

TRIANGLE



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By Stella Satin

Even as a kid I wasn't much into reading. Mom was such a sports nut that there were always stacks of magazines or autobiographies of jocks around the house, but I found them nothing but – boring! Debbie's was my girlfriend. Her mom was into Romance (She laughed and called them 'Bodice Rippers') and there were usually some of them lying around when I'd be waiting for Debbie – which was pretty often – so I'd leaf through them on a regular basis. They were kind of silly, but they helped to pass the time.

Which is a kind of roundabout way of saying that my reading was limited. Not only that? It wasn't what you'd call good literature either. But I was well enough aware that the basis for a lot of plots in books or movies was a 'triangle'. Two men competing after one woman – or two women trying to captivate one guy. Pretty basic. What I'd never read about was a triangle where I loved Debbie, she loved Janice – and Janice wanted me. Janice didn't come into the picture for quite a few years though.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I'd known Debbie Williams in Elementary school, but it wasn't until we were in Junior High that I started getting a crush on her. She was so gorgeous! Had a great personality and had all the boys after her, though she said she wasn't interested in them – just liked me. This of course suited me right down to the ground. As we lived close to each other and our mother's couldn't afford to buy us cars, it became an automatic thing for us to meet on the way to the school bus every morning and keep each other company on the way home. Naturally, other kids would join us regularly, but it was recognized by everybody that we were a 'twosome' and in front of everyone, Debbie acted as if she doted on me. Was MY girlfriend.

By ourselves, it was a different story. I mean, she was nice. Maybe a little bit bossy but I didn't mind. What did bother me was the fact that she'd drop all of her flirting ways, and treat me just like a friend. Not a girlfriend perhaps – but not a boyfriend either. Almost like I was her sister would be the best way of describing it. This went on up through High School until our senior year.

Her mom did something to do with computers and worked out of her house. I know she didn't make that much money, but they seemed to get along without too many problems. They had rented the house they stayed in for years. Her dad had split with his secretary years before. I don't think her mom liked men too much, but she always welcomed me into the house after a time when she examined me thoroughly I guess. Had no objections to me being Debbie's friend. She'd tease me a little at times, but was never mean or anything like that.

In our house, my mom was a dog's body for a local newspaper – at least that's what she called herself. She wanted to be a sportswriter in the worst possible way. Had been quite a jock herself in college but never enough to make a go of it as a professional. Doted on sports in the craziest way imaginable. She did have an office job when she met my dad and was doing quite well in management, but dropped it without a qualm when she had me. He got killed in a freeway accident just after I was born. The insurance money wasn't much, but it tided us over for a while and mom got a low paying job on a local newspaper – something she'd always wanted to do.

Now a small town like ours can barely support a newspaper – and doesn't pay employees very much, but mom loved what she was doing and persevered – did everything that was ever asked of her and I mean everything! I'm not implying sex. I heard mom say often, that she'd had all the men she ever wanted and didn't need any more – except for ME – and I never saw anything that showed she didn't mean it. Accordingly, she attended just about every event a small town can generate, both social and sporting. She didn't care for lots of them, but looked upon them as simply part of her job. But there was a fair size town not far from us which supported just about all of the professional sports venues, so she constantly had tickets to all sorts of events. It was probably the biggest prickly point between us – I was bored out of my mind most of the time when she'd take me – nothing but big jocks going around, showing off as far as I was concerned.

When I was little, I had no choice – I went to these games whether I wanted to or not. Mom couldn't afford a baby sitter. It wasn't so bad at times as I got older – she knew how I felt about Debbie and invited her along a few times. Debbie always pretended she had a great time, but she wasn't much into that stuff either. Seemed to be more interested in being close to my mom to tell the truth. Then, to reciprocate, her mother would 'baby sit' me if mom had only one ticket – or there was something I did NOT want to attend, which happened more regularly as I got older – and I'd spend the time of the game with Debbie and her mom. A few times, I even stayed with Debbie's mom – while she went off to some sports event with mine!

Mrs. Williams was great! Around mom, I often got the feeling that, although she loved me fiercely, I was a sort of disappointment to her. I

think she understood that I was too small and skinny for most sports, but couldn't grasp why I wasn't out there trying to build muscles or stamina or other junk like that. Around Mrs. Williams, there was nothing like that – she accepted me as Debbie's friend, and that was all there was to it. Unlike mom, she was into clothes, makeup and hairdos – womanly stuff, you know? I don't think she was as good looking as mom, but she made the most of her looks, while mom didn't give a shit – you know what I mean? She'd even casually ask for my opinion on various shades or materials – made me feel important. My mom on the other hand would often ask me some question on sports, then get all pissed off if I didn't know, or screwed up the answer.

Lots of times then, I'd hear Debbie being given tips on makeup, hair care – and that kind of stuff. Once I was taught how to make cookies along with Debbie. It was kind of embarrassing being made to wear a floral apron to protect my clothes but her mom was adamant and it actually was a lot of fun messing around with the women in a kitchen. A few times after that, her mom would show us how to make simple dishes like meat loaf or Pasta Marinara – how to cook veggies – that sort of thing. Mom looked at me kind of strangely when she came home one night and I'd made a meat loaf and potatoes. Mind you, she inhaled it – an admittedly rotten cook herself and too poor to eat out often, we'd got used to eating too much Macaroni and cheese, hot dogs, that kind of thing. After that, when she was making up her grocery list, she'd get me involved and would buy stuff that I wanted to cook. I never wore an apron in front of her though. She had some nice ones that she'd been given, but the thought of it made me feel funny, so I didn't. I'd no proof, but the thought of my mom's reaction if she saw me in a floral apron? I shuddered.

When I went around to Debbie's to hang out one rainy afternoon, Mrs. Williams was apologetic – she was going to spend a few hours giving dressmaking lessons to Debbie – but if I wanted to join them, she could give me some pointers at the same time? Blushing – this was beyond the pale – I turned her down and asked if I could wait for Debbie instead. She shrugged and said it was okay – so I settled down with one of her 'bodice rippers' after she and Debbie went into the room where Mrs. Williams kept her sewing machine and dressmaking stuff. The book was pretty bad and I had just about decided to go home, when Debbie bounced into the room where I sat. She looked a little angry.

"This is silly! What are you doing out here, all by yourself! Why won't you come in with us?"

"But you guys are dressmaking Debbie. What am I supposed to do?"

"Learning to sew is too ladylike for macho man?" she asked sarcastically.

"AW Debbie – you know it's not that!"

"What is it then?" she said, coming and tugging me to my feet by the arm, then propelling me back into the room she had just left.

Mrs. Williams looked up at me as Debbie shut the door behind us. “Thank you Philip. I think Debbie gets bored with me at times. Needs someone to chatter to. But don’t let her boss you around. If you don’t want to do this, just say so. She’s far too bossy where you’re concerned. I keep telling her that she should be more ladylike...”

“Aw mom!” Debbie broke in. “Not that again! I can act ladylike when I want. Just don’t see why I should be that way with him. He’s my friend for goodness sake!”

“As I was saying to Philip, Debbie?” Mrs. Williams said pointedly. “He doesn’t need to stay if he doesn’t want to. I don’t want to embarrass the poor boy!”

“Oh mom! He’s not embarrassed, are you Philip?” Debbie laughed.

“Well, it’s okay, I guess,” I managed, blushing like crazy to contradict what I was saying, but nobody seemed to notice my face.

“See mom? Told you!” Debbie laughed. “Now don’t you have a smock for him?”

Mrs. Williams looked theatrically aghast. “Oh Debbie! You can’t possibly expect him to wear a smock?” Then she smiled at her daughter. “Don’t you think that’s asking just a little too much?”

Debbie looked perplexed. “Why on earth not? I have to wear one, and you don’t hear ME complaining. I mean it’s not like it’s a party dress or anything, is it? Quite plain as a matter of fact.” She turned to me. “I mean, these aprons you wear when you’re in the kitchen with us are a LOT frillier. Mom wants me to wear smocks when I’m in here because she made them herself, exclusively for sewing. They got nice big patch pockets for holding your tape measure in – and spools of thread – that sort of thing. Then it’s got a padded area that you can store your needles and pins in. It’s strictly functional Philip. You surely can’t have a problem with that, do you?”

As Debbie was speaking, Mrs. Williams went to the closet and pulled out a hanger with a brightly colored garment on it, then proceeded to take the smock off the hanger and cross over the floor to me with it in her hand. “Want to try it on, Philip?”

“Of course he does!” Debbie said, taking it from her and handing it to me. “Here Philip. Stop messing about and put this on over your head.”

No sense going into details. I wore the pretty, feminine thing then, and every other time I took sewing lessons. Matter of fact, there was no question about it, I was probably better on a sewing machine than Debbie – but as she said? “I want to look good wearing clothes – not making them!” So it wasn’t as if I pissed her off or anything. I mean it was nice to have my girlfriend parading around in her sexy slip or something – but

she paid me no more mind than she did her own mother. As if I were her dressmaker! As if I were sexless!

Then, sometimes, they'd take me shopping with them. I kind of liked that to tell the truth. It's not as if they embarrassed me or something like that. Okay, I guess I'd gradually been feminized to a certain extent by that time, but you tell me this. You're walking in a mall with a gorgeous blonde (Who you lust after, body and soul) linked with you on one arm – and a beautiful woman just a little older, on the other. You going to complain when as part of this they seem to think that you're one of them. Gonna refuse?

Okay, when they window shop, it's not exactly motor cycles, sporting goods, or men's haberdashery they're looking at. But what're you going to do when your companions wheel you around to look into the Victoria's Secret windows, huh? Complain? Or they take a few minutes in front of a cosmetic counter to discuss new lipstick or nail polish colors. Same thing? I mean it's not as if they expected me to put the stuff on – although Mrs. Williams would sometimes look at me with a quizzical expression as if wondering how I'd reply if I was asked. Though I'll admit that I was asked for my opinion a few times – and when I had one, both Debbie and her mother were nice enough to listen attentively to what I had to say.

Looking at what I've just written, it could look like I was swishing around in aprons and smocks and shopping with women all the time. It wasn't that way at all. Okay, I'd graduated to different aprons and smocks over the years and thought nothing of wearing them at the appropriate time. I'll admit that the time that I was given a pale blue, satiny material smock to wear – matching the one that Mrs. Williams had made for Debbie, I blushed, getting an immediate insight into the overall picture that suddenly flashed into my mind when we wore them together for the first time. But Debbie was so delighted with hers that I felt it would be ungrateful to complain. And to be quite honest? I think that neither of them would have understood any complaint I'd have made. I mean I just wasn't a sissy is all I'm trying to say – regardless of appearances.

Okay okay okay! There were another few things that a normal guy wouldn't have done and if I'm to report on what honestly happened I should write about them – although at the time they didn't bother me hardly at all – well maybe the pink party dress I wore that Halloween?

Debbie had become a cheerleader and every so often two of the other girls, Norma and Tiffany, would come over to practice their coordination and their cheers and suchlike. At first the two girls didn't understand why on earth I'd be sitting watching them when I could be off doing something else – like boy things for example. Then they got the impression that I was Debbie's steady and then, as time passed, changed their minds and seemed to cotton on to the idea that I was her friend – just like they were – and started to treat me in exactly the same way as they did each other. It didn't make much sense then for me not to join them – and it wasn't

long before they were pressing me, and we got in the habit of all of us prancing about in front of Mrs. Williams with our pompoms and cheerleader screams to see what she thought. Just don't get the wrong idea, I wasn't wearing skirts or anything. I was just having fun with three girls is all.

Being small and slim doesn't bother me so much now, but in high school it was like all of the guys were shooting up past me – and even a lot of the girls were too –and the ones that didn't were developing about the bust area too so that often, I was like a little kid amongst a bunch of adults. Debbie never grew huge, luckily enough, though her bust developed nicely so that she was shapely to say the least. It was in our sophomore year that the guys at school really started coming on to her but, to everyone's amazement – including mine – she told everybody she had a steady – and I was it!

Halloween was coming up and she was all excited – had been bugging her mom to make her a very special costume and though the two of them were as thick as thieves while they were about it, I wasn't given a clue. She was going to a party given by a cousin in the next town. (We had got too old for trick or treating). But then, about a week before the party, she got really down and grouchy. Stopped talking about how much fun she was going to have and snapped at me if I asked what was wrong. It was a very rare mood for her to be in, but I had learned to leave her alone, even though I was concerned – after all, I'd been a little hurt that she hadn't asked me to accompany her to the party – but I wasn't mean enough to hope that she'd have a bad time. Far from it.

I finally managed to get a private word with her mom and asked her what the problem was. She looked a little defensive. "I don't know if Debbie wants me to tell you Philip. But she may not be able to go to the party after all and she feels kind of silly now."

"Silly?" I asked. "But she's been going on about her costume for weeks! It's finished, isn't it?"

"Oh yes. And she looks marvelous in it. Not the kind of thing I'd have ever expected from Debbie, but she looks absolutely fantastic!" She continued. "Well, Norma had agreed to go as her date, and ..."

"Norma? But she's a girl!" I interrupted. "How come she couldn't ask me?"

Mrs. Williams sighed. "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings Philip but ..."
She paused as if making up her mind, then obviously made her decision. "Here, let me show you something. Just hold on a minute." With that, she left the room. A minute or so later, she returned, a photograph in her hand. She smiled in a motherly way and handed it to me. "Debbie was SO taken with how she looked, she wanted this taken." I looked at the photograph blankly – of a young man in a tux.

"Huh?" I said, looking up from the picture.

Mrs. Williams laughed. "That's Debbie! Doesn't she look fantastic?"

I shook my head and looked back at the picture – but it took me a few seconds to see that it was indeed my girlfriend – and she made a great looking guy! I looked back at Mrs. Williams.

She sensed my confusion then explained. "She doesn't have to have a date for the party – her cousin told her that – but if she didn't she's positive she'd be the only one without a date there."

"And Norma? Was going as her date?" I asked, still confused.

Mrs. Williams shook her head. "Oh Philip, for goodness sake! That's why she didn't ask you – she wanted a girl to go with her – as her date. Did nothing but giggle and laugh at the thought of the expression on her cousin's face when she discovered who Debbie and her partner actually were!"

"So what happened to Norma? She told me over the phone last night that she wasn't doing anything for Halloween. Why'd she drop out?"

Mrs. Williams shrugged her shoulders. "Some kind of allergic reaction to something she ate. Came out in awful looking blotches all over her body and face."

"Couldn't she use makeup?" I asked.

"Seemingly, doing that could make her whole condition even worse. I guess that her mother won't hear of it – and I can't say as I blame her."

"Oh. Can't Debbie get anybody else?"

"It's too late to ask another girl, Philip. Most kids have plans by now. I think she's asked a few, but none of them can make it."

"Aw, that's a shame! Wish I could help," I said.

"That's nice of you Philip, and I'm sure you mean it..." she started, then gave me a most peculiar look. Cocked her head – and gave me that quizzical look that I'd seen so often. Then she spoke, very carefully. "Look dear? I have an idea. Please? Don't hesitate to refuse – I feel awful even thinking of asking it of you – but Debbie has been SO miserable..."

"Want me to give you a hand to make her another costume? I'd be glad to!" I interrupted enthusiastically.

She got a puzzled look in her eyes then gave her head a slight shake as if bemoaning my lack of insight. Sighed. "No Philip. I was just wondering if... if you'd be her date?"

"Sure! I wasn't thinking I'd be doing anything this year – so I don't have a costume," I said "But her tux wouldn't fit me. And what would SHE wear?"

She shook her head again. "I meant as her date, Philip! To replace Norma!"

"Huh?" And then her suggestion struck home. "You mean – wear a dress? Pretend to be a girl?"

She smiled. "Finally! You got it! Yes Philip, that's exactly what I meant. There's a formal dress of Debbie's that she's grown out of would probably fit you near perfectly!"

I started to pant in pure fright. "Oh, Mrs. Williams? I couldn't wear a dress! Everybody would laugh!"

She laid a hand on my arm. "Philip? It's perfectly understandable that you say no – but please don't say it for the wrong reason."

It was my turn to shake my head. "Wrong reason? But if the kids at school found out, I'd never be able to live it down. I have a hard enough time as it is!"

She nodded. "IF they found out – but how would that happen?"

I looked around the room helplessly. "Well, I wouldn't be telling about it – that's for sure..."

"And Debbie wouldn't – not if you asked her to keep quiet. She'd be far too grateful to do anything to hurt you" She paused. "And none of the kids you know will be going there..."

"But a guy – in a dress!" I wailed.

"If I thought I couldn't make you look like a girl in a dress, do you think I'd ask you?" She was speaking more firmly now. "I think I could make you look like a girl. If I couldn't convince you? No deal!" Taking command of the situation.

I felt myself weaken. "But Mrs. Williams? Are you sure there wouldn't be anyone from our school at the party?"

"No. Not right now. But tell you what? Why don't you think it over and while you're doing that, I'll find out if that is going to be the case. Now, if it is the case that you'll know nobody there and Debbie promises not to tell anybody – do we have a deal?" Her face softened. "It'd mean an awful lot to me and Debbie, Philip."

"I..I .. I guess so," I said weakly.

"You are such a sweet boy!" she said, then gave me a hug.

I got home in a dither. There was no doubt about it, I knew that I'd earn a lot of Brownie points with Debbie if I did as her mother had suggested – but the thought of wearing a dress? Scared the hell out of me. Suppose my mom found out? Or anybody else for that matter? After a great deal of soul searching, I decided to call Mrs. Williams and back out of our deal

before she'd gone to any trouble. But then I dithered about. After all? I'd definitely made points with her – and if she discovered that there was somebody I knew going to be at the party, then I could back out gracefully. I must have picked up that phone ten times – then put it down again.

But as it turned out? It didn't matter. Debbie called me.

When I answered the phone, she came on with a rush telling me how sweet and wonderful I was – and how eternally grateful she'd be – and wouldn't it be a good idea if I came over to her house right away?

"What for?" I asked.

"Silly! Mom told me how scared you were about people being there that know you – and how you'd feel if they found out you are really a boy! And ..."

"Are there going to be any gals or guys I know there?" I interrupted.

"Of course not! I wouldn't dream of taking you up on your offer if there were!"

"But what if anybody finds out?"

"Well? Mom and I figure that the only way they're going to find out that you're not a girl is if you can't act the part – like say you wobble in high heels – don't know how to carry a purse – or fix your lipstick And we've got to make sure that your dress fits you perfectly! So why don't you get over here – Pronto! We can start teaching you everything you need to know! Not only that? If we hurry? We'll have lots of time!"

I listened to what she was gushing with a growing sense of horror. "Look Debbie. I don't know..."

Her voice grew a little frigid. "Now don't you be getting cold feet now! Behave Philip! Get your backside over here!" she said quickly.

"Aw Debbie! Suppose I can't act the part?" I squeaked.

"Mmmm. Tell you what. Promise me that you'll try. Practice what we ask you to. Then I'll leave it up to you. If you don't think you can pass as a girl by the time that Halloween is here? I'll let you off."

"But you'll be mad at me if I can't." I said weakly.

"No I won't – I promise! I'll even promise in front of mom!"

Knowing Mrs. Williams stance on promises made and the keeping thereof, I knew that Debbie meant what she said. Knew I was defeated and agreed that I'd get over to their house immediately.

I don't think I'll ever forget the experience that followed. Mrs. Williams was nice and understanding but was adamant – she made me strip to the

waist then put on a bra! “There’s just no way I can fit a dress to you Philip unless I’ve established a bust size for you, so please? Don’t argue. Just do as you’re told.”



I think that I knew my goose was cooked the minute I put it on. A wave of helplessness washed over me as the two women circled around me, discussing the merits of the various types of bra that would suit me best – which naturally meant that I had to try on different ones. They finally decided on a strapless, padded, bustier, assuring me (As if I cared!) that once I was in my dress, I’d look great!