

A WAR OF WILLS

By Patricia Smith



ILLUSTRATED BY C. PITTS

A 'YOUNG ADULT' NOVEL

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A WAR OF WILLS

by Patricia Smith

CHAPTER 1

I was twelve years old and had one week of school before summer vacation when Dad hit us with his annual trimming of the boys' hair. Well, it wasn't really a *trim*: Dad liked to shave our heads almost bald every summer. Usually, he didn't do it until after school had let out, but this year he was early.

I already had the shortest hair of any kid in school, except for my two brothers. All the other boys were in style with their longer hair. He got my brothers first, and I tried to talk him out of my annual scalping.

"All the *other* guys have long hair, Dad," I told him as a pile of my brother Charlie's light brown hair hit the floor, "It's the style these days for boys to wear their hair longer."

"Only *girls* should have long hair, Adam," he replied in his condescending voice.

"These are the eighties, Dad," I complained. "My hair is shorter right now than any other guy in the sixth grade. You always cut it too short and the other kids will make fun of us and try to push us around because of it."

"I can't help what another parent might do and not do," he replied sternly, "This is *my* house and I am in charge around here and I say that all boys have *short* hair and only the *girls* can grow it long. Girls know how to take care of long hair. *They* keep it clean."

"I can take care of my hair and keep it clean too," I told him, "I bathe at least twice a day now as it is."

"You *want* to look like a girl?" he asked, while Charlie got out of the chair and ran his hand over his new crew cut. It was Barry's turn as I continued my argument.

"Having long hair won't make me look like a girl. None of the *other* guys at school look like girls and some of them even have earrings!"

"Like I said, Adam, I can't help what other parents do or don't do with their kids. Boys in *my* house will all have short hair. *Girls* can grow it longer."

"Mom is the only girl here. Its not fair," I cried. "Why do you have to do it *today*? Why not next week?"

"I do it when I feel it's time. It's time!"

"That's not fair!" I repeated, "The other guys pick on me already because I can't take gym class with them or go out for recess. Now they'll pick on *all* of us a lot more."

Barry was done and ran his hand over his nearly shaved skull as he got out of the chair. "Feels good!" he told me.

"It looks terrible," I replied. He laughed as he went out to play in the backyard.

"If all the other guys in school jumped off a bridge, would *you* do it too?" Dad asked me.

"No," I answered, "but if only Barry and Charlie jump off the bridge and drown, would you want *me* to do it too? Or should I try and save them?" It was a logical approach to Dad's senario.

"*Of course* you should save them, if you can. What does that have to do with getting your hair cut?"

"Just because they like having short hair doesn't mean that *I* do. *They* like mushrooms and I *don't*. I like broccoli and *they* don't. Why do we have to look the same?"

"Because *I* say so and *I* am in charge around here."

"Dinner is ready!" Mom called. I was saved temporarily but kept up the argument right through dinner. My one year's growth of hair wasn't long by any stretch of the imagination and I was able to talk Dad into at least postponing my shearing until the next week. Then, I would be out of school and not have to put up with the harassment because of it. Mom seemed to take my side when she said, "Adam might look really cute with longer hair."

"He *already* looks like a girl," Dad told her. "I'm going to call him Amanda until he agrees to let me cut his hair for him."

My two younger brothers joined in with Dad. They all laughed at me and tried to ridicule me into doing something I didn't want to do. It was "Pass the potatoes please, Amanda", and "Amanda, please pass the salt" and "Amanda, help your mother with the dishes". I *always* helped Mom with the dishes, since I was the oldest, and never broke any when we cleaned up.

I had asthma and allergies and dry skin and couldn't go out to play with the other kids. I was virtually housebound, unless it rained. Then I got to go out for a walk, fresh air and a bit of exercise. The rain settled the dust and pollen in the air and I could breathe easier. Of course I had to stay out of the puddles, or Dad would lecture me about keeping my clothes and shoes clean.

I had inhalers that I took to school with me or when I had to go out with Mom or Dad. I had a tank of oxygen next to my bed in case of an attack in the middle of the night. I had my own room, because it had to be airtight and clean to keep it sterile. I soaked my body in the tub several times a day, using bath oils to moisturize my dry skin.

Being housebound gave me a lot of time to read and watch television, and I got almost perfect grades in school. I helped Mom with the dishes because the water felt good on my hands. She had to wash the pots and pans, though, because the grease and grime irritated my skin. And when I did the dishes I had to wear one of her aprons to keep my clothes clean.

Wearing the apron over my short pants and shirt gave my brothers more fuel for their ridicule. "That's a pretty skirt you're wearing, Amanda," Barry said to me from the kitchen doorway.

"Get out of here!" Mom commanded. "Unless you want to put on an apron, too, and help with the dishes."

Barry left us alone then. He was just over a year younger than me and capable of helping around the house, too. Charlie was four years younger than I was. They got to help with the things I couldn't do, but only on Saturday. Dusting, vacuuming, laundry and shopping. I had my own little world up in my room.

CHAPTER 2

The last week of school passed too quickly to suit me. I knew it wouldn't be long before Dad would be back at me with his shears to shave me as bald as my brothers were. I tried to think up new arguments to save my hair while enduring their taunts. All they called me now was Amanda, but I wasn't letting them bother me *too* much and they knew it.

To further ridicule me, Dad and the boys began to treat me as they would a girl. I wasn't allowed to lift heavier things, and as Dad always held Mom's chair for her, Barry began doing the same for me. I tried to chase him off, but Dad *ordered* me to let him do it.

Finally, time was up, and Dad asked, "Are you now ready for a haircut, *Amanda*?" He stressed the name.

"No," I answered. I could be very stubborn when I wanted to be, but so could Dad. It became a test of wills.

"School's over for the summer. What's the problem now?"

"I want to grow it to see what its like. I won't know if I like having long hair if I don't *try* it. I had to try mushrooms before I found out I didn't like them."

"Fine. You can grow your hair as long as you want to. But, you'll get all the things that go with having long hair in this house."

"I take two or three baths a day, Dad. I can keep it clean and neat. You'll see."

My birthday was a week away. I'd never had a birthday party, since I had to live in a controlled environment. Lots of other kids coming over was out of the question, and so was going out for dinner. To celebrate Mom made me a cake and anything I wanted for dinner. Then, I got to open the presents. Mom usually did the buying and just signed the others' names.

Dad and my brothers had come to calling me Mandy. They laughed at me as often as they could. Only Mom and I weren't laughing, and I tried not to let them know how much it bothered me. Of course it hurt me deeply that they would be so cruel to me just because I wanted to grow my hair long.

This birthday was no different than any other, except that they treated me like a *girl*. I was thirteen now, a teenager, so Dad bought me my first watch. I opened his present first as he said, "All teenagers should have one of those, Mandy." I opened the box and found a girl's slim wrist watch.

"*Its a girl's!*" I shouted.

"*Of course* it is," he answered seriously, "A girl's watch for a girl named Amanda" My brothers joined in laughing with him.

"I'm a *boy*, Dad," I reminded him.

"Boys have *short* hair, girls have *long* hair. Amanda is a girl's name so now you have a girl's watch to go with it."

“This one is from me and Charlie,” Barry said, thrusting a package onto my lap, “Open it next.” I could see from the wrapping that they had wrapped it themselves. “We used our own money and picked it out ourselves. Dad helped us get it. You’ll like it!”

I opened the haphazardly-wrapped package with apprehension, since Dad had helped pick it out and *he* had given me a girl's watch. With the paper off I cut the tape holding the box shut and opened it to find something I half-expected. It was a girl's nightie set in bright pink nylon and lace.

“Since you are our sister now, Amanda,” Barry said, “we thought you should have the kinds of things that *other* girls have, too.” He had a grin plastered on his face from ear to ear and so did Charlie.

“Your father ordered all of us to buy you girl's things for your birthday, dear,” Mom apologized as she handed me one of the things she had gotten for me. I saw the smirk on Dad's face but I wasn't going to let him win this easily. I had gone too far already to back down now.

I opened Mom's present and got two party dresses complete with girl's underwear. One set was in pink, the other in yellow. All of my other presents were along the same line. Girl's clothes, jewelry, shoes, and Mom's final present, makeup and a large bottle of bubble bath.

Dad and the boys sat around laughing every time I opened a present. Mom didn't laugh once; she found it hard to enjoy picking on me like the others did. But, she had to do what Dad told her and got me nothing but girl's things too.

Once all the presents were opened, I was allowed to go upstairs to have a bath. My skin felt dry and itchy, and I needed the relief that only a bath would give me. Mom packed up all of my new things and helped me carry them to my room.

“I'm sorry about this, Adam,” she told me when we were alone in my room. “Your father *insisted* that all presents be for a girl and he would burn anything we got that wasn't. He meant it, too.”

I dumped the things onto my bed, then took off my shoes and socks and shirt and reached for my bathrobe.

“Wear this one, Adam,” she said, handing me the new yellow quilted robe she had bought for me.

“I'm *not* a girl, Mom,” I told her, as I refused to take it from her.

“I know that, dear. But try to imagine what it's going to do to your father. He thinks you're going to throw all this stuff in the garbage or refuse to use any of it. Then, he'll feel justified to tie you down and shave your head. Turn the tables on him. Try to make some use of these things. Its not as bad as you may think it is.”

Mom did have a point there. Dad would tie me down if he had to and shave my head if I refused to even try them. I knew he would be angry if I started to use the girl's things they got for me. I liked the idea of not letting Dad win so easily. I took the robe from Mom and put it on before removing my short pants and undershirts. There were

yellow furry slippers that matched, so I wore them as I headed for the bathroom. Mom handed me my bottle of bubble bath and after a moment of hesitation, I took it too.

Why not? I was almost out of my bath oils and bubble bath might work just as well. I could try it before I ran out of my necessary oils. It worked just as well as the oils and the bubbles weren't hard to put up with. Actually, the bubbles saved me some embarrassment as Mom came in.

"I don't need an audience when I'm having a bath, Mom."

"I know that, dear. But your Ivory soap isn't very good for washing longer hair. You need the proper shampoo and conditioner to clean it. I didn't think to get you any, so I brought you mine to use for now. I'll show you how, unless you would prefer the hair-cut?"

I let Mom wash my hair for me and by the time she was done, all of the bubbles were almost gone. She stayed and watched as I washed myself using my Ivory bath soap, then she pulled the plug to drain the soapy water. I was losing whatever cover I had so I had to get out of the tub and let her dry me off with one of the large fluffy bath sheets she kept just for me. She washed them in Ivory laundry soap as I was allergic to detergents. Mom wrapped another towel around my head, turban style, before I put on my new robe and slippers and headed back to my room.

Mom followed me and I soon found out why. "Did you think about it, Adam?" she asked me when she closed the door behind us.

"Think about *what*?" I asked her.

"About using some of this stuff we got for you?"

"Yeah. I know Dad would cut my hair if I tried to avoid it. It would *really* make him go crazy if I used some of this stuff. They already call me Amanda and treat me like a girl. Since this is now my stuff, why not?"

"Does it bother you the way they treat you, like a girl?"

"I don't let it bother me, Mom."

"Would it bother you if *I* called you Amanda, too?" she asked.

"No, I guess not."

"Of course I would never make fun of you, dear. But wearing girls' things can be fun too. How about trying on that pink baby doll night gown your brothers bought for you? I'll bet they spent every penny they saved to get it. They made a bet. Your father promised to give them their money back if you didn't wear it within a week. If you *do* wear it, they won't get their money back and you'll get revenge on them, too."

I liked that idea. It would teach them a good lesson if they lost the money for good. I turned my back to Mom and opened the robe as she dug out the pink lacy panties for me. I took them from her, removed the slippers from my feet, then put them on before removing the robe.

They were loose-fitting and trimmed with pink lace. They weren't as uncomfortable as I thought they might be. Mom bunched up the nightie and pulled it over my head, letting me put my arms into the short, puffed sleeves. She arranged it over my body. I

put on the sheer little lace robe that went with it and belted it loosely about my waist. Dad had bought me a pair of bright pink furry slippers that matched the nightie, so I put them on as well.

“This is going to shock the heck out of them,” Mom said as she smiled at me. “Wait here, I’ll be right back.” Mom left my room and was back in minutes with her hair brush and a pair of sissors. “Longer hair requires a brush rather than a comb. Can I cut off some of your split ends? It makes the hair look neater and it grows out even faster then.”

I let Mom brush and trim my hair for me, though I thought she went a bit far when she trimmed my bangs just above my eyes.

I was all set for the laughter I knew I was going to get. But when I walked into the living room where Dad and the boys were watching television, it didn't happen. My appearance before them, wearing the most feminine of all apparel, shut them all up for a long time. I tried to act like it was perfectly normal for me to wear a pink nylon and lace nightie in front of them. I tried to goad them into a reaction.

“It fits really good, doesn't it?” I asked them. “Thanks Barry and Charlie. You too, Dad.”

Mom was in the kitchen laughing to herself when I came in to help her with the dishes. She wasn't laughing *at* me and I knew it. She was laughing at *them*, and the stunned expressions they all still wore on their faces.

The television was turned off and I peeked around the corner to see what they were doing. Barry and Charlie were crying that they wanted their money back, but Dad wasn't going to give it to them. A deal was a deal! Dad reminded them of that, but made a new deal with them that meant a lot more trouble for me. They were scheming and I let them, since I now knew for sure that I had really gotten to all of them in a way they'd never expected.

I was enjoying myself at that moment, watching them squirm, so I really didn't mind wearing the nightie. Letting them see me in it was what had done the trick. And the nightie wasn't nearly as uncomfortable as I thought it would be. It fit and felt better against my sensitive skin than my pajamas ever had.

CHAPTER 3

I retired to my room once we had everything cleaned up again and the house was back in order. I sat on my bed and looked over all of the clothes and accessories I had just gotten for my birthday. I remained in my little pink nightie set. What was it Mom had called it? It was a baby something-or-other. No matter, it was mine and I laughed again when I recalled how wearing it made the boys and Dad squirm with discomfort.

Just then I heard Mom's faint yet discernible knock on my door, so I went and opened it for her. She had brought up a tray of tea for us, a rare treat, so I held the door open wide for her to enter, and she placed it on my desk. The tray also held two plates with slices of my birthday cake on it.

"I see you are still wearing your baby doll, Adam... oh, I mean Amanda," she said looking me over appreciatively.

A baby doll! That's what this nightie was. "Yeah," I answered simply. "Should I take it off?"

"No, no. Unless its too uncomfortable to wear in front of me. I *really* enjoyed the effect your wearing it had on your father and brothers."

"Me too. I was all ready for them to laugh at me some more but they didn't. You and I were the ones doing the laughing this time. The nylon feels cool against my skin, not like my cotton pajamas. It was hard to wear it downstairs in front of the others, though."

"I can believe that dear, and your father has pretty well figured it out too. I overheard him telling the boys that you only wore it to irritate them. That you couldn't last for long, having to wear girls' things. And that you'd soon be begging to be allowed to wear boys' things again. You know, I wouldn't *blame* you if you chose to get your hair cut now."

"I don't *want* to get my head shaved, Mom!" I told her. "*They* started it. They had their fun teasing me and making fun of me and now its *my* turn to watch them squirm."

"Are you *sure* about this?" she asked me. "Don't get me wrong, Amanda. I love watching them squirm too. After everything they've done to you already, it serves them right. And I love even more finally having a daughter I can teach things to and have tea with."

Mom poured the tea and served the cake, while continuing, "I hate the thought of letting them win but I would hate it even more if I thought you weren't enjoying some of the things that as a girl I really enjoyed too. Its not wrong for you to enjoy dressing up and looking pretty, or to get revenge against your tormentors, but it is wrong to do it if you're not comfortable with it."

"I don't know if I'm going to be comfortable doing it or not, Mom, but I'm going to *try*. The bubble bath felt better than the oils we got. And the nightie feels better than my old pajamas. Do you *really* think I might look pretty as a girl?" I had to ask.

“I imagine that if you worked at it you could be prettier than a lot of *real* girls. Feminine beauty, I believe, comes in two parts: the genes and the work. You have the genes to be very beautiful, so all you need now is the work.”

Mom helped me hang my new dresses up in my closet. It felt strange to realize that these dresses were *mine* and even stranger to realize that I would soon be *wearing them*. We found hangers for some of my new lingerie too and the rest got folded up and put into my dresser drawers. Only my boy’s undershirts and bathing suit came out of the drawers.

“Girls these days wear a *lot* of boys' clothes too, so I don't see why *you* can't,” she told me.

“Won't wearing some boys clothes make Dad think that he won?”

“Not if you do it femininely.”

My next question she answered it before I could ask it.

“A little makeup and some nice jewelry should do the trick. Not to mention that the outlines of bras and panties can be seen through most clothes. Short pants, jeans and tee shirts can still be worn as a girl.”

Mom tucked me into bed wearing just the pink nightie and matching panties. She kissed me on the forehead.

“Yes,” she said softly, “it *is* going to be fun to have a daughter for a while.”

I slept in the next morning, having been so emotionally drained the day before, but also because of the luxuriousness of the baby doll. I awoke to Mom shaking me saying, “Come on sleepy head. Time to rise and shine!”

I got out of bed and Mom helped me out of my comfortable new sleepwear and into my new quilted robe. I put on the slippers and headed off for my ritual morning bath. It was the bubble bath again, and I enjoyed it as much the second time as I had the first time. I wasn't surprised when Mom came into the bathroom and helped me wash my hair. While I dried off she cleaned the tub for me, then escorted me back to my room. She had made my bed up for me too and laid out some clothes for me to wear.

It was cooler that day, so she had laid out jeans and one of my sweatshirts, along with a white bra and panty set. White socks and my sneakers were beside the bed. I stood and looked at them, with a little sigh.

“What's the matter, Amanda?” she asked me.

“I was just thinking that Dad and the guys are going to laugh at me again no matter *what* I wear. If I wear jeans and a sweatshirt now, even with makeup and jewelry, they'll think they've won. I don't want to give them that much satisfaction just yet. Can I wear something else?”

“Certainly. What do you want to wear?”

I got out the pink party dress and looked questioningly at her. Mom helped me with the pink panties and bra, the slip and into the dress. She brushed my hair for me, then watched as I put on the socks and shoes. It felt somewhat strange to see myself in my mirror wearing only girls' clothes, but the feeling of naughtiness dissipated when

I told myself that in Dad's mind this was all part of having long hair. My one hope in wearing these things was that it might shut Dad and the boys up for at least a little while.

I was right. They were so surprised to see me wearing that party dress that they didn't have a thing to say. There was no more laughing and snickering or jokes about me; I had done the unexpected and caught them off guard.

I wore pink all that first day; though I needed Mom's help to get out of it when I went for my soakings in the tub. Mom didn't mind helping me get undressed in the middle of the day, and stayed to watch as I soaked in my tub of hot water and white bubbles. I no longer minded that she stayed and saw me naked, since I needed her help to get dressed again when my skin had soaked up the required moisture.

Mom took great care in helping me, too. She liked to fluff out the skirt and make sure the tiny pink ribbons threaded through the lace trim of the puffed sleeves were straight. And after my evening bath, she liked to help me into my pink baby doll night gown set, even though it was simple enough for me to put it on by myself.

I spent two days wearing pink. The boys tried to get me going by giving me the kinds of compliments that girls normally received but, I shut them up when I thanked them. Then, I went two full days wearing the yellow party dress and its matching underwear. They had a hard time thinking up ways to bother me.

I spent a whole week wearing the party dresses, two days in each color before switching. Then, I felt ready to change things. Mom had my yellow outfit laid out for me when I got back to my room after my morning bath. "I don't want to wear that today," I told her.

"What would you *like* to wear then?" she asked patiently. "A T-shirt and jeans?"

"No. How about that orange-colored dress Dad gave me?"

"It's peach, and it's a sundress. Its pretty cool out there today, dear."

"That doesn't matter much, Mom. I'm stuck in the house anyway, right?"

"True enough. Okay, do you want to do it right today?"

"If I can. I want to make them feel like losers. What do I do first?"

"First, we put this stuff away. Girls wear underwear as close to the color of their outfits as possible to minimize detection. The closest you have to peach is pink."

Mom put away my dress and slip while I exchanged the yellow bra and panties for the pink ones in my drawer. Off came my bathrobe and slippers so that I could put on the tiny bikini panties with delicate lace trim at the waistband and leg openings. Mom helped me into the harness-like bra and fastened it behind my back for me. Her hair brush was on my desk so I took it and stood in front of my dressing mirror to brush my hair dry. She left me there for a minute as she got something from her room.

Nail polish! *Pink* nail polish. She sat on my desk chair while I sat on my bed and put a foot onto her lap. I watched as she painted each of my toenails pearly pink. Two coats on each nail. Then, she did my fingernails.

From my new makeup case she took an odd-looking device and explained that it was an eyelash curler. She used it on both sets of my upper eyelashes, then showed me how to put on the waterproof mascara, upper and lower lashes. Not too much, just enough to make my eyes stand out more. She brushed a bit of blush onto my cheeks, then showed me what faces to make as she applied pink lipstick to my lips. After blotting my lips she let me look in the mirror.

The effect was startling. I looked pretty without looking overdone. My hair was clean and dry and the style added to my feminine appearance. Even my underwear made me think I was looking at a girl rather than my own reflection. Mom had a body cologne spray with her and sprayed some on my shoulders, back and chest. It was her light lilac scent which I could tolerate, despite my allergies.

She took out my sundress and unzipped the back before removing it from the hanger. She held it open for me and I stepped into it, pulling it up past my hips so I could slip my arms into their openings. She settled the shoulder straps over my bra straps and zipped it shut for me. Mom arranged and smoothed down the skirt portion while I ran my hands over the bodice and fingered the ribbon trim.

“You look *fabulous*, Amanda,” she told me. “Very pretty and very feminine.”

Looking in the mirror I knew she was right. I looked like a *real* girl. While Mom ran to her room again I got out my new wristwatch and put it on my left wrist. Mom returned and placed about my neck one of her thin gold chains. It had a tiny locket attached.

“My mother gave me this when I was sixteen,” she told me. “I want you to have it now.” Again I looked in the mirror and touched the locket, while she put in a pair of pink berettes to hold the hair back from my face on each side. The final step to getting dressed was to slip my feet into a pair of white sandals, which had a strap running over the instep and buckled on the outside of each foot.

“How do you feel, Amanda?” she asked, as I studied the overall effect in my mirror.

“I don't *know* how I feel,” I told her honestly. “All I know is that I look like a *real* girl! I guess that how I feel will depend on who does the laughing. Us or them.”

“I have a feeling that you and I are going to be the ones doing the laughing from now on.”

CHAPTER 4

Dad, Barry, and Charlie had all finished their breakfasts and were sitting around the kitchen table planning their day for a way to bother me as much as they could. It looked like rain outside, but they were planning to do things I could have done too, as a boy, things they felt I *couldn't* do as a girl. Mom and I did some eavesdropping before we made our entrance.

Mom led the way into the kitchen and I followed as naturally as I could. I said my good mornings to them as I went about getting a bowl of cereal, as if nothing was out

of the ordinary. They stared at me with wide eyes and open mouths, and I saw Mom trying to hold back a smile. It was all she could do to keep from laughing out loud.

Dad gave the boys a nod of his head and they left the room to go and get ready to leave with him.

“Uh, its pretty cool out today, Amanda,” he said to me, “I thought you would wear jeans today.”

“If you wanted me to wear jeans you should have got me some for my birthday,” I told him. “I figured that since you went to all the trouble of getting me this dress that I should at least let you see me wearing it. I'm wearing the watch you gave me too, see?” I held out my hand so he could see the nailpolish on my fingers.

Dad had nothing to say and sheepishly left the room. Only then did Mom let out the laughter she was holding back. Now I knew for sure that I had done the right thing by wearing that sundress instead of the jeans. Mom had coffee and toast while I ate my cereal.

Dad and the boys were ready to go before we finished eating, so Dad had to come and tell us what they had planned. He asked Mom what she and I were doing today. Mom dug her calendar out of her purse and after looking up the day said, “Oh dear. I forgot all about it. I have a doctors appointment this morning. It'll only take a few minutes, so Amanda can either stay here or come with me.”

“I think I'll go with you, Mom,” I said. “Its no fun staying home alone.” That put a sour expression on Dad's face. It was clear that he didn't want me to have any fun at all.

They left, and Mom burst out laughing again. I couldn't hold in the mirth I was feeling either.

“I love the way you keep doing it to him,” she said. “After a whole week of wearing the party dresses, they were just getting it together again when you wear the sundress and throw them for another loop. I love it!”

“He's been asking for it. They *all* have,” I answered.

“You want to do it to them again, only better?” she asked.

“Sure. How?”

“Come to the doctor's with me. Then we can go shopping later and get you your own things, so you don't have to borrow mine all the time.”

“Do I have time for a bath and to get changed Mom?”

“Do you *need* a bath?”

“Well, I can't go out like this. Its one thing to dress up to get Dad and the boys going crazy but its another thing to go out dressed up, too.”

“I think it would drive them even crazier if they knew you went out dressed exactly as you are. My doctor is not the one you go to so neither she nor her staff will know that you're not a *real* girl. As a boy you don't go out with me often enough so that people I know might recognize you. Plus, it might make it easier for you in the long run around here if strangers can accept you as a real girl.”

Mom kept giving me more and more reasons why I should try this, but the one I gave myself was the best of all: I wouldn't know what it was like until I *tried* it. It made perfect sense for me then to go out as a girl and see how the world would accept me. I agreed to accompany Mom as her daughter.

Mom had a small shoulder-slung purse she lent to me. We filled it with the things girls usually take with them. The purse was white and matched my shoes, which was very important for girls, she told me. She lent me one of her wallets, but all I had to put into it was my money. Since it was cool out, she lent me one of her white sweaters and I wore it draped over my shoulders.

It was a short drive and we were there in minutes. Mom went in to check out the waiting room while I stayed in the car. Being chemically sensitive I couldn't take heavy colognes and perfumes, so she ran interference for me. The coast was clear, so I took the plunge and joined her in the waiting room.

Mom got through her appointment quickly and, as we were about to leave she introduced me to her doctor as her daughter. That was when things began to look dark for me. The doctor asked Mom all kinds of questions about me; since she had the time now she insisted on doing an examination on me. It would only take a few minutes and Mom couldn't come up with enough reasons to refuse it. Mom and I found ourselves in the doctor's examination room together.

To my relief though it wasn't a complete physical exam she wanted to give me. She took me to be a real girl just entering puberty, and asked me things like if I had begun to menstruate yet and did I have cramps and was I sexually active. I said no to all of them. She listened to my heart and lungs through her stethoscope, then Mom undid my dress and removed my bra. She examined my chest and asked my age, then wrote Mom a prescription for me. Mom took it and put it into her purse before she helped me put on my bra again and refit my dress for me. I was really glad to get out of there.

In the car again Mom burst out laughing. "What's so funny?" I asked her seriously.

"A doctor," she explained, "who treats nothing but women examined you half-dressed and never realized you weren't a real girl. Think about it, Mandy. If a doctor who is a woman who treats *only* women can't tell the difference, what chance does anyone *else* have at realizing the truth?"

I could see now why she thought it was funny. I, on the other hand, just felt a sense of relief. I was relieved that I had made it through there without having been discovered for what I really was.

Mom drove us to the drug store where we filled a basket with all of the things she felt I should have to continue our charade indefinitely. Light-scented colognes and perfumes, nail polish in different colors, hair brushes and barrettes and ribbons. At the pharmacy counter, Mom stopped to get her prescription filled and accidentally handed over my prescription, too. It was too late to take it back when we realized the mistake. Mom had ordered the full dosages as we might go away for the summer and might not be here to get a refill when needed.

Mom paid for our purchases and we carried it all out to her car. "What did the doctor prescribe for me?" I asked just out of curiosity.

“Birth control pills,” she answered. “You see Mandy, women don't just use them to prevent pregnancy. We also take them to regulate our menstrual cycles. Most girls your age are already well into their secondary stages of development. The doctor feels that the birth control pills will jump-start these changes for you, so you can be like all the other girls.”

“I don't have to take them, do I?” *Now* I was worried!

“No dear, you don't. They are close enough to mine that I can use them if I run out or lose some. But I doubt if they could do anything to you anyway. Your system would probably just flush them right through without any problems. It might be a good idea, though, if you were to carry the case in your purse. I keep mine with me, as do most girls. It'll be just one more signal to other people who might see them that you are a *real* girl.”

I could do that much. She handed me the pink, plastic, oval case with twenty one pills in it, and I put it into the purse she had lent me. “There are thirty one days in a month, Mom. How come there are only twenty one pills here?”

“Girls get their periods once a month,” she explained as she drove. “They only take the pills when they aren't menstruating. One package will last from cycle to cycle. Three weeks on and one week off. Then, a new package.”

“Okay,” I said.

Mom parked the car in a small strip mall and said, “Lets have lunch out, okay?”

I was somewhat hesitant as it seemed to me that we were pushing my luck. We had been to the doctors, we had been to the drug store, *now* she wanted to take me into a restaurant.

“I hope there aren't a lot of smelly people here,” I said in reply.

“Not usually,” she answered. “That's why I came here. Its out of the way and not too busy and we should be able to get a table fairly quickly. We'll just have a sandwich and some tea and get out fast.”

Mom led the way into the restaurant and straight to a table in the center of the room. My apprehension grew as I felt a lot of eyes upon us. I was nervous and it showed.

“Relax, Mandy. We are just two more beautiful females for people to look at. Didn't Adam ever stare at the girls in school?”

“Uh, yeah,” I answered tentatively.

“Well, Amanda is a very pretty girl now, so she is being stared at, too. Just ignore the stares and pretend that it's just you and me here.”

We ordered our sandwiches and tea and continued to talk quietly to each other. “You know Mandy, all of the clothes you got for your birthday were chosen to make Adam feel foolish if he had to wear them. The prettiest, the frilliest, and the most feminine styles. Your father checked every item before it was wrapped to make sure it fit his scheme. I even had to take back some blouses because he felt they just weren't frilly enough to make you feel foolish wearing them.”

Her words brought out my stubborn streak and gave me the resolve I needed. “Dad is going to regret starting all this,” I told her.

“He already *does*, dear. His biggest fear right now is that you might learn to *like* being a girl.”

“I *don't* like it, Mom. But it's not all that bad either when everyone thinks I am a girl. For Dad's sake though, I think I can pretend to like it a lot more than I really do.”

“Sometimes I wish you could *stay* a girl forever.”

“It's not easy being a boy and wearing girls clothes, Mom. It was hard enough at home and out here it's *really* bad. I'm doing it because I don't want to let Dad off the hook too easily. *He* started this.”

“Yes, but no matter *what* your reasons are, you are now my *daughter*. I feel wonderful and alive again even if it is only for a short time. I am having the best time of my life being out with my daughter!”

She meant it, too. She was drawing a great deal of personal pleasure from my being a girl with her, at home and in public.

“Do you want to have some more fun, Mom?” I asked her.

“*Of course I do*, Amanda. What do you have in mind?”

It was a big step but it might piss Dad off even more. “A lot of the guys at school wear earrings. Maybe I could get one ear pierced too?”

“Not as a girl, Amanda. Girls get *both* ears pierced. But if we do them both now, then as a boy later you can wear one earring. How about that?”

“Sure,” I said. “Why not?”

After lunch, Mom took me to a jewelry store and we picked out several pairs of girls' earrings for me. Mom had them put one hole in each earlobe and insert a tiny diamond stud. I was given directions for the care and cleaning of the holes and told not to remove the studs for at least a month. Mom told me I could take them out, but *only* if I put in another pair immediately.

We had a couple of blocks to walk back to the car, which was safely parked in a lot. On the way we happened to pass a shop that sold swimwear. Mom stopped to look and I stopped with her. “Want to?” she asked. “It's summertime, and Amanda doesn't have a swimsuit. I can just see your father's face when he sees you in a girl's bathing suit when we go to the beach.”

The beach! Usually we went to the beach for a day on the weekends when it was really hot. I had to be very careful on those days and have my inhalers with me. Sometimes, I had to sit in the car with the air conditioning on high. I did it so the others could have fun. Dad would *really* freak out if I did it like *this!*

I led the way into the shop and Mom helped me pick out two suits that would drive Dad crazier. The first was a bright orange one-piece suit with straps that crisscrossed behind my back and a short skirt built in from the hips, to barely cover my groin area. The second one was a white two-piece suit with pink trim, for sunbathing. Both suits had built in foam cups where my breasts should be.

We took a detour after leaving the swimwear shop and Mom took me to a lingerie store. I only had the one baby doll nightie and minimal lingerie as Dad expected me never to wear any of it. Dad had never been cheap with any of us and usually gave us more than what we really needed. He was a lawyer and made good money. I applied that “theory” to the shopping Mom and I were doing now and got more than I really had a use for. To say that Mom was eager to help was to understate the situation.

I got a dozen pairs of the frilliest panties available in the prettiest colors they had. I picked out bras to match, and Mom made sure they were in my size. There were garter belts too, so we matched up a couple of them and got a few pairs of stockings as well. I got some pantyhose, too.

Mom asked if I wanted some teddies, so I looked at them with her. I picked out three of the prettiest ones they had in my size, and Mom agreed that they would drive Dad nuts. We chose several camisoles with matching half-slips, some full-slips and six more of the prettiest nighties they had. It was too much for us to carry it all to the car so I stayed in the store with our purchases while Mom went to bring the car over.

Inside the store, no one came by to bother me much. To them, I was just a girl waiting for her mother. It was then that I realized that I didn't feel uncomfortable anymore. I knew that I *looked* like a girl, had *acted* like a girl, so everyone in the store assumed that I *was* a girl. Being treated as a girl by strangers wasn't so bad. And when Mom stopped the car outside the store and we began loading in our bags, men actually stopped and offered to help us. We declined the offers. There were definite advantages to being a girl, and I made a mental note to explore them a bit further.

CHAPTER 5

It was late afternoon when we finally got home to find Dad and the boys wondering where we were. My walking arm in arm with Mom still wearing the dress from that morning shocked Dad and the boys. They had expected me to change into boy things to go out with her. They had expected to *win*.

“Where *were* you two all day?” Dad asked Mom.

“I had my doctor’s appointment this morning, remember?” Mom replied.

“*All day?* It doesn't take *all day* to go to the doctor’s and back,” he said.

“No, but you will recall that Amanda only had minimal clothing to wear. We went shopping and got her more things she’s going to need. The bags are in the car, so I would appreciate it if you would get them and take them up to her room for her.”

Dad took the boys with him to carry in our purchases, while Mom and I started to make dinner. It had to be quick so we decided on frozen fish and chips, which just needed to be heated up in the oven.

“Dad’s going to look through all of my bags, isn’t he?” I asked Mom.

“Of course he is,” she answered as she made us some tea. “I’m glad he will only find the kinds of things that meet his criteria for his new daughter. Pretty and frilly and feminine.”

“You know, Mom,” I said to her when they were all outside for a second trip, “we’ll have to go shopping again pretty soon.”

“Why? What did we forget, Amanda?”

“Well, I only have four dresses. No skirts and no blouses.”

“Right. And you’ll need accessories, too. Shoes, boots, belts, purses, sweaters, scarves, and a ton of other stuff. Your father is *really* going to pay now for having started all this.”

We served dinner at six, and everyone was very quiet until we were all seated. Then, Dad spoke.

“You two must be pretty hungry, having skipped lunch and all.”

“Oh no,” Mom answered lightly. “We had lunch in a tiny cafe I know of. We aren't starving.”

Knowing that I had been to all of these places as a girl obviously bothered him. I appeared to be as happy now as at any other time in my life. He tried another tact.

“That’s a lot of stuff you got today Amanda. And I see it’s all very pretty, too.”

“Thanks, Dad,” I said as casually as I could. “I *need* all of it, too.”

“You're planning to *wear* it all?” he asked, trying not to sound surprised.

“Of *course* I am,” I answered haughtily. “There’s no point buying it if I'm not going to *wear* it, is there?”

Mom had to stuff her mouth with food to keep from laughing, but the smile was still there.

“Well, I just didn't want you to go wasting money on unnecessary things is all.”

“Well, there are a few things I don't *have* to have, but they were so pretty and useful, Mom said I could have them if I really wanted them.”

“Like what?” he asked with a lump in his throat that he couldn't keep down.

“The teddies we bought,” I answered easily and with a smile on my face. “Silk ones. They were so much nicer than the nylon ones and had more lace on them too.” He almost spit out a mouth full of food, coughing uncontrollably.

“*Silk and lace teddies?*”

“Yes. They're *very* pretty and Mom said I could have them. I'll show you one after dinner if you want to see it.” He didn't and the rest of our dinner was eaten in total silence.

Mom and I cleared the table and I went to the kitchen to start washing the dishes. I saw Dad pull Mom aside while the boys were in the living room. I eavesdropped on them.

“This is going a bit far now, isn't it Jan?”

“*You* started it,” Mom reminded him.

“Well, yeah, but he was supposed to hate it and agree to the haircut. How do we stop this nonsense now?”

“Just agree to let him be a boy and have long hair.”

“I can't do that, Jan, and you know it. I have my principals and I will *not* compromise them. *Boys* have *short* hair, *girls* have *long* hair.”

“Then don't complain to me that we now have a daughter!”

I had my hands in the water when Mom came into the kitchen to dry the dishes, but none were washed yet. “You heard?” she asked me with a smile.

“Yes. I think I'm starting to get to him.”

My understatement made her laugh again. “Just watch out for some low blows. Your father is not one to just roll over without a fight. And he fights dirty sometimes.”

“I can be pretty underhanded, too. But I won't start it until *he* does. *He* started calling me Amanda and treating me like a girl and getting me girls' things. So now I'm answering to ‘Amanda’ and acting as much like a girl as I can and wearing the things he got for me. *He* starts it, *we'll* finish it.”

“*We?*” she had to ask in amazement.

“Sure. You *like* having a daughter and *I* like it when he *doesn't*. I'm more stubborn than *he* is.”

After the dishes were out of the way, Mom and I went up to my room where we sat on my bed and started taking the price tags off my new clothing. We sorted it all into piles, then found places for it all in my dresser drawers. The drawers were filled.

It had been a cool day and I didn't need another bath yet. I would have one before I went to bed. It was early yet, so Mom and I went back to the kitchen to have some tea. The tea helped my respiratory problems, so we both enjoyed a cup whenever we could.

Barry came into the kitchen just as Mom put on the water and complained that he was out of clean underwear. "The laundry!" Mom remembered aloud. She had forgotten to do it with all of the fun we were having together.

"You can borrow some of my panties," I told him as seriously as I could. "I have *lots* of new ones now, very pretty ones, and I'm *sure* they'll fit you."

"Yuck!" he yelled and ran back to the safety of the living room, Dad, and Charlie.

Mom had a good laugh, then went to start a load in the washing machine while I made the tea. There was still some birthday cake left over, so I cut it into two pieces.. I washed and dried the plate it had been on before Mom came back upstairs.

"You *really* scared Barry there, didn't you?" she commented as she poured the tea.

"Why not? He and Charlie are in on it with Dad. Its them against us and we're winning, right?"

"I'd say so. Maybe I should steal his pajamas and you can offer him a nightie to wear?"

"That would be starting something, Mom," I said with a smile, "I think I have the upper hand when I let them start it, so I can finish them off. Or do you want *three* girls in the house?"

"No, one is enough... for now." We laughed together.

We finished our tea and cleaned everything up, then Mom went to do the laundry and I headed up for my bath. I was able to get undressed by myself, though it was hard to undo the zipper on my dress and unhook my bra. I just didn't know how girls could do it all the time by themselves. I put on my yellow robe and slippers, then gathered my nightie from under my pillows to go into the bathroom. I ran into Barry in the hallway.

"You really *like* that thing?" he asked, pointing at the baby doll nightie he had given to me.

"Oh yes!" I answered with as much enthusiasum as I could. Then in a more conspiratorial tone I whispered, "Its really great! Thank you *very* much, Barry. I got some new ones today if you want to try one yourself. They really feel nicer than an old pair of pajamas."

"*No way!*" he almost shouted at me. "You're a *girl!*"

"Well, it's impossible to be a boy when everyone treats you like a girl. So, if that's the way it is, then I may as well enjoy myself as much as I can." He looked at me like I was crazy and took off down the stairs. I felt victorious all the way through my bubble bath.

Mom came in to help me with my hair and noticed my mood, so I told her about Barry. She was happy about it, too. We laughed for the rest of my bath. I wore the nightie and carried the robe back to my room with Mom following me.

“Do you have your birth control pills, Mandy?” she asked me once my door was closed.

“Sure, why?” I asked as I went to the purse she had lent me and got them out.

“I am going to take one. We don't want to waste them now do we?” she answered.

“You just got your own, why do you want one of mine?”

“Girls don't carry around full packages of pills, Amanda. Some have to be used out of it to make it look normal. We don't want to waste them, unless *you* would like to take them?”

“They wouldn't hurt me, would they?” I asked.

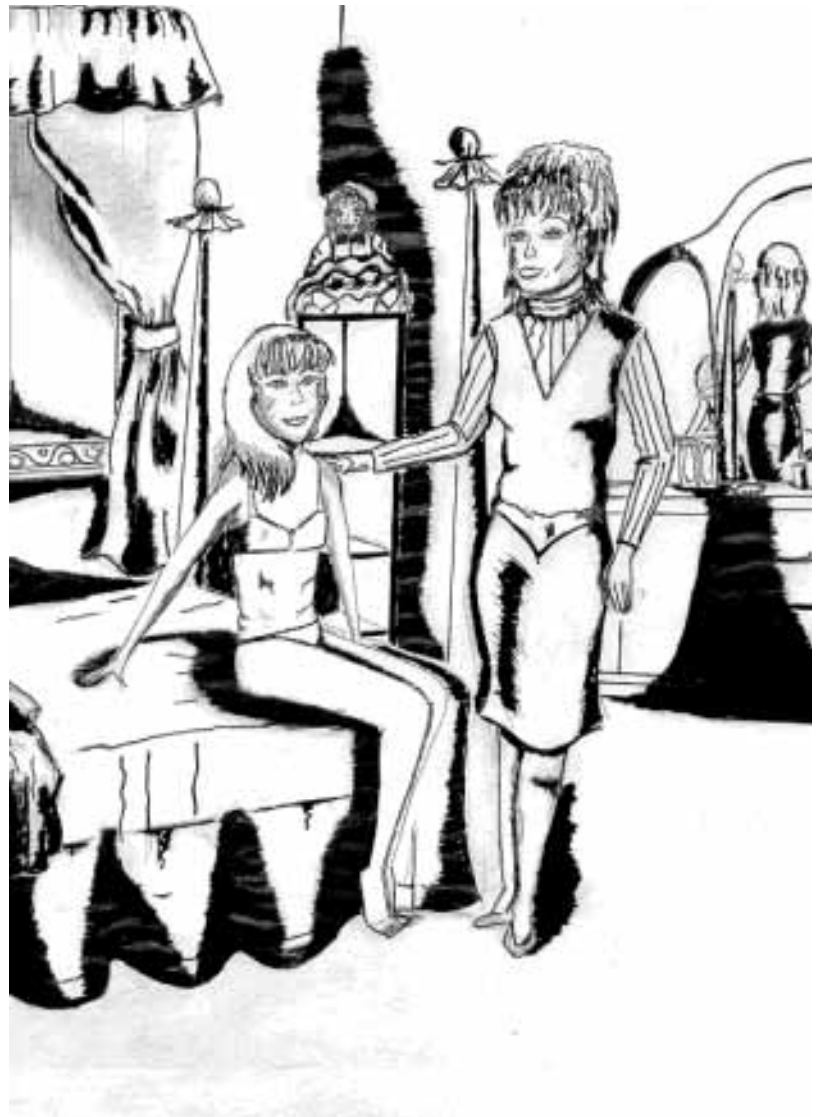
“I don't see how. I would *never* give you anything that would hurt you.” She sounded offended at the thought.

“Then I might as well take them myself, if that's okay,” I offered.

“It would be best for you to take them instead of me. That way you can honestly tell someone who asks that you are on the pill yourself.”

“Why would anyone ask?” I wanted to know.

“If someone sees them in your purse they might ask.”



CHAPTER 6

The next morning I was up early as usual and went for my bath in a reverse of the procedure of the night before. I wore my baby doll nightie to the bathroom and carried my robe. After I was done with my bubble bath, I wore the robe and carried my nightie back to my room, where I found Mom waiting for me in her light green shift.

She had my white panties and bra laid out for me along with a new pair of pantyhose. I tossed my nightie onto the bed so I could take off my robe and slippers. Mom just sat on the chair and watched as I picked up the panties and put them on. Then I took up the bra and began fitting it onto myself. I thought that she would offer to help me with it, but she just sat there and let me do it myself. I had a lot of trouble getting it done up behind my back, but I guess she wanted to see if I could do it alone. I did.

I sat down on the edge of my bed facing Mom and opened the new package of pantyhose and took them out. Only then did she say anything, and it was to give me directions on how to put them on properly myself. I did as I was told and soon had the luxury of nylon covering my hairless legs. They felt better than I ever dreamed they might. And I had only started thinking about how they might feel when we had bought them the day before. Mom ordered me into my white full slip and the lace hem brushing against my nylon-clad, sensitive legs was a glorious feeling, too.

Mom stood to allow me to sit on my desk chair. Again she only supervised as I used my cosmetics case mirror to apply my own makeup for the first time. I curled my upper lashes and applied the mascara myself, pretty well for the first attempt. I brushed on my blush and blended it in as she told me to. Then I applied my lipstick and blotted it to her satisfaction.

She wouldn't always be available to help me with my dressing and makeup, so it only made sense that I learn to do it myself. I may only be dressing as a girl for the summer, but I still had to learn a few things. I used my new hair brush and easily got the desired style. My hair was straight and baby fine, so all I had to do was part it down the middle and arrange my bangs to my eyebrows. Mom handed me a pair of white barrettes, and, under her patient guidance, I finally got them to hold the hair back over each ear. After a light spraying here and there of my own lilac-scented cologne, I put on my watch and locket. Mom took my off-white sheath dress from the closet and handed it to me. It was a pullover style with no zippers or catches to do up, and I got into it easily. I arranged the hem myself as I had seen Mom do many times before, and buckled the attached belt snugly at my waist. Then I buckled my sandals.

Everything was matching and coordinated, as this was the dress for which the sandals had been bought.

“You are truly beautiful, Amanda,” she said as she gave me a hug. “And you did it all by yourself. I'm proud of you.”

I picked up my purse, checked the contents, and was ready to go downstairs for breakfast. Mom just grabbed her purse from her room and followed behind me. We put our purses on the hall table and walked into the kitchen to find Dad dressed and the boys still in their pajamas.

Good mornings were said, then Mom and I started getting our breakfasts. Dad and the boys just stared at me in their usual dumbfounded way. I felt good, so I just gave them an honest and natural smile. They stopped staring.

“What are you two all dressed up for?” Dad had to ask.

“We're going shopping,” Mom told him pointblank.

“You went shopping *yesterday*,” he complained.

“We couldn't get everything Amanda needs in one trip dear,” Mom answered casually. “She only has four dresses! Two are for dressing up, one casual which she wore yesterday, and this semiformal outfit. If you are going to insist on treating her like a girl because she wants to wear her hair long, then she needs a *lot* more clothes just to get by.”

Then Dad noticed my earrings. “When did you pierce her ears!?” He sounded upset.

“When we were out yesterday. Nice, aren't they?”

“Are you *sure* you don't want a haircut and to be a boy again, Amanda?” Dad asked me quietly.

“Oh no,” I answered quickly. I *did* want to be a boy again, but I also wanted long hair. “Being a girl isn't so bad.”

That was the truth, too. There were aspects that I did enjoy. “I'm glad you're making me experience this and I'm having a lot of fun with it.” That wasn't exactly true but I didn't mind a bit of a white lie to get his goat.

Dad put his face in his hands and I *knew* I had him. He was quiet for the rest of breakfast. Then Mom and I were off to do our shopping, leaving the boys to clean things up for a change.

Out in the car we had a good laugh about their reactions. I had the most fun when I could tease Dad or the boys. They'd had *their* fun and now it was *my* turn. Mom enjoyed seeing it as well.

Mom knew exactly what I needed and where to get it so we cost Dad a pretty penny that day. We took time out from our busy day of shopping to have short coffee breaks and a quick lunch. It was after lunch that I had to use the washroom.

I was headed for the men's room when I felt Mom's pressure on my arm. She guided me into the lady's room. I lifted my skirt to lower my panties and sat on the “throne” as other girls do. Mom waited for me, and we continued on our shopping spree.

Dresses, skirts, blouses, sweaters, coats, jackets, shoes, boots, and all the accessories any girl might need; I got them all, and Dad was paying. The car was full by the time we stopped in a restaurant for dinner. Mom phoned home and left a message that Dad and the boys could fix their own dinner.

We had just ordered our meals, when a gang of girls walked into the restaurant. They were about my age and dressed pretty much the same as I was; it was obvious that they had been out shopping too, since they carried big shopping bags with them. They took the two tables across the aisle from us, and terror suddenly gripped me as I recognized most of them from school.

My fears subsided slightly when I realized that they hadn't guessed who I really was. They looked at me and what I was wearing, but all they saw was another girl. They ignored me, and chatted about the shopping they had done and what they had bought, comparing the deals they had gotten. They only had something to drink, then left.

Mom saw me tense up when the girls came in but didn't ask why until they had gone. "Did those girls being here bother you, Amanda?"

"A little, at first," I answered her. "Some of them were in my class at school, some in the other sixth grade class, and the rest I've never seen before. I was pretty scared they might recognize me as Adam, but all they saw was another girl."

"That's all *anyone* sees, dear. Girls will look at other girls to see what they're wearing. We're pretty vain and want to look better than other girls. They obviously saw a pretty girl who wasn't threatening them or their vanity, so they didn't think to look any further. Generally, boys look at girls' legs first, maybe to see if they can catch a glimpse of lacy lingerie. Most boys will look at a girl's face last, if they have the time. Men, on the other hand, get to see the face right after they see the legs. I doubt though that you would have anything to fear from boys or girls, men or women."

"I'm just a little self-conscious is all. This is only my second day out as a girl, Mom!"

"I know, dear. And I think you are doing a *marvelous* job of being a girl. You're doing so well that not even girls from your class in school could recognize you."

"Well, they really didn't know me much as Adam. All of the kids treated me like I had some contagious diseases, and none of them wanted to be near me. I think I kind of scared them since I was so different than they were. And I had to use my inhalers all the time, too."

"Speaking of which, do you have an inhaler with you now?"

"Yes. It's in my purse. And I just realized something, Mom."

"What's that, Amanda?"

"In these past two days, being out as a girl with you, I haven't had to use my inhaler even once. I guess it's cool enough that I don't need it as much."

"It could be. What about at home?"

"Not even then. Maybe I'm getting better?"

"I don't know about that, Amanda. You're getting better at being a girl all the time. Maybe that has something to do with it?"

"Maybe. I'm constantly worried someone will recognize me and say something, so maybe I just don't have time to be sick."

We ate our dinners and went home for a repeat of the night before. Dad and the boys carried my new things up to my room, where Mom and I removed the price tags and put everything away in my closet and dresser drawers. Dad was compelled to comment on the quantity and quality, and Mom defended each and every purchase as being necessary. Femininity had its price.

CHAPTER 7

The next morning I dressed myself before Mom even got out of bed. I wore a pale blue sundress we had bought with matching bra and panties, and white thong sandals. It was a warmer day, so I dressed for comfort. I had finished my breakfast and had the coffee pot on when Mom came into the kitchen. She was pleased with what I had chosen to wear, though when Dad and the boys appeared they all had frowns on their faces.

Dad had taken a few weeks off from work and made the announcement over breakfast that, since it was going to be a hot day, we should spend it at the beach. The boys were instantly thrilled at having a day at the beach, while Mom and I pretended to be less enthusiastic.

The guys all thought that this would be the straw to break the camel's back. That I would relent now and allow my hair to be cut, so that I could go as a boy. They were wrong.

I helped Mom pack a picnic lunch for all of us, then we went to our rooms to get ready for the beach. I changed into my peach-colored sundress with pink bra and panties, then packed my orange bathing suit into an oversized straw beach bag, along with a towel and an assortment of other feminine and medical necessities.

Mom knew what was up and played along. The guys were less than pleased when I appeared as a girl ready for the beach. The day wasn't over yet, though, and they had other things planned. We all piled into Dad's car.

The beach Dad preferred had pure white sand, leading into the clear, warm water. It was built for public use. There were lifeguards on duty from sunrise until sunset, so Dad didn't have to keep his eyes on us all the time. There were public washrooms and changing rooms with showers, one set for the boys and one for the girls.

After parking the car as close to the beach as he could, Dad carried our stuff down close to the waters edge. Mom and I spread out the blanket while Dad set up the beach umbrella. Then, he and the boys went to the men's room to change into their swimsuits. Mom and I stayed to guard our belongings.

When they returned it was our turn but Mom said we would stay dressed as we were for now.

"No way!" Dad protested, "We're here to enjoy the beach and to swim, and everyone has to change into the proper attire!" He was looking right at me when he said it. He wanted me to use the ladies room with Mom. It was a command, not a request and Mom motioned for me to go with her. I picked up my bag and followed her.

Women and girls were coming and going from the ladies changing room as Dad watched us enter. I suppose he expected me to come running out screaming, but I didn't. Mom chose the far corner for us and unzipped my sundress for me, as I slipped off my thong sandals. I faced the corner to get out of my dress, and Mom used her body to screen me from the other females while she changed. I had my bathing suit laid out

before I removed my bra; then, as quickly as I could, I stripped off my panties and climbed into the swimsuit. I was safe again.

I packed my clothes into my bag and turned around to see the room half full of half-naked females. It was a sight I wasn't quite prepared for, so I may have stared a bit more than a real girl would have. And for the first time in memory I saw my mother naked, too. She turned to me and smiled as she stepped into her bathing suit and pulled it up.

Mom packed up her things and we left together. Wearing our bathing suits and sandals, we carried our bags in our hands and draped the towels over one shoulder. Dad and the boys were waiting for us to reappear and were more than a bit surprised that no ruckus had occurred in the changing room. They were obviously very disappointed, and moved on to Plan C.

Plan A was announcing a day at the beach. Plan B was to send me to change with the females. I wondered what they had in store for Plan C, but I would deal with it as it came up.

I enjoyed the water and swimming as much as ever. The boys played in shallower water, since they couldn't swim as well as I could. Once in a while, either Mom or Dad would join in and splash about with us. Whenever I came out of the water I had to dry off quickly and apply my lotions.

The day passed quickly, and it was time to go home again. I'd seen no obvious attempt at a Plan C.

There weren't as many females in the changing room this time, and using the same tactics as before, we both got changed without anyone being the wiser. I had pulled off a day at the beach as a girl, frustrating all the attempts to ridicule me. I felt pretty good about it.

We'd had our picnic lunch on the beach blanket at noon, and now it was past time for dinner. The boys were complaining that they were hungry, and wanted to stop to get something to eat. I was pretty slim and didn't eat much anyway, so I could wait until we got home. Dad had other ideas, of course, and took us all out to dinner at our usual restaurant.

He said it was a treat for Mom and me. She wouldn't have to cook and I wouldn't have to help do the dishes. I knew it was, finally, Plan C.

Whenever we went out as a family for meals, it was to Kerry's Chicken & Rib Shack. They knew us there; we always got the same table and usually ate the same things time after time.

When Dad pulled into the almost empty parking lot to park close to the front door, Mom recognized my predicament and gave me a worried look. While Dad and the boys went in to get us a table, Mom and I used the car mirrors to fix our hair and touch up our makeup.

"Do you think he *planned* to come here, Amanda?" Mom asked me, applying a coat of lipstick.

“I foiled him twice today already. If he didn't plan it this morning, he and the boys put it together at the beach. The boys complained more than usual without a reprimand, and he drove here without warning. Whatever happens, remember, it was all *his* idea.”

Mom and I walked boldly in the front door together and, once our eyes got used to the dim lighting, we saw the guys and went over to join them. Kerry herself came over, as Mom took her usual chair at the table while I avoided my usual seat and took the only remaining one. That moved me over one chair to put me beside Mom instead of beside Dad.

“We're all here now,” Dad announced to Kerry as she brought the usual refreshments.

“But where is Adam, and who is this lovely young girl?” she asked. I knew I was blushing as she figured it out quickly.

“It is Adam!” she exclaimed.

“*Amanda* now,” Dad told her.

“Okay,” she answered quickly. “But *why* is Adam now *Amanda* and dressing like a girl?”

No one was answering so I knew it was up to me.

“Dad is just trying to embarrass me,” I told her. “Since I wanted to grow my hair long, he decided that I should have to dress and *act* like a girl. He thinks that long hair makes me look like a girl anyway. I have to do what he says, right?”

“No matter,” she said easily. “*Amanda* is a very pretty girl and as welcome here as Adam ever was. I think you should have been *born* a girl. You're too pretty to have ever been a boy.”

I said thank you and gave her a little smile. She went off to get our food for us. Mom gave my knee a little squeeze under the table, and I looked to see her smiling broadly at me. Dad wasn't happy at all. There was nothing for anyone to say, and we endured several minutes of silence before Mom nudged my leg under the table. I caught her little nod towards the back of the room. I excused myself to use the washroom and Mom followed me into the lady's room.

Inside, with the door closed, Mom gave me a hug and said, “That was *great*, *Amanda*! You shut him down *again!*”

Kerry must have seen us enter the ladies room because she joined us .

“What's going on, Jan?”

“Its just like *Amanda* explained at the table, Kerry. Frank wanted to embarrass Adam into getting his haircut like the other boys. He insists that only girls can have long hair, and if Adam wants long hair, then he has to look and act like a girl. He refused to let any of us buy Adam boys' gifts for his birthday, so we all gave him girls' things. Adam has turned the tables on his father and brothers and is using the things he was given. *Amanda* is wearing only the things her father gave to her right now.”

Kerry saw the dress I had on and the outline of the bra I wore under it. At Mom's request, I let her see the little pink bikini panties I also wore. I showed her my watch, and she noticed my pierced earlobes.

"I *meant* it when I said you were a very pretty girl, Amanda," she told me again, "What can I do to help?"

Only then did the idea pop into my head, and I thought for a minute before answering. With Mom and Kerry, I hatched a spur-of-the-moment plan to get back at Dad and the boys. Mom and Kerry loved it.

We went back to the table and took our seats only to find Dad grumpier than when we left. He didn't like the idea that I could use the ladies room with so much ease. Kerry and two of her waitresses appeared with our food; and, as they served it, the girls gushed over how pretty I was. They said I that I should stay a girl forever, which soured Dad's face even more.

Then they continued our plan of attack, and told the other two boys that they could be *just* as pretty, if *they* were to wear dresses too. They described in detail pretty little dresses and dainty lingerie the boys would look so "darling" in, with or without long hair. The boys were *really* squirming now.

Kerry made the final move herself and told Dad, "You could look pretty good as a woman too, Frank. The right dress, some expert makeup; yes, you could be a very beautiful woman as well."

They went back to work. Only Mom and I enjoyed our food. I wasn't all that hungry, but I ate what was in front of me. Dad and the boys had lost their appetites at the mere thought of them "looking pretty". To have it suggested to them by real women, in public no less, was even more of a shock.

Mom urged the boys and Dad to eat, since the stop was their idea and we shouldn't waste the food. They all ate, but they didn't enjoy it. Kerry came back to find out how the food was, and everyone said it was great, as usual. While the guys picked away at their meals, Kerry sat down beside me; we talked about the clothes I had, shopping for more and the new cosmetic styles that were on their way in. I pretended to know more than I did and was soon lost about the conversation she had going with Mom. But I was involved in it, so it put Dad off even more than before.

Finally they were all done, and Dad announced that it was getting late and time to go home. He asked Kerry for the check and she replied, "My treat, Frank. I enjoyed meeting Amanda so much I just *couldn't* charge you for your meal. Besides, you didn't seem to enjoy it as much as usual, so I suspect there was something wrong with it and you are just too polite to say so. No, tonight was my treat."

Dad couldn't admit why he wasn't enjoying himself, so he had to accept Kerry's hospitality. It really irked him that his plan had been foiled again. He never thought that the truth would come back to haunt him like it did.

CHAPTER 8

Dad didn't try anything more for the rest of his time off from work. He didn't want to ruin the rest of his vacation by trying to trap me in a corner again. He hadn't given up yet, but he was biding his time and would spring something on me when he was *sure* he would win.

I, on the other hand, was gaining confidence in my ability to live as a girl full-time. Mom was teaching me all she could at home about living as a girl and doing all the things that girls did.

I couldn't do most of the laundry because of the detergent necessary to get the clothes clean, but I could watch and learn and wash my own things in Ivory laundry soap flakes. I could hand wash my delicates and hang them to dry, and I learned to iron everything as well.

I had to be in my room when the house was cleaned, since the dust raised was too much for me. And what dust and dirt did get into my room I was able to vacuum up myself. Likewise with the floor wax and furniture polish. It had me sneezing and coughing and wheezing in no time, so I had to sit in my room until the vapors were gone.

Mom took me out shopping whenever she could, although some days all we did was window shop. There were times when all we did was go to Kerry's for lunch, or stroll through the malls and watch the other girls my age. I learned a lot from seeing them and how they act when alone.

Naturally, the neighbors I knew all got to meet me now as Amanda, and when the truth was known, most of them were behind me one hundred percent, the women and girls especially. The men and boys tended to align themselves with Dad and his ideas, even though many of the boys and some of the men had long hair too. It was their masculine pride that refused to accept me living as a girl, even if it wasn't *my* idea. But, like the males in my own family, they soon tired of trying to tease me about it.

The Monday that Dad was going back to work, Mom met me in my room after my morning bath, to help me dress again for my day. It had been over a week since she had been there while I dressed, and I soon saw why today was different. She was laying out boys' clothes for me.

"*Did I win?*" I had to ask her.

"Not yet," she answered. "But you have an appointment with your doctor this morning and I think you should be allowed to go as a boy. I don't care *what* your father thinks, this doesn't mean *he* wins, either."

I had to sit down and think about it for a minute or so.

"This is *your* doctor, not mine," she continued, "and he will check you over completely, like he does every time. He doesn't need to see you as a girl."

I still wasn't sure, so Mom let me think about it while she made sure Dad got off to work and the boys ate their breakfasts. I sat on my bed and looked at the boy clothes

laid out beside me, then looked in my open closet door at the array of pretty dresses hanging there. Even though it *was* my doctor this time, I knew I had only one choice to make.

I appeared for breakfast a half hour later dressed in my newest dress. It was a cool, white sundress with a ruffled hem. Under it, I wore a white lacy bra and panties, with sheer, beige pantyhose. I had white pumps with open toes and flat heels, and my makeup was as perfect as Mom could have done for me. I had white barrettes in my hair, pearl earrings, the locket Mom had given me, and my wristwatch. All of my nails were painted the same shade red as my lips, so everything matched.

Barry and Charlie had nothing to say. They just stared at me, their breakfasts finished.

“Are you *sure* about this?” Mom asked as I got my own cereal from the cupboard. “I know you were forced into this, but you don't have to do it today.”

“The truth is,” I said, “I *want* to go as a girl. I looked at the shirt and cotton shorts and realized I don't want to wear them. I kind of *like* being a girl now. I'm not comfortable going anywhere, right now, as a boy.”

Barry and Charlie were both flabbergasted and kept quiet as Mom thought over what I had just said. Realization was sinking in that I had lived completely as a girl for only just over a month and I really liked it now. Mom could accept it, though the kids were stunned.

“Okay, Amanda. If *you* can accept that, then so can *I*. From now on, Adam doesn't exist. Only Amanda. And to tell the truth, I'm very happy to have a daughter and I'm looking forward to a wonderful future.”

“But Amanda is still a boy underneath,” Barry said.

“Not anymore,” Mom answered. “You two helped your father force Adam into this, so now you will accept Amanda as your real sister. Or *you* will be wearing dresses, too! Any questions?”

There weren't any, so Mom went to get herself ready to go out, too. Mrs. Childers, next door, would watch the boys while we were gone.

“You really like being a *girl*?” Charlie asked in total amazement.

“I didn't at first,” I told them, “but since I couldn't do anything else, I tried it and now I think it's better than being a boy. I can do more as a girl than I could as a boy. And I have to thank you two for helping Dad push me into it. Without *your* help, I would probably still be a boy with long hair.”

It only made sense to me to thank my brothers for their unwitting participation in my transformation. It was obvious that they were uncomfortable with it, but they said I was welcome even though they didn't mean it.

Arriving at the doctor's office, we checked in at the nurse's station. The receptionist recognized Mom and looked around for Adam. I'd had many appointments there as a boy, but this was my first as a girl.

"I would appreciate it if you could change the appointment from Adam to Amanda, please," Mom said to her.

"Yes, but Adam still has to see the doctor. With his condition, he has to be checked regularly. Is he all right?" she asked, sounding worried.

"My name is Amanda," I told her quietly, "but I *used* to be Adam."

She studied my face for a few moments, then the truth of who I was dawned on her.

"*Of course!* Amanda! You're very pretty, Amanda. Can I ask why you're doing this?" She kept her voice low so no one else could overhear us.

"I have discovered that I like being a girl more than I ever liked myself as a boy," I told her. "My family seems to prefer me as a girl, too, so they've accepted me as one."

It was enough for her, and she changed the name on the register to Amanda.

A few minutes of waiting and we were ushered into a private examination room. With my chemical sensitivity, I couldn't wait too long in the waiting room, and they knew it. Even the smell of the antiseptics bothered me, so the doctor made sure to see me as soon as I arrived. He had been warned.

Mom explained the circumstances of my appearance while he performed his examination. It didn't seem to bother him at all that I was now living as a girl. And it didn't bother him that I preferred it, too.

"I have other male patients who prefer to dress as the opposite sex," he told us, "It's not all *that* uncommon. Just how far do you plan to take this, though?"

Mom looked at me questioningly.

"What options are there?" I asked him.

"Well, you can dress as a girl while remaining a boy and no one will guess the truth for several years. There are steps that can be taken to make you develop more like a girl, and make living as one possible even longer. Then, of course, there is the possibility of a complete transformation with surgery."

"What are the steps to developing like a girl?" Mom asked.

"Artificial female hormones," he answered, "I would say she could use birth control pills for a month or two to start things off, then something stronger to help develop the secondary characteristics of a female. Skin tone, hair, voice and breasts, just like any other budding young lady."

"Birth control pills!" Mom and I said in unison.

"Yes. They contain a mild form of artificial female hormones. Starting with mild ones is better than beginning with full dosages."

I opened my purse and took out the pink plastic container. I showed him the half-used package. "We didn't think it would hurt me to take them, so this is my second package," I told him.

He examined the prescription on the case, then reexamined me with a new perspective. He now examined my skin tone and hair, and he prodded about on my bare chest.

“It’s safe to say that the hormones are doing their work,” he told us both. “The areolae are larger than normal, and I’m surprised I didn’t notice it sooner. There are solid lumps forming under them that will eventually blossom into noticeably feminine breasts if you continue with the hormones.”

“How long before they are noticeable?” Mom asked.

“I’d say a month, maybe two.”

“Is there any way to speed it up?” I asked.

“Sure. Stronger, more potent hormones. But, I would suggest you stick to the pills you have for now. It is better to go slow at first.”

“I’ve already gone slow,” I told them. “I would like to go a bit faster if I can.”

“Is there any danger to that?” Mom asked.

“There is always danger when fooling with the natural progression of a body. But I can prescribe stronger hormones if that’s what both of you want, and *if* Amanda comes to see me at least once a week for the first few months.”

Mom and I looked at each other and we both nodded our heads. Artificial female hormones would make me into as much of a real girl as was possible without surgery. With real breasts on my chest, I could wear some of the nicer clothes I had seen other girls wearing, and there would be *no* chance that Dad could force me to be a boy again.

“I’ll make appointments for every Monday morning for the rest of the summer,” Mom told the doctor. “Amanda will be here and she will take the prescription, please.”

The doctor wrote the prescription while I got myself dressed again. He warned us that I might experience some nausea or discomfort until my body got used to living with the more powerful dosages I would be ingesting. But the thought of developing into a real girl overpowered any suggestion of negative side effects.

CHAPTER 9

Mom and I decided it would be best for all concerned if no one other than the three of us knew about this. Mom took us across town to another pharmacy to fill my prescription where we weren't known at all. We promised each other not to tell a single soul what we were up to.

I took the pills regularly and checked myself daily for any signs that they were working. I knew it wouldn't happen overnight, but I still hoped for it. Mom took me back to the doctor every Monday morning and sat in on the examination and question period. The morning sickness hadn't happened; that was due to the fact that I had been on the weaker pills before I began the stronger ones.

About two weeks after beginning the stronger hormones I noticed a sensitivity in my nipples that hadn't been there before and told Mom as soon as I could. She measured me after my bath and felt it was time I wore A-cup bras without padding, rather than the AA padded ones I had. We went out shopping and replaced every one of my previous bras with the new size. I was on my way!

It was about this time that some longtime friends of my parents decided to pay us a surprise visit. They arrived just after we finished dinner on a Saturday evening. The Wilsons had been friends since before I was born.

Dad answered the door while Mom and I were in the kitchen doing the dishes. When we realized who was there and that Dad was ushering them into the living room, I told Mom that I would finish the dishes and she could go to greet her friends.

I knew the Wilsons all of my life, yet couldn't predict how they would receive me now as a girl. There was only one way to find out. I finished the dishes, then made a pot of tea and set up a serving tray with the cream, sugar, cups on saucers, spoons and a plate of Mom's best cookies.

As usual I was dressed and made up to look my best as a girl, which Dad never liked to see. Wearing my apron over my dress I made a bold entrance carrying the tray of tea and dainties to serve our guests. As expected, the room went silent when I walked in. I *liked* the effect I had as a girl.

"Tea!" Mrs. Wilson exclaimed as I set the tray on the coffee table in front of her. "What a *wonderful* idea! And just who is this lovely young lady who brought it to us?"

"This is my daughter, Amanda," Mom proudly told them.

"You mean, it's Adam dressed up like a girl," Mr. Wilson said.

"That's what I said, Ken," Mom added quickly. "This is now my daughter and her name is Amanda."

"Well, she is *very* lovely," Mrs. Wilson repeated.

"*Why* is Adam dressing as a girl?" Mr. Wilson wanted to know. He was staring at Dad for an answer.

Dad was fumbling about for an answer when I spoke up. “If you have to know the truth, Mr. Wilson, I'll tell you.” Dad was preparing himself for the embarrassment he felt sure he was going to get from my telling the truth.

“The fact of the matter is that I thought I might like being a girl, so Mom, Dad, and the boys have agreed to let me try it for the summer. They call me Amanda and treat me like a girl, and I like it very much.”

Any embarrassment there might be was all now on my shoulders, which took the pressure off Dad. Mom played along and added her comments about how wonderful it was to have a daughter at last, a girl to do girl things with. To save face, Dad just played along. He didn't want to tell them it had been *his* idea to try and embarrass me into letting him cut my hair. Over such a trivial matter as the length of my hair, Dad was sure to get a blast from both of the Wilsons, who had let their sons grow their hair out a long time ago.

I served the tea, then left them to talk as I said goodnight before going up for my bath and to go to bed. Dad caught me alone on the stairs as I was heading up.

“Thank you for telling them that, Amanda,” he said to me. I knew it was hard for him to say it but he did. “You can be a boy again and keep your hair as long as you want. I'm sorry I ever made you do this.”

“I'm not, Dad,” I told him honestly. He seemed surprised, and a little perplexed as I continued “You made me become a girl to enforce your control over all of us, and I have been a girl for so long now that I really *do* like it. I don't *want* to be a boy again.”

“B... but, school will be starting again soon,” he stammered slightly, “What will you do then?”

“Deal with it as it comes up. I still have asthma, chemical sensitivity and allergies, so participation for me will always be limited. What difference will it make for me to sit through class in a dress instead of pants? I have a lot of lingerie, dresses, skirts and blouses I haven't worn yet. Are we just going to *waste* them or do I get to *use* them?”

He didn't answer so I continued up the stairs. He went back to join his friends and Mom in the living room.

CHAPTER 10

Sunday morning, I appeared for breakfast at my usual time and found everyone still around the kitchen table. I said my morning greetings to them as I got my usual breakfast. It was obvious I had interrupted something; no one said more than good morning to me.

“We've been talking things over,” Dad finally began to speak, “and I feel I have to apologize to you and everyone else for forcing you to become a girl. It was wrong of me and I'm sorry I ever did it.”

“You've said you're sorry and the boys said *they* were sorry ,too. I can accept that. I didn't like it when you started, but as time went by and I discovered what it felt like to be a girl, I realized that it was *better* than being a boy. I'm not sorry at all that I dress, look and act like a girl. I *feel* like a girl and I want to *stay* as a girl all the time. I am Amanda.”

“Yes,” he agreed, “you are a girl now. There can be no doubt about that. I wanted my son back, but I now know that is not an option. And I have no one to blame but myself. So, we have all agreed that if you want to remain a girl, we will help you in any way we can. First off, tomorrow I will change your name legally from Adam Edward to Amanda Eileen. Sorry, but when children are born they have no say in what their names will be.”

“That's okay, Dad. I like Amanda Eileen.”

“To make the adjustments easier,” Mom continued, “we have decided to send you to a private school for girls. You will live at home still, but attend school with only girls. This way there will be less chance of running into boys from your previous school who may not like the idea of your changes. Your brothers have agreed with us that Adam no longer exists and that Amanda is their real sister. If we hear that they ever admitted to anyone that Amanda used to be Adam, they too will learn what it's like to be a girl and go to a girls school.”

Neither of them would ever admit to anyone that they ever had a brother named Adam. The consequences would be more than they could take.

I was free! I had *won!* I could remain a girl for as long as I chose and wear the things other girls did. I could wear jeans and sweat shirts and dress down whenever I felt like it and still be a girl. It felt *wonderful* to have my freedom!

I took a bath at noon and chose, for the first time that summer, to dress down a bit. Wearing my panties and bra, I pulled on a T-shirt and got out my best jeans. I put my feet into the pant legs and pulled them up to find they no longer fit. Either the jeans had shrunk or I had grown. They were tight through the thighs and hips, though the waist was a bit small. I called down to Mom and she came running up to see what was wrong.

“Did my jeans shrink or what?” I asked her.

“I think you've grown, Amanda,” she replied, “Boys jeans aren't going to fit your girlish figure now. It will have to be girls' jeans.”

Mom and I went through my wardrobe and I tried every item of my old male attire once more. None of it fit me at all. The pants were all tight through the thighs and hips, and that went for my short pants, too. My shirts were all tighter across my chest than they had been before. We packed up everything that didn't fit and moved it to Barry's room. He could use the things I no longer could wear.

This now made shopping a necessity again. I needed jeans and leggings and stirrup pants, along with girl's slacks and short pants. I could keep the T-shirts and sweat shirts but got rid of the ones with masculine designs on them. I was a girl and should have only girls' clothing.

CHAPTER 11

Monday morning, Dad had left for work on schedule, so when I walked into the kitchen for my breakfast, only Mom was there. The boys were out and playing already. I didn't know what to wear and was still in my nightie and robe. Mom had my breakfast on the table, so all I had to do was sit down and eat.

“What's wrong, dear?” she asked me, “I thought you'd be happy and bubbly today.”

“I thought so, too. But having won the fight against Dad and the boys isn't what I thought it would be. I feel like they let me down by giving up so easily.”

“I think I understand. You won but feel like you really lost. Lets look at it a different way then. The war is not over yet. This is just a temporary truce.”

“What do you mean? Dad has agreed to let me be a boy or a girl and keep the longer hair. That *was* the war. It's over.”

“Not yet, it isn't. The long hair was the initial objective. All you won was one battle. You told all of us that you really enjoyed being a girl rather than a boy. Your father's objectives have now changed to getting his son back. The boys want their brother back. The war is still on, only now it has changed the battlefield and tactics.”

“So staying a girl is the only way to win?”

“No, *becoming* a girl is how you win. And we have a secret weapon they don't know about.”

“What's that?” I asked.

“The *hormones*, Mandy. Your father mistakenly confided in me last night that when you begin to develop like all other boys you will finally see that you can never be a real girl and you'll change back to being a boy again. Then, he's won once and for all.”

“But, by staying on the hormones, I'll develop like a girl and win another battle, huh? I've *already* begun to develop, since I wear A-cup bras instead of the AA padded ones. How do we explain *that* without giving up our secret?”

“Simple. Men and boys are very ignorant about women and girls, and the things that make us different from them. We'll use their ignorance against them. All we have to tell them is that having worn a bra for so long already, the flesh has been forced into the cups and it's staying that way. It's plausible, since younger girls wear training bras though men don't understand that it's to accustom the girl to wearing the real thing later on. We can say it's like figure training with a corset. Girls who wear corsets to slim their waist down only wear them for a period of time, then the waist stays smaller by itself.”

“I get it! I wore tight-fitting bras all day, every day and since the flesh had no where else to go, it filled the cups. Now I have breasts like other girls my age.”

“Right! And we *still* have our secret weapon. Now, you'll grow some body hair, though not as much as a boy would. Like all girls you'll have to shave some of it. Legs and underarms.”

“What about my face? Will I grow a beard, too?”

“No. Thanks to the hormones and because you began them early enough, I’m told if you continue with them you won’t develop facial hair like a male. And, your voice won’t change like a boy’s would. It will remain young and sweet like other girls,” Mom began chuckling at first, then laughed out loud. “Your father *also* told me,” she explained, “that his best weapon now was your natural male hormones coming into play. Your artificial female hormones override them, so *our* secret weapon is countering *his* secret weapon.”

I laughed too.

“Go get dressed, dear, we have some shopping to do.”

“I don’t know what to wear Mom. I have so many clothes now, it’s hard to decide,” I answered.

“Okay. Lets look at today and dress for it. Today is special since it’s Amanda’s first legitimate day as a girl. Your dress should be special, too. In a way, I guess that today is Amanda’s birthday. So, since you seem to like feminine and pretty things, they have to be a consideration. I like them, too. Your father and brothers really *don’t* like seeing you wear things they consider to be too sexy, and since we aren’t trying to please them, sexy is also a consideration. Color is important too, and so is comfort. So, go up to your room and choose three dresses that incorporate those conditions. I’ll be up in a while and we’ll fine-tune it down to one dress.”

I did what Mom told me to and found I was having fun again. The war was still raging though it had moved to the gentler art of deception, rather than being waged in actual combat. I had a lot to learn from Mom. She knew the rules and how to win such a war.

Colors! What colors looked good on me? I had mousy brown hair and lightly-tanned skin, but good tone. White always looked good and was good for summer. I got out my



best white dresses and ran through Mom's list of qualifications. I had already taken care of “color” and “feminine”. I put back the plainer ones. I was left with one that was like what I was looking for. And it was comfortable when I tried it on in the store.

Pink! I pulled out my pink dresses and discounted the ones that didn't fit the requirements. Actually, none of them worked with all the qualifications, so all of my pink dresses went back into the closet.

Blue. Again, none incorporated all my requirements. Red. I had two dresses that were “all there” so I kept out only the one that was the most comfortable to wear. Yellow. I had “pretty and feminine” and “comfortable”, but not “special” or “sexy”. Green. Once again I had nothing there.

Black. *Now* I had a color that really worked. They were all feminine and pretty though only about four of them were what I would call special. The rest went back. Of the four, there were two that were really sexy as well. Of these two, I chose the one that looked the most comfortable and kept it out. I had three choices that fit all of the requirements.

Mom came into my room and, seeing what I had chosen, gave me a smile and nod of approval.

“Okay Amanda, lets throw in one more variable. The weather. Today we have clouds with the possibility of rain. No sunshine. What color would work best with the weather?”

“Black,” I answered without thinking about it much, “Black would keep me warmer on a cool day.”

“True. Now, materials. If it rains, which dress would stand up best to the weather?”

My red dress was silk and satin and would be ruined if it got wet. My white dress was cotton and would hold the water and stick to my body. My black dress was a rayon blend and much more water-resistant. “Black again,” I answered.

“Okay. Now, stand back and look at all three dresses and tell me which one is the prettiest, sexiest and most feminine.”

I did what she said and looked them over. The white one had crocheted scallops around the neck and short sleeves, and was very pretty with its ruffled hem. It was sexy but I had worn it before, so I put it back into the closet without saying a word. That left two. The red dress would show a lot of cleavage, but so did the black one. They were both about the same length, though the red one was sleeveless while the black one used black lace to form short handkerchief sleeves. The red one had netting overlay on it, which would look good on my bared skin, but the black one had lots of black lace trim around the neckline and the hem line. Based on the weather and the materials, I took the red dress and hung it back in my closet. That left me with the black one.

“Excellent choice!” Mom exclaimed, “Now, underwear! All the same considerations should be applied here as well. Since it is all ladies’ underwear anyway, it already *is* feminine. You have also chosen the color since it has to go with the dress—black. So, we have to choose “special”, “pretty”, “sexy” and “comfortable”. We might lose some on

the comfort side to attain the other three, but that is to be expected. What would *you* choose?"

"Well," I said, "I *have* to have panties and a bra at the very least. Black lace bikini panties with a matching three-quarter lace cup bra." I went to my bureau and got them out. "I'm going to need a full slip with this dress, but I don't think I have one that is cut low enough or is short enough to wear under it. And, I would choose beige pantyhose, too."

"The panties and bra are perfect, Amanda, so you may as well put them on now." I lifted off my waltz-length nylon nightie and stepped into the panties to pull them up into place. I put my arms into the bra and easily attached it behind my back. A bit of lifting and pulling and I got my small breasts adjusted inside the cups. I reached for my pantyhose. "Wait a minute, dear," Mom said. "We agreed on your choice of panties and bra, not pantyhose." I put them back down.

"What would *you* suggest, Mom?"

"Granted, the pantyhose are comfortable, but let's think "sexy and pretty" here. Why not consider a black lace garter belt with sheer, nude silk stockings with seams up the back? *Very* sexy and pretty, though less comfortable. And they are more practical too since you don't have to pull them down to use the toilet."

I got out my little, black, lacy garter belt and began to put it on as Mom went to her room and got me a pair of her silk stockings. I only had nylon ones. Mom showed me that the garter tabs had to go through the panties and out the leg openings, and she explained why. "If the tabs are over the panties you will be limited in how far you can pull down the panties to use the toilet. It may not be far enough to do it comfortably."

I saw her point and, while she instructed me, I put on her stockings by myself. She helped me get the seams straight up the backs of my legs, then smooth the stockings and attached the garters tautly.

I got out my black full slips and held them against the dress, and I was right. None of them would work. The length could be adjusted with pins, but the neckline was too high on all of them and too much slip would show there.

"The slips are useless here," Mom agreed with me, "but we aren't defeated yet."

"I can't wear that dress without something under it, Mom," I complained. "Anyone could see all of my underwear right through it."

"True enough, but we do have other options. A camisole with a half-slip, or a teddy."

"I only have *one* black camisole and it's cut too high for this dress."

"So lets take a look at your teddies, then."

I got out my two black teddies and was happy to find that one of them would work just fine. I put it on. The smooth silk against my bare skin felt really nice. Mom helped me into the dress and did up the zipper for me. I stood in front of my mirror with a critical eye and looked for whatever might be wrong. I could see in my reflection that a slip was required, too. Mom chose a half-slip with lots of black lace at the hem; while I held up the skirt of my dress, she helped me into the slip. It was too long, so she

reached under my dress and rolled up the waist of the slip until it was the right length. Perfect!

All my black shoes had flat heels on them, so we chose a pair with open toes to show the seamed toes of my stockings and the bright red polish I wore on the nails. I put on my watch and locket and replaced my diamond ear studs with a pair of dangling diamond earrings. Mom watched me apply my makeup and was pleased with the final look. I brushed out my hair and left it hanging straight.

Mom took me to her room, where I once again checked my overall appearance in her mirrors. She had movable mirrors so I could see myself from all sides without having to twist and turn like a contortionist. While I checked myself carefully, Mom stripped herself naked to change into something more suitable for a day out with me. I was going to give her some privacy, but she told me to stay and watch. "We are both females now, Amanda. You have to get used to seeing women and girls in the altogether or it'll make you uncomfortable later when it shouldn't."

She was taller than me by several inches and today she chose to wear blue which went well with my black and looked great with her long chestnut brown hair. I watched her put on similar items to what I wore and finished herself off with makeup and jewelry. We were both ready to go out once we got our purses.

CHAPTER 12

Mrs. Hammond, across the street, was more than happy to take the boys for the whole day. Dad was at work and we didn't know when we would be home.

Our first stop this day was a shoe store. Mom felt that I should have proper shoes to go with the dress I had on, and flat-heeled pumps didn't work. I got to try on black patent pumps with three-inch heels in both open- and closed-toe styles. They fit and, with a bit of coaching from Mom, I was able to walk fairly well in them. She bought them for me, though she didn't feel they were exactly right, either. I tried on a pair of black T-strap sandals with three-inch heels and wore them out of the store, my flats in the bag.

Our next stop came as a surprise to me. Mom had phoned ahead and gotten an appointment for me at her usual beauty salon. Apparently, she even told them of my chemical sensitivity, because they took us back to a private room to do the work Mom requested.

They changed the color of my hair from mousy brown to a brilliant straw blonde, and oohed and ahed over how pretty I looked as a blonde. They styled it 'til it dried, then cut it in a short bob and added some fullness and body to the back of my head. It was much more feminine than the way I had worn it before.

My makeup had run a bit from the water, so they removed it all for me and brought in their cosmetics expert to do a proper job. The woman first shaped my eyebrows by plucking the hair that didn't belong, then got to work with eyeshadow, eyeliner, mascara, eyebrow pencil, blushes, lipliners, lipstick and lipgloss. She finished off her work with a matte powder and finally allowed me to look.

Wow! I had a hard time believing the pretty-looking girl in the mirror was really me. I looked older, like a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old. Mom was happy with what they had done and so was I.

Then, it was time for lunch and another surprise. We had a date to meet someone for lunch in the dining room of one of the city's finest hotels. I didn't know who it was, and Mom would not tell me.

We were meeting Dad for lunch! I found that out when we arrived a few minutes late and were seated at his table.

He watched us walking across the room and was evidently too stunned with what he saw to remember his manners. He sat and stared at me, dumbfounded, as the maitre'd seated both Mom and me.

"*Stunning*, isn't she?" Mom said to Dad.

His mouth moved up and down a few times without any sound coming out. He found his voice and said, "Did you *have* to go and do that to her?"

"Do *what*?" Mom asked, slightly surprised. She combed my bangs idly with her fingers as she continued, "Amanda needed to learn more of what it's like to be a woman these days and a trip to the salon was necessary. *I* think she's beautiful."

“She *is*,” Dad agreed. “Amanda is very beautiful. And Amanda Eileen is legally a girl, too.” He fumbled in his pocket for a few seconds though he never took his eyes off of me. He produced a birth certificate for me and gave it to Mom.

Mom checked it over, then handed it to me. I had never seen my previous one so I didn’t know what they should look like, but this one showed my proper birth date, my name as Amanda Eileen Connelley and my sex as “F”, for female. I knew he was going to be doing this, but I hadn't expected it to be so *soon*. I had already planned to thank him in a girlish way.

I got out of my chair, went over to him and threw my arms around his neck. I kissed him on the cheek before I hugged him and said, “Thank you, Daddy!” in his ear. I let go and glanced at Mom, who was grinning from ear to ear, so I gave her a little wink and she knew I had planned it. Dad was slightly embarrassed but was learning to accept the fact that he now had a daughter.

He calmed down a bit and we were able to order lunch. I went with just a tossed salad, no dressing, and picked at it while he and Mom ate their meals. Dad kept staring at me and finally he got out the question that was on his mind.

“*How* did you manage to instantly give Amanda cleavage like that?” he asked Mom, pointing at my chest.

Mom gave him our pat answer, then continued with, “What else can you expect? A young person like this wears *any* tight-fitting undergarment long enough and changes are *bound* to occur.”

Mom knew Dad pretty well because he accepted her explanation without hesitation. It seemed reasonable to him that a tight-fitting bra would force a boy's flat chest to push out and look more like a girl's chest. He didn't object to my dress, either. *He'd* bought me my first one, after all. Now that I had outfits, I most certainly *had* to wear them.

“Well, it looks like Amanda got a haircut after all,” he commented. “It looks shorter than it was.”

“It *is* shorter, Dad,” I replied. “But, *they* didn't shave my head like *you* wanted to do. Now, I have a style like other girls my age. It's longer and I *like* it.”

“But, is it worth the price you're paying?” he asked.

“*What* price? Having long hair is allowing me to learn all about the joys of being a girl. That's *two* benefits at the same time. I just don't have the words to thank you properly, Dad.”

He let it drop, since he could see there was no way to win against the logic I presented. Dad had to get back to his office while Mom and I had more shopping to do. Dad paid the bill, then walked us out to Mom's car.

I tried on girls' jeans and got two pairs. I tried on some leggings and stirrup pants and got four pairs of each. And Mom bought me a raincoat and a good maxi-length winter coat. I was going to need both. We would get other winter wear later, as it turned colder and as I needed them.

All in all, I didn't spend a whole lot of time on my feet shopping, so when we got home I stayed dressed as I was and practiced wearing my high-heeled shoes. And every time I passed by a mirror, I had to look at my reflection. My new blonde hair made a striking contrast against my lightly-tanned skin and the blackness of my dress.

Mom had dinner on, and the boys were out playing. Dad would be home in another hour, just in time to eat. "Amanda," Mom called to me, "could you come here please?"

I went to the kitchen, much more confident in my high heels and said, "Yes, Mother. What would you like?"

"I need a favor, dear," she began. "The boys have vanished or they aren't answering. We're low on milk and butter, and I can't leave or dinner will burn. Would you mind running to the store and getting the milk and butter?"

I thought about it. The store was two blocks away. It was my first real chance to go out alone as a girl. Every other time had been with Mom. Now I could walk down the street with a reason and get a chance to run into people who knew Adam but didn't know *me*. "Sure, Mom. I'll go to the store for you. Just milk and butter?"

"We could use a loaf of bread, too." She got me the money and I put it into my wallet in my purse and headed towards the door. "If you see the boys," she called after me, "send them home. Dinner will be about ready by then."

Not having Mom's reassuring presence beside me, walking the two blocks to the store added a new dimension to my feminine personality. I was doing it by myself, and it felt very nice and very naughty all at the same time. And people treated me differently now, too.

As Adam, no one ever gave me a second glance. With Mom, people looked at me often, though they never said an unnecessary word. Now, I noticed smiles appearing on faces of men and women I passed. There were boys out and about, and they all had grins. Some were crude enough to whistle at me.

In the store, there was the staff I saw a few times a year. Adam seldom went anywhere by himself. There were a few girls from school there, though they weren't dressed up like *I* was. I got the milk, butter, and bread and stood in line to pay for it. The girls were right behind me and bold enough to talk to me. They liked my dress, stockings, and shoes and my hair and makeup, too. They introduced themselves, and I told them my name was Amanda. They told me their ages and I told them mine.

Then it was my turn at the checkout, so I put my things onto the carousel and set my purse on the counter to dig out my wallet to pay for it. As chance would have it, my case of birth control pills fell out with my wallet, so I casually put it back into my purse. I no longer used the pills, but I still carried the case. Seeing it intrigued the girls, but they were polite enough that they didn't ask any questions there.

I had finished paying and was about to pick up the bags when Barry and Charlie came into the store. "Hey, you guys," I called to them. "Mom wants you two at home, pronto. But since you're here, you can carry the groceries home."

“Sure thing, Amanda,” Barry said, “that's why we followed you to the store.” They each took a bag and we walked home together. Association with the boys would probably raise more questions with the girls, since everyone knew the three Connelley boys. I would have to talk it over with Mom and see what she said.

CHAPTER 13

Mom's solution wasn't much more than a suggestion to stay away from those girls and boys that I had known before. In a new school I could make new friends and leave the others behind, which was fine with me since they hadn't really been "friends" to begin with. The boys were told to explain Adam's disappearance by saying he was too sick to go out, so he was being tutored at home. As for the appearance of Amanda, they'd "always" had a sister but *she* had health problems, too, and went to a private school. No one had to know anything different.

Time was going by all too quickly now as the end of summer was approaching, and it was almost time to go back to school. I spent as many days as I could laying out in the sun, in my two-piece swimsuit, getting a good tan with the proper tan lines. It was always a rare day that I could do this and I had never really *wanted* to in the past.

With a week to go, Mom came into my room one morning to supervise my dressing again. White lace panties and bra with a lace trimmed white half-slip. She chose my light blue print sleeveless blouse for me and its matching skirt. I didn't wear stockings at all and wore my white flat sandals on bare feet.

Makeup was light, jewelry was minimal, and she helped brush my hair into the pretty style I always tried for. After we finished breakfast, the boys went across the street while Mom took me to my new school.

I had to be registered properly, introduced to the principal, and given a tour of the school. Mom explained that since my health problems were getting better, I no longer had to stay at home all the time. The choice of a private school would offer more security, while giving me a chance to integrate myself with other girls my age. Since all previous schooling had supposedly been done at home, I had to be tested to see which grade they could put me into.

There was no doubt at all that I was a girl, since Mom showed them my birth certificate. But I was still to be limited in what physical activities I could do. And we had to buy the school uniforms: White blouses, short sleeves for the summer months and long sleeves for winter wear. Red plaid skirts with dozens of knife-sharp pleats and the hem line right at the knee. Summer skirts were a light rayon blend, while winter skirts were made of wool. I could wear the wool if I wore a slip under it. There were red ribbon ties to be worn around the neck with every blouse, and rayon jackets to be worn only in the winter. White knee length socks and black Mary Jane-style shoes in school, though boots could be worn to school. The choice of underwear was left up to each girl, though the school frowned on black or dark-colored bras under white blouses. Nylon stockings or pantyhose were allowed in the winter months, though socks had to be worn with the shoes as well.

The school had its own store, and we purchased three full uniforms for each season, with two pairs of shoes. I could use my own white socks as there was no specific design that had to be worn. Mom had to hem up the skirts for me because they hung down past my knees. And, I had yet to get a pair of winter boots, hats, scarves and gloves.

I had to go back in a couple of days to write the tests. Mom took me there and had me wear my uniform to show it off. I did very well on the tests and would be in the advanced class of grade seven students.

The school was close enough that I could walk both ways in a short time, so running into other kids was less of a concern. The Big Day arrived and I survived it easily. There weren't any girls I had known there from before, and since we were *all* girls in this school, it was easier to make friends with many of them. Life was definitely taking a turn for the better.

Time alone will tell how this story ends, but I can no longer envision myself as anything other than a girl.

THE END

LEARNING TO TAKE IT AS IT COMES

by Patricia Smith

CHAPTER 1

Even though my family was on the poorer portion of the social scale, I considered myself to be a very lucky twelve-year-old boy. I had loving parents who cared more about me and my happiness than they did about themselves. That's why, when I realized I had a problem, I knew I could talk to them and get the proper help to resolve it. I spoke to them on a Friday evening immediately after supper, before Mom began clearing the table.

"You look worried about something Joey," Mom began, "What's wrong?"

"I have a little problem," I told her.

"Tell us about it," Dad said, putting down his tea cup.

"My chest is itchy, and sometimes it hurts too. I have trouble sleeping because of the itch and pain." I told them.

Mom told me to strip to the waist, so I took off my shirt and undershirt and let her see. I pointed to the nipples on my chest in explanation of what was bothering me so much.

"The nipples are extended and ultra-sensitive," Mom said, "The areolae appear to have enlarged somewhat and there is a solid lump under each of them. What have you been eating, Joey?"

"I only eat at home," I told her, "I only eat what you give me. I don't even eat candy the other kids offer me."

"Okay. Leave your undershirt off, put your shirt on but do not tuck it into your pants. Leave it loose and it should be a bit more comfortable for now."

"Do you know what it is?" Dad asked her.

"There's no point getting all worked up about something I could be wrong about. I'll call the doctor and try to get us in there tomorrow, if it's at all possible. If not, I'll try to find a temporary solution for Joey."

I was finished with my supper and the conversation was over, so I took my dishes to the kitchen and stacked them on the counter top. Then, I went up to my room to put the undershirt away. That left Mom and Dad to talk privately about me.

Normally, I slept on my side or stomach, and I liked having the weight of the quilt on top of my body. Lately, if I got *any* sleep at all it was because I was laying on my back without any covers or pajamas on. But I couldn't sleep this way for more than an hour or so; then I would roll over, feel the pain and wake up. Sometimes I woke up crying.

Mom relayed my symptoms to the doctor, who apparently said it wasn't an emergency and couldn't see me until Wednesday at the earliest. His schedule was just too full. He recommended a "Band Aid" solution to her until he could see me. Mom talked it over with Dad and they both agreed that something had to be done for me. I was in too much discomfort all the time.

Mom went shopping first thing Saturday morning while Dad and I did our usual chores around the house and yard. First, I had to clean my room, then change the linen on my bed, before going out to cut the grass. I raked up the clippings, then weeded the flower beds, too. I did these chores every week for which I got an allowance of ten cents to spend any way I wanted. I was saving my money for such things as birthday presents for both my parents, or for other special occasions.

I felt I was a pretty good kid all in all. Having completed my weekly chores, I went to watch my Dad working at his workbench in the garage. Dad was trying to replace some of the plumbing in the basement himself, so that he could put in another bathroom down there. It was a project he worked at every week for at least one full day. But it was all new to him, so when I had the time to watch him, I did. I could learn a lot.

School work was never as interesting as watching Dad in the basement or garage. I wanted to help him, but there never was any thing I could do until he got it figured out and the pipes in. I saw him dig a hole in the floor where the toilet was going, but I wasn't around when he put in the pipes for the drain. Maybe that one worked so well for him because I wasn't there.

Dad saw me standing in the open doorway and asked, "You got your chores done already, Joey?"

"Yes, Dad." I replied, idly scratching at my chest.

"Okay. When Mom gets home, I want you to go with her and do everything she tells you to. Don't argue with her either. She is only trying to do what she can to help you."

"What is she doing?" I asked him.

"Never mind. She'll tell you herself. You just do as you're told, *or else.*"

I knew what "or else" was. Dad's only idea of punishment for any infraction consisted of removing his belt and beating me with it. I wondered what Mom was doing to require a warning like this from Dad.

I suddenly lost interest in what Dad was doing. I went up to my room, where I took off my shirt to sit on the bed and read one of my school books.

School was over for the summer and in the fall I was going to be in grade six. I had turned twelve years old on February the 14th, 1962. Valentine's Day was also my birthday.

Mom got home while I was absorbed in my reading, so I never heard her come in the house. The first I knew she was home was when she knocked lightly on my bedroom door and entered, carrying a large shopping bag. She smiled at me when I looked up at her and placed her bag beside me on the bed.

CHAPTER 2

“How are you doing, Joey?” she asked me.

“It hurt, so I took my shirt off.” I told her.

“I see that. But you shouldn't run around all day without a shirt on.” It sounded like an admonishment.

“I'm in my room.”

“So you are, dear. Be a good boy now and take off your pants,” she ordered.

“Why?” I asked standing up and undoing them.

“I was talking with a doctor friend I ran into downtown this morning and I told her about your condition. She told me what to look for on the rest of your body, to see if it was this condition she had heard of. I need to see you with all your clothes off.”

I took off my pants and my socks, then she made me take off my underwear too. I was completely naked. I had to turn around and let her look at me from all sides and angles until she was satisfied.

“I bought you some new underwear today Joey. All of your old things are falling apart. But these new ones are a new style, called briefs.” She produced from her bag a pair of light yellow underwear and handing them to me ordered me to put them on.

I found the tag indicating the back of the waistband, so I put each of my legs into their openings and pulled them up and into place. They felt snug on me, then I noticed something.

“Where's the front fold to pee out of?” I asked her.

“I told you, its a new style. These briefs don't *have* that fold. Now, I was lucky enough to find them on sale and a little brassiere to match. It has size AA padded cups which will cover and protect your sensitive chest. I'll help you put it on.”

Mom made me put my arms into it, then she pulled it up, adjusted the straps over my shoulders, and hooked it together behind my back. Then I was allowed to put my shirt, socks, and pants back on.

“Isn't the brassiere *girls'* underwear?” I asked Mom.

“Yes,” she replied, “but it's one of the only things the doctor and I could think of to make you more comfortable until your appointment on Wednesday. How does your chest feel *now*?”

I had to think about it for a moment. The brassiere was snug around my chest and over my shoulders. But it didn't hurt, and the itching seemed to be less than it had been. I told Mom how I now felt and thanked her.

“When you go outside, Joey, I want you to wear a light jacket or sweater, all right?”

“Why, Mom?” I asked.

“Because the brassiere is an item of girls' underclothing, and your shirt is light enough that the outline of the brassiere can be seen right through it. Others will know you are wearing the brassiere unless you hide it with a jacket or sweater.”

“Does Dad know?” I asked her.

“Yes,” she answered, “he and I talked about it before I went shopping. He agreed that it seemed like the only answer for now. We'll just have to wait and see what the doctor has to say about it all.”

So, I put my jacket on to go outside and sit by myself on the back steps. Dad had told me to do everything Mom said “or else”. Mom was making me wear a girls' brassiere, at least until I saw the doctor in four more days. It was tight on me, but at least my chest didn't hurt me anymore. And the itching was a lot less, too.

The new underwear I wore was also tight on me. It was the same color as the brassiere and had a very narrow waistband. I had to suspect that Mom got me a pair of girls' panties to match the girls' brassiere I now wore. I went back into the house and caught up with Mom as she entered the kitchen.

“Is your chest still bothering you?”

“It will always bother me until I find out what is happening to me,” I told her, “The new style underwear you got for me are really girls' panties, aren't they?”

“That's right, dear. When I bought you the bra, the panties were given to me for free. I couldn't very well refuse them, now could I?”

“Why *not*?” I asked her.

“And what should I *say* to them? ‘Oh no, I don't need the panties that match since I am buying this brassiere for my son and they are too small to fit me.’? Can you *imagine* what would happen the next time anyone saw you with me? Strange women would come up to you in the street and ask if you liked the bra your mother bought for you. Would you have preferred *that*?”

“No. But, do I *have* to wear them?”

“Why *not*? They are brand new, they were free, and they are in much better condition than your *old* underwear. And unless you go and tell everyone else, only four people will ever have to know that you are wearing girls' underwear.”

“Which four people?” I had to know.

“You, me, your father, and our doctor.”

I went into the living room to sit on the couch and think some more, but Mom made me take off my jacket and shoes first. I didn't *want* to take off the jacket because the outline of the bra I had on would show through my shirt. Mom made me take it off anyway, reasoning that she and Dad already knew I wore the brassiere.

Mom made soup and sandwiches for lunch, then called Dad in to join us. We ate at the kitchen table, since it was only a light meal and not worth messing up the dining room.

“How is your chest now?” Dad asked me between spoonfuls of his soup.

“It feels *much* better.” I told him.

“That's good! You were right, Gloria. Wearing a brassiere is the best thing for Joey right now.”

“They were giving away the matching panties, so I took them, too. Since his old underwear is so ragged I had him put the panties on as well. Is it *wrong* to make Joey wear nice things even if they *were* made for a girl?” she asked Dad.

“No, its not wrong at all.” he replied, “They were free and brand new, it would be a crime to let them go to waste. Joey, its not wrong at all for boys to wear some girls clothes, just like it’s not wrong for girls to wear some boys clothes. Right now, the brassiere is helping you, the panties are a bonus. Wear them, all right?”

I finished my lunch before Mom and Dad did. “I didn't sleep too well last night,” I told them, “can I go take a nap?”

“Certainly, dear,” Mom replied, “just lie on your bed on top of the covers with your clothes on. I'll wake you later so you don't end up sleeping all day. If you did that, you might not be able to sleep tonight.”

I went up to my room and lay down on my stomach. It didn't hurt, so I put my head on the pillow and fell asleep.

CHAPTER 3

I woke up with my mother shaking me and calling my name. I was in a deep sleep, so I guess she had been shaking me for quite some time before I actually woke up. Mom escorted me to the bathroom where she had me wash my face with cold water just to be sure I was fully awake.

“You had a pretty good sleep, didn't you?”

“I guess so,” I replied, “The last thing I remember is putting my head down on the pillow, then you shaking me awake. How long did I sleep?”

“About two hours. I have to vacuum the upstairs now, and you know how noisy the vacuum cleaner is. It would have woken you anyway. Besides, I need a few things from the grocery store and I hoped you would go for me.”

Mom gave me the list of things she needed as I put on my running shoes. I read it back to her, then tucked it and the money she gave me into my pants pocket. Mom reminded me to wear my jacket, so I put it on before leaving the house.

I found the things Mom wanted at the store and put them into the cart I was pushing down the aisles. I only picked up small things for Mom at the store, since she and Dad went shopping for everything else once a month. I unloaded the cart onto the counter and the lady at the cash register punched in the prices.

“Pretty hot day to be wearing a jacket, isn't it?” she commented.

“I felt a cool breeze out there,” I lied to her, adding, “I haven't been feeling too good lately, so I didn't want to take a chance on getting sick again.” I hoped that would stop her.

“You aren't telling me the truth, are you?” she asked me.

“What makes you think that?” I asked back.

“It's so hot outside you didn't do up your jacket. You were so hot, you perspired and your shirt got so wet it is sticking to your body. It 's so easy to see the brassiere you're wearing you may as well not be wearing a shirt at all. If you're trying to hide the bra, you should do up the jacket, too.”

I did up the jacket without a word. Silently, I paid for the groceries. My head hurt the whole way home, from having all the blood in my body rush into it so fast. It drained away slowly.

I put the grocery bags on the counter along with Mom's list and the change from the money she had given me. I went straight to my room and sat on my bed. Mom came in a few minutes later.

“The lady from the store phoned and told me what happened,” Mom said to me, “I explained the circumstances to her and she is more than willing to keep your secret.”

Mom helped me out of the jacket and shirt, then unhooked my bra and took it off for me. “You have perspired so much you need to take a bath, Joey.” She removed my shoes and socks, then undid my pants and removed them as well. She even removed

my panties. She led me down the hallway and into the bathroom, where I was made to sit in the empty tub. Mom put in the plug and began filling the tub with fairly hot water. She poured in some of her bubble bath powder and filled the tub more than half-way full.

I was allowed to soak in the hot bath and perfumed bubbles for about fifteen minutes. Mom came back and washed my hair for me. Then, she washed the rest of my body. I was old enough and big enough to do it by myself, but she wouldn't listen to me. She was determined to do it, and no amount of complaining by me was going to stop her.

Mom pulled the plug and, as the water disappeared down the drain, she helped me out of the tub. I dried off with one of her big fluffy towels. Normally the big towels were reserved for Mom and Dad, and the fluffy ones were Mom's alone. She wrapped the towel around me and led me back to my bedroom.

"I bought you more than one bra, since they were a two-for-one special with the panties thrown in. You see, it's my suspicion that you are growing breasts, like any little girl your age might do. I am positive I'm right and I bought you several more items of lingerie. I was lucky and caught a sale, so everything I got you was too cheap to pass up. The only bad part is that I was forced to take the colors and styles they had in stock. We needed these things for you right away."

"I'm a *boy*, Mom! How can I be growing titties?"

"I don't know. All I know for sure, is that I am a woman and when I was a little girl about your age I started to grow mine. They looked and felt just like your chest does now."

"I hope the doctor can explain it to us, and I hope he can do something about it. I don't want to be half boy and half girl."

"I'm sure the doctor can do something for you, Joey."

"The brassiere does help, though. Dad says to try and enjoy the panties too. I guess I can get by with the yellow ones until the doctor can fix things for me."

"The yellow ones have been washed and are hanging on the clothesline to dry. They were the only plain ones I could find. All the rest of the things I bought for you were a bit fancier, I'm afraid."

"*How fancy?*"

Mom opened the top drawer of my dresser and removed another bra and panty set, placing it on the bed for me to see. It was a very bright pink, overlaid and trimmed with white lace. I learned that the main material of the brassiere was satin and the panties were made from nylon.

Once again, I didn't have a choice. Mom put the brassiere on me and fastened the hooks behind my back. She held out the panties for me to step into, then pulled them up for me. Then she took out a white sheet-like garment, and rolling it up, pulled it over my head. She had me put my arms into the arm holes, then pulled it down over my body.

“This garment is called a chemise.” she explained to me. “I hoped it would help hide the brassiere a little more. I knew you might need it with the pink bra but I thought that you could do without it with the yellow one.”

The chemise clung to my body all the way down. It was long enough that it just barely hid my panties from view when I looked in my mirror. Except for the lace trim on the edges and the silky feel of the material, it could have been an extra long T-shirt.

Mom got a clean shirt for me out of my dresser and, as I put it on, she got out a pair of my short pants, too. At first I thought I had put the shirt on inside out but after I checked I knew I had it on right. Whoever had made the shirt had put the buttons on the wrong side. The buttons were on the left side and the holes were on the right side. I mentioned this to Mom but she said that shirts could button up from *either* side. Both the chemise and the shirt tucked into the shorts before I did up the button and zipper. I put on ankle socks and my tan-colored shoes.

Dad came in from the garage just as Mom and I came down the stairs. I asked him if he needed any help out there. He said no, but Mom might need some help. Not wanting to offend my mother, I asked her if she needed any help in the house. She said yes, she *did* need some help with the dusting.

“Dusting can be a dirty job,” Dad offered. “You got an apron Joey can wear?”

“My aprons would probably be too big for him, but I do have a pinafore that should fit him.”

“What's a pinafore?” I asked.

Mom got it out and with Dad watching, helped me into it. She went behind my back to tie the sash into a huge bow. It was like a bib but had shoulder straps attached to the sash which got tied in back. It was made of white cotton and had a frilly trim around every edge.

“I don't *think* so!” I said.

“Its a perfect fit!” Mom said.

“It looks good on you, Joey.” Dad told me.

“It makes me look like a *girl!*”

“Girls are important, too.” Dad said. “I want you to wear that pinafore and help your mother with her housework. And I think you can help your mother do this every weekend from now on. Any more trouble from you and I'll see if your mother can't find a *dress* for you to wear, too.”

I was trapped and knew it. I had to learn to accept trying the feminine things Mom wanted me to or face the wrath of my father. I did the dusting for Mom and wore the pinafore without further complaint.

Dinner was ready by six and I was sent out to the garage to get Dad. I tried to undo the pinafore, but Mom had put it into a knot. I asked her to undo it for me.

“You can wear it out there to call him,” she told me, “The garage is very private and no one will see you. Now, go before dinner gets cold.”

I eased open the back door and stuck my head out to see that not a single soul was in sight. I slipped outside and down the stairs. I thought that if I hurried I could get into the garage door before anyone could see me.

I got to the small garage door without being seen and slid inside to find my father talking to several of his neighborhood friends. They all saw me enter wearing the white pinafore, and suddenly I was turning red as a beet. "Dinner is ready," I said to Dad before turning and running back into the house.

Mom stopped me from running up to my room and asked me what was wrong. "Dad had some of his friends in the garage with him and they all saw me," I told her, the tears flowing from my eyes, "They were all laughing at me."

"I'm sure they weren't laughing at *you*, dear. They were probably telling jokes again and one of them was actually funny, for a change."

Dad came in then and washed his hands in the kitchen sink, as though nothing was out of place. Of course I was made to wear the pinafore at the table, and later when Dad asked me to help Mom do up the dishes. I couldn't get it off by myself, so I really didn't have a choice in the matter. Only when dinner was completely cleaned up did Mom remove the pinafore from me.

I had about an hour to relax before it would be my bedtime, so I went to my room to read. Dad was listening to the radio and Mom was doing some sewing or knitting. I got my books down but couldn't concentrate on the words or the pictures. Too much was happening to me all at once here.

Mom came in to my room a short time later to tell me it was time for me to get ready for bed. She stood there and watched as I put my books away and stayed as I started to undress. I took off my shoes and socks, the shirt with the buttons on the wrong side and my short pants. Mom helped me out of the chemise and the bra, then directed me to remove the panties. I did as I was told and stood naked again before my mother.

"Sleeping has been pretty rough for you, Joey, I know that." she told me. "Daytime bras should not be worn to bed, though. I did find a sleep bra when I was shopping and got it with its matching outfit. The only color they had it in was light pink."

"Why does *everything* have to have a matching something to go with it?" I asked her.

"Girls are lucky that way. Pretty lingerie is *so* nice to wear when everything matches. So far you've only worn matching bras and panties."

"You mean there's *more*?" I asked.

"Of *course* there is, Joey. Like this sleep set I got for you to wear tonight. First, there is the bra with the see-through cups and the matching, see-through panties." Mom got them out and helped me into them. "Then, there is the matching, semi-sheer nightgown," she said, producing the garment and making me put it on.

Everything was the light pink color Mom had said it would be and in the sheer nylon. The nightgown had short puffed sleeves, a flat collar that lay down around my

neck, and a hem line that fell to my knees. Mom had a sheer nylon robe to go with it and a pair of pink slippers for my feet.

She made me wear all of it, though I had to go use the toilet. Mom followed me there and would not allow me to pee standing up, as it didn't go with the things I was wearing. I had to turn around and sit on the toilet to pee.

When I was done I washed my hands, then headed for my room to go to bed. Mom stopped me halfway down the hall saying she was going to make me some hot chocolate to help me sleep, and that I had to drink it in the kitchen.

“Do I *really* have to let Dad see me in this?” I asked her.

“Why *not*? I showed it to him this afternoon when you were having your nap, and he *liked* it. He wants to see how you look in it, since he has already paid for it and it can't be returned.”

Mom followed me down the stairs to the kitchen, where I sat on a chair while she prepared the hot milk for me. When Dad heard us in the kitchen he came in from the living room to have some tea with us.

“My, my! Don't *you* look cute tonight, Joey!” he teased me.

“Why are you *doing* this to me?” I asked them.

“Doing *what*?” Dad feigned ignorance.

“First, you make me wear girls things, then you put me in an embarrassing spot or tease me. What's happening on my chest is not my fault. I didn't put it there on purpose.”

“We *know* you didn't, Joey.” Mom said. “Maybe we're taking this a bit far, but both Dad and I *like* the idea of having our son dress up like a girl. We *like* to see you wearing the pretty things usually reserved for girls.”

Dad gave me his serious look, stood up, ruffled the short dark brown hair on my head and wordlessly walked back into the living room. Mom finished making tea for her and Dad and took him a cup. She finished making my hot milk for me, though I didn't want the chocolate in it.

“Your father once told me,” Mom began, “that when *he* was a little boy, younger than you are now, his mother made him wear girls' clothes, too. His older sisters teased him a lot and, as he got older, they liked to dress him up in their clothes just for fun. Though he won't admit it, I think your father learned to like being made to dress as a girl. And because *he* once liked it, he wants *you* to experience the same things.”

“So why do *you* want me to dress as a girl?” I asked.

“I always wanted a daughter as well as a son. After you were born I found out I can't have any more children. There's no chance I can ever have a real girl of my own. When I saw that you might be growing breasts like a real girl, I thought this was my chance to experience having a daughter, for a short time anyway.”

I finished my milk and said goodnight to my mother. I went into the living room and said goodnight to my father. I had a lot to think about as I went back upstairs to my room, took off the robe and slippers and climbed into bed. I fell asleep within minutes.

CHAPTER 4



I was up early the next morning. I needed to wear brassieres to reduce the pain I felt in my chest and to reduce the itching, too. My Dad telling me to learn to enjoy wearing the panties made sense to me now. And Mom's point of view was understandable as well.

Thinking about it, I realized that the only real problem I had with wearing girls' clothes was the stigma associated with it. Girls who wore boys clothes and did boys things were called tomboys, and there was nothing wrong with it. Lots of girls were tomboys. But boys who wore girls' clothes or who did girl things were called sissies and were often the targets of bullies. I did *not* want to be called a sissy and teased in public, nor did I want to be the target of the bullies, male or female.

Was there a happy medium to be found? I hoped so. I had only a couple days to go before I saw the doctor and got his professional opinion on my condition. If I continued to fight with Mom and Dad

about the clothes they wanted me to wear it was going to be a long and embarrassing week. I *had* to wear the brassieres Mom bought for me; they helped me a lot, and the matching panties felt okay too. I had to wear the nightgown set as well. I had no choice and knew it.

Could I *like* it, though? I didn't know. It was as strange to me as it was new. Okay, the brassieres were tight on my chest, but they helped reduce the pain and itching. The panties and chemise were not uncomfortable and neither was the sleep set. I didn't like being teased or caught in embarrassing situations. I couldn't imagine that anyone would like that.

I knew that I had to get over my fear of being seen wearing girls' things. I went down for breakfast wearing my sleep set, but Mom and Dad were still asleep. I cleaned up after myself and went back to my room, where I managed to strip myself naked,

even removing the bra. I took a hot bath using lots of Mom's bubble bath and washed myself all over.

In my dresser I found another brand new brassiere and panty set, this one all white. Of course I had no trouble getting the panties on and even admired the lace that trimmed every edge. I guess I *really* didn't mind having the pretty underwear.

I had more trouble with the brassiere, though. I put my arms into the straps and reached behind my back to do it up. But try as I might, it was impossible to do. Finally, I took it off and wrapped it around my waist, did up the clasps in front of me, then pulled it around. I put my arms into their straps and adjusted the cups over my chest. The chemise was no trouble at all; it went on like an extra long T-shirt, but this one was even longer than the one I wore the day before. The hemline was halfway to my knees, which made it a full slip really, not the same as a chemise.

I sat on my bed to put on a pair of white ankle socks I found in my sock drawer. That's when Mom came into the room and caught me. She was wearing just her robe over her nightgown, plus her slippers.

“Good morning, Joey. Couldn't wait for me to help you?” She didn't seem angry.

“I was hoping to surprise you,” I told her, “This isn't a chemise, it's a full slip, isn't it?”

“Yes it is. I wanted you to wear it with the white underwear today.” She went to my closet and got out a basic white blouse that had a large floral design on it. Next, she took out a wispy-thin skirt that was the same color yellow as some of the flowers on the blouse.

I let Mom help me into the blouse and do up the buttons for me. Being a blouse, the buttons were on the left side while the holes were on the right, backwards from a boys shirt. The collar was flat and trimmed with lace, as were the short puffed sleeves.

As per Mom's directions, I stepped into the skirt and helped her tuck in both the slip and blouse before she fastened the button and zipper behind my back. I held up the hem of the skirt so Mom could adjust the slip beneath it, then let her adjust the hem of the skirt, too. I sat on the bed and watched as she rolled the tops of my socks down one turn and put a pair of black, patent leather shoes onto my feet, with straps that buckled across the insteps.

Dad was up and moving around by this time, so we decided to surprise him. He wore his slippers and his robe over his pajamas the way Mom wore her robe over her nightgown. Dad had put the coffee on, then sat at the kitchen table while Mom and I were still upstairs. We came down together, Mom went straight to the kitchen to make breakfast for both of them. I knew Dad would want his morning paper, so I went out the front door and found it for him. It was out on the front walk, just barely in our yard.

I guess it surprised all three of us when I walked into the kitchen and gave Dad his newspaper. I didn't know how he would react to seeing me already dressed in those clothes. I poured myself a glass of orange juice, then sat down in my usual chair.

“That's a nice outfit you're wearing, little girl.” Dad said to me in his teasing tone.

Mom shot him a dirty look as I replied, “Thanks Dad. Since it was in my closet, I thought I might as well try wearing it. It’s a pretty good fit and I’m real glad you like the way it looks.”

“But I called you a little *GIRL*, too”

“I *know* you did. And it was real hard to ignore that part too, but I’m trying. I *know* I’m a boy but you really *want* me to wear girls clothes, don’t you?”

“Yeah, I guess I do,” he replied, “It could be a nice change to have a little girl instead of a little boy. My son, the girl. But ‘Joey’ isn’t a girl’s name.”

“Why *not*?” Mom interjected. “Instead of being short for Joseph we could say its short for Josephine. Or we could go with Jo Jo which is more feminine.”

“Why worry about it now?” I put in, “I thought that I have to dress this way anyway, at least until I see the doctor in three more days. What if I’m *not* growing titties at all? What if it’s something *else*? Let’s at least wait ‘til then before we go and make long-range plans for me to be a girl.”

“Joey is right,” Mom said, “we have to wait.”

“Okay,” Dad agreed, “but no matter *what* the doctor says, I *still* want Joey to spend some time dressing as a girl. It will help make him a better person when he gets older.”

“You may be right in that regard, Ed,” Mom replied, “I *also* want a daughter. What do *you* want, Joey?”

“I want to grow my hair long this summer. *Other* boys have hair longer than mine and *they* don’t have to wear girls’ clothes.”

CHAPTER 5

After breakfast, Mom took a bath. As she got dressed for church, Dad sat with his third cup of coffee and read his newspaper. The funny pages weren't all that funny, so I gave them back to Dad, then cleared his dishes from the table. Mom had finished running her bath, so I ran a sinkful of hot water to wash the dishes in.

"Doing the dishes is women's work, Joey," Dad said, "You're acting like a *real* girl now."

"Isn't that what you *want*?" I asked him.

"Sure. You might as well learn to cook and clean and do the laundry, too. I'll be taking care of the yard work from now on."

The bathroom was directly above, so we heard Mom getting out of the tub, then the water draining and, a little while later, Mom walking back to her room. Dad went up for his bath and to get dressed for the day.

Church was Mom's choice, not Dad's, so he never went. I tried it a few times but never really liked it, so I wasn't forced to go. I listened to the radio and worked on a jigsaw puzzle while Dad worked in either the garage or the basement during the time Mom was at church. Any other day I would've been out with my friends playing some neighborhood game, like hide and seek.

Girls wearing skirts never played those games, so a *boy* in a skirt would be excluded, too. The next few days were going to be pretty lonely for me. Dad would be going to work, so that would leave me home all day with Mom. I figured I may as well learn to do women's work: Cooking, cleaning, laundry and dishes. At least it would be something to do.

Mom got home from church a little past noon and was excited about something. She made us a quick lunch and, after we finished eating, she told us her news.

"Mrs. Williams is coming over for tea at two!" This was wonderful news for Mom.

"I'll stay out in the garage to be out of your way," Dad told her, "I doubt she'll want to talk to me."

"You don't have to, Ed. Mrs. Williams is a very nice lady, and I want her to meet you and Joey."

Dad agreed to meet her.

"I'll get changed into a shirt and pants," I told Mom.

"You don't have to, Joey. Mrs. Williams is in charge of the used clothing drive for the poor. She told me that after giving everything away that they could, they still had some things left over. Mostly dresses, skirts and blouses. She tried to give them to the Connors family for their girls, but they wouldn't take them. So she offered them to me, for you."

"Why would she do that, if she knows I'm a *boy*?" I asked.

“Because Mr. Williams was visiting your father in the garage yesterday when you announced dinner was ready. In your pinafore, he mistook your shirt and short pants for a dress or a blouse and skirt and told his wife about your outfit. Like your father, she believes that *every* boy should experience the joys of dressing up as a girl.”

“I explained to Mr. Williams and the others that Joey wore the pinafore because he was *forced* to, and that otherwise he wore only boys’ things. I really didn’t *want* this to happen.”

“It doesn’t matter now. Mrs. Williams was convinced that Joey was dressed as a girl; since I didn’t know what you told your friends, I didn’t deny it. How could I? She’s coming at two and bringing boxes of things for Joey to try on to see if they fit. Everything is used but has been washed, ironed and mended so that it looks brand new. And it’s all free!”

“Well, if it’s *free*, then I think that Joey should at least try them on,” Dad volunteered, “While his skirt and blouse is pretty, it shouldn’t be his *only* outfit.”

I had no say in the matter. If I argued, I could feel the sting of Dad’s belt across my bare bottom. I did the lunch dishes while Mom made a jug of iced tea and put it into the fridge. I watched Mom arrange an assortment of cookies on a plate, then helped her set the dining room table for three people.

Precisely at two, the doorbell rang and Mom let Mrs. Williams into our house. I was sitting at the top of the stairs, dreading what I knew was to come. Dad was there to meet Mrs. Williams for the first time, though he knew her husband quite well already. I had met both of them before.

Mom led her into the dining room, while Dad went out to help Mr. Williams bring in the boxes of clothes. Mr. Williams was here, too! I counted six fairly large boxes that were placed in the middle of the living room floor.

It was about five minutes later that Mom came up the stairs to get me.

“This is a cruel punishment,” I told her, “and I didn’t do *anything* wrong to deserve it.”

“Don’t look at it that way, Joey. Look at it like you are exploring new and different worlds. Mr. Williams is in the garage with your father having coffee. It’s just me and Mrs. Williams in the living room.”

One or both, it was all the same to me. I was nervous as all get out as I let Mom lead me in there. Fighting and arguing wouldn’t help me one little bit and I knew it. Better to just get it over and done with.

CHAPTER 6

I remembered Mrs. Williams as being an older woman who was always gentle and soft spoken. She didn't disappoint me. Her smile was genuine as was her greeting, without malice or a trace of teasing. She shook my hand, then pulled me closer to hug my shoulders and tell me that I made a very pretty-looking girl.

"You don't think you're pretty?" she asked me.

"I don't know what pretty *is*. I've never *been* pretty or told I was pretty before," I told her.

"Well, I know pretty and you, my dear, are *very* pretty." Mom was beaming with joy at Mrs. Williams' words. "How long have you been crossdressing?" she continued.

"Crossdressing?" I asked. I was not familiar with that word.

"Crossdressing is a person of one sex wearing the clothes of the opposite sex. Boys dressed as girls are crossdressers," she explained to both Mom and me.

"Well, then, I've been crossdressing about 28 hours," I told her, "Yesterday morning was the first time I ever put on girls clothes."

"That's about right." Mom verified.

"That's all?" she exclaimed. "Oh Joey, as pretty as you are now, you have the potential to be one of the *most* beautiful young ladies in town in just a few short years. I am so happy you allowed me into your lives, Gloria."

"I'm happy you're happy, Mrs. Williams." Mom answered.

"Please, Gloria, call me Emily. I'm sure we can be good friends for years to come. And I want to be Joey's friend too."

"Of course, Emily. However, I won't allow Joey to use a name of such familiarity. He will have to call you Mrs. Williams."

"Of course, dear. Children shouldn't be so familiar with any adult as to use their first names. But should 'Mrs. Williams' become too tedious I would not object to hearing Joey call me 'Aunt Emily'. I know many children I am not related to who call me that."

"Calling someone Aunt isn't the same as being on a first name basis with them. Joey can use either title."

"Are you going to continue calling him Joey if he's dressed up as a girl?" she asked Mom.

"I think so," Mom replied, "It's short for Josephine too. Its that or Jo Jo."

"Joey is both masculine and feminine, so I think it is best to just use one name for both genders. Shall we take a look at what's in the boxes then?"

Mom opened the flaps on the first box and they both pulled out dresses and sweaters. Holding them against me they realized that everything in this box would be too

small for me, so they neatly folded them and put them back. That box got pushed over to the doorway.

The second box was full of shoes and other footwear, so it got set aside for a moment. I would be trying some on, but not until I had tried on other things first. The third box was more like what they were looking for: Party dresses with slips and crinolines and skirts.

Mom helped me out of my blouse and skirt, placing them neatly on a chair. She fitted me with several layers of crinoline, then took the white party dress Mrs. Williams had chosen and put it over my head. She had me put my arms into the sleeves and arranged the skirt over the crinoline. Mrs. Williams watched with obvious pleasure as Mom did up the buttons behind my back and tied the wide sash into a large bow.

“Oh, I am so glad that dress fits her,” Mrs. Williams said, “I have had it in these boxes for two years now. In order for a dress to be pretty it has to be worn. That dress looks very pretty on you Joey, don't you think so, Gloria?”

“Absolutely, Emily. Do you have any more this size?”

“Oh yes, several.”

For trying on the dresses, Mom had me wear three layers of crinoline. Besides the white dress there was a pink one, a blue one and a yellow one. There was a pair of white gloves that could be worn with any of the dresses and a white sun hat, too. In the box of shoes Mrs. Williams found a pair of white shoes to go with the dresses and, trying them on, we found that they fit me, as well. All these things were set aside as Mom helped me out of the dress and crinoline. Then, she loaded them all in her arms and took them up to my room.

Mrs. Williams moved the empty box aside and opened the rest of them. She took out neatly-folded blouses and sweaters and laid them on the furniture. I stood and watched as she matched the skirts to the tops. Mom came in and saw what she was doing and smiled down at me.

“You should feel lucky, Joey,” Mom said to me, “Being a new girl and getting so many wonderful things to wear so quickly!”

“That slip is too much, Gloria. Can you remove it please? I have a satin vest that might be better for *her*.” She put heavy emphasis on the feminine pronoun.

Mom helped me out of the full-slip and folded it atop my other clothes.

“Joey is wearing a brassiere already!” Mrs. Williams exclaimed.

“Yes,” Mom answered, “he, uh, *she* needs it just now. Joey has a doctor's appointment on Wednesday to find out exactly what is happening. Personally I think she is growing little breasts, like a *real* girl.”

“May I see?” she asked.

Mom removed my brassiere and Mrs. Williams came forward to get a closer look. She reached out to touch my chest and inspect the nipples and the darkened areolae.

“I believe you are right, Gloria. It looks as though Joey is developing female bosoms. A lot of itch, some pain too?”

“Lots of pain,” I told her.

“The brassiere is needed then.” she conceded.

Mom helped me back into the brassiere and full-slip. The vest was a garment worn by little girls who weren't into wearing bras yet. They found three skirts that fit me and eight different tops. There was a winter coat that fit, along with a pink snowsuit for outdoor winter activities. I tried on boots, shoes and slippers of various colors and styles and got to keep everything that fit or was a little bit big on me. I would grow into some of those things.

After we had been through it all, Mrs. Williams was taking home three of the six boxes she had brought over. One was full of things that were too small, one had only footwear that didn't fit me, and the last one was partially filled with things that were far too big to fit me.

Mrs. Williams helped me and Mom carry the last few items up to my bedroom. There, she took a long last look at the white party dress she liked so much. Instead of helping me dress in the clothes I had worn earlier, Mom had Mrs. Williams help her dress me up in that white party dress again.

Three layers of crinoline over my slip, then the dress, the gloves on my hands and the sun hat tied onto my head. Mom did up the buttons and the bow, then had me sit on a chair while she put the white socks and shoes onto my feet. As a final accessory, Mom found one of her small white handbags for me to carry around.

Mom led Mrs. Williams back down the stairs. I lingered a few minutes to look at my reflection in the mirror and realized that they had made me look just like a *real* girl. I had been to church a few times and had seen little girls there dressed about the same as I now was. I didn't look like a *boy* wearing girls clothes. I looked like a girl, a *real girl!* That realization at first alarmed me, then had a calming effect on me, and I could see that I really *was* a pretty little girl. Better to look like a girl than like a boy *dressed* as one, I thought to myself.

I was a few minutes behind Mom and Mrs. Williams, but found them making a fresh pot of tea in the kitchen. I followed them as they made their way back to the dining room with the tea pot.

“How long do you plan to have Joey dress as a girl, Gloria?” came the question from Mrs. Williams.

“I'm hoping for at least the entire summer,” she answered, “We want to see what the doctor has to say first, before making long-range plans. But no matter *what* the doctor says, Ed and I both want Joey to experience his feminine side on a fairly regular basis from now on. I suppose school will have to be as a boy, though.”

“Not really. Let Joey's hair grow out and he can go back to school as a girl. I am certain that in a couple of months it could be trimmed into a short pageboy style with bangs.”

“But to have Joey live as a girl all the time, there are so many things we would have to buy! I doubt we could afford them.”

“How would you like a lingerie sale, Gloria?”

“They would have to be pretty low prices before *I* could afford to buy very much.”

“Finerman's Clothing on First Street is having their yearly unadvertised clearance sale starting Wednesday afternoon. Sylvia Finerman is an acquaintance of mine. All in-stock lingerie will be sold at below cost just to get rid of it before their new stock arrives. They prefer word of mouth when they are giving everything away like this.”

“Of course I'll go. But I'll have to see the prices before I know if I can buy anything.”

“Can I meet you and we can go together?” she asked.

“Yes, I'd like that. I'll be downtown anyway for Joey's appointment in the morning. We'll just stay down there. It's all right for Joey to come too, isn't it?”

“I suppose so, though I have never seen a boy in Finerman's Clothing Store before. He may have to stand by the front door while we do our shopping.”

I listened carefully to everything Mom and Mrs. Williams talked about and sipped my tea as they did. I knew I looked like a girl, so it was in my best interest to learn to *act* like one. I would have a better chance in public someday if I knew exactly what I was doing. Who *better* to learn from than Mom and another real lady, like Mrs. Williams?

It was nearing dinner time when Dad and Mr. Williams came back into the house. Normally, I would have been petrified at their presence, but for some unknown reason, I didn't feel it. They saw me, smiled and told me how pretty they thought I looked. I didn't mind it as much as I had before.

Dad stored the empty boxes while Mr. Williams began carrying out the remaining ones. Dad came back to help him, then Mom and I walked Mrs. Williams out to the car. Remembering my manners, I smiled at Mrs. Williams and thanked her for all of the pretty new clothes she had given me.

We watched them drive away, then turned to go back into our house. We had to stop at the sidewalk as several kids went past on their bicycles, all of them friends of mine from the neighborhood. I'm sure they didn't recognize me, and they never even slowed down as they went past.

In the house once more, I put down my handbag and took off my gloves to help Mom clean up from our tea party. Mom washed the dishes and I dried them while Dad helped by putting them away.

CHAPTER 7

Dinner that evening consisted of a tossed salad with cold cuts and cheese sticks served on our front porch. Mom and I were still dressed up from our day with Mrs. Williams. Dad apparently had a good, long talk with Mr. Williams out in the garage as they drank their coffee.

“Art Williams is a really nice man,” Dad told us as I picked at my salad. “Did you know that they don't have any children of their own?”

“I knew that,” Mom replied. “So what?”

“So, Art tells me that over the years they have helped about two dozen families, and their young sons, learn how to live as young girls. He says there are about four more boys living as girls within a fifteen minute walk of our house, and all of them are about Joey's age, too.”

“Did he tell you who they are?” Mom asked him.

“No. He said he can't give out that information.”

We finished eating in relative silence from then on. When we were done, Mom and Dad carried the leftover food back into the house while I stacked the dirty dishes onto a tray and brought them all in with me. By the time I finished doing the dishes by myself, it was my bedtime.

Mom followed me up to my room where she helped me undress and get into my sleepwear. I sat up in bed and watched as Mom hung up or put away the rest of my new clothes. When she was done, she came over and gave me a goodnight kiss, tucked me in, and turned off the light as she left my room.

Bright and early the next morning I awoke to Mom shaking me and pulling back the covers. She helped me out of my gown and bra and, as I kicked off the panties, she handed me one of her older robes she no longer used. I put it on with the slippers I had gotten the day before from Mrs. Williams, then followed Mom to the bathroom. Dad came out and we went in.

I got the bubble bath I was expecting and Mom dried me off again with her large fluffy towel. This time she got out a large puff, sprinkled it with baby powder and began to dust me with it all over my body. She had to replenish the baby powder on the puff several times before she was done. Then, it was back into the robe and slippers and to my room to get dressed.

I was getting used to a *lot* of things so they were no longer bothering me as much as before. Like being naked in front of my mother. At first, I was really embarrassed having her see me without any clothes on. But as often as she has washed me, dried me, dressed me, and now powdered me, I have no more objections to her seeing me naked. It's almost natural once again.

Time to get dressed. Panties, bra, half-slip, and ankle socks turned down once. Then, two layers of long crinoline and a calf-length red skirt with a plaid sleeveless

blouse. Except for doing up the brassiere and skirt, I put it all on by myself, finishing the job with a pair of red and white saddle shoes.

Mom combed my hair for me, parting it in the center of my head and combing it to each side, as well as down the back and pulling some down in front of my eyes. She got out a pair of scissors and trimmed the front hairs 'til they stopped at my eyebrows.

"You know how to make coffee," Mom told me, "go down to the kitchen, find the pinafore and put it on, then make a full pot of coffee. Then, have your cereal while the coffee is perking, and I will be down to direct you further."

I found the pinafore and put it on. I put together the pot of coffee, then had my breakfast. When I was done, I cleaned up my dishes and waited for Mom to come downstairs.

When Mom came down the stairs she showed me how to make breakfast for her and Dad. Bacon or sausages, eggs sunny side up, and toast well-buttered. Dad took his coffee with a little cream while Mom added sugar to her cup. I watched them eat, then Dad left for work, leaving me and Mom to clean up.

There was no time to sit around doing nothing. Monday was the day Mom did the laundry. She showed me how to fill the tubs with water for rinsing, and to fill the washing machine for washing the clothes. While the washing machine and tubs were filling, she showed me how to sort the laundry into the different loads. Whites, bright colors, dark colors, lingerie from linen; outerwear separate as well.

The first load went into the washing machine with the soap and we looked at the clock to time it. Fifteen minutes later we put it through the ringer and into the first tub to rinse while the machine drained. Then, we refilled the machine with hot water and started a second load. We ran the first load through the ringer again and into the second rinse tub, then through the ringer and into a dry laundry hamper. From there we took it out onto the back porch and hung it up to dry on the clothesline. Personal items of apparel were usually hung in the basement to dry; it was no one else's business what we wore for underwear.

The third load was in the washing machine, and I was putting the second load through the rinse cycles when Mom heard a knock at our front door. I don't know how she heard it over the noise the machine was making, but I stayed with the laundry while she went to see who was there. I had just put the last of the second load into the laundry hamper to go out on the clothesline, when I heard Mom calling for me to come upstairs. I brought the hamper up with me and left it in the kitchen.

"Look who's here to see you," she said to me, half dragging me into the living room.

The damage was done and I knew it. There, by the arm chair, stood Martha Graham, a girl I knew from school. She was wearing a blue velvet dress with white lace trim and showing a froth of crinoline below the hemline. Since Mom was holding me there, she couldn't help but see how I was dressed. There was no point in trying to hide.

"You look very pretty, Joey," she told me.

"So do you," I told her. She did, too.

"I brought you something. Aunt Emily asked my mother to send this over to you so I said I would bring it." She held out a paper bag.

"What *is* it?" I asked.

"First of all, I brought you one of my old dolls to play with, and all of her clothes so you can dress her up." She pulled the doll from the bag to show me. "I called her Sara, but you can give her a new name if you want to."

"Why, that is so sweet of you, Martha," Mom told her. "Not too many girls are willing to part with their dolls."

"I have *lots* of dolls at home and I never play with Sara any more, so I don't mind giving her to Joey. And if Joey and I get to be friends, I'll still be able to see Sara once in a while."

"What do you say to Martha, Joey?" Mom prodded me.

"Thank you, Martha," I said, taking the doll from her hand.

"I also brought over this old wig you can wear. Your own hair is so short, you almost look like a boy. You can keep the wig, because I don't need it anymore. And if you want, you can trim the hair to the style you like."

"You used to wear the wig yourself, Martha?" Mom asked her.

"Oh yes, Mrs. Wells. Before my own hair grew out, I had hair as short as Joey's. I wore the wig so no one would know I was a boy wearing girls' clothes. Its a lot easier when everyone thinks you really *are* a girl."

"You're a *boy*?" I stammered.

"I *was*!" she answered, "but I prefer to think of myself as a girl now. I *like* being a girl."

"I always thought you were one of the prettiest girls in school," I told her. "How long have you been dressing as a girl?"

"Two years now. Aunt Emily understands how hard it is for boys to start dressing as girls, so she kind of sent me over to help you. Actually, I *volunteered* to come and help you."

"That is very nice of you, Martha," Mom told her. "How long can you stay?"

"All day if you want. Aunt Emily says I am an 'extroverted exhibitionist', whatever *that* is. I think it means I like to wear my dresses and other girls' things. But I also like to help other boys learn to enjoy wearing dresses and act like *real* girls. It's *fun!*"

Martha pulled out the wig, shook it out, and showed me and Mom how to put it on my head. She produced some bobby pins, which she used to pin the wig to my hair. Then she got out a rat-tailed comb and gave the wig a quick styling. Mom was smiling as she led me to the mirror, where I saw for myself that with the wig on I looked *much* more feminine. The color was close to my own, and it hid my real hair completely.

"You girls sit and chat a bit," Mom told us, "I want to put this load of laundry out on the line, then I'll make lunch for us and we can talk some more." Mom went to take

care of the laundry, so Martha and I sat in the living room, where she immediately put her old doll in my lap and began to show me the clothes that came with it.

“You *really* like being a girl, don't you?” I asked.

“*Oh yes! I really do.* I wouldn't trade back for the world. Being a girl is so much nicer than being a boy, especially being a *little* girl.”

“Why?” I couldn't understand her. “Why prefer being a girl?”

“Listen, Joey—is that short for Josephine?” I nodded my head in reply to her question. “When I was a ten-year-old boy I was constantly being told to look out for my sister and protect her from the other boys at school. Angela was one year younger than me then, and we never got along. Being younger than me, she got everything and all I got was punished. I hated being a boy and being older than my sister. Now I'm a girl and Angela is older than me.”

“How can your little sister be older than you?”

“We pretend a lot. When I was eleven, Angela and I were in our mother's room playing dress-up with her clothes. She caught us when she came to get us for dinner. Angie and I ate dinner that night while we were dressed in Mother's clothes. After we had eaten, Mother sent us to our room to change into our own clothes. Angie and I were the same size, so she put on my clothes and I put on hers. It was the first time in our lives we got along without fighting.”

“It didn't *bother* you to put on a girl's clothes?”

“Oh no, Angie and I already shared a bedroom, and we always took our baths together. Mother laughed when she saw we had switched, but she played along. She called Angie “Martin” all night. And me, “Angela”. She gave us a bubble bath together before bed and made me wear a nightgown. She made Angie wear my pajamas. I slept in Angie's bed, she slept in mine.

The next day Angie didn't want to play the game anymore, so she got dressed up in her own clothes. I didn't want the game to end, so I put on her clothes, too. I remember Mother laughed at me for what seemed like hours when I showed up for breakfast with Angie, and both of us were wearing dresses.”

“Didn't it *bother* you to be laughed at?”

“Not really. Angie and I played together all day with her dolls and tea set and story books, and the only time we fought was over which of her clothes she and I were going to wear the next day. It was Angie who first called me Martha.

Mother made both of us get dressed up on Sunday morning in Angie's best dresses and took us to church with her. I looked just like a boy wearing girls clothes, so I had all of the other children teasing me and calling me names. Their teasing didn't bother me as long as Mother and Angie kept calling me Martha and I could pretend I was a girl. That's where we met Aunt Emily.”

“Mrs. Williams?” I asked.

“Yes. We aren't related, but she likes to be called Aunt Emily by as many kids as she can get. She got me the wig, which helped me to look more like a real girl. And now she has got it for *you*, too.”

I touched the new hair on my head. “So, how are you younger than your sister?” I asked again.

“Angela didn’t want to share her good clothes with me, so I got to wear her old clothes. Since I was so new to life as a girl, we decided that I should be Angie's “little sister” instead of the other way around. I went from being an eleven-year-old boy to being a nine-year-old girl. Now, I’m an eleven-year-old girl and Angie is twelve, like you. Don't you like being dressed up as a girl?”

“I don't know. I don't have a choice, I'm being forced into it by both of my parents. Maybe I'll like it, when I can find something *to* like about it.”

“You have a father ?” she asked.

“Yes, don't you?”

“No. None of the other crossdressing kids I know have fathers either, only mothers and sisters. One girl has only a mother and four big brothers. She was forced into dresses too, but seems to like life as a girl now.”

CHAPTER 8

Mom came in and made a light lunch for all three of us. She kept running down to the basement to do the laundry every few minutes, so she didn't hear too much of our conversation.

After lunch, Mom removed my pinafore for me, then took me up to my room to get me changed into a prettier dress. Because Martha was in a party dress, I had to wear one too. Mom chose the pink one for me since Martha was wearing blue. It had crinoline and lace and lots of ribbon around the crinkly pink taffeta.

When Martha saw me again, she giggled and told me I looked very pretty. She asked Mom if we could go outside to play with our dolls, and Mom said it was a good idea. I dreaded going out dressed as a girl but I didn't have a choice, thanks to Martha.

Martha had a doll with her she called Debbie, so I took Sara and we went out front to sit on the steps. We weren't there five minutes when Kathy and Darlene from down the street came along. I'd played with them before, and they knew me as a boy. I was scared that they might recognize me now and make fun of me.

"Hi," Kathy said from the public sidewalk, "are you friends with Joey who lives here."

"Hi. That Joey went to his uncle's farm for the summer, so *this* Joey came *here*," she said, pointing to me. "My name is Martha, what's yours?"

"Mine is Kathy, and this is my friend Darlene. We live down the street. Do you want to come and play dolls at my house?"

Martha was about to accept, so I had to act fast.

"I'm not allowed to leave the yard," I told them.

"All right," Kathy said, "how about we go get our dolls and come play here? Is that okay?"

"That would be wonderful," Mom said from behind me. Kathy and Darlene raced off to get their dolls.

"I heard everything," she told us, "why two different Joeys?"

"Its easier for Joey to pretend he's a girl if the other kids start off thinking he really is one," Martha replied. "I've seen other little boys dressed as girls who *looked* like boys dressed as girls and never learned to like it. I saw boys dressed as girls who *looked* like girls, were *accepted* as girls, and who enjoy their lives as girls. Why make things harder than they have to be?"

"I guess it *would* be harder for Joey if the other children thought he was a boy instead of a girl. Okay, what can I do to help?" Mom asked.

"For the benefit of the other kids, call him Josephine for the first few days."

"That's *all*?" Mom asked.

"Yes. Treat Joey like a girl and call her Josephine."

Kathy and Darlene came back with their dolls, and we played together for well over two hours. We dressed them, and undressed them, and changed them, and cuddled them, and talked baby talk to them. I had seen Kathy and Darlene play with their dolls before, but Martha seemed to be better at it than they were. I played along, as the last thing I wanted was to be found out. I could never live *that* down.

At mid-afternoon, the girls had to go home. Martha and I went into the house. We had tea and biscuits with Mom, while we talked about the time we'd spent with the other girls.

"Did you have fun playing dolls with the other girls?" Mom asked us.

"I *always* have fun playing dolls with real girls," Martha replied. "The best part about living as a girl is fooling others into thinking I am a *real* girl."

"I always thought you *were* a real girl when I saw you at school," I told her.

"Why did you tell us the truth about yourself?" Mom asked.

"Aunt Emily said Joey needed help. A boy who is just starting to live as a girl can accept help easier from a boy who is doing it, rather than from a girl who has no idea what he's going through."

"I guess it *does* help Joey more knowing that you were born a boy and are living as a girl. The other girls were wearing blouses and pedal-pushers. Wouldn't *you* like to wear clothes like them?"

"Oh no! I like to wear party dresses every chance I get. I wear a blouse and tunic when I go to school, but I change into my party dress as soon as I get home. I think that only boys should be allowed to wear pants, and *girls* should have to wear skirts or dresses."

"Little girls look nicer in dresses than they do in pants," Mom agreed, "but pants are sometimes more practical for older girls and women who have work to do. Joey is going to spend the rest of the summer as a little girl, though. Skirts and dresses for two whole months."

"Except when I go to the doctors, right?" I asked hopefully.

"No, I think you can go there as a girl, too. Now that you have the wig and you look so much more feminine, I think you should get to go downtown with me as a girl. We're going to meet Mrs. Williams there to do some shopping, too."

Mom invited Martha to stay for dinner, but she had to call her mother for permission first. We all agreed that Dad was not to learn the truth about Martha. Only Mom and I were allowed to know that Martha was really a boy.

Dad seemed to like Martha and, because it was late when we finished dinner, he wanted us to walk her home. Martha lived only five minutes away, close to the church our mothers both went to. Martha and I walked together ahead of Mom and Dad, carrying our dolls. At Martha's house we got to meet Angela and Mrs. Graham, and got invited inside. Angela and Martha took me up to their bedroom while the adults talked.

“The wig looks better on Joey than it ever did on you,” Angela told her sister, “and Joey is prettier than most of the real girls around here.”

“Yes, she *is* pretty, isn't she,” Martha replied.

“I guess I should say thank you,” I told them. “I'm just not used to people telling me I'm pretty.”

“You're going to hear a lot of it,” Angela said. “Just smile and say your thank you's and maybe a small curtsy for the older ladies. And remember, little girls hold their dollies in their arms like babies, not in their hands like toys. A doll is not a toy— it's a baby, and should be treated as one.”

“Just watch the other girls, Joey, and do the same things they do,” Martha told me. “It would be easier if you had a *real* girl's name, instead of a name that works both ways.”

“Martha and I are going swimming tomorrow. Do you want to come with us?” Angela asked.

“I don't know if I *can*. I don't have a girl's bathing suit. Where would you swim around here?”

“Aunt Emily has a pool in her backyard. She lets us go and use it whenever we want, so long as she knows we're coming in advance. An adult has to be there at all times. Angie is about your size and she has *lots* of bathing suits. I'm sure she can spare one.”

“I'll have to ask my Mom if its okay.”

The girls followed me downstairs, and I asked Mom if I could go swimming with Angela and Martha the next day. She repeated my questions from upstairs, so Martha told her about the pool and Angela offered to let me have one of her old bathing suits and a bathing cap to cover my long-haired head. Mrs. Graham said it would be no trouble at all to have three girls there instead of two and invited Mom to come along with us.

Dad thought it would be a great idea, so he consented and talked Mom into it. I liked to swim but thought that would be out of the question until my chest problem got resolved. In a girl's bathing suit there wouldn't a problem.

On our walk home, Dad told me I was a really lucky little girl to have friends like Martha and Angela.

“That Martha is a real good-looking little girl. And they are both so polite and helpful. You can learn a lot from these girls, Joey.”

CHAPTER 9

Swimming was always one of my favorite pastimes, and with the thought of doing it again dancing in my head I went to bed a happier person. Wearing a girl's bathing suit and cap just *couldn't* be as hard on the nerves for me as wearing lingerie and dresses all day every day was. I was tired and fell asleep quickly.

The next morning I was up bright and early with Mom shaking me again. I was able to fall asleep quickly and stay asleep all night. Was it because the brassiere was protecting my chest from irritating me during the night? Or was learning to be a girl so rough that I was totally exhausted when I went to bed? The answer wasn't all that important to me. What *was* important was that I had to live as a girl as long as Mom and Dad wanted me to, so I had to make the best of my situation.

Mom dressed me for our day of fun. Yellow panties and bra with the white slip and crinoline and yellow socks. She put the yellow party dress on me, with black, patent leather Mary Janes. She put the wig onto my head, pinned it in place, and styled it just as quickly as Martha had. I was not allowed to go anywhere without Sara, the doll, in my arms, not even when I was home with just Mom and Dad.

We could tell already that it was going to be a hot day, so it was good that I was going swimming. We got Dad fed and out the door for work first, then we ate and cleaned up the kitchen.

Mom packed a bag with a few things she thought we might need for the day and locked up the back doors. She checked the windows to make sure they were closed and locked. Then she tied my sun hat onto my head, had me put on my matching gloves, pick up Sara, and we went out the front door.

Walking down the street with my Mom didn't feel so bad today even though I was wearing a party dress. We passed Kathy sitting on her front steps and waved to her. Darlene was just coming out of her house and she waved, too. I held Sara in my right arm, while Mom held my left hand as we walked along.

Angela and Martha had been waiting for us to arrive. They came running down the street to greet us as we approached. Angela was wearing a light green party dress and Martha wore a light pink one. My yellow dress didn't look out of place in their company.

The girls took me up to their room where Angela showed me the bathing suit she was letting me use. It was a one-piece suit that had a ruffled skirt about the waist and a large, yellow, flower design. The bathing cap would stretch over my wig and was decorated with lots of little, yellow flowers. I took the suit and cap down to show Mom, and she put it into the bag she had brought.

We piled into Mrs. Graham's car, which was parked on the street. Two adult women in the front seat and three young girls in the back seat, each clutching a doll in their arms. I was dressed as a girl, I *looked* like a girl, so I tried my best to act just like the two girls who sat on either side of me. I didn't feel so out of place when I had Angela and Martha there with me.

Aunt Emily's house wasn't far from the Graham's, but with the bags that had to be brought and three young girls it was a lot easier for our parents when they took the car. We got there in minutes, and Aunt Emily came out to give each of us a hug and her personal greeting. She escorted us in the front door and through to the patio.

It was a large and well-maintained yard, and the patio took up a good portion, stretching from one end of the house to the other; it completely surrounded the pool. There were privacy fences along the sides and back of the yard with shrubbery growing against them. And there was a good-sized patch of green grass off to the side opposite the pool, edged with flowers. All in all, a lovely yard to spend the day in.

There was a private entrance to the basement of the house, which held the change rooms, showers, and a toilet for people using the pool. Aunt Emily led the way to the ladies' change room and showed us the closets we could hang our clothes in while we were there.

Mom started to undress me to get me changed into my bathing suit. Mrs. Graham was helping Martha out of her dress and Aunt Emily undid the buttons on Angela's dress. In short order all three of us stood there naked while the bags were searched for our swim suits.

I couldn't help but look at both Martha and Angela, and they were looking at me too. Between the legs, Martha and I were quite similar, though she was a bit fleshier than I was. Angela was completely different. On the chest, Angela and I looked about the same while Martha was the odd one.

We got our bathing suits on, then worked at getting the caps in place too. Since I wore the wig, my cap was harder to get on and once it *was* on, I found the bobby pins hurt my head. I was then allowed to take off the wig, though I still had to wear the bathing cap.

I rinsed off in the shower before getting into the pool. There were only two rules we had to obey around the pool: No running and no peeing in the pool.

The women sat around a table by the shallow end of the pool, where they wouldn't get splashed as they drank iced tea and talked. Angela, Martha, and I had a great time in the pool, swimming, diving, splashing and bouncing a ball around.

We played together for over an hour until Aunt Emily announced it was lunch time. She served sandwiches, chips, and lime-flavored Kool-Aid to us girls at a table separate from the grownups and their meal. The women sat in the shade while we sat out in the sunshine.

After eating, we were not allowed back into the pool for at least one whole hour. We were fairly dry by this time, so we decided to do a bit of suntanning. But first, I had to use the toilet and went inside to the ladies' change room. I had no sooner sat down on the toilet and started to pass my water when Angela came in and walked over to where I was doing my business.

"How old are you, Joey?"

"Twelve," I told her. "You're twelve too, aren't you?"

“Yes. I knew you were the same kind of girl that Martha is, but you have a chest just like mine. How did that happen?”

“I really don't know. It just happened. I told my parents about it on Friday because of the itch and pain I had, and that's when they decided I should be a girl for a while. Does *your* chest hurt and itch, too?”

“It did, but not anymore. I guess it'll pass for you, too. Did you see a doctor?”

“Tomorrow,” I told her. I was done on the toilet so I stood up and pulled my bathing suit back up. Once I had it in place, I headed for the door to go back outside.

“Wait here for me,” Angela asked, as she dropped her suit to the floor to sit on the toilet herself.

“Doesn't it bother you to be undressed in front of me or Martha?”

“No. We're all girls here. I'm just a different kind of girl than Martha is, and with your chest, you're a different kind of girl than me and Martha. It's the clothes that make us what we are.”

“What do you mean?”

“It's a simple point of view, Joey. Girls who wear girls' clothes are *girls*. Girls who wear boys' clothes are *boys*. Boys who wear boys' clothes are *boys*. Boys who wear girls' clothes are *girls*.”

“What about boys or girls who wear *both* kinds of clothes?” I asked.

“They're weird.”

“*What?*”

“Girls should wear girls' clothes, boys should wear boys' clothes. Look, before when you and I were getting changed? We both took off girls clothes and we both put on girls bathing suits. I look at both of us standing there completely naked and see two different girls. Everyone can accept you as a girl if you don't flaunt your differences like Martha does. I'm *glad* you're a girl and hope we can be friends forever.”

Angela finished her business on the toilet, replaced her bathing suit, and we went back outside to join Martha for our suntanning. Lying on our towels with the sun beating down on us, we were allowed to remove our bathing caps. Angela repositioned her towel so I was in the middle between her and Martha. I *liked* having a friend on each side of me; I felt more secure.

We lay there quietly awhile, and it allowed me the opportunity to think about the conversation Angie and I had in the changing room. Looking at things her way made it a lot easier for me. I was dressed as a girl, and therefore I was a girl—just like Martha. If I dressed like a boy, then I *was* a boy. It just meant that I couldn't wear boys' underwear under a girl's dress. That would make me weird. I couldn't wear panties and a brassiere under boys' pants and shirt. *That* was weird, too.

I found that I really liked Angela and her little sister Martha. I didn't want to be *weird*; I wanted her to be my friend. That would be more likely if I was a girl, like or unlike any other girl she knew.

We swam and played in the pool for most of the afternoon, then we had to go home. Mom, Mrs. Graham, and Aunt Emily all made sure we showered together and dressed properly while they packed the bags for us. We all thanked Aunt Emily for a great day with hugs and kisses that she seemed to need. Mrs. Graham gave Mom and me a ride home. We thanked her and got into the house before Dad got home from work.

I helped Mom and together we had dinner on the table right on time. It was a quick and easy meal, since we didn't have all day to prepare it. Mom told Dad all about the fun we both had at Aunt Emily's yard and pool.

CHAPTER 10

I was well rested the next morning when Mom woke me up. She gave me my early morning bubble bath which told me I was to be a girl again today. I thought about it during my bath and came to the conclusion that it probably was for the best.

“I don't want any trouble out of you now, Joey,” Mom told me as she took me back to my room.

“When was the last time I gave you trouble?” I asked her.

“That's not the point. I know you were looking forward to going downtown today as a boy, but I have changed my mind and want you to go as a girl instead.”

“I know, Mom.”

“You do? Since when?”

“The only time you give me a bubble bath is when you plan to dress me as a girl. I think it's a good idea.”

“You do?”

“Look, Mom. My neighborhood friends believe the male Joey is gone for the summer, thanks to Martha. They believe the Joey who lives here now is a girl. If I keep switching back and forth they'll figure out that I'm both the boy *and* girl Joey. You and Dad already said I had to be a girl for the summer, so why have me jumping back and forth now?”

“You're right, dear. I'm sorry. I was just thinking how awkward it might be at the doctor's office since they only know you as a boy.”

“The *doctor* knows me as a boy. His receptionists don't know me at all, because they keep changing all the time. Every time I've been there he's had a different woman working for him.”

I took off my robe and slippers, and Mom had me put on the white panties. Then, she helped me into the matching white bra and the white chemise. From my closet she took out the white sundress with the large navy blue polka dots on it and helped me into it. It was still a bit big on me, but not so much that it was noticeable. I put on white ankle socks turned down once and my black Mary Jane shoes. Mom did the wig for me again.

As I was about to leave my room, I reached down to pick up Sara and take her with me.

“Not today, Joey. Sara is good to have when you are dressed as a little girl, or when playing with your little girl friends. Today's look is a little older, and dolls are not a part of the overall appearance.”

Mom was probably right, so I left Sara behind. I went down to the kitchen where I made the coffee and had my breakfast, while she got dressed. I cleaned up my dishes and got things ready for making Mom's and Dad's breakfast. Mom came and helped. Together we got them both properly fed and Dad out the door to work.

I finished cleaning up, while Mom finished getting herself ready for our day out. We were leaving early to do some window shopping before my appointment. It was forecast to be a cooler day than yesterday, so we both put a sweater on before we left the house.

Just walking to the bus stop was an experience I wouldn't soon forget. The sun was warm on my skin, while the cool breeze caused the skirt portion of my dress to brush against my legs. I had to guard against gusts that lifted the hem high enough that my underwear could be seen. We were in a busier part of our neighborhood, so men and women smiled at me. Mom was talking with several of them. We got onto the bus, Mom paid our fares, and we took seats halfway down. I got to sit by the window.

The ride was uneventful, but downtown was busier than I ever remembered it being. Everything from bicycles to buses cluttered the streets, slowing or stopping only for the red lights. People of all sizes and shapes rushed in every direction, and no one had time to see anything out of the ordinary. They barely saw where they were going.

Mom and I visited several of the department stores, as we wove a trail to the doctor's office building. And in every store we went straight to the ladies' wear department, where we saw the prices and quality of all the female undergarments. We both soon learned what was reasonable, expensive, and outrageous as far as prices went. We didn't see anything cheap.

We arrived in the doctor's office a few minutes early and had to wait to see him. As I expected, the woman working behind the desk was new to the job, and neither Mom nor I had seen her before. It was easy to confuse her.

"Joey Wells is a *girl*?" she asked Mom as we stood before the desk.

"Yes," Mom replied, "Joey is short for Josephine." The woman scrambled to straighten out the files, and we took seats to wait for my turn in the examination room. We didn't wait long.

In the examination room, the doctor sat at his desk and listened to Mom tell him about my sore and itchy chest. He said he had to see it for himself, so Mom helped me out of my dress, chemise, and brassiere.

"Mrs. Wells," he began, "your daughter is merely entering puberty. She's developing the secondary female characteristics normal for young girls her age. Has she begun to menstruate yet?"

"No," Mom began to reply, "she..."

"Remove her underwear, put her up on the table with her feet in the stirrups," he interrupted.

"Doctor, *please* listen to me." Mom said.

"I can't examine her if she's not on the table," he responded. "Quickly now, I have other patients to see."

Mom removed my shoes and panties, and helped me onto the table, where she positioned me and finally put my feet into the stirrups. Then she stood back to watch as the rubber-gloved doctor moved into place below me.

“What’s going on here, Mrs. Wells?” he almost shouted.

“I *tried* to tell you, but you're in too big of a hurry to listen to me. Joey was born a boy and raised a boy, until we discovered that he might be growing breasts like a girl. We thought it best to make him dress as a girl, to help hide the fact that wearing a bra provides some comfort for his chest.”

The doctor examined my genitals and the whole area while he was down there, then reexamined my chest again. He told Mom to get me dressed while he made notations on the charts on his desk. I was dressed before he was done writing.

“Well, Mrs. Wells,” he began when he was ready, “Joey is the first hermaphrodite I’ve ever seen. He appears to have the normal genitalia of a nine- or ten-year-old boy. But he also appears to be developing the secondary sexual characteristics of a normal eleven- or twelve-year-old girl.”

“That's pretty much what *I* thought,” Mom said. “So what do we *do* about it?”

“Wait and watch,” he replied. “It’s my opinion that the breasts have to grow and develop fully before they can be removed safely and completely. That will take at least a few years. We also have to observe the development of the genitalia and note any problems there. I’ll consult with other doctors and read up on any other similar cases that have been reported so far. We will only do what is best for Joey.”

“I should hope so,” Mom said. “Since it is easier to hide his male parts than his growing female parts, I intend to keep him living as a girl for now.”

“I believe that would be best,” the doctor answered.

Mom and I left the doctor's office, while all that had happened was still sinking in. I was both sexes in one body, and there wasn't anything that could be done about it until I was fully developed as a female. I was from one world and living in another and just had to learn to make the best of it.

We stopped at the lunch counter in the lobby, where Mom got us each a sandwich and a glass of milk. After we were done we walked at a slow pace, and we continued window shopping on our way to meet with Aunt Emily. Finerman's Clothing Store was famous for having only the finest feminine garments there were, specializing in undergarments.

CHAPTER 11

Mom and I walked into Finerman's Clothing Store and began browsing through the aisles of ladies' underwear. I could see some of the price tags and that the prices were all two or three times more expensive than similar items from the larger department stores. But Finerman's was pretty big, too. On the outside it looked like a small shop, but inside it spread out to take up three floors. A salesclerk came over and offered to help us.

"We're to meet a friend here," Mom told her, "Emily Williams."

"Oh good!" she replied. "Mrs. Williams is one of our best customers. Any friend of *hers* is a friend of *ours*. Who are we shopping for today?"

"Emily said you had an unadvertised sale today, so we thought we would see what was on sale and what we could afford."

"On a budget, are we? Well, we only tell our best customers about these sales and give them first choice. If Mrs. Williams is meeting you here then I can tell you all about it. Every item we sell is on sale today. Our new stock is coming in, and we have to move this old stuff to make room. Regular customers are still paying the regular prices, special customers get the special rates."

"Can you give us an example?" Mom asked.

The woman reached onto a shelf and took down a pair of light pink panties. "These panties sell to a regular customer for four dollars per pair. They are hand-made in France from new Chinese silk and delicate French lace. Well worth the price. But for our special customers, we will sell them for as little as ten cents per pair."

"How can you afford to sell them so cheaply?" Mom asked.

"We lose a lot, but it generates good will with our best customers and in the long run they buy more things from us at regular prices."

Aunt Emily arrived then and greeted us warmly. "I just explained the sale to your friends," the salesclerk told Aunt Emily. "Where do we begin?"

"With this young lady," Aunt Emily said pointing to me. "She needs some nice lingerie."

Mom, Aunt Emily, and I were taken to a dressing room where I was helped to undress until all I had on were my panties. I was lucky in that, even wearing only my panties, I still looked like a real girl. The salesclerk took out a measuring tape and measured me from all sides and angles. She wrote down the sizes on a pad, then disappeared out the door.

Within minutes she was back with a pair of white panties for me to put on. She pulled out a screen, giving me privacy to remove my yellow panties and put on the white ones she handed me. I did as I was told and reappeared with the white ones on.

Other salesclerks were busy bringing things for me to try on: garter belts and silk stockings and waist cinchers and brassieres. All Mom and Aunt Emily did was sit, watch, and pick out the items they either thought I needed or thought looked espe-

cially nice on me. Besides the foundation garments, they bought me camisoles, half-slips, full-slips, teddies, and nighties.

The clothes I had worn to the store were set aside, so I could wear home clothes from the store. White panties and brassiere with a matching waist cincher. The garter tabs were put inside the waist band of my panties and came out the leg openings. I was instructed in the proper method of putting on the sheer silk stockings I wore. I put on the half-slip with a hem below my knees. The dress was white with small black polka dots. It had a round neckline and plain, short sleeves. The shoes of their choice were a pair of white flats that slipped on like a pair of Mom's pumps. Then I sat to watch Mom's turn to try on a few new things.

Since I was a girl in everyone's minds, it was only natural that I stay while my mother tried on some new clothes. I watched Mom try on new panties, brassieres, and garter belts with stockings as I had done. She bought almost as many things for herself as she had bought for me, and the total price was less than twenty dollars, including my new dress and shoes.

We were packing up our purchases when a different woman came into the dressing room. Aunt Emily introduced her as Estelle Finerman, owner of the store. We exchanged greetings and I was encouraged to curtsy to the woman. I had practiced it a few times, but it still came off rather clumsily.

"Emily, I have this oversized stuff I just cannot get rid of. Please tell me you know someone who can wear it. I'll give it to you free of charge if you'll just take it off my hands."

Mom, Aunt Emily, and Mrs. Finerman talked among themselves for some time before it was agreed that Mom would take the oversized things. Apparently, she knew someone who could wear them. We said good-bye and Aunt Emily gave us a ride with all of our new purchases. It was too much for us to take home on the bus.

We had one more stop on the way home. Mom had to get Dad a few things and, since she had saved so much on our new clothes, she could afford to get the good things for Dad. I waited in the car with our purchases while Mom and Aunt Emily went into the menswear store together.

At home I took my things to my room, then helped Mom take the rest of it to hers. Aunt Emily stayed to have tea with us, then left as Mom began getting dinner ready. I went to my room; I had a few things to do.

On my own I cleaned out my closet and dresser drawers. I no longer had any use for my boy clothes, since I knew I had to live as a girl until I was fully developed. That could be years, so I packed up my boy clothes and moved them out. That gave me lots of room to put away my new things. When I was done, I carried the boxes of old clothes down to the hallway, where Dad could take them away later. Then, I went to see if I could help Mom with dinner.

CHAPTER 12

While I was helping Mom in the kitchen, it gave her the break she needed to go and put away her and Dad's new things. By the time she returned to the kitchen, dinner was almost ready and Dad was coming in the front door.

Over dinner, Mom explained to Dad how I really was blossoming with feminine breasts. Understanding that the surgery was still several years away, Dad agreed that I should remain a girl until it was time to operate. He liked the fact that Mom had bought so many new and wonderful items of feminine clothing, and for such a cheap price.

"You know, Ed," Mom said, "I was looking at all these things Estelle Finerman wanted to get rid of and realized I knew someone they would fit, so I took them for free."

"Good for you," Dad replied. "I'm sure *anyone* would be happy to get them. Who is this lucky woman? Do I know her?"

"I guess Joey feels fairly awkward having to wear dresses and other girls things all the time now," Mom told him smiling over to me, "I'm certain the woman's things I got today will fit you perfectly, Ed."

"*Me!?*"

"Absolutely. I thought that Joey and I shouldn't be the *only* ones around here who get to enjoy dressing up. Since the clothing was free and in your sizes, I thought it would be a real shame to let this opportunity go to waste. We can try them on you later."

Dad and I both knew that this was not the time or place to try and argue with Mom, so we both let it ride. Besides, Dad had been in total agreement with Mom when she was having me put on panties as well as the brassiere I needed. He said then that I should learn to enjoy wearing girls' underwear. I guess its only fair then that *he* gets the same enjoyment.

I finished my dinner first and took my dishes to the kitchen. Instead of leaving them for Mom to do up later, I ran a sink full of water and began doing up the dishes myself. When Mom and Dad finished eating, they brought me their dishes and Mom helped me clean up the rest of them.

"I'm tired," I complained to Mom, even though I still had more than an hour till my bedtime. "Is it okay if I go to bed early?"

"Of *course* it is," she told me. "We did have a rather long and exhausting day today, didn't we?"

I nodded my head and, for the first time in a long time, Mom wanted a hug and a kiss before I went to my room. Dad saw me give Mom the affection and wanted the same treatment. I had no problem kissing Dad on the cheek and giving *him* a hug, too.

I went up the stairs and slipped quietly into Mom's and Dad's room, where I made sure the hot air register was open then, just as quietly, I slid back out and into my room. The first thing I did was to open *my* hot air register, as well. I got undressed and

put on the brand new, lemon yellow, baby doll nightie I had gotten earlier that day. I remembered the price was supposed to be over twenty dollars for this one item. We didn't even pay twenty *cents* for it.

Mom came into my room just as I was leaving to go and use the bathroom. "That is a very pretty nightie," she said to me, "I wish they'd had it in my size."

"I think its pretty, too." I told her.

"How did you like our day, today?" she asked.

"Do you want the truth?"

"Of course."

"At first, I was pretty nervous. No matter what anyone says, I don't think the wig looks like real hair on me. I felt a little better when we got downtown where it was really busy. I got nervous again in the doctor's office and hated letting him see me naked. Getting dressed there was the first time I recall wanting to put my dress back on. I really got nervous when I had to take my clothes off again in that dressing room in the store, but felt a lot better when I didn't have to change my panties in front of everyone else. From then on, everything got a lot better for me. I found I didn't mind trying on all those different styles and colors of lingerie. Finerman's have a lot of really nice things for women and girls, don't they?"

"They sure do. Does this mean you're going to like living as a girl from now on?"

"I know I don't have any choice, Mom. Knowing that makes it easier for me to adjust my thinking and try to enjoy the things that girls usually take for granted. Silk, satin, nylon, velvet, and lace are a few of the things that boys never get used to, normally. Having to live as a girl, I can enjoy wearing this nightie. Were I still living as a boy it would be a *lot* harder to accept having to wear such a soft and feminine piece of clothing."

"So you're saying its all your frame of mind, then?"

"Yes, I guess so. Knowing I can't change my fate allows me to accept things no other boy would *dream* of trying."

"Okay. I want you to be very quiet tonight. Your father and I will be arguing in our room, and we don't need to be disturbed, all right?"

"I won't disturb you," I promised her. She followed me to the bathroom to make sure I sat on the toilet like a girl. She watched me brush my teeth, then followed me back to my room. She gave me another hug and kiss, then left me to sleep.

CHAPTER 13

I was reading, a half hour later, when I heard Mom and Dad come up to their room. I put down my book, turned off my light, and slid over to the hot air register to eavesdrop on them. I knew it was wrong, but I just *had* to know what was going on in there.

"I don't know about this, Glo," I heard Dad say to Mom. "I mean, it's one thing for us to make *Joey* wear girl things, but it's somewhat awkward to be putting them on *myself*. You know what I mean?"

"Of course. But these aren't *Joey's* things and they aren't *mine*, either. They're *yours*. They are brand new, never worn by anyone else and all yours."

"Yes, but it just doesn't seem right for me to be trying on women's underwear," he responded.

"Complaining isn't going to help, Ed. We can't afford a whole lot and we both know it. You barely make enough for us to live on, in that steel plant. I got all this new clothing for free, and you have to complain that it was made for a woman, not a man? Do I have to remind you what we told *Joey* in this same circumstance?"

"No. I told him to learn to enjoy it since it was free and it would be a crime to waste it."

"The same holds true for *you*. Either do as I ask and at least try it, or go and sleep on the couch tonight."

It got quiet, until I heard Mom saying, "See Ed, the panties are a perfect fit. Now lets try this bra on you." There was a short pause, then, "Good, we can fill the cups with some of my old stockings." A short while later Mom continued, "I'll show you. Here, give me that stocking."

"This stuff is pretty uncomfortable, Glo. How can women *wear* this stuff all day long?"

"We aren't going for comfort here, Ed, we're just checking sizes. I want to make sure all this stuff fits you. Later, I'll show you how to make it more comfortable."

"I agreed to do this once Glo, not *forever*."

"Once *means* forever, Ed. If you put it on and it fits, we are *keeping* it. If we keep it, it has to be *worn*. To be worn means you have to put it on again and again. So far we are keeping everything, since everything fits you perfectly. Sure, the garter belts are a bit too tight right *now*, but you have a bit too much weight around the waist. The corsets work properly on you and will help you trim down enough that the garter belts will fit better later on. Now try on the full slip... that's right... Emily told me before she has some larger adult dresses, so I think I'll see about getting some for you."

"Emily Williams knows you got me women's underwear?" Dad whined.

"Of course not, dear. She was there when I took the free clothes for my friend, so she volunteered larger-size dresses as well as shoes and other accessories. She does a lot of volunteer work, you know."

"I know. Well, lets just keep this dressing up thing between you and me, okay?"

"Don't forget Joey. She knows too and will be seeing you in some of your feminine finery."

"Right. Can I take this stuff off now?"

"Sure. I want to see you in that white night gown over there, anyway. It's too big for me, so *you* have to try it on. If it fits, you get to wear it to bed tonight."

Things were winding down now, so I went to bed. I was glad I had eavesdropped on them. I felt better knowing that Dad had tried the things Mom had gotten for him, and even happier to learn that he would be wearing them again in the near future.

I was up bright and early the next morning, but stayed in my room. I wanted to think about what I had heard the night before. Then I heard Mom and Dad getting out of bed and decided to do a bit more eavesdropping.

"How was your sleep?" I heard Mom ask Dad.

"Okay, I guess. It took me awhile to fall asleep, since I'm not used to wearing silk gowns to bed."

"I have the robe and slippers to go with it. You can wear it to the breakfast table if you want."

"Uh, no thank you, Gloria. I think I'll get dressed now. What did you do with my old underwear?"



“It was pretty ragged so I tossed it into the trash last night. Since I saved so much on mine and Joey's things I got you some new things, too. They're still in the bag beside the bureau.”

“I don't know what you were thinking when you bought these things Gloria. They're all too small for me.”

“What? Let me see them... I'm sorry Ed, for some reason I got the wrong sizes. You'll have to wear a pair of the panties under your other clothes today.”

“You'll go and exchange these other things later?”

“Oh no! Underwear can never be returned to a store. They have that rule for sanitary reasons. You have lots of ladies' underwear you can wear for now. Try to pick one of the plainer pairs for wearing to work. You can wear a camisole or chemise instead of an undershirt.”

“I hope none of the guys at work catch me wearing panties under my work clothes. I'm out of a job if they ever do.”

“So don't get undressed in front of them, and don't have any accidents either.”

I felt a lot better dressing as a girl, knowing that my Dad was *also* wearing women's underclothing. I looked forward to seeing him in one of the dresses Mom was going to get for him, and eavesdropping on them some more. I was about to leave my listening post when I heard Dad speak.

“What are you doing?” he asked Mom.

“The underwear I bought doesn't fit you, so I thought *I* would try it on. If it fits, there's no point in letting it go to waste, now is there?”

“A fine family *we* are,” Dad commented. “Our son is growing boobs, so he's dressing and living as a girl from now on. *I'm* wearing ladies underwear under my work clothes and my *wife* is wearing men's underwear. Where is it all going to end?”

“What we do in our home is our business and no one else's,” Mom answered him. “Joey is becoming more accepting of her situation, *you* only have ladies' underwear that fits you, and while I have lots of both, I find that men's underwear isn't all that comfortable for me. I'll give them a chance, though, and wear them all day to see if they get any better.”

“You said you would show me how I could be comfortable when wearing women's clothing,” Dad reminded her.

“Tonight, Ed. I have to get a few things from the store. I'll talk to Emily later and see if I can get you a dress or two. I told her my friend's name is Evelyn, so from now on that is what I am going to call you in private, or when you're all dolled up for me. Or, I may call you “Eve” for short?”

The conversation was carrying out to the hallway, so I left my listening spot and started to get dressed for my day. I hoped Mom would include me in her shopping plans for Dad. I wanted to see him dressed up as a woman even more than *she* did.

CHAPTER 14

I dressed myself in the clothes I had worn home from the store the day before. I found that if I silently kept reminding myself that I was as much a *girl* as I was a *boy*, I could enjoy dressing up as a girl and going out as one, too. I especially liked the way the silk stockings felt on my legs and the feel of the hems of my slip and dress. I joined Mom and Dad for breakfast in the kitchen.

“Joey,” Mom began when she saw me, “that dress is so pretty on you, isn't it. Ed?”

“Uh, yes. Yes it is *very* pretty. You are a *very* pretty girl, Joey.” Dad was in a bit of a hurry.

“How much did you hear last night, Joey?” Mom asked me.

“Most of it, I guess.”

“That's good. I noticed the register in your room was open last night and, when I checked, I saw that the one in my room was open, too. You must have heard everything quite clearly.”

“Yes, Mom. I was eavesdropping. I know it's wrong, but I *had* to know what was happening.”

“Its okay. I *wanted* you to hear and to know. So, what do you think? Do you think you could stand seeing your father in women's clothing?”

“I look forward to it,” I answered. I was feeling a bit guilty before, but not anymore.”

“Why should you be feeling guilty, Joey?” she asked me.

“Because I *liked* to wear girls clothes and pretending I really *was* a girl. Boys aren't *supposed* to do that, so I felt the guilt. Now that *Dad* is wearing women's underwear I know that *I* can do it and enjoy it, too. I also keep telling myself what the doctor said, that I am developing as a normal girl and therefore have every right to wear girls' things.”

“What do you like best about being a girl so far?”

“I like the feel of the long slip and dress against my silk-covered legs. It's not a tickle, it's just... wonderful.”

“I think the word you were looking for is “sensual”. *I* like it, too. While silk is great, it's very expensive. Nylon can be just as sensual, but at a price we can more afford.”

“I know. I just thought that since I have the silk stockings, I would wear them one more day. I can change them if you want me to.”

“No, you may as well enjoy them. Do you think your father would look good as a woman?”

“I have no idea. What do I *call* him when he does? I can't call a person wearing a dress “Dad”, can I?”

“I suppose not. I plan on calling him Evelyn. Why don't you call him “Aunt Evelyn”?”

“That could work. Do you think Aunt Emily would have a dress to fit him?”

“Let’s find out,” Mom answered. She went to the phone and called Aunt Emily. I finished eating breakfast and began cleaning up the dishes while they talked.

Mom came back to dry the dishes and tell me, “I have a few things to get at the drug store today, then I’m going to see about a dress for your father. Do you want to come with me or wait at home?”

“I was hoping I could go with you,” I replied.

“Good, I want you to come. I want to pick up a few things for you at the drug store, too.”

We walked at a leisurely pace to the drug store, where we spent over an hour picking out the things we were going to buy. Mom showed me how to put on lipstick and, after a couple of attempts, I got it right enough to wear it out of the store. The sales woman suggested a bit of rouge, so Mom applied it to my cheeks before we left.

Again we walked at a leisurely pace until we got to Aunt Emily's house. Aunt Emily was so happy to see us, she gave each of us a little hug and kiss on the cheek. I gave her my first easy and smoothly-done curtsy.

Aunt Emily served Mom and herself coffee and cakes. I got a tall glass of milk. When we were done with the pleasantries, she led us to her basement storeroom, in which hung women's clothing in all sizes and styles.

“Helping those less fortunate than myself is my greatest hobby and joy,” she told us. “I get these clothes for free, wash them and mend them and give them away to those who need them.”

“You don't *sell* them?” Mom asked.

“Heavens *no*, Gloria. I could *never* take money for them. That would destroy the pleasure I get from helping others.”

“I like helping, too, though I'm nowhere near the scale you are on” Mom answered her.

“The part I like best is when I can help a boy dress up as a girl, or a man dress up as a woman.”

“Have you helped many men dress up as women?” Mom asked.

“A few” she replied. “I married Arthur because I once saw him wearing a dress in a school play and thought he looked very feminine. Since we got married, I have dressed him as a woman almost every day. I think he likes it, though he is hard to coax out the door when he is dressed as a woman. He hasn't enough confidence in his appearance or ability to act the part.”

Aunt Emily showed us lots of dresses, as well as some skirts and blouses and sweaters and shoes. Mr. Williams reconditioned the shoes so that they looked almost brand new. Mom picked out several outfits for Dad, even though Aunt Emily was constantly encouraging her to take more and more. Mom picked out a couple of pairs of shoes, as well.

In another room, Aunt Emily showed us her young woman-style clothing, which were a lot like the dress I was wearing. Like a *real* girl might, I waltzed through the

racks of dresses and other clothing, pulling things out here and there to hold against myself before returning them to the racks.

“Pick what you like,” she told me. “You can try them on and, if they fit you, can keep them. Nothing makes me happier than to see young women like you wearing the clothing Art and I have reconditioned.”

I looked over to Mom and saw her smile, shrug slightly, then nod her head. I don't know what they were doing, but I was having the time of my life as I tried on dress after dress after dress, then skirts and blouses and sweaters and shoes and boots and even bedroom slippers.

I didn't want to be greedy, so I chose only three dresses and three skirts with a couple of blouses and sweaters. But Aunt Emily had other ideas, as she picked out things she thought looked good on me. Mom tried to protest that it was too much, but Aunt Emily insisted that we take as much as we could.

On our way home we made a couple of stops. We went to a beauty salon where I was placed in a chair while Mom and Aunt Emily talked with the stylist. The wig was removed from my head and the woman inspected my scalp and hair.

“Oh, yes!” she exclaimed to both the women. “Her hair is long enough to be styled into the newer short styles for young women. And I would suggest she get her ears pierced.”

Mom and Aunt Emily agreed to it and the work got done in short order. I was given a modern girls' hair style as this woman clipped and shaved my short brown hair in all the right places. Ice was used to freeze my ear lobes, then the needle went through, leaving a hole large enough to accept the imitation gold and diamond ear studs Mom had picked out for me.

Looking in the mirror, I saw that I really *did* look like a girl. My hair was styled like Audrey Hepburn wore hers in the movies. They showed me a picture of her. Since I had established myself in the neighborhood with Kathy and Darlene as a girl already, I could still be accepted as a girl with my short hair style. The pierced ears were a definite sign of femininity; no *boy* would ever get this done to himself. The wig went into a bag, and Aunt Emily would save it for some other young girl who would need it.

It was tea time by the time we got home, so I made and served it to Mom and Aunt Emily. I was able to have tea with them. Coffee was just for the adults.

I don't know what they had been talking about, but I know that plans had been made while I was making the tea. Aunt Emily was positively glowing with pleasure as I served the tea and biscuits. Mom looked pretty happy too.

Since I was going to be keeping all these wonderful clothes from Aunt Emily, it was agreed that I should pack up the other little girl things she had given to me and let her take them home to give to someone else. But she couldn't take them just now, so she promised to come back tomorrow evening with her husband to carry the boxes for her. That would make it Friday evening.

CHAPTER 15

Only when Aunt Emily left for home did Mom and I take the time to put away all of the clothes she had given to us. I needed her help to hang and fold everything into its proper place in my room. I helped Mom hang and fold Dad's new clothes and put them away in the spare bedroom. There just wasn't enough room in their closet.

When Dad got home, Mom had him take us out for supper. We had hamburgers and milkshakes at the malt shop, where most of my old friends used to hang out. Kathy and Darlene were there and helped convince the others that I was a different Joey than the one they had known before. Kathy liked my new hair style, though she didn't know I had worn a wig before. Darlene preferred long hair on girls and short hair on boys. Since she believed me to be a real girl, she didn't like my new hair style.

After our supper out, I had some friends to spend time with. All of the neighborhood girls wanted to be my friend and, since I had nothing else to do, I went and learned all about them, making up things about my past. Like Martha, I found it was *fun* to fool them.

Mom and Dad, I found out later, had things to do all by themselves. Mom showed him the things she had gotten from Aunt Emily, then she took him into the bathroom, where she shaved his body completely free of hair. Then, she got him all dressed up.

I got home from Kathy's house at eight o'clock to find Mom having tea with my new "Aunt Evelyn". Dad was really nervous about having me see him like this. I curtsied, then gave him a hug and a kiss and called him Aunt Evelyn.

All three of us went to our bedrooms and changed into our best nighties. We returned to the living room to relax before bed. Dad made a really big-looking woman, but he adjusted to it as best as he could. He had been smaller as a kid, when his sisters had dressed him up as a girl, and had liked it more then.

On Friday, Dad was off to work as usual, while Mom and I spent the day with a few household chores and looking through Mom's fashion magazines. I learned to iron clothes while she supervised and did some mending.

When Dad got home dinner was far from ready, so Mom had him take a bubble bath and change into one of "Aunt Evelyn's" outfits. Complete with makeup, wig, and jewelry, Dad didn't look *too* bad as a woman, though he was still pretty big. But, I was small, so *everyone* looked big to me. Maybe Aunt Evelyn wasn't *really* as big as I thought.

All three of us got to wear aprons and clean up after dinner. We were finished when there was a knock at the door. Mom went to answer it, while I watched from the kitchen doorway. Aunt Evelyn hid beside the fridge.

It turned out to be Aunt Emily. She had come to pick up the clothes I no longer needed, since I was now dressing as a girl my age instead of a little girl. Her husband Art was there too, though she had made him arrive wearing one of his dresses. I went forward for an introduction to my latest Aunt, who it turned out was being called

“Alicia”. I did my curtsy and told Aunt Alicia that she looked very beautiful, and it was the truth.

I led them into the living room to seat them while Mom went into the kitchen to get Aunt Evelyn. It took a lot of pushing and cajoling from Mom, but knowing that Aunt Alicia was there made it somewhat easier for her.

Once the initial embarrassments were out of the way, introductions were made and the four women sat to chat while I played hostess and made the tea. I was enjoying myself now, with both Dad and Mr. Williams also Aunts to me.

In exactly one week, I had gone from being a happy *boy* to a happy *girl*. I’d made new friendships with girls and boys I already knew and had three more “Aunts” who could do a lot of good for me. From now on, my life was going to be worth living; it promised to be full of enjoyment for all concerned.