

Our Sorority

ISSUE TWENTY THREE

August, 1990

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WHILE PUTTING IT TO BED

As we approached the deadline for our intended issues on Survival and Transsexualism my own personal work load increased to the point where it became clear that these issues would have to be delayed. At the same time the stories and poems for our contest continued to come in so we just decided to be a little less creative and let others fill the space. So here is our summer fiction issue.

We had hoped to do a photo spread for our new "Undercover Girl", but, we only received one entry with one photograph. So we went with the flow and published it. Hope to see your pictures next issue!

SUMMER

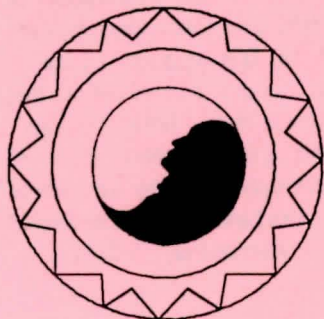
FICTION

ISSUE

Our contest results will be given in our next issue. Meanwhile we will be sending out checks to our published authors.

In this issue we have several nice short stories, cartoons, poems, National Events List, our continuing autobiographical story Many Little Kindnesses, and much much more!

If your friends wonder where their copy of Our Sorority is, please remind them that we are now a subscription publication.



Our Sorority

An Outreach Publication

The HUMAN OUTREACH AND ACHIEVEMENT INSTITUTE is a non-profit organization (501-C3) based at Kenmore Station, POB 368, Boston, MA., 02215. Our Sorority is not an organization, it is based at POB 11254, Lincolina Station, Alexandria, VA., 22312.

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OUR UNDER COVER GIRL: PHAEDRA KELLY

Based upon her own little autobiography, our lovely Phaedra is from England. She is 36 years old, 6 foot tall, has blue eyes, with varied hair and figure. She calls herself a male to female trans-former and self designated Gender Transient. So here is her story...



"I began in the 1970s, one of the few in our community who took a conscious decision to be an Androgyne, - ie, not wanting to be male or female, but both in one.

"My earliest female name was Jaquetta El e La Ha, (the latter half being an -Asian-Cocopa Indian name for a Transgenderist). I changed to Phaedra (after the Greek Drama) Kelly (after Ned, the Australian bandit/revolutionary) in 1980, when I formed the Gender Transient Affinity, a postal international study and reform network.

"In 1983 I had minor press coverage for having entered a Carnival Queen competition, from which I was "banned" for being born male.

"In 1984 (Orwell's year) my fiancée Yanda and I got married, fighting and winning against the government for the right to do so, with me in bridal gown and she in the suit with three Transgender bridesmaids, the first such wedding legally in recorded British history. It got world news coverage.

"I had freelanced for years, but in '85 was accepted on merit for training as a professional fashion, glamour and promotional model with Lace Modelling Agency out of Mallinsons photography school. Halfway through the course I was asked to train other students. After which I did a couple of kissogram jobs, and small cos-

tume drama movies, some nightclub work and singing with a tiny band named *Mistress*.

"I also continued to study and document transgender worldwide, mainly from a social anthropology viewpoint, writing two books (still unpublished): *The Naked Transient* and *The Third Opinion*..

"I campaigned for civil rights, media rights through letters, articles in both Transgender and mainstream magazines, lobbies to Prime Ministers, MPs and government the world over, with varied success.

"I did a static line parachute jump (in female form) sponsored on behalf of Mencap the charity for the mentally handicapped, forming from that the idea of the GTA Adventure Sport Squad, a.k.a. Para Trans. Although I have done another jump from two thousand feet recently for a child needing a liver transplant, and several sea and air stunts since, so far no other Trans have joined me.

"Several groups have done me honorary life memberships, and I have enjoyed a certain popularity; but lately have fallen from favour in UK especially, due to having taken on Germaine Greer in print publicly, challenging her over her biased and bigoted anti Tran attitude. Rank and file support is plenty, but the group leaderenes seem to be reluctant to encourage even the sanest and most needed form of literary activism.

"Not being a light unto myself, I have grown tired of the struggle, and decided to let that lie fallow, in the hands of the Comet Queens. I still have my research on behalf of the Trans Gender Archive at Ulster University to keep me busy, as a research assistant, and have just done an expedition to The Gambia N.W. Africa, to investigate the tribes at some risk. (Tranning in an Islamic land in mid Ramadan wasn't easy.) My hubby and I have a fact finding tour of Paris planned for next month.

"I have also begun visiting TVs and TSs who are in prison and hope to encourage the formation of a selfhelp group for, and by them, run in part from within UKs groups on the outside.

"Recently I joined three UK Vampire Study groups, and am looking into the connection with that and Androgyny, and may return to acting for a Vampire movie, and be part of an amateur documentary on the subject."



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Because I was a churl,
Always starting a fight,
I'm to be a little girl,
Until I learn what's right.

Mother, made me a proper girl,
In fear of the hairbrush's smite.
Taught to curtsy in a lacy swirl;
To be prompt, Dutiful, and polite.

It is not easy to be a girl;
Teased and taunted by all for my plight.
To be cast in a new life's whirl,
In silks and satins like a fairy sprite.

As my mother's dainty pearl,
I wear lovely dresses so dainty and bright;
With my hair in a pretty curl,
I'm revealed to all in sight!

But I've learned to be a good little girl,
And, I know that mother is always right,
For, who wants to be a bad little churl,
When you can have a life of feminine delight..

THE TRANSEXUAL PHENOMENON

by Harry Benjamin

The Outreach Institute announces the reprinting of this classic publication on gender issues. This major work on transsexualism, which includes 16 pages of photos associated with important case histories, and the well-known Benjamin Scale of Gender Shift, is available in limited numbers.

The antique cover edition is priced at \$39.95 and the standard edition costs \$35.95. Please add \$3.50 for postage and handling US, or \$7.00 in US Funds outside the US.

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"ONE OF OUR MOST COOPERATIVE
EMPLOYEES. I MERELY WARNED HIM
THAT IF HE DIDN'T DRASTICALLY
CHANGE HIS WAYS....."



"WELL? HE WANTED TO
BE A SECRETARY!"

A GREAT VACATION

by Elizabeth Anne Nelson

Don sprawled out over his bedroom floor studying the booklets and mail from Camp Thunder. Munching on a peanut butter and jellie sandwich he took a sip of root beer and hardly looked up when his twin sister Danna entered to spread her skirts and join him.

"What you doing?" she asked rolling over and picking up one of the color folders. "This about the camp you're going to this summer?"

"Yes," he replied enthusiastically, "I'm going this weekend you know. It's a groovy camp with swimming, boating, riding...."

"Horseback riding," Donna asked her ears almost perking up at the sound of her favorite subject with growing envy as she saw a picture in the folder of two boys making a high jump on horseback. "Boy oh boy they let you ride all afternoon if you want," she sighed reading the folder.

"I want to go on canoe trips," he observed taking another bite from his sandwich. "They go on explorer trips in the back country and I'm just old enough to go. They only take twelve or older, you know. That's scout age."

"Big deal," she muttered thinking with envy about what a great camp it really must be. She was going to their grand mother's at the beach to baby sit her aunt's two little babies and be 'a little homemaker'. Their mother was completely captivated by the idea of her daughter spending the summer learning how to take care of babies and help grandmother around the summer home. To put it mildly, Donna was not at all that eager; especially now that she saw the great vacation her brother was going to have.

But, the vacation wasn't her only trouble. Tomorrow she had to take a math test. Frankly, she was scared to death because math was her worst subject. If she flunked she might not be let into the eighth grade. Now she saw that her brother had it made in the shade.

She just couldn't see how two that looked almost exactly alike, except for the hair, her's was shorter since he went on the mod kick, could be so very different just because one was a girl and the

other a boy. She shrugged to toss the folder aside and stand up. Just as she was straightening her skirts and wondering what she was going to wear to school she gave out a shout that caused Don to all but choke on his root beer.

"Hey, bubble head."

"I got the greatest idea since Liverpool started to swing," she shouted looking at her brother and clapping her hands. "Do you want your stupid sister to get stuck in the seventh grade until she gets too old to touch dance?"

"Cut your engines your overheating," he muttered taking another bite from the sandwich and wondering why the world ever made silly sisters and girls. "What's this staying in the seventh grade bit?"

"If I flunk my math test I won't make it," she announced. "Just think, the last day of classes and they spring a test."

"It's not bad," he muttered not liking the idea of being bothered about anything but his plans for the summer. "My homeroom took it last week."

"Will they really not let you go into the next grade?" she asked wondering if her plan would work, it had lots of risks.

"Ah, come on, you won't flunk, bubble head," he protested.

"Not if you take my test for me," she stated all at once. "See, you have taken it and you could dress as me and nobody would know and..."

"Oh, no we don't," he stopped her rush of words by raising his hand. "If you think I'm going to run around school dressed like a girl, you've got to have blown your cool kid."

"It would be a snap, I'll get Kathy to walk you around since she has the same classes I do. She is my real buddy type friend," Donna concluded clapping her hands over the idea.

"And who will be in my classes?"

"Me," she replied with a giggle liking that idea. "I'll be you and you will be me."

"Even if I was stupid enough to try such a crazy thing, it wouldn't work. Nobody would believe that you were me."

"Oh, really," she said sitting on the edge of his bed only to get up and start looking through his closet to produce a pair of slacks and a sports shirt along with a pair of sneakers. "I'll show you, Donald Baker."

"Now wait a minute," he protested as she suddenly unzipped the back of her dress to stand before him dressed in panties and an undervest.

In a moment she grabbed a pair of sox from his bureau and slipped on his slacks and sport shirt to sit on the edge of the bed to put on the socks and shoes. Standing up she went to the mirror of his bureau and picked up a comb and brush to look at him for a moment before she quickly brushed her hair from its curly summer hairdo to match his Beatle styled hair.

"Now for the real test," she laughed grabbing his hand and pushing him into the closet. "Fifty cents says that mom won't tumble?"

"You're on," he answered guessing that it was easy money, even if she did look an awful lot like him right then.

"Say mom," Donna called opening the door after tucking her dress under the bed. "Did you see these keen folders from camp."

Mrs. Baker stepped out of the master bedroom to brush her arm against a stray lock of hair.

"Not had a chance, dearest," she said seeing that it was Don and wishing that their voices would change soon so that she could know which one was shouting. Well, at least Donna was becoming too ladylike to yell. "What did I tell you about yelling, young man?"

"Gee, I forgot," Danna said mimicking Don's habit of sticking his hands into his pockets and looking down as he kicked an imaginary pebble. "Would you like to see the folders?"

"I guess so, but I am awful busy packing. You know dad and I have to leave early in the morning right after you kids go to school if were to reach the convention by tomorrow and I still have to talk to mother."

Danna led the way into her brother's room to pick up the papers from the camp, which she handed to her mom.

After showing her mother the folders a fantastic idea began to form in the back of her mind, but she continued her little game until her mother left to return to her packing.

"See, smarty pants, you owe me half a buck," she announced closing the door to face her somewhat surprised brother. "Now it is your turn, kiddo."

"Not on your sweet life, bubble head," he swore sitting on the edge of his bed trying to ignore her outstretched hand, but then he shrugged and dug into his pants to produce half of a week's allowance, "Gee, sis, you know I'm saving to save for a go-cart."

She pocketed the coins and smiled brightly figuring that what she had in mind was worth the price. "I have almost fifty dollars in the bank," she suggested bending over and pulling her dress from under his bed to hold it up to his chest. "I might consider a loan for a little favor."

"A loan," he asked uncertainly thinking that all he needed was twenty more dollars. With summer and all he didn't figure he could get the cart until fall when school started if he watched his money closely.

She eyed her quarry thoughtfully, "I think that I could help you buy that go-cart, how much is it worth to you?"

"I need twenty five bucks to buy it," he replied looking down at the summer dress. "It's an awful gamble. What if I'm caught cheating. The whole school would know I pretended to be a girl."

"You won't get caught," she promised. "Kathy is coming over tonight," she added to get his mind away from the possibility. "Let's first see if we can fool her. Now that would be a real test."

"If I make it," he suggested, "I get my fifty cents back."

"And if you fail, I get the rest of the dollar, wise guy," she demanded, "is it a deal?"

"It's harder to be a girl," he protested, "I'm not so sure..."

"Well, let's see if you can fool Kathy first," she sighed suddenly taking him by the hand and pausing at the door just to be sure the hall was clear before she towed him to her room. "Take off your shirt," she ordered having him sit before her vanity table.

"Hey," he complained as she began to fuss with his hair just noticing her clock radio, "can't we wait until after supper?"

"No," she concluded having made up her mind, "I want to test the folks also. If they don't tumble I know it will work. If they do it's just a joke, okay?"

Continued on Page 14

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ANNOUNCING THE PUBLICATION OF:

TRANSFORMATIONS

CROSSDRESSERS AND THOSE WHO LOVE THEM

By MARRIETTE PATHY ALLEN

Recently published, this book of photographs and interviews with men who crossdress focuses on males who depend on feminine imagery to reach full personality expression. It includes sixteen pages of color, 100 black and white images, and 32 interviews. Ari Kane of the Outreach Institute says, "Transformations is a sensitive and empathetic portrayal of men whose lives are involved with this form of expression of the feminine." Professor John Money says of Allen's work, "an absolutely splendid photographic job in capturing moments of truth, esthetic and empathetic, in the lives of men whose destiny is to mime women." Betty Ann Lind says, "Transformations is a lovely collection of excellent photographs interwoven by well chosen understanding words."

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"I still get the money?"

"Oh, no, not until you have taken the test and all," she countered sectioning his hair and applying the wave lotion before setting it in big rollers showing him how to do his own hair.

While he rolled a tress in place she went to her bureau and dug out a pair of white cotton panties trimmed with lace leg openings.

Assisting him with the lotion she helped him with another curl before leaving him to finish the curl while she pulled a pair of pink anklets from a drawer and produced a pair of black patent leather Mary Janes from her closet along with an A-line white nylon slip trimmed with lace at the wide shoulder straps and ruffled hem.

The dress was a pink cotton pleated float styled dress with puffed sleeves. Within a few minutes she showed him how to complete the hair setting only to undo the whole works, much to his surprise. Taking a brush she soon brushed out whatever sectioning she had done to the wet hair.

"Now again start from the beginning by yourself while I watch."

"What's the idea," Don complained taking the comb from her hand trying to remember where she had sectioned the hair.

"I just want you to see what it's like to be a girl," she answered with a secret smile. "Yes, that is right. And remember that the first row of rollers are rolled with the rollers up. Perfect."

After some time he completed the ordeal and she placed the dryer cap on his head only to begin giving him a manicure; remembering then to remove her own clear polish, thankful that her mother hadn't noticed. Doing one hand she had him do the other. Next she plucked a few stray hairs in his brows and used vasaline on his lashes before using a curler. Satisfied, she tested a curl and began to show him how to fix his hairstyle making sure that he knew how by making him do it over once she was done.

"Good," she exclaimed clapping her hands. "Now before you go to bed tonight you can set your own hair and prepare it in the morning."

"Set my hair?" he asked in wonder.

"Yes," she replied firmly, "I can't sleep in here tonight if you are to be me and we won't be able to switch in the morning so from now on you are me and I am you."

"I don't..."

"Twenty five dollars," she reminded helping him to stand. "Now you undress and put these on." She handed him the panties.

"Can't I wear..."

"The skirts are too short for you to be wearing your own briefs." She giggled at the idea. "Now don't be a cry baby, put on your panties, Donna."

"Okay," he muttered lowering his pants as she looked the other way. In a minute the shame of the panties covered him and he felt strangely different. Almost timidly he accepted the nylon slip. "Couldn't I wear slacks or something," he asked looking at the dress as she helped him into it and buttoned the back.

"Not on your life," Donna stated picking up the anklets. "Mom insists on a dress for school and supper. You know that."

"I wondered why you always put on a dress before supper," he mused stepping into the shoes after putting on the anklets. Tightening the straps he straightened out to look at his image in the mirror. It was Donna!

"Perfect," she exclaimed clapping her hands. "And now we're going to practice until supper."

"Practice?"

"Oh, yes, you have a lot of rough edges to smooth out. I'm glad to be a bit of a tomboy," she mused. "You're lucky too. Because, mom doesn't expect the goody-goody sissy pants bit from me. But, you do have to know how to sit, stand, walk, carry books, talk, and ever so much more. I'm glad Kathy will be here."

For two solid hours she drilled him until he responded to her name and began to feel the part of being a girl.

Suddenly their mother called and poor Don almost died of fright admiring in turn how cool she was. Soon he was in the hall on the way to supper. When his father came in he ran to him in a flurry of skirts and blushing kissed and hugged his father who lifted him up from the floor and swung him a bit in their evening ritual of "how is my little baby girl" that father and daughter practiced when father came home.

Helping his mother with the food he accepted her compliments on how pretty 'Donna's new hair set looks'.

And soon the meal was underway with the poor boy trying to be the perfect lady until he began to feel relaxed; for he could see

that he was accepted as being his sister. When the meal was over he helped with the dishes and was released when Kathy came to the back door.

"Hi, Dot," Kathy exclaimed entering the kitchen and greeting the Bakers. "I brought my math book so we can cram, okay?"

"Now, girls, I want you studying, not playing records," Mrs Baker warned as the two ran upstairs hand in hand while the real Donna finished wiping the dishes.

Soon Kathy took over the bed to open the book.

"I'm frightened to death over math," she exclaimed pushing the book away. "I thought that you thought that dress was icky."

"It's babysville," Don countered thinking fast, "but dad, dear old dad likes it."

"I see," Kathy mused, "Jane and Barb are walking to school with us. Did you see the adorable new dress on sale at Angela's, it mod, but fab."

Don nodded remembering how his sister had gushed over that dress when they passed Angela's. "It's soft as cake. I bet their asking a lot for it. Did you see Sandra's new bike?"

"Sure," Kathy acknowledged picking up the book. "I have a new *Sure Dead* record.

"Hi, bubble heads," Danna (as Don) announced leaning in the doorway hands in pockets. "Need any help on that math book. The test was a cinch."

"Your baby brother's here," Kathy taunted but then she shrugged. "I guess you could help at that."

"Sit here, sis," Donna (as Don) ordered patting the bed in a masculine gesture.

Don (as Donna) dragged up a chair about to put his feet up on the organza spread.

"Don't you dare put your feet on my bed," the real Donna suddenly protested only to stifle a laugh causing her brother to join in.

"Oh, Kathy," Donna exclaimed in sheer delight. "You fell for it."

Kathy looked at the crazy brother and sister in bewilderment.

"I'm Donna, and that lovely girl is my brother, Don," Donna announced causing Kathy to break into giggles once she recovered from her disbelief. Donna whispered something into her ear causing Kathy to look at Don with a mischievous grin.

"I wish I had a twin brother," Kathy said at last, standing up to take his hands into her's so that she could have a closer look. "Perfect."

"I think we had better have him practice some more," Donna suggested telling about her game before supper and soon Don had two teachers putting him through his feminine paces. After four more hours of practice Kathy left to go home promising not to tell a soul about their little ruse and also promising to stay with Don through the day to help him out.

When she left Mrs. Baker came upstairs to send the children to bed pleased to see that Don had been helping his sister with her math.

Before Danna left she selected a dress for Don's day at school and then went to Don's room to look through the camp folders before undressing and slipping into a pair of his pajamas and going to sleep.

Don undressed and found a pair of her baby doll pajamas and after setting his hair he went to bed thinking about what had happened and what was going to happen, hoping that all went well.

Morning came suddenly to the boy, who had a restless night. Donna opened the door on the way to the bath room and woke him up to make sure the normally late getter-upper would be sure to have enough time to do his hair.

Once his hair was ready he went to the bath room and cleaned up only to return to his sister's room. Soon he removed the feminine pajamas to put on the panties and slip he had worn the night before along with the black patent leather Mary Janes and the pink anklets. The dress was a pink A-line with side pleated skirt and ruffled organza and lace circular collar.

Donna, now dressed in a pair of blue cotton slacks and a pull over shirt came to her room to inspect her 'sister' and added a pink hairbow to his disguise before leading the way down to breakfast.

Don had barely finished breakfast when a highly amused Kathy with Jane and Barb picked him up to take him to school.



"Do well on your test, dearest," Mrs. Baker asked giving her 'daughter' a quick kiss goodbye. "I have a surprise for you after school."

"What, mother," he asked, but she only smiled and sent him out with the girls. Donna (as Don) smiled and waved goodbye before talking with 'his' mother.

Poor Kathy could hardly keep her secret; but, she enjoyed the fact that the other girls were so completely fooled too much to let on.

Before long Don was at school and sitting in Donna's desk at homeroom. He was too nervous to really think

about what was happening and before long he was just one of the girls going from class to class with Kathy. After a very anxious hour of lunch surrounded by the girls in his class he was back in the homeroom and taking the test. Don finished up before the bell rang and Mrs. Dexter took his test with a sigh of relief, for she expected poor Donna to be last.

When the bell rang Kathy took him in tow to gym class where a very nervous boy changed to the blue jumper in his sister's locker. Soon he lost himself in the game of German socker enjoying himself so much that Mrs. Kenter had to warn 'Donna' twice not to play so rough. When the ball game was over she thanked the girls and watched them leave the playing field for the girl's gym wondering over how much Donna's coordination had improved.

Once he had changed back into the pink dress he followed Kathy back to homeroom where he returned to his sister's desk and listened to their home room teacher as she wished them all a wonderful vacation and then the bell rang.

Kathy arose to take a very thankful Don home when the phone rang.

"Yes, she's still here," Mrs. Dexter answered on the phone. "Oh, Donna?"

Don froze in his tracks wondering what was wrong. "Yes, ma'am?"

"Would you go to the main lobby please," the homeroom teacher asked hanging up. "Someone is there asking for you."

"Yes, ma'am," he replied with a half sigh as he half ran after Kathy.

"I'll meet you at home, Donna," Kathy said in a hurry, "I have to meet my mother downtown. Did you have a good time, darling?"

"I'll be glad to get it over with," he sighed leaving her to walk down the hall towards the main lobby. Opening one of the double doors he saw his grandmother standing patiently by the door!

"Oh, Donna, there you are," she exclaimed taking the child's hand. "We have to hurry if we are going to catch the train."

"The train?" was the startled question. "What train?"

"Why to Seaview, didn't your mother tell you?" she asked opening the door as she towed the child to the cab. "Since she was leaving today I thought that I should pick you up. Your brother was so very helpful in helping me pack your things."

"Going, pack, brother," the child stammered trying to understand.

"Why yes," she replied helping her grand daughter into the cab as it started towards the station. "We're going to Seaview today. Your aunty Clara will meet us at the station in Seaview. I'm certain your mother told you about her lovely twins and how you are going to baby sit them while helping me about the house. She seemed delighted over the idea. They're nine months old, a boy and a girl, like you and your brother. Isn't that wonderful?"

She beamed at her grand daughter with a happy smile. "Yes, I talked to Don about it while he told me about the camp he was going to this summer where he is going to ride horseback. He felt certain that you would love to be at the beach and care for the babies."

The stunned and confused child looked at the happy woman; not knowing what to say. But, there really was no escape, because things were far to complicated now to back out.

"Yes, a wonderful vacation at the beach," she concluded with a smile. "Three whole months learning how to be a little home-maker. Won't that be wonderful?"

"I guess so."

"Yes, darling, I'm certain it will be more fun than swimmer school," she noted taking the child's hand into her's. "For you see that is where Donna is really going, and you are going to take her place as a punishment for this little masquerade."

"I....," began the protested surprise mingled with disbelieving fear. "Please, no, grandma, please..."

"But, Don, you wanted to be Donna. So you shall be a charming little girl all summer long," she stated finny with an amused smile over her little punishment. "When the summer is over and you have had a wonderful vacation, I'll bet you will just adore being a girl."

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These events are national in scope and each event is set up to provide a varied program for both the novice and advanced cross-dresser. With the exception of the Tri-Ess Convention (for members of Tri-Ess only) these events are open to any & all crossdressers. If you hear of further national events, please contact *Our Sorority*.

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YOUNG ADULT TITLES



IT'S IN THE BAG

IT'S IN THE BAG

When little Jack Lee ran away from his aunt and uncle, he thought he would escape old fashioned pinafores and serving as their maid. Jack made his way by hitch-hiking to a mountain cabin where he met Sandra, who stole his bag of cameras and money leaving for him her things. In her bag he found a fate he dreaded more than pinafore punishment.



CAPTIVE PLAYMATES

CAPTIVE PLAYMATES

Pat was a little man with a great fortune and a two timing wife, who he believed planned to murder him. He sought to escape his fate until he was arrested by the police for drunken driving and manslaughter. Then he needed her help and was willing to do anything to escape only to discover that she had planned a future for him as a toddler behind playpen bars.



AUNTY

AUNTY

Evelyn and Beverley had each graduated from high school and they did not want to go to college like their aunts had wanted. Aunt Helena offered Evelyn a new car. While he dreams of a new car Aunt Helena Picks A School for Evelyn. Beverley wanted his aunt to buy him a garage; but, she decided what he really needed was a proper Duenna.



FAIRIES

FAIRIES

It is hard to imagine three youths who would be more insulted by being called Fairies. Dale escaped home to become a Flower Child, but he hitch-hiked into fairy land. John was reluctant to enter a contest reserved only for talented musical children; however Mrs Worth suggested a perfect Composition for A Minor.

Aunt Lena left her daughters in charge of Rachel with orders that he be treated as one of the family, and Aunt Lena's Daughters Are Obedient to the point where he enters a fairyland created by the girls just for him.

NEW WOMAN TITLES



STERIOD

STERIOD By Liz Jamesguard

Two young men hear of a new steroid capable of turning athletes into super jocks. With money in hand they sneak into night to buy the wonder drug. Share their surprise when they discover what the steroid was really designed to do!



DANCER

GO-GO DANCER

Joyce knew that the girls attending the Elite School for Secretaries would be in class when he broke into their dormitory. If he had known what the students planned to do to him when they found him trembling in their closet he would have screamed for the police!

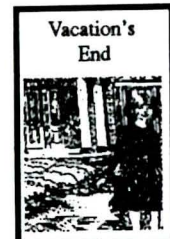
NEW WOMAN TITLES



ONE DAY

ONE DAY by LIZ JAMESGUARD

We couldn't argue with a computer. It was perfectly reasonable. "Think about it, Tim. This would be an opportunity to show Monica how you would like her to be, and Monica would do the reverse. Now, I'm not proposing that you have to conform to each other's ideal, but information is the key-stone to problem resolution." "Wait," I decided. "This is crazy." Tim didn't believe that his computer could patch up a lover's quarrel by having him switch places with Monica for just One Day. But, what if it would not switch them back again? Why did it want him trapped in a woman's body?



Vacation's End

VACATION'S END

This year my prep school graduating class planned a vacation tour of Europe. And, I had been accepted by Old Ivy.

But...Aunt Soule had other plans.

"When Mrs Lumas wrote that she needed a young man to do some handi-work I thought of you...I wrote her that I was going to send you there for the summer to work...If you don't go I will cut your funds."

And that is why I was sent to Edgemont College for Young Ladies until vacation's end....



LADY

LADY

Mrs Sarah Dexter was not pleased to learn that her son brought his male lover home as his wife. But she decided to teach THE FAIRY BRIDE....Now our hero was certain that she did not have A CERTAIN IMAGE to be a top executive. But, his competitor had a different image in mind for him...And the mystery was: Who wanted to make Joyce into the LADY OF THE HOUSE?.



WILYI

WILYI

Young Lieutenant Jean de Marc dreamed of glory and honours. Fate placed him the hands of a slave caravan where he hid among their women learning the strangest drills ever taught a soldier and he wondered why he was being trained to be a Wilyi, a love slave to belly dance for the pleasures of men.



PLIGHT

Plight

Bob had no idea what Roger had in mind when he entered his bedroom, but he even had less of an idea what his aunt planned to do when she caught them in a very awkward situation!



MaidForSex

MAID FOR SEX Hazel escaped the police by ducking into John Bentley's car only to discover himself forced into the sexy uniforms once worn by Tina, Mrs Bentley's former maid. Mrs Bentley had hoped that Tina would tempt John away from his 'gay' ways; but, the wanton girl had just ran away with John's most recent lover, Mark, instead. This time Mrs Bentley decided to change her son in stages by making Hazel a Maid for Sex. Then Mark's cousin arrived to answer to Mrs Bentley's prayers. The perfect woman to domesticate Hazel and become John's wife. How can Hazel escape?

FULL SPECTRUM TV STORIES



CELESTE

CELESTE by ELIZABETH ANNE NELSON It starts on a stormy fall night when five crossdressers and a mysterious stranger began the seven tales of Celeste.



MOON

MOON QUEEN by Elizabeth Anne Nelson Celeste begins our five tales with her prophetic tale: The Legend of the Berdache. See the Moon Queen's magic in the tale of A Daughter; Witness the creation of The Passionate One; A wife's plan for Domestication; And, how a cheating husband is taught With Loving Care.



TRAPPED

TRAPPED BY SKIRTS by Cynthia Leigh Four lovely tales about men trapped by skirts. Little Peter found the perfect spot to look up under skirts to find out that IT'S A HABIT. JAN, MY LOVE was looking far and wide for a mistress only to find her close at hand. Cindi **RESCUED** Tommi to discover lesbian love. PHYLE & LAYNE discover love.

TV STORIES



HOMEMAKE

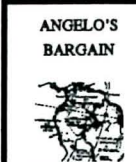
MY LITTLE HOMEMAKER by Elizabeth Anne Nelson As June Turner explained to Mrs. Lurd, Carol wanted to please his wife, June, but the ladies of the Brair Village Ladies Club took him to be a retarded child! How can lovely Carol convince the ladies that he should be accepted for membership?



SEXIST

TAMING A SEXIST

C. Robert Perry was a male chauvinist, who enjoyed letting every one in the bar know what he thought about modern feminism. At that very same bar a Mrs Van Meer was lamenting the fact that her two former marriages were a mistake because society simply did not prepare husbands for professional women like it did wives for men. What she wanted was a home-maker such as the "good old fashioned girl, like the girl daddy had." "Why if conditions were right most men might accept the idea of being a homemaker," Mrs Knox observed. "Good, then I'll take him," Mrs Van Meer replied pointing at C. Robert Perry!

ANGELO'S
BARGAIN

ANGELO'S BARGAIN

He had proposed marriage to Helene De LaVerga. Yet, how could he avoid such a marriage? He needed money, and Helene was his golden goose. Such a monstrosity should be grateful to have a man. For marriage was to be a sound business deal between them. Little did he know that he has bargained for a life in petticoats among the Amazons!

SEAMEN'S
DELIGHT

SEAMEN'S DELIGHT

Dale Belle was to serve as a steward aboard the Crystal Belle, to make a man of him. But, his new uniform was right out of a south sea island movie, and he was to be the sexy island maiden! And this was just the first step in making him into the Seamen's Delight!

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MALE LESBIANS OF CLUB LESBOS by Dani

Come with us to a world where Lesbos is not a Greek island, but a lesbian night club. Here lesbian dominants are attended by submissive slaves, both male and female, dressed in bizarre ultra feminine clothes designed to attract male just as the ultimate sex objects to totally humiliate the wearers; who are identified with cute little dolly names like Sissy Dani, Busty Barbie, and Teasing Tammy to remind them of their existence as mere sexual toys

COMPLETE by Elizabeth Anne Nelson

Most young women have been told by some matron that they are not complete as women until they have a baby. Three men discover that they are about to be complete. Mark at his Baby Shower, Max find out he is about to be a Bosom Buddy when he is arrested for prostitution. And poor Lthia knew that she had many babies, She just couldn't remember it happening because she was Aunt Barbara's Patient.



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TO ERATO, MUSE OF LOVE POETRY AND MIMICRY

A Letter to Salman by Chris Statley

You hide, Salman:

*Because you are under attack
from a rasping pulse of people.
Because your thoughts, your feelings,
have been deemed too different and
too offensive to be allowed to exist.
Because you know if you went in
public, you might certainly be
destroyed, like one of your pages
wadded up and tossed in a
curb side bonfire.
They kill you, they kill your ideas,
Salman, your 'satanic verses.'*

We, too, hide.

*We know the fear of discovery, the
metallic taste of fear, of confrontation
with those who will not find a
microscopic fold in their brain where
our reality can live in peace.
We hide because in the open, we may be
torched by the howling crowds,
burn magnesium-bright,
and disappear.
But we are not here to disappear.
We are here to live.*

So Salman, your words ring true.

*Your words when you say,
'Freedom is always taken; it is never given.'
Yes, there is a price.
A price some of us are ready to pay.
It is our time to say that we
are entitled to freedom.
And we face the howling crowd
with a truth simple as a new leaf:
We exist, and this is how we are.*

The consequences? Let them come.

*We cannot plot and plan beyond this point.
As you say, Salman,
'Our lives teach us who we are.'*

And we are ready to learn.

Hanging On By My Fingernails by Chris Statley

*When you have a dream, don't let it slip,
Keep it safely in your grip.
That's what I do with my femme person,
Hanging on by my fingernails, which I've been nursin'
For so many years, to a length quite lovely.
Oval-shaped and smooth and far-and-abovevely
To long for any macho male to own,
These digits could cause my 'cover' blown.
So I curl my hands into tight little balls,
Hiding my talons from one and alls.
But sometimes I notice an errant eye stray
When I'm not being careful and a nail gets away.
And I see someone wonder why those nails are on a he.
I simply answer, in my head, 'They're not, they're on me.'*



Sick Day

by Chris Statley

Watching the others trudge to the morning bus,
like linked elephants past my living room windows,
I danced in my head, great arcing leaps, then down
en pointe, 12 liquid twirls, and grateful applause.

My mother had called in. I was 'sick.' She has gone to work,
Here was a day without pain.

Up to the drawers, closets, and small hiding
spaces. Panties from here, a scarf from there, a skirt rolled up at
the waist to show a saucy glimpse of leg.

Rouge, lipstick, a touch of perfume.
Dressing, dressing, but never looking in the mirror.
Just feeling. At home. comfortable. Appropriate.

Not until hours later, when passing a hallway mirror
I stopped and looked. And my eyes met in a new face.
My face. Where there was a rush of recognition.
A big sister? An old acquaintance?

No, me. But a me with such a calm, cool, clear sense
of identity that I stared in disbelief. Here was a girl
who could do anything. Anything? I asked.
My eyes looked back, understanding and warm, like the doctor
who knows the answer to a familiar question and is ready to reassure a
fearful and flighty patient.

'Yes,' My eyes said, 'anything. It is all possible.
But I have to be here. You can't just pull me out in
bits and pieces from behind a drawer
on an odd Thursday some March
and expect me to help you.'

I looked and looked. I looked: diving into a cool lake,
deep into a trackless, welcoming infinity.
A sense of complete security flooded me,
a great wave of energy and purpose.
It was all there. I saw it so simply.
In my eyes, in my new face.
In the person I was.

And the joy was so terrifying I ran to put all the clothes away
and spent the rest of the day in bland and aimless activity trying
to forget what I had just
seen.



TV TOWN

by ENID

A FANCY

NOTE: In this narrative, for the sake of readability, all names are as chosen by the individuals for their gender of choice. For instance, Jill's father is Terri, her mother Hal. Practically all persons mentioned, have other gender-appropriate names, but the ones commonly used by them in The Town are the ones used here.

I've often wondered how my life would have developed if I'd grown up any place but The Town. I haven't the slightest doubt that I would have eventually become a habitual crossdresser, but it is reasonable to doubt that it would have been anything like - it was. All communities are unique in one or more ways, of course, but our Town is very, very special in that it is composed almost entirely of transvestites. Not only the men, either. While my dad's closet is probably four-fifths women's wear and the rest suitable for men, my mother's is exactly the opposite. Her's contains only a minimum of feminine garments, with the rest suits, sportcoats and slacks, neckties, and the like. Their dresser drawers are the same. My dad's contain mostly brassieres, nylons, filmy panties and girdles, while mom's is stocked with jockey shorts, undershirts, socks, etc. They aren't all dress-up clothes, either, but a practical selection of casual around-the-house, and yard wear, too.

A certain proportion of gender-proper clothing is necessary because there is no industry in The Town, and all but a few of those who work must commute to The City, which is near enough to make the commuting practical, yet not so near that our style of living is in danger of becoming crowded out. Those employed here are only those in retail establishments and other service facilities, and those individuals conventionally dress as tv's or transgenderists.

In my teens I became curious about how such a condition could develop to such an extent, and my dad and other older people explained that in the early days of the development a couple of crossdressers recognized each other, told others about it and those others moved to join them. The whole thing grew topsy-like until The Town became what it is. It has maintained its unique character for many years now, and the one real estate office in

the community -- run, of course, by a man-and-wife team of crossdressers -- is much more interested in keeping our town as it is than in fees.

I can remember in my very earliest years holding my dad's hand as we went to town on a Saturday morning. He would be wearing a skirt, cute blouse, nylons, and walking heels, and the other men we met, and often stopped to chat with, were similarly dressed.

One particular morning I remember was when we were in the drug store and Janey, the pharmacist, was selling a customer a razor. My dad jokingly commented that Janey probably sold fewer of those devices than any other druggist in the state. They laughingly agreed. Beards are practically unheard of in the Town. As soon as the young whiskers become evident on the boys' faces, they begin their regular trips to the beauty salon where one chair is almost altogether devoted to depilation. In my own case, I have hardly shaved in my life, because by the time it was really necessary I had nothing to shave. Consequently, some of the most beautiful complexions you will ever see are in our Town -- and many of them on the men.

When I was away at the university in The City (and since when working there) and I was asked about my clean face, I always replied that it must be inherited. "My dad is this way, too." No problem.

Unconscious as we were of mere clothing, I am sure that school children were commonly crossdressed. I wasn't aware of it until quite well along in elementary school, and then became quite conscious of it in high school. Our schools, of course, are quite small -- and totally integrated in every sense. The teachers are all originally from The Town and commonly dress in the mode of the opposite gender. One of the most beautiful -- and best-dressed -- women I have ever known was Linda, my high school English teacher -- and a man.

Something of a critical point was turned in my ninth year. I remember that it began with me being entranced at my parents' preparation for a party they were attending one evening. I took in every detail of it. Dad's hair was brushed just right to set off the jewelry in his ears and his necklace, his dress was a beautiful swishy pearl gray, and I was especially intrigued by the gray open-toed pumps with three-or-so-inch heels that set off his (really) gorgeous legs and ankles so well.

Mom, of course, complemented him in a dark suit, shirt and necktie, and high-shine shoes. Her hair was brushed back, though not severely. They made a very attractive couple.

Hal's chest – that is, Mom's – was as flat as Terri's (Dad's) was full. I suppose Dad was wearing falsies, but Mom was depending, as all the other Town women did, on the special brassieres that Linda and Ron make a point of carrying in their Toggerie.

I doubt there has ever been another shop quite like The Toggerie. Most of the women's clothing tends to run into the larger women's and misses' sizes and their shoes start at about size nine and go up, while the men's clothing runs much smaller than in most shops and they probably sell more men's shoes in size six than in any others. Their large selection of special brassieres is almost completely composed of those designed to deemphasize the breasts rather than enhance them. You may suppose that, considering everything, breasts are a common problem in The Town, being either too large or too small. That isn't so. Over the years the problem has been worked out very well. A few of the very large-breasted women have had surgery to correct their problem, and possibly an equal number of men have had enhancement. Otherwise they put up with what The Toggerie can do for them.

Several of the younger women have had what you may call a simple mastectomy, and have practically nothing up front at all. Rather than just appearance, there is real medical justification for the operation; breast cancer is practically unknown in our community. It seems to be a trend, because all of them who have had the operation seem to be pleased with it. Ben, my wife, now that our children are well on their way, has talked seriously about it, and we have agreed that if and when any surgery that is even vaguely related, is necessary she will have it done. We have also agreed that about the same time I will in my turn have a couple of implants.

We are particularly lucky in that our own home-grown medical team, Drs. Dorothy and John, are not only excellent general physicians but sympathetic to, and skilled in, the techniques particularly applicable to our community.

For some reason, the incident that particularly impressed me that dressing evening was a small incident at the end of the part of it I saw. Dad was turning this way and that, flipping his hem, for Mom's checking and approval, but she stopped him.

"Wait a minute." – and she turned, went back into the bedroom, and came back shortly with a tissue in one hand and a tube of lipstick in the other. She said, "Hold still." Wiped his mouth off the best she could, then reapplied the new color. Stepping back, she looked at it closely, then said, "That's better!"

Terri ran his tongue over it, grinned, and said, "Tastes better, too!"

So Mom kissed him on the cheek, put his new lipstick in his small bag, handed it to him, and they went out together.

I was practically haunted by the scene all the rest of that evening, probably through the night, and all the next day until the early afternoon.

Dad was out some place (it was a week-end), and Mom came into the living room, started to turn on the television, turned it off, and just sat down with a sigh. She'd had a busy Morning, and I guess she just thought it was time for a few minutes of relaxation.

As she sat there, I said, "Mom?"

She looked at me. "Yes?"

I said, "Can I ask you something?"

She could tell I was quite serious about it, looked puzzled, but said, "Certainly."

Then I asked, "How come I never get to dress up like Dad?"

She said, "Well, you do wear girls' clothes."

I did? I thought about it' "Yes, but not like Dad!"

She said, "You mean dress?"

I nodded. "And lipstick!"

She smiled at that, then sat there thoughtfully for a moment. "That's right -- you don't. Would you like to?"

I said, emphatically, "Yes!"

She nodded, then said, "I have to go to The City next week-end. Would you like to go with me?"

I asked, "In dresses?"

She nodded. "In a dress!"



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I don't remember responding, but it was a pact!

You can well imagine that I was on pins and needles all that week, and when I would obliquely bring it up to Mom she would smile at me, pat me on the shoulder, and kiss me on the cheek. Then she would assure me, "It's coming along."

Came that happy Saturday, and right after breakfast she crooked her finger at me and started toward my bedroom. She pointed toward it, said, "Peel!" and went on into the bathroom and started to run the water. When I came out she just said, "Don't get your hair wet," and left me on my own.

When I came out, wrapped as usual in a towel, she was waiting for me in my bedroom, and laid out on the bed was an assortment of things I certainly had never seen there before! I know my eyes were like dollars and even my breath was short. She turned me, wiped some water from my shoulders, then handed me something that looked to me like nothing so much as a large handful of fluff. "Here - put these on."

I turned them this way and that until I finally realized they were a pair of panties -- with row after row of lace ruffles from the top band to the bottom hem! I started to stand on one leg to put them on, and she chuckled. "Sit on the bed" -- so I did. After they were snugged up I looked down at them and ran my hands over my hips. They were just as soft as they looked -- and I had never in my life had a thrill like I experienced that moment!

Then she handed me a pair of socks.

"Here."

Except they weren't socks as I had always known them but silky opaque nylons. They went on the same as my ordinary knee-highs. They were a very pretty light blue, and felt nothing at all like my ordinary hose!

Next she knelt and smoothed the nylon around my foot and slid over it a slipper that was as far from my ordinary klompers as footwear can be. It was white, with a strap over the instep, and with just enough heel to boost me up to girl-height and (I think) make me walk a little differently.

Then I stood up and she pulled a slip over my head and down around my body. Silky, too, it was, the slim girl-type with a touch of lace at the top and another band of the same around the hem. That was the culmination of something, because as I looked down

at it and the slippers below I realized with a shock, "Now I'm a girl!" I was, too; and never from that moment to this have I ever lost the sense of being something more than the well-functioning male I have apparently been all of my life out in the "other world".

Though I came to appreciate and enjoy it very much, the dress was almost an after thought. It was by any little-girl standard a very pretty medium blue, full flared skirt, and with an embroidered yoke and white tie-belt around the middle.

Then she combed my hair. Differently this time. It was already, medium long for a boy, and she formed it around my face, fluffed it in back – and for the first time ever I felt the mist of spray on it. Then from someplace she found a pretty clip-on ribbon for the side.

She faced me toward the dresser mirror and said, "Look."

I did -- and honestly didn't recognize the creature I saw there! As I turned away she turned my face again toward her, and from her palm came a slim tube I instantly recognized. The pale pink color from it was expertly transferred to both my upper and lower lips, and when I next consulted the mirror I was sure the transformation was even more miraculous!

She then turned me toward the living room and, giving me a light pat on the fanny, said, "Now it's my turn. Wait for me." She sort of giggled. "And don't get dirty!" Ho!

We did the stores that day, and all we were to anyone was an attractive lady and her little girl. I was in seventh (at least) heaven, of course, but the high light of the day was when we ran into one of the women from The Town and her son, who was about my age, and while the women were talking he eyed me curiously. Finally he said in surprise, "Jill?"

I was almost -- but not quite - embarrassed, but I admitted I was.

Then he eyed me even more closely, finally grinned, and said, "Hey! – you make a good girl!" That really did make my day, and he told me later that the next time he accompanied his mother to The City he insisted that he go as a girl, too!

One permanent effect of that day was a positive addiction to the feel of nylon on my legs and the brush of a hem against them. And it is just as strong this day as it was on that one! Also, from that time I have always insisted that everything I wore, at least next to me, had a definite touch of the feminine.

Luckily, there was no problem at school. Most of my school-mates crossdressed to some extent. Looking over the playground at recess it was hard – often impossible – to tell the he's from the she's.

One special experience was dressing really up for a special event at school. Cute dress, ruffled slip, nylons, and the small heel lift, bow in hair, etc. I was quite self-conscious at first, but nobody seemed to notice, so I relaxed and enjoyed the experience.

One of the girls commented, "You look nice." And, as many of the others, both boys and girls, were as fully dressed, I just joined the group.

My folks agreed that I could let my hair grow quite long, - and I habitually wore a ribbon, barrette, or something of the kind in it. I've always had exceptionally nice hair, and that was the beginning of my special concern with it.

As we grew and went on to high school, we became, as all high-schoolers tend to do, more clothes-conscious, and rather than become slobs as that age group sometimes does, some of us developed a considerable level of sophistication in our dressing. School events especially brought out the peacock in all of us, and a titillating part of attending them was seeing what all the others were wearing.

It was at one of the games that I first became terminally attracted to Ben, my wife and mother of Jeanne and Jean. Of course, in such a small school everyone knew everyone, but she had never been more than one of the girls to me until one particular time when one of the girls asked the other – probably mostly to make conversation -- if he or she was going to one of our games. When Ben answered that she was, I impulsively asked, "Would you like to go with me?"

She flushed a little, then said she would.

Then I asked, "What will you be wearing?"

She hesitated, then said "Well, I have a new shirt that I think will go especially well with my favorite slacks, and I've been thinking about trying them together."

I asked, "What color is it?"

She told me, and I did some quick coordination in my mind's eye, then said, "I think I have the perfect skirt to match it. It's new, too, and I'll wear that."

And that was that -- the beginning. We associated as much as ever with the others about the school, but from that time until this any serious dating was only with each other.

By the time we graduated we had both developed well along our separate ways -- me feminine and she masculine -- so when it came time for us to go to the university in The City we had to make a serious trip (we went together) to Pam and Ted in the beauty salon. They had all the answers we needed. There is undoubtedly no other shop like theirs, where they have become masters at doing the hair of both men and women so they can pass on their jobs or school in The City, yet present by simply combing their hair the opposite personalities they want to assume within minutes of their arrival home.

Of course, the lucky ones who work in The Town don't have that problem. They dress and do their hair -- or have it done -- any way they please. And they take full advantage of their opportunity!

We are well off the main highway and don't have many people passing through, but I was amused one time especially when I was in our drug store and watched a couple of visitors do all their business without ever realizing that Janey was a man and Bud was a woman! Actually, though we know them so well, we also have come to treat everyone according to the way they present them selves. I think to this day I tend to treat my Dad more as others treat their mothers and Hal more like others do their fathers.

It might seem confusing, but it may very well be that life in our Town is so interesting that those who are a part of it practically never move away.

I know Ben and I have never done anything to make it otherwise. When, for instance, people ask us why in the world we named our boy Jeanne and our daughter Jean, and ask if even we don't get mixed up, we just ask them:

"What's the difference? They are both the same to us!"

As everyone else is.

They are all to us just what they want to be.

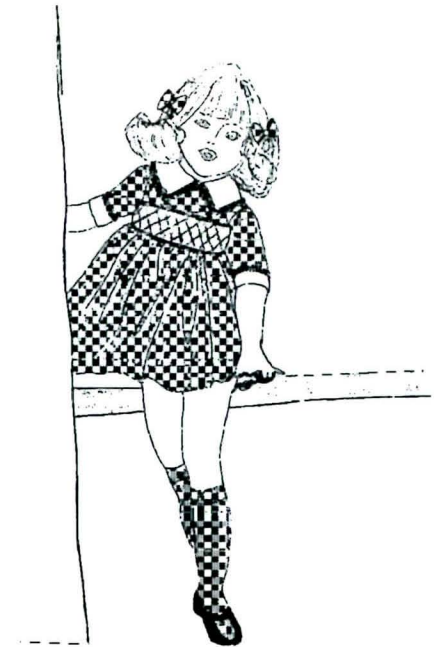
How many others can make that statement?

.....
 Mommy thought I was too
 tough,

.....
 And felt my boyfriends to be
 too rough.

.....
 So she put me in clothes all
 femininely gay,

.....
 And now only the girls will let
 me play



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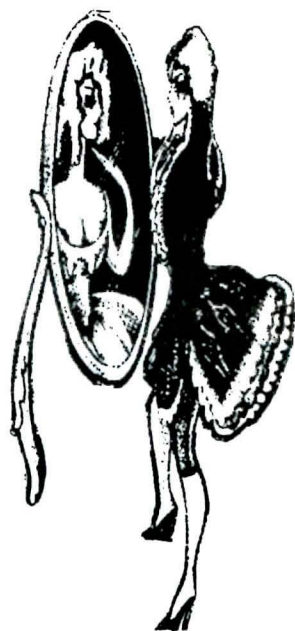
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UNWANTED CHASE

Fiction By Kinny Lee

Coramae and Listra had decided to go on a shopping excursion to the local shopping mall. They had invited Montelle, but she had declined to go saying she had promised to help her wife with some redecorating work on their house and would be in the dog house if she backed out at this time.

The shopping trip was to take place on a Thursday evening at seven o'clock and the two women were giving extra special care to their preparation since they were crossdressers and did not want to attract attention to themselves.

Gordon took extra time to get an especially close shave and apply an appropriate amount of moisturiser and foundation so that no trace of beard would be evident. Dress for the evening was to be casual, meaning skirt or slacks, blouse, hose and flat walking shoes as well as a light jacket or sweater. Coramae finished off her transformation with a medium length brunet wig.

Both Lester and Cordon were small men at five foot six and five foot eight respectively so in that regard they had something in their favor.

Coramae would take her car, pick up Listra and the two of them would be off for what each one anticipated to be an enjoyable evening. Upon arriving at Listra's apartment, Coramae tooted the horn and soon Listra appeared wearing a plaid skirt, a white bulky sweater and a shoulder length medium blonde wig.

The girls exchanged greetings and compliments on each others' taste in clothes and began the drive to the mall.

Coramae had seen a pair of heels in one of the shoe stores just a few days before and felt that she just had to have them. Fortunately she wore a size nine ladies shoe so finding her size was again no problem.

Listra did not have anything special in mind, but she enjoyed just window shopping like any normal woman might. She would no doubt come upon something that intrigued her and if she could afford it she would add it to her modest wardrobe.

On the way to the mall Coramae said, "I better stop at a convenience store and get some gas or we will end up walking and I don't think either of us wants that."

They pulled in to find another green Camaro parked centered on the pumps so Coramae pulled ahead of the other Camaro and backed to where she could use the pump to fill the tank.

Listra got out of the car and said, "five dollars of gas is on me. Is that enough?"

Coramae agreed that it would be plenty so Listra pumped the gas into the car while grumbling that some people should know better than to leave their engine running while parked by gasoline pumps.

There was a brunet at the wheel of the idling Camaro who bore some resemblance to Coramae, except that she seemed unduly nervous.

Finishing fueling the car, Listra started to walk to the store to pay for the gas.

About this time a couple of shots were heard to come from inside the store and then a blonde woman carrying a handgun came running out and jumped into the Camaro with Coramae. The gun woman, who was immediately read by both Listra and Coramae as being a man in drag, waved the gun toward Coramae and said "Lets get the hell out of here".

Startled by the woman with a gun, Coramae started the Camaro, put it in drive, and accelerated into traffic.

These events took Listra by surprise and all she could think to do was jump into the other idling Camaro to say, "follow that car!" But before she could get the words out of her mouth, the brunet was yelling something about '*how that dirty son of a bitch is trying to beat me out of my share*' as she was burning rubber out of the parking lot in pursuit of Coramae and the blonde robber in the other Camaro.

As all this was happening, the clerk in the store, who was unhurt, was calling police to report a robbery pulled by a blonde who had apparently used two identical late model green Camaro getaway cars, one of which had also stolen five dollars worth of gas. There must be some kind of plot to throw off any pursuit since the general description of drivers and passengers in each vehicle were the same.

In the meantime Coramae is driving down the road with no idea where she is going and the robber, who is more concerned about anyone who might be following, hasn't noticed yet that he is in the wrong car. Coramae who has read the robber as a man in drag asks, "Where do you want to go?"

The robber looks at Coramae in surprised disbelief demanding "Who the hell are you and what happened to Betsy?"

Coramae replied, "I think you got into the wrong Camaro and if I am not mistaken your car is coming up on us fast!"

"jeez this is the kind of SNAFU only I could get into. I'll bet Betsy is really steamed," the robber swore.

Meanwhile, Listra, who is holding on for dear life as Betsy careens after Coramae, realizes that Betsy also has a gun and listens as she threatens to blow "*that usless bastard's head off as soon as she catches him*".

Listra, knowing that this situation is all a mistake, tries to reason with Betsy and tells her that what has happened is a comedy of errors and that what her partner has done, he has done not knowing that he was getting into the wrong car adding, "which incidentally is being driven by my friend."

Betsy says "I don't know who the crap you are lady, but you sure as hell better be right or Jordy is going to be history".

The robber orders Coramae to turn into a deserted side street and stop. Soon Betsy and Listra catch up and pull in behind Coramae. Betsy orders Listra out of the car and walks over to the passenger side of the lead car where she meets Jordy who has just gotten out and they both stand there with guns drawn glaring at each other until Betsy says, "Jordy you dumb shit. You can't even rob a damned convenience store and get it right! Now what the hell are we going to do?"

Jordy said, "Why dont we just take their purses and split"?

Betsy decided that for once Jordy had come up with a sensible idea so she demanded, "You ladies can just hand over your purses and your keys and we'll get lost." This was done and Betsy and Jordy got into their own car and were gone.

Now, we had two "ladies" with a car that was probably listed on an all points bulletin, who had no purses and supposedly no car keys, and a pair of somewhat inept robbers at large in a similar

vehicle and it was just a question of which one the police would catch up with first.

"Boy, what a bizarre situation to find ourselves in. I guess we can get along without our purses; and I've got another set of keys stashed in the car. But, what will we do if the police get to us first. It would be bad enough to have to go to the station dressed, but to have to try to explain away a robbery too, I don't know," Coramae exclaimed in wonder over what had just happened.

"Then again, if the police catch them first, they will recover our purses with our true identification in them and we will still have to explain what happened," Listra noted trying to sort out things. "Since we know their license number, maybe we can catch up to them and figure a way to get our purses back and worry about what to do from there".

So Coramae retrieved her spare set of keys and the two nervous *damsels* started out again after the lawbreakers. They hadn't gone far when they spotted the other Camaro coming out of a drive-in and Coramae began the chase.

Betsy, driving at her usual pace, took little time to put a fair amount of space between the two Camaros but Coramae was determined to catch them and began pursuing them in earnest while the rapid pace of the lead car attracted a police cruiser in the vicinity and it promptly gave chase, getting between the two Camaros. The police car with lights flashing and siren wailing, only made Betsy drive faster and Jordy decide to shoot at the pursuers.

Coramae had hardly had time to slow down when Betsy missed a turn and hit a power pole abruptly ending the chase. Coramae and Listra pulled to a stop on the opposite side of the street and sat there wondering what to do next until all of a sudden Listra said, "I don't believe this, we must be some of the luckier people on earth, do you recognize that officer?"

"Ill be damned, It's Bernie or 'Bernice' the chapter treasurer."

So our ladies casually walked over to the officer, who had called for an ambulance and quietly explained the situation. Bernie recovered their purses and Coramae and Listra quietly drove away.

After a moment Coramae sighed saying, "I don't really feel much like shopping tonight, how about you"?

"Let's just get me home where we can get a nice double bourbon and we can talk about it," Listra agreed as they drove home.

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MANY LITTLE KINDNESSES

by Betty Ann Lind

CHAPTER NINE

A child's life is supposed to be a lovely unfolding like a flower coming into bloom surrounded by others of the same age to enjoy the Spring of youth together. This was not to be my fate. For I would no sooner put my roots into the soil when an adult would come along and yank me up from my familiar ground to transplant me in totally different ground.

I often wondered if there ever would be a home "to go back to". But, as I grew older, I realized that life for me would focus upon the journey rather than the destination. A sort of Huck Finn drifting down the Mississippi at night wondering about the lives of those living with the pin points of light he saw on the dark shore. He could smell their food cooking and hear their shouts and laughter, but he knew nothing else about them. His adventure was based upon his desire for "freedom". There were times when I thought that I was alone on the raft because they wanted to be "free" of me.

In time it all became a picture show with me as the audience sitting alone in the dark theater trying to make sense out of the plot until I realized that the story was like a "soap opera" and it went on and on into totally unrelated plots. Then I focused upon the characters in life's movie to discover the uniqueness of each person I met.

Each time I was transplanted I arrived in a totally new theater and as new people appeared upon the screen I could look at them with an intra-cultural mind of tolerant interest trying to understand them. (By the time I was five going on six I had lived in the black culture of Brownsville, rural Illinois, the "tree" streets of lower middle class Chicago, and most of the movies from the silents to the talkies of my own generation.) Even though I interacted I quickly discovered that a child can not hide from people until he learns how to bubble forth happily like little Shirley Temple. Most adults accept such behavior as healthy and leave the child alone (or plays the game on the child's terms). Any kind of withdrawal leads to confrontations. I know now that I was more like a Buddhist monk

separating his body from the mental and physical pain of reality, so that they could not harm me in my bliss.

For, like the monk I learned how to be alone. What a wonderful gift from the Gods, to be able to analyze the characters in your life, and to be able to live with yourself alone. The next greatest gift is books.

With the meeting between my dear mother and my father's aunt it became clear that I was to be transplanted again into a new theater of life. And I can safely say my Great Aunt Katherine was to take center stage. I was most anxious to learn all about my new world before I was to be moved into it, so I had hundreds of questions for my mother. But, I fear, she was not inclined to answer. For, as far as she was concerned, I was about to be placed into the hands of the *enemy* because she had no choice. And she did not want to poison my mind with her own hatred of those who tried all they could to keep her away from her beloved husband until he died in Mexico leaving her alone, pregnant, without money, and over forty. So, I shall try to give you a snap shot of the "Lind" family taken from hindsight.

My grandfather came to the United States shortly after having served in the Franco-Prussian War. As a true Prussian noble he could see that Europe was making ready for total war. So he moved to Chicago with whatever he could borrow and rights to several German tool and die manufacturing and chemical patents. Since he had arrived after the Great Fire he had just what it took to rebuild. Within fifteen years he was a millionaire just in time for the Spanish American War to become an American industrial baron! About that time he brought his two younger brothers and two sisters over to the United States. His youngest sister fell from horseback in Italy while on a Grand Tour before WWI. His youngest brother was his business partner until he died in the very war grandfather wanted to avoid. With the true irony being that he was killed by a German artillery barrage (undoubtedly fired by a relative, since the family has a "thing" about artillery) while grandfather was changing the family name to "Lind" to avoid "Hun Haters" back in the United States. His other brother died shortly after the war of pneumonia during the Great Influenza Epidemic.

This left Katherine. Because of family lines in England and Scotland and the political world of Germany it was decided to ship Katherine off to England to be properly educated (read as properly married) by our "more royal" cousins in England. Although the "colleges" for women tended to be rather superficial (when com-

pared to the college education available for men), the new "American" view of education for women was coming to the fore and there were colleges that focused upon the practical as well as the academic. So, as grandfather would say, they stuffed her silly blonde head with mathematics and bookkeeping.

In her own words, soon after she came to the United States she was married off to a very well to do stock broker and settled down into genteel Victorian motherhood. In fact, she was one of the officers of the WCTU and hip deep in the women's suffrage movement. And as a WASP she was deeply committed to charity related to the Anglo-American view of "white man's" burden. (She saw eye to eye with my grand-father's abolitionist view - my mother's father served in the Civil War - that the races were equal in the eyes of God, and all they needed was a good dose of Christian Western Civilization to "catch up". *Curiously enough, this bias is just as unpopular today as it was in their time, for completely opposite reasons.*)

Physically she was very tall for a woman of her generation, within an inch or two of six feet). She towered over men, except for the men of her own family, with a Valkyry form complete with blonde hair that would do proud of any Wagnerian opera star. When she, like my mother, walked into a room all conversation stopped and men stumbled over each other to attend to her.

By the twenties her two daughters had married and moved west. Suddenly, the 1929 "Crash" ended with her husband dying from the shock. She sold her home for half its worth and set up a business of loaning the proceeds from the sale to new businesses for a percentage of the business plus being their bookkeeper. Within five years she was back in her own home and about as rich as before 1929. And some "feminists" wonder why I seem "detached" when I hear from them how impossible it has been for women to get ahead... The difference is that Great Aunt Katerine was a WASP and firmly believed that "God helped those who helped themselves".

So, imagine a five year (going on six) old boy being placed into her hands at least ten years after her oldest daughter had left the household.

You got it, we were both terrified!

So, on a late day in May of 1938 my mother cried in a midst hugs and kisses as I was caught up between this sudden show of heartfelt emotionalism and the sight of my worldly belongings (in a

metal foot locker) being taken by a uniformed chauffeur to the trunk of a Rolls Royce.

Suddenly I swept up with goodbyes to my little playmates and others from the House across the street, and then I was all alone in the huge back seat area of the limousine trying to look out over the high window sill at the passing city streets until I was now lost in a whole new world with new streets and buildings I had never seen as we moved further north along Michigan Boulevard. For some strange reason my mind was filled with imaginings of some mystical stagehands taking down the city of Chicago while others busied themselves constructing the new theater I was moving into, near suburban Evanston. (Yes, I read a classic Sci-Fi story with this same theme many decades later. There is no doubt Shakespeare wrote on the same imagery: "All the world is but a stage.") As night fell we approached the great Victorian Gothic dominated the corner of a giant tree shaded block. Although the "tree streets" of Chicago had lovely old trees, these trees had leaf burdened limbs that arched like a continuous canopy over the street. As we drove through the tall iron speared gateway through a similar fence I remembered scenes of the haunted mansion from at least a dozen horror films and half expected to see a fog shrouded graveyard nearby.

The Prussian soldier chauffeur brought the Rolls to the front of the house and silently escorted me up the front porch stairs to the double doors and pulled a chain nearby and for some reason the image of his flushing himself away in an old fashioned WC chased away my fears of haunted houses and left me in a state of near giggles. "Master Lindy, ma'am," was his announcement before he vanished back towards the car leaving me before my great aunt, who actually extended her hand in greeting, as if I were an adult.

"Good evening, ma'am," I managed with a half bow straight out of a European movie as we silently shook hands. I can still remember her golden hair done up in a French twist, a simple pearl earring and necklace, and a high waisted bra look white summer organza dress no doubt designed by Schiaparelli. But, most of all I remember her deep blue eyes as they gazed out at me and I realized that she too viewed the world in the perspective of the theater in her mind with watching intelligence and interest about the new character that had entered her stage. There was just a hint of a floral scent in the air as I boldly moved forward through the foyer into the house to survey my new home.

"Have you had supper, Master Lindy?" she asked taking the lead through the "lobby" with its marble curved Y central grand stairway that led up to a wide landing and then split to the left and right to reach a second floor colonnaded balcony that overlooked the marble floor below from all sides with each Corinthian column reaching up to a third floor Grecian clear story surrounded by windows. Three great crystal chandeliers hung above the entrance room while at the end of the staircase bannisters there stood a Grecian statue of a woman in flowing robes holding high a beach ball like globe light.

"No, ma'am. I'm not really very hungry." With this announcement I went to the center of the room under one of the great chandeliers and looked up at it as I spun on tippy toe to watch the twinkling crystals change. "Do you have fancy balls here, like in the movies?"

"Once a year," she answered softly watching me as I continued to gaze upwards at a Grecian pastoral scene painted on the ceiling high overhead. "Before the Great War we entertained a great deal. Have you had dancing lessons?"

"No, ma'am." I studied the second floor balcony area. "How many bedrooms do you have?"

"Upstairs to your left and your right are four bedrooms on each side with each pair of bedrooms sharing an inside bathroom. These are the guest rooms. At the top of the stairs overlooking the grand staircase there is a master bed chamber apartment with a bedroom and private bath on either side sometimes used by my daughters when they visit." She walked across the room towards her right as she continued, "On the first floor to your left is the music room. Adjoining that is my private study, and then the library. To your right is the livingroom and next to that is our dining room which has a doorway into the servant's area. It is like a little house attached to the main house with the kitchen, pantries, laundry, various workrooms, and the garage on the first floor with their quarters upstairs."

"Since most of my time is spent helping my clients I have decided that you will live in the old nursery in the servant's wing. It is a nice little suite with the nursery bedroom, a private sitting room, bath room, and another bedroom once used by our nanny. Since you will be here for just a few months I have turned that room into a playroom and the servants have all agreed to take turns keeping track of you," She smiled and opened the door to the dining room to reveal that two place settings had been arranged with one in

front of a youth chair, no doubt for me; as a young woman dressed in a black cotton maid's uniform with a matching white lace ruffled cap and bib styled apron held the chair for my aunt before arranging it so that I could manage the youth chair. "This is Miss Powers, my downstairs maid," my aunt noted causing the young woman to smile towards me with a nod before she withdrew to the kitchen. "We shall eat and talk alone for now. Tomorrow, I shall introduce you to the household staff, once other matters have been settled between us."

"What is that, ma'am?"

"I have thought a great deal about that time when I saw you wearing a dress and playing with the other girls," she announced casually while she poured herself a cup of coffee and gestured for me to eat. "I presume that your mother knows nothing about this little charade of yours?"

"Oh, no, ma'am," I agreed earnestly trying to make certain that I wanted her to keep my little secret.

"And, no doubt, the moment I turn my back you will find your way back into petticoats?"

"Oh, no, ma'am," I promised, not wanting to start off on the wrong foot with her.

"That may well be your promise. But, I think that you enjoy skirts too much to really be held to such a promise," she mused aloud causing me to wonder if she wasn't teasing me.

"No, ma'am, I..."

"I think that you look at being a girl as being some sort of game of *'Let's Pretend'*, rather than taking it seriously. A girl your age is no longer an infant. She is expected accept a few responsibilities, to learn certain skills, and acquire proper manners. You do understand that?"

"I suppose so, ma'am," I managed trying to understand what she had in mind.

"I suppose so," she repeated with a wane smile. "Let us suppose that for the summer you will live here as a little girl. Will you be willing to do that?"

I wasn't certain that she wasn't teasing me, but I had no desire to miss an opportunity. "Oh, yes, ma'am!"

"Very well," she stated with a shrug. "You will start in the morning. But, only if you agree to be a perfect little girl at all times, no matter how difficult or embarrassing it may be for you, all summer long. And you must promise not to sneak away to be a boy. In fact you will tell no one that you are a boy. Do you understand?"

"I think so, ma'am," I responded a bit less certainly.

"Well, I shall let you consider my offer over night. But in the morning you shall be a boy all summer long with no little games of 'Let's Pretend'; or you shall live the next four months as a girl. If you decide that you want to be a little girl, I think that we may very well have you cured of that little fantasy by the end of summer. Of that I am certain."

I wondered what she had in mind....(To be continued...)

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 THE MAGIC TUNNEL

 by Terri Davis

Billy arrived before anyone else that morning to sit on the stone steps leading to the boy's entrance of Westvale Street School. Where having nothing else to do, he took the small rock that he had picked up on the way, out of his pocket to toss it back and forth from hand to hand watching how the morning sun glittered on the glass like crystals buried into the iron heavy rock. After a few moments of this exercise he became tired of it and wondered what else he could do to pass the time before the class bell rang.

He decided to get up and look around the schoolyard. So he stuffed the rock back into his pocket and walked about the school yard hoping to find a lost rubber ball or something else interesting.

As he approached the building again he noticed a smooth granite slab imbedded into the brick wall close to the door. It had the number "1890" chiseled into it.

'Wow, this school is old!' Billy thought trying to figure out just how old it really was. He knew that it was 1959, so 59 plus ten from the last century was 69. Sixty-nine years! That was older than his grandfather.

He walked along close to the building studying the red bricks and thinking about how wonderful it was that these same bricks were still there after all those years and hadn't broken up. He looked upwards at the granite-framed windows with many panes, some with pictures taped on to them drawn by the children in the various grades. Billy thought about the children, who must have been in these rooms 20, 30, or even 40 years ago, that were now grown up and drove cars and had children of their own.

Billy was so lost in his thoughts that he hardly noticed that the schoolyard was filling up with kids. A classmate name Larry surprised him from his thoughts by tapping him on the shoulder and asked him if he wanted to play touch football.

Billy never turned down an opportunity to play football. So he ran back with Larry to where the other boys waited. But, when Larry counted out the guys it turned out that there were nine, one too many to play. Therefore, someone would have to sit out the

game. Billy volunteered, with thoughts about continuing his exploration of the school building grounds.

He stood by and watched a couple of plays and then left to walk to the bush hedged wall of the building where the kids didn't go so often. He squeezed behind the fire escape wondering if, just maybe, a boy back around 1925 (about the time his dad went there) had carved his name onto a brick. He found none; however, he had to stop looking because he had almost reached the girl's side of the schoolyard, and boy's weren't allowed on that side.

He paused and watched the girls at play. A lot of them were jumping rope while holding their colorful skirts and lacy petticoats with one wrist as they skipped through the loop being swung by two girls holding the ends of the rope and shouting a skipping chant. A couple of girls were throwing a soft inflated ball back and forth underhanded style causing Billy to wonder what it must be like to be a girl, to play so gently.

Just then the class bell rang and all the pupils filed into the school. It was a busy morning in Billy class starting with math drill sheets handed out as a surprise quiz. Billy did his quickly, but he would have been even faster if it hadn't been for Jill, the girl who sat behind him, who whispered things he couldn't hear while she giggled. Billy would turn around to "Shhh" her with his finger in front of his mouth, but she just giggled in delight of attracting his attention.

Following the quiz Mrs. Wilkins began to write the problems and answers out on the blackboard until she began to clear space by erasing the previous day's lesson only to have her eraser separate from its back in a loud clatter of three pieces hitting the blackboard rail in a cloud of chalk dust that sprayed all over her before the pieces hit the floor causing the kids to burst into delighted laughter as she brushed her dark suit off.

Mrs. Wilkins frowned towards the class to reestablish her authority over the children while she walked over to her desk to check for another eraser. Finding none she went to Billy's desk.

"William, downstairs in the basement, across from the boys' locker room is the storage room where Mr. Jakubauskas keeps some school supplies. There should be some erasers there. Would you please go and bring me a new one?"

"Yes, ma'am," Billy responded knowing that Mrs. Wilkins liked him and trusted him to run such errands.

Slipping from his seat he made his way from the classroom to the boys' hall staircase where he repeated her instructions in his mind as he walked down the familiar steps taking a little jump at each half landing turn with his hands in his pocket using his elbows for balance each time.

Each time he jumped he felt the heavy rock in his right pocket as he trust his hand into the pocket, and the rock seemed to be warmer to the touch. At the bottom of the last flight he looked down the darkened hallway.

"Across from the boy's locker room," he repeated aloud to himself while he walked down the corridor studying the wall opposite of where the boy's locker room was. Despite his sharp eyes he walked all the way to the end of the hall without seeing a single door to a storage room. "Was Mrs. Wilkins wrong?"

He turned around to return down the hallway for another look. As he walked back down the dark corridor he realized that there was no door opposite of the boys lockerroom side of his passage way! Just as he was about to reach the stairway he noticed a very narrow hallway on the side where the storage room was suppose to be hidden by dark shadows. Where was he?

He wondered why he had missed it the first time. Something was very wrong. But, maybe it did lead to a storage room? So, he turned into the short narrow hall to discover that the ceiling bulbs were out causing it to be even darker than the main hall.

At the end of the hall there was a dim ceiling bulb that revealed what appeared to be a blind passage with two dusty old mops and a dirt caked broom covered with spider webs propped against an old wooden pegboard that had an old fashioned carved wooden framed mirror leaning against it. It appeared as if the pegboard was being used to cover something hidden by the shadows.

"Nobody has been here for years," he mused aloud liking the sound of his voice in the small silent hallway as he moved the mops and broom causing dust to fill the air. Brushing the mirror off he gingerly moved it to one side only to discover that the pegboard was much heavier. But he managed to move it aside to reveal, to his surprise, a little square door only about 2 1/2 feet high set into

the concrete wall. "Well, this certainly isn't Mr. Jakubauskas' storage room."

Bending over he managed to pry open the door with his Scout pen knife. Moving to his hands and knees he looked inside wishing that he had a flashlight with him. But, a light came from the back, way in the distance. It was a tunnel. To where?

Now he was even more curious and his mind wandered to thoughts about *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* as he crawled on his hands and knees along the hard packed dirt with no thought about his teacher's errand. The tunnel was long and straight and as he reached the other end he realized that it had a little open door similar to the one he had left behind.

He poked his head out and stood up feeling a bit dizzy in the dim light to become totally confused. For, here at the other end of the tunnel, was everything just as he had left them when he entered the tunnel. It seemed that the same two dusty mops, the dirty broom, wooden pegboard, and old fashioned mirror were exactly in the same place as he had left them to crawl into the tunnel, until he realized that everything was exactly opposite!

Still feeling a bit dizzy he sat down to look towards the light far down the tunnel only to catch his reflection in the dusty mirror. In absolute disbelief his eyes grew wide in fear as he opened his mouth to protest as someone, who looked very much like him, gazed out at him from the mirror to mimick his surprised expression.

Only this person had on black patent leather T-strap shoes, white tights, a ruffled petticoat, and a white princess skirt styled dress with red ruffles at the hem, sleeve cuffs, and circular collar to match the red fabric belt! The long black hair reached down to well below her shoulders tied into two thick braids secured at the end of each by a rubber band and decorated with a pretty red bow to match the trim of her dress.

From his own dizziness he could feel the weight of the braids, and his lower body felt different then it had ever felt. He looked down at his skirted lap and realized that he had turned into a girl!

There wasn't time to be amazed, for just then there was the distant sound of a girl's voice calling from the distance. Perhaps from the staircase? Not really knowing what to do, Billy, or whomever Billy was now, quickly brushed out her skirts as she pushed shut the little door and recovered it with the pegboard and mirror before she propped the pegboard just as Billy found it with the dusty mops

and dirty broom. Walking down the narrow hall she dusted her hands again hoping that she hadn't gotten all icky and dirty. Brushing her skirts once again to be certain all was neat she felt in her skirt pocket the pretty rock that she had found on the way to school.

Suddenly, at the end of the little hall to her right on the way back towards the stairs was Mr. Jakubauskas' closet!

The little girl (or was it Billy) decided that the thing to do was to finish what she had set out to do. She stopped to open the closet door to discover that the walk in closet contained supplies neatly arranged on shelves to the left with some women's clothes and things hanging on a closet bar to her right. Dismissing the clothes from her wondering mind she took an eraser while Billy thought about the janitor wearing dresses?

Just as she turned and closed the closet door she heard footsteps nearby and she saw that it was Billy's classmate Bobby, only Bobby was a girl too!

"Hey, Beth," her girl friend whispered, "where have you been? Did you get lost in this awful dark and dirty basement or something? Mr. Wilkins sent me down here to get you. I wish he had sent one of the boys. But it is the girls' side of the school."

"I...had trouble finding the closet in the dark," Beth (Billy) confessed, "but, I just found it."

The two girls half ran up the stairs to the first floor and Billy realized that 'Bobby' was right, they were on the girls' side of the basement. As they walked up the next flights Billy's mind tried to figure out how he had gotten lost. Deep in thought he suddenly realized that they had reached the class room.

When he opened the door he found that all of his boy friends had somehow turned into girls like him, and the girls were boys. And just as 'Bobby' had said their teacher was not Mrs Wilkins, it was Mr. Wilkins!

"Did you get lost Miss. Beth," Mr. Wilkins asked with an edge to his voice as he considered how much time had been wasted while the silly girl wandered about the basement.

"Yes... um...Mr. Wilkins," Beth answered sweetly, "But, I did find the erasers after all."

"Good girl," Mr. Wilkins responded in turn causing some of the kids to giggle, "and thank you, Robin for finding our little lost girl. Maybe we all can now get back to our math lesson."

Mr. Wilkins continued to write numbers on the freshly wiped black board, but Beth could hardly pay attention. Everybody was so different, yet she was the only one who knew!

Pretty soon it was time for recess, and all the kids went outside into the schoolyard with Beth joining her classmates at jump rope. While Susan and Linda held the ends of the long rope to get the beat of each swing started; Laura chose the order in which the other girls jumped into the swing. At first turn one by one to the rhyming chant. Beth found herself surprisingly good at it as she moved into doubles with Laura skip for skip.

After she tripped out of her turn Beth played a hand clapping game with Mary: "Abla Blueble, Abla Blueble," they recited while they clapped each other's hands and their own. Soon Mary saw her turn at the jump rope and she left Beth alone.

Beth went over to the side of the schoolyard where she could see the boys playing touch football. She sort of wished that she were playing touch football too; but, then she thought about how much fun she was having playing with the other girls. She giggled at the strange thought that maybe she was thinking like a tomboy, or was it Billy who preferred to play with the girls?

When the class bell rang they all went back inside where Mr. Wilkins gave them a sheet with words on it. They had to write down other words that sounded the same but were spelled differently.

Beth finished her sheet quickly. She would have been finished much sooner if it had not been for Jeff, who sat behind her and amused himself by pulling on her braids and whispering, "Ding, dong, bell, pussy's in the well..." She turned around angrily to warn, "Stop it!", but it didn't do much good until Mr. Wilkin's stern glance caught Jeff's eye.

At lunch time Beth (Billy) had a little problem -- she couldn't find the right lunch box on the shelf at the back of the class room with the other lunch boxes. Her mind seemed to shift back and forth with Billy's until he decided to wait until the rest of the class had picked up their own lunches. Billy's lunch box had been green with pictures of trains upon it, but the one that was left was pink with flowers upon it. When Beth opened the box she found her name written on a plastic tape inside the lid, "Beth Harrison". Fortunately,

it was the same lunch that his mother had packed for him that morning. (Or would his father be Beth's mother here?)

The rest of the day went by quickly with lots and lots to do without those long day dreaming moments that Billy seemed to feel in school. It was different being a girl, Beth actually looked forward to school work and adored working on the art project that Mr. Wilkins had suggested for the class. It was an exciting day and fun project despite the protests of the boys, and Beth decided that she really liked being a girl...

The final school bell rang and the children all formed into safety patrols for the walk home. Beth had known her patrol leader as Billy as a red headed boy named Carl, who was in the sixth grade and very grown up. But, now the red head was a girl called Carol.

Under Carol's watchful eye they had walked about four blocks from school when Billy's mind had a very frightening thought. Everybody at home would be different too! He didn't want to see that, even if Beth seemed confused, oh no!

Suddenly Billy-Beth turned around, thinking that if he crawled through the tunnel things would return back to the way they were before, and he-she started running back towards the school in a swirl of flying skirts and petticoats realizing that soon the doors would be locked and there might not be any-way back!

Hearing someone running behind Billy-Beth saw that Carol was chasing her demanding that she rejoin the Patrol. She knew that Carol was older and could run faster, but Billy-Beth had to get back to the school before it was too late! Billy-Beth just had to!

A block behind was patrol #4, the one that always turned onto Maple Street. Billy-Beth ran around the cheering kids up into someone's lawn fearing that Carol was getting closer and that in any second she would feel Carol's hands about her waist stopping her!

But, it didn't happen. Billy-Beth turned her head to look back only to see that Carol had ran smack into an old man, who was scolding the embarrassed young lady, who usually tried to be so grown up.

Billy-Beth ran the last three blocks back to school. Would anybody still be there? Would the door still be open? She headed down the flight of outside steps that led to the girl's basement only to find the fire doors firmly locked! So was the girls' entrance!

She would have to go into the main front entrance to the school past Mr. Moraski's office to get to the inside stairs to the girl's basement where the tunnel might still be. And Mr. Moraski was the school principal! How could Billy-Beth explain why she had returned to school? Trying the front door Billy-Beth could see the Principal returning to his office, only it was Ms. Moraski! But just as frightening!

Fortunately the Principal hadn't seen Billy-Beth's entry into the school lobby causing Billy-Beth to realize that she still had to sneak past the Principal's office to make the girls' stairway. Deciding that her lunch box made too much noise she placed it just outside on the front entry landing and walked very softly down the hallway, almost on tippy toes, towards the office. As Billy-Beth neared the office door she paused by it.

Her heart was beating so fast! She knew that she would have to run past the frosted door window! She could hear voices from inside the Principal's office. She waited just a second, and ran hearing the slapping sound of her leather soles upon the tile floor!

"A little girl just ran past the door!" a voice exclaimed...

But, by then Billy-Beth was taking the steps almost two at a time as she half ran and half jumped down them boy fashion ignoring her untended skirts and petticoats. When she reached the bottom she turned left, remembering how everything was opposite, and before she reached the girls' locker room she found in the darkness the narrow passage. She quickly moved the mops and broom aside hearing the sound of people coming down the girls' stairwell in search of her. Pushing the mirror and pegboard away she opened the door only to pause at the thought of getting her pretty clothes dirty!

But, Billy's mind seemed clearer as she accepted his will and entered the tunnel remembering to leave the little door almost shut to just a little crack. As she crawled through the tunnel she hoped that her pursuers would not notice the tunnel door. She felt very strange and frightened by the near total darkness as her hands felt the hard packed dirt and she wondered if there might be spiders and "things" in the passage way towards the faint crack of light ahead caused by the fact that like the door behind her the door ahead was nearly closed.

When Billy-Beth reached the other end she pushed the door open and crawled out to stand up and brush her skirts before the mirror only to discover that he was Billy again!

"I don't see him here. We've better check the locker room," Mr. Moraski voice sounded from somewhere beyond the narrow passage.

Billy knew that he wasn't out of trouble yet as he realized that poor Beth was probably trying to sneak out of the school in the opposite world, just as he was. He waited in the narrow passageway for a minute or two; and, after hearing the Principal and the others talking together as they went up the boys' staircase, he decided to make his way down the narrow hallway to the junction of the main corridor.

Just as he stepped out into the corridor he saw coming towards him, Mr. Jakubauskas, who seemed startled by Billy as if he had stepped out of nowhere!

"Billy," the kindly janitor whispered as he came closer, "What are you doing down here so late. Did you leave something in the boys' locker room?"

"I...I..." a very confused Billy started to say sticking his hand into his pocket to feel his rock as he wondered how it was that he could now see the door the janitor's storage room nearby and the tunnel hallway was gone, when just before he... Removing his hand he now saw both the storage room door and the tunnel hallway nearby....

"Never mind," the janitor sighed holding his finger to his lips as if to end the boy's confused words noticing that the boy seemed totally lost in his own thoughts. Smiling as if he were in on a secret he urged, "we have to get you out of here, Billy, so that Mr. Moraski won't find you. He takes things too seriously."

Quickly he led the way to the fire doors at the base of the boys' staircase and unlocked them for the boy. "Now, you get out of here you little rascal. And be careful of the traffic!"

Billy paused in the school yard at the top of the outside steps to consider the fact that the new rock was a kind of key to the tunnel and if he wanted to he could probably return to that other world where he was a girl. And she could come to his world causing him to be suddenly hurled into hers'. For they both could not be in the same world at the same time. He wondered if there were other "tunnels". Where did they lead to: Beth's world, or others?

Billy ran about the outside of the school building remembering where Beth had left her lunch box and there upon the top of the

front steps he saw his own just as his mother's car pulled up in front of the school and she got out to run towards him.

"Billy?!" she exclaimed with concern as she approached. "Are you alright? Carl came by and told me you ran away from his patrol back towards the school. Did you leave something behind?"

"Uh...Yes, mom!"

"Well then what could have been so important?"

"I...sort of...left...myself!...I think!..." And then he started laughing so hard that his mother couldn't be upset any more over his silly behavior and all she could say was, "Well, don't do that again."

Billy climbed into the front seat and stared at the old school building wondering if the magic tunnel would still be there tomorrow. Would he go back again and have the nerve to go home to see Beth's turnabout parents. What was Beth going to do? His thoughtful change in mood caused his mother to look at him in wonder as she smiled saying, "You are a strange little boy."

If only she knew how strange.....

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