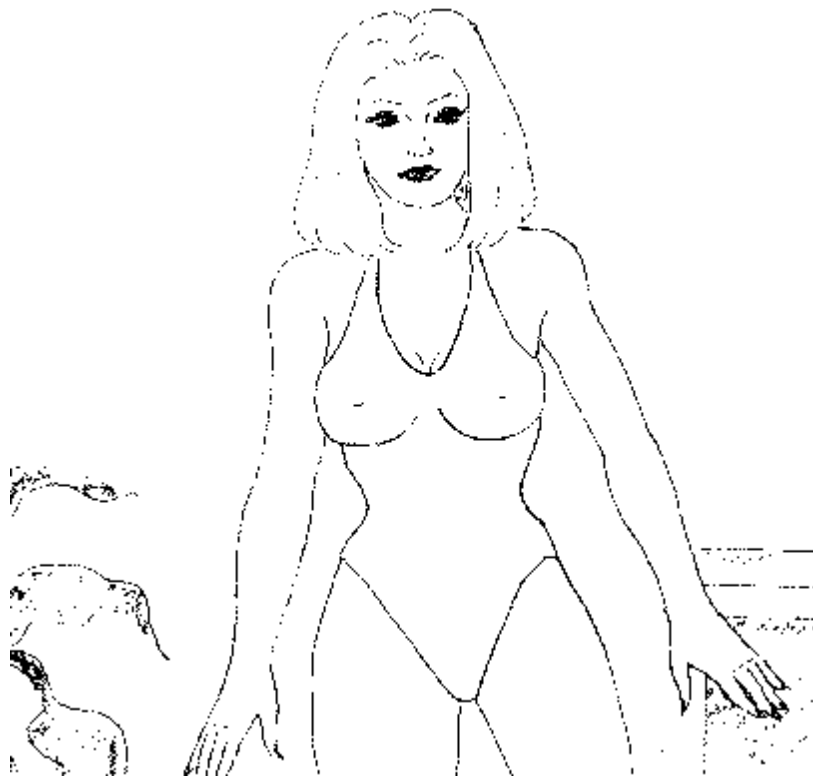




*Reluctant Press*

# Maid Redundant

Katie Lord



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN DUKEHART

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**A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL**

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# MAID REDUNDANT

By KATIE LORD

## A TRUE MAN

Mary had no time for the new man, the caring, sharing washer of dishes.

She married Joe Tracey because he was a figure of authority. When her father played one Rugby game too many and broke his neck and died, Joe was the man to take his place.

A real man.

Joe was her manager at work, her knight, her tower of strength, her rock, her anchor. His gray suit was the shining armor in which he rode to battle.

Directors and high management buzzed in and out of Joe's office like bees. They dined with the Traceys and admired their home.

Still, despite her home-girl views, Mary stayed on with the firm to help pay their fearsome mortgage.

Mary didn't really mind that Joe wasn't mountainous, noisy and beer swilling like her father. So what if Joe liked to run and swim? What if his body was light, his voice soft and his favorite drink a mineral replacement cocktail? What if they were "sharing" enough to go running together? Mary would pace him on her bicycle.

Mary did the housework while Joe was the blue-collar man. His skills built them a palace.

When Mary's friends moaned that all the nice men were gay and all the straight men were bastards (and gross to boot), smug Mary would think loving thoughts about her Joe.

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In that first summer of their marriage, friends threw a vicars-and-tarts party; women of the commuting villages could be sex objects for the evening.

Joe went as a bishop, Mary as Mitzi the French maid: black satin micro-dress flaring out over frothy petticoats; sheer black hose and tall heels; frilly white cap and apron.

Mitzi added gloss to her scarlet lips and went downstairs to find Joe waiting in the hallway. She wasn't prepared for the effect her costume had on him. His eyes widened, his mouth opened, he swayed on his feet. Then he swallowed, licked his lips, and groaned like a dying man.

“Joe! Was there something in the food?”

“Marry me again. Let's make love. Now. Here. On the floor. I daren't drive the car, I'd let go of the wheel and climb on top of you.”

“You like my costume.”

“LIKE? You mean YEARN, you mean HUNGER—”

“Hey, can't you control yourself until we get back?”

“We won't get back. You'll start a war. There won't be any survivors.”

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Joe wasn't far wrong. Mitzi was a sensation and he had his work cut out to get a dance with her. They made up for it when they got home: he tore off her frilly panties, her pantyhose flew high in the air and he took her on the drawing-room carpet.

At 9:00 on Saturday morning Joe woke up in an armchair with a maid in his arms. She was without panties or pantyhose and her clothes were awry. His pulse raced and his hands began to wander, but Mitzi kissed him and slipped out of his grasp.

“Enough's enough, sweetie. Your maid deserves a bath.”

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Mary returned the hired costumes to the costume shop. On a whim she decided to buy her maid's dress for keeps. One day she might want to turn Joe into a wild animal again. She liked the feel of power, it was risky to the user of course...but that was half the fun.

It was funny that Joe got so turned on by her clothes. Her Dad never noticed what women wore. Never mind, Joe was like her Dad in all the ways that mattered.

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As a manager, Joe worked later than Mary. Sometimes he came home to a curtsy-ing maid. Maybe he'd goose her or ravish her on the hearthrug. Or else they'd be solemnly formal, she'd help him undress, run his bath, serve him dinner.

The longer they kept up the formality the bigger the explosion at bedtime.

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Mary bought a second uniform - to have one for formal evenings and another for wild scenes on the hearthrug.

She'd married a real man, she reckoned, a tiger in bed.

When the winter came, Joe switched to swimming. He shaved his body for extra speed. Mary hated this. His body wasn't much more hairy than hers so now (to keep ahead of the game) she had to depilate her own body twice as often.

She didn't like the little bristles when his hairs grew back, so she lent him her hair removing cream, explaining that depilating was smoother and more thorough and lasted longer than shaving.

His smooth body thrilled her, but her Dad would never have shaved his legs.

Mary began to have doubts.

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Maybe she overreacted to Joe's birthday.

Joe intended to celebrate it at his Mother's home, "because we always do, and stopping suddenly would upset Mother."

Had she married a mama's boy?

She had nothing against Helen Tracey, in fact she loved her, you couldn't ask for a sweeter mother-in-law. But birthdays were for intimacy between newlyweds. Mary kicked herself for being jealous and went out of her way to be pleasant.

### **BIRTHDAY BOY**

They had a happy time but in her insecure mood Mary noticed things. Joe hung around the kitchen helping his mother get lunch ready, beating Mary to tasks which should have been hers. The house was very well heated and Joe dug out an old pair of shorts and a tee shirt and leather sandals. The tee shirt left him baremidriffed and he must have outgrown the shorts a year or two ago, they really were short.

Mary was shocked when she looked at him from behind. With his long hair, slim and hairless body, and legs you could only call beautiful, he looked like...well, if he wasn't androgynous he was certainly unisex. And from the front...oh, my!

Those shorts were *tight* .

Her heart beat faster, there was that awful thrill again, how could he do this to her? She wanted to hit him.

After meals was worse, that ridiculous little frilly apron his mother put round him, half joking. He just grinned and went along.

Too sure of his masculinity to be embarrassed?

She hoped it was that.

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Then there was the talk. When Helen came to Mary's house, she and Mary would have "girl talk" - that's what Mary called it. Joe would disappear and do his blue-collar stuff or watch sports in the other room.

Now in his mother's house he joined in the girl talk. He oohed and aahed when Helen talked about a friend's baby; giggled at stories about office flirtations; murmured appreciation when Helen described a dress she'd bought.

It became harder than ever for Mary to stop being jealous. Joe's contrast with her father was now so extreme that she had to change her manner towards him.

Let's be frank about Mary's father. He was a local celebrity, played once for Wales against Ireland, and got a job on the strength of his cap. He treated his wife as a servant and his only daughter as a toy.

Mary loved him for what he was and didn't know that she hated him for what he wasn't.

He only met Joe once. He didn't want his daughter to marry a non-Welsh, non-rugby-playing, near-tee totaling shrimp.

Joe stood his ground, survived his handshake, jutted his jaw, fixed their lawn mower, drank a beer or two, and snapped quick counters to the aggressive jokes. Joe quite liked the old monster but didn't give much of a damn either way and they parted friends.

Mary had been delighted at Joe's encounter with her father. Now she saw him sitting in the drawing-room in his little shorts, mirroring his mother's expressions and gestures, mirroring her knees-together-hands-on-lap posture. His hand would go to his hair from time to time to put a stray hair in place. This was one of his mother's mannerisms that he copied unknowingly.

Driving home they had the craziest conversation, so it seemed to Joe. His wife wanted to make a big deal out of some old pair of shorts, and washing the dishes. Mother's tired old apron gag had laid a very big egg.

Mary was at him again.

"You realize you've turned my whole world upside down?"

"I know, I know. It's terrible. I've lured you into marriage under false pretenses."

Mary wouldn't be teased.

"Darling, I've nothing against effeminate men. They make wonderful friends, but they just aren't capable of being husbands."

"Gee, thanks!"

"Honey, I don't exactly mean you're effeminate, but oh, you're so...different in your mother's house."

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She was a bit strange with Joe all week. Nothing you could put your finger on, but not the usual adoring little wife.

Then on Friday Joe's French maid welcomed him home. Was everything back to normal?

Joe was tired. He shaved and depilated and showered. This (and the thought of his maid in waiting) revived him.

Mitzi had run him a scented bubble bath. Part of the maid game, maybe. Bubble baths were a bit sissy but she meant well. It certainly was refreshing.

When he was bathed and dry, Mitzi was ready for him with a big bath robe.

She smiled impishly and curtsied. "Would madam like me to attend to her hair?"

For long moments Joe stared at her. It wasn't Mary's kind of joke, she made a fetish of his masculinity. Finally he grinned and played along. Anything she did or said in that costume turned him on.

Before he knew it he was seated at her vanity table having his hair fixed with styling mousse.

“Mary, what's the idea? I thought you hated this kind of gag?”

“Darling, we both hate it, in a way. But Helen's shown me another side to you and it's unfair to leave me out. Hey, what happened to that sense of humor?”

“And now may I do Madam's make-up?”

Joe was in turmoil. The scent and feel of the make-up caused weird feelings.

Was she was trying to steal his manhood? Or was she insecure, trying to test it? He mustn't disappoint her. She liked him to be Joe the jock, didn't she?

Mitzi stepped back after applying Joe's lipstick.

“Is something the matter, ma'am?”

Joe had caught sight of this half familiar girl in the mirror, with Mitzi the maid bent anxiously over her. Panic seized him.

“I can't do it, sweetie. I can't be a girl.”

“Oh, Miss Joanna! Not even to please your little maid?”

“But you keep saying you like a man to be a man.”

“Yes, and I like a girl to be a girl. You're a girl, Miss Joanna.” She bent down and murmured in his ear: “Aren't you a girl, Miss Joanna?”

Mitzi seemed to fill the room with femininity, it was a vapor, sweet and heady; breathe it and melt.

Joe smiled weakly.

Mitzi pressed her advantage.

“Miss Joanna, I hope you don't mind? I thought you might like to wear that lovely pale blue chiffon dress for dinner?”

“Uh...are we the same size?”

“I think you'll look adorable in it, ma'am.”

Mary was shocked when Joe gave in so easily. Was he really a man? Just listen to that breathy little voice.

Joe stood up and noticed the dress and lingerie on the bed.

She handed him a pantygirdle, and helped him tug it on.

She had his bra fastened behind him before he knew, padded him out with silk scarves, a smile on her face like a fellow conspirator.

Joe learned how to pull on his sheer pantyhose and slip into an ice blue satin teddy. To Mitzi's alarm he looked willowy and graceful, all girl.

Mitzi helped him into the lovely blue dress. He sat on the edge of the bed while she put on his high heeled blue sandals.

Part of her was proud of his beauty. Still, she hated him, how could he do this to her? She picked up his satin clutch bag and put in lipstick and tissues and a few odds and ends.

Joe felt deep shame. What were they doing? In a trance, like sleepwalkers, they went on testing to see who would stop first, though it might change their marriage forever.

Joe went downstairs knowing he looked wonderful - he couldn't deny a little thrill. But he'd gotten used to Mitzi admiring his manhood. What would happen now?

She served his dinner with the same curtsies and smiles as before; only now it was "ma'am" instead of "sir". When she used to call him "sir" the fun was that she half meant it. But she called him "ma'am" with an irony that might be saying "look at you, so-called male, you're just a woman like me."

In bed the old ways were gone. Mary was teasing, elusive, contrary. She wanted to spend a long time playing, called him Joanna, did things to his nipples.

In the middle she stopped: "Promise me something?"

"What?"

"Just for tomorrow morning. Dress up again."

"No."

"What d'you mean 'no'? Darling, It's just a game that any couple could play. Lots of men dress up as girls for a gag."

"Why can't we just go back to normal?"

"Normal, normal, normal! My Dad was normal, I married you because you were a bit like him, but not so...well, Daddy wasn't always as nice to Mummy as he should have been. You just seemed a lot nicer—"

"So what's this got to do with—"

"Daddy used to say that nice guys don't win the ball—"

"That doesn't mean they go about in dresses."

"Are you so unsure of yourself that you can't do this one little thing to please me?"

"Of course I'm not."

"Then it's equality you're afraid of. It's all right playing dress-up as long as I'm your maid, but if we were sisters I'd be a threat. You treat your mother as an equal but you've always been afraid of getting too close to me. Darling, I won't bite."

What could a man do?

"OK, just for Saturday morning."

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Next morning she experimented.

Mary remembered how Joe changed when he joined in the girl talk with herself and Helen. She dreamed up a lot of housework which they did together while she chattered away about women they knew, their children, clothes and boyfriends.

Sure enough, he joined in and his posture and mannerisms changed.

Mary guessed there must have been a kind of mother-daughter relationship between Helen and her boy. Not that either of them knew it. Typical widow and only son!

Mind you, there were other things to girlyfy him this morning. She had him on three-inch heels, black pantyhose, black skirt and top. She'd picked the skirt to make him feel self-conscious; it was very short and tight, the kind that turned his head in the street when he thought she wasn't looking.

The heels, the clothes, the padded bra and tight feminizing pantygirdle underneath them, caused him to move (quite unconsciously) like a model.

Then there were tips from women's magazines and her school charm classes which Mary passed on to him.

Joe decided to go along with the tips. He had to choose between 'stay male' or 'act female', or some blend. He thought the male option would be gross and the blend effeminate so he'd go for the female way. He let his voice pitch drift up, hoping it was so gradual that he'd slip it by before she noticed.

Mary had him stay that way for lunch. Then she decided he should go into town with her as a girl, and then out with her for the evening. She even had him sleep in a nightdress on Saturday night.

*This seems to escalate, thought Joe. When Mary gets an idea, oh boy, does she run with it.*

The trouble was that Mary was coming on to him like a big sister and he was out of his own territory, very dependent on her. She was just impossible to refuse. She tasted power while he tasted yielding. She didn't admire him for giving way.

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On Sunday morning Mary and Joanna went to a church where they weren't known. They lunched in town, visited an art gallery, spent Sunday evening at home like sisters.

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Mary's experiment was over. She still didn't know whether she wanted Joe to be like her father, or the exact opposite. Both, really. Was that possible?

On Monday evening she gave her verdict.

"I love Joanna. She's a wonderful sister-in-law. We can be friends, but I need a man. Let's try the old way and see if you can cut it."

Joe was relieved. It was a scary and shaming weekend, as if an alien were taking him over. The price was too high for the thrill of being a beautiful girl.

Anyway, he preferred being a man, who wouldn't?

## **MITZI AND JOSETTE**

But a week later came the New Year's Eve party. At the last moment they heard it was fancy dress. The costume shop was closed.

"Mary, what's the problem? You can wear your maid's uniform. I can wear my running shorts or...I've got a policeman's helmet. Or draped in a sheet, a Roman senator?"

"We can both wear maid's uniforms. I've got two, remember?"

"People might think I'm, you know?"

"Well, don't do it if you don't want to. I thought you might like to wear a maid's dress. You seem to find me very sexy when I wear mine."

"Yes, but that's *your* kind of sexy—"

"What's wrong with my kind of sexy?"

"Nothing, except you're a girl."

"Well, let's forget it. I just thought you jocks would do anything for a gag."

"As long as people know it's a gag. OK, let's both wear maid's uniforms."

"If you're sure that's what you want."

"Okay, I'm sure."

"You're sure what?" She smiled teasingly.

"That I want to wear a maid's uniform," sighed Joe.

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Mary and Joe got dressed together in their bedroom. As their costumes were alike they took care to wear the same color lipstick. Their make-up was too-too much: long false lashes, deep red glossy lipstick, lots of blusher. When they were ready they stood side by side, each with an arm round the other's waist, looking at themselves in the tall mirror.

"Wow! We make quite a pair, Mitzi and Josette!" exclaimed Mary.

Joe's heart was hammering, he thought it was going to burst. The tiny caps and aprons looked so silly.

"Your cleavage is quite convincing" approved Mary. "It's amazing what a little stage-craft will do."

"Oh, but look at yours!" moaned Joe.

"Are you jealous? Never mind, Josette. The boys will be too busy looking at your sexy legs to worry about your tits. Now! Let's see you curtsy. Come along, we'll curtsy to the mirror. Ready, hold your skirts like so and...dip!"

"Lovely, darling, but let's have a radiant smile. A happy smiling curtsy: ready, smile!"

"Oh, that was sweet. Now let's see more petticoats. This time we'll do a d-e-e-p curtsy, we bow our heads demurely, be graceful, ready? Down...we go. My! We really were graceful, weren't we? The other curtsy is the pert little dip, like... so! You try. All right!"

She gave him an impulsive hug.

"Oh, Josette! Everybody will adore you. We'll put our coats and head scarves on (to prevent rape on our way to the party). Come along, we'll be late."

"You'll have to drive. I'll never manage in these heels. I can hardly walk."

"So mince. It suits you. Have you got the keys? Let's go."

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At the party nobody recognized Joe.

His friends knew him as a little brick of masculinity. All shoulder display, jaw display; with the amiably aggressive jokes, the quickfire tough repartee.

Everyone's forced to learn one act. Somehow he had to learn two.

He found a little-girl voice that came to him out of the blue. Marilyn? Some dimly remembered child actress in a cute commercial?

Now he was a creature of hairdo and mascara and lipstick and blusher. All feminine body language, breasts and hips and legs, so demure and giggly with that little-girl voice, so exposed in those maid's clothes, the showbiz of femininity.

*Well, would you believe it, thought Mary, I did discover something on his birthday.*

She took Joe aside.

"Hey, Josette! You're doing this much too well. If your friends find out they'll wonder about you. So let's not tell anyone who you are. And we'd better not be seen together too often. I told Peter and Clarissa that Joe couldn't come. You're my old school friend."

• -000-

Mary was both amused and annoyed at the way Joe handled the swarm of men crowding round to chat him up or dance with him. She decided to teach him a lesson with a little flirting of her own. This wasn't too difficult, the men were around her like rutting stags.

Joe kept hearing her musical laugh, she was always dancing with somebody, being kissed like mad during the slow dances. He knew she was taunting him. He wasn't about to let her make the running. He flashed his smiles about and did his own show on the dance floor. If they wanted to see panties...

He discovered that if you wear a mini flared maid's dress you get goosed. Some men's idea of goosing was a very hard pinch. Some men's idea of kissing in the slow dances was to tangle tongues with you, sometimes complete strangers who hadn't even exchanged names. It was scary, you knew if you were in their place this sexy little stunner would drive you wild.

Mitzi and Josette turned the evening into a war of the flirts. When they caught each other's eyes they exchanged just-you-wait-you-bitch glares.

Mary drove them home. They'd had a marvelous time; it's a buzz to be sensationally popular.

Joe broke the silence.

"You were absolutely *brazen* " he pouted. "I couldn't believe my eyes. I was *mad* with jealousy."

Mary giggled. "You little hypocrite. You were *far* too busy to be jealous. By the way, can you sit comfortably? We forgot to pad the seats of our panties."