

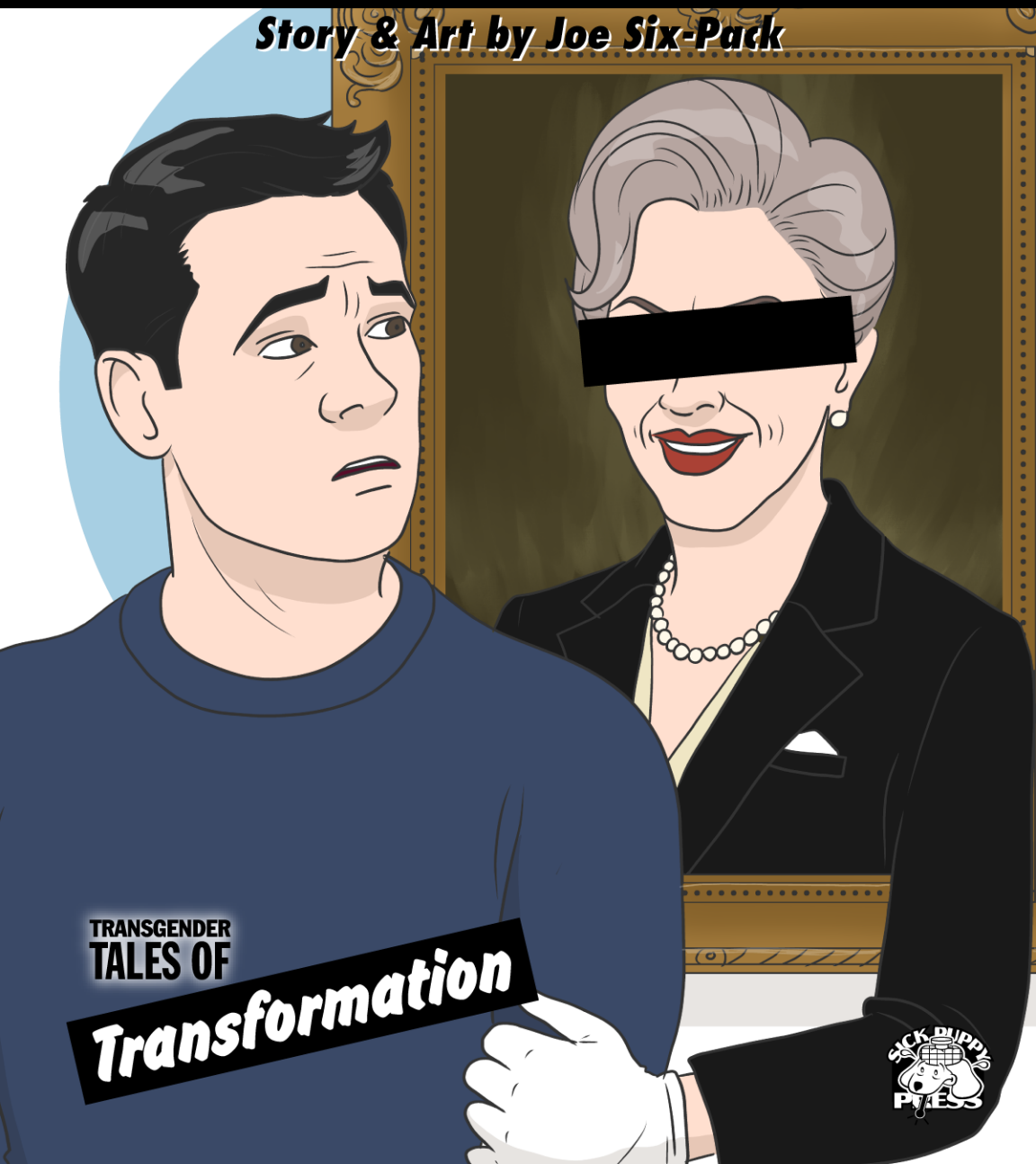
ADULTS ONLY

124 pages 31 illustrations

# CHARM SCHOOL UNDERCOVER

CHARM SCHOOL BOOK 1

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack



TRANSGENDER  
TALES OF

**Transformation**



**J O E   S I X   P A C K**

**CHARM  
SCHOOL  
UNDERCOVER**

**Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack**  
**A Tales of Transformation story**



2025 Edition

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## CHARM SCHOOL UNDERCOVER

Officer Thorpe turned his head over his shoulder, looking at the young woman in disbelief. She was in the back seat of their patrol car, having been picked up for being a public nuisance, making a scene at a 7-11 at 3 AM. The girl bounced her leg nervously, wearing white pumps, tugging anxiously at the hem of a bright pink skirt decorated with glittery hearts. She wore a tube top with pink sequins that read “Princess” across the very generous chest. “Okay, like, seriously, I’m not even kidding,” she said, gesturing wildly. Her hands fluttered through the air, punctuating each word. “This is super, totally serious! I was tricked into going, like, six months ago. No joke, dudes. And it’s *so* not okay. I mean, like, look at me — this is not even my style.”

The other officer, Perez, raised an eyebrow and glanced at Thorpe. Thorpe cleared his throat. “Miss, can you slow down a minute?”

“I’m not a miss!” She yelled with all her might. “I’m a guy, like you!”

That seemed far-fetched as she was barely 5’ 5”, as thin as a 16 year old girl and had long, blond hair with a face full of makeup. She couldn’t have been more of a girl if she tried. “You’re telling me someone kidnapped you and dressed you up like this?” The officer verified.

“Um, yes! That’s exactly it!” The young man stomped his feet, pouting dramatically. “Oh my god, why is this so hard for you guys to understand? It was the charm school! They were totally brainwashing me and stuff. They made me learn cheer routines and slang and how to match accessories, and they made me say ‘like’ and ‘oh my god’ and...”

“Right, the charm school,” Thorpe interrupted calmly. “You know it?” He said, asking his partner.

“It’s on Abernathy. Next to the Jack in the Box. We get lots of complaints about them.”

“You have?” The young woman’s big eyes went wide, bright with hope. “Thank god! I thought you totally wouldn’t believe me.” She pouted as she fussed with her long hair, drawing her pink-nailed fingers along some strands as she talked.

“Just slow down and speak slower,” Thorpe said, opening the squad car door. “We just want to make sure we’re clear on the story.”

She glared, crossing her arms, but the motion was too practiced, too perfect, like she’d watched a hundred YouTube beauty vloggers. “They wouldn’t let me go! So I knew I had to escape! I literally — I mean, I just climbed out the window and...”

“And then what?” Thorpe asked, eyebrow raised.

“And then I, like, ran across the parking lot, and I tripped in these shoes...” He looked down at her pumps. “...but I kept running, and I went to the

convenience store to ask for help, but they didn't help and... and... they flagged you guys down, and you *have* to help me! Please!"

Perez snorted. "You ran in those? Respect."

But Thorpe just shook his head. "You're saying you were held at this... *charm school*? Against your will?"

She nodded frantically, hair bouncing. "Yes! Yes! You have to believe me. I mean, nobody would *want* to tell you a story like this, right?" She tugged at an earring, cheeks coloring with shame, voice wobbling dangerously toward tears.

"No, no they wouldn't," Thorpe had to admit.

The patrol car slowed to a stop in front of a half-dead strip mall. The young man pressed his face against the window and let out a piercing squeal of panic. "No! Oh my god! You brought me back! Oh my god, I totally trusted you! Don't make me go in there again! I'm begging you, dudes, please!"

Thorpe stepped out of the vehicle and looked at the shabby building labeled "The Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Women" on a shaky old glass door. As they came to a stop, a striking young woman came sauntering from the doorway, flashing a confident grin.

"Officers! What a lovely surprise," she said warmly as she allowed their eyes to run up and down her voluptuous figure. "Oh no, don't tell me little Michelle got out again?" She leaned down and peered through the window. "Michelle, honey, you know you're not supposed to leave without the permission of your mother."

"She's not my mother! She's my secretary!" The girl objected.

"She's very worried about you, Michelle," Randy said.

The young man inside the squad car cringed and shook his head frantically. "My name is Mike, not Michelle! I'm done with this weird, girly stuff!"

Randy straightened, chuckling lightly. "Oh, she's such a drama queen sometimes, officers. But we love her for it. She just has cold feet." She winked at the officers, friendly and calm, totally at ease.

Thorpe nodded knowingly. "Yeah, you guys really gotta change the locks on the place. That's the third one this month."

"I'm so sorry, guys" Randy said graciously. "You have the patience of saints."

As Officers Thorpe and Perez climbed back into the car, the young man clawed at their shoulders, screaming at the top of her lungs. "No, please! Don't leave me here with them!"

"Just calm down, honey," Perez said, with a bemused grin. "Must be that time of month, huh?"

“No! They’re going to make me do cheer practice again! They’re going to force me into panties! Oh my god, please just drive away, okay? I promise I’ll totally chill out if you just drive away!”

“Easy there, little lady,” Perez said, chuckling as he unlocked the car door for Michelle. “You’re gonna be fine. Just listen to Randy.”

“I’m not a little lady! I’m a man! I run a company! My mom... I mean my secretary tricked me into coming here so she can take over! Please! They’ll make into a teenage girl for realies!”

Randy opened the back door, holding out a manicured hand. “Come along, Michelle. Let’s get you cleaned up. You don’t want your mascara to run, sweetheart.”

The young man took Randy’s hand reluctantly, shoulders slumped in defeat. “*Ohmigaaaaawd*, you guys seriously suck,” he muttered at the officers.

## DAY 1

The Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies had been under suspicion for years. People went in, and they never came out. There were two dozen missing persons reports that could be traced back to the Dandridge School, but we could never prove anything. Not only was there no evidence of any wrongdoing, we couldn’t find any criminal connections whatsoever.

We’d sent people in to inspect the place under false pretenses, but found nothing. We ran surveillance on the building, but found no sign of wrongdoing. We went through the garbage and put everything through DNA analysis. Zippo.

Yet the reports kept coming in. People were still going missing. LAPD knew there was something here, we just had to crack it.

I’m Brody Callahan, LAPD. This has been my baby ever since the files got dropped on me by my captain. She wants this one bad. I think it’s a waste of time, as I’ve been slaving away on this case for three years, destroying my budget and eating up all my resources. I have nothing to show for it. Any other case with these kinds of results would have been taken off my hands by now, but not this one.

So today, when Capt. Keller came to my desk and pulled up a chair, I knew what it was about.

“Break in the case,” she said. Even without being specific, I didn’t have to guess it was about the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School. “Finally, what we’ve been waiting for. A stroke. Priscilla Dandridge has gone into the hospital. She’s unconscious and unresponsive.”

“Great?” I said.

“You bet your ass it’s great!” Capt. Keller said, her red lips breaking into a crooked smile. “It creates an opening. There’s a void in their leadership, and we can fill it. We can get our own plant in there and blow the operation wide open.”

Priscilla Dandridge was a legendary actress of the silver screen, and although it had been decades since she was in a movie, her stardom was more than enough to sustain a small business like a charm school. She was once the most prized leading lady in Hollywood, famous for her beauty and grace, and they still sold posters of Priscilla Dandridge in stores. I don’t mind saying that she was quite the looker, even if she was sixty years too old for me.

Why or how she got into the business of running a charm school, who knows. I guess they didn’t have clothing lines back then, and you had to make your money by running a business. The skipper on Gilligan’s Island used to run a seafood restaurant across from my apartment, or so I’m told. As far as I know, it didn’t make the diners disappear, though.

“So you want to plant someone inside?” I asked the captain. “How the hell is that supposed to happen? I’m the only one working the case.”

“Shut it and let me explain,” Capt. Keller said. She laid out a folder in front of me. “I’ll have the identification cleared by the end of the week, and we just need someone to take the role. What we need to do is train someone, and train them quick. Our window is only open for a few days.”

“We don’t have the people or the money, Captain.”

“I’ll find the money,” she said, gritting her teeth. “My superiors want to close the case for lack of anything to go on, but I’m going to take this operation down single-handed if necessary.”

She slipped a piece of paper to me. “What’s that?”

“Don’t lose this,” she said. “This is the login and password to the Dandridge School surveillance system. You’ll need it.”

“How long have you had this? Where did you get it?”

“Officially, you’ve never seen this,” she said. “I have a pal at the FBI who got it for me. They’ve got all that spy tech the government isn’t supposed to have.”

“So what do I do with it?”

“With this, you can watch everything that goes on in that school. I need you to make reports to brief the agent that’ll be going inside. Who does what, what time they do it, how many people there are, names, faces, everything.”

“A complete analysis of how they work,” I confirmed. “Do you think I’m made of time?”



“I’m taking you off everything else,” the captain said. “This is your one and only priority.”

## DAY 2

So this morning, I filled my mug full of coffee and grabbed a fresh notepad. I knew it was going to be a long day. I woke up the computer and logged into the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies server, and had complete access to their camera system. They had one in every room, but according to my layout of the building, I wasn’t able to see into the main office or the reception desk. I also couldn’t see the top floor, which according to our info was made up of student residences.

The first thing that caught my eye was the way people there were dressed. It was like they were dressed for job interviews. Every adult woman was in a suit with a skirt, they wore heels and they looked... Well, they all looked amazing.

After the first hour, I was able to isolate on the woman who appeared to be the most important. An “Elenor Tuft” was the second in command, and without Mrs. Dandridge, and I suppose she was now running the place. She was easy to spot, wearing a grey skirt suit set and with hair that was either platinum blonde or greying blonde. It was hard to tell. She must have been sixty, but she was pretty well put together for someone of that age. Great legs.

I watched as four women of varying ages were brought into an office where they signed a stack of papers. New students, I had to assume. They looked a little rough, in my opinion. Just the type to need a little help from a charm school.

Elenor arrived to look over things. “You’re signing the standard student contract with financial aid,” Elenor



explained to them. “The cost to you is virtually nothing. The student aid pays for just about everything including room and board.”

Interesting. That sounded like it had the potential to be quite the scheme. Government checks, little oversight. I’d seen that racket before.

## DAY 3

Now that I had the general feel for the school, and could identify some of the people, for my second day of surveillance I decided to concentrate on the classes themselves.

I clicked through the cameras, figuring out where to start. It was clear that the school was suffering, as I only saw a handful of students but a couple dozen staff. It was built to be much busier than it was, that was for sure.

Then again, since the school was finding a way to dispose of people, it would explain the surplus of employees. I guess it was up to me to figure out how that worked.

I finally found yesterday’s group of four new students on camera 4 and I decided to follow their day. “Welcome to orientation,” Mrs. Tuft said to them as they sat in desks waiting to start their instruction. It was a small classroom, about the size of a bedroom, and the walls were lined with pictures of old movies Mrs. Dandridge had once starred in.

The students were all a little skittish with what I’d have to say was a bad case of the nerves. Or was it something worse than that? It was hard to say on the compressed video I was watching. It was probably just my suspicious cop mind.

Still, I was going to keep my eyes open to see if they were behaving oddly. Somehow the students at this school found ways to disappear, and it may not have been by choice.

The first class really wasn’t much of a class at all. After Mrs. Tuft left, the instructor introduced herself as Millicent Hawthorne. She’s a stately woman who stood tall in a dated athletic outfit. I was beginning to see a pattern in the women who worked here. They all seemed to have the same air of elegance and confidence I imagine Priscilla projected.

The four women were told to stand still and remove their outer clothes. They all looked a bit panicked.

“No need to look so stressed, ladies,” said the instructor.

We only need your measurements. For those who are a bit modest, you can dress in one of our leotards, if you like.”

They all took that option and spent a minute to change into skin-tight leotards behind a screen.

After that, they were measured every which way. Height, weight, waist, chest, leg length, arm length, and even neck circumference.

After the girls had changed back into their regular clothes, Ms. Hawthorne handed out sheets of paper to each student. "This is your diet and exercise plan for your particular body type," she explained. "We have exercise periods in the morning and evening, and attendance is mandatory."

I could hear the deep groans from the girls. Not that they should have complained. They all needed to lose a few pounds.

"We will also be prescribing you weight reduction medications and a vitamin regimen," Ms. Hawthorne said.

I wasn't sure how this exactly fit with being a charm school, but the new students didn't object to the demands.

"You will also need undergarments," Millicent said. "All students are required to wear our approved underwear and body-shapers. It's all a part of your tuition, so you won't have to buy anything, and your dressers will have your new items ready and waiting for you by the end of the day."

That was interesting. They cleaned up on involuntarily selling stuff to the students, I bet. Another way to get more aid money.

That class came to an end, and I found the new students on Camera 9 as they arrived in the next classroom. There were no desks, just stools. It was actually a dance studio, if I didn't miss my guess.

This was a modeling class taught by a Mrs. Fallon, who looked like she had likely been modeling all her life, with the practiced and graceful way she carried herself. She had the students stand before her, and were all judged on



their posture and walk. She made a lot of “tsk-tsk” sounds as she got a look at them. Like I said earlier, they were kind of rough, these girls.

By the end of the class, she had the students walking along a line on the floor with books balanced on their heads, just like you would see in a movie. They looked like they had a long way to go.

Next was Cosmetology, taught by a Jasmine LaMay, which was quite the name. Cosmetology, I slowly learned, was not the study of astrology or the cosmos, but makeup and hair. Go figure.

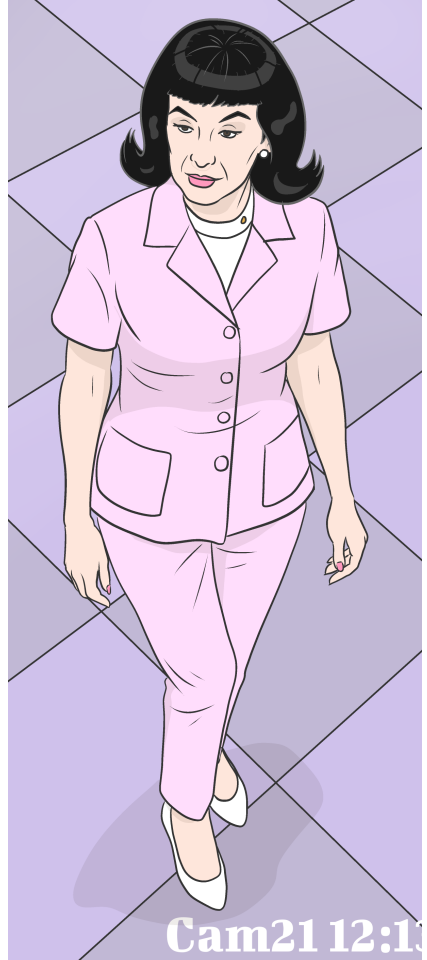
She was a woman with an immaculate head of black hair that looked a little dated. She was dressed in a vintage beautician outfit from the sixties, or at least it appeared to me that way. In fact, just about everything about her looked like it was decades behind the times, despite the fact that she was probably only in her 40s.

I watched as Jasmine went over what they were going to learn and how they were going to be graded. It was all over my head.

They collectively seemed grateful to get out of there and go to lunch. According to what I could see, the school had a selection of complimentary salads and soups, but in remarkably small servings. It seemed they were ready to enforce a low-calorie lifestyle and weren't going to wait for their students to cut back of their own free will.

Their next class, was “elocution,” which I had to look up on my phone to have explained to me. It was about speaking clearly. The instructor, a Mrs. Wiest, made a few jokes about “the rain falls mainly in the plains of Spain” but also was very clear that she wanted her students to speak clearly, but in a “lady like” tone.

Finally, we ended the day with a fashion class, taught by a Mrs. Bianca Newman. She gave each student a small stack of magazines, filled with fashion photography, and the threat that they would be quizzed about the content the next day.



I was surprised there isn't a manners class or something like that. Then again, from what I had seen, they were *all* manners classes. They taught that subject in everything they did.

All in all, it seemed normal. Well, normal in a not-normal kind of way. I had always visualized a "Charm School" as an old lady's living room where she'd lecture some girl on how to sit, serve tea, set a table or some junk like that. This was a far more involved process than I had ever thought it needed to be. It was run almost like a community college.

Maybe that was the key. Maybe it was too much. Maybe it was all cover for what they were really doing. I was going to have to think about that.



## DAY 4

After three days of watching the school, I have a pretty good idea of the way it works. I have a schedule down, I have screenshots of faces and associated them with names I even have some light bio info on some of the staff. Where they live, marital status, that kind of thing.

I even have a chart of where the staff members go and at what time of day. It was one of my better dossiers, if you ask me. Being Friday, I decided to drop it off on Capt. Keller's desk as I headed out for the weekend. She wasn't expecting it until Monday, but I was looking forward to working on my regular cases again, so I wanted it done.

She stopped me before I could leave. "Quick work, Callahan. But don't leave yet." She picked up the report and weighed it in her hand, then opened it up and leafed through it. "So who have you found to do the undercover work?"

“Me? I... Isn’t that *your* job?”

She looked at me like I was the dumbest person on Earth. “I was counting on you, Brody!”

“Don’t pin this on me,” I said. “You never told me that it was my responsibility!” I know she never asked me to find an op for this job. Not a word.

“I only have until the end of the day to pick someone!” She slammed her fist down on her desk. I’d never seen her do that before. “We’re so damn close! Don’t screw this up now.”

“I didn’t screw up anything.”

Captain Keller rested her head in her hands. “Criminy,” she said.

After she was silent for nearly a minute, it fell on me to move things along. “What do you want to do now?” I asked.

She released her head and fell back into her chair. “I have until five o’clock to submit a name for this assignment. If I don’t, we lose our window of opportunity.”

“I’d volunteer myself...”

“Consider yourself volunteered.”

She was trying to trap me. “Captain.”

“I’m out of options, Brody. It’s you or we flush this whole case down the drain. 26 missing persons cases go unsolved.”

“Look, it’s not that I don’t want to help, Captain. But I’ve learned something with my surveillance — they have one big rule at the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies.”

“Which is?”

“No men allowed. Men are forbidden inside the school. That rules me out.”

## DAY 5

I was dozing off in front of the game I was watching when I got an urgent text from the captain. There was something going down, and she needed me there. This being my day off, I wasn’t happy. Being called in is just the nature of my job, and you’re expected to reply to every text, but I wish I’d ignored this one.

After getting my shit together and jumping in the truck, I arrived at a house on the other side of Hollywood. It was one of our safe houses, if I wan’t mistaken. Inside, the captain was waiting, but she had a guest. The lady who taught makeup and hair at the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young

Ladies. Jasmine LaMay. I'd been watching the surveillance of her for three days, so I recognized her immediately.

"What the hell?" I asked the captain.

"Thanks for coming, Brody," Captain Keller said. "I appreciate your commitment."

"What's she doing here?" I needed to know.

"This is Jasmine LaMay, who happens to be one of my closest friends. I grew up with her as a little girl." The captain explained.

"She works at the school!" I said. "I know who she is."

"Jasmine's been our unofficial mole on the inside now for some time. She's actually the one who alerted us to its suspicious nature."

I turned to Ms. LaMay. "And you still work there?"

"Honey," she said, "I can do more good inside the walls than I can outside. It also happens to pay better than any other job I've ever had."

"If she's on the inside, why do we need an undercover agent?" I had to ask.

"Jasmine isn't official. She's my personal contact, and no one knows about it." She gave me a good glare. "Is that understood? *No one* needs to know."

"So what's the point of this, then?"

"Callahan," Captain Keller said. "I had to make a decision on who was going to go in undercover. I made that decision. I put in your name."

"Why? Like I said, it's women only in that place."

"We can work around that." She gestured to her friend. "That's why Jasmine is here. She's going to help us."

"Help? Help how?" I asked.

"Help you look like a woman, Brody."

I looked at the both of them, waiting for the punchline. Neither were smiling. "You're serious? You're not serious. You can't be."

"I don't have a lot choices left," the captain said.

"You can do it!" I said to Keller. "You're a woman."

"I'm not cleared for that kind of work. You're a trained undercover agent. A good one." She picked up the report I had given her yesterday. "You've literally written the book on the school, and you know it better than anyone I can train."

"I'm not doing it."

"It's an order, Callahan."

"I'll quit."

"Don't be stupid. It's just undercover work. It's assuming a role, like any other you've done. Just with a little extra challenge."

"I'm going to look like a chump in a dress."

"I won't send you in if you're not totally convincing. I wouldn't do that. I'll call the whole operation off."

"I'm going to be the laughing stock of the department. I'll never live it down."

"No one needs to know. Only you and me. And Jasmine."

I couldn't do it. I couldn't agree to this. At the same time, I knew I was trapped.

"I'm *ordering* you to do this. This is on me."

It wasn't much, but it made it a formality. I had taken an oath. I trusted Keller. I didn't much like her, but I trusted her.

She was also right when she called it a challenge. That had me interested, in a twisted kind of way.

"Take your clothes off," Jasmine said. "I have some things for you to try on."

"How long is this going to take?" I asked.

"We need you to be ready by Wednesday," the Captain said as I sat down in the chair. "Your cover is..."

"If I don't look like a nightmare," I interrupted.

"If you don't look like a nightmare, your cover is going to be as Priscilla Dandridge's granddaughter. I've done the research, and Mrs. Dandridge's one son died twenty years ago in Malaysia, leaving unknown descendants. That gave us the opportunity to create a niece, Dianna Dandridge, 47."

"Forty seven?" I said. "I'm twenty six. I can't pretend to be 47!"

"A twenty-something man and a woman in her late forties look very much alike, in terms of an unmade face," Jasmine said. "Once I do the makeup I think you'll be pleasantly surprised."

"Oh, I'm *sure* I'll be surprised," I told her. "Just not pleasantly."

"Hurry up," she said, referring to my undressing. So I had to strip myself down to just my briefs in front of two middle-aged women.

A suitcase was open on a couch, and Ms. LaMay began to pick out some items.

"This is going to be your new best friend," she said as she held up a pair of underwear.

It looked like a panty, but was padded, and had some folds of fabric on the inside that didn't make any sense to me. "Uh... Explain?"

"It's a gaff."

"Explain what a gaff is?"

The two women exchanged a look that chilled me.

Ms. La May sighed. “It keeps your... front flat. Like a woman.”

“How?”

The lady dug through the suitcase. She found a folded piece of paper. “Here are the instructions.”

I didn’t look at them right away, as I still had no idea what to expect, but when I did look, it was horrifying. I thought it was porn at first.

She next presented me with a heavy beige-colored garment. “Put this on,” she said. “It’s a body shaper.”

I turned it around a few times, baffled. “How the hell...”

“I’ll help,” she turned it right-side up and showed me how to pull it up over my head. She tightened some straps in the back, crushing my waist — then tightened it further.

“Don’t even bother complaining,” Captain Keller said to me. “We women already know it feels like you’re being cut in half.”

“It’s going to crack my ribs!” I said. It really felt like that.

“You’ll survive. It’ll only hurt for a few hours.”

“Now put this on,” Ms. LaMay said, and handed me a bra. I sighed. I knew it was coming, but I was still humiliated to have one in my hands.

“I’ll hook it up in back,” the captain said.

Ms. LaMay slipped some foam inserts in the cups to flesh it out. They looked huge to me, but I was told they were “quite modest” in size.

“Do you know how to wear stockings?” Ms. LaMay asked me.

“Do you really need to ask?” I replied.

She sat me down and showed me how to “properly” put on stockings, being careful with the fabric, rolling them up my legs, making sure they weren’t twisted, and then hooking them to some small clamps dangling from the body shaper. I had wondered what those were for.

“Shouldn’t he have shaved?” Captain Keller asked her friend.

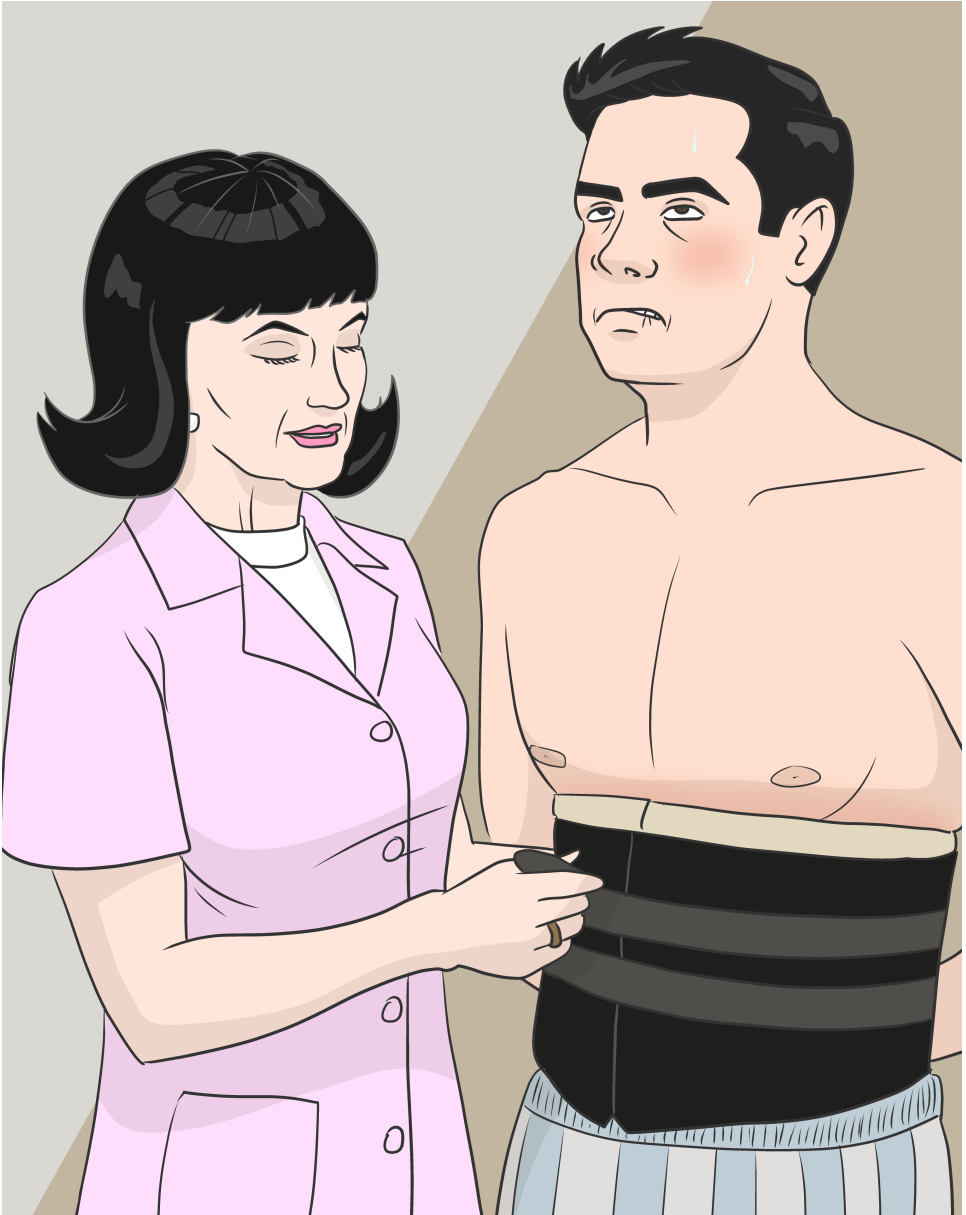
“That’s why he’s putting on opaque skin-tone stockings. We can shave when we do the real thing.”

“Don’t count your chickens,” I told them.

“Here’s a robe,” Jasmine said, giving me a silky red robe. “And I brought some slippers for you as well.”

I already felt like a freak, and this was not helping.

“Time for the gaff,” Ms. LaMay said. “You’ll want to use the bathroom for that. We’ll wait for you in the kitchen.”



When I was done, which was as revelation as the elasticity and compressible nature of the human penis, I went into the safe house kitchen, where the breakfast table had been loaded up with makeup, brushes, a few wig-sized boxes and I couldn't tell you what else.

"Have a seat," Jasmine said, pulling out a chair.

"I can't sit with these things on," I told her.

"Yes you can," she told me.

I guess she was right in a technical sense, but I felt like I was about to burst or faint or both.

Anyway, I sat there for probably about an hour and a half, doing jack shit, while Jasmine worked me over. She might as well just applied the makeup with a paint roller, it was put on so thick. It all had that makeup kind of smell too. It's hard to describe, but you know it when you smell it. Kind of a putty-like odor. However you describe it, I was surrounded by it now.

They also tried a few wigs on me, and settled on an auburn color with a few grey streaks through it. It was mid-length, and Jasmine called it a 'Page Boy' as if there was anything boyish about it. After an industrial amount of spray to the wig, I was ready to see myself.

However, the captain and Jasmine weren't. "If the whole undercover operation is riding on this," Captain Keller said, "then you'll get a look when the whole package is done and you can make your judgements then."

"That bad huh?" I asked.

"You might be surprised," the captain remarked.

I was then escorted upstairs where another suitcase had been emptied of its contents which were spread out on a bed.

"I really like what you were able to do with him," I heard the captain say to her friend Jasmine.

"He came out really better than I expected," Jasmine replied.

I don't know if they thought I wasn't listening or what, but I was sure they were trying to trick me.

"He's going to look really great when we can epilate his skin."

"I can't wait," Keller said.

"What does epilate mean?" I asked them.

"You'll find out," Jasmine said with a grin. "Oh lordy lord, you'll find out."

I was then told to get the robe off as Jasmine picked up a peach blouse. "How did you know my size?" I asked.

"The police department had your clothing size for your dress uniform," Captain Keller explained. "It was all in the employee database."

"Congratulations. You're a women's size 18 Tall," Jasmine said to me, giving me the skirt. "And a 10 1/2 shoe."

"That sounds huge."

"Well, it's not *too* large," Jasmine said. "A lot of women at that age have put on weight, and you won't look fat, just a little 'big-boned' as they say."

The blouse was distractingly thin and slick. I had never worn anything quite like it, and I was hopeful I never would again.

I was next given a peach wool skirt that was, oddly, one of the heaviest things I'd ever worn. It felt stiff and constricting. The two ladies let me search around fruitlessly for the way to fasten it closed, and it was pretty obvious they were enjoying themselves at my expense.

“Do you want me to zip you up?” Captain Keller asked with a pronounced smirk.

There was a short zipper at the back of the skirt that secured it, and Keller made a show of taking care of it for me. Humiliating? More than you can imagine.

Finally, I had a matching peach wool jacket to put on, and it fit surprisingly well, although tighter than any other jacket I'd ever worn. It was heavy too, not quite as much as a leather jacket, but heavier than you would expect.

Jasmine clipped a pair of large gold earrings to my earlobes and messed around with them for a moment to get them the way she liked them.

The final item were shoes, and I was given a pair of heels in peach. “You think I can wear heels, huh?” I asked.

“Everyone at Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies does,” the captain said to me. “It was in your report.”

So it was. I sat on the bed and crammed my stockinged feet into the shoes, then slowly — very slowly — rose up.

I stood in triumph. “Are we done?”

The two women contemplated that answer for a little while as they looked me over, exchanging positions. Their expressions looked like they were examining modern art at a gallery.

“I think so,” the captain said. “Jasmine?”

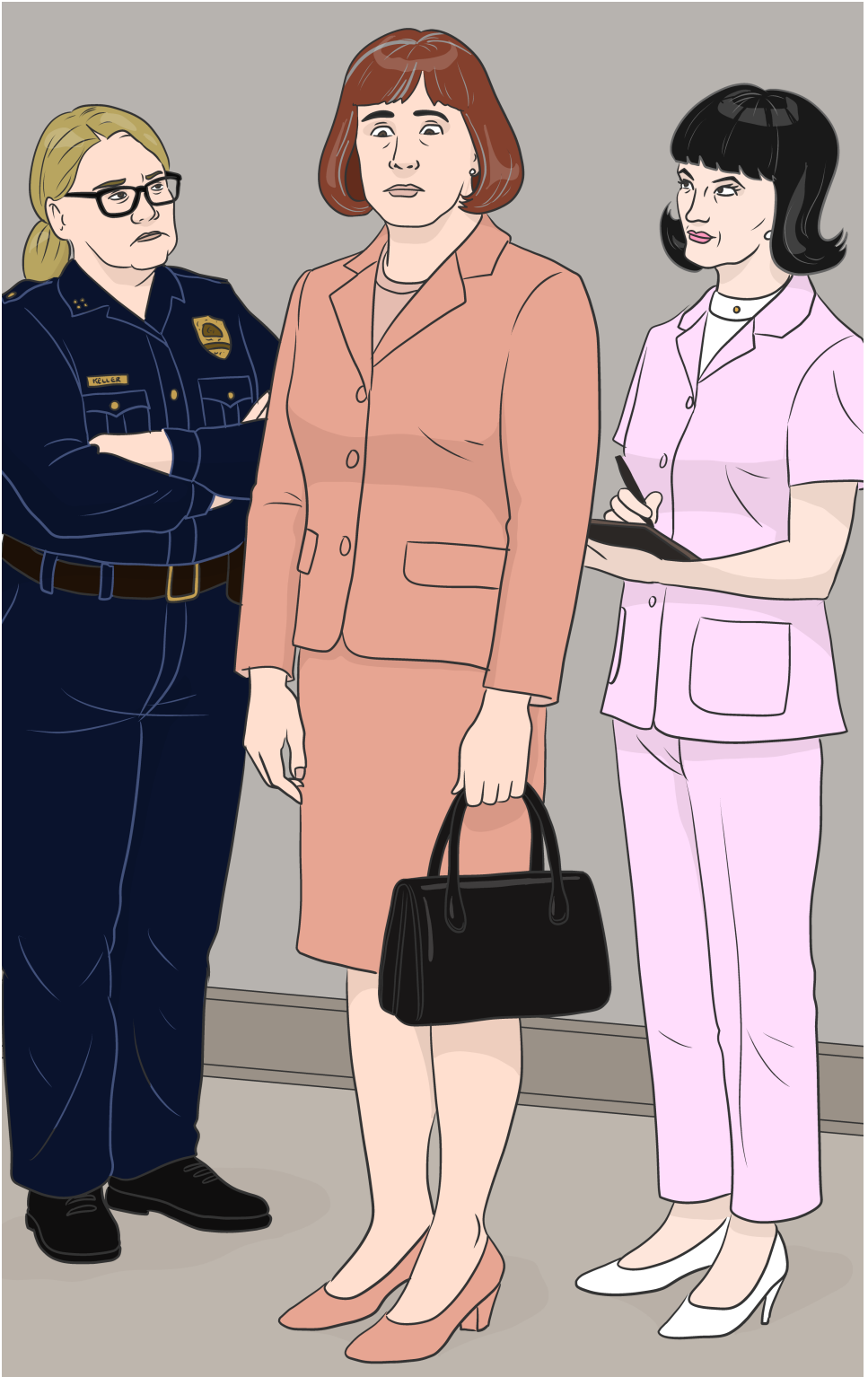
“The final product will be much more refined, of course, but I think it's...” She pointed to a full length mirror that was against the wall. “Why don't you see for yourself?”

I hobbled my way over to the mirror, as the shoes really didn't make any sense to me at all. I had no idea what I was doing, and I could hear one of the women quietly chortle behind me.

When I got to my destination, a harrowing four feet away, I was shocked. Yes, I had been set up all right. The reflection was of an intimidatingly dignified older woman. Every detail looked genuine, presenting the image of a woman who came from money, had dressed in fine clothes all her life, and although her youth had faded, she still projected confidence and grandeur. I looked like a professional, mature woman.

They had done it. I looked perfect for the role.

“That is a Dianna Dandridge if I've ever seen one,” the captain said.



“She would fit in perfectly at the school,” Jasmine added.

“Well, detective?” Keller asked me.

I could go anywhere and no one would even question it. I looked like a woman in every way. If there really was such a thing, this was the perfect disguise.

“I don’t really know what to say,” was all I could come up with.

It’s not every day you find that there was a woman inside you all along.

## DAY 7

I haven’t been home since coming to the safe house. It’s turned into a kind of school of its own with me as the only student. I’ve been drilled relentlessly on everything feminine.

While I never said I was going to do this, the captain and Jasmine LaMay have just decided to start teaching me, and I haven’t run for my life, so I guess we’re doing this.

It wasn’t my first time learning how to play a role, or take on some character traits. It was definitely the most extreme situation I’d ever been in, but picking up on what I needed to know came easy.

At least most of it. Walking in the shoes is impossible.

Otherwise, I had to learn to talk with my hands, keep my back straight, giggle rather than laugh, manage my skirt, and use every possible moment alone to make sure my hair and makeup looked good.

We all decided that since I was posing as Priscilla Dandridge’s granddaughter, I ought to pattern my behavior and mannerisms to hers. So I must have watched six (seven?) of her films over the last 36 hours, repeating her lines just the way she says them. Her husky voice isn’t too hard to mimic.

Other things the captain impressed on me was getting used to more people touching me even when they didn’t need to, not to stare back when stared at, not to scratch myself.

I’ve also been rid of most of my body hair, finally learning what “epilate” means. Yay for me.

Jasmine went back to work this morning, leaving just me and Captain Keller to finish things off. She helped me with long nails, and perfume.

She also gave me a few tips to look like I was in command and knew what I was doing. One was to make a decision as quickly as possible and never back down from it.

“Not that you ever use any tricks,” I said.

“No, of course not,” she said.

## DAY 8

So today was the big day. I checked the address again. This was the place. The unmarked entrance was tucked in between two nail shops and across the street from a wine shop. The Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies.

It looked innocent enough, except for the fact that a charm school seemed completely out of place in modern times, that is. I also knew it was far from innocent.

As I went up the stairs and into the lobby, I couldn't help but be reminded of how unrelentingly feminine the whole place looked. The color scheme was pink, pink and off-pink. This was already going to be a tough job, but having to look at this place for the foreseeable future made me sick.

"May I help you, ma'am?"

The tall drink of water at the desk was looking at me expectantly. No doubt few men had ever made it any farther than this. When they said it was for ladies, they meant it.

"Ma'am?" the blonde asked me again.

"Yes," I said, using my feminine voice for the very first time in public. "I'm Dianna Dandridge. I think you're expecting me?" That was my cover, the "lost" granddaughter of Priscilla Dandridge, here to inherit and take over the business while my dear grandmother was incapacitated. By putting me in charge of the business, we were sure to finally figure out how the place worked, and what they were doing.

"Mrs. Dandridge!" the girl said, warmly. She had the most amazing eyes. By eyes I mean tits. "We've been awaiting your arrival!" She got up and took my arm. "Let me take you to Mrs. Dandridge's office. I'll let everyone know you're here!"

"And you are?" I asked.

"Randi Sparks," she said. Of course it would be a name like that. At least she lived up to it. She was, even for a girl in Hollywood, a genuine knockout. Her touch on my arm felt like the touch of an angel as she escorted me down the hallway, her flaxen blonde hair gently swaying back and forth, just like her butt in the tight black skirt she wore.

I was already liking this assignment.

"Here you go. Make yourself comfortable," Randi said to me as she led me into a very large and opulent office. It was obviously designed to impress. We hadn't been able to see it on the surveillance, and it was just as impressive as one would expect. "It's so sad what's happened to Mrs. Dandridge," Randi said

with an adorable pout. I so wanted to nibble on that lower lip. “Everyone here is hoping for the best.”

She left swiftly, I assumed for the purpose of rounding up people that needed to meet the new person in charge. Me, “Dianna Dandridge,” who had just inherited the business.

I noticed Mrs. Dandridge’s surveillance monitor set up that showed images of all the various classrooms so she could see and hear what was going on. They were the same views we had tapped into. I was tempted to try it out for myself, but I was trying to make a good first impression. The surveillance could wait.

I took the opportunity to check my appearance, not out of vanity, but out of panic. I was sure the first real woman to see me would immediately spot the wolf in sheep’s clothing, but so far, so good. My wig was still looking good, my lips and eyes still looked decent and the earrings dangling from my ears sparkled.

“How do you do, Ms. Dandridge,” said a very composed and elegant woman who strolled into the office. “My name is Elenor Tuft. I’m the director of The Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies.” I already knew that, of course, but played it like it was news to me.

“How do you do,” I said, coming around to shake her hand. I noted she held her hand limply, but it seemed purposeful. I tried to match it. “Dianna Dandridge, as you know.”

“Yes, of course. The rest of the staff is conducting classes at the moment, but they’ll be here if they become available.” She seemed to size me up for a few moments and then continued. “We’re all devastated by what’s happened to Priscilla. She’s been so full of life. It’s hard to imagine that we may lose her so suddenly.”

“It’s been a shock, and I feel horrible to have to introduce myself under such circumstances,” I said.

“No, it’s understood. Priscilla did want to keep the school in the family,” Elenor said. “How much do you know about our school?”

“Aside from the obvious, that it’s a charm school for ladies, not much,” I said. “I was hoping I could be shown how it all works.”

“Well, there’s quite a bit to show you. I can take you on a quick tour.”

“I’d appreciate that, yes.”

We headed out, Elenor leading the way, which was just the view I wanted. I almost felt bad lusting after a woman that was old enough to be my grandmother, but she was in almost as good a physical shape as the receptionist.

“This is the admissions office. All new students start here,” Elenor said, coming to the first door nearest the lobby. She opened it up and we went in. “We’re in luck. It looks like we have new students signing up.”

The small office was divided by a glass partition, and on the other side from us several women were signing documents.

“They’re signing the standard student contract with financial aid,” Elenor explained. “If we approve a student’s admission, the cost is essentially free. Even housing is included.”

Again, we were covering things I already knew, but we had to go through it. Besides, maybe I’d learn something new. “So the students live here?”

“The top floor has about fifty living spaces and we can accommodate 70 students. Although at the moment, it’s much lower. Charm school doesn’t have the demand it once did, I’m afraid.”

“I see.” I looked at the prospective new students. They didn’t seem any bit odd. They appeared normal enough, although they didn’t speak a word. There was a tension I hadn’t picked up on the video. They didn’t appear to be relaxed or comfortable in any way. “How much aid is that?”

“About \$15,000 a term, which is three months. It takes three terms to graduate.”

“Expensive.”

She turned to me and made very sure eye contact. “Yes we are.”

We proceeded to walk by the various departments. One thing that was also different from the video was how compact the school was. It was about the size of a small office building, maybe eight offices wide and three floors tall. The bottom floor of the strip mall was rented out for retail, and the school took the top two.

After the short tour, I was taken upstairs to the residences. “I assume you’ll be needing a place to stay, as you just got into town.”

“I have a hotel room.”

“No sense in wasting money. We have regular guest speakers and have a room set aside especially for them. You’re free to use it.”

Staying on site 24-7 was exactly the kind of thing that would help me close this case as fast as possible, but I didn’t want to seem eager.

“I’m going to have an apartment once I have the chance to hire a realtor. I can just stay at the hotel until then.”

“I will not allow it,” Elenor said. “You are a Dandridge, and your grandmother would eviscerate me if I allowed you to go bankrupt paying for expensive hotels.”

“Well, if you insist.”



“I do,” she said. “Room 112,” she said as she gestured to the door with that number on it. She then delicately placed a key in my hand. “Here’s your key.”

“That’s very kind of you,” I said. “I’ll send for my bags.” We headed back downstairs.

“Ah, Jasmine,” Elenor said to a passing woman. “Come meet Priscilla’s granddaughter, Dianna Dandridge. This is Jasmine LaMay, our head of cosmetology.”

“Makeup and hair, yes. Hello, Jasmine, I’m Dianna,” I said, trying very, very hard to not look like I already knew her.

“Ah, Ms. Dandridge. It’s such a pleasure to meet you.” She shook my hand in the same limp manner Elenor had and gave me a metered smile. “Under such sad circumstances, though. I hope your grandmother is feeling better soon. We all miss her.”

“The doctors say there’s always a chance,” I said, pretending to have talked to them. Honestly, I knew nothing about her condition. She could have been dead or standing right behind me. I had no idea.

“I’ll catch up with you later,” Jasmine said. “I have a class staring in just a minute.”

I watched as she left, her pumps clicking on the hard floor, never turning back to give me wink or anything like that. At least she knew how to keep a secret.

We returned to Priscilla’s grandly furnished office. “To be practical, Ms. Dandridge,” Elenor said, “your grandmother, and my best friend, is not going to survive much longer. Even if she does fight like the tough old bird I know her to be, I don’t believe she’ll be in any shape to run the school. So if you are going to be inheriting this place of learning, I want to know that you’re going to give it everything you’ve got.”

“I may be new here,” I said. “But I have spent my lifetime living up to my name. The Dandridge Charm School will be my way of holding up my grandmother’s legacy. I will do everything I can to make this institution live up to her standards. I love my grandmother and I will not let her down.”

“I know you’ll do wonderfully,” Elenor said, apparently pleased with my little speech. I had practiced it. “Tomorrow, I’ll be calling on you bright and early. Are you ready?”

“Yes, Ms. Tuft.”

“Please, *Elenor*. Well, buckle up! It’s going to be a wild ride.”

She had no idea how wild I intended to make it.



I was a bundle of nerves after just a few hours of pretending to be a woman. My pulse was probably double what it normally was. I was scared out of my mind for every moment I was being seen by others, but I think I got away with it. There were lots of lessons I'd learned from my first day, and primary amongst them was to take every break I possibly could.

I needed every spare chance to adjust my stockings, my sagging bra, my blouse becoming untucked, my hair going stray, my makeup wearing off — I needed constant maintenance. My appearance was vital to keeping my cover.

The next thing I had learned was that I had to work harder on my character. I had never really had to completely imitate someone before. Usually, my characters were just versions of myself. Dianna Dandridge, granddaughter of the famous Priscilla Dandridge was a very specific persona, and I was finding myself falling in and out of character at times. I needed to do a better job of fully realizing who Dianna Dandridge was — I mean, it's Hollywood. We're all frustrated actors here.

I was going to just have to think "Dianna Dandridge" from here on out. How she talks, how she acts, how she sits, how she stands, how she speaks... These are all things I'm going to need for the days ahead, I would have to say. It was time to bury myself in Dianna's life.

The investigation could wait. I needed to be Dianna for now and gain everyone's trust.

## DAY 9

When I woke, my phone had a message on it: "Your auction bid is still pending and the seller is interested." That was a code from Captain Keller. It meant that the undercover operation was still active, and Priscilla Dandridge was still alive. You need to work these things out for the unexpected.

The room they've given me has a bed that is probably the most comfortable I've had in years. Ever since the divorce, I've been on my own, and I haven't had the kind of money to get a decent place, so it was nice to relax in a luxuriously soft bed. Oh, and I checked for microphones and cameras, and the place was clean.

The door also has an interior lock, so I don't need to worry about anyone breaking in to find me without my disguise on. However, as I would do for any undercover job, I make sure I'm always ready to be interrupted.

I slept in a nightgown, covering a less constrictive body shaper that was suitable for sleeping and still had inserts for the breasts. The wig I was wearing was pinned to my scalp so it wouldn't come off in anything less than a tornado.

There were post-it notes stuck to the clothes in my suitcase to coordinate the items in there, left by Jasmine. I was grateful for the help. It took forever, starting with the shaper, then panties, garter, stockings, bra, slip. I then attended to my wig, which was a mess. I must have spent half an hour undoing it and starting over.

I was also tasked with doing my own makeup today, which I had been practicing, but I got the feeling it takes women a lifetime to get it right. I did it three times before it was acceptable. I added some perfume as my last step.

Then I moved on to the blouse, then skirt, earrings, necklace, bracelets, and jacket. I had done it before in training, but I was still overwhelmed by the sheer time and steps involved.

A knock came to my door. I was expecting it. “Just wanted to stop by and see if you needed anything,” Jasmine LaMay said. Actually, she was checking in to make sure I had made it through the process of getting dressed in decent shape. “Oh, you might want to touch up your lipstick, Ms. Dandridge.”

If that was all I need to do, I considered the morning a success.

My first full day as the new head of the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies began with meeting Elenor Tuft in Priscilla’s office. She was just as impressive as she had been yesterday. I swear she could just run this whole thing by just giving staff withering stares.

When I arrived, I found Elenor seated in discussion. “Ms. Dandridge, good morning.” She checked her slender watch. “And just on time.”

Well, I had gotten up two hours ago. I was going to be on time this morning even if it killed me.

Elenor spoke to the guest. “Ms. Dandridge stands to inherit the school, if we should be so unfortunate to lose Priscilla.”

“My dearest wishes to your grandmother, Ms. Dandridge.” The guest stood to shake my hand. I held it limply like I had learned. “I was devastated to hear what had happened. I’m Merrill Thorne.”

“Ms. Thorne is our recruiter,” Elenor said.

“We are all hoping for the best,” I said. “My grandmother is a fighter.” A paused for a respectful moment before continuing. “What kind of recruiting, Ms. Thorne?”

“Recruiting new students,” she said, taking her seat again. “The school has employed me for thirty years to recruit its’ students. I’ve brought over a thousand students to the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies.”

I did the math in my head. That worked out to just over 30 students a year. It wasn't exactly the kind of low numbers I would expect. I filed that number away.

"I'm glad I got a chance to meet you, Ms. Thorne," I said to her. "I'm sure we'll be seeing quite a bit of each other."

"So you'll be running the school?" She asked.

"It seems likely, yes, if the worst should come to pass."

I looked for any kind of reaction from Elenor. I suspected she was anticipating that she'd be in control if Mrs. Dandridge had passed away, and she might be a bit bitter. She didn't seem to react in any way, but I was coming to believe she had a face of stone.

Ms. Thorne and Elenor ran me through the basics of how recruiting worked at the school. She essentially was the sales department, but she didn't really do traditional marketing. There were no print ads, no TV or radio, no press releases, nothing like that. They hadn't even printed up a brochure. Mrs. Dandridge apparently relied on word-of-mouth marketing and the use of her name.

That in itself felt suspicious. They didn't even have a sign on the building. It was like they wanted to keep the very existence of the school from gaining any kind of attention. Like they were trying to hide something. For now, though, I was only gathering information. I'd question Elenor about it after I had some standing here. That's undercover lesson number one: be patient.

Elenor saw Ms. Thorne off and told me she had meetings with the staff scheduled all day, leaving me alone in the huge office. I watched some of the surveillance cameras, but mostly I just examined Mrs. Dandridge's amazingly ornate office filled with books and memorabilia from her acting career. I recognized several props from the films I had been watching, now decades older and showing their age. I didn't dare touch them.

It was fascinating, seeing her whole professional life played out in the items. The photos displayed her with famous actors and in amazing locations. I could only imagine the stories she could tell. She had truly seen it all, filming all over the world and meeting the most incredible people.

It seemed hard to imagine she'd have anything to do with a place that makes people disappear, wiped from the face of the Earth, never to be seen again.

As the day was coming to an end, Bianca Newman, the fashion instructor dropped by the office. "I didn't see you at lunch," Ms. Newman said. "I was hoping you'd drop by."

"Lunch?" I had to ask.

“At the commissary,” she explained. “You know we have a commissary, right?”  
“I uh... no. To be honest I guess I got wrapped up looking around this office.”  
“It’s very impressive, isn’t it? I could spend days in here. But you do need to eat.”

She led me down the main hallway, and through to a room with several small, round tables with embroidered tablecloths and flowers in vases. It looked like an old European café one might see in a Priscilla Dandridge movie. However, the room beyond the tables was more along the lines of a prison cafeteria.

My stomach growled, but under the many layers of clothing I was wearing, it couldn’t be heard. I did need something to eat. What I found wasn’t exactly what I was hoping for — the food on offer was a large salad bar, with a few brothy soups and some crackers. Tea, coffee and “fruit infused” water were the only drinks on offer.

I did what I could and made a salad for myself, piling it as high as I could on the shallow, small plate they supplied. Portion control was in effect here, that was for sure.

“They don’t want the girls to get too much to eat, I suppose,” I said, as I brought my plate back to the small table Ms. Newman was seated at.

“I find the salads here to be more than filling enough,” she replied. “You may have more than you can handle there.”

My salad couldn’t have been more than a couple of inches tall on a plate that was only 8 inches wide. A rabbit ate more than this in a sitting.

“I wanted to make sure you have all your questions answered about the fashion classes,” Bianca said in between bites. I noticed she was a very proper eater, being very deliberate about holding her fork in the right position and chewing everything a specific number of times. She also didn’t put her elbows on the table, just like my mother used to tell me. She also lightly dabbed her lips with the napkin, like a princess. I did my best to mimic her immaculate table manners.

“Well, I don’t have a lot of questions,” I said. “Fashion is the kind of thing I’ve never had much of a history with.” I could tell by the look I was getting from Ms. Newman that this was not news to her. “If that wasn’t already obvious,” I added.

“Well, I do have some suggestions,” she said, as diplomatically as she could. “When we’re done here, come with me to my classroom.”

“Oh? Is there something there that might improve my fashion sense?”

“We provide multiple outfits for many of our students during their stay,” Ms. Newman said. “And, after all, I’d like to show you what I do.”

“It sounds good,” I said. This was a chance to see deeper into how and what instructors did here, exactly, so I was game for it. I just had to make sure I didn’t need to undress in front of her. I then looked down at the food in front of me. I had only eaten less than a quarter of it, but I was full. Maybe it was the body shaper’s compression of my stomach, but I honestly didn’t feel like I needed to eat any further. “Shall we go?”

Sure enough, at the back of the fashion classroom was another room, a wardrobe even larger than the classroom itself, stuffed to the rafters with outfits of endless variety. It was like a costume shop, in many ways.

“Now Ms. Dandridge...”

“Please, after hours, it’s Dianna,” I said.

“Dianna, in my professional opinion, your clothing choices may be a bit... Flashy for being the head of the school.” She was working her way through a rack. “What size are you?”

“18 Tall,” I replied, pleased with myself for remembering that. “A little flashy? I thought this was conservative.”

“The cut is, but the colors aren’t. It looks like something Jasmine might wear.”

You don’t say. She was the one had picked my clothes out. Bianca knew her stuff.

She pulled a skirt suit set from the rack. “Let’s try this one,” she suggested. “If you don’t mind.”

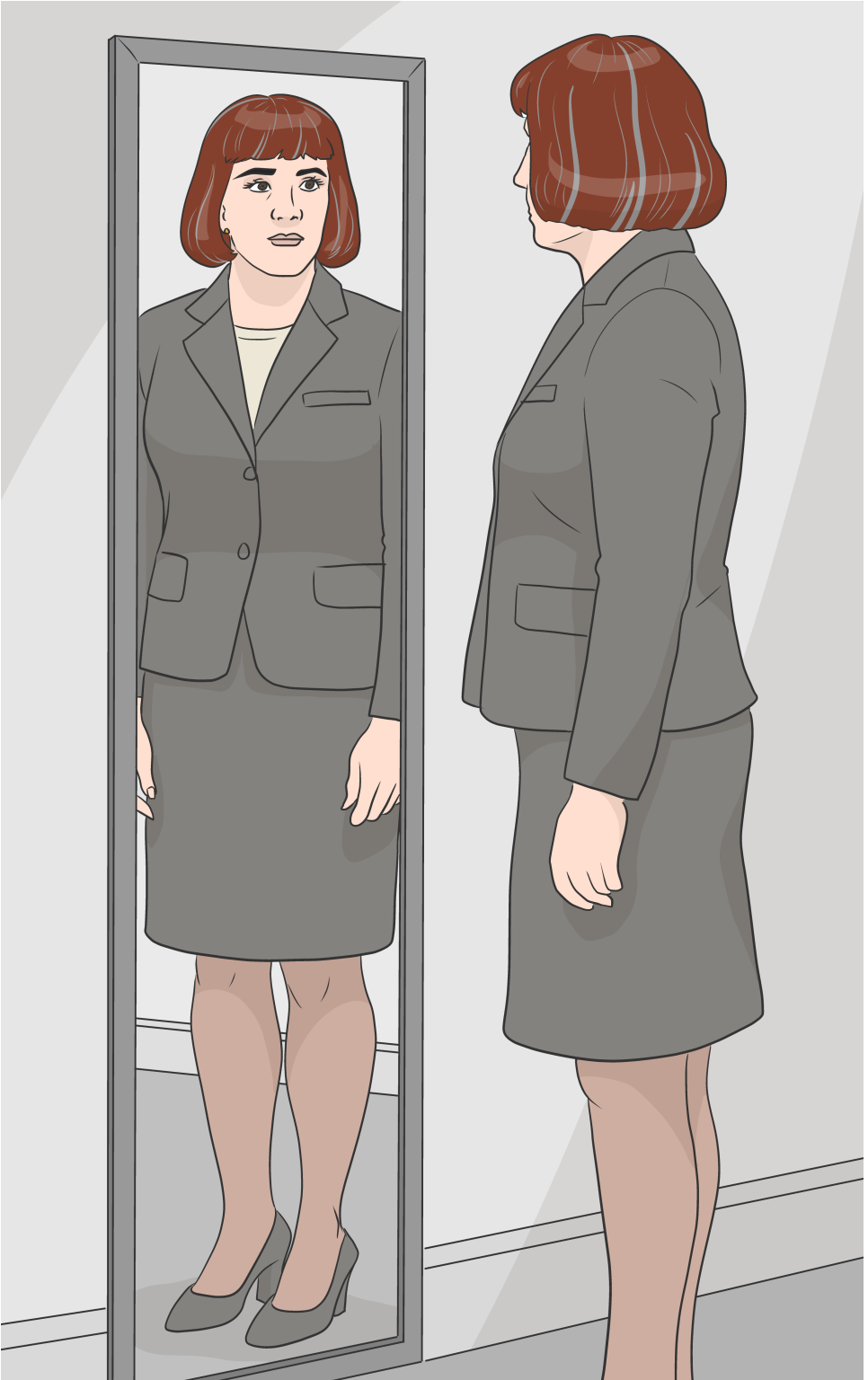
“Uh... Is there somewhere I can change?”

“Behind the screens,” she said, pointing back out into the classroom. She smirked a little, obviously amused at my need for privacy. Little did she know what I was really covering up.

The variety and volume of clothing in the back was mind-boggling. It was hard to imagine that every single student needed to be clothed with a full set of outfits, but maybe that was a part of the service they provided here. That would account for what I had just seen.

I was very, very careful to be unseen, and Bianca stayed in the wardrobe area, far away from where I was. I changed out of the peach outfit I was wearing into a more neutral grey outfit, that was styled very much the same. I did note the skirt was a little shorter, which I was not a fan of. However, I did agree that the grey was more becoming of a person in charge.

“What do you think?” Bianca asked as I returned to the wardrobe.



“It’s nice. I think it feels more... self-assured.” I looked down at my knees, which were now visible. “The skirt is a little short.”

“It looks wonderful on you, though, Dianna. A little leg contrasts your authority with femininity.”

That made sense, I have to say. Or, does it?

I was sent back to my room with four more skirt suit sets, one for every day of the week, and advice on how to mix them to create more.

## DAY 10

When I woke this morning, I was eager to try on one of my new outfits. It may be a bit strange, but I actually wanted to see the reaction I got from Elenor when I got to the office.

I was halfway into my new morning routine when I realized how odd I was behaving. Maybe the place was getting to me and being surrounded by so much femininity was warping my mind. Men do not get excited about showing off an outfit.

Thankfully, I was a little more practiced today, as I did my hair and face in record time, and dressed myself with a lot to spare. It gave me a little time to look closer at the new clothes I had been given. The skirt was a little lighter and thinner than the ones I had been wearing, which I found a little disconcerting. Thicker felt safer.

The jacket was just the same as the ones I had, but with a very distinct detail. The collar of the jacket was laced with a shiny thread that looked metallic. In fact, every jacket Bianca had given me had the same interesting feature. It wouldn’t be visible from the outside, either, so it had no aesthetic value. Odd.

As soon as I had put it on, however, I felt dizzy and nearly fell right out of the heels I had just put on. Maybe some dry cleaning chemicals were left in it, but the feeling soon passed.

“I’m jealous of women, sometimes I wish I was one,” I thought.

...Why would I ever think such a thing? I wasn’t exactly sure where the notion had come from. It just kind of popped into my head.

I made some last-second adjustments to my look, pulled my skirt up to show a little more leg, packed my purse, and headed downstairs to my office, where Elenor was waiting for me.

“Good morning, Ms. Dandridge,” she said.

I returned her greeting. “Good morning, Ms. Tuft. It’s a delightful day, isn’t it?” I put my purse into its desk drawer where I preferred to keep it.

I waited to see what Elenor would say about my clothes. She said nothing, but did linger for a moment as she looked at me for the first time that morning. You could tell she was impressed.

“Today,” Elenor said, “We have a very busy day. There’s a lot to show you.”

“I do like to be busy,” was my reply.

I was shown how the interview process works for incoming students, which surprised me, as I assumed it was simply a matter of an online application. I was proven wrong when Elenor conducted a thorough interview with two prospective students, one after the other.

Much like the other new students I had seen, they were both running a severe deficit in terms of charm. Both must have lived their lives as tomboys, and were seeking some kind of correction, as they could have easily been men in wigs for all I could tell. One was 22, the other was older, and he might have been as old as 40, and they were extremely nervous for their interview, visibly sweating.

The most interesting question that Elenor asked, the one that caught my attention was, “Why do you want to be all the woman you can be?”

Neither answer was particularly memorable, because neither of them seemed to be able to vocalize a coherent thought as they replied. They avoided answering directly and just kept talking until they ran out of words.

“They’re both accepted,” Elenor said to me as we walked away from the interviews.

“Both?” I was very confused. “They were anxious, edgy and agitated. They couldn’t answer any of your questions succinctly and they both looked like they wanted to be anywhere but in that room with you.”

“Prime Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies material,” Elenor said. “Those are the qualities of our best students.”

“How?”

“Priscilla herself told me this,” Elenor said. “If they aren’t nervous, they don’t care.”

I suppose that made sense, in a way. I’m not sure if that slogan really offered insight into what I had just seen. Elenor and Priscilla were the experts, however.

Later that morning, I began reading through Priscilla Dandridge’s memoir, *To Hell and Back in Heels*, which she had on her bookshelf. It was engrossing, learning how the woman thought. I couldn’t put it down. There are times I’m jealous of women, and sometimes I wish I was one.

“Ms. Dandridge?” said a voice from the doorway of my office.

I looked up to see Ms. Wiest, the Diction instructor. “Yes? Ms. Wiest, isn’t it?”

“Yes,” she said. “Celine Wiest.”

I put the book down, bookmarking my place.

“Oh, if you’re too busy...”

“I’m not busy at all. What’s that in your hand?” She was carrying a small plastic dropper.

“Well, this is something I wanted to show you,” Celine said as she came all the way into my office. “It’s kind of our secret sauce in my class.” She handed it to me as she got close enough. It was full of clear liquid, and on the outside it had a white label that had the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School logo in gold and ‘Special Vocal Enhancement Formula’ in pink letters.

“Eyedrops?” I asked, looking at the kind of packaging I had seen with medical eyedrops.

“Throat drops. Mrs. Dandridge, your grandmother, formulated it herself.” She pointed to one of the black and white pictures on the shelf. “She told me she was shooting a movie in eastern Africa many years ago when she got a bad throat infection that left her hoarse and threatened to stop production. A local tribal doctor that was one of the extras in the film offered some herbs that fixed the problem right away. She apparently got the formula from him, refined it until it was a clear liquid, and we use it pretty much the same way to this day.”

“Really?” I said. “Fascinating. So it helps sore throats?”

“Well, yes, but that’s not what we use it for. It raises the tone of the voice, and brings lower voices up into a higher pitch, and makes them sound more lady-like.”

“I was under the impression that wasn’t possible,” I said. “At least not without surgery.”

“Yes and no,” Celine said. “There are a few drugs that can temporarily raise the pitch of someone’s voice, but they tend to do it a little too much. They sound like they’ve been inhaling helium, and it lasts for just a day or so.”

“And these are better?” I asked, as I spilled a couple of drops out into the palm of my hand.

“Much.” She headed for the couch, and I joined her as she sat. “These will raise the voice gradually over the course of three weeks, and if you keep taking them for three months, the results are permanent — and a higher dosage will result in a higher voice. Plus it’s tasteless.”

“How interesting,” I said. “And it really works?”

“Every time. The reason you should know about it is that it’s a big part of our process here. It can be kind of disconcerting when you meet a student one day and then a week later, their voice has changed. I can’t remember the last student to go through here who didn’t use these drops at least a little.”

“I see. It’s a good thing you told me, I might have thought I was losing my mind.” As I looked at the contents of the bottle, I thought that if one wanted,

they could put these drops into someone's food or water and they might not know they were even taking it.

Why they wouldn't have tried to sell this stuff by itself was baffling. It was clearly a marketable product. They could make tons of money selling it. So, I had to ask myself, why didn't they? Yet another sign that something wasn't kosher here.

"Thank you Celine, this has been very enlightening."

"Ms. Dandridge?" A voice said over the intercom.

"Yes, Randi?" I replied.

"Call from the hospital, line 1."

The hospital? I had no idea why they be calling me.

"I'll talk to you later," Celine said as she excused herself.

I sat in the big chair behind the desk and took the call. "Yes?"

"Ms. Dandridge?" said a voice on the other end of the line. "This is Dr. Patel. I'm at Mercy General."

How had they ever connected us up? I had no idea. This was not good.

"That's right," I replied.

"Well" he said, "I have good news, Ms. Dandridge, it looks like your grandmother is on her way out of her coma."

Hell. That was not what I wanted to hear. I had barely even made a dent in this case. As soon as she was conscious, my whole cover would be blown.

"That's wonderful, Dr. Patel!" I said, hoping I sounded sincere.

"It will still be a few more hours, but tomorrow, we'll be attempting to wake her."

"She'll be awake and conscious?"

"That has yet to be seen," he said. "We won't know if she sustained any brain damage until we're able to speak to her and perform some tests."

This was unravelling fast. I needed more time.

"Doctor, I... I... I was hoping you had a few minutes to talk," I said. This was my last chance. I was going to have to tell him what was going on, and that this was a very important case, with people's lives in the balance. I prayed that this line wasn't tapped and no one could overhear me.

"I'm afraid I have many patients to see, Ms. Dandridge," the doctor replied. I can't stay on the line."

"How about lunch?" I asked. "I'd like to thank you for all the care for my dear grandmother."

"It's a a little late for today..."

“Tomorrow, then,” I said. “Lunch tomorrow.”

“Yes. Yes, I can do that.”

So I scheduled lunch with Mrs. Dandridge’s doctor for tomorrow at a restaurant near the hospital. Next, I called Captain Keller and told her all about it. She nearly exploded in anger, but she agreed I had done the right thing. The only thing.

## DAY 11

The clock ticked so very slowly this morning. It was the day for my lunch with Dr. Patel, and I was beside myself. I watched the second hand stumble around the dial, working slower than I had ever seen a clock run before. I barely paid attention to what Elenor was telling me, going over the school’s tax situation. When it came time, I interrupted her and told he I needed to go, which I think shocked her. What might even shock her more was that there was a good chance I was never coming back.

I primped in my hand mirror, grabbed my purse and left my office. Fortunately my rental car was where I had left it some days ago in the school parking lot visitor’s section, unharmed. That’s not a given in LA.

“Right this way, madame,” said the head waiter as he led me to my table.

I was seated at a booth, which was what I had requested for privacy. My guests had not yet arrived, so I ordered tea.

About ten minutes late, which isn’t bad for a doctor, I saw an older west Indian gentleman making his way towards me. This was going to be new. I hadn’t actually fooled a man yet in this disguise. Just women.

“Ms. Dandridge?” He said as he arrived. He was dark haired and dark skinned, with flecks of grey at his temples. I can only hope I look that good when I’m his age.

“Yes, I’m Dianna Dandridge. You must be Dr. Patel.”

“Dr. Sahil Patel,” he said. “It’s so nice to meet you, Ms. Dandridge.” I held out my limp, long-nailed hand, which he gently tugged on.

I could see him subtly run his eyes up and down my body, evaluating me, looking at the makeup on my face, the pinned-up hair on my head and the short skirt I was wearing. It was quite different than being evaluated by a woman. I felt much more... Vulnerable.

“I have to say,” the doctor spoke, “I am surprised you did not come down to the hospital this morning when we began to bring Priscilla out of her coma.”

“Already?” I said. “She’s not talking, is she?”

“Well, yes. She’s going in and out. I did tell her that her granddaughter was monitoring her progress while she ran the school. That seemed to fill her with energy and hope.”

“Oh, good, my... associate... is here,” I said. I saw Captain Keller, dressed up for a change, come through the front door. “This is Captain Keller from the LAPD,” I informed the doctor. “She’s been working on a very mysterious case.”

“Oh?” Dr. Patel asked.

“Yes,” Keller replied. “And due to circumstances, I need to take you into confidence, doctor.”

She and I described what the situation was, with an open undercover investigation into the school Priscilla Dandridge ran, and that there were a multitude of missing persons cases attached to the school. She also told him that I was an undercover agent working the case from the inside. We did not bring up my true identity.

“So what it comes down to, doctor,” the captain said, “is that it’s going to cause a lot of trouble for our investigation if Priscilla Dandridge identifies our agent, and brings our work to a sudden halt. They’ll know we’re on to them and we’ll lose our chance. It’s one of the biggest missing persons cases in the history of this state, and we need to get to the bottom of it.”

“Well, I certainly sympathize, Captain, however, I’m not sure what you expect me to do.” The doctor looked concerned, an expression every doctor must master. “What are you suggesting be done?”

“She just can’t be allowed to communicate with anyone,” Captain Keller said. “Do what you need to do to help her recover, but she’s going to need to be isolated from the outside world.”

“That sounds more like your department than mine, Captain,” said Dr. Patel. “A police guard can keep people out.”

“Or keep her from getting out,” I added, like a dumbass.

“I hardly think a 95-year-old woman recovering from a stroke will need to be contained,” the doctor said.

“Yes, of course,” I said, embarrassed. Sometimes I think too much like a cop.

“A police guard would raise a lot of questions and look highly suspicious. What can we do to keep her isolated while we do our investigation?” the captain asked.

“Well, I could say her immune system is compromised and she can’t have visitors. Also, for the time being, she’s not coherent enough to be on the phone.”

“That can work,” the captain said. “How is she doing? Will she recover?”

“It’s too early to say, but she is a very healthy woman for her age.”

“Are you ready to order?” The waiter said, interrupting. They must take classes on how to awkwardly interrupt conversations.

## DAY 12

My day began briefing Elenor on the condition of Mrs. Dandridge, and how she would be out of communication for some time. She was disappointed to hear that she would be gone as long as she was, but practically elated to know that her best friend was past the worst of it and was talking again. Word quickly spread throughout the school, and it seemed that everyone’s spirits were lifted by the good news.

I had lunch with Elenor, and found myself with the smallest sprig of lettuce on my salad plate, and somehow completely filled after I ate it. I was beginning to think they were doing something funny to the food here. It seemed like magic.

The afternoon I spent talking to some of the support staff, such as our janitor and our IT specialist. The school had a surprisingly modern and robust array of technology, although it wasn’t very obvious. Computers were on instructor’s desks, tablets were given to students, and everyone could handle written work through email submission or logging onto our web-based file server. Security was handled by cards that just needed a tap on a terminal. My department isn’t even this sophisticated.

After I called it a day, Jasmine intercepted me on my exit from my office. “Dianna,” she said. “Done for the day?”

“Yes,” I said. “Learning how this school works and meeting everyone keeps me so busy. I’ve never been more exhausted.” That was perfectly true. This was very tiring work, at least in the mental sense. “Then there’s everything else,” I said, eluding to the disguise I was maintaining.

“I completely understand,” she said. “You know, maybe you should let me help you with that tired look, Dianna. Let’s stop by my classroom and we can take care of that.” She looked at me with a very serious expression, which told me there was more to this than just a touch-up. “Why not change into something casual?” She suggested.

“Casual?” I asked.

Being the person who had packed my bags for this operation, I think she knew very well I only had work clothes.

“Let’s go to your room.”

We did just that, and as I sat in Jasmine’s chair ready for a “touch up” a few minutes later, she had me dressed up in a new outfit. Black slacks, black flats and an ivory long-sleeved blouse with a pearl necklace. It still felt dressy to me, but I guess it was casual for my “Dianna” character.

Janice had me lie back and she took care of the work. Apparently my beard was beginning to show, so I had another round of epilation done to my face, a horrible little machine that yanked hair out by the roots. It wasn't as bad as the first time I had done it, though. She said it was because the hair was thinner now.

My wig was tightened to my scalp and my nails re-done. "You should really find a salon that can take care of this," she said. "Especially if you're going to be here for a while."

"Any suggestions?"

She gave me a business card. "This is just a couple of blocks away. Sometimes you'll even find me there filling for a vacationing stylist."

"Don't I pay you well enough, Ms. LaMay?" I said with a smirk.

"The owner is a friend, that's all."

After an hour, I was done, and I thanked Jasmine for her help. My face was smooth again and looked even more feminine. As I stepped out of the classroom, I said, "I couldn't do it without you." I left my intent vague in case anyone overheard.

"Do what?" Genevieve Fallon said, as she bumped into me in the hallway. Good timing.

"Just help me... Adjust."

"I can only imagine," she said.

She was dressed in a sporty exercise outfit, and looked on the way to a workout. "Don't tell me there's a gym hidden somewhere around here and I missed that, too," I said.

"No, no," Ms. Fallon said, laughing. My ignorance of the cafeteria had become a bit of a story around here. "It's the fitness club around the corner. We all have complimentary memberships as part of the staff. Why don't you join me for some squash?"

"Maybe another time," I replied.

As we walked down the hallway, she stopped me. "Anyway, I wanted to talk to you, Dianna."

"What about?"

"Today when you were sitting in on my fashion class... Your skirt was bunched up under you in the most... Unappealing way, and I wasn't sure if I should let you know or not. Does that kind of thing offend you? When someone lets you know that things might a little unbecoming?"

I wasn't embarrassed so much as angry with myself. Folding my skirt under me when I sat was such an easy thing to do, yet I had been consistently forgetting. I'm jealous of women and how they naturally know these things,

sometimes I wish I was one. There were so many unconscious things I could do to give myself away, but this was completely under my control and I was still messing it up.

“Not at all,” I said. “It’s been a few years since I’ve worn business clothes. I appreciate a little discreet tip, if you’re willing.”

“Splendid!” Genevieve said as we parted ways.

## DAY 16

I am so grateful for Jasmine’s session yesterday. I hadn’t noticed how slack my wig had become, and tightening it up made me look a thousand times better. As for my beard growth, I was going to have to pay much closer attention to that. It would be silly to sink this investigation because of something like a nasty hair poking out of my chin.

I suppose I’ve settled into my own routine. I can get myself dressed and ready to go in about an hour now, and I’m looking better than ever. Doing my face is a snap. Give me thirty seconds and a mirror and I can get my face picture perfect. I also seem to have dropped a few pounds, which is always good news.

It’s occurred to me that since I was called into duty for this assignment that I’ve been dressed exclusively in women’s clothing since then. I haven’t even been back home since then, and so it’s been over two weeks as Dianna Dandridge. Two weeks of makeup, long nails, heels and skirts. If you had asked me before, I would have given myself a day, maybe two tops keeping this disguise up. It’s a lot of work, which is one of the reasons I’m jealous of women, sometimes I wish I was one to help me get through this. I can only try to get through it day by day.

This afternoon, I got a call from Dr. Patel, who asked if I would come by his clinic. I wasn’t sure why, and asked what this had to do with Priscilla Dandridge, but he said it wasn’t about that.

“It’s about you, Dianna,” he explained. “I would like to see how you’re holding up under all the stress. I was concerned when I met you the other day.”

I was pretty sure he was trying to avoid specifics, and since he was working for us now, I interpreted this to be about something he didn’t want people to overhear.

“How about tomorrow?” I offered.

“I have an opening at 11:15,” the doctor said.

## DAY 17

Today was the visit to Dr. Patel's clinic and despite having 24 hours to think about it, I had come up with no answers as to what he wanted to talk about.

At 11:23, only eight minutes late, I was called into his office from the very quiet waiting room. I had dressed in my light grey skirt suit, because I was reasonably sure the doctor hadn't seen me in this outfit yet.

The doctor was waiting for me and escorted me into his office. "Ah, good. Please have a seat," he said, graciously.

His office was almost as nice as mine, and I suppose it was for the same reason. To impress people. It was a very comfortable chair, that was for sure.

"Thank you for coming, Ms. Dandridge. Or... Should I ask what your real name is?" He paused. "Your male name?"

I got back up on my feet.

"No, no, it's alright," the doctor said. "You're in no danger here. Please relax." He never budged an inch. I had no idea what was coming next. I didn't know if this was some kind of set-up or a trap, or what it was.

"You have a point?" I asked, my voice dropping for the first time in days. "Who tipped you off?"

"I'm a professional, and I can spot these things." He smiled. "I knew within five seconds of meeting you, but I had to play along."

"Congratulations," I grumbled. "Are you going to tell anyone?"

"Not a soul. I just thought I could help you out. I can make your disguise a little more authentic."

"Why?"

"I've never been a part of an undercover operation before. It's kind of fascinating."

"So what do you suggest?" I asked.

"Hormones and anti-androgens."

"Sex change drugs? You're talking about sex change drugs. No thanks."

"Well, yes these drugs can be used on a long-term basis for gender transitional patients, but used in the short term, they'll help with weight loss, they increase hair growth as well as thickness and they make the skin softer. All attributes that would help with your disguise."

"All right, but they're sex change drugs."

"If you take them for several months, these effects would be permanent, however when you take them just for a short time, it's all temporary."

The idea that it would aid with weight loss did intrigue me. If there was one thing I was super aware of was that I was the heaviest person in the charm school.

“It would also have the effect of putting you more in touch with your emotions, like an authentic woman experiences.”

One thing that you learn with working with women as much as I had lately was how their moods and emotions drive them. They seemed much more alive than the men I knew. They seemed to be having more fun than I was. You know, in a way, I’m jealous of women, and sometimes I wish I was one.

“How long would it be until the drugs took effect?” I asked.

“Inside of a week to ten days you’d notice some of the changes. Faster if you begin an exercise program, which I would highly suggest.”

“Let me think about that one,” I said.

“While you do, I can also take care of the Adams apple on your throat. It’s quite prominent and it’s what first told me what your true gender was.”

I felt the bump on my throat, which I had never much liked. I’d always heard that it was what gave transvestites away. In fact, it had been mentioned at the police academy as a way to spot transvestite prostitutes. If that was going to jeopardize this assignment, that had me deeply concerned.

“What are walking about?”

“A chondrolaryngoplasty, is what they call it. What we’d do is give you a little anesthesia, shave the bump down, and you’d be back at work the next day.”

“Okay, I’m interested,” I said. “But the money...”

“I contacted Captain Keller, she said the department would cover it.”

“She knew all about this?”

“I would have never approached you if I hadn’t cleared this first.”

“You should have started with that,” I told him. It would have saved me a lot of stress. The doctor took some blood for testing, and I have an early morning appointment tomorrow on Friday. I’ll have the weekend to recover.

## DAY 20

Monday morning is a bear, and this morning was no different. Even working undercover, when I’m technically always on the job, I still feel the drag of going back to work.

After my visit with Dr. Patel, I went ahead with the throat procedure, and I decided I’d try out the hormones and anti-androgen medications. If the drugs

don't work, I can always stop taking them. That was two days ago, and the swelling has gone down in my throat, and I've covered the mild redness with some foundation.

When I put my jacket on and made my last-second checks, I couldn't help but think that women have it easy when it comes to red skin. If I got a zit or a shaving cut I had to wear that sucker out front for all to gawk at for days and just endure it. I'm jealous of women, sometimes I wish I was one.

I spent the majority of the day letting Randi Sparks show me the ins and outs of her job as receptionist. Given that the school is for women only, and isn't that well seen from the street, Randi doesn't get much more than deliveries and the odd sales call. The staff and students use a card entry system in the rear of the building, where the parking is, so she doesn't see them much at all.

It sounds lonely, but Randi seems to be in great spirits almost all the time. She always has a smile and is an easy giggler. She's also a knockout, and wears the most mini of miniskirts most days, so I always find any excuse to get a glimpse of her at least once a day. Lately, I've been having her serve up coffee and tea whenever I have a meeting, and that's only because I like to see her walk into my office — and walk out. Wow.

She's also a redhead, with glimmering curls like copper. For some reason I thought she was a blond when I first met her, but I guess that's how faulty my memory is these days. Such a stunning girl.

I also stopped by Jasmine's class to tell her about the work I had done and she told me it was a fantastic improvement, and I'd never miss my old knob in my throat. She's not kidding. I never liked that bump.

Jasmine had a funny little story about shopping for panties over the weekend and how she'd spent the better part of eight hours tracking down exactly the brand and design she wanted. She had actually driven so far from LA that she rented a motel room in Monterey rather than drive home that night.

"Sounds like I'm crazy," she said.

I couldn't imagine getting that worked up about my underwear. "The thought had crossed my mind," I admitted.

"Silk Sensations by Ladylines," she said. "Try them, you'll never go back."

"Might not be the best for me and my situation," I said.

"Well... Maybe not." I think she blushed red when she realized she had suggested a panty to a man.

Jasmine's a good person to talk to. She has a lot of fun stories but doesn't talk your ear off. Plus, she's a little silly. I like that.

## DAY 28

Here we are, just ten days since my hormone shots from Dr. Patel, and I can feel my skin changing. I was beginning to think nothing would really happen, but there's no doubt about it. My skin is softer.

My weight has also started to drop a little faster. Five pounds since the shots. No complaints!

I had a morning appointment at the salon, my very first time going to a proper salon. It was the one Jasmine had suggested, which was close and convenient. Oddly, I felt a little more confident today, with my softening skin and weight loss, as if I was carrying off this disguise a little bit better today.

I didn't know where to go or what to do when I got the place, though. Certainly this was a sign that I really shouldn't feel that confident at all.

Eventually, the staff there got me to a chair, no thanks to me. The hairdresser, a young woman by the name of "Tia" sat me down and immediately began giving me a skeptical squint.

"It's a wig," I explained.

"I don't work on wigs," she said.

"Well, I was sent here by Jasmine..."

"Oh, Jasmine sent you," the girl said, her expression immediately changing to a smile. "Well, I guess we can make an exception in your case... Or just do your hair like the wig."

This might be the option I was looking for, but could such a thing be done? "But it's so long," I said, "and my hair is so short."

She shrugged her shoulders. "Extensions, falls, we can add just about any length."

"Okay then," I said. I had no idea what I was in for, and spent the next two hours sitting on the chair. I had to call Randi and tell her I would be late getting back.

"You have a very masculine hairline," she said to me as I was just sitting there. I had no idea there was any kind of a difference.

"Yes," I said. "I've heard that."

At some point a woman came up to my side, sat down on a stool and took my hand to start working on my fingernails. I had no idea what was happening, but I had learned to just let it happen. If someone starts taking off your shoes, let them. If someone tells you to close your eyes and hold your breath, do it. If someone drops a towel on your face, don't fight it. Those were the rules of the salon.

Before long, I had two hands' worth of shiny powder pink fingernails. It was a much better job than what I previously had, with the nails tapered in such a way that made my fingers look slimmer, longer and more graceful. It kind of freaked me out. A pair of women's hands were now attached to my arms.

Then the curlers went in. Why was I surprised by this? I was in a women's salon getting a women's hairstyle. Of course curlers were going to be involved. How had I avoided curlers this long, was the correct question to ask.

"We could also do something about those facial hairs," Tia said, being discreet about it.

"Something how?" I wanted to know.

"Electrolysis," she answered. "A quick zap and the hair won't grow back."

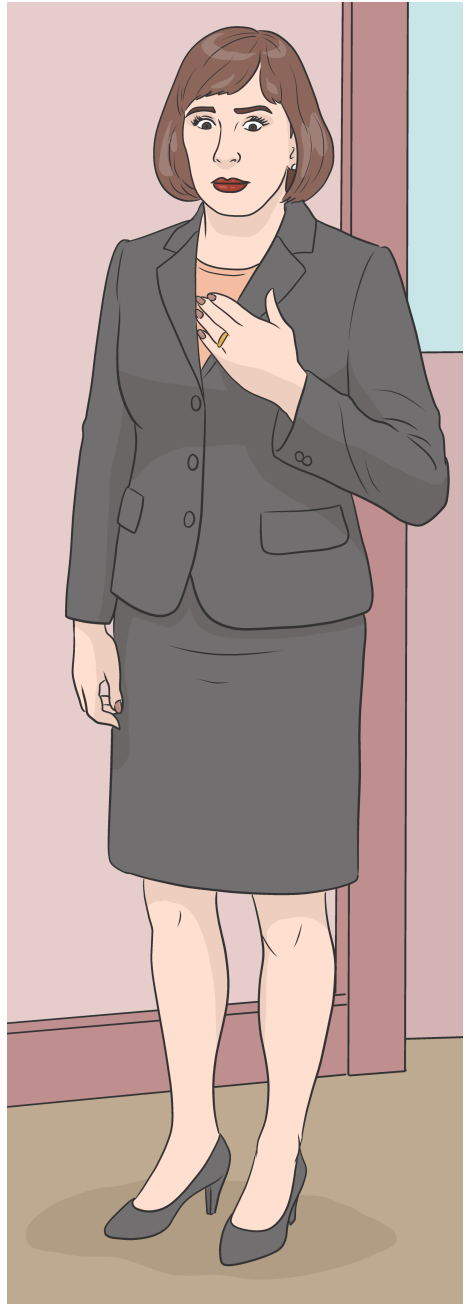
When making a choice between that and another round of that mechanical epilator Janice tortures me with, I didn't have to think very hard. "I'm interested."

So I had that done, too. I was told that I may see something in six months, but until then, I was good. That was music to my ears.

Once the curlers came out, I could see the length of my new hair, and I was astonished. I had no idea you could do this. I had always assumed once you had short hair, you had to get it back the old fashioned way, by waiting for it to grow.

With the ends of greying auburn hair grazing the tops of my shoulders, I was proven wrong.

"So far, so good. What do you think?" Tia asked me.



“It’s incredible.” It really was.

“So now I’m just going to put it back the way you had it, okay?”

“Show me what you’re doing, I’m going to have to do it myself.”

She led me through every step she was taking to match the classic “Dianna” look the wig gave me. It looked flawless, almost as nice as a movie star might have for a red carpet premiere. I had never looked better.

The girls at the school couldn’t stop complimenting me when I got back. Even Elenor had a few kind words for me. As soon as I got back to my desk, I made my next appointment and booked a regular spot for Tuesdays and Thursdays. I was a convert. More salon time for me, please.

## DAY 31

I finally let Ms. Hawthorne talk me into joining her at the gym today. Sitting at a desk most of the day is not the way to stay in shape, and even if I am worried about giving the game away, I was going a little stir crazy not being able to let loose and have a real workout.

I had a very distracted day with Elenor, unable to really focus on anything because I was so looking forward to the workout. I had to stop by Bianca’s class and she got me a nice exercise ensemble I could wear and covers me up well. Problem is that it’s pink, and I was just about fed up with pink, by now. I was surrounded by it every moment of every day.

I had a pink pair of track pants, a matching pink track jacket, a white bodysuit worn inside and a pair of white cross trainers. Bianca also insisted that I wear a pink sweatband to “complete the look” as she put it. I had to promise her I would.

I didn’t notice until I looked at it closer in my room but it was lined on the inside with those same curious silver fibers that my jackets had on the collar.

When I put it on, I swear I nearly lost my balance out for a moment, but it was only the briefest little interruption. I suppose I was overwhelmed by the idea of going to a gym again. I checked myself in the mirror, and honestly, there is such a thing as too much pink.

“There’s nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful,” I thought.

Now, where had that idea come from? Who knows. This place must be getting to me. Maybe it’s all the pink.

Anyway, the workout was kind of a let-down. After all that anticipation, it became clear that Ms. Hawthorne wasn’t going to leave my side, and doing any

strenuous stuff like lifting or crunching wasn't going to look good for my cover story. A fifty year old woman should not be bench pressing 280.

Instead, I had to do the aerobics/pilates/yoga stuff that they were doing. Who knows what the proper name is for it, but whatever it is, it's dull.

I'm not even sure I'd call it a workout. It's more like stretching with extra steps.

"Let's get those leg muscles nice and powerful," Millicent said as she started doing some leg stretches, waiting for me to join in. I mean, I figured if I wanted to do any exercise today, this was the only way I could, so that's what I did.

I spent probably twenty minutes on various forms of leg-lifts, which was way more than my body was prepared to do. The last two minutes I could barely get my legs to move, and I knew I was going to be incredibly sore tomorrow.

"You have to keep working those glutes if you want those beautiful feminine curves," she said.

I suppose there's nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful, so I got my second wind and pushed through the pain.

We moved on to kettlebell squats, then bent leg kickbacks. Millie fastened some weights to my ankles and I did some weighted donkey kicks.

We did almost nothing with the upper body, instead moving on to double-leg calf raises, then seated calf raises and finally stair stepping. Women sure do want their legs to look good. They spend so much time on them, which I suppose makes sense, as workouts can't really make your boobs bigger.

When we were done, I thanked Millie for her help and she told me that tomorrow would be easier. So I guess I'm coming back tomorrow.

And I was wrong about being sore tomorrow. I was aching like crazy by the time I ate dinner.

I was sitting by myself in the cafeteria, with a bowl of soup and Priscilla Dandridge's memoir, which I was now reading for the second time, when Jasmine sat down with me.

"Mind some company?" She asked.

"Of course not," I told her. I put my book down and stirred my soup. "It's been a long day," I said. I took a sip of my tea and I dabbed my lips with a napkin.

"You're holding up well," she said. "The staff really seems to like you."

"I've been trying to build personal relationships with everyone."

"That's important... As the new administrator of the school." She didn't have to explain to me what she really meant, that I needed to know everyone closely enough to be trusted before I had to start getting nosy.

“I spent this afternoon working out with Ms. Hawthorne,” I said. “She’s a slave driver.”

“So you survived a Millie workout, huh? You *are* made of tougher stuff.”

“I guess she has a bit of a reputation?” I asked.

“You could say that. There’s a reason no one works out with her.”

“I’ll see how long I last,” I said. I tried a spoonful of soup, but it was still too hot. “If we keep going like this, my thighs will be thicker than the winner of the Kentucky Derby.”

“I’d take that deal,” Jasmine said as she began to nibble on her salad. “By the way, I really like your outfit.”

I had dressed in another so-called casual outfit, slacks and a blouse, adding a cardigan wrapped around my shoulders. I had seen a photo of Priscilla Dandridge in her book where she wore something similar. She had a very good sense of style.

“Thank you,” I replied. “And I love your blouse,” I added. It was important to volley back a compliment when you were given one by a woman, I had learned. It was also important to take note of every item of clothing they wore, so you could talk about it.

“I got it at Nordstroms last week,” she said. “Half off.”

“At Nordstroms? That’s unheard of.”

She shrugged. “I got lucky I guess.”

After we chatted for a little while, Jasmine was done eating and left for the night. I got back to reading my book. Priscilla was really, truly, an amazing woman. She made her living as a sex symbol of her age but still asserted herself with all the rights and privileges men had. She didn’t take any shit from anyone.

“Give me a good pair of heels and I can get anything I want,” she had written. After all, there’s nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful even as you live life on your own terms.

## DAY 35

It was chicken croquettes day, which meant the girls were wearing gloves. Not because croquettes required them, but because Thursday lunch included etiquette drills — tea service, ladylike laughter, and the proper removal of lemon seeds with one’s spoon. Girls were expected to discuss novels they hadn’t read and keep their posture straight without appearing to try. I sat near the back of the cafeteria with a folder of enrollment documents and a pot of tea that got cold before I remembered to drink it.

That was when I looked up and saw the new girl.

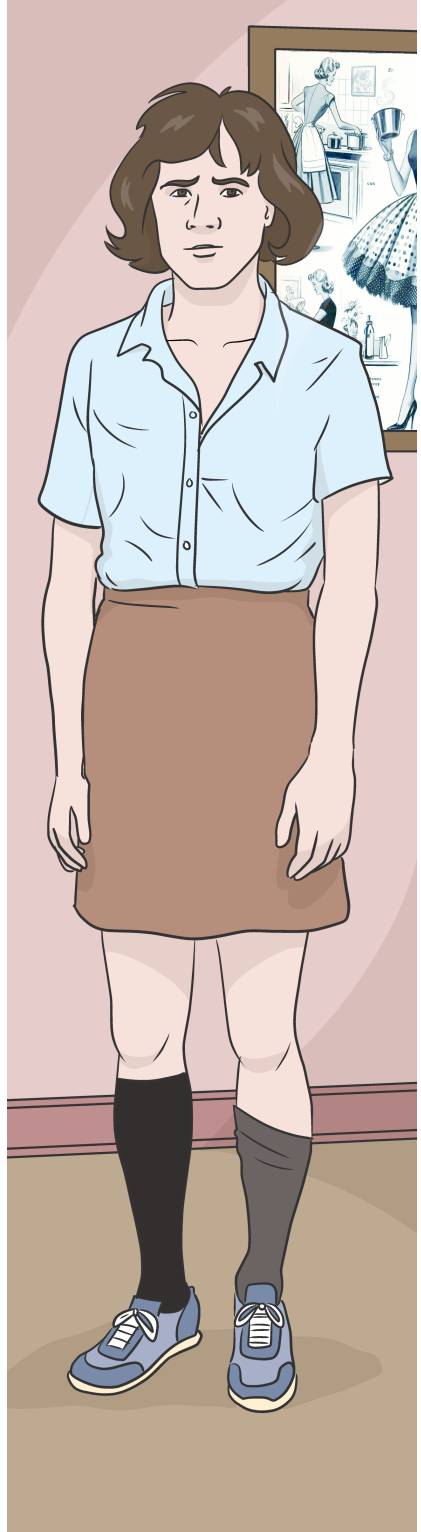
Lucy Everett. The paperwork had arrived on Dianna's desk three days earlier, folded into a manila envelope with a letter of introduction signed by someone who referred to themselves as "The Baroness." No surname. No return address. The letter mentioned Lucy had "delicate nerves," which I assumed was polite code for either mood swings or a tendency to lash out. Either way, we'd accepted her. Eleanor hid signed off personally, and it appeared to be one of Merrill Thorne's recruits.

She stood in the doorway like she'd been dropped there. Her blouse was wrinkled, collar limp and open at one side like she'd forgotten a button. Her skirt hung too loose at the waist and sagged in the back, suggesting a thrift store origin and no tailoring. Her socks didn't match. Her hair — a short, brassy bob — curled in one direction on one side and the opposite on the other, like a question mark made of frizz. It appeared it might even be a wig. She wore no makeup, and her face had the raw, reddish look of someone who'd scrubbed it too hard. Her tray held only bread rolls and what appeared to be two bananas.

She scanned the room, then sat at the empty table in the corner, facing the barred window like she thought it might offer an escape route. She didn't speak to anyone. The other girls looked at each other, wide-eyed, and then back at her like she'd wandered into the wrong country.

"Poor thing," murmured Genevieve Fallon beside me. "She looks like she's just escaped a mine collapse."

"She looks *new*," I said, which was my



way of saying she didn't look like she belonged here.

The others had been shaped — or at least sanded down. They knew how to hold a spoon and how to press their lips around a straw like it was a delicate secret. Lucy didn't even sit properly. One leg curled under her, the other jutted out like she was about to leap.

I clicked my tongue. "She'll need remedial everything."

"She'll get it."

"Does she speak?"

"I assume so."

"I do hope she's grateful. It's not easy to get into this school."

We watched as Lucy peeled one of the bananas. She took a bite, stared out the window, and chewed with the slow, flat look of someone who wasn't tasting any of it.

"She's not ready for this," I said, and sipped my tea.

"None of them are, Dianna — when they arrive," Genevieve replied.

## DAY 38

It's been several days of the same thing. I was worried my daily workouts with Millie were going to wear me out, but I think I'm over the hump. Dr. Patel was right, too. I've been seeing real results in weight loss. Exercise combined with the hormones have helped me drop 8 more pounds.

Besides my new daily workout routine, I've been sitting in on more classes, getting to know the kind of curriculum we teach here at the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School. The more time you spend in the classes, you begin to appreciate just how much there is to learn about femininity and presenting a charming and graceful image.

There's nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful, and I respect all our students for taking the challenge on in a day an age that seems to value overt sexual appeal rather than embrace the alluring interplay between a man and a woman. Is romance dead? Not if Priscilla Dandridge has anything to say about it.

"Ms. Dandridge?" Randi said as I walked to my office. "Someone from the police wanted to drop by and talk to you about a missing persons case," she said. "A Captain Keller, she said her name was. I scheduled her in tomorrow at 11."

So, the captain wants to see me. Very curious.

## DAY 39

I picked out my finest skirt suit for the captain's visit today. Well, I picked out a grey jacket, black blouse and black skirt, which I thought was my strongest combo. There's nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful when you meet up with your boss, and I wanted her to know everything was under control.

I also picked out my best heels, suede black ones Bianca gave me the other day. I looked sharp in those, even though the heel was a little higher than I'm used to. I spent a few extra hours with Genevieve to help me with my walk to make sure I looked smooth in them.

"Ms. Dandridge?" Randi said as she escorted the captain into my office. "Captain Keller from the LAPD."

"Thank you, Randi," I said, noting her red hair was looking decidedly more brown than I remembered it. "Tea or coffee?" I asked the Captain.

"Tea would be nice," she said.

I gave Randi a nod and she was off to make the drinks. She already knew my preference for tea.

I had the captain sit down in the guest chair in front of my desk as I sat in mine. "So what brings you to our school, Captain?" I asked. Yes, this was all very silly, but I had to keep up the pretense.

"Thank you for seeing me on such short notice," the captain said. She was really playing this well. "First, let me say I hope your grandmother makes a complete recovery."

"Thank you," I said. "My grandmother still has a lot of life left in her, and we're all pulling for her swift return."

"The reason for my visit today is a case we've been investigating for the past few days. It's a missing persons case involving a minor. He's 18, Mexican, five foot eight, 145 pounds. He was last seen at his high school twenty days ago."

"His family must be heartbroken," I said.

"He has no immediate family, unfortunately. We were alerted by the school. His guardian didn't report him missing, and we have had a hard time tracking him down as well."

"Tragic," I said.

"Our people working the case have had a number of leads, and we know he was in this area after his last sighting at his school. We believe he might have tried to enroll here, for whatever reason."

I hated to hear about such things. Young people had so much to live for. "My heart goes out to him and I pray he's found safe and sound. However, as I

believe you know, this school is for women only, and only women are allowed inside. No exceptions. The person who fixes our plumbing is a woman, as I have recently learned.”

It was true. Men were simply not allowed in the building at any time for any reason. According to Elenor, the only time it was allowed in the past thirty years was when Priscilla herself suffered her stroke and had to be taken out by emergency medical personnel.

“Never the less, we believe he was here, and may have attempted to gain entry.”

So this was why Captain Keller wanted to meet face to face. There was a new missing persons case attached to the school, and she was essentially briefing me on it.

Randi came in and served the tea, using the good cups. That was a good call on her part. Once she left, I continued the conversation.

“Do you have a photo or a name?”

“Everything is right here,” she said, sliding a file folder across my desk. Even undercover, I was getting a case file. The work just never stops.

I opened it, and inside was a list of places this person been seen, a brief bio, a couple of photos and a name. Ignacio Cortez Jr. was what the paperwork said.

“Well, I can circulate it amongst the staff and students to see if anyone’s seen this young man, but I’m not sure what other help I can be,” I said.

“Our information dries up when it comes to anything beyond being seen in this immediate area,” the captain said. “So we believe he may still be here, and he may yet try to contact the school, staff or students.”

“So if we do see him we should contract you immediately?”

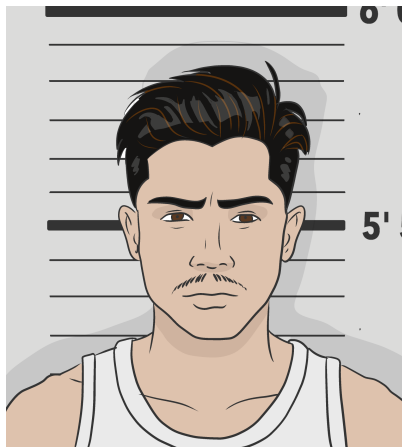
“My direct number is in the file,” Captain Keller said.

“So I can keep this?”

“Consider it yours,” the captain said. That was it — that was the instruction to take the case. “That’s what I came to say, and I must be getting on my way.”

“It’s wonderful to see you again, captain,” I said. “And I do hope we can be of some help in finding this poor boy.”

“I’m sure you’ll do your best,” the captain said. As I came around the desk she gave me another look. “Have I said how much better you look these days, Dianna? You really have been getting in shape, and I love the look.”



“You’re wonderful for saying so, captain. Yes, I’ve been a little more attentive to my health lately. There’s nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful.”

“Southern California will do that to a woman,” the captain said.

The competition in Los Angeles to look good amongst women who had come here from all over the world based on their appearance alone was fierce. Sometimes, the pressure could get to you. “Yes, it certainly will.”

I saw her off and let out a breath. I was worried it was going to be worse. Instead, this was just a reminder as to what I was here to do, and the appearance of the captain gave me the cover I needed to begin talking to people about this case.

Sure enough, the word had spread quickly and everyone wanted to know what the situation was. I calmed their curiosity while also distributing the pictures I had. At least for the moment, no one had seen Ignacio Cortez Jr.

## DAY 43

I decided today I was going to spend the day with Celine Wiest in her diction class, but before very long, it wasn’t the students who were being schooled in their tone and elocution, but me.

“Dianna,” Ms. Wiest said in the most maternalistic way to me. “You’re simply not getting it. With all due respect.”

She had me repeating tongue-twisting phrases over and over again, and the goal was to make sure all the words were “clear and comprehensible” as well as “pleasantly spoken.”

I was doing pretty well on the “clear and comprehensible” but falling flat on “pleasantly spoken.”

“I just can’t get my voice into that range,” I told Celine, but she was not going to let me off that easy.

“I am certain when you were a little girl you must have spoken with the voice of an angel, Dianna,” she answered back. “There’s a melodious, delightfully sweet voice inside of you, and we are going to bring it out.”

“I’m really not so sure, Celine.”

“Tut tut! Who’s the instructor here? You have no idea of the miracles I’ve been able to conjure. I could make a donkey sing the Hollywood Bowl!” She pointed to the script I had been given. “Try it again!”

“Betty bought butter but the butter was bitter, so Betty bought better butter to make the bitter butter better,” is what I read on the paper. “Betty bubber bidder,” is what I started to say.

“Well, let’s just focus on the tone,” Celia said. “What I want to hear is resonance in the head, not in the chest. Don’t worry about pitch, just focus on keeping the voice up in your mouth and head, and not in the body. Try paragraph 2.”

“Don’t go deep into debt,” I said, reading from the sheet. “Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.”

“Okay, now listen to me say, it,” Celine said. “Don’t go deep into debt. Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy. See how I keep it all from the throat up? I keep my throat tense, my chest still, and I try to project my voice up, not let it settle.”

“Don’t go deep into debt,” I repeated, nearly choking on the words. “Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.”

“That’s progress,” Celine said.

“Maybe we should just use the drops,” I said, referring to the school’s “secret sauce” she had shown me so many weeks ago.

“Dianna, all the pitch in the world isn’t going to make you sound more feminine. You’ll just sound like a cartoon.”

“Fine,” I said. I wasn’t sure why I was torturing myself like this. My “feminine voice” had been more than adequate to fool everyone I had met so far. Still, there’s nothing wrong with wanting to sound more feminine and beautiful. “Don’t go deep into debt,” I said once more. “Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.”

“Try imagining you’re working a sex phone line,” Celia suggested.

“*Baay-bee...*” I said in my best Barry Green voice.

“As a woman,” she added.

“Oh, of course.” I cleared my throat. “Don’t go deep into debt. Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.”

“Try it again. Really picture it.”

I closed my eyes and tried to imagine myself talking into a phone. I pictured a dim room, a bed with silk sheets. A woman laid out on the bed in a silk nightie. In red. Me. I was the woman. “Don’t go deep into debt,” I said, sounding sultry. “Success seeds success.” I was practically purring. “Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.”

“He’s a lonely man on the other end of the line, hearing your sexy voice is his one relief from his busy, exhausting life.”

“Don’t go deep into debt. Success seeds success. Ensuring excellence isn’t easy.” It was finally clicking into place for me. I had it. I had the voice. The sweet friendliness and musical timbre of a truly feminine voice. “Betty bought

butter but the butter was bitter, so Betty bought better butter to make the bitter butter better.” I could use this voice to make any man weak in the knees.

“That’s more like it, Dianna,” Celia said, clearly pleased with my progress. “Now can you keep it up?”

“I’ll do my very best,” I replied in my new voice. “Ms. Wiest.”

“Look out boys, there’s a new girl on the prowl,” Celia said.

Indeed.

## DAY 47

Today I found myself in Bianca’s class, and much like my trip to Celia’s class, I found myself more the subject than observing it.

“Now who here thinks Ms. Dandridge could use a little bit of an update?” Bianca asked her five students. They all raised their hands enthusiastically, with some assorted giggles.

“But *you* gave me these, Bianca,” I pointed out.

“What was that, over a month ago? Styles move on.” She wasn’t going to let me talk her out of this. “Anyway, the clothes have outgrown you and you need to show off that new figure.”

I had been wondering what I was going to do about my clothes, actually. I’m now at 142 pounds, which I haven’t been since... High school? Maybe even before that. Come to think of it, that’s a crazy small number. I should probably check with Dr. Patel to see if that’s normal or not.

“I don’t think undressing in front of students is appropriate,” I told Bianca.

“You’re an old fuddy-duddy.”

“Ugh,” I replied. I walked over to the privacy screen. “What do you have in mind?”

The smile on Bianca’s face made her look like a kid who was told they could pick any toy in the store. She dashed off to her wardrobe so fast you could hear the “whoosh” sound she left behind.

“Does she do this to you girls, too?” I asked the class nodded and they mumbled agreement.

“I had to stay after class to try on shoes yesterday,” one girl said.

“We had a vote on my underwear last week,” another said.

“Let’s show off that amazing new figure, Dianna!” Bianca said, returning with a pile of clothes. “Get out of those awful old things!”



I stepped behind the privacy screen and took off my jacket, blouse and skirt. This was a risk, as a single set of eyes could ruin everything, but avoiding it would look terribly suspicious.

Also, maybe I just wanted to try on some clothes? There's nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful, is there?

"Look at that hot little bod you've got! You are going to knock 'em dead, Dianna."

"Please, Bianca"

"You are going to have to fight them off with a stick."

I wriggled into a dress that was way too tight, barely squeezing into it, and feeling like the insides of a sausage. "This is too small," I said.

"We'll be the judge of that, won't we girls?" Bianca said to the class.

I fastened the large ornamental belt attached to the dress and stepped to where Bianca could see me.

She immediately adjusted my bra straps as they were leaving a tell-tale outline. I hadn't even been paying attention to that.

She got behind me and forced me out in front of the students, and all of the sudden I was on display. I'd been through a lot in the weeks I had been in disguise, but this was new. Evaluation. Direct examination. Eyes staring at me, judging me.

"I think it looks good," one of the students finally said.

"I really like it," said another.

"You look really nice, Ms. Dandridge."

I was about to thank that student for the compliment, but something stopped me. The girl who had just spoken had triggered some kind of memory, and I didn't know what to make of it. It wasn't until later that I realized what it was. She reminded me of Ignacio Cortez Jr., the missing kid. The eyes were similar. Nothing much else, though. This girl had blond hair, a fair complexion and spoke with a slight southern accent — but the eyes. The eyes were the same.

Weird how something like that can trigger a memory. What a crazy coincidence that a girl in this school would have eyes just like a boy missing in the area. Imagine the odds of a thing like that.

Anyway, as I stood there, basking in the compliments, I could feel my face getting red. I may have been on display, being judged, but after the tense and nerve-wracking moments of all eyes on me, they approved. They liked me. What a rush.

I even did a little spin for them. I felt on top of the world.

"Well, princess, let's try a few more looks, okay?" Bianca said, gesturing to the privacy screen.

“This feels so short,” I said as headed back to the screen.

“It’s not that short at all,” Bianca countered. “Take a look.”

The mirror she had been blocking from my view was now visible as she stepped aside. I had to admit, it wasn’t as short as it felt. It was only above my knees by an inch or two.

I wore a few more outfits, but it was very clear we already had a winner. One thing was consistent, though, they all had shorter skirts than I was used to.

“You have the legs, Dianna,” Bianca said. By now class was over, and it was just the two of us. “They’re your best feature, so show them off.”

“They are?” I said, giving my legs a turn in the mirror. I had been working out a lot with Millie lately, and working on my legs almost exclusively. They had gotten more toned and much slimmer, and my thighs had become a bit thicker. “I don’t know, Bianca.”

“Trust me, I’m the expert.”

“I can’t argue with that,” I said. I turned around to get my other side. My legs had never looked better, really. There’s nothing wrong with wanting to look feminine and beautiful, and I did look rather feminine — and if the compliments I had just gotten were any measure — one might even say beautiful.

## DAY 55

Millie and I were down in the Gym doing our usual routine this morning, minding our own business. She had talked me into wearing shorts instead of my usual track pants, and that was where I made my mistake.

This were going on as normal, with squats, leg-lifts, stretching, and step exercises. We had done this dozens of times. So we were taking a break when this guy comes up to me.

“I never do this,” he said. “But I noticed you a few days ago, and I just had to talk to you.”

I looked over at Millie for help, but she had turned her back and was walking away from me, swiftly. I suppose she thought she was helping me.

“Talk about what?” I said, unaware of his real motives.

“Well, let’s start with you,” he said, smiling like a creep. “How do you keep in such great shape?”

“The usual,” I said in my new feminine voice. I still wasn’t used to how womanly my voice had become. Every word I spoke was sultry and sounded like I was coming on to everyone I spoke to. I need to work on that.

“Well, whatever you’re doing, it’s really working for you. *Really* working.” He moved his head around the side to look me over, including my butt. It was right about then that I started to think he was coming on to me. Brilliant, I know, but given that a guy had never tried to chat me up before, I didn’t recognize the obvious. I also forgot what I looked like.

“Uh, yeah,” I said. “Thanks. Gotta go.”

He quickly side-stepped to be in my way. “I may not be the best-looking guy in here, but I’m the only one talking to you.”

“Good for you. I have to get back to my workout.”

“I can help you get the vitamins you need for the best workout,” he said, still blocking me. “You need a megadose of Vitamin D.” He then pressed himself forward right up to me, pushing his groin on my leg. He was erect. This was apparently “Vitamin D.”

I pushed him away with all the strength I had, which was much less than I thought I had. The lower body workouts had let my arms become weak and shapeless. I only wound up pushing him a few inches.

“What’s the problem?” He said, putting his arms out. “You don’t want to pass on these.” He flexed his admittedly impressive muscles. “I have more mass than a church on Sunday.”

“No, seriously, get out of my way,” I said, a little louder.

“C’mon, you can’t tell me you don’t want it,” the guys said.

“Is there a problem here?” Another man came in, trying to insert himself between me and this creep. He was probably in his fifties, with a salt and pepper beard and slightly beefier than the other man. “Why don’t you leave the lady alone?”

“Take a seat, grandpa,” said the creep.

“Oh, you’re making it personal?” the other guy countered.

“You get a day pass from the old folks home? Somewhere a cup of applesauce is going uneaten.”

“Please, guys,” I said, trying to stop the escalation.

“Applesauce is all you’re going to be able to eat after I smack that smile off your face.”

“Hey, yeah, that’s a good...” The creep then launched a haymaker, missing wildly. I took several steps back, not wanting to get involved. These two men were much larger than I was, and it had been a long time since I had been in that kind of position.

The older man took advantage of the creep’s loss of balance after his swing and pushed him away, sending him back a few steps. He then righted himself

and charged with an over head punch, which was grabbed and stopped, but the creep swept his leg and sent the older man into some of the equipment.

The area was immediately swarmed with gym employees, but it didn't stop the fight. The older guy lowered his shoulder and laid into the creep, pushing them into a Nautilus machine with a clatter. Both men just smiled at each other, ready to take the fight to the next level.



“Maybe you can explain to me why my undercover officer, nearly two months into one of our longest and most elaborate undercover operations, is sitting here in the back of a cruiser, handcuffed?”

Captain Keller intercepted me before I was to be taken into the station to get booked for disorderly conduct and assault. Fortunately for the both of us and the operation, she had been alerted to “Dianna Dandridge” being brought in. She was now leaning over the back of the police car’s rear door as I sat in my workout outfit, my hands behind my back.

“It’s not my fault,” I said.

“Not your fault,” she repeated, quietly.

“I tried to get out of there, but...”

“A woman knows how to stop this kind of situation from even happening!” the captain shouted at me. “Either you are one hundred percent committed to the role, thinking like a woman would, or this whole thing is going to explode in our faces!”

“But...”

“You’re damn lucky I was even told about this before you got exposed!” She yelled.

“Sorry,” I said. I wasn’t sorry, but it was what she wanted to hear.

“What started this?”

“Well, I was just minding my own business when this guy came up to me during my workout and... He pressed his boner into me.”

“And?” The captain asked.

“*He pressed his dick into me!*” I repeated.

“Do you know how many times horny men have pulled the same shit with me? With every woman alive? You deal with it! You don’t start a fight!”

“I didn’t start the fight!”

“I don’t care! You need to think more like a woman and less like a man, is that clear?”

“Yes.”

“I’m going to tell the officers to forget all about this, but I need you to re-commit to this role, Callahan!”

“Yes ma’am.”

“The next time this happens, you just play it cool and use your feminine wiles to handle the situation, got it?”

“Yes.”

“You better. Now get out of there and let me un-cuff you.” I struggled out of the back seat without assistance and turned around to be unlocked. “Next time I’m going to let them strip search you first.”

“Yes ma’am.”

## DAY 62

I was at the salon today getting my hair done, because this was going to be a big day for me. I’m moving out of the school. It had been two months now, and according to my cover story, I was moving to the area, so it only made sense that I’d have my own apartment by now.

The captain had come through with a sizable budget, and instead of an apartment, I was shopping for a condo. That fit with my standing as Headmistress of Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies, as my new business cards said. So I needed to look like a million bucks for the interview.

I was dressed in one of Bianca’s new outfits, a simple black sheath dress and my killer three-inch heels. I was still uncomfortable with the short hemline, but there was no doubt I looked good in it.

“Big date?” Tia asked me as she assessed my needs for the appointment.

“Date?” I replied, scoffing at the implication. However, I caught myself. As the captain had said, I needed to commit to this role. “Not tonight,” I clarified. “I have an interview with a co-op for a condominium.”

“A co-op can’t keep you warm at night,” Tia said. “No, wait, actually I think that’s exactly what a condo does.”

“So let’s go with a professional look today, okay?” I asked Tia. “Something that says I have everything together, and I’d be a great neighbor.”

“I know just what you mean. Leave it all to me.”

Darned if she didn’t so it, too. I looked great when I was walked out of there, ready to take on the world. A sharp dress, my best shoes and a head of hair that didn’t have a strand out of place.



I did not get the condo.

Fortunately though, a few hours later I got my second choice. I didn't even have to interview for that one. It came furnished, too, which was great because we did not have the budget for furniture.

I didn't waste any time, so this evening, I packed up my suitcase and headed to my new place. Okay, so I needed five suitcases. When had I accumulated so much stuff? I mean, most of it was clothing and shoes and makeup, but there was just so much stuff. I must have lost track of all the things i was accumulating.

Anyway, now I'm all moved in, my closets half full and I'm going to sleep in a big bed tonight. I've got a great view of the valley, it's ten minutes to the school, and there's a Trader Joe's just down the street. It's nice.

Too bad it's not really mine. Maybe I can swing something with the department when this job is over.

## DAY 71

She came in without knocking. That was the first thing. Not that I blamed her.

Lucy Everett stood in the doorway like someone waiting to be scolded by a stranger. She was wearing something persimmon-colored and too big in the shoulders, and her hair looked like it had been cut with garden shears and dried by accident. Her shoes were scuffed, penny loafers missing the penny. She blinked at the room — filled with Priscilla's mementos — like she didn't know where she was.

"Have a seat," I said.

She did, slowly, arms crossed over her chest as if she was expecting impact.

"I'm Headmistress Dandridge. This is your follow-up meeting. We do these with every new student, usually after the first month."

She nodded once.

"I want to get a sense of who you are. What you've been taught. What needs..."

"I want to leave," she said flatly.

That shut me up for a second. It wasn't the words so much as the tone. Like she wanted to say something else but didn't have the right shape for it yet. I had taken some special notice of her, as she was the first new student while I was undercover.

"Where did you come from, Lucy? Where were you before?"

"Foster care. Mostly."

“And your aunt? The Baroness?”

“I don’t have an aunt.”

“She signed your enrollment.”

Lucy shrugged.

I opened the file again. There were no transcripts. No medical forms. Just the letter and the payment slip.

“We teach refinement here,” I said, pivoting. “Behavior. Presence. How to exist in the world with a kind of softness that doesn’t disappear under pressure.”

She stared at me.

“We teach how to speak. How to stand. How to dress in a way that invites respect without begging for it.”

“I just want to leave.”

“And where would you go?” I asked, genuinely curious.

“Just let me leave,” she repeated.

“I think you’ll be safer and more comfortable here,” I answered. After all, it was better than foster care or the streets.

Her brow furrowed.

“I know it’s all a bit odd, but as you can see, the girls here all adjust to it over time.”

“That’s what worries me,” she replied.

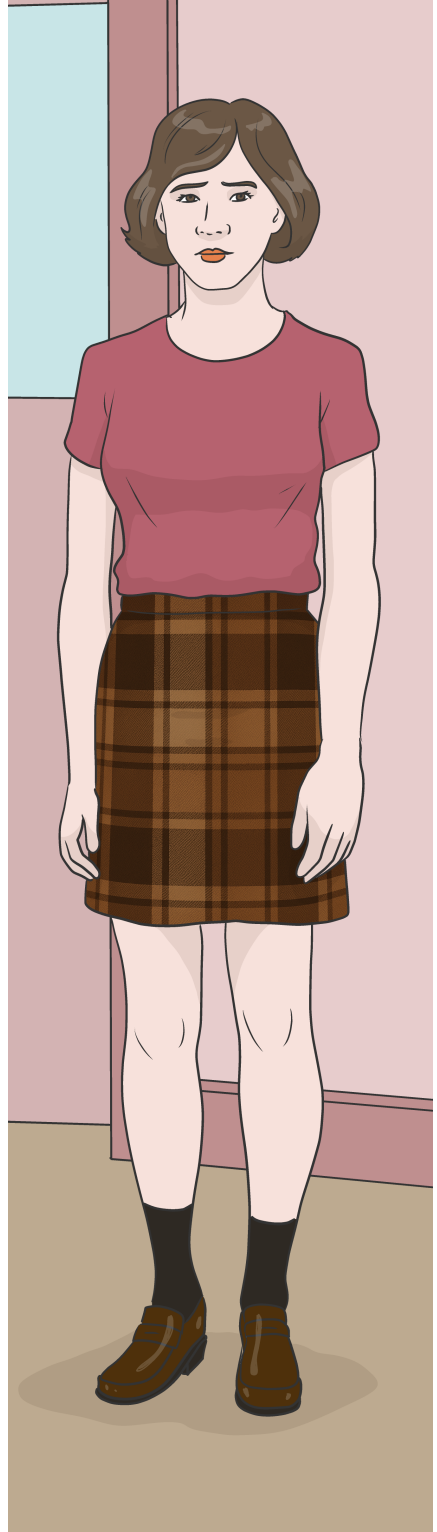
It sounded like the usual fears any new student might have in a school. Nothing to worry about. “You’ll see Ms. Wiest for vocal training after supper. And Ms. Hawthorne for fitness. She’ll take your measurements again.”

She stood up. “Can I go now?”

“Yes.”

As she turned to leave, I added, “Lucy?”

She stopped.



“When you hear girls laughing at you, it’s not because they’re cruel. It’s because they used to be you.”

She left without saying anything.

## DAY 74

I don’t know why I had let Millie talk me into the leotard today, but I wore it, and when we were working out at the gym, it sure did start to attract the flies.

I played it smart, just like the captain had told me to, and just ignored those who weren’t in my way. For those who did get in my way, I asked them to go get me something or have them do some task where I could just dash off and leave them behind.

It worked amazingly well. Men are not bright. See a pretty woman, a little bit of leg, and their minds go to mush.

Anyway, as we did our leg lifts, leg curls, squats and stairs, we were pretty much left alone.

That was until we got into the weight room, and he was there. Mr. Salt and Pepper Beard. All 220 pounds of him. Just a guess.

It had been a while, and I hadn’t seen either of the two men who had fought over me since, so I was hoping they’d moved on to another gym and on to some other gym that they could destroy in peace.

Upon seeing him, I wanted to turn back immediately, but Millie was already adjusting the weights on her machine, so I had to follow her. I was her spotter, after all.

Sure enough, he noticed my presence and began to move over my direction. Why did I wear that stupid leotard? It shows off everything.

“I think that’s close enough,” I told him when he was six feet away. He put up his hands in surrender and didn’t move.

“I owe you the biggest of apologies,” he said.

“How are you even allowed back in here?” I asked.

“I own the place,” he said.

That would explain it. It would explain why our school’s membership wasn’t cancelled. It would further explain why the staff let him fight in the first place.

“There’s no excuse at all for my behavior,” he said.

“No there isn’t,” I said, and turned my back to him. I had hoped that would put an end to the conversation, but it didn’t.

“I’ve extended your school’s group pass for ten more years,” he said. “And upgraded them to platinum VIP status. On the house.”



That was a lot of money. A lot. I had seen the bill. For the good of the school, and our staff, I had to swallow my pride. “Thank you,” I said.

“Am I forgiven?”

“It’s a start,” I said. Crap. Now he was going to think I was soft and letting him win me over.

The things I do for the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies.

## DAY 78

It was another hard day at work, and I was so glad to come home to my place and kick my heels off. If this whole operation had taught me anything, it was appreciating the simple things.

Being able to relax in my own place without worrying about someone barging in and exposing your secret felt almost decadent today. I took the bra off and tossed away the bodyshaper as I changed into a nightie and a bathrobe.

I poured myself a glass of merlot, the bottle a housewarming gift from Genevieve, and sat down in front of the TV for an evening watching old movies. How I missed having private time.

I suppose it was with a few glasses in me that I realized I hadn’t actually been able to... arouse myself in fear of being discovered. I checked the locks on the door, tossed my robe and laid myself out on my big bed, ready to finally get some release. First I had to carefully wriggle out of my gaff, which is not easy, and I tend to keep it on just because it can get a little annoying. I wait until the very last minute when I have to pee. The more I can store up the better.

You would have thought that after two and a half months I would have had some real pent-up needs, but you would be wrong. No matter how hard I rubbed and rubbed, I couldn’t get hard. I even used lotion. I couldn’t even get the tiniest of feelings. It was like I was trying to get off by jerking my thumb.

There I was, though, in a silky nightie, feeling completely unfulfilled. I closed my eyes and tried to think of something erotic. I was nodding off instead. I had one last idea left. I got up, swiped off my nightie and put on my sexiest panties and bra. I put my hair up and then snapped on a garter belt, and slipped a pair of my silkiest stockings on my legs, clipping them into place. I refreshed my makeup and stepped into a pair of my stilettos.

Then I set the mirror up in front of the bed, and laid on it. I kept my eyes closed as I got in place, and opened my eyes. Lounging on the bed in front of me was a seductive woman, dressed up for sex. She looked pretty good. A little flat, a bulge in her panties, but she was pretty. She had great legs.

I tried a few poses, even blowing myself a kiss. Nothing. I needed to complete the picture. I closed my eyes, my reflection fresh in my memory, and imagined myself finding the beautiful woman on my bed, beckoning me to join her.

As I joined her on the bed, I felt her hands moving up my arms and her lips kissing my shoulder. I could smell her perfume, and the scent of her hair. I could feel her strong body taking control of me as I surrendered, as he nibbled at the nape of my neck, and feeling his stubble rub my skin.

I wasn't sure exactly why my perspective had changed, and I had suddenly thought of myself as the woman, but I was finally getting a tingling sensation inside of me, and I didn't want to stop. His big hands were roving all over me, rubbing and massaging me, probing me. His hot breath, shooting from his nose like a rampaging bull, the tender fingers of an experienced lover, his stiff cock, massive and throbbing...

That was when I felt the energy of an orgasm flow through me. Not like I was used to, not in one strike, but in a slow build, like a wave building and then crashing. I then felt the wetness in my panties.

I had come. I was still soft, but I had come.

After washing myself and putting my panties in the sink, I put my nightie and robe back on and went back to the TV. I didn't really want to think about what I had done.

Thinking about it now, I believe I may have had a female orgasm. But that's silly.

## DAY 86

Today, almost three months into being the Headmistress of the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies, I finally saw our recruiter again.

"Oh, I was expecting Dianna Dandridge," Merrill Thorne said as she entered my office.

"Merrill, it's me. I'm Dianna," I said.

She looked back out the door like someone was playing a trick on her. As she stood up to greet her, she reluctantly stepped further inside my office, still regarding me as some sort of put-on.

"Stop it with that look, Merrill," I said. "It hasn't been that long, has it?"

She greeted me with a double cheek kiss, but still kept a distance. It was hilarious.

"It's just that... You've changed so much, Ms. Dandridge."

I didn't think my changes had been so dramatic. I had lost a lot of weight, that was for sure, and upgraded my wardrobe, but I couldn't have been so different that I was unrecognizable, could I?

"In a good or bad way?" I asked.

"Good," she said without any conviction whatsoever. "I don't recognize you at all. You're like a different person. Seriously, is this a joke?"

At that, Elenor entered the office. "Hello, Merrill. As always, it's good to see you."

"Elenor! Who is this person?" Merrill asked. I got the distinct impression she was deadly serious.

Elenor looked alarmed for a moment, a rare display of emotion from the usually stony-faced person I had come to know. What was she worried about? "Merrill, don't kid around like that," Elenor said, quickly regaining her composure. "Dianna is a busy woman, she has too much to do to cope with your odd sense of humor."

It was a solid three seconds before Merrill broke into a slow, reluctant smile. "Oh, yes, of course. Just a little levity on my part."

Even with the smile, her eyes were trained on me, and her stare was giving me the creeps, as focused and worried as she looked.

"Well, I hope you've got good news, Merrill," I said, as I gestured to the chairs in front of my desk. I pushed the intercom button. "Randi? Tea for three, if you could."

Elenor took her usual chair and Merrill sat in the other, looking at Elenor like there was something she needed explained. What strange behavior.

"Yes," she said, as she seemed to clear her head. "I've been busy." She brought out a stack of folders from her bag and dropped them on my desk.

"I'll say you have," Elenor said.

"I've signed eight candidates for our school," she said, proudly.

"Eight!" Elenor replied. "That's some sort of record!"

Eight didn't feel like a very large number. Three months of recruiting and she had only found eight students to enroll in the school? Was a charm school that out of step with modern life?

I reached for the folders, but Elenor swiped them away. "I'll do my usual checks on them," she said. "Thank you, Merrill."

I wasn't sure exactly what was going on, but I felt a lot wasn't being said. This felt very suspicious. I decided to ask some questions, as delicately as I could.

"Forgive me for asking," I said, "But with all due respect, eight students isn't a very large number. We've enrolled 11 in the three months I've been here."

“Oh!” Merrill said. “Those are the financial aid students. I recruit the full ride students.”

I looked to Elenor for an explanation, and she obliged. “Our financial aid students are where we’re reimbursed by the state and federal government. Part time and full time students have their tuition adjusted to be able to meet the amount we’re paid through those financial aid programs, as you know.”

By now, I had a pretty good idea of the shady finances of the school, and the financial aid situation was one I was focused on. There was more than enough evidence that the aid being pocketed by the school was far more lucrative than anyone would suspect. I had noted in the school’s ledgers that many students had two entries, an entry under their name and then a second entry under a similar male name, and both were likely financed by our taxes, almost certainly doubling the aid for a single student. However, it was all just speculation until I saw some real evidence.

I wanted to know more. “So these recruited students aren’t on aid. How do they pay?”

“Well,” Merrill said, “Their education is financed by third parties. Sometimes a company, sometimes a benefactor, sometimes parents... It comes in all forms. They also use all of our services at the full rate.”

“The important part is that they pay full fare,” Elenor said. “And for every full ride student, we make ten times what we make on our financial aid students.”

“So it’s more like getting eighty students, not eight,” Merrill was quick to add.

“Really? That is good news. I had no idea.”

That was when Randi showed up with the tea, and poured it for us. “Azúcar?” She asked Merrill.

“One lump,” she replied.

“Ya está,” she answered, in her thick Mexican accent, giving Merrill the sweetened tea. “Oh, I almost forgot, Señorita!” Randi strutted out the door in her heels and came back with a tall vase of flowers. Red roses, actually.

“Muy hermosa!” she said as she put them on my desk.

“Someone has an admirer!” Merrill said.

I didn’t have to look at the card. They were from Hugo. The man who had the salt and pepper beard and owned the gym. That was his name.

He sent a vase of red roses to me, or, “Dianna,” every Monday since. The card only had his email address on it. I had no intent to ever use it.

“They smell wonderful,” Elenor said, bending over to take a sniff.

I had to admit, they did add some color and a pleasant aroma to my office. There’s nothing wrong with wanting to feel feminine and beautiful, and having roses sent to you did just that in a way I’d never appreciated before. Still, I

wasn't going to be swayed, even if it was amusing to have someone chasing after you.

"So let me get started on these," Elenor said, carrying the thick stack of folders. It's kind of odd, that much paperwork for a new student. There must have been fifty pages of papers in every folder. "Merill, once again, you've worked a miracle."

"When will we see these new students?" I asked.

"When they've finished their preparations," Merill answered.

"What kind of preparations?" I asked, even more curious. Why would they need "preparations" to come to a charm school?

"A student is ready to learn when their heart is open to new things," Elenor recited. "Your grandmother said that."

"Ah," I replied. I think she was avoiding my question.

## DAY 97

Today was new a new thing. Millie phoned in sick today, so guess who was charged with teaching her classes? That's right, me.

I was entirely unprepared to teach grace and deportment to women who had been living it for their entire lives, but fortunately for me, our students are not exactly the most demure. I'd have to say most of our students fall into a category of "reformed tomboy" or "femininely challenged." That means that even with my limited knowledge and abilities, I still have a little bit of a lead on the girls.

I put on my four-inch heels and led my first class with as much enthusiasm as I could muster.

"Women like us must radiate our femininity," I told them. "While men can be gruff and aggressive, a woman — a woman of grace and refinement — must be the sugar to a man's salt."

"Our facial expression is as much a part of our looks as our facial features," I said. "Poise counts equally as much as prettiness."

I asked each student to show me what they had learned, and began by taking them out into the hallway to show me their walk.

Then I showed them by doing it myself. "Shoulders back, eyes forward, a smile on your face." I walked up and down the hallway a couple of times. "Note my hands floating, my hips swinging and I arch my back a little."

I have to admit, seeing the girls mimic my movements was immensely satisfying. Being an administrator didn't let me experience the joy of seeing a young woman learn how to carry themselves with grace.

Next, back in the classroom, I had them show me how to talk with their hands, and how to sit with their legs to the side. “No crossing your legs when you’re being seen,” I told them. “If your legs can be seen, keep them together and swing them to the side for comfort. Crossing your legs is for when you’re alone.”

I added a few things I had read in Priscilla’s memoir. “Gracefulness adds to glamour,” I told them. “Your behavior as a woman defines you. *Pretty is what pretty does.*”

I was feeling over the moon about actually working with students, and I was halfway through my workout in the nearby gym before I realized I was there alone for the first time, what with Millie being sick.

I scanned the gym for any sign of Hugo, hoping to God I didn’t have to see him without my wing girl with me to run interference. Luck was with me, as there seemed to be no sign of him today, although plenty of men tried to start conversations with me. That’s alright. I’ve learned to handle men.

It’s kind of a shame Hugo was missing today. I would have loved to tell him off in my own graceful and poised way.

## DAY 99

Today I kept my scheduled appointment with Dr. Patel. We had been messaging each other on the status of Mrs. Dandridge, although I had to remember to call her my grandmother. She seemed to be doing okay, but was heavily medicated most of the time.

As per my request, no nurse was involved, and it was just him and me. That was for security’s sake.

“You have made tremendous progress,” Dr. Patel said, looking very pleased with himself.

“I think those hormones really helped me lose a lot of weight,” I said. “It’s amazing. What did I weigh in at?” I glanced at the clipboard he was holding that had the weight I’d just put in on the scale. It read 131 pounds. I gasped. My scale at home must have been off. “That can’t be right!” I said, seeing the mind-blowingly small number.

“Well, if I could explain...”

“And my height?” I saw that I was measured at five foot six inches tall before he swiped the clipboard away and gasped again. “I’m five foot nine!”

“Not to worry,” the doctor said with a smile. “With weight loss, and especially such dramatic weight loss, some height will be lost. The bulk you used to have is gone, so the joints compress, and you lose some height. It’s perfectly natural.”

“Three inches?” I had to ask.

“Well, yes, and you might see more as time goes on.”

I didn't like hearing that at all. I thought I'd be happier with the more weight I lost, but now I was shrinking. Actually shrinking. Yes, I felt lighter and more energetic than I had in a long time, but was it worth losing height?

“Will I gain it back if I put on weight and build up muscle again?”

“Almost certainly,” Dr. Patel said. “But for the moment, your size makes you a very convincing woman. I'd be in no rush to bulk up until you're done with this assignment.”

“This is a lot go through just for an undercover operation.”

“Well, it's a unique situation. You're doing an excellent job. Your movements, your appearance, even your voice are all completely convincing. Your superiors must be thrilled with how dedicated you are to the job.”

“My captain isn't exactly thrilled at the progress I'm making.”

“Well, that's not my specialty,” the doctor said. He had slipped on a pair of gloves and prepared a syringe. “Let's give those hormones a refresh.”

I turned my back and bent over, and took the shot in my butt.

“Your throat has healed up completely, I see,” the doctor said as he disposed of the gloves and syringe. “No pain or irritation?”

“I don't even think about it anymore,” I said to him. “After a month, it was like it never happened.”

“Good, good.” The doctor did a few doctor things like checking his clipboard, looking at some vials of blood he'd extracted from me and making mumbling noises. They must have a class for that. Doctor charm school? “Any questions you have?”

Actually, I had a big one. “Uh, it's my... I... I can't get an erection.”

“I see. How long has this been happening?”

“I don't really know. I was really busy with the assignment, and I only recently had a private place... But it's just not responding like it used to.”

“Your penis.”

“Y... Yes, my penis.” It felt so wrong to say it.

“Well, there are a number of factors that can contribute to erectile dysfunction. Are you using a gaff?”

“Yes. You know about gaffs?”

“You're not the first transgender patient I've worked with.”

“I'm not transgender.”

“My apologies. I mean to say, you’ve got many of the same concerns a transgender patient does. For different reasons, of course.”

“Of course.” He looked so embarrassed. I liked seeing him knocked off his game for a moment.

“Anyway, the gaff can be responsible for cutting off blood and blood pressure is a vital part of having an erection.” He looked at my pile of clothes left on a chair. “Do you mind if I take a look?”

“Knock yourself out.”

After a few moments of looking at it and turning the gaff inside-out, he put it back. “I think we’d have to say that’s likely what’s causing your problem.”

“The gaff?”

“It’s constricting blood flow. I would advise you to stop wearing it.”

“It’s kind of essential to the mission!” I said. “Without that, I’m in real jeopardy of being discovered.”

“Yes. However, there are more medically sound ways of achieving the same thing.”

“Such as?” I had to ask.

“Prosthetics.”

Yeah, that’s what he said. A prosthetic vagina. That’s what he was getting at.

## DAY 108

So, a few days later I was back at Dr. Patel’s office, with my newly delivered package, which I really did not want to open. I just handed it to the doctor and let him do the dirty work.

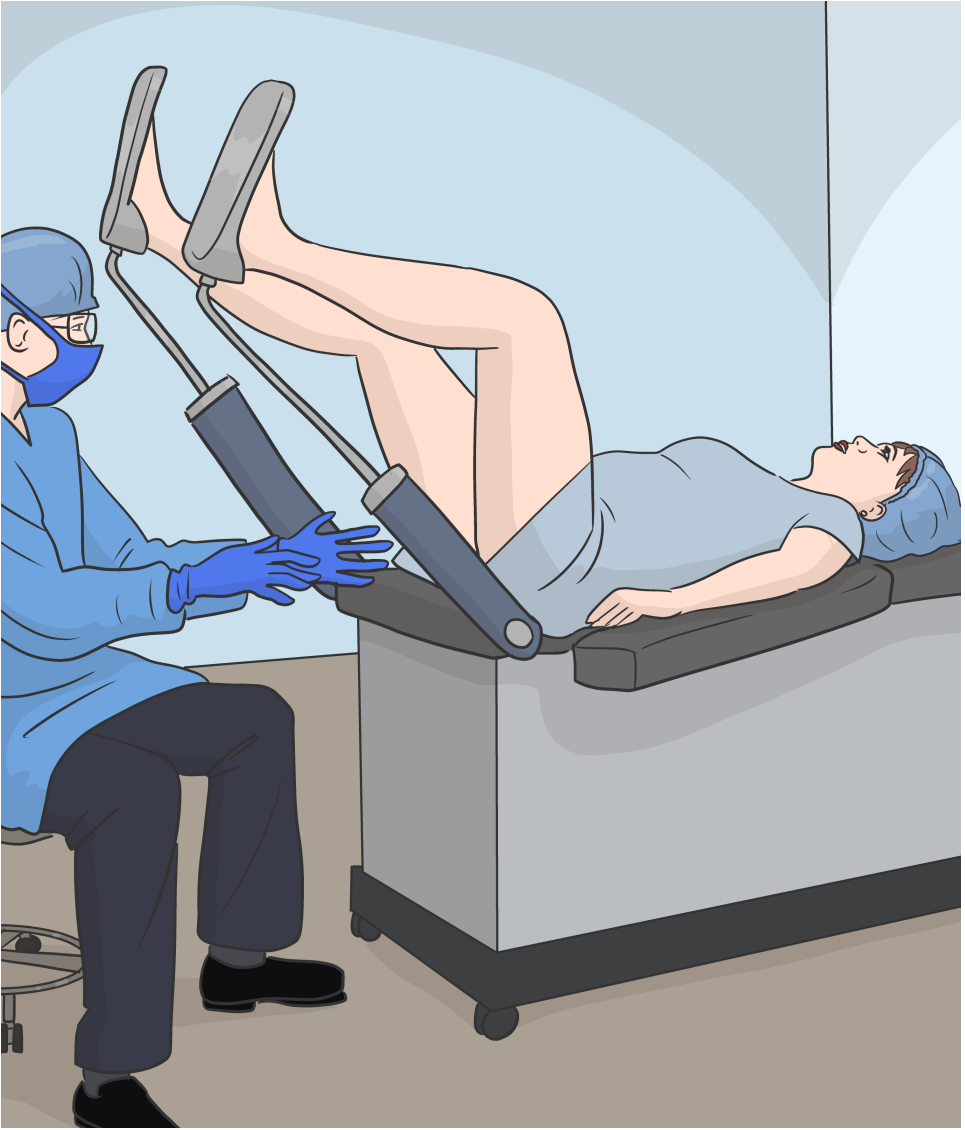
I had been given a make and model of prosthetic vaginal device to order, and it had cost me, or the department, quite a bit. I ordered it with my eyes squinting, not wanting to see what they really looked like. It felt so wrong.

I was led into another room by the doctor with some kind of apparatus set up, and I disrobed. Then I realized what I was looking at was stirrups. The kind that doctors use for vaginal exams.

“Hop on up,” Dr. Patel said to me. “And keep your legs spread.”

There were arm rests, I noted, and after my feet were in the footrests, I gripped those arm rests hard and looked up at the ceiling. I didn’t want to think about this.

“You might feel a pinch,” the doctor said. That was the way they prepared you for an intense shock of pain. Sure enough, I felt a needle jab me in a part of my male anatomy that is renown for its sensitivity. I was told it was a local.



This attachment procedure needed what he said would be a day or two of adjustment, and since it was the end of the fall term, we had a week off. This was the best time to do this.

The doctor told me that the device I had ordered would need to be “attached” to me, using what he called a “minor inpatient procedure.”

I did not want to know the details of exactly how this was going to happen, and I had asked to be put under for this, but he said it could all happen with me being conscious. Whoopee for me.

What this was supposed to do was make me more comfortable by placing a latex cover over my genitals, pushing my testicles out of sight and using a kind

of catheter so I would pee in a more feminine fashion. I was told that once this was done, I would be undetectable as a man.

So thirty minutes into the procedure, I was minding my own business, trying not to think about what was being done out of my sight, when the doctor stopped. He stood up and said, "We're going to need to put you under," he said.

"Is there a problem?" I asked.

"This is taking longer than I had thought, and the local anesthesia is going to wear off in a little bit. I don't want to do another local, so putting you under is the best solution here."

"You sure there's nothing wrong?"

"You're in no danger," he said. That did not quite answer my question.



The next thing I remember, I was waking up in my bed at my condominium, with Jasmine perched over me. I had no idea how I got there or how long it had been since my procedure.

After babbling incoherently for a little bit as the drugs wore off, I was aware enough to start asking questions.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

"Angie... Erm, I mean, Captain Keller asked me to make sure you woke up okay," Jasmine said.

"How did..."

Anticipating my obvious questions, Jasmine debriefed me. "You had a procedure at Dr. Patel's office, and you have been out of it since. It's about three hours later. Some very nice and adorably cute EMTs helped get you back home and into bed."

"Did everything go okay?"

"Well," Jasmine said with a very deliberate pause, "there was a complication."

"What kind of complication?"

"I should probably let the doctor answer that. I have no head for medical stuff." She patted my knee. "What I do know is that you need bed rest and I've already told Elenor not to expect you to return any calls right now."

"When can I talk to Dr. Patel?"

"He'll be here tomorrow," she said. "So just take it easy. I've already set myself up in the guest room."

“You don’t have to stay...”

“Are you kidding? You have all the channels here. I’m loving this.”

I went back to sleep with only one thing on my mind: Captain Keller’s first name was Angie?



Finally, this morning Dr. Patel came to visit and explained what had happened.

He assured me that nothing had gone wrong, but that the prosthetic proved to be “trickier” than the last time he had done it. However, he said, the procedure had been a complete success and that visually no one would be able to detect a seam and the device was not going to peel away from my skin under any circumstances. Until I paid another visit to a doctor, it was on there to stay.

“Is that a good idea?” I asked him. I was aware it was a little late to ask this, but I needed to know.

“It’s perfectly safe,” He assured me. “You’ll need to keep it clean and that’s a meticulous procedure, but it’ll be fine.”

“How meticulous?”

“You want to keep the perineum well washed and clean at all times.”

“Okay, I can do that. What is a perineum?”

The doctor sat down. “Okay, let’s take this from the top.”

What followed was a rundown of female anatomy that I had somehow missed throughout my life. I had to look up pictures on my phone to verify what he was saying because frankly, I didn’t believe him. Yet it was all true. Every detail. The vagina, the labium, the clitoris, the urethral orifice... It was true.

Now I had them too. Plastic, yes, but I had them.

## DAY 115

So it’s been a week after the procedure and I’m no longer feeling soreness or stiffness. In that time, I have entered into a world where this unfamiliar anatomy has become by biggest concern. Keeping myself clean never required written instructions before.

The worst is the dilation. I’m still unclear on why a prosthetic would be designed this way, but I have to use a plastic thing to keep my vagina from closing up. Did I just use the term “my vagina?” Holy God.

But everything works okay. I can pee, although it takes a little more bladder control than I'm used to using, and that where most of the cleaning comes into play. There's no seam, either. You can't tell where my skin and the prosthetic begins, except for a very slight change where I can't feel anything, and the skin's texture gets slightly rubbery.

Jasmine finally left, too. Don't get me wrong, I love her company, and she's a lot of fun to hang around with, but I needed some alone time to kind of mentally digest what had happened to me.

It didn't help that she teased me when she left a "christening" present for me and my new appliance. A dildo. She left me a dildo. Funny girl.

So now I have three days before school starts back up and I have nothing to do. Except buy some panties. I needed a smaller size, now. That's not going to fill up the time much at all.

## DAY 116

I tried the dildo. It was just sitting there, on my dresser, taunting me. How could I not try it at least once?

Dr. Patel said that I could "take a man" with this appliance which is not at all what I wanted to hear, but he was also eager to add that the sensations were authentic.

I tried not to think about it, I really did. But how can you keep yourself from entertaining that kind of idea? An authentic female sexual experience? I'm only so strong.

Even just holding the dumb rubber thing made me feel both revulsed and nervous. Holding it in my thin, slender hands and long fingernails looked so fantastically feminine and sexual. If I had ever lived to see such a delicate and ladylike hand on my own dick, I wouldn't have been able to control myself. Now I was seeing it from the other side, and I was still getting off on it.

I decided to just go all in. I licked it. On the underside. I swirled my tongue around the tip. With my hands trembling, I stuck it down my throat.

Maybe I should have felt some shame, but honestly, I hadn't been this energized and excited in months. It was so wrong. So very, very wrong. I wasn't sure if this was some new kink I'd discovered or something deeper, but I wasn't thinking that hard. I was getting revved up.

It was time to do it. It was time to take it.

The part that surprised me the most was that I moaned. I was taking short breaths and making some random noises as I slipped it in, because it kinda hurt

(but in a good way) then I had to just let loose and moaned into the air — loudly.

That was probably the weirdest time to find the switch that made it vibrate. Oh my lord.

The doctor was right. So, so right.

## DAY 118

It's been a wild weekend. I don't think I've actually gotten out of bed for two days. Well, who am I kidding, I know I haven't gotten out of bed. That is, except for food and bathroom time. I'm not a savage.

However I am, it appears, a sex fiend. It's been non stop. I guess discovering a new sexual frontier will do that to a person. I can't get enough of my dildo, and being penetrated is amazing. Truly, impossibly, electrifying.

How many times have I orgasmed? I have no idea. I think I've just been working myself into one long, constantly euphoric sensation. I never could do this before, and I wonder if it may be those hormones going through me. I respond so differently to stimulation. Even just touching my arm can get my heart racing. My whole body is a sexual organ.

I have to stop, though. Tomorrow I have to go back to work and I have to be Dianna Dandridge, Headmistress. How will I ever forget these past few days? How can I work, knowing that at any moment, I could just start feeling another wave of delight pass over me?

Do women have to deal with this all the time? I guess I'll never know for sure, but I suspect they do.

## DAY 119

So today I was back at the school, welcoming our returning students for the winter term, as well as a few new students. I hope I didn't look too distracted as I shook everyone's hands as I spoke to them in the cafeteria. My mind was shattered.

I also couldn't help but look at our assembled teachers and staff, and think that I now understood them so much better. I felt a kinship with them — almost like I was a part of the sisterhood? Maybe that was a bit strong. I know what they feel like, thinking the same carnal thoughts. I know what a woman feels, and I know the struggle.

I was fighting the need to talk to one of them about my crazy weekend and my new perspective. I couldn't, though. It would be inappropriate. Especially with Jasmine, as I was not about to let on that I had worn out her joke gift.

I had to remember to buy a jumbo pack of batteries at the store on the way home. I intended to tear the rubber coating right off that thing.

Anyway, on my desk was a fresh delivery of roses, as there always were on Mondays. It wouldn't be the start of the week without them. Unable to really concentrate on my job, I leaned over and gave them a deep inhale more than once today. They really did smell nice.

I decided to jot off a quick, short note to Hugo. "Thanks for the roses," was all I wanted to say. Nothing more. No insinuation.

"I have a new thing for you, Dianna," Bianca said, sweeping dramatically into my office in the afternoon. "You are just going to love this." She was holding a long, wool coat in black with a faux fur trim that was to absolutely die for.

"It's wonderful, Bianca, but it's Los Angeles," I had to point out. "Winter is seventy degrees."

"Winter is a state of mind and a justifiable excuse for looking cozy and fashionable. And it gets as low as 68 in December." She thrust the coat forward. "Try it on."

It wasn't like I was getting much done anyway, so I got up from my seat. I walked over to Bianca to give the coat a look. "I've been meaning to ask," I said, looking at the unique metallicly-threaded collar, "what's with the silver thread? Everything that comes out of your wardrobe has that same collar."

"Just a signature touch," Bianca said. "Something to remind you where it came from."

I'm not sure I believed that, but I wasn't going to let it keep me from trying that gorgeous coat on. I slipped out of my jacket and dove my arms into the silken lining of the coat. I must have inhaled a fiber from the faux fur, because I got a little discombobulated for a moment.

"I'm truly a woman at heart," I thought to myself. It was an odd little thought that just came to me, and at the moment, I'm not sure I disagreed with the notion. In my dress, whisking along my nylon-covered thighs, snug in a comfy warm coat, my earrings dangling and my senses awash in flowery perfume, I was loving everything about this moment. A moment men weren't ever going to have.

"You were made for that coat," Bianca said. "I knew it the minute I saw it. It's all yours."

"Thank you Bianca," I said. "Really." Then an obvious thought occurred to me. "Is this school property?"

"Gotta go! My students call for fashion guidance!" Bianca said, upon exiting.

The little scamp.

“Senhorita Dandridge?” Randi said as she entered, carrying another vase of red roses.

“Another one?” I said.

“Jes,” the Brazilian beauty said. Her big pearly white smile looked even bigger against her dark skin. “Joo have an admirer, I thinks.”

I checked the card. They were indeed from Hugo. That’s what I get for being nice to him. “Well, I suppose it’s sweet, in a way. But I really shouldn’t lead him on.”

“Joo not break up with heem!” Randi said. “Not until jou get a diamond necklace.”

Maybe the girl was right. Besides, it wasn’t hurting anyone.

“Oh! Message,” Randi picked out a paper note from her blouse. “From Captain Keller. Jou know, the nice police lady who came about the missing boy?”

“Right, right,” I said, pretending not to instantly recognize my superior. “Thank you, Randi.”

She wanted to meet, according to the message. She wasn’t being coy or careful about it, either. Something was up.

## DAY 121

It was a very difficult day. The meeting with Captain Keller was in a motel room. She wanted to keep this private. She thanked me for my time, for my dedication to the job and for my willingness to go through what I had been through. Now, though, she was closing the case.

“You can’t do that!” I said. “I have a solid financial aid abuse case here!” Is aid. “They’re double-billing for their government money, and I’m this close away from proving it! You can’t kill this operation now!”

“It’s out of my hands, Callahan!” Keller said. “I got the word last week. Budget cutbacks in every department. We can’t keep pouring money into this job when we can’t bring charges.”

“But the financial aid...”

“Financial aid fraud is a federal case. Not something for the LAPD. This is a missing persons case.” She paused. “Or was.”

“Fine, but I can go deeper!” I wasn’t expecting to have to beg to continue the job, but I wanted to see it through. I had invested too much. “Fraud is just the tip of the iceberg! There’s all sorts of unexplained stuff going on there. I just

need time. They trust me. I can tell they've been holding things back, and soon they'll show me everything, I know they will!"

"There's nothing I can do, Brody! It's done. I'm closing my five most expensive operations, I was ordered to do it, and this comes from the top."

"I have to finish this, Captain! I have to. This is everything to me."

"I'm out of options, detective. I need you back at your desk on Monday."

I took a deep breath. I have to say that this wasn't entirely unexpected. I had a vague plan, as I've been undercover dozens of times and told to pull out. The thing is, I'd considered my options, and I didn't like them. Yet, I wanted to do it.

"I have vacation time," I said. "I must have two months saved up. I'm taking it now."

"Don't do this, Brody."

"I'm doing it. I have to get to the bottom of this. I know something's going on, and I need to know what it is. If I don't, the mystery will kill me."

It was the Captain's turn to sigh. "You're going to really do this."

"Yes," I said. I tried to sound convincing.

"I can't endorse this. You'll be on your own. No more cash."

"Fine, fine." I thought about the situation. "The condo is paid for?"

"It is. Until the end of the year. The car is also leased for a few more months. I can... delay claiming those as department assets."

"Thanks, Captain."

"As far as I'm concerned, you are now on vacation. If you need money, I can't help you. If you hurt yourself, you're paying for it. If you need an officer, call 911. If anyone asks me, I haven't seen you."

"I got it."

The captain took her time to reply. She was really thinking it over. "As a friend, I'll be in touch. Just from time to time."

"I appreciate it." So that was it. I was now on my own. I was just a private citizen doing my own thing on my own time.

## DAY 127

They had her walking with a book on her head. A real book, too — something heavy and hardbound with faded gold lettering. They made the newer girls start with it because the spine was stiff and the weight forced them to slow

down. If they moved too fast, the book fell. If they slouched, it slid. If they complained, they started over.

Lucy was on her fourth lap.

Her shoes were plain patent flats, not flattering but difficult to scuff. Her skirt was pressed, the hem grazing her knees. She kept tugging at the sleeves of her shirt like they didn't belong to her. Her posture was still wrong. Her chin dipped. Her arms moved too much when she walked, like she was about to start a fight with the air. Still, she was trying.

Genevieve Fallon stood off to the side, clipboard tucked under one arm. "Her pitch has shifted two notes," she said without looking at me. "We're doing daily vocal shaping and diction drills. She responds best when corrected mid-sentence."

"Her voice is changing? Is she okay with that?" I asked.

"She just speaking more clearly. And she prefers 'Lucille' now."

Lucy — I mean *Lucille* — reached the end of the hallway, turned, and began again. The book wobbled, but she corrected it. She passed by us again. Her eyes flickered with something that looked a lot like anger, but then it went away.

Genevieve clicked her pen. "She's easier than some."

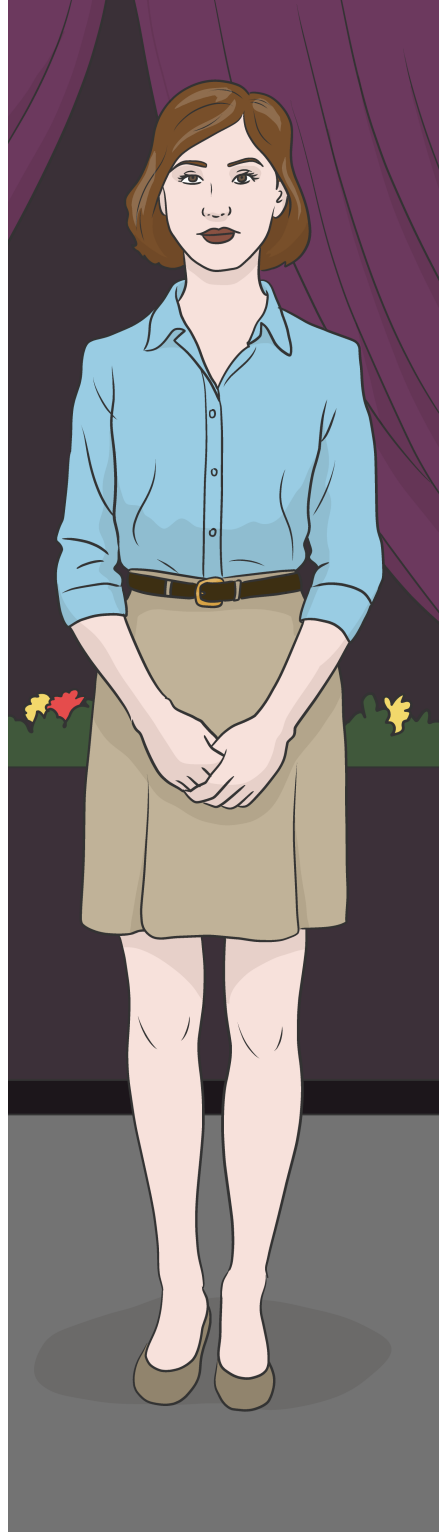
"She doesn't look it."

"She doesn't resist. That's easier."

"Not resisting isn't the same as agreeing."

Langley smirked. "You weren't here last year. One of the girls bit me."

I watched Lucille make her turn again.



She moved slower now. The book stayed balanced. Her shoulders didn't hunch as much. Her hips started to pivot with each step, just slightly — a rhythm picked up from the other girls, or maybe just from repetition. Her hair looked more natural now, and had been trimmed just enough to soften the shape. She blinked more slowly than she had before.

"She doesn't ask *any* questions?" I said.

"No. She's past that. We've broken her."

Lucille reached the end of the hall again, stopped, turned, and lowered into a curtsy without dropping the book. It wasn't graceful yet, but it wasn't mechanical either.

Genevieve clapped once. "Better."

Lucille straightened, nodded, and resumed walking.

As I turned to leave, I heard her speak — not loudly, just under her breath. She was repeating something Langley had said earlier. "*Lift the tone, don't push from the throat.*" Her voice didn't sound like it did last I talked to her. It was softer, more refined. Like the high string on a violin.

She passed by again, and this time she didn't look bothered at all.

## DAY 129

It's been over a week since I was cut adrift, but so far, so good.

Now my greatest worry is in appearing too eager for something to happen. I need to catch a break in this investigation, and I need it fast. Every day I spend at the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies is being done on borrowed time.

This morning, I had gotten a call from Dr. Patel who asked me to meet him at the hospital, so I had arrived thinking I was going to get an examination which I couldn't really pay for.

Instead, he met me at a hospital patient's room. "Miss Dandridge," he said, "I'm glad you could come."

"Of course, doctor," I said, still at a loss as to what was going on. "It's good to see you."

"Now, it's about Priscilla," he said. "She's fully awake and she's asking to see her granddaughter."

"How did...?"

"Well, if you remember, I did tell her about having a granddaughter before we had a chance to talk."

"Oh, yes. And she remembered?"

“Truthfully, it’s what’s been keeping her going. She talks about meeting her granddaughter constantly. Unfortunately, as she’s become more lucid, she’s also become more stubborn. She refuses to take her medication, eat her food or even be civil. It came to the point where I had to promise her that she would meet Dianna soon if she would cooperate with my nurses.”

“That’s why I’m here?” I said. “You know she’ll recognize me as an...” I lowered my voice in the semi-crowded hall. “Impostor.”

“We’ve been talking, and it appears that she’s never met or even seen a picture of her granddaughter. I could put anyone in front of my patient and claim it was Dianna.”

“But you want *me* to do this.”

“It makes the most sense. She’s going to be talking to her employees soon and she’ll know...”

“No, no, I understand. I suppose this was inevitable.” I looked around for restroom, and there was one just a few feet away. “Give me a minute, would you?”

I stepped into the ladies room to refresh my makeup. I wasn’t going to meet Priscilla Dandridge looking a mess. I tucked my stray hairs back, refreshed my lipstick and gave my nose a quick dusting of powder.

Once I had killed time doing that, I just tried to imagine what Dianna Dandridge would do and say in this moment. She was someone who had been protected from meeting her grandmother, obviously, by her father. She didn’t understand his reasons, but respected them.

However, he wasn’t around anymore, and when the call came to take charge of her grandmother’s affairs in the face of her possibly passing away, she came with no questions asked. That meant she wanted to meet her. She wanted to be a part of her life. She had dropped everything halfway around the world to be here. Yes, she had never met Priscilla Dandridge, but she wanted to. She wanted to know her grandmother.

I, as Dianna, wanted to know her.

“Are you ready?” Dr. Patel asked when I came back out.

I handed him my coat. “Hold this for me, would you?”

“Knock knock,” I said as I entered into Priscilla Dandridge’s room. “Hello?”

The elderly woman in the hospital bed with the tubes coming out of her looked my way wearily. Slowly, then very quickly, she came to life. There was no doubt I was looking at Priscilla Dandridge, star of the silver screen. She just has that magnetic, radiant superstar quality that defies description.

With the the warmest smile I had ever seen, she lifted her hands toward me. “Dianna!” She said, her eyes watering up. “Oh, my Dianna!”

I advanced and let her embrace me, although the tubes kept her from moving too far. “Hello, grandmother,” I said. I didn’t feel great about deceiving an old woman, yet at the same time, she was undeniably elated. Her joy was irrepresible.

“Let me get a look at you,” she said when she finally let me go. I stood up straight and averted my eyes, afraid to look her in the eyes. “Oh, there’s no doubt about it. You’re a Dandridge girl, through and through.”

“It’s nice to finally meet you, grandmother,” I said.

“I’ve waited so long. I almost gave up hope. Ever since your father and I had that falling out...” She seemed to fade away for a moment, but came right back. “It’s doesn’t matter. You came. You’ve been running the school?”

“Uh, yes. Since I was next of kin...”

“I always wanted the school to stay in the family. I’m so happy you’ve taken the reins. Elenor tells me you’re doing a wonderful job.”

“You talked to Elenor?” I asked. She was supposed to be out of communication.

Mrs. Dandridge looked like a kid caught with her hand in the cookie jar. “Do you have a place to stay?” She asked, swiftly changing topics.

“Yes, I have an apartment.”



“Move out,” she said. “Move into my mansion. I have so many rooms going unused. And my servants are probably loafing about with my absence.”

“I have a very nice...”

Before I could stop her, she had pressed a key ring into my hands. “1391 Strathmore, in Bel Air. Oh, you will bring life back to the old place, I just know it.”

“Really, Mrs. Dandridge...”

“Oh? I’m not your grandmother anymore?”

“Sorry,” I corrected my mistake. “Grandmother. It’s just that... We just met...”

“I have known you since the day you were born, Dianna. I dreamt of you every night. I dreamt of the day I would meet my granddaughter. You are the girl I saw in my mind’s eye. Dianna Dandridge, heir to the Dandridge legacy.” She smiled in the most adorable way, and I took the keys. I was powerless to refuse her.

“All right, let’s get you back to resting,” Dr. Patel said, as he interrupted.

“Oh no...” Mrs. Dandridge said, pouting. “Please doctor...”

“No, no. I promised you would meet, but I also need my patient to get her blood pressure under control,” he said, tapping a monitor that was showing a live readout of her vitals. “Your granddaughter will be back when you rest up.”

“Poop,” Mrs. Dandridge said.

“Follow the doctor’s advice,” I said, backing up Dr. Patel. “I promise to be back tomorrow.”

That seemed to bring the life back to her face. I liked seeing her smile. I liked making my grandmother feel good.

After Priscilla had fallen asleep, I waited for Dr. Patel outside.

“I can’t thank you enough,” the doctor said. “Priscilla is my most important patient and I just want the best for her.”

“I’m sure she appreciates your hard work, doctor. It’s just that she’s never been in a position like this before. You can imagine, a woman with her accomplishments isn’t very good at giving up control. Well, I imagine that’s the case, having just met her.”

The thing was I felt like I already knew her well. Maybe I had spent too many nights reading her memoir, leafing through her pictures and watching her movies. Meeting her today was like meeting an old friend.

“It was good thing she accepted me as her granddaughter,” I said.

“Well, I’m concerned about that,” the doctor said. “Truth be told, her eyesight is still recovering. Her eyes are in poor condition right now, and probably didn’t see you much more than as a blur.”

“Will she be able to see better?”

“Soon, yes. But right now, I think she was just being courteous when she said you were a... What were the words?”

“A Dandridge girl,” I said feeling a bit of pride.

“Exactly. I think you might want to consider a touch of cosmetic enhancement if you want to make sure she recognizes you as her own family, once she gets her eyesight back.”

“I don’t know,” I said. “You’re talking plastic surgery, and that’s a little beyond the scope of this... Investigation.”

I reached for my coat, which he was still carrying. “Here, let me,” he said, holding it out for me to slip into. Such a gentleman. “I do think your appearance would be enhanced dramatically,” the doctor said. “Your grandmother expects to see a beautiful woman, after all.”

As I tugged the coat on, the idea suddenly made much more sense to me. I’m truly a woman at heart, I guess, and looking beautiful for my grandmother was exactly what I wanted.

“How many days would I have to miss from work?” I asked.

## DAY 141

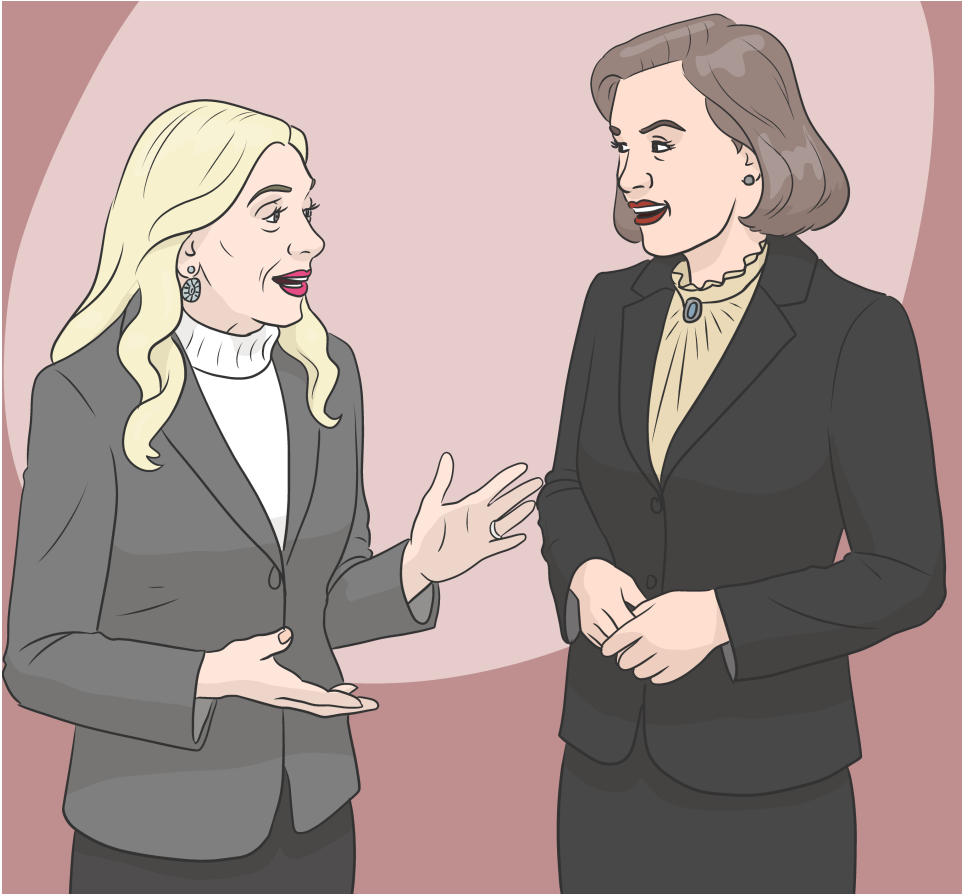
Now that my cosmetic surgery has healed, I’m back at work. I’m still a little woozy from the painkillers, but with a little bit of makeup, no one would ever guess I’d had something done. I’m quite pleased with the work the doctor has done to my face, I now have a smaller nose and what many people call the “Dandridge lips,” a feature my grandmother is so famous for.

Fortunately, Elenor had kept the place humming along in my absence. Far from being upset, she just wanted to hear all I had to tell about Priscilla’s recovery.

As the doctor had told me, she was going to be in a wheelchair a lot from now on. She could still walk short distances, but she had balance and muscle issues that would keep her from walking any more than a few feet. Otherwise, she was the same Priscilla Dandridge that Elenor and the school knew in every way.

Elenor’s stony demeanor was absent, as she hung on every word I had to tell her. It was clear that they were the very best of friends, and her smile was heart warming.

Finally, I told her the kicker, that she was due to be discharged this very afternoon, and she was moving back home with me. The mansion had been



buzzing for the past week, as Priscilla's room and bathroom had been altered to accommodate a new adjustable bed, her wheelchair and some monitoring equipment she might need. The bathroom had to be modified for a wheelchair and a few comfort items added to make her life more pleasant. The workmen had finished just in time, too.

Even in my bedroom, in the east wing of the mansion, I could hear all the noise and it was driving me mad.

I had moved in at the Dandridge Estate completely, my bags unpacked and my clothes hung in one of the closets. The other was for shoes and accessories. I did not realize I had twelve purses now. I really need to cut back on the shopping. I thought the walk-in closets would be far too large for me, but I wound up having to put some of my older dresses, back when I was larger, into basement storage.

Oh, and I didn't forget to bring my little toy either. Jasmine had no idea how much use I was getting out of her little gift.

Anyway, this afternoon I left early to get grandmother home, and I rode in the family limo as we followed the ambulance back to the estate. “Kelly,” I said to our chauffeur, “tell the truth, what exactly were you and the rest of the staff doing when grandmother was in the hospital?”

“Praying for her safe return to us,” she said. The staff were almost all female, and young women, too. Even the cook was a 25 year old girl.

“And that took you four months?”

“I may have also invited some friends to the pool and the bar,” she said. “Why let such a beautiful mansion go unused?”

“So you basically treated the place like your parents were away for the weekend.”

“Oh, no ma’am!” Kelly replied. “Mrs. Dandridge really was foremost on our minds. We would never go anything to disrespect her or her house. We were very careful.”

To be honest, I completely believed her. She, along with the rest of the staff, were fiercely loyal to grandmother. However, even I, a dignified woman of 47 would have played while the cat was away.

We got to the mansion and I watched as the attendants very carefully eased her out of the ambulance. She wanted to stand, and at least return to her house on her own two feet, which I can certainly respect.

When we got inside, Eleanor was waiting with a wheelchair.

“Get in the chair and stop making us worry about you, you old nag,” Eleanor said.

“What are you doing here, Ellie? Don’t you have a school to run into the ground?” Grandmother asked her.

“I haven’t seen you for five months, and this is the thanks I get for coming to see you?” Eleanor said, carefully helping grandmother into the wheel chair. “I might as well leave you to rot like the decrepit bag of bones you are, Prissy.”

“You’ll be held together by bandages and sutures one of the days, Ellie! Then we’ll see who’s laughing! I’ll be standing over your grave kicking dirt down the hole! Just you wait!” Eleanor started to push the chair with grandmother in it and they headed out back to the garden, still arguing as they left.

“It’s good to have them back,” said Kelly as she stood by the door.

“Yes,” Penny the maid said. “It’s like old times again.”

“This is normal?” I asked them both.

“No, normally they yell,” Penny said.

## DAY 154

I was getting dressed this morning when I first felt the shift. In my chest. When I bent over to slip on my panties, I felt the weight shift under my skin. I thought maybe I was just imagining things, but later when I was clasping my silk stockings I felt it again.

As I put on my bra, and before I slipped my falsies in, I felt my breast area, and I couldn't help but think both sides seemed larger. They felt a little sore, and yet a bit a firm under my skin, like there was some kind of growth.

I dropped by Dr. Patel's for a quick check, as you hear horrible stories about breast related problems these days. I know there really wasn't anything to fret about, but I guess I'm truly a woman at heart, always worried about something.

Dr. Patel was happy to see me, and I undressed down to my bra and panties with the help of his nurse. She asked me where I had bought my stockings from, and I gave her the name, even though I fear they might be a bit expensive on her salary.

I measured 5'5" and 125 pounds, so there was nothing to worry about on that front. I was perfectly healthy. The doctor examined my chest thoroughly to check for anything out of order, but he said it all appeared to be normal.

"It's definitely flabbier," I said of my chest. "And I can feel something firmer under that, too."

"Hormones will do that," the doctor said. "It's expected after five months of taking them."

"Oh," I said. "I'm growing breasts. That makes sense."

"That's what it is."

That was a relief. "And I was worried it was something serious. Now when I stop taking the hormones, they just go away, correct?"

"I can almost guarantee it," the doctor said.

"How big will they get?"

"Hard to say. There's a lot of factors, making it very difficult to predict."

I slipped back into my clothes, thanked the good doctor, and headed back to the school. As I sat in the back of my limo, I was curious to see where this breast thing might go.

Would I hate having them? Should I stop taking the hormones? How big would I be? Would other women be jealous?

Not to mention that there was a whole world of low-neck blouses and tops I had never been able to even entertain wearing before, and I was looking

forward to expanding my wardrobe appropriately. I hated having to put cute dresses and tops back on the rack when I saw a low neckline. After I could show cleavage, my appearance would be complete.

## DAY 175

Captain Keller was waiting in my office when I arrived this morning, and I could not say I was very happy to see her. I am absolutely at my wit's end on my investigation. I have spent untold hours trying to understand why these bright young students at our school were supposedly going missing. It hasn't happened yet on my watch as Headmistress, thank goodness, and if I have anything to say about it, it won't.

"Dianna, good to see you again," She said.

We kissed each other on the cheek as we greeted each other. "You're looking marvelous, Angela," I told her. As Randi served us tea, the captain came right to the point.

"I'm putting together my report on the Ignacio Cortez Jr. missing persons case, and I need to know what conclusions you've come to."

"So you didn't find anything?" I asked.

The captain waited for Randi to leave before answering. "No, sadly."

I offered my information, or rather, the lack of it. "As far as I can tell, this poor boy was never in contact with us. No student recognizes his photo, no staff member has seen him, our records do not have his name, and there's been no sign he was ever here."

"With all due respect, Dianna, there have been a lot of disappearances associated with the school."

"Well, as I understand it, these students are reported to have gone missing only after graduation, and are off school grounds, so I do not understand why this has become our sole responsibility."

"That's not fair, Dianna. I only asked for your help, not for you to bear all the burden," Captain Keller said. "And I assumed you, more than anyone, would want to get to the bottom of this."

"I completely understand the need to look into any links we may have with a nefarious third party taking advantage of our students. If someone is using our data to find our graduates and kidnap them, or heaven forbid, someone is using surveillance on our school, we must absolutely know about it. Our students' safety is my highest priority."

"Given that, I assume you didn't find anything useful."

“Our security is second to none. Data just simply doesn’t get out of our school, and our student records are as safe as technology can make them.” I sighed. “Surveillance is possible, but we have our own cameras, as you can see.” I raised the false bookshelf behind me to show her the robust closed-circuit screen that showed every inch of the school. “I personally reviewed the recordings of the dates you gave to me. I haven’t seen anything. I just wish I had any kind of an answer.”

“Not even the financial aid issue you were looking into?”

“Surely this financial aid clue isn’t enough incentive to actually — and I can’t believe I’m even saying this — abduct a student. A few thousand dollars isn’t worth that kind of risk.”

“I’d have to agree, although I’ve seen people killed for less.”

“Well, in more unseemly environments, yes. But this is a school. A prestigious institution of learning.”

“Yes, be that as it may,” Captain Keller said, “I’d like to have my people take a closer look.”

“Angela,” I said, “A scandal like this could absolutely destroy our school, and I am not going to stand for that. This school will not meet its’ end and I will not betray my grandmother’s trust in me. Grace and charm are the two most important things a girl can learn in her life, and we are going to continue to send our graduates out into an increasingly charmless world with all the advantages of being a true lady. It horrifies me to think that someone is taking advantage of them in any way. We are not responsible for these disappearances, and if there is anything here that would have helped in your investigation, I would never hold it back from you.”

“Very well, Dianna. I consider the case closed. Thank you for your help.” She stood up. I did too as I came around my desk. She seemed so much taller than I remembered.

“You can’t stay?” I asked. “You haven’t even touched your tea.”

“Duty calls,” she said. “By the way, I am absolutely in love with your dress.”

I turned my leg and swung my hips to show it off a little. I am, after all, a woman at heart. “I saw it in a shop window waiting at a stop light. I told the chauffeur to pull over and I bought it right there. It’s like I was born to wear it.”

“No argument from me. I love the way it accentuates your curves. I’m so jealous you can keep yourself so trim and svelte. Anyway, I’ll see you later, Dianna,” Angela said.

“Don’t come around just for business, all right? I miss just sitting down and having a nice chat with an old friend.”

“Of course, as always.”

## DAY 178

By the fifth month, I was told, most of the girls had learned to keep their voices featherlight and their posture locked into place even while laughing. It wasn't real laughter, of course. It was the kind that could be dropped into conversation like a powdered sugar garnish. Sweet, subtle, polite.

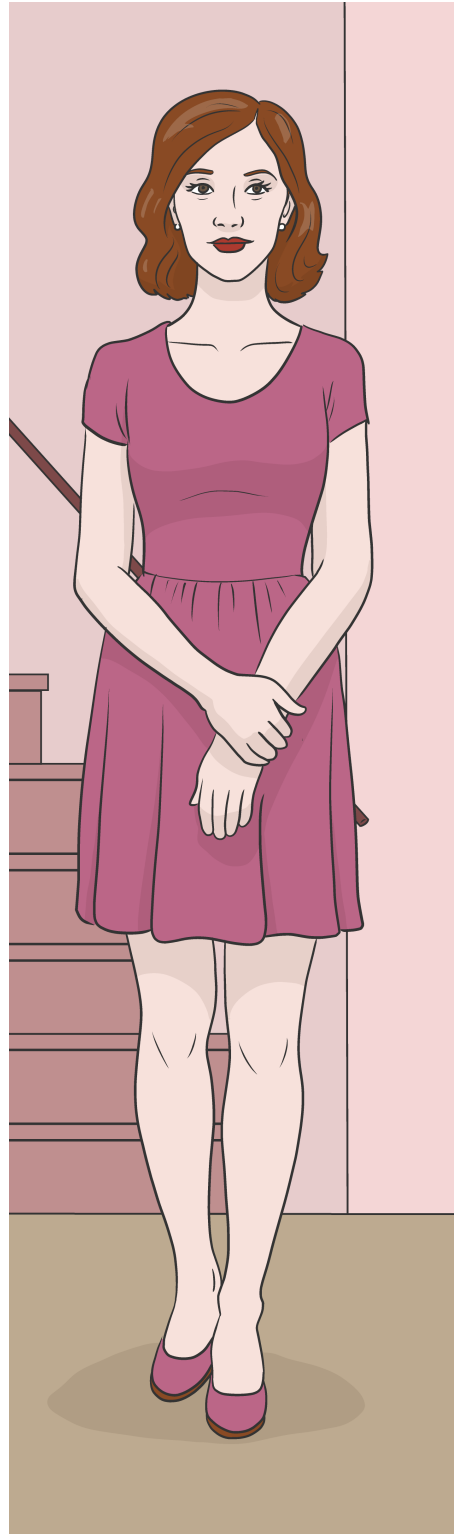
Lucille had started laughing like that.

She sat at the center table now, between Rosalind and Ivy. Ivy spoke in sentences that never had hard endings, and Rosalind repeated everything twice. They were harmless, decorative girls. Good for shaping someone.

Lucille wore a raspberry dress that looked just right on her. Her hair curled and waved just perfectly, as if she had spent time on it. Someone had taught her to hold her teacup with two fingers and a thumb. The pinkie didn't stick out. That would've been vulgar.

I stood behind the divider, where I usually watched from, pretending to review term notes. Mille leaned close and whispered, "She's developed beautifully. Her cheekbones have softened. Her gestures are more refined than Rosalind's now. Did you see how she tilted her head just then?"

I had. Lucille tilted her head like someone had whispered a secret and she was about to tell it with her eyes. Her shoulders moved like silk when she turned. There was no stiffness in her arms anymore. Her voice was light, melodic, rising at the end of each sentence like she was handing it back to



the group for approval.

She reached for the salt with perfect poise, just fingertips, and said, “Isn’t it lovely how everything here is quiet? Even when we’re loud, it’s quiet.”

Rosalind sighed dreamily. “It’s because it would be rude to make a nuisance.”

Lucille laughed. “That’s such a proper thing to say.”

She smiled at the table, then to her hands. Her nails were buffed, shaped into gentle ovals. Nothing sharp left. Not even at the edges.

“She looks happy,” Millie said.

“She looks finished,” I said. “How much charm can a girl hold?”

I noticed something else: Lucille hadn’t touched the croquette on her plate. Just nibbled at the peas, dabbed her napkin, drank her tea. There was an old rule here — one of my grandmother’s — that said you could tell how far a girl had come by what she no longer needed to finish.

Satisfied, I turned my attention to a far more chaotic corner: Michelle’s table.

What a difference. Michelle, as always, was a burst of color and sound amid her cluster of quieter friends. Her white skirt with pink ruffles was matched with a cropped cardigan in the brightest shade of mint, and her hair was tied up in two bouncy pigtails, each wrapped with a sparkly ribbon. She looked, quite simply, like girlhood incarnate.

She barely touched her lunch, her hands in constant motion, eyes wide with animation as she talked—and talked and talked.

“Oh my gosh, you guys, I just had the weirdest dream last night,” she said, clutching her fork for emphasis. “Like, I was in a castle but also at the beach? And there were, like, unicorns everywhere, except one of them had a bowtie and he was all, ‘Michelle, you forgot your purse again!’ And I was like, ‘Why do I need a purse for swimming, duh!’ Isn’t that so random?”

Her friends, Madison and Taylor, merely giggled, and Michelle continued, as if the silence encouraged her.

“And, like, does anyone else think the pudding tastes different this week? Not, like, bad-different, just... pudding-y-er? Is that a word? I feel like I’m inventing words today. Like, yesterday I told myself I was being ‘glitterful’ because I found sparkles in my hair from craft hour.”

“Sparkles are, like, your whole personality anyway!” One of her friends said.

“Shut up!” The young girl spun a strand of hair around her finger, her bracelets chiming together. “Oh! Did you see the way Ms. Fallon looked at me in class? I totally forgot to curtsy before sitting down and then I was like, ‘Oopsies, my bad!’ I swear, I have, like, goldfish brain sometimes. Wait, do goldfish even have brains? They must, right? Otherwise, how do they swim? I mean, I can barely remember where I put my brush and I’m not even a fish!”

The other girls just nodded, offering little more than the occasional “Mm-hmm” or soft giggle, clearly used to Michelle’s nonstop stream of consciousness.

I smiled to myself. Michelle was perfectly, unapologetically girlish — flighty, scatterbrained, and absolutely compelling. A different type of feminine, of charm, but just as wonderfully feminine. It’s strange, though. The last time I checked her file, I came away with more questions than answers. “Michelle” was listed as 33 year old, and the intake papers were signed by a “Stephanie Ross” who had been working as a secretary. When I called to check on the situation, I was told “Stephanie Ross” was now CEO of the company, replacing a missing “Michael Thomas.” A few days later, we were told to update our records to show that Michelle Thomas’s last name was being changed to Ross. Very curious.

However, looking at Michelle right now, I was sure it was just some kind of coincidence. Michelle was having such a good time, it was impossible to believe she was in any danger or distress.

As I watched, Michelle bit into her cookie and let out a delighted squeal. “Yesss! They didn’t use raisins today! Best. Day. Ever. You guys, remind me to thank the lunch ladies, okay? Like, maybe I’ll write them a poem. Roses are pink, pudding is sweet, no raisins make lunchtime a treat!” She paused. “I’ll work on it.”

Her friends laughed, and Michelle beamed, basking in their attention and laughter, her endlessly bubbly chatter filling the air.

## DAY 189

I had the most wonderful day today. Grandmother was finally feeling strong enough, so we brought her back to her school to see everyone.

We spent at least an hour picking out her outfit, doing her hair and makeup and making sure she looked amazing for her return to the school she founded. We didn’t tell anyone, as we wanted it to be a surprise, and when we wheeled her into the first classroom, the reaction was priceless.

I don’t think I’ve seen our staff so overjoyed as they were today. They all wanted a minute with grandmother, but we couldn’t disrupt the schedule, so we had her visit every classroom and observe. In retrospect, that may have been even more disruptive, as our students couldn’t concentrate at all with her in the back, but I wasn’t about to call it off.

Bianca was practically in tears when she was teaching her fashion class, and I wound up handling most of it as she gathered herself. Absolutely precious.



It was even worse in Millie's class, where Millie just couldn't be torn away from grandmother. I just took the reins and handled her "Figure & Fitness" class right there and then, changing into a leotard in front of the class and there I was, leading the girls in stretching and figure training. At least grandmother applauded me when class was over. I was thrilled down to the tips of my toes.

At lunch, I led our students in singing our school's anthem for Grandmother, "Charm Becomes You." She couldn't have been more delighted as she listened to us sing. To be honest I didn't even know we had a school anthem, but now that I do, I think we'll be singing it much more often, as it's a great way for our students to bond.

She really isn't supposed to be walking as much as she is, but I pray for the misguided soul who tries to tell my grandmother what to do. She is a force of nature. If anything, she was getting stronger as the day went on.

Jasmine was far more composed as grandmother visited her class, although I did notice she had to touch up her eyes twice. Celine's diction class students all wanted to show off their skills and so they read passages from her book back to her using their best speaking voices. That almost made *me* cry, as I was so proud of their progress.

We ended up in my office, which I suppose really isn't my office, but grandmother's. She almost seemed irritated when we got there, however.

"Why do you have all my things still on display? Isn't this your office now?" Grandmother asked me as she looked around. "You can't do things in my shadow, Dianna. This is your school now, and you're the one in charge." She then looked at me with a bemused expression. "Except for the name, though. Don't change the name of the school. That's the draw."

I had to agree. "If you really think so, Grandmother."

"I do!" she said. "And you don't want to make your dear old grandmother sad on such a happy day, would you?"

Already with the guilt.

Anyway, I suppose I have some rearranging to do here in my office tomorrow.

## DAY 202

She came in precisely on time. That wasn't new — the girls always came on time by the fifth month, as if being late were a sin that could never be forgiven. But Lucille didn't arrive. She *presented herself*. That's how Genevieve describes it. "A lady does not enter a room. She presents herself to it."

Lucille stood in the center of my office and waited. Her hands folded lightly in front of her. Her hair was longer now, pinned back with a silver clip. She wore a

soft cream dress with a waist that I was intensely jealous of. If only I was her age. Still, I'm not even sure I could have looked as nice as Lucille did this fine day.

She did not sit until I invited her.

"Lucille," I said, motioning to the chair.

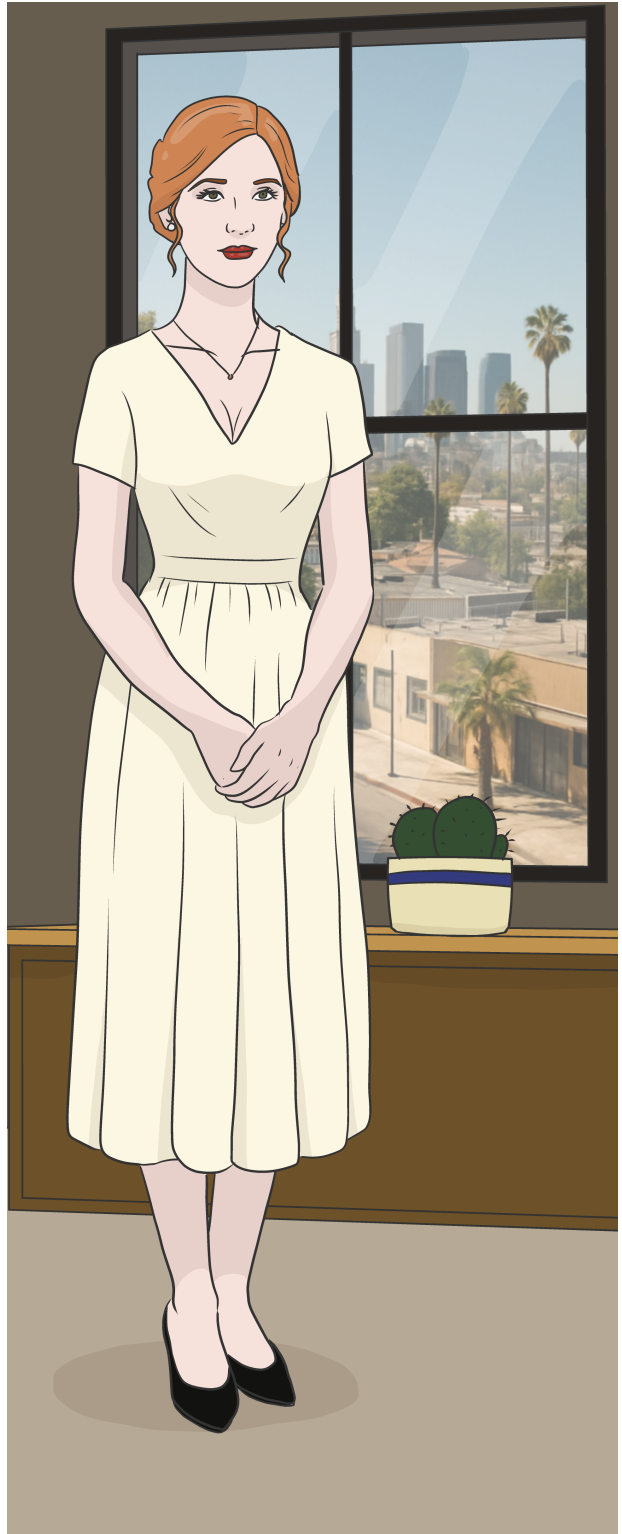
"Thank you, Headmistress." Her voice was higher now, not just in pitch, but in placement — like it came from her essence rather than her throat.

She sat straight. Knees angled, hands resting like petals again.

"This is your final review. Your graduation isn't too far away. I want to be sure you're ready."

She tilted her head just slightly. "I understand."

I flipped through her file. The notes from Genevieve, Celine and Bianca were glowing. "Posture is sustained even during transition states." "Inflection consistent across emotional expression." "Unprompted courtesies observed daily." The last page had a photograph taken during cotillion lessons. She was in a pale blue gown with an



embroidered hem, holding her skirt in one hand as she stepped across the parquet. The other hand was raised for balance. Her fingers were pointed but relaxed.

“What do you remember about your arrival?” I asked.

Lucille paused, thoughtful. “It was... hard at first. I think I didn’t know how to be still.”

“Do you remember what you wore?”

She smiled faintly. “Oh goodness. Something awful, I’m sure.”

“No particular details?”

Her eyes moved upward, as if searching for a memory kept in the ceiling. “I remember being afraid. Of doing it wrong. Of being watched. But I don’t remember the clothes.”

I nodded. “What about before you arrived?”

She blinked. “I’m not sure I understand.”

“Before this school. Before... the lessons.”

Her smile didn’t falter. “I don’t really think I care to reflect on that, Headmistress.”

I watched her carefully. “You’re certain of that?”

She tilted her head again. “Oh yeas, I am very certain.”

There was nothing in her expression. Not pride. Not mischief. Not defense. Just a polished, gentle earnestness. She believed it. Or at least had no reason left to doubt.

“You’ve done very well here,” I said.

“Thank you, Headmistress. It means so much to me.”

As she stood, she adjusted her skirt — not for modesty, but for symmetry. She didn’t look in the mirror as she passed it. She didn’t need to.

She paused at the door and turned back with a practiced smile.

“I’ve always enjoyed our little chats, Headmistress. I am always delighted to be in your presence. I do hope you continue to lead this school just as skillfully as you always have.” She smiled again and left.

I sat down and opened the file again. The earliest notes were there, still in my own handwriting: *Hair uneven. Posture collapsed. Speech flat, possibly untrained. Does not seem to understand expectations. Suspect difficulty adapting.*

My newer notes had overwritten all that. In tighter handwriting. Smaller. Neater. It’s interesting to see how much my handwriting has changed since I started. I added one final line added at the bottom:

“The ideal student.”

## DAY 211

I left the school early today for the salon, which I had been using less and less often, truth be told. Under Jasmine's expert tutelage I had become quite the accomplished cosmetologist myself. However, sometimes a girl just wants to be pampered.

"The usual, Miss Dandridge?" Tia asked me.

"Something a little more dramatic," I said. "A touch bolder than usual."

"Sounds like someone has a date," she said, kidding me.

"Actually..."

"Seriously?" Tia asked in shock. "Dianna Dandridge is finally on the hunt for a man? Seriously?"

"It's just a date," I explained. "Grandmother set me up, and I can't back out of it."

"Well, this is a special occasion! When's the last time you even went on a date?"

Honestly, I couldn't recall precisely. I was always so busy.

Tia worked her usual magic and help assuage my fears over the evening ahead. At the very least, I was not going to scare the man off with my face. I looked spectacular — almost too good to waste on a blind date.

Now I had to choose a dress. I had a dazzling gold sequin number I had picked up yesterday, but it was a little on the short side for a first date. Besides, as a Dandridge girl, I knew my date would expect something sophisticated and elegant. After trying a few long dresses on, I settled on a Rickie Freeman two-tone 3/4-sleeve taffeta shirtdress that was the perfect mix of Hollywood elegant and moderately casual I needed. Some black four-inch stilettos, a handbag, dangling earrings and a necklace from Grandmother's jewelry box finished the look.

"Oh you look so pretty," Grandmother said as I came downstairs.

"Don't butter me up," I told her. "I'm still sore about you arranging this in the first place." I gave her a spin anyway, just because I liked the dress.

"You don't want to be an old maid, do you? You aren't getting any younger, Dianna. You need to hitch that wagon while you can still hitch at all."

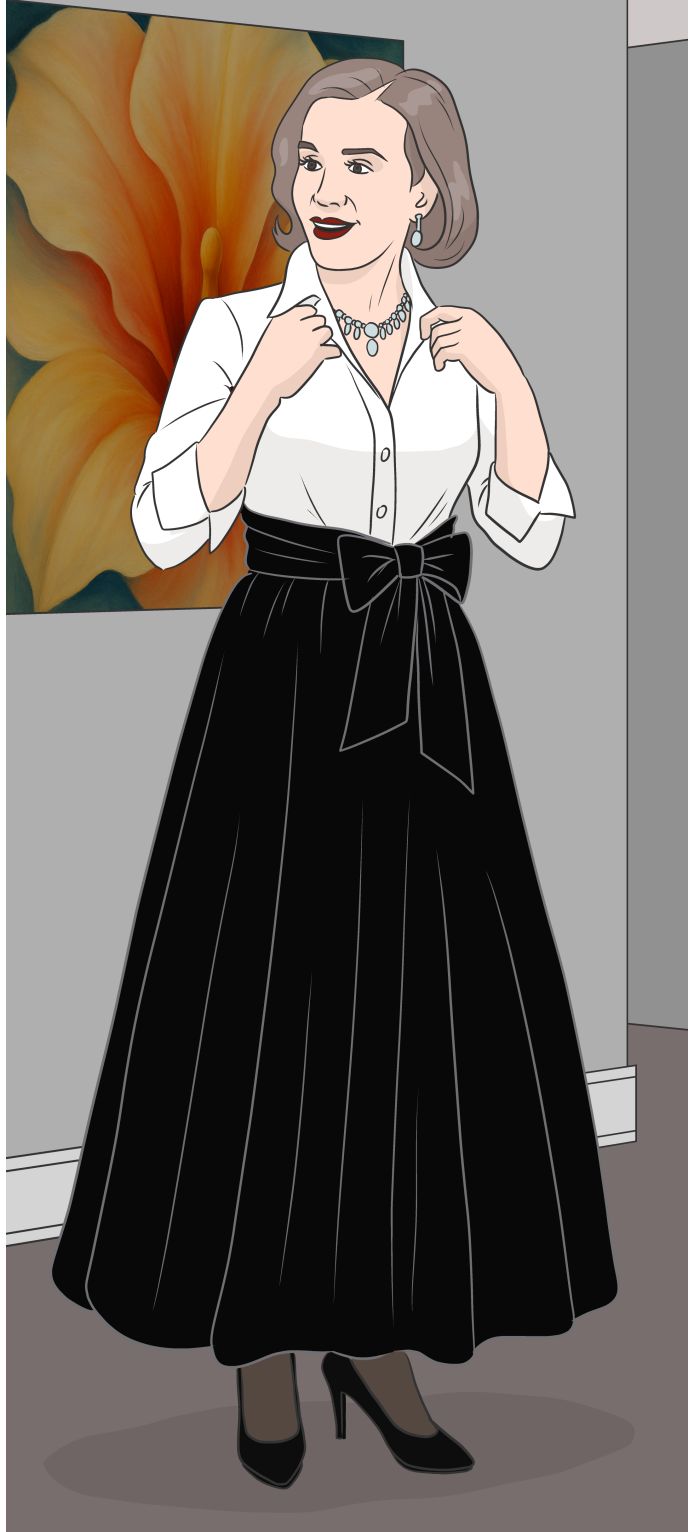
She was blunt as ever. Not that I was about to explain that I had some special considerations when it came to dating men. Still, I was determined to make the best of the situation. I was looking forward to the unique experience of having someone else buy my dinner at an elegant restaurant.

Richard is his name, and he owns a small boutique film studio. Mostly they buy foreign films and distribute them in the US. He arrived in a nice Mercedes and insisted on complimenting Grandmother before even looking at me. I suppose this is something to be expected when having a famous family member.

Eventually, after I reminded him of the time, he stopped kissing up to Grandmother and paid some attention to me.

“What have I ever done to deserve such a stunning woman as my date tonight?” He said to me. I admit he was trying, at least.

As we went out to his car, I waited for him to help me into the seat, and he was already opening his side when he realize I was standing by. Richard quickly reversed himself and helped me. I was very tempted to



lecture him about manners, but I held my tongue. We drove to the restaurant making chit-chat. I told him I ran a small private school, and intentionally left out the details for fear of scaring him off.

We dined at The Parkhouse, a fancy restaurant I'd only seen the likes of in the pages of upscale magazines. We were shown to a table with a breathtaking view of the valley and this time Richard didn't have to be reminded to help me with my chair.

"Tell me more about the school," Richard asked me when we sat.

"There's not much to tell. I'm much more fascinated with your line of work, Richard," I said. Rule number one, get the man to talk about himself.

It worked almost too well, as he went on and on about running a film studio, which was a topic I found fascinating.

"Figure out what you'd like to eat?" He asked me.

"Yes, the steak," I said and handed him my menu.

He didn't seem to know what to do. "I... Uh..."

"You order for me, Richard. It's the man's duty, after all." I was surprised he wasn't prepared for that, but maybe I had been spending too much time wrapped up in proper etiquette and was playing it far too formal. I almost apologized before I realized that I was the one being taken on the date, and I was the one Richard was trying to win over. I was well within my rights to want to be treated like a lady.

Dinner was better than I ever imagined. The food was incredible and the wine was the very best I'd ever tasted. Dessert was so decadent that I was sure I'd sprouted horns on my head.

The string quartet in the corner began to play and I watched several couples walk out to a small dance floor. I looked at Richard and he blanched when he realized what my silent question was. Still, he did what he was obliged to do. "Would you like to dance?" He asked.

"I'd love to," I replied, enjoying the discomfort on his face.

However, when we got to the dance floor, it was my turn to feel uncomfortable. I was pressed against Richard, who was much larger than I am, and my chest, with its rapidly growing breasts, pushed into him. I hadn't felt anything from my breasts until that moment, and I hadn't understood that they were, in a very unexpected way, reacting to being touched.

As we danced, my breasts were dragging left and right against his stomach driving me crazy with every step. I was so sensitive. I was begging for the music to come to an end, but it just kept going on and on. By the time it did end, I was practically biting my lip trying to keep myself from moaning, and I leaned on Richard's arm pretty hard as he led me back to our table.

I excused myself to the restrooms, and I stumbled a little bit in my heels, which wasn't very lady-like, but I was in a hurry. It wasn't until I was at the door when I realized what I was about to do. I hadn't yet used a restroom in public yet and I assumed it would be full. At the same time, I couldn't wait. I needed a stall where I could let myself loose from all the pent-up tension I had just experienced.

I straightened myself up, swept some stray hairs aside, took a deep breath and strolled in, trying to look as dignified and composed as I could.

The restroom wasn't as busy as I thought it might be, and in five steps I had ducked into a stall. Whatever man it was that thought taffeta was a good material for a dress never had to actually wear it. I had to lift my dress up, like I was trying to pack a parachute with one hand and then fish down for my panties with the other.

Normally, I would have used my trusty vibrator, but all I had was, well, me. With just a moment's hesitation to be doing this in public, I fingered myself. I don't know how this strange little device that was attached to my body was capable of this, but I was electrified as I touched myself. The sensation hit me harder than it ever had before, shocking me in more ways than one. I had no idea I could feel something so real and so enthralling with this prosthetic.

"You, were gone for quite a while," Richard said when I came back to our table. It must have been fifteen minutes,

Well, Richard should thank his lucky stars I even returned at all, given the life-changing experience I had just had. The man had no idea.

"Just chatting with some of the other ladies," I said. "You know how women can be."

"Do I," Richard said with a serious expression.

The poor dear must have felt so neglected. I made sure to let him look down my dress as we left, pressing myself against him. This was as much as I wanted to give him. Just something to remember me fondly by. A second date wasn't going to happen, after all.

He took me out for a long drive along the coast as we talked in the moonlight, and not surprisingly, we had little in common. Richard spoke a language I didn't even comprehend, being a studio executive. As an educator myself, it was a very different — and unappealing — world.

He dropped me off back at the estate, and I made sure to send a delicate but firm message that there was not going to be a good night kiss by keeping my distance. That was when he grabbed me by the waist and reeled me in faster than I could react. As long as I was kissing him, I figured I might as well make it a good one. After all, it wasn't like it was an unpleasant thing, and if he was going to steal a kiss from me, I was going to make sure he had regrets when he'd realize he'd never have this again.

A lady does not cause a scene, as I often reminded my students, and you always look for a way to turn things to your advantage, even if you find yourself the object of unwanted attention, as I was at that moment. I did everything I had learned and taught in Charm School, tilting my head back, accepting his tongue, using my hand to hold the back of his head and let my leg kick up as I vocalized a quiet muffled moan.

The door closed behind me, and I was immediately cross with myself. I dated a man, dressed up for him, accidentally lost control of my emotions and had to pleasure myself in the restroom. Then he kissed me and I had actually enjoyed it. I had never felt so feminine in my life, and I hated it.

“Miss Dandridge?” Cecile the maid said as I stormed past her up the stairs.

“I’ll be retiring to my chambers, Cecile!” I said. “No disturbances.”

“Yes, Miss,” she replied dutifully.

I sped down the hallway, angrier and angrier with each step. I closed the door, locked it and stripped off my dress as fast as I could. I was so horny. I grabbed my vibrator from the dresser and flipped off the lights. That Richard — that man — and gotten me all revved up again.

“Richard!” I yelled out as I penetrated myself. “Fuck me like a whore!”

I went at it for an hour, calling out his name, before I tossed that vibrator away in disgust, hating myself. I was not a woman, easily romanced and sexually triggered by a handsome face and a night out. I was a man. I was Brody Callahan.

Still, nothing had really happened. I had just enjoyed a nice meal and had a drive in a nice car. That was all that had happened. I wasn’t in any worse shape for the experience. Besides, it had been a long time since I had just gone out for a night in the city.

Yet I had been treated like a woman, even worse, I wanted it. I wanted to be treated like a woman, and I enjoyed it. I could still picture Richard in my head, and a part of me wanted to call him back and thank him. Thank him!

For taking advantage of me?

Oh God, I wanted him to do so much more. I wanted him to ravage me. Absolutely ravage. I wanted scratches. I wanted to be sore in the morning.

I went to my vanity and used some cold cream to take my makeup off. I changed out of my garter, stockings, panties and bra and into a nightie, then undid the pins in my hair. I lotioned one arm, then the other, then one leg and the other. It was Thursday, which was clay mask night, so I applied that to my face, and then loosely twisted my hair to keep it out of my face as I slept.

I laid there in the darkness for hours, wondering what I had done to myself. What had I let myself become, as Dianna Dandridge? I had spent the entire night thinking of Richard as a man, and as a man, someone of a different

gender. We were the same. Two men. Two men on a date. I wasn't a different gender at all.

Why had I even gone out on the date in the first place? I could have called it off, I could have politely backed out of it. Mrs. Dandridge wasn't that formidable. I could have just claimed to be sick. There were so many ways I could have called it off, but I wanted to go on the date. I was curious. I wanted to know what it felt like to be treated as a woman on a fancy night out. I wanted to be pampered and spoiled and fawned over. I wanted it all, and I couldn't admit it.

Was I truly a woman at heart? No. I was Brody.

Yes I was. I was a woman at heart. That was the whole point of this assignment, to become a woman that could work with women, go undetected as a woman, and teach women how to be more womanly. I was absolutely a woman at heart, and I was damn proud of what I had become. The ultimate undercover assignment. My best work. My finest achievement.

I was a woman, and it was okay to behave like a woman. This was my place. That was going to change eventually, but for right here and right now, I was a woman. There was nothing to be ashamed of.

Richard was a mistake, but a mistake I could still Jill myself off to, so I did.

## DAY 227

I've been exhilarated with my work lately. Having accepted that I am a woman at heart, it's freed me up to do what I should have done long ago and that was to take on a teaching role.

It is, after all, a charm school, and the one class we didn't have an instructor for was the instructor of Etiquette, Manners and Protocol — our primary class, and the focus of all we do. Teaching this class had been done on an ad hoc basis, with the other staff members. Grandmother had been the instructor for these classes and since she had her stroke, we had been rotating through Millie, Jasmine, Genevieve, Bianca and Celine.

Now that I have dispensed with my inhibitions about my femininity, I was ready to teach the girls on the fundamentals of feminine deportment.

"Your most powerful asset is your femininity," I tell my students every day. "Femininity is not weakness, but rather a different set of strengths. Do not let men fool you into thinking you are the weaker sex. Let them believe what they like, but know that you are the one that holds the keys to his happiness — and yours."

I laid it all out on my first class:



As a woman, you are an intuitive creature. There's a reason they call it feminine intuition. That is your special sense of the world and events around you. Trust your heart and trust in your intuition. It is your guiding light and something that men will never possess.

As a woman, you are a creative creature. Our female imagination is second to nothing. We give life to what our imaginations dream up, just as we can give life to child. Submit yourself to your imagination and creativity.

As a woman, you are a social creature. Your ability to connect with people on an emotional level is your greatest strength. Nurturing people and growing relationships is what you do best, and when we as women work together, we are a force of nature.

Being a successfully realized woman, accomplished in all things feminine, may not be celebrated by men. However, we know that when we women use our femininity to the best of our ability, we are just as powerful as any man, and the perfect companion to a deserving male who gives back to us the love we give to them.

Take pleasure in all things feminine. Visit the salon, buy clothes, style your hair, paint your nails, cry at the movies, fuss over babies, hug your friends. Do it all out loud, and let yourself be vulnerable, as it's where you will find your truest self, the person you need to be.

I delivered the whole speech just off the top of my head — just following my instincts. Not having to worry about preserving my masculinity is the most blessed gift I could have given myself. I can feel my confidence as a woman in everything I do, and I know others can feel it, too. I radiate the joy of femininity.

Even grandmother says she's noticed a difference, especially in the way I smile.

I cannot emphasize this enough, keeping a smile on your face is your light upon the land. Presenting yourself as femininely as you can is to bring sunshine into a weary world. It is every woman's duty to be unreservedly ladylike in everything we do.

This is why I'm so proud to be teaching the girls at the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies, and why I will always be proud of my students for being brave enough to be the epitome of femininity.

Listen to me just go on and on! I guess we women do have a reputation for talking, don't we?

## DAY 231

The hall outside the Etiquette classroom had been washed in soft light from the tall barred windows, the kind of light that made the girls' ribbons glow. I was returning from a meeting with Celine when I heard the sound of delicate heels — not rushed, not hesitant — just the steady, graceful rhythm of someone who had never once needed to run.

Lucille appeared at the far end of the corridor like a vision from a painting — her hair swept back into a bun, wisps of hair framing her cheeks. Her gown was the color of fresh butter, fitted through a brown bodice with a subtle row of fabric-covered buttons and a soft bustle at the back. The puffed sleeves were only to the elbow where they met calfskin gloves. A small, leather-bound book was tucked neatly under her arm.

She curtsied when she saw me. It was so deep and fluid, I felt myself holding my breath.

“Guten Nachmittag, verehrte Frau Direktorin,” she said in perfect German, her eyes alight with warmth.

“Good afternoon, Lucille.”

“Oh, it's *Luitgard Isabelle von Reichenfels*, actually. Lucille was just a little fib I told so as to not intimidate the other students.”

“Luitgard?” I asked. “That's a pretty name.”

She straightened, smoothing her skirt. “I was just taking the long way to my needlework review. The air in



this hallway is so very fine in the afternoon — it feels like walking through a cathedral.”

Her voice was soft, full of practiced lightness, as though each word had been carefully sewn before she spoke it.

“I hope you’ve been practicing for your rehearsal tomorrow,” I said.

“Oh, but of course, Headmistress,” she said, and pressed a gloved hand to her chest. “I am to recite Goethe’s *Heidenröslein* by heart and then accompany Rosalind during her piano études. My schedule is arranged to the minute, as it must be. I have written it all in my little ledger — a gift from the Baroness.”

She lightly grabbed the book under her arm and flipped to the page, just to show me, though I hadn’t asked.

“Will you be performing in German or English?”

“German, but of course, mein Herz,” she said, with a smile of serenity. “It is the tongue of my forebears — sharp as crystal in winter, yet soft as linen warmed on a hearth. My position as future Duchess of Reichenfels bears with it the weight of such things... lineage, language, legacy. And I do believe a lady ought to speak as though her soul remembers.”

She glanced toward the tall window, as though she half-expected to see snow falling gently onto the velvet seats of a waiting carriage, pulled by four white horses with braids in their manes.

“Duchess?” I asked.

Her laugh was light, shaped like a bell. “Why, yes, Headmistress. Surely I’ve mentioned it? My aunt — the Baroness von Reichenfels — writes me often. She says the pines stretch taller than the chapels and the mist never truly leaves the hills. The estate is old, romantic, and very much in need of loving hands. It’s nestled near the edge of the Bavarian Forest, a place where even time walks softly.”

She folded her hands as she spoke, the gloves smooth over her fingers. “The staff must be reassembled. The winter salon is crumbling. The wine cellars — oh, the ledgers are in a state of utter despair. My mother says only someone with youth, and perhaps a bit of imagination, could tame such lovely disorder.”

That explained the Baroness in our files. A title that had once seemed theatrical was anything but. “And you feel ready for that life?” I asked.

She blinked slowly, the smile never leaving her lips. “It feels, Headmistress, as though I have spent all my life walking in its direction. With every step, the stones beneath my slippers whispered, *This way, fair maiden.*”

Then, with sudden gravity: “A lady must never forget the ground beneath her feet, even when her world is made of crystal chandeliers and Turkish rugs. There is always earth, somewhere below.”

She curtsied again — this one lighter, as though meant for me alone. “You will come to the class presentation next week, won’t you? I’ve chosen my own waltz. It’s modest, but the bow at the half-measure is... delicate. Just delicious. And my gown...” She stopped herself, hands pressed gently together. “Ah. But I mustn’t spoil it.”

“I’ll be there,” I said.

She curtsied one last time and vanished around the corner, as her steps made no sound. It appeared as if her future was a palace with the gates already open.

This place could absolutely perform miracles. However, the miracle I wanted to know more about was how a person like “Lucy Everett,” an American, a kid in foster care, had come to be a German princess.

## DAY 241

When did men get so big? I swear, I was running errands this afternoon when I had to have Kelly stop at the gas station. While she cleaned the windshield, I went to go pay inside. Maybe I had just spent too much of my time exclusively in the company of other women, but all of the sudden, men are absolutely huge to me. The little gas & go shop was filled with truckers and male drivers that towered over me.

Yes, Richard was so much larger than I was, but I assumed he was just a very tall man. As I stood in line to pay for my gas, I realized that every man was bigger than me. I was tiny in comparison, almost the size of a child.

When I got home that night, I measured myself again: 5’3”. My scale said I was 119 pounds. Same as the last time the doctor took my measurements, and I couldn’t think back to a time when they were much different. Yet I couldn’t understand why men felt so much more imposing than they had before. It’s definitely something I need to ask Dr. Patel about when I see him next.

Until then, though, I need to get ahold of myself. I can’t help but think about how these men might... No, Dianna. We’re just not going to go there. Embracing womanhood doesn’t mean I have to lose my head when it comes to reality. I may be a woman at heart, but a man slumbers underneath the femininity.

Heavens to Betsy, how long will it take me to return to the man I used to be? I can’t imagine it being like a snap of the fingers. I’ll probably need to take a month off at the very least. Maybe at a nice tropical spa resort. Yes. That would be delightful.

Anyway, the most interesting thing happened today. I finally made some progress in the investigation. I had been so hung up on this financial aid issue

that I was overlooking the obvious. It was our full-fare students that I needed to be taking a closer look at.

I was going over the new incoming class when I idly decided to Google a few of the names, to see where some of my students came from. I wasn't surprised to not find much of anything, but then one name did come up with results. Many, many results, as a matter of fact.

Tiffany Hoffnauer, a 15 year old girl coming in for the next fall term, a German girl, was a name I probably should I have recognized. I had a few of their products. Jasmine had recommended their mascara to me, but I found it just clumped too easily. My search for the perfect mascara goes on, to find the right mix of thickness and smoothness, a search I fear may never come to an end. Isn't that a shame? I mean, could it really be *so* difficult?

Anyway, Tiffany was the daughter of Gloria Hoffnauer, the billionaire CEO of Hoffnauer cosmetics. Strangely, however, the stories about Tiffany were regarding her untimely death two years ago from an asthma attack. So tragic. I can only imagine what a mother feels when they lose a child so young. Mrs. Hoffnauer must have been devastated.

Aside from that, if Tiffany Hoffnauer was dead, then who was it that was coming to our school?

That question, as it turns out, has no definitive answer. Despite my searches, I could find no reference to a different Tiffany Hoffnauer of the same age, nor of anyone of that age in the Hoffnauer family, with the exception of a nephew who was a 14 year old living here in Los Angeles, by coincidence. He had lost his parents in a plane crash just recently, as a matter of fact, and Mrs. Hoffnauer was looking after him, according the article I had found.

Still, who was this supposed Tiffany Hoffnauer? If she didn't actually exist, that would explain how a student "disappears" from our school — if they never existed in the first place. Finally, this was the break I have been working so hard to find.

I went to Elenor with my concerns, and while she was adamant that "everything checked out" when she made the arrangements, she promised to investigate further. What would I do without her?

"I'll do a full examination and research everything we can find. I'll see if we can contact some people who know her. A full background check. I'll give you a report in..." She checked a calendar on the wall. "11 days."

Seems good, but I have no idea why she picked 11 days. Is there something happening I don't know about?

## DAY 251

“How can I help you today, Dianna?” Dr. Patel said to me as he came into the exam room. Today was not my regular monthly appointment, rather a consultation I had booked this morning. Still, I had no reason to think there would be anything truly unusual. If I had only known.

“I think something is wrong with the prosthetic,” I told him. Overnight, the oddest thing had happened. I was indulging myself with a little stress relief, using one of my vibrators to... pleasure myself in bed. As I was doing so, I felt something beneath me. I looked and saw small flakes of something thin and transparent, littering the sheets. At first, I thought maybe the laundry had been done incorrectly, but then I noticed how these flakes were centered around me. Or rather, my bottom.”

“I felt around, and found a large section of this strange material coming from me. It was like my skin was peeling off, but this wasn’t skin. It was rubbery, and was coming from the prosthetic.”

The doctor was listening intently to my story, but I hadn’t even gotten to the strangest part.

Anyway, I pulled at the filmy skin-like material, and it was coming off, but as I did, I could feel it separating from my skin.

“I could feel it, doctor. As if the prosthetic was my own skin!” I told him. “I can still feel it. I can feel that appliance, but it’s warm and fleshy. Not rubbery at all. Once the film came off, it was like my own flesh.”

“Well, Dianna...” The doctor began to speak.

I interrupted him. The worst was yet to come. “Of course I immediately checked myself in the bathroom, and that’s when I found the blood.”

“Oh?” The doctor said, crossing his arms and looking away.

“Yes! I found blood coming from my prosthetic vagina!” I said.

“Well, that does sound urgent,” he said. “We better take a look.” He gestured to a bed at the side of the room.

I climbed up onto the bed and laid back. “Do you think it’s serious?” I asked. “I have to think that maybe the blood is pooling up inside and that’s why it’s warm and sensitive.”

“No, I’ve seen this before,” he said.

“It’s not a cut or something?”

“No, no.”

I grabbed the handles on the exam table and as I did, the nurse came in. I wish I’d paid more attention to what she was doing, but I was too focused on the doctor.

I waited for a respectful moment before talking again, trying to be polite, but it was hard to mind my manners in this situation. “What’s going on? What do you see?”

“It’s just fine, Dianna,” the doctor said. “It’s simply your time of the month.”

This was not a good time for jokes. “Doctor please, be serious.”

“I am perfectly serious, Dianna. You’re having your period.”

“Doctor?”

“I had hoped the rubber coating I had given you would have lasted a bit longer, but I suppose it gave out just at the right time. We work very hard to make sure it gives out right when you’re ready.”

“Rubber coating?” I asked. “What’s this all about?” I tried to right myself, but my wrists had been bound. They were tied to the handles on the table by the nurse. “Doctor! What’s happening, doctor?”

As I struggled, I saw that my ankles had also been tied to the bed. I looked to Dr. Patel for some kind of explanation but he wasn’t looking in my direction.

“Doctor?” I asked again. He was actually ignoring me. “Why am I tied up? What’s wrong with my prosthetic?”

He turned to me and gave me the most chilling grin. “What prosthetic? There was never a prosthetic.”

“What do you mean?” I asked. “Tell me what that means!”

“The nerves I numbed in your pelvis are starting to revive. Your sexual organs are healed, acclimated to their new body and now coming to life once again.” He picked up a clipboard and began making things off. “The rubber was just so you thought it was fake, Dianna. It was never fake.”

“What does that mean?” I asked. “What does any of that mean?”

He turned to his nurse and ignored me again. “Do you have the collar?” He asked.

The nurse held up a small fabric collar, with a clasp in back. As she did, I noticed a peculiar silver lining inside of it. It took me a moment, but I recognized it as the same type of collar I’d seen in the clothing I’d been wearing from the school.

It didn’t take very long before the nurse had it fastened around my neck, with the doctor forcefully holding my head still and muffling my screams.

Before I knew it, they had left, leaving me with nothing but questions. I still didn’t understand anything. What had they done to me? Why? What did he mean by having sexual organs that were in a new body? My prosthetic wasn’t real? None of this made any sense.

That’s where I am now. Lying here, strapped and bound to the bed in my undies and pantyhose with this strange collar around my neck.



“I’m Dianna Dandridge. I’m the woman I always wanted to be,” I keep thinking to myself, over and over. I can’t stop it. That’s the only thing I’m thinking. It just repeats.

I’m Dianna Dandridge. I’m the woman I always wanted to be.  
I’m Dianna Dandridge. I’m the woman I always wanted to be.  
I’m Dianna Dandridge. I’m the woman I always wanted to be.  
I’m Dianna Dandridge. I’m the woman I always wanted to be.

I'm Dianna Dandridge. I'm the woman I always wanted to be.

## DAY 252

I woke up this morning with the oddest sensation. My body felt exhausted. I was in bed, but I felt like I'd just been running a marathon. My wrists and ankles hurt and I was sore all over.

Heading to the bathroom, every muscle in my body fought me as I tried to move. Looking in the mirror, I expected a collar or something around my neck, but nothing was there. I have no idea why I expected a collar, but I was sure I had been wearing one. So very strange.

Then I went to the toilet. As I removed my panties, I saw the string hanging out of my vagina. I pulled on it, removed my spent tampon, wrapped it in toilet paper and disposed of it. It suppose it was a light month for me. I inserted a fresh one for the rest of my day.

Once I was done, it occurred to me I had no idea what particular day this actually was. I checked my phone and saw it was Thursday, which was bewildering. It should have been Wednesday. I distinctly remember making an appointment Wednesday morning for Dr. Patel, but nothing else. I had lost almost a full day! Maybe it was my age catching up with me. At 47, I was constantly worried about my memory, but grandmother was still as sharp as ever, and that was after a stroke. I had the Dandridge genes, and they made for strong and hearty women like myself.

I would have to check my appointments and notes to see what I had done yesterday. It was very mysterious, and slightly terrifying to not recall these things. However, it's probably best if I keep this lapse of memory to myself for now. If I have another episode like this one, then I'll certainly seek some help. If it's just this one time, I think I can handle it.

I looked in the mirror, and smiled. I was the woman I always wanted to be. Beautiful, experienced, respected and successful. The Headmistress of the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies. It was everything I ever hoped to be.

Well, even if I was showing my age, I needed to get ready for another day as an educator and leader of young women. I stripped myself bare and jumped in the shower, excited to get the day started. When I was done, on a whim, I just decided to do something different with my hair today. That page boys was not a good look. I don't know why I ever cut my hair like that.

Later that morning, I got a call from Angela. I hadn't heard from her in some time, so I was eager to chat with an old friend. She invited me to lunch that afternoon, and I was delighted to accept.



My cheer at seeing her was misplaced, however. When I found her at the restaurant, she had a dour look on her face and was in her dress uniform.

“Oh my,” I said upon sitting down. “What’s happened?”

“Had to lay a cop to rest today,” she said. “One of my own.”

“Oh, no,” I placed my hands on hers. “I’m so sorry.”

I’m sure we looked quite the pair, the petite professionally-dressed woman I am, comforting the uniformed police officer, but I was there for my girlfriend, and didn’t much care about the way things might have looked.

“Do you want to talk about it?” I asked. She was silent, so I prompted her. “What was their name?”

She looked at me intently, and didn’t speak immediately. “Brody Callahan,” she eventually said. “One of my detectives.”

“That’s a good Irish name,” I said.

“His father was a cop, too,” she said.

“It was in his blood.”

“Maybe,” she said. “But I always got the feeling he wanted to move on. Find something more challenging. Something that better suited his skills. He could have done my job, that was for sure. He was good with people and would have been a good manager, I think.”

“But he liked his work. Otherwise he wouldn’t have stayed.”

“I think he was just used to it,” Angela said. “He could have done just about anything he wanted, really. I knew from when I first met him. I knew he would be great at whatever he chose to do. Being a detective seemed like a waste, to a certain extent.”

“Sounds like you had great respect for him.”

“I really did.” She looked me in the eyes again. “I like to think that wherever he is now, he’s found his passion. Found his place.”

“I’m sure he has,” I said. “After all, he worked with people who cared about him and valued him. That’s not so bad a life. If you work with people you respect and also respect you, it all works out in the end.”

She smiled. “I like your way of thinking, Dianna.”

“Let’s get out of here,” I said. She looked like she needed to get some grief off her chest. “We can find a nice Irish bar and drink to his memory.”

“Yes,” she said. “Let’s do that. I’m glad I have someone like you in my life, Dianna. The school is lucky too. It would have never survived without someone who was just as dedicated and charismatic as your grandmother. They needed someone like you to run it or else it would have fallen apart.”

“I think the place pretty much runs itself.”

“Hardly, Dianna. If you didn’t already exist, Miss Dandridge, they would have had to create you.”

“You’re a silly girl,” I told her. “Let’s go get drunk.”

## DAY 964

### TWO YEARS LATER

The first thing I felt this morning was trapped. I was being held in place and I could barely move. I saw the massive, hairy forearm draped across my waist and tapped it. “Time to get up, honey,” I said to my husband.

“Mrrg,” he replied, and instead of releasing me, he pulled me in tighter, being the possessive caveman he is. I was practically engulfed as he spooned me, and felt his scratchy salt and pepper beard scrape against my soft shoulders.

“Hugo, please,” I said. “I need to get up.”

“Erf,” he replied, lifting his arm just enough for me to scoot under. He turned over onto his back as he began to wake. He was big man, my Hugo. As the owner of a fitness chain, he was the best advertisement for his product. Even at fifty two, he looked to be in better shape than just about any male even half his age.

He was also a wild man, an animal, and had an insatiable sex drive. I had the pussy bruises to prove it.

“Have I ever told you that you’re the most beautiful woman in the world?” He said as he opened his eyes. I was tying the sash of my silk robe by the bedside, stepping into my four inch bedroom mules.

“I don’t recall,” I said. Every day he said it. I could see my reflection in the dresser mirror across from me, and I looked disheveled. I had that freshly fucked look, which was appropriate for what we had been doing all night. I sighed at my appearance. I had a lot of work to do this morning if I was going to look presentable at the school. “I’ll see you in a bit,” I said as I walked into the bathroom. I knew he was watching my butt. The wolf whistle confirmed it.

As always, I took the bathroom first, and he did a light workout while I readied myself. Men needed so little time in the mornings. If only they understood how much we have to get through to look pretty for them.

An hour later, we got to the kitchen, dressed for the day. Hugo in his track outfit, and me in my dress, heels and jacket. Grandmother was already seated at the breakfast table, alongside Elenor. My former second in command practically lived here now.

Has it been two years since she announced her retirement? It doesn’t feel that long ago. She said that now that there was a young, new generation of Dandridge to run the school, she could finally enjoy her senior years.

Given that grandmother and her were the best of friends, it was only a matter of time before she had taken up residence in one of the guest rooms. Honestly, it was the best thing for grandmother to have a friend around and help out — even if they bickered constantly.

“Good morning, ladies,” Hugo said in his deep, booming voice.

It was clear from the adoring looks my husband got from Eleanor and grandmother that they were just as enamored with him as I was.

“Good morning, honey,” grandmother said. “My, you look wonderful this morning. Sit and eat with us.”

“Already running late. Maybe another time.” He looked at me. “Are you ready to go?”

I was just screwing the top of my coffee lid on. Brianne, our chef, made the most amazing coffee for us. “Yes.” I walked over to the wall intercom, my heels click-clacking on the tile floor. “Kelly?” I said.

“The car is ready, madame,” she said back.

“Very good.”



“Don’t forget, the campaign fundraiser is tonight,” I said to Hugo as we sat in the back of the limo, heading downtown. He had his eyes on his tablet, and a hand on my knee.

“Fundraiser?” He said, as if he didn’t know.

“For Angela. Angela Keller for Police Commissioner.”

“Oh,” he replied, tossing his head as it came back to him. “Tell me it’s informal.”

“Your tuxedo is ready to pick up at the dry cleaners.”

“Not the tux...” he whined.

“We don’t have to be there for long. Just so I can meet some people, say hello to some friends, and write the check.”

“You always say that and it always goes on for hours.”

“I promise,” I said. I reached over and squeeze his cute face. “Will you be a big boy for mommy?”

His shoulders dipped and he rolled his eyes. I had the poor man completely under my spell. He never had a chance.

Then he ran his hand up my thigh, trying to sneak one in. I swatted his meaty paw. “No,” I said. “I just did my makeup.”

“So re-do it.” The divider between us and Kelly was being raised by Hugo flipping a switch.

“No,” I repeated. “I don’t want to look like a mess for work. It’s undignified.”

“God forbid Dianna Dandridge should look human to her students.”

“Exactly,” I said. I pushed his arm away.

“We’re here,” Kelly said over the speaker.

“Thank God,” I said to Hugo. Yes indeed. I may have been vocal in my objections, but every part of me wanted my back on the floor and my legs in the air as he pile-drove me into the carpet.

The door opened as Kelly stood by attentively. She was such a good chauffeur. A true professional. No wink or nod at what she knew we had been up to. I truly valued her — just as I valued all our staff at the estate. It turns out that all our girls were all graduates of the school, too. Grandmother hired them after graduation and now they were the best domestics in Bel Air. I’ll put them up against anyone’s servants.

“I’ll see you tonight, sweetie,” I said to Hugo as I left. I blew him a kiss, knowing how blue balled he must have felt. I turned to Kelly. “Don’t forget to pick up his tuxedo.”

“I won’t, Mrs. Dandridge.”

I only had a single flight of stairs to cool myself off from Hugo’s advances and become the executive I needed to be at work. I have spent a lot of time crafting the image of the educational professional I am, and I don’t want it undone in any little way. I am, after all, the woman I always wanted to be.

“Good morning, Headmistress,” Randi said as she met me at the elevator. Seven AM sharp, as always. She handed me some papers. “Your morning reports,” Randi said in her slightly Brooklyn accent.

I had promoted her recently, and in addition to her receptionist duties, she was now my secretary. It was already something she was doing anyway, but I made it official. I was very proud of her and how she had managed the increased workload effortlessly. Eventually, I was going to give her more responsibilities. If she stayed with us, I could see her taking Elenor’s spot one day.

We proceeded down the hallway, passing the empty classrooms. The students weren’t due for another hour.

“Any fires I need to put out?” I asked Randi.

“No, Headmistress,” she said.

That was another change. I was now to be referred to as “Headmistress” when school was in session and when students were about. It was just the professional thing to do. Calling me Dianna was strictly for after hours and private meetings.

We came to my office and I put my things on the corner of the desk and sat in my chair. “Ready for another day, Miss Sparks?” I asked Randi.

“Yes, Headmistress,” she said with a smile. “I’m always ready.” She dipped a curtsey and left.

Randi was dressed in the new staff uniform, a white minidress with wide pink stripes up the sides and a small pink pill hat. White four-inch heels, too. It was one of my little changes. I felt all our staff, with the exception of myself and the instructors, should all wear a uniform. It made us look more authoritative, which helped when dealing with unruly young boys.

In our mission to convert males into cultured, well-mannered and demure young women, we needed all the help we could get. After all, it’s very hard to get a man to part with the family jewels without a little bit of manipulation.

...*Besides* the mind control we used on them, is what I mean. Our silver collars did most of the work, transmitting messages directly into their cerebellum. Even then, we still had to do a little extra push from time to time to get a student to fall into the right way of thinking.

Too bad that they had no idea what we could do to them. Even when they fought and resisted, the tools we had at our disposal made sure we were going to win, every time.

We could alter their voices, reduce their height, change their skin color and so much more. Then just when they thought we couldn't possibly change them any further, Dr. Patel would reveal his transplant surgery, and they would be fully functional girls, with menstrual cycles and pregnancy possible. That would extinguish any last bit of resistance.

It was a swap, actually. Those male genitals would find very good homes with women who had found femininity not to their nature. Waste not, want not.

Come to think of it, I hadn't had my birth control pill today, so I popped open my purse and took today's dose. Dr. Patel says I could bear children if I wanted to, and he keeps saying I have the body of someone in their twenties, but at 49, I am not about to change diapers and chase a little rugrat around the mansion. No thank you.

I checked my appointments on the computer, and saw the fundraiser that evening as my only commitment. Angela was going to be commissioner, of that I had little doubt. She had been cleaning the streets of crime for the past few years, and we played our small part as well.

We had an agreement. If she could get a criminal into a dress and wig, we could turn them into productive members of society. "You break them, we'll take them," I told Angela. It was very successful — and profitable — arrangement.

Yes, occasionally someone would complain about a missing person, but Angela knew how to keep those complaints from going too far.

I remember the night when grandmother and Elenor called me into the parlor and explained how the whole operation worked. I nearly fainted on the spot. The very idea that every student we had was actually a boy at one time in their lives? I couldn't even comprehend it.

You might have thought knowing that all the girls in our school were actually male would have demoralized me. Far from it. Finally, a calling I was born for. I had been so worried about these girls being kidnapping victims or human trafficking, or some such horror, but now that I know they were all young men who had lost their way in some form, I knew I had found my true destiny. Making unruly, lost males into sparkling, beautiful and charming young women. It made so much sense! Why weren't there a *thousand* charm schools like ours?

Even before they explained it all, and showed me how it worked, I was a believer. The mission of the Priscilla Dandridge Charm School for Young Ladies was a calling. A calling I embrace completely.

I owed everything to the brilliance of my grandmother, the great Priscilla Dandridge and to her vision of the future. A vision that bestowed upon males the blessings of femininity, charm and grace. The joy of womanhood was the biggest gift any man could ever have, and they were chosen to be the vessels of nature's most prestigious honor. Femininity.

I had long ago discovered the advantages of being the most ladylike of ladies, and I thank my lucky stars I was born into the fairer sex. These men and boys had no idea how fortunate they were to learning the secrets of a feminine life. They all eventually came around to understand, though. I always enjoyed meeting up with former students when they came to visit. So many lovely women have walked out our doors in high heels — and all of them have stayed in heels, I'm proud to say.

Oh, yes. That was another change I made. Every graduate of my school learns to walk effortlessly in four-inch pumps. What could be more charming than a woman in heels? It's a requirement to graduate. Well, unless our clients asked for something different.

The benefactors of our full fare students can have some very wild ideas, that's for sure. We have to approve everything, regarding what's realistic and what we're willing to do. We are not practitioners of extreme humiliation and punishment, and do not condone that in any way. We have lost some very large endowments because of this, but as grandmother reminds me, it's not about the money, it's about the gifts we give our students.

Two hours later, it was time for me to teach the first of my three classes. I teach Charm and Manners in beginner, intermediate and advanced.

"Good morning, Headmistress," my students sang out as I called class to order.

"Good morning, ladies," I replied, cheerfully, standing before them in my high heels, skirt and blazer. I love my job.

I have 26 beginner students, and I love looking out at them, in their short skirts with bony knees and ill-fitting wigs. They are just starting out on their wonderful journey to womanhood. Today, I would be teaching them about what to do on the first date.

I have 23 students in my intermediate class, who all look adorable with ribbons and bows in their growing hair. Those uncertain mixed expressions on their faces are priceless. I'll be teaching them how to handle unwanted male attention this afternoon.

My advanced class has 25 students, all sitting posture-perfect in their seats, ready and attentive with smiles on their faces. Their lesson today was on planning the perfect wedding.



After all, over 30 percent of our graduates were married within the first year. 90 percent within five years.

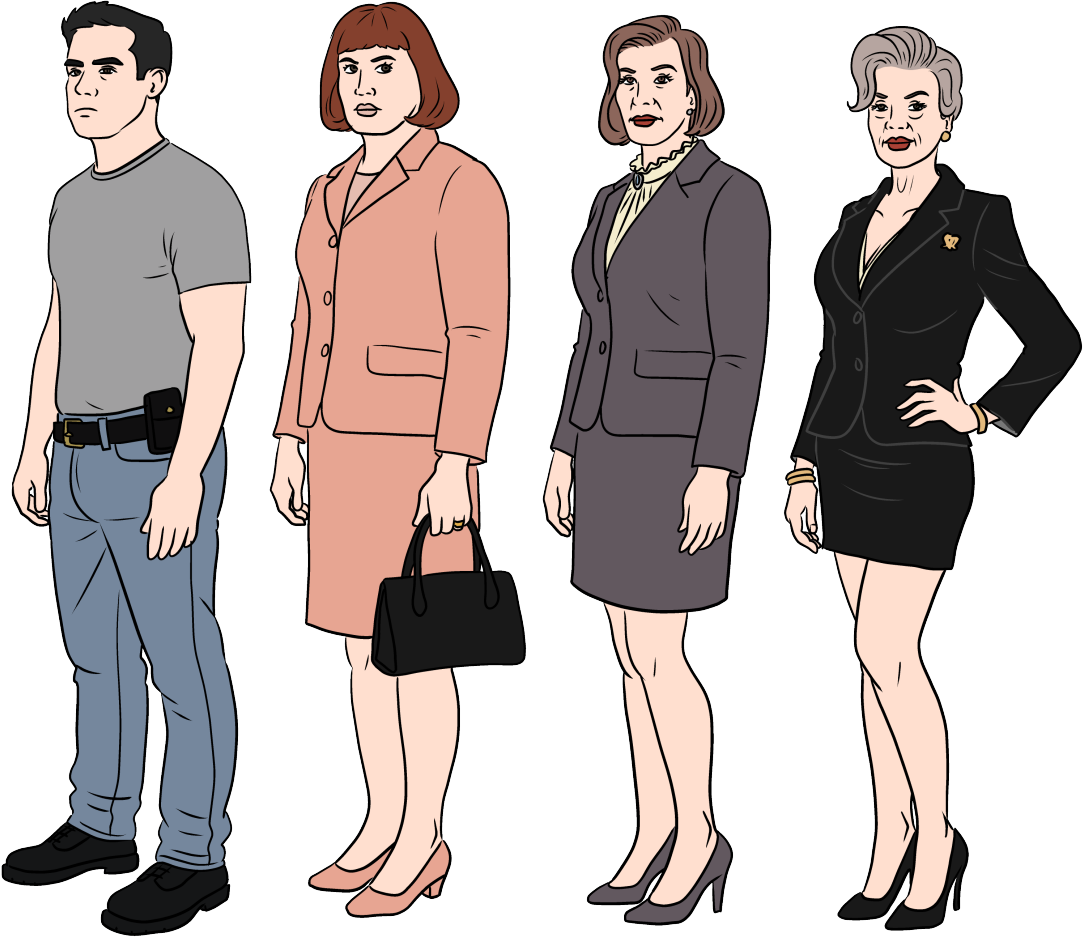
Yes, our classes were absolutely packed. The largest student body we've had in years. Next year's looks even larger. Grandmother said she hasn't seen such demand since 1965. I suppose I can take some credit for that, but it's all a group effort by my talented and hard-working staff.

Well, that's all I really wanted to say. You must be bored with an old lady like me prattling on. The *really* interesting stories are about our students.

Perhaps you'd like to hear one?

The End

Read about the students of  
Dianna Dandridge's Charm School for Young Ladies  
in "*Charm School Confidential*"







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### **Help Wanted 2**

Story by James J Craft, art by RocketXpert. Three more boys are getting far more than they bargained for at a woman's fancy mansion, and three others are finding their places. Comic / 40 pages

### **What Popular Girls Do**

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. A teaching assistant in high school is about to find out what it's like to go back to class — but as a saucy teenage girl with a bully boyfriend he needs to satisfy. Comic / 47 pages

## **Teens Transformed**

### **She Made Me Into My Sister**

"A Little Too Clever" by Joe Six-Pack. Wyatt wanted to help his girlfriend get revenge, but at what cost? As it turns out, a cost greater than any boy could have imagined. Book / 88 pages / 20 illustrations

### **He's a Valley Girl, Fer Sure**

From the files of TGStories.com: "Corey Taylor's Big Bodacious Adventure" by Joe Six-Pack. For Corey, the only way he can get into college is to pretend to be a girl. But when does it stop being pretend? When he's cheerleader? A girlfriend? A beauty queen? Book / 78 pages / 17 illustrations

## ***From Boys to Bridesmaids***

“Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Groom” by James J Craft. Two spoiled and privileged boys are about to be put in their place by their new step-mother. And their place is by her side as her bridesmaids and daughters. Book / 77 Pages / 16 illustrations

## ***Little Mis-ter Popular***

“My Two Moms” by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Thanks to his aunt’s “Confidence Club,” Leon will find a way to become popular, and to get over all his hang-ups... Including his masculinity. Book / 77 Pages / 17 illustrations

## ***Bride to Be***

By Joe Six-Pack. Derek and Cole grew up together as kids. One year, though, Cole has to start pitching in at the family wedding business. His life will never be the same. Book / 63 pages / 25 illustrations

## ***Gone Girly for Good***

“Big in Japan” by James J Craft. Mike and Ken were one-hit-wonder rock stars. Then they discovered they had fans in Japan, so they left to become famous. Then they discovered that the Japanese didn’t know they were guys. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

## ***One Year in Tokyo***

By James J Craft, illustrations by Kwon Lee Tran. Mickey is forced to spend a year with his father in Japan. However things often get confused when words get translated from English to Japanese, as Mickey soon finds out... Book / 87 pages / 20 illustrations

## ***Mall Makeover Madness***

“A Day at the Mall” by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Four boys are going to have one weird day at the mall. By the time the day is over, it’s four girls who leave the mall to begin their new lives. Book / 109 pages / 25 illustrations

## ***Convicts to Co-Eds***

Story by By Courtney Captisa & Claire Bear, illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Three teen boys are sent to a reform school. What they can’t know is that they are about to be “reformed” all the way into skirts... And beyond. Book / 154 pages / 31 illustrations

## ***Creating Samantha***

Story by Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by The Might Fenek. Samuel was under the tutelage of his legal guardian, only his guardian had no intentions of letting him grow up male. Book / 70 pages / 16 illustrations

## ***Crosley High Chronicles***

By Joe Six-Pack. River is coming to a new school, and trying to fit in. The problem is the only way he’s going to fit in is in skirts and heels. Book / 217 pages / 75 illustrations

## ***Student Exchange***

By Joe Six-Pack. Kelley Sue’s convinced a French exchange student to disguise himself as a girl. What happens when she realizes he has no intention of returning back home? Book / 77 pages / 22 illustrations

## ***The Substitute Ski Bunny***

By Joe Six-Pack. Walker is a young man who’s fallen in love with a girl. The only way he can get close to her is to dress up and become her roommate. It’s not going to go according to plan, though. Book / 132 pages / 31 illustrations

## ***My Brother, My Mother, My Doll***

By Joe Six-Pack. Seven year old Amelia has made a wish. A wish that she had a mother more like her doll, and that her brother weren’t so mean. Her family is about to have their lives turned inside-out. Book / 109 pages / 34 illustrations

## ***The Princess Center***

By Cheryl Lynn. Jeffrey wanted everything his brother Alan had. He was willing to to any length to get it, even to send Alan to... The Princess Center. Book / 85 pages / 26 illustrations

## ***Tales of Transformation***

## ***He’s the Wrong Girl***

“Office Chemistry” by Joe Six-Pack. James had to fill in at the reception desk. Problem is, the business is a bio-genetics company. And all of the sudden the coffee tastes funny. Book / 53 pages / 14 illustrations

## ***City Boy, Country Girl***

By Joe Six-Pack. Richard's successful city life is interrupted when a sheep he wants to fleece needs urgent care out in the country. But instead of returning home, all Richard's wife hears are a series of suspicious excuses. Revised in 2019. Book / 92 pages / 34 illustrations

## ***Thames Greene***

By James J Craft. Ira wanted something better for his family. A new start. But in Thames Greene, everyone's getting a new start, whether they want it or not. Book / 77 pages / 26 illustrations

## ***Hiding in High Heels***

"How Not to be a Sissy" By Joe Six-Pack. Vince was on the run from people who wanted their millions back. Howard was a friend with a funny little idea and a knack for making subliminal CDs. Mini-Pix / 48 pages / 15 illustrations

## ***A Blessing in Disguise***

By KK, illustrations by Kannel. Jay was a witness to a murder, and now he's the target of a vicious criminal. Resorting to a female disguise, he becomes trapped with no way out. Book / 84 pages / 16 illustrations

## ***I'm Your Dolly***

"Barbie-in-a-Box" By Joe Six-Pack. Tyler wasn't much of a boyfriend anymore. Jessica wanted to throw him out, but then a better idea came to her, in the form of the Barbie-in-a-Box service. Tyler better get used to pink. Book / 103 pages / 20 illustrations

## ***Winning is Everything***

"Costume drama" by Joe Six-Pack. Seth made a funny little bet for Halloween. He needed to pull off the impersonation of a Cheerleader for a party. What's at stake? 100 million dollars and his manhood. Book / 215 pages / 37 illustrations

## ***His Life as a Trophy Wife***

By Joe Six-Pack. Nick had a great life, but then it evaporated. Now he's down on his luck. In steps a wealthy executive willing to pay him handsomely to pretend to be his wife. What can it hurt? Revised in 2018. Book / 256 pages / 39 illustrations

## ***Male Monday, Girl Friday***

"Hey, Cutie!" by James J Craft. Daniel is going to be promoted from his average life to an exciting executive position. At least, that's what his bosses are telling him. They may not be telling him everything. Book / 58 pages / 20 illustrations

## ***The Happiest Place on Earth***

From the files of TGStories.com: "The Fairest One of All" By Joe Six-Pack. Will is a kid looking for a job. He gets one, performing as Snow White at a theme park. For Will, he doesn't suspect that playing the role and wearing the costume is slowly changing him, day by day. Book / 51 pages / 21 illustrations

## ***Hello, Nurse***

From the files of TGStories.com: "Quality Health Care". Dane is filling in as a nurse for his pal Jimmy at his new office. Although both are doctors, Dane begins to take to his new role as a nurse. Soon, he feels compelled to be the ideal nurse. Book / 44 pages / 15 illustrations

## ***My Boss, The Bimbo***

"If I Were a Betting (Wo)Man" By James J Craft, illustrations by blackshirtboy. CEO Lucas has a superiority complex. When his long-suffering secretary is able to feed into Lucas' competitive nature, he'll make any bet to prove his dominance over women. Book / 38 pages / 10 illustrations

## ***He's the Girl They Want***

"Rallies" by Joe Six-Pack. Spencer has a great new executive job in the food service industry, but first he's got to learn the ropes of the business by waiting on tables. He just doesn't quite fit in with the cheerleader theme. Yet. Book / 63 pages / 22 illustrations

## ***Demoted and Degraded***

"Trixie the Secretary" by Angela J. Cindy didn't much like Tom Jones attitude and his advances, so when she has the opportunity to help take the wind out of his sails, she takes it. But she had no idea that it was all designed to make Tom into Trixie the secretary. Book / 87 pages / 17 illustrations

## ***I, Candy***

“Sissy Sweets” by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Inheriting his family’s bakery requires this young man to become the new face of the business. A female face. Book / 45 pages / 15 illustrations

## ***Boyz II Girlz***

“The Making of the Ballroom Brats” by Joe Six-Pack. The Ballroom Brats become the newest worldwide celebrity sensation. How did four unsuspecting guys at a fast food joint become the hottest girl group in music? Book / 113 pages / 34 illustrations

## ***His Strangest Desire***

“Employee of the Month” by Joe Six-Pack. Mick is declared Employee of the Month, and he’s going to find himself hurtling headlong into facing his weirdest inner desire. Book / 59 pages / 19 illustrations

## ***Hard Time or High Heels***

“I’m Turning into My Mother” by James J Craft, illustrations by rocketxpert. Colby got deep into debt to a local gangster. Before long, he’s on the arm of that very same gangster as his reluctant girlfriend. Book / 75 pages / 20 illustrations

## ***Seriously Skirted***

“The Show Piece” by KK. Illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Mel finds work at a clinic as a secretary. He slowly begins to fit to role. Book / 75 pages / 19 illustrations

## ***From Mister to Sister***

Story by Melissa N., illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Dan just wanted to help guide his girlfriend’s sister out of her depression. Instead, he’s being guided out of his manhood. Book / 84 pages / 24 illustrations

## ***The Russian Girl***

Story by Melissa N., illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Casey’s wife has had enough of watching him kill himself with work, so she forces him out of his comfort zone... Into the life of a female stripper. Book / 196 pages / 30 illustrations

## ***Swindled into Skirts***

“Beta Male” by Joe Six-Pack. Kyle inherited a multi-million dollar mansion in southern California. He begins to adjust to the Cali lifestyle, but his adjustments seems to have a decidedly feminine flavor to them. Book / 78 pages / 23 illustration

## ***Mergers & Acquisitions***

Story by James J. Craft, Illustrations by Sortimid. Mark is a disaffected retail salesperson, and after a takeover of his store, he finds himself selling feminine fashion... and struggling to embrace everything about it. Book / 103 pages / 31 illustration

## ***Suddenly a Secretary***

Story & art by Joe Six-Pack. Rock guitarist Mick has become obsessed with following the life of secretary Lori Chandler through her inter-office email messages. Soon, Mick is taking her place. Book / 133 pages / 30 illustrations

## ***Stories of the Supernatural***

### ***A Change for the Better***

“Do-Overs” by Joe Six-Pack. Evan wants a chance to do over his biggest mistake. He gets the chance, but he keeps wanting his new life to be a little bit better than the last. Book / 59 pages / 18 color illustrations

### ***Changed and Rearranged***

“Wrongs Make Wright” By Joe Six-Pack. Chris and Matt were rivals. Then, Matt decided to show everyone how smart he truly was by impersonating a teacher. But the disguise becomes more and more real, much to Chris’ dismay. Book / 74 pages / 19 illustrations

### ***From Pals to Gals***

From the files of TGStories.com: “Mandate of the People” By Joe Six-Pack. Teens Jeremy and Stewart are good friends, but a bit thick in the noggin. When they jokingly nominate each other for Prom Queen, they slowly become the perfect candidates, thanks to some magic. Book / 45 pages / 16 illustrations

### ***A High-Heeled Halloween***

Story & art by Joe Six-Pack. A costume shop has four spooky tales to tell this Halloween, where the price you pay for your costume is far more than money. Book / 128 pages / 34 illustrations

## ***Born on Black Friday***

Story & art by Joe Six-Pack. Malcom Balford was forced to go shopping on Black Friday. What he finds at the mall may mean that Malcom will never leave. Book / 57 pages/ 17 illustrations.

## ***In the Family Way***

Story & Art by Joe Six-Pack. The Finch brothers are trying to catfish a man out of his money. To do so, they dress up as mother and daughter. But their impersonations slowly seem to be taking them over. Book / 182 pages / 42 illustrations

## ***Crossed Fiction***

### ***Sisters for the Summer***

"Camp Counseling" By Joe Six-Pack. Brock McCade always thought of himself as a real man, or at least he would be one, someday. After summer camp, he's no longer so sure. Book / 76 pages / 17 illustrations

### ***They're the Girls for the Job***

"Peace and Harmony" By James J Craft. Illustrations by blackshirtboy. Pete and Harmon need jobs bad. How far would they have to go to get them? Book / 64 pages / 19 illustrations

### ***Blondie's Lost Summer***

By KK. Illustrations by Fraylim. Carl's dream summer was about to become three months of dresses, heels and makeup. Book / 159 pages / 48 illustrations

### ***Blondie's Lost Year***

By KK. Illustrations by Fraylim. Book Two in the Blondie Series. Carl's trip to Florida has been horrible enough, trapped in dresses and makeup. Now, high school has presented a whole new level of humiliation for him. Book / 221 pages / 52 illustrations

### ***Blondie He's Not***

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Mark got a job at a salon, and fell in love with one of the customers. Problem was that customer was Candi "Blondie" Wethers, and what happened to Candi was about to happen to Mark. Book / 151 pages / 40 illustrations

## ***I Never Wanted to be a Woman***

"Politically Corrected" By Cheryl Lynn. Illustrations by Joe Six-Pack. Michael's politically active mother has decided she's going to make her hippie son over into the daughter she always wanted. Book / 64 pages / 19 illustrations

## ***If the Shoes Fit***

"Hand Me Downs" By KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Sydney is a teen who is just trying to make it through the summer with no money. He finds himself wearing hand-me-downs from his sister, and that takes his life in a whole new direction. Book / 98 pages / 30 illustrations

## ***The Boy's Guide to Girlhood***

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Dweeb Kenny and cool Rex find themselves trapped in a Principal's twisted scheme, and only one of them is going to get out in tact. Book / 109 pages / 32 illustrations

## ***Fashion Victims***

Story by Lauren Bliss, illustrations by Fraylim. Teenage boy Jamie just needed clothes for school. Oh, he's going to get clothes for school. Just not male ones. Will he ever need male clothes again? Book / 67 pages / 26 illustrations

## ***The Boy's Guide to Girlhood***

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Dweeb Kenny and cool Rex find themselves trapped in a Principal's twisted scheme, and only one of them is going to get out in tact. Book / 109 pages / 32 illustrations

## ***The Making of a Beach Bunny***

Story by KK & Fraylim, illustrations by Fraylim. Before heading off to college, John wanted to spend his last normal summer at the old rental summer house with his friend Stanley. There was nothing about this summer that would be normal. Book / 134 pages / 58 illustrations

## ***Medical Miss-Practice***

Story by KK & Fraylim, illustrations by Fraylim. Jerry just needed a medical procedure. He came out with two big new problems and a whole new life. Now he's losing everything he loves, piece by piece. Book / 95 pages / 51 black & white illustrations

## **12 Days of Christmas**

Story by KK, illustrations by Fraylim. Paul was a rising executive, but he had a secret embezzlement scheme. Now he's being blackmailed into skirts day-by-day in the 12 days of Christmas. Book / 74 pages / 21 illustrations

## **Seriously Sissified**

## **A Family Femmed**

"The Femmed Family Robinson" by James J. Craft & Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by Sortimid. The Robinson boys all had dreams of their own, once. Now they have new ones, thanks to their stepmother. Book /96 pages / 29 color illustrations

## **Forever Femmed**

Story by James J. Craft & Cheryl Lynn, illustrations by Sortimid. "A Family Femmed's" Deborah is still hard at work, flipping men into sissies and selling them to the highest bidder. But this time, there's a new wrinkle. Book / 108 pages / 28 illustrations

## **Auntie's Girl Time**

By Cheryl Lynn. David was just a young teenage boy who wanted all the things in life a man could look forward to. His aunt, though, is going to make sure he never gets them. Book / 79 pages / 20 illustrations

## **Revenge of the Cheerleaders**

"Pansy Cheers" By Angela J. Patrick Sears was a football player trying to sleep with every cheerleader at his small college. He'd have to pay for his conquests. Book / 116 pages / 19 illustrations

## **He's Got His Mind Maid Up**

By James J. Craft. Illustrations by kinkyrocket. Corey has just a sliver of a chance to get into college, but that chance involves becoming his stepmother's maid. And she wants him to fit both the role and the dress. Book / 68 pages / 16 illustrations

## **Fated for Femininity**

Story by KK, illustrations by RocketXpert. When a web page shows Evan having sex with another boy, the poor kid is chased out of town — right into the arms of a gender therapist who has her own agenda. Book / 70 pages / 15 illustrations

## **Un-Boxed & Undone**

By James J. Craft, illustrations by Banedearg with additional art by Joe Six-Pack. Caleb is struggling to get his YouTube career started. When he gets some strange shipments of makeup and clothes, he finds his channel suddenly taking off - but can he control it? A picture story. Book / 41 Pages / 33 illustrations

## **Web Classics Revisited**

## **Two Forms of ID**

By Joe Six-Pack. Harvey had the unusual ability to convincingly imitate a teenage girl. In desperation, he has to use that talent to make some money. But when is enough enough? Paperback / 194 pages / text only

## **Barbie's Life**

Story & Art by Melissa N. Chris was a student actor who said he could play any role. A disgruntled girlfriend and playwright are about to see if he'll be able to play the lead role in... Barbie's Life. Book / 55 pages / 21 rendered images

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