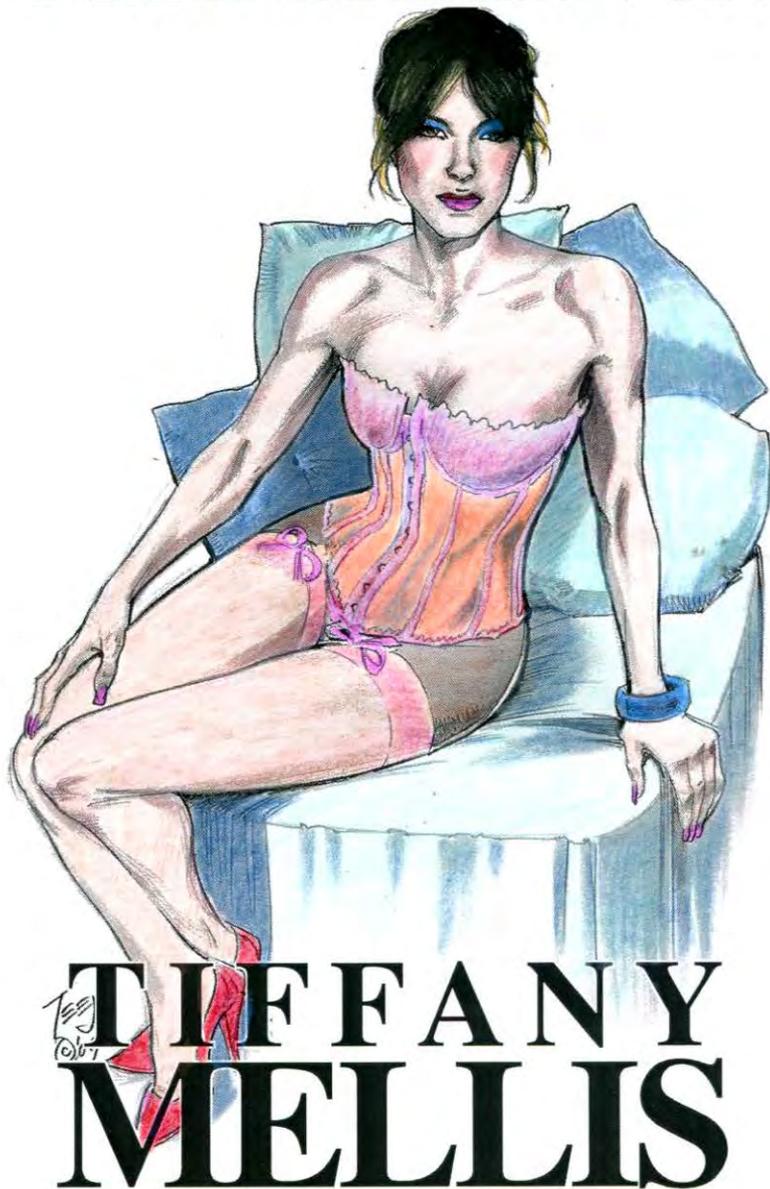


REPEAT PERFORMANCE



TIFFANY
MELLIS

REPEAT PERFORMANCE
and
DATING GAME
both by **TIFFANY MELLIS**



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Written by Tiffany Mellis
Illustrations by Teeje

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Repeat Performance
by
Tiffany Mellis

Susan and I were friends – just friends. I’d have liked it otherwise - she’s drop dead gorgeous but, with me being such a wimp, I’m afraid she’d laugh at me if she had any idea of how much I want her.

Frankly, I think too that women have this *sense* about men. Smell our level of testosterone maybe? I don’t know. You see, it’s not that I’m not interested in girls, I most certainly AM. It’s just that when you’re smaller than most of them and kind of spindly and weak? They sort of look right past you – almost as if you weren’t there. On top of that, I’d very little experience in dating women. Normally, I’ll admit it – I was attracted to the flashy girls and I never seemed to learn. I’d usually stammer and stutter a request for a date. Most of them were kind enough to just laugh and turn me down. Yes, you’re probably asking: “*kind*” enough? The few that did let me take them out humiliated me in ways that still make me tremble with rage and embarrassment – treated me as if I wasn’t any kind of a man at all.

I met Susan on a cruise ship sailing out of San Diego. I was working as a steward while she was a beauty shop operator. She was just so natural, fresh, and considerate that I fell in love with her immediately. She didn’t mind me keeping her company although her girl friends would raise their eyebrows and make snide comments when I’d join them. They were nice enough girls, but they had their eyes open for some rich young stud passenger.

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I mean – I wasn't even a regular employee – just a temporary worker filling in for a Company employee who'd fallen sick.

It was only a two week cruise, but I was grateful for the work. I'd been out of work for quite a long time and having a roof over my head – or a deck – and regular meals was very comforting. On top of that, I may not have been making much money but at least I was making *something* in the way of building up a bank account that had been moribund to say the least.

But all good things must come to an end.. Have to admit that when Susan and I parted I was unhappier about that than the thought of job and apartment hunting again. She was with her sister, Cindy, as we said her goodbyes. “Bye Michael!” Susan cried, giving me an affectionate hug. “It's been SO nice meeting you. Perhaps we'll meet again soon! I hope so!” Then she said. “Did you meet Cindy, my sister, while we were sailing?”

“Yeah, Kinda.” I said, blushing.

Cindy was a *big* woman. Actually was just as pretty as Susan but a LOT bigger and, where Susan was soft and feminine, Cindy was anything but. She and Dallas, her friend – another huge woman were buddies on the ship. Unfortunately, I'd made a stupid comment about them being a pair of Lezzes to one of Susan's friends before I knew that Cindy was Susan's sister. Naturally, that mouthy broad let Cindy know what I'd said. Got the fright of my life when one night, after work I was about to pass Cindy in an alleyway on C deck when she simply grabbed me by both arms, lifted me up, and slammed me into the wall with an impact that rattled my teeth.

“You been making comments about me – you effing little pansy?” she snarled, her face right into mine. “Calling me a Lez? Huh? Now tell me the truth or I'll knock your goddam teeth out!”

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Frightened and rattled, I started to cry and admitted I'd said something like that – but had only meant it as joke. She gave me an evil grin and, holding me in place with one hand, started slapping my face – though very gently – with the other, alternating between the palm and back of her hand, each slap punctuating her words clearly.

(Slap) “Well you little fairy?” (slap) “I AM a lez” (slap) “You think I’m some kind of *joke*?” (slap.) “That it?” (slap).
“No Cindy! I’m sorry!” I said through my tears. “Honest. I won’t say anything after this. I’m sorry!”

She’d surprised me then. Kissed me forcibly and rammed her tongue into my mouth. Then pulled back “Better not sweetie. If I ever hear anything outta you like that again? I’ll pay you a little visit in your cabin some night and have a dildo so far up your ass it’ll be tickling your tonsils. Got that?”

“Yes Cindy,” I’d said cravenly. “But I won’t. I promise!”

But that was then. Cindy was now staring at me, contempt all over her face and in her eyes. Talked to her sister. “Yeah Susan. We’ve met. Come On! Don’t have time to be standing talking to fairies all day!”

Susan rolled her eyes as she was pulled away, but she was giggling too. “Oh Michael! I’m sorry. Don’t mind her, she’s really quite nice! Just grumpy at times!”

I sighed, thinking that was the last time I’d ever see her again. But it wasn’t.

Three weeks later, I met her again. “MICHAEL!” I heard and turned around.

I’d just come out from another interview. Knew damn well I hadn’t made it, despite the assurances of “*Oh YES Michael! You’re very*

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qualified! We just don't have anything for you right now! But we'll call you if anything turns up!"

It was the same old bullshit. I was living in what was nothing much more than a flophouse – and watching my hoarded savings run down the drain. Miserable and disgruntled, I turned to meet Susan – surprised. Effervescent and bright, she was as lovely as always. She was carrying a couple of heavy looking grocery bags.

“Susan! I thought you’d have been off on another cruise by now?” I cried as she put the bags on the ground then came and hugged me and gave me a peck on the cheek.

“No” she giggled. “Cindy may have got a great deal for me on one of the luxury charters. Thought I’d take a chance. Won’t be leaving for a few weeks – but the money’s GREAT – so thought I’d take a chance.”

“Wow! That sounds wonderful! Hope you make it!” I said. “But what are you doing wandering around here carrying these bags?” She blushed. “Can’t find my stupid car! Don’t know where I left it. Feel like such an idiot!”

“Here,” I said. “Let me carry your bags for you – and I’ll help you look for it.”

“That’s nice of you Michael, but really, I can manage. I think they might be kind of heavy for you.”

It was my turn to blush. This *girl* thought she was stronger than me! Then, tactfully she added. “Oh, I’m sorry Michael. That sounded awful! Here. Why don’t you take this one. That would be a big help.” And she picked up what I was pretty sure was the lightest bag and gave it to me.

It didn’t take us long to find her car – it was a small Honda parked between two huge SUV’s which is why she hadn’t been able to

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see it.. I helped her load her groceries in her trunk. Then she said. "Can I drive you anywhere Michael? Or do you have your own car nearby?"

"Can't afford a car right now," I admitted. "Things are kind of lean."

"Well! Can't have that, can we? Need to fatten you up a bit. Say! I'm having Margaret and Jean over for dinner tonight. Why don't you join us. Maybe you can help me cook? I'm worthless in the kitchen." She laughed. "And now that I remember it? Didn't you say you worked as a cook on a boat one time? And that you *loved* to cook? Won't you *please* come and help me?"

She pouted so prettily – and flattered, I couldn't refuse. On top of that, Margaret and Jean were two girls I knew from the boat as well and they'd always been pleasant enough to me, so I knew I'd feel comfortable with them. A little while later I was helping her carry the groceries into her house. Then, once I found out what she was going to have for dinner, I started sorting out the stuff she needed for that while she put the rest of the stuff away in the fridge.

Once that was done, I took off my coat jacket and was just about to start when she appeared, wearing a pretty apron around her waist – and handing one to me.

I blushed. "Ah Susan! I don't think I need . . ."

"Michael! Aren't these your good clothes that you wear for interviews?"

"Yes," I admitted sheepishly.

"Well, don't be so silly! Remember I've seen you in a wedding gown! So stop being so silly! Here, let me tie the bow for you!"

"I wish I'd never let myself get talked into that damn dress!" I blustered as she fitted the apron around my waist and tied the bow at my back. "Don't think anybody'll ever let me forget it!"

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“Must admit it. I thought you were very brave!” she giggled. “Not many men would have the courage – but you *did* look cute you know. Remember how amazed the passengers were when you won first prize for the best costume – and they found out you were a man?”

“Still wish I’d never done it,” I grumbled.

“Well sweetie? You did! Now are you going to stand there and fuss all afternoon – or get on with the cooking?”

I had to smile. “Slave driver!” I said.

“Got that right!” she laughed. “Get on with it, slave!”

Dinner preparation was well under way about a half hour later. I suppose with all the clatter and noise I hadn’t heard the front door open, but froze in my tracks when I heard the deep voice from the kitchen doorway.

“My MY! Isn’t *this* a pretty picture! Hello *girls!*” And Cindy was standing there, an evil grin on her face!

I was immediately aware of the impression I had to be making. Hair mussed, some flour probably dusting my face, a frilled apron – with a flounced bow? Embarrassed, I started to reach behind me to undo the bow, but Cindy knew immediately what I was trying to do and was there beside me in a flash, one hand on my arm, restraining me.

“Oh, please don’t be embarrassed! You look so *cute!* Pretty almost! Happy! I’d be most offended if I thought you were going to take your lovely apron off because of me! So? Leave it alone – *please?*”

“Oh Michael!” Susan giggled. “Don’t let her tease you so much!” Then she spoke to Cindy. “Leave him alone for goodness sake! Go and grab a beer or something! Piss off!”

Cindy grinned at Susan. “Okay sis. Sounds like a good idea.” Then she gave me a warning stare. “But you won’t take your

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pretty apron off – will you Michael?”

“Oh shut up Cindy!” Susan retorted before I could make an answer.

“He won’t. Needs it to protect his clothes! Now just go away!”

“Whatever your pretty head desires sis,” Cindy said, then leered at me as she went to the fridge and pulled out a bottle of beer, opened it and took a quick drink. “Bye – girls,” she said, leaving the kitchen.

Susan saw my expression and came and gave me a hug. “Don’t let her bother you. She’s really just teasing you know. Just stand up to her –she’ll leave you alone.” Then she firmed up. “Come on slave. Work to be done!”

I probably did something wrong then. Trying to make light of the whole episode, I took the sides of my apron in my hands and bobbed a quick curtsy. “Yes Mistress,” I said – but smiled to show I was joking.

A peculiar expression showed in her eyes and she looked at me questioningly for a split second before she smiled herself. “Okay.” Was all she said.

I felt a little strange wearing the apron in front of Margaret and Jean when they arrived – and wearing it all through dinner. When Susan suggested I take it off when we ate, I just laughed and said it would be good protection for my clothes as I was a messy eater – and as I’d be needing it to clean up afterwards and do the dishes, there was no sense in taking it off, was there? Naturally, I was well aware of the sardonic expression in Cindy’s eyes on hearing my explanation – and just as naturally, was forced to wear the apron even when she hurried away out of the house, five minutes after dinner. After all, I couldn’t very well reverse what I’d said before, could I? I felt somewhat strange doing the clean up afterwards – the girls in jeans and tops, and me in a flimsy, feminine half apron wafting around me. I kept sensing half-amused glances being

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shot at each other behind my back. Once caught Jean flipping her wrists in a sissy-like manner at the other two in a reflection of the kitchen window – but what could I say? Breathed a sigh of relief afterwards (though had a nervous look at the door) when I finally took the apron off and joined the girls for a drink.

It turned out that Susan had a favor to ask. It turned out that she split the rent of the house with Cindy and, by not being at work was starting to feel the pinch. “This charter job that Cindy and Dallas are talking about pays a LOT better than my old job – and it sounds like a lot of fun,” she said. “But I need to keep the wolf from the door right now – and I’ve been offered a job at Helen’s Beauty shop – but part of my deal with Cindy is that I keep house – and do the cooking.”

“*You?*” Margaret laughed. “You can’t boil water!”

“Don’t know about that,” Jean said. “That meal was delicious!”

Susan blushed. “Oh, you’ve got Michael to thank for that. I just stood around and watched – or did what he told me. That’s all.”

“Ah!” Margaret said “I was wondering about that. So you’re looking for a roomie? Don’t think I can – and don’t think I know anybody – but I’ll look if you want?”

“I’m in the same boat,” Jean added. “But I’ll check around.”

“Thanks girls,” Susan said. “I’d really appreciate it. Cindy’s not pressing me or anything – I just like to pay my own way is all.” We all nodded understandingly and went on to talk about other things.

I had a nice time, but left earlier than the others. Didn’t really want to – I had such a crush on Susan – but was very nervous thinking about Cindy coming back and catching me still there. Walked for a while, then got the bus home to my apartment building.

Two days later, I came home from another (unsuccessful) interview.

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My heart sank when I saw Mrs. Andrews, the apartment manager, standing in the hall. Hoped she wasn't going to dun me for the rent – I had two days left on that month I thought. But she greeted me pleasantly enough. “Glad I caught you Michael. Hope you don't mind, but I let a Miss Timpson into your apartment – she claims to be a friend of yours? A very pretty girl?”

“Susan?” I asked hopefully.

She shrugged. “Showed me her license, but I've forgotten. Hope it's okay?”

“Sure!” I grinned, delighted at the prospect and hurried up to my apartment and burst in through the door. “Susan!” I called out.

I stopped, transfixed with horror as Cindy came stalking out of the kitchen! She smiled as if delighted to see me, then came and embraced me. “Oh Mikey! You're home! Have a nice day?”

As she spoke, she dropped her arms until she was holding me around the waist, then effortlessly lifted me up and carried me into my own kitchen – and sat me down on top of the cabinet beside the sink. “But, you know what?” she continued. “I've looked everywhere – and can't find one pretty apron – not ONE! Why is that?”

“I don't have any aprons Cindy,” I mumbled.

“Aw! And you looked so pretty the other night! That apron you wore? Just looked so *right* for you. Know what I mean?”

“But – it was Susan's apron Cindy. Not mine!” I managed a trace of indignation this time.

“Of course it was! But you liked it – didn't you? Now tell the truth now! I don't like sissies who tell fibs! You enjoyed the pretty apron, didn't you?”

“I'm not a sissy, Cindy,” I said, but weakly.

“Yes you are,” she cooed. “A *pretty* little sissy. Tell me? What did you wear under your wedding gown the night of that costume ball, huh?”