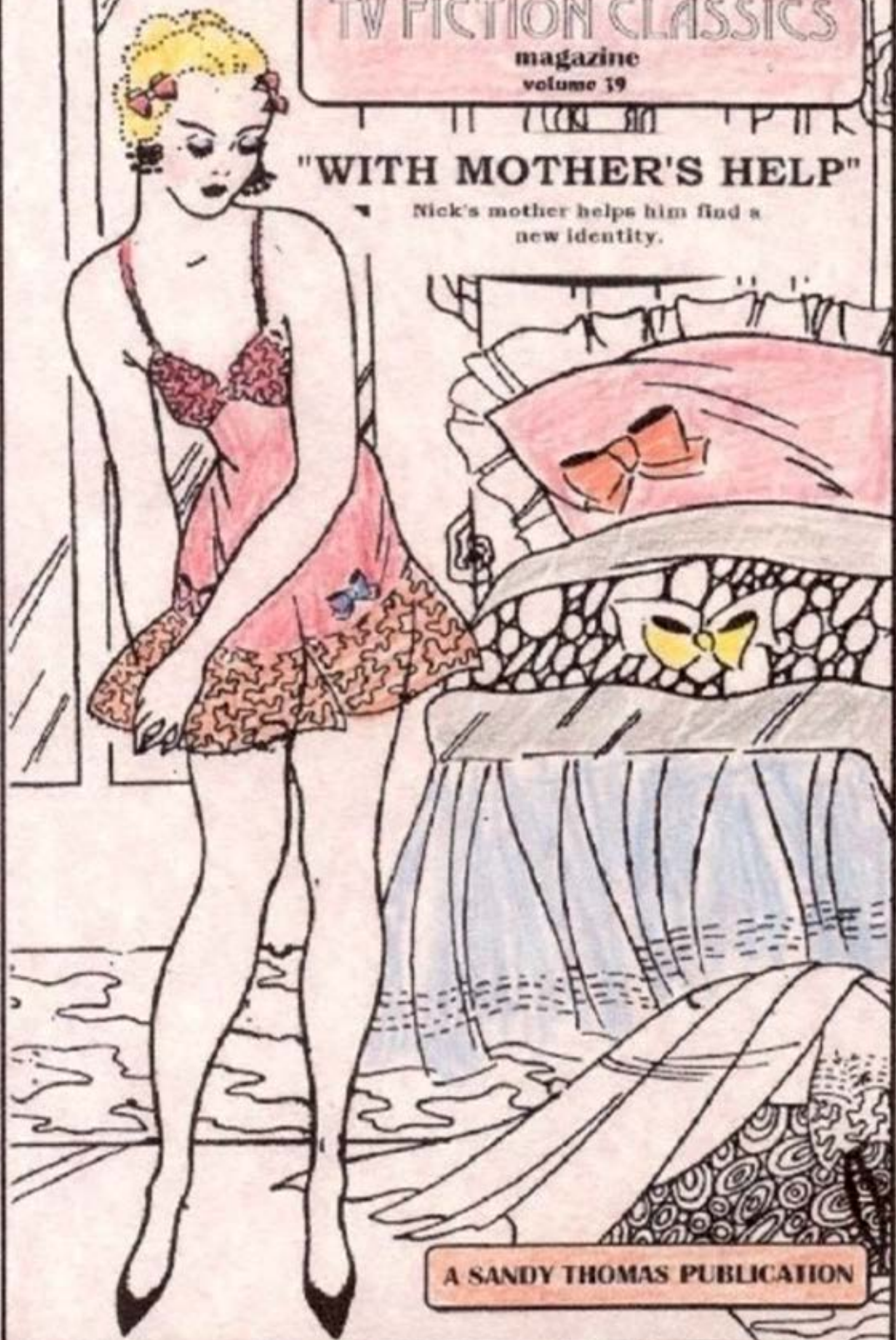


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"WITH MOTHER'S HELP"

Nick's mother helps him find a
new identity.



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"WITH MOTHER'S HELP"

by SARA WARREN

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QUOTE BOARD

A boring wardrobe is one that has everything to wear and nothing you shouldn't!

"WITH MOTHER'S HELP"

By SARA WARREN

The emergency room nurse handed Karen Taylor a clipboard with instructions on how to care for her broken elbow. She had slipped and fallen while trying to hang new curtains in her living room and she was now wearing a cast that covered the middle third of her left arm.

The nurse explained that it was a simple fracture and that it should heal easily without any complications.

"Your arm will be in the cast for the next eight to ten weeks," the nurse told her. "You'll have to be careful. Don't bang into things with it and try not to get it wet."

"How am I going to take a shower with this thing on?"

"I'd suggest baths instead of showers."

"And how will I shampoo my hair?"

"Is there someone at home who can do it for you? A daughter perhaps? If not, I'd advise you to get a short, no-fuss hair cut. There's no way you can style your hair right now with that cast on your arm."

Karen groaned aloud. She had always been proud of her thick mane of light brown hair. She wore it long, past shoulder-length. Although it was a lot of trouble, she set it nearly every night. She had a good, mid-management job at the local bank and she wanted to look her best.

Karen scribbled her name at the bottom of the instruction sheet and accepted one of the copies from the nurse. Gathering her purse and jacket, she followed the nurse out to the waiting room where her son Nick was sitting anxiously.

"Are you okay, Mom?"

"Just fine, except for this cast," she indicated with her other hand.

"You've been in there so long, I've been worried about you."

"She's fine," the nurse told him. "She just had to wait a little bit while we treated some others who needed more

immediate care. I think her biggest worry right now is her hair-do," she smiled.

Nick looked at his mother quizzically, but she just waved off any more questions. "Let's go home," she grumbled.

In the car on the way home, she explained everything the nurse had told her. "Luckily it's my left arm, so I can still drive the car and I'll be able to dress and go to work. And I can live with taking a bath too, but I don't know what to do about my hair."

"What do you have to do? I mean is it very complicated? Can I help you out?" Karen's ex-husband, Nick's father, had walked out on them a couple of days before Nick's second birthday. They'd never heard from him again. When Nick had gotten old enough, he started doing simple chores around the house to help his mother out. He was very considerate and never complained the way some children do. Now that he was older the two of them had divided up the household chores between them. Thus it only seemed natural to him to offer to do a little extra at a time like this.

"Thank you, darling. It's very kind of you to offer, but you don't know the first thing about hair styling," she said as they waited at a traffic light.

"It can't be that complicated, can it?" the boy asked. "Besides, what else can you do?"

"I don't know. I certainly would hate to cut it. But then again, maybe it's time to change my look," she said as she tapped her fingers impatiently on the steering wheel.

"Oh, no! Don't cut your hair. That length looks so nice on you. And you know how everyone tells you how great it looks."

"But what choice do I have, darling?" she asked as the light turned green.

"Let me try to do it, at least. Then if it doesn't work out you can think about cutting it. Okay? I mean, why give up without even trying?"

Karen drove on in silence. At last they pulled into their driveway. She sat and thought for a minute after turning off the engine. She was disgusted with herself for being so careless as to have the accident in the first place. But Nick was right. Cutting her hair in haste would only compound her problem. Why not wait a few days and see how things

worked out? "Okay," she finally said. "I'll let you try. But you may decide very quickly that it's more trouble than you thought."

"We'll see," her son grinned at her.

After dinner that night, Nick insisted that his mother sit and relax while he cleaned up the kitchen. Their usual arrangement was that one would cook while the other did the cleaning up, but tonight Nick had insisted on doing both jobs. "You deserve a break, at least for today," he told her.

When he was younger, Karen had started out teaching him how to prepare some simple meals. He thought it was fun and caught on quickly. He had a knack for cooking and over the years he had learned a lot of recipes. Now, as she relaxed in the living room, she thought about how lucky she was to have such an understanding and helpful son. When he was done he went in to check on her.

"How's your arm feel, Mom?"

"Okay. Those pain killers the doctor prescribed really help."

"Is there anything I can do for you? When do you want me to help with your hair?"

"We might as well do it now and get it over with," she sighed. "Are you sure you want to tackle this?"

"Anything to help you out," the boy replied sincerely.

His mother smiled at him. She noticed that he was still wearing the apron he had put on when he had started preparing dinner. She had always insisted that he wear an apron while cooking, lest he spill anything on his clothes. While most boys might have objected to wearing such a feminine garment, Nick just accepted it as part of the job. He even wore one often while cleaning the house, so as not to get his clothes dirty. Now he sat across the room from her wearing a full, bib apron. It was pale yellow with large colorful flowers and simple lace trimming along the edges.

Karen told him to collect the shampoo and conditioner, and a couple of towels and meet her in the kitchen. She had decided that the sprayer at the kitchen sink was the best thing to use to wash her hair. In a few minutes Nick was standing next to his mother, carefully wetting her hair. She was bent over the sink with a towel draped over

her shoulders. He applied a generous amount of shampoo to her long hair and began to massage it in. After several minutes, he had worked up a good lather. He rinsed it off and reapplied a second dollop of shampoo.

"This feels great," his mother told him. "I love having my hair washed."

"I hope I'm doing a good job," he told her. He was enjoying the feeling of closeness as he stood next to her.

"You're doing a wonderful job, darling. I can't thank you enough."

After the second rinse, he carefully worked the conditioner through her hair and then thoroughly rinsed it for the last time. After wringing out the excess water, he wrapped the other towel around her head turban-style. He had been careful with the sprayer, but he noticed that he still managed to get some water on the front of his apron. "Good thing I kept it on," he thought to himself.

Karen led the way upstairs to her bedroom. She sat down at her vanity table and got the tray of rollers and clips out of one of the drawers. After unwrapping the towel from her head, Nick carefully combed out her hair with a wide-toothed comb. He had watched his mother set her hair plenty of times, so she didn't need to explain a lot to him. He quickly sectioned it, sprayed it with setting lotion, and began to wind it onto the colorful plastic rollers. His mother was pleasantly surprised to see what a competent job he was doing.

"That's very good, my dear," she complimented him.

"Why thank-you," he replied proudly.

"If I had known what a good job you'd do, I might have asked you to do my hair before this. I feel so good to have someone work on my hair," she said.

"I guess it does," Nick observed. "You keep saying that."

"But it's true," she insisted. "It's too bad you're a boy. If you were my daughter, I'd do your hair for you."

Nick blushed bright red and looked away, but not before Karen noticed.

"Oh, I'm sorry, darling," his mother said quickly. "I didn't mean I don't love just as you are. I just meant that if you were a girl, I could set your hair, and things like that. You understand what I meant, don't you?"



"Sure, mom. I know what you meant," he said softly and he carefully wrapped another section of her hair around a roller. "I'm sure it's fun."

Karen looked at her son's reflection in the mirror. His cheeks were still flush. With his fashionably long hair and his apron, she could almost imagine him as her daughter. Although she loved him dearly, at the same time she had always wished for a daughter too, someone to share the joys and treasures, as well as the trials, of growing up female.

She fondly remembered that picture of Nick at five wearing a scarf on his head, her high heels and her red bathrobe. It was all in fun. . .dress up. She had done all she could. He got toy tanks and race cars for Christmas. . .sometimes.

"Oh, well," she sighed to herself. "What's done is done." At her age, and with her job and all, she was not about to have another child.

Nick, meanwhile, was caught up in his own inner turmoil. A slight, quiet boy, he had never felt drawn to athletics or the rough and tumble play typical of young

boys. From an early age he had been somewhat shy and withdrawn, preferring the company of books and his own imagination. He was fond of constructing elaborate fantasy lives to lead.

When he was little he even played with dolls with some of the neighborhood girls his age. At his insistence his mother had bought him a Barbie doll and several outfits. He only quit when he started school and some of the boys found out. They teased him unmercifully. However, his Barbie still sat propped up in his closet.

Now the other boys in his class pretty much ignored him, as did most of the girls.

He had a friendly personality, but his shyness kept him from making any close friends. A few of the girls were nice to him. They recognized that he was not a crass creature like most boys his age. But he felt quite comfortable going home alone every day after school to straighten up the house and do his homework. Now, as he stood behind his mother and set her hair, he found himself enjoying this most feminine experience.

"What's going on?" he wondered to himself. "How come I enjoy such girlish things. Is there something wrong with me? I'd die if any of the kids in school saw me like this." But the sincere smile on his mother's face convinced him that what he was doing was all right. "I'm just helping Mom because of her broken elbow," he mused. "There's nothing wrong with that!"

He stepped back to admire his work when he was finished. "How's that look?" he asked.

"Why, you've done a marvelous job, darling. You sure picked the technique up quickly. If I had known you had such a talent, I would have enlisted your help a long time ago."

"Aww, mom," he blushed again.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to embarrass you, dear. I just feel very lucky to have such a wonderful and considerate son like you." She put her arm around him and gave him a big hug. "Thank-you, sweetheart," she said.

"My pleasure," he smiled back at her. He took a large triangular net and carefully wrapped it around the rollers and tied it off. Then he adjusted a fluffy, elasticized sleep cap over her head, just as she did every night. It was made

of pink mesh, with white lace trimming all around, a pretty, feminine cover-up to hide the rollers.

His job the next morning was more difficult. He didn't have any trouble removing the rollers from his mother's hair, but he had never paid very close attention while she combed and brushed out the set. He was usually too busy getting ready for school himself. While she sat at her vanity table, dressed in a slip, he listened carefully as she instructed him on how to carefully comb out the curls and shape them with a brush and pick. It didn't take him long to learn the right technique. Then he sprayed it all over with hair spray to help hold it in place. The resulting hair-do looked every bit as good as when Karen did it herself.

"You're a real life-saver, my dear. You've done a great job and I really appreciate it," she said as she turned her head to inspect herself in the mirror. "But it's a lot of extra work for you. Are you sure you want to do this every day?"

"It was fun, actually," he told her truthfully. "It didn't feel like work at all. I don't mind, in fact I enjoyed it. Besides, you don't want to cut your hair, do you?"

"No, not if I can help it," she admitted as she got up to finish dressing.

He lifted her dress over her head so that she could slip it on. Then, after helping her adjust it, he zipped up the back for her. Again, Karen realized how lucky she was to have such a son.

After school Nick came directly home. All day long he had felt strangely excited about working on his mother's hair and he looked forward to doing it again tonight. He quickly changed out of his school clothes and without really thinking about it, he went out into the kitchen and donned the full apron he had worn the day before. Then he proceeded to straighten up the house and do a little dusting before settling down at the dining room table to do his homework. That was where she found him when she got home from work.

"Hello, darling. How are you doing?" she greeted him. Inwardly she smiled to herself when she saw that he was still wearing the apron.

"Hi mom," he replied. "I'm okay. How's your elbow feeling?"

"All right. It's a little sore, but the doctor told me to expect that for a few days. Nothing I can't live with. How was school?"

The two of them chatted and caught each other up on the day's events while Nick helped his mother out of her coat. Then he followed her upstairs to her room, explaining about the science project that he was working on. Karen kicked off her shoes and reached behind her to unzip her dress.

"Let me do that for you mom," Nick said.

He carefully unfastened the hook at the top and then unzipped the dress for her. After she stepped out of it, he took it and hung it the closet for her.

"Why, thank-you, darling. That's very kind of you."

"It's okay," he replied. "That cast on your elbow makes it hard to do things," he smiled. "But I was wondering, how come so many of your dresses have zippers in the back. It seems like they're deliberately made to be hard to get in and out of."

"They're designed that way so that the front of the dress can have a smoother, more finished look. It would look strange to have a big zipper running down the front, don't you think?"

"Umm, sure," he said, satisfied with her answer.

"It's the same with my blouses. A lot of them button up the back too." She reached into her closet and took one of her house coats off the hanger.

"Girl's clothes sure are a lot different than boy's clothes," he observed.

"Well," she smiled at him, "girls are a lot different than boys, aren't they?" She slipped the house coat on and began buttoning up the front.

"Yeah, I suppose."

"They're built different, for one thing," she observed as she buttoned the front over her bosom.

"That's for sure."

After dinner, Karen again relaxed while Nick cleaned up the kitchen. Then they repeated the routine of last night, with Nick shampooing and conditioning her hair,

and then setting it. Karen decided that she could quickly get used to this sort of treatment. When he was done she remained seated at her vanity table while she removed her make up.

She rubbed cold cream on her face, then carefully wiped it off with a tissue. Finally she applied a moisturizing night cream. When she noticed Nick watching her intently, she began to explain what she was doing. He listened carefully as she talked about dry skin and wrinkles. When she was done, she stood up and turning to him, said, "Sit down, dear. Lets take a good look at your complexion."

The boy hesitantly sat down in front of the mirror. He felt a strange, tingly sensation as he and his mother discussed how he should care for his skin. While his face was unusually clear for someone his age, he still had a few blemishes. Karen explained that while some were unavoidable, they could be kept to a minimum by cleaning his face thoroughly every day. He had seen enough bad cases of acne on kids at school, so it didn't take much to convince him to try out his mother's suggestions. She showed him how to use a skin cleanser to clean his pores. He was amazed at the amount of dirt that came off on the cotton pad.

"Keeping you skin clean is very important," she told him. "And just as important as clean skin, you should start now to moisturize it every day, in order to keep it soft and wrinkle-free."

It never occurred to Nick to question why he should be concerned about having soft, wrinkle-free skin. All he knew was that he was having fun performing this essentially feminine task in front of his mother. He dutifully massaged his face with the night cream, taking special care under and next to his eyes. "That's where we get crow's feet," she explained to him.

Karen beamed as she watched him. She might not have a daughter, but there was no harm in teaching her son a few tricks. After all, smooth skin is something everyone should strive for, she told herself.

The following Saturday morning, as was their habit, the two of them slept in late. The fact that the day was dark and rainy contributed to their reluctance to get up. They had planned to go to the big sidewalk sale downtown

this afternoon, but it looked like the rain was going to keep up all day. Sure enough, the local radio station confirmed their worst suspicions. The weather forecast called for showers and thunderstorms today and tomorrow.

"Looks like they'll have to postpone their sale till next weekend," Karen remarked as she sipped her first cup of coffee.

"Yeah, well they're not going to get many shoppers on a day like today," Nick agreed. "What do you want to do today?"

"I know we planned to go shopping today, but I don't feel like going out in this weather. Would you mind if we stayed home."

"Nope. I can't think of anything I want to do out there that's worth getting soaked for."

They had a leisurely breakfast and then Nick, as was now his habit, donned his familiar yellow apron and cleaned up the dishes. Karen disappeared upstairs. When he was done, he went up to find out what she was doing. He found her in the back bedroom, which they used as sort of an all-purpose work room. It had Karen's sewing machine in one corner and under the window was a table that Nick had used to finger-paint and make projects when he was younger. It had been awhile since he had done anything like that.

"I decided today's as good as any to clean out this room out," his mother announced. She was sorting out a large bag of fabric remnants and old sewing patterns. "Some of these things go back years," she said as she held up an unfinished project. "I'll never be that size again," she sighed, "but that's okay. It's out of style anyway."

"Want some help?" Nick volunteered.

"Sure. Why don't you go through the stuff on the shelves in that closet and see what you can toss out. All your old finger-paints and things have been collecting dust for years. I'll bet they're all dried out and useless now. Just throw them in here," she handed him a cardboard box.

"Wow, this brings back lots of old memories," he said as he started to examine the stuff on the shelves. "Remember this, mom?" he held up a curled sheet of paper. The thick coat of finger-paint was cracked and peeling, but you could still make out the figure of a four-legged animal.



"Of course. You were so proud of that picture. A horse. How could I forget?"

"It's supposed to be a dog, mom."

"Oh, sorry," she apologized.

"That's okay. I can see where you might be confused."

"Thank you, dear."

"Oh, sh...", he strangled a cry.

His mother hurried over to where he stood. The lid had come off a jar of powdered paint when he went to pick it up. The jar had tipped over and spilled most of its contents on him. Fortunately he was still wearing the apron.

"Stand still," his mother commanded. "Don't move or it'll get all over everything." The dry paint was very fine, like talcum powder. Some of it still hung in the air. Karen very carefully lifted up the bottom of the apron and folded it over. "Hold this," she instructed him. Then she untied the back and lifted the strap over his head. Slowly she gathered up the garment with the powder trapped inside. Fortunately only a little bit had fallen to the floor.

"I'll take this downstairs and leave it by the back door. When it stops raining you can take it outside and shake it

to get rid of the paint. In the meantime you'd better vacuum up that stuff on the floor before we track it all over the house."

In a few minutes Nick had it all cleaned up and had put the vacuum cleaner back in the hall closet. "That could have been a lot worse than it turned out," his mother observed.

"You can say that again," he agreed. "The only problem is that my apron is all covered with paint now, and the other one is in the wash. What should I wear? I don't want to have another accident and spill something on my clothes."

"Hmmm," Karen thought for a minute. Then she smiled at him. "Why not put on one of my house coats, like the one I'm wearing? We're about the same size. I bet it would fit you."

"Uh... gee, mom, I don't know."

"Oh, go ahead. It's practical. What's wrong, are you worried someone might see you?"

"Well, yeah," he admitted.

"It's just the two of us. No one's going to come wandering into the house unannounced. Don't worry. You'll have plenty of warning if someone comes over and you can change. Besides, it's so miserable outside. I don't think we'll be having any visitors today." At that moment a loud clap of thunder sounded in the distance.

"Well, okay. But promise you won't laugh."

"I promise, darling. Go on and pick whichever one you like."

Nick slowly walked across the hall to his mother's room. He emotions were in turmoil. On the one hand he was intrigued by the thought of putting on such a feminine garment, but on the other he didn't want his mother to think that he was "strange." However, since it was her idea, she couldn't think he was weird. He just had to make sure that he didn't appear too eager.

Karen had several house coats that she wore regularly. The first thing she did when she got home from work every day was to take off her good dress and put one of them on. On weekends she often wore one around the house. Nick now stood in her closet and surveyed his choices. They were all basically variations of the same theme---short-sleeved, loose fitting garments that buttoned up the front

and came to just below the knees. His first impulse was to pick feminine one, but he didn't want to arouse his mother's suspicions so he opted for the powder blue one with white flowers and an understated lace trim on the sleeves and collar.

"What do you think?" he asked a few minutes later as he stood in the doorway, buttoning up the last couple of buttons.

His mother turned to inspect him. She couldn't suppress a little giggle.

"You promised not to laugh," he cried, blushing furiously. He was about to turn away and go back to her room to take it off when she spoke up.

"I'm sorry darling. I know I promised not to laugh, but I couldn't help it. House coats aren't designed to be worn over your regular clothes, you know. It's meant to be worn in place of them. Did you look at yourself in the mirror? Besides, isn't it kind of tight like that?"

"Yeah, I guess so. I didn't know," he mumbled.

"It's okay. I'm sorry I laughed. Why don't you take off your other clothes and try it on again. I'm sure it'll be more comfortable."

Nick retreated to his room and quickly pulled off his shirt and jeans. He slipped the house coat back on and buttoned up the front. As he turned to go back to show his mother, the hem brushed his bare leg and a thrill went through him. He shivered with new-found excitement. "What's going on with me?" he wondered.

Returning to the room, he stood before Karen again. "That feels a lot better, doesn't it?" she asked.

"Yeah, it sure does. I don't know what I was thinking about before. How do I look?" he asked.

"You look perfectly fine," she told him approvingly. "And I'm sure you'll be a lot more comfortable in that than in your jeans, actually. One thing though. Those sneakers look a little clunky with that on. Let's see if we can find something else for your feet."

She led the way back to her room. From the closet she pulled out a pair of powder blue canvas flats with crepe soles. "Take off your sneakers and try these on," she said as she handed them to him.

He sat down on the bed and crossed one foot on top of the other leg to untie his sneakers.

"Wait a minute," his mother admonished. "That's one of the first things I learned when I was a little girl. You have to be careful not to let anyone see your underwear. Whenever you're wearing something like that you have to be careful about how you cross your legs. If you're going to untie your shoes, either bend over to do it or cross your legs with your knees together."

Nick looked up at her surprised. "Uh, okay." he said as he dropped his foot to the floor. It never occurred to him to question why he should learn to act like a proper girl. He just accepted his mother's advice. Karen, however, realized what had happened. As soon as the words were out of her mouth however, she realized what she was saying.

She watched her son as he bent over to untie his shoes with his knees pressed tightly together. After slipping on the feminine shoes, he crossed the room and stood in front of her full-length mirror. He turned this way and that, inspecting himself from all angles. As she watched him admire himself, she marveled at the ease with which he seemed to adapt to the feminine clothing. When he turned to look at her, she smiled approvingly.

"You look very nice. How does it feel?"

"Fine," he said shyly.

She just nodded. "And how about the shoes."

"Good. They're a lot lighter than my sneakers."

"Keep them, they're yours. I think you should wear them around the house. It'll keep the place



cleaner too, if you take off your shoes as soon as you come in. Okay?"

"Yeah, sure, mom. Whatever you say," he replied as he gazed into the mirror.

He finally pulled himself away from the mirror and went back to helping his mother clean out their work room. When it was time for lunch, Nick suggested that his mother take a break while he made sandwiches for the two of them. Karen sat at the kitchen table and chatted with him while he bustled about fixing their meal. When everything was ready he joined her at the table. She couldn't help but notice how he carefully smoothed out the back of the house coat with one hand as he sat down and then straightened out the front once he was seated. She smiled inwardly to herself as she reflected on these feminine gestures her son was making.

After lunch they returned to their tasks, and by three o'clock they were finished. It was still pouring rain out. Karen announced that it was a perfect day to curl up with a good book. Nick agreed with her and soon both of them were comfortably sitting in the living room with their respective books. Despite the fact that his chores were finished, Nick hadn't bothered to change back into his shirt and jeans. He felt very much at ease in the house coat, and the fact that his mother had encouraged him to wear it only reinforced his feelings.

That evening he again did his mother's hair. When he was finished he sat down at her vanity table and cleaned his face with the cleanser just like his mother had showed him the night before.

Then he massaged in the moisturizer. As he gazed at his reflection in the mirror, a little chill ran down his spine. Between his long hair, the house coat, and the traces of moisturizing lotion on his face, he saw a decidedly feminine image looking back at him. Rather than repulsing him, as it might other boys his age, it instead thrilled him.

He couldn't begin to explain why, but he now realized that he enjoyed dressing and acting like a girl. Not only that, his mother seemed to be subtly encouraging him in that direction. He couldn't figure that out either, but he decided that if she approved then it had to be okay.

The next morning he pulled off his pajamas and slipped on the house coat as soon as he got up. He didn't have the excuse of doing chores and he hoped that his mother wouldn't say anything. Instead, she greeted him in the kitchen just like every other morning, and never mentioned a word about what he was wearing. This helped put him at ease.

It wasn't that Karen didn't notice. That would have been impossible. It was just that she got a little kick out of seeing her son dressing and acting feminine manner. Maybe it was a deep-buried desire for a daughter, maybe it was something else. She herself couldn't figure out where her feelings were coming from. All she knew was that Nick was now exhibiting some very definite feminine tendencies, but she couldn't see anything wrong with it. He remained dressed that way all day as the two of them spent another rainy day cooped up in the house.

The following day was Monday, and Nick had a hard time concentrating on his classes. All he could think about was rushing home and changing into his new feminine clothing. The bus ride home seemed to take forever. As soon as he got inside the door, he pulled off his sneakers, then skipped up to his room and stripped off his school clothes.

Pulling the house coat on, he carefully buttoned the front up, then ran into his mother's room to admire himself in the full-length mirror. His whole being tingled with excitement. He turned this way and that, admiring himself from all angles. Only when he was completely satisfied, did he tear himself away and go downstairs to straighten out the house.

Then, as was his habit, he started his homework at the dining room table, which is where his mother found him when she got home from work. As he had hoped, she didn't

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say anything about his attire, but just greeted him warmly as she usually did. Although she didn't say anything, in fact she had spent the day wondering what he would be wearing when she got home. She secretly hoped that he would be back in the house coat and so was pleasantly surprised when she saw him.

Nick continued to wear the house coat every day after school. Finally, on Wednesday, Karen decided to take things a little further. When she got home from work she found him dressed as usual.

"That house coat must be getting pretty dirty by now, don't you think?" she asked him.

Afraid that she might insist that he go back to wearing his old boy's clothes, Nick started to protest.

"I'm afraid I must insist that you change," she cut him off. "That thing needs washing. Let's go up to my room and see what else we can find for you."

It took a second for her words to sink in. When he finally realized what she had said, all he could say was, "Uh, sure." He obediently followed her up the stairs and into her room.

"Let's see," she mused as she stood in front of her open closet. Nick stood quietly to one side, slightly bewildered. "How about this?" she asked as she reached in and pulled out a brightly colored, floral patterned garment. It was a floor-length cotton lounge, with a scoop neck, and long, full sleeves. "Take this in your room and try it on."

Nick's heart skipped a beat. He had been expecting his mother to insist that he stop wearing her clothes and get back into his boy's clothes. Instead he was being offered the chance to dress even more femininely. It was all very confusing, but he was not about to say no. He quickly changed and reappeared in his mother's room in a couple of minutes. She hadn't even had time to finish changing herself.

"That looks great on you," she exclaimed as he walked in the door. "Don't you just love the way it feels, so light and airy."

"Yeah," he said as he checked himself out in the mirror. "It feels wonderful." Then dropping a hint, he said, "You've got some really neat things, mom."

"I know," his mother replied with a smile. "I've never really understood why we have such rigid dress codes in our society. Girls get to wear pants whenever they want, but boys have no choice. It doesn't seem fair, especially since some things reserved for girls are so comfortable and so much fun to wear. I think that boys should have the same freedom that girls do to wear whatever they'd like, any time, any where."

"But I could never wear this outside," the boy said emphatically. "I'd be teased to death."

"I know that dear, but there's certainly no reason why you can't wear it in the house. Since it looks so good on you and you like it so much, consider it yours. And here," she said as she handed him a matching pair of skimmers, "These shoes go with it."

He kicked off the canvas shoes and slipped on the other pair. He again turned to the mirror to admire himself. He was overcome by a feeling of warmth and excitement as he gazed at his reflection. When his mother came to stand beside him he turned and gave her a big hug.

"Thank you so much, mom," he said softly.

"I'm glad I can make you happy," she replied as she gently stroked his hair.

That evening after dinner, Nick shampooed and set his mother's hair again, as was now their routine. He enjoyed it even more dressed as he was, with the skirt of the lounge twirling around whenever he moved, and the swish of the full, long sleeves. After he was done, Karen collected her nail care kit and some polish and sat down at the kitchen table to give herself a manicure. When Nick saw what she was doing, he offered to do it for her.

"That's okay, honey," his mother said. "The cast on my elbow doesn't prevent me from working on my nails. Besides, I didn't know you knew anything about nail care."

"I don't know a whole lot," he admitted. "Just the little bit I've learned from watching you once in awhile. I figured you could tell me what to do."

"Why don't you sit here and watch me? I'll explain everything as I go along."

"Sure," he said eagerly. He watched carefully as his mother first removed the old polish, and then soaked her nails in a soapy solution. After they had softened up she

carefully filed each nail in an oval shape. Spreading cuticle remover at the base of each nail, she let it sit for a few minutes before removing the cuticles with an orange stick. After that she applied a base coat of clear polish, followed by two coats of color and then a clear top coat. At every step she carefully explained what she was doing to the fascinated boy. The two of them continued chatting across the table while she waited for the polish to dry. When she was sure that it was completely dry, she casually reached across the table and took his hands and placed them in the dish of soapy water.

"What are you doing, mom?" the boy asked in alarm, starting to pull his hands back.

She grabbed his hands and held them in the solution. "Your nails need trimming and I thought I'd do you a favor and take care of it for you. What's the matter?"

"Uh, nothing. Sorry," the boy replied, blushing deeply.

His mother carefully filed his nails, taking care to make sure that they were just short enough not to attract the attention of the kids in school. The two of them chatted while she worked and this helped put the boy at ease. When she began to trim his cuticles he didn't raise a protest. But when she opened the bottle of clear polish he pulled his hands away.

"You can't do that," he said.

"Why not?" his mother asked.

"I can't go to school with nail polish on. The kids would never let me live it down."

"It's only clear polish, darling. No one will notice, I'm sure." She took one of his hands and began to apply the polish.

"Oh," was all he could manage to say as he sat fascinated, watching her work.

When at last she was done, she instructed him not to touch anything until the polish was thoroughly dry. He held up his hands in a feminine manner, waving them limply and blowing on them to help speed the drying. He had to admit that he liked the way they looked. He just hoped that no one in school noticed the clear shiny polish.

For the next couple of days Nick kept sneaking surreptitious looks at his nails all day long at school. He was relieved that no one seemed to notice them. But in fact

several of the girls in his class did notice, although none of them said anything to him. They did, however, discuss it among themselves. A couple of them said that they weren't surprised, but none of them criticized him or made fun of him.

On Friday evening Nick was yet again setting his mother's hair. She was beginning to worry that this nightly chore was starting to become a burden for him.

"Are you sure you don't mind, darling," she asked.

"Oh, no. Not at all," he replied sincerely. "I like doing it, honestly." Tonight he was fascinated with the way the lights surrounding the vanity table mirror glinted off of his polished nails as he wound each section of hair onto a roller.

"Well, be sure and let me know if this gets to be too much for you okay?"

"Sure, mom."

"I must admit that I do love having you work on my hair. I guess it's just another one of those simple pleasures that girls get to enjoy and boys don't," she said innocently.

"Yeah, I suppose so," he son replied. Both knew where they wanted the conversation to go, but each was afraid to come right out and say it.

"Your hair's gotten awfully long lately, hasn't it?" Karen said. "When was the last time you got a haircut? I can't remember."

"I don't know. It's been awhile," he shrugged. In fact, it had been months. His hair was now down to his shoulders. Since a lot of kids in school had long hair, he didn't stand out in that respect. He took good care of it, shampooing and conditioning it daily, and always kept it combed neatly.

He finished securing the last roller. After he tied the net over the curlers and adjusted the lacy bonnet over them, Karen stood and motioned for him to take her place. Standing behind him, she fingered a lock of hair while watching him in the mirror.

"It's so much fun to have your hair done. How would you like me to do it for you?"

His heart started thudding. "You mean like yours?" he asked.

"Uh, huh," she replied. "Just like mine."

He hesitated only momentarily. "Yeah, sure. I'll try it."

"Go on in and take your shower and shampoo and condition your hair like you usually do. Then come back in here and I'll fix you up. It's the least I can do to pay you back for all the time you've spent doing mine."

The boy nervously rushed into the bathroom. His heart was pumping double time and his knees felt weak as he quickly showered and washed his hair. In less than ten minutes he was seated again at his mother's vanity table, dressed in his pajamas with a towel wrapped turban-style around his head.

Karen had everything arranged by the time he returned. Taking a wide-toothed comb, she combed out his hair and sectioned it. Then she carefully sprayed each section with setting lotion before winding it onto a colorful plastic roller. She hummed to herself as she worked, pausing occasionally to say something reassuring to her excited son. He sat silently throughout the experience, watching her every move as she methodically covered his head with the large rollers. When she was at last done, she tied a net over the curlers just as he did for her every night. Then from a drawer in the vanity table she retrieved a lacy bonnet, identical to the one that she now wore and adjusted it on his head to disguise the curlers.

Bending down so that her face was level with his, she looked at her son in the mirror and smiled broadly. "We look like twins."

Nick was speechless. He had to agree with his mother that it was fun to have her work on his hair. But at the same time he figured that the pleasure he was experiencing probably came from a different source than the one she talked about. Whatever the case, however, there was no question that he was excited.

When he didn't say anything, she asked, "Are you okay?"

"Uh, yeah. Sorry. I guess I sort of drifted off," he replied sheepishly.

"Your hair is so nice and thick and manageable. I can't wait to see what it looks like in the morning."

"You mean I'm going to sleep with these on?" he pointed to his curler-covered head.

"Sure. I do every night. So do lots of other women. Is that a problem?"

"Uh, no. I guess not."

"It might feel a little uncomfortable at first, but you'll soon get used to it. After while, you won't even notice them."

Caught up in his own conflictive feelings of the moment, Nick didn't catch the implications of what his mother's statement.

The next morning he awoke to the unfamiliar feelings of the curlers on his head. He lay there for a few minutes thinking about all the changes that had occurred in his life the past couple of weeks. It seemed he was becoming more and more girlish every day. And he had never felt so good about himself either. Not only that, his mother wasn't just tolerating all of this, she actually seemed to be encouraging him. While he couldn't figure out her motives, he did know that he was enjoying himself and he didn't want the experience to end.

He jumped out of bed, stripped off his pajamas, and eased the lounge from last night over his curler-covered head. The scoop neckline was just big enough to fit over them. His mother was already up, drinking coffee, when he breezed into the kitchen. When he spotted the bouffant cap on her head covering her curlers, he realized that he must look the same way. He wondered if he looked silly, but he certainly couldn't tell from the warm greeting Karen gave him.

"Good morning, darling. How are you this bright and cheery morning?"

"Fine. How about yourself?" he inquired as he crossed the room to get himself a glass of orange juice.

"I feel great," his mother said emphatically. "How did you sleep last night?"

"Okay. It took a little longer to fall asleep, but I wasn't nearly as uncomfortable as I thought I would be."

"That's good. I didn't think you'd have a problem. I can't wait to see what your hair looks like."

"Me too."

She picked up her coffee cup. "Why don't we go upstairs and see how it turned out?"

When they got to her room, Nick suggested that she sit and finish her coffee while he did her hair first. Then she could tackle his.

"Sounds like a plan to me," she told him.

He was so used to the routine that it didn't take him long to remove the rollers, brush it out and style it. "You do such a good job, my dear," she told him. "It's going to be tough to have to go back to doing it myself once my elbow heals."

"I can still do it then," he said. "I like doing your hair, actually."

She looked at him skeptically.

"Honest," he said as they traded places and he sat down in front of the mirror. He watched carefully as she unwrapped each section of hair, starting at the back of his neck and working her way upwards. When the last curler was removed, she took a comb and brush and carefully styled it into a mass of curls that surrounded his head like a halo. Spritzes of hair spray helped hold everything in place. When she was at last done, she stepped away and asked him expectantly, "What do you think?"

Nick was stunned. While he had been expecting a feminine hairdo, he wasn't prepared for the completely girlish image that greeted him in the mirror. Even Karen was taken aback by the change affected by the hairdo. "I look like a girl," he said softly, half to himself.

"Yes you do," Karen nodded. "You certainly do. Does it bother you? Do you want to wash it out?"

"Huh? No. Not at all." He continued to gaze at himself in the mirror. "I, I like it, I think."

His mother stood behind him, looking over his shoulder into the mirror. She could see the march of his conflictive feelings across his face. Finally, she spoke up. "How would you like to finish the job?"

He looked up at her questioningly, "What do you mean?"

"How would you like to see what you'd look like if you were really a girl?"

"How would I do that?"

"A little makeup and a change of clothes."

He paused for only a moment. "Sure. Yeah, I'd like that," he said.

Karen smiled lovingly at her son. "I think we can turn you into a really beautiful girl. Let's start with your face. I'll teach you how to use makeup to enhance your best features and bring out the inner girl in you." He grinned back at her.

She sat down next to him and began to explain the art of cosmetics. Nick paid close attention as she showed him how to apply a day time moisturizer. "Your skin is so young and clear," she told him. "I'm jealous. You don't need a heavy foundation. Any blemishes you might get can be hidden with this cover-up stick." She showed him how to blend it in with his natural skin color. Next she carefully trimmed his eyebrows with a pair of tweezers.

"Does that hurt darling," she asked.

"Not enough for you to stop," replied the excited boy. He was having too much fun to be bothered by the slight irritation. Besides, he reasoned, if women can stand the bother and pain of plucking their eyebrows, then so could he. His mother was careful not to thin them too much. She didn't want him to look too obvious at school.

Next she used a pencil to lightly fill in his brows. Then she had him close first one eye, and then the other while she carefully brushed on a light coating of shadow. As she performed each of these feminizing acts on her son, she explained what she was doing and why. Nick eagerly absorbed all that she taught him. He was especially fascinated with the mascara that she brushed on his eye lashes.

"Wow, they really do look longer, don't they?" he exclaimed as he inspected them in the mirror.

Karen nodded approvingly as she used a tube of lipstick to color his delicate lips. He learned how to press his lips together to smooth out the color, then blot them with a tissue and reapply another coat.

"It tastes good," he said with a little note of surprise in his voice.

"Uh, huh. But don't eat it all off," she warned him.

Next she brushed a hint of blusher on his cheeks and blended it in. The final step was a light dusting of powder to soften his image. When she was done, he turned and looked in the mirror, captivated with what he saw. He really did look like a girl! Not only that, he was in love with his new image. The slow, hesitant steps he had been

taking toward feminization over the last couple of weeks had turned into a gallop. He was now in love with his self-image as a girl and he couldn't wait to explore it further. He turned to his mother.

"What did you say about clothes?" he asked.

"How would you like to try on a dress?" she inquired, then added, "You're really enjoying this, aren't you?"

"I sure am," he boy replied. "It's okay, isn't it?"

"Certainly, darling. I love being a girl and I don't see why you can't enjoy it too."

"Oh, mom. Thanks for being so understanding." He gave her a big hug.

"I'm having fun too, you know," she said. "Maybe it's because I've always wanted a daughter. Whatever the reason is, I'm enjoying this nearly as much as you are," she laughed.

She crossed the room to her bureau and opened the lingerie drawer. Picking out a pair of floral-print cotton panties and a matching bra, she handed them to him. "Why don't you start by putting these on."

"A bra too?" he looked at her questioningly.

"Sure. All the girls your age wear them."

"Okay," he said as he started to head out the door.

"Where are you going?"

"To change in my room."

"You don't have to be so modest. It's just us girls here now, remember? Why don't you change right here."

Nick hesitated. The rush of new experiences had stimulated and excited him in more ways than one. The lounge he was wearing effectively hid his heightened excitement and saved him from embarrassment. Now, as he slowly unbuttoned it he tried to will himself down, but it didn't work. He turned his back on his mother before pulling it up over his head. Then he quickly tugged off his jockey shorts and pulled up the dainty panties. He tried to put the bra on too, but he became confused as he struggled with the unfamiliar garment.

"Here, let me help you," his mother offered.

She showed him how to slip the straps over his arms and then hooked the back for him. While doing this, she caught a glimpse of his excited state. Wanting to save him from further embarrassment, she immediately handed

him a full slip to put on. It helped somewhat. "I'll have to find a better solution for this problem," she said to herself. "I can't have the poor boy walking around like that all the time. It's not very lady-like."

She had him sit on the edge of the bed while she got a new pair of panty-hose for him and showed him how to put it on. They had a control-top, and she figured that it would help hide his problem. He carefully unrolled the each leg and then stood up to pull it up to his waist. To his relief nothing much could be seen at the front of his slip.

She also noted that his legs were still smooth and relatively hairless. What little hair he had was fine and colorless. "It won't stay that way for long though," she thought, "I'll have to teach him how to shave his legs."

"Oh, I almost forgot," she said aloud as she watched him tugging at the panty-hose. She retrieved a box from the top shelf of her closet. "Your aunt Janice gave me these once as a joke. I don't know why I kept them, but now I'm glad that I did," she said as she took the two breast forms and carefully positioned in the cups of Nick's bra. The boy blushed a bright red. "Don't be embarrassed, darling. Girls are proud of their breasts. It's a sign of womanhood. Besides, you'd look very strange without them and your clothes wouldn't fit right."

Nick just stood there and stared at the unfamiliar protrusions rising from his chest.

Karen spent a few minutes at her closet, trying to decide which was the best dress for her effeminate son. She had an extensive collection of dresses, many of them bought for work. She wanted something youthful looking and would give him a sparkling "taste" of femininity. She finally chose a navy blue knit with a delicate print of little white flowers. It had lace trim around the collar and at the cuffs of the long sleeves. A narrow belt encircled the waist.

"Ready?" she asked seeing her son's eye's widen.

"I think so?" he muttered. His breath quickened and his cheeks became delightfully flushed.

She lifted the dress over the excited boy's head and carefully lowered it, taking care not to mess his new hairdo. After zipping up the back she found a matching pair of low heels that he quickly slipped on.

She quickly pushed him in front of the full-length mirror. He gasped aloud, "Oh, mother! Look at me!"

"You look absolutely adorable, my dear. You're the perfect image of a teenage girl."

"I do look like a girl, don't I?"

"A very pretty one, I might add. You could turn the boy's heads."

"Huh?" he was suddenly jerked back to reality. He blushed, "What do you mean? I'm not going outside like this! What if somebody saw me? I'd die of embarrassment."

"Why? You don't look at all like a boy. No one could possibly recognize you. You look every inch like a pretty teenage girl."

"But mother..."

"Well, let's not worry about that now. I promise not to drag you off to the mall this afternoon. In the meantime though, I think I'd better get dressed. My own son is outshining me."

Karen quickly dressed while Nick stood in front of the mirror, totally wrapped up in his own image. When she was done, the two of them sat down at the vanity table so that he could watch her do her own makeup and perhaps pick up a few more tips. When she was finished, she offered to polish his nails, but he suggested that he try it himself.

As his mother looked on, he carefully removed the clear polish and applied two coats of light pink, the same color as his lipstick. When he was done he felt very proud of himself as he held his still wet nails up to the light to admire them. His mother lavishly praised his work.

After awhile, the two of them went downstairs to the living room. Karen noted how Nick carefully smoothed the back of his dress while sitting down, and how he kept his knees together once he was seated. He couldn't keep his eyes off of his brightly painted fingernails. Every few minutes he held them up to admire them.

It was a pleasant sunny day, and Karen would have loved to take her new "daughter" out shopping, but she knew it was futile to bring up the subject again. Once he got used to dressing like this and felt more comfortable, however, she figured she might be able to coax him out of

the house. Instead, she got out her knitting project and started working on afghan.

That gave Nick an idea, and he soon appeared with the sewing basket and a small pile of clothes that needed mending. Over the years he had learned how to sew by watching his mother. He could make simple repairs, such as redoing torn hems and reattaching buttons and hooks. He spent the rest of the afternoon sitting primly on the sofa with needle and thread, proud of his ability to perform this feminine task.

After cleaning up the dinner dishes, mother and son once again went through their evening ritual of shampooing and setting her hair. When they were done, Karen suggested that he shampoo his own hair and she would set it for him. He took off the apron and at his mother's suggestion he went upstairs to hang up the dress. Returning dressed only in his slip, he carefully washed his hair at the sink. Within minutes he was back up in his mother's room, seated at her vanity table. As he watched her wind his hair on the rollers, Nick fantasized that this is the way things would be every night if her had been born a girl. He shivered slightly at the thought.

"Are you chilly," his mother asked.

"No. I was just thinking about things, that's all."

"Like what things?" she inquired.

The boy hesitated. He didn't want his mother to think that he was "weird." On the other hand, she was encouraging him to impersonate a girl. And at the moment she was setting his hair. "I was just thinking about what it would be like if I were a real girl. You know, if I had been born as a girl."

"And..." his mother encouraged him to go on.

"And right now I wish that I was really a girl." There, he finally said it. He immediately felt better for having gotten it out.

"Well," his mother said thoughtfully, "I love you just the way you are. And if you would like to be a girl, I'll do all I can to help you out. There's nothing we can do about the past, but we can certainly do things differently from now on. I enjoy my femininity, and I don't see why you can't enjoy yours too. As far as I'm concerned, you can spend some. . .even all of your time outside of school as a girl if you wish to. Is that what you'd like to do?"



"Oh, yes, mother. More than anything else in the world!"

"In that case, the first thing we must do is go shopping for a new wardrobe for you. I don't have enough clothes for both of us, and besides, I'm sure that you'd have more fun with clothes that are appropriate for a girl your age."

"Okay."

"When do you want to go? How about tomorrow? All the stores are open on Sunday. Might as well get started right away."

"You want me to go too? I thought you'd just bring some things home."

"No, I thought it would be fun for you to pick out your own dresses?"

"Fine with me," he replied. "But I really don't know what I need."

"I'll help you with that. Let's see if I can find something cute for you to wear."

"Oh, I can't go dressed as a girl!"

"And why not? You just finished telling me that you wanted to be a girl. You can't spend the rest of your life cooped up in this house, can you?"

"I...I...don't know. Someone might recognize me?"

"If that's all you're worried about, you don't have any problems. With a lovely dress, subtle makeup and your hair done, there's no way anyone is going to peg you for a boy. You look like a hundred percent girl. Trust me."

"I'm nervous just thinking about it."

"Look, there's no point in discussing this any further tonight," she said as she finished clipping the last roller in place. "We'll talk about it some more in the morning. In the meantime how would you like to have a bubble bath?"

Silly question. Following his mother's guidance, he quickly removed his makeup and applied the night cream. Soon he was soaking in the tub amidst billows of softly scented bubbles. He couldn't get over how much his life had changed in such a short time. He had shed his drab existence as a shy, quiet boy and a bright, new wonderful world had opened up for him. He couldn't wait to explore it further.

There was a soft knock on the door, and his mother poked her head in. "I thought you might want to wear this tonight instead of your old pajamas." She held out a pale pink satin nightgown, with a matching robe and pink satin slippers.

"Oh wow! Thanks mom. I was wondering if I could borrow something from you for tonight."

"Here dear," his mother said reaching into her pocket and pulling out a pink razor. "It's time you learned how to shave your legs."

With great care and patience, Karen enlightened her son on all the little tricks to having smooth, nick-free legs.

There wasn't much fuzz, but it was quickly gone. "You'll have to keep your legs free of hair now, okay?"

Nick felt his smooth and hairless legs and smiled.

As he smoothed lotion on his new shining legs, she smiled warmly at him. "I'll be in my room reading. Come in and let me have a look at you when your done."

Nick soaked in the tub until all the bubbles disappeared and the water started to get cold. He finally climbed out and hurriedly dried himself off. After dusting himself with some of his mother's rose scented powder, he slipped the nightgown over his head and ran his hands down the sleek shiny material.

It felt so good against his slippery, bare skin. The gown was floor-length, with an empire waist and narrow shoulder straps. It was decorated with delicate white lace trim on the bodice and at the hem. The matching robe was also trimmed with lace. He stepped into the slippers and crossed the hall to his mother's room. She was sitting up in bed, reading a book.

"Oh, that looks lovely on you," she said when he came in. "Take the robe off and let me see the gown."

He pirouetted in front of her, showing off the sleek garment. At the same time he kept one eye on the mirror, drinking in his own reflection. "It's a good thing he has such a slight build," Karen mused to herself as she noticed the lacy straps crossing his delicate shoulders. "I really must do all I can to help this poor child."

She patted the bed next to her and he came and sat down. "That looks adorable on you," she told him. "You have nice legs. We must be about the same size. That'll help in picking out things for you."

"Oh mother, I can't express how I feel. Thank you so much for being so understanding."

"I'm just glad that I'm able to help, darling. I love you very much and I want to do all I can to make you happy. Besides, I've always wanted a daughter, and now you've been kind enough to provide me with one. Let's just say that it's working out for the best for both of us."

"I'll go along with that," the boy said emphatically.

They hugged each other and kissed goodnight. In his own bed, Nick lay in the dark, re-living all the experiences of the day. He squirmed a little bit so that he could feel the sleek smoothness of the satin nightgown against his skin. And he grimaced as he reached up and felt the mass of plastic curlers covering his head then smiled. "Just like all the other girls," he said to himself adjusting the nylon nighty around his legs.

Snuggled in, his heart finally stopped hammering at his chest and he finally drifted off to sleep.

The first thing he was aware of when he awoke the next morning was the unnerving feeling of the curlers on his head. So it wasn't a dream after all, he decided as he reached down and ran his hand across the satin nightgown. Then he remembered his nails. He held both hands in front to his face to admire the enameled finger tips.

"Oh my. What a incredible morning," he said to himself as he leaped out of bed. He stepped into his new slippers and wrapped the robe around himself. On the way to the bathroom to wash his face and brush his teeth, he made a detour into his mother's room to again inspect himself in the full-length mirror. She was already downstairs.

He lingered there, captivated by his own image. Finally tearing himself away, he hurriedly performed his morning ablutions and then skipped down the stairs to greet his mother. A warm, reassuring feeling filled him when he saw his mother and realized that they were dressed alike in nightgowns and robes, with their hair in rollers.

Karen greeted her effeminate son warmly when he crossed the room to give her a kiss. "Good morning, darling. How's my little girl this morning? Did you sleep well?"

"Uh huh," he replied. "These curlers didn't bother at all. I must be getting used to them," he said proudly. How many boys at school could say that?

She smiled at him. It still surprised her how effortlessly and completely her son had embraced femininity. Her only regret was that she hadn't discovered his interests earlier. She thought of all the experiences he had missed, from starched and frilly little-girl dresses, to pajama parties. The thought only stiffened her resolve to make it up to him by encouraging and helping him in any way that she could.

After breakfast they went back up to her room, where she picked out an outfit for him. Since she still planned to try and talk him into going shopping dressed as her daughter, she picked out a sweater and skirt outfit for him that was more appropriate for girls his age.

He again changed in her room, but this time he felt more at ease and to his relief he wasn't as excited as the day before.

Karen showed him how to hook his bra in front where he could see what he was doing, and then slide it around so that the cups covered his chest. "One of the tricks of the trade," she told him as she helped him position the breast forms in the cups of his bra.

He felt a soft, tingling sensation all over as he realized that he was standing in front of his mother clad only in a bra and panties. The sensation was only heightened by the fact that she was acting as if everything was perfectly normal.

He rolled a pair of panty-hose up his smooth legs, and then stepped into the half slip his mother offered him. She then helped him put on a camisole and adjusted the straps for him.

"We should do your makeup now, before I style your hair and you finish dressing."

"Is that the way all girls do it?" he wanted to know.

"Only girls who don't want to run the risk of spilling something on their outfits," she told him.

He sat down at the vanity table. Karen was prepared to do his face, but he wanted to try it himself. "I watched you real carefully yesterday," he explained. "Now I want to see if I can do it alone."

His mother just nodded and smiled at him. She watched as he expertly applied the cosmetics, interrupting him only a couple of times to give him some tips. He had obviously been paying attention yesterday, because he did an excellent job. Karen praised him lavishly when he was finished. He felt very proud as he inspected himself in the mirror.

After removing the rollers and styling his hair into a bouffant halo of curls, she helped him lower the sweater over his head and then watched as he pulled on the flowered print skirt. He then stepped into the flats she had laid out for him and turned again to examine himself in the mirror.

"Adorable," she told him sincerely.

"Really?"

"Bet you're afraid you don't look like a real girl, right?"

"I think I do, but I'm afraid I can't trust my own eyes. Do you know what I mean?"

"Yes darling, I do. But let me assure you that no one in this world could possibly mistake you for anything but

a teenage girl. There's still a lot of work we'll have to do to eliminate all the boyishness about you but you look a lot more feminine than many of the girls I see nowadays in ragged jeans and worn tee-shirts and such. What we want is to make you feel girlish."

Nick felt the skirt and swirled around making it twirl around his nyloned knees. He adjusted his hair and said, "Yes, I think I'm beginning to feel like a girl."

"Then you don't have anything to worry about."

He continued to pose in front of the mirror while his mother got dressed. Then he did her hair for her. While he had always enjoyed doing her hair, he felt an extra special thrill to be performing this feminine task while dressed the way he was.

Karen went out of her way to praise the job that he did on her hair. "Every woman should be so lucky to have a son who makes a delightful young lady like you," she told him. Of course, he just ate up this praise of his feminine self.

"Are you sure I can't change your mind about going shopping today?" she asked, seeing his eyes brighten with pleasure.

"Well, I don't know. I certainly don't want to go to any stores here in town. We might run into someone we know."

"I was thinking of the mall over in Pleasanton. It's not that long a drive if we take the highway, but it's far enough away so that I don't think we'd risk running into anyone who knows us. What do you think?"

The boy hesitated for a few moments. On the one hand he was extremely nervous about going out in public dressed like this, but on the other, he had adapted so completely to his feminine persona that he now wanted to go out and experience the world as a girl.

"Can you imagine how you'd feel out shopping for a new dress. . .while wearing a dress?"

"Okay," he finally blurted out.

"Splendid," his mother said. "Let's get ready to go right now." She wanted to get moving before he had a chance to change his mind. She got her things together and found a purse for Nick to carry. In it she put a compact in case he had to powder his nose, she explained, along with a tube of lipstick and some kleenex. At the last minute she also slipped in one of her tampons. Nick looked at her incredu-

lously. "It's a little extra touch of authenticity," she said with a wink.

Nick blushed at the notion but took the purse in his painted fingers and re-checked it's contents.

Since he was afraid that the neighbors might spot him, he climbed into the car while it was still in the garage. Karen noted how he smoothed his skirt as he first sat down on the seat before swinging his legs into the car. "I wonder where he learned that trick," she mused. She didn't realize that Nick had been watching how women and girls comport themselves for a long time. He himself had never fully understood his fascination with feminine behavior until now. Now at last he had an opportunity to put into practice all that he had learned.

Nick was mostly silent on the drive to the mall. He was nervous with the expectation of his first outing in public. Out of the corner of her eye she watched him nervously finger the purse on his lap. She sympathized with his feelings and didn't press him. She finally spoke up as they pulled into the mall parking lot.

"We never discussed a name for you," she pointed out. "I can't very well be calling you Nick when you're dressed like this, now can I?"

"No, I guess not." His mind, however, was a blank at the moment.

"How about Nicole?" she suggested. She had thought of the name last night as she lay in bed, but had forgotten to mention it until now.

"Nicole? Umm, sure. Sounds good." He thought it over for a moment. "Yeah, I like it."

"Well then, Nicole, are you ready to shop?" Karen asked him as turned off the car.

He turned to his mother. "Let's get it over with," he said grimly.

"Cheer up, dear. You're about to find out why shopping is one of a girl's favorite pastimes."

The hardest part was walking through the door. Once inside it quickly became apparent to Nick that no one was paying the least bit of attention to him. Other shoppers passed him by without a glance. At the first store they stopped at, one of the clerks came up to them almost immediately.

"Can I help you ladies find something?" she inquired.

"No thank you. We're just looking," Karen told her.

"Well, let me know if I can be of any assistance." Then she turned to Nick. "That's a lovely outfit you have on. Did you buy it here?"

Karen came to his rescue. "No. We picked it up at Willow's department store." Nick just smiled wanly.

"It's very chic," the clerk told him. As she turned to leave she said, "I'll be over there if you need any help."

"Whew," said Nick as soon as she was out of earshot.

His mother laughed. "It's part of the sales pitch, my dear. She wins your confidence by complimenting you on your taste in clothes. After that you're putty in her hands. She'll have your credit card maxed out for you before you make it out of the store."

"I thought she was just being nice."

"She was being nice. The point I'm trying to make is that you can't let it go to your head. See?"

"Uh, huh."

They wandered in and out of several more shops without buying anything. Suddenly Karen grabbed Nick's arm and steered them toward a jewelry store.

"What are we looking for here," he asked.

"How would you like to get your ears pierced?"

"Oooh, yeah! But wait a minute. Everyone will notice, like all the kids in school."

"I thought it was the fashion these days for boys to have pierced ears."

"Yeah, but only one."

"Which one?"

"I don't know."

"Well then, we'll just do both. That way you're sure to be in fashion no matter which ear it's supposed to be."

The logic of her statement escaped Nick, but he found himself caught up in the moment as his mother and the clerk quickly picked out a pair for him and the clerk loaded the gun. Within minutes they were back out in the mall with Nick sporting a little gold star in each ear.

"That didn't hurt, did it?" his mother asked.

"No," the slightly dazed youth replied, his femininity now forever marked on his ear lobes.

"Why don't we start with the basics?" his mother suggested as they approached one of the large department stores. They headed toward the lingerie department. Nick had always been fascinated with this area, but he had also been too embarrassed to linger. Now he had a legitimate reason for being there. Not only that, but dressed as he was he could spend all the time he wanted inspecting everything and not draw attention to himself.

He tried to act casual as he looked over the large selection of panties. His mother just rolled her eyes when she spotted him fingering a pair of high cut French bikinis made of red satin with black lace trim. She picked out a dozen pair of simple cotton panties. They were a delicate floral print with just a trace of lace around the leg openings.

She also picked up several plain, lightly padded, underwire bras. When Nick pointed out a black push-up bra on display, she reminded him, "You don't have anything to push up, darling. Besides, who would you be trying to impress with that little number?" That caused him to blush and look away.

In addition to the bras and panties, Karen selected for her son: a full slip, two half slips and a couple of camisoles from the countless styles and colors.

In the sleepwear department, Nick spotted a frothy, soft pink pair of baby doll pajamas hanging on display. It had short puff sleeves, loads of lace trimming, and a delicate ribbon tied in a bow at the neckline in front. The matching panties were also lavishly trimmed in lace.

"Oh mother, look!" the boy exclaimed, unable to express that he wanted that most unmanly attire.

"You certainly can't get anymore feminine than that," she remarked. "I bet sleeping in that would make you feel girlish?"

He looked at her with pleading eyes.

"Okay," she laughed.

It turned out that they were on sale, fifty percent off. It didn't take much to talk her into getting two of them. They also picked out a robe and a pair of fuzzy slippers. All in pink, of course.

At Karen's suggestion they took a break in one of the mall restaurants. As they looked over the menu, she suggested that they both order the salad bar. "We girls

have to watch our figures," she said. That simple statement sent shivers of excitement up Nick's spine. To him it was yet another affirmation by his mother of his femininity. He was thrilled.

Their waiter looked like a college student working his way through school. He was tall and handsome, with light brown hair and a deep tan. "Good afternoon ladies," he smiled. "What can I get for you two this afternoon?" Karen noticed that his gaze seemed to linger a bit longer on her "daughter."

Nick noticed it too. With no experience in this area, he didn't know how to react to male attention. In his confusion, first his eyes got wide and his long mascaraed lashes fluttered several times, then he looked down at the table and tried to hide behind the menu. Of course, their waiter interpreted this as flirting, which only piqued his interest more. As soon as he left after taking their orders, Karen cleared her throat and then spoke up, "And where did you learn how to do that, my dear?"

"What do you mean?" the poor boy responded.

"Where did you learn to flirt with boys like that?"

"I wasn't flirting. Honest," he protested. "I just didn't know what to do when I caught him looking at me."

"Well, you fooled me. And you certainly fooled him. If you're going to continue to pursue your feminine side, you're going to have to learn how to deal with male attention. That poor boy appears to be quite taken with you after that little display you put on for him."

"I wasn't trying to lead him on. What am I supposed to do?"

"You have so much to learn." Karen did her best to explain to her feminized son all about the little tricks girls use to attract boys' attention. "If you like a boy, you smile back like you just did."

"Like a boy?" the boy gasp.

"I can't keep a pretty girl like you in a closet! I assume you'll find some interest in boys sooner or later." Nick sat there wide-eyed as he listened. He had never had a girl friend, never even been on a date before. It was all news to him.

He was careful to keep his eyes down and avoid doing anything else to entice their waiter when he returned with their order.



During the meal he was careful to act his feminine best. He took small bites of his salad and chewed each one carefully. Periodically he would daintily pat his lips with his napkin, taking care not to smear his lipstick. Seated across the table from him, Karen noted each of these feminine gestures approvingly. She realized that while he still had a lot to learn about being a girl, much of it seemed to come naturally to him.

As they were getting ready to leave, Nick announced that he had to go to the bathroom.

"It's right over there, I think," his mother said, pointing across the room.

"But mother, I can't go in there alone!"

"And why not? You're not two years old. Do you want me to hold your hand?"

"No, but please! This is the first time and I'm nervous."

"Oh, all right. I guess I can powder my nose while you do your business. But from now on I expect you to go to the ladies room on your own. Okay?"

"Okay. Thank you mother."

"Just remember to sit down when you do your business."

"Mother!" the embarrassed boy hissed.

Karen led the way across the room and through the door marked with the universal symbol for women's rest room. For Nick, it was yet another symbolic step on his path to girlhood. He excitedly looked around, noting that there were only stalls. He also noted the two sinks and the large mirrors.

It seemed to be a lot cleaner than your average men's room, with a delicate floral aroma in the air rather than the harsh smell of disinfectant. It was empty except for the two of them. He stepped into one of the stalls and closed the door. After hanging his purse on the hook, he reached under his skirt and lowered his pantyhose and panties, and then sat down.

"How are you doing?" his mother inquired.

"Fine," he replied as he directed the stream into the water. He was soon finished and rejoined his mother who was still inspecting her makeup at the mirror.

"You should powder your nose, it's starting to get shiny," she told him. "And your lipstick could use a new coat too."

He felt very grownup as he fished the compact out of his purse and skillfully patted his nose with the puff. The door opened at that moment and a middle-aged woman walked in. She smiled at the two of them and disappeared into a stall. Nick marveled yet again at the fact that everyone accepted him as just another female. He grinned to himself as he reapplied his lipstick.

Back out in the mall, they noticed that one of the smaller shops was having a sale. "Let's take a look at their dresses." Karen suggested.

As soon as they entered the shop a clerk walked up to them. "May I help you ladies?" she smiled.

"We're just looking," Karen replied.

"We have quite a selection of younger styles," the clerk said as she looked at Nick. "I'm sure we've got something in your size my dear."



Nick was still too unsure of himself. He started to stutter, but his mother intervened. "Thank you. We'll let you know if we need any help."

"Okay," the clerk said reluctantly. "I'll be right over here if you need me."

Nick looked relieved as the clerk walked away. He still wasn't sure if he could withstand much close scrutiny. "She obviously working on commission," his mother commented.

Mother and son casually inspected the racks. Eventually Karen picked out several dresses and suggested that Nick try them on. She pointed out the dressing cubicles at the rear of the store.

"But mother, what if someone sees me?" the boy protested.

"Don't worry. Just lock the door. No one's going to go barging in on you. Besides, you're wearing a slip. You'll do just fine, believe me."

The nervous boy entered the cubicle with an arm full of dresses. The first one he tried on was a light blue number, with an empire waist. His mother was waiting for him when he stepped out.

"Hmmm," she looked at him critically. "I don't know if that style suits you. What do you think?"

He stood in front of the full-length mirror and inspected himself. "I don't know either. Let me try on some of the others and see how they look." He was beginning to relax.

Karen smiled knowingly at him. "Take your time, dear. This is an important decision, buying your first dress."

He tried on several others while Karen waited patiently. She had wandered back up toward the front of the store to look at skirts for herself, when she was startled by someone calling her name.

"Hi Mrs. Taylor," a pretty teenage girl said to her. Karen recognized her immediately. It was Heather Johnson, a classmate of Nick's who lived in their neighborhood. Karen's bewilderment at seeing her must have been obvious.

"I bet you're wondering what I'm doing here so far from home," Heather said.

"Well, it is a surprise." She hoped that she could get rid of the girl before Nick finished changing again, but she had her doubts. Maybe he would spot Heather before she saw him. Just in case, however, she started to move as if to leave the store. Heather, however, had other ideas.

"My folks are visiting my aunt and uncle here in town. I got bored, so they dropped me off here for a few hours. This sure beats sitting around listening to them talk about old times. What are you doing here?"

"I, I was just passing through and I'd thought I'd stop and see if there were any sales," Karen said quickly. "I heard that Wood's department store was having one. Want to check it out with me?"

"I want to see what this place has first. Are you in a hurry?"

Just at that moment, Nick emerged from behind a rack of dresses. His mother's back was to him and she blocked his view of Heather. He had finally found a dress that he liked and he couldn't wait to show it off. "What do you think of this mom?" the boy said eagerly as he stepped up behind her. "Doesn't it look fabulous?"

As Karen slowly turned around, he caught sight of Heather and froze. Heather's jaw dropped. Nick felt glued to the spot. All his circuits shorted out and he felt paralyzed as he just stood and stared at the girl. Confusion

registered on Heather's face, as she stared back. Then, as it slowly dawned on her what was happening, the confusion was replaced by a look of amazement.

"Nick? Is that really you?"

The poor boy was still in too much of a shock to answer her. His mother started to intervene, but Heather spoke up again.

"Wow, you look great. I never would have imagined. Are you going to buy that dress?"

Karen finally spoke up. "I think Nick is a little too embarrassed right now. Why don't we let him change, while you and I find some place to talk about this, okay?"

Heather turned from staring at Nick to look at Karen. "Oh, you don't have to worry. I'm not going to say or do anything to embarrass him, honest Mrs. Taylor. I know all about this from watching the talk shows on TV. I've always wanted to meet a cross dresser, but I had no idea how." She turned back to look at Nick. "I think it's neat. You look really good," she said sincerely as she looked him in the eye. "And please don't worry, I promise to not tell anyone."

Nick finally found his voice. "Thanks, Heather," he said softly. "I..I... I'm really embarrassed about all this, you know."

"You shouldn't be. That dress looks absolutely marvelous on you, don't you think so Mrs. Taylor?"

"It is rather nice," Karen said as she tried to recover her equanimity. She felt very bad for her son, but she was thankful that at least Heather was not making a scene.

Heather took Nick's arm and led him back toward the dressing cubicles. "Show me what else you picked out," she said. "I love to go shopping, don't you?"

Nick just nodded as the girl led the way and Karen tagged along behind. Heather stopped in front of the mirror and turned to Nick. His dress was an off-white, peasant style, with delicate embroidery around the neckline and on the puff-sleeves. The skirt was pleated and full, coming to just his knees.

"You look adorable in that dress," she told him. "It suits you perfectly." Nick had thought so too. It was his eagerness to show it off to his mother that had caused him to run into Heather. Now that the deed was done and the shock was beginning to wear off, he still liked the dress.

"What do you think, mom?" he asked hesitantly.

"Heather's right. It looks very nice on you. Shall we get it?"

The boy nodded, then looked over at Heather. She beamed at him. "What else are you looking for?" she wanted to know.

"I, I don't know," the boy mumbled. He was glad that they had already picked out lingerie. He just hoped that she wouldn't go looking in the shopping bags. He didn't want her to see the panties and bras he had bought. He disappeared into the cubicle to change clothes.

Karen took the opportunity to speak to Heather. "You know that Nick finds this situation very embarrassing. I had assured him that we wouldn't run into anyone we know here. This is the first time he's ever been outside dressed like this. I'm sure you appreciate how much pain this would cause him if it ever got out. The other kids in school would make his life miserable. I hope that will keep his secret to yourself."

"I'd never do anything to hurt him, Mrs. Taylor. Honest. He's always been kind of shy and quiet, but the other kids like him too. I know that they'd never let him live it down if they ever found out, but I promise I won't tell. I'll treat him just like I do my other girl friends," she said proudly. Then when she realized what she had said, she started to stutter, "I, I mean...."

"I know what you mean dear, and I appreciate it. And I think Nick would appreciate it too."

Nick rejoined his mother and Heather after he finished changing. While Karen paid for the dress, the two teenagers walked back out into the mall. Heather couldn't keep her eyes off the femininely clad boy. He had a hard time not blushing at all the attention she was giving him.

"You make such a sweet girl. How long have you been doing this?"

"Not very long," he told her.

"Just learning, eh? I find that hard to believe. You're a lot cuter as a girl than you are as a boy."

"Thanks, I think," the boy blushed. "I'm still confused."

"Consider it a compliment. I'm a girl and proud of it. You should be too."

"But I'm not a girl," the boy protested.

"You are learning, aren't you?"



Nick nodded.

"Then from now on, you can be my best girl friend! There's so much I can show you about being a girl!"

When Karen rejoined them they debated about what to shop for next. Karen mentioned that she had wanted to buy Nick some cosmetics. "Oh goody," Heather squealed at the prospect of helping pick out make-up for the feminized boy. Her enthusiasm made Nick feel a little queasy. The three of them headed for the cosmetics counter at one of the big department stores. Karen and Heather discussed what to get while Nick, in the middle, just listened.

When they got there, Nick noticed a couple of stools next to one of the counters. "Just the thing," he said to himself as he sat down, "How convenient." He felt emotionally drained by the recent turn of events.

He had barely seated himself when one of the beauticians approached. "Would you like a make-over today, dear?" she asked the boy. Before he could reply, Heather came up behind him. "She's been looking forward to it all day," she piped up. "She looking for some advice on evening make-up, like for a date."

Just as Nick started to protest, his mother walked up. "A make-over. How wonderful!"

Encouraged now, the beautician inspected his face critically, then started to remove his old make-up. He realized that it was too late to protest, so instead he just sat there and let the woman work.

"You have very fine bone structure," she told him. "You're lucky. And your skin is practically blemish-free. You must take very good care of it."

"I try," he told her while Heather giggled and his mother smiled at him.

Fifteen minutes later, after much kibitzing and good natured fun from his mother and Heather, his face was done and Nick got to see himself in the mirror. He was shocked. The face that looked back at him was beautiful. He now looked older and more mature. Better than a lot of the girls at school, he thought.

Heather thought so too. "Wow! You sure do look different. You'll have all the boys drooling."

Nick turned away and blushed furiously. The beautician smiled at him. "You are very pretty, you know. You're a lucky girl." He just nodded silently.

While Karen and the beautician discussed what to buy, Heather took Nick aside. "I'm going to call my Mom and see if I can get a ride home with you. Is that okay? I'm having so much fun with you, I don't want it to end."

"Yeah, sure," the boy replied hesitantly. He was feeling confused. None of the girls had ever paid any attention to him as a boy before. But now that he was in skirts one of the prettiest girls in his school wanted to be his best friend. He had always figured that everyone would ridicule him if they ever found out about his feminine inclinations. Instead, Heather was acting as if it were the best thing about him. Her reaction was certainly unexpected, but it sure beat the alternative.

Karen was a little surprised when they told her about their plan, but she quickly agreed. She too was pleased

with Heather's reaction to discovering Nick in a dress. She just hoped that the girl was sincere and wouldn't do anything to embarrass him. Heather's delight did seem to be genuine, however.

They stopped at a pay phone and Heather called her parents. Karen and Nick listened while she explained to her mother that she had run into a girl friend from school. "Nicole," she said with a wink at Nick when her mother asked her who it was. After explaining their plan, she handed the phone to Karen, who assured Heather's mom that everything was okay. "The girls are having a good time together and I don't mind giving Heather a ride. She can stay at our house until you get home." It was agreed that Heather's mom would call when they got back that evening.

Heather's enthusiasm was proving infectious and Nick was beginning to get excited about the prospect of spending the rest of the day with her as a girl. At Karen's suggestion, they stopped at another clothing store to look for a skirt and top outfit for Nick.

"That dress is the only thing of his own," she explained to Heather.

The two teenagers had a wonderful time picking out clothes and trying them on. Nick had loosened up by then and he began to enjoy himself. It was a lot more fun shopping with a girl his own age than just with his mother. In fact, Karen stepped back and stayed out of their way. She realized that the two of them were acting like a couple of normal teenage girls and she didn't want to interfere. They each tried on different outfits and critiqued them for each other. Much to their delight they discovered that they both wore the same size.

"Oh, I can't wait for you to come over and try on some of my things," Heather told him. "I've got some outfits you'll just love." Nick found himself looking forward to it.

In the end, they picked out three skirts and half a dozen tops that Heather said "Nicole just has to have." Karen smiled indulgently as she scooped up the clothes and took them to the register.

On the way home the two teenagers sat in the back and chatted. Karen smiled to herself as she listened to the two of them. They sounded just as they appeared: two teenage girls talking about clothes and makeup and hair. When they finally pulled into the driveway, Nick forgot all about

the neighbors as he and Heather jumped out of the car and ran to the front door of the house. Heather's complete acceptance of him had caused him to relax and he now felt very comfortable and at ease in his girlish role.

The two of them ran up the stairs to his room as soon as they got inside the house. Heather insisted that he try on each of his new purchases. He grabbed the dress and started for the bathroom to change, but she stopped him.

"You don't have to go in there to change," she told him. "You're one of the girls now, remember?"

He started to protest, but she began to lift up his sweater. She slipped it over his head, then helped him step out of his skirt. He felt very strange standing in front of his classmate while dressed in a camisole and half-slip, but she acted as if it were a perfectly normal state of affairs.

"Let me help you with this," she said as she got the dress out of the shopping bag. She helped him into it and zipped up the back. "That looks simply marvelous on you," she told the boy.

He again examined himself in the mirror. The dress did look good on him. He especially loved the delicate embroidered trim and ruffles. He turned and smiled at Heather. "It does look pretty, doesn't it?"

"And you look very pretty in it," she said as she crossed the room and gave the effeminate boy a big hug. "I'm so glad I ran into you at the mall. I can tell we're going to have a lot of fun together." She looked him in the eye. "From now on you're my best girl friend."

Nick continued to try on the rest of his new clothes again, while Heather watched and offered helpful suggestions concerning accessories and combinations. At one point Karen knocked on the door.

"How are you two doing? Can I get you anything?"

"We're fine, mom," Nick responded. And Heather chimed in, "You can come in if you like."

Karen raised her eyebrows slightly when she entered and found her son back in camisole and half-slip, sitting on the edge of his bed while Heather rearranged his hair.

"I'm showing him some different things he can do with his hair," the girl explained.

Karen quickly regained her composure. She wasn't sure how Nick viewed Heather, but it was obvious that Heather considered him to be one of the girls. Leaving the

two of them alone with the bedroom door closed was probably not going to lead to anything that would upset Heather's parents.

They called a couple of hours later when they got home. Karen offered to give Heather a ride home. On the way over, Heather made Nick promise that she'd get to see Nicole again soon. The boy was so delighted that she had taken an interest in him that he probably would have agreed to just about anything.

That evening as he soaked in a fragrant bubble bath, he reflected on the wonderful turn his life had taken recently. He had gone from a drab, colorless existence to one which seemed to hold an endless number of exciting possibilities.

After bathing he put on a new pair of baby doll pajamas and then went to his mother's room to set her hair. When he was finished, they traded places and she did the same for him. She usually used smaller rollers for his hair in order to achieve a curly hairdo, but at Heather's suggestion tonight she used larger rollers in order to get a straighter, fuller effect. "That way it won't look too different and nobody at school will notice, except me," she had said with a wink. When Karen was done, he removed all of his makeup with cold cream, and then how to applied a night-time moisturizer.

Mother and son were similarly dressed in frilly feminine nightwear, with curlers in their hair, when they sat down together for breakfast the following morning.

"How did you sleep with those larger rollers in your hair last night?" his mother inquired.

"Just fine," the boy said proudly. "They didn't bother me at all. I must be getting used to them."

When he went back upstairs to dress, he reluctantly concluded that he had to return to dressing as a boy. "What a drag," he thought without realizing the irony. He did, however, put on his bra and panties. "No one can see them under my clothes," he reasoned. As he stood in front of his closet trying to figure out what to wear, his mother knocked on the door.

"Come in," he told her.

"I thought you might be tempted to wear those today," she said when she walked in. He had gotten so used to dressing and undressing in front of her that he no longer

felt any sense of embarrassment at standing in front of her dressed as he was.

"Why not?" he wanted to know. "No one is going to see my underwear."

"Did you forget about gym class?"

"Oh!"

"Perhaps you'd better change, darling. But I'll tell you what. I understand that there's a doctor in town that specializes in treating boys like you. Why don't I make an appointment for you. With a note from the doctor you'll be able to skip gym class and wear your dainties even to school like the other girls."

"Sure," he told her, then paused. "You mean I'm not the only boy who wishes he were a girl?"

"No dear. Not by a long shot. There are lots of boys like you around."

"I'll bet none of them have mother's as understanding as you, though," he said earnestly.

She laughed and shook her head. "I don't know about that. But I am enjoying watching you enjoy yourself. I only wish we had discovered your feminine side earlier."

"Better late than never," he grinned at her.

Heather spotted him in the hallway before the first bell. She hurried over to him as he fumbled with his locker. "How are you doing this morning, Nick?" she asked.

"Oh, hi Heather," he said as he turned around. He had expected to run into her, and now his eyes searched her face to see if she was going to go back on her word and embarrass him in front of the whole school. But he could see right away that she was being sincere. However, he was still not used to talking to girls in school. None of them had ever paid the slightest bit of attention to him up until now.

"I love your hair. Did you set it on those big rollers last night?" she whispered to him.

"Uh huh," he nodded as he looked around to make sure no one was overhearing them.

"Were they uncomfortable to sleep on?" she continued.

"Not too bad."

"And did you wear those swishy baby dolls to bed last night?"

He nodded again, looking nervously around the crowded hallway to see if anyone was listening.

"Good," she announced. "I'll see you later. Bye." She winked at him as she turned and scurried off down the hall for her first class.

No one said anything to him, but some of the kids in his class noticed the subtle change in his hair. Most of the boys didn't notice, or if they did they didn't know enough to figure out why. But most of the girls figured it out right away. Some of them whispered to each other, but no one said anything to him.

Mrs. DeMarco, his homeroom teacher, noticed too while she was taking the roll. She was startled at first and almost stuttered, but quickly recovered and went on. It was by no means the first time she had encountered an effeminate boy in one of her classes, so she wasn't too surprised.

The others she had met had all been good students and well behaved. In fact she found their effeminacy to be cute and endearing, a welcome change from the loud boisterous teenaged males she usually had to deal with.

At lunch Nick found a seat by himself in the cafeteria. He was used to sitting alone and usually brought a book with him to read. He had just settled in when Heather sat down next to him.

"Nicole, how are you doing?" she whispered with a twinkle in her eye.

"Okay," the startled boy replied. He again looked around to see if anyone could hear.

"I really had a lot of fun with you yesterday," she told him. "You're not like other boys."

"I had a good time too," he said, still looking around nervously. He was afraid someone might overhear them. In fact he spotted several kids staring at him and Heather.

They were trying to figure out why one of the prettiest girls in school was sitting with a lower form of life like Nick. His first thought was that she had told her friends about him and that the story was now all around the school.

"Heather, did you tell anyone about me?" he demanded.

"Of course not. I don't want to embarrass my new girl friend," she protested.

"Not so loud," he hissed.

She leaned toward him and said in a low voice, "I meant it when I said I had a lot of fun with you. I like Nicole and I want to be good friends with her. I'm not going to do anything to ruin that friendship. So stop worrying, okay?"

"All right. I guess I'm just a little nervous. I couldn't stand it if everyone found out and made fun of me."

"I must admit that I find it a little amusing that someone who makes such a pretty girl as you is worried about their masculine image. But don't worry, your secret is safe with me."

When he got home from school that afternoon, Nick immediately ran upstairs to change clothes. He carefully put away his school clothing before slipping on a matching bra and panty set. He had had trouble all day concentrating on school work. His mind kept wandering back to his new wardrobe and what he would wear when he got home. Now as he stood in front of his open closet he still had trouble deciding.

Everything was so new and wonderful---he wanted to wear it all. He finally settled on the dress that Heather had helped him pick out. First he pulled a full slip on over his head, then sat down on the edge of his bed and unrolled a new pair of panty-hose up his legs. The sensation of rubbing his nylon-clad legs together was delightful.

Next he gathered up his new collection of cosmetics and went into his mother's room, where he spread everything out in front of himself on her vanity table. He carefully followed the beautician's instructions as he made up his face.

When he was finally satisfied with his face, he used some mousse to style his hair into a more feminine look. Only then did he return to his room to put on his dress and shoes. He was standing in front of the full-length mirror, admiring himself, when the phone rang. It was Heather.

"What are you wearing right now?" she wanted to know.

He started to tell her about his dress, but she interrupted him. "Tell me everything," she demanded.

At her prompting, the effeminate boy described every article of clothing he was wearing in detail, from the skin out.

"How does it feel?" she asked him when he had finished.

"Heavenly," he sighed truthfully.

Heather giggled in response. She was having almost as much fun as he was. He went on to tell her how he had done his face and styled his hair. She made him promise to set it again that night.

"I really liked the way your hair looked today," she said sincerely.

"I was afraid the other kids might notice," he confided in her.

"Don't worry about it," she assured him. "It didn't look that much different, just neater. The changes were so subtle that I'm sure that no one could tell the difference. No one said anything to me, that's for sure."

Nick asked, "Sometime, can I borrow the dress you wore today?"

There was silence on the phone. Heather giggled, "What if I told you I was sitting here with a bunch of my girlfriends and they're listening to every word?"

Nick panicked. "Oh my. . ."

"Just kidding," Heather interrupted then laughed. "You can trust me."

The two teenagers went on to talk about school and their various classmates. Heather filled him in on all of the latest gossip. Before he knew it, he heard his mother come in from work. They had spent nearly two hours on the phone.

"I've got to go," he hurriedly told her. "My mom's home and I haven't gotten anything done."

"Oh, okay," Heather said reluctantly. "I suppose I ought to do my homework too. I'll see you tomorrow at school."

Karen wasn't at all surprised to find her son in a dress when she got home. "Good afternoon, darling," she said to him as they greeted each other. She gave him a hug and a sideways kiss on the cheek so that neither of them messed their makeup. "How was your day?"

Nick proceeded to tell her all about his experiences, including the fact that Heather sat with him at lunch.

"I guess she really likes you," Karen observed.

"But it's so strange," the boy said as he unconsciously played with his hair. "She's one of the prettiest girls in school, and one of the most popular too. But up until now she's acted like I never even existed. All of a sudden she wants to be my best friend."

"What's wrong with that?"

"I don't know. It just seems weird, that's all."

"She's probably fed up with most of the boys she knows. After all, a lot of boys your age can be pretty immature. I'll bet she likes you because you're sensitive and caring, and because you have a lot in common."

"Yeah, like we wear the same size dress," he laughed.

"Well, now that you mention it," his mother laughed too.

After dinner Nick rushed to finish his homework. The time he had spent on the phone with Heather had thrown off his usual schedule.

His mother suggested when doing his homework, he practice his penmanship and make his letters neater and more ornate like a girl. Even homework was more fun as a girl.

As soon as he was done, he skipped upstairs to get ready for bed. He kicked off his shoes and then stepped out of his new dress and hung it in his closet. It gave him a thrill to see it hanging there next to his new skirts. After carefully unrolling his pantyhose, he remembered that his mother often washed hers before wearing it again. He went back downstairs to ask her about it.

He found her in the living room, in her nightgown and robe, curled up on the couch with a book. It gave him another thrill to be standing in front of her while wearing only his full-length slip.

"What should I use to wash my pantyhose?" he asked her.

"There's a bottle of mild detergent under the sink in the bathroom," she told him. "Be sure and rinse them out thoroughly, then hang them next to mine on the towel rack."

"Okay mom, thanks."

Karen smiled to herself as she watched her son turn and walk out of the room with a slight sway of the hips.

Nick let his pantyhose soak in the soapy water while he took a leisurely bubble bath and shaved his legs again for fun. When he was done he carefully rinsed out the delicate hosiery and then hung them to dry next to his mother's pair. He felt very pleased with himself as he performed these most feminine tasks. Later, while he sat

at his mother's vanity table and watched her set his hair, he confided in her.

"Thanks so much for letting me act like a girl, mom. I don't think I've ever been happier."

"You're very sweet and gentle. That makes it easy to think of you as my daughter. I'm just glad that I can help you, darling."

He looked at her in the mirror earnestly, "I'm beginning to wish that I had been born a girl."

"I think I mentioned that there's a doctor in town who specializes in treating 'boys' like you become more like girls. Would you like me to make an appointment with him for you?"

"Treating? What's that mean?"

"He gives the boys medicine so that they develop like girls."

"Isn't that kind of strange, a male doctor treating boys who want to be girls?"

"Would you prefer a woman doctor?"

"I think so," he nodded shyly.

"Let me ask around and see if there's one in the area."

"Thanks, mom. I think I'd feel more comfortable talking to a woman about this than a man. It's almost like I'm a traitor to the male sex."

"I think the proper term is gender, dear, not sex. And I wouldn't consider myself a traitor if I were you. Instead, why don't you think of it as discovering your true inner self. I think you'll find it a lot easier to deal with if you approach it from a positive point of view."

"That makes sense," the boy observed. "How'd you get to be so wise, mom?"

She laughed. "Let's just say it's a little bit of wisdom passed down from mother to daughter," she said as she gave her femininely clad child a hug.

Dr. Carol Pearson's office was in Fremont, about a thirty minute drive from Nick's home. She was an internist with a busy practice. Among her many patients were a number of people, male and female, with a wide variety of gender-related problems. Two weeks later Nick and his mother found themselves in Dr. Pearson's waiting room.

They were fortunate to get an appointment so soon. Some one had called in to cancel.

At his mother's suggestion, Nick had worn his most feminine outfit. Now he sat primly on the couch next to her, his knees modestly together, and tried to concentrate on the magazine on his lap. He had eyed the others in the waiting room, trying to determine if any of them were there for the same reason he was, but he couldn't tell. Of course, anyone looking at him would have reached the same conclusion. His hair, makeup, and clothing were impeccable, and he now carried himself in a most natural, feminine manner.

The first thing he had had to do when they arrived was to fill out a questionnaire. He answered each of the questions truthfully. The secretary who collected it didn't act as if he were out of the ordinary, nor did the nurse who led him into an examining room.

She weighed him, took his temperature and blood pressure, then left him to disrobe and put on the examining gown. His mother waited in the outer office. In a few minutes a very pretty young woman in a white coat opened the door and came in. Extending her hand in welcome, she introduced herself.

"Good afternoon, Nick. I'm Dr. Pearson." Her smile was friendly and warm and immediately Nick felt at ease. The doctor started, "I like your hair. Where did you have it done?"

Nick started to blush as he explained how he and his mother did each other's hair.

"And you do this every night?" she asked.

"Uh huh."

"Do you dress in girl's clothes every day?"

The boy explained about school and how he changed clothes as soon as he got home every day.

"Maybe I should give you a note excusing you from gym class? That way you can wear your panties and maybe a bra under your clothes during school?"

He nodded silently.

"Is there anything else you want while you're here?"

"Like what?" he asked.

"Often my patients ask me to prescribe female hormones for them. I was wondering if that was going to be the case with you too."

"I hadn't even thought of them. What do they do?"

The doctor explained to the interested boy all about the effects of hormones, both male and female, on the human body. She detailed the changes he could expect if he decided to start taking them.

"What if I changed my mind later? Are these changes reversible?"

"Some are, some aren't," she told him.

"How big would my breasts get?" he wanted to know.

"It depends on a lot of things, including heredity."



"My mom's pretty well-endowed. Would I be like that?"

"There's a good chance."

He thought about it for a few minutes. "Let's do it, okay?"

"Let me finish examining you first. Then you can get dressed and we'll sit down and discuss it with your mother. Is that all right with you?"

"That's fine, sure," the breathless boy replied. Visions of himself with real breasts like his mothers' were dancing in his head. He tried to imagine himself standing in front of the mirror without a bra, stroking his own large, perky globes.

He didn't even seem to notice as the doctor examined his genitals. Under any other circumstances he would have been embarrassed. Lifting his gown still further, she noticed that his nipples were erect. When she cupped his flat chest with her hands he shivered slightly.

"I bet you are trying to envision what it would be like to have real breasts?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied softly, a bit embarrassed by her mind reading. "And I'm a little scared."

She patted his arm gently. "Trust me, they'll work out fine for you. You'll find them most appropriate in your new life."

After the doctor left the examining room, Nick got dressed again. One of the nurses led him down the hall to the doctor's office, where his mother was waiting.

"Everything's fine," he said in response to her questioning look. "She examined me and we talked about lots of things. She said that if I wanted to I could develop like a real girl, with breasts and everything. I told her I wanted to do that and she said that we should talk it over with you."

At that point Dr. Pearson walked in and introduced herself to Karen. She sat down behind her desk and looked at Nick. "Have you told your mother what you want to do?"

"Uh huh."

She turned to Karen. "What do you think?"

"He seems to have adapted quite well to his feminine role, almost as if he were born to it."

"I agree that he makes a very convincing girl. But that's not enough. We're talking about some serious, long-range changes here." She turned to Nick. "Are you sure this is something you really want to do?"

"Huh?" he replied still daydreaming about having breasts.

"You realize that if you start developing a bosom, you'll eventually reach a point where it'll be too obvious to cover up," his mother pointed out to him. "You'll have to start living as a girl full-time."

"And school? Have you thought about that?" the doctor asked.

"Well, uh, no. I haven't," he admitted.

She looked down at his chart. "What grade are you in, Nick?"

"I'm a senior this year."

She turned to Karen. "These changes aren't going to take place over night. He's now in his last semester of school. I don't imagine that his breast development will be too noticeable before graduation. But you are right, at some point it will be too much to ignore."

"Then there's no problem, right?" the boy pleaded.

"If you're sure it's what you want, then I'll support you," Karen told him.

"Oh, thank you, mom. You don't know how much this means to me."

"I'm beginning to get an idea," she smiled at him.

Dr. Pearson had him stand up and bend over. He raised his dress and lowered his panties so that she could give him an injection in his right buttock. Then she handed him a prescription for pills that he was to take daily. "They're designed to mimic the normal monthly female cycle," she explained. "They come in the same kind of dispenser as birth control pills. Just follow the instructions that come in the package. I also want you to read these pamphlets," she said as she handed him a stack of material. "They explain all of the changes that you be going through, both physical and psychological."

"What do you mean psychological?"

"Hormones circulate in the blood stream and they affect every part of the body, not just the genitals and the breasts. For instance, you'll lose some muscle mass, and gain some fat. But it will be distributed differently. In women it tends to accumulate in the hips, among other places."

"I can testify to that," Karen said ruefully.

The doctor smiled and continued. "Hormones affect the brain. You may find yourself getting moody or depressed at certain times of the month. Also, watch your diet. You'll be gaining weight around your hips and buttocks."

The effeminate boy nodded solemnly as he listened.

"Is there anything else you'd like to ask?"

Karen and Nick both shook their heads.

"I've treated a lot of youngsters like you over the years. You seem to be well adjusted and sincere in your desires to be a girl. I don't expect you to have any problems. In fact, I imagine you'll find it a liberating experience. But please don't hesitate to call me at any time if you have any

questions. Okay?" She rose from her chair to indicate that the visit was over.

Nick stood. "Thank you for everything doctor," he said as he reached out to shake her hand. Instead, the doctor came around her desk and gave him a hug and a light kiss on the cheek. "I'm pleased to be able to help such a delightful young lady," she said. "I'll see you again in three months."

Karen and Nick stopped at a nearby pharmacy to fill the prescription. Nick examined the cosmetics displays while waiting. He was always on the lookout for new shades of lipstick and nail polish. He shivered with excitement when the clerk called "Nicole Taylor."

At the counter the young clerk, who assumed the package contained birth control pills, explained that the instructions were in the package. The pills came in a wheel-shaped package, one for each day of the month. As she rang up the two lipsticks that Nick had picked out, she confided in him, "I've been on the pill for a couple of years now. It sure beats all the other methods I've tried. The diaphragm was too uncomfortable and my boyfriend hates to use condoms. I don't know what I'd do without the pill."

"Me either," said Nick with a big smile.

He was quiet on the way home. Finally his mother spoke up.

"What are you thinking about?"

"I was just wondering what it would have been like if I had been born a girl."

"Oh?"

"All the things I missed, you know."

"Did you miss them at the time?"

"I didn't used to think so, but now I wonder."

"Could be you're just imagining it, but maybe not. Whatever the case, we can't undo the past. We'll just have to try and make up for lost time."

"Sounds good to me," he grinned.

Nick faithfully punched a little white pill out of the package every morning and swallowed it with his orange juice. For the first couple of months he inspected his chest each evening as he prepared for bed, but finding no visible

changes, he eventually fell out of the habit. When he mentioned it to his mother, she counseled him to just be patient.

Thanks to the note from Dr. Pearson he no longer had to go to gym class, which meant that he could wear his lingerie under his boy's school clothes. He now spent more time as Nicole than as Nick. Each afternoon he would hurry home to change into a dress or a blouse and skirt. On Friday afternoons he would change over to his feminine persona and remain Nicole until Monday morning.

Since he spent so much of his time living as a girl, and he so cherished his femininity, it became increasingly difficult for him to shed his feminine mannerisms during the time he still had to present himself as a boy.

He unconsciously behaved like a girl in the way his hips swayed as he walked, the way he carried his books held close to his chest, the way he gestured with his hands. He continued to set his hair with the large rollers every night. He hadn't cut it for a long time and it had gotten quite long. What had been subtle indications before now became obvious to even the most casual observer. He was regularly mistaken for a girl when viewed from behind.

The boys shunned him as before. None wanted to be associated with such an obvious "swish." Some of the girls ignored him too, some felt sorry for him, but a few felt sympathetic and befriended him. None of them knew the real story, because Heather had kept her promise not to reveal Nick's secret.

Heather was the one close friend Nick had. She had earned his trust by not spreading the word about him around school. They continued to hang around together at school, and they talked on the phone every day after school and on weekends. Heather thought of the effeminate boy as a girlfriend. She borrowed clothes from him and loaned him some of hers.

They did each other's hair and nails, gossiped about the other kids in school, and went shopping together. Karen was so pleased that Nick had Heather as a friend that she cheerfully drove them to the mall whenever they wanted to go.

Heather usually came over to Nick's to visit, but occasionally he went over to her house. One day while the two youngsters sat in the school cafeteria eating lunch, Heather mentioned that her parents were going out to a

party Friday evening. She asked Nick if he'd like to come over to her house that night.

"My folks are going to some party and won't be home till late," she told him. "We'll have the whole house to ourselves."

"Are you sure they won't mind?" he asked.

"Why would they care if one of my girlfriends comes over?" she replied.

"Oh, yeah. I see what you mean," the boy replied. He was still trying to sort out his own feelings about Heather. While he definitely like being her "girlfriend," he sometimes wished for more. However, he was afraid to say or do anything for fear driving her away.

Karen was pleased when Nick told her about Heather's invitation. She felt sorry for her son because he didn't have any other close friends. "I know you'd have a wonderful time but Heather's a very sweet girl. Do you feel feminine enough to just be two girls?"

The boy blushed and demurely said, "I like her a lot. But she sees me as a girl and that's how I feel around her."
...

Heather's parents were just about to leave when Nick's mother dropped him off Friday evening.

Her mom greeted him at the door. "Come on in, Nicole. Heather's expecting you. She's up in her room." She eyed the boy approvingly. "That's a lovely outfit you have on. Where did you get it?"

"Willow's department store. Heather helped me pick it out," she said.

Heather's father was coming down the stairs, fastening a cufflink.

"Frank, I want you to meet Nicole."

"Hello, Nicole," he stuck out his hand. "Nice to meet you." He turned to his wife, "Let's go honey, we're late already." As they hustled out the door, he cautioned Nicole, "I expect you girls to behave yourselves tonight. And don't invite any boys over. Understand?"

"Yes sir," Nick replied.

Heather overheard the conversation from where she was standing at the top of the stairs, and she and Nick started giggling even as the door clicked shut.



"If they only knew," Nick finally said.

Heather looked him up and down. "Actually, you know, considering how you're dressed, they probably wouldn't mind even if they did know."

Nick blushed as he looked down at his cute little dress. "I don't make much of a boy, do I?" he said seriously.

Sensing his change of mood, Heather grabbed him by the arm. "Boys don't wear dresses and you do? That make you a girl to me. Come on, let's go up to my room. I've got some terrific clothes I want you to try on."

She led the way up the stairs. Her room was decorated in a very feminine manner, with of dolls of every size and color piled everywhere. The matching furniture was white

with gold trim. The wallpaper had delicate pink and white roses to match the curtains and bed covers. Nick had nearly swooned the first time he saw it.

"I love your room," he gushed as he fingered one of the dolls.

"It is pretty feminine," Heather observed. "To tell you the truth, I never paid much attention to it."

"Oh, I wish my room looked like this," the boy responded. "I never had any dolls."

He sat down at her vanity table and began to inspect the various cosmetics scattered on it.

Heather stood behind him and began to play with his hair. "Let me see what you'd look like with a French braid," she told him as she began to separate his hair into sections. Nick just sat there, enjoying the attention while the girl worked on his hair. When she was done she handed him an small mirror so that he could inspect her handiwork.

"What do you think?" she wanted to know.

"Wow! You've got to show me how you do that. It looks great."

The two teens switched places. Following Heather's instructions, Nick fashioned her hair into a style that matched his. It took him quite a bit longer, but when he was finished it looked just as good as his own. Heather was impressed by what she saw in the mirror.

"That's great. You really seem to have a knack for hair styles," she told him. He smiled at her compliment.

"I've got some outfits I wanted you to try on." She started rummaging through the clothes hanging in her closet and pulled out a short, black knit skirt and a charreuse silk blouse. She handed the garments to Nick, who started toward the adjoining bathroom to change.

"You don't have to go in there," she told him. "It's just us two girls here. You don't have to be so modest."

Nick blushed a deep red. He still felt embarrassed to have her see him in bra and panties, but he didn't want to argue with her, so he turned his back to her and began to disrobe. She sat down on the edge of the bed and waited patiently while he changed. He finally turned around as he finished buttoning up the front of the blouse. She critically inspected him as he tucked the blouse into the skirt.

"I don't know," she hesitated. "Maybe that blouse doesn't to with that skirt after all." Returning to the closet she retrieved a bulky red sweater. "Here. Try this on instead."

Growing more at ease with the situation, Nick didn't bother to turn around as he removed the blouse and pulled the sweater over his head. This time she nodded as he stood in front of her.

"That looks great on you. It really brings out your femininity. You can borrow it any time you want. Let's see if there's anything else that will go with that skirt." He took off the sweater while she tried to find something else. At last she held up a black stretch lace body suit. "How about this?"

"No thanks," the boy blushed again. "I'm not built for it."

Heather crossed the room to where he stood with the sweater modestly held up in front of his chest. "You've been taking those hormones for quite awhile now. Haven't they done anything for you yet?"

"No, no... they haven't," the boy stammered.

"You don't mind if I have a look, do you?" she asked sweetly as she gently pulled his hands down. "That's such a pretty bra you're wearing," she whispered in his ear as she deftly unhooked it. As the garment fell away from his chest he grabbed the two breast forms and tried to hide them in the sweater he was still holding. Heather let out a little gasp as his swollen chest came into view. She instinctively reached out and caressed them. The enlarged nipples immediately grew taut under her palms.

"I think they've started to grow. Why didn't you tell me?" she admonished him.

"I didn't notice much," he tried to defend himself. "I used to inspect them every night, but other than some tenderness, nothing happened for so long that I finally quit. I was beginning to think that they would never grow."

"Well you were wrong. They've budded." Her fingers traced the outline of the enlarged jelly-like mounds. "I think they're adorable. And look!" Heather's long fingers moved down over the curve of Nick's hips and buttocks. No longer boylike, Nick's hips had the lush swelling of a girls.

"Wow," Heather said as her fingers went back to Nick's jutting, pink nipples. They were so creamy soft and tempting. "You ARE turning into a girl! You couldn't even go to the beach now without a top! How's that feel?"

"Odd, but I guess I am," he said like it was a surprise. He suddenly realized how much developing full breasts would change his life.

The boy pictured Heather and himself sitting on the hot beach, their bodies greased with coconut oil. He was wearing a hot pink two piece that showed off his little soft belly and navel. . .an "inny!" The daydream was most exciting.

Heather nudged the bewildered boy toward her bed. When the backs of his knees touched the edge of the mattress, she pushed him over so that he sprawled on his back. She landed next to him. "I think your little boobies are exciting," she said huskily as she leaned over kissed each of them. Next she took one nipple in her mouth and ever so gently began to suck on it.

Nick squirmed with pleasure. He held her head while she explored first one and then the other newly formed breast with her lips and tongue. So caught up in these new sensations was he that he didn't notice her hand as it reached out to caress his torso.

It slowly made it's way to his thigh, where it began to creep up under his skirt. Only when it brushed his heightened manhood did he realize what was happening.

"What are you doing," he said in an almost frightened voice. He had never even kissed a girl, and now he found himself being seduced by one.

"Don't worry, my little sissy one. I won't hurt you," she purred at him. "Isn't this fascinating. You now have three erections," she pointed out as she continued to play with his two engorged nipples. Her other hand firmly grasped his tenuous manhood through the silky material of his panties.

"Want to see what your little boobies will look like soon?" she asked him.

The confused boy could only nod breathlessly.

She reached up under her sweater and unhooked her own bra. In one sweeping movement she removed both sweater and bra to expose her own luscious globes of tender

young flesh. Leaning over him, she brought them right up to his face.

"Bet you can't wait till yours are this big?" she cooed while moving her shoulders back and forth.

He reached up with both hands and softly cupped them, then stroked her nipples lightly. "Mine will never get this big," the boy whispered enviously.

"Bet they will. . .you just keep taking those pills. Won't it be wonderful," she said as she leaned in to tease his nipples again with her lips. She lifted his skirt again and grabbed hold of the waist-band of his panties. She skillfully slipped them over his curved hips and down his satiny thighs. Nick assisted her by raising his legs.

Once they were free she flung them across the room. Then she reached under her own skirt and did the same. She straddled him and slowly lowered herself onto him. The inexperienced boy let out a little gasp as he felt engulfed in her warm moistness. Heather settled back slowly, savoring the delicious feeling.

She paused when she had fully ensheathed him, allowing both of them to prolong the experience. Then she slowly began to rise up, sending ripples of pleasure through the youngster. As in the case of most inexperienced boys, it did not take him long to be overjoyed. Though he tried to stave off the inevitable, he soon reached the limit, erupting deep inside of her. She felt the waves of ecstasy rippling through his body as he moaned with pleasure.

From previous experience, Heather knew what to expect. She remained atop the boy, not moving for a few minutes, letting him recover from the loss of his innocence. Then she leaned over and softly kissed him. She cupped his tender young breasts with her hands as their lips met. Then she kissed him more firmly, her tongue tentatively reaching out to explore the inside of his mouth. As she expected, he never completely lost his rigidity and within a few minutes he had regained his former hardness. Now it was her turn. Starting off slowly, she raised herself up and then plunged down, grinding her pelvis into his firmness.

Nick lay on his back, fascinated, while the young woman used him to satisfy her own needs. At last she too reached an intense crescendo and collapsed on top of the boy, pinning him to the mattress. He reached up and

tenderly stroked her hair. Although he had certainly enjoyed the entire experience, he knew that he had finished too soon. But he derived a great deal of satisfaction from knowing that she too was able to crest. Now he enjoyed in the sensation of helplessness as her weight pressed on top of him. He felt safe, protected, and despite his recent performance, very feminine.

Eventually Heather rolled off of him. They peeled off their skirts and spent the next couple of hours or so exploring and pleasuring each other. Heather took the lead in showing Nick what to do. He was an eager and willing pupil. Later they lay in each other's arms, not talking, just content to be close. Eventually Heather suggested that they get dressed again in case her parents came home early.

"Here," she said as she handed Nick the panties she had been wearing. "Put these on." She slipped on the pair that he had been wearing. He grinned at her as he pulled them up over his fleshy hips.

They finished redressing and then fixed each other's hair and redid their makeup. By the time Heather's parents walked in the door, the two of them were sitting on the couch in the living room watching an old movie on the tube. Her father had agreed to drive Nick home, but Heather had another idea.

"It's so late. Can Nicole stay here tonight? Her mom can pick her up tomorrow." She looked over at Nick who nodded in agreement.

"It's okay with us," her mother said, "But she ought to call her mom and ask her. It's getting awfully late and she may start to get worried."

A surprised Karen hesitated, but finally agreed. "Is everything all right?" she wanted to know.

"Just fine," her son told her as he winked at Heather.

As soon as he hung up the two of them skipped upstairs to Heather's room. She picked out nightgowns for each of them and this time Nick didn't try to hide as he changed. At Heather's suggestion, he didn't take off his bra with the breast forms inside. "Someone might notice and wonder what happened to them," she told him.

They had a great time, giggling and laughing as they set each other's hair. When they finally got in bed they cuddled together for a little while before Heather again

climbed on top of him. They had to be a lot quieter so as not to alert her parents. This time Nick lasted a lot longer, despite the fact that it felt extremely erotic to be making love while wearing his girl friend's nightgown and curlers in his hair. Heather also felt very turned on to be making love to this completely feminized boy.

In the morning Heather talked her father into letting her borrow the car to give her "girl friend" a ride home. She pulled into the driveway at Nick's house, where they sat and talked for a few minutes.

"Thanks for a wonderful time," Nick said.

"I liked it too," she reminded him.

"I'd never done anything like that before. It was my first time. . .I hope I was okay," he shyly admitted. His fingers played with the hem of his skirt.

"You did very well, what with the hormones and stuff," she complimented him. "And I look forward to doing it again."

"Oh, me too! Maybe next time you can spend the night over here. The only trouble is my mom doesn't go out much at night."

"That's okay. We'll just have to be careful so that the bed springs don't squeak." The two of them giggled at the thought.

Nick leaned over to kiss her good-bye, but she deflected him. "We've got to be careful," she reminded him. "People might get the wrong idea if they see two girls kissing." They settled for hugs and a peck on the cheek.

Nick was so enthralled with the way his life had changed that he didn't even pause to worry about the neighbors spotting the strange girl unlocking the front door and walking into his house. But in fact Mrs. MacGregor across the street not only noticed, but figured out who it must be, too.

She smiled to herself, satisfied that her long-standing suspicions were finally confirmed. "Such a delicate creature," she said to herself. "He makes a lovely girl." She resolved to try and find a way to invite the new "girl" in the neighborhood over so they could become friends.

Nick's mother wanted to know all about what happened. She was concerned that Heather's parents might learn the truth and become angry. Nick reassured her that everything was fine and that he had had a wonderful time.

"They're very nice," he told her. "And they think that I'm just one of Heather's girl friends."

She wanted to know where he slept.

"She's got double beds in her room," he lied. He felt kind of bad about lying to his mother, but he didn't figure he could tell her the whole truth. He was afraid that his mother would forbid him to see Heather if she knew all of the details about the night before.

Even worse, he was concerned that she might demand that he stop all of his girlish activities. Instead, he concentrated on telling her about how they tried on different outfits, and how Heather showed him how to do a French braid, and stuff like that.

That night when he was ready for bed he went into his mother's room. She was already in bed reading, when he walked in and sat down next to her. Although she no longer had the cast on her arm, they had continued to set each other's hair every evening. It was a feminine ritual that made Nick feel especially close to his mother, like a daughter.

"I think those pills I've been taking are finally beginning to work," he told her.

"Let me see," she said.

Nick raised the top of his baby dolls to expose his newly developing breasts. Karen lowered her reading glasses and peered at his chest.

"Well, I'll be darned, they are working after all." She reached out and gently touched them. "Do you mind?" she asked.

"No. Go ahead. Do they look okay to you?"

Karen carefully inspected both protuberances. "Are they sore? Do they bother you?"

"Tender but they feel just fine."

"Well, they look perfectly normal to me. I'd say you're well on your way to developing a typical woman's figure. Is that still what you want?"

"Oh yeah. Even more so now that they're starting to grow. I'd about given up on them."

"It won't be long before you can throw away those falsies. I'm very happy for you, darling," she said as she hugged her child.



"Wow," he thought to himself then asked his mother, "Does that mean I NEED a bra?"

"Look for yourself," she replied, pointing to the mirror. His once flat chest now jutted outward with two squishy, tender mounds topped with distended pink nipples.

Dr. Pearson congratulated him at his next appointment. "You're developing quite nicely, Nicole. I'd suggest that you ask your mother to buy you a couple of training bras. You're getting to the point where you're going to need some real support. It won't be too long before you'll be able to discard those breast forms for good. I'll see you again in a month."

Karen insisted on taking Nick in to one of the large, full-service department stores to have him fitted for a new bra. He felt embarrassed and didn't want to go. He didn't want to undress in front of some stranger, but his mother insisted.

"There are a lot of women walking around wearing the wrong size bras, and they're all very uncomfortable. It's important that you start off with the correct size. Then as they grow you'll know what sizes to move up to. Trust me."

He finally gave in and the next Saturday afternoon they drove over to Lacy's department store in Concord. They headed straight for the intimate apparel department. Nick felt very self-conscious as he stood to the side while his mother discussed his breast development with the sales clerk.

"She's a late bloomer," his mother was saying to the clerk. "But now that she's growing, we feel it's important to find the right size."

"An excellent idea," the clerk agreed. "It's too bad more mothers aren't so concerned about their daughters development." She turned to Nick. "You're such a pretty young lady," she smiled. "What's your name, dear?"

"Nicole," the blushing lad replied.

"What a lovely name." She took Nick by the arm. "Come with me dear," she said as she led them through the curtains into the fitting room. "Stand here and take off your blouse while I find my tape measure."

Nick fumbled with the buttons while the clerk rummaged around looking for the tape. Karen stood to the side, beaming at her "daughter." Once he took his blouse off he felt naked standing in front of the fully dressed women.

After measuring his chest the clerk brought out several different pairs of bras for him to try on. They were all very demure, with delicate, understated lace trim. She picked one out and helped him slip his arms through the straps before hooking it in the back. It felt surprisingly comfortable. Nick was startled, however, when he looked down and saw how big his chest now looked. Of course a good part of it was the extra padding in the cups, but still, what was there was all his, not the breast forms he had gotten so used to wearing.

"How does that feel, dear?" the clerk inquired.

"Fine," the boy replied. He walked over to a mirror to further admire himself. He couldn't resist staring.

"All the girls do that," the clerk confided in Karen. "They're usually embarrassed when they come in, but they all end up staring at themselves in the mirror."

Karen just nodded as she watched her son inspect his new figure. She ended up buying him three bras, including the one he wore out of the store.

With his newly developing figure, Nick had to be more careful in choosing the clothes that he wore to school. His mother and Heather helped him pick out some loose-fitting tops and sweaters that would disguise what was becoming most eye-catching.

He also discovered that his jeans no longer fit like they used to. They were looser at the waist, but were becoming too snug around his hips. He was puzzled about this and didn't realize that it was also a result of the hormones until Heather pointed it out one day. He was trying on some outfits in her bedroom. She suggested that a pair of jeans would go well with the blouse and vest he was wearing, and she handed him one of hers.

"What size is this?" he wanted to know as he buttoned up the front.

"It's the same as yours, remember? We wear the same size."

"But if fits so much better," he remarked as he ran his hands over his hips and backside.

"It's a woman's size," she pointed out. "They're cut differently. You're still trying to wear the old jeans you bought before you started taking the hormones. But your boobs aren't the only things that have grown, you know. Your hips have gotten wider, too. And I'll bet your waist is a little smaller. Am I right?"

"I don't know. I hadn't really noticed much because the waist still fit but my pants didn't seem to be as comfortable as they used to. I thought maybe they had shrunk in the wash, or something."

"Well, it's real obvious something has changed from the rear," she laughed. "I like to watch your ass wiggle when you walk."

The boy blushed a bright red knowing that others saw it too.

"Don't be embarrassed, darling," she said as she pressed up against him and caressed his butt. "You're developing a real woman's figure. I think it's sexy." Any misgivings he might have had disappeared as she kissed him deeply, her tongue exploring the inner recesses of his mouth. His knees got weak and his head started to spin. The poor lad was putty in the hands of his pretty girl friend.

None of the other kids in school could understand what Heather saw in Nick. She refused to discuss him when the other girls quizzed her about it. Instead she would just smile and make some cryptic remark about getting to know the "real" Nick.

The two of them hung out together whenever they could during school, but none of the other kids ever ran into them outside of school. They would occasionally go out on "dates," but always somewhere where they were sure they wouldn't run into anyone they knew because Nick was always dressed as Nicole for these outings.

As their relationship developed they began to spend one weekend night together at one or the other's house. Of course Heather's parents were still completely unaware of Nicole's secret. Her mother occasionally wondered if the two girls were spending too much time together, but she refused to consider the possibility that her daughter might be "strange."

Karen, on the other hand, suspected that the two of them might be engaging in some form of adult play when they spent the night together in the same room, but they were too discrete for her to catch them at it, and she certainly was not about to mention anything to Heather's mom.

She did sit Nick down one day for a serious talk about birth control, and she made sure that he understood that it was not only the girl's responsibility.

He felt uncomfortable talking to his mother about the subject and spent most of the time playing with the hem of his dress and looking down at the floor. He did get the message though, because he asked Heather about it the next time they were together and she reassured him that she was on the pill. Actually they both were!

The two teens were spending more and more time together. As the school year drew to a close, it was inevitable that sooner or later their discussions would get around to their future plans. Heather planned to go to college. She had been accepted at UCLA and was eagerly looking forward to it.

She wasn't yet sure what she wanted to major in, but the admissions officials had reassured her that she had plenty of time to decide. She had an independent streak and one of the main attractions of going to UCLA was the chance to move out of her parents' house.

Nick, on the other hand, hadn't thought any further than the end of high school and the opportunity to live full-time as a young woman. It was Heather who brought up the subject of them living together in Los Angeles.

Nick was hesitant at first. "I don't know," he told her. "It sounds like fun, but what would I do?"

"What would you do around here?" she wanted to know. "Here you're afraid to go out of the house for fear someone you know might recognize you. What are you going to do, spend the rest of your life living like an old spinster with your mother?"

That prospect didn't seem too thrilling once he thought about it. "But what would I do in LA?"

"Quit hiding, my dear. You could get a job. Or you could go to school, like me. . .only with your chest up high. . .or out!"

"Hmmm," the boy murmured. "Do you really think I'm ready to join the girls?"

"Haven't you noticed how inadequate you're becoming as a male?"

The poor boy blushed, helpless to halt his shame at the implication. Doing anything like a male was becoming increasingly awkward.

"Shhh," Heather quickly added, "that's what I love about you!"

Heather pulled him close, one hand straying under his blouse to tease his pert nipples that puckered into tiny erections. His breasts were not as big as Heather's but with the right bra his cleavage was undeniably feminine. "A pretty girl like you can do anything she wants to," Heather purred in his ear. "Please, Nicole?"

He loved it when she teased his nipples and called him Nicole. That was all it took.

Having convinced him to move in with her, the two of them began to make plans for a life together. They decided to rent an apartment together near the campus. There were several places that rented exclusively to coeds. They decided that a building like that would be quieter and safer.

Since Nick hadn't applied for the fall semester, he planned to find a job for the fall and enroll in January. In the midst of making their plans, Heather confided that there was still one thing that she really wanted to do before they left high school behind.

"You know, I've been looking forward to going to the senior prom ever since I was a freshman," she told him.

"Oh?"

She looked him in the eyes. "And I was wondering if you'd do me a great favor and be my date."

"Your date?"

"Yeah, date. Like in pinning a corsage on me, and escorting me arm in arm, and dancing, and all that stuff." As she said it she shivered involuntarily. Nick could tell how much it meant to her. And for the first time he realized how deeply in love he was with this beautiful young woman. He leaned over and kissed her lightly on the lips.

"I'd be happy to be your date," he said tenderly.

She threw her arms around him and kissed him passionately. "Oh, thank-you darling. You don't know how much this means to me. And I realize how much I'm asking of you to dress as a boy yet one more time. I love you!"

"And I love you," he replied.

Karen was surprised when Nick announced that he was taking Heather to the prom. He was standing in front of the full-length mirror in her bedroom, inspecting himself in one of Heather's dresses that he had borrowed. Her immediate assumption was that they both intended to wear gowns, and the first thought that crossed her mind was that she had no idea which shops specialized in prom dresses.

"Oh no!" the boy replied in horror when she asked him if he knew how much a formal gown cost. "I couldn't do that in front of all those kids. I meant that I'm going to wear a tuxedo, and Heather's going to wear a dress."

His mother was still startled. Outside of school time, she couldn't remember the last time she had seen her son wearing boy's clothes. "What's going on?" she wanted to know. "Are you changing your mind about wanting to be a girl?"

"Nope," he replied casually. "It's just that going to the prom is important to Heather. I don't want her to miss it, but I don't want to show up in a dress myself, and I certainly don't want her to go with someone else. You see?"

"You're very fond of her, aren't you?" Karen said gently.

"Yeah, I guess I am. I think I'm in love. I've never felt this way about anyone before. For that matter, I've never

even had a girl friend before. And I think she's in love with me. I don't want to disappoint her."

Karen slipped her arm around him and hugged him tightly. "You're a very sweet and considerate person. I know how much it means to you to live in skirts. I'll do what ever I can to help you out."

"Thanks mom. I hope I can find a tuxedo that fits my figure. Heather said she's going to buy me some special lingerie to wear under it."

Karen arched her eyebrows at that last remark, but she didn't say anything.

The two teens went shopping with Heather's mom for her prom dress. She must have tried on a dozen different gowns before they settled on just the right one. It was a frothy pale yellow strapless dress that plunged down the front, revealing plenty of cleavage. Her mother was skeptical at first, but Heather and Nicole convinced her that lots of the girls would be wearing similar styles.

"I just don't want to shock your father," was her final word on the matter.

Nick started early in the afternoon to get ready for the prom. First he washed and set his hair on the large rollers he always used. Then he manicured his nails, which he had allowed to grow fairly long, and coated them with clear polish. Next he repainted his toe nails a bright scarlet red. Then he filled the tub with his favorite bubble bath and soaked for nearly an hour in the fragrant water.

Before he got out he carefully shaved his legs. It was such a girlish thing to do.

After toweling himself off, he dusted himself all over with rose-scented talcum powder. He had laid out the lingerie that Heather had bought him on the bed. One new garment that he had never worn before was a gaff. It looked awfully tiny.

"How can I wear something like that?" he had protested when she handed it to him.

"It's designed to keep you looking smooth and lady-like," she cooed as her hand slipped down between his thighs. "We don't want you walking around pointing at the prom, do we?" He began to rise in response to her ministrations. "See how easy you are?" she giggled. "Besides, it's not just for the prom. You should wear it all the time

from now on. Especially if you're wearing slacks or jeans. And it's essential if you ever want to wear a bathing suit again."

He struggled to pull the unfamiliar garment up past his thighs. Following Heather's instructions, he tucked his male parts up and under, but the restriction was almost unbearable. It seemed to take his breath away. He had to sit down for several minutes while his body became accustomed to it. Eventually the pain subsided and he was able to resume dressing.

He grinned as he stepped into the silk bikini panties that she had purchased for him. They were scarlet red with black lace trim, and with the gaff in place they fit him perfectly. He crossed the room to admire himself in the mirror. The front of panties was completely smooth. He ran his hand down his crotch and between his legs. There wasn't a trace of a bulge.

He wondered if his tiny maleness would get even smaller and softer from being pressed up by the gaff. He hoped so.

"Wow," he said aloud as he examined himself. Next, he slipped his breasts into the cups of the matching silk bra and reached around behind and hooked it. The cups were especially low-cut, so that the tops of his swollen nipples were just visible. He returned to the mirror, where he leaned forward and squeezed his breasts with his upper arms so that they protruded even more. At the same time, he wiggled his hips in an enticing motion.

Suddenly he became aware of the increased strain on his confined maleness. "Oh geez," he said to himself, "I'm turning myself on!" Even though he was alone, the poor confused lad blushed a deep red. "What am I doing?" he wondered. To distract himself he decided to finish dressing. He pulled the matching garter belt up to his waist and then unrolled the fish-net stockings up his legs and hooked them in place with the garters. It took him a few minutes to straighten out the seams that ran up the backs of his legs.

Since there was still plenty of time before he had to pick up Heather, he slipped on his kimono and went downstairs. He didn't want his mother to see the sexy lingerie that he was wearing. Karen was busy at her computer when he walked into the den.

"What are you doing, mom?" he wanted to know.

"Taxes," she replied.

Nick paced back and forth for several minutes before his mother finally looked up from the screen.

"What's the problem, dear? Are you nervous?"

"It's nothing, mom."

"Then why are you wearing a hole in the rug with your pacing?"

"I... I guess I am a little nervous."

"Want to talk about it?"

"It's just that I wish that tonight were over with already. This is the last time that I'm going to have to appear as a boy, and I feel so uncomfortable in boy's clothes."

"But you agreed to do it this one last time because it means so much to Heather."

"I know," he sighed. "So then I feel guilty for feeling resentful about it." He sighed again, only deeper. "Life can be so complicated some times," he moaned.

Karen stared at her cross-dressed son and burst out laughing. "I'm sorry," she finally managed to say. "I didn't mean to laugh, but I couldn't help it. Of course you're right, life can be complicated. And yours is more complicated than most. You're standing here, dressed in a kimono, with your hair in curlers, your bright red toenails peeking out from under those fish-net stockings, getting ready to put on a tuxedo and take your girl friend to the prom. I hope you're able to keep all this in perspective and see some humor in it."

The boy looked down as he bored a painted toe into the carpet. Finally he looked up at the ceiling. He raised one limp wrist to his brow and placed the other over his heart and sighed even more loudly. "I suppose you're right," he said theatrically. "I guess one can't take any of this *too* seriously."

Then they both burst out laughing.

After they calmed down, Nick returned to his room to finish getting ready. He put on a camisole under his shirt in order to help cover up his red bra. He was hoping that the tuxedo jacket would hide his newly developed breasts. After checking that his hair was dry, he carefully removed the rollers. Then he brushed it back into a pony tail and secured it with a rubber band. Earlier his mother had wondered aloud why he was going to the trouble of setting it if he was going to wear it pulled back. Nick had just

shrugged. He hadn't explained that later that evening he was expecting to literally let his hair down, and he hoped that it would still retain some of its body.

Nick was so nervous that he tripped and nearly fell down while coming up the front walk at Heather's house. "Must be these damn boy's shoes," he muttered to himself as he stood in front of the door. He took a few deep breaths before ringing the door bell.

Her father answered the door. "Good evening son," his voice boomed. He was very protective of Heather and he always acted very stern and forbidding whenever he greeted her dates. He hoped that this kind of behavior would somehow instill fear in the boys and thus his daughter would be safer. It didn't occur to him that Heather had enough sense to be choosy about who she dated.

He led Nick into the living room and offered him a seat. The lad was grateful for the chance to sit down because he was so nervous his knees were knocking. But his discomfort only increased when Heather's father sat down on the sofa and stared at him sternly from across the room. Minutes went by and neither of them said a word. Beads of sweat appeared across Nick's forehead. One was just beginning to trickle down the side of his face when Heather's mom appeared in the doorway. She stared at Nick curiously for several seconds before introducing herself. At least he had the presence of mind to stand up when she came into the room.

"She's almost ready," she told him. "It'll only be a few minutes more."

"Thank-you, ma'am," the nervous boy replied. He and Heather had debated the possibility that her parents, especially her mom, would recognize him as the Nicole that had spent so much time at their house recently. Nick was sure that they would be able to tell, but Heather insisted that there was no way.

"I'm sure I've seen that boy somewhere," her mother announced when she returned to Heather's room. "What did you say his name was?"

"Nick," Heather replied as she stared into the mirror, inspecting her hair one last time.

"Hmmm, he sure looks familiar. Has he been over here before?"

Heather did her best to suppress a giggle. "No, mom. Nick has never been here before." Nicole, but not Nick, she said to herself as she turned and hurried down the stairs. She realized that she'd better hurry up and get the poor lad out of the house before parents got too suspicious. When she turned the corner into the living room Nick stood up so quickly that he nearly knocked his chair over. Her father's stern demeanor had thoroughly shaken him.

Heather grabbed her coat and the two teenagers scurried out the door as quickly as possible. Once they were out in the car, Heather burst out laughing. "My mom was awfully suspicious. I was afraid that if she checked you out too much longer, she'd see through your disguise."

"Yeah. Well you can laugh, but your father scared the daylights out of me. I was sure he was going to drag me out the door by the scruff of the neck and toss me in the street."

"Oh, you don't have to worry about him. He's really a softy at heart. He just does that because he feels he's supposed to act protective of his only daughter. It's my mother I was worried about. Women notice things that men never see." She glanced over at Nick.

Despite the tuxedo and the pulled back hair, there were still traces of Nicole visible if you knew where to look. Like his delicately plucked eye brows, his manicured nails, and the holes in his ear lobes. Not only that, but also the way he carried himself, his body language, had become distinctly feminine over time. As he spent more and more time in his feminine persona, the posture and gesturing he had practiced so hard became ingrained and natural. It was extremely difficult for him to change back over completely for this one last night.

Once they got to the prom he quickly calmed down. Heather was so excited, and her enthusiasm was infectious. They danced and chatted with the other kids. Some of them stared at Nick at first, still bewildered at what a sharp girl like Heather could see in him, but they soon forgot about them. Every one was too excited about finally graduating from high school.

When the prom was over, the kids broke up into various groups and headed for their own private parties. No one even noticed Heather and Nick leave. They headed over to a motel out by the highway, where Nick had reserved a room. They had scarcely closed the door before Heather

was all over the boy. She pushed him up against the door jamb and kissed him deeply, her tongue probing the furthest reaches of his mouth, while her hands fumbled with his clothing. After the longest kiss of Nick's young, inexperienced life, she leaned into him and gently nibbled his ear.

"Thank you for a wonderful evening, darling," she whispered.

Her busy hands had pulled off his jacket and cummerbund and unbuttoned his shirt, uncovering the sexy bra she had insisted he wear. Now she cupped his breasts in her hands and kissed the exposed tops.

"It really turned me on to know that under that tuxedo you were dressed like a tart," she laughed.

By this time Nick's maleness was straining to be free of it's restriction. He reached around behind her and began to unhook her dress. The two teenagers quickly undressed each other and were soon lying together on the bed. Nick pulled off the rubber band that held his hair and shook his head, fluffing it out. Experienced lovers by now, they were in no rush, but instead took their time, pleasuring each other and themselves.

When Nick finally entered her, he was lying flat on his back while she was in the superior position. It was their favorite way of making love. Later she collapsed on top of him. While gently stroking her hair he confessed that he enjoyed the feeling of helplessness he got while lying pinned beneath her.

"I'll bet you enjoy it almost as much as I enjoy being on top," she laughed in reply.

That night they made more plans to move to Los Angeles. Nick would be Nicole full-time from now on. He could even legally change his name and get a new set of identification, although the "M" box would still be marked. He realized that most people, when they see an ID card, never bother to look past the name and photo.

Heather's parents were actually relieved when she told them that she and Nicole would be sharing an apartment. They had been worried about her living alone in the big city. They were still unaware of Nicole's other life and the teens saw no reason to confuse them with the facts at this point. Karen wasn't too surprised when they told her of their plans. She too was pleased that they would continue to be together.

She had realized that once he finished high school Nick would want to move out and develop a life of his own, but she too was concerned about her effeminate son. She had read in Reader's Digest all about the dangers delicate flowers like him faced from a host of depraved, predatory individuals who prowled the seamy underbelly of the neon-lit jungle of today's modern cities. Heather assured her that she would take special care of him.

It's been nearly two years now since they moved. Both girls are coeds at UCLA. Heather is majoring in computer science, and hopes to find a job in Silicon Valley after she finishes graduate school. Nicole is majoring in library science. She figures she can find a job as a librarian where ever Heather ends up.

They tried dating boys for awhile, but all the boys seemed to have only one thing on their minds. Now the girls spend more of their time studying, and when they do go out, it's usually to one of the many women's places in the area. And they're planning to get married soon. Since Nicole has never had surgery, there's no legal bar to their marriage.

They even found a minister who said she would be pleased to perform the ceremony with two brides. They know Karen will be pleased, but they still haven't figured out how to tell Heather's folks yet.

THE END

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