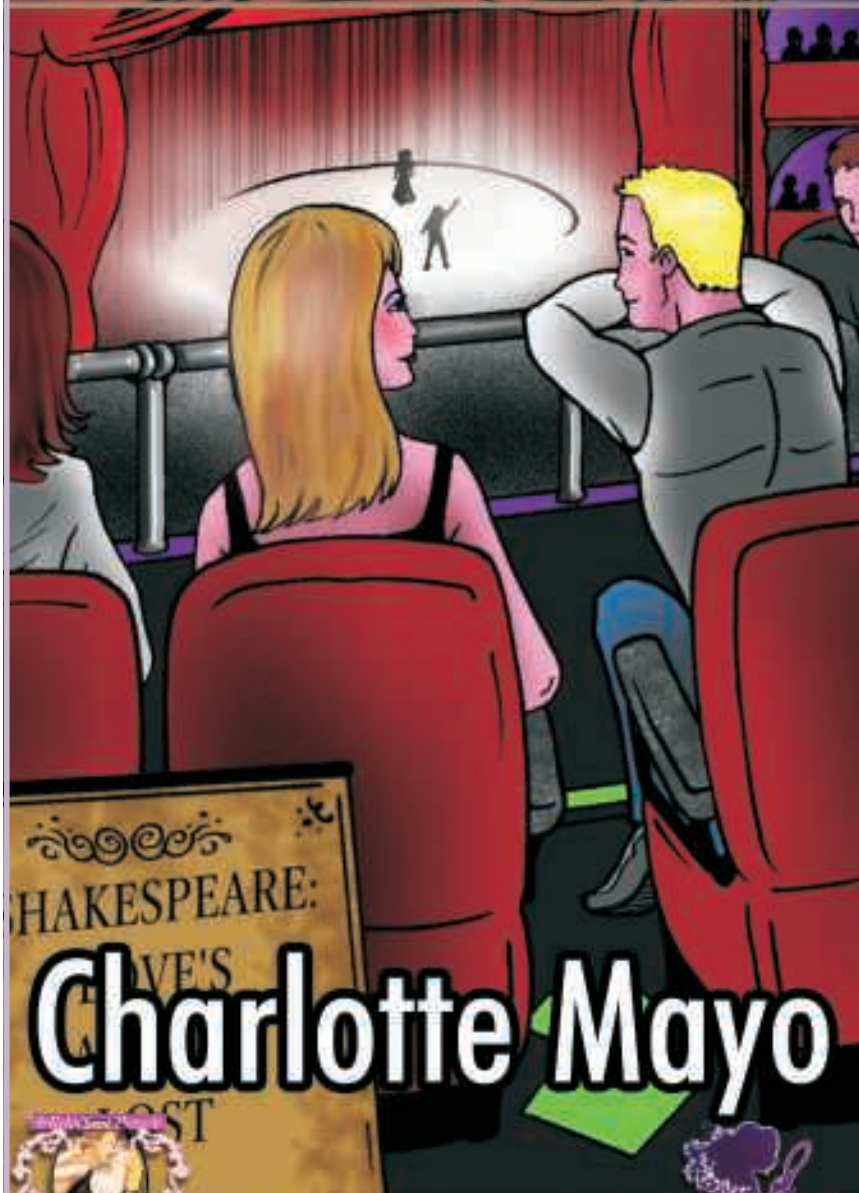


# TV Times



SHAKESPEARE:  
LOVE'S  
A  
MIST

# Charlotte Mayo



A "Her Tv" Novel



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# TV Times

by **Charlotte Mayo**

## Preface

Picture this. You go to the theatre for a night out with your wife or girlfriend. You move up between the rows and there, sitting in the row behind, is a very well-dressed blonde lady. She catches your attention. She is wearing a black leather pencil skirt which stretches across her shapely thighs, and a black, sparkly jumper with a polo neck which shows off her ample breasts. You note she is also wearing patent burgundy-coloured, knee-length leather boots with a 3" heel, which match her burgundy-coloured hand-bag, and a black box-style jacket with a leather-look trim. You can see she has large breasts which push out against her tight jumper. Her face is very well made up; her blonde hair is nicely coiffured. As you get closer, you can see her smooth legs under the fine denier tights she wears. Next to her is another lady, wearing black trousers and a dark top, along with high-heeled court shoes. The first lady seems to be

looking around and smiling and enjoying just *being* there.

You take your seat.

Then, coming back from the interval, you pay attention to the lady in the row behind again. She is resting a tub of ice cream on her leather skirt which is stretched taut; she is chatting to the lady next to her and then to her friend. They are both smiling and look happy. You think to yourself,

“Isn’t it nice to see such a well-dressed lady in the theatre? Women just don’t dress up so much these days. Even for the theatre, a lot of women look scruffy. It makes such a pleasant change to see a well-dressed woman.”

## Introduction

When I was a teenager I loved the New York “Power Pop” band Blondie, fronted by Deborah Harry. A lot of teenage boys had adolescent crushes on Debbie Harry, but for me it wasn’t just about lusting after her. I liked her clothes, and her make-up too. Likewise, when I looked at pornographic magazines, *Playboy* and *Men Only*, I looked not just at the young ladies’ attributes, but at their spiky heels, their lingerie, their beautifully made-up faces.

Why? I was a transvestite. I still am. My sister first described me as a “transvestite” when I was about fourteen, and I have been one ever since. It is something you can’t change, even if you want to.

Unfortunately, there are not a lot of transvestite role models out there; I suppose guys who like dress-

ing like to keep it hidden in the closet. There have been suspicions about people like J. Edgar Hoover, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Danny Kaye, but they were never fully outed – not like Ed Wood Junior, whom I really admire. He was a transvestite, and he didn't give a *fuck* who knew it, in an age when conventional-ity and giving a *fuck* really mattered. He was right out there and open about his transvestitism, and for me he is the greatest transvestite of all. To make a film like *Glen or Glenda* (1953), and write books like *Killer in Drag* (1965) and *Death of a Transvestite* (1967) in the Fifties and Sixties – well, that took balls.

It is strange to say it, but the only thing I have ever been *really* good at in life is dressing as a woman. I am no good at sport, not particularly ambitious, and have never been a lady's man. The one thing I have mastered is the ability to dress and act like a woman and pass in public *en femme*.

I am fortunate to be married to a very understand- ing wife, Nadine, who helps and assists me; just how much assistance she gives will become apparent as you turn these pages. I have always enjoyed dressing and find it hugely relaxing but, like a lot of TVs, I have always had the desire to pass in public. That has been my ultimate goal: to pass in public *en femme*. Hopefully, these pages will help and inspire others as I reflect on the good, the bad and the ugly of my *en femme* escapades, with some tips about how to do it and how not to do it. It is good to learn from your mis- takes, but even better to learn from other people's!

I am also extremely lucky that I am small framed – about 5 foot 8 inches tall and 164 pounds, so a size 12, with slim legs and small hands, arms and wrists. I've always liked it when women have commented on some "girlish" aspect of my build or personality. Over the years, I've been told that I "giggle like a girl"; "I

blush like a girl”; I’ve got hands “like a woman’s”; and more than one girlfriend has told me they wished they had my long eyelashes. Once when I was wearing shorts, one woman said she wished she had legs like mine. All these comments were unconnected to me dressing or being dressed, just everyday comments—and yet they mean so much to me as a transvestite.

I am very much a heterosexual transvestite. There is a part of me that does like to be looked at by men when dressed, but only because it the ultimate in knowing I have passed – not just as a woman, but a *desirable* and *attractive* woman. I don’t mind being referred to as a crossdresser, but frankly I hate the modern idiom of “transgender” which is supposed to encompass TVs like me along with those who feel they were born in the wrong bodies and seek sex changes. I often feel the sex-changers now get the lion’s share of the media, while the poor TV, who wishes to be a male but wants to dress occasionally or regularly, is being edged out. Well, I refuse to be edged out. This is my story.

## Chapter One

My early forays into dressing *en femme*, like those of many other transvestites, were simply walks with little or no purpose. I undertook about twenty of them with Nadine, normally around a small, upmarket town about ten miles from where we lived. The ritual was always the same: mid-week, when the neighbours were at work, I would take a day off work and we would go to the small town. Initially, Nadine would drop me off at a carpark and I would walk into town through a park and around a lake. Then I would walk around town before heading back to the car park. After a while she started to drop me at the back of a department store. This was better, as I would



walk through it and onto the street before heading back there to do some shopping and meet Nadine at the back of the shops again.

During the walks, I now know, I was over-dressed and over-made-up. As a result, I was read at least once on every tour of duty. Even so, there were some memorable occasions. Once I passed another TV who was out and about, and we looked at each other in disbelief. Another time I was waiting for Nadine to collect me when a large, black traffic warden passed me and smiled and said “hello.” Earlier, some women had passed on the other side of the road and looked at me curiously. The same happened when I crossed the road to the meeting point with Nadine and a woman was getting into her car; I passed close by and she gave me a long look. *Read again*, I thought.

One of my most embarrassing moments was when I slipped on the floor in a department store. Numerous people all around me were watching me drawing attention to myself. All of them, I fear, were reading me at once!

Nevertheless, after a couple of excursions, I built up enough confidence to buy a few bits in the department store. Usually I was read by the assistant who served me, as my voice was so quiet as to be non-existent and all I could do was nod or shake my head when presented with the simple question, “Do you want a bag?”

Even so, I did start doing a small shop each time, and the advent of the self-service till was great in that respect. I also withdrew money from the cash point and on one occasion took something back as I had scanned it twice by mistake. Again the floor manager read me, but we live in TG-friendly times and it was no issue.

In addition, on two occasions I was asked for directions and found it difficult to answer! Once I was hooted at by a van driver; on that occasion I was wearing a long, black leather skirt, and was so surprised I nearly jumped out of my skin. Of course everyone turned and looked at the recipient of the van driver's sexism, and I was probably read again, but it was nice to think some van driver had thought I was a real girl – even if it was just from behind.

On a few occasions, I like to think, I got admiring glances or looks from men. Once a young man in a shop watched me as I went past; another time a black man gave me a long, lingering look as I walked down a path to the high street. However, a bus driver didn't. I had inadvertently crossed the road on "red" and he hooted me – three long beeps which I thought was totally unnecessary and forced me into a skipping run.

The strangest occasion on which I was read was when I crossed a road and saw two women, some way off, looking in my direction and talking about me. What they had seen I will never know, but the giveaway may just have been the walk or the clothes.

Still, the early trips were useful in building up my confidence. By the end of our "shopping period", Nadine would go to a café, we would communicate via text, and then I would wait for her on a side road. Once, though, she came into a department store café. She was waiting for me and, though it was empty, she had chosen a seat right at the back. I found her and went to order a coffee. An older woman and a younger woman served me; the older woman prepared the coffee whilst I paid. The young assistant read me and watched me like a hawk. Later, I went to the toilet and she pretended to be looking at a rail of clothes by the toilet. Such things can be a bit of a

dent to the confidence, but they can't be helped. They happen to all of us, and at least they help you know when you are *not* being read.

## Chapter Two

After about twenty-odd shopping trips, we both realised it was not that satisfying. Apart from the issues mentioned earlier – too much make-up and being over-dressed - I felt I was going through a lot of preparation, a week of not shaving, for maybe an hour's shopping or walking around the shops 'window shopping'. We thought about places where going out well-dressed would be more of an event and I would not stand out from the crowd. That is why we decided on a trip to the theatre.

After many shopping trips, I had at least started to act naturally and *feel* I was a woman, without thinking about people looking at me. Nevertheless, the first time we went to the theatre I was a bag of nerves. It was towards the end of summer and we had chosen some strange, arty play called *A Country Girl* in a large, modern theatre about forty miles from our house. The night before I had shaved my legs and body and on the day, itself, after one week's beard growth, I decided to go to a gentlemen's barber's shop for a proper wet shave with a cut-throat razor, which was great. The barber's shop was some distance from our house, so it was a bit of an ordeal to get there and back, but it worked out well.

When I came home, Nadine painted my nails and, when they were dry, I got dressed. Nadine fastened me into a Velcro waist clincher, I pulled on silky panties and fastened a bra to my chest in which I inserted expensive silicone breast forms. Then I sat on

the bed and pulled on 10 denier black tights with a slight pattern. All day I had been on edge waiting for this moment. Nadine had been out shopping, and I had laid on the sofa watching football on TV prior to going off for my shave. Doubts pounded through my brain: *would I make it? Would I be able to go out dressed as a woman?*

Next, I pulled on an all-in-one black body with a polo neck. This attached under me and gave a lovely shape. Finally, I pulled on a black cotton pencil skirt which Nadine fastened at the back. I sat on the bed and pulled on a pair of black leather boots with a low heel. The last item was a filmy black and white top which we had purchased from a charity shop. These tops proved very good and over the years we have purchased quite a few, the advantage being that the polo tops are thin and cover the neck and arms but the filmy tops gave a feminine air.

Then I sat down on a chair in the second bedroom where Nadine had prepared the make-up materials.

“Let the magic begin,” Nadine said with a confident air as she started to apply foundation. I knew her voice belied her own nervousness. At that time, we were using a theatrical foundation which covered my beard growth (unfortunately I am a hirsute bugger with thick hair). We had purchased it from a theatrical shop in London after having had make-up lesson there. After the foundation, Nadine applied eye shadow and mascara to my eyes, blusher to my cheeks, lipstick and gloss to my lips. Then came the crowning glory, a short blond wig which I pulled into shape and Nadine styled. Apart from jewellery I was ready. Nadine added rings to my fingers and a gold chain to my neck. I stood up and admired myself in the mirror – the black skirt, the knee-length black leather boots, the filmy top over the body. I looked

good. I prepared my large black patent hand bag – tickets; lipstick; brush; tissues; sweets. I took some deep breaths.

“Do you think I will pass?” I asked.

Nadine nodded her head.

“You look good,” she said as she helped me on with my black Mac.

It was Saturday night and beginning to get dark. Nadine did a check outside and then I left the house. The car was facing forwards so it would be easy to drive out. I got in the passenger seat and waited whilst Nadine locked the front door. She got in and we drove off; the usual ritual was for Nadine to drive to a carpark or quiet street where we would swap drivers so I would drive to the theatre (fortunately, I have always been able to drive in heels).

It took about 45 minutes to get to the theatre. Once there, we parked in the large car park which fronted it. I checked my look in the rear-view mirror and took a deep breath. It was time to go. Adrenalin was pumping through my body; my heart beat fast and my hands felt clammy. I knew I had to go through with it – we had put in too much effort to pull out – there was no going back. I could see the large, looming theatre in front of me, the neon sign that proudly announced its presence.

I opened the car door and stepped out into the car park. It was quiet, but I could see cars and shoppers further down the road as it was still early. I felt nervous, apprehensive. I closed the door and we began to walk. I made an uneasy journey to the theatre, watching every step, conscious of cars as I crossed the road, conscious of people around me, possibly looking, possibly glancing.

As we neared the theatre the number of people we came into contact with grew—and so did my nerves. Now I could not go back, even if I had wanted to. Even so, Nadine walked confidently beside me. We reached the theatre and were greeted by a member of the staff who said “good evening”. I smiled and gripped my handbag tightly. We walked across the foyer and up the stairs to the circle. It was early, but the auditorium was open so we went in. We had end row seats so I could sit in the last seat with a guarantee of no one next to me apart from Nadine.

After a short while I began to relax and started to look around. I got up and went to buy a programme, squeezing between the rows. For the first time, I saw a woman really look at me in the row behind, but the young male programme seller took no notice as I whispered that I wanted a programme. I made my way back, crab-like, between the rows, conscious of the blond woman, who was in a group of five or six, watching me. As I sat down I spotted some elderly women in back row seats looking at me as well.

Nervously, I sat next to Nadine, flicking through the programme. Finally the lights dimmed and the play started. The play was an almighty bore - not that I could really concentrate. I was worried about my wig; worried about being read; worried about getting out of the theatre alive!

The playhouse was pretty much empty, with a scattering of seats taken here and there, yet it seemed everyone in the circle, where we sat, had seen me. At the interval, I queued up at the bar and asked for some drinks in an almost inaudible whisper.

“Sorry, what did you say?” The barman asked.

“Could I have two glasses of wine, please,” I whispered again.

“White or red?”

“White please.”

The barman had to lean over the bar to take my order, so quiet was my voice. But he poured the drinks; I paid and took them to Nadine, who was standing by the wall.

At the end of the interval I went to the toilet. Under the bright lights, I was definitely read. (Women are far more likely to read you, as they are more observant; visiting the “ladies” is placing yourself in the lion’s den.) One mistake I made was to drop my handbag on the floor when I dried my hands at the drier as if it were a sports bag; I have noticed that women always keep their handbags close to them and hold them at all times, sometimes in the crook of the arm, which is what I have started to do.

I got back to my seat feeling a bit more relaxed that the ordeal was over. I was thankful when the play ended and I could make my way out. Nadine helped me on with my coat and then we had to walk downstairs and then across the foyer. Some chap held open the door for me but I ignored it and pushed open another as I was scared to use my voice. I was back out on the street and pacing excitedly back to the car, the black skirt stretching across my smooth legs and restricting my gait.

Yes, I had been read, but it had not been too bad. I had accomplished the first theatre trip. It had been a qualified success.

Nadine and I were anxious to repeat the experience, so a few months later we did just that. We learnt from our mistakes and this time we went for a more popular production. Fortunately, with the internet, you can check seat sales to see how

well-liked something is and whether seats are taken in your chosen row. Not that there were any fears about the next production being a turkey, because it was Willy Russell's ever popular *Blood Brothers*.

This time I wore a black leather pencil skirt and a black jumper with silver thread running through it; I even brought the black trench coat along for the ride. Again, I went through the same ritual of not shaving for a week and then having a professional shave at a barber's shop. Once home, Nadine painted my nails and I then got dressed: silky pink panties; large, ribbed bra with silicone in fills; waist clincher; ten denier black tights on freshly shaved legs and the thin polo neck jumper. When I was dressed, Nadine applied the make-up – same as before. Finally, I stepped into the black leather knee length pencil skirt – I always love that bit, stepping into a skirt – it is the thing that makes me feel most feminine, particularly if it is leather which is a material I love the feel of. Nadine eased up the zip. The skirt fitted well (in fact it was a bit big). With the skirt in place I pulled on the black leather knee high boots I had worn on the first outing. Finally, it was the short blond wig and jewellery.

I was ready. I looked at myself in our wall-to-ceiling mirror. I looked good, better than the first time, and I didn't feel as nervous. That first occasion had been an ordeal, but this time I knew what to expect.

We reached the car park at the theatre and crossed the road. Straightaway I could see people converging on the theatre from all angles.

The theatre was crowded, which was better, as I was less visible in the crowd. Nadine and I entered the theatre, made our way up to the circle, and went straight to our seats. A female usher, who stood by

the row, kept smiling at me. *Read*. Also, as people came past I heard them mutter and knew they had realised I was wearing a “syrup,” which is Cockney rhyming slang for wig (Syrup fig – wig).

Even so, all in all the experience was a lot better. A woman did come close to me at the interval when we were sipping our wine; she pretended to be reading a poster, but I knew she was looking at me and trying to discern whether I was male or female. I had been read again. This time the show was great; I found myself really getting into it and even “forgot” I was dressed – until the usher who had read me gave me a warm, friendly smile at the end of the evening and wished me a cheery “Good night.”

Getting read in such circumstances was no bad thing, as nothing untoward had come of it.

When we got back into the car I felt a massive sense of relief. It was better, a lot better than the first show, but we realised we had to do something about the syrup – it was just too short and didn’t cover my ears and, although we thought it looked good it was a give-away. We made plans to buy a different style.

## Chapter Three

The next time I went out dressed, we decided to go out for a meal rather than to the theatre. By this time, we had purchased a very expensive, light brown shoulder-length wig with a slight curl; although not real hair, it had a monochrome front piece and was laced. (As all trannies know, the wig is the key. Get that right and you might pass, get it wrong and it is curtains.) This time we went for an Indian meal in another small town not far from our house; it was the end of August and we had chosen a restaurant called the Curry Garden.

I wore full, beige leather A-line skirt which Nadine had bought for me; she liked surprising me with a new top, skirt, handbag, or shoes. I teamed it up with a brown polo-neck jumper and brown low-heeled pull-on boots. I was a little overdressed, but the weather wasn't good; it had been a miserable, wet summer. Once again Nadine did the make-up. We had also bought a pair of women's glasses, not like the unisex ones I had before. Nadine and I were very pleased with the wig; it hid my neck and cheeks, making it look far more natural than the blond wig which had sat atop my head. This wig merged with it and looked like real hair.

Once ready, I picked up my brown handbag. Now everything matched; I looked sophisticated and expensively dressed (which I was). As with any new adventure, the night before I had been nervous and had not slept well. There was always that risk of getting read. The theatre had been different: once the lights went down and the play started you could relax. With a meal there was nowhere to hide; I would be on constant show.

We parked in the car park; I checked my look in the mirror and took a deep breath – this was another new experience. Gradually, I edged out of the car. The car park was quiet. Holding my brown handbag tightly, I walked along the path to the restaurant with Nadine by my side. Then we were out on the High Street and cars were passing by, slowing for the ubiquitous speed humps. I felt the breeze circulating around my hairless legs, covered as they were with 10 denier tights; I heard the echo of my low-heeled boots on the pavement and felt the luxurious leather swish against my legs. I felt hot, not so much because it was August as because I was over-dressed and the hairpiece made my head feel warm. Nadine walked ahead of me and went up the two steps to the door of

the restaurant: from the road, I could see diners, sitting at tables. Nadine pushed the door open and we went in. An Indian waiter stood at a lectern by the door. Nadine said we had booked a table for two for 8 p.m. and gave the name.

The waiter looked at me carefully, smiled and then said to Nadine, “This way please, Madam.”

We followed him up to a table on a raised platform. The restaurant was fairly quiet, and none of the other diners seemed to look at me at all. My heart was beating like a drum. We took our seats; a different waiter passed us the menus and asked us what we wanted to drink. We looked down at the drinks menu and I ordered a soft drink. Again, my voice was very soft but the waiter wrote something on his pad.

I moved the napkin onto my leather skirt. Nadine started talking to me, but it was difficult to reply; my voice was almost an inaudible whisper. Then we waited—and waited. The drinks arrived and we ordered out mains and starters; the waiter did not seem to give me a second glance, but he did pick up my napkin as it slipped off my skirt and onto the floor. Although no one seemed to take any notice, the restaurant was extremely quiet and I felt very nervous and on show. The starter arrived eventually and I ate carefully and slowly – we had a mixed starter which we shared. Nadine asked me questions and I tried to answer. I was conscious of how difficult I was finding it to talk properly. My voice was just too soft and I had no confidence in it at all.

The plates were taken away and the main course came out; I had ordered salmon biriyani, very tasty. I ate slowly. I was growing in confidence.

Finally we got through the meal and I stood up, placed my napkin on the table, and walked to the toi-

let. As I got up I scraped my chair on the wooden floor and the noise reverberated around the quiet restaurant. Diners looked in my direction. On a table under the window, which was below the raised section, I noticed a youngish, trendy-looking man with a young dark-haired, very slim woman in an ultra-short cotton dress. As soon as I scraped the chair back he looked around and looked at me. Our eyes met and I quickly looked away. He didn't. In fact, he continued to look at me and I felt myself blush to the roots of my wigged hair. I started to pace towards the toilet, passing another couple who took no notice of me at all.

Fortunately, the ladies' toilet was a single cubicle which meant I could go to the toilet, calm my nerves, and re-apply my lipstick in peace. However, when I left the sanctuary of the toilet I noticed the young, trendy man who had stared at me earlier, talking to a waiter by the door. They both gazed at me when I came out of the toilet which was more or less opposite the main entrance. In unison, they moved back so they were in eye-line with me. I smiled and walked back to the table, confident I had not been read: *could it be that the man with the young, scantily clad girlfriend actually liked the look of me, perhaps because of the leather skirt?* It was a really nice feeling.

I sat down and Nadine asked for the bill. We had designed a scheme whereby Nadine would pay on her debit card and I would give her my half in cash in front of the waiter to give the impression we were friends out for a meal. After paying, we left the restaurant. I got up carefully, trying not to scrape the chair back this time—but the young man with the dolly-bird girlfriend got up and followed us out. I was conscious of him looking at me as my leather skirt swished around my shaved, nyloned legs as I walked along the street. He followed us into the car park and then cut across to his car. His car was parked across

the car park and I watched as they walked off apparently ignoring me and Nadine. It was strange because I was aware he had not actually been in the restaurant long and had not ordered any food. We got back to the car. Doors locked, ready to go.

We both sighed with relief and pleasure. Once again we had got away with it and I had passed in public *en femme*. I felt elated. I was not aware that I had been read. Although the restaurant had been quiet at first, it had gradually filled up with diners,, but I had not been aware of anyone looking at me closely – unless my young male friend had actually read me! However, his girlfriend certainly took no notice and it is normally the women that *read*. It was such a buzz, such a thrill. I just loved the idea of going out dressed and being accepted as women. I had managed to do it at a restaurant and twice at the theatre which was great. The theatre trips had not gone so well, but the new wig seemed to work. We came home and I undressed: once again Nadine and I thought we had cracked it.

But there was room for improvement; there always was. To ensure the next trip was even better, I started to write reports on my excursions like a military “de-brief”; I would also add “tips” for next time. That way we could see what went wrong and what went right, getting ready for the next excursion and always improving.

The next time I went out dressed, we again went for a meal at the same Indian restaurant, the Curry Garden – but this time it was the middle of winter. Again I had not shaved for a week; then, on the Saturday of the meal, I had a Turkish wet shave at a traditional barber. An open blade gave a nice close cut. I then came home and dabbed moisturiser onto my face and set out all the clothes I was going to wear that

night, for often a “TV event” would take a lot of preparation and the whole of the Saturday would be taken up with it.

That morning, Nadine and I had gone shopping for jewellery, makeup, and nail varnish to ensure the “look” was good and everything matched. Then Nadine painted my nails, and I went upstairs and got ready. Of course, I was fully shaven which meant the silky negligee I always often wore prior to getting dressed felt fantastic against my smooth skin. I took a deep breath and got to work. By this time I had a gaffer, over which I wore silky knickers. Then Nadine pulled me into the Velcro waist-clincher which shaved off a few inches; then it was a pair of ten denier black tights, followed by the underwired bra into which I inserted my silicone inserts. Finally, I was ready. I pulled on a black polo neck jumper with long sleeves. Over the top I wore the same black and white flouncy blouse I had worn on the first theatre outing but this time, instead of a cotton pencil skirt, I wore a size 12, knee length, black leather pencil skirt. I sat down and Nadine did my make-up, foundation; powder; eyeliner; eye shadow; mascara; blusher; lipstick; gloss. Nadine added some jewellery including rings (I wore what looked like a wedding ring and engagement ring) and the crowning glory – the shoulder length, light brown wig. I pulled it on and Nadine styled it; then I added my ladies’ glasses. Lastly, I pulled on my black leather knee length boots, size seven – thank God for small feet!

I looked good, very convincing. Up to that point it was the best I had looked. Nadine and I felt we were gradually “getting there.” I took up my black clutch bag and posed in front of the mirror. Nadine felt it was better for me to have a clutch bag or hand bag, so as to have something to do with my hands.

We took some photographs; then Nadine looked outside and gave me the “all clear.” We drove to the restaurant, swapping drivers en route, and parked in the public carpark. I took a deep breath, adrenalin surged through my veins. Going out dressed was the best thing ever and I just loved it; I was nervous, but excited.

I got out and followed Nadine onto the dark path by the car park, feeling the restrictive nature of the skirt, the fine tights against my shaved legs, the boots that encapsulated my feet. Walking along the High Street and into the restaurant, I felt a lot more confident than before—but when Nadine pushed the door of the restaurant open we were hit by a cacophony of voices and activity. The place was packed!

As before, an Indian waiter stood at a lectern and asked for the name the table was booked under. Nadine gave her name, but we were told our table was not ready. That threw us straight away. I sat down and anxiously grabbed a handful of spicy nuts. I felt I could not speak to Nadine due to “the voice” which I just was not confident in using.

Eventually, we were shown to our table. In front of us there was big group of women, maybe eight or nine. A few of them turned around as I approached our window seat. They smiled, but I am not sure if I was read or not, because others did not turn around, and the women quickly went back to their own conversation.

“Women do look at other women,” Nadine said to re-assure me. “If you are dressed up you will get a lot of attention from both sexes.”

She was right. As we walked in I noticed a big guy sitting on a raised platform, having a meal with his equally large partner. He had looked at me when I ar-

rived; he looked again as we followed the waiter to our table. This time I felt more comfortable. We were in a quieter part of the restaurant, and the window seat was ideal, as it was a table for four which meant I could sit close to the window and have an empty seat to my side. A young Indian waiter came over and took our drinks order. The voice was getting better and I found people could hear me. I ordered a soft drink and Nadine ordered a glass of wine.

The waiter came back with the drinks and we ordered our food. Although the restaurant was busy this time, I was far more relaxed. The waiter seemed to be a very attentive, and at one point even made a bit of small talk with Nadine when we ordered a starter and a main course. The food was lovely and, instead of ordering desserts we ordered coffees. When the waiter returned with the coffees I was supposed to ask for the bill but he gave me such a nice smile I forgot!

Later, I went to the toilet. The single cubicle was an excellent place of sanctuary; I re-applied my lipstick and brushed my hair. It felt wonderful. As I came out, again I saw an English guy talking to the Indian waiter by the entrance. Once again, they both stepped back as I left the toilet so they could have a good look at me! I was flabbergasted at how men stare and how obvious they make it. I smiled and sauntered back to the table, feeling the restrictive pull of my leather pencil skirt around my smooth legs. I felt really good; I gripped my black clutch bag in my right hand. I ignored the two men and turned right to walk back to where Nadine and I were seated.

As I approached our table I noticed two young men on the table behind us; I had not seen them come in. One looked up and raised a bottle of beer to his lips; then his eyes ran up and down me, very slowly, very

deliberately. For the first time I knew what women meant by the phrase “he looked me up and down” because this guy certainly did that to me! It was as if he were prizing up a piece of succulent steak – and I have to admit it felt absolutely fantastic. He held my gaze and smiled at me and I smiled back – a big, flirtatious smile that said I was delighted that he had looked me “up and down” and that he thought I was an attractive woman. I still think about that scene, me walking back to our table with the young man watching me; looking me up and down, drinking in my slim figure, the weighty, artificial breasts, the leather skirt and boots. It felt good. It felt better than good. It felt unbelievable!

Again Nadine paid by card and I paid her my half in cash. I noticed a woman at the far side of the restaurant, some distance away, smile at me and laugh. I wondered if she had read me. Who knows? You never know if you are read, and you never know what gives you away, but by being read you get to pick up the signs and clues.

We left the restaurant and walked back to the car, delighted that we had accomplished another triumphant trip. I had conquered two theatre trips and two meals. It was far better than streetwalking, to say the least.

## **Chapter Four**

For the next trip, we decided to return to the theatre. We both liked it and felt it was better all-round as, in the restaurant, Nadine had to do pretty much all the talking.

Nadine and I have always liked to have a new outfit for each of our TV experiences. For this outing we bought a new skirt – a lovely, green velvet affair with a ruffle down the side. We teamed it up with a sparkly black polo neck jumper and a black and white Jasper Conrad jacket; we had also purchased new boots for the occasion. I just loved the feel of the leather boots on my bare legs: they encased them and created a lovely warm, comfortable feeling – you were just so conscious you were wearing them.

I slept quite well the night before, as I had grown in confidence. My beard had grown for eight days; once again I drove over to the barber's shop for my Saturday afternoon shave. Unfortunately the lady who did the shaves was often late, but she was very good, and I got a lovely, close shave. After I came home, Nadine painted my nails and did my make-up—but first, as always, I dressed in my outer garments so I would not have to pull anything over my head once the make-up was in place.

This time we went to see Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*. We parked up behind a hedge at the back of the carpark, as I found leaving the car a nervous and awkward time. Once out of the car, I adjusted my skirt with Nadine's help. A man watched us as we walked off, but I felt very confident. We walked across the road and down the main concourse and into the theatre.

Although it was a full house, there were very few people in the foyer. I felt confident enough to hold the door open for a man and his partner, who thanked me. We bought some sweets and the female attendant took no notice whatsoever. I then slipped off and bought a programme and again the seller took no notice, although I still could not reply to her questions

when she spoke to me about giving me a lot of coins as change.

While waiting for the doors to open, we ordered interval drinks from a small bar area. This time I ordered and Nadine paid. Even though I was not happy with my voice, it was getting better and I was not quite whispering. One thing Nadine had not liked about the meals was my inability to hold a conversation, which was one of the reasons we preferred the theatre.

I went to the toilet and looked at myself in the mirror whilst re-applying lipstick. The woman next to me took no notice, nor did anyone else in the toilet, and I actually felt quite at home. It was so much nicer than the men's toilets with the male odours; at least the ladies smelt of perfume and scent.

When I had finished, I came back upstairs and found Nadine standing by the side. We walked to the door and went in to find our seats. The usher smiled at us as we showed her our tickets, with no pause or hesitation; I took this as a sign of not being read.

Once again we were at the end of the row; this time Nadine was at the last seat and I was second in. As people came along our row, I was constantly getting up and down, which meant struggling to pull the skirt back down. Still, sitting in the second seat worked better, as the newcomers talked to Nadine rather than me. One old chap came past twice, and even talked to her about her sweets which were in a carton.

"I thought that was a drink," he said. Nadine confirmed it was a carton of sweets.

"I'll be back in a minute, just got to fetch something from the car." True to his word, he came back

and again spoke to Nadine whilst I stood by my seat looking (I hope) decorative.

I had a man sitting next to me but he never looked at me at all. Even so, I noticed how men often take both arm rests and leave us poor girls with nothing!

At the interval, we found our drinks which we had pre-ordered. Nadine went off to the toilet and I stood on my own, texting a friend from the TV community who liked to be updated on my exploits. I then looked at the programme. There were plenty of people hanging around discussing the play, but I did not draw any attention.

Before the end of the interval I went back downstairs to the Ladies toilet. There was only me and another woman in the toilet when the bell sounded for the start of the second half; she smiled at me and she said how she was always in a rush. Unfortunately, I didn't reply, which was a pity. Not for the first time, I realised how vital cultivating a good female voice was for future trips.

In all, it was a brilliant night. We walked down the stairs and out of the theatre and, for the first time, I didn't feel that I was read at all. A woman even held open two doors for me and I thanked her. We got back to the car, closed the door, and we both felt like punching the air with delight. It was amazing what a decent wig could do.

That New Year's Eve, Nadine and I booked up to see *High Society*, with Grace Kelly and Frank Sinatra. at a small, arty cinema. I had changed my barber to a man who was more conscientious, and shaved in a room off from the main barber's shop, which was also better as he was not disturbed. (I had been cut by a different barber at the shop I had used previously – hence the change.) The shop was in the small market

town where I used to do my walks. I drove over mid-afternoon for my shave; it was already getting dark. It had been a warm, wet winter, and the streets were packed with shoppers buying bits for New Year's Eve's parties. I had some time to kill prior to my shave, so I went to a stationery shop and bought a diary. It was strange to think that in a few hours I would be dressed as a girl and walking down the street of a different town.

When I came back from the barber's I got changed: silky red panties; ten denier tights, patterned barely black tights over smooth legs; the waist clincher; the bra; the falsies and a black polo neck body. When I was ready Nadine applied the make-up. This time I wore a red and brown pencil skirt along with a black leather jacket. I pulled on tan coloured leather boots with a 3.5" heel and in my hand, I carried a matching tan coloured hand bag.

We parked some way away from the cinema, in a public car park, which meant we had a long walk up the busy main road. I loved walking up the street, feeling the pull of the skirt against my virtually bare legs. We followed a large group of women who were heading the same way but I felt totally confident. I walked in and went to the ticket office to collect the tickets.

"My husband booked these," I said in my best female voice, handing over a bit of paper with a booking reference on it. The young girl looked through a wooden box and found the tickets. She handed them over.

"Do you want the piece of paper back?" she asked.

I smiled. "No thanks, I don't think I will need it."

All the time I was conscious of the manager behind the counter looking at me—and not because he thought I was attractive! No, I had been read again. That unnerved me slightly and, when we went to our seats, I let Nadine order the drinks at the bar. There was a big party in front of our table, all from the same family, who were talking and joking, but they did not seem concerned about me.

I was pleased when the film started. It was a table of four and there were a couple behind us who were talking, but they never mentioned me. I like to think the guy got a good view of my expensive boots with the 3.5” heel as I sat with my legs crossed. As we came out of the cinema, a car stopped to let Nadine and me cross the road although it was not a crossing. I noticed there were young lads in it; no doubt they wanted to see two attractive women cross the road in front of them under the glare of their headlights.

We came home and ordered a take-away. I got changed and removed my make-up and then I slipped into a slinky, pink nightdress and negligee. Later, Nadine answered the door to the delivery man. We sat and ate the meal as Big Ben chimed midnight. It had been the best New Year ever, and we had hardly had a drop to drink!

## **Chapter Five**

For our next trip, in January, I went to the same barber. Once again, I had about seven days’ growth. The reason for the growth was, first, to make sure the skin was as smooth as possible; second, to make sure no shadow would appear by the end of the evening. Because I did not have to hang around waiting for the shave, I came home earlier than expected;

Nadine painted my nails, which is always the first step in the cross-dressing process.

We had booked to see a play at the same modern theatre we had been to previously. The production was *Ladykillers*, which had been an Ealing Comedy of the Fifties, but had been adapted for the stage. One thing Nadine and I were very conscious of, when selecting events for my TV escapades, was to select things that were likely to appeal to older people. That way there was less likelihood of any negative comments if I was read – but, of course, the whole aim of the enterprise was not to be read at all.

Nadine and I had purchased a firm control, all-in-one girdle to give a better silhouette. I got dressed: the gaffer to hold my bits in; the silky knickers; then the all-in-one firm control body. I inserted the gel breast forms into the bra pouches (you can't beat a pair of proper breast forms which bounce – like the wig, it is something worth investing in). I put on 10 denier black patterned tights over top of the body to ensure I could go to toilet. (Still, going to the toilet can be awkward; now I ensure I am dehydrated on the day of a dressing escapade).

Once I was dressed, Nadine applied the make-up, using long-lasting lipstick and gloss which I could re-apply in the toilet. For this event, I wore an expensive, mulberry-coloured leather pencil skirt, size 12, from an up-market department store; it was lovely, soft leather. I also wore a black polo-neck jumper, a collarless black jacket, and black leather, knee-length boots with a 3" heel and a zip up both sides. Then of course there was jewellery and a black, patent hand bag.

This time it was raining, so we had to use our umbrellas after parking the car. We strolled to the thea-

tre and I felt really confident. The theatre was busy and we had to queue for sweets in the foyer. Then we walked upstairs. We pre-ordered drinks from the bar in the circle: I paid, operating the purse easily. It was good to have a big handbag, as it worked well for all the bits and pieces I was carrying. I now had a feminine diary and a feminine case for my phone; it is these details which help with the whole illusion.

As we entered the auditorium I bought a programme from an usher, and kept a number of people waiting as I searched for my money. It amused me to notice how people give you more space as a woman, whether it is walking up or down stairs or buying things. With men they were more impatient, and you could often *feel* them behind you.

This time the voice worked well, as I had spoken to the lady selling sweets and the programme seller, and I had ordered drinks. I had started to practice talking in a female voice on my long commute to work. I would say tongue twisters or sing along to music in the car. Gradually, I found a female voice which I could go into at will—when I had the confidence to use it.

Again we had the end two seats in the row, but as people came past they took no notice of me. I really was beginning to pass in public *en femme*. At the interval, we could not find our drinks and went downstairs to find an usher. It was quite funny as Nadine and I cornered this poor girl and asked her where our drinks were. It was strange because in some ways I “forgot” I was dressed. She assured us the drinks were upstairs, and when we looked again sure enough they were! We had ordered white wine, not red, which is what we thought we had ordered.

As I went up and down the stairs I noticed a middle-aged man, seated on a sofa with his partner; he gave me long, lingering looks each time, as did a man standing at the top of the stairs. There was no doubt they thought I was an attractive woman.

After we got back to our row and sat down, we stood up to allow two men and a woman, all elderly, to come back to their seats in the middle of the row. The man in the lead was a small, bespectacled, bald chap. The theatre was not that busy, and I had heard him talking earlier; he was obviously quite bossy. He was somewhat shorter than I was, but even so he looked me up and down and smiled as he passed. I understood at once what women mean when they say they are objectified by men; I felt a bit uncomfortable, as he was so much older than I was. Even so, it was a confidence boost, another marker which proved I had passed in public *en femme*.

At the end of the performance I thanked a woman who held a rubbish bag open for me, and in return she smiled at me. It had been the most successful tranny night by far. No doubt about it.

The next occasion we went out dressed, though, was not so good. I wore the same outfit as I had worn to see *Ladykillers*, to see Joan Collins doing a one-woman show at a different theatre. This time it was a Sunday evening; the audience was not large and was mainly female. I got a couple of looks in the toilet, and one woman gave me a hard stare as I was drying my hands. Also, two women smiled at me as I came back to our table during the interval. All in all I thought I had been read by quite a few people, and it dented my confidence.

Nadine and I discussed it after. "I think it is the make-up," she said. "It is just too heavy and looks

unnatural.” Up to that point I had been using a theatrical make-up to cover my harsh beard growth, hence the need for the long periods of not shaving prior to a trip. We had had a make-up lesson in a London theatrical shop and the foundation had been recommended by them, but it was just like a cake on my face. We decided to invest in another make-up session; I found someone named Melanie on the internet, who was TV-friendly. Nadine and I booked an appointment and went along for a lesson. Nadine took notes and photographs. The advice and demonstration were excellent and when Melanie had finished I looked fantastic. The beauty of it was that she had used High Street products which we could buy ourselves.

“You should have brought some clothes with you and gone out,” Melanie said when she had made my face up and Nadine had added my wig. I wished I had as well, as there was no doubt the shop bought products she used were far better than the theatrical ones. For the first time, I looked very natural and feminine.

Nadine and I could not wait to try my new look, so we booked up the theatre again, a different theatre this time. The play was *The Rat Pack*, an evening with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Junior impersonators. Little did they, or anyone else, know that one of the audience would be a female impersonator—and, with the new improved make-up, a very good one too.

In addition to the new make-up, something else I had improved was my voice. Most days in my car, during my long commute to work, I would practise “Char’s voice” by saying things like “Can I have two glasses of Pinot Grigo please?” “Can I have a programme please?” Or I would say tongue twisters

like “The water in Gibraltar don’t taste like what it ought to” or “Around the ragged rocks the ragged rascals ran.” My favourite was “How much wood would a wood chopper chop, if a wood chopper would chop wood. If a wood chopper would chop would chop wood, how much wood would a wood chopper chop?”

Gradually, I found I could go into the same female voice all the time—slightly high, well-spoken because it was slow and careful, but definitely female. I even tried it out by booking the Curry Garden again, I scripted out the conversation.

“Hi, can I book a table for two for this Saturday at 8pm, please,”

“Hold on Madam, I will just go and get the diary.”

Long, long pause. Confidence wanes. Waiter comes back.

“When you say, Madam? Madam?”

I felt nervous about speaking.

“Saturday, what time?” The waiter prompted.

“8 o’clock for two.”

“Ok, thank you Madam, can I have a contact phone number?”

I mumbled my number.

The voice worked, but a few days later we bottled out and Char’s “husband”, Mark, called up to cancel saying that Char was unwell. (We had started to create a back story for Char: she was married to a rich husband and had two children, one at home and one at university.)

For the Rat Pack, I decided to dispense with the shave at the barber's. After a week's beard growth, I shaved in the sink, using two new Gillette blades. One tip I had learnt from the barber was to heat a damp flannel up in the microwave and dab my face with it to draw out the hairs. The other thing I had learnt was to use lots and lots of moisturiser to help the make-up. With the increasing sales of male grooming products, I had moved on from the female moisturiser, which I used every day, to a male one which was better for my skin. Once again, I shaved my legs, chest and the rest of my body the day before so I was ready for the next great adventure. After the shave, I had a light meal and when Nadine came home from shopping she painted my nails. I waited for them to dry and then I put on the foundation garments – all-in-one firm control body; breast forms; 10 denier Lycra tights on my smooth legs and a black body with long sleeves and a polo neck.

When I was ready, Nadine set about her task of applying the makeup. She mixed the new, shop bought foundation on her hand, then she applied the foundation to my face which worked really well. When she had finished, she applied the eye-shadow, eye liner and mascara which made the eyes far more prominent. For the first time, I wore contact lenses rather than lady's glasses which I had always worn in the past. Melanie had done the eyes a bit darker which looked fine, using pencil rather than a liquid. The make-up took about forty-five minutes and was absolutely fantastic; for the first time I looked very "natural". The wig also looked great when combed and styled into place with sprays. The skirt I was going to wear was a very full Fifties-inspired number, but when I tried it on it was too tight because it had a high waist band and I was, as ever, struggling to keep my weight down. In hindsight, it would probably have been a bit over the top for a night at the theatre.

Fortunately, I always have plenty of female outfits in reserve. I decided to wear the mulberry-coloured, leather pencil skirt again, as it had served me so well for two previous outings. I teamed it up with a waist-length black jacket, along with the new black, knee high boots with a zipper on each side and a 3.5" heel. When I had finished, Nadine added jewellery which consisted of a wedding and engagement ring; a watch; a bracelet and a necklace. Then she sprayed on some Yves St Laurent perfume, which we had decided was Char's scent.

Feeling very confident, I drove to the theatre in the middle of a town. As we walked out of the car park and across the walkway, I noticed a guy in the supermarket by the car park looking at me as the leather skirt stretched against my nylon clad legs. We reached the theatre and pushed open the door. The foyer was crowded. I felt confident, though, and bought a programme using my "new" more confident voice. I even managed a "thank you". We then went upstairs to the circle and ordered drinks. The young lad who served me kept smiling at me and asked a lot of questions about our drinks; I felt confident in the voice and was able to answer the questions without a problem. There was no doubt the lad liked the look of me, as he gave me a big smile and was very chatty. Nadine and I then stood to one side drinking our drinks: when we had finished, we went to find our seats.

As we went into the auditorium, the matronly usher smiled at us and said, "Good evening, *ladies*." That little word made me feel a million dollars. I had passed!

I made three visits to the toilet and each time the other women there paid no attention to me. In fact, on two occasions women were next to me at the sink

when I was washing my hands. I thought the make-up looked really good and I was very pleased with the new look; in hindsight, I could see that the old make-up was too thick and drew attention. (In fact, on the last visit, two women looked at me and made a negative comment – and it was not about me being a bloke!)

At the interval, Nadine and I got up to go and get our drinks. There was a woman next to me and her partner was next to her. They remained seated and moved in their chairs to let us pass. As I walked past the man, he said to me, “Are you just going out to stretch your legs?” I smiled a reply, but I don’t think his partner was too pleased, as after the interval they had moved seats!

Without doubt it was the best night ever. I really felt I was not read at all, which was great. I looked very natural and passed quite comfortably. Between us, Nadine and I had achieved our goal: Char was now passing in public with consummate ease!

It was such an adrenalin rush we could not wait to go out again. A short while after, we booked a classical music recital at the same theatre. After a week’s beard growth, I had a shave in the sink and used the hot flannel as well. Nadine painted my nails and then I put on my foundation garments – 10 denier black tights and an all-in-one in which I inserted breast forms. This time I wore a new black leather pencil skirt with an embossed detail on the front panel which gave it decoration, a red polo neck jumper, and a black jacket. I also wore a belt with a large buckle and black leather, knee-high boots with a 3.5” heel. The look was very sophisticated. When Nadine had finished the makeup, I thought it was the best I had ever looked. The brown wig trailed my shoulders and suited my face shape, adding a feminine edge.

“There is no way anyone will read you,” Nadine reassured me when I was dressed and we were ready to leave the house.

At the theatre Nadine nudged me. I looked around to see four men, standing at the bar, admiring me. We went in through the big brown doors and took our seats near the stage.

The theatre was fairly quiet. Nadine and I had brought some sweets with us. After we started eating them, I broke out in a violent coughing fit. “I should not have come out tonight,” I said in my best Char voice. “I have a terrible cold.” That made Nadine roar with laughter.

I was conscious of people looking around, but no one seemed to read me. I got up, squeezed between the seats, and went back out of the auditorium to buy a bottle of water. The young man who served me took no notice at all. I came back with my water just before the orchestra started its recital of Bach, Mozart and Vivaldi.

At the interval, we bought some wine and stood to one side. As I returned to my seat, I was conscious of a young lad who had moved to the row behind us. He had not been there before; he looked at me and smiled. I thought he was perving at a “bird” in a leather skirt—but it was pleasing all the same.

At the end of the performance I thought it had been another fantastic night. I did not want it to end or to remove the lovely clothes I was wearing, but I knew the following day I would be back in my drab male gear. My report on the evening said the immortal words “best ever”—not for the first time, nor the last.

## Chapter Six

In early spring we went to a play called *Classic Ghost Stories*. The night before I had an all-over shave in the bath; the following day I shaved off my seven-day beard growth. When I had shaved and Nadine had painted my nails, I got dressed. This time I wore a knee-length, black Lycra based skirt, a black all-in-one, a frilly blouse over the top, and black patent leather boots with a 3" heel. Nadine applied the makeup by mixing the foundation on her hand, which worked really well. The wig looked great, as it had been washed and conditioned just like real hair. We had also bought a watch and a ring during the day as well. When the makeup was complete, Nadine added the jewellery.

I felt very confident, but it was nerve-wrackingly light at 5.30 p.m. when we left. After getting caught in road works near our house, we finally arrived at the theatre at 6.30 p.m. A young Asian girl showed us to our table which was by the bar. Then another waitress came over and asked, "What can I get you to drink, *ladies?*" Oh, it was so nice to hear that word again!

We ordered drinks and then our food; I ordered mushroom risotto and Nadine ordered fish and chips. I was hesitant at first, but my voice worked really well. The meal took twenty-five minutes to arrive; we didn't have that much time to eat it, but it was very tasty and well prepared. No one took any notice of us at all, and I felt really good. Nadine said she saw one of the male ushers looking at me in an admiring way.

In the theatre, we had couples on both sides of us; with the new improved make-up, we had decided that Char could sit anywhere! I saw a black guy look-

ing at me; he had clocked the patent boots and obviously liked them. In fact, he liked them so much he looked at them when I was seated with my legs crossed in the auditorium; he was in the row in front and some seats along. It is amazing how men stare – and how many men are attracted to female clothing, even if they don't want to wear it!

During the second half of the performance, the man next to me kept leaning forward. I thought he too was inspecting my boots, and I was scared to uncross my legs – but in fact he was looking at my programme, as I had rested it on top of my handbag. There were three plays; he was trying to read the titles and report back to his partner! Even so, it was another great night – the third trip since I had changed my make-up. Once again I felt I could really pass in public. It was a great buzz.

Our next trip which was to the same theatre to see another classical musical recital, this time with a Mexican classical guitarist. The event was called *Spanish Fiesta*. Without my prior knowledge, Nadine had purchased a new outfit for Char – an ocean green coloured, knee-length A-line leather skirt and a pair of matching patent green court shoes with a 3” heel, a platform sole and strap to fasten them. The heels were block rather than stiletto, so quite easy to walk in. In addition, she had bought a new green handbag.

“Well, Char has got to look stylish and sophisticated,” Nadine said.

I could not have agreed more. Nadine loved doing that – surprising me with a new outfit and then telling me I was going to wear it that night. Nadine was in charge, and although she may have asked my opinion she always made the final decision. Even people who didn't know about my crossdressing also

thought it was good that Nadine made all the decisions, and would always arrange things with her rather than asking me. If I bought something or arranged something without her prior knowledge, it was quickly reversed. I had learnt to just go along with her wishes. Sometimes it was frustrating, but at the end of the day I accepted the fact that I was a transvestite and it was only right that I was kept on a tight rein.

This time I didn't have a shave for nine days. I used a hot flannel in the microwave and shaved in the sink, having shaved my legs and body the night before. I used a new shaving gel with two new Wilkinson Sword blades to give a very smooth shave. Then I used balm to finish. Nadine painted my nails in lovely sparkly green to match the new skirt. Then we started to get ready; I put on the foundation garments and then she made my face up and added the wig. That night I wore new velvet touch tights; the new ocean green coloured A-line leather skirt; a black jumper; black box jacket and the new green court shoes. Nadine added the jewellery and we matched the outfit with the new green handbag (Nadine had such a good eye for detail and always wanted Char to look expensively attired and sophisticated).

When we entered the theatre, Nadine told the waiting usher that we had a table for two booked. A young girl showed us to our table upstairs. I loved walking upstairs in my high heels. I had noticed that women often walk upstairs on the soles of their shoes and the heel does not touch the floor. It was a lot easier to walk that way, and I am so used to doing it now that I do it in male mode too.

We were shown to our seats and then a young waitress called Marcia approached us,

“What can I get you to drink, ladies?” I just loved that – “ladies” – it was so nice to hear that word.

We ordered drinks and food as well. By this time, I felt ultra-confident in my voice and could communicate with ease. I was so pleased I had practised in the car every day until I had a natural, feminine-sounding voice I could go into at will.

Before we ate, I went to the toilet to check my look; I looked really good. I loved looking at myself dressed in those well-lit toilet mirrors, especially when other women came in and took no notice. *Pass there*, I thought, *and you can pass anywhere*. But on this occasion there was no one else in the toilet, so I had time to look at myself in some detail. I was slim and weighed about 164 pounds (I had to battle with my weight to keep it down). I was a size 12, with nice, slim legs and ankles accentuated by lovely, green high-heeled court shoes; I had small hands and wrists; varnished nails; the make-up was flawless and the hairpiece suited my complexion – there really was no way anyone would know my true gender. I came out of the toilet and went back to our table, swinging my handbag and smiling confidently. I often felt a shiver roll down my spine when I saw myself dressed and realised I looked like a woman – there was no feeling like it.

The food was delivered and Nadine and I ate, talking occasionally. The efforts to train my voice had worked. I thanked the waitress when she brought the food, and felt confident talking to Nadine throughout the meal. During the meal, I had my phone out and placed it on the table; I had even purchased a pink case for it. Mobile devices are excellent as they give something to look at, and by buying a girlish case for mine I had yet another feminine ingredient.

By this time, I was talking more to Nadine and felt my voice was really good. We had a back story: Nadine would ask about my children and what I had been up to. My story was that I was married to a guy called Mark who was an accountant and quite bossy. The meal idea worked well as it extended the night. Both Nadine and I had fish and chips which were lovely and well-presented and, as we had a table, we were allowed to keep it for interval drinks. We ordered coffees for the interval.

After the meal, I went off and bought a programme; then I went to the toilet again and combed my hair and re-applied my lipstick with a brush, leaning over the sink as I did so (feet always together).

This time other women were using the toilet and but they took no notice whatsoever. When I came out Nadine and I walked up a set of stairs to the theatre seats as we were in the Upper Circle. I was next to a large chap and Nadine by two women. There were people behind but there were no issues. I felt my voice was good and I was able to make a bit of small talk with Nadine which others could over hear. It was hot in the theatre and I actually took my jacket off. At the interval, I put it over the chair. Again, I went to toilet but this time I had to queue up – when I reached the front of the queue the woman exiting the cubicle held door open for me and said,

“Mind the lock; it is a bit stiff.”

I thanked her and went inside the hallowed sanctuary. I couldn't actually go, but came out and re-applied my lippy. A woman, at the hand dryer, looked at me but I don't know why; certainly I didn't feel any other looks or glances and I felt I blended in well. We went back to our seats and then we realised we had

forgotten the programme. I told the chap next to me as I got up.

“Oh dear, sorry to hear that,” he said as I scurried downstairs to where we had been seated. By this time last call was being given out. An Asian girl asked me what I wanted so I told her and pointed to the table we had been sitting at – it was not there anymore.

“Oh well,” she said dismissively. “It looks like you have lost it – the second half will start shortly; you had better go back to your seat.”

I walked back up the stairs and back to our row. Two large, plump women were on the end seat and seemed reluctant to move, so I had to squeeze back past them. I sat down next to Nadine,

“Couldn’t find it,” I said. I was glowing with confidence. I was starting to do things naturally and had almost “forgotten” about being dressed—but not quite!

At the end, we had to queue up at the ticket machine to pay for the parking. There was a big queue so we walked off to find another machine, without luck. We encountered a few guys who held doors open for us, which was nice. Eventually we went back to the machine and had no trouble at all, despite being surrounded by people. There was a big queue to get out to the car park, but twenty minutes later we were finally on the road.

It was definitely the best ever night. I felt the most confident; the voice was great; I looked good and the make-up and clothes were spot on. It all added up to the realisation that there was nothing to make people think I was a transvestite. I really felt we had cracked it. I was a transvestite who could pass in public as a woman. Absolutely perfect.

Buoyed up by these successes, Nadine and I decided to try something different. We had long considered a trip away and we felt we were finally ready for it, so we booked a hotel in the midlands and a theatre which was close by. I was worried the night before and didn't sleep well. During the weeks leading up to this new TV excursion I had made up a long list of things to remember to take as we had to remember my Char stuff as well as male things. In fact, I took the Friday off work to pack up.

On the Saturday we left early, but I missed the motorway junction, adding a good half hour onto the journey. Finally we found the hotel and parked. We went into town, had a coffee, and bought some bits for Char in department stores. Finally, we went back to the hotel and checked into our room on the first floor.

The hotel was full of period features and quite antiquated, with squeaky floors and dark timber beams. The stairs were in the middle of the foyer between the reception and the entrance. We noticed that there was a modern wing, by the car park entrance/exit, and this would also have been a good place to stay as it was away from the hotel. There was no lift needed, which was good.

We went off and had something to eat in a pizzeria and then came back to our room. Nadine went to the fridge and got out a bottle of wine – Char could enjoy a drink for once! I had only four days' beard growth, but it seemed fine. I had a wet shave in the sink and then we waited a while (did nails etc.); then I got ready and Nadine started the make-up. The light in bathroom was first-rate and we didn't need the light I had brought with me. Nadine was able to do the make-up without any trouble at all, under a brighter light than she would normally have had.

When she had finished, I looked really good. In the end, I wore the straight black, leather skirt with the embossed front which I had worn to the classical music concert; a black top and red and black tunic style jacket we had bought from a charity shop. The outfit was completed by zipping up my favourite, knee high leather boots with the 3.5" heel. I also had a small, back handbag. I felt I looked very convincing. We took some photos and then Nadine got ready.

At 6.30 p.m. we made the short walk to the theatre via the main road. It was a bit nerve-wracking leaving the room, but there was no one about, and we walked down the stairs and along the short corridor to the front door with no problems. Fortunately, it was very quiet and a good time to leave as it was early in the evening. We got out onto the pavement and then strolled to the theatre. No one seemed to take any notice, though plenty of people were sitting in restaurants and we passed quite a few pedestrians. A young, bearded usher, who was standing in the foyer, looked at me as we approached the theatre, but Nadine asked him about the circle and he gave directions without really looking at me again. We went upstairs and saw another, older usher who gave me a look and seemed very friendly. He said that we had to use the bar upstairs or down as the circle bar was out of action, so we waited around for the lift. When the lift arrived, we got into it. There was another couple in the lift but they took no notice of me what so ever. At the bar, we ordered drinks for the interval and bought a programme and the young lad was polite and courteous. We moved away and stood in the corridor. Nadine went to the toilet and, whilst she was away, an elderly couple came and stood right near me. Then, when Nadine came back, a lady usher was moving a screen. She said to me, "Mind out of the way, love."



I went to the toilet and re-applied my lipstick, which I didn't need to do as it was long lasting. For some reason the water was running in the sink (it was one of those stupid taps you don't need to turn on). I dropped the lipstick in the water and had to fish it out. A woman was watching me, but probably because I had messed up. Nadine tried to dry it off, but it was ruined.

We came back to the foyer and we walked back to our seats. The theatre was very full, with little space in the narrow corridors, so we passed a lot of people at close quarters. We went to our seats early. The seats were good ones with no one in front, overlooking the balcony. The play, Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, was hard to understand, but the scenery was excellent. At the interval we collected our drinks from the circle bar which was open for drink collections. It was very busy. We stood by the entrance and got plastic cups from a young, female usher so that we could go back to our seats. I went back to toilet, and, although I didn't go, I made out I did and washed my hands. A woman indicated with a nod of her head that a dryer next to her was free. I don't think I was read. By this time my nerves had passed.

During the second half I took my jacket off and placed it over the balcony, but I put it back on later as my top was coming away from the skirt band. There were two lads next to me, student types, who leant forward and rested their arms on the balcony – did I detect the one next to me glancing at my legs? It certainly felt that way.

The play ended and, as I walked out, the older male attendant who had been friendly earlier smiled at me and said "Good Night." We walked back downstairs and out onto the foyer. It was a lovely clear

night. We strolled across the open area and down some more steps and back up the High Street to the hotel. There was a couple behind us all the way. They had also been to the play and were talking about it. The street was quite busy by this time, but no one took any notice, and it felt fantastic to feel the restrictive leather skirt stretching as Nadine and I walked along. We even passed two men who stepped out of the way for us. We walked on without a problem and turned back onto the street where our hotel was located. Then we were back at the hotel and in through the entrance which had two doors. The foyer was empty and we walked along the carpet and up the stairs. Nadine took the door key out of her bag and let us both in. Another successful night. Brilliant.

The next day we came down for the self-service breakfast in the restaurant. The waiter said a warm “good morning” and looked at me closely. I wondered if my transformation had been spied on CCTV. Still no matter – it had been yet another great night. After breakfast, we checked out. A great Char weekender!

By this time it was spring, and the opportunities for Char to go out were getting less; certainly I could not wear a leather skirt. Instead Nadine and I went shopping and bought two Jasper Conran body con dresses which fitted very snugly and, when teamed up with stilettoes and a jacket, looked very sophisticated.

We booked a play, *Woman in Black*, and decided to try out one of the new dresses. Again I shaved the night before to ensure I had nice smooth legs, arms and chest. On the Saturday, I had dinner at lunch-time and then shaved: I used hot flannels and a new Gillette razor with a swivel head. I finished off with plenty of moisturiser.

Nadine painted my nails a lovely shade of pink and then I got ready about 5pm. I pulled on red satin knickers over the gaffer. Next I put on the firm control all-in-one and inserted the breast forms. Lastly, I pulled on fifteen denier dark tights with a zig-zag pattern. Then it was time for the new dress: I pulled the pink bodycon dress over my head, there was no zip and it was sleeveless so it just hugged my body. Nadine then started on the make-up. Foundation; blusher; eye liner around the eyes; mascara; eye shadow; lippy. When she had finished, I looked really good. I put on a black box jacket and, lastly, the crowning glory – the wig - I pulled on the long, brown hair piece and Nadine styled it into shape. Then, I slipped into black court shoes with a 3” stiletto heel and Nadine added my rings; my gold necklace; ear rings and bracelet and watch. Finally, she sprayed on some Yves St Laurent scent.

I examined myself in the mirror. Yes, I was a transvestite, but all I saw in the mirror was a very glamorous woman indeed. I felt shivers run down my spine – what was it about dressing as a woman which made me feel so, so good? I had long, thin legs; trim ankles; a slim body and large breasts which were accentuated by the tight dress which hugged my body. It was the best I had ever looked, I felt sure of that. I felt so confident it was unbelievable.

“No one would ever think you were not a woman,” Nadine said.

“Thanks!” I replied in my Char voice. I *lived* for days like this. My 9-to-5 job was OK, but I did not live to work. No, I worked to live. I worked to get that paycheck in my hand so I could invest it in my alter-ego Charlotte. I was lucky because Nadine loved Char too and didn’t mind the expense; in fact, she was often the instigator of a new wig, a new dress, a new look. I

was so lucky in that regard: I was married to a woman who also loved making Char look great. Like me, she loved the invention of it, the masquerade, the fact that Char had become the third person in our marriage with her own style and personality.

I picked up my pink handbag, with a scarf attached to the handles to add a feminine touch. Nadine was so good at matching outfits; I knew it was one of the things that helped me pass.

We left about 6.25 p.m. and drove up to the same modern theatre as before. We walked along to the theatre and got in without any problems. By this time it was 7 p.m. so we went straight upstairs to the circle. Then I went to the toilet to check my look. There were other women in there, but I did not even think about being read.

When I returned, I went to the bar and ordered wine; the staff took no notice of me and I spoke easily. The in-car voice training had paid off. I was far more confident and used my “Char voice” a lot. We walked upstairs again and into the auditorium to find our seats; the male programme seller said, “Good evening ladies,” which is always nice. (Nadine replied “Good morning” for some reason). I bought a programme and then had to stand around for ages whilst he changed £20 to a load of £1 coins!

A lot of youngsters were making a noise and laughing, but they took no notice of Nadine and me. There was also a group behind as well but no one sat next to me; however, there were a couple two seats along. The woman wore a lovely pair of black, knee-length high-heeled boots with at least a 5” heel. She was wearing a black and white checked dress and a leather jacket. When we all got up to let someone

pass she said to me, “It’s like musical chairs.” I just smiled in reply.

The play was good, but not as good as the London production of the same play we had seen before, and I had to watch out that I wasn’t too jumpy. The couple beside Nadine left at the interval as they didn’t like it. We went out and collected our drinks, which were marked down as “Charlotte,” and sat in a chair with a table between us. I had to remember to keep my legs together, as the dress was so light it didn’t feel as if I was wearing it.

I went down to the toilet and Nadine went back in. I had briefly been to the toilet on arrival to straighten up my hair and, though there had been a few women there, they had not taken any notice. I re-applied my lipstick and sprayed on some more perfume. I had gained so much in confidence I had started to ham it up a little in the toilet, using a brush for the lipstick and pouting my lips and really taking my time and looking at myself. As I came back I bought an ice cream from the usher and then I had to squeeze past the lady with the nice boots and her partner; they both smiled at me as they got up.

When the play ended the woman with the nice boots said to me, “Sorry for holding you up.” As we left as she was still putting her jacket on. I smiled at her and said, “That’s all right.”

We walked to the door of the auditorium. A man in front of me pulled open the door and then stepped out of the way to let me go through the door first—which was nice, but I think he just wanted a rear view! Three girls were coming out of the toilet; one walked out and nearly went straight into me, but the next girl let me go, which was nice.

“Sorry,” the second girl said as she held the door open for me.

I was the only one in the toilet, so I went for a wee and then came out. As I walked back I passed two ushers, one male and one female: the chap gave me a broad smile then looked down – I didn’t have a clue what he was looking at but then I noticed his glance was firmly on my large breasts!

I walked downstairs and met up with Nadine by the entrance, and we walked back to the car. It was another perfect night, nothing untoward at all – going out as Char was such an adrenalin rush I could not wait to do it again.

It was not long before we went out again, same theatre, same type of body con dress, almost the same seats in the circle, but a different production, *The King’s Speech*. On the Saturday, Nadine did my nails early to give them time to dry. I then went upstairs and had a shave, using hot flannels and a new Gillette razor with a swivel head. I then got ready – it was great to pull on the gaffer again and the silky knickers – as always, I had shaved the night before in preparation. Then I decided on a variation and sat on the bed and pulled on ten denier black tights with a circular pattern; this time they were to go under the body to give a smoother line. Next, I pulled on the all-in-one body which had proved so successful; I popped the two breast forms into the pouches and rubbed my hands along my smooth body. I was still slim (a size 12) and the body gave a very slight hour glass shape; my legs have always been long and thin and looked great clad in black tights. (I remember once a girl telling me she was envious of my legs when I was wearing shorts.) Last of all I pulled on the body con dress which was orange and black and which hugged my slim frame. Nadine sprayed on

some perfume and then I came through to another bedroom where Nadine had set out the make-up; it was like a military operation.

Nadine applied the make-up using a new Mac foundation which we had started using after the make-up lesson: it was the usual routine, foundation; powder; eyes which meant mascara, eyeliner and shadow and then blusher and lastly lips which she touched up with gloss when finally dressed. The wig looked better too. I pulled on a black box jacket and slipped into the same elegant, black patent stiletto court shoes with the 3" heel. I looked classy and chic. I added ear rings and some jewellery – not forgetting the rings for my fingers. I took up my small, black handbag with a gold chain and posed in front of our wall-to-ceiling mirror – there was no question I looked good. I had long ago moved from questioning whether people read me to just not expecting to be read, which was far better because I behaved more naturally, especially because I was now confident of my female voice.

We arrived at the theatre in plenty of time and parked in our normal spot behind the hedge. As usual, I checked my look in the mirror and then we clambered out of the car. Then it was the walk to the theatre – I always liked that bit – the nervous initial steps but every step gathering confidence. We walked along a path and then crossed the road in front of the theatre. I could feel every stone under the soles of my high, awkward shoes – and yet it was just so lovely to be out and about, feeling the breeze circulating around the thin fabric of my dress, the cold air on my nyloned, bare legs. My whole being was consumed by being dressed as a female.

We walked up to the big glass doors and went through to the theatre foyer without any problems.

There were always people on the door who said “good evening” but no one took any notice of me or Nadine. The production was popular and there were a lot of people milling around the foyer, but Nadine and I just blended in. We decided to go straight up the stairs to the circle area. When we reached our level, I went to the toilet to straighten my hair and Nadine went to a cubicle which meant I was left standing around a bit.

When Nadine came out we walked into the auditorium and I bought a programme; the female seller took no notice as she handed out a lot of change (they all seem to do that!). In fact, she seemed a bit grumpy and asked for our tickets. We were next to the seats we had sat in on the previous occasion. We settled down; we had couples both sides, which I preferred as I like to sit in more of a central position. It was an older audience this time, which was better too. The play was good and, at the interval, the bar had opened so I queued up and ordered drinks.

“Can I have two glasses of Pinot Gringo and a bottle of water, please,” I said in a clear female voice.

The young lady who served me smiled and went to pour the drinks. I stood at the bar moving my foot out of my shoe, which felt great. At last the drinks were served and I handed over my theatre card with the name “Charlotte” on it. She made the necessary deduction and I paid her cash. I told her to keep the change.

I moved away from the bar and handed Nadine her drink.

“It’s going well so far,” I said to Nadine as we stood around.

Nadine winked. “I saw one guy giving you the once-over when you were at the bar.”

I smiled. That was music to my ears. We sipped our drinks. It was lovely standing in the theatre in my high-heeled shoes looking at the other theatre-goers. How different it was from the first few times I had been out, when I had been nervous, apprehensive, and self-conscious. Nadine and I sent each other text messages so I would not have to ask if anyone had looked or noticed me; it worked well.

We finished our drinks and I went back to the toilet. A young girl looked at me as I went into the cubicle but I was not sure why – women do look at other women, and it is quite disconcerting as a man. When I came out I washed my hands and a woman was washing hers beside me. As we stood together at the dryers she smiled at me and asked me if I was enjoying the show.

“Yes, it is very good,” I replied in my Char voice.

I came back to the sink and I sprayed on perfume and re-applied some lipstick; then I straightened up my dress. I left the toilet and walked back upstairs and met Nadine again. We came back in and squeezed along the row to our seats. The second half was very good, but one thing I liked about the theatre was the interval when I was back on show. When it ended, we walked out with the theatre and along the path to the road. We crossed over to the car park. It felt great to feel the hard road under the soles of my shoes, despite the constant ache in my ankles from the high heels. We got back into the car.

“We’ve cracked it,” Nadine said. “The look is good – you look very confident and sophisticated, and you walk better than a lot of women in those heels. Char, we have cracked it. We have cracked it!”

## Chapter Seven

In common with a lot of TVs, as well as Count Dracula and vampires, I have an aversion to bright light, especially if it is sunlight. I only like to come out after dark or in the winter months. Light is bad news. So it was that, over the summer, poor Char was boxed up and put in the loft. It was a frustrating time, but we realised it was not safe to shave, due to wearing shorts and T shirts; also the nights were long, so more people were about and it was difficult to leave the house. Trannyng, for me, is definitely a winter sport.

After a long period of absence the nights started drawing in again, and we edged into autumn. We decided it was time for Char to reappear, so we booked up a theatre and meal deal. We liked the pre-play dinner package, as it extended the evening and gave another dimension to the dressing. Therefore, we booked up a “jukebox” musical based around the music of the Sixties, called *Dreamboats and Miniskirts*.

The night before it was fantastic to lay in a lovely, warm soapy bath and shave my legs, chest and arms (but not my face). I got out and dabbed myself down with a thick blue towel and then rubbed oil onto my skin. I felt so much better when shaved, and it was great to think that another TV period had commenced. Some people don't like the winter, but for me it is my favourite time of year as I know Char will once more make her appearance. Not that Nadine and I didn't think about her during the summer, because we constantly planned and thought about how we could improve “the look.” To that end, we had bought a new, blond wig which was slightly shorter in style.

So, after five long months, Char was finally going to go out again, after “her” summer break. This time I didn’t have a shave for seven days, Saturday to Saturday, which seemed fine. I used a hot flannel in the microwave and shaved in the sink; then I used the Gillette razor with two new blades – I had to be careful of cuts. After, I bathed my face in cold water and then I used a lot of moisturiser to make the make-up go on well. Then Nadine did my nails in lovely brown colour, to match the skirt I was going to wear.

Finally, I started to get dressed: gaffer; silky knickers; thin 10 denier brown tights with a zig-zag pattern; the firm control all-in-one; the breast forms in the pouches; and a new brown jumper with a fake blouse underneath which showed at the collar and wrists. I pulled that on and went into the next room where Nadine was ready to start the make-up. I sat down, she wrapped a barber’s cap around me, and the magic began.

Nadine applied the Mac foundation and then brushed on some setting powder. Next it was the eyes – eyeliner around the eyes; eye shadow; mascara on my long lashes and then blusher on my cheeks. Finally, the part I liked best – Nadine would get a lipstick and start to paint my lips with a brush. Sometimes she would even use two colours, but on this occasion the lipstick was a reddish-brown colour to match the outfit I was going to wear. Then it was a touch of spearmint flavoured gloss. I looked in the mirror; the makeup was the best ever.

Over the summer, Nadine and I had purchased a very full, chocolate-brown coloured, leather skirt which was just below the knee; also, we had bought an expensive pair of tan leather boots with a 3” heel; but the crowning glory was the new blond wig which was excellent. It looked really good and suited my

colouring: it had a lot of volume at the back so it did not look like a wig and moved around, in addition to which I could fluff it up with fingers. Then, last of all, it was jewellery – rings, watch, bracelet.

This theatre was over an hour's drive away, all on the motorway, but we took our time. Even so, we still arrived too early and the car park was full of shoppers (as we had a meal deal, we had to arrive a good hour before the show). As we walked into the theatre, the A-line leather skirt swished about my newly shaved legs encased in the boots. God, it felt wonderful to be dressed again! I lived for such moments. Not for the first time in my life, I thanked God that I was a transvestite – I just loved it and could not have been any happier.

We walked through to the carpeted auditorium and, after a short wait, Nadine found a waitress who showed us to our table by the side of the theatre, just along from the bar. The waitress said her name was Eloise and that she would be our waitress for the night. I sat down opposite Nadine. Immediately, I saw a young, dark-haired man with a small beard and moustache chatting to the bar steward; he was obviously the manager, dressed in a suit and tie. He looked over at our table and pointed towards us, then he came striding over.

“Good evening, ladies,” he said, rubbing his hands together and smiling broadly. “What have you been up to today?”

Nadine answered, saying she had been out shopping, whilst I sat quietly.

“What can I get you to drink, ladies?” He asked.

It was my turn – I always ordered the drinks and rehearsed the order on the way to work in the mornings.

“Can we have two glasses of Pinot Grigo, please,” I said.

He wrote this down and looked at me and returned my smile. Then he turned away. Nadine was laughing.

“I think he has got his eye on you, Char!”

There was no doubt about the fact that he had paid us special attention, for we had come in after some other groups and we had been served drinks straight away. I glanced up and saw our friend making his way back to our table with a tray on which stood two glasses of wine. He approached our table.

“There you are ladies, enjoy.” He said as he placed the drinks down. “Eloise will be over shortly to take your dinner order.”

“Shortly” turned out to be quite a while, and I made a visit to the ladies to check my look. I always loved looking at myself in the mirror when out, to reassure myself that I looked good – plus there is nothing like applying a bit more lippy, a spray of perfume and brushing your hair! Eventually, Nadine managed to order; we had breads to start and I had chicken supreme as a main, Nadine went for fish and chips again. The food was very nice and well-presented; I even told the waitress that the breads and chicken were so filling I would not have room for a dessert as I was “watching my weight,” which made her smile. I found my voice came very naturally. We were allowed to keep the table for interval drinks so we ordered coffees instead. Prior to that the young manager had come back over and asked if we wanted

more drinks. I ordered a soft drink, blackcurrant flavoured, but he then came back and said they did not have that flavour so I told him, "Oh, any flavour will be lovely, you choose." This, I thought, was a rather feminine thing to say.

He smiled and scurried off to the bar. Nadine could not stop laughing, especially as he walked back past the table later and smiled at Char!

"I think he fancies you!" Nadine said.

"Don't!" I replied. "I am a married woman." It was a little unnerving, but wonderful at the same time. It was the ultimate in passing: not just looking like a woman, but looking like an *attractive* one as well!

Before we went to our seats I went to the toilet again. I walked towards the bar, aware the toilets were opposite it. The young manager stood, legs akimbo, surveying the tables and diners. He watched me as I walked towards him, holding my brown leather handbag. I knew the jumper and blouse ensemble looked very good, and the leather skirt and boots looked expensive and sophisticated. The jumper emphasised my large bust, and I was conscious of the manager's admiring stare as I walked towards him. As I approached he said,

"It's on your left, madam." He smiled broadly.

He clearly understood that I was making my way to the toilet – the *ladies* toilet at that. To emphasize the point, he gestured with his right hand. I thanked him and smiled in return.

As I opened the door I noticed that other women were in the small toilet area, much smaller than the large toilet at the modern theatre we normally frequented. However, no one took any notice; one lady

even held the door for me as I came in. I re-applied my lipstick and sprayed on yet more perfume. I came out and walked back to our table. By this time the restaurant was very busy and a lot of people were complaining about orders not arriving (a waitress had tripped on the stairs and dropped a tray of yet-to-be-served dishes), but we finally got the bill for the drinks and I paid cash. None of the waitresses took any notice.

We got up and went off to the stalls; an elderly attendant looked at our tickets. We were fairly close to the front. There was no one in that row to start with so we sat down, but then I realised I didn't have a programme so I got up and went back to the foyer to buy one. It was all good for my confidence and part of acting naturally. I paid the money to the usher by the front doors and came back to the seat, by which time the row was full of women! (There were two women together and a mother daughter and her daughter's friend next to me.) I squeezed along and got back to my seat. The view was excellent and the play, *Dreamboats and Miniskirts*, was very good: excellent music with a light plot.

At the interval, the coffees were on our table. Straightaway the manager came over and asked, "Is everything alright with your coffee, Madam?"

I smiled and said it was. He then walked off – probably because I had not engaged him in conversation.

Nadine came back and I went off to the toilet. It was quite full, but I managed to wash my hands next two other women and then reapplied my lipstick, sprayed on some perfume, and combed my hair – yet again! The two women by me at the sink had come together and were chatting away but, by this time, another woman was re-applying her lipstick and she

looked at me in an admiring way. I was pleased by how slim I looked and how sophisticated. I left the toilet and met Nadine at the theatre door; we went in together and found our seats.

At the end of the performance we got up to go. As I moved up the row there were two large ladies in the last two seats and one touched my skirt – I am not sure if by accident or on purpose, but she was certainly smiling a lot when I came past. *Read?* Possibly. Who knows?

As we walked through the foyer I put some money in a charity tin; then we queued up to input our car details to get a ticket to leave the car park. It didn't take too long and couples behind were chatting away about the show all the time. We walked back up the concrete steps to our car as it was parked in the multi-storey car park: it had been another successful night. The wig and make-up had worked really well. After five long months, it was good to be back. In fact - it felt Trans-tastic.

## Chapter Eight

Towards the end of the same month we booked to see *The Glen Miller Story* at the same modern theatre we had visited on numerous occasions. Having shaved my legs and body the night before, the next day, whilst Nadine was out shopping, I went upstairs and had a face shave: again, using the hot flannel in the microwave and two razor heads. I used plenty of moisturiser as it was the key to ensuring the make-up went on well. When Nadine returned from shopping she did my nails a lovely blood red colour to give them time to dry, and we had a light dinner.

I then got ready; I pulled on silky, red satin knickers with black, lacy trim. I had dispensed with the gaffer and the tuck; to be honest, with my meagre equipment, I did not need them. Anyway, I loved the feel of the satin against my skin. After, I sat on the bed and pulled on 10 denier black tights with a circular pattern. I then got up and put on the foundation garment into which I inserted the silicone breast forms. Finally, I pulled the black, polo neck jumper over my head. Once I was partially dressed, Nadine started the makeup. Like the artist, she was she went to work with dexterity and skill. When she had finished, the makeup looked perfect.

Then came the part I loved best. I went back to the bedroom and took a brand new, size 12, black leather pencil skirt off the hanger and took off the tags. Just looking at it and smelling the leather and newness made me feel excited. I felt the softness. Oh, how I loved being a transvestite – the thrill of getting dressed, the make-up, the soft lingerie, the thin nylons on my shaved, bare legs, and the best thing of all, stepping into the skirt and pulling it up. Nadine edged up the zipper; there was no popper or button on this one as the zipper went up to the top of the waistband, which was the modern style. I straightened it up (Nadine always adjusted the skirts so they were above my waist, as she said women had higher waists than men). Then I pulled on a flouncy red and black top, very loose fitting and easy enough to get on without ruining the make-up. I slipped my feet into the black, patent court shoes with the 3” heels I had worn previously.

I came back and sat in a chair so Nadine could finish the ensemble. Once again, the crowning glory was the new blond wig, which was excellent – we always bought wigs with a lace front and monochrome top as they looked more natural. Nadine added jewel-

lery, rings, bracelets, and watch; I stood up and took my black handbag and added some tissues, lipstick, perfume and a hairbrush, not forgetting the diary and phone. I was ready. We took some photos and I pulled on a beige cape with a fur trim, which I liked as it fastened with one button and was easy to take off.

I looked at myself - or rather Char - in the mirror. Adrenalin ran through my veins, I shivered with a feeling of ecstasy. I felt so happy it was unreal: I could feel the nylons on my bare legs, the lipstick and gloss on my lips, the soft, leather skirt on my thighs, the high-heeled shoes on my feet, the large breasts beneath the tight polo neck and flouncy top. I was so, so pleased I was a transvestite - the pleasure I gained from dressing was unsurpassed.

Nadine called me; I came downstairs. We left the house and headed up the motorway to the theatre. We parked up behind the hedge in the second set of bays. I got out of the car easily. By this time I was calm and knew I would pass; going out dressed had become a habit. Even so, I loved the feeling of adrenalin pumping through my veins, the beat of my heart. I straightened myself up and then Nadine and I walked down the walk way to the theatre. We were actually the only people for a while; then we saw some other people getting out of a car nearer the theatre. As we walked over the concourse and got closer to the theatre, many people were going in. We knew it was a "full house" from looking at the seating plan on the internet.

We arrived at the right time, as it was just beginning to get busy. A chap held the door open for us; we thanked him and went through to the theatre foyer without any problems. We walked straight up to the Upper Circle, a long way up the staircase.

We went to the foyer bar and saw two women at a table. I noticed one, a blond lady, look at me but I don't think she read me: she certainly didn't seem to be staring. Nadine sat at the table behind them, whilst I queued up to get the drinks. God, how many times had I practised, in the car going to work, phrases like "Can I have two glasses of Pinot Grigo, please?" "Can I have a programme please?"

I had to wait a long time, as the people in front ordered loads of drinks and a queue formed behind me, but no one took any notice. The person behind the bar was called Emma. When I finally ordered our drinks my voice was loud and confident, and I found I answered questions well. I ordered a Pinot Grigo for myself and a Prosecco for Nadine, and said a medium and a small. When I paid, I showed my theatre card to Emma; she studied it before passing it back to me. It was good to have other cards in my purse (even though they were actually in a male name and for show only). She asked me what name to put the drinks under and I said "Charlotte Mayo." She even called me back to take a receipt. By this time there was quite a queue.

I took the drinks back to the table and then I bought a programme from a guy who came past. I paid him cash, but then forgot to take the programme! After retrieving the programme, I left it with Nadine and walked down two flights of stairs to the toilet. I found walking down stairs in heels more problematic than coming up, but Nadine said I had a very natural gait.

I strolled into the Ladies. There were two or three women by the sinks, but they took no notice, and when they left I was on my own for a while. I re-applied my lipstick with a brush and fluffed up my hair. Then, I came back up the two flights of steps. When I

reached the upper circle area I noticed a grey-haired man walk towards me: he stopped and then just ran his eye over me and smiled, which was nice. I came back and sat down at the small, round table by Nadine; she gave me a birthday present, as it was supposed to be Char's birthday. It was good to unwrap something, as it looked authentic – ladies out for a night.

When we had finished our drinks, we walked through to the theatre and handed our tickets to the usher. I had seen, on the seating plan on the internet, that the one spare seat next to Nadine had gone, so I sat next to a couple. That was a pity, as a large, loud guy came in and started chatting to Nadine - at one point saying he was a thorn between a number of roses! I took my coat off, folded it and laid it on my lap, but we had to continually get up to let people pass.

The play started and was very good. At the interval, we went out to the same table/seats by the door. Nadine collected the drinks and then went off to the toilet which meant that for a while I was on my own. I noticed a guy look at me whilst I was seated: he had queued for drinks but actually left the queue and circled around me and let another member of his party order. When Nadine returned, we drank our drinks and walked back to the auditorium. Nadine and I had decided to swap seats so that I was next to the large man. I bought an ice cream from the usher, which allowed Nadine to get back to my old seat. I was very pleased with how well my voice worked; I asked about flavours and prices, and even chatted (two lines) to a woman in front of me who I actually nudged into.

Her: "This is not a good place to stand, is it?"

Me: “No, it is not ideal when the theatre is so busy.”

She then smiled at me. When it was her turn, she bought four ice creams and said, “Good luck,” as she turned to go. I said, “Thanks.”

I came back and sat down. The large chap beside me made a comment about offending Nadine and said that she didn’t like his aftershave (this was to the woman on the other side of him). He then said to her quite loudly, and this really made my day,

“I now have a different lady next to me now.”

He was chatting a lot to the two women next to him but I managed to join in a bit by saying, “I can’t think of Glen Miller without thinking of the James Stewart film” and “I did not know Moonlight Serenade had words.”

Nadine chatted to the women next to her. It was a great show, and afterwards continued with a few songs at the end of the performance. When it was over I pulled on my cap (Nadine helped by pulling my hair out) and then moved between the rows in my high-heeled shoes. We had to walk down three flights – not easy in high-heeled shoes!

When we got to the theatre doors, another woman held open the door for me. We walked out onto the concourse and back to the car: the leather skirt stretched against my shaved legs, the high heels ached my ankles but caused a not unpleasant sensation. I felt so restricted by the shoes and skirt, and so feminine – it felt wonderful!

When we reached the road, Nadine rushed off and crossed in front of me, leaving me on the other side, but then a car stopped and waited for a large group of

us to cross the road together. I would like to think it was because the male driver saw a nice-looking woman in a leather skirt but, of course, I can't be sure.

It had been another fantastic evening. The words "best ever" kept appearing in my debriefing reports. It was hard to see what else there was to improve on – the make-up; the wig; the voice – there was nothing. Up to that point we had undertaken fourteen theatre trips, nine with the new make-up and two with the new wig. We had kept improving, and had reached a very high standard indeed.

As the winter drew on and the nights got darker, the TV events came thick and fast, at least one every month or two. We tended to have our best nights out in October through to February, but the theatres were geared to pantos in December, so that was not normally a good month. However, one show did come up in early December which we both wanted to see: Andrew Lloyd Webber's classic *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

I spent a long-time shaving: I made sure the water was nice and hot in the sink; warmed the flannel in the microwave to draw out the hairs and made sure the shaving gel was really rubbed into the skin. The hair came off well. After, I bathed my face in cold water and then I used a lot of the new number 7 moisturiser. When I had finished, Nadine painted my nails in lovely red colour. When the varnish was dry, I started to get ready. It was the same routine – silky knickers; ten denier dark tights over smooth legs; the all-in-one; breast forms and a black, sparkly jumper with a polo neck. Then it was time for the makeup.

Once again Nadine applied it with the aplomb of an artist. It always felt so nice to sit in a chair and be

made up. Nadine said that the foundation really went on well. The makeup looked great; I loved it when she painted my lips with a brush.

When she had finished, I continued to get dressed. On this occasion I wore the black leather, knee-length pencil skirt I had worn on the previous outing, and new burgundy-coloured knee-length leather boots with a 3" heel. The ensemble was finished off with a new burgundy-coloured handbag. I pulled on the black box jacket with the zip which I had worn previously; then I pulled on the wig and Nadine styled it. We took some photos and then we left the house.

As we came off the motorway, I got in the wrong lane and had to move across lanes; I got hooted by a car going back onto the motorway. Still, we reached the theatre in one piece and parked on the fourth floor of the multi-storey. This time we took the lift down and walked across the concrete thoroughfare to the glass doors. Nadine pushed it open and then we were in a kind of anteroom where there was a box office: an assistant watched us. We went through the next set of doors and into the theatre. Nadine had tickets and walked to the front area where we waited to be served. When an usher approached, she said, "My husband booked this meal for two," as it was in my male name.

The usher took us to a table by the bar area and said Maggie would be our waitress for the night. No one took any notice and there was a couple right next to us who could overhear our conversation. Nadine and I exchanged Christmas presents, which looked very natural. We ordered some drinks (Prosecco and Pinot Grigo) and Maggie went off to get them. When she came back with the drinks she said, "Here you are, Ladies." (I just love the sound of that word!)



We then ordered breads to share as a starter. For a main I had chicken supreme again and Nadine had a burger. I went to the toilet whilst it was empty to check my look. I wriggled girlishly as I adjusted my skirt and then I re-applied some lippy with a brush, not forgetting to add a dab of gloss to my lips and a spray of perfume. The hair and make-up looked fantastic. I left the toilet and walked confidently back to our table which was by a pillar, opposite the bar.

As usual, the service was a bit slow. I asked Maggie where the order was and ordered another drink (any flavour juice); my voice was really good and I felt very confident. Eventually, the food was served and Nadine and I ate slowly and carefully whilst we chatted like two friends.

“There’s a lady over there who keeps looking over – I think she is admiring your handbag!” Nadine said.

My hand bag was on the floor by the table and I could see her looking not at me but at the floor.

“Women often do admire other women’s shoes, bags and clothes,” Nadine said.

When we had finally finished our meals, I went and bought a programme from the lady at the front who stood behind a lectern. She was friendly and I took my time getting my money from my purse and paying her. The theatre was busy by then but no one took any notice at all. When I came back to the table we ordered drinks for the interval (coffee) and I paid cash for the drinks we had had and for the interval drinks. I went to toilet again; this time it was busy so I went into the cubicle, sat there for a few moments, flushed the chain and came out (without going). I walked over to the sink and washed my hands, then re-applied my lipstick and added another dab of gloss. I straightened up and ran my hands down my leather

skirt. There were women all around me as the toilet was quite small, but no one took a blind bit of notice. It just felt so wonderful to be a transvestite, standing there in the female lair, surrounded by women, while *no one* took any notice at all.

I came out of the toilet, feeling totally at ease. I smiled at Nadine and she got up from the table; we went into the auditorium. Nadine showed our tickets to the usher, who pointed out our seats. She said she thought the last couple had the same seats which was a bit disconcerting. The theatre was full and I had two ladies next to me. There was a chap next to Nadine who looked at me when I sat down and at the interval but I think he was just admiring Char.

The play was a bit heavy-going, but at the interval we went back to our table and had our coffees. A big group were sitting next to us but it was no problem and they took no notice of me whatsoever. Nadine and I chatted away together. After, I had to queue up in toilet and the door kept hitting me as people came in. I said to an Indian lady behind me,

“There’s always a queue, isn’t there?”

She agreed there was and smiled.

“I don’t think this is a good place to stand,” she said and moved out of the way of the door, but I did not follow her and the door continued to hit me when people entered. I suspect she thought Char was a bit thick!

I finally got to the front of the queue and when a cubicle became free I walked towards it. The woman coming out said, “It doesn’t flush.”

“OK, thanks,” I said.

I could not go as it was just too busy so I left a few minutes later. I said to the young girl who came in behind me, "It doesn't flush." (The old lines are the best!)

I re-applied my lipstick again, dabbed some powder on my nose, and went back to my seat, purchasing a tub of ice cream from the usher en route. The play had not started, so this time I plucked up courage to speak to the lady next to me: "It's good, isn't it?"

She agreed and asked if I had seen it before. I said I hadn't but I had heard that it was a bit controversial in the 1970s. I then had a little conversation with her which was excellent. She said things in Britain had changed for the worse since the Seventies, and I agreed with her. It was nice to hold a short conversation in my Char voice.

Then the play recommenced and the lights went down and there I was, a man, sitting in the theatre wearing a black, leather pencil skirt; a box jacket; a black jumper with silver thread and burgundy boots.

*It was great!*

The play finished; I squeezed down the row and walked out of the auditorium. Once again we had to queue at the ticket machine to pay to exit the car park, but it was not too long a wait. Finally, we got in a lift with some other people, including the Indian lady who I had spoken to in the toilet. She recognised me and joked at how empty the lift was compared to the ladies' toilet. I smiled in reply and agreed with her.

"I would have thought more people would use the lift," she continued.

“So, would I,” I said.

“Perhaps they like the walk,” a man said.

The lift stopped and we walked back to our car; I opened the door and collapsed onto the seat. I took a deep breath and sighed. I felt wonderful – on top of the world.

I started the engine and drove out of the multi-storey. We queued to get out of the car park and then had the long journey home. So, my fifteenth theatre trip had come to an end, and all had been excellent – particularly the later ones, which had demonstrated that I really could pass in public. Again I rated this trip as the “best ever,” as I felt I really looked good and no one had read me at all. The make-up was just perfect and I had actually engaged in conversation. We were close to people, in the lift, eating the meal and at the interval and no one had taken any notice. *No one had taken any notice.*

But pride comes before a fall, and the next trip was not so good. We went to see the tedious *Sound of Music* at the same theatre. I had underestimated the appeal of the show to children. Again, I didn’t have a shave for seven days (Saturday to Saturday) which seemed fine. This time I started getting ready early in the afternoon and once again used the hot flannel, heated in the microwave, and shaved in the sink using a new razor. The hair came off really well. I then applied loads and loads of number 7 moisturiser. I have found that the best thing to do is let the first dose of moisturiser just soak into the face and then re-apply it. Afterwards, Nadine did my nails in lovely red colour. When they had dried, we started to get ready. It was the usual routine: silky knickers; fine, black but patterned tights; all in one which hooked up at the back; breast forms and black, polo neck

jumper. When I was ready, Nadine did the foundation which went on really well. The makeup looked great.

Then I changed into the rest of my clothes. It felt lovely to take the maroon leather skirt off the hanger and slip it into it. Putting the skirt on always made me feel feminine. Nadine done up the button and eased up the zip: the skirt had had several outings and was one of favourites. I then sat on the bed and eased on a pair of knee-length burgundy boots with a side zip and a 3" heel – these were the same boots I had worn before. Lastly, I slide my arms in to my back, box jacket. I was ready. I sat back down on the chair and I pulled on the wig and Nadine shaped and styled it then, last of all jewellery: Nadine added rings, a gold necklace around my neck and earrings.

I picked up my new burgundy-coloured handbag and I was ready for action. The traffic was very heavy and it was raining hard all the way, but we arrived in good time. Walking across to the lift on the far side of the carpark, I was totally confident and loved the way tight, burgundy skirt stretched against my smooth legs – boy, it was good to be dressed as a girl!

As the lift juddered to a halt at ground level Nadine said, "Show time." I stepped out of the lift onto the concrete concourse. We walked into the foyer which was already very busy, so we stood and waited for a while. Finally a waitress came up, showed us to our seats, and said our waitress for the night would be Imogen. We ordered some drinks (Prosecco and Pinot Gorgio) and at the same time ordered our main meals. Nadine and I took it in turns to speak; we had now created quite detailed back story for Char, which I mugged up on every time we went out: married to Mark, two children one at university, one at home, part time office job, rich husband, very materialistic, relatives in Australia (Mark's sister).

The meals were finally served; Nadine had a rack of lamb and I had duck, with shared breads to start, but I sent the duck back because it was too cold. Imogen, our waitress, constantly referred to us as “ladies”: “*What can I get you to drink, ladies?*” “*Is everything alright with your meals, ladies?*” “*Are you paying by card, ladies?*” She also chatted to us about how busy the restaurant was and gave us the timings for the show. I was really pleased with my voice, which worked well. All that practice in the car had paid off, and I could hold a conversation with staff and with Nadine, which was great. One of the good things about sending the meal back, and the poor service, was that it gave Nadine and me a topic of conversation which then looked very natural. I didn’t see anyone look over when having the meal. I even got up to look at some other show information and bought a programme, as we were waiting so long for the main course.

When we caught Imogen’s eye again, we ordered some more drinks (Prosecco and juice) and ordered a sticky toffee pudding to share. I also had to dispute the bill with another waitress, as we had been charged for breads which came as part of the deal. This time we did not order interval drinks.

So, to my fall from grace or the one negative on the evening: after the meal, I went to the toilet and there were two young girls in the toilet, probably aged about eight and ten. I thought they were waiting for their mother, but no adult appeared, so there were just the three of us in the toilet. As soon as I walked in, they just stared and stared as children do. When I went to the sink and re-applied my lipstick in front of the mirror, one of the girls got really close to me and watched. Then I went to a cubicle and I could hear them laughing outside, though I never heard them say anything about me. I came out of the toilet and

brushed my hair to show I was unfazed, but they were still staring at me intently and laughing, so I think they read me – strange what kids see, as no one else seemed to read me. Even so, the one downside of the production was that there were too many children in the place. The child behind us in the auditorium was eating sweets throughout and his mother kept talking to him. When I went to the toilet at the interval I got in early, but could not go with the constant flushing of toilets and doors slamming. I emerged to see the mother of queues snaking out the door and everyone looking at me as I washed my hands and walked out, but again I don't think I was read – obviously, it is natural for people to look.

So, we went back for the second half,

*God, I thought, if I hear one more Doe, Ray fucking Me I'm going to shoot myself.* Tedious would not begin to sum it up, although the *Country Girl* and a later production were worse. Nadine, though, actually enjoyed it – no accounting for taste.

With no one next to me, I was able to cross my legs which I love doing. When we finished, Nadine rushed across the theatre to get to the ticket machine before everyone else, which meant I had to run too! My tits wobbling about! We then had to make our way to the rear stairs, where an usher had told us there was another ticket machine.

We got the ticket and Nadine hurried up the stairs before me. There was another couple on the stairs but they didn't take any notice, though the woman looked back a couple of times – I think she felt sorry for Char! We reached the car and we actually got out all right; we had got out early and there wasn't much of a tailback of cars.

So, that was our sixteenth theatre trip, perhaps it had not been as good as the last one but still been great. No one had read me except for those pesky kids. The obvious solution was to choose only plays that didn't appeal to children, preferably in less crowded theatres.

The next play we decided to see was a thriller called *Rehearsal for Murder*. After a week's beard growth, I had a wet shave in the sink. Nadine was out but when she came home she painted my nails. I had already eaten: the advantage of not having to eat at theatre was that we could leave a bit later. Nadine had washed the wig beforehand, and of course I had had an all-over body shave the night before. During the day, we had bought a new Clairins eye pencil and some Charnos tights as well as a lipstick and lip pencil. I always started by pulling on a pair of nice silky knickers; on this occasion they were pink French knickers. Then, I put on the foundation garments – tights; the body; the all in one. The tights were patterned with a rose vine on each which looked nice. We started to get ready; the makeup took about 45 minutes and looked immaculate. The wig also looked well coiffured. I wore the black leather pencil skirt, which had had a couple of outings, and a new pink blouse and a black box jacket (I have two, one with a zip and one without any fastening). I also wore my black patent boots, which looked good, and my black Mac. We took some photos and we left at just after 5 p.m.

I felt very confident. It only took half an hour to get to this other theatre, which was about 30 miles away. The foyer was crowded. Security guards searched our bags as we came in, but the black guy who searched me didn't look at me, he just said something about me only having tissues in my hand-bag. We went upstairs to the circle. It did not take

long to order drinks and buy a programme; later there was quite a queue. The girl serving was very good. The bill came to £24 and I only had £20 on me. Stupidly, I had withdrawn £30 earlier in the day but had only taken out £20, so Nadine had to pay by card. The girl serving took no notice as we mangled our story of why Nadine had to pay and not me (I had cards in my purse too). I felt the voice worked well, though, and did not panic when slightly caught off guard. We had a drink (juice and Prosecco), then we stood near to the bar drinking, and I popped to the toilet and checked look. The toilet was empty, which was good. I combed my hair and re-applied my lipstick, again using the brush. When we had finished our drinks, we went into theatre. We had no one on either side, but there was a family behind us with teenage children.

The play was good and not too long. It was strange because by then I could just sit and watch a play and almost forget I was dressed (I say *almost*, but not quite!) I just love the feel of the leather skirt on my smooth legs, covered as they were with thin tights; didn't I just love the feel of the satin blouse on my chest, the heave of the large breasts which wobbled as I walked! Just doing simple things like crossing my legs and feeling the "sticky" patent boots rub against each other felt exciting. Oh, it was so nice to sit in those comfy theatre seats and just luxuriate in femininity.

At the interval, I collected the drinks we had pre-ordered and we sat in large, soft bucket chairs with a round table in front of us: there were two seats on the other side. Nadine and I were discussing the play (that's another great thing about the theatre – it gives a ready-made topic of conversation) when a couple came over. The woman said, "Sorry, is anyone

sitting here?” She pointed at the two seats on the other side of the table.

Before either Nadine or I could reply that they were free, the man she was with replied, “No, there’s not.” He promptly moved the two chairs away from the table, nearly knocking our drinks over!

I was flabbergasted by his rudeness and could tell Nadine was seething. Later she explained that men do quite often treat women as second-class citizens.

Both Nadine and I drank our wines as the man and his partner discussed house prices. I knew Nadine was annoyed, but in some ways I quite enjoyed it. For one thing it told me that I had passed, and for another I had been treated like a real woman.

After, I squeezed passed the chairs and went to the toilet where I checked my look and re-applied my lipstick with a brush. Another woman came in and smiled at me and I smiled back, confident, self-assured. Nadine had made her way back to her seat by then so I went to join her; en route I stopped by the usher. She stood with a tray of ice creams and a strap around her neck.

“Can I have an ice cream, please?” I said.

Instead of asking me what flavour I liked, which is what I had expected, she then started to reel off the different flavours, very slowly, very deliberately. Meanwhile, the bell had gone and people were making their way back to their seats, but still she droned on—and on.

“And those ones are £4 and come in vanilla, chocolate, strawberry...”

When she had finally finished, I chose one and paid the money.

“Are you enjoying it?” she asked.

“Yes thanks.”

“And have you worked out who done it yet?”

“No,” I replied.

She raised her eyes and smiled. I knew what she was thinking, “thick bitch”—and in some ways that was nice too. Like the guy with the chair, it showed I had passed.

When the play finished I went to the toilet, which was quite busy. A woman thanked me for holding open the door for her. Having been to the toilet, I washed my hands and then re-applied my lipstick. As I went to join other women at the sink a teenage girl moved some stuff out of the way and said “sorry,” which was nice. I then met Nadine; we left the theatre and walked back to the car park. We got into the lift with a couple who had come from the supermarket, but they took no notice of me.

It was certainly one of the best trips ever. On the way, home some Asian men drove up beside us and started smiling; then they messed around by braking in front of us. That was a bit unnerving for a while, but as Nadine explained, “they are all things women have to put up with.”

A month later we booked up another production, this time called *Heartbeat*, at the theatre with the meal deal. Again I didn’t have a shave for seven days, which is always the precursor for a “Char trip”. The night before I had an all-over shave and then, on the Saturday, I heated the flannel in microwave and had

a really good, careful shave. The hair came off well; the secret of a good shave is using plenty of shaving gel. After, I bathed my face in cold water and then I used a lot of the moisturiser on my face. Then Nadine painted my nails; when they were dry, I started to get ready. I put on a pair of silky blue knickers, followed by the all in one, foundation garments, and black 10 denier tights with spots on them. Then I got fully dressed. I wore the black Lycra-based pencil skirt, satin fuchsia-coloured blouse with a bow tie collar, and a black cardigan. The outfit looked great, especially when teamed up with my black patent leather boots with a 3" club heel and patent black handbag.

The makeup looked great and the wig was excellent. It was very wet and windy, but we arrived about 6 p.m. which was the time the meal was booked. Nadine had tickets and walked to the front area where a young girl was waiting with a clipboard. Nadine said, "My husband booked this meal," as it was in my name. The waitress took us upstairs to a table near the stairs and said our waiter for the night would be Brad. The theatre was quiet and there was just one other couple upstairs eating, but no one took any notice. Brad came over and said, "Good evening, Ladies, what can I get you to drink?"

We ordered drinks (Prosecco and Pinot Grigo) and I went to the toilet, which I liked as it was quiet and I could have a good look at myself. I came back, the drinks had been served and when Brad came back again we both ordered breads and then fish and chips. Brad served the breads and we sat eating our food and chatting girlishly. When we had finished, he served the fish and chips. Finally, he came over and took the plates away.

"Was everything all right with your meals, ladies?"

“Fine, thanks,” I said in my best Char voice. “Can we have the bill please?”

A few minutes later Brad returned to our table with the bill. I looked it over and called him back.

“Sorry, but you have charged us for the breads which are part of the meal deal.”

“Sorry, Madam,” Brad said. “I will amend the bill right away.”

When he came back I had to pay by card, which was a bit uncomfortable as it was in my male name, although he did not appear to look at it.

The other couple upstairs were in their thirties; the woman was wearing black leggings and a pair of black boots with a reasonably high heel. As Nadine and I got up I was looking at her boots and she looked around and smiled. It was funny as her partner took no notice at all, whereas I am sure if he had known that another man had been looking at his wife or girlfriend he would not have been happy!

We went downstairs to door two and bought a programme; the chap on the stand was quite polite. Then, we walked through the door and instantly the blond usher said to me, “You love the theatre, don’t you? You’re always coming here.” This was a surprise and took me back a bit, but she had clearly recognised me from previous Char excursions.

She showed us to our seats. I had no one next to me, which I preferred as I liked to cross my legs, feeling it was quite feminine. The show was a bit slow, cobbled together from a popular TV series, but it was quite entertaining. There were four women near to Nadine and, at the interval, they would not move out of the way to allow us to get out, so we had to squeeze

passed them. We went back upstairs for our drinks. Then, I went to the toilet: I re-applied my lipstick with a brush and combed my hair. On the way, back into the auditorium I asked the usher about joining the theatre as a friend. She gave me a very full reply and spoke to the programme seller who was standing by the back row. It was great, as I did not feel read at all and very natural. In fact, she misunderstood me and thought I had asked about how to become an usher!

The play finished and we had to queue for a ticket at the machine to get out of the car park. It didn't take notes, so we paid by card, but it had been another perfect night.

So, my eighteenth theatre trip had come to an end, and once again it had been excellent.

## Chapter Nine

After that poor Char did not go out for six months, as she doesn't like to venture out when it is too light. Therefore, I was a bit nervous before we went to see *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. We decided that my face can be a bit raw when doing the make-up, so I decided to shave earlier. I had a meal at lunchtime and a shave in the early afternoon, using the tried and tested techniques: hot water and flannel in the microwave. I also used the shaving brush to dab hot water onto my face. I used plenty of shaving foam and the hair came off well. I had not shaved for seven days, from Saturday to Saturday, which is my usual time frame. After, I used cold water to cool my face and dabbed it dry; then I used loads of moisturiser. I came down and Nadine painted my nails to give them time to dry.

I then got ready. I put on the foundation garments and then I put on a new all-in-one we had bought that day. In fact, we had bought two new all-in-ones: they both had a bit of sparkle and had long sleeves, one was taupe and one was black. I wore the black one that night. When I was ready, Nadine applied the make-up. The make-up looked good – the best ever, partly as we had purchased new products and the shave was better. I then went next door to change. Nadine had bought me a lovely, satin A-line skirt with a flower motif in blacks and reds, gorgeous and very full – a bit like a Fifties skirt. It was high-waisted and a bit tight, but Nadine managed to do up the zip and button. I teamed it up with my black patent stilettoes with the 3” heel and a black leather jacket which was chic rather than bikerish. We had also bought a new black handbag which had a shoulder strap.

Once fully dressed, I put on the hairpiece and Nadine styled it, then it was the rings and the other jewellery and we were ready. I stood in front of the wall to ceiling mirror and placed my feet together: I had slim ankles and legs and then the glorious skirt encased my lower half – deep red and black and very full. The high waistband restricted and hurt my waist, but the skirt felt so feminine and glorious it was wonderful. The black sparkly top showed off my large breasts and the stylish, black leather jacket gave an air of sophistication. I examined myself – I was a transvestite but I looked like a woman – there was nothing, *nothing*, that would give me away. I practiced my voice a few times.

“You look fab,” Nadine said.

I had to agree with her. It was one of my best ever “looks” and I felt a million dollars. A tingle ran down my spine. I loved these days, lived for these days.

There was nothing quite like it. Nothing could replace that sense of happiness dressing as a woman gave me.

We took some photos, left the house, and drove up the motorway to the theatre. Again, we parked behind the hedge in the second set of bays which was a good spot as it was often quiet. I got out of the car easily and flattened down my skirt. Then we walked down the pathway to the theatre. There was a lady doing security who checked handbags, but there were no issues. We went straight upstairs to the circle and ordered drinks at the circle bar. We were the only people at the bar, where a young lad was serving. I was a bit nervous to start with and my voice was a bit soft, but Nadine helped out. A barmaid looked over and I thought she read me, but when I looked again she was straightening her tie. We ordered drinks for the interval as well and then Nadine went off to the toilet, which meant I had to pay. I didn't have enough cash so I had to use my card, which I had to give to the barman so he may have looked at name, but didn't seem to take any notice. Nadine came back and we sat in chairs by the ladies' loo. People came by, no one took any notice of me, and my confidence grew. It had been a long, long time and I felt "rusty". I went to the toilet but not a cubicle; I re-applied my lipstick, powdered my nose, and brushed my hair.

I bought a programme from the seller, but I was a bit inexperienced with the purse and had to think where the notes were. When we found our seats, I had a large man next to me who was with his wife; Nadine also had a chap next to her who was part of a larger group. Another guy came, passed and smiled, and said "sorry".

The play was boring, not in the Audrey Hepburn/Gregory Peck league at all, and I heard people moaning about it. At the interval, the chap next to me let Nadine and me go whilst his wife had walked out first. His wife turned to me, when she reached the end of the row, and said, "Oh sorry," - she thought I was her husband! Nadine thought he was having a look at me from behind! Certainly, it was strange that he did not just follow his wife out.

We found our drinks on the side and sat in the same seats by the ladies' loo. I always thought that the theatre was better when it was not full, as we had more time. I went to the toilet again, just checking my look. The handbag worked well as I was able to carry it on my shoulder.

When I came back we went through to our seats and I bought an ice cream from the usher. By this time, I was quite calm and the voice worked well. She explained that the honey and ginger was melting as she went through all the flavours. I selected a tub of ice cream and paid for it, but I couldn't find our row and walked up and down the stairs a bit - no easy task in those heels! Then I saw Nadine. I had to squeeze back past the people next to my seat, but they all got up and smiled. During the second half, which was equally as boring as the first, I made the mistake of trying to cross my legs and hit the chap next to me quite hard with the heel of my shoe. I whispered "sorry"—but in a male voice! Fortunately, I don't think he heard.

On way out I stopped to go to the toilet again. This time it was busier so I went to a cubicle, but came out quickly and checked my look and re-applied my lipstick with a brush. Women glanced at me, but there were no long, lingering looks. It was still quite busy in the foyer and we walked passed a large group of peo-

ple. We went through the front doors and out onto the concourse; my satin, A-line skirt swished against my smooth legs as I sashayed along. It felt great. It was so nice to be out and about again. Char was back and it felt absolutely wonderful – I lived for being out in public dressed as a woman. We crossed the road and saw the couple who had been seated next to us, and some others, standing around in a big group discussing the play. Nadine and I walked passed them and found our car. It had been the first time out for Char in six months, but it had all gone well. I was bound to have been bit nervous, but it had all come back to me, and so our nineteenth trip out to the theatre was a success.

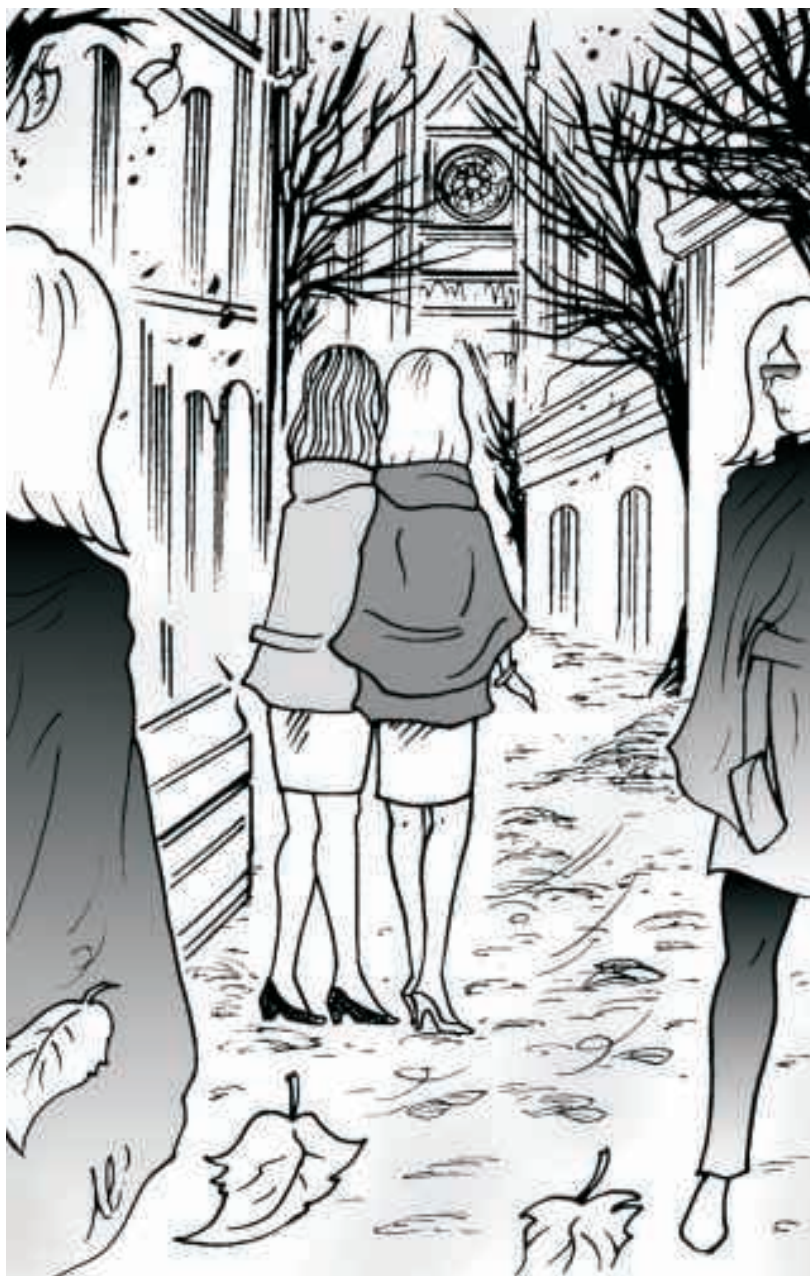
Prior to our next trip, we bought a wig from a shop which catered for the TG community. We had not had a lot of time to try it on before our next trip, which was a classical music concert in a church. In the morning, we went to a small market town to do research for the evening – find the parking etc. We discovered that the car park was quite close but still involved a short walk across town. The night before we had tried the wig on and Nadine had cut a bit more off the fringe. The wig was a long brown style, as the lady in the shop felt it suited my colouring better than the blond one. When I saw it on, I had had to agree with her.

I had a shave about 3 p.m.; again I used the hot water and flannel. I also used the shaving brush to dab hot water onto my face, which worked well. I used plenty of shaving foam and the hair came off with ease. I had not shaved for seven days again. Afterwards, I used cold water to cool my face and dabbed it dry and then I used loads of moisturiser. I came down and Nadine did my nails a nice brown colour to match my skirt and boots: we gave them time to dry and then we had dinner.

I then got ready. I put on the foundation garments and tights and the expensive tan-coloured leather boots. Then Nadine started to do the make-up which went on well. The make-up looked good, the best ever, partly because she used new products and partly because the shave was better. For this outing, I wore the tan-coloured leather skirt and the brown jumper/ blouse all in one. We added jewellery. The wig looked fantastic; longer brown hair certainly suited Char and she looked great – a total change. Being longer, it hid some of the face and made it look softer. We took a few photos and then I put on a poncho type coat. Nadine drove to some shops and withdrew some money whilst I got into the driving seat; there were some young girls walking past, but they took no notice. It was nice going to a nearer venue, as we did not have to rush and was an easy drive.

After parking the car, we went up in the lift and came out by a restaurant; there was a family right by the entrance and they took no notice. We turned left and walked down an alleyway to the High Street. Then we were on the High Street: we passed a pub, a restaurant, and a lot of people milling about, but I paced the street confidently. The handbag worked well as I was able to place it on my shoulder. It was a new one which was beige and black.

We crossed the road and walked down another alley towards the church, careful not to slip on leaves. I felt I walked well in moderately high heels and felt very, very confident. There were a lot of people entering the church. Nadine and I walked through the door and joined a big queue to get in. We came through the main doors and were greeted by a member of the church in a yellow sash. He was quite friendly; I heard him say to someone else that the seating was not open and realised we were a bit early, so we went back to the refectory and ordered some



wine for the interval and Nadine had an apple juice. The lady said,

“Evening Ladies, what can I get you.”

“Two red wines please,” I replied. “For the interval.”

“And what name, Madam?”

For some strange reason, I said my surname was “May-ho”.

“Oh, you will have to spell that, dear,” the lady said.

We stood around in the very busy refectory, but no one looked or stared, and it was absolutely perfect. Nadine noticed I was sweating up a bit and said I should use powder, but I had forgot to bring it.

Fortunately, I had researched the back story and was able to talk about that. My “daughter” Kirsty was at University and then going to Australia when she had finished her degree in History and Politics; Daniel, was my other “child” and he worked as a trainee accountant and had just bought a motorbike.

We then went through to the church and spoke with a number of ushers about where to sit without any problems. We were very exposed as we walked down the middle aisle. I loved the fact that I had to walk a lot, as I felt quite visible and on show. We found our seats and sat down, but then a lady with a walker came in with her family, and Nadine and I had to move out of the row to let her pass. We then sat down and big chap with a loud voice sat next to me and an old woman next to him. Someone else came up looking for a seat, and the big chap asked me what seat numbers we were in, so I told him. My voice

was quiet at first and he asked me to repeat myself. He then started chatting to me!

“It’s a magnificent venue for classical music; have you been before?”

“No,” I said, “this is the first time.”

“You’ll enjoy it. This is my friend and she lives here and whenever there is something on she lets me know and I come up. I live in London. This is the fifth time.”

“I live in a little village called Norton’s Cliff.”

“How far away is that?”

“About 30 miles.”

“Oh, about as far as me then.”

We then had a conversation about Char not being good at distances and how she needed a sat nav to get anywhere (of course, he didn’t own one - he knew London well) but Char liked to come across as a bit dumb. We talked for a few minutes. It was great and I got a real buzz out of it.

The first half only lasted forty minutes and then the music stopped.

“Is this the interval?” I said to the guy.

He said it was, so Nadine and I got up and went to the refectory. We found the wine and moved outside to the area around by the side door: there were loads of people about but there were no problems. There was a big queue for the toilet so I didn’t bother to go; I had started a dehydration technique when I went out as Char, not drinking at all during the day apart from

a cup of tea in the morning. We had our wine and made our way back. Nadine stopped in the gift shop and bought a Christmas gift, which was nice; there were two people on the till and they took no notice. I felt very natural. We then walked back a long way through the church and down the central aisle. I saw one guy look me up and down in an admiring way. We sat back down; the large man's female friend was seated but he had gone off to look at the church. He turned to me and asked, "Are you enjoying it?"

"Yes," I said, "It's wonderful."

He agreed it was and the music started again; it lasted another hour. The seats were comfortable, and I liked the fact there was room to cross my legs which feels feminine. Also, at the end, I clapped with my hands together which is very feminine. As we left, Nadine helped me on with my coat and got the hair out from under the collar. I saw the guy next to her watching intently; I don't know why. The large man next to me asked me if I had enjoyed it. I said I had. Then I added, "We're thinking of coming back for the Carols."

"We might see you again then," he said.

The friend shook her head.

"Matilda doesn't like Carols so we won't be there," he laughed.

We then walked out of the central door whereas he walked the other way - which was the way we should have gone, as we could have talked for longer and it was actually quicker. We had to walk around the church in the dark to get to the same point!

We walked back across town to the car park and went down in the lift. It was another perfect night,

one of the best, and it had been great to hold a reasonably long conversation.

###

That's all for now, though I may be back later with some further updates; it all depends what happens. Did you guess what trip the preface came from? That was *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which I still think of as one my best outings.

The events here took place over a six-year time frame. What I have learnt is that the more you do it, the more there is to learn. There's so much to remember: the gestures (some TVs overdo it); laughing; whispering; sneezing... the list goes on and on and on. I am still learning, but I am getting there; I am definitely getting there.

I will leave you with a couple of poems I have written.

## **TV Times: Poems**

Some People Get Their Kicks

Some people get their kicks

on Route 66,

but I get mine,

I get mine,

from stealing clothes off a washing line.

Some people get their kicks  
by fast driving,  
but I get mine,  
I get mine,  
by wearing lingerie soft and fine.  
Some people get their kicks  
by sky diving,  
but I get mine,  
I get mine  
by wearing women's clothing.  
Some people get their kicks  
by smoking and drinking,  
but I get mine,  
I get mine  
from wearing high heels when walking.  
Some people get their kicks  
from watching baseball and soccer,  
but I get mine,  
I get mine,  
by storing female clothing in my locker.  
Whisper It Gently

Whisper it gently,

say my name,

I'm dressed to the nines

I'm out for fame.

We arrive at the theatre, just before seven,

now I am in my perfect Heaven.

I take the stairs one at a time

reach the bar, third in line,

wearing a black leather skirt, high heeled stilettoes,

I ask the barman for two glasses of Prosecco.

Whisper it gently,

say my name,

I'm dressed to the nines

I'm playing a game.

Now it's into the auditorium; the usher beams

"evening ladies" but it's not what it seems.

She checks our tickets – we're in row C.

Dressed like this I feel happy and free.

We sit together and watch a great production,

and then it's the interval – I need to function,

The toilet's packed but no one glances,  
once again, I have taken my chances,  
I powder my nose and add gloss to my lips  
Fluff up my hair and admire my tits.  
Whisper it gently,  
say my name,  
I'm dressed to the nines  
I'm out for fame.  
The play comes to an end and we return to the car  
It's been another great evening, the best so far.