

# She's Having A Ball



## Alex Miller



A "Her Tv" Novel



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# **SHE'S HAVING A BALL**

**by Alex Miller**

Zack just graduated at the age of twenty-four. It had taken more than a few years of hard work at his uncle's garage to finally have enough money to pursue a degree in the fine arts. Not at a place with fame, just one of the many schools of fine arts that were out there and one he could afford. He kept the cost at a minimum; close by, living at home and so on.

He even got a student loan. His parents weren't very happy about that, but they accepted it. At least they didn't have to pay for it. They wouldn't have, either.

A bachelor in the fine arts wasn't a degree, it was a joke. That's what his parent's thought, anyway. And honestly, they weren't exactly wrong. It couldn't give you the talent an artist needed to make name, to make a future. If one had talent, one didn't need a degree.

So, you had to take a job in commercial media; advertising - and the ones who got those jobs were the

lucky ones. Lucky was something Zack wasn't and had never been, but he was confident that he would find something.

But for now, he had no job and a lot of time for soul-searching - and that was what he intended to do. He had planned to follow in the footsteps of Jack Kerouac.

When Zack told his parents about his plans, they couldn't stop laughing. Zack wasn't the type to go drifting through the country. He was the silent introvert type, the one who never took the first step, because he lacked the confidence. That was a big handicap for the artistic type. That was also a reason for him to go on this trip, to make him harder and more confident. But until now he had been someone who never would take such a big risk. He was a slender, rather short guy, compared with other guys of his age. People with bad and other intensions would consider him an easy victim. His parents told him that more than once and he believed them, but he had to try. He packed a backpack and headed south. That's where he wanted to start his quest.

Spring was showing itself. If everything went right, he would be back home before winter could ruin things. His parents believed that he would be back in days, however.... and he would have, except for the misfortune that was heading his way.

Zack couldn't say how long the trip took but somewhere on the way he just got off the train without thinking. Not that he had to go much further to reach the southern limits of his trip, but something said that he had to get off. He found himself in a little town that was no different than most.

Once outside the station his stomach protested loudly and left him no other option than to step into the nearest diner. After that, he would take the first

bus northeast and see where it would bring him. This town seemed nice enough but it looked too much like his hometown. There was no reason to stay much longer. Not when the unknown was waiting.

He found the right place to eat. The diner was the retro kind, a reminder of better days, but unlike most, it was clean and comfortable; just the place to satisfy his needs.

“Can I help you, dear?”

“Coffee and scrambled eggs, please.”

What he saw was what he expected; all those diners looked the same - as did the people who worked there.

So, he didn't look further - but *she* did. What she saw was a young man with long brown hair tied up in a ponytail and a goatee. He had a face that one never would call male without having some doubt about it, even with his beard.

With that beard gone and his hair hanging loose, one could make a mistake about his gender, especially from the back. However, it had to be the right circumstances and if nobody had heard his voice. He was a woman's height. Not that gender had a height. It just meant that his height didn't make him stand out. But that day, he stood out.

The waitress was talking about him to the cook while waiting. Not loud enough for him to hear anything. Otherwise he would have been more than surprised of the content of the conversation.

“This one just looks like her type. Shall I make the call or not? Maybe it's better to let things be? He probably will run like the others and that only makes

it worse. She had so much hope with the last one. Even when I thought it wasn't the right choice."

"But you think this one is, don't you? It's the first one you like. The other ones all had flaws, but you haven't said anything about this one. You seem to like him too much."

"Maybe, but you're right. I like him. He has potential to make her granddaughter Catherine happy. He has something the rest didn't have. This isn't just a drifter. He looks educated, too."

"And when she's happy, the town's happy. Make the call and let fate handle it. The guy may like what we have in mind for him."

The town would be happy because most of its inhabitants were dependent in one way or another on the economic accomplishments of *that* family. Most of the land was theirs and always had been since they bought or stole it from its original owners. A happy boss won't make a happy employee, but an unhappy boss will make an unhappy one.

The waitress filled his cup with steaming hot coffee and put the eggs and toast in front of him. He didn't let it get cold. He was in a bit of a hurry. He had to take the bus. If he missed that one, he had one more he could take, but that was the last one that day that would head the way he wanted to go. That meant that he only had half an hour to fill his stomach.

Zack looked at the clock while he put the last piece of bread in his mouth and washed it down with his last bit of coffee. Before someone could stop him, he had paid the bill and walked out.

All the while, he was being watched by the waitress and the cook. Something he wasn't aware of. He would have seen the relief on their face when a

well-known car passed the approaching bus. The car pulled up as closely possible to the bus when it came to a stop. Zack was just about to board the bus when someone grabbed him and held him back.

“Sorry young man, but you have some questions to answer.”

A man that according his uniform and badge, was the sheriff, gave the driver a signal to move on and so he did. Zack was scared and worried, about the sheriff and about getting the next bus on time.

“Let’s go to the diner.”

Someone else would have made a big fuss, but Zack was as always, compliant. But that didn’t mean that he didn’t have any questions. Normally, he wouldn’t be that bold. Challenging authorities wasn’t his habit.

“Am I under arrest? Have I done something wrong?”

He was intelligent enough to know that this wasn’t normal procedure. There was no reason for an arrest. And if there was, the sheriff wouldn’t be so friendly. So why did it have to happen at such a critical moment? It just wasn’t his lucky day.

“Don’t worry. I just must check your identity so I can rule you out as a suspect. We don’t have enough information to do that yet.”

Zack was surprised that he even could be a suspect. He just had set foot in this town.

The sheriff waved to the waitress.

“Donna, coffee please, and something for this young man, too. He looks like he can use something

strong, so make it a black coffee. You know how I like mine, lots of milk.”

He got a black coffee without asking and all he wanted was to take the bus. He could take the next one but he wasn't happy about it. And his unhappiness only got worse when he heard the questions.

The sheriff asked him the stupidest questions one could imagine. The questions themselves weren't stupid, the fact that he needed the answer them, however, was.

Why would he want to know if Zack had family, children, and all kinds of other personal information? After an hour, the sheriff knew almost everything about him.

Strange, inappropriate things, like if he preferred women or men. It wasn't something one should know but he said it anyway. He didn't want people to think the wrong way about him, even if we were talking about people he would never see again.

“Women, of course! I'm not gay. Why, do you shoot gay people in this part of the country? Then I'm glad I won't be here much longer.”

Zack was surprised at his own outburst - its intensity. It was indeed very important for him that nobody even imagined the wrong thing about him and his gender identity. Maybe because a lot of people already had assumed things when they met him.

“So, you're planning to leave us quickly? No need for that. It's a nice little town. The next one is a few hours away. Enjoy your stay a while longer. For now, I know everything this town needs to know.”

“I just need to know one thing, when the next bus leaves,” Zack replied. He had just gone to make use of

the sanitary facilities... when he sat down again, the sheriff was gone. He probably had nothing to ask anymore. Funny, now that he had missed the bus, he had more than time enough to answer them. The only thing he could do was wait. His disappointment was visible on his face.

“You don’t look very pleased, young man,” Donna said. “Has our sheriff been too hasty again? He always likes to talk with newcomers. It keeps him busy in this peaceful town.”

The cook smiled. He had seen this same situation more than once before. He also knew what would be coming next, so he knew what to say.

“Well nothing to do about it. He’s just doing his job. For as far as we know, you can be wanted for bank robbery.”

“I’m sure he does, but this looks me the wrong way. He only asked me questions that were meaningless if I had been a bank robber.”

“It may look like that, but the sheriff has his reasons. Why don’t you stay a few days in town? The motel near the station has cheap rooms.”

“No thanks. That’s the last thing that I want to do. Stay here for longer than I need to. I’ll sleep in the next town.”

Now it was Donna’s face to show disappointment. Something he didn’t get at that point. Why would he? There was no reason to think that she had any interest in his travel plans. He just furrowed his eyebrows when she left him behind without saying a word.

Seeing her making a phone call would have made him perhaps a little suspicious, but he didn’t see that. He had left to ask when the next bus would ar-

rive. He came back after that. There was no other place to go if he didn't want to wait at the station and Donna had told him that he could wait there. From that moment on she never left his side. Not even to attend to other customers.

That job was taken over by the cook, but Zack didn't care or notice. His mind was occupied with home - maybe this trip was the wrong idea? It looked that way. He considered his confrontation with the sheriff as a bad omen.

His soul-searching had started out on the wrong foot and his desire to continue was at its lowest. He thought that maybe was better to just go home... He could wait until the next town to decide, but he didn't. A train heading home was much earlier than the bus and he would be on it. He wasn't planning to push his luck and therefore would take up his normal life a little bit sooner than expected.

His mind made up, he stood up while emptying his cup of coffee. Donna tried to slow him down as much as possible, but he was determined. Filling his cup again did nothing. He said his thanks and walked outside. Just in time to see an old Bentley pulling up at the diner. He did stop to admire the car and discovered that the driver was an old man. Well, "old" to Zack. Being in his early fifties wasn't old, it just surprised Zack that the man was in a uniform. Here in this place a uniformed driver?

Zack kept on admiring the car. He walked slowly around it, wishing that he once would have the money to ride with such a car. At the moment, he would be satisfied with only sitting in it.

If he had heard what was said in the diner, he wouldn't have wasted his time. He would have walked home on foot. No, that is not true. He would have run.

“I’m sorry, Bill, you just missed him. I tried to keep him busy, but he stopped listening to me. He seemed to have made his mind up. He’s going back home. I think this one is no longer a possible candidate.”

The person Donna was talking to was the old man. He was listening with one ear. His mind was busy with the vision of Zack in the mirror behind Donna. There he had a clear image of him.

“Don’t worry, Donna. I know that you have done your best. Besides, I think that you have picked a winner. This one looks like he fits the bill. So, I’m not willing to let him go that easily. I already know how to do it. Get me the sheriff on the line. He can still save the day and my butt.”

Zack’s train was slowly pulling into the station. He couldn’t wait until the doors would open and he finally could leave this place. They would never see him this far south again. At least that’s what he thought.

The moment his foot was on the train, a hand grabbed his collar and pulled him back. The voice that came with the hand wasn’t unknown to him.

“Sorry young man, but you have some more questions to answer.”

Zack sighed deeply. Would he ever get home? What was it this time? He only spent time in the diner and the bus station. Not exactly the places to commit a crime. But he apparently had done something wrong. The sheriff would obviously tell him what it was. That he was sure of.

He was taken back to the sheriff’s office, where he to his surprise was locked behind bars. He started to panic. Was he under arrest?

“Sheriff, what’s going on? I haven’t done anything wrong.”

“Tell that to Bill. He says that you have damaged Miss Tennyson’s car. That isn’t something we take lightly in this town.”

“Damage? A car? And who is Miss Tennyson? I never have heard of her and I surely don’t know which car is hers. So why would I damage it and I didn’t. I only walked from the diner to here and never touched anything and certainly not a car. I absolutely didn’t damage one. “

“That’s not what Bill says and there are plenty of witnesses that tell the same story as him. You made a dent in Miss Tennyson’s Bentley.”

“Wait a minute! A Bentley, you mean that dark red monster outside the diner. I didn’t even make a scratch. I just looked at it.”

“Not according to Bill. He found a big dent in his door and you were the only one who could have done it. Everybody in the diner confirms it. You were the last one there.”

“But, but? No, I never. I didn’t touch the bloody car, I’m innocent. This Bill is mistaken. Someone else must have done it.”

This time he was beyond panic, it was despair. He was innocent, but he couldn’t proof it. Normally it should be the other way around, but he was a stranger in a little town. Who would take his side? His word meant nothing and there were witnesses. Why would they lie? But they were.

“If Bill says that someone made a dent in his car then someone did and when he and other witnesses say that this someone was you, then it’s you. You’re

going to jail little man. We don't appreciate vandalism in this town and certainly not by strangers. And the judge won't either."

Zack was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Jail, judge, he didn't know what to think anymore. It couldn't be that he had to go to jail for a dent in a car. He had to call his parents. They could get him a lawyer.

"A phone call, I want to make a phone call because I seem to need a lawyer. He will sort this madness out."

"Not today. You aren't officially arrested yet. No phone call until Bill and the witnesses are here. Until then you better take a rest."

Zack laid himself down and before he knew it he was sleeping. The coffee must have been decaf for him to be so sound asleep. More than a few hours later he was awakened by the sheriff. He carried a tray with food. Instead of bringing it into the cell, he just opened the door and left it open. There was a small table outside.

"Wake up sleepyhead. We have a verdict. Well not really, but it's clear that you are guilty. Luckily for you is that Bill isn't mad. He understands that it might have been an accident. So as long as you pay for it you can leave after you have finished this meal. He won't press charges. Like I said, you're a lucky guy. I wouldn't have been so lenient."

"What charges? I'm innocent. My lawyer will prove that."

"You can do that, but then you only fool yourself. Bill won't be so forgiving and the judge won't either. Every witness says that you are guilty. You can keep on telling us that you are innocent for the rest of your

life, but you won't escape a sentence and this judge is a hard one. He will give you the maximum punishment he can. If I was you, I would just pay and be done with it. It won't even get on your record. Just pay three grand for its repair and were done. Ooh and Bill only takes cash."

"Three grand and in cash? Where would I get so much money and that only for a dent? This is madness. I think I want my lawyer. At least he will be cheaper. He will know what to do, won't he?"

"I don't think so. Even your lawyer can't save you. There are too many witnesses to your crime. Take this deal or go to jail and do hard time. They will love a newbie like you there."

The sheriff wasn't wrong. He could get a lawyer, but that wouldn't make him innocent even when he was. If all those people were convinced that he was guilty, he would be a sitting duck. The judge only had to give him the finishing blow. But three grand, where would he get it?

"Can I call my parents? Maybe they can give me the money?"

"No, this is a one-time opportunity. Pay now and in cash and all is forgiven. And if you don't have it, we already have a solution."

Was this a scam? It sounded like it, but then the whole town had to be in it, impossible. And what was this solution the sheriff talked about? Zack said nothing. He only stared at the sheriff who wouldn't stop.

"And before you ask, it's a simple solution. You work for it."

“Work for it? It will take me weeks, months to do that.”

“Three to be exact. Bill agreed that three months of working at Misses Tennyson’s place would be just enough to pay for the damage. I know, it is cheap labor, but you are a prisoner.”

“Three months? That’s crazy. I can’t wait three months in this godforsaken place. What will I be doing there anyway?”

“Everything, everything they want you to do. You’ll be working from morning till evening. Sunday is a day off, but for the rest you are at Misses Tennyson’s disposal. Just keep her happy for three months and you’re free to go. So, what will it be? You have five minutes to think it over. We have wasted more than enough time on you.”

Zack was stunned. If this was justice then there was something very wrong. But could he take the risk or spend three months working for some lady or spend months in jail? It wasn’t really a choice.

“Ok, I’ll do it if it gets me off the hook. So, when does this crazy job start? When will I get out of here?”

Before the sheriff could answer someone came in and that someone happened to be Bill. He couldn’t have timed it better. It helped of course that he was waiting in the sheriff’s office while hearing everything.

“Well, what’s the answer? Do I have to wait until he finishes his meal or shall I file a complaint? My friend the judge will be glad.”

If Zack already hadn’t been sure to work for it, he would have been then. Bill’s words had made very clear that he had no other choice. Bill and the sheriff

had trouble hiding their smiles behind a straight face. But once Zack was seated at the front of the Bentley the sheriff's face lightened up. Things appeared to be as they should. If they were lucky this one would turn out the way they wanted and the way Miss Tennyson wanted. Hopefully her grandmother Misses Tennyson would get him into the right shape. That or scare him away like the rest.

Zack was sitting in the Bentley, but he wasn't enjoying the ride. He even had forgotten to look at the damage. Not that they would have given him the chance. There was nothing to see and it would have sunk their plan. Luckily for them his mind was busy with every scenario possible for what could await him. Even so, he still got surprised. The old wooden house wasn't what he had expected, nor was its inhabitant.

"Zack, this is Misses Tennyson, your boss. She says jump and you ask how high. If you make trouble for her, I'll make trouble for you. Got that? If I must come back to straighten you out, it will cost you."

Zack didn't answer. He still was mesmerized by Misses Tennyson. What he saw was an old lady and this time old was old. Misses Tennyson's age was seventy-five. She was dressed in black in a dress that wasn't of this century, not even the previous one. Her grey hair was rolled up in a bun. Zack found that it gave her a soft appearance, until he saw her eyes. Her voice made it only worse. She had to be as hard as nails.

"Oh, and something very important! You can't go outside at night and during the day you must stay in sight when you move around the house. If you break this rule you will be considered as a fugitive."

"So, Bill, is this the scoundrel that ruined my car? The car I gave to my granddaughter for her twenty



first birthday seven years ago. The car that's in our family for decades and hopefully will be for many more. At least when vandals like this young fool doesn't ruin things for us. I still think that three months isn't enough for such a crime. So, I'll make sure that these months will count. He will regret to ever have laid hands on it."

"He is, mother. Now excuse me, Catherine expects me home."

"Of course, dear. You can't let your own daughter wait for her lazy father, can you? That's not how I raised you."

"No, you didn't, mother. I'll be back tomorrow to drive you to town for you weekly visit to the hair-dresser."

"Of course you will, and if you are a minute late like last week you know what will happen, dear. As a mother, I have to be firm. I still think that your late wife was much too forgiving of you."

"Yes, mother. I won't be late. And Ellen was as firm as you. That's why you chose her to marry me and she never was anything less."

"I know, dear, I'm just teasing you."

Bill knew that his mother never teased. That meant that she had a soft spot and that was impossible. He had pity for this young man. His mother would make these three months hell on earth, but it was necessary. He wanted to see his daughter happy and that meant making sacrifices - and sacrificing this young man was part of that. He hoped that his mother would succeed this time. He couldn't bear to see his daughter this unhappy. The Tennyson women needed a special kind of man and his daugh-

ter needed one that was even more special than usual.

He left Zack where he stood and the young man didn't move an inch. He didn't dare. He was afraid of Misses Tennyson reaction if he would. The old lady walked around him and checked him out as if he was cattle.

“Umm, I think that you'll do. Yes, yes, you will do fine.”

“Excuse me? I'll do what? What is happening?”

“No, you're not excused and listen carefully. I will only say this once so you better get it into that thick skull of yours. You are not here to speak to me, only to listen and answer if necessary. If you have a complaint or some stupid question, you'll ask it to Lisa. And if you don't, you'll learn not to make that mistake again. Ooh yeah and if you have to address me, you'll call me Misses Tennyson. Everyone in this house does. That means that the only words I want to hear from you are yes Misses Tennyson. Whatever you say Misses Tennyson. Got that?”

Zack had a question, but one he didn't dare to ask it. If Misses Tennyson was that demanding being her usual self, he didn't want to know what she was like when angry. He just wanted to know who Lisa was. A normal question and an obvious one, even Misses Tennyson knew.

“Lisa, you can come in now. You and Brenda have your instructions. So I don't want to see his face.”

A woman came in. She had to be almost forty and she was dressed as a maid from around 1900. Only the skirt length wasn't old-style. The dress came down to her knees. The dress had a black high collar

dress with a lace apron stitched on it, a white cap and nothing about all of it was plain.

“Move you fool and follow me or you’ll soon regret it.”

Was she exaggerating or was it the truth? He didn’t want to find out so he followed. She led him upstairs, to the highest room of the house. It was small and cut in half by the sloping roof. Just enough place for a single bed, a closet and a wash table.

“Isn’t there indoor plumbing here?”

“There is, but not this high up. Misses Tennyson doesn’t want to spend money on unnecessary things or things that aren’t permanent, like you. A floor lower there is a bathroom. You can use it to shower, but always knock before you enter. It’s mine and Brenda’s. If you ever walk in without knocking we will tie you naked to a tree and cover you in honey. The ants will love such a tasty dish and that will be nothing when Misses Tennyson hears about it. She’ll skin you first and then the tree.”

There was a coverall on the bed. He didn’t have to guess who it was for.

They didn’t give him time to recover from his introduction. He was put to work as soon as he came down. The house was old and there was a lot to do. His reward was diner, but after half an hour he was put back to work. They made him clear that he was there to pay for his crime, with hard work. That would teach him a lesson while providing Misses Tennyson the reimbursement she was entitled to. He was glad that he finally was allowed to go to sleep, but not without a surprise... one he found on his bed.

It was a cotton nightdress. He screamed in more than one way, loud enough to wake half the county.

“Lisa, Lisaaaaaa. Have you all gone mad?”

It wasn't Lisa that came, but her twin. He noticed because Lisa had black hair and this woman had red and he had seen Lisa only minutes ago. So, this had to be Brenda. He still had almost said Lisa to her, so alike was she. If her hair hadn't been different he would never have known.

“Shut up, you idiot. Do you want to disturb Misses Tennyson?”

She didn't need more words than that to silence him. He went on but as silent as possible without making it difficult to be heard. He had forgotten himself and was more rebellious than he ever had been.

“Why do I have a nightdress? I'm a man and men don't wear nightdresses. Not where I come from. This must be a mistake.”

“Well, this man I see before me will. Do you really think that in this house we have nightwear for men? You're the first male to sleep here. Besides, a night-shirt isn't much different and that's for men.”

“Yeah, but not one of this century. I don't need it. I can sleep in my underwear. You can take it back to where it came from.”

“Oh no. Misses Tennyson won't allow that. Nobody in this house sleeps in only underwear. She doesn't want to bump into someone that isn't decently dressed. Whether it's because of a fire or the world coming to an end, she doesn't care. She wants you to be dressed in more than underwear when she sees you. This is a non-disputable rule. It is required, just as the slippers are for your feet. So, you will put this nightdress on, if you want it or not. Got it?”

He did and he obeyed. Defying Misses Tennyson on his first day wouldn't be the best move to make. It wouldn't be on any day.

The rest of the week passed by and every day looked the same. During the day, he repaired the outside of the house and during the night he wore the fresh cotton nightdress that lay on his bed. When Sunday came, he didn't care anymore.

Brenda was right, he just had to look at it as being a nightshirt. Anyway, there was no one else besides those three women to see him dressed in it. And he was lucky. That morning, Misses Tennyson was waiting for him to enter the hall to the bathroom. She was checking up on him.

"I see that despite your little tantrum you are wearing the necessary attire. That's a shame. I would have loved teaching you a lesson."

The only thing Zack could do was swallow and walk on.

"Intolerable! You there stop. Show me your legs."

Zack stopped, but was too confused to follow her order. Show his legs? He hesitated. Why would he do that? He also started to get a red face. It was embarrassing, he in a nightdress being screamed at. That made her only angrier. So she had to do it herself.

She pulled the bottom part up to reveal his legs, while at the same time the twins came running. They had heard that Misses Tennyson was about to explode and that was never a good sign. Unfortunately for Zack, they were too late.

"Lisa, Brenda, take that fool and make sure that he gets rid of that awful hair on his legs. It's ghastly. I

don't want to see it ever again, not today, not tomorrow, never. Just make it disappear."

"Remove the hair on his legs, Misses Tennyson? Yes we will, immediately. We will shave his legs immediately."

"All his hair, of course, his body hair. It's all ghastly. And get rid of that mistake he calls a beard too. Make it go away forever. It's not that he needs it. It only covers his true nature."

His what? What was she talking about? Zack was led by his arm to the bathroom. Brenda was already waiting with a scissor. A moment later his goatee was gone. He hadn't had the courage to protest. The knowledge of facing Misses Tennyson could do that. If he ever would do that, he would make sure that it was worth it. He wouldn't risk his life for a beard and not for the few hairs he had on his body. He couldn't move, but he could talk and ask questions.

"Lisa, there is no reason for Misses Tennyson to have my hair removed. I'm a guy. No one sees it when I'm dressed."

"That doesn't matter. The thought of you walking around in her house covered with that ghastly hair is too much for her. And trust me when I say that this is the easiest way to make that problem go away. Besides, it's your own fault. You were the one that vandalized her car. So stop stalling and undress before I help you with it."

It turned out that she had to. The word 'undress' made him freeze again, but officially he hadn't refused. She had no other choice but to do it for him. That of course made a part of him unfreeze and stand up to protest. Neither Lisa nor Brenda reacted to it. They just went on with their job. He froze even harder and this time all of him. They kept ignoring him, not

that there was much to ignore. They knew the world and its pleasures, big and small. He couldn't believe it. Two women were stripping him naked and they got a very good view of every part of his body. He was trying to block it out of his mind by closing his eyes, what didn't work. It would have made things worse if that was still possible.

“Brenda when you have cut off his beard, use the facial depilatory and I will start with his body with the other depilatory.”

Zack didn't know how to react to those many hands covering his body with cream. Well one part did, but that was already stuck in overdrive. Luckily for him and the two women he was pushed under the shower a few minutes later and he could clean himself with a washcloth or two, but only after he had taken those out of the women's hands. He heard them laughing until they were beyond his reach. He only dared to leave the bathroom fifteen minutes after he had finished his shower. Zack grabbed one of the white silk bathrobes, beautiful, soft and short. White, the only other color Misses Tennyson allowed her girls to use for their underwear. Not that she would wear it herself. He didn't dare to walk outside in a towel like he had done the past days. If Misses Tennyson still was in the neighborhood he would tread on dangerous grounds. She probably would have many objections against his appearance. He wasn't wrong. She was still outside, waiting for her prey.

“Come here you. I see that you at least have the decency to cover yourself in the proper way. Now let me see what they have done.”

Zack froze again. She wanted to see how he looked like. That scared him more than the woman herself and that was saying a lot.

“Is there something with your ears young man? I give you one chance to come to me and show yourself. If you don’t, I’ll make sure that you will regret not following an order of mine. Is that what you want?”

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That did it for Zack. Step by step did he approached Misses Tennyson, until he was almost an arm’s length away. He thought that he was safe there, but he had made one big mistake. The few times that he had seen her he hadn’t noticed the cane she had in her hand. It was black and it was barely visible next to the dress.

He became painfully aware of its existence when it reached his robe and pushed it away. Revealing the parts of his body he desperately wanted to keep hidden from her... He wanted to run, cover his body, but nothing worked. Only one thing and that was the problem.

When the cane hit his organ, the pain helped it to make itself scarce. It just left the source of the problem behind. It was hanging there minding its own business when the cane hit it again. The pain made it him almost impossible to react.

“This is a disgrace. How dare you show this filthy thing to me! You almost pushed it right in my face. I should cut it off!”

“No, Misses Tennyson, please don’t!”

The cane hid it for the third time and this time it made him cringe.

“Did I ask you something? Did I? No, I didn’t. Then why am I hearing your voice addressing me with a request? ... Answer me!”

She didn’t care what he did or said. It was part of his education. She would grab every opportunity to make him into the person most fitted for her granddaughter. To do that she had to shape his mind and body.

“No Misses Tennyson, you didn’t ask me anything. I’m sorry.”

“You better be. And now this little problem here.”

She used her cane again to emphasize Zack’s male problem.

“From now on we’ll have to get rid of this thing. Well only for the time being of course. We have to hold a firm grip onto this snake, maybe with a gaff, or something like that. Lisa or Brenda will get you geared up. And if I ever notice that you are walking around without that gear, you’ll wish that I cut this little thing off. That would be less painful for you. So just wait here as you are until those two come back.”

He wanted to ask what a gaff was, but he didn’t dare. He knew what the consequences were. She would get mad. He only didn’t know what the consequences would be of Misses Tennyson getting mad.

“Now let me see if the rest is smooth and clean.”

She left him behind only covered in shame. Her cane had robbed him of the robe. It was lying next to him on the wooden floor. So he was standing there, left by Misses Tennyson, waiting for the twins. He wasn’t sure what to do, but being naked wasn’t the right thing. He put the robe back on just when the twins arrived. Brenda shook her head.

“That not good. Misses Tennyson told us to expect a naked man. She won’t like it that you haven’t followed her orders. No she won’t.”

“Please don’t tell her. She doesn’t have to know, does she? And beside what will she do to me? Make me repair the outhouse?”

It was his attempt to a joke, because there wasn’t an outhouse anymore. Those days were over. But the twins weren’t really laughing, actually it was the opposite. They both were shaking their head.

“Zack, Zack, Zack, we could tell you what she may do, but you wouldn’t believe us. But you’re lucky, we won’t tell her. So, strip or we’ll show you what she will do to you as a punishment.”

He smiled. He was convinced that they were pulling his leg, that Misses Tennyson eventually would be more bark than bite. Or was he just hoping it. Her cane had told him a whole different story. The twins showed him that at least they were women of their word. That became obvious when they removed his robe. He tried to resist their eager hands, but he was no match for them. He tried to cover his shame with his own hands. It was on the rise again and he couldn’t stop it, but the twins could. They had anticipated it. A bag of ice cubes made him cringe again, everywhere.

“Quickly Brenda, before this little soldier salutes again.”

Zack was the only one that didn’t laugh. He watched how they cut carefully measured pieces of gauze transparent tape. Just enough to maximize its strength and cover what was needed. Leaving the necessary room for Zack to function.

“Is this what they call a gaff and will it hold?”

“No silly boy and it definitely will hold, until we apply a new one. This tape is extremely sticky and almost invisible. As you can see the tape has taken on the color of your flesh. It’s not perfect. But it has advantages that a gaff doesn’t have even when that would apply more pressure. But you can even wear a thong without revealing too much what is underneath. The main thing is that it fulfills Misses Tennyson demands.”

“A thong, I’m not one of those guy’s. I’m not a stripper.”

“Well, you could have fooled me a minute ago. Just put the robe back on so that we can go downstairs.”

“What? Why can’t I get dressed?”

“All your clothes are in the wash. You asked us to wash your underwear and we are, but the rest could use a rinse too.”

“I forgot. But I should have at least some underwear for today.”

“You had, but we thought that it could use a washing too. So we decided to make it a complete package. You can wear the robe the whole day long, especially now that you are restricted to show your enthusiasm in an indecent way. They say that it will be a warm day so that won’t be any problem and Misses Tennyson won’t be one either. It’s Sunday and that means that she will be gone until late afternoon, family obligations.”

“But I can’t walk around in a white robe for women. It’s embarrassing. What will they think of me?”

“What are you talking about? No one will see you except us and we have seen you more than clearly.”

So, get over it, we have, over the disappointment. Not that we had expected much, but still.”

He spent his Sunday sitting on the back porch, gloating in the sun. The twins now and then appeared in his line of vision, the best moment for him to ask if his clothes weren't dry yet.

“Little one, this is the fourth time already. No, they aren't dry. Your underwear needs at least a few hours more and the rest a lot more.”

He wasn't happy with the 'little one', but neither was he with her answer. It was already late in the afternoon. He started to worry about the return of Misses Tennyson. His next question was just about that, but his answer walked in on them, shouting loud to them all. What was surprising because Zack was sure that he should have heard the Bentley as a warning.

“That ugly disgusting underwear is hanging on my wash line? Who wears this disgrace? Considering that my girls aren't one of them I must conclude that they are the criminal's garment. What a surprise! I should have known that he totally has no taste. It's insulting to mine, first the hair and now this. I should have known that people like him had no flair. Girls gather all of them and burn them, as quickly as possible, now!”

Lisa and Brenda didn't hesitate. Before Zack got out of his chair they were pulling them off the line. Lisa threw them on a pile of wood, while Brenda returned from the kitchen with a can of alcohol. Zack had been looking at what was happening with open mouth, totally forgetting that he could stop them. When a quickly thrown match lit-up the scene, he made a futile but not unnoticed attempt.

“Nooo, you can’t do that. They are mine. Stop it damned.”

Zack had forgotten where and who he was. Normally he wouldn’t have shouted that outspoken and surely not against Misses Tennyson. But seeing his underwear burn made him loose his mind and he soon would lose more than that. Misses Tennyson was obviously not pleased with this outburst.

“Lisa, Brenda, I think that we have to teach our esteemed guest some manners. And we apparently must do it the hard way. First, he vandalizes my car and then he dares to say ‘no’ to me in my own house. If he acts like a child I maybe have to treat him like one and spank him. What do you think, Zack? Do you need a spanking?”

He couldn’t believe what he heard - a spanking! But knowing Misses Tennyson she wouldn’t hesitate to act according her word. He had no other choice than to jump whenever she needed him to. There was another solution, but that was too drastic. Running away, escaping from her grip, but that would be considered as a jailbreak, probably.

“No Misses Tennyson, I don’t. I’m sorry for saying such words. I will never say them again. You can be sure of that.”

“I hope I can, because next time you won’t escape from it. Doing something I don’t like will get you one. Saying something I won’t like will get you one. Failing to do something I want you to do will definitely get you one. So, for this once I will let it pass, this time. There will not be a next time.”

Misses Tennyson went inside leaving him standing on the porch. The only thing he could do was watch how the twins burned his underwear. They stopped poking the fire when there wasn’t much left. And

what was left could not be called underwear anymore. Lisa took the rest of his clothes that were almost dry and Brenda dragged him in. She was pulling him in by his arms or he would have stayed there forever.

“Come on. You have to make yourself ready while Lisa prepares dinner. Misses Tennyson won’t allow you to be absent. Dinner on Sunday is important for her as head of this household. That means that it is important for you as part of this household. Hurry up!”

“But I have no underwear anymore. You have burned all of it.”

“Ooh, but we have more than enough underwear. A former employee had your size, so you can wear one of those that are left. I’ll get you one. You go to your room and take your clothes with you.”

He just sat on the bed when Brenda already was there with his new underwear and a big smile on her face. He could see why.

“You don’t expect me to wear that, do you? It is women’s underwear and a thong. I’d rather not wear underwear at all, then.”

“I wouldn’t try that if I was you. Misses Tennyson would skin you alive. Wearing no underwear is a mortal sin. So, you wear this or I tell her and you shall face the consequences. She won’t mind that it is women’s underwear. It’s refined enough for her and that’s what count. Yours weren’t. Be glad that she is in such a good mood, but if you keep on making things difficult she will let you have it, more than once. And it’s a thong because you personally made clear how much you loved one.”

“I hate them, more than anything.”

“Like I said. That’s how much you love them and we can’t have that. We personally love them and so should you. So, we can’t have you keep on hating them. You will start to love them when you have been wearing them for days. I know you will. We’ll make sure that you will.”

He slowly slipped the thong over his legs up to his hips. It felt completely different and still the same. It covered the essentials but in a soft and sensual way. The tape was having a hard time, but it did what it was meant for and so did the thong. He hadn’t counted on was what it did to him. How it felt and made him feel. A feeling that was overwhelming and he loved it. Something he would never admit to anyone, but he did unwillingly. Mind over matter never was as meaningless as it was now.

“Look at our little one here. He already like’s it. He likes it very much. Misses Tennyson will be pleased. I’ll stack your drawers full of similar underwear. If you love this, you’ll love those.”

He didn’t want to say that he did, but he also couldn’t say that he didn’t. So he said nothing. He just treated it has he had the nightdress, as a necessary and acceptable alternative. One restricted to this house. After a week, he was so used to them that he wouldn’t change back anymore. If it were boy shorts, briefs or thongs, his mind and bottom embraced them — or was it the other way around?

Days passed and it was time again for Misses Tennyson visit to the hair salon. But this time she wasn’t the only one who would get a haircut.

“Lisa, Brenda, while I am gone you give our unwanted guest a treatment of his own. Make sure things are as I like them.”

Misses Tennyson was just gone when Zack was grabbed by the twins and kidnapped to their room. A room that contrary to his was very spacious, quite modern and had everything the twins needed. Materials, tools, equipment, everything to make sure that they looked the way Misses Tennyson wanted them to look. They quickly pushed him in a chair.

“Brenda, you know what to do with him. His hair is way too long. Ooh and according Misses Tennyson does he needs a permanent reminder of his sins. So, I’ll pierce his ears and give him some transparent studs. They won’t be very visible, but he will feel them now and then. Or do you have some objections my dear Zack? I can always pass them on.”

Misses Tennyson obviously didn’t want to let him go unpunished for his outburst, contrary to what she had said. She also wanted him not to forget what he had promised. This way she would be doing both.

“No I don’t. Not if it would upset Misses Tennyson. But does Brenda know how to do that and if so why doesn’t she cut Misses Tennyson’s hair? No, don’t. Forget that I asked. I know why. It’s like asking her to dig her own grave. And men only get one ear pierced.”

“They used too, not anymore. Some prefer both. So, you have to forgive me that I also choose to do them both. It’s just to be sure. This way I will be always right and I won’t upset Misses Tennyson. Or don’t you want me to be right Zack? Can I do both or not?”

Was she testing him or not, testing his obedience? Maybe not, but he couldn’t take the risk. It would cost him more than a pierced ear, and like the rest, nobody would notice it.

“Whatever you want, Lisa. You can make as many holes as Misses Tennyson wants or better said as you want. I don’t mind.”

When he said it, he knew that he had made a mistake. Misses Tennyson would see it as a challenge and a rebellious act. So Lisa couldn’t let this be. Some minutes later he had two transparent studs in every ear. If he had known that Lisa would do it the old fashion way, he would have objected a lot more. Now he only screamed four times very loud.

The haircut took a little longer. What was left was shoulder long hair. Not what he would like, but no disaster. Three months, all he had to do was keeping his mouth shut for three months and he would be gone.

“Yes, that looks better, much better. Misses Tennyson never thought that you were the type to wear long hair and she is right. Ooh and we are going to give you another clean shave again. So, get naked so we can cream you up. Just go stand on this towel. It can do its job while you walk to the bathroom and while we enjoy the show.”

“Not again. Isn’t there a better solution than this cream?”

“There is! Laser treatment, but it’s expensive and therefore not for you. But you never know when fate can be generous to you.”

A moment of hesitation, but the twins had seen already more than he would have liked, so there was nothing to hide.

“Ooh, you do look nice with your new underwear, don’t you? Make it disappear. It has to go, the panties, and what’s underneath. Don’t worry, we won’t cut anything of, but it is this that has to go.”

He screamed out loud when Lisa pulled the tape from down below.

“Don’t be such a sissy, even if you haven’t felt the wrath of Misses Tennyson yet. And stand still.”

He crowded his mind with happy thoughts, especially when they reached a certain area. Ten minutes later or more he could dress himself again. But not before Lisa had made sure that things below were as they had been.

“Here don’t forget your panties. You seem to have gotten used to it sooner than expected. Does that mean that you actually like to wear it?”

He sure did, but that would be the last answer he would give to one of these women. They obviously didn’t care that he did, but that made no difference. Given them this knowledge was too much of a risk.

“Ha, ha, very funny. Just give me my pants, will you?”

He had a lot to think about after his haircut. So, he did, making use of the fact that Misses Tennyson was absent. He was, strapped, stripped, pierced and was wearing female underwear. How weird would this ever going to get? One thing was certain. He didn’t want to find out. Ok, in their eyes he only was a criminal. Not someone to have pity with. But they had crossed a line and now he would too. There was only one way left for him and he was thinking hard about it, running away. When they stopped and finally let him go he had made his mind up. He would run, run away from this house and their crazy inhabitants. That night would be as good a time as any. There was no reason to wait for a more perfect time.

He had trouble staying awake waiting for the others to go to sleep, but he succeeded. He headed out-

doors, dressed in his clothes, but with a fresh satin brief. He didn't want to go commando. He had his backpack strapped firmly, but not after he had changed from his slippers to his boots. He shouldn't have done that in the house. The bouncing floor sounded like thunder in his ears. It took him ages before he had reached the backdoor. He got as far as ten yards and then he stopped. Doubt was flooding his mind, doubt about doing the right thing. If he did this then he was breaking his promise and a lot more. The law would be harsh on him and so would be Misses Tennyson. Would running away really solve anything? He only had to stand this, whatever it was, for a few months more and he would have his old life back and these feelings? They were just normal feelings. They had to be and he should be able to handle them.

So he turned around to go back inside and got the scare of his life. Misses Tennyson was standing on the porch looking at him. He slowly walked back being more nervous than ever. He passed her without looking at her.

Waiting every moment for the lightning to hit him and strike him down.

“You know that I can't let this go by me. It's only ten paces, but technically it's a jailbreak. And I'm the warden of that jail, so your punishment is mine to determine. Go to sleep while I think of one.”

He didn't sleep much. He kept on waking up from nightmares of being spanked. To his surprise it didn't come, his punishment, not the spanking. The next day passed by as every other had did, well not exactly.

“From this day on, Zack, you won't be allowed outside anymore except when you are in my company. You are here to pay me back by working on my

house. However, you will have to do other work now, inside the house. From this day on you will be doing housework. Lisa and Brenda will take it easy. They will only have to teach you the ropes, like cooking, cleaning and even sewing. Everything a good housewife needs to know. How to behave as one will be taught by me and all that I find necessary too. And you better don't slack off and learn hard. A criminal must learn something useful during his time. And you are no exception. You will learn all this until you are a perfect housewife."

Zack didn't know what to think. Was this her payback or was it just the beginning and what would be then the real cost of his betrayal?

He found out one of the next days. To his surprise nothing had happened for days. No lessons, no demands, no requests passed Misses Tennyson's lips as if she waited for something and she did. The day of reckoning turned out to be the next hair day.

Zack only had taken one step outside his room in his nightdress when he was dragged by the two women to their room. He expected another hair treatment and he got one, also a few things more.

"When you're clean, come back in. We have to do something extra today. It's a surprise. That means that we are going to blindfold you. Once inside, you have to go lie on the bed and stay still, completely still."

When they put the blindfold on him he could only guess what was coming, but he never would have guessed this. Brenda had the pleasure to administer Misses Tennyson ultimate punishment. But it was Misses Tennyson who made it clear to him, what and why. She especially had delayed her departure for this. Hearing her voice froze his body to the position he was lying in. That made it easier for Lisa to apply

the medical glue on to the right places. She had a big smile on her face.

“Zack dear, stay still. What Lisa will be doing will feel cold, but it is necessary. You scared me that night. I never had expected that you would leave me without a word or my approval. That disappointed me much. So much that I have to make you aware of the pain that you have given me. I also must prevent you from doing such a foolish thing again. I can tell you that I have found the perfect solution for that problem. I love it, the twins love it and you have no other choice than to love it.”

Zack was staying still, very still, even when the glue felt cold on his breast. He still stayed still when Brenda took care of his left side and Lisa the right one. A moment later two very realistic looking silicone breast were attached to his own. He only felt the weight. He tried to guess what it could be, but stopped trying.

The blindfold wasn't removed until Misses Tennyson did it herself. She was the first thing that Zack saw. His reaction wasn't that bad. His reaction to those weights on his body was far worse and for this once Misses Tennyson did allow it. Zack was mostly screaming. So Misses Tennyson mostly covered her ears - as did the rest.

“Stop it, you screaming sissy! This is your own doing. You were the one that tried to escape. Don't blame me for these extra body parts. It will remind you every day of what you have done and not to do it again.”

“But they are huge and unnecessary. There are tracking systems.”

“Tracking systems cost money in this part of the country. Do you think I'm crazy enough to spend

more than a dime on you? If should make you work a month longer just to pay for these extras. But seeing how much you will enjoy these will be payment enough for me.”

She touched them to see if the glue was working and how they felt.

“They are not that huge, only C’s. Be glad that we didn’t decide for the D’s. They have to be very noticeable to prevent you from running away. You won’t hide that easy when you have breasts that every man looks at out of lust and every woman out of jealousy. And most important, you won’t be able to remove them that easy. Hold still for a few more minutes until Lisa wants you to dress.”

Misses Tennyson went outside with the biggest smile on her face she had in years. That made everybody that saw her happy. A happy Misses Tennyson was a rarity, but a very much appreciated one. It meant that she wasn’t unhappy and that always was a relief for the people of the town. They all knew what an unhappy Misses Tennyson could bring forth.

The twins had to help him get dressed. Zack wasn’t capable himself. He was still knocked out by everything that had happened to him that day. But it had to be said that the last addition gave the finishing blow. Brenda gave him support while Lisa held the door open.

“Snap out of it. Misses Tennyson has already left.”

The twins weren’t that bad. They helped him with the robe to cover himself up. His white shirt didn’t fit anymore. They had to find something else for him to wear and that meant the essentials first.

“These things are tiring. I can’t keep walking around like this.”

“Don’t worry. That’s why women have bras. Well that’s one reason for it. You just have to get used to it, a C is not enough to be getting back pain. Well it shouldn’t be for you. Those are nothing like the real deal. But I must say that the robe suits the new you. It tells me that a blouse will look great on you. I think I can find a few that will suit you even better. Maybe a sweater? Yes, I think I can find those too.”

“A bra, a blouse? Please that’s too much. You can’t do this.”

“Zack stop whining. It won’t change anything.”

He couldn’t stop looking at his breasts. Brenda had given him a black satin bra and a white blouse. The bra matched the panties he got too. Not that one could notice it under his pants. Everything fitted nicely, as if they were made for the new him.

“I’ve dropped the rest of them in one of your draws. You will have more than enough to get through the days. They are perfect to combine with the rest. But if you have any preferences I will be glad to get it for you.”

Her smile told him that she was kidding, although he never was sure with Brenda. Not that Lisa was any better to grasp.

“Like what, a pink top? I can’t wear anything I was used to for my upper body. Just give me anything that hides these things as much as possible. That’s all I ask. Maybe a tent to hide myself under?”

“No can do. Their visibility is part of your punishment. Beside so long as you are in this house, only we three can see the new you. You know that all too well. So, will you finally stop whining already or I tell Misses Tennyson and she won’t be as patient as us.”

He stopped and spent the rest of the day reading. That was no problem because not one of them tried to disturb him.

He thought that he finally could have rest and that maybe also for the next weeks. He was mistaken. Misses Tennyson gave him a week to get used to his new additions. She was a hard lady, but she wasn't a monster, not yet.

So more than a week later, it was another Sunday and another washday. He was sitting outside again, but this time the robe covered more than a naked body. He didn't dare to walk around anymore without any underwear on. Not that anybody present cared beside him. The twins surely didn't. It was because of the person that wasn't present. Thinking about Misses Tennyson made him nervous and he couldn't have that. This was his day off, a day of relaxing and that was what he would be doing, for as far as he could with that weight pulling on him. The discomfort came mainly from the lack of experience that his body and his mind had with these new additions. Now and then he unnecessarily readjusted things. It kept him from finishing the book, but that wasn't the only thing that hindered him. He read with one eye on the pages and the other eye looking at his pants. It wasn't underwear, but he would make sure that they were gone hours before Misses Tennyson would be home. With her taste, she could have a problem with jeans too.

The book came from the extended library of Misses Tennyson. She had given it to him herself. That was as good as an order to read. It said 'rules of etiquette for all occasions'. He couldn't imagine why he needed to know those, but he studied them nevertheless. Misses Tennyson seemed to live in a world that never had given up on them, even on the silly ones, what in a way were all of them

His reading got disturbed by the barking of dogs and what he expected to be their owner's voice calling for them. It came closer and closer. That drove him back into the house. Dogs wouldn't give anything about a man with artificial breasts, but their owner would. Lisa and Brenda however came looking who this wanderer could be. They all could see moments later how two dogs came running, grabbed his pants and tore them to pieces. Zack looked at it with growing surprise, but there was nothing that he could do, not dressed like that and certainly not without shooting those big Irish wolfhounds. The owner came minutes later and minutes too late. What was left of his pants was just good enough for rags. Lisa and Brenda went outside when the owner had leashed the dogs. Zack looked at them, entangled in a heated discussion. That's what he thought, but why were they all laughing now and then. It was obvious that they knew the owner. And Misses Tennyson who again made an unexpected appearance did also. More, she hugged the owner and rubbed the dogs over their head. The whole company disappeared before Zack's eye, leaving him behind with his sorrow and what once were his pants. He wanted to run outside but had to wait until that stranger and his dogs were gone. Lisa saved him the trouble. She picked the remains up while Brenda accompanied Misses Tennyson inside. Who stopped a moment to remind him of her rules.

"Zack, this doesn't mean that you can walk around in my house wearing that robe and certainly not a coverall. Outside for working is fine, inside it is a disgrace. Brenda will give you something to wear instead. This robe is tolerable so long as I'm not home, but I insist that you run upstairs and get decently dressed as soon as possible."

Zack didn't know what to say. He at least had expected some apology and certainly an explanation of

what had happened. But no, Misses Tennyson was her usual self. Only concerned about what effect it had on her life and household. He followed Brenda without any protest. He knew better than to even try that. He would gain nothing from it. If he had known what awaited him he would have. Because what he got made him protest anyway, whatever the consequences were.

He waited in the twin's room for some pants. It probably would be women's pants, but he didn't care. Jeans wouldn't be much different from the male version. What he got wasn't jeans, however.

"Brenda, are you crazy? That's a skirt. I can't wear that. I need pants. You can't expect me to wear that. It's a woman's garment."

"Pants aren't allowed in this house. Not for women anyway. Misses Tennyson forbids it. She finds it an improper way to dress for a woman. All I can give you is a skirt or you must prefer a dress. That's also possible of course. But it is this or nothing and Misses Tennyson won't like that."

"I don't care what Misses Tennyson likes. What I like is pants. So no I will never wear a skirt, no, no, noooo. Not in a million years."

"Is that so? Then you have to say that in my face young man."

It was Misses Tennyson followed by Lisa. If she had been first she could have warned Zack and told him that this was only the third time she ever had entered that room and it never ended good.

"I'm sorry Misses Tennyson but this is madness. I can't and won't wear a skirt, period. Someone just has to buy me some pants in town."

Zack had especially not looked at Misses Tennyson to not lose the courage his indignation had produced. She had noticed that of course.

“Zack, look me in the eyes and say that again or better, just say no, but be aware that it will have consequences. You know what is promised. And buying pants in town! Do you really think I will spend any money on a criminal as you? Not even when you would pay me back.”

She was scarily calm, because the look on her face forecasted a storm and Zack was the fool who was determined to defy this tempest.

The thong had already been a devastating blow to his self-respect.

A skirt would destroy what was left of it. So, it was a fight for his survival.

“No, no, no, no, nooooo. I rather face a judge than a skirt.”

“Bold words. Let’s see if the rest of you is as brave, Lisa, Brenda.”

Misses Tennyson seated herself on a bed and Zack was grabbed by four strong hands. He tried to resist, but they knew what they were doing and he always had been more interested in developing his brain instead of his muscles.

He was no match for these two fierce women. He was forced into a humiliating position, bent-over Misses Tennyson’s knees. Lisa was holding his wrists and Brenda his ankles. Misses Tennyson grabbed the hairbrush Lisa had laid on the bed. Parts of his body wobbled to all directions, some harder than others. A lot of painful strokes later Zack’s bottom cheeks were as red as his facial cheeks. Pain that



made his eyes fill themselves with salt water. He should have expected that Misses Tennyson would be a woman of her word. But being spanked by a woman of seventy-five was the last thing he imagined to be possible. She had beaten his last bit of self-respect out of him right with his last bit of rebellious nature. Something he never had before and would never have again. So from that moment on, he would wear a skirt. A few months weren't that much to do Misses Tennyson's bidding.

"Wipe those tears out your eyes and get dressed. I hope that you have learned your lesson, but if you didn't I can always ask the sheriff to come and help you get dressed of course. He knows better than to say 'no' to me. Maybe he will make you listen to me. Will you listen to me?"

"Yes, Misses Tennyson, I will."

It was Misses Tennyson's way to make him clear that she was the boss, that the sheriff wouldn't be a way out of this predicament. Misses Tennyson walked out the room, but the twins stayed. They didn't want to miss anything of what followed. Zack took the skirt in his hands while shaking his head. How had it come to this, he, a man, getting ready to put a skirt on as if he was a girl? He also knew how silly it was when it was said by a man who was wearing breasts and female underwear. The trip had brought him nothing but misery. But he couldn't complain. It was an adventure he had stumbled on, only not the one he was looking for.

"Come on, put it on. We have been waiting long enough. And don't forget the black blouse that's lying behind you. We can't leave those two beauties uncovered. Not now anyway."

Lisa gave him the black pleated flare PU leather skirt. He never had seen one like it. He could imagine it on a hot girl, but not on himself.

“I also have a burgundy one. It will look even better on you.”

He shook his head. The color didn't matter. It took him a few second to step in it and pull it up. He had trouble with the position of the skirt, his blouse and the zipper, so Brenda and Lisa helped him out.

“Dammed Zack your body looks hotter than mine and that's something for a guy. Even your legs are sexier than mine.”

“Thank you, Brenda, that's exactly what a man in my position wants to hear, as if I am not embarrassed enough. Look at me.”

“I am, we are and we like what we see. Misses Tennyson will have nothing to complain about and you won't even notice that you are wearing a skirt. Besides, you will only be wearing this inside. Outside you can wear a coverall even when Misses Tennyson hates them so much. It's a pity that you won't be working outside anymore, really a pity.”

He could have strangled them if it had made them stop smiling. But with his luck it would only have preserved their smile for eternity.

Not noticing was an understatement. He felt a light breeze or rather a draft and the feeling of the skirt on his underwear drove him and a certain part crazy. He survived the rest of the day. He found himself now and then admiring himself in a mirror. Misses Tennyson had a lot of mirrors and some bigger than herself. There he found out the most surprising thing of all. He didn't hate his new look and outfit. He wasn't a girl and this was not his normal way to dress, but

somehow he didn't hate it. The longer he wore it the more he liked how it made him feel and that scared him. If he already was subdued by this new look after a day, how would it be after a month? He had to return home and to his normal self again, but that was impossible. What had they done to him? It was nothing compared to what they would do. Like the next morning would reveal after a shower.

"Lisa, you left me some lingerie, but where is my skirt and blouse? Or do you have some pants for me? That would be even better even when I can't wear a shirt with this physical expansion of my body."

"You wish. No, we have something much better for you, some new work clothes. I'm sure that you will love it, we do. But first put on this short and sexy black slip. It is obligatory when wearing this new uniform."

That didn't sound all too good and it wasn't. It was for them, but not for Zack. The satin slip alone took him way too long to get on. Not because he couldn't get it on, but because of the effect it had on him or more likely his body and thus his mind. But he finally succeeded. During all that time, the twins had been waiting for him to end his struggle. What they both held before him was a maid's uniform, but not completely one like they were wearing. It missed parts they had, mostly cloth.

That uniform had *cleavage*, and as he would discover, way too much. They didn't give him the opportunity to dress himself. No, they wouldn't let him take that pleasure away from them. Who could blame them?

"Lisa, this uniform is not like it should be. It has too much cleavage. My breasts, sorry, these breasts are barely covered as is my bottom. The skirt of this dress comes above the knees. Yours come below, how

comes? It has short sleeves and yours long ones, how comes? You have a simple cap and I have a bow on top as has the uniform on the back, how comes? Is this even a normal dress for a maid to wear?"

"It is when you are French and from now on you are, at least when you are a maid. Misses Tennyson always wanted a French maid and now she has one. And don't forget the shoes. Boots or slippers won't do. You'll have to get used to women's shoes. The only worthy footwear to use in this house. That means that you will too."

"I can't walk in women's shoes. Especially not those with high heels. That's silly and I will spend weeks to learn."

He exaggerated a bit, but he wasn't wrong. It would take him time to learn to walk on heels and for what. For grace and beauty, for sake of Misses Tennyson's twisted standards that made him walk around in women's clothes and now in women's shoes.

When he saw the shoes, he uttered a sigh of relief. They were women's shoes, but they had flat heels. For a moment, he had worried that they would surprise him with high heels or just higher ones. Even one or two inch would be unachievable for a newbie like him. However, what he didn't know was that these shoes had convertible heels. It was possible to change those flats into high heels and would discover that much later. The twins would change the heels after four or five days with heels that were a half inch taller. Something that even he had to notice.

"Lisa, since when do my shoes have high heels? I just noticed."

"Since you need to learn to walk on them. Misses Tennyson demands that the women of her household are behaving as elegant as possible and that includes

walking on high heels too. I already told you that. That reminds me that I must make them higher again. Don't worry. You will soon walk in heels as if you never did anything else. But most importantly you will have to learn to walk the right way, the female way. Like this and be sure to practice."

So, the next hour he unexpectedly got a lesson in how to walk as female as possible. He could have said anything, but he had given up. Since that moment Lisa and Brenda would correct him every time he deviated from the right path of female walking. He just gave in and before he knew they stopped correcting him and he stopped walking as a man. But just as it was with the shoes, he didn't even notice those changes.

It would take a few weeks before Lisa would have him walk on heels as high as three inch or even higher. But before that would happen he was way too occupied with his new work and appearance. Misses Tennyson made sure of that. She loved her new employee and how he looked.

"Ah, it seems that I have a new maid! One that looks even better than my old ones. Not including her ugly face of course. Come here girl and let me see if you are the maid I want you to be."

He approached Misses Tennyson with care, trying to stay out of reach of her cane. His attempt was futile.

"Come closer scaredy-cat. I won't eat you, not yet anyway."

What he had feared had happened. Her cane invaded private places and revealed what he didn't want to uncover, not to her anyway. He shivered when her cane brushed his legs. He was totally in

black. That got him an approving nod from Misses Tennyson.

“I see that you are learning. I don’t prohibit the use of white, but I do appreciate it that one does prefer the use of black. There only seems one problem, but it’s one that we can solve very easily.”

His heart started a race that his mind couldn’t keep up with...

“Your legs or better said, your skin is very sensitive. The bugs will eat you alive and that will disturb you while working and we can’t have that. So make sure that from tomorrow on you are wearing pantyhose.”

His heart skipped a beat. Now she would make him wear pantyhose. She wasn’t wrong about his legs, but wearing pantyhose was not his way to get rid of a problem, it only would create another one. He didn’t know how to react and what to do next, it showed.

“You can leave now, but make sure that this household runs as smooth as ever or I have to take measurements so that it does.”

He rushed to the kitchen where the twins were waiting for him. They knew what to do. They only had to make sure that Zack would know it too. The next days they wouldn’t give him a moment to rest, only to learn his new tasks and the necessary skills. The first of those days he got his pantyhose from Brenda. She was waiting in his room for him to return from his shower, holding the pantyhose in her hand.

“Here, you go and take very good care of it. This is one of the few pantyhose’s we have in your size. If you tear them all, we have to use another way. There is an alternative, but pantyhose are better for a maid.”

He learned how to cook, sew and more and most importantly he learned how to walk on high heels carrying some extra weight. After a few weeks he couldn't tell the difference anymore with how it used to be. Maybe dancing would be asking too much but he had become as skillful in walking on high heels as the rest of the house and he wore his uniform with the same perkiness as they did. Something he wasn't even aware of, but he was the only one in the house.

The housework was very demanding, on Zack and on his outfit. His pantyhose's didn't survive the abuse very long, but that was anticipated and hoped. Its replacement was already waiting to be fitted to its new owner. It was on a Sunday what made it even more special for the twins. That was the only day they could see Zack in a more casual outfit. Not for one day had they given him the opportunity to choose his underwear and Sunday clothes for himself. The made every time sure that it was something of their liking. The only constant was the robe he wore leaving the bathroom.

"Lisa, I have torn the last of my pantyhose's. I know that it was the only one left. So, what is this alternative you spoke about?"

"You silly girl. That's not the way to treat the last pair you've got. That means that we have to use the alternative. Look Lisa has gotten the box from the attic. It's filled with your size. One of the previous maids was nuts about stockings. She bought dozens of them and never used them. That means that you don't have to worry about pantyhose again."

"Stockings! Really Brenda, stockings. And please stop calling me a girl, even when it's just to tease me. I'm not a girl and I'll never be one. I'm a guy. So will you please treat me like one?"

“You may yet look not female enough to fool everybody, but you can fool some. But don’t worry, some day you will fool them all and be glad for the stockings. Misses Tennyson loves stocking, the sophistication they represent and she will love you for wearing them and a garter belt of course. You can’t wear stocking without a garter belt, not if you want to do it the right way and there is no other way in this house.”

Lisa took over the conversation and the dressing of Zack.

“Loose that robe girlie and quick. I don’t want to spill my free day on you. Here, this black bikini brief is perfect for a Sunday or any holiday. Its design is sexy and stylish at the same time. Just what Misses Tennyson wants. She will be very happy with her new maid sense for style.”

Stylish that he could understand, sexy that was harder to take in. But of one thing he was certain of, that this brief was showing way more of his bottom than he would prefer, as did the matching bra with his breasts. His skirt was familiar. It was the burgundy version of the black PU skirt. So putting it on wasn’t any trouble. The upper part was new and therefore a surprise. It was Brenda who had the pleasure to put it on him. She had to push Lisa’s helping hands away.

“What is this black sweater, Brenda? It will fit nicely.”

If Zack had heard what he had said he would have ran straight home without stopping. That could be because it wasn’t Zack anymore. It was and it wasn’t. It was still the same Zack that went looking for some answers, but it wasn’t the same soul anymore. He got what he wanted. He wanted some soul-searching and

he got some, just not the kind he expected and his journey to a new Zack wouldn't end there.

Lisa looked hopeful to Brenda and Brenda looked hopeful back.

“That’s a black crop top with long sleeves. It makes you show a little of your belly. The slip we keep exclusively for the uniform. You’ve got stockings now to keep you a little warmer. Not that it’s necessary.”

He was looking curiously how Lisa grasped one stocking and gathered it all, only to stop abruptly with it. She had noticed something.

“Brenda, his toenails are too long. They will destroy his stockings in seconds. We can’t let that happen. He is obviously in need of a pedicure. I’ll do them, but can you check his fingernails. Maybe a manicure isn’t that bad either. Make them shine, will you?”

And she did, they both did. Before Zack realized it, his nails were all cut, filed and given a coating of dark red nail polish. He couldn’t say anything because Lisa’s hand was on his mouth.

“Before you say anything I have to remind you that it will make Misses Tennyson very happy too. She appreciates a woman who takes good care of her nails and shows it too. So, do you want to get on her good side or not? I can remove everything if you prefer it the natural way?”

Lisa had learned bit by bit how to manipulate Zack and it worked. That meant that it wouldn’t be the last time she would do it.

“No, no, if it pleases Misses Tennyson I can endure it. It isn’t that bad anyway. The more I see it the more I like it. You can leave it.”

He was still studying his nails when Brenda removed the skirt. Almost at the same moment Lisa wrapped the garter belt around him.

“This here is your new friend. One that will keep you company from now on. Together with the stockings I will fill your last draw with. The garters are in the panties draw if you wish to know.”

He didn't. What he wanted to know was why he wasn't screaming and running, but was instead calm as never before. He even was kind of enjoying this dressing up. What had happened to him? Who, what was he? He was a guy in stockings not much later. His skirt barely covered the clips. That's how it felt to him, but he had inches left, only not when he bended over and he did, to pick up the paper packaging. The twins said nothing. Their mouth didn't move, but one couldn't say that about their eyes. And they had seen it all before, but this was more teasing for them. They were obviously enjoying more of the new Zack than anybody else. That shouldn't be a surprise considering the low number of inhabitants, but it was, only not to Zack. He was still none the wiser.

“Lisa, Brenda, have you seen my shoes. I thought I just saw them near the bed. If I walk around too much, I'll ruin these stockings.”

“Yes you will and we appreciate that you take that in account. Your shoes? Brenda has them, don't you sis?”

“I certainly do. They are here in this box, as good as new.”

That wasn't a surprise, because they were new. These weren't the shoes he had been wearing for weeks. These were new black high heeled shoes with multiple ankle straps.

“Brenda, these heels are even higher than I have been wearing the last days. Are you sure that I will be able to walk on them?”

He wasn't even refusing anymore to walk on them, he was just wondering if he would be able to walk on them.

“Absolutely, those straps will make it much easier. You won't feel the difference, only in height. That means that you finally are as tall as me. Now you are at least tall enough to see your fiancée in the eyes.”

“What fiancée? My last girlfriend hated me and not one of them all ever had the intention to marry me and I never had the intention to ask.”

“Who knows, maybe you find her here. The way you are looking now you are destined to find a woman that fancies you. Well, maybe a few changes first, a nice hairdo, some lipstick and other minor changes.”

“What? What the heck are you talking about? Who would like a man dressed in women's clothes?”

“Well we know at least one, but then only after those changes. She is like her grandmother. She likes things to be perfect, not half and half.”

“That's nice, but it doesn't matter. I'll be home in less than a few months. So whatever you are thinking will never happen.”

“Well, then we just have to make sure that you both get hitched before you leave us. Maybe you can take her to dance one time?”

“Stop with this nonsense. It isn't funny anymore. Not when I'm looking like this. Besides, I can't dance.”

“Ooh my, that isn’t something we can tolerate. We must teach you the right way to dance with your fiancée. How will you otherwise ever get the right girl when she can’t sweep you of your feet during a dance?”

“I asked you to stop and I’m sure that it is the other way around.”

“Is it? Well you could be right, but you also could be wrong.”

He chose the only way to stop this silly argument, by walking away. Lustfully stared at by the two women he left behind.

“Dammed Lisa, I’m starting to hope that Catherine doesn’t like this one, even when it is the first to ever get this far.”

“I do too Brenda, but it is idle hope. If he wasn’t perfect you wouldn’t want him either. So enjoy him so long as you can, I know I will.”

If Lisa hadn’t known better she would have thought that her sister was pouting. But she wouldn’t be surprised if she was. This Zack guy would give them a lot of pleasure or better said this Zack girl. But they wouldn’t be able to keep this price out of Catherine’s hands. Not that they wanted to, but they hadn’t had this much fun in years.

The week seemed to last an eternity. Not because they kept him busy with learning to be a perfect housewife, but because they couldn’t wait for another Sunday. Playing with a French maid didn’t keep them happy for a week. It explained the big smile on their faces that morning.

“Come on girlie. We have to get you ready before Misses Tennyson leaves. She wants to see you

dressed first. Hurry up and get yourself under that shower. We're already waiting."

The lingerie was as black and stunning as ever. That was necessary too, because the bra was mostly visible underneath the white mesh blouse.

"Lisa, Brenda, really, this is what you want me to wear? It's not much better than being naked. Luckily the skirt isn't so daring."

That was just a matter of opinion. It was a black mini pencil skirt.

"It's much better than being naked. It still leaves enough to people's imagination. The skirt is a classic and perfect for a girl as you."

He exploded, but it only took a few seconds to implode.

"I'm not a girl. ... Please, don't call me that."

"I'm sorry. You're right. Calling you a girl now is wrong. We won't do that anymore. We will wait until you really look like one."

He wanted to say something, but the voice of Bill reaches the first floor. Normally he would have stayed there, but the twins didn't let him. A lot of steps later he was standing close enough for him to see everything. And that meant really everything that wasn't taped down.

Bill's only reaction was "Umm."

His mother, who was standing next to him, could not have missed it and she let it be known to him.

"Something wrong, Bill? Zack is temporarily going to be my maid, any objections? Is it that you don't ap-

prove his new appearance? It's better than he had been wearing before and quite necessary."

"But I do, mother. He looks lovely, strangely enough, but something isn't right. His head doesn't match his body. What if he needs to go outside? He will stand out like a sore thumb now he is dressed like this. You have to make him look decent."

"Then we have got to do something about that. He can't go outside with me like that. I mean, one never knows when it will be necessary; and when it is, we may not have time to make him ready. It will be a scandal.

"Lisa, Brenda, you both will have to fix that. They will indeed blame me for it and we can't have that of course, someone accusing a Tennyson. It would bring shame to the family name. Just fix it before I am back from my weekly visit to my family."

"Yes, Misses Tennyson. We will make sure that he is always ready. Come on Zack, we're going to our room."

He followed eagerly. If he had listened right, they would change everything back so he could go outside again.

"Sit down on our dressing table and don't move. Whatever we do, don't move an inch, not even if it feels as if we are scalping you."

He couldn't tell what they were doing, but they were certainly busy! When they finally finished, they held up a mirror so he could see the results...

"You have to be kidding me! You turned me into a girl. Lisa, you can't do this. Brenda, will you please turn me back? Why this?"

“Why? Because we had to fix you and this is the only way we know how. We had to make you presentable according Misses Tennyson’s standards. It is for your own good so that people won’t laugh at you. We can’t make your body match your head without defying Misses Tennyson’s other orders, but we can make your head match your body.”

“Nonsense, my body doesn’t look like that of a girl.”

Both women started to laugh.

“Zack, you are deceiving yourself. Worse, you are being foolish. If there ever was a man that looked like a girl, it is you and you surely do know that. If you don’t want to go through with this, just tell it to Misses Tennyson and deal with the consequences. That’s all you have to do.”

That was all that needed to be said to make him stop. He just had to sit it out. Once he decided that, he knew that all that was left for him was admire the work the twins had done. He glanced again at the mirror...

If he hadn’t been sure that it his own reflection, he wouldn’t have believed it.

His hair was a wild curly style now and his face was partly hidden behind it, but that didn’t make it impossible for him to see that his eyebrows had become thinner while his eyelashes were larger.

The make-up also was perfect for who and what he was meant to be.

He kept staring at the woman in the mirror and the twins kept smiling; even they hadn’t expected this result - even when they had a solid base to work on. It would leave no one disappointed. And when he thought about it, they were probably right.

It was for his own good. Perhaps it was the only way he could walk outside inconspicuously. That was a lie. Some knew young Misses Tennyson's preference, her desires. A few people of the town knew the truth. Not all of them agreed, but they all accepted it.

Brenda brought him back from his own little world...

"Come, girlie, let's go. We are going to go for a little walk."

"But I can't go outside when I'm not accompanied by Misses Tennyson. You know that. She'll have my balls for it."

"She already has those, I believe. But we are just going outside and walk a hundred yards, no more. We want to see the wind blow through our new girlfriend's hair. You know, see you in the full sunlight. That's all. I'm sure that you will love being outside, even if it is just for a moment."

That much was true and they obviously wouldn't tell Misses Tennyson anything. They were involved in this little recklessness.

So he was glad when he felt the asphalt under his feet, even when his feet were compressed in high heeled shoes. He looked around and saw for the first time where he really was. The other moments it had been too busy, too crowded or his vision was hindered. Now, he finally had the opportunity to take in his environment without being disturbed.

The house was a lonely one. He couldn't see any others for miles except one; the mansion. It stood there proudly on a hill in the distance. It was guarded by too many trees to count, but still not enough to keep it hidden for someone like Zack. He knew that if

he turned left the road would lead to the town so going right should lead to the mansion. He wondered who lived there and if they were related with Misses Tennyson. But that couldn't be. A woman like Misses Tennyson wouldn't be living in a house like this without a good reason - a damned good reason.

He got his first impression of the mansion's residents only a moment later. It sounded like dogs barking. That made him look for its origin and run, run hard back inside.

"Don't worry, Zack, that will probably be Catherine who's taking her dogs for a walk. The dogs you already have met... or your former pants did, anyway. You'll get another opportunity to meet their owner."

"Lisa, I can't face that woman dressed like this. She'll see right through this female disguise - and if she doesn't see, she'll hear it."

"Yes, that's true, the last part at least. Just let me do the talking."

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"Good morning, ladies... or afternoon... whatever it is. I never take my watch with me on a walk. It spoils the pleasure."

Lisa and Brenda started to talk with the stranger as if they had known her their whole life. The blond woman was taller than Zack even now that he had gained several inches with the high heels. And in contrast with him, she wore sturdy low heeled walking boots. This Teutonic woman was dressed in a pantsuit, a strange outfit to walk those dogs. But she made it work. Her long hair didn't make her face less hard. But hard wasn't the right word nor was scary beautiful. It was the face of a woman that always

lead, never followed. Zack didn't doubt that she was used to being in charge.

He couldn't imagine that she wouldn't get what she wanted. The dogs that didn't move an inch made that all very clear. He should have seen the family resemblance, not with her grandmother, but with her father. Zack was obviously overwhelmed by her appearance. He just kept on staring at her. So much that she had to notice. She had to be aware of his presence from the moment she arrived.

"Lisa, Brenda, before we talk any further you have to introduce me to this stunning girl. If I had known that you were hiding such a beauty I would have visited you all much sooner."

"Oh, how impolite of us. Catherine this is Zara. Zara, this is Catherine, a very good acquaintance of ours, and of Misses Tennyson."

Zack wasn't able to say a word and not because Lisa had just called him Zara. That "Zara" thing was a surprise, but he feared now was the effect of his voice. But that made him seem to be a very rude woman. Luckily Brenda came to his rescue. She was prepared for the situation.

"But Zara, why don't you say something to Catherine? That's not very nice. I thought that this time you would be able to, but no, still not. She is a shy one you know Catherine. You have to forgive her."

"I will, but only if she promises me the first dance at my ball."

"Well, I think that it can be arranged, Catherine. Does that mean that she is invited to the ball at the mansion next month?"

“It does, I’ll send the official invitation in a day or two. So don’t you dare to forget that shy little being when you all are coming next month. It won’t be much of a ball when I can’t dance with her.”

“We won’t, Catherine. We just have to convince Misses Tennyson of the importance of her being there, even if you send an invitation.”

“Ooh, but don’t you mind Misses Tennyson. I’m sure she will understand that this beauty can’t be miss my ball.”

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Zack wasn’t sure that Misses Tennyson would allow a so-called criminal to be present at a ball at the mansion. He just had to convince her that it was a good idea to let him go.... Zack’s eyes almost popped out of his head. What the heck was he thinking? He was thinking about attending a ball and that wasn’t the crazy part; he would be attending the ball as a woman! ...Was he so taken aback by meeting Catherine that he even didn’t know what he was doing anymore?

Catherine left after having a long look at Zara. She left with a smile on her face, but Zack only saw her back.

“Well Zack, aren’t you a lucky guy. Sorry I should say, lucky girl. Catherine isn’t usually that friendly to strangers. It must mean that you have made a deep impression to her. You really are lucky.”

“Girl? I’m a guy! How can this be lucky? She obviously likes women and not men. She left a big impression on me too, but she thinks I’m a girl. How can I do anything with her when she doesn’t know

the real me? She will be extremely mad at me when she finds out.”

“So you want to do something with her, very interesting! That means that you like her already. Don’t worry. Catherine is a big girl. She knows how to handle things, even disappointments. Just enjoy the ride being Zara. It’s too late to do anything about it - or do you want to tell Misses Tennyson that you were too scared to tell Catherine the truth? I don’t think that she will mind that you are going to the ball, but she will mind that you made a fool out of Catherine. So you better keep this Zara thing going for now. You’ll see, it won’t be that bad being Zara for the outside world too.”

He had to admit that Catherine had left a deep impression, but going to the ball as a woman? Still, it seemed as though he didn’t have a choice. He couldn’t stop thinking about her. He had to go to the ball. It was the only opportunity to see her again. If she met Zara, she met Zack.

He should have said ‘no’ but the only thing he could think about was how he would convince Misses Tennyson to let him go.

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It turned out to be easier than he thought once Misses Tennyson was back.

“Stunningly perfect, girls. Remind me that I have to reward you both for a job well done. She will make heads spin. Won’t she, Bill?”

“Yes, she will, mother. That reminds me of another problem, her name. She can’t walk around with a name like Zack. It’s unfitting.”

“That’s true. We can’t let a girl walk around with the name of a man. We have to change that, Lisa, Brenda, a name please.”

They didn’t have to think it over. They already had one.

“Zara, we would like to call her Zara Misses Tennyson.”

“Umm, not bad, it’s simple but elegant. It means princess and that she is. Ok, Zara it is. Dammed girls, I still can’t believe how cute you have made her. Yes, this girl I can take outside. Once she wears the right dress.”

The mention of the word ‘dress’ should have made Zack nervous, but it didn’t. He was used on a skirt and having breasts. A dress couldn’t scare him anymore. He just wondered what kind of dress.

“Bill, that will be all. You can go home and I think that I will go to bed early. It has been a good day. So, goodnight girls.”

They should tell her about their meeting with Catherine, but they didn’t. That made Zack very happy. A punishment wasn’t what he wanted to end this strange day, but they had another surprise.

“One moment please, Misses Tennyson. We would like to request you to let our new girl sleep in our room. It makes things so much easier every morning. She’s a girl now, after all, so that shouldn’t be a problem.”

“Umm, I should refuse, but after all that hard work that you both have done I can’t. That means that you can move all her things to your room. Not that there is much to move anyway. However, there is one condition, a condition that has to be fulfilled.”

Zack's heart stopped. Whatever the condition would be it couldn't be good. He would move to the girls room. That meant that they had to move his bed too. They only had a huge double bed. They had seen him naked more than enough, but the problem was that he hadn't seen them naked. So how would they avoid that from happening. All these things spooked his mind as Misses Tennyson continued to share her request.

“And that condition is that you throw his last male belongings away. She's perfect now. We don't want that ugly disgusting male stomping through the house again. Make sure that he doesn't come back!”

Well, at least Zack knew what he was up against... *Zara*. She hadn't existed for a long time, but she already had taken over a big part of him. She would take over even more if he let her and he had no reason not to. She made his presence at the house much easier to bear. His days weren't as long as they used to be. Compared to Zack's days they were short and the labor was quite different. He even learned new skills.

Misses Tennyson seemed to treat *Zara* with more kindness and respect than she would treat Zack - and Lisa and Brenda couldn't be nicer. Looking like a girl had been a small price to pay for the comfort he got in return and still was.

“He won't, Misses Tennyson. We won't let him. He will never walk through this house again. You can be sure of that. The day after the ball, Zack will be gone. I recounted twice and the result is the same. The day of the ball will be his last day with us as *Zara*.”

Was it? Zack had counted with months, not weeks and somewhere in-between, he had lost one. It was strange. He was glad things came to an end and yet

he was sad because things came to an end. Misses Tennyson reacted as expected, very composed.

“Good, then that lousy criminal Zack will be kicked out the moment he’s free? Then things can go back to the way they were.”

He didn’t even think about the consequences, the only thing he kept hearing was that he would be free. He would be Zack again.

However much fun being Zara ever was, she had to go. When his jail time would come to an end, Zara would come to an end. He would go back to his normal life and look back at this strange adventure with mixed and disturbing feelings. That was his plan, anyway. He just had to keep following orders and that included that last one, moving out his room.

The twins didn’t give him a chance to go anywhere else then their room, but he was a willingly accomplish. He couldn’t think of a reason to refuse their offer. Being close by decent plumbing was reason enough not to refuse. He just hadn’t taken in account their ability to surprise him.

“Lisa, Brenda, shouldn’t we move my bed? Besides, my nightdress is still upstairs. I have to get it too.”

“No you don’t. We have enough nightwear here that fits you... and the bed? We have a huge one, with more than place enough for another person. The rest of your stuff will be moved tomorrow.”

He wanted to protest, but he was already half naked. The twins obviously wouldn’t take ‘no’ for an answer, even when he wanted to scream that word out louder than ever. They had put on his new nightwear, a baby-doll and of course a white one. And the worst

was that he looked good in it. They had just added a new dimension to being Zara.

“Perfect, the only disadvantage is that we won’t be sleeping very much this night, knowing what a smoking hot girl is lying next to us.”

He didn’t sleep much, not that night and not many of the nights after, but he did learn a lot. Zara learned a lot and she didn’t mind. Not after Zack found out that he didn’t either, but not many guys would. Those two were very good looking women. The next morning started with a bump on the road. Bill was there when Zara the maid entered the salon.

“That’s quite a maid you have there, mother.”

“Yes I do and a cunning one too. How else does she get an invitation from the mansion to attend the ball? Can you tell me that?”

“Come on mother, does it matter? The ball is a week before her sentence ends. Catherine asked her personally and she will be the belle of the ball. Besides, it’s Zara that will attend, not Zack.”

“Well, if you put it that way. Ok, girl, you can go. I even give you a ride to make sure that you will get there in one piece.”

“Go, Misses Tennyson, I can’t go. I don’t want to go. Not looking like this. So you don’t have to be afraid that you will be embarrassed by my presence there. Just let me stay behind.”

For a moment, Zack’s mind was thinking rational again; for a moment. Logic said no, all the rest said yes.

“What? Do you really think that you can ignore an invitation of the new mistress of the mansion? Never,

that will be the day and that would embarrass me more than your presence there. That will never happen anyway, because no one will see the man that was, only the woman that is. Besides, I can't leave you behind on your own. Half the town will be there, well those people that are of importance anyway. There won't be anyone trustworthy left to keep an eye on you when you would stay here. At the mansion, at least I will and I am sure I won't be the only one. So, you will be an extra passenger when the carriage takes us there. It's just big enough for all of us, dresses included. Just don't let it get ruined when you sit."

Dresses, that was true. If he went as Zara he would be wearing a dress, but that would cost a lot of money. It was as if Misses Tennyson could read his mind or was it because his face told more than enough.

"If you are worrying about the dress, don't. Catherine will send you one. The twins had filled her in. It said so in the letter that came with the invitation. So that's another reason to go to the ball. You're a lucky girl. That means that it will be the best of the best. Got that?"

He did and that worried him still. If this Catherine ever found out that he was a man she would make him pay everything back. He wouldn't be able to pay such a costly dress back. What had he gotten himself into?

"That's not the only problem Misses Tennyson. She can't dance."

It was Lisa's voice coming from behind him. Misses Tennyson's face made clear that it worried her, but not for long.

“That’s a big problem; a girl at the ball that can’t dance. Then there is only one solution. Someone has to learn how in only weeks. That means that I have to do it myself. We’ll start this afternoon.”

And that was how the days became nothing more than hours of dancing for Zara. Misses Tennyson was a harsh teacher and demanded perfection. That meant that it was never good enough.

“No silly girl. I lead, you follow. I’m the man in this picture and you are the girl, don’t you forget that. It’s actually a lucky thing that you can’t dance. Otherwise you would have to learn it all over and forget all that you had. That is near impossible to do in a few weeks.”

Days passed without much change, only the dances did. The nights also stayed the same, to the joy of Lisa and Brenda.

The dress and a problem arrived a week later.

“I’m sorry Misses Tennyson, but there is one more problem.”

“Yes Lisa, and that is? I’m starting to have regrets that I agreed.”

“It’s only a problem for Zara and the dress Misses Tennyson. Her waist is not thin enough. The dress Catherine has send will not fit. We should make her slender, a few inches will do. That means that she has to wear a corset and the shop in town has to order them. That takes weeks.”

“Silly girl, that is not a problem. I ordered some a week ago. When one is as old as me one knows what a girl needs and when. It’s in a box in my closet. Make sure that she’ll start wearing it immediately so she

can get used to one. It's not something you learn to endure in an instant."

Zack had heard everything with growing concern. He heard of a corset, had seen a picture of it, but that was all. He'd never seen a real one. He couldn't imagine what it would be like, but when Misses Tennyson used the word 'endure' it couldn't be good.

"Zara, go with Lisa. I'll bring the corset in a few minutes to you."

That was a first, Misses Tennyson who did something for someone else. Or she had become softer or she had a hidden agenda. The first seemed impossible what made the second more plausible, but it was of no use to guess. He had other things to think about once he saw the corset. Surprisingly Misses Tennyson didn't even stay to watch.

"Well you can say one thing about Misses Tennyson. She has taste. This bodysuit annex overbust corset will fit you perfect and will make you a perfect fit. It even works as a gaff. Well, it will for you. And your breasts will be bigger than ever, your most outstanding features."

Lisa kept admiring his new prison. If he thought that the house didn't give him much opportunity to move around, then he soon found out what being in a tight space really meant. He would, once wearing the black corset. The bodysuit was waiting for him, together with Lisa who couldn't wait to see it on him. A joy Brenda wanted to be part of.

"Sis, when you keep an eye on the front, I'll pull her strings on the back. Well go easy on her for the first day. An inch will be enough."

Not much later he was imprisoned in his new garment. One he would never could escape from. Not if



Zack had a quiet night behind him. The only thing was that he was extremely nervous. He hadn't taken things seriously. As if everything had been an illusion. That it just was a joke. Now that the day was there, he couldn't deny this reality anymore. He was going to the ball, Catherine's ball. He only would stop denying things when he would see himself in the dress. That was the moment he accepted his fate.

"Go and shower. We'll get everything that you'll need to be the belle of the ball. Catherine counts on it. Ooh and use the cream."

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When he came back - clean and smoother than ever - a lot of people were running around downstairs. So he hurried back to the twins.

"Lisa, what are all those people doing downstairs?"

"More than a few are here to make Misses Tennyson ready for the ball. You are our responsibility and it would scare you too much if you were given into strange hands. And the rest are here to move some stuff to the big house. There are a few things that will change after today."

He didn't ask, but in a way he didn't want to know either. Mainly because he was convinced that he wouldn't like the answers.

"Ok, let's do this. Hair, make-up and everything that will make you the woman you need to be to impress Catherine."

"Not that it makes a difference, but why do I have to impress Catherine. I like her, but that doesn't mean that I want to impress her. Not as I am looking now anyway. Why would I?"

“Because it will make her happy and that will make us all happy. It means that we finally can stop looking.”

“Looking for what? What has that got to do with me?”

“Ooh, nothing much and everything, just keep quiet and show me your lips. A nice dark color brown will go perfect with the dress.”

An eternity later his hair was ready and so was his makeup. His curly bob was curlier than before. And to his big surprise the holes in his ears were filled with diamond earrings. One was a very flashy drop earring and the other was a stud to accentuate everything. He was dressed in a same bodysuit annex corset he had been wearing for days. The black stockings were elegant even when nobody would be able to see them under the dress and not because of the eight-layered petticoat. It was because the dark brown taffeta dress flirted with the ground, almost touching it whenever Zack moved. The top of the dress was sleeveless and the high neck left nothing to cover except that part what the diamond choker would. He didn't like the height of his shoes, but this time they had sturdy heels. That made it easier for him to master walking in those heels.

“They are for dancing. What you mostly will do with Catherine. That also explains the height. Your adjusted posture is another benefit.”

And to finish things of his hands were tucked into long brown gloves. The result was a woman he never would have recognized. He only knew that it had to be him. If it wasn't, who else was standing between Lisa and Brenda? They both had a big smile on their face.

“Girlie, Catherine with never let you go once she has seen this beauty. You better get used to the name Zara from now on.”

“Very funny. My so-called imprisonment is coming to an end. Then I’ll be Zack again and Zara will be gone.”

Zack kept looking in the mirror. Not because he was fixated on the image that was reflected, he was, but now that he saw himself in the dress, he realized how foolish and crazy this going to the ball was. He, a guy, would attend a ball dressed as a woman. Every second that passed made him more anxious. He was going to a ball dressed as a woman. It would be a disaster. Why did he do it again? He knew it, but he would never admit it, not even to himself. It was because he couldn’t say no. Not to Misses Tennyson and not to Catherine, not for something like this. He knew from the first moment he saw her that she was too much woman for him, for most men. A woman that could be as hard as nails and one that would never accept a no. He just had to survive the ball and freedom awaited. That meant stay away from Catherine. If he would get caught in her web, she would eat him alive. The twins hadn’t noticed his doubt, but it didn’t matter. They wouldn’t let him out of their sight. Misses Tennyson would bury them alive if things still went wrong, now that they were so close to the conclusion. Lisa nor Brenda would let him stroll more than two yards away from them while they were preparing themselves for the ball.

“Will you please stand still Zara. We are getting crazy from your pacing up and down. You just have to wait until we are ready. That’s the least you can do for us after all the work we have had with you.”

He couldn't disagree and instinctively wanted to plant himself on the bed. But a scream prevented him. Lisa had seen the sings.

"Don't you dare! You are not allowed to sit down for the whole evening except in the carriage."

"But that's crazy. Why should I, just because I'm wearing a dress? You can't expect me to never sit down during the whole evening."

"No, we don't. We expect you to never sit down the whole evening and night. If you don't Misses Tennyson will make sure you won't."

A vision of Misses Tennyson spanking him at the ball was all he needed to convince him of the necessity of obeying this rule.

"Your dress is perfect as it is. Sitting down too much will ruin its look, too much wrinkles. Don't forget that you are representing Misses Tennyson. That means that you have to be perfect in every way possible. And speaking of perfect, here is one more thing, a gift from Misses Tennyson. It will hide that male giveaway you have on you neck. This choker cameo is a family heirloom. You better not lose it."

The sound of a carriage approaching made him nervous. Once he would be seated, as carefully as possible, there was no way back. Not that there was now, but he at least had hope. Misses Tennyson destroyed that to when she grabbed him and hooked their arms firmly together. She came from out nowhere and had him totally surprised.

"You'll stay with me. I don't want you to run away and make a fool out of me. It's not the moment to decline the invitation."

The mansion was immense, but he had not realized how big, big enough to have a ballroom for thousands of people. That meant that a lot of people would see her, Zara and not Zack. He started to panic. If Misses Tennyson hadn't held him firmly, he would have been standing outside before anyone could have stopped him. Misses Tennyson tightened her grip because she felt his panic grew when he became the center of attention. All eyes were fixed on Catherine and her eyes never strayed away from Zara. That meant that with every step she came closer he became more and more the center of attention, especially when all the guests noticed the presence of Misses Tennyson. Catherine was ravishing in more than one way to more than one person, but only person got her attention. Now he saw her for the second time, he wished he could conquer this woman's heart. That was a laughable thought, because no man would succeed and he knew surely not a man like him. Luckily for him, he wasn't a man anymore, not if you went by the rules. Besides, she was the one who conquered, as she always had. She was dressed in a pinstripe business suit with a high collar black blouse, no jewelry if you didn't count the ring. Totally not appropriate for a ball if it had been worn by someone else. This time her hair hanged loose and if he hadn't felt for her the first time, he would surely have then. Like everyone else, man or woman. Catherine knew the extents of her power, but she still needed someone special to satisfy her needs. Zack didn't know that only Zara was special enough. Catherine's family did and they all smiled knowing they finally saw the end of the road. It had been a challenging one.

“Hello beautiful, I see that you got my invitation in time. I'm glad that you did. This ball wouldn't have been worth my attention without you even when it is my own ball. By the way, the dress looks great on you.”

He hadn't noticed that Misses Tennyson had let go of him and was already swallowed up by the crowd. Catherine was close enough to take over Misses Tennyson's task. Not that it was necessary. Zack wasn't able to move. He was like a deer caught in the headlights of a car. Catherine abused the moment and made her lips wet by using Zack's.

"You taste nice, too. I think I have to experience this unique flavor more than once this evening, but I will have to go deeper into it to enjoy the real you. That means that you have to stay at my side. I can't have anyone else take advantage of you now that you are my responsibility as the host. Promise me that you will, that you'll never leave me."

Not considering the consequences of his words only the effect of the kiss he said what she wanted to hear, "I promise." He didn't even notice that he answered as Zack. If he had he would have wondered why Catherine didn't even raise an eyebrow. From that moment on he was playing a game, a survival game. He couldn't escape from Catherine, not here, not tonight. He just had to make it through the night, which was a blur. Zack didn't want to remember that he was dressed as a woman, looked like a woman and was admired as one. He wanted to forget, forget that he didn't hate every minute of it. As Zara, he enjoyed being who he was and it showed. Everybody could see how Zara radiated when Catherine led her over the dance floor. Who without a doubt noticed, was the twins - and Lisa didn't hide it when it was her turn to dance with Zara.

"If I didn't know better, I would think that you are enjoying yourself little one. That you love the feeling of your petticoats caressing your lovely wrapped legs while you are dancing or is it the corset? I know that panties turn you on. Well a certain part of your body anyway. Oh, are you surprised that I know that.

Brenda told me. She had seen you admiring yourself for the mirror little one, more than once.”

He didn't know what to say. She wasn't wrong. The last weeks he had been giving in to those strange feelings he never knew that he had. He still wouldn't admit that he had them, but they were there. What had they done to him? He was Zack that loved being Zara, but as a man. How was this even possible? Well it didn't matter.

“What's the matter did the cat got your tongue? You are strangely silent. Is that because I am right? I am, aren't I? I knew that you were a little pervert. Not that it is, but some people will see it that way.”

Zack almost lost his balance. He would have if Lisa hadn't held him tight. That made the smile on her face only bigger. Zack kept on dancing the whole night. He hadn't any other choice if he wanted to avoid Catherine, what was impossible of course. He always turned up back in her arms. It was as if everyone knew that Zara belonged there. So she was still dancing with Catherine when all the guests were gone, even Misses Tennyson was going. It wasn't that late. It had to be after twelve, but not much. Nevertheless, was it a big surprise to Zack that Misses Tennyson could stay up on her feet until this hour. She was after all of a respectable age. He hesitated a moment, but he knew that he would pay dearly for it if he would keep Misses Tennyson waiting. Catherine held him in a firm grip. That meant that she had grabbed his butt and had him close to her. Zack wasn't used to such dominant women, not many men were.

“Please let me go, Misses Tennyson will be mad if I don't follow.”

“Then you better follow. A girl like you should obey a woman like her. It's her money that buys your

pretty dresses. Well, not this one. This is a gift from me and money well-spent.”

“I must thank you for this one. It is a lovely dress.”

Zack was confused. Here he was thanking her for a dress, but how could he not. It was a gift and he couldn't be ungrateful.

“You can thank me later and I already know how.”

That answer made him only more confused. He ran after Misses Tennyson leaving Catherine behind with what one would call a very naughty smile, but what did Zack know about naughty?

“Misses Tennyson wait. You are forgetting me.”

“We are forgetting nobody. You are that little pest that is bothering me for nothing. Didn't I tell you that today you are on your own? So why do you think that I will waste my time with you. Go away.”

Lisa stopped Zack from following Misses Tennyson. He didn't know what else to do. She held Zack with ease, he didn't even try.

“Stop, you can't. Your sentence is over, you know that and with that ends also the obligation of Misses Tennyson to feed and clothe you. You have to solve your problems yourself, now. So we have to say goodbye to you. Just let Catherine take of you. You know she is crazy about Zara. Maybe you even like it here as Zara. I'm sure you will.”

“No I won't. This is stupid, I'm Zack. All this is over now. I have to find my way back home. I know that, Misses Tennyson knows that and you both know that. The only one who doesn't know is Catherine and she will never know. She cannot know that I am a man.”

“You worry too much. She knows how to take care of herself? She’s a grown woman. She’ll survive, but you won’t. Deceiving a woman like her will cost you your balls. Wouldn’t that solve everything!”

“No Zara anymore. I’ll send Catherine a letter once I’m home. That will be the easiest and least painful way. This is all your fault for putting me in these panties and dresses as if I was a woman.”

“But you are a woman, just look in the mirror.”

“Didn’t you both hear me? All this will be over in a few days. No more Zara, only Zack. All that will be left is disaster”

“And you’re the one who is responsible for all this.”

“What? It isn’t my fault that it came to this.”

“No, isn’t it you that seduced every man, woman and Catherine with such an ambiguous appearance. How is that our fault?”

“How is it not? You all made me do this.”

“We didn’t trash the car, that is completely your fault. We didn’t make Catherine like you, that is completely your fault. You could have been an obnoxious bitch, but no, instead you had to be a little minx. You could have said no and went to prison. You, all this is your fault.”

Not what he wanted to hear, but something he couldn’t deny anymore. He only had to say no to Misses Tennyson, to the twins and even to Catherine and he wouldn’t be in this predicament.

“Let’s say that you’re right. Then what should I do?”

“Stop whining and do as I say, that’s all. You still have your shoe money. Yes, I know of the money you had stacked away in your boots since the beginning. I know that you saved it before the boots were destroyed. It’s more than enough for a ticket. Be a man and go home or be a woman and stay with Catherine. If I was you, I would choose the last.”

It wasn’t bad advice, but it was the wrong one. Going home was the only option. But it was midnight and he had no place to spend the night. The old house was a forbidden zone for him. He felt helpless for the first time in years, but his knight in striped suit came to the rescue.

“That was quite a show, my dear. I couldn’t hear anything, but you look shattered. I can’t let you go home like that. I knew that Misses Tennyson was a hard one, but this seemed heartless. Luckily do I have more than room enough for a guest as lovely as you. I’ll take you there.”

Zack didn’t have the strength to protest and he didn’t want to. What else could he do than follow her? Go outside and walk back home. If he stayed the night, then he had time to find a solution. Yes, that would be the best thing to do. Just stay for the night.

Zack woke up in big bed in a room that obviously was decorated for a woman. It was stylish but extravagant and was provided with a lot of tools to admire and upgrade its inhabitant. Zack looked around, but found only a door to the bathroom and he didn’t dare to take the main door. He didn’t have to. Someone knocked on the door and it wasn’t Catherine. It was a maid. He assumed because she wasn’t wearing a normal uniform. It was a short black dress with long sleeves, a white collar and white cuffs. A stylish substitute for a uniform, just what one would expect from a woman like Catherine. The maid came in to

open the curtains. As a result, sunlight flooded in to fill the room and revealed more than Zack liked. It had been a hot night so he was lying on the bed uncovered. That made the pink satin teddy he was wearing very visible.

“My, my. You are a lovely girl, just Miss Catherine her type. Where did she find you, a Cinderella to the ball?”

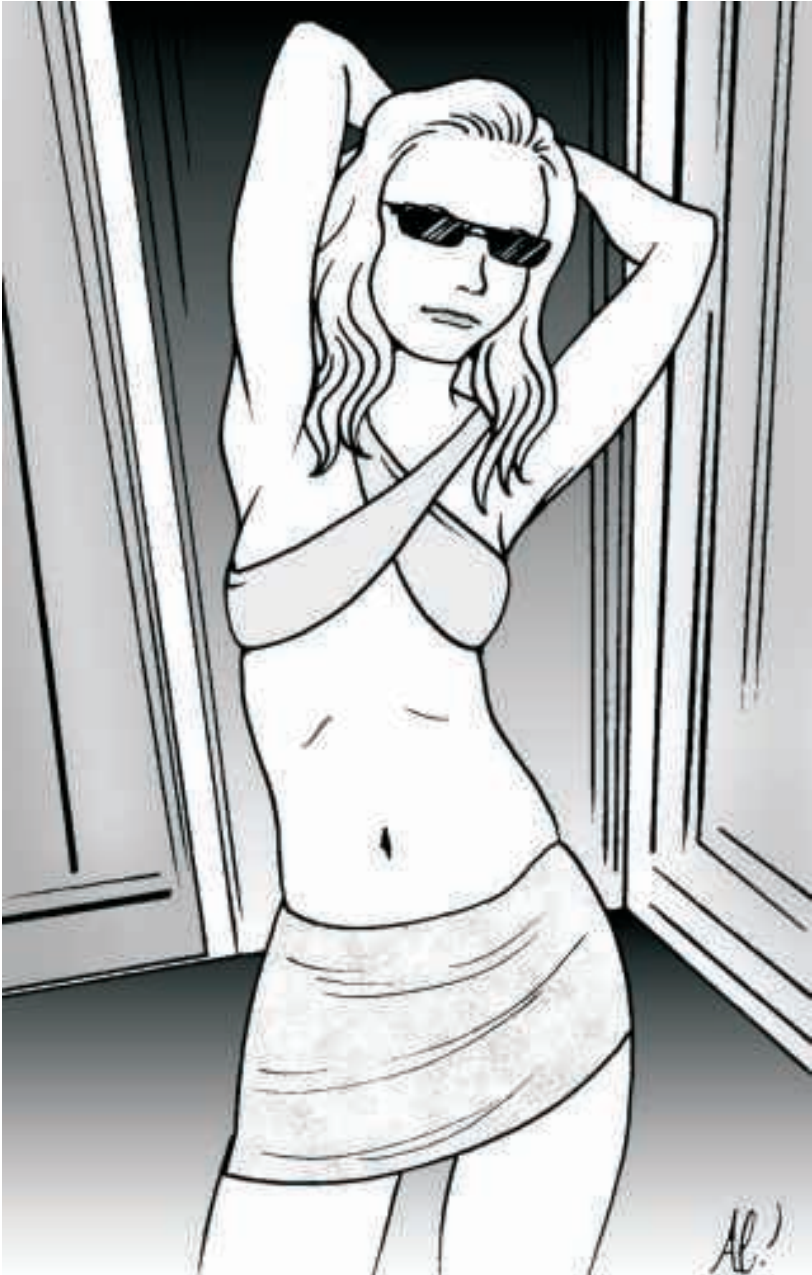
“I just made the wrong stop and fate did the rest.”

The teddy had been lying on the bed, as if someone had expected him. He didn't give it a second thought, but if he had he would have known that something wasn't right. It didn't matter. He had other things to think about, as how he would get home and what to wear. The dress was hanging on a rack waiting for him. It wasn't the perfect solution, but the only one he had. He couldn't really expect them to give him another dress, but they had. It was lying ready. The lingerie set was, as always, more revealing than hiding. Catherine did seem to have the same taste and standards as Misses Tennyson, on clothes anyway. The upper department was covered with a white crisscross wrap top. To finish it all there were black lace up high heel ankle boots. The sunglasses were for fun. He was free, but not from wearing a dress. He was a guest here, a female guest.

“That's a nice outfit, isn't it? It will accentuate those boobs perfectly, won't it? It's a pity that they are fake. Not like that other thing you are hiding under that lovely skirt.”

“What? What did you say? Fake boobs? Other thing? What are you talking about? You're joking, aren't you?”

“Why am I the one who's joking when you are the one who is showing everything. That's what happens



when you wear a teddy that is that revealing. It showed all those things that didn't belonged to a woman or a man. You almost poked my eyes out with them."

It was no use of denying it. The cat was out of the bag, impossible to put back. It was obvious that the maid knew.

"It can't be. Is it that visible? I didn't know that I was that careless. I thought that I had hidden it well. This means that Catherine will know. This is terrible. What am I going to do? It will be a disaster when she hears this. She'll have me thrown in jail."

"Isn't that how you got here? Yes, I know. I know everything, because I know Miss Catherine. It's common knowledge for us maids that she likes girls like you. You know those who are guys like you."

"She likes what? She likes what I have become. Is this why I am looking like this? Did they make me like this? Are you saying that all this, all this feminizing is intentionally? Just so I would become the bride of Frankenstein. What if I hated her? What if I hated looking like this?"

"But you don't do you?"

He had nothing to say that would have made a difference.

"Wait, does that mean that Misses Tennyson also was part of the conspiracy? That it all was a set up from the beginning?"

"Frankenstein, that's a good one, but not one to tell Miss Catherine. Well if I tell you that Catherine is Misses Tennyson her granddaughter and that the twins are her aunts from her mother's side. Does that explain some or do I have to go into details?"

His shoulders almost hit the floor. He was a wreck. His courage to face the guilty persons was gone. The only thing he could think about was getting out of here, before he would become a joke of a man.

“Sit straight girl, you have a busy day and no time to lose.”

“What are you talking about? I need to leave. I’ve got to find some clothes, something to wear. I can’t face Catherine anymore.”

“You can and you will. That means, shower, now.”

He didn’t move.

“I think it’s time to call in the cavalry. Girls, I need some help.”

Four eagerly maids came storming in. A minute later he was naked and showing everything. They were holding his arms, so he couldn’t cover his shame. They even kept watching him getting a shower. If he already hadn’t been panicking, he would have then. They kept ongoing.

“Depilatory, lots of it. Don’t mind the boobs, they are still perfect. There C’s but A class material. You two get him out and dry him off and I mean dry you dirty bitches. Hair, eyelashes and eyebrows have to wait till last. Ok, that leaves the cover up.”

Whatever they were doing down there they were very handy in it. A lot of ice, glue and much patience delivered a not so realistic female replacement. But now he could wear a string without too much risk. So being wrapped in his new outfit wasn’t a problem. Not that it ever was.

“Perfect, now you can face Catherine at your best. Oh, and if you need me, I’m Annie, Catherine’s right hand for matters of this house.”

He hesitated to go down, but he couldn’t stay the whole day in his room. The maids were long gone when he finally dared to descent the stair. He was confronted by a determined Catherine.

“Good, follow me. We definitely have to talk. And stop pouting. My girl doesn’t do that. I thought that my grandmother had taught you better manners. Well, that just means that I have to do it over again.”

He lost the capability to produce coherent words one after the other, named a sentence.

“Uh ... what ... you ... me?”

“You seem lost and not only for words. Yes, I know who you are, I know what you are. You are what I want you to be. The girl I like.”

“You, you did this to me?”

“I did nothing to you. You let this done to you. You wanted this.”

“I never. I didn’t ask to be turned into this, this whatever I am.”

“Oh, but you did. Every step you made and every step you didn’t. It all led to this. And what you are is mine. That’s all you have to know.”

He was left behind with his thoughts and a lot of questions, but not for long. His company was requested, no demanded at lunch.

“I have had them made a salad for you. You can afford it to lose some more weight. Even when your bottom can use a little fat, but that is for the future.

When you are ready for some real changes. When you ask for them yourself and I'm sure one day you will."

"Never, you can't expect me to even think about doing that. I'll never be who you want me to be or what. I will be gone long before"

"Nevertheless, as long as you are my guest I expect you to be the woman you pretend to be. Everybody that has seen you in my house thinks that you are. I can always call the sheriff and say that you entered my house under false pretenses. That won't make a big impression, not until I show him what those false pretenses are."

That scared him enough. Not the sheriff, but the fact that he had the power to lock him up and didn't mind abusing that power. He just had to make sure that he wasn't a guest for long. He had to find a way to escape.

"Do you really expect me to do as if everything is normal? How long am I supposed to be your guest? Am I a prisoner?"

"You're a guest, my guest. You can leave whenever you want, not that I want. But I'm convinced that after a few days enjoying my hospitality you don't feel the need any more to go back."

She never intended to let him go home or let him go back to his old self. He would have no other choice than to stay here and the person she wanted him to be. But she didn't want to scare him too much. A loose leash was as effective as a tight one but less breakable.

"But I won't stop you if you try getting back. You can always walk home of course, but I wouldn't recommend it in those heels. And calling a taxi isn't an option. Our town doesn't have one. You have to find a

friendly lady who is prepared to give you a lift. You know someone like me. If you ask nice I might, but if I was you I would wait several days. Things change fast and they can change drastically in days.”

He looked at his shoes, a sign of his submission. As was his dress of course. He was already so used to wearing all of it that he had forgotten the consequences of them. Walking to town was out of the question and surely not looking like this. Not that he wouldn't be able to convince people of his appearance, but he didn't want to. He wanted to go home as Zack, not as Zara. His parents would get a heart attack if he stepped through the door as a woman. Catherine left to be replaced by Annie.

“Miss Zara, I'm to inform you that all your clothes have arrived and some extras. All a gift from Miss Catherine. They are all yours, so when you leave you can take them with you.”

Why would he and how would he. A big empty wardrobe was now full and of course there was also the necessary lingerie that was part of the deal. It had everything he didn't want, even a bathing suit.

“It's your size. I can guarantee you that. I personally have checked it out. Why don't you take it for a swim? The lake is only a ten minute walk from here. There is a paved path leading to it. So you won't twist your ankle in those high heels of yours.”

He would love a swim. It was after all a very hot day.

“Annie, don't you have some low shoes for me? These things are killing me and it would be much better to walk in the sand.”

“Sorry Miss, can't do. Orders from Miss Catherine. She likes you in high heels and won't have you any

other way. So just go along with it. I've got some sandals for you and yes they have high heels."

Annie disappeared leaving him behind staring at the bathing suit. Could he, would he, just for a swim! It was a full bathing suit. High cut below and low cut up high. But nevertheless the only one he had. There were bikini's, but not one that he would dare to wear. But a swim, he could use a swim. A minute later the suit covered him like a second skin. Accentuating every curve of his body and that meant every curve. A robe, the sunglasses and even a big hat made his outfit complete. He walked down the stairs looking out for to curious eyes. He wouldn't admit it to anyone, but he loved how it all felt. His resistance to his feminine form was caving in. Subtle changes that he didn't noticed, but had its effect.

A voice behind him made him jumped and that in high heels.

"Wow, you look ravishing Miss Zara. If only Miss Catherine could see you now. She would pay you a million bucks."

He could use the money but not the attention. Not while wearing that thing. Catherine might notice too much he didn't wanted to show.

"Well, you know where to find me. Just show me witch way."

His toes were digging in the sand. The robe lay around him. With his arms behind him giving support, he looked at the sky, watching the clouds pass by. He hadn't been this relaxed in days, months. No worries, nor regrets, just being happy who he was. Never minding what he was. Hours passed while being in this state of bliss. The sound of a person nearing made an end to that.

“Are you wet yet? I know I will be.”

Catherine, unmistakably her voice, but that wasn't the surprise. It was the bikini she wore, a bunch of laces on the back and tiny pieces of cloth at the front. She placed herself next to Zack. Grabbed his sunglasses and laid herself down with her hands behind her head.

“A penny for your thoughts.”

“You really want me to be like this, don't you?”

“Of course I do. Would you otherwise be like this? The guy I like is the girl you are now. But that doesn't matter when you don't like me back. My aunts however told me the opposite. Don't you want this story to have a happy end? Don't you want me?”

She had him trapped. He couldn't say that he did want her, because that would mean that she won. He couldn't say that he didn't, because that would be a lie and she would see right through it. Of course, did he want her. He wanted her from the beginning. But was he ready for what it would cost him, his soul and body. She wanted them both her way.

“Why do you think I want you? Are you that irresistible? It's not that every man falls for a woman like you, me included.”

Brave words but not convincingly enough for Catherine and it was after all just some bolt pretending. It was the last convulsions of a fading man. Catherine was already the one pulling his strings. He only had to admit it to himself. Then he would truly be the Zara she was looking for.

“That's not an answer, but I'll take it and you.”

She grabbed his hand and pulled him against her. Close enough to have another taste of him. He tried to escape into the water, but he soon noticed that it had a shark in it. Catherine intended to play hide and seek. What he was hiding, she was seeking for pleasure. He was glad that he made dinner in one piece, even when his bathing suit hadn't.

“Go and change dear. That is not a proper evening attire. Annie, will you help her? You know what I like to see, don't you?”

He couldn't say no, because she was right. A bathing suit was not exactly fitting. So he followed and he wasn't disappointed. He expected something special and he got it. What Annie pulled out of the wardrobe was a black strapless lace evening gown, the apogee of femininity and he would be in it. The lingerie was fitting, him and the dress and as always high heels, black crystal pumps.

“Isn't this a bit too much Annie. This is a waist of beauty when you think who and what is wearing it.”

“Don't be silly. It's perfect for you. You will feel completely female in it. Or is that the problem maybe? Shall I say Catherine that you don't like it? That you don't want to wear it for her, you can, but I'm not the one who has to tell Miss Catherine that you said no. That is something that you have to do yourself. I know that it seems a bit excessive, all this dressing up. Just play along with it. For Catherine, you are a life-size doll and she is trying out the wardrobe that came along with her toy.”

Her toy? Was he just her toy? Maybe he was, but he couldn't deny that he started to like being her toy. He came south for an adventure and he had found one. More exotic and surreal than he would have imagined, but real enough to leave him satisfied.

The evening was another ball, one for him and her. She danced, he followed. She seduced, he tried to resist.

He awoke with little memories of the evening before, the end of it. If he had any then he would have known how he had gotten in the long lace nightgown that he was wearing. Annie brought breakfast on bed, accompanied by two other ones just to open the curtains and catch a glimpse of Catherine's latest creation. The open front of the nightgown showed his g-string. Normally Zack would never have agreed to wear such thing. Even knowing what a no would have cost him. However, after a few glasses of wine his inhibitions were none existing. Annie whistled and the other maids backed her up.

"Dammed girl, you look hot. What have you been doing yesterday evening? Maybe I should go check on Miss Catherine first."

"Uh, this, this is not my choice. Is it? Where is the rest of it?"

"Rest, there is no rest. That is it. What you see is what you get and I'm getting it too. I must say those fakes keep on surprising me as do you. You are more open than we expected, a lot more open. No pun intended. I didn't think that you were already this far accepting into your fate because of Miss Catherine, but it looks that way."

He wished that he could say that she was wrong, he wished. But she wasn't. He didn't scream, he didn't hide, he showed himself, in every aspect. Something that even yesterday had been impossible.

Those continuing days had been a rollercoaster through female attire and the evening hadn't been any different. It made his mind overload from this constant female overdose. All those outfits had their

reason. They were what Catherine had prescribed for this affliction called Zack. It was a very effective treatment. It had cured a lot of male symptoms Zara still was suffering from. Zack was close to what she wanted him to be.

“If you say so. What’s on the program for today?”

He wasn’t thinking about going home anymore. He was only thinking about what Catherine had planned for him that day. What she had in mind was a test. Just to see if there was any resistance to Catherine’s domination over his future and present life. She was after all a Tennyson and he only had to know how to say yes to her. If he didn’t protest to the dress, he was the woman she needed. If he didn’t protest to her demand, he was the man she needed. She would soon find out.

“A garden party. Half the town will be there and the whole Tennyson family. It’s to thank everybody for doing such a fine job. And you will be the center of attention. You’re the guest of honor.”

“What, the guest of honor? Me, why? How can I be the guest of honor? And what job are you talking about? It must have been quite a thing when half a town needs to be thanked for it.”

“That is something you have to ask to Miss Catherine. I’m not high enough on the corporate ladder or family tree to be with the in crowd, but you are. However, I think that she wants to keep it a surprise. Besides, I wouldn’t disturb her. She’s very busy with the preparations for the party. If you bother her now with a dumb question, she’ll get annoyed.”

That was the last thing he wanted to do. Catherine wasn’t an unreachable goal anymore. Ok, the conditions for her affection were not that common, but they weren’t as crazy as they once sounded. That was

because he didn't mind them any longer. Not after everything he had been through the last months and especially days.

"Ok, that only leaves a dress, or are pants a possibility this time?"

"Don't make me laugh. Women's pants are strictly the privilege of Miss Catherine. Her girlfriend is the last one she wants to see in them."

'*Girlfriend*,' it was still strange to hear it, to be referred to as one. But that meant that she was his girlfriend or something like it and that was an acceptable arrangement. It sounded better and better.

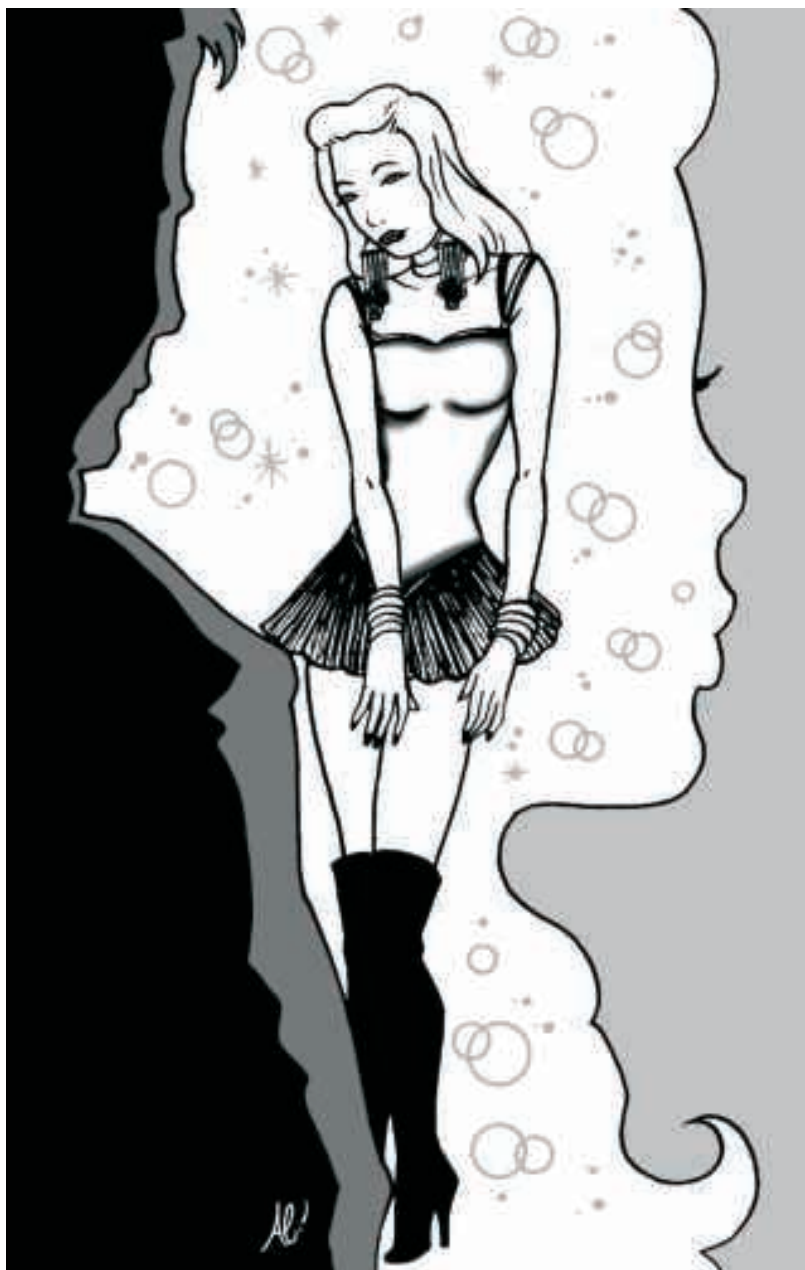
"You've got a beauty this time. Not very conventional... exotic is a better description. Before you say anything, these are Catherine's orders. You have to wear this and join her in the garden. No questions asked."

After seeing the dress that was all he had; questions. However, refusing was an option that didn't even come to mind.

He wanted to please Catherine and if this dress was the way to do it, he would. Little did he know that he had past the final test. Annie was the first to find out.

What he was squeezed into was a latex corset dress. A full circled flair skirt with let's call it a sweetheart neckline. The short off shoulder sleeves, the neckline and breast were trimmed with red. Zack couldn't even guess what the meaning was of this look.

It was on the edge of slutty, especially with the garter straps and stockings showing. I was over the edge to be exactly, but his appearance wasn't. His hair



was one long big curl, fifties style. Lips and nails were the same deep red as the trims of the dress. Long heavy golden earrings and bracelets in abundance was the finishing touch. Not that's not true, the choker was. The shoes were as exotic as the dress. He didn't realize what his feet were getting into. Once he stood, he knew. Knee high boots, well known in some circles, more like long ballet shoes with heels, impossible to walk in and a pain to wear.

"Dammed, girl, you're dressed to kill. I think I have to get me one like you, too. You'll be the talk of the town."

"Annie, these shoes are excruciating. I can't even stand let alone walk. What was Catherine thinking about when she chose these?"

"That's simple, that you can't run. You'll have to lean on her the whole day. Never leave her sight. That's all there is to it."

For a moment, Zack thought to do run... for a moment. But for what? Where would he run to - an ordinary life? Was that what he wanted? He wanted Catherine and he could have her, if she could have her, Zara. What was, three months ago, a strange way to dress was now a way of living. Being Zara didn't scare him anymore, in the contrary. She was the new Zack, a changed man and a changed woman, the (fe)male that Catherine wanted. So he wouldn't run. He had accepted his fate and what came with it and who. Beside in those shoes he wouldn't get very far.

Annie offered her arm. She was going to enjoy this. She had since she first laid eyes on him in that Teddy.

"Come along, girlie, you have an appointment with fate and she doesn't like to wait. You already know that."

He didn't see the maids glaring at him passing by. He didn't see the big smile on Catherine as he approached her step by step. All he could see were those steps. It took him ages to reach her.

"Wonderful, just wonderful. How do you like your outfit dear? It's a little bit different, but it does what it needs to do."

He wanted to ask, he wanted to know, the dress wanted to know. All these feelings it produced needed an explanation; shame, desire, femininity to the extreme, too extreme.

He was at her side when the first guests started to arrive and he was at her side when the last guests had arrived, constantly being watched by every pair of eyes present. Nobody said a word, except hello when Catherine introduced him as her girlfriend. He thought that it was the dress and he wasn't wrong, but it was more, way more.

Hours passed, Catherine chatted and he held on. The only thing he exchanged with the guests were looks; intense looks. His had question marks in it, theirs a mix of content and pity. He was convinced that they had to know something, but what? Maybe he would find out now. They were approaching an old acquaintance. One who was known to always tell the truth.

"Hello Zara, have you learned your lesson?"

"What lesson Misses Tennyson?"

"That you belong in a dress, even that one. The sooner you accept that, the better. But maybe you already have?"

“Maybe I do, but this dress? It is a little bit too exotic and these shoes are challenging everybody’s imagination.”

Misses Tennyson didn’t even raise an eyebrow.

“Are you saying that my granddaughter has bad taste, Miss Zara?”

“No, no, of course not. All this is just so noticeable.”

“If that’s what it is, then you can count on it that it is meant to be. Just ask Catherine, she’ll confirm.”

And she did.

“Everything is very noticeable, isn’t it? Good, because everyone has to notice you. Show them what you are.”

“And what am I?”

“You are mine, mine forever and I’ll prove it to you by taking what I want and making you mine without any doubt.”

Suddenly out of nowhere came the twins with the sheriff. Zack wanted to crawl in a corner. The sheriff had to recognize him and then this garden party would become a farce. He only smiled, like so many others.

“Miss Catherine, I hear disturbing news. Your aunts are telling me that someone committed a crime on your property.”

His voice sounded loud and disturbing, what lured every guest near. Zack was now literally the center of attention.

“There has, Sheriff, there has. This girl that is clinging on to me was trying to steal my Bentley. You have to arrest her.”

He couldn't believe his ears. What was Catherine doing?

“Well, that's some girl you have their Miss Catherine, stealing your Bentley. I should arrest her for dressing that shamelessly alone, but stealing a car, that's some crime. Luckily we all have seen it.”

Everybody around him nodded confirming. He thought he was going crazy. What was happening? Was this real?

“I think that will get her ten to twenty years jail time. After all it isn't her first crime around here. What do you think, judge?”

“I'm sure it will. But look at her. It would be a shame to lock her up. Maybe she can arrange something with Miss Catherine. Let's say, be hers to honor, love and obey, especially obey and that for some significant amount of time. I think life sounds about perfect. Doesn't it, Catherine?”

“Yes, that will do fine. What do you say, Zara? How does that sound? A lifelong commitment to the house of Tennyson, and to me. Condemned to the shell you are in now. That's the only way I'll take you.”

He could say no, go back home and live the life he was planning to have. Or he could say yes and live the life he was hoping to have. Not that Catherine would let him go that easy, but she wanted him to choose. He had to lay his future into her hands personally or he was never hers completely.

Everybody was waiting for an answer. Misses Tennyson was, just to see her granddaughter happy and to find out if her hard work had paid out.

The Sheriff and the rest of the town were waiting to find out if they finally could stop looking for that unique and special guy who would keep Catherine happy and busy and off their back.

“There is still one problem that needs to be solved.”

“And that is?”

“How am I going to tell this to my parents?”

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