

AUNT EMILY'S SUGGESTION



By BEA



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By Bea

"Christ! Would you look at THAT!!" Jenny said pointing out the window at the beautifully dressed girl who was standing with her mother in their driveway, waving hello to us. The girl was in a long floral summer frock with a broad white lace collar and faux black pearls, pale hose and white sandal shoes with a medium heel. A pretty face set off by shoulder length, wavy, blonde hair. I thought she looked smashing! Okay, she was my cousin – but maybe we could be GOOD friends? Know what I mean? The mother was dressed more elderly, but was also one good-looking woman. She looked nice and was waving happily as well.

"Jenny? You little shit? What did I tell you!" Mom said. We were still too far away for her to be seen by the people in the driveway, but she was speaking from a clenched mouth, trying her level best to show a smile "Any crap from you for the next few months and I'll beat the hell out of you!"

"But she's just a girl, maw! Look at that outfit!" Jenny complained.

"That's what girls are supposed to wear dummy! Not jeans and tops all the time! Keep it up and I'll buy YOU some dresses" mom hissed. "That what you want? Now behave!" She then turned her attention to me although she didn't turn her head. "Philip? I find out that Jen's been mean to Gloria? I'll expect you to tell me. Got that?"

"No problem mom," I said heartily.

"Goddam sneak!" Jenny muttered at me.

"WILL YOU WATCH THAT MOUTH?" mom said out loud – but smiling a little genuinely now as we drew up beside her sister Emily and daughter Gloria.

Let's face it. I love my mom, she's nice. But there's no question, Jen is her favorite amongst us two. Naturally, she hides this as well as she can but Mom is a sportswriter for magazines and just starting to get noticed. She's gregarious and outgoing, a lot of fun. Very sports minded and was quite a jock at school. Jenny has all the earmarks of being just like her. Not big but tough minded. They're two of a kind. Very competitive. Me on the other hand? I'm quiet and bookish. Older than Jennie by a short year but in size she's almost caught all he

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

way up to me. Up until recently, I was always the top dog in the home but recently, she's starting to question that. To tell the truth, I'm starting to get a little nervous of this but getting Mom's permission to keep an eye on Jen's escapades gave me a lot of confidence. Gave me a big stick too. Know what I mean?

Jen and me were going to spend a few months with Aunt Emily and Gloria. Mom had this big chance with a National magazine, but this involved going around with various sports teams for a while. Once she did that, she could settle down pretty near anywhere but for the time being us kids were a problem. Aunt Emily lived out in the boonies and home schooled Gloria. With her being an ex-teacher and having great relationships with mom, she was a perfect choice. I didn't mind because, frankly? I didn't get on too well with the guys at school. Jen on the other hand? She loved mom and could see the need for what had to be done but, at the same time was pissed off because she was right on the point of making Varsity in a number of sports at high school. Was even pressing some of the boy athletes there as well.

But everyone was all smiles as we got out of the car and we went through all the hugging and kissing that's involved when friends get together. We hadn't seen them for a while being at opposite ends of the country. I smelt my aunt Emily and practically inhaled her – she smelled SO wonderful! So soft and feminine. A little taller than me in heels – but lovely! I must admit to being surprised by Gloria. I was kinda shy so hung back... Surprisingly though, she just smiled – then hugged me. I was expecting a soft curvaceous body, just like her mother's – but underneath that floral dress was something else entirely different. Sure, she smelled lovely as well – but there was a hardness there. Real strength. I was surprised. Someone that looked that feminine – yet felt so lithe and strong? But I was so taken by the moment that I forgot immediately.

Naturally we stood there for a moment, then went inside. The house wasn't very big, but charmingly feminine I thought. It was SUCH a nice change from mom's “throw it anywhere” routine. Not that I ever complained about mom – but this was just so nice!

We'd had lunch on the way there, so just chatted over soft drinks for a while. Then it was mom's time to go. She apologized sincerely but she had a long way to go to meet up with the team. She handed me her keys and Jen and I went out to get our luggage. Gloria tried to come help us, but her mom said she couldn't – in no uncertain tones and I saw Gloria sulk a little as Jen as I left. Knowing the cases we needed was easy, but I had to admit a trace of uneasiness at how Jen could handle even the heaviest luggage – while I felt the weight a few times. Finally, we got it into the house as mom was saying her goodbyes.

There were a few tears and well wishes as we said her farewells to her, then we all trooped out to wave her goodbye. She didn't fool around. A few blown kisses and she was off. Emily put her arms around Jen and me and led us into the house. “Okay, all you kids? Let's have a quick talk and get this over with. Okay?”



She was obviously in charge, and nice. We certainly weren't going to argue. Gloria led the way, then Jen and I followed, with Emily bringing up the rear. Back we went to where we'd been before and all settled down. "Now let me talk and you kids can ask questions when I'm finished. Okay?" she said.

We all nodded. I wondered what she had in her mind. She made a point of addressing Jan and me first. "Your mom tells me that you're nice kids, and I believe her. You Jenny are used to being bossed around by a boy – and I'm not saying that you're mean Philip, but Gloria isn't used to a male. Not only that, I'm not used to having a guy around. Got it? So I need you to behave!"

Frankly, I was complimented a little. Okay in past times I had been a little bossy with Jan – but that's what older brother's DO, right? At the same time, I didn't want Aunt Emily thinking I was worse than I was. "I'm not that mean, Aunt Emily," I said. "Honest."

She proceeded to shake me. "I really don't care Philip. Oh, if you start beating up on the girls, you'll have to answer to me. Otherwise? They're going to have to learn to put up with you. I don't expect to hear ANY bitches from you girls, understand? If he's giving you a problem, I expect you to learn to live with it.

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

Girls have learned to get along with men for centuries. Frankly Gloria? I think that having a man around will do you a lot of good!"

Jan broke in defensively. "Aunt Emily? Philip's really not that bad. I don't think you have to worry about him being a bully."

I was very pleased at Jan. Felt nice at being defended. Was quite surprised actually at Jan speaking up for me. But then Aunt Emily spoke up again. "That's all very well Jan. I just want to point it out most definitely that I expect us all to get along. I spend a lot of the time here at home working on the computer and taking care of the house." Here she shot a look at Gloria. "Despite some people's objections, but I still expect peace and a quiet life."

I saw a sort of sulky grin cross over Gloria's face at Emily's comment and wondered, but Emily was talking again. "And to you, Philip, a fair warning. The girls – and me – will maybe have to adjust to you. "But?" here she looked around appraisingly. "This IS a womanish house. I know my sister and love her dearly – but a housekeeper she isn't. On the other hand Philip, I am - so you are going to have to adjust as well. Is that fair?"

"Sounds more than fair to me aunt," I smiled.

"Okay then? We're all agreed? No bitching? That fair?"

Us three kids were nodding when the phone rang. "I'll get it" she said. "Gloria? Be a dear and show these two to their sleeping areas."

Gloria nodded and making sure that her mother didn't see her, quickly grabbed up a few suitcases – mine as it turned out, while Jan got hers. I offered to help, but Jan just shook her head at me and picked up her own. I felt kinda stupid, trailing behind Gloria. She stopped on a landing and pointed with her elbow to one door. "You and I are sleeping in there Jan. Whose luggage do I have?"

"His," Jan said. "I'll dump my luggage first."

"Okay. Philip, follow me," Gloria said then led me down to another bedroom further down the hall and kicked the door open. "This is yours," she said, taking my cases in.

"You gotta be kidding!" I said, looking at one of the most perfect examples of a girl's room I ever saw. Soft pastels, mostly in pinks and whites. A single four-poster bed with an off white satin cover – to match the bedspread – which had about five strategically placed dolls on it. Soft white antique furniture with deep pink throw shag rugs. Mirrored closet. Posters of girls in various hairstyles and makeup on the walls. Absolutely gorgeous!

"I'm really sorry!" she said, thumping the cases on to the floor and thank goodness her back was to me or she might have seen the look of surprise on my face. "This is ALL mom's idea. Not mine! She's bound and determined to make a lady out of me. She's firmly convinced that some of this niceness will rub off on me while I sleep or something!"

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

"Good grief!" Jan said, coming in now, her suitcases left in her room. A sound of distaste in her tone. "Your mom wants you to sleep like THIS?" She sounded as if she were sorry for Gloria!

"Yup!" Gloria said sadly, bouncing her ass onto the bed cover. She was still as gorgeous as ever, but different somehow. Almost as if a shell had been removed. "You and I are sharing one bedroom Jan because it's a double bed in there. You Philip are lucky enough to get this! I'm sorry, but this is the only single bed in the house – and it's only a three bedroom. The only other choices were sleeping with mom or me. I'm dreadfully sorry."

"But I feel awful, setting you out of your own place," I said sincerely.

Gloria looked at me suspiciously. "There's no need to be sarcastic," she said grimly.

"Oh, don't mind him!" Jan said. "He's probably sincere. Has some really crazy ideas some time." She laughed a bit. "I saw you in that dress and started wondering what I'd got myself into. God, you look girlish!" she said – and she wasn't being complimentary.

Gloria plucked despairingly at her lovely dress. "She makes me wear stuff like this on a regular basis! Hates me in pants and a top! I'm really hoping that you guys - especially you Philip – can get her to see reason!"

"Get me to see reason about what – exactly?" Emily said, coming into the room but smiling. "I wanted to apologize Philip," she said. "Was going to mention this downstairs, but got interrupted by that stupid phone." She opened up one side of a closet. "Sorry but we moved a lot of Gloria's stuff to the spare bedroom to make some room for your stuff here." (There was plenty of room for my stuff, but I felt a strange feeling go through me as I saw the beautiful clothes and fabrics which would now be beside mine.). She continued by opening a door I hadn't noticed before. "This dear, is your bathroom. I hate to keep on saying that I'm sorry, but you'll have to share it with me. I had the house built this way when Gloria was little – she was sick a lot and needed attention. This let us have connecting rooms – and a bathroom between two women makes sense."

I shook my head a little. "But Aunt? I can't share a bathroom with you!"

"Of course you can, silly!" she laughed. "We both keep our doors to the bathroom unlocked. When someone goes in, they just lock the other side. When they're finished, they simply unlock it. That's all there is to it. Of course you can expect to be yelled at the first time you forget and lock me out. But you'll soon get used to it." She opened the door and let me see in to a beautiful bathroom. "And that's one thing Philip? I'll admit to being a clean freak when it comes to bathrooms. I hope that you're clean – because I'll really get on your case if you're not!"

"She means it too!" Gloria laughed. "A royal pain in the ass!"

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

"Gloria! Language!" Emily said, sounding just like mom talking to Jan but shaking her head sadly.

"Can I change now mom?" Gloria added eagerly.

"Of course not!" Gloria started, then drew to a stop. "Aw, I guess so. You other kids will need to unpack and I expect will want to see outside before dinner." She paused, then added to Jan and I. "I know I said that I wouldn't listen to anybody whining. But I genuinely want to hope that both of you have a nice stay – and are happy!" With that, she came and hugged us both, then everyone left my room.

Of course I felt silly. From an untidy place to one that gleamed. From an old bedroom with vestiges of old bunk beds when Jan and I had slept in the same room for company – to this? Frankly, I was in awe although very, VERY, glad that I hadn't had a chance to comment to Gloria or Jan how nice I thought the room had the strongest feeling that I'd be laughed at immediately I slowly unpacked, feeling all the time that I was in somebody else's room. Felt myself swallow nervously when I saw the limited space I had – although plenty for my requirements, in the chest of drawers – filled as they were with frothy, multi-hued undies. Gulped appreciably as I couldn't help but touch some of the lovely stuff – frightened silly that Jan or my cousin would come in and catch me.

Over the next few days, we settled in. both Jan and Gloria teased me about putting the dolls on top of the bed after I made it. Yes, I felt silly – but it was nice at the same time. I simply said that I wanted to show Aunt Emily that I was doing everything I could to show her that I didn't care about the effeminacy of the room. I also commented that there really wasn't any place to put them properly – which was somewhat true.

With the house being well out in the boonies there weren't that many kids of our age around. Gloria was overjoyed when Emily admitted that she'd talked to our mom and learned the need to keep Jan occupied with sports. They didn't know any girls of that nature – so some boys started coming around as they were asked. It didn't take long for Jan and Gloria to make the boys see that they knew what they were doing. I joined in of course, but it soon became obvious that I wasn't too athletic. It started getting obvious when Gloria and Jan would be picked before me in any team sports. I started looking for excuses to get out of playing – as I was always being picked last.

Emily made no bones about it. Wanted Gloria to have all the feminine attributes while Gloria, though not in Jan's class of jock, fought to get as many male exposures as possible. Emily was strict about home schooling. Made sure that we covered all of the fundamentals, although there was a decidedly feminine slant to many of the things she taught. I'm not sure if she did this intentionally, but often Gloria or Jan would say. "Isn't this housework or makeup?" and sigh dreadfully. Emily would laugh, but that didn't stop her completely though. I just went along. It was so NICE – not competitive the way it was when mom was

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

teaching us. There were less chances for Jan to show me up. If anything, it was me that was the most comfortable.

In doing her home schooling, Emily had built up this little coterie of girls that she thought Gloria should emulate. Just three, Betty, Dorothy and Tiffany. I had to laugh. They were SO feminine – into anything that related to boys, makeup, dressing, housework – that sort of thing. Naturally, I would be around when Emily would conduct her classes and have to laugh to myself at Gloria's face. She was SO bored! Later, I was confounded when neither Gloria nor Jan professed any liking for Betty.

"But what's not to like?" I protested. "Nice dark hair and gray eyes. Well-modulated, calm, voice. Very pleasant!"

"Silly!" Jan said. "I try to stay away from that bunch all together. Thank God, Aunt Emily leaves me out of that group. I just feel so sorry for Gloria having to do it sometimes."

"Yeah!" Gloria added fervently. "Betty's okay I guess – but she's bossy. Even wants ME to do as she says."

"Bossy? That's silly!" I said. "She's just a nice girl that knows her way around a house is all. She's like your mom Gloria. Kinda house-proud. But bossy? I think you're nuts!"

Gloria looked at Jan and then me. "Haven't you noticed Phil? She wants everybody to do as she says. Not only that? She trains them to do what she wants before she even asks!" She giggled a bit. "I hate to tell you – because you obviously haven't noticed? But Dorothy and Tiffany are HER girls! Make themselves all pretty for her - wear her favorite perfume." She launched her final barb. "They even call themselves Betty's Brides!"

"You're kidding!" Jan laughed. "She a lesbian?"

"Don't think so, though she might be." Gloria said. "She just likes to be boss lady is all!"

Then came a bad day. The girls were in the house with Emily and Jan and I were at loose ends. I really enjoyed being in the house when Emily would be giving them instructions on housekeeping – or economics of running a household – or makeup. It was – well nice – you know? So low key and friendly like. But I felt that I was getting some looks – you know? On one side, Betty would always give me a nice welcoming smile. Never said so, of course, but I got the distinct feeling that I'd be made most welcome if I joined her and the girls? This was absurd of course – but it was such a change to feel wanted – by anyone. More and more, I was becoming distinctly unpopular amongst the boys. Made to feel sort of unwelcome, if you want to know the truth

But this day it was just Jan and me. I don't even remember what started the argument. One of those stupid things that happen when we were both in a bad

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

mood. I must admit that a large part of what happened was my own fault. "I'm gonna tell her!" I finally said haughtily. "Tell mom!"

"About what exactly? Gonna go running to her. Goddamn sneak!" Jan was angry, and her tone made me the same way

"I just tell her what's going ON!" I grumbled. "Just lucky you're a girl! That's why she wants me to tell her when you- - you," I searched for a word.

"Am a proper little bastard? That what you're trying to say in your namby pamby way?"

"That's right! Behaving badly! That's right!" I got out, choking.

"Badly? Am I being NAUGHTY? Oh my goodness! You better run and tell your mummy RIGHT away!" She broke her wrist and waved like a parody of a faggot!

"You're just lucky you're a girl!" I repeated. I should thump you!"

Then the thing happened I'd been dreading for a long, long time. Her face got really red and she paused for just a second – then pushed it right in front of me.

"What you gonna DO, Lady Philip? Punch me? Take your best shot!"

Inwardly, I suddenly realized that I was quailing in fear. But this was my little sister for goodness sake! I knew I should back down but felt that I'd never live it down. Tried to placate her instead, but it was too late.

"Knock it off Jan! We don't want Aunt Emily to get mad!" I was using a voice of reason now.

She punched me! Punched me on the upper arm! "Gonna run and tell her?" she asked in a little girl taunting voice. "That what you're gonna do – LADY Philippa?"

"Wow!" I said, rubbing my arm. "Hey! Enough of . ." I started - and she punched me again!

"Ooh Ooh Ooh!" I yelped. "My arms!" I was putting them up to protect myself but wasn't making any attempt to hit her. An amazed look crossed her face then she smiled cruelly. "Put your arms DOWN, lady Philippa! Put them down!"

"You're just . . just . . going to punch me again!" I wailed.

She shook her head. Spoke in a phony cultivated tone. "No dahling! Punches are for boys! I don't want to hurt you any more – just slap you a little. You know – the way girls do?"

"Don't want to," I found myself wailing more.

She hissed at me. "Gonna punch you – real hard – if you don't hurry!"

I was too slow – and she punched me again. Not as hard as the first two, but contemptuously now. To my awful shame, I started to cry and lowered my arms

Aunt Emily's Suggestion by Bea

submissively. "That's Jan's little girl!" she said mockingly and gently patted my tear stained cheeks. "You won't give me any more trouble will you?"

"No Jan," I quavered.

"Be my good little girl?"

"Aw Jan. I'm not . . ."

"Should I put you over my knees and spank you until you agree to be Jan's little girl?"

"No," I wept.

"So what's your name?"

"Philippa?"

"That's right. And you're what?"

I tensed in shame but had to follow through. "Your little girl?"

"Goddamn pansy! Backbone of a girl!" she grated and stalked off.

Blinded by tears of humiliation and outrage I blundered about, not watching where I was going. Was finally calming down as I leaned up against a shady tree outside, when all of a sudden, Betty was there. I didn't know what to say, when without any hesitation she was standing beside me, her arm around my shoulder sympathetically. "I saw everything from inside," she said. "And I know how awful you must feel. Please don't feel bad! I'm sure you didn't fight with your sister because she's a girl – and you're too much of a male to hurt her!"

This wasn't something I'd managed to figure out. Naturally, I knew it was nonsense, but I grabbed at her reasoning like a drowning man and a straw. "Yes! That's it!" I said with a shred of hope but then I couldn't help it. Started crying again!

"Poor thing!" she said, and I was being cuddled into her breasts. "Cry it all out! You'll feel SO much better! Come ON now!"

And the sympathy and concern in her voice was just too much. On came the tears again, and I just stood there, sobbing for quite a time. Finally, I shuddered to a stop. "You feeling okay now?" she asked softly.

"Yes," I whispered and cuddled my face into her. It felt so nice and comforting.

She tipped my face up and looked at me calmly. "Your eyes are all red. And we can't have that, can we?"

I looked up at her helplessly. "Don't know what to do about that Betty," I whispered.

"No problem. We'll go into the house – and I'll have you right as rain before anyone knows."