

COLORADO CHRISTMAS

By R. P. Smith



ILLUSTRATED BY C. PITTS

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

Copyright 1999, Friendly Applications, Inc. - All Rights Reserved

Reluctant Press TG Publishers

This story is a work of fiction. Any similarity to persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. All situations and events herein presented are fictional, and intended only for the enjoyment of the reader. Neither the author nor the publisher advocate engaging in or attempting to imitate any of the activities or behaviors portrayed.

Persons seeking gender reassignment surgery, hormone therapy or any other medical and/or body-altering process should seek the counsel of a qualified therapist who follows the Benjamin Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorder.

Protect Professional Fiction on the Internet!

We need *your* help! We want to keep providing our readers with low cost, professional quality fiction on the Internet. We spend thousands of dollars to edit, illustrate and typeset *each story*. It is important, therefore, that everyone works to help keep professional fiction alive on the Net.

This story is protected by US and International copyright law, and is owned exclusively by Friendly Applications, Inc, DBA Reluctant Press, which retains exclusive rights to publish these materials. The civil penalties for copyright infringement can be severe, including substantial monetary damages, injunctive relief, and liability for attorneys' fees incurred in prosecuting a case. If a court determines that the infringement was committed willfully, statutory damages of up to \$100,000 for each copyright infringed can be awarded. Even if not found to be acting willfully, a defendant can still be held liable for statutory damages of \$500 to \$20,000 for each copyright infringed. **These penalties apply even if money was not charged.** In addition, criminal penalties may be imposed if someone willfully infringes a copyrighted work for commercial advantage or private financial gain. This crime is punishable by up to five years imprisonment, up to \$250,000 in fines, or both. State civil damages and criminal penalties vary from state to state and country to country, but are always severe.

The best way to keep professional illustrated fiction available on the Internet is to do YOUR part to protect the author's and publisher's copyright. *You can be part of the solution.* Encourage others to purchase our stories. Never share the access rights you've purchased. **You** make the continued availability of TG fiction on the Internet possible. Thank you for your cooperation!

COLORADO CHRISTMAS

By; Patricia Smith

CHAPTER 1

Everyone knew how it worked. With the boom in population and the growth of the population, Santa Claus and his elves could not make enough toys for all the children of the planet, nor could he deliver them all in one night even if he had them. That's where the toy manufacturers and parents stepped in to help. Department store Santas were viewed as Santa's helpers. As one of Santa's helpers, it was now a year-round job for me. It was better than collecting welfare eleven months of the year.

Klaus Schmidt owned the largest chain of toy manufacturing plants and retail stores on two continents and was the only one in the position to pull off the hoax of the century in order to sell even more toys than ever before. His retail outlets were called The Claus Toy Chest; Christmas was his best time of the year. He wanted to make Christmas a year-round event throughout the world and he was well on his way to fulfilling that dream. The insistence of parents the world over on instilling the myth of Santa Claus into the minds of their children was the greatest advertising boost he could have gotten, and it was free!

I didn't think it was such a bad dream, to make Santa and Christmas a reality for millions of children the world over, even though it *would* put Klaus Schmidt into a position where he could make millions more in profit every year. The rule of business is that one has to spend money to make money. Klaus Schmidt certainly had the money to spend and he was willing to risk all to make it happen.

The plan had been in the works for two years before he hired the people he would need to pull it off. High up in the Colorado Rockies he had found a remote, secluded valley and bought it. Construction crews went in to build the permanent City of Toyland for him. Tunneled into a mountainside and using part of the valley floor, it was a modern city of architectural mastery, designed and built to look like the pictures in children's books that depicted the mythical North Pole of dreams.

Nothing was overlooked and no expense was spared. Toyland was a miniature city built to house a real Santa Claus with his wife and elves who would operate it and keep the legend alive as long as possible, thereby insuring greater profits for Klaus Schmidt and his conglomerate of companies. Toyland was ready to be inhabited.

There were several requirements that Santa Claus had to fulfill. He had to be an elf himself, no taller than five feet even. He had to be willing to grow his hair and his beard and have it dyed snow white for the months of November and December. He had to have a cheerful personality that didn't give way to fits of temper or rage at any time. Also, he had to be able to speak the languages of the countries that shared the tradition. It would be a bonus if Santa was naturally fat for the jolly appearances, but that

could be faked if need be. Mrs. Claus had to be shorter than Santa himself, though it was preferred that she have a nicer figure than most fashion models. That would help most fathers to keep the myth alive, no matter how much it cost them to make their kids happy. She would help out with communications with the English-speaking countries and be available to serve cocoa, milk and cookies while Santa and his helpers were in the workshops.

Fine! I had worked one month a year for five years as a Claus Toy Chest Santa and was called back every year to do it again. As I was on welfare, it was a requirement that I take any job I was capable of doing for the length of time the job ran. I could sit and hold children on my lap as I listened to their requests for toys and I fit most of the requirements for a permanent Santa Claus.

I was five feet tall, thin and frail from the disease ravishing my body for more than ten years now. Padding filled me out for the only job I was capable of doing. Having survived my disease gave me the temperament to do the job without losing my temper no matter *how* many kids peed themselves while seated on my lap. They kept several changes of clothes and padding for me should they be required and it only took a few minutes to change. My own hair had grown back long, full and blond with a bit of natural curl to it, so all it needed was for it to be dyed white. I had a full beard that any Santa would have been proud to call his own, but it was light brown in color and, it too, had to be dyed snow white. The only part I found hard was making my frail, high-pitched voice sound deeper for the kids.

Physically incapable of performing manual labor, I spent my off months learning and practicing languages. I was an educated man and someday hoped to find employment as a translator somewhere. I didn't want to remain on the welfare rolls. I wanted to work and support myself. I was a natural for the role of Santa Claus and won out over the hundreds of others who applied for the job.

I hadn't expected to find full-time employment so soon, but I wasn't going to turn it down either. The job offered free room and board in Toyland year-round, full medical and dental benefits, all travel expenses paid by Klaus Schmidt, two months paid vacation anywhere in the world, and twenty-four thousand dollars a year compensation. It was after my most successful Christmas as a Santa that they flew me to Hamburg Germany to meet with Klaus Schmidt himself.

Klaus preferred to be called by his first name and I had to correct myself a few times as I kept slipping and calling him Mister Schmidt. After the first few days, it became easier to relate to him since he was such a natural and hospitable person. I was very happy to be in Germany where I could practice my German with people who spoke the language from birth. Klaus laid out my duties for me in the week between Christmas and New Years.

January and February were vacation time. I could go anywhere in the world I wanted and it would be paid for by him. Not just my salary, but all expenses, too. All of his homes throughout the world were open to me for ten months of the year, and he maintained a home close to every one of his manufacturing plants. He also had homes in every country in which he did business and that meant every country that celebrated the Christmas tradition and Santa Claus.

March to September were work months and I had to learn every nuance of every toy his plants produced. I also had to learn all I could about every toy his competition was building and selling. He had an entire company devoted to researching the competition and I was required to go through all of their information. My photographic memory would work well for me here. During this time I would be traveling the world in a private jet to continue my education and increase my familiarity with languages and customs. A research team in each country would teach me what I had to know to be Santa Claus.

November and December were the crucial months. For these two I had to live in Toyland City and remain close to the communication network set up to connect Santa to the entire world. Audio and video were hooked into every one of our retail outlets in the world so as to facilitate connection with children the world over. Toyland was to be the hub of the children's universe for as long as they remained children. "Thumb nail" histories of every child connected to Santa would show up on a monitor prior to connection so that I would have some knowledge about who I was speaking to. The world would see me speaking directly with just about any child who believed in Santa Claus.

For these last two months, it would be a twenty-four hour a day job, seven days a week. I would be talking to kids as I ate, in the workshops, at any time of the day or night. Elves were seen in the background as they toiled to produce toys themselves in the old-fashioned way of centuries gone by. Mrs. Claus was around to serve milk and cookies and would give me a break when I had to sleep. Transmissions could be put on hold if I had to use the bathroom. There was a full backstage crew there to take care of the technical requirements the elves were unable to handle.

The elves themselves were all "little people". Klaus had cleaned out every circus and sideshow he could find to get every little person and their families to fill out the background of his Toyland City. He offered them more money than they could make anywhere else in any job, along with guaranteed year-round employment, health and dental plans, schools, hospitals, and paid vacations. It was permanence that a circus could never offer with less danger *and* they would still employed in show business.

Mrs. Claus had a full-time job with me, though she, too, could take her vacation where she chose. Kyra Solvason was four-feet, ten inches tall and an Icelandic beauty with the right figure for the job. She was American, like me, and she only spoke English. She looked even better dressed in her costumes when we had to work together for the last two months of the year. Kyra, though, had a drawback to her employment I didn't have. She was married and had a young daughter. Her husband was not one of the little people as he was five-feet, eight inches tall, but he was happy to live off the income offered to his wife. The part he didn't like was that his wife had to pretend to be married to someone else for two months of the year. He was a jealous man.

CHAPTER 2

I signed on for a five-year stint as Santa Claus and would be reviewed on a regular basis based upon what I learned and how I acted at all times. Kyra Solvason signed on for the same length of time. Our first two months would be spent moving into our permanent homes in Toyland. It was simple for me to accomplish. All I had to do was cancel my welfare, pack my few possessions and report to the jet at the airport. Toyland City had its own airport since Claus had made it possible for families to win trips to Toyland to see Santa in his natural habitat.

I was moved into Toyland by the third of January; the tailors got busy fitting me with the Santa suits complete with built-in padding. I spent my first week in Toyland City Hospital being checked over by the doctors and tested in every conceivable way to give them a clear understanding of who I was. As far as they could determine, I was far too thin and underweight, but they felt confident they could help me become quite fat and jolly long before Christmas time rolled around.

I was thirty-one years old at the time and weighed perhaps a hundred pounds fully-dressed, including the padding and boots. I had cheek pads to fill out my face since I appeared to be quite frail without them. With everything else I had going for me, I was still their best choice for a Santa Claus.

The course of treatment to increase my weight consisted of weekly injections of female hormones. I was single with no hope of ever finding a woman to love me, and thanks to my disease, I had no expectation of ever being able to make love to a woman, anyway. Makeup could make me appear to be a hundred years old, but it was harder to make me appear fat for extended periods of time. I would be more comfortable without all the padding and I was signed on for five years anyway, so why not take the hormones? With the doctors there to monitor me, I had nothing to lose and a life to gain.

A nurse was assigned to me at all times in case of complications from the injections I was now receiving. Her name was Linda Gardener. She was dressed as an elf and only four feet tall. She was at my side as I inspected the stables and got to meet my reindeer. Nine were trained to pull a sleigh and they each had their own stall. Dasher and Dancer, Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid, Donner and Blitzen and, last but not least, Rudolph. I don't know how they did it, but Rudolph had a red nose, too. The kids would be told that it only glowed at night on Christmas Eve. There was a whole herd of replacement reindeer, too, but they hadn't been trained for the sleigh yet, and the sleigh was just for show, anyway.

The workshops were mostly empty and silent right now as the newly-hired elves were moving into their new homes and learning the trade of toy making from expert craftsmen brought in from the world over. The shops were stocked with every miniature tool required for the elves to create the old-fashioned toys that were part of the background. Cameras and microphones were all built-in and hidden so as not to be seen when in use.

The bakeries and kitchens were hard at work, preparing to feed the hundreds of people who would soon live here full-time. When March rolled around, candid shots would be taken and released to the various retail outlets to begin the advertising cam-

paign. Everyone was required to work in character all the time, though they would not be filmed when relaxing at home. The streets of Toyland were also under constant video surveillance, so everyone had to be in character there as well. The street lights were gas lamps and required lamplighters to light them and to douse the flame as well. There was public transportation in the form of a miniature train pulled by a steam engine. It wound its way through the open parts of town before it entered the other parts of the mountain.

Santa's semiprivate quarters were also monitored. The only places I would have privacy would be in Santa's dressing room and bathroom. Microphones and cameras were not allowed in these two places. I had to get used to wearing a nightshirt and cap for bed and for the last two months of the year, I would also have to wear my padding to bed as well. Unless of course, I was fat by then. Santa would be seen climbing into or out of bed and he had to *look* like Santa at all times. I hoped I *was* fat by then.

Santa and Mrs. Claus had to be seen climbing into their huge sleigh-shaped bed together, but when the cameras were off, we could sneak out and go to our own rooms to sleep. In the morning, we would sneak back into the large bed to be seen getting up together. The people of the world had to know that Santa was a *real person*, even though he was an elf, too. Like the good little children of the world, I had to be seen doing the things expected of them: Saying my prayers before bed and meals, brushing my teeth and combing my hair. I couldn't get away with anything and, quite frankly, I didn't *want* to. I had to lead by example as that is what *all* children look for.

Smoking was a big issue. Santa *had* to have his pipe or he wouldn't be complete. But with all of the reports on the damage caused by tobacco and the anti-smoking campaigns the world over, Santa would never light his pipe. He would have it there by force of habit and bite on it when he had to worry over some little problem. In all of Toyland, smoking was prohibited. Alcohol, too, was a banned substance. Eggnog would be rum-free. The only drugs in town were in the hospital and kept under a watchful eye.

I toured all of Toyland and got to know every part of it. Since Mrs. Claus wasn't here yet to serve me my meals, I ate in the places open to elves only. There were private corridors and areas for everyone, including support people who were not small enough to pass as elves. I got to know as many of the people there as I could.

Toyland City was a private enterprise and it had more security than most government installations. Outside intrusions were not permitted. We were not close to any air routes so any plane in the area had to be coming to us. If not, it would be intercepted and turned back by Klaus' own Air Force. The only secrets we kept from the outside world were the myth of Santa Claus and the "North Pole" now being located in the mountains of Colorado.

There were no roads in and no paths for either horse or machine. Hikers and sports enthusiasts were kept away, too. The closest town was twenty miles by air, double or triple that on the ground. Since the local towns helped to support us, they had a vested interest in keeping us a secret. We had to get supplies from somewhere, after all.

Klaus was already making money on that venture. Take flour as an example. We had to use it in the kitchens and bakeries. Klaus approached the largest mills in every country and sold them “bragging” rights for their product for their countries. The elf bakers were seen emptying sacks of the advertised flour into the bins prior to doing the actual baking. Since Toyland was a year-round venture, advertising for the products was, too. Everyone associated with Toyland had to sign a secrecy contract before they could begin to work with us. Considering all of the products required to keep us going, there was a *lot* of advertising to be done. Lumber was another good source of income as most of Toyland’s toys were made of wood. The foreign companies who claimed to supply us paid for that right to deceive. Local suppliers either provided us with free product or sold it to us at greatly reduced prices.

Toyland City was a hoax put together to sell toys the world over. It generated a profit long before it opened for business. The shots of the elves at work were all candid ones. Not Santa nor any of the elves were allowed to promote a single product other than Claus Toy Chest toys. Klaus was smart enough, however, not to make it a monopoly. If the competition had a good product he didn’t have and was willing to pay the price, he would allow us to show off the toy and exclaim what a good one it was. The bottom line was profit, but one had to spend money to *make* it.

Santa’s main venue for being seen was in the mail room. There, sitting at an old roll-top desk with spectacles perched on my nose, I would be seen reading letters from the children and handwritten replies. The mail room was another advertising ploy; mail sacks from all over the world were on display as they were emptied. The mail was sorted by elves, opened according to country of origin and the letters were stacked up for reading. I couldn’t possibly read them all, so they were scanned into a mainframe computer and read by helpers who then wrote appropriate replies. There was a setup in each country to take care of the local letters and deals were made with the local postal systems. This resulted in free advertising for free postal service.

CHAPTER 3

Kyra, her husband Greg and their daughter Katya arrived in the middle of February and began to settle into their accommodations. As I had been, they were given guided tours and told what they could and could not do. Kyra was restricted only in what she ordered to wear. While Greg and Katya were shown everything, they were not allowed into certain areas for ten months of the year. From Christmas Eve until the end of February, they could wander about the entire town. Being normal-sized people, they could not be seen in Toyland, unless on a guided tour by elves. They had agreed to every stipulation.

Trouble raised its ugly head the moment Greg thought he had me alone. “You don’t touch Kyra in anyway, at any time!” he told me. “She is *my* wife, not *yours*.”

“Get a grip, Greg,” I answered him. “You’ve read the contracts. In Toyland, she is Mrs. Claus and I am Santa. There *has* to be a certain amount of touching between us. It all has to be viewable by children, so I will never touch her inappropriately. I am *required* to touch her on the arm and shoulders and give her a hug every now and then with a kiss on either the forehead or cheek, but that is it!”

“Wrong! You don’t touch her *anywhere* at *any* time! No hugs and no kisses either. You’d make an ugly Santa with a black eye, broken nose or some missing teeth, wouldn’t you? You touch my wife and I *may* even break your arms for you!”

Greg was a jealous man and not a very smart one. He threatened me and made it very clear what he would do and he did it in the incomplete privacy of the Claus bedroom. Every word and action was recorded by the cameras. Security burst into the room to arrest him before I could even reply.

Klaus himself flew in for the hearing and presided as the judge. Greg had made his threats not just to *me*, but to a billion-dollar industry and it was played back for all to hear. The verdict was simple. Greg was under house arrest for the duration of his stay in Toyland. If he left his private quarters, it had to be in the company of two guards who would not allow him anywhere near me. I was too valuable to risk harm in any way. The project was too valuable to risk losing it over petty jealousy.

Kyra was furious with Greg for his actions and words and mad at *me* for allowing it to be filmed. I didn’t even know her yet and already I didn’t like her much. It was going to be hard work to pretend to be in love with her. She was an actress, though, and was able to be charming and more than pleasant when we rehearsed our roles. She did more touching than I was required to do, gave me the hugs and kisses that Greg had forbidden. When the director said “Cut!”, she turned as cold as the snow at the real North Pole. It was a job for her and she worked at it. It was a *life* for me, however, so I remained in character as much as I could.

For the second day of work, Kyra showed up for makeup with a black eye and a bruise on her cheek. Greg had apparently not been happy with her performance. Klaus, in turn, was not happy with Kyra’s obvious bruises. Greg was summarily ejected from the project and Kyra fought it, citing clauses within her contract that allowed her husband and child to live where *she* lived. Klaus cited clauses of his own

that called for civilized behavior from them at all times. There was an anti-violence clause that included all public and private disputes. *No one* was allowed to violate it.

The entire Solvason family left together after a week in Toyland. It put everything behind schedule and Klaus resolved never to hire another married woman to fill the role of Mrs. Kyra Claus again. "Kyra Claus" was a registered name belonging to The Claus Toy Chest company. Luckily, no pictures of Kyra Solvason had ever been used. Another Kyra Claus now had to be found and we had only a few months to do it. Publicity shots had to be taken and sent out long before the arrival of the Christmas season and work went into full production.

There were four backup Santa Claus' waiting in the wings in case something happened to me. Kyra Solvason was one of a kind, though, and there were no backups for her. The backup Santas were all three or four inches taller than the height limit and were in the process of learning new languages; they were all fat naturally. Some of them were still growing their own hair and beards. They all had the deep voices that I had to fake. I, though, had the required height, or lack of it, the long hair and beard, the languages and customs, all locked away in my photographic memory. I was irreplaceable!

With the arrival of March and still no Kyra, I began my world tour with only the four backup Santas as my traveling companions. New toys were coming off the assembly lines and we were among the first to see them. We had a six-continent tour to make in eight months and a *lot* to learn. Of course I had Linda traveling with me, too, since she had to give me my twice-weekly shots in the butt of the female hormones and monitor my daily diet. The costumes were all left behind since Santa only existed outside of Toyland on Christmas Eve and that, of course, was fictitious to adults. The only part of Santa that had to travel with us was the personality.

Thanks to my shots of female hormones, changes were happening to me by the beginning of April. Unfortunately, they were not the changes we had hoped for. I was gaining weight all right but not where Santa needed it. My butt got a little bigger than it had been and I had added some fat to my hips. I was also showing budding breasts on my chest without any more weight being added to my stomach. My skinny legs were slowly filling out a bit but no new weight appeared on my arms or face. Still no "Kyra". Still no publicity shots of me.

Linda consulted with doctors the world over and altered my diet before she tried adjusting the hormone levels. Nothing was working to fill me out as required. My skin turned soft and smooth all over and even *more* makeup would be required now to make me appear to be a very old man. It was getting harder and harder to make my voice sound deeper like the man I was supposed to be.

By the beginning of May, I had to wear the belly padding all the time to hide the fact that I had real breasts and wide hips. It became impossible to hide the fact that I was stuck with a soft and high-pitched voice. My excitement about being Santa was draining away and there was nothing I could do about it. *Still* no Kyra!

In June, we landed in Germany and I went to stay with Klaus in his home. Linda was with me and she reported everything to Klaus in person over our first dinner. Thanks to the work of the hormones, I was now far too feminine to ever be able to pass

for a realistic Santa, even via audio transmissions from Toyland. My contract was canceled and Alan Miller, Backup Santa Number One, would take over. I was devastated!

“I still need you, Kenny,” Klaus told me. “Care to sign another contract?”

“As what, an elf?” I asked.

“You were always an elf as Santa,” he replied. “Instead of being ‘head elf’, how about being the second in command?”

“Head toy maker?” I asked curiously.

“No. Thanks to the work of the hormones you are too feminine for *that*. I was thinking that if we remove your beard and put you into the right costume, you could make a passable Kyra. All we have to do is adjust the roles and you could still do just about everything you were going to do.”

“As a *woman!*? Ha! There is a lot more to being a woman than wearing the clothes. I wouldn’t have a *clue* how to pull it off!”

“We have one month left before we need to begin the publicity shots. They are all stills; all you need for that is to *look* the part. We have resources at our disposal to get you ready for that. Then, we’d have four more months to teach you to play the role for our live cameras. It’s all a big show anyway, so having a man in the part of Kyra Claus isn’t going to hurt us at all. Besides, there will be very few people who will know about it. So, what do you say?”

I thought about the deal for the rest of the dinner as I silently ate everything on my plate. It just might work *if* I could get past the biggest of the hurdles before me. Could I *actually* wear women’s clothing all the time? Could I allow anyone to see me like that? Could I *really* learn to act like a *real* woman? Could I get through the “touching” I would have to do with the new Santa? I had a lot of problems with this, not the least of which was that I would have to remove the beard I had been growing for more than twelve years now.

Without this work, I would be unemployed again with little hope of finding a job. I would have to wear belly padding until my feminine figure allowed me to do without it, or I would risk public ridicule for being both sexes in one body. The lesser of the two evils was to take a chance and become “Kyra Claus” for as long as I could. At least I would still be making money for my nest egg. The Kyra contract paid the same amount as the Santa contract.

“I don’t see where I have any other choice, Klaus,” I told my host and employer. “Do you have a Kyra contract for me to sign?”

Linda smiled and excused herself to go to her room. She had a lot of phone calls to make to get everything set up in Toyland and Hamburg. Klaus called for a set of both Kyra and Santa contracts and a telephone. “I am going to make some small changes to your new contract, Kenny,” he told me. “I know its going to be pretty hard for you to learn to act like a woman for public appearances in Toyland. It is a twenty-four hour-a-day job seven days a week for months at a time. I’m adding the extra duties that Alan cannot do and increasing your salary to fifty thousand a year. Only you, me and

my accountants will know your salary now. You will return to Toyland this month. I'll have the contract for you to sign tomorrow. All right?"

"Yeah, I guess so. I hope I don't regret this."

"I'll try to make it as easy on you as I can. Alan Miller *has* to know, so I am sending for him now." Klaus picked up the phone and dialed his limosine. He sent the driver to the airport to get Alan. Then he called Alan to have him come to his home. I began to fidget as realization of what I had agreed to began to sink into my brain. I had agreed to play the role of a *woman*!

Alan Miller arrived with his luggage and was shown into the dining room where Klaus and I still sat at the table, sitting with our coffee. He never brought alcohol into his house. Too bad, because I suddenly felt that I could use a stiff drink. Coffee was the strongest stimulant he permitted.

After being seated across the table from me, Alan said, "I assume from being here that you are no longer Santa Claus, Kenny. Sorry to hear that. You were *perfect* for the job!"

"Thanks Alan, but I guess its up to you now."

"You know about the hormones Kenny was taking to increase his weight?" Klaus asked him.

"Sure! We *all* knew about them. They didn't work, huh?"

"Yes, they worked all right, but not in the way we had hoped for. Kenny has become too feminine to be an acceptable Santa Claus. We have mutually agreed to terminate his contract. I am having a contract drafted for you that will work with your current abilities. The new Kyra will handle what you are unable to. Will this be satisfactory?"

"Sure. The money and benefits still the same?"

"Yes. From this moment on, you are in character as Santa Claus. Understood?"

"Yes sir. Who is the new Kyra going to be?"

"Kenny will now have that role," Klaus told him and the surprise on his face was plain for us to see. "With his talents and memory, plus what the hormones have already done to him, he is the best candidate available at this time. From now on, he is "Kyra" to you and you can never divulge his true identity to *anyone*. No one has ever seen the adult Kenny without a beard, so no one will recognize him when it comes off. Your contract will include a clause stipulating that, should you reveal Kyra's true identity to anyone, you will be terminated immediately and lose all compensations. Understood?"

"Uh, yes sir. I let the cat out of the bag and I'm out of work without any more benefits. That's pretty clear."

"Also without your salary! You lose it *all* if you compromise Kyra's identity. You would leave my employ with only the clothes on your back should you divulge this secret. Do you still want to sign?"

"Uh, sure. Show me the dotted line."