I got drunk and threw up. I wasn't jealous of Aslam being with my ex-girlfriend; I was jealous of Anne in that bloody dress!

CHAPTER THREE

The New Millennium turned out to be all quiet on the TV front as I stayed in doors and wrote my thriller. Occasionally, I made visits to the dress agency in Hanley where I had left my bridesmaid's dress. Tragically, it was too small for my increasingly large frame – gone were the blissful days of an easy size 14 for I was now a 'tank, a 'fatso', a 'whale' or a 'barrel' – barrel was probably the most apt description because a lot of my weight increase came through drinking pints. Beer barrel.

Still, I did try to lose weight; I started an exercise programme that involved running three times a week, building up to four-mile runs but I suppose I'd reached a stage in my life when I would never be so thin again.

Once, in the dress agency a young girl served me. She was the daughter of someone who worked there. I handed in my ticket.

"Has it been sold yet?" I asked.

She took the ticket. "No, I'm sorry. We've had a lot of interest in your dress, though." She laughed nervously. "I don't mean *your* dress."

"That's quite all right; I know exactly what you mean."

She went on to explain that a student had wanted it for a prom and that a two future bridesmaids had tried it on but because it was on its own it was difficult to sell.

In August, when I had finished my book, I 'came out' of my self imposed closet one more time. My first purchase was a hair-clipper from Argos, which was an excellent way

to shave all my hair off. It was like shearing a sheep. All that thick hair fell onto the newspaper I had spread across the floor. Then, I went on a shopping spree, buying make-up, a mirror with a light and two blouses. I also bought jewellery and clothes from catalogue companies. I was earning money for the first time in ages and went a bit mad with my orders from the catalogue companies. I wasn't embarrassed at all when talking to a female operative on the phone but if a man answered I'd make an excuse and say that I had called to check my balance. I'd love it when the female assistants said, after I had placed an order,

"Is it for yourself or customer, sir?"

The money was soon running out, though; I got through £300 on catalogue items alone. These included a gorgeous black and mulberry dress, more blouses, two pairs of shoes; one, a pair of black stilettos with 4" heels and the other was a pair of high-heeled sandals from Faith. And, of other course, I bought a leather skirt and a pair of leather trousers – I actually sent the trousers back. I also purchased a lovely pair of high-heeled, black knee-length leather boots.

It felt so nice to be dressed again, fantastic in fact. A feeling of ease and calmness came over me as I slipped into each item and pulled the ten-denier stockings up my smooth legs and fastened them to a suspender-belt, sheer bliss. Once dressed I would prance around the house and take pictures of myself.

By the end of August I'd spent £750 on my TV wardrobe and money was running out fast. It was time to draw in my horns and try to pay some of the money off that I owed. No wonder the catalogue agent, who lived up the road, asked me into the house and made friendly chit-chat every time I responded to a card pushed through the door that said yet another parcel was awaiting collection.

Getting dressed again made me anxious to return to the TV scene. By coincidence I met Mary one day whilst out shopping and was soon in touch with Natasha. Off we went to the Club and the Three Tuns. The first time out dressed, I wore my red and mulberry dress and new stiletto shoes which had 4" heels. Ironically Stephanie, from the bridal shop, was in The Club that night and recognised me though I didn't see her.

I also went to Stella and Mary's next party. I dressed in my new tan-coloured leather skirt and one of my new silky, silvery blouses with my red/brown-bobbed wig. This time I set out on my own to Mary's house and arrived late because I went for a long drive first. I loved walking up the road to the house and then down the steep drive, feeling the fresh air circulate around my legs. Pure bliss.

Soon, Natasha and I were back to our regular Wednesday nights down the Club. We would always go for a drink in the Three Tuns first, and then, when the Club opened up, we would walk along the back passage to the entrance. It was actually Melvyn that told me that Stephanie had been in the Club and had asked about me. One night Natasha and I met a TV in the Tuns who said he had 'come out', told his work colleagues and then gone to work dressed as a woman; he looked convincing because his hair was long and he didn't need a wig. He talked to Natasha whilst I chatted to Melvyn.

On another occasion, on a Saturday night in the Club, Natasha and I went to a small room at the rear of the dance floor. The room had its own bar and was a quiet place for

people to talk away from the noise of the disco. I dressed that night in a black satin mini-skirt, four-inch heels, a tight white body and a black jacket. I was pleased with my look, as the bob wig, that Mary had sold me, was the most convincing I had owned. The wig makes all the difference. Natasha and I were chatting when a youngish man in a suit approached us. He was very smartly dressed and dripping after-shave.

"I like what you do," he said. He chewed gum. "How long you been at it?"

Natasha responded in his usual droll way. Unflustered.

"I'm a TV myself," the stranger confessed.

Natasha and the man, who introduced himself as Dan, started to chat. I moved away, went to the bar and bought another half. When I returned I saw that Natasha was talking to some else, Dan gave me a cheeky smile, I felt a hand brush across my satin skirt and then pinch my bum. He winked.

"You're sexy," he said.
"Want to make a date?"

I smiled; I was a little shocked at his brazenness.

"No, it's all right, I'm with him." I pointed at Natasha. Claiming that Natasha and I were an item had saved us from one or two hawks down Mates/The Club – and in the Manchester bars and clubs.

Dan swaggered back to the disco; as he neared the door he turned and winked at me again.

A month or so later I was in London for the England verses Germany, World Cup Qualifier – the last game ever to be played at Wembley. It rained all day, and in the morning we, that is my brother and I, had had a wasted trip on the London Eye. We couldn't see anything because of the moisture on the inside of the glass and



there were no refunds. To add to our woes the football match was dire. After we got back to my brother's rented house we went out to a trendy disco-cum-pub for a drink - and that's where I met Nadine. It was her arse that first drew my attention. She was standing chatting to two friends when I saw her delicious pair of buttocks, shrink-wrapped in tight, PVC trousers. As most of the people in the trendy bar were years younger than us and this group of three girls looked similar in age, I suggested to Rob that we edge over. Whilst standing by the dance floor one of the girls tapped me on the shoulder and introduced me to her friend.

That was the start of it. I preferred Nadine, the girl that had tapped me on the shoulder, so I spent the night talking to her. By the end of the evening we were kissing and exchanging phone numbers. She told me that she worked in a school.

So began a long-distance relationship, with me commuting down to see her at weekends, and, either staying at my brother's house or, on the first date, doing the whole London/Stoke trip in a day.

Still, Nadine was worth it. I had decided early on that she was the girl for me - if, that was, I could ever comfortably confess to my transvestite tendencies.

Something that was especially appealing about Nadine was that she had an excellent dress sense and once, when I called around to pick her up and take her out for the evening, she was wearing a grey coat and knee-length, black boots. Under the coat I glimpsed an inch of gleaming black leather. As Nadine walked down the path to my car the coat parted seductively to reveal more of her skirt. I was enthralled. This was the first time I had dated a girl who already had a leather skirt in her wardrobe - apart, that is, from one date with a girl I met in a night club who turned up on our first and only date wearing a black leather mini-skirt and thick tights. When we got to the cinema Nadine took her coat off to reveal that she was indeed wearing a lovely, leather skirt and a thick black jumper; she informed me that she had purchased the skirt from Next, her favourite shop.

A few weeks later she came up to Stoke for the first time. We were sitting in a café when an attractive blonde girl walked past outside. The blonde was dressed in a leather skirt, matching jacket and high-heeled boots. She had her arm draped around her boyfriend. I couldn't take my eyes off her.

"You're looking at her clothes," Nadine said.

It was an amazingly perceptive comment, though in fact, an innocent one.

The next time Nadine came up to my house we went for a meal with some of my friends. I had already told her about the spanking magazine I wrote for and had even shown her some articles I had written. Nadine was broad-minded and had absolutely no problem with it; in fact she quite enjoyed reading the articles, which, it has to be said, were very mild and mainly gleaned from reports in national newspapers. Still, it was one confession down; there was just one big one to go. At least my interest in spanking had tested the water. The trannie thing was a bit different though. I didn't know how to broach the subject.

Then it just seemed to happen. We had been dating for about six weeks and Nadine came up for a long weekend. On the Sunday evening we went to the cinema. Before going out Nadine had said that she was going to make my face up when we got back. She said

her friend had done it to her husband when they had been on holiday and both had enjoyed it. Alarm bells started ringing in my head. How should I react? What should I say?

I didn't say anything. We got back late to my house anyway, having gone for a drink after the film, so Nadine didn't mention the subject again. When we got in I opened a bottle of red wine. Nadine was sitting on my lap. The thought of the aborted make-up session was foremost in my mind. This was as good a time as any to confess to my dressing, I thought.

"You know what you said earlier about wanting to make my face up?" I began. I gulped down some wine. "I do that sort of thing anyway."

"How do you mean?"

This was the difficult bit. *How did I mean?* It was a good question.

"Dressing in women's clothes," I said quickly. Once again, I couldn't mention the dreaded "T" word.

I couldn't see Nadine's reaction because she had her back to me.

"What? For enjoyment?"

"Yeh, kind of."

"I don't believe it, I don't believe it," she said over and over again.

Instantly, I regretted saying it. It was a big mistake, as it had been with Anne. I would never meet a woman who would understand.

"And everything was going so well," Nadine continued.

"I'm sorry," I said.

She asked me questions. I tried to answer, I tried to explain. I kept saying.

"It's no big deal."

But it was a 'big deal' – it was a massive deal – and Nadine knew it.

My mouth felt dry, my head hurt, I wanted the conversation to stop.

"I don't know what to say, I just don't know what to say," Nadine said. "And everything was going so, so well."

She got up and made for the dining room door.

"I'll sleep down stairs," I said despondently.

She turned and faced me; there was real compassion in her eyes.

"Come up," she said softly.

I blew out the candles I had lit earlier and followed Nadine upstairs. We hugged and kissed and then got into bed. There were still plenty of questions to answer.

Did I fancy blokes? How did I do it? Where did I go? What did I wear?

How do you make sense of the unexplainable?

That night we made love. Nadine told me after that she had wanted to see if she still loved me.

On Monday morning she got lost going home because her head was still filled with my confession. I felt really sorry for her but I was also embarrassed about my urge to dress in women's clothes. Nadine phoned me on the way home. She had spoken to her best friend and told her the story. Later, she looked on the Internet to find information out about transvestism. We continued dating. Occasionally, the dressing was mentioned. She would ask me something about it, a question that had come to mind, something she didn't know. Then, just before Christmas we met up in London and had a long discussion about my dressing. When we parted at the station we continued the conversation on our mobiles until we both got home – Nadine to her parents and me to mine. That was nearly an hour and a half later!

My embarrassment waned. I felt more comfortable about Nadine knowing about my desire to dress, and when she asked questions about it I would patiently answer them as best I could. Then, after Christmas she came up one weekend and I showed her my photograph album. She looked at each picture intensely, turned the page carefully. My album told the story of my journey from a young, naïve transvestite in my early twenties who had no idea about dress sense and make-up to the present where I had become involved in the TV scene and met some fantastic people and had had so many good, good times. As she asked me questions about the pictures she made comments on the clothes, make-up, wigs and my gestures.

If the 'TV thing' had ever been an issue with us it stopped being so fairly early on. One time, at her parents' house, Nadine even let me try on her black leather skirt. On another occasion at my house she tried on my bridesmaid's dress which I had rescued from the dress agency. It fitted her as well as it had fitted me back in 1994. It felt fantastic to hold her, feel the material, swirl her around in time to the music that played on my stereo, push up the skirts and make love to her. Now, that really is a dress that could tell a story or two!

The confession about the transvestism made it easier for us to talk about other sexual fantasies. One night, after we had been out for a meal with friends, I introduced her to some playful spanking, at one point tipping her over my armchair and whacking her bum with a paddle. It was great fun and she really enjoyed it. We soon started play-acting – inventing roles for ourselves and acting parts. Nadine was a natural actress and it really spiced up our sex life. One time Nadine was a bridesmaid at a wedding and I was the best man, she had been flirting with me so I again tipped her over the back of my armchair, pushed up the layers of skirt and spanked her. We then made love. Fortunately, shortly before I met Nadine I had bought a three-piece black leather-suite and the chairs proved more than useful for spanking games having broad backs and a low base which meant they didn't topple over.

On another occasion Nadine ordered a rubber dress for me from Ann Summers and brought it with her on one of her regular trips to Stoke. I pulled the thing over my head but it was miles too tight and panged against my body like an elastic band. With my chest restricted I danced around the bedroom desperately trying to pull the dress off whilst Nadine lay on my bed convulsed in laughter.

Such incidents helped to ensure that my dressing was fun and something we both enjoyed rather than serious. Indeed, as Nadine became more comfortable with it, she made it

clear that she didn't mind it – as long as I followed two rules; firstly, I wasn't allowed to shave and secondly, she insisted that she choose all my female clothes.

For Nadine was very different from my usual girlfriends, being very self-confident and slightly bossy. Early on in the relationship she had told me off for using sexist language. Nadine, though remarkably placid, was not afraid to let vent to her feelings if something annoyed her. Here was someone I could not manipulate into wearing the clothes I liked as I had done with Ann and Helen. I quickly learnt that if I asked Nadine to wear something she would wear something totally different.

"I won't be told what to wear," she would say. She also picked up on the fact, that, when we were out together, my roving eye would scan the street or bar or shop for females wearing clothes that appealed to me.

"I saw you looking at that woman in the PVC skirt," she would say, but she didn't mind, in fact she soon started looking at clothes, too, spotting girls wearing things that might appeal to me and nudging me.

Our long distance relationship lasted three months before I decided it was time to relocate back to the south. I applied for various jobs in the same field and, after my first interview at one such company, I was asked if I had ever considered a management position because a manager's job was to be advertised shortly. *Moi?* A manager? I think not. Even so, despite my reservations, I duly applied (for the money, if nothing else) and got the position. Bingo. The scourge of managers had ended up as a manager himself.

Just before I left Stoke I went back to Stephanie's shop with Nadine and said I wished to buy a bridesmaid's dress. This time I was shown to an upstairs changing-room whilst June brought up dress after dress and Nadine sat on the window sill quietly taking to me and listening to Radio Shropshire which played unobtrusively in the background Nadine helped me choose the dress I finally bought - a silky pink affair with an under hoop. It wasn't as nice as the first dress, but then, nothing could be. We went back to my house and I tried the dress on. Without the foundation garments, it fitted better. Nadine and I were soon rolling on the bed together, the nylon skirts of the dress wrapping around us both, I pushed them up and made love to Nadine, the first time I had ever done it dressed in women's clothes.

Shortly after that I moved down to Nadine's parent's house. I packed up all my belongings into boxes and put them into storage before moving south and settling into the spare room. Their house was a small semi with three bedrooms. I was given Nadine's brother's old room, Nadine having the third bedroom. I lived there for close on fifteen months. Dressing was strictly off limits but occasionally Nadine would buy me a pair of knickers. She was partial to lace or mesh ones, which I would wear at important events like weddings. We also purchased a black, bat-wing top and then, whilst on holiday in Bournemouth, I purchased a pair of pull up snake-skin boots, which added spice to our lovemaking. After the holiday Nadine bought me a leopard print chemise from Ann Summers. So, without realising it my *en femme* wardrobe was building up again – only this time my girlfriend was adding to the collection as well! She even found a padded bra for me which, she told me, would be more flattering to my figure as my tits – which had cost £260 – were, in Nadine's opinion, much too big.

Then one day we were in Mark's and Spencer's. They were holding a sale and on a rack were some calf-length PVC skirts; Nadine picked one and held it against me. She enjoyed doing this, even though a woman looked at us both rather curiously. I'd fallen out of the habit of looking for female clothes and found the situation a little awkward. Not so Nadine. She picked a size 16, dark brown PVC skirt and I walked to the till and paid – and that was all before we left Nadine's parents house and moved into a place of our own.

When we did eventually find a suitable abode, long months were spent doing it up before we could actually move in. Gradually, some of my *en femme* things appeared in the wardrobe. I had a special drawer for my knickers and would wear them when the mood took me. Occasionally, I would wear a dress or a skirt in the evening and sometimes, of a Saturday, Nadine would make up my face and style my wig and I would be dressed properly again and look in the mirror in wonderment at the transformation.

On one of our frequent shopping trips, Nadine and I were in John Lewis. Naturally, as we walked through the ladies department I spied the leather items. Nadine went to the rail and selected a tan coloured leather skirt for me with an embossed type pattern. This, she said, would be more suitable to my age. We bought the skirt – size 16 – for £75. Buying female clothes with Nadine was easy as no one took much notice. One of the best items Nadine bought me was a lovely slinky, glittery evening dress. It cost all of £1.75 in a local charity shop and was fantastic to wear. It soon became one of my favourites.

Nadine had a huge influence on my male wardrobe, too, choosing shirts, shoes, coats and trousers for me. As with most men when they have a partner, my dress sense improved dramatically – the days when I gave no thought to my male clothing were over – Nadine saw to that!

I loved being drawn into Nadine's world and meeting her close friends who she had known since school. Soon, she was regaling with me with tales of previous boyfriends and sexual encounters. Most of her ex-boyfriends had been quite controlling and she had felt that she couldn't be herself with any of her former boyfriends but could be with me. She told me about a tall lad called Pete she had met in a trendy pub one night when out with her friend, Sue. Sue had slept with his friend. The following night Nadine had gone out with Pete and they had ended up sleeping together- after which she never saw him again.

Nadine and Sue, and a group of their friends, used to frequent a trendy pub twice a week, where they got to know some of the local lads. One was called John and Nadine and Sue were friendly with his brother but didn't care for John much as he rated himself as something of a womaniser. Apparently, he had a very attractive girlfriend but enjoyed the single life and would go to this particular pub on a Friday with his friends. Anyway, one Friday, although the night was still young and none of them had been drinking particularly heavily, he walked up to Nadine and pinched her bum and then joked with Sue that he would like to go back to her place. Sue replied that he couldn't as Nadine was sleeping at her flat. John responded by saying that he didn't care because he would sleep with them both, to which Nadine replied that he wouldn't be able to handle her and Sue. Some highly-charged sexual banter then ensued with John boasting about how many women he had had. Sue and Nadine left a little later as Sue's flat was some distance away. As they drove home Sue brought up the topic of John and suggested they 'call his bluff'. They

stopped at a phone box (this was before mobile phones) and phoned the pub. John came on the line.

"John," Sue said, "we've been thinking about your offer, we'd like to take you up on it."

Sue put the phone down in fits of giggles. John, it appeared, was only too keen to accept the invitation to go back to Sue's flat and had asked Sue to pick him up from his place in ten minutes. So, Sue turned around, pulled into a garage to buy condoms and then went back to where John was waiting. They went to Sue's studio flat, Sue put on some soft music and pulled down her bed. Before long all three were in bed together. John made love to Nadine first and then Sue. The next morning they dropped him back at his flat and told him to keep it quiet, but by the following week everyone in the pub knew, except, of course John's attractive girlfriend who is now his wife.

There were other stories too, about children in Nadine's infant school. For Children In Need day each child was allowed to come to school dressed as they liked. Naturally, two little boys arrived in dresses and spent the whole day at school dressed as girls, in both cases their mothers' had even applied make-up. Wanta be transvestites? You bet.

By the end of the year we had decided to get married and were busy planning our wedding. I went back to Stoke for a stag night and got rather drunk. When I returned Nadine was annoyed that I had been away for a whole weekend and questioned me on what I had got up to. I explained that I had been drunk and bumped into a friend's wife and some other girls in a pub, which didn't improve Nadine's mood. Later in the evening I went upstairs and dressed in the brown PVC skirt Nadine had spied in the sales at Marks and Spencer. I also put on my boots and my bat wing top – no make-up. Nadine was sitting down stairs and not happy that I had dressed when she was feeling upset. She bemoaned my dressing and the fact that I had 'got up to no good in Stoke'. I felt distinctly uncomfortable; Nadine really was in a bad mood. We wandered into the dining room sniping at each other, me conscious of how ridiculous I must look in full rig but without the make-up and wig. Slowly, Nadine pulled out a dining table chair and sat down. She grabbed my wrist and pulled me forward violently. I ended up sprawled over her knee! I thought it was a joke but then the first smack splattered onto my PVC skirt. Then another. And another.

"I don't want you to leave me again, understand?" Nadine said.

I murmured that I did. Her hand really stung.

"And I don't want you chatting up other women."

"I won't."

Afterwards we made up. Spanking me seemed to relieve some of Nadine's pent up frustration. Soon the paddle that I had used on her when we were up in Stoke disappeared into her drawer and occasionally it was used. If I upset Nadine she would tell me to lie face down on the bed and I would be given one or two hearty wallops. At other times I was told to bend over – trousers and pants down – and would receive a couple of whacks on my bare backside. There was no doubting who was in charge. She even started recording my misdemeanours in a book which she would refer to when she came to punish me.

At the end of the year we got married and I wore gold knickers to match Nadine's gold dress on our wedding day. Our honeymoon was in Paris where I wore knickers everyday and even bought a pair of tan leather boots. For Christmas Nadine gave me a lovely purple nightdress and knickers. It was simply divine to lie in bed on Christmas morning and open presents my wife had given me – my special presents – my *en femme* presents. They meant more to me than anything in the world.

Early January found us hawking around the sales. There were one or two bargains to be had: for me there was a size 16 light tan leather skirt in Oasis for just £10 and Nadine picked up a petticoat with a control panel for £7 in Next. That evening I got dressed in full rig. After my wedding and Christmas over indulgence I had gained a lot of weight and only the new skirt fitted properly. I dressed in the skirt and the boots I'd bought in Paris whilst on honeymoon and my bat-wing top. Nadine applied my make-up and re-styled my wig, pinning it up with pins and clips. I looked for all the world like a girl – no, not a girl, but a woman – a mature woman. I was now asking Nadine if my skirt was too short? Would I pass in public? You see, that was the next question, would Nadine do a walk with me in public? A dressing trip *en femme*?

She said she would and we went shopping for a black polo neck jumper and a coat. We were now all set and put aside a day to go to Milton Keynes shopping centre. On the morning of the particular Saturday in question, Nadine got cold feet. Would I really look convincing in a tan-coloured, leather mini-skirt, and bobbed wig? The wig and skirt were wrong. The following day we drove to Suzy's wig shop in Thurrock which was advertised in the Way Out Guide, and bought a new wig for £190. The wig was a longer, reddish style, which looked a lot more convincing.

A few nights later I dressed in a body I'd ordered from Grattan that really kept me in, my old breast forms, the brown PVC skirt, the black polo neck jumper, the boots I'd bought in Paris and the long reddish wig. Nadine applied make-up as I sat on the bed gazing at my reflection in the mirror. When she had finished she said,

"Now that's it, now you really are convincing and I'll go shopping with you."

She then ordered me to lie face down on the bed. Nadine delved into a wardrobe and withdrew a long, thin cane she had secretly purchased from Ann Summers.

"Right, you've been cheeky to me lately. You're going to get six of the best."

Swish. Crack. The cane came down on arse. It stung a lot and I had to grip the chrome supports of the headboard to stop myself putting my hands out and grabbing the cruel implement. When she had finished she turned me over, pushed up my skirt, untucked my erect penis and we made love, with her on top. It was the best session I'd ever had and the first time I had made love to her in full make-up and wig. Fantastic.

"I love being in charge," Nadine said. "It's so nice to meet a man who I can train and who does as he's told."

And somehow it felt right to put myself in a bridle and let Nadine have hold of the reins. After all, she had chosen the house we lived in, the decoration and even my car when I had gone to purchase a new one. Obviously, we shared a lot of decisions but I enjoyed the feeling that Nadine was the boss.

“Caroline doesn’t suit you,” she told me on another occasion when she had finished doing my hair and make-up and I was dressed like a woman again. “I’m going to re-christen you Charlotte.”

Funnily enough, I had always liked the name so was happy to go along with her wishes.

“And,” Nadine added, “I think its time I chose a wedding dress for you – I know you’ve always wanted one.”

CHAPTER FOUR

I was feeling very pleased with myself when Nadine and I drove up to Stoke for an appointment with Stephanie at the Bridal Centre in mid-February, 2003. Nadine and I had a loving, understanding marriage and she was all I could possibly have wished for in a partner. As each day went by our relationship grew stronger and I knew, that in Nadine, I had at last met my soul mate, my best friend, my lover. When I was in my early twenties, or perhaps even late teens, I had written some lifetime ambitions at the front of one my diaries. These were as follows (in no particular order):

1. Visit all 92 professional football league grounds in England and Wales.
2. Write and have published a novel.
3. Travel around the world.
4. Have a short story published in a national magazine.
5. Have a story or play performed on the radio.
6. To pass in public *en femme*.

By any standards they were/are an eclectic mix of aims, for as I say, I’ve never had a clue what I wanted to do job-wise and no real ambition or drive to achieve anything. In the words of the song, I am who I am and I’m happy with whom I am. Because I am a transvestite I have never had any desire to be famous (except when I was a teenager and had my brief flirtation with pop mega-stardom! For imagine being photographed by the paparazzi when dressed?) and certainly I have no interest in politics (imagine being a MP who is caught in women’s knickers?). No, I’m at peace with myself. I have had an enjoyable life and many good times. Along the way, I’ve achieved one or two of my ambitions; I’ve visited 87 of the 92 football league grounds (though clubs now are apt to re-locate or build new grounds and so thwart my ambition.) I’ve had a novel published and two short stories accepted by national magazines; articles published in my spanking magazine and another article published in a mainstream mag. I’ve never achieved the radio play or story and doubt I ever will but I have travelled around the world and been to America on three occasions and South America once and, of course, I have passed in public, dressed as a woman on more than one occasion.

Maybe I’ve lacked drive and ambition, and maybe if I had possessed more drive I would have made something of my life as James Marchmont – but the truth is I would never have made anything of my life as Caroline or Charlotte Marchmont and for that I would have always been disappointed and frustrated. No, the hand that life has dealt me

has been a good hand, a great hand, and I regret nothing, nothing at all. If I had the chance I would do it all again. Perhaps with the proviso that I would have slept with one or two more girls. And yes, if I had a choice I would chose to be a transvestite.

En route to Stephanie's Bridal Centre we stayed with a friend of mine, Keith, for two nights and celebrated old times with a meal and a drink in Newcastle. Unfortunately, we couldn't go to the Tuns or The Club as Keith knew nothing of my dressing. On the Monday, Nadine and I left Keith's house and drove to Stephanie's Bridal Suite for 9am. The shop didn't open until 9.30am, so we drove to Stoke and found a shop that sold ex-catalogue goods where I bought a pair of trainers and Nadine bought me a pair of size 6 shoes for 99p because she thought the idea of wearing boots to try on a wedding dress (the ones I'd bought in Paris) was a fashion faux pas.



When we arrived at Stephanie's shop, just after it opened, I was carrying a blue bag filled with my breast forms and wig. I was wearing (under my male clothes) a pair of thick black tights and a waist cincher.

Before we had returned to Stoke I had written to Stephanie to explain that Nadine and I wanted a wedding dress for me and that it would be Nadine who selected the dress. With the letter I had enclosed a picture of myself in the glorious lilac dress I had worn during the Miss Mates Drag Queen Contest.

June and Sue were serving again, as they had been when Nadine and I had last visited. Both were friendly and June made us a cup of tea. Then, I was shown into the large downstairs changing-room – the same one I had been in on that fateful day in 1994 when I had chosen my award winning dress. Once the curtain was drawn, I stripped off my male clothes and inserted the breast forms under the fabric of my

bra. I then pulled on the too-tight black shoes Nadine had just bought and placed the red-dish wig, bought from Suzy's, on my head. Beyond the curtain, I could hear Nadine and June discussing dresses.

"I'm not sure about that one," Nadine said, followed by, "I like that one, he can try that on."

June emerged through the curtains as if entering an Arab tent.

"Do you mind if I help you dress, duck?"

"No, no, not at all."

She came in and hung a dress on a rail beside me in the changing room. Then she picked up a large hooped under slip and told me to step inside the middle of the circle it made on the floor. She pulled the white linen under-slip up to my waist and tied the two ends behind me.

"That'll give the dress lift, duck," she said. She then took the dress she had brought in with her off the hanger. It was a beautiful satin short-sleeved beaded affair. It had a full skirt and gloriously detailed bodice. June told me to crouch down whilst she dropped the dress over my head, the full skirts falling around the hoop. I inserted my arms into the delicate mesh, beaded sleeves and June pulled the bodice in. Slowly, she fastened the back.

"That's an 18," she said. "It isn't a bad fit."

I looked at my reflection in the mirror in front of me and then at my reflection in the large floor-to-ceiling mirror to my side. The dress was stunning. I swirled the skirt around my legs, the heavy material and the short train swung to my movements, so, so soft and feminine. I tried not to look at my hairy arms, my chest, my face.

June had gone back to the shop and, with Nadine, she was selecting another dress. A few minutes later she came back with a Regency style, very plain, straight affair. It wasn't quite in the same league as the first dress, though a trifle cheaper. The third dress that June brought into the changing room was made of silk and it was so light I could hardly feel myself wearing it. I preferred the first dress but I knew the decision was Nadine's.

Then June or Sue found another dress – a satin frock, beaded with exquisite detail on the bodice. This dress had long sleeves and a huge flowing train. June hung it on the rail and then came over to me and unzipped the bodice of the silk dress. I then went through the manoeuvre of bending down whilst she lifted the silk dress above my head. She hung it on the rail next to the satin beaded one, which was so much frillier and expansive, so much more like the dress worn by the bride I'd often imagined myself to be.

June unzipped the bodice, took the dress off its hanger and I stooped down as it came over my head. I then stood up whilst June pulled the bodice around me and drew up the zip. The dress was glorious. With the full skirt, the long train and the beaded bodice, I knew this was the dress I wanted. Would Nadine agree?

"This one really is lovely," June said. "I think Nadine's going to have to make the choice out of this one or the first one."

"This one covers my hairy arms," I replied.

"Doesn't she let you shave, duck?" June asked.

I shook my wigged head, "No."

"Pity."

"I have to do as I'm told now," I joked.

She placed her hands on my nipped in waist. "Good," she said.

I smiled, swaying in front of the mirror in all my finery. At that moment Nadine came back into the changing room and sat down on a chair in the corner.

"I like that one," she said. "What do you think?"

I agreed with her that it was the best dress and so we decided to take it. June, who had left us momentarily, came back into the changing room.

"It's a size 20 and the bodice is a little loose," she said. "If you want it we can alter it."

We confirmed that we would buy it, for £350, so June took her pins and began pinning up the sides of the bodice. By this time other customers were in the shop, talking to Sue, and I had to be quiet. The dress pinned, I took it off, got dressed, packed up my bag and left with Nadine. The customers, two women and girl, didn't take much notice as I left the changing-room with my blue bag; Nadine leading the way. For, of course the dress was for Nadine and I was a plumber? An electrician? The only problem was that when June wrote out the receipt for the deposit Nadine described herself as "Mrs Marchmont." Not the thing to do in a wedding shop. We agreed to collect the dress in March when we were next in Stoke. Hopefully, I would get to try it on again. We drove home to the South, both of us feeling very satisfied with the weekend.

Adam Faith had died of a heart attack at the Victoria Theatre in Stoke the night before we arrived back there in March. June and Sue were busy with two lots of customers so Nadine and I sat on chairs in the centre of the room at Stephanie's and waited our turn, flicking through a guide for the theatre in the pretentiously-named 'Cultural Quarter'. Seeing Adam Faith's name as the star of the play "Love and Marriage" was a poignant reminder of his untimely demise.

The customers trying on dresses both had bridesmaids and mothers in tow. Stephanie was absent so Sue and June were assisting the young women in the changing rooms. Eventually, Stephanie came back into the shop and we were shown upstairs to the area reserved for alterations; this was where I had tried on the second bridesmaid's dress I had bought. The altered wedding dress was hanging on a rail. That morning I had worn my black body and black tights, I slipped in breast forms and pushed my size seven feet into my size 6 shoes. Then for the dress. Again June helped me into it, attaching the bow, drawing up the zip and clipping the hooks into place. It was fantastic; the full skirt flowed gloriously about my legs, an ecstasy of cascading white silk. I floated in front of the mirror, admired my reflection, pirouetted. I pulled up the skirts and then released them so they fell about my ankles. With the bodice taken-in the dress fitted wonderfully well.

"You've done a great job, June," I said.

Then I had to take it off. June helped me again. Whilst I changed, Nadine showed June photographs of our wedding. Once the dress was boxed we paid and left the store. Stephanie asked me if I was going to wear it for any more competitions,

“Just around the house,” I mused.

I felt elated. We drove to Keith’s house and stayed with him for the weekend. That meant a quick change out of the body and tights in the bathroom. Nadine, the consummate actress, assured Keith that I had to wash my hands because they were covered in diesel after filling up the car.

Two weeks later, Nadine and I were alone for a weekend and that meant dressing in the wedding dress, full make-up and wig. Nadine took photos. We had meant to simulate a wedding, using our wedding video, but unfortunately we had left the video in a taxi coming back from another friend’s house the night before. Despite that set back, Nadine and I both entered into the spirit of the thing. Nadine put my hair up and placed her veil over my wig. The dress felt heavenly. I wore the hoop I had bought from Stephanie’s when I had purchased the second bridesmaid’s dress. It really lifted it and helped create a soft, feminine, bridal look, which was beyond my wildest dreams. The long train dragged across the floor. It felt heavy and I had difficulty getting up and down the stairs. It all added to a fantastic night and, when we went to bed, I changed into a special wedding nightie I had bought and made love to Nadine whilst still wearing make-up and a wig.

Our hectic social schedule meant dressing was placed on hold for a while. I still had visions of shopping with Nadine and we planned a trip to Windsor during Easter. In the meantime Nadine found other clothes for me. A white body for my wedding dress and a pair of brand new three-and-a-half-inch heeled platform-soled tan leather boots in a British Heart Foundation Shop – size seven; they cost just £9.

Sometimes, when we were shopping together, Nadine would hold up a skirt against me and say, “I think that would suit you,” often to the bemusement of other customers. Nadine had no inhibitions about selecting ladies clothing for me – and discussing them with me as if she were chatting to a girlfriend. We had come a long way since that fateful night when I had told her of my passion for women’s clothes.

The loft was my storage place for the items Nadine and I bought. I had two temporary hanging rails with my dresses (in dress bags) as well as suitcases and boxes filled with my *en femme* wardrobe. Some skirts and dresses had migrated to the wardrobe in the spare bedroom but most stayed up in the loft. For the first time in my life I didn’t have to be too careful about who saw my female garb. Any prying eyes would think the articles of clothing were Nadine’s; except of course the breast forms and the wig.

Soon our thoughts – or mine at least, started to turn to going out dressed in public in Windsor during Easter. With this in mind Nadine bought one or two items of clothing, make-up and jewellery. There was no doubting Nadine’s feminine eye for what looked good and it felt great to have a real-girl apply my make-up. Gradually, Nadine was transforming me into a mature woman with good fashion sense rather than an aging tart in a short leather mini.

On odd evenings in Nadine and I would try on the clothing she had selected; try out the new cosmetics and make-up and try new jewellery. Now, when I looked in the mirror I

saw a convincing, well-dressed woman. Nadine agreed. My 'look' was totally different from that of Caroline with her old-fashioned hairpiece and tarty clothes. Now I was sophisticated, the clothes matched my maturity, the make-up was soft and understated and that crowning glory – the wig – looked like natural hair. Nadine, of course, selected everything I wore. She either bought the items in my presence or when she had been out shopping alone. Nadine enjoyed creating her vision of femininity on the blank canvas of my hairy body. And it was Charlotte not Caroline who would go out in public *en femme*. Caroline was dead, long live Charlotte.

CHAPTER FIVE

On Tuesday 22nd April, Nadine drove me down to Woburn – a small village near our house made famous by the 'Country House' television series and the activities of Lord and Lady Tavistock. I have always admired Lady T, having read her book '*A Chance to Live*' about her husband Robin's stroke and subsequent recovery. (He has now tragically passed away). Lady Henrietta Tavistock was described as the 'Deb of the Decade' in the Fifties due to her radiant good looks – an accolade she richly deserves. Henrietta reveals in '*A Chance To Live*' that Robin would tell her to change her clothes if she was wearing something he did not approve of.

"He hates me looking a mess. He would prefer me to be very slim, nicely made-up with my hair beautifully done all day long," she says, whilst husband Robin admits, "...I made Henrietta re-cook meals and change her clothes if I didn't like what she was wearing, because I thought my standards had to be high to impress her."

I knew how poor Henrietta felt, for Nadine was of the same mind as Robin and would not so much make me change my clothes as select my clothes for me whenever I went out, both in male and female garb.

On the night we drove to Woburn Nadine had selected the following ensemble for me to wear. 3.5" high-heeled tan leather boots with platform heels. Black lycra-based tights; matching silky deep blue panties and bra; the tan coloured PVC skirt Nadine had bought for me in M&S over a year before; a black, all in one body; bat winged black top; a dark tan PVC jacket and, of course, my reddish coloured wig which Nadine had put up using a hair clip. The breast forms were the only things I had purchased.

After many evenings of trying out make-up and clothing we had decided to give my new look a 'test drive' by going to Woburn and walking up and down the High Street, to see if I passed in public. I was not totally satisfied with the boots as they were high and I had awful memories of Blackpool and blisters. To avoid such injuries Nadine had advised wearing a pair of socks over my tights. Even so, I still doubted whether I would be able to walk far. Anyway, we pulled up by the Bell public house and I got out. I felt surprisingly calm, partly because I had Nadine beside me and partly because I felt totally confident in my appearance. We walked. The High Street was quiet; the boots which made me over six foot tall, clip-clopped on the pavement, but were surprisingly comfortable.

"Walk normally," Nadine chided. "Head up, don't swing your arms."

I stepped on with Nadine beside me. We came to a restaurant and looked at the menu. Diners could see us through the window but no-one looked up at us. We walked on. Cars

flashed by. No-one hooted or slowed, not even when we crossed the road in front of an on-coming vehicle. We stepped along the pavement, Nadine occasionally reminded me not to swing my arms. The wind circulated around my legs. The PVC skirt brushed against my tights. I felt so tall in those heels that threw my forwards – and yet they were surprisingly comfortable. The total sensation was divine. We both grew more confident. Nadine spoke to me and I replied in hushed tones. We stopped at a second restaurant; again the window diners could see us and again they did not look up from their meals. Two men came out of a building and walked across the road. They ignored us but, all the same, we decided to go back to the car. We turned and walked off; two males on the other side of the road walked parallel with us and then disappeared into a pub. No-one paid us any attention. At one point Nadine hung back and watched me from behind.

“You’re convincing,” she said when she caught up with me. “The clothes are tasteful and the walk natural.”

That was enough. We came back home and I undressed. Three days later we would go to Windsor.

The day before we had returned from Stratford-upon-Avon where we had stayed in The Shakespeare Hotel for one night to celebrate my birthday. Walking around Stratford on the Wednesday, Nadine had purchased some jewellery for me from Clair’s – an expandable ring, a bracelet and a necklace all in a dark wooden ethnic style. She had also got me a purse and some earrings. On the Thursday night I had dashed around supermarkets trying to find some false nails as Nadine thought these would add to my appearance. When I had finally found a set, Nadine had glued them onto my fingers whilst I had spoken on the phone to Keith, our friend in Stoke, about football. She had then painted each one with bronze-coloured nail varnish. The nails did look great, though they totally handicapped me - picking up anything, even a pint of beer as I watched a football match, was a nightmare. They were, though, better than stick on pads, as they did glue tightly to each nail.

Having slept in the nails, I got up at 7.30am. Fortunately, the weather forecast was for wet, cool conditions; I say fortunately because there is no greater hazard for the TV than hot or windy weather. After breakfast I showered and shaved. Nadine then applied a cover stick over areas of particularly dark beard shadow and then a foundation. As Nadine worked away I sat on the edge of the bed musing about the day ahead. In truth, I hadn’t slept that well for nervousness for this was my first ‘walk’ in daylight since 1998 and that time (Blackpool esplanade) it had been a disaster.

Slowly, my face took shape. Nadine asked me to suck in my lips and applied blusher, then she applied lipstick and gloss, mascara, eye shadow... I looked in the mirror after she had finished. The make up was perfect. I got changed – leopard print thong, black tights with Lycra, black body, breast forms, socks...

Then for the black bat-winged top and the brown PVC skirt. By this time Nadine had changed too – into a denim skirt, top and boots. I pulled my wig on and Nadine adjusted it; she used hairgrips to pin it down and then pulled the hair back into a bun before fastening it with a clip. Strands of hair were pulled down around my ears. The effect was a natu-

ral, modern look. Then for the jewellery, the ring, the bracelet, a gold watch and another ring to go with my wedding ring which looked very much like an engagement ring. This time I was going out 'married', not single, Nadine had another idea - a beaded belt around my waist, hanging down the front of the skirt. Her superb eye for detail had suggested that it would look good and it did. Lastly, I put on my jacket. Nadine wrapped a scarf around my neck, tied it loosely in front of my chest, pulled out my long necklace so the wrap didn't obscure it and announced herself completely satisfied with the result.

"Hold on," she said, taking a bottle of her perfume and spraying it on my arms and neck, "There, that's it. Perfect."

Finally, I went to the spare room to collect my platform boots which had 3.5" heels. I pulled on each in turn and zipped them up; with the skirt just skimming the top on the knee-high boots it didn't matter that I was not shaved. I looked for all the world like a sophisticated woman.

With one last look in the downstairs mirror we left the house. Nadine went first and opened the car doors; I then walked out and sat in the passenger seat. Fortunately, there were no neighbours about. Nadine went back and closed the front door and we set off, driving to Toddington to join the M1. It was 10.15am.

An hour later we arrived in Windsor and Nadine quickly found her way to the car park at the bottom of Alexander Park. We followed an Espace into the car park, which was bordered by rail arches, and parked beside the Renault. Nadine went to get the pay and display ticket whilst I checked my look in the mirror. When she came back, I scrambled out of the car, trying to keep my skirt straight and my feet together. The family beside us were also getting out of their car and were just feet away from me. No one seemed to stare or look over long in my direction. Nadine and I started to walk around the street that bordered Alexander Park; my high heels clipping on the pavement. The groups of people walking beside the Thames took no notice of us, nor did the woman on the mobile phone who caught us up and overtook us as we stepped along the street. My confidence increased.

We passed Brown's pub and turned right up the hill. Now for the real test. The pavement was bustling with tourists and pedestrians going about their business. No-one seemed to take any heed of the transvestite and his wife.

"I need the loo," Nadine announced. I followed her into the public toilet on Thames Street. I was amazed at how clean it was compared to the men's. A woman was by the mirror but she seemed unconcerned by my presence. I went to a cubicle and closed the door. After the walk around Alexandra Park it was pleasant to sit down on the seat, but there was no way I was going to get involved in pulling down my tights with my false nails so after a few minutes I flushed the chain and left the cubicle. Nadine had beaten me to it. Two women were by the drier. I washed my hands and waited, standing close by the women who continued their conversation without a pause or glance in my direction. Finally, Nadine and I had our turn on the drier and left the toilet.

We walked on; some lads were sitting on a bench seat eating chips. One of the lads looked at my skirt and boots and smiled. I had fooled him. He clearly thought I was a woman and liked my attire. As we continued up the sharp incline we turned right onto the

main High Street. Here people were milling around in their droves. We had to pass other people at close proximity and sometimes women would give me a curious glance – and, we had another problem neither Nadine nor I had anticipated: the wind.

The wind was not on the same scale as Blackpool but still it blew my nicely coiffured wig around and exposed by sideburns. Occasionally, Nadine and I stopped at a shop window and Nadine pulled strands of my hair back into place, causing us to receive stares from a woman seated at a bus stop. Still, the majority of people had not read me until a well-built young woman walked straight towards me clocking every detail of my appearance. Read.

We turned right into the covered shopping area and walked to an outside café. We found a table to the rear of the arcade and Nadine went to get two cappuccinos and a muffin. Whilst she was away I went through her diary to give me something to do. No-one seemed to look in my direction and the two women seated behind me continued their conversation. Still, the wind was troubling, and when Nadine reappeared with the food and drink order we decided to abort my plan which had been to go the statute of Queen Victoria for tourist-style photos. The clothes and make-up had passed the test but we needed to find some way of covering the beard shadow more completely and of keeping the wig in place more securely. Another problem I was experiencing was that the wig had a tendency to ride back on my head. After the drink we walked around the mall. We went to a card shop and Nadine picked up cards and talked to me and asked me questions such as,

“Would Mark like this?” (Mark was the name of my made-up husband, invented by Nadine) and “Did you have a guest book at your wedding?”

I replied in hushed tones. As I left the shop I passed a tall lady who was also with her friend. Her apparel was similar to mine: a full black leather skirt, shiny black boots and a tan coloured leather jacket – very sophisticated, and yes, she was all woman.

Nadine and I made our way back down Thames Street. The wind had dropped and after we got around the corner the walk back to the car was quite relaxing. Nadine even took a few photographs of me in Alexandra Park. When we got back to the car park, Nadine, who has an aversion to driving on busy motorways, asked me to drive. That meant struggling out of my boots and into trainers (which I had brought with me in case of emergencies) whilst a young Indian girl looked on aghast. Still, the trip had been a success. The journey home took an hour, the same time as we had spent in Windsor. Whilst we drove home, Nadine and I analysed the trip. The wig had drifted back on my head and I needed a stronger concealer, otherwise it had been a success.

“I want to take you out for a meal,” she said. “Perhaps in Woburn. You could wear a chiffon skirt and a black blouse...”

That was Nadine – already planning the next event in my TV life.

As I approached our house our neighbour but one was getting something out of his car. I swung our car into a private car park, waited and then drove onto our drive when he had gone inside his house. I then made a mad dash for our front door, hurrying up the step in my socks and trainers and with my skirt flapping around my legs.

Yes, the trip to Windsor had been a success all right.

CHAPTER SIX

The big issue was still my beard growth. Nadine was just not happy. The growth has probably got worse as I've got older. It's thick and stubbly and very difficult to conceal. For years I'd used Clinique foundation but this had proved unsuccessful in terms of covering my stubble completely. So it was that I walked into a sex shop in Dunstable and bought a copy of Vikki Lee's "Way Out Guide" – the bible for trannies who travel around clubs and want to know the best shops for tranny gear. I scanned the pages for advertisements or features that seemed to offer a solution. Charles Fox theatrical make-up artists appeared to be the answer, I made some enquiries, sent an e-mail and the opinion was that they were the best in the business when it came to covering stubble and applying make-up.

Nadine and I set out, one warm day in May, for London and found our way to Tavistock Street, near Covent Garden. We had an appointment for a two-hour make-up lesson – cost £75 each – for, of course Nadine had to be involved, too. At 12pm we walked into the small shop and had a look at the false teeth, the bolts through heads and the theatrical wigs that made up Charles Fox's stock. A few minutes later a Spanish lady called Carolina arrived and took us downstairs to a long dressing-room with a mirror on the wall, surrounded by bulbs. In her Spanish accent she told me that it looked as if I had not shaved or, if I had, not very well.

"What foundation do you use?" she asked.

I told her.

"Too thin. That is for eighteen-year-old girls. You need a thick foundation."

She took out her pallet box and set to work. I knew straight away I was in the hands of a real professional as she transformed my face with skill and dexterity.

"Your beard growth is blue," she said. "What neutralises blue?"

"Not got a clue."

"Red."

Her idea, and it sounded pretty revolutionary, was to apply a layer of red foundation on the beard growth to neutralise the stubble. Amazingly, it worked.

When Carolina had finished on the foundation, she applied eye make-up, painting a line on my eyebrows to make the eyes look bigger; it was a new concept. There were so many hints and tips, I was overwhelmed by all the good advice; fortunately, Nadine was there to take the notes and photographs after Carolina had applied the finishing touches.

The make-up Carolina applied that afternoon was the best ever. It was just such a shame that I was in the male, though I had bought my wig so that I could test out my new look from the shoulders up. The wig and make-up were perfect.

When we returned home from London, Nadine was keen to test out the make up on me. She repeated the procedure on the following night. Of course, we had had to purchase all the make-up that Carolina had recommended, from Charles Fox at a cost of £116, so we had the right materials to do the job.

A few days later I sold my record collection; all the old punk and Beatles albums I'd listened to as a teenager and had caused me to have tinnitus, went to a dealer for I felt a bit guilty about the amount I had spent on the 'TV Thing' and didn't want it all to come from our current account. Especially, as Nadine had ordered a lovely, filmy blue skirt, silky camisole and jacket from Grattan that was to be my attire when we went out for a meal.

"I think we've cracked it," Nadine said as she finished making up my face on another night. "For the first time there's no shadow under the foundation and it looks perfectly natural. I think we're finally ready for that meal."

CHAPTER SEVEN

But of course we weren't. Like a lot of things in life the meal got absorbed in wider issues. Neither of us particularly liked the area in which we resided: in the eighteen months we had lived there we had been burgled and had our cars written off whilst they had been parked outside our house. We decided to move. That took time. Then, there was the quite sizable issue of whether I would pass in a quality, non-scene restaurant. We thought a drink would be a better starting point. So, in between house-hunting and house-selling we tried to fit in a visit to a Woburn pub and make alterations to my appearance so that I was ready for the extended period of static scrutiny a meal or a tippie in a non-scene inn or restaurant would bring.

At about this time I discovered Ebay and sold off a number of old outfits; leather skirts, a bridesmaid's dress (not *the* bridesmaid's dress), boots, shoes and other garments all went to the highest bidder: sometimes to men and sometimes to women. I made purchases too – a corset, which I sold on at a big loss and a skirt and a jacket, which I also sold on at a loss. The best purchase, however, was a pair of Gucci ladies frames for glasses I had lens fitted by Vision Express and they were fantastic. Finally, we went for another walk in Woburn which was actually an aborted attempt to go for a drink – on this occasion the pubs were too full.

In the New Year, Nadine purchased a very long (ankle length) skirt for me as well as a pair of low-heeled, tan leather boots (which we had bought on a trip to Stoke). The boots were great, the most comfortable footwear I had owned.

Later on, Nadine and I had another attempt to go for a drink but this time we aborted before we left the house – a group of thuggish youths were sitting on the wall opposite our house and, given out recent trials and tribulations, we decided not to risk the scorn of the ignorant, foul-mouthed youths, who may, or may not have observed that the 5' 9" woman in the long skirt and glasses was actually a *fella*.

Finally, one June day, almost a year after the make-up session in London, with the house sold, and another purchase made, we departed to Woburn for that drink. Boy, was I getting thirsty! I was dressed in the long, suedette skirt Nadine had bought and wearing a tan and white coloured blouse. I had my PVC jacket draped over my arm and my handbag on my shoulder. So attired, Nadine and I stepped out of the car one Sunday evening in Woburn. It was still fairly light.

My hair was gripped up on my head and for the first time I was wearing my Gucci framed glasses. I strolled down the High street, swinging my handbag, with a coat draped

over my other arm. By occupying my arms to such a degree I did not have to consciously think about not swinging them like a soldier on parade – a usual habit of mine. So off we went. The make-up was the best it had been, the boots fantastically comfy and the long skirt fashionable and flexible.

We passed two couples at close quarters and in both cases the men made passing glances towards me – I'd like to think admiringly. Nadine was convinced it was the best I had looked and thought the make-up, glasses and walk all added to a very poised, feminine me. Even so, we did not venture into a pub.

"You just need to lose a bit of weight," Nadine said.

And she was right. I had bulked up to a massive 13 stone, 7 pounds and every ladies garment we purchased was now a size 18.

The next day I packed away my things and got ready for the house move.

It takes time to unpack, to decorate, to do all those mundane jobs associated with moving and so it was that my TV things, which had, survived yet another move, remained in our new loft.



Finally, one day at work, during the lunch break, I saw a skirt to die for in the window of a ladies fashion shop. It was a long, lush and of course, you know me well enough by now to know, that it was leather. Black, flowing, supple, stupendous.

That Saturday I persuaded Nadine to come to Amersham to view it. She said she would look at it but she would not buy it for me, as money was still tight after our move. The skirt was reduced from £179 to £99, which was still a lot. Even so, when we reached the shop and Nadine saw the rail of leather skirts her heart melted; she came round. I told her it was the type of skirt I had always wanted, that I had searched Ebay for just such a skirt and here it was...

She took the size 14 and went to the changing room – just right on her so she tried the 16, slightly too big. I was sent back to get the size 16 – they were European sizes so we had to guess which would be

right. Unfortunately, there was a woman in the next changing room so I waited and when she slipped out of her changing room I slipped in to Nadine's and tried on the size 18 skirt – over my jeans. I knew it would fit. We bought it – on condition that I sold my wedding dress on Ebay.

That night I spent a glorious, made-up night in the skirt – the first in our new house; Nadine was surprised how happy such a simple thing like a skirt purchase could make me. We drank red wine and watched the film *Buster* on DVD.

That night, my mind raced with ideas of a shopping trip. We had already cased Chesterfield as a possible place for such an excursion, now it was upper most in my thoughts. I pencilled in November 12th with a drink in Woburn a few weeks earlier as a test.

One big advantage of the move, and the work associated with it, was that I had lost a lot of weight; 8lbs to be precise. The weight loss, of course, ensured that I looked better when dressed and could even fit into some of my old clothes.

The woman in me was truly taking shape. With Nadine's help I had become a sophisticated lady when dressed and clothes, hairstyle and make-up were all age-appropriate. There was no doubt, that in terms of my look, with Nadine's help, I had reached my zenith.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Over the next few months, Nadine would dress me up on a weekend and then take photos of me. On one occasion she took the digital camera to school, forgetting to delete the weekends dressing scenes. A New Zealand teacher, Emma, saw one photo of me and asked who it was. Nadine replied that it was my sister.

"They look alike, don't they?" Emma said. Nadine agreed and played it ice cool, even when Emma made a joke about me dressing up as a woman!

By this time I was developing three to five days beard growth before having a shave if I was to dress to ensure that my skin was as smooth as possible. At work, I used the excuse that I had a rash. Then, during a ten day period of beard-growth hairfest, which was supposed to climax with a clean shave and a drink (dressed) in Woburn, Nadine announced that she would rather go shopping instead, so on the Monday, 8th November, we decided to go to Windsor again.

I took the day off as a "sickie" and, in the afternoon started to get ready, firstly shaving off my beard growth. I always wet shave in the shower first to avoid cuts and then go over my face with an electric razor. Then, Nadine set to work with the make-up. Within an hour I was fully made up. I got dressed in my long suedette skirt; camel coloured polo-necked jumper; tan coloured boots and poncho; this was definitely one of the most tasteful outfits I owned. My wig looked better than ever with Nadine clipping it up on top of my head and then pulling the hair down at the sides. I really did look like a woman.

It was 3.30pm. For the first time, at our new house, I left dressed; fortunately the neighbours did not see us getting into the car. The journey to Windsor took longer than expected and by the time we reached the town it was 4.50pm. We parked by Alexander Park car park again. Nadine went to the pay and display machine whilst I looked at myself in

the vanity mirror – and checked the road for curious passers-by – but, fortunately, all was quiet. Anyway, I didn't much care, I felt very confident in the way I looked and didn't feel at all nervous. At last Nadine came back with the Pay and Display ticket and I left the sanctuary of the car. Taking careful steps, I walked along the pavement – towards Windsor.

We skirted up the hill and once again went to the immaculately clean, but empty, ladies toilet where Nadine added some finishing touches to my appearance. We then wandered around by the shops, window-shopping as most were closed or closing. As we approached the town centre we began to see more people along the street but no one stared or looked in our direction. For sure, one or two males might have lingered too long in their stares, but was that because I was a tall, elegantly dressed lady or because they read me as a male? Certainly, I would prefer to believe the former and, as I said to Nadine, women are far more observant and therefore far more likely to see that there is an impostor in their midst. Men are far less likely to read a TV – on that basis I believe they were curious glances towards an attractive female.

Nadine and I walked back, down to the river, up the slippery, leaf-strewn steps, where I nearly fell down, and onto the Eton Bridge. We sat on a bench and looked out at the lights reflecting on the river as Nadine made a phone call. Then on, into Eton, where we meandered around shops (definitely being read by two young women who worked in a beauty salon) before going back to Windsor. We did ponder a drink or something to eat in Benny's but in the end decided against it. I drove back. We'd been out about four hours, and been walking around Windsor for at least 45 minutes; my feet hurt and I was a trite disappointed that we had, I felt, wasted a golden opportunity, to go shopping I had gone so long without a shave. Nadine said she wasn't ready; she said she could still thought of me as a man and that it was hard to detract from my body shape and height.

The next day I lofted my TV things and awaited another chance to go out dressed.

CHAPTER NINE

There are certain aspects of living near London that appeal; one is the close proximity of high class venues for TVs such as the Way Out Club, The Way Out Café and Transmission. Before we finally, finally planned our much aborted shopping trip, Nadine told me she was keen to meet other TVs and their spouses, take me out to a safe and secure venue and see how I compared with other TV's. The Way Out Club appeared to be the ideal place. I'd bought a copy of the magazine, "The Way Out Guide" knowing it was the most comprehensive almanac for TV and TS culture there is. Apparently, every Saturday at 9, Crosswell Street, (off Minorities) in the City, the Way Out Club held a Transgender evening at a nightclub called Charlie's. So, on the 8th January we set off to London - not dressed, for this was a trial run and mighty pleased I was for it as we got lost and it took us an hour and half to cover 26 miles. Though driving in London was not the nightmare I had expected.

The following week I dressed; I started getting ready at 5pm. After a pizza, I shaved in the shower and then went over my face with an electric razor, once shaved I dressed. White bodice, tits, blouse courtesy of Wallis, leather skirt, socks, boots and wig. Nadine did the make-up to a near perfect standard. Nadine had even bought me hand bag with silver baubles on it from Freeman's, my look was fantastic; with my hair up I felt I could pass in a straight restaurant and the only glances I would receive would be complimentary and male rather than female and read. Nadine dressed too, this time in a PVC skirt and top,

"Oh honey," she kept saying, "will they think that I'm a TV?"

I assured her they wouldn't. The journey down was fine, Nadine drove from the house then I changed into flats and took over a mile later. I had butterflies in the pit of my stomach as this was the first time out for five or more years with other TVs. All day I had had the normal anxieties I get when I'm embarking on a new TV "venture"; would the police stop us? What would happen if we were involved in an accident?

Again we got lost, this time around Aldgate, it was so damned difficult to find The Minories; we did though and arrived at just gone 9pm. I pulled on my black boots (Nadine had ordered these for me too, this time off Ebay - they were black leather with low heels); Nadine looked at my make-up and refreshed it in places.

"Those lips are the best they've ever been," she announced.

Then we got out of the car and walked along the quiet street. The nightclub was incongruous amongst the office building that stood around it.

We pushed open the glass door. Another, heavy TV stumbled in before us without a greeting.

"Evening ladies," the unimpressed bouncer announced.

He gave us both tickets for a free cocktail then it was down three sets of very steep stairs. Finally, we arrived in the saloon where unsmiling foreign staff stood behind a shabby bar; the place did not have the glamour the Guide had suggested and was a lot smaller too. A long straight bar on the right covered the whole of one side which was partitioned off by a cloakroom; on one side of which was a dining area and on the other, a dance floor. The place was a bit unkempt and out of keeping with the modern tower blocks that surrounded it. We sat in the dining area on leather couches and looked around. Groups of TV's were huddled around tables, some eating; it was still early and the place was quiet. Television screens showed silent pictures of fashion shows and video highlights of Club nights; the music was dance. Despite notices to the contrary everyone seemed to be smoking. Gradually, more TV's and TS's arrived; at last one came up to us. He was TS called Mary who was in his sixties and wore flat sandals and a drab skirt and blouse. He knew it was our first time and explained a bit about the club and his life as a TS. He had had a full sex change op after his wife had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and was unable to remember who he was - his kids were not impressed however. Only, he said, it wasn't a sex change because he had always been a woman.

Then there was a group from Pandora's Box - the dressing and escorting agency who had sent three TV's out with Alison, a very buxom, blonde lady who was also under going gender realignment surgery. Alison was very proud of her breasts and kept pushing them

up in her low cut dress. Lisa was the youngest TV of the three and came from Brighton; he also came over to chat to us. He was very friendly. He told Nadine that since he had started dressing he had become more macho around women and that he didn't know if he was gay, bi etc though he thought he was straight. He said how lucky I was to have met a woman who understood the dressing and who helped me dress as Pandora's Box were charging him £150 for the privilege of dressing and escorting him for the night. Another of the three, from Bournemouth, told me how he liked my skirt and bag. It was pleasant chat in a friendly atmosphere.

Later, Nadine and I went for a wander around the other side of the club, through the dance floor and up to the toilets - where a stocky South American was loading massive toilet rolls into the cubicles.

Back out in the club, there were a large number of well-dressed guys milling around looking to pounce on unsuspecting TVs. One TV danced like a banshee on top of a box, banging her heels on the wood. There were also a number of oriental girls mixing with the TVs and some lesbians too. The single guys made me uncomfortable. Every now and again they would make a move for a TV and chat her up. I'd never experienced such blatant lechery before, and I knew, as one of the best dressed in the club; if Nadine were to leave me on my own I would be in for the same 'treatment.'

At about midnight we left, once we were back in the car, I changed into my training shoes and we set off. We had a speedy journey across London back to Hemel. Back to suburbia. Back to safety and security.

Transmission meets on the first Saturday of every month at a bar called Extra Time in the Barbican. Extra Time is a modern sports bar with a bank of televisions behind the bar playing music videos. Soft lighting and covered sofas surround the walls. I made my debut there on the 5th March. This time I wore a new black top with green and white undersleeves and collar. Nadine had then produced a surprise for me... she had been to a dress agency and purchased a knee-length black leather skirt. It felt wonderful to pull the skirt on and realise that it was a present from my wife. Once dressed and made-up I pulled on my pink leather boots and picked up my silver handbag, Nadine checked the roads, unlocked the car and then called me out. Soon, she was driving up the street. Straight away we had realised we had forgotten the map, Nadine had to turn around and go back to the house - I sat in the car whilst she ran in to collect it from upstairs. A good start. Not. In the event, we didn't need it, Transmission was as easy to find as the Way Out Club was difficult. We swapped drivers by the BP garage in Hemel and then headed for the M1. I drove in male shoes, my boots flung over the back of the seat. We drove through London and arrived at 8.20pm, parked up a side street and Nadine checked my make-up and I pulled on my boots. We walked to the door and paid the £7 admission. We then bought drinks and sat on a raised platform, overlooking the scene developing before us. Trannie's arrived in a variety of outfits, one in a Fifties dress, another in a tutu, one in a PVC number - everyone seemed friendly and as the night progressed we got talking to a few TVs who sat on our table as well as a very convincing Irish lad. An American approached us with his English friend and we chatted to them for a time about the scene in the US. Later, went up stairs to the disco and downstairs to look at the pool tables. There were a mixture of trannie's, some very convincing and some very unconvincing.

The following month, on 2nd April, we were back at Transmission. Nadine had been shopping and had made yet more new purchases for this trip. This time she dressed me in a pair of pink boots and a jacket – bought from Primark in Hemel. She also made me wear a short, black pencil skirt (purchased from Ebay) and a silky blouse; I probably looked the best I had looked for some time. This time Transmission was very full and we sat in the corner by the windows, again enjoying watching trannie's and TS's coming into the club, paying, chatting going to the bar. I said to a large guy, who sat next to us on the long, bench seat,

"Are you a TV?"

He looked offended and said, "No, I'm waiting for my girlfriend."

His girlfriend, when she arrived, was a TV.

This time we didn't speak to anyone and no one approached us. I enjoyed being out dressed and knew that Nadine enjoyed it too. She particularly enjoyed being in the presence of other couples and liked examining the different outfits the TVs were wearing. Nadine thought I was a bit moody and threatened to spank me when she got me home. In the event, we left at 10.30pm before it got really busy as I had a bit of cold developing. The drive back home was uneventful.

CHAPTER TEN

Going to London was a drag (excuse the pun) so Nadine and I started looking for a nearer venue on the Net. We were put off London by the 7th July bombings, the Live Aid event that was on the same day as one of the Transmission evenings – and the general hustle and bustle of the place – including lots of uninsured, badly driven cars. To add to which we'd never really made any contacts at Transmission, it was too clique and too full of TVs! It was time to change.

Nadine and I looked for an alternative venue and discovered Pink Punters in Bletchley, Milton Keynes. This was a gay club and Club Angelic, a transgender group, met there once a month. The manager was very TV friendly and so were the staff.

So on the 6th August we set out for Milton Keynes taking the A5. For this outing Nadine had purchased my whole outfit off Ebay. She had dressed me in a shimmering, gold blouse; a gold PVC pencil skirt; black fishnet tights and black and white boots. I also wore false nails and jewellery that was either Nadine's or she had purchased for me.

It only took thirty minutes from home rather than the hour to London. The Club itself was like a big old house and not unlike the Club/Mates in Stoke. It had three floors, a basement, a middle floor and an attic which opened at 9pm and where we decide to sit as this seemed to be the trannie's area. We got there early and the bouncer showed us around. Although there were a few trannie's about it was not overly full and that meant it was easy to get chatting to like minded people – here they seemed a lot more "normal" than they had at the Way Out Club and less "clique" than Transmission. The first people we met were Dolores and her friend Terence, the resident photographer. It was a good evening sitting around the table drinking and talking. The smoke, as it always is in gay venues, was a problem however.

A month later we went again and met up with an odd she-fellow by the name of Diane who was convinced no one knew about his hobby though it was plan to us that the world and his wife were aware that he was a TV as he had long hair and nails and of course shaved.

Nadine was convinced my wig was wrong – it was too long for my age, she felt, and I agreed. So on the 11th November I took a day off work and we went back to Suzi's in Lakeside and spent £197 on a new wig – boy those credit cards come in handy!! The new wig looked fantastic and was just right for me. The shorter length was much more in keeping with a 41year old lady and it looked absolutely fab. That evening Nadine applied my make-up and I changed into a variety of outfits – it was easily the best I had ever looked.

On the 19th November we went back to Pink Punters. By now I was driving in my boots both black and pink varieties which saved the hassle of changing from trainers to boots and back again. This third visit was our best as we got chatting to another couple Julie (female) and Gemma by the blazing (too hot!) fire. It was good for Nadine to meet another TV's female partner and we met up again on 17th December at the Christmas party at the Campanile Hotel across the road. I wore my long leather skirt for this one and it was one of the best TV evenings ever. There were perhaps about 60 TVs in a side room; the company was good but best of all I was next to the woman I loved in the clothes I love. What more could I ask?

So we settled into a pattern of outings. Different things came to mind – would a corset alter my figure? Take away my stomach? I thought about buying one from Axfords but it was a huge expense on top of the new wig. However, I did re-joined Roses after a gape of ten years which was slightly cheaper!

On 22nd January 2006 we went back to Punters, which had been newly renovated with a different entrance and new plasma screens spaced around the bar, I received two compliments, one from Terence on the stairs as I went to the toilet - he said I looked elegant - and one from a small Latino lad who we passed as we left.

"Oh, fabulous," he said.

We chatted to Terence and Dolores who said TV Chix was now the new kid on the block in terms of the transgender community and that Club Angelica and TV Chix both held special evenings at the Punters. I thought about joining the latter but decided against it. I had Repartee to read and that was enough.

Still, I hadn't done my shopping trip and money (the lack of) had restricted buying corset. Even so, we had Terence's jewellery party to look forward to on the 13th Feb.

The jewellery party was like the old days – TV's and there partners sitting around talking and enjoying each others company whilst purchasing a few bits of jewellery from the ladies who ran the stall. Nadine and I had found the small, terraced house more by luck than judgement, parked up (me driving) and went in. It was a great evening – especially as being in the confines of a home meant we got to know Terence and Dolores better – Dolores being something of a character and good humoured. For this trip I wore my green suede suit and in my (humble) opinion and in Nadine's' I was the best attired and the most convincing.

Later that week we were due to do a “walk” in St. Neots. I was to wear the same outfit – green suedette suit, false nails, boots and black top. However, a few days before we were due to “depart” Nadine phoned me at work to say she couldn’t go though with it. At home I discussed it with her. I’d always known she had been nervous about accompanying me on a walk and now she gave vent to her concern – to her I was James Marchmont and however pretty and feminine I looked to the outside world to her I would always be a man. We reached a compromise – I would drive to St Neots and she would sit in the car whilst I walked around the town centre...

Nadine...

Nadine is not a domtress but more a “Mummy Wife” – I once left a post on the Daily Mail *Femail* chat board saying that my wife was a mummy wife after an article in the Mail on Sunday about Brie in *Desperate Housewives*. I received a lot of negative replies stating that I was “Mr Pampered” and submissive but Nadine fits the bill perfectly; she likes to be well-dressed and is very house pride; at the same time she endeavours to support me rather than pursue her own career. Every morning she gets out the shirt and tie I am going to wear for work that day and even gets out my clothes when we go out of an evening. Since I have known her I have never bought any clothes for myself - either male or female – Nadine buys them all – including two suits without me even being present. So am I submissive? I guess so, but I’m a TV, aren’t I? It has taken me some time to get used to being submissive when I’m in male garb because a side of me is a little bit controlling and I like to be in charge... but now I just let Nadine run the show and it works well... for us.

So, on 4th March Nadine dressed me in a silky green Bo Ho style skirt and a black cow-neck jumper and pink boots and we went back to the Pink Punters. Unfortunately, there was no one there we knew so we spent the evening watching a drag queen in a tight, purple dress with massive hair talking to another equally flamboyantly dressed “queen”. I was surprised at how many straight couples were in the club. The Punters was full but we missed the people we knew so it was a disappointing night from that angle. Also, I had hoped to buy petrol on the way down but had lost my nerve in the garage so drove back nearly on empty. The only “event” was going to the toilet and striking up a conversation with a young, plumpish girl who said she had seen me in Punters quite a lot and that I looked great. On the way back up stairs from the toilet someone attempted to pinch my bum – though I am unsure if the “fiend” was male or female.

My false nails proved a disaster. They were the most expensive we had bought and they started falling off in the car park; by 11.30 I had lost four; in the end I took them all off – unfortunately the glue on my nails proved more problematic. The next morning, I started with nail/glue remover and moved onto paint stripper, petrol and meths and still the glue would not dissolve – only rubbing them down with good old fashioned sand paper did the trick. I resolved not to wear false nails again – though they did look good.

On Thursday, 13th April 2006 I finally got to do my shopping trip. Nadine and I got up at 7.30am and I drove up the road and bought some woman’s magazines for Nadine and a paper. The deal was that Nadine would stay in the car and read her magazines and I would do my “walk.” When I returned we had our breakfast of toast and marmalade and then I started to get ready. I showered and shaved using two razor heads. I then went over my face with an electric razor before adding rose water and moisturizer. After four days of

growth my skin was nice and smooth. Next, I held onto the bedroom door frame whilst Nadine pulled me into my waist clincher. We had bought this one on Ebay and it was the best clincher I had ever owned being very comfortable whilst pulling me in and flattening my stomach. I took a deep breath and Nadine attached the Velcro. I fastened my underwire bra, slotted home my breast forms; pulled on my high-waist control panties, (which partly covered the clincher) and pulled on my black polo neck jumper. Then, I sat in the bathroom and Nadine applied my make-up. By 10am I was ready. We both agreed that the waist clincher had made a huge difference, removing my paunch and giving me curves. I tried on various skirts and Nadine took photographs of me. We were both really pleased with my look. The final skirt I was to wear was a suede one which Nadine had actually bought for herself and was a size 14. Having bought it (at my behest) she had decided it was not for her and asked me to try it on – to my surprise it actually fitted me though I am a size 16. The length of the skirt meant I did not need to wear tights or stockings. I pulled on and zipped up my boots with their 2" heels and dropped a black poncho over my head. I picked up my hand bag. Nadine had purchased this for me and it was a basket-come-handbag which was spacious enough for my make-up and brolly. The bag matched my ensemble wonderfully well. Once ready, Nadine checked to see if the coast was clear, and, at about 10.30am we set off. Nadine drove down the road where she parked and we swapped drivers. A van came passed whilst I was out of the car and a woman walked by they didn't notice me. I felt a little nervous but was happy with my look and pleased I had not had any attention from the first people who had seen me dressed that day. Once in the driving seat, I started to drive to St Neots – a journey of some 59 miles up the A1. En route Nadine and I recorded our thoughts on a Dictaphone. The weather was over cast and it rained intermittently. We arrived in St Neots and I drove into the Riverside car park which appeared full. I had a job finding a parking space – I had not realised that it was market day. At 11.50am we finally parked and Nadine re-applied my lipstick and checked my look. She was satisfied that I looked very convincing. I was too. I was ready to leave the safety of the car. The only problem was that it was now raining hard. I placed my hand on the door handle, opened the door and climbed out of the car. Immediately, I put my umbrella up. Then, leaving Nadine in the dry, I started to stroll towards the town which meant walking across a bridge. There were a number of people crossing the bridge in the opposite direction but no one paid any attention to me even though I had to stop frequently to let people pass at close quarters. I got to the pedestrian lights, crossed over and walked onto a very busy High Street. Again, no one seemed to be glancing or looking at me. I made it to MacKay's clothing store. I went in and had a brief look at some of the woman's clothes. I phoned Nadine to tell her where I was. The handbag she had bought for me was great as I did not have to search around in it for my phone and could just drop it in after I had finished talking to her. I may have aroused the suspicions of a young shop assistant due to my nervous behaviour but I'm not sure if she read me. I left the store and walked down the road to Ottackers, I had a brief glance through some books before leaving to walk to the pedestrian lights at the top of the High Street. By this time the wind and rain were quite strong and I had to keep lowering my umbrella as I passed pedestrians on the busy street. I decided to call it a day and started back along the High Street, this time passing on the market side. On the bridge the wind really swirled and gusted which turned my umbrella inside out on a few occasions. My wig was scattered around my face and must have looked dreadful but still I did not attract any glances or stares. I struggled

back to the car and got in – breaking the side zip on my skirt in the process. It was 12.15pm. I'd done my first "solo" walk in 23 years and as far as I was aware no one had read me. Having cleaned my steamed up glasses I drove out of the car park and back onto the A1. Nadine said I had looked good as I had walked off out of the car park.

On the way home we stopped at MacDonald's and Nadine went in to get us both some burgers and drinks (I only eat fast food when I'm dressed!). When she returned I sat in the car eating my burger with a business man on one side of us in his car and a woman on the other side of us in her 4X4. Then, as I reversed out of the car park I made a bit of a hash of turning the car around and was pleasantly surprised at the male driver, coming into park, who waited patiently for me. I smiled and waved as I passed him. Next, a delivery man waved "thanks" to me as I stopped to let him cross in front of the car.

Nadine took over the controls before we got home and drove the final part of the journey back to our house.

It was early afternoon when we got back to the house. I walked up the stairs to look at myself in the mirror as Nadine had said I looked "a right state". I stood looking at myself in the long, full-length mirrored wardrobe. Nadine came and stood beside me. She looked at my reflection. Her careful handiwork underdone by the elements. She held my hand. She was dressed in black trousers and a top. I was dressed in black leather boots with a 2" heel; a full skirt which was made of suede and coloured green; a black poncho and a black polo neck jumper. My face was nicely made up – though I had lost my lipstick (Nadine says this is because I lick my lips when I eat) and my wig resembled candy-floss on a stick. My glasses had steamed up and if I looked closely I could see a great gash of white where my firm control panties could be seen through the broken zip of my skirt. I took a deep breath and sighed. Nadine was right; I did look a "right state" – a "right mess" to be exact. Nadine's grip on my hand grew tighter; there was a smile on her face. I knew she wanted to laugh at my bedraggled appearance and was trying to repress her mirth. My wet skirt stuck to my legs. I could feel the waist clincher's tightness against my body. I felt uncomfortable and wanted to change. I recalled my sister's bedroom on that fateful, sunny August day some 35 years before.

"Did you enjoy it?" Nadine asked.

"Yes. It was very good," I said. "Very exciting." Then slowly I added. "'cept for the bloody wind and rain. It blew my wig to buggery."

"But you came through it," she said. "You did it."

A faint smile formed on my lips. "Yes," I said, "I did it."

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