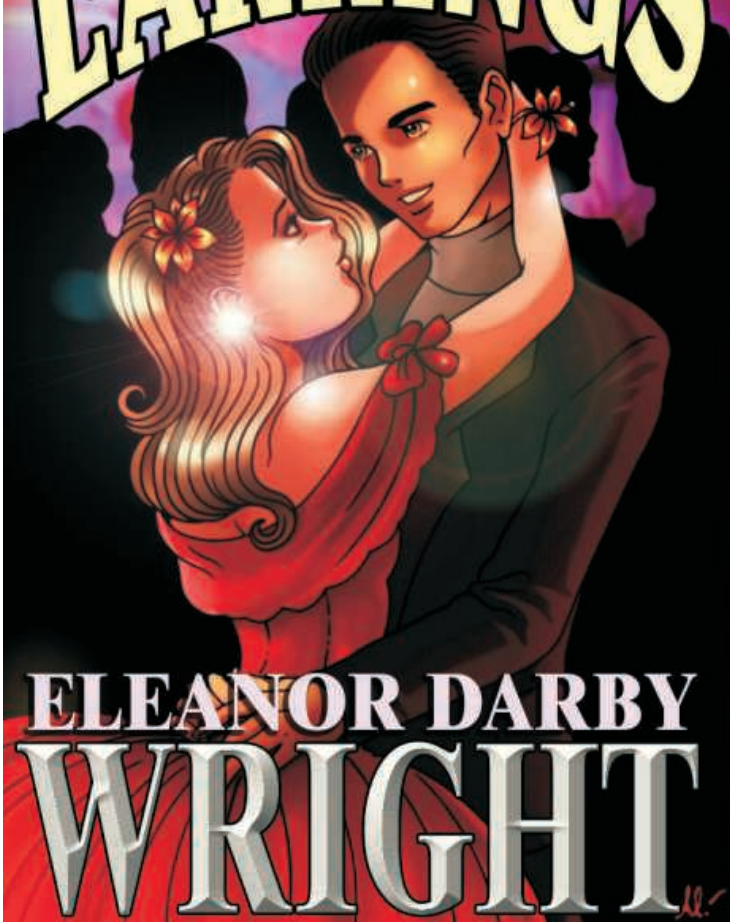


ALL BECAUSE OF EARRINGS



ELEANOR DARBY
WRIGHT

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ALL BECAUSE OF EARRINGS

by Eleanor Darby Wright

It didn't begin all at once. Even when it was well underway, and everyone was deeply involved, no-one knew where it was going to end.

It was all so innocent at the start. Just a bunch of boys and girls lying together on a grassy hillside, sort of sleeping off lunch and the couple of drinks that most of us had had at the local watering hole. We weren't that used to drinking in the afternoon and some guys had brought a few cases along as well that were quietly being consumed.

So, maybe it was the liquor after all. And the hot sun beating down on everyone from the brilliant,

clear-blue sky. I remember that the air was so warm that we boys took off our jackets, then our shirts and lay back. It was far too tiring for any necking and petting or anything strenuous like that. Still, pairs had got together and were doing gentle things like tickling each other's faces with blades of grass.

"Oh, look at Brian's pretty earrings!" giggled Amy, her long, pointed fingers covering her pert, pretty face.

A few heads bobbed up, some very slowly.

Tracey was just putting her necklace about the sleeping Brian's neck. He already had been painted with her lipstick and her pearl earrings were at his ears.

"Ow!" said Brian, frowning and sitting up abruptly as if he had been stung, clutching at his ear.

"Shush, shush," whispered Tracey. "I just gave you one of my earrings. Let me loosen it off a little."

Brian smiled and pouted his lips for a kiss which Tracey obliged him with, the other girls putting fingers on their lips so that none of us guys could call out and warn Brian what was going on.

I was half awake with Andrea cuddling to me when Shirley waved for Andrea's purse. Robbie was snoring just a little, flat on his back. Shirley was grinning as she took off her earrings.

"Rob doesn't have pierced ears," I murmured to Andrea, in First Year History like me.

"Shush," hissed Andrea. Then she smiled at me. "But you do, David, don't you?"

She took off one of the golden tassels that she had been wearing all day and that I thought must be tantalizing her. She waved to Shirley and got her purse back, taking out studs which she transferred to her ears

where the tassels had come off. Guess who got the long, golden tassels then? If you guessed that it was me, you were right.

Robbie had large golden hoops right through his ears while Ken had flowers at his. The others had all kinds of earrings, Marty looking terrific in Stacey's huge, golden dangles.

Robbie must have had more to drink than the rest of us because he didn't move as Andrea went over to join Shirley and Angela. They worked totally on that boy's face, putting not only lipstick on him but they gently blushed his cheeks, painted his eyes and his face, even powdered him.

Robbie had long hair. Well, we were all students and it was more because we couldn't afford the cost of a haircut that we had pretty unkempt hair more than anything. Well, Robbie's might have been a little longer. Anyway, it looked much nicer when the girls braided it and Robbie had two cute, little braids in ribbons at his neck. Shirley was trying to curl the bangs at his forehead when Robbie shifted and the girls all went quiet as Robbie sat up.

"What the ...?" he began and reached for his ears.

"Don't," said Shirley, kissing him then lightly, taking his hands. "It's just my earrings at your ears."

Robbie yawned. I don't know how he didn't feel the ribbons and braids at his neck. He did see Gordon then and the girls working on his makeup. He began to laugh, his voice so incongruous coming from his little girl's face, and the girls shushed him.

Brian was fast asleep again and Tracey was gesturing to the other girls as to whether to take off her bra or

not. "No," I said to Andrea whose hand was over her mouth as she was trying so hard not to laugh.

My vote didn't count and so Brian, a real sleeping beauty in vivid red lipstick and gorgeously made up eyes, had Tracey's bra, its tabs reset to fit him, about his chest and stuffed with tissues to make the mounds stand up from his pecs of which he was so proud. Served him right for going to sleep bare-chested, I thought.

"Hey! What have you done to my hair?" asked Robbie suddenly and all the girls around him exploded with laughter.

"Oh, don't touch it!" pleaded Shirley. "You're going to ruin it and you look so cute! Andi, can I borrow your makeup mirror for a moment?"

Well, Robbie was a good sport, much better than I would have been in the same situation. Soon, he was laughing with the girls as well. "*I feel pretty, oh so pretty, oh so pretty and witty and why!*" he warbled to the girls who instantly began to sing with him and who finished, "*And I pity any boy who isn't a girl tonight!*"

"We should make up all the boys!" said Tracey then. "Let them know what it's like to have to wear all the stuff that we do on our faces."

"Not me," I said, standing up then, Andrea's tasselled earring swinging about my neck. I went about three paces downhill before I pitched over as someone wrapped their hands about my legs.

I slid a little way further down. Tracey was quite contrite as she asked how I was. I had made quite a thump as the hillside was fairly steep. "I, I'm okay," I said, rubbing my head as I lay with my feet uphill and my head down.

“Oh good,” said Tracey, swinging her foot across me then and she sat on my chest, her open blouse showing her shapely breasts bouncing free as she wasn’t wearing her bra. “Andi! Come and help me. We’ve got a live one here!”

Well, I tried to wriggle her off but she was a tall girl, Tracey Everton, and I was a smaller guy. Then, when Andrea, a trifle concerned, joined her, I had little chance. “Now don’t be a spoilsport, David Evans, as you always are,” said Tracey. “Your boy friend doesn’t join in these socials very often, does he?”

“He’s not my boy friend,” said Andrea with a laugh as she took out a bottle of something and poured it on her hands and then on to me. “I just let him pick me up when we came out the pub.”

It was true but there was a tone to the way that Andrea spoke, sort of like, he’s better than nothing but when I see a more interesting guy, I’m away. That was the story of my life with girls.

“Be still, David,” Andrea said then. “Or this line on your eyes isn’t going to be very straight!”

I didn’t care if it was. But Tracey sat on me as Shirley and Robbie, two astonishingly female heads at first looking over me, came to see how I was. They helped Tracey to hold me down as Andrea worked on my face.

“I think that she’s the prettiest of them all!” said Tracey when Andrea stopped for a moment and then looked down at me in surprise.

“Well, if we did something with that grotty hair,” she said doubtfully.

Andrea didn’t offer me her mirror as I was allowed to sit up. I looked up at the other guys on the hill. It

was an amazing sight. I think all of the other guys must have got a touch of sunstroke or something.

Not only were the girls laughing and having fun making up all the guys but the guys were encouraging them to make them prettier than each other. Frank had a purple bra with white stars about his chest and was submitting to Erica combing and pinning his hair until it looked as if he had a ponytail. Then he put on the purple top that Erica had been wearing, she was in his shirt as Frank looked like he had breasts. Worse, he actually looked like a girl in his jeans and runners and purple top with makeup on his face and a ponytail.

“The winner!” yelled Erica. “E-yuck.” The last came as Frank, the new girl, raised his arms and showed off the hair underneath his arms. Everyone began laughing then, including Frank, with his shapely breasts.

“French girls don’t shave their pits!” Frank yelled at all the other girls and ‘girls’ yelling at him. “So I am Brigitte and I don’t like you smooth-skinned American beauties!” He pouted then, an arm posed like a girl on his hip.

“He means you,” said Tracey then to me with a grin.

“Why don’t we have a beauty contest?” said Andrea then. “We each do what we can to make our boy friends into our girl friends!”

“Yes!” said several of the girls and Robbie as well as I almost died. I didn’t like the way that Andrea was now looking at me.

“What’s the prize for the winner?” asked Tracey, moving in on a smiling Brian who was grinning and probably not knowing how pretty and girlish he was, particularly in Tracey’s black bra.

“They get to drive back the bus back to University Hall,” said one of the girls, Maureen I think it was, a serious girl with glasses increasing that impression of her.

“Free beer from you all for a week,” said Brian, sitting up then and everyone gaped at him, and the pink barette that Tracey had put over his ear to pin back his hair and show off his classy earring.

“Only while you’re still in your lovely bra,” sneered Robbie. Everyone laughed and began adding more conditions.

“So,” said Tracey with a laugh, holding up her hands and everyone quietened down. “It’s a week of free beer and we collect a tenner from everyone, right? Anything left over goes to the girl friend who makes her guy look the prettiest, right?”

I went cold all over as everyone but me agreed. I, of course, was ignored as I usually was. I shuddered and couldn’t object as Tracey said, “Well, that’s unanimous. Now we can’t all be using Andrea’s makeup for this, can we? So, at the bottom of the hill that way,” she pointed over the top of the ridge, “is a pub and an E-zee Mart. I saw it when we brought the bus to the bottom of the hill.” She looked at her watch. “I say seven o’clock. Whose turn is it to drive the bus? Marty? Well, as long as Stacey goes with you! We meet at the bar, the Black Bull, I think it is, and we’ll get some of the locals to be the judges. The prettiest girl is ‘Miss Information’!”

“We can all do anything we want to our boy friends to let us win?” asked Andrea.

There was a lot of calling and noise then. I was one saying that it should just be our faces that were judged.

Everyone was calling out so many different suggestions that Tracey threw her hands in the air.

“All right!” Tracey yelled. “Anything goes! Satisfied?”

“Oh yes!” yelled out over half the girls and one or two boys like Robbie, rolling over as Shirley tickled him and laughed at him and what she was going to do to him. I think that Robbie actually was still quite drunk.

“Anything goes!” yelled Tracey again. “Everyone heading to the store, follow me!”

Which we all did, save for Marty and Stacey who were lying down and necking in earnest. “We’ll catch you guys,” waved Stacey, the feminine face beside her smiling as two girls seemed to be kissing each other in the grass.

Andrea linked her arm through mine. “Now, I’m really glad I let you pick me up today,” she said to me, as I gulped in fear at the look on her face. “We are going to win this thing, Davina my girl, for sure!”

There were more shops and stores just around the corner from the bar and store, including several women’s stores, the local woman passing by told us. We came down the public footpath and onto the road that showed us the Black Bull pub and opposite it, the E-zee Mart. Several couples were already heading there eagerly while Andrea and I chatted to the passerby who stopped on her bicycle and looked open-mouthed at me, then at Robbie, his chest tented with Shirley’s bra that he had coaxed from her.

“Why,” the woman asked, “are you ... It’s not some kind of deviate outing, is it?”

Andrea hooted with laughter then and tried to explain that we were university students. We had been on a dig for a few days and this was the last day. We were celebrating and the boys all went to sleep ...

The woman laughed then. “And so now you’re having a contest to see which boy makes the prettiest girl,” the woman said. “My husband was the prettiest in his day and that’s why I married him! Good luck, girls!” she called and I didn’t know who she was calling to. “I’ll stop by at *Anne’s Lingerie* and the dress shop and let them know you are coming!”

She peddled off furiously. “How much money have you got?” asked Andrea then, her arm about me as mine was about her. “How much is on your credit card?”

I swallowed hard. “Let’s not get into this too much, Andrea,” I said to her.

“How much are you spending?” Andrea called to Shirley then who was coming after us, propping up Robbie who wanted to get amorous with her.

“I don’t care,” said Shirley with a grin. “Two, three hundred at least. But my darling girl deserves it!”

“Oh, yes, I do,” chortled Robbie beside her.

In the distance, looking back, I saw other people, the celebrants of the completion of the dig piling down, off the hill, some coming our way and some heading in the other direction to the store or the bar. We were in the lead going towards an invisible village.

The huge trees and bushes hid the crossroads and the houses from our view but when we came up to the

stop sign, there was a proper sidewalk and houses. There was a gas station and beyond that a line of stores with residences above. And everywhere were trees and bushes, little lanes or driveways leading off unexpectedly, the houses behind them disguised.

"There's the dress shop," said Andrea, pointing at the line of shops. I felt my mouth go dry as I saw the sign, *Anne's Lingerie*, at one end of the shops and *Bridal and Everyday Dress Shop* at the other end.

"Oh, yes," said Andrea, beginning to skip down the sidewalk, holding my hand and wanting me to do it as well, I guess. "How would you like to be a bride, Davina? That would make you Miss Information, for sure!"

If you could have seen my face under the makeup that Andrea had put on me, I would have been scarlet with embarrassment and shame at her suggestion.

"Oh, come on, spoilsport!" said Andrea, pouting at me. "Don't be a drag on the party we're going to have!" Then she considered what she had said. "Actually," she said, a dimple on her cheek as she smiled. "You should be a drag, really, shouldn't you? We should make you into a proper drag queen tonight, shouldn't we?"

I protested as Andrea held on to my hand and tugged me into following her across the road and up the steps to the dress shop. There was a bride in a long white dress on a mannequin in the window.

"You could be her," said Andrea with a laugh, pointing to the red-haired model with a white hat and a veil.

"No," I was saying as Andrea pulled me into the shop after her. Oh no, I thought in panic, wishing I

could have gone to the washroom in the gas station and tidied myself up. An older, grey-haired lady was putting dresses onto a movable rack according to sizes.

“Oh, hello, my dears,” she said with a huge smile which I was sure was meant for me and the predicament I was in. “Jane came by and told me I’d be getting some business this afternoon. I suppose that you students don’t want to spend too much and so I’ve been pulling some of my less costly dresses onto this rack, in larger sizes of course. But you, young man,” she said to me as I shivered inside, “you’ll be able to get into tens, I think, which means you can choose anything that you see.”

“See, Davina, darling,” said Andrea, gushing in a way that I had never seen her before. “You can be a bride if you would like to be. Davina can try on the wedding dress in your front window, can’t she?”

The grey-haired woman hesitated then. Thank goodness, I thought. No, of course, she wouldn’t want a bunch of guys trying on all the dresses she had for sale.

“Well, have you shaved?” the proprietor asked me then. “And what do you have on underneath?” She indicated my jeans.

“I don’t think that Davina shaves very often,” said Andrea then with a laugh, her cool hand on my hot face as she stroked my smooth face.

“Oh, I didn’t mean there, my dear,” said the older woman. “I meant all over, legs, body hair, under the arms. And one should wear a long slip, panties and a waist shaper, of course, if you really are serious about wearing the wedding dress.”

Both Andrea and I stared at the older woman in amazement and it was her turn to be a little embarrassed.

“Oh, you weren’t serious,” she said then, her face a little pink. “And here I was thinking that you had done something like this before. He looks so pretty the way that you’ve made him up, doesn’t he, dear?” she went on to Andrea. “He would indeed make a lovely bride.”

The shop bell rang again. Shirley and Robbie almost fell into the shop after us and the woman went to greet them as Andrea pulled me after her. She took a little black dress from a rack beside a mannequin and held it against me. I reeled back.

“Hold still,” commanded Andrea. “Yes, this would look good on you, Davina. But the manager is right. You shouldn’t wear this with hairy armpits and I have seen yours today, you know.”

The manager had shown Shirley and a grinning, playacting Robbie to the rack she had been preparing. She came back, beaming, as she saw the dress that Andrea was holding against my shivering body.

“Oh, that’s such a good choice,” the older woman said to Andrea.

“It might be,” said Andrea doubtfully, “but you were right, Mrs, Mrs, um?”

“Mrs Harvey,” beamed the older woman.

“Yes, Mrs Harvey,” said Andrea. “But this is going to be a contest and I have to show Davina off at her best. I can’t have her appearing in this with hairy armpits and stockings, can I?”

“Oh no, dear, you can’t!” said Mrs Harvey. “Just a moment, if you will, my dear.” She scampered over to

her till as more of our crowd, Gordon, and Frank, who introduced himself to Mrs Harvey as Brigitte, came in with Erica, Angela and some other girls. 'Brigitte' was strutting about in Erica's bra and top, while Ken was in his pretty, flowered earrings, his hair parted down the middle like a girl's.

"Mrs Jenkins in the lingerie shop," said Mrs Harvey, coming over to Andrea then. "She has bathroom showers in the back of her place. Some people go in there in quite a mess and want to try on all kinds of things she has there. She'll help you out with the proper undergarments as well for your Davina. I'll set this black dress aside for you but when you come back, I won't be at all surprised if you don't want to try on the bridal dress!"

"Come on," said Andrea to me then as I felt goose bumps coming out all over me.

"This is going a little too far," I told Andrea as we left the dress shop for the lingerie store.

"Where are they going?" I heard Frank's loud voice asking then as Mrs Harvey went to serve her new customers eagerly.

There were more couples stringing along the little road to the corner. Tracey and Brian were bringing up the rear with packages that they must have bought at the E-zee Mart. Tracey waved to us and Andrea waved back eagerly as she opened the door to the lingerie shop.

Again there was no-one in the store but an older woman. She was much different from Mrs Harvey, however. Her hair was stylish in a long, grey and white pageboy. Her makeup made her look elegant in her black suit. She was slim but had a definite womanly

shape as she gestured to us without a word to the back of her store.

"I do charge for the depilatories that you use and the towels and supplies," Anne Jenkins, as the small brooch on her suit proclaimed her. "An average man will take just one bottle of the rose-scented cream," she said to Andrea, showing her the bottles, "while the very hairy man will need a second. That will make your bill fifty-five dollars. Are you sure you want to do this?"

Andrea hugged my arm and almost bounced into the bathroom. "Of course we do!" she said.

"Did, did, did you hear what she said?" I asked Andrea as she locked the door behind us. "An average man, she said," I went on as Andrea ignored me and started the shower running.

"Well, you're less than average in hair, I think," said Andrea with a laugh, missing out on the incongruity of a woman in a lingerie shop having such showers available and then referring to men as if they used her shop all the time for body hair removal.

Andrea took my jacket and hung it up and then helped me out of my t-shirt. "I don't want to," I began but she flipped the buckle on my jeans and was taking them from me as I just stood there, shivering and feeling so stupid.

"You won't be the only one," Andrea scolded me then. She began to lather me then across my chest and the little hair that I had. My armpits got the same treatment and by then my jeans had hit the floor.

A tap on the door and Anne Jenkins was there. "Your friends say that this is a complete role reversal," Anne said with a smile to Andrea, ignoring the partly

nude me. "Here are some panties for your friend. The gaff ones are meant to be tight and hold everything in. If they don't fit, have your friend sit in cold water for a minute or so, and then they will fit properly. The second pairs are just for you to have nicer panties on the outside then, something frilly, scented like a woman and nice to look at."

"What are we getting into?" I croaked at Andrea as the door closed on us then and I could hear Frank's voice and Tracey's as well, outside. "That woman ..."

"Knows just what we want!" said an excited Andrea. "Oh, do hurry up, Davina. We're at the head of the line and there's lots more girls who want to use this after us." She slathered my legs then with the rose scented stuff as I shivered, standing there in just my underpants.

Andrea took off my shoes and socks for me and looked at my feet critically, putting the cream all over my toes. Then she wanted to see my fingers and my arms. I was covered with the stuff then, all over the backs of my hands and my knuckles.

"Don't you think that girls have to do this as well as you?" asked Andrea as I complained about what I would look like. "Anyway, you'll all be the same after today. Gosh, we'll all be the same, won't we? Don't you feel just the least bit excited about that, babe? You and me, we'll be the same!"

Not likely, I thought, but Andrea seemed so excited. I wanted to get out of that bathroom fast and so I had to get the guck off me. She turned her back, really, as I took off my underpants and slathered myself across my abdomen as she insisted. A lot of the stuff got on my pubic hair and so I got into the shower to get the stuff off me. I needed cloths to get the stuff off, it held

on so much and then, when I started to wipe myself off, the hair that had grown on me came off as well, rolling up in little dark balls.

Andrea didn't keep her back turned as I washed myself in the shower. She got a cloth, peeled back the curtain and helped me. I felt so embarrassed as she wiped down my legs and all the hair there just disappeared. Worse, my pubic hair was coming away in clumps.

"Oh, good," said Andrea. "I hate a man who's all bushy there."

I was flabbergasted as she stroked my tush and praised me on being so smooth. Then, I had to put on the gaff and the panties and did I ever feel foolish as I put them on, my front not bulging at all as it did normally.

Andrea insisted then that I wash my hair and clean the makeup of my face that she and Tracey had put on me. "We can do better," she insisted and turned me to face her.

"Hey!" I called out, jumping back as she splashed the last of the bottle of hair remover on my eyebrows and on the sides of my face.

"Hold still or it's going to look awful!" snapped Andrea. She wrapped my head in a towel then, put a robe from the back of the door about me and shoved me out into the lingerie shop.

Ken grinned at me and, without asking me at all about how terrible it was, took my place in the bathroom, his real girl friend, Linda, going in with him, a robe over her arm and a big smile on her face.

Andrea hustled me to where it said 'Fitting Rooms' as several of the boys and girls awaiting turns in the

bathrooms looked at us with stares, smirks, with interest and with disdain, while I felt like such an idiot.

Anne Jenkins had hangers for my clothes which she handled at arm's length as if they had come out of a pigpen. She had a tape measure about her neck and as soon as the door to the cubicle she had ready for me was closed, she started measuring me.

"Sale or rental?" she asked Andrea again.

"Apart from the cost, is there any diff?" asked Andrea.

"Oh my, yes," said Anne Jenkins with a thin smile, slipping the robe from me so that I stood there, hairless, humiliated, in front of two women in women's panties with a towel about my head and cream on my eyebrows. "Choice for one, perfect fit for another, and then, rental has been made to fit another. But it is much cheaper of course if this is just a passing fancy."

"Is this just a passing fancy, Davina?" asked Andrea then.

"Oh yes," I said with nervous twitches that brought a smile to Anne Jenkins' face.

"Don't leave that depilatory on long," said Anne then. "Otherwise, the changes you are making could be permanent. Did you have a dress on hold at Mrs Harvey's?"

"A black cocktail dress, a ten," said Andrea.

Anne Jenkins looked me over then. "A ten?" she asked. "Oh, I think that we can do much better than that, my dear!"

By 'doing better', Anne Jenkins meant putting me in a smaller dress. Well, she succeeded. She succeeded because I could scarcely breathe in the corset that she put on me. I protested when she started with the black thing. She just looked at Andrea and my supposed girl friend berated me again for the bad sport and party-pooper that I was turning out to be.

"We don't have to do this," I protested. "I'm not gay, Andrea."

"Who said that you were?" asked Andrea then. "Do you think all the guys on the dig are gay? You think Tom Johnson is gay?"

Tom Johnson was the young lecturer who had been in charge of the archaeological dig. All the girls thought he was something special and we guys admired him as well as he was very careful around the girls. He was supposed to have a fiancée in another department of the university but Brian, over a drink, once had confided in me that Johnson only told everybody that to keep the girls away. He didn't want to get involved with a student.

"No," I said and Andrea grinned.

"So what do you think is going on in all the other cubicles and out in the main parts of the shops around here?" asked Andrea. "If you stop now, you'll be the only guy not looking like a pretty girl tonight for the wrap-up party at the Black Bull. Then, darling Davina, you will really stand out as a loser and a wimp, afraid of people laughing at you. Well, we won't be if we finish this thing. Winning it or not, we'll be laughing

about it together in the days ahead, all of us, from Tracey to Gordon."

So I caved in. It never occurred to me that the same sort of blackmail was being worked on any number of the guys. I wonder how many of them heard, "Well, if David Evans isn't afraid of appearing in public dressed as a pretty girl, why are you?" I shuddered though and wondered how things had got so out of hand so quickly after just putting on a girl's earrings as I kissed her on a warm summer's day.

"The stockings you have to buy," said Anne Jenkins as she ripped open a package and rolled them up before taking my leg and showing me how to roll the stocking up my smooth leg and then attach it to the dangling garters from the corset I had around me.

"Oh, pretty," said Andrea as the brownish stocking slid over my leg. "Yes, Mrs Harvey was so right. It's much better to put stockings on hairless legs, isn't it? It's so much more feminine!"

"And Davina does have pretty legs," said Anne Jenkins thoughtfully as I felt such pressure at my groin as I attached the second stocking, standing to do it, looking down at what were women's legs to me. There were these mounds on my chest as well. Anne Jenkins had said to Andrea that many women lost breasts and needed prostheses and so the round, padded, pink satin things she put into the breast part of the corset would suit me just as they suited real, breastless women.

I had to wear a black, silky slip and then put on the size six dress, my chest and back bare as the tiny black straps matched and went with the corset straps over my shoulders.

“Oh, very pretty,” murmured Anne Jenkins, looking at me, opening a box of shoes. I should have known that they would be women’s high heels. I sat with the dress about me and felt so silly and so embarrassed. I had to stand and sit. I had to learn not to wobble and how to cross my legs. I had to practice walking and it was so difficult. I felt all the eyes on me as Andrea took me out of the cubicle and allowed George Stevens and two girls who were dressing him to take our places.

All through the lingerie shop were girls in jeans and shirts painting the faces of girls in pretty dresses. Some had their hair arranged and had pretty bows or barettes in their hair. All had to sit daintily, with crossed legs, arms in, or the girls corrected them. I had to sit down and Andrea was joined by Angela and the two began to paint my face again. I hadn’t been able to look in a mirror to see myself.

I felt such a fool, sitting there. I felt such shame for all of us, all of my class and what we were allowing the girls to do to us. We had just been going to have a windup party at the end of the three week dig. That was all. Now look at us all and just because Tracey had put her earrings on Brian and the other girls had thought that was funny. I didn’t think making all of us wear women’s underwear and makeup like women was very funny. The girls were laughing at us all as well and then getting serious when anyone objected. I heard ‘party pooper’ enough times to start getting an inkling into what was being done to us all.

“I have this wig,” said Anne Jenkins then, appearing with a long, mainly blonde pageboy. I didn’t realize that she meant it for me at first but Andrea squealed. “Oh, it’s so perfect for Davina!” she said.

"I think so," said the elegant Anne Jenkins, folding her arms as she looked down on me. "That wedding dress that Nancy Harvey has been trying to sell for a year is a six. I suggested to her that if Davina wins your contest tonight, we should put it up as a prize for her. Otherwise, it will be gift certificates from us both."

"That seems such a marvellous gift," enthused Andrea, painting my lips a pale sort of pink.

"Wait till you all get our bills for services, rentals and purchases," said Anne Jenkins dryly. "And we're all coming to the Black Bull tonight, the whole village, I think. I hope you will have a parade so that we can all see how well our handiwork has been done."

She said that as Andrea put the hair about me and then the women looking at me gasped. "Well, I did think so," said Anne Jenkins.

"What's the matter?" I asked, uncrossing my legs and starting to stand.

"Just a second," said Andrea, then, breaking out of the astonished gape that had stilled her face. "Earrings and a necklace."

"And bracelets," chimed in Angela.

"And the right perfume," said Anne Jenkins.

I shuddered as hooped earrings were put at my ears, the hair on my shoulders, curving under my chin and touching my back so light and feathery and, yes, feminine. I felt that way as I stood, wobbled and took Andrea's hand and she led me to the long mirrors by the door.

Everyone seemed to be looking at me as I went by. "Oh gods," I heard Brian say then but I couldn't see which 'girl' was him. "Do I look like her?"

“No,” I heard Tracey say then as she bent over a red-haired girl in a long, silver evening gown. “You’re much prettier than she is.”

I stood in front of the mirror but it must have been angled as I couldn’t see myself. I moved slowly in the mincing step I was trying to make and so did the pretty, blonde-haired girl in the mirror. I looked behind me to see where she was and then I looked back, only to see Andrea’s hand clutching the girl’s. It hit me in a rush, then, well, a panic more like it, ‘she’, the gorgeous, shapely blonde in the mirror was me, David Evans.

“What, what have you done to me?” I croaked as I shuddered and my dress floated about me, making me so aware of all the feminine finery I was wearing. I smelled a fragrance on me as well, the scent that Anne Jenkins said that she sold to all her first-timers. I shuddered as I thought about the fact that she must mean that there were other men around like me, dressed as women.

Of course there were. I was in a room full of them.

“Davina will need a stole or a coat for that dress,” said Anne Jenkins, her arms folded and coming to smile at last at me in the long mirror. “Are you girls getting transported back to the Black Bull?”

Tracey made the call then and got Marty to bring Stacey and the bus from the bar’s parking lot, where they were waiting, down to the Arden shopping area for us. Then it was a shocked Marty’s turn to be transformed. I shuddered at the look Marty gave me as he came into the lingerie shop.

"I'm not doing that," he said, pointing at Brian then, standing in high heels and towering over the girls but looking like a fashion model anyway.

"Oh, yes, you are," laughed Stacey. "I'm not going to be the only one without a girl friend tonight. My boy friend is not going to be a party-poopers or a wet blanket! It's our party time!"

"But, but who'll drive the bus?" asked Marty, being led to the bathrooms first.

"I can, Tracey can, Jen can," said Stacey while Anne Jenkins went for a clean robe and more bottles of depilatories.

All my money went as did Andrea's on what had been done to me. Both Andrea's and my credit card absorbed the rest at the two stores that we visited and then Andrea bought me a little black jacket to wear over my bare shoulders. I couldn't see spending three hundred dollars on an item I would never wear again. Well, I supposed that Andrea could wear it.

While we waited for Marty to be transformed into Marcia, Andrea had me sit like a girl again, took my hands and gave me the first manicure I had ever had. All the girls had to do it then. Some guys had long enough fingernails to have them shaped and painted. Others like me had to purchase acrylics. Tracey had a few pairs bought at the E-zee Mart and some other girls had them, too. Andrea glued them to me and painted them and so each time I looked at my hands, all I could see were these girlish hands. I felt so odd, so feminine all over and was it any wonder.

Jen was finally the one who backed the bus up to the front of the door.

“Oh God,” I heard a male voice say as the ‘girls’ were lined up in Anne’s Lingerie and I looked down a line at people I didn’t know. They looked at me, their lipsticked mouths open, fidgeting with their dresses and paddings, eyes so vivid and staring, not a few without panic on their faces as there was on mine.

“Everyone back there,” Tracey yelled to the real girls, grinning and laughing at the back of the shop. “You bring all the male clothing with you and put it in the storage area under the bus with our packs from the dig. We can sort it all out later when we get to the Black Bull. Now, everyone has to have a pretty girl to escort in which means some, like Jen and Stacey, will share. All right, Davina,” there were lots of whoops then from the real girls and I felt a shudder and nausea pass through me. “You’re at the front; so you can lead the ladies of History First Year onto the bus.”

Andrea opened the door and there was Nancy Harvey and several other people chatting to her waiting for us, I’m sure.

“Oh Goddess,” said Andrea with a smirk as I moved and a dress moved with me about my legs. A girlish dress moved about me and Nancy Harvey smiled at me and pointed at me, saying something that shocked the other four people watching me lead a parade to the front of the bus.

I didn’t stumble. I probably should have. I shouldn’t have sashayed like a girl as Andrea had been showing me. I just got my foot on the first step of the bus when there was a loud, piercing whistle, the kind that men do, that I have done, when a pretty girl walks by. It came from a young man at the gas station filling his car. He just didn’t do it once. He did it again and the people over there turned and looked at us. They were

smiling. I think I saw some of them laughing then. I got onto the bus quickly and hurried to the seat I normally sat in.

I felt so awful as I sat down and then I had to stand and do it again so that my dress wasn't pulled all out of shape. Me, a man, I was doing girlish things and, all around me, nervously, blonde girls, brunettes, red-haired girls and in-betweens were doing the same thing.

"It ain't so bad," I heard Robbie's voice say then. "We're all in this together, boys, ain't we?"

"Can it, Rob," I heard Lewis Badgett say then. At least, it was Lewis Badgett's voice but it came from a girl who must have been Christina Aguilera's twin sister. "This has all gone too far. Let's just get on back into town and get this all over with."

The tall figure of Brian, it had to be him, he was the tallest of us all, swept into the bus then, his headpiece touching the roof. "Oops!" he said cheerily. "Oh, Louisa," he went on campily, moving his wrist and arm like a girl, well, like a drag queen, I suppose. "You left the front seat for me. Oh, darling, you shouldn't have!"

I stared at Brian as I am sure the what, eighteen other guys on the bus were doing as well. Is that what we were supposed to be doing, I asked myself, and I think the others were thinking that as well? Were we supposed to be putting it on and acting, overacting, as if we were women?

Tracey came bounding up the steps then and touched a grinning Jen on the arm. Other girls began to crowd on, eagerly pressing forward and looking for the right 'girl' to sit next to. "Now, listen up, ladies,"

Tracey said. "Some ground rules, ladies. For one night at the Black Bull, the manager says it's okay, you are not, any of you, to use the men's room. You are all ladies and will be treated that way.

"Now, we have the meeting room on the main floor at the back but we have to go in and out through the main bar. I think Mr Johnson is already there and probably Professor Dunley as well. We'll let Andrea go in and explain our party to him. There'll be dinner served right away and then the room will be cleared for dancing. Now, for goodness sakes, ladies, keep your voices down. You, Roberta, and you, Brittany," she pointed at Brian then which got a laugh, from the real girls at least, "whisper! If you want anything said to everyone, whisper to your escort while you are a lady and she'll tell us all what you want. All right, Jen, you take us up to the Bull and then you get to take Davina into the party."

I couldn't help shivering. Across from me, Marty tried to say something and Stacey shushed him immediately. "No, Marcia," she said. "Whisper, darling, like the girl that you are. What did you want me to ask Kendra?"

Yes, all of our names were feminized. Well, not all, Gordon wasn't Gordona or anything like that. No, he was Marilyn which suited the hair and the makeup he was wearing.

We were at the Bull in a flash and Andrea shot off to do what Tracey wanted her to. Brian, alias Brittany, got up and flounced out of the bus with Tracey there to smile up at him and slip her arm through his.

I looked around in panic. The bus was parked in front where a parking strip had been cleared for it. Beyond, however, the parking lot looked to be full. Even

the bicycle rack was full. Just as Kendra, in her flowered earrings went carefully down the steps in her high heels, I saw cars drawing up. Nancy Harvey and her friends were getting out. Then Anne Jenkins came walking across the lot, a tall man with his arm about her. She was looking up at him and talking most animatedly, pointing so femininely from the arms across her chest at the bus and us.

There was such a lump in my throat as I followed Marcia down the aisle of the bus and Jen stepped in front of me to assist me off the bus.

"Wow," she said, staring at me. "Is it, is it, David Evans? Yes, Davina, that's you, isn't it?"

"Yes," I whispered. Oh, and Jen took me by the arm then, making me put mine under hers as if I was the girl and she was the guy.

"Lean on me a little," whispered Jen then. "That's it, just little steps. One foot right in front of the other. It will make your hips sway just like a girl. Oh, wow, maybe I shouldn't be telling you that, Davina. You look so cute as a girl, you know, that I think I'm blowing the competition for Marcia. Not that she stands a chance beside a cutie like you, anyway."

Jen finished with a laugh. I couldn't. I was terrified as I followed the swaying Marcia and knew that an equally dainty figure, Stephanie, was behind me, on Amy's arm. A tall man, a local, grinned at each of the girls that went by him. He stopped for a moment as I approached and went, "Wow, that's not a guy!"

Jen looked haughtily at the guy as I froze in mid-step. The door closed for a moment and I saw myself and Stephanie, a few yards behind me. Oh, goddess, as Andrea had said, we weren't boys at all! We

had undergone a complete transformation! We were girls, pretty girls. We had gone far too far to win a silly game that we didn't even know we were going to be playing until just that afternoon.

"Just open the door," snarled Jen at the man standing there gawking at us. He did so with a huge grin and even bowed to us as Jen pulled me past him.

"Oh, look!" a woman in the crowded bar said. "Here's two more. Oh, aren't these the prettiest little queens of them all!"

Jen laughed at that. "How come no-one ever says that about me when I enter a bar?" she asked the gaping crowd. I shook all over and had to look down as there were eyes, eyes everywhere on me.

Then, they started applauding and I had to walk on Jen's arm right through the bar, people standing up at tables to get a better look. Anne Jenkins and the man with her smiled at me and Anne said, "Good luck, Davina," to me and then "Good luck, Stephanie," to the couple behind.

Professor Dunley and Assistant Professor Tom Johnson were standing in front of the glass doors to a room beyond. Andrea was talking volubly to them and smiling. The university professors weren't smiling. They looked stunned and nervous. Andrea said something then and pointed to me. I felt a flush steal all over me as I knew the men were looking at me, evaluating me and the way that I looked. Both of them knew me as David Evans. I just wanted to turn around and run for it. But that would mean back through that packed barroom.

I looked down at my black dress swinging out in front at me, at the black, pointed women's shoes at my

feet and yes at my black boobs which were phoney but didn't look like it. Inside the room, the long table was ready and the real girls, all in jeans and shirts, I realized, were standing over pretty girls as they sat down, and were pinning flowers on their dresses.

I shuddered as Jen held my chair for me and reminded me to brush the skirts beneath me and to sit like a girl. "Cross your legs, Davina," Jen reminded me in a whisper as she took my jacket and exposed my chest and the bra straps as well as shoulder straps of the dress I was wearing.

"This is so stupid!" Stephanie, Steven Woodley, said beside me as Amy shushed him, grinned and bent over Stephanie to pin the orchid that was intended for her that night if she did but know it to Stephanie's what. Her bosom? Her chest? Her bust, I suppose was the right answer. It looked very nice there.

"Thanks, Jen," said Andrea then, coming over and taking the corsage from Jen who most reluctantly gave it up. I suppose there were three extra girls in the room and there was an empty seat on the other side of Marcia from Stacey. I tried to smile at Andrea but the smirk on her face was too much. I could only shudder as she undid the box, reached over and pinned my flower right between where my breasts would be if I really was a girl. Then, she bent over and kissed me lightly on the cheek.

"I am so proud of you, Davina," she said. "I thought tonight was going to be such a drag with you and it is, isn't it? But this is so much better, isn't it?"

"No," I said in a whisper as she sat down beside me then and put her hand on my lap.

“All right, ladies, everyone,” said Tracey then, moving up to the table and putting her arm about Brittany’s shoulders, stroking them. “Professor Dunley, Professor Johnson, Ralph, Tom, if you could sit here beside Brittany, Tom, and you beside Roberta, down there, Ralph.

“Well, the dig is finally over. Professor Johnson took every relic and sample back to the Primcult lab in the University and it’s now up to the second years, some of us, if we make it,” there was nervous laughter at that, boyish and girlish, and a lot of shushing, which made the girls laugh even more, “to explain to the world what we found and why it was all important. Now is our time to party and to let off a little steam. But before that, there are the formalities. Professor Dunley?”

Professor Ralph Dunley looked about to explode. He looked around the room at the thirty-nine of us students and then lifted a hand in a gesture to the other male-dressed figure in the room to go on.

“Well, ladies and well, ladies,” said Tom Johnson, giving us all a crooked smile. The girls all laughed at that. I couldn’t look at him any more as his eyes swept around the long table. “Each year on these digs, I have been led to believe, the last day party has been a hum-dinger and full of surprises. Well, I think that this year, you have surpassed every other year in the surprise department.”

The girls all laughed and began to clap Professor Johnson. They had to turn to all the other ladies like me, of course, and encourage us to clap as well. I saw many of the girls had sparkling eyes as they looked to where Tom Johnson was speaking from. Well, they all liked him. Any one of them would have gone home

with him if he asked them, I was sure. I turned my head to look at him and the eye contact was there immediately.

Oh, I couldn't look at him. I had looked at him at the door coming in and his eyes had been on me all the time as Dunley had looked at Jen and then at Stephanie and Amy behind us. I shuddered and looked away quickly.

"Now, I will turn it back to you, Tracey," said Tom Johnson pleasantly then. "And we shall all hear how we are to proceed."

Tracey looked to Professor Dunley but he shook his grey, balding head immediately and looked down. Robbie, no, Roberta, had to take his hand then and startle the man as Roberta stroked it and whispered something to him, the earrings at Roberta's ears swinging wildly as she pouted and arched a little like a girl. Dunley's mouth opened and yet he managed to look sick at the same time.

Shirley immediately seized Roberta's hand and slapped it lightly. "Bad girl," I heard her say clearly while Dunley looked fit to be tied.

"You can serve now," said Tracey to a red-haired waitress at the door, who shot away immediately to call on others. "First, dinner," said Tracey, "and Stacey, you're in charge of the dinner music CDs." Tracey pointed to a sound system on the far wall. "Then, we shall clear the banquet table, serve drinks, white wine only for the ladies in dresses." That meant all the boys. No wonder the girls had all gone to jeans for the so-called party. "Our deejay, a regular here, will take over then for the dance and before we leave, we shall invite some of the locals from here to be the judges and present Miss Information with the fabulous prizes the

local stores we supported today have provided us with."

"What about the free beer?" asked Brittany loudly and there was a lot of laughter then, hushed by the girls.

"Who is that?" mocked Tracey then. "Oh, it is Brittany, my date for the evening." She rolled her eyes. "Yes, girls, she has her panties on tonight. I checked." That brought cheers and whoops from several of the girls while Brian, I mean Brittany, seemed to flush even as she looked back defiantly, through coal black eye-lashes that must be false, at the girls around her. "What would ladies want with beer when they could have pretty dresses? No, the prize money tonight will be put towards gift certificates to Nancy Harvey's *Bridal and Everyday Dress Shop* and to Anne Jenkins's *Anne's Lingerie!*"

Just then the door opened and the waitress who had been in the room to start with came in with a man in a cook's hat. The two of them began serving soup right away and though Tracey said something else, I think it was to enjoy the party, I didn't catch it at all. I hoped she'd said that she was only kidding. At least, the winner should be able to treat all his friends to beer to commiserate after this silly, stupid evening, shouldn't they?

Tracey was right about the wine. Our waitress served us with white wine and brought more bottles to the table as the dinner began. "You only eat half of anything in a bowl or on a plate," hissed Andrea at me and I seemed to see every girl at the table receiving that message. I shivered and looked around. And, yes, Tom Johnson was there, staring at me again.

It was only after the meal was done and all the dishes cleared away that the trouble began. I mean, how can you have a dance in which all of us present were dressed like girls? Who was supposed to lead?



Well, the girls in pants and jeans insisted that they lead, which wasn't so bad when Kenny Zee, the deejay, played waltzes and slow stuff to get the party moving. But when he switched to rock and roll, the girls in pants made sure that we girls in dresses had to be the ones who were swung and twirled and our dresses, of course, had to swish about us. We all left no doubt to the bemused professors and the few girls who had no partners that we were all in female underwear as well as dresses.

Well, the girls seemed to be having fun doing that but I saw Stephanie's face and I think that it mirrored mine. Any time now, I was sure one of the boys was going to explode and tell the girls that this was no frigging joke any more. What a relief that would be when we could all tell the girls where to go and get back to being ourselves again. Some of the girls, the real ones, I think, were getting bored with it all as well, just like Brittany and Stephanie. I could see that Jen and Stacey, sharing Marcia, were getting bored of treating us all like women and not being treated that way themselves while Erica looked at the still prancing 'Marilyn' as if he was from another planet.

No, that wasn't the trouble, however. The trouble was the motorcycle club that drove up, having heard like everyone else what was going on at the Black Bull. And they decided to crash the party.

"Oh, this is a private party!" proclaimed Tracey, leaving off jitterbugging with Brittany to head off the men in leather jackets coming into the room.

"But you ain't got any men here," said the tall, young, dark-haired guy who came in with several other grinning guys. "Can't be a party with all girls and no guys!"

"I'm sorry!" said Tracey. "This is our private party!" She went to push the first guy out the door as several more young men came to look in as well.

Andrea had been twirling me like crazy and she put her arm protectively about me but Jen and Shirley then did what I least expected. I thought they were heading to the door to support Tracey but they weren't

"Oh, let them in," said Jen, walking up to one of the taller guys and putting her arms about his shoulders. "I want to dance as well!"

"Yes," said Shirley, going up to a smaller, blonde guy, who winked at her. "I'm tired of dancing with girls. Let's let them all in!"

Tracey tried calling "No!" but the deejay put on some funky music then, laughing away at us all and inviting the guys to come in and grab a girl in a pretty dress, and suddenly we were invaded. In no time, half a dozen girls were dancing with men and then some more men came into the room. The only girls not dancing then were girls like me, disguised boys. If the men who came in knew that, and they did, we learned later, they didn't care at all. Stephanie was whirled off in a man's arms and Roberta followed.

More guys came in and Andrea let me go. Yes, she let me go and walked over to a guy and began dancing. I was scared stiff, certain that these guys were here to insult us university types and pick a fight. I wanted to get away but I couldn't as another guy took me by the arm. "Oh man," he said to me, crushing me against him, even though I pushed on him and shuddered as he grabbed me and swung me, deliberately swishing my skirt around my legs. "Are you ever cute? And you smell so nice! I could dance with you, girl, for the rest of the night!"