

# Until Something Better Comes Along

*Part Two*



# Rebecca Rafferty



An "Adult TV" Novel



## **Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers**

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# **UNTIL SOMETHING BETTER COMES ALONG**

## **PART TWO**

**by Rebecca Rafferty**

### **VIII. ONE OF THE GIRLS (continued)**

“We have all been in awe of you all week,” Kate said. “You pick up things that the others have taken years to perfect. Donna said that you have perfect pitch in a song, and you do, whatever range you are singing in. You can dance like Fred Astaire or like Ginger Rogers. You seem to be a natural mimic, male or female. None of us can think when we ever saw anyone as talented and as quick a learner as you. You could be the savior of our little show.”

Kate began to kiss me in earnest then. She slipped down her panties and took my feminized hands and showed me how she wanted to be pleased. I didn't mind all the foreplay. I clung to her and held her small, femininely soft body to me while she smiled as her real breasts bounced on my false ones.

"Kate!" I whispered to her, reaching for the panties I wore to take them down like hers.

"No, Deirdre darling," Kate whispered to me. "That's my job. And I'm going to show you how we make love around here."

Kate didn't undo my taping to make me appear to be a woman. No, she didn't care about what she had done to make me flat at the front, as a woman should be. Kate caressed between my legs and up and down my thighs while I went slowly crazy. She kept my fingers working on her as she used hers in similar fashion on me. I couldn't help it. I had to fight her, turn her, rip away the taping and overcome the intense pains I felt and have her as a man has a woman.

Kate seemingly had come before, but she did react to me penetrating her. She pulled the bra tightly about my chest as she came. I came as well. Ooo, it was so fantastic as we kissed, hugged and rolled together.

Kate grinned at me as I rested a little on top of her. "Well," she said, stroking my arms. "That didn't go entirely in the way I'd planned." She frowned. "Um, Dee. Please, please don't boast about this to any of the others, will you? Don't, please don't, tell your brother what we were up to in here today."

"Or your mama?" I asked her with a grin. Kate was startled.

“Oh yes, my mama,” Kate said, hugging me. “Donna would get very mad at me for doing this with one of her girls.”

“Hey, I’m *not* one of—” I began. Hey, I wanted to say, quivering as I spoke to Kate like the Queen of England whom I’d imitated. Kate had told me to speak just that way as she made my face look so womanly.

“Yes, you are!” said Kate fiercely. “You are going to be a smash hit in Calumet City where Donna is going to offer you the show. Yes, she wants to retire, just do a few cameo performances, but let someone as talented as *you* take over and modernize the show—buy it from her, basically. Now, don’t tell anyone that, either, if you don’t mind, Deirdre Johnson. That’s just pillow talk between the two of us.” She sighed and wrinkled her nose so prettily.

“Am I as much a mess as you are, Dee?” Kate asked me. “We should have done this in my room, you know. We could have used my bathroom to clean up.”

“Janet would still have walked in on us,” I told her with a giggle. Kate stiffened a little before laughing with me as well.

“Well, I suppose it’s her bathroom as well,” Kate said, patting me and rolling me a little, to slip out from under me and stand naked before me. I reached for her hungrily, wanting more than we’d shared so avidly—but she took my hand, caressed it and returned it to me.

“Now, be a good girl, Dee,” Kate said with a brilliant smile. “Maybe later we’ll have some private time. Yes, and then, my lovely girl, I’ll show you properly how we girls make love to each other around here.”

“You don’t have to show me,” I told her, laying out, my male member erect where I could touch it myself.

“Now that’s being a very naughty girl, Deirdre,” said Kate with that lovely smile of hers. “Save that for later. Let’s get ourselves cleaned up and dressed properly first.”

“Dressed properly” meant dressed as a drag queen, in my black satin blouse, the black, slitted, shiny skirt, stockings, black underwear, the high-heeled boots, vivid makeup, and the dark-haired wig. The last item took Kate a lot of combing to get perfectly arranged on my head, once more.

I went meekly, satisfied a lot, down the stairs with my lover, her arm affectionately about me as mine was about hers.

“So here are the girlfriends,” taunted Terry Marvel, getting up from Frankie Morel’s lap which she seemed to think was her permanent property.

I admit I blushed at that. Kate squeezed me and said, “Jealous, Terry?” At the piano, Janet looked up at the two of us and shook her fine blonde head of hair at me.

“I’ve been trying to warn you,” Janet said in her husky voice. I found it rather sexy now, I must admit, as she was trying all kinds of elixirs that Kate had brought her, or so Janet said. Janet was no longer the gravelly-voiced emcee of the show that I had first heard in the Star Club.

“But I *like* being Kate’s girlfriend,” I said in lilting, high-class, English, female tones to Janet. Kate, beside me, blushed even worse than I did. I could see it

plainly, as she wore so little makeup—unlike all the men in the room, even Frankie.

“Is Dee your girl friend now, Kate?” asked Janet—with a little tension, I thought, in her manner.

I wanted to say to her what Kate had said to Terry. I wanted to ask Janet if she was jealous, as well. From the look in her feminized, made-up face, I thought that ‘she’ was.

“None of your business,” said Kate curtly, escorting me to the starting position for me, off stage. “Let’s do *I’ll Carry You*, Janet, if you don’t mind. Once through, Frankie, with the kiss on Deirdre’s lips, if you don’t mind.” Those words startled me. I know I shuddered then as I tried to object, but Kate just shushed and ignored me. “Give us an intro, please, Janet. You know the score.”

“Oh, I do,” muttered Janet in a voice so low that only I—right beside the piano, squirming as I waited, ready for my grand entrance, a smile on my face—could hear her. “I know the score only too well.”

I don’t know what got into Janet, but she played a much punchier version of the music than she ever had before. I was able to dance and swing with much more emphasis on posing like one of the many female models I’d seen in my life, my hair swishing across my face, as I took on the persona of a drag queen for a little while. I didn’t mind Frankie’s kiss at all at the end of the energetic re-interpretation of the song. I felt that I had to kiss him on the lips, as the dance and the music called for it—so I did.

“Wow!” said Terry, as I relaxed in Frankie’s arm and did another feminine pose, leaning against him, one of my legs lifted, a broad smile on my face. That

would show all these supposed ‘girls’ what they hadn’t learned to do as well as a male actor could. “That is so great, Dee. That is just so effing great! I wish I could do a number like that!”

“Oh, you will, in time,” said Kate, applauding me as she came forward as well. “Okay, that’s it for today. Janet, that was wonderful. We must get you that synthesizer and a drum machine. Dee interprets your music so well, don’t you think? Bobby?” she turned and smiled at my brother, whom I’d seen slip in to frown thunderously at my performance as ‘Angela’.

“Bobby,” said Kate with a smile, “could you help Frankie and the girls with the cases and trunks, and get them out to the cars and vans? We want to be on the road first thing in the morning. No staying up and playing musical rooms tonight, please! Frankie, Donna needs her beauty sleep for tomorrow night. Yes, you can nap in the cars if you aren’t on driving duty, but we do have an extra show tomorrow night, which will be after midnight. So, get your beauty sleep, girls. I want you all to be looking your best tomorrow night!”

“Yes, Mummy,” said Terry in the little girl voice she liked to use from time to time.

I sashayed over to Kate and put my arm about her. She was rather startled. She looked quite surprised in fact. Then, she shrugged and smiled at me while I saw Bobby staring at us, open-mouthed.

“You, Dee,” Kate said to me with her brilliant smile, “must get a lot of beauty sleep, as we are going to be depending on you quite a lot tomorrow night. We’ll be depending on you almost as much as we depend on Janet’s piano playing.”

I glanced at Janet who was putting her sheet music carefully into a leather briefcase. Janet looked up at me thoughtfully. I thought she was commiserating with me, in a way, for I'd done what she'd said I'd do, which I'd sworn I'd never do. I'd become a female impersonator, just like her. I'd have to talk to her and tell it was only for a couple of days, until the 'husband and wife' drag queens were back on their high heels.

That made me wonder if Janet's initiation, into becoming the remarkable woman she appeared to be, had been sparked in any way by a seduction that I knew I'd been subjected to—and was still being subjected to.

Janet wore only a little makeup. Her long, brown hair was pushed behind her ears and held there with hair pins. At the dress rehearsal, earlier, she'd let it hang loose and had worn huge earrings that danced over her face as she played. Now, with thin, light brown eyebrows, a little lipstick, a cardigan draped over her white, silky blouse, her stockinged legs crossed in her medium heels below her wide, dark brown skirt, she looked like a real woman. But then, I kept seeing the 'girls' I was with, dancing and prancing, and thought of them as girls. As far as I could tell, the only genuine female impersonators in The Donna Vallee Show were Donna and myself.

## **IX. READY TO SHOW OFF**

"Well, did you sleep with her again last night?" Bobby asked me when we were stopped at a gas station. Kate was laughing with a gas jockey as we streamed the car and vans slowly through the pumps and filled up.

The other girls had moved easily into the convenience store to buy drinks and flirt with the customers. Donna stayed in the Dodge van with Frankie—who did all the talking to the attendants, I noticed.

I couldn't do that, not dressed in a billowing skirt the way that I was, and a pretty top with short, puffy shoulders. I was in bright red high heels, stockings and, yes, a garter belt that I wanted no one else to see—and so I clutched at my dress, as it threatened to blow up at any moment.

The wind about my legs, on my stockings, was unbelievable in how it made my freshly shaven legs feel. I did feel effeminate and girly. I felt the pull of my bra straps and the tightness of the waist cinch about me. The long hair of my pinned and glued brunette wig blew about my made-up face, my lipstick renewed before I got out of the car to stretch my long, shapely legs. I would have to brush it again several times, I was sure, to re-arrange the girlish image I was striving to achieve with so many people looking at me.

“Was it that obvious?” I asked Bobby, countering his question about me sleeping with Kate, which I had, with one of my own.

Bobby stared at me. “You must have slept with her again,” he said churlishly to me. “You're even more a girl today than you were yesterday. Gods, Zenon, what kind of drug does she have you on?”

“Oh, Bobby,” I said, teasing him, moving closer to him and taking his hand with a big smile, as if I was a girl flirting with a boy friend. He had to be angry, as he called me by my real name again. “Really, you shouldn't knock it until you've tried it, sugar.”

Bobby almost jumped six feet from me as if I'd stung him. "I don't know who you are any more!" he said wildly.

"I'm Dee," I told him in my coyest of girlish voices. "We never get to talk these days, do we? I'm Dee, and Angela, and Cindy for the next two days, and then it'll be back to being boring old Douglas again. You will still be boring Bobbypins all the time, though, won't you?"

"Doug," Bobby said fearfully. In the background, I saw Kate turn and smile at the picture I must have made, being so girlish and coy with my stiff, uncomfortable brother.

"Dee," I corrected him. The wind blew even more strongly and my skirts flew up, showing off my petticoats and my stockings. I think that I was able to hang on enough that my garters and my panties weren't exposed. "I have to get back in the van," I told my brother, putting out my hand girlishly to him. "Why don't you come back and talk to me for a little while?"

Bobby had been driving the Dodge that was behind the Plymouth, in line to be filled up, while the Ford I was in had been parked a little way from the pumps. Bobby looked quite sick as he took my hand and walked me to the Ford, unable to match my mincing walk.

"You look ridiculous!" huffed my brother as I slid into the passenger seat of the car like a girl, smoothing my rustling skirts beneath me, having waited and forced him to open the door for me.

"It's so nice to be a girl," I cooed at him. My brother really got mad at me.

“You’re making a fool of yourself!” Bobby snapped at me as he got into the car. “Do you know what you smell like?”

Yes, I did. I was smothered in *Joy* on that particular day. “No,” I lilted femininely to my brother, batting my eyelashes at him. “Isn’t that heavenly fragrance of oil and gasoline all yours?”

Bobby began to realize how much fun I was having, teasing him. “You smell like a woman,” he said to me. “A pretty woman.”

“Oh, you say the nicest things,” I said with a shrug and squeeze of my shoulders in mock delight, bending my wrist limply as I touched his arm.

“Cut it out, Doug,” said Bobby angrily. “It’s me you are talking to, you know.”

“I’m still Dee,” I said to Bobby coyly, keeping my Queen of England voice going. It was getting to be so easy. “I think you had something to tell me, didn’t you? Did you finally manage to contact Agnes Schafer?” She was the female ‘agent’ that our parents had got for us when we were—what? Eight and nine years old, I think.

“You’ve been listening to my phone calls?” Bobby asked me in surprise, turning his head away. He was too embarrassed, I think, to look at me, at my chest and figure, as a woman. I noted, however, how he looked at my crossed legs, my stockings and my shoes, quite surreptitiously.

I had an idea of asking him if Bobby would like to trade places with me, if he’d like to be in Cindy’s place in the show. I could accuse him quite easily of being jealous of me, as I was beginning to think Donna had been quite right in what she’d said to

Kate. Bobby was fidgeting with me as much as he'd fidgeted with Terry, and probably still did. She'd insisted on riding in the van he was driving, to Calumet City, with him.

"I don't have to listen to your phone calls to know that you must have contacted our so-called agent, Lady Agnes," I told Bobby seriously, reverting to my regular voice which startled him. "I'll bet she had the usual tale of woe to give you and asked for an update of our resumes. Then she asked for a number to reach us at, before she said she'd get back to us in a week. We both know it won't amount to anything at all. What was the last job she got for us since you turned thirteen?"

"Wow," Bobby said unsteadily. "Wow again. I didn't think that I'd ever hear you talk like my brother again, Doug, er, Dee. It kind of shakes me up to hear you like that when you look the way you do."

"I can tell," I said to him, disturbing him as I re-crossed my legs in a swishing of petticoats and rustling of nylons. "Did I get it about right with Aggie?"

Bobby nodded uneasily. "Pretty much," he said uneasily. "I've been phoning around, though, and I talked to Nate in New York." Nate was an older actor friend, more Bobby's than mine, who had been in movies with him. "He gave me names and numbers of some new agents. I sent in both of our resumes to several of them at the agencies they work for."

"Good idea," I told him. He looked pleased with himself.

"I got a cell phone," Bobby said then with a smile. "I had to have a number to give out so they can call me back."

“Another good idea,” I said with a smile at him. “Did it cost you very much?”

Bobby gave me what I considered his guilty look. I knew then what he’d done. He’d probably signed up for a plan, the terms of which he had no intention of fulfilling, in regard to payments. I only wondered what name he’d used in the scam he was pulling, or if he realized what jeopardy he was putting himself in if an irate telephone company set someone on his case to track him down.

No, I didn’t say anything like that to him. “You have to have a phone,” I cooed to him in one of my girlie voices. I smiled as Bobby reacted nervously and looked at me. “I’ll give you some money soon to pay for it,” I told him with another smile and squeezed his arm playfully. Bobby again looked very pleased with himself. I was intrigued with how praise from a pretty girl—and I felt like a pretty girl—worked on a man, even when the pretty girl was the man’s brother.

“Don’t you have to get back to your van?” I asked Bobby as I saw Kate finally finish paying for everyone. Terry and Pearl were coming out of the store, laughing and smiling, giggling and being totally feminine, with some young guys from a red sports car.

“I suppose so,” said Bobby heavily. “I had to drive with Janet this morning until Terry got her to change at the rest stop we made at noon.”

It was quite an operation to get us ‘girls’ through the women’s bathrooms without other women filling the place—or worse. According to Pearl, who’d driven with me, little kids instantly seemed to know female impersonators from women, no matter how much we girls toned down our makeup and wore ‘drab’ clothes.

“Terry told me about Janet and Kate,” said Bobby, turning the key in the Ford and backing the van out of the parking stall and up behind Frankie’s Dodge while we waited for the giggling Terry and Pearl to re-join the convoy. Kate was heading towards us—with quite a smile on her face, I noticed—while Janet was behind the wheel of Kate’s car.

“What was there to tell?” I asked my brother lightly.

“Janet and Kate used to be married,” said Bobby, giving me a quick glance.

“I knew that,” I said lightly, forcing a smile, though I felt as if a dagger had been put through me.

“Did you know that it was Kate who persisted and persisted in getting Janet to become Janet and help her draggy father save his drag show?” asked my brother. I smiled as if I didn’t find anything gut-wrenching in what he was saying to me. “Terry told me Kate was playing you, in just the way she played Janet. Of course, Janet doesn’t mind now so much, but she did ask Kate not to make a play for you. Kate’s supposed to have said she wouldn’t.”

“Why would Janet ask that?” I said as off-handedly as I could, but I don’t think I fooled my brother one bit.

“Janet likes you as Doug,” said Bobby bluntly as Kate stopped beside our car and waved the Plymouth, with Cindy at the wheel, up beside us. “She didn’t want you to become a drag queen like her. She wants you as a woman wants a man, brother. How does that feel, Dee? Both the husband and the wife after you, and the three of you all as cute and girly as can be? I can’t work it out. You’ll have to let me know

what you're going to do. I have to go back to Terry and Janet."

My brother got out of the car as a smiling Kate got in and took over the role of driver. "You're almost as wind-blown as I am, Dee," she said to me with that flashing smile at me. "What did Bobby have to say? Is he regretting now that he didn't give the drag business a chance on his own?"

"No," I said, trying to order my own conflicted emotions as I sorted out all that Bobby had told me. Just sitting there in a dress, the long hair of my wig, swirling over my neck and face, wasn't easy to handle—nor the other femmy stuff on me.

"We should be there within the hour if we don't have any more traffic jams like we've had all morning," said Kate with a smile. "And we should have those guys in the Corvette at our show. They don't know what they're in for, of course. So, it should be a lot of fun if they show up to see Terry disrobing tonight!"

"She should be honest with guys," I suggested, wondering how Kate would react to that. "It could be dangerous for her if she led them on too far. They could be very disappointed as well and do something stupid to her, to us, or the vans."

"Don't worry about Terry," smiled Kate to me. "She's had a lot of experience with men. Stick with her tonight and she'll take care of you as well."

I recalled then that Pearl and Cindy had gone out into the audience at the Star Club after the cabaret had been completed. A queasy feeling began to come over me.

“Do I have to go out into the audience after the show?” I asked Kate directly. She gave me an astonished look.

“Is that what Bobby was telling you you’d have to do?” she asked me sharply.

I shook my wind-blown wig at the woman I’d slept with just the one time. It didn’t matter what I was thinking or what Bobby had said about Janet. I wanted to sleep with Kate again. There was something about her. I hoped it wasn’t because she was the only woman among all the female-dressed figures I was now a part of. Yes, I was a female-dressed figure all the time, wasn’t I—as Kate had persuaded me to be?

“Well, it’s not true that you have to go out and meet the guys in the audience,” said Kate lightly. “Terry, Cindy, and Pearl love doing it. They get lots of tips that way and they love to party. Didn’t you see any of that going on in Midland or Tylerville?”

“Sort of,” I said grudgingly.

“It won’t be the same at *Diamond Lou’s*,” said Kate airily. “Our parties are more private. I’ll bet Cindy makes a miraculous recovery by tonight. A girl like her wants her part of the action, sick or not. Look, here’s the turnoff. Watch the road signs if you will. It’s a little tricky to find our way as *Lou’s* isn’t downtown where it used to be.”

There were working men drinking in different bars as we ‘girls’ entered *Diamond Lou’s*. They all came to see us entering through the hotel entrance, swishing girlishly, as Kate whispered for me to do in more wriggly fashion, up the stairs to the rooms that were assigned to us.

Terry put on a show, wiggling, waving and flirting with all the bemused men who stared at us in our high heels and dresses, clicking our way up the broad wooden steps to our rooms.

“Hey!” one guy yelled at me. “You in the red shoes. Are you a boy or are you a girl?”

I’d already had the people who worked at the place give me calculating looks that terrified and unnerved me. Then there were the posters all around the place for the Donna Vallee Show! Yes, it always had an exclamation mark after the title now. And there I was in the pictures, with the other girls, in provocative, girlish poses on the posters, in female clothing, transformed by taping and tugging into a facsimile of a real girl.

An older man came bustling out of an office at the foot of the stairs as I minced upwards, my face heated and scarlet.

“Now, now, Jim Rennick,” said the grey-haired man, his eyebrows going up as he stopped and stared at me. “The young lady isn’t going to answer an impudent question like that!”

Impudent? I felt like I was listening to the tutor on the movie set that my parent had had to employ.

“She looks like a real girl, Lou,” said the first man determinedly, moving as if he would come up the stairs after me.

“Now, Jim, that’s out-of-bounds to you,” said the grey-haired man whom I now took to be Louis Diamond himself, the owner of the place. He was still staring at me as I minced across a landing to another set of stairs. “So, you come to the show tonight, tie and jacket, and check her out for yourself, Jim. If

that little girl is in tonight's show, then you'll know she isn't a little girl but a little boy."

"She's pretty though, whatever she is," said another guy, going along beside the stairs. I'm sure that he was looking up my dress as he did that. Oh, that's why I'd had to wear such colorful and frilly panties and garters, I realized, with a spasm of fear passing through me.

"The show's tonight," Lou Diamond called out, now grinning. "Come and see all the pretty girls in the show tonight! It's going to amaze you! It always does!"

The rooms on the third floor were small, but each impersonator, including me, got one to herself. "I don't have to share," I said in relief to Kate as she gave me the key to 307.

"Well," said Kate. "You don't have to—but you might want to." She smiled and had a funny sort of look on her face. "I might come by and visit you myself."

"Oh, would you?" I gasped. She looked prettier than she normally did in her severe business suit, stockings, makeup and carefully styled hair.

Kate laughed. "Now, Deirdre," she said with a sigh. "With all the offers you are going to get tonight for your time, you likely won't have any inclination for the likes of me. But if you really want me to, I will look in on you and see that you're making out all right."

"I probably will be pretty tired," I admitted, looking at the dark-haired girl—me 'practicing'—in the long mirror of the room Kate opened. She gestured for me to enter with my little makeup and overnight cases. A young bellhop, red-faced as Terry put her arms about

him and squeezed him, brought us all our suitcases, coming to me quite quickly to get away from Terry.

“Why would that be?” asked Kate as I shivered at the girl in the black, silky top and the white and grey patterned, flared skirt in the mirror. The puffy sleeves with my slimmed figure, my hair still fluffed out by the wind, made me seem so young and girlish. My red heels Kate had bought me as a gift, she said, and they fitted me perfectly.

Girls and women had it right, I had thought a few times, as I felt all the soft petticoats and underslips against me, against my stockings. I wanted to flounce my skirts about me like a Spanish dancer. I probably would have done so but for the young bellhop nervously, repeatedly, asking me where I would like to have my suitcases placed. He called me ‘miss’ as well, all the time, though I was probably only a year or two older than him.

“Would you like me to hang up your dresses for you, miss?” the bellhop asked me—blushing hopefully, I would have said.

I was about to say “No,” with a shiver at a man or boy seeing all the woman’s clothing that Kate and Donna had provided me with. But Kate precluded me from doing that.

“Deirdre would love you to assist her in putting her clothing properly into the closet and chest of drawers,” Kate said with a smile. “Will you be working tonight, Gerald?” she asked the boy who opened my dress cases and almost reverentially began to hang up some of the dresses that I would have to wear in the show. The showgirl outfits weren’t there, nor my blonde wigs. They were in the large cases that Bobby had been told to get help for and take to the dressing rooms for the ‘girls’, a word that now included me. It

sent weird thrills through me each time I heard it, in reference to me.

“N-no,” said Gerald huskily, his face scarlet. He seemed unable to look at me save for several surreptitious glances.

“Do you have tickets to our show, then?” asked Kate with a bright smile.

“It, it’s really a, a cover charge,” said Gerald anxiously. “But they are selling them in advance. It, it’s going to be a very big crowd at the show tonight. It really is!”

“But you have advance ticketing?” asked Kate again. And that time, Gerald nodded and gave me a quick glance. I’d rustled over to the only chair in the room and sat, my legs crossed, to watch the stacking of the closet. Kate opened the case with panties and teddies, the ones she and I had washed and ironed the day before, while she laughed about how clumsy I was. She told me that I’d have to learn how to do this because no one was going to do it for me. *But it’s only for two days, tops*, I wanted to tell her—but I didn’t get the chance.

Actually, that would be untrue, about cleaning and ironing, while we stayed in the hotel. I had a laundry basket to put all my undies in, but I would have to keep my gaffs, my stockings, and my breast pads to myself. Those I had to clean and dry properly each night after I had prepared myself for bed in my nightie and negligee or peignoir. It made me shiver all over again as I thought of how I went to bed these couple of days, just to get near to a woman whom I liked and wanted to make love to. I shivered when I went to bed and shuddered more as I thought about it, about the touch of nylon and silk about me, of the bra that Kate told me always to wear and the light

padding taped to the inside. I also had to wear panties with each nightie.

“You *should* feel like a girl,” said Kate, when I protested that that was the way I was beginning to feel and shouldn’t. It was only till Cindy and Pearl could go, again. “Haven’t you noticed the other girls getting flirtier and more feminine in their dress and mannerisms as we get closer to the show?”

I hadn’t noticed anything of the sort. It seemed to me that the girls in the show were always flirty and girlish, no matter whether it was after a show or before.

“Well, they are,” said Kate with a smile. “They’re psyching themselves up to put on a really good performance in praise of women, and in your case, in the *Rent* number, of drag queens. That will be something new for this audience which is why we have put it at the start. There will also be a few surprises as well, which you’ll find out about as we go along.”

“*Surprises?*” I almost screamed at the girl whom I admired so much. “If you think that I am going to become another Cindy, Pearl, or Terry Marvel, you should—”

“Now, Dee,” said Kate as the bellhop stood uncertainly by the open door, all my dresses and feminine clothing put away. “Gerald is leaving us now, and we have to reward him for all that he’s done for you, don’t we?”

“Oh,” I said, standing as gracefully as I could and going for my purse to take out one of the few bills I still had in there.

“Is that what you were expecting, Gerald?” asked Kate with a grin.



The scarlet-faced boy shook his head, his eyes downcast. Kate looked at me as I stood there, my skirts wafting about me, a five-dollar bill in my hand. Kate reached out a soft hand to me, took my equally soft hand, and put it into Gerald's moist, trembling hand.

“Just a little kiss,” said Kate with a brilliant smile at me. “It's the consideration that Gerald would most prefer for the services he's rendered. Isn't that so, Gerald?”

Gerald did look up at me then, his pale blue eyes squinting as he blinked rapidly and still could barely look at me. He nodded and blushed and sweated furiously as Kate moved us together, me trembling as much as the poor boy who, I guessed now, was the same age as me.

It was a fumbling, inexpert kiss, my skirt swishing about us as his hand pressed my breasts against him. He kissed me with closed lips, eagerly pressing so hard against me. His eyes were closed. He didn't see that it was Kate who placed my arms about his neck and made me sway against Gerald, my whole body rebelling against kissing the 'man', but Kate's hand was at my back so that I couldn't let go.

“There,” said Kate with another smile as Gerald had to breathe—I guessed, the way he was gagging as he pressed on my lips. He opened his eyes as he hugged me and hugged me, my skirts rustling, my face surely the color of his as I tried to smile at him.

“That,” Gerald began, finally looking at me, reaching to kiss me again. I turned my cheek demurely, knowing that I must look like I was batting my false eyelashes at him. I may have looked all girly on the outside, but I sure didn't feel it on the inside. “That,”

Gerald said, “was great. It, it was just like kissing a real girl!” he finished in a rush, letting me go.

Kate was laughing as I stood there trembling, the money still in my hand as Gerald, his mouth and neck covered in my lipstick, went out into the hallway. “Gerald meant that as a compliment,” Kate said as I shivered. She seemed to know what I was thinking all the time, as I supposed that the things Bobby had said to me must be true. Kate did seem to be very experienced in dealing with female impersonators, especially encouraging new ones like me to dress more and more like enticing girls, and fashioning excuses for us to stay in dresses, skirts and nighties all day long.

“It’s a good job you put on fresh lipstick in the car,” said Kate as well, still playing me. “When Gerald sees his face in a mirror, he’s going to have a little orgasm all of his own.”

I hated it when she spoke like that, of the effect that I or any of the other girls would have on men. I didn’t want men to be sexually interested in me. “But doesn’t it validate your performance,” Kate had said cynically to me. “If you can be so enticing a woman that you get a man to come in his pants, or just get an erection, as he would on seeing a pretty woman, then you have succeeded with the straight part of your audience. There won’t be that many, you know, who are *really* straight—but we always get some groups, young men usually, who want to come and be daredevils. That’s when you tone it down and become really demure. They’ll soon be eating out of your hands, you know.”

I shuddered as I thought about what she was saying. It did seem to me that Kate was often referring to what was going to be going on after the show or during intermissions. I was determined that I was not

going to be involved in any of that perverted stuff. I was primed and prepped for my performances; that was what I was going to do, and nothing more. No, I wasn't going to let Lou Diamond kiss and ravage me in front of the audience, encouraging the diehards to do the same, later on.

Kate took my hand. "Let's go and see how the dressing rooms and stage are organized," she said. We went into the hallway like two girls in the way that we swayed together and minced along the hallway in our high heels.

Kate slowed outside an open door, where we saw Gerald with his back to us. He was talking a mile a minute to the vivacious Cindy, brushing her hair most carefully, her legs crossed, already in a negligee, smiling up at Gerald who seemed to be sharing with her about his job in the hotel part of *Diamond Lou's*.

"I don't think that Gerald is quite as naïve as he was putting on," said Kate as she pressed for the elevator.

I hadn't thought at all about that. The door opened on seven or eight people in the elevator car. I tried to hang back, aware only of the intense scrutiny both of us were getting from the men riding down to the main part of the hotel.

I flushed and stood with my back to most of them as the elevator headed down to the Main Floor. As the bell clanged and the door opened, one of the guys beside Kate asked, "Well, is it true that the third floor is reserved for female impersonators doing the shows here for the next few days?"

Kate smiled. I don't know how she did it. I was in agony at the inspection of everything about me, from

my stockings to my hair and earrings, by the men around us, walking with us, almost like a posse. “Yes, it is true,” she said, taking my hand and swinging it against my rustling, feminine dress. “I hope you’ll all come and see the show tonight or tomorrow.”

“Count on it,” said some raspy-voiced guy behind me. Kate then pulled me gently to one side of the passage, where we went down a short flight of steps to where a door was marked ‘Performers Only’. She opened the door with the computer card key.

“Your room key will work here as well,” Kate told me. Her eyes sparkling with laughter as she saw me shuddering in disgust, after walking like a sexy woman in front of so many guys. Luckily, we entered a more familiar world to me, and the relief I felt was palpable. I was used to theater props and stages, as well as sets, ropes and pulleys, stages that led out into the audience, as well as traditional stage arrangements.

Janet was in front of the footlights, which weren’t on, directing several men who often stared at her thoughtfully. She looked very elegant, I thought, in a straight skirt and jacket and blouse, very much like Kate’s. *What am I kidding about?* I quivered to myself as I saw how the men, and me too, were looking at Janet. She did look like a very real, attractive girl—one I wouldn’t kick out of bed, as the saying goes.

“These are the sets, the entrances and exits, the light and music configurations, the recordings and the new sheet music,” Janet was saying huskily.

“We should run through some of this modern stuff,” one of the men said with a frown, leaning on a synthesizer, if he did but know. His expression

changed to a smile as Janet laughed at him. “Yes, I know we always say that. But this time, it’s true. It’s a good thing you’re doing most of the playing, Janet. Will you be able to cut over to *Mackenzie’s* after your last show tomorrow night? There’s this piano player there we’re trying to recruit for the house band.”

Janet went off with the man’s arm about her shoulders companionably, she looking up and laughing at the musician, shaking her fair hair most femininely at him. She didn’t look around for me at all, as she usually did. I felt Kate’s hand in mine stiffen; I looked at her in alarm.

“Let’s check that your dresses and wigs are all ready,” said Kate, leading me to a long dressing room with eight stations and mirrors for whoever was performing at *Lou’s* to prepare for their performance. The trunks and costume racks were in position and Donna herself was there, with Frankie, making sure that everything was in order.

Donna smiled at her daughter and looked at the hand clenched to mine. Almost immediately, Kate let go of my hand and dress.

“You didn’t tell me that Mike is back with the house band,” said Kate sharply to the matronly, elegant, blonde impersonator.

“Mike Elliott?” asked Donna with a frown and Kate nodded.

“He just went off with his arm about Janet,” said Kate in a raised voice. I could sense the anger inside her.

“Janet is not your husband any more,” said Donna softly, sympathetically, and her tone seemed to ease

Kate's sharpness somewhat. "She is a grown woman and will make her own mistakes."

"You're wrong," said Kate snappishly. "Janet is not a grown woman."

"Well, I'd say that she was," said Frankie jovially. "I'd say she's really grown, if she's the kid I knew with Lynne Berringer's stage show."

Kate snorted and let go my hand. "Have Alisha and the other girls arrived yet?" she asked her father.

"No," said Donna. "They don't really need to, as they'll just be working the audience for the first shows. You can rehearse them tomorrow, Kate. Alisha could only get three boy dancers to join us; they'll be here later. I always forget how small this dressing room is, and how we'll have to double and triple up. You'll be our dresser again and organize things, won't you, Kate?"

There was a silence. I thought Kate was going to refuse. "Of course," Kate finally said with a sigh. "But when you go west, if Vegas comes through, mama, you are going to have to get someone to do the job permanently, someone like Alisha."

I wondered what the Vegas thing was. I shivered as I thought of me going with The Donna Vallee Show into Las Vegas. There would be bound to be people there who knew Bobby and me. I shuddered. It was a good thing I would soon be out of this dress and this bra and panties. It had been an excruciating performance, but it wasn't working out the way I wanted it to with Kate. As soon as we were paid, Bobby and I should split, no matter if we had nothing else to go to right then.

The 'other' girls came down then, laughing and being absurdly girlish. As predicted, Cindy said that she was going to come back into the show.

I shivered. Thank goodness, I wouldn't be needed as a showgirl. I would just have to perform my theater spots and I could be done. "Oh no," said Cindy with a smile as she casually took off her dress and paraded about the room in bra, panties, and stockings. "We need you as well, Dee. You take my place and I'll take Sharon's, the girl who quit. We're supposed to be in fours in each of our sets, and Terry will join us for some. Kate, we have to tape Deirdre really well so that we don't upstage her with these."

Cindy smiled and jiggled her breasts. She really did have very rounded, mobile, female breasts. I had an attack of chills, and fever, as I thought how it would be if I ever had breasts just like her. *No!* I screamed silently to myself. I couldn't have things like Cindy's breasts wobbling on my chest as Cindy's did on her.

"What happens when Terry has a sketch of her own with Donna?" I asked.

"Janet will fill in," said Kate caustically. Cindy's thin eyebrows shot up as she smiled.

"Does she know?" asked Cindy of Pearl, who was smiling at her as she stripped just like her husband, or wife, or whatever, did.

"Janet's rekindling the flame with Mike Elliott," said Pearl very softly as Kate had moved away and was talking to Donna and Frankie. Frankie's arm rested easily about Donna's shoulder. The older, blonde female impersonator was in no hurry to shoo him away or make him keep his hands to himself.

“Stupid girl,” breathed Cindy, smiling at me. “So, you’ve got a chance there, Deirdre,” she smirked at me while I shuddered and sat in front of the mirror and looked at the pretty, dark-haired girl in her black top looking back at me so seriously.

No, I didn’t need that complication now, I thought, the tension rising in me as Kate brought my hair-pieces over and put them in front of a mirror that was clearly reserved for me.

“Ready for the big show?” asked Kate with a smile that I knew was false.

“Oh yes,” I said girlishly as she looked at me sharply. “I love to show off. Let’s get to it!”

## **X. A STAR IS BORN**

I had created faces before. I had worn pancake, panstick, and theatrical makeup in various productions according to circumstances. I tried to put out of my mind all the stuff going on around me. I concentrated on what I had to do, and changed nervously into the tight skirt and boots that I had to wear for Angela.

I was in a state of nervous tension, but it was a very familiar state, one that I expected to be in whenever I performed. I couldn’t perform without butterflies in my stomach at the very least. But I usually was inundated with nervous attacks that threatened to convulse my whole body. That was the way that I felt for this completely new show.

I’d been in many plays and pantomimes. I’d worn women’s clothes as a ‘dame’ in some of those, but

this was definitely different, I kept hearing a voice in my head telling me. Ooo, I painted my lips in womanly fashion and got ready to be Angela for the first show. *You have to be a real woman*, I told myself nervously, expecting that that was what female impersonators told themselves when they were preparing to go out and perform for other people.

Everyone kept saying that we were doing three shows, at 9:00, 11:30, and 2:00, depending on how late the hall could be cleared. But the posters around the dressing room, with me featured as much as the other girls, showed the times of only two shows, the last at midnight.

“Come on,” said Cindy, her makeup now so thick and heavy up close. “The bell is for a walk-through. We have to do it with the band and crew that Lou Diamond always insists upon. Now you be nice to them, Dee! And, if they pat you on the derriere, smile and act as if you enjoyed it. Most of them don’t stay for the private party at two o’clock anyway.”

“Private party?” I asked shakily as Janet began to play the opening bars of the first number of the show. Wow, was it ever different when a sax, a guitar, bass and drums joined in as well! It actually sounded like a real show!

“Yeah,” said Pearl, joining us and smiling at the way that my chest had been taped so that I looked, even as Angela, as if I was as busty as the husband and wife. “Are we going to practice the surprise as well?”

“No,” laughed Cindy. “The surprise will be just that. Unrehearsed. But we won’t be doing any today. I just hope no one gets hurt when we do it. They sometimes do in these things.”

A line of a half dozen girls, brightly dressed in dance dresses, came in with an older blonde woman who ushered them out to sit at some of the tables. There they watched us avidly as we walked through the show.

“Alisha is here with some of the chorus line she uses in her show in Chicago,” whispered Pearl to me, as I trembled at the curiosity in all the eyes watching us. “If we go to Las Vegas this summer, it will be for over two months. We’ll have a dozen dancers, female dressed, at least, come with us, along with a male partner for each. Donna’s show in the old days was like that. Kate wants to get the show back to Vegas and you, Dee, can get us there. It’ll be great when you take over from Donna and do some more up-to-date music.”

“But I’m not staying,” I said. I don’t think Pearl heard me as she scampered away to where Cindy was clinging to Lou Diamond. He was smiling already, and looked twice as pleased when Pearl joined him. Yes, he had the husband-and-wife team in his arms. But then he steered them over to me, looking me over in my tight skirt and even tighter blouse.

“And you’re the new girl,” Lou beamed at me. I shuddered at the way he looked at me in such an interested fashion, oblivious to the other girls hanging on to him. In the background, Janet and Kate argued over how Janet could get into costume to join the other girls and me in a short chorus line, which would dance and perform in the middle of the show.

“I—yes, I am,” I said anxiously, femininely, wanting to kick myself with a high-heeled boot as I described myself that way to a man. No, I wasn’t the new girl—and I wasn’t staying, as the term seemed to imply.

“Well, break a leg,” said Lou Diamond with a big smile. “We’ll definitely be getting together at the party. Save a dance for me.”

I was saved a crass reply by Kate, declaring that the show was about to start and we had to go to our places right away.

I should have broken a leg but didn’t. I did everything exactly as I had been practising and so did the others. I was Liza Minnelli and did a complete medley with Frankie Morel as a massive Joel Grey. I couldn’t believe how the number of girls in the chorus grew as Cindy, Terry, Pearl, Donna, Janet, and even Kate joined us, while Frankie did a quick change into blonde wig, makeup and glittering evening gown. All the ‘women’ on stage made me feel that I really was Liza and singing on the stage of the Kit-Kat Club.

Boy, did the audience ever applaud for that, much more than for the *Rent* numbers. I don’t think the kind of audience we had was as familiar with a modern musical as they were with one from the past.

As a showgirl, I’d danced and done high kicks with just Pearl. I was very uncertain of doing that in public, but the addition of three more girls—Terry, Janet and a shaking Cindy—made us into a real chorus line of ‘girls’. We hopped and kicked high in unison; the audience loved it. Oh, how they applauded as we turned and wiggled our feathery backsides, frilly panties, stockings and garters to them, and girlishly ran off together.

It was so exhilarating—well, sort of—to be applauded so much, to be welcomed back on the stage when I went to sing, aping a real woman’s voice, with Donna. Then we did a little “Destiny’s Child” in outrageous drag with Cindy and Pearl. I was applauded as if I was a real actor—which I am, I tried to tell my-

self—and had put on an outstanding performance in a great play. Or so I was telling myself as I swished in pretty dresses and long, glamorously feminine hair.

Well, I *was* somewhat outstanding, I guess, as I could ‘do’ a woman, her attitudes and voice, in whatever I had to do. *I’m an actor!* I wanted to scream at my fellow dancers, who looked so surprised at me when I was changing in the dressing room. I loved it all, even when roses were delivered to me. Flowers were poured on all the girls in the crowded dressing room.

It really was a giggle, as Terry Marvel declared it. I sat in a negligee, in my long tights and panties, and gushed with the other girls about the ovations we had all received. We giggled, maintaining our soft, girly voices, as we catalogued the near misses we had made and how we would improve and re-do certain moves in the second show. We barely had time for drinks and vitamins before we had that second show to do.

We were better than the first time, I thought. I know *I* was better, going out on the high of all the adulation from having done everything once with a real band to inspire me. I thought that I got into each of my roles so much more in the second performance, but the audience was tougher. “Not so many tourists,” said Terry with a smile when I mentioned that. There was less applause, even though we were much more girly in our showgirl moves and dances after we were co-ordinated a little better.

I don’t know how Terry could say that. I couldn’t see beyond the footlights. I never could. All I knew was that there was a full audience out there, who seemed for the most part to enjoy what we were doing. They did seem to like my second song as Angela at the end much better, however. Ooo, how they ap-

plauded, too, when Frankie kissed me. Yes, I acted as if I was delighted and didn't mind at all, kissing and being caressed by another man.

The third performance was a private session for some important people, said Donna, looking at me nervously. There wouldn't be as many at this show, she had said. She was right. I could see the chorus line girls, in their glittering, colorful dresses, out there in the audience entertaining various men.

"Here," said Cindy, handing me a glass of water and a pill, when I had a little attack of nerves as I changed back into my swishy skirt for the opening number. I gasped and shivered as I wiggled very sexily, girlishly, seeing myself in the mirrors at the exit. Cindy asked me what the matter was. I said I was tired. The nervous energy I brought to every performance was beginning to dissipate. I was losing the butterflies I needed to perform my best.

"What's this?" I asked, refusing the pill.

"It's how we girls get through hectic schedules like this," said Cindy, urging me to take it. "Can't you see how sparkly we all are? I think Janet took two before the last performance. Have you ever seen her so flirty? Try just one. You'll see. It'll get you through with no ill effects. After all, the US Army uses them to keep going. So, why shouldn't we?"

I didn't tell Cindy, but I didn't take the pill. Thinking about how the girls were behaving like—well, like girls, like energized, ultra-feminine girls having a fabulous time all night long, made me shudder. I was swept along. I was hugged and assisted each time I came off stage by Kate, who smiled knowingly at me as if she knew I was on some girlie pill.

We were applauded off the stage, holding hands like girls as we bounced off in our long skirts, swishing them together and laughing at the feminine noise we made. I just followed the other girls, at the end of the third show, as everyone made a left turn and started going out right away, into the audience.

“I’m not going,” I gasped, trying to balk as Cindy and Pearl grabbed my arms and laughed. They tried to pull me through the door onto the club floor, where it seemed as if little parties were going on at the tables nearest to the stage.

“Everyone will want to meet you,” said Kate—right there, blocking my retreat with a smile—“including the Las Vegas bookers who came by unexpectedly today. So, smile, darling, gorgeous Deirdre Johnson. *Smile!* This is your chance to be a big star!”

I tried to hold back, but I was hustled out across the floor into Lou Diamond’s arms. I was hugged and kissed on the cheek and told how wonderfully fragrant a girl I was. I tried to smile, but my heart thudded and went a mile a minute as I was introduced, as Dee-Dee, to Cecil Young. He had been in charge of casting the minor parts in *Running Through the Line*, the kids’ movie that Bobby and I had ‘starred’ in. I recognized Liz McCann, one of the people with Mr. Young. She was a booking agent in Vegas. I had once sat in her office for two days, but never got to see her.

“She’s the real talent,” said Liz—fiftyish, stylish, organized—to Mr. Young, as Bobby and I had always called him. I hadn’t seen Bobby all night long. Boy, did I now fervently hope he wouldn’t put in an appearance and give away who I was, by telling Liz who *he* was, and what his brother had been doing in the show.

“Should I call you ‘she’ or ‘he?’” asked Liz, looking so intently at me that I was sure at any moment she was going to say she knew me. “We were just going up to Chicago when Kate Vallee phoned and persuaded me to talk to Cecil, which led to us dropping in on your show. And am I ever glad that Kate phoned me! I can see this as a new *Cage aux Folles*—and you know how much of a hit *that* is. We’ll need to get this femme under contract to us, Cec, as well as The Donna Vallee Show. We’ll have to change that name, of course. We don’t want anyone thinking it’s the old, tacky show coming back.”

Cecil Young smiled at me. He was twenty pounds heavier than I remembered, but I was terrifically afraid he remembered *me*. “I think we’ll call you ‘she’ all the time,” he said with that lazy smile he was known for. Bobby had said Cecil Young looked that way because that was what he was, lazy. Cecil moved next to me and looked down the front of my dress. I don’t know what he expected to see. But then I realized how tightly I was taped and guessed that Mr Young saw me as a prettified boy-girl. I thought of myself that way, sometimes, I told myself in anguish.

“We have to have you under contract with your correct name,” said Liz, while Lou Diamond still kept his hand on my arm, as if I was really a girl in my rustling, flared dress. That made me want to throw up. “What’s your real name, dear?”

“D-Deirdre J-Johnson,” I stammered. Oh, how they all laughed at me!

*Oh please, don’t start talking about me!* I thought in a panic, recalling all the things I’d let slip about Bobby and me, about the movies we’d been in. I couldn’t remember if I’d ever named *Running Through the Line* as the movie we’d starred in. My name was on the poster, for goodness’ sake. “Douglas

Reynolds is Justin Morgan in ...” was the banner above the picture of me and the title of the movie. I was sure I’d said to someone that my brother and I had starred in several movies as The Morgans.

I just knew how Cecil Young would laugh when he realized who he was talking to. He was such a gossip as well. We, Bobby and I, would be fodder for the tabloids for sure. So, I stood there in my yellowish, organza, white, flared skirt and white petticoats, my face made up like a woman, my hair so feminine, too, and tried to make these important show business people think that I was a female impersonator. I couldn’t be the actor whose name they might have heard of, but whom they hadn’t been interested in, as a young leading man or ‘character’ actor.

“Ah, good,” said Lou Diamond as someone started up some music. He’d come over to his ‘guests’ and released me from Cecil’s clutches, only to take me, his arm about me. I gulped and realized I’d shifted from being one boss’s girl to being another’s. At least, I thought, Lou Diamond was a neat, handsome man, just starting to grey.

Oh, goodness, wherever had such a thought come from—that I was holding on to a handsome man? I wasn’t going to be his girlfriend, I told myself—*never!* I felt Lou’s hand clasping me tightly around my waist. “Dance with me, pretty Deirdre,” he smiled at me. “We can leave all the sordid contract details to Kate, Cecil, and Liz. Come and join the party.”

It was a party into the early morning, with no end in sight. I was to be a party girl, not even allowed back to the dressing room to change into something less sexily glamorous as the costume I’d ended in, as a dancing showgirl. Worse, I was the boss’s girl! Lou held onto me when others came and tried to pry me away from him. All of the impersonators danced with

men who held onto them and laughed with them. Alisha and her chorus-line girls joined in as the tall, handsome, mostly brown-haired Lou Diamond held onto me tightly in every waltz. All the other girls were doing the same, clinging to men.

“You don’t leave with anyone else but me,” said Lou Diamond quietly, pressing me into him. I trembled as my long, blonde hair caressed my shoulders. Ooo, he kissed my face, his fingers pressing into my waist and back. “Cecil Young wants to dance with you, and you can. But tonight, pretty Dee-Dee, you are mine. You don’t go back with Cecil to his room, no matter what he says he will pay you to get you to go with him. Tonight, darling Dee-Dee, you belong to *me!*”

I wanted to tell him off, to protest. I wanted Bobby to come from wherever he was hiding then and ‘rescue’ me, his brother. Ooo, but Lou Diamond’s words made me shiver and shudder as Cecil Young came up and took me back into his arms, with his huge belly pressing into me.

“You’re such an attractive woman,” Cecil murmured to me as we circled the little floor, my high heels a whisker away from being trodden on. “Why don’t we cut out of here, my pretty one, and discuss your career in Vegas? You really don’t need this show, you know, not a talent like you.”

“Lou won’t let me leave with anyone else,” I squeaked at Mr. Young, who looked very surprised that I’d turned him down.

I looked over his shoulder as Mr. Young held me close. I saw Kate in a smiling but frenzied conversation with Liz McCann. I watched Kate’s face freeze and followed her eyes, knowing what I would find. Yes, there were Janet and her musician friend,



clinched to each other, their lips pressed together. They broke apart, but Janet was sparkling—there was no other word for it—as she took Mike Elliott’s hand and led him towards the outer door and the elevators. She was almost skipping beside him, she was so high.

I didn’t have a doubt in the world where Janet was going, and what she was going to be doing with the guy. I looked at Janet’s ex-wife, Kate, the woman I wanted to talk all of this through with—but I could see that Kate wasn’t concerned at all with what was happening to me.

“I guess I’ll have to surrender you here,” said Mr. Young with a sly grin. “But, when you come to Vegas, sugar, you’ll be in my town and under my rules.”

I shivered as Cecil Young leered at me and told me I had such pretty long legs. He’d love to kiss them from top to bottom, he whispered as I squirmed, but I couldn’t break the firm grip he held me in until Lou Diamond came up to reclaim me like a prize, a very frightened prize.

“It’s very late, Cec,” said Lou, holding me and nuzzling my neck, making his claim to me very evident to the angry Las Vegas mogul. “I see all of your friends are getting lucky tonight. Cecil. That girlie in the glittery dress, Terry. She’s been waiting for you to claim her, Cec, as I’ve told Dee-Dee to wait for me. So, Cec, shall we both get the girls who’ve been set up for us and go and get lucky as well, tonight?”

I was in a panic as Lou Diamond ushered me towards the elevators. Cecil Young was shaking his head and looking pretty angry, though his expression did change when Terry Marvel came waltzing through the crowd and flung her arms about his neck.

I prayed that Bobby would be there to rescue me, but he wasn't. It was just me and the well-groomed owner of the hotel, the club, and many neighboring bars. I could feel how he wanted me, as a girl, just by the way he held me. Gosh, I knew that everyone else in the cast expected me to go with him and be his girl.

I should have run for it—but Lou's arm was so tight and possessive about me. Everyone was wishing him a good night as I minced with him to the elevators, thinking of wild schemes that would get me away from this man who wanted me as a woman. We didn't stop at the third floor as we went up in an empty elevator, but went right up to the penthouse.

Lou's arm was about me all the way. I sort of flounced with him into his suite, I couldn't do anything else in this sexy dress and these impossible high heels. Oh, gee, without any preamble, he kissed me. It was an aggressive male kiss. Yes, I made it worse for myself by trying to pull back, which only made him more and more ardent. Soon he had his tongue between my lips.

Ooo, I was thoroughly kissed as a woman should be kissed! I was waltzed over to the sofa, where we fell in an explosion of feminine rustlings as Lou Diamond pressed himself on top of me and kissed and kissed me, caressing me heatedly, my tush wriggling under his attentions, as I had caressed women before. I probably would have enjoyed it, if only I'd been a woman.

"I know, I know," Lou growled at me as he lay beside me on the sofa, his hand lifting the petticoats of my skirt and caressing my stockinged legs so gently as incredible waves of nervous tension swept over me. "Kate told me that you weren't inflated at all like that ex-husband of hers. Janet's quite a dish now, is-

n't she? Just like you will be in time, Deirdre Johnson. But not now. Still, a girl like you can still pleasure a man like me, can't she? Don't tell me a lovely little tranny like you doesn't know how to go down on a guy."

"I'm not!" I began in agitation as Lou Diamond reached between my legs and took hold of my panties. I had to scream then as he pulled on the taping that I had. I tried to push him, to fight with him, but I was hurting and wriggling so much as Lou kissed me then, softly and so gently. Oh, he shouldn't have done that, not with his hand caressing the tops of my thighs, my stockings and garter belt and my manhood.

As it often did when it was released, my manhood grew. Oh, gods and goddesses, in Lou's hand it grew more than I thought possible! Lou's mouth held me in the kiss. Ah, I did something that I should never have done. My penis thrust itself forward, as my panties were stroked. And so, just like that, I came, as I always did, prematurely. I came sexually with another man kissing me, caressing my legs, squeezing my breasts and stroking my dress about me while I tried to sob, "No, No, No!"

"There, my darling Dee-Dee," said the man stroking me still as if I was a woman. My member stayed erect as he stroked me, spreading my legs. Then he opened his pants.

I was able to scream, "No! I'm not gay!" as Lou climbed onto me and his wet penis touched mine and then slid backwards between my thighs as I gyrated and tried to get away from it.

"Neither am I," whispered Lou Diamond as he forced me. He penetrated me and took me as if I was a woman being penetrated by her man. He lifted my

legs about his waist, put my arms about his neck and kissed my terrified lips as he began to pump me. “You feel like a woman now, don’t you?” Lou whispered to me and, terrified by the avid look on his face, I nodded. “Good, I told Kate that the new pills we got for her girls would really work. See. You don’t have to fight me. Just keep moving like that. Yes, baby, yes. That’s the way.”

All I was doing was trying to get free of him, but Lou seemed to think that I was moving my derriere to accommodate him. “Please don’t!” I begged him in the rustle of femininity that was me, which he seemed to think was so wonderful of me. It took him a while to come. I had to relax, he told me, and it would be over. I tried and he seemed to enter me even more, deeply. I twisted and moaned, as I was hurting.

Ooo, this man started pumping me like a piston, telling me how much he loved doing that to a woman like me. He ignored my groans as he came inside me. A man came inside me. Then, his passion slaked, he wanted me to lie with him, all demure and womanly, kiss him gently, arousing him again and being friendly with him, as a girl like me wanted to be.

I was all a-shiver in distress as Lou got up to get drinks for us, kicking off his pants, his manhood hanging down most obscenely. “This will make you sleep,” said Lou as I put on high heels and wobbled to my feet, thinking for some reason that I’d be leaving the room, having accommodated the boss’s primal urgings.

“Here’s where you tell me what a lovely evening you had and thank me,” said Lou Diamond, looking down at me, his arms about me lovingly, if you can say that about someone like me, being held as a woman. All the time, my private parts ached and oozed.

“Th-thank you for the lovely evening,” I gasped as Lou hugged me to him and kissed me, softly and gently.

“I’ll see you to your room,” Lou said with a smile. I thought that I’d go back to 307 but I didn’t. Lou picked me up and took me into his bedroom and his bed. Whatever was in the drink made me really woozy. It was Lou who slipped back the sheets of the bed and helped me out of my dress. He gave me lotions and helped me get rid of the makeup on my face. I felt so weird as he did such kind things for me. Then he kissed me again and got into bed with me, my bra and stockings and panties still in place.

This time, I responded as a girl should to a handsome man. It made me feel all warm inside when he stroked me and told me what a wonderful girl I was and how I loved playing the part of a girl, didn’t I? I did. I loved it. I loved it when he told me what a pretty girl I was. I needed no urging to put my arms about Lou and to kiss him back—as I hadn’t really done yet, he told me.

Ah, he told me, that was the way to make love to a man. Yes, and wiggle and kiss him—that was it! See, he was going to make love to me all over again. Wasn’t it just wonderful to be a girl with a man like Lou Diamond? Ooo, yes, I whispered to my boss, who did me again, and then again and, I think, again, as I rolled around on him as he wanted—being a thoroughly delightful woman, my lover told me.

Lou said that we were making love really wonderfully as boyfriend and girlfriend. I was the girlfriend. “You lucky man,” I said to him as I stretched out in the bed and let his hands caress me everywhere as I kissed and caressed the handsome man beside me. It was easier for him, at the end, when I rolled over and Lou penetrated me from the rear, caressing my boo-

bies, as he called them, my little man, and my legs and stockings as I arched and bucked as my lover took me as if I was a woman.

*So that's how it feels*, I thought pleasantly, turning back to him, wanting to be a woman, wanting to please him even more as my tiredness seemed to have gone. I think we pleased each other half a dozen times more before light appeared in at the windows. He suggested we just cuddle and sleep together in delight if we could. I had the strangest of dreams that I was a real woman, and that I was pleasuring my man all night long.

## **XI. DIVA!**

“We do the surprise in this show,” said Pearl as I sat, so ashamed and humiliated with myself, in the dressing room, looking at the woman’s face in the mirror and hating her, for she was me. She was a degenerate, that woman in the mirror. If she had been a real girl, I would have called her a slut.

Worse than that, she was an addict. She couldn’t get by without the pills Cindy supplied her with, night and day. Yes, The Donna Vallee Show had been extended at *Diamond Lou’s*. We were in our third week. I was in the third week of being Lou Diamond’s girl.

I lived in his penthouse with him. I slept with him every night. I made love to him as if I was a girl whenever he wanted it, in the afternoon, at night, or in the early hours of the morning after the show.

I had hated him when I first woke up and found out where I was, what he had slipped into my drink.

Lou had flummoxed me by the way he'd apologized so abjectly to me. He'd treated me reverentially. Of course, that had been as a woman. He'd said he adored me and thought I was the best thing ever to come into his life.

Lou had given me the run of his penthouse and hotel. Wherever I went, in the most fashionable of women's clothing and makeup, I was 'Lou's girl'. I was showered with flowers in the dressing room that Alisha and her 'girls' had joined us in. We now were a full-blown revue. Ooo, I was its star with my impersonations and specialty numbers. Yes, I was a female star, both on the stage and off. I was changing, being changed, in every way that anyone could think of, into the kind of beautiful, attractive woman everyone told me that I was.

It was so wonderful to be taken care of all the time, all my worries about money and the next meal set aside for a while. I just mentioned once that I hadn't been paid and had no money, and *voilà*—there, in my purse, were five thousand dollars.

"It's mad money," said Lou with a smile, when I fearfully asked him what it was and why it was in my purse. "Spend it any way you like, my darling. There'll be more in there next month. Don't mention it to Donna, will you? Let her pay you for the show you're putting on. This is just because I love my girl. She's not going short while I'm around."

I shivered and, yes, I rewarded him well as any girl would with kisses, and with more than kisses, for his being so kind to me. I actually began to feel safe and secure, even though I shuddered as I thought of why money was flowing copiously to me from another man, my lover. I tried not to think of it as what it was. I sent half the money to Bobby, as I knew he must be running short as well.

“My darling,” said Donna Vallee—sporting wedding and engagement rings on her ring finger, the wedding ring matching the one Frankie Morel wore—“I’m so glad to retire, believe me. The cameo appearances I’ll make, here and there, will be fine enough for me.”

The changes that made me the star of the show meant that I had to rehearse many new parts. The dressing rooms were expanded with the simple expedient of cleaning out stockrooms and moving new mirrors and cubicles in. There was a men’s room for the male dancers and a room for the chorus girls, all of them tall, thin and gorgeously feminine, though all were boys like me—or so they said—until Kate, Donna, Alisha and Frankie had got through with them.

I had to dance with them all as well in various numbers, the males smiling and holding me as if I was a woman. I shook each time I performed with men who lifted me with ease and complimented me on being such a pretty girl. It was also quite a thing to be part of a dozen, giggling, girlish men and youths, all of us being as feminine as we could as we did our can-cans, with our frilly panties and black garters wiggling together like the good girls that we were.

Mike Elliott was our musical director while Janet was gone to a clinic to have her throat operated on, I was told by Pearl. That was why Kate was missing some days—off to visit her ex-husband, I was told. She barely spoke at all to me on some days.

We saw nothing of the Las Vegas people. It was as if the earth had opened up and swallowed them. But they must have been there somewhere as I couldn’t see all the changes in the show being paid for by anything else than the expectation that we were going to be a smash hit in the future in Las Vegas.

And that relied on me, Lou Diamond's woman, going down on my boyfriend in his office during the day, being his loving woman in bed at night, being a glamorous ornament on his arm wherever he went, while everyone knew that Lou's girl was in fact a female impersonator. I couldn't have got through it without the drugs. Not only did they energize me, but they made me feel so kittenish and affectionate all over.

I wanted to be kissed and fondled as Lou did to me all the time, no matter the company we were in. I let Kate become my beautician, deciding on the women's clothing, makeup, and hairstyle I should wear. I glowed with pleasure at Lou's compliments, his hugs and kisses. and I wore his favorite Chanel perfume for him.

Kate told me to keep it up as the show was getting everything it wanted at Lou's place, where the show had been extended and then was extended again.

"Oh, goody," said Terry to me with a smirk at our last extension. "I love it here, don't you, Dee-Dee?" She'd heard Lou calling me that. Soon everyone was calling me that as well. "The little towns are all right, but you have to prove to so many guys that you're a woman and then that you're a man. I liked the tips for having a guy feel up my titties, and selling him a few kisses, but I hated having their hands in my panties. I preferred that they got all worked up when we were in bed and found out when they couldn't do anything about it. It's much more fun that way!"

"I like our parties as well," said Pearl, joining in from the other side of the dressing table, smiling as she did her mascara so expertly. "It's nice with every man after you. Have you had that Jim Rennick yet, Terry? Oh, he's so cute, and his thing is so bendy!"

Terry giggled. “And what does he think of your little extra?” she asked, setting on her own false eye-lashes and winking at me, so girlishly making up, as well.

“He likes lollipops,” said Pearl. Immediately the two girls on either side of me dissolved into laughter.

That was when Pearl told me we’d do the surprise in the show. I’d no idea what she meant. I was as surprised as the young chorus girls and boys, as we waited while a new segment was added. The basic idea was that the makeup ‘experts’, Donna and Alisha, could make any boy look like a beautiful girl. It was one of those “Oh, no you can’t!” “Oh yes I can!” exchanges with the front rows of the lively audience.

Then, Cindy went out into the crowd and selected a ‘volunteer’ from the audience, a boy who would be made over into a girl. Some of the audience in the second show, where we did the ‘surprise’, seemed so drunk that they actually did really stand up and volunteer their friends with them to be made over. Yes, the audience ‘volunteered’ a lot of them. But Cindy had it all worked out. She grabbed Bobby by his tie and pulled him forward as the beautiful chorus girls ran forward in a giggling, shrieking line. They set up the rest as ‘poor’ Bobby, his face as red as a beet, was set in a chair beside Donna and Alisha who queried the audience on what they wanted done to poor Bobby.

The audience wanted a blonde bombshell. They wanted to see Bobby’s legs in garter belt and stockings. They wanted him with long blonde hair—a bimbo, ready for a night out. They wanted the ‘kid’—my brother, for goodness’ sake—to be their date for the evening. Several men were rising and offering money, in an auction of sorts, for the new girl who was being created on the stage in front of them.

Mouth open, I watched my brother being transformed—yes, fully transformed, just like me. He looked just as girly and feminine as the girls in the dancing chorus. Well, that’s what the audience wanted—and that was what they got.

I think Lou must have got a couple of bouncers to help, as Bobby had been swearing while he was held by several guys in the crowd. Yes, ‘she’—the new, pretty ‘girl,’ my brother—was kissed and stroked, fondled under his short, frilly dress, his ‘breasts’ bouncing as they were caressed and kissed by whatever guys could get their hands on Bobby. I was shaking as ‘she’ was dragged off by several of the pretty chorus girls who’d been making him dance just like one of them.

Eventually, those girls and more came back to me as we did a musical number from *Le Moulin Rouge*, with me as Nicole Kidman. Bobby was escorted back by the bouncers to a table beside the stage. It was a neat touch, as they were so big and strong. They kept away all the men who were still waving dollar bills at the pretty girl, wanting ‘her’ to come and sit with them. Most of the guys were so big that it really made the contrast with Bobby’s feminine dress and stature, small and thin—he must have been mad to wear a corset like me—all the more dramatic. He looked more feminine than I was, I thought.

“So, are you planning to get all your friends who volunteered you for this?” asked Donna sweetly as we finished a wild flurry of feminine dancing and high-kicking, flipping our dresses to show off our rounded tushes and frilly panties. Bobby nodded furiously to Donna’s question, as the crowd cheered.

Donna and Alisha went on and on about what they’d done to the squirming, delectable Bobby, only because the crowd had wanted the newest chorus

girl to be made that way for them. One of the boy dancers had been chosen to bring Bobby flowers. ‘She’ had to stand to receive them.

It was a neat touch again, as it loaded Bobby’s arms. He, or ‘she’, couldn’t react as he would have wanted to then as Marco, leader of the boy dancers, kissed him on his lipsticked mouth. Then, as Marco walked away, he goosed Bobby. To my eyes, Bobby looked about ready to cry at the indignities he’d suffered, and still was suffering, the flowers trembling in his hands.

Bobby had to sit through the rest of the show in the front seat, enduring all the taunts and counsel of the girls—if they *were* girls—who’d come with their menfolk or boy friends to see our ‘burlesque’ show. He had to do all that while I strutted in front of him and sang to him that *I Enjoy Being a Girl*, that *I Can’t Help Loving That Man of Mine*, and that I loved wearing an *Itsy Bitsy Teeny Weeny Polka Dot Bikini*.

When I and the chorus line stripped to our bikinis and tights to finish the number with a few bumps and grinds, Bobby tried to get up, but one of the bouncers stood with him and kissed him as he struggled; then the bouncer passed him on to another for more kisses and caresses, in front of the laughing, celebrating crowd. No, the only way Bobby was going to get out of there was as a demure, sweet girl who behaved like one. Yes, ‘her’ upraised miniskirt, ‘her’ pink, frilly panties, high heels and stockings, and ‘her’ garter belt, were all on display to everyone.

“Some surprise,” I said to Pearl, as we wiggled into the dressing room ahead of the new chorus girl. Pearl laughed at me as we both put on new showgirl head-dresses.

“Well, it was a surprise to Bobby,” she said with a giggle. “Don’t you think that your stuck-up younger brother deserved it?”

I didn’t think anyone deserved what I had gone through. I refused the two pills that Pearl wanted me to take, went out with the other ‘artistes’, and was applauded wonderfully as the woman that I was in all that I’d done that night on the stage. Then, I changed into a tight skirt and skimpy top and went in search of Lou.

“You didn’t have to do that to my brother,” I sobbed to Lou. Surprised, he sat me in his lap, wrapped my arms around him, and had me explain.

I wept out the whole story, feeling so feminine and distraught, as Lou’s hand went up my skirt and caressed me. I was so used to him doing that to me that I didn’t object at all. Lou kissed me and commiserated with me on the terrible joke played on Bobby and me.

“I don’t think anyone knows that the schlep who did the driving for your group to get here was your brother,” Lou told me. It was probably true, I guessed.

He kissed my wet eyelashes and eyelids as he squeezed me to him. Oh, he loved it when I was as girly and cuddly as I was now, and in a little miniskirt as well. “Where is he now?” asked Lou.

I didn’t know. Actually, I think Bobby had gone out in the crowd, still dressed as a blonde, slutty woman. He couldn’t have blended in. Everyone would have known that he was a man in a dress.

Lou set a search going for Bobby. I thanked him as lovingly as a girl will thank a man whom she has ma-

nipulated—but, while that was going on, he undid my skirt and slipped it from me as he took me to the couch in his office. “You had your pill for the show?” he asked me. I nodded, though I hadn’t.

I wanted it to be awful when we made love, to teach me a lesson. I taught myself a lesson, all right. It must have been a backlog from all the other nights of taking pills to sleep with Lou. I felt that I was a woman. I loved making love to my man, Lou, and having him make love to me, he being so manly that I had to be sweet and girly with him. I forgot that I was Doug and Zenon before that. I was Dee-Dee. I loved the strong man who loved me so tenderly, fitting us together so eagerly, each of us working with gentleness and kindness to make the other reach an emotional high. Ooo, what a woman I was becoming, I gloried to myself.

“Goodness,” said Lou Diamond as I lay in his arms and shivered in bliss at being loved as a woman. “It is really getting better each time between us, isn’t it, darling? I don’t think that I can ever let you go from here to Vegas. I really don’t.”

“I’ll stay if you like,” I murmured in a little, girlish voice, not meaning it at all. We’d done enough time, Bobby and me, with The Donna Vallee Show. We’d done the two days and tons more. But Lou really kissed me then as he hadn’t in an age, fiercely. I answered his kiss with everything in me. I knew I wasn’t under any influence, but it didn’t seem to matter to me. I wasn’t playing any kind of role. I was what I was. I was a woman who wanted my man to make love to me. I aroused him with my stockinged thighs and by kissing him. In so doing, I aroused myself.

So I wasn’t gay, I sneered at myself, as I went down on Lou on the sofa. He quickly grew so hard, so hard that he could penetrate me when I wiggled beneath

him, my legs high. Lou climbed onto me, half my feminine clothes still on, my stockinged legs high in the air, me frantically urging him on, when Bobby burst into the room and looked down on us, at what Lou was doing to me.

“What the hell?” yelled Lou as the slender, curvy blonde in the little skirt and long, blonde hair looked down on us. Oh she did look so much like me, in clothing like I was partially wearing! “Can’t you see that I’m busy with this chick? Get out of here! Get in line!”

The chick, me, buried her head in her man’s arm and pulled him down on her, hiding her face from her brother. Lou reacted to me and did me harder and harder as Bobby stood there, mouth agape, watching me being taken as a woman by another man.

“It’s my brother,” I whispered to Lou who instantly became more attentive and gentle with me. Lou caressed and stroked me, ignoring the other blonde woman who seemed rooted to the spot with her hand on the outer door, holding it closed.

Lou whipped me up into a frenzy with his kisses and stroking. I finally exploded against him. Lou didn’t mind as I almost convulsed in the ecstasy that I had first faked for him and now found so real when we made love. I wriggled and writhed under my male lover and had the orgasm that had come onto me so gradually that now I couldn’t do without it whenever Lou made love to me.

I knew that I was Dee-Dee, his loving woman, and that Lou loved me to be so feminine and girly with him. I knew that I had to finish with him. I couldn’t leave off, no matter who was watching us with such intense disapproval. I had to have Lou all the way. He obliged me, grunting and hugging and kissing me in

his own ecstasy, as he climaxed after me, stroking and kissing my chest cleavage. He'd promised me that I would have my own breasts before I went to Las Vegas as a going-away present from him. I'd thought that would be just wonderful, I now realized, but common sense seemed to be returning to me after a long absence.

"I just get to try them out first," Lou had told me as he'd tweaked my little nipples and kissed my chest where the taping still held me a little. He kissed my cleavage now, even with my silent, femininely dressed brother standing beside us. But, as we kissed again, my body starting to quiver as it did when any emotion swept over me, my blonde cutie of a brother suddenly turned on a high heel and swished out of the room—the room where I'd just made love, and reached ecstasy, as Bobby must have seen. The door slammed after my brother, the swishing of his dress and the click of his high heels reverberating in my bejeweled ears.

"You have a show to do, my darling," said Lou as we climbed up off the sofa. I was at last able to find my panties and put them on, following with the tight skirt that I'd worn. I had to stop and kiss Lou with all the affection in me, as he stroked and fondled me, raising all sorts of girlish feelings, as usual, in me. I pulled on my top and knew I had to go back to my room, our room in Lou's suite, where I could clean up and get myself ready for the last performance of the night.

"Nice to meet your brother," said Lou with a grin as he put on his clothes and came over for a final kiss and cuddle in the doorway. It aroused me yet again. I might not have left if Bobby had been there. "She looks like you. She's as pretty as you in that wig and dress."

I opened the door and there was Bobby, sitting on Lou's desk, his dress hitched above his knees, reading something left there. As we stepped out, he raised the paper in his feminized hand and dropped it on Lou's desk, just as any pretty girl would have done. Where the heck had he learned to make a gesture like that? I wondered, admiring the way he slipped down onto his high heels and swished towards me.

"She's coming with me," I said shakily, taking Bobby's hand and leading him out of the office. He didn't walk well in his high heels, so I slowed down. A couple of Lou's people looked up as we passed and smiled at me. They were used to seeing me coming out of Lou's rooms, all mussed up.

I used my card and took Bobby up to the private suite. I went into the private bathroom and ran a scented bath to luxuriate in, as I often did after heated sex with Lou. I think this qualified.

"You can follow me in," I said to my brother—but Bobby came and looked at me, looked at my womanly body and at me without my wig, my hair something of a mess as I bathed.

"Well," the blonde said, in a strained Bobby voice. "I guess I'm just the same as you, aren't I?" He took the makeup remover and did his face just as I had done my own. He put his blonde wig on the stand next to mine and took off earrings and eyelashes, just as I had done, putting his beside mine.

The girls had been thorough. Bobby was in a tight waist cinch but all his underwear was for females, save for the tight gaff that he had been laced into. The expression on his face was a wonder to behold as he let that go and feeling returned to that part of his body.

The bath was big enough to get into it with me, not a hair on his body, as there wasn't on mine. "I tried to warn you," Bobby said huskily to me. "Janet tried to warn you. I got a note to go in and see her at the clinic. She whispered to me that there's an appointment for you there in two weeks. Are you going to become a woman completely then, Zenon?"

"No!" I told him. "I d-don't know a-about any a-ap-  
pointment in a c-c-clinic!" It took a while to convince Bobby. The phone rang as we were in the bath. It was Donna, looking for me.

"You're on in ten minutes," she scolded me. "This is no time to be playing the diva and holding everyone up."

"I, I needed to bathe after, after," I began.

"After Lou," said Donna abruptly and then she laughed. "He's strutting around here like a rooster. He's always like that when he's had sex with you. You're really good for him, girl. I think that the poor man's in love with you."

"Like Frankie is with you?" I asked her. Donna laughed. I couldn't have told that she was the female impersonator with the voice like a man's as she spoke to me, now.

"Well, let's say that you and I are neck and neck in the number of times that our man has had us flat on our back with our legs in the air," she said smugly. "Or do you like it from other directions more?"

"What a question to ask!" I said as I dabbed myself all over with a soft towel and Bobby luxuriated in the scented water I had left him.

“What are we going to do now?” Bobby asked me directly then.

“Do you still have clothes, male clothes?” I asked him.

“If they didn’t clear out the room I was supposed to be in with Frankie Morel,” said Bobby anxiously.

“Wait for me in 307,” I told my brother, giving him my key card. “I’ll do this last show. I’ll have to entertain Lou’s friends”—*and Lou himself*, I thought with a shiver that was a thrill as well. Sometimes I really thought that Viagra was marvellous, as Lou swore by it. Sometimes, though, it was a pain to think about. It was going to be my last time with Lou, I thought miserably. I should make it a night to remember for him, anyway.

“It will take quite a while,” I added as I taped myself. Bobby watched me in fascination as I did that and put on my lightly padded panties. “But I will be there. No one is up in the morning around here. We can be well on our way by eight o’clock. I’ll wear your spare clothes.”

“All right,” said Bobby uncertainly. “So, I finally get here,” he said, looking around the luxurious bathroom, “and what happens, I have to leave.”

I did my makeup quickly and smiled at him. “You could always be my understudy,” I told him. “I’d share you with Lou.”

That got Bobby out of the bath. I noticed, strangely, that he had an erection he tried to hide as he dried his hairless body. Oh, he did look like me. I could make him into me easily. Lou would have trouble telling us apart, I thought, if we were girlies like the actress whom I’d just impersonated.

“I couldn’t do what you do,” said Bobby thickly. “You let me see it all, didn’t you—to scare me off, for life?”

I let him think that. I like it when people think well of me, even if it’s by accident. I put on my garter belt and opened a new pair of stockings, putting them on quickly with my manicured, painted nails, while Bobby gulped overtly as he stared at me. I showed him how I taped my chest and put on a bra and slip before putting on a top, a skirt, and my blonde wig.

“I think you’re really my sister,” said Bobby thickly. I pouted and blew him a kiss as I left the penthouse. I’d tell him why I’d done that; I’d tell him all about the drugs, the ones that made me feel so much like a girl, that Lou liked me to take four times a day, and more.

I had to run in my high heels to get to the dressing room, my skirt restricting my stockinged legs a little, feeling so girly to move like that. I had to skip and dance girlishly through a line of people heading to the cabaret room where I would soon be performing. I don’t think anyone recognized me or, if they did, they didn’t stop me. I was just a ditzy blonde woman hurrying along a hallway to a doorway that led below the club area.

“About time,” said Kate. “What were you doing, squaring your brother away? The bouncers said they couldn’t find him, but Lou said it was all right, that he was with you.”

“Bobby is just fine, after the surprise of his life,” I said to Kate. She grinned at me.

“He’ll be joining us now, I bet,” Kate said smugly to me, “now he’s had a taste of what he really wants to do. Are you going to initiate him?”

“I think so,” I told Kate innocently, as she assisted me in undressing and putting on my stage makeup and a proper wig for my first number. I dressed in my dominatrix gear and thought what a phony I was. Cindy slipped me a pill with a knowing smile. I thanked her even as I palmed it away and put it in my purse. No, no more pills, I thought bravely, though the butterflies were beginning as I thought about what I had to do, how I had to act as a lonely, innocent drag queen. Oh, it was going to be a good performance, I could feel it. It would be all me—the last one I’d ever give as Dee-Dee Johnson.

## **XII. ON THE ROAD AGAIN**

“Los Angeles,” said Bobby Clark definitely as we stared at the television screen in the room we’d taken under the name of Smith at the low-priced motel. “Look, we have to forget about theater experiences entirely.”

For over two weeks, Bobby and I had wrangled over our next destination. My store of money was evaporating rapidly. We’d have to make a decision soon or be stranded again, albeit in a much larger city than Nowheresville, Middle America.

“If we do go to New York, we could find something off-, off-Broadway, but we both know how hard that is,” said Bobby logically. I had to admit he was probably right. There might be more casual work around Los Angeles because we had worked in movies and ads. We had sources we could try to tap, even though they had been hard to work the last time we’d been there, over a year and a half before.

“I say, let’s head west,” said Bobby, his face a little shaggier than mine. I’d been plucking and waxing for several weeks. So, my feminine features were an embarrassment when we went out. We were taken for a gay couple or as a gay duo with almost everyone we met. Bobby said we should claim that we’d been in a gay movie. We’d had to match the parts to the people we played if anyone in L.A. asked us pointed questions. Other actors would understand. But still, I hated being called ‘Miss’ by snotty-nosed store clerks, certain what I was.

“There are theaters as well,” said Bobby, clearly in a good mood that day. He hadn’t been in a good mood for several days as he’d listened to and responded to the stories I’d told him about me. He didn’t like the idea of drugs and what they’d encouraged me to do. Well, I claimed it was all that. I don’t know if he really believed me or was convinced that he had a lying gay brother now. But still, whatever had cheered him up, it was neat to see him up, energized, and not moping around.

“Dinner theater?” I asked him. Bobby shrugged a ‘why not’ at me. He’d hated the long terms we’d once spent in non-theater cities, doing three months here and there, before taking the play or musical to another area of the country for another three months.

“A lot starts there,” said Bobby, slumping back on his bed in our motel room. He closed his eyes. When he spoke, it sounded as if he was forcing it. “There are theaters as well as television. Someone’s sure to know us from the ads we’ve done!”

I was the one then who stalked moodily about our little room. I was half afraid to go out by day, and definitely afraid of going out at night, after the looks we got. I was sure we were followed the last time we went out to buy a few beers. It was lucky we were so close

to where we had the room. Now I was afraid to go out even for fast food for lunch.

Bobby didn't mention female impersonation at all now. I hadn't told him about my last, wonderful night with Lou Diamond, Lou telling me that I should get the operation that would make me a girl. "Then, I can marry you legally, darling," he'd whispered to me. "This place, and a few others I've a stake in, will all be yours when I kick the bucket."

"You don't know me," I'd told Lou unsteadily.

"I do know that you are the sweetest piece of, well, sorry about what I was going to say," he apologized to me, kissing me so tenderly, as I straddled him in the chair where he was sitting, his pecker getting more and more active against the back of my clean panties. I wouldn't have them on for long, I thought, and was quite right.

"You weren't on your med today, were you?" Lou asked me, that last time we'd made such memorable love, with a smile. "It's all you loving me now, isn't it, which is so wonderful of you—after what I did to you to get into your panties at first."

I cried a few tears at that, and shuddered as Lou told me how much he loved me. I shivered as if I was a witless girl at the way he spoke to me. Well, I was dressed in scanty, slutty fashion, the girl I was, as I told him that I loved him as well. I, a man, whispered words like that to another man as he told me I was a woman and his wife. He would love it to make it all legal with me as a woman. He deserved the wonderful time I gave him. I know I enjoyed it, and I thought he did as well. At least, I left him in a blissful sleep when I finally tore myself away and went to find Bobby.

When I thought of Donna and Kate, and the house where I'd learned to do a female impersonator act, it seemed like a lifetime away. I remembered the way that Cindy and Pearl had tantalized Frankie. I only later learned from a grinning Donna that she'd put them up to that, attacking him in their bikinis.

"I wouldn't do that any more in public," Donna said. "Frankie is easy to please in bed with the lights out, but I know I can't compete with the bodies you young queens have these days, thanks to all the chemicals available."

I wondered, at times, how much I'd left all of them in the lurch. I spent a lot of time thinking to myself, guessing what they'd done when they found out that I'd gone off with my brother. My biggest worry was that they'd all pool together the things we'd said to them about ourselves. Yes, no matter where we went, the story about Doug Reynolds, female impersonator and live-in girlfriend, would be there before me.

"Well, don't you agree?" Bobby asked with a scowl as I realized that I hadn't been listening to him again.

"What?" I said with a start. The image of a smiling Kate, her cheeks dimpling at some joke I had told her, that made her laugh with pleasure, her brown hair shining like her eyes, wavered and dissolved from in front of me.

"Oh, yes, Los Angeles," I said with an attempt at a smile. "Well, I suppose that you're right. Anyway, we won't find out unless we try. We should get going. You look much better."

Bobby scowled. "That wasn't what I actually said," he sighed. "You could go back, you know. They'd take you back."

*How would you know that?* I thought with a shiver. *And what would I say to Lou Diamond if I ever met him again?* “Not without *you*, Bobby,” I said to him determinedly as he stared at me. I’d looked out for him since before Dad died. He hung around the Donna Vallee crew out of loyalty to me, waiting for me to show him what he should do next.

“We should never have let them touch our eyebrows,” Bobby said miserably, staring at me. I knew what he was seeing. It was my feminine appearance that was holding us back now. “We should have brought the wigs and clothes with us, you know. We could have sold them and stayed somewhere until your eyebrows start to regenerate.”

Bobby would be arguing soon that we’d left in too much of a rush. That was the odd thing in our arguments. I’d been concerned for him, that he’d follow in my footsteps and become a female impersonator—no, a woman, as I’d felt I was. We’d talked about that in the first few days. I thought I’d scared him enough.

“But I’m not gay,” Bobby had said with a shiver. I’d shuddered as well, as I could hear myself saying that to Lou Diamond.

“You don’t have to be gay to be a female impersonator,” I told him. “It’s probably better if you aren’t. Trannies aren’t really gay, I’ve been finding out.”

That was a new idea for Bobby. We talked around it for a while. “That’s what it was like for you?” he’d asked me.

I shivered. “It was just that, once I take on a role, it takes hold of me. So, when I was Angela, I felt I was a drag queen. When I was Cindy the showgirl, I was a showgirl. Lou liked me as a girl. I was trying to be a

girl for him—but you know what happens between men and their girlfriends.” I didn’t blame the relaxing and energizing pills. As my last sessions with Lou had showed me, all they’d done was allow a real me, Dee-Dee, to surface. Oh yes, she was me and I was she—but now I had to put her out of my mind and get on with the rest of our lives.

“I was thinking of going the other way and shaving the eyebrows off completely, along with my hair,” I said to Bobby miserably. “I would look more butch then, wouldn’t I?”

“Probably,” said Bobby, sitting up and staring at me. “You’d do that?”

“I might have to,” I said miserably. My hair was getting too long. If I backcombed it, with my eyebrows and face as it was, I would look like a girl in jeans and jacket, anyway.

“We could save some money by hitching part of the way,” said Bobby as I figured again that we’d be able to live in L.A. on one meal a day, if we wanted to last more than two weeks. We’d look like addicts by then. We’d have to check what was being cast and join the right cattle calls. Heck, by the time we got there, we could be prisoners in a Nazi war camp. I wondered if anyone was making a movie about the Second World War and concentration camps.

“We could get a job here,” I said to Bobby.

“Let’s not wait,” Bobby replied. “At this time of year, I’d rather starve in California than in Chicago!”

“All right,” I agreed but Bobby lapsed into one of his depressed moods and stared at the television. He saw people we knew, and had worked with, who were

filling in the menial parts in a made-for-television movie.

After an energetic burst about the city in our first week, contacting possibly everyone in any acting group, and any agent we could find out about, in order to ask for a job, nothing had happened. Bobby went out personally to talk to anyone he could, but I didn't dare. I did use the phone a lot.

At the moment, Bobby hadn't been out in three days. It was as if he had retreated to lick his wounds. He'd been told things he hadn't wanted to hear, I think, but I didn't press him. We tried but we couldn't find one ex-Gillingham Player in town. We'd been generous to many of them. It would have been nice to call in some old loans—but they'd all apparently disappeared off the face of the earth, which was a strange way for actors to behave, I thought.

This morning, Bobby's mood had changed after he had gone out to get coffee for our breakfast. He ran around the place in a panic, packing the few things he had that we shared. We had to leave right there, right then. That was why we left Chicago on the morning bus to Las Vegas, from where Bobby said that we would have the best chance to thumb a future ride to Los Angeles.

Bobby said that he hadn't known that *The Donna Vallee Show* was supposed to go to Las Vegas with me as its 'star'. I thought that he must have heard about that, but maybe no one from the Show was talking to him, back then. I got on the bus, however, in some trepidation, fearing I'd meet a familiar face—but, of course, there was no one.

"The show was going south," said Bobby—blanching with fear and agitation, I thought, when I told him who might also be heading out to Vegas with us.

“But you wouldn’t have been going soon with the Show. Janet said she needed a long time to convalesce and grow into her new voice. She was definite that you were booked into that clinic for next week.”

“And Vegas is a big place,” I said to Bobby. “There’s no way we’ll just run into them. We won’t see them again.”

Which proves how wrong I could be. We did see them again, under about the worst conditions imaginable.

The accident was spread out all over the highway. We came to a dead stop opposite the Ford van I used to drive. Its contents, trunks of costumes and dresses, were thrown out on the road. An ambulance was on the scene, the still figure of Pearl on a gurney. Cindy stood weeping beside her as various members of Donna Vallee’s show were standing in shock along the highway.

“We could help them,” Bobby said weakly to me. The bus eased past them, but had to stop again when the ambulance with Pearl inside took off past us.

“You want to go through all that again?” I asked Bobby fearfully.

“Is there something else, something better, waiting for us at the other end of this ride?” my brother asked me bitterly, completely shocking me to the core.

I wasn’t happy. I was in shock when Bobby went up to the driver and asked him to let us off to help the friends of ours who’d been involved in the accident. “Let me drive you to the next town,” the old driver said with concern. “I wouldn’t normally stop there, but you’ll be able to follow the road signs to the hos-

pital. The bus ticket agent might be able to alter your ticket and get you through to Vegas on a local bus.”

I was reluctant all the way, but I couldn't just stay on the bus and leave Bobby in the middle of nowhere. I was going to arrange our ticket out first, though. Nothing was going to keep me from going on to L.A.—not even finding out that one, or any number, of the people I'd called friends had been hurt or had died. So I told myself, again and again, as I followed Bobby off the bus. We were walking up the road to the hospital when the squealing of brakes and the flashing of an indicator and brake lights broke the silence we'd been walking in.

A familiar Dodge van stopped for us. I felt the bottom drop out of my stomach as I saw the near door open and a familiar feminine figure get out, hand on her hip, as she stood most girlishly and pouted at us.

“I told you it was them!” said Terry Marvel back to someone who was driving the van. Her voice was loud and clear and familiar. “Batman and Robin come to rescue us poor damsels in distress once more!”

### **XIII. THE REVIVAL OF DEE-DEE**

You can imagine the bedlam around the hospital when they found out that the ‘girl’ they were treating for her injuries in the accident wasn't a girl at all—and they thought they were going to be invaded by ‘dozens’ more female impersonators.

That wasn't true. Kate wasn't with the group, for one. The Show was reduced back to the smaller show I'd first seen at the Star Club. Donna, in jeans and shirt but looking like anyone's aunt in her husband's

pants, was shaken and incoherent for the most part. Frankie Morel, trying to console her as if she was a woman, only made the whole situation worse. Our arrival with Terry and the mute Janet, driver of the Dodge, added more to the confusion and noise.

“Get Kate on the phone,” I told Janet, who (I gathered) was under orders not to talk. She nodded and wrote it down for the policeman who was trying to get some kind of order into the emergency room. She smiled at him as she gave him the note. The guy gave her a most interesting look. Bobby was trying to tell Cindy it would be all right. So, one part of the husband-and-wife team (if that was indeed true) held onto Bobby and cried her eyes out.

Janet and the cop disappeared into an office as things changed. Order was restored. Tow trucks and a cleanup crew were organized. A Dodge was loaned; I was commandeered to drive it back to the site of the accident and re-load it with all the dresses and stuff we could salvage.

It was leaving all her precious stuff behind that apparently was giving Donna the ‘hysterics’ as Frankie called it. Janet came with me and, lo and behold, her cop came with her as well. He’d found us the Dodge, I gathered. I wouldn’t have been surprised if it wasn’t his.

We found the human survivors of ‘Pearl’s crash’. “We should never have let that scatterbrain drive,” Terry whispered to me later, in a ratty motel on the highway.

“They had enough rooms so we could all stay together,” said Frankie Morel. “You and your brother will be paying for your own room, won’t you? What?” he asked as Donna clutched at his sleeve. “Well, they

aren't part of the show any more, are they? They're striking out on their own, aren't they?"

"Yes," I told them all before there could be any mistakes. "We're on our way to Los Angeles."

"Going to be a big movie star again?" Terry the Tease asked me. "With that face and those eyebrows? What part are you playing?"

"I have to shave all my hair and eyebrows off," I told her as several of the others, crowded into Donna's room, were staring at me. "It's a concentration camp movie and they want weird-looking inmates."

"Why did you tell them that?" asked Bobby when we retreated to the room we shared. "They have a show to do tomorrow night in a club in the state capital. Terry was going to ask you to do your part again."

"I'm not going to do it," I told Bobby. "We're a team until we get to L.A., aren't we? It will hurt your reputation to have a female impersonator brother, you know."

"You won't be in the show because of me?" asked Bobby unsteadily.

"Right," I told him, laying down on the bed, wearing his underpants and his undershirt which I'd borrowed and not returned. "I wouldn't be in the show without you."

"Then you'll be in the show," said Bobby uncertainly from the dark. "I told Terry I'd try to do Pearl's showgirl part in the show. It isn't very hard."

"What do you think you're doing?" I asked him in distress.

“Getting you back into the show where you belong,” said my brother with a sigh. “And where I belong as well.”

I said to the girls that it was only a one-off—but Janet and Terry, by their smiles, knew better. They saw the way I looked when I put on my stockings, for the first time in weeks, and attached them to my garter belt, over my panties. One of the suitcases was full of the underwear that I had worn in my various roles in the show, on and off stage.

“Janet told us you’d be back,” said Terry, sitting beside me, bare-breasted, playing with her sequined bra, and watching me make up as Dee-Dee again. “I don’t know how she knew.”

I think I could guess. That panic that Bobby had been in. I think he was somehow in touch with Janet. My brother knew the show was moving west that morning, and was going to end up in Vegas, in a much lower facility than originally planned.

Pearl didn’t have any bones broken. She finally joined us with stitches, bruises, and a fat lip. She had stories about all the doctors she’d seduced in the ‘hick’ hospital where they’d never seen a woman like her before. She insisted she was delighted that Bobby was to take her place in the Show, and stunned that I was back, even if only for one show.

“Well, your brother looked like me, the only time I saw her in drag!” Pearl exclaimed—saying that Bobby must be ‘her’ in the show, making my brother start gulping nervously. “What’s her name to be? Roberta or Bobbi with an ‘I’?”

Bobby’s face was crimson. It was again when he eased nervously into the dressing room. The girls immediately called him ‘Roberta’. Pearl was the one to

supervise his transformation; I shrugged and watched from the side. I was undergoing my own changeover to Angela, loving the pull of my bra about my shoulders while the tight skirt and exposed slit as I crossed my legs was like a wonderful dream.

Roberta was as smooth as any of the girls in the show. After Pearl fixed his eyebrows and painted his face, he fitted in, a smile on his red lipsticked mouth. Pearl tightened the Merry Widow corset about him to impossible dimensions, but he didn't complain.

From that day on, I never saw Roberta—my sister, whom we soon called Bobbi all the time—out of skirts and dresses and long, blonde hair. She was the first of us to dye her natural hair blonde, and the first, of our family, to have breast implants. Well, it was only by an hour or so, as I followed her to the table.

## **XIV. THE REAL LIFE FOR ME**

I finished the last show and followed the girls to entertain the locals by letting them buy me drinks and such. I had barely walked into the club area when a tall, handsome, mostly brown-haired man came up to me and put his arm about me.

“Kate phoned me,” said Lou Diamond, holding me and staring into my nervous, feminized face. “You can't believe the agony I've been through since I woke up in bed and you weren't there beside me.”

“Lou,” I began unsteadily but he kissed me and all was right again between us. I went with him eagerly to his room in a different hotel, leaving Bobbi alone. Well, she wasn't really alone; she was initiated, as she said it, into womanhood.

"I knew just what to do," Bobbi told me as we sat together in a café the following day for brunch, our legs crossed femininely in our stockings, she playing with her long hair and earrings as I must have when I first became Dee-Dee. Behind us, Janet was with her cop friend. He had to put his arm about her. His ear was against her lipsticked mouth to listen to her. Each time, after he whispered to her, she would kiss his ear or his neck, which he loved, squeezing her to make her do it again.

Eventually, Janet and her cop disappeared. It was time for Cindy and Pearl to come squealing into the place, excited over Kate's arrival and whatever she was saying to them.

"So you're back," Kate said, picking up my hand, looking at the rings on my ring finger and my feminized, painted, scarlet nails. "You can't wear these in the show, you know," she said as she stroked my rings.

"No," I agreed. Lou knew that, but he'd insisted I have the rings. They'd buy my way out of a lot of trouble in the future, he said. I'd always be safe from harm with the price of the glittering necklace and earrings he'd given me, if I had to have money.

"Where's Lou?" Kate asked me. Lou was on the computer, doing some business with the people back at his hotel. "Are things all right between the two of you?"

"Yes," I said, thinking of the intense, wonderful night of being a woman again that I'd spent in Lou's arms.

"I have contracts for you to sign," said Kate with a frown. "I take it that your husband is going to be the

one to make the decisions now whether you sign them or not.”

I shivered at the lovely word she'd used. If I had a husband, then I must be a wife. I must be a woman. My earrings danced at my ears as I shook in my lovely dark wig, watching my sister at the table next to us.

Bobbi had joined Cindy and Pearl; they were regaling each other with stories of the wonderful men that they had had the night before. Cindy and Pearl were helping Bobbi to get her voice high-pitched and her inflections girlish like theirs.

“You knew what would happen when she put on a dress,” said Kate with a grimace. “I knew it would happen to you once I got you into the show as well.”

“Well, you were right,” I said breathily, femininely, to her, as I saw my ‘husband’ come into the coffee shop and look about for me. Lou came right across, bent and kissed me most thoroughly, his arm about my narrow waist to cuddle me to him as Kate watched us, a weird look on her face.

“I need a man,” she said with a sneer on her face. “A real man.” So did I, I thought as Kate pushed the papers to Lou Diamond.

Lou had me sign the contract for Vegas. It meant a step up in the class of casino and hotel we played. It meant the addition of a chorus line, which Donna had wanted so much. It meant long-term work for all the girls who now sort of depended on me. It meant that I was totally committed to wearing dresses and acting as a woman for the foreseeable future in my life.

“Was that a shot at me from Kate there?” Lou asked me as we strolled arm-in-arm through the little



coffee shop, my skirt and high heels making me walk with a feminine sway which my husband liked very much.

“No, at *me*,” I said, flicking my long hair over my shoulders and letting my breasts proudly lead the way towards our room.

That made Lou’s hackles rise. “But you don’t want to be a real man, do you?” he asked me. “Not when you’re a real woman like you are.”

What could I say to that—except to cling girlishly to Lou’s arm, and to reward him with a long, full kiss that had cars all over the parking lot honking at us? I didn’t care if they thought that I was a female impersonator or not. I was a real woman after all. My husband had told me so.

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