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Stepmother's Surprise

By Susan Hulbert

"This is surreal," I said as Jasmine and Cheryl fussed around me, making sure that my veil could be lifted for that kiss. "This shouldn't be happening."

"You accepted his proposal," Jasmine reminded me.

"I think I accepted because it meant we were going to live together."

"You were doing that anyway," Cheryl pointed out

"I know, but I mean... I don't know what I mean." I turned to the mirror to look at myself for the umpteenth time.

I liked what I saw. The short white dress, all lace and pearl, was tight across my breasts and low on my shoulders. The white satin shoes matched exactly and my legs looked so slim and shapely. I liked what I saw. I hoped others would approve.

"He explained it was what he wanted. His family wanted him to commit."

"Come on; admit it," Jasmine chided me. "You wanted the white wedding too. It's the culmination of every girl's ambition."

"I never had that ambition. I think I wanted to be a cowboy or an astronaut. I never thought it would happen to me."

"Of course you didn't." She shook her head. "It's not what little boys are expected to dream about. They may be the cowboy or the astronaut in a fairy story, but they're never the princess."

"I wish I'd never let him talk me into this," I said half in jest.

"We didn't hear your protests." Cheryl joined the conversation again. "Face it, you were destined to be a girl from that first time Denny dressed you up."

"She forced me," I remembered. "And she did it maliciously."

"But it gave you the chance to discover so much more about yourself."

"I guess it did." I smiled and looked at the diamond on my left ring finger. And kismet is kismet."

"It's time to go meet your groom." Jasmine took my hand as Simone appeared to escort me to the ceremony.

I thought that those were the good times. Denny—she was always Denny, never Denise as her mother intended—was a dream come true. She had the figure and poise of a showgirl but the brains of a shrewd financial operator. When she moved to somewhere cleaner and somewhere warmer, I followed.

I wasn't as bright and I wasn't as educated. I'd gone from high school to work. I was self-taught in

computer stuff and fell into stock control jobs; ware-housing and shipping. I moved on and upwards quite quickly and so did my income. I thought I'd got it made back then.

We'd go to great places. She loved the clubs late on the weekend evenings; dancing, seeing, and being seen. She discovered the drag clubs. They were probably the only places where the girls were more flamboyant than she was. We'd end up in one nearly every weekend.

I don't really know how we fitted together from the start. She was the mature college graduate, whereas I was younger and just out of high school when we met. I struck lucky. I found something I was good at and which earned good commissions.

She'd been promoted again and again, then jumped from one company in finance to another. Her salary always rose. Mine kept pace too. I became something of a super salesman on top of the computer jobs. It turned out that I had a knack; plant and machinery mainly, but if you wanted a fleet of cars or trucks, I was the guy.

We must have looked an odd couple. As I said, she could have been a showgirl but I was shorter, even when she wasn't wearing heels. When she was, I only came up to her shoulder. She had a figure; she turned heads.

I was skinny and small. The only good feature I had was my hair; long and pale brown, straight as straight could be. It was hair on my head only though. I couldn't grow a beard or a moustache. I only needed to shave occasionally. It started with a party invitation.

I should have refused, but I didn't foresee anything.

"They're doing a Halloween special," Denny said as we lay in bed after a particularly robust evening. "I'm going as the wicked witch of the East or West... wherever they have wicked witches, I guess."

"You'll make a wonderful witch," I agreed.

"You're going as my princess."

"I'm not princess material," I replied lazily. "You must have noticed I don't have the right equipment."

"I know but it's not very big and it can be hidden."

"You didn't complain earlier." I started to get defensive.

"Maybe it's the way you use it that compensates for the lack of size?" She giggled, trying to make light of an insult to my manhood.

"Okay; I'll give you that, but I'm still not good witch material."

"You could be with the right help." She started stroking me into action again and I forgot to argue.

"I still think you'd be wonderful as my princess." Denny returned to the subject next day. "I imagine I could bend you to my wicked will whenever I wanted to."

"You do that already."

"I know." She smiled that smile which said there was something more coming. "That's why I've got Jasmine to help you."

"Jasmine; but she's the girl... I mean guy at the club; the one with..." I hesitated there.

"Yes, she's the guy with the breasts, who lives as a girl all the time."

"I'm not surprised. With those breasts it would be difficult for anyone to think of her or him as one of the regular guys."

"He's married, you know." Denny smiled and then saw the disbelieving look on my face. "You didn't know? You thought it couldn't be possible?"

"Okay, so he's married some guy where it's legal."

"No, He's married to Cheryl; the girl you keep ogling when she's in the club."

"But she's a real girl," I spluttered.

"How many kinds of real girl are there?" She looked at me. "Yes, she's a real girl and always has been. And she's married to Jasmine; they got married when he was still Jeremy."

"You'll be telling me that she made him change next."

"I'm sure she helped him," Denny replied. "After all, the money he's making now is much more than he could as an electrical contractor."

"How do you know so much about him?"

"Cheryl's in my book club." She pointed to the book on the table. "We have coffee together after the meetings. That's how I know Jasmine and that's how I got him to agree to help you."

"It sounds like you've stitched me up," I said. "You know I don't want to do that."

"I also know that you're *going* to do it." She smiled at me again and I thought of a spider contemplating a particularly juicy fly.

I was caught and there was nothing I could do.

"You'll need to shave all over," Jasmine told me that first time he came over to our apartment. "Princesses don't have hairy legs."

"I don't have hairy legs." I pulled up a leg of my chinos and looked down.

"It's soft, but it's there." He felt along my calf.

"So I don't need to shave there." It felt wrong to have another guy rubbing his hand up my leg, even if he did look as feminine as Jasmine did.

"I think you should listen to good advice." Denny had been listening and watching; she turned to Jasmine. "I could get him booked in for a full body wax at my salon if you think that would be better?"

"That would be perfect." Jasmine's smile was beaming. "It's a much better result than shaving."

It seemed that had been agreed without a word from me.

"I need to take some measurements." Jasmine looked to Denny who nodded. "Do you want him to be natural or something like a horror movie princess?"

"I think as natural as possible," Denny replied. I'm going to be the horror story so I think he should look as pure and innocent as possible. I want him to look like a real genetic girl. Can you make it so that no one realises who it is."

"That's very possible." Jasmine looked at me again. "His features aren't ruggedly masculine."

"You can say that again," Denny laughed.

"With the right makeup and hairdo, he could be perfect." Jasmine felt my hair. "In fact with this hair and the right hairdresser, he could look entirely natural."

"That sounds like just what I want." Denny looked at me. "Of course, he'll have to get his ears pierced."

"That's not going to happen." I looked round in shock; they seemed to be discussing me as if I wasn't there.

"Don't be silly." She pretended to slap my hand. "There's not a princess in the land who doesn't wear earrings; more than one set usually."

It seemed to be another nail in my coffin.

They were expecting me when I turned up at the salon.

"You're the guy for the waxing and the ear piercing," the receptionist said as she looked up from the appointment book.

"That's me," I said and then I thought again. "Did you say 'ear piercing'?"

"Yes, your girlfriend said it was a surprise treat for your birthday, and we shouldn't let you chicken out," she said. "She even picked out the earrings for you."

"I didn't expect..."

"That's why it's a surprise," she replied. "I promise it won't hurt. You wouldn't like to go home and tell her that you were too afraid?"

"I guess not," I said with less than enthusiasm, thinking that I'd been set up.

So what did I do? You can guess; I went along with it and didn't say another word. It didn't hurt, but seeing what I looked like with two sparkling studs in each ear was a shock.

"I think they look really good." The girl looked at me. "You don't need to pull your hair over them. Lots of guys wear earrings these days. My boyfriend has five or six sets."

"But I need to look smart to get another job," I thought out loud.

"Don't worry; once the holes have healed, you can take then out and change them for tiny studs."

"How about changing them for nothing?"

"That could be a choice. The piercings would heal over if you take them out too soon and that would be a waste." She smiled. "But I'm sure you'll get so used to them that you'll feel naked without them."

I gave up. It was too late to argue once it was done. I lay down on the bench in the back room, covered with a towel, and waited for the next indignity.

The waxing was awful. I never realised how much discomfort girls went through. If my rear cheeks hurt, then the same at my groin was a real torture. Okay, I admit that I screamed at the first rip of the wax from my thigh. I was so embarrassed. I determined to wince silently through the rest of the treatment. I nearly made it.

"It's only because it's your first time," they told me. "It's never so bad when there's only a little re-growth to deal with."

"I'm never doing that again," I said to Denny that evening. "It was horrible."

"But don't you feel different?" she asked. "The way your clothes move across your body. They must feel lighter and almost airless as they glide over skin as you move."

"I'll give you that," I said as her hand rested on my thigh and rubbed. "There is a new sensation."

"I think I'm going to love that new sensation when it's next to me." She stood and held out her hand to me.

I was never one to refuse an invitation like that.

"That was so good." Denny spooned lazily against me afterwards. "I like the hairless version."

"Don't get used to it," I replied as she turned to face me. "This is a one-off occasion."

"Maybe; wait until you see yourself at the dress rehearsal." "What dress rehearsal?" I asked.

"You have to try out," she replied. "You can't go from computer nerd to charming princess all at once. You have to learn how to walk in heels and talk softly and use your hands. You need to know how to walk gracefully in a dress, and how to repair your makeup, and look after your hair."

"Is it all necessary?"

"Of course it is," she said. "I've arranged it. Jasmine says you're to go on Saturday before the club opens."

I didn't realise how that was going to work out.

On Saturday morning, Denny dropped me at the club's rear door. I pushed the bell and waited for a few moments.

"You're ready, that's good. "Cheryl stood back to let me enter. "Jasmine's still at the salon. She's asked me to get started on your transformation."

"I've no idea what you're going to do to me."

"We"re going to make you beautiful, of course," she replied. "There's nothing that you can't be expecting. You've not come to us for surgery; it's only dressing up."

"Now you're making fun of me." I blushed. "I'm nervous enough already."

"Seriously, all you have to do is work with us and relax. This is meant to be fun, not a trial."

"You're right. It just seems so alien; something I've never even thought of doing."

"Perhaps Denny can see something in you that you've never realised."

"I know I'm small, skinny and I wear my hair far too long," I replied. "That doesn't mean that I want to be a girl."

"No one ever said that it did."

"I heard that." Jasmine burst into the room with a whole wave of new energy. "You're not starting on a journey to become my rival, so get all that out of your mind."

"I don't think it was in my mind." I blushed again.

I think when I looked at Jasmine he saw that I was looking with more attention than ever. The swell of his breasts was impossible to miss in the tight top he was wearing. He saw me ogling and laughed.

"I've taken the female impersonation thing further than most people would," Jasmine confessed. "That was my choice."

"And it was mine too." Cheryl looked admiringly at him and then they kissed. "It's made him appreciate me more."

"I always appreciated you," he replied.

"That's not quite what I meant." Cheryl paused. "Now he has to do all the things I have to do to look good; it seems that it's brought us together."

"You just like playing with my breasts."

"I do. It's not every girl who can say that and still have her man in the bedroom."

"I think you're giving me too much information," I interrupted.

"All I mean is that it's not the end of the world or the beginning of a change of lifestyle. You're dressing up for Halloween. Denny got you into this mess if you want to look at it like that. I think you should relax and enjoy it. You'll be here amongst friends anyway."

"I guess you're right. Do your worst, Doctor Frankenstein, I'll be your monster." I saw the funny side at last.

"We don't do monsters," Cheryl replied.

It felt suddenly strange to be wearing a bra and panties; ones that looked pretty and matched in pale lavender shades. It felt even stranger when breast forms were placed in the bra cups. The sudden weight and protrusion was a sensation all of its own.

"Couldn't they be smaller and lighter?" I asked in shock as they wobbled against my skin.

"They're only small," Cheryl replied. They're not as big as Jasmine's; more like my size."

"Mine are bigger for professional reasons." Jasmine sorted through a jumble of clothes.

"He would say that," Cheryl confided. "He said it was no use half-pretending that he'd got breasts. He didn't want the audience to feel cheated."

"Hey, I'm here and I'm listening," he interrupted. "They're a small D cup if you must know and not outrageous for my frame."

"Okay, that was little Miss Perfect." Cheryl blew a kiss to him. "I told him to look natural when he decided to get implants. I don't mind going out with him looking like my sister but I didn't want him to look like some sort of freak."

"But I do turn heads," Jasmine added again with a pose that left nothing to the imagination.

"I don't think I want to turn heads," I said.

"Come on; it's Halloween. Of course people are going to look at you. The guys will probably be judging you like they do any girl," Cheryl said. "Denny wants you to look natural."

I didn't realise the implications of those words then.

If the bra felt strange, the addition of a garter belt and stockings made it even more surreal.

"Is that really me?" I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror for the first time. "I look like something out of a magazine."

"And that's only from the neck down," Jasmine said. "Wait until you have the full works to look at."

"How do you cope with heels?" Cheryl re-appeared with some shoe boxes. "Denny gave me your size and as luck would have it, you're a little smaller than Jasmine so you can try some of these."

"Won't I slip out of them?"

"They're mostly shoes with ankle straps or buckles at the back so they can be adjusted. It's the heel height that you have to get used to. You want to walk elegantly, not like you're clumping around like a carthorse."

"I've never worn heels."

"You have some Cuban boots. Denny said you got them so you could look taller."

"I did, but even wearing them, she's still so much taller than I am. She wouldn't wear lower heels, even when I asked her," I said sadly. "The boots were difficult at first, but it got that I really like walking in them."

"So you shouldn't have any trouble with something a bit higher. I did ask Denny if she'd like to be the showgirl," Cheryl said. "She'd look so good all dolled up."

"But she chose you for the full works." Jasmine looked over the shoe boxes. "Try these with three and

a half-inch stilettos. Thin heels make your legs look longer and they're sexier."

"I don't want to do anything sexy."

"How many times do I have to remind you that it's Halloween, not a change of lifestyle?" Cheryl shook her head. "Keep that in mind."

I put the shoes on and fastened the straps around my ankles. I stood and walked across the room. It was true; there wasn't any problem.

"Your Cuban heeled boots taught you well," Cheryl approved.

It was a succession of new feelings. The dress they gave me looked ever so simple. It was a small flower pattern over a black background and a dress. They weren't allowing me jeans or even Capri pants.

"It's a dress," Cheryl said as I looked in horror at it. "Denny chose it, and you don't want to upset her by criticising her taste, do you?"

"I wouldn't dare," I replied, knowing how Denny liked to get her way in everything.

I stepped into it and felt the zipper being pulled up the back. The dress fitted tightly from shoulders to thighs, hugging every false curve of my feminised figure. The neckline was slashed and the skirt ended above my knees. I looked in the mirror.

"That neckline is really flattering." Cheryl looked critically. "It shows your figure and doesn't hint that it might not be real."

"That's because there's going to be no join showing when your breasts are glued on," Jasmine laughed.

"You glue them on?" I was surprised.

"Of course, you'd hate it if one fell out in the middle of the party."

"That's not likely." I felt a chill at the thought.

"It might if some guy who gets a little over-served, grabs and gropes a girl the way some guys feel they have a right to do."

"Surely not," I said.

"I have the bruises," Jasmine said quite seriously. "Even when they know they're not natural, some guys feel free to feel at every opportunity. They get thrown out and banned, but there's always another."

"And then they come back to apologise and get allowed back in," Cheryl said. "It's not good business to upset some of our best spenders in the club."

"I guess...." I saw the logic, even if it was an uncomfortable one.

Hair and makeup were a whole new experience.

"You're going to have the full works." Cheryl indicated that I should sit in front of the mirror. "You can either watch it all step-by-step in the mirror, or I can cover it and you can see the full transformation when it's done."

"I think I'd like to watch," I replied, feeling a twitch in my groin; I was getting excited even though I should have been feeling guilty.

"Hair first; I think I'm going to twist it all up into something casual. You've such a lot of hair; I think you could do anything with it."

"Anything if I was a girl." I smiled at the question.

"Don't anticipate too much," Cheryl replied. "You may decide on a whole new way of life."

Oh no; this is a one-off," I replied. "Denny got me into this against my better judgement."

"That's no reason why you can't open your mind to the experience," she said. "Remember when you were little and dressing up was fun."

"They"d never let me be the pirate king; I was too small." I remembered those games.

"Maybe you could be the pirate queen," Jasmine interrupted with a grin which made us all giggle and lightened the mood.

Within a few deft twists, some spray and pins, my hair was piled on top of my head with tendrils escaping as if they were accidental rather than artful. Cheryl looked intently from all angles.

"I think that's going to look good." She sprayed and patted the up-do a little more. "Now the makeup; I'm going to do it a little, heavier than I do my own. You've hardly any beard which makes it easier but I want to do some contouring and I want to make your eyes really stand out."

"Denny has eyelash extensions." I remembered seeing them for the first time and thinking how sexy they looked.

"That's something for Jasmine, not for you today, although I'm going to use some false lashes."

"Is there a difference?" I asked naively.

"You'd have to kill me to make me give up my lashes," Jasmine interrupted. "I never felt as feminine as I did the day I first got them."

"There speaks the man I married." Cheryl pulled a face at him.

"You know you love me anyway." He pouted and blew a kiss.

"Promise you won't get so vain," she said to me as she looked closely at my face.

I sat there. I opened my eyes wide and closed them as I was told. I

was very still with my mouth open and closed my lips when I was required. The feeling of the brushes and the sponge, the scents of the creams and powders were all new to me.

I saw my facial features almost disappear under a mask and then start to re-form as she worked. I felt the weight of the mascara on my eyelashes, then the weight of the false lashes when they were fixed. The feel and taste of lipstick took me by surprise, as did the size of my lips when she'd outlined them.

I saw Jasmine sitting by the side, watching. He caught my eye and smiled approvingly.

"I think you could be my rival," he said. "You've transformed so easily."

"That can't be true," I replied, becoming conscious for the first time as I looked at my reflection that I was feeling very different. "I may look a bit more female but I've no idea how to act, let alone walk in these heels."

"Don't try too hard," he said. "The way you look will do something all too mysterious. You'll find that you adapt to your appearance. If you're in a room full of women, you'll want to fit in, even if they know you're not one of them."

"What about the boys, the men? What do I do then?"

"If they know you're a boy and you feel safe, I think the natural thing would be to act as you look. Play up to your image, and make them accept it."

"That sounds difficult."

"What could be the alternative though?" Jasmine replied. "You have to act the part. If you were dressed as the servant, you'd take that role. If you were wearing a general's uniform, you'd act that role, so if you're the attractive woman in the room, why not play it for all you can?"



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"Isn't that dangerous?"

"I've not found it so. In mixed company, there'll always be some who are on your side. The girls will think you're brave or a curiosity and they'll ask all kinds of questions," Jasmine continued. "Act as if you're the natural one and the questions don't matter."

"That's good advice," Cheryl added. "You're not going to be anywhere outside. Everyone in here will know or guess that you're a boy and they'll not be harmful."

"What do I do if they think I'm a girl?" It seemed a sensible question.

"That depends on what you want them to do," Jasmine replied. "I show them my wedding ring. That sends most of them off."

"What about the ones who aren't put off?"

"I simply tell them I'm not interested and I make sure that I'm never alone with them."

"It's still scary though. Why did I let Denny talk me into this?"

"What do I do now?" I looked at myself again in the mirror, totally female from my hairdo to my heels.

"You walk round and talk," Cheryl laughed. "You get used to being in a female body. I have to go to the shops and you can come with me. It will help your confidence."

"Right now I haven't got any." I looked at her in shock. "How can I do that? I'd be laughed at everywhere."

"Look in the mirror again. I've watched you. You can't believe that there's any risk; there's not a trace of man to be seen."

"Okay, I give you that." I had to smile. "The visual impression may be okay, but how do I behave?"

"You walk with me and watch what I do. Listen how I talk and think how you could do the same." Cheryl handed me a purse and looked at my hand as I took it. "Nails; I forgot your nails."

"It doesn't matter," I replied.

"Of course it matters. No girl looking like you would go anywhere without having her nails done." Cheryl pushed me back into a chair. "There's no time for acrylics, so I'll paint them quickly."

"Acrylics? Don't they last for ages?"

"It depends how you take care of them," she replied casually. "You'll have acrylics for Halloween of course. You need them blood red and really long."

"That sounds frightening to me as the one who'll have to wear them."

"I'm sure Danny expects nothing less." Cheryl started to paint my nails a deep red. "As they are, no girl would ever leave them in such a state. I'm only painting them because there's no time for anything else."

Ten minutes later, with my eyes firmly fixed downwards, I followed her out of the door and into the open street. I hesitated and Cheryl looked back at me with a puzzled expression.

"It's the feeling of the air on the tip of my legs," I explained. "And I feel that I should keep pulling this dress down."

"You're being too modest." She took my arm and we walked on. "Look at the guy on the other side of the road. He's looking at you."

"He probably thinks I'm a fool."

"No, he probably thinks he'd like to take you for a drink or something more intimate."