

Blending In

A stylized illustration of a woman with long blonde hair, red lips, and a purple top, looking upwards. A man's face is visible in the lower left corner.

Gabrielle Johnson



Copyright © 2016

Published by Mags, Inc

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotes contained within a critical review.

For information address

Mags, Inc.

P.O. Box 5829

Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

USA

Call toll free (800) 359-2116

www.magsinc.com

New Authors Wanted!

Mags, Inc and Reluctant Press are looking for new authors who want to write exciting TG, crossdressing or sissy TV fiction.

Stories should be in Word or Rich Text format, and around 24,000 to 30,000 words in length. Reluctant Press also prints some shorter stories in the 19,000 to 24,000 word range.

If you think you have what it takes, this could be your opportunity to see your name in print on a real book, commercially published, and get paid for it.

Contact

**magsinc@pacbell.net,
reluctantpress@gmail.com - or call
800-359-2116 to get started.**

BLENDING IN

by Gabrielle Johnson

“Well, I really do want to talk to your partner,” said the blonde woman, her pink lips pursed in a tight line. I was in my role as Hamilton Barnes. I shrugged and fingered the thick, bushy mustache glued to my top lip. I’d taken time, that day, to affix a little stubble in a few strategic places about my chin and jawline. I thought I looked fairly butch. Keeping my voice in what had once been my normal range, however, was pretty hard on me.

“She comes in when I’m not here,” I growled at the woman opposite me. I hadn’t dressed as Hamilton to meet her. This was probably a good exercise as I hadn’t talked as a man in what had seemed an age. Janice Volker had just barged into my office at Morton Barnes and Associates and wouldn’t take my word for it that I was involved with someone else, on an impor-

2 Gabrielle Johnson

tant job, I'd claimed. And so was Leanne, my friend and colleague, I'd told her, when she'd said that she didn't want to talk to me, a man, anyway, about her problem.

What I'd said was true. I'd been going to meet with the husband of a celebrity in our city, about assisting in his case for divorce, but he'd cancelled at the last moment. Yeah, the reconciliation was going to cost me a fee, but I had the husband's retainer, anyway. I was actually luxuriating a little in being a man with a mustache, feeling 'normal' for the first time in a while when, in had waltzed Janice Volker, demanding to talk to the other half of the Morton Barnes and Associates Detective Agency.

"Whom did you say recommended this agency?" I asked Janice Volker. She made a brushing-off gesture as if it was of no importance who'd recommended our agency to her.

The telltale signs of distress were on the woman. Another case of spousal infidelity, I thought with a sigh. Each successful case Leanne worked, the Morton part of our business, the more recommendations were made on behalf of abused or betrayed women; and that led to even more such work flowing in. I just wished the security side, of the work we advertized that we did, would improve at the same rate.

Janice Volker was blonde, her hair a riotous mass about her head. It looked as if she hadn't brushed it since she got out of bed. It was the fashion women as rich as her could wear these days. Leanne looked terrible like that. I much preferred Leanne with buns, chignons, pony tails or even braids in her hair. She looked good in pageboy cuts but they attracted notice to her.

Yes, because of her looks, accentuated by her makeup and little, shaping attachments she'd learned

to use, Leanne didn't blend in all the time. Often, she'd smile and look vacant for a while. Then, of course, men and women overlooked her, thinking her to be a dizzy blonde. They then proceeded did the most incredibly stupid, criminal things in front of her, Leanne. How surprised some always were when they realized who it was who'd caught them in wrongdoing.

"Do you and Leanne Morton work together on cases?" asked Janice Volker, determined, I could see, to have Leanne working for her. Janice's voice was nearly as low-pitched as Leanne's, quite melodic, I thought. I think Janice must have strained it in some way as women do when they yell a lot at someone. I wondered if it was her husband who'd been yelled at so much.

"Sometimes," I said off-handedly. "Sometimes we talk things over. It all depends." There, I thought smugly, the classic non-answer, answer. Now, if you want Leanne, Mrs Volker, please go away and wait for her to call you. I said that much more politely to the blonde woman whom I was beginning to see more and more as a 'trophy' wife.

"No, I can't wait," said the blonde woman, bouncing in her chair, her long, pretty legs, a nice sight to look at. Any man would be impressed. "I need to get someone started on this right away. I can't play telephone tag for days and then have you turn me down."

Yes, and if you talked to me, I'd know all about your problem, wouldn't I, Mrs Volker, and about Mr Volker's. We promised secrecy and anonymity about our work, Leanne and I. But 'recommendations', from one of us partners to the other, didn't break that vow that I made to clients and always kept to.

4 Gabrielle Johnson

Janice Volker opened her purse then and took out an inhaler. She used it voraciously, staring at me, Hamilton Barnes, her eyes bright blue, fringed in thick, curled eyelashes. They must be false, I thought, having seen Leanne, or Tiffany, put on eyelashes like those. or take them off, according to the case she was working. This woman didn't have to worry about blending in, changing hair colors and stuff. I supposed her eyelashes could be that naturally dark and thick. Her thin, bobbed nose and heart-shaped face were lovely. But her little, pointed chin was set in determination as she returned her puffer to her purse.

When she spoke again, Janice's voice had gone up an octave, the rasp and hoarseness gone. "I'll tell you what I need done," said Janice Volker, her voice decidedly more feminine in tone. "You can decide to help me or not. But please don't tell me to go to the police."

"If there's a crime involved, we have to inform the police," I told her. Again, she made that brushing-off signal as if the police were of no account.

"My husband owns Lincoln American," said Janice Volker, watching me carefully, with her china-blue eyes, for a reaction. I was glad I'd put on the dark-tinted glasses I wore in my Hamilton persona. They help when I want to say nothing or to give nothing away.

Three mammoth developments, Lincoln North, Center and South were both principal department stores and important shopping/business center complexes in the city. Janice Volker started again, huskily. "My husband, Brian," she said, I'd heard of Brian Volker, a possible Senate candidate in the upcoming election, or so Ron Jones had told me, trying to get me on to some sort of backing committee for 'our future



Senator, "is in some kind of trouble. I have to find out exactly what it is, so I can help him."

Oh no, politics and infidelity, the worst kind of case for someone like me. Just mix in a little religion and there'd be no way the case could be solved quietly, between the aggrieved parties. It would probably be a case that ended up in court. I hated court cases, and testifying, having to swear who I was, while Leanne and her 'associates' were even more opposed to public appearances than me.

"Tell me what you know," I said to her, pen poised over my notebook. "Or is that all?"

The blue eyes narrowed sharply, angrily. It would have been the same if she'd been talking to Leanne. She'd have smiled, though, as Leanne gave out the same conditions that I did then as Hamilton Barnes. Janice sat straighter, her tight black skirt revealing several inches of lovely thigh. She couldn't be trying to vamp me, could she, I thought with amusement. Well, lovely lady, such tactics didn't work with me. Not with all the experiences I'd had now in this business.

"I think Brian's made some kind of business deal with organized crime," Janice Volker said abruptly with a shiver. "There's money coming in and going out of our companies, to and from foreign accounts, that we've no real business dealings with. They're just paper money transfers. Now, Lincoln American is expanding to six new cities but the partners we've taken on are all numbered companies."

Laundering money for the mob was the first thought that crossed my mind. Janice was implying it but didn't say it out loud.

I looked at the young woman across the table. I didn't laugh at her or make condescending remarks, not

with the way she looked, so tense and unhappy. I could tell by the set of her pretty features that she expected condescension, pointless, reassuring remarks from me, a man, questioning how a pretty woman would know about business deals. I was after all trying to appear as a macho sort of man.

"You don't believe me," Janice Volker said angrily. "Maybe I should talk to your partner, first."

Well, I'd wanted a break from marriage infidelities, hadn't I? Sometimes the gods answer us. We get what we ask for, don't we? "She'd ask you the same questions," I told Janice, forcing my voice into a baritone rumble, dredging that up from my stomach. It made her wince.

"I-I was in charge of finances for my h-husband's companies," Janice Volker stammered. I concentrated on what words she was having trouble with. She'd stammered over 'husband' in describing herself in relation to him. Interesting.

"Not now?" I prodded her.

"No," Janice said, thinking about what she wanted to confide in me. "Not since the w-wedding," she went on.

"Settling down to domestic bliss?" I pushed on.

"S-Something like th-that," Janice muttered. "L-Look. I'm still a director of our companies. I didn't forget how to read balance sheets and company financial records just because I became Brian's w-wife."

There was something in the way she moved, the way she'd re-crossed her legs, the way she checked that she was sitting properly, her elbows tucked in, her skirt beneath her. I'd seen Leanne do the same, me often checking her out. I hadn't let Leanne go out to

work, even though she'd wanted to, until every gesture she made was undeniably feminine.

Undeniably feminine. I looked more closely at Janice Volker and listened to her talk about her qualifications. She was confident about business but definitely nervous about personal affairs. I wondered if Leanne would have caught it as I did. Janice might have spoken to her differently, expecting support from another woman. Yet, I was willing to bet real money, a lot of it, that the woman sitting opposite me wasn't a 'real' woman at all.

No, that's not right. The woman who was tossing her hair back at me in a very feminine gesture was not born a woman. I knew I was right in that. I didn't know who or what she was now. Well, that's not completely right, either. Janice Volker was a transvestite or transsexual of some kind. A 'tranny', as kids, and the Internet, calls them.

"There's money passing through our accounts that Lincoln American hasn't earned," Janice went on, her voice so feminine, not the giveaway it might have been before. "The only reasonable explanation I can think of, is that Brian's involved in something illegal, money laundering or growing money on trees."

I'd thought Janice was really young when she came in, twenty-one or twenty-two. I'd rated her as a bimbo by the breathless, hurried way she'd talked. She had her puffer out again. It was fascinating how her bust rose and fell as she used it. I think she was totally aware of the effect she made on the male of the species. She was used to getting more reaction from a man, as her breasts rose and fell, than she was getting from me.

"Growing money on trees isn't illegal," I said neutrally.

"Coconut palms?" queried Janice, her voice now completely in the soprano range. I must get one of those puffers and have Leanne check it out. Sometimes, her voice was raspy in the mornings until she'd ingested a third cup of coffee.

I imagined Leanne opening such a puffer, with feigned surprise.

"Oh, Hammy," she'd gush as only Leanne can at such personal moments. "A present for me, poopsie?" Yes, she practised whatever role she was playing to 'blend in' to her case, with me. "You really know how to spoil a girl, don't you?"

I imagined her throwing the thing at her mirror, then. Leanne did that with most of my silly gifts, impulse buys, like the Valentine's Day panties that split in half the moment she put them on. So embarrassing.

Janice was going on earnestly. Where was I? Oh yes, how old was she? Her neck was so smooth and her face so unlined that she'd fooled me. Yes, she must have had female feminization surgery. Her features were perfect, not a hint of protusion at her brows or cheeks. Even her ears were tucked in tightly, two sets of earrings in each ear that danced as she spoke about the banks in certain island republics sending so much money back into her husband's accounts.

"I don't know why the SEC hasn't investigated us," Janice went on, nervously holding her hands in her lap as I studied her. Yes, she was in her late twenties. I was sure of it. She'd been a tranny for a long time, out in public and very sure of herself, certain to be accepted everywhere as a woman. That's probably what she called herself, a woman. Probably thought of herself that way as well.

"How old are you?" I asked her bluntly as Lincoln American Holdings came up on my computer screen.

Janice smiled. The coquette, as Leanne called it, appeared in the way she pouted as she answered me with the inevitable question, "How old do you think I am?"

"Twenty-seven, eight?" I hazarded. That shook Janice Volker. "When I get a copy of your marriage certificate, I'll know for certain, of course."

Man, did she ever look gorgeous in her wedding gown, clinging to her husband. He had his arm about her waist in the file photo. Wow, what a handsome dude. Leanne would like him. Grandson of a former Senator, the original founder of the family firm, I saw. And this grandson was Janice Volker's 'husband'? What a subject for blackmail he'd make with a 'wife' like Janice. If I hadn't been on the ethical, good-guy side of criminal investigation, this pair could really be in trouble. But Janice must have been living as a woman for years with great success. Only the trained eye ...

No, that was baloney, I thought. The reason I'd known who she might be was much closer to home. It takes one to know one, I thought derisively at myself.

"What, what d-does it m-matter, how, how old I, I am?" asked the suddenly nervous, young-looking woman in front of me.

"You'd have to be experienced in finance, years of it, to know what you're hinting at," I said to her. "You come to us, Morton Barnes, making extreme, wild allegations, trusting we'd believe what you say. How can that be? You don't know me or Leanne. Not, that is, unless someone's been talking about us."

Janice Volker went very still.

"I need to know your source," I said to her. "Tell me who recommended us to you. I'll need a little time to prove who and what you are. What position for instance did you hold with Lincoln before you married your present husband?"

Janice's hands began to work very nervously as she thought about what I was asking and what her answers might reveal about her.

I waited. "I don't recall ..." she finally began.

"Sandra Lemayne?" I asked her. She blinked. "Nicole Drury?" An even bigger reaction. "Melissa Green?" Janice's lips parted in silent protest at that name but she couldn't make her words come out. Those might have been feminine, female names but I knew and she knew, her frightened look told me, that she was a 'tranny', just like those former, well I suppose future as well, 'female' clients of Leanne's.

"Your corporate profile is only that you were Brian Volker's private secretary for a year before you were married last July," I said to her. "You learned a lot in just a year for someone with such a thin resume. Looks like you were employed as window dressing for his corporate office."

Janice Volker shuddered. "I was," she said, a note of bitterness in her voice.

"And your husband had you added to the Board of Directors to distract the older men from what he was doing?" I asked her. She nodded furiously.

"He made it very clear to me this week that that's exactly what I'm supposed to be doing, nothing more," Janice said furiously. Her mass of blonde waves and curls shook as she went on, in a surprising, male imitation. "'Don't worry your pretty, little head

over facts and figures, darling. That's not being presented to the Board, anyway.'

" 'Oh yes, we've a little bit of doctoring to do before we present the numbers. The expansion plans are being financed by these investments in Lincoln, that's what you're seeing. We're doing very well these days since you left the p-position y-you used to have with the c-company.' "

Janice Volker looked at me furtively as she said that. Again, she knew she'd told me too much about herself. Like so many before her, she tried, by telling me more, to divert me.

" 'You don't have to do more, these days, than look very sweet and pretty,' " she went on bitterly. " 'Wear those low-cut dresses we bought in New York for Fashion Week. Dazzle Henry and Claude. You know they're in love with you, or with your pretty breasts, anyway. That would really help me the most!' "

"He treated you as the little woman," I suggested.

"Yes!" Janice exclaimed, her finely manicured hand, the painted fingernails so prominent, flying to her mouth. She gave me a most guarded, anxious look, no doubt thinking of the names I'd quoted. They implied that I knew about her and her probable status as the 'little woman'.

"Tell me what you want Leanne, and the rest of us, to do," I said to Janice as she nervously shifted crossed legs again.

"I want you to, to ..." Janice began, stopping, looking at me helplessly

"Get you out of this without it falling on you publicly," I said to one very distressed 'tranny'. "You want to know if your husband," I really emphasized that word, "is being blackmailed about you, his wife."