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THE EDUCATION OF ADDIE

By Mardee Louise Prynne

PART I LESSONS WITH THE LIBRARY LADY

Most of the guys in my high school wouldn't think twice about turning down a summer job at the local public library. "That's girls' work. No place for a real guy." Well, I jumped at the chance to shelve books and file all sorts of cards. Things were a lot different then and I was as different from most of the guys as a boy in his late teens could possibly be. I didn't walk around spouting baseball stats nor did I play the games the guys played. Oh, I was well coordinated enough, probably more so than most guys on varsity teams but I was so small and slender; petite would have been the word that best described me had I been a girl. Not that I didn't behave like a girl. That little quirk earned me numerous nicknames such as faggot, fruit, fairy, queer and feigeleh which is Yiddish for "little bird." These nicknames were meant to be hurtful and were until one afternoon in the library when I turned the tables on a boy who had often made my life a living hell.

My given name was Adam which is ironic because it means "first man" in Biblical Hebrew. The irony lay in the fact that I was rarely first in anything and I wasn't much of a man which was okay with me. My name was shortened to Addie which I didn't mind at all. On school days I dressed casually but never in jeans. Slacks and a dress shirt or polo shirt was my standard attire; never jeans in school. Shoes were usually saddle shoes which was as feminine as I dared to get. Outside of school I wore Bermuda shorts that were just a little too snug for a boy. My color preferences were white, beige, suntan, and light blue. That I had noticed when girls bent over the seams and hems of their panties were visible through their Bermudas and summer slacks and that often the color of their panties could be discerned through the not quite opaque fabric were no small factors in my color choices. When the briefer Jamaica shorts were introduced I wore them as well. On visits to

the country home of a friend of my mother I wore short shorts and even dared to wear a pair or two with the zipper on the side or the back which was unequivocally a girl's style. In the city I would have certainly been beaten on the street had I dared to go out so dressed but in the New England artists' colony I was just another eccentric bohemian. It was there that I found a shop that stocked boys' and men's briefs in every color imaginable and freed me from the boredom of white briefs. These marvelously intriguing underpants differed not only in color but in cut as well. There was more shape to them which emphasized contours front and rear. Of course I never dared to wear these briefs on days when I had to change for gym; so doing would have condemned me to an even more miserable existence than I was already having in school.

I was thrilled when I got a phone call from Miss Rubin, the head librarian at the nearby public library, to let me know my application for a summer job had been accepted. I did feel badly about not having as much free time to spend with Aunt Helen which is what I called my mother's friend for as long as I could remember. The extra pocket money earned at the library would be my passport to buying whatever clothing might suit my personal tastes or as much of my personal tastes as I dared indulge. I would miss the freedom and acceptance at the artist's colony as much as I would miss Aunt Helen.

Miss Rubin told me that I would be allowed to dress comfortably and that "comfortably" did not rule out Bermuda shorts as long as I wore crew or ankle socks with them. This compensated in some degree for not having as much time with Aunt Helen.

A few days later I went downtown to shop for new summer clothing. It was ever so hard to resist buying things in the missy's wear and junior miss departments which is what the departments that catered to girls in their late teens were called in those long gone days. Then an inspiration struck me on how to indulge myself with a touch of femininity. I decided I would go to a drug store, buy a rat tail comb and a bottle of hairspray, the kind that came with a finger operated pump. (Spray cans were still in the future.) I found a small restaurant on a side street, the kind of place that catered to well born, old moneyed ladies who wore gloves that matched their shoes and handbags, the kind of place called a tearoom. I was seated at a small table and given a menu. I ordered and asked the waitress where the men's room was located. Leaving all but one of my packages at the table I headed for the small men's room. Once inside I took the comb and hairspray from the bag, carefully combed my hair into bangs and pushed them to the side. The style held once sprayed. The effect was thrilled me even as it stroked my vanity. The image smiling back at me from the mirror could easily be that of a pretty, somewhat boyish girl who didn't need to rely on makeup. It would have been better had I the confidence to buy a lipstick. Makeup would have to wait; for the moment I would have to muster the confidence to walk out of the men's room to face the patrons and staff of the tearoom.

Those few that noticed me looked at me with approval. The waitress served me my sandwich and pot of tea with a warm smile. She later took a moment to remark that, "Hard to believe you just combed that style so quickly. You really ought to wear your hair that way more often but do have a care around the wrong sort." I thanked her for her kind words and bit of advice although I wasn't at all sure of what she meant having a care with "the wrong sort." Then it struck me. She was saying that I had to be careful of cute, femme

hairstyles around the guys. That was the very same thinking that wisely kept me from wearing my colorful briefs on days when I had to change for gym.

“Thank you and do call again,” was what the lady in charge said to me as I left. Her warm smile and tone of voice told she meant it. The experience bolstered my confidence and reinforced my determination to carry out my scheme. The next stop was a five and ten where I dared to linger at the counter that sold packaged panties. It was a thrill to sort through the rows of panties arranged by size, color and fabric. My purpose was not only to select from these choices but to figure out my size from the charts on each package. I selected three packs; pastels, brights, and white. All were cotton brief styles and without lace trim or insets. My heart was throbbing and I felt a thrill as I paid the saleslady who said simply and without a note of sarcasm, “Thank you, Miss.” She had taken me for a girl! It was a rather heady experience.

It was so easy to bring off with my newly found confidence. I resolved to develop my femme skills and then try a ladies specialty shop.

The weather was hot and humid the day that I discovered my most important strength. Miss Rubin had asked me to leave the windows open in the stacks and to close them only when the storm broke and if the wind was driving the rain through the open windows. Wearing the panties I bought a week or two ago was still a very private in home only activity. That particular day I had worn Jamaica shorts over a pair of the dark blue briefs that I had bought during a visit to Aunt Helen during spring break. I had made sure that the color would show through when my Jamaica shorts pulled taut across my tush. It wasn't a fulfilling substitute for panties but enough to trigger that won-



derful femme quality popularly known as bitchiness.

I was shelving books when I came face to face with Arnold who was a minor bully and one of sometime tormentors. It was, I decided, time to test my potential at dealing with these drips.

Arnold looked me up and down in a way I hadn't been aware of before. It wasn't unkind but somehow he looked surprised as if he was seeing something he hadn't noticed before. Suddenly his affect went flat and a brief snarl flashed across his face.

"Arnold, is here anything I can help you with?" I paused but not long enough to let him answer. "If you can't give me an answer you can just let me get by so I can get on with my work."

He stepped aside, pressing himself against the shelves. I swaggered past him in my first public attempt at a femme walk. It was just too easy. My smile was almost a sneer as I looked up at him. He saw it as the challenge I meant it to be.

"What's with you?" The quivering in his voice betrayed his confusion.

I cut him off before he could finish. "Oh, come off it, Arnold. You know you really think we should be friends," I said as I leaned closer to him.

His blush gave me a flash of insight into why at least some of the guys gave me a rough time. They were attracted to me as if I were a girl and that threatened their hard guy self respect so much that they had to convince themselves I was a thing to be derided.

Now I was going to play Arnold for all he was worth, crack his fragile little ego and leave him hurting.

"More than that, sweetie, you want me to be your friend." I drew out the word "friend" giving it special emphasis and stirring his well hidden fantasies.

He tensed as I brought my hand toward his face, ran the back of my fingers along his cheeks. I smiled as provocatively as I knew how. Arnold glanced to the left and right along the rows of bookshelves. A long slow breath that he let out even more slowly as he became less tense.

This is so, so neat! I'm actually teasing this jerk-off and he's getting turned on. Careful, Addie I thought to myself. Don't go too far or he may try to hurt you.

"Addie, you got me. I always wanted to be your friend but you know how it is with the guys..."

"But I don't know how it is with the guys as you put it. They've always ganged up on me and teased me to tears. The sad part is you were one of them."

"I swear it'll be different from now on."

That's awfully sweet of you to say so." I parted my lips, ran the tip of my tongue over my upper teeth. Arnold was breathing hard. "But Arnold, how can I be sure you won't turn on me? After all, you know how it is with the guys. That's the excuse you just gave me."

"Come on, Addie. Why would I be standing this close to you if..."

"Then why did you look around to see if the coast was clear before you even talked to me?"

He was flustered now. I could have sworn his eyes were filling with tears. Standing on tiptoe, I brought my lips close to his, paused and then brushed them lightly over his waiting mouth. Then I stepped back.

"Not now, not here, Arnold. You've got your reputation to protect. And besides, I'm not that kind of girl."

A quick glance at Arnold's fly removed any doubt I might have had at my success in turning him on. The hard-on that was straining against the front of his jeans was all the reassurance I needed. Arnold and all the other so-called 'guys' were going to be mine to do with as I pleased.

A pained look came across Arnold's features. He began to plead. "You can't just walk away like this, you can't."

"Of course I can. I'm doing it right now."

I wasn't sure what his intent was as he forced himself to his full height and puffed out his scrawny chest as if he were some sort of bird doing its mating dance. I decided to meet him halfway. Stepping toward him I brought my left hand up and looked at my watch. That distracted him from my right hand which grabbed his balls right through his jeans. Making sure my grip wasn't so tight that I didn't have room to increase his pain, I sneered at him.

"Sweetie, you may find me irresistible but you really must control yourself. Now back off or I swear I'll rip them off you here and now."

Arnold was writhing in well deserved agony and humiliation as I increased the pressure on his balls. I twisted my wrist while still holding onto Arnold. His attempt to swallow his scream was just too funny.

"You've had enough," I sniggered as I let him go. "Or have you?" I added as I lunged at him. Arnold looked at me in wide eyed disbelief. My one regret was that there was no one around to witness my first triumph.

Arnold started to walk quickly away from me or at least as quickly as he could given his sore balls. Once he was safely out of my reach, he stopped and half turned toward me. "Addie, you're lucky I'm a gentleman. I don't hit girls."

"Sweetie, don't tell me you've forgotten that I'm really a boy. Tell you what, Arnold. Why don't you call me tonight after dinner and we can talk about being fiends?"

The rumble of nearby thunder which had punctuated this wonderfully bizarre incident broke into a summer lightning storm. The lightning and wind whipped rain kept Arnold an embarrassed prisoner in the library. He sat at a table in the reading room with a magazine propped in front of him but eyeing with a forlorn expression every time I came into view. Of course, I made it my business to kneel or bend over every chance I could to draw his attention to the dark blue color of my briefs through the summer weight fabric of my Jamaica shorts.

Go ahead, you drip. Ogle my tush all you like and wonder if I'm wearing panties. Kiddo, you're going to pay for all the misery you gave me, you and your revolting pals.

"Addie, please come to my office when you can but be sure to see me before you leave today."

"Yes, Miss Rubin." My rapid speech must have betrayed my anxiety over the possibility that Miss Rubin either saw or heard part of my interaction with Arnold because she gave me a knowing smile.

"Don't be concerned, Addie. You're not in any kind of trouble; quite the contrary." She winked as she turned on her smart black heels and walked to her office.

The storm subsided quickly. Arnold hung around sulking even though the weather was no longer giving him an excuse to stay. Eventually he got up and stood looking at me for a minute or two. I walked over to the table he had just abandoned, picked up the magazine and carried it to the magazine racks.

"Arnold dear, it's okay to talk to me if you want to." I wasn't sure if I meant to salve his wounds to rub salt into them.

Like the beaten puppy he was, Arnold trailed after me as I walked across the checkout area. "I'll call you if that's okay." It was more a plea than a statement.

"Sure, if you want to. Don't expect anything to happen though."

"Yeah, I won't. No hard feelings, okay?"

"You were the one who was hard," I teased.

That made him blush. "Call you later," was all he could manage as he turned and left.

I was scheduled to work until closing which was at six PM. The library had been almost empty since the storm had started to brew so I took advantage of the slow time to catch up on clerical chores and to reflect on my easily accomplished humiliation of Arnold. This kept me so busy that Miss Rubin's slipped my mind until I became aware of her standing behind me as she had done several times during those last two hours.

High heels like Miss Rubin almost always wore making a clicking sound as a woman walks yet I never heard Miss Rubin approach. I had only this vague sense of someone behind me and glanced quickly over my shoulder to see Miss Rubin eyeing me appraisingly. This time she tapped me on my shoulder and reminded me to stop into her office after closing.

"Please come in and sit down," was her cordial greeting as I approached the door to her private office. "Please feel free to call home if you're expected. I wouldn't want your family to think something was amiss." She didn't seat herself behind the desk like she would if she were going to reprimand me or rate my work but chose to sit on a small couch in the corner while pointing me toward a comfortable chair facing her.

"Thank you, Miss Rubin, but there's only my mother and me. Mother won't be home until at least seven tonight so I have time."

"Well then, perhaps you can join me for dinner after we're done here. I've been noticing for sometime now, even before you were hired. As you know I hire very few boys but you impressed me as different from most of the young thugs around here. You're brighter, more directed, more polished and graceful in your movements.

"Since you started I've seen you assert yourself forcefully but without being crude. You have an intuitive quality so rare in men and boys."

Oh my gosh! She's saying I have feminine intuition. Got to be what she means.

"Thank you, Miss Rubin, but it's nothing I work at, just comes naturally."

"Of course it does, Addie. Intuition is a gift and cannot be taught.

"I've also noticed that you chose clothing that suits you and not what custom dictates is the guy look. You carry that clothing very well. I've also noticed your preference for underpants not in the dull, traditional white. Stop looking so uncomfortable. I'm impressed that you're able to choose fabrics that allow a hint of color to show through. Quite effective really. Just don't limit yourself to colors. You must never underestimate the power of white panties. It's often more noticeable especially when worn under a skirt.

"In so many ways you truly are one of my girls."

I blushed at the thought of being described as "one of my girls." Her statement was meant to flatter and didn't embarrass me in the least. It made me realize how much I really wanted to be like a girl.

Miss Rubin casually crossed her legs to reveal the edge of the dark tops of her stockings but not so carelessly as to show thigh or even garter snaps. Despite my femme identity I was fascinated by the intricacies of women's intimates and what were called foundation garments.

"I was quite impressed by your behavior with that Arnold person. You took advantage of his confusion and when he tried to get too close to you, you very ably handled him and made him ejaculate, cum as you teens say, before you were done with him."

"I'm sorry," I blurted out. "It won't happen again, at least not..." I froze in midsentence as I realized Miss Rubin might think it inappropriate for me to add "not in here." Her praise of my femme qualities made me think she would not want a fighter among her girls.

"Addie, you've no reason to apologize. You simply put that a bully in his place. I have no problem with you defending yourself in any way you can. Perhaps the reasons for defending yourself go back in time but that's no reason not to put a creep in his place, to get even for what you had to endure.

"With your Mother's permission I want to help you develop your innate but suppressed qualities. It is only your mother that we need to talk to. If the information on your application correctly your parents are separated and your father prefers to keep his distance. Are you willing to continue this discussion?"

My mouth had gone dry as I listened to Miss Rubin's proposal. Unable to speak, I nodded.

She must have looked into my family background because there was nothing on the application saying that my father is out of my life. What does he mean when she says “develop my innate but suppressed qualities?” What if she wants to train me to be more like a boy? I can refuse. No. She can make trouble for me an account of what I did to Arnold.

“Let me get some drinks for us. Iced tea?” Miss Rubin got to her feet as I managed to get out “Yes, please.” She went out and returned with a jug of cold tea, a bowl of ice, and two glasses. She put a few ice cubes into a glass and stood close to me as she filled the glass with tea. A shiver ran through me as her stockinged calf brushed against my bare leg as she turned to go back to her place on the couch.

She sat back and relaxed as she studied my reactions to her veiled proposal. As Miss Rubin tilted her face toward me as if getting ready to say something, she folded her hands over her shin and pulled her knee toward her chest. I was transfixed as she allowed her skirt to slide back exposing the under side of her thigh. Despite my effort to avert my eyes from Miss Rubin’s provocative display, I could not. The bottom of her panties showed at the vee where her legs met her groin. I wouldn’t have noticed these tailored briefs in the shadows of her skirt had they not been stark white nylon. Miss Rubin had taught me by example how arrestingly erotic white can be.

Miss Rubin literally had her tongue in her cheek as she nodded to me, a silent affirmation that I now understood her admonition to add white to my repertoire of colors.

“Addie, dear, most males would be as captivated as you are now but for very different reasons. They would simply drool inside with animal lust. You, my young friend, both want to be near a seductive female and to absorb her sexuality as your own.

Don’t even pretend to tell me I’m wrong but understand that what I’m telling you about yourself is a compliment to your natural beauty, your rare character, your potential for strength.

“I’ve said enough for now. You have to think this through even before you approach your mother. Let me know if you want to hear more of what I’m willing to teach you. For now you’ll continue on here at the library with the offer of part time work once school starts again. Have no concern about punishing Arnold or any of his goon friends for any reason you think warrants it.”

My mind was racing with all sorts of wild ideas about what Miss Rubin had in mind in her vague but fascinating proposal. Glancing at a clock in a store window across the street I realized that this strange interview had lasted less than fifteen minutes which gave me plenty of time to get home, set the dinner table and to reheat whatever mother had left in the fridge.

I decided to stop off at the local soda fountain to pick up a magazine, the kind of magazine I had only dared to furtively glance at on the racks near the cash register, a fashion magazine geared to the interests of girls in their late teens. Nothing was going to deter from buying what I decided on.

A few of the local greasers were hanging around outside the soda fountain. As I walked between them, one or two actually made way for me to pass. I smiled at the one who seemed to be the ring leader. Oh, hell. What if he thinks a queer boy is coming on to

him? He'll probably punch me or worse. To my very pleasant surprise he nodded at me, a small acknowledgment but better than I had expected.

Being dinner time the store was empty but for the owner's wife who was behind the counter. I had been hoping there might a few kids inside so I could test my resolve to buy what I wanted in front of them. Looking over the magazines my eye fell on "COED STYLE." I took it down and began leafing through the pages.

In those days most soda fountains had a counter with a sliding window facing the street to allow sales of candy bars, cigarettes and such to passersby. I heard the window slide open and a young man's voice. "Deck of Lucks, Mrs. Kaminski." (Deck of Lucks = fifties slang for a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes) I glanced over my shoulder to see the greaser who had actually acknowledged my smile. He smiled at me and turned way after paying for his cigarettes.

After I paid for my magazine and left the soda fountain, the greaser approached me with an offer.

"Hey, you're the kid from the library, the one they call Addie."

"Yes, I am."

"I seen you a couple of times when I go to the library to get books. That Miss Rubin gives me reading lists so I can make something of myself. Anyways, you seem like an awfully good kid but some guys wouldn't see it that way." He gestured toward my magazine. "If any one gives you a hard time you let me know and I'll set them straight."

"That's awfully sw...kind of you but I can take care of myself." Good thing you caught yourself before you said sweet.

"Sure thing. By the way, my name is Phil. I'll see you at the library sometime."

"That'll be neat, Phil. Be sure to say hi."

What is going on? I push Arnold around and he wants to call me. Now this Phil character sees me with a girls' fashion magazine and he offer to protect me. Yikes! Neither one is dating material, I mean neither one would be if I were a real girl. Wonder where this is leading.

Folding my copy of Coed Style, I started for home turning onto a residential street. Three girls who were in a few my classes over the years approached from the opposite direction. They were the epitome of the nice girl look in the their chic shirtwaist dresses, crew socks and saddle shoes, their hair in page boy or pony tails styles.

One of them waved at me, a very stylized exaggerated girlish wave.

"Hi. Addie."

My confidence in being able to take care of myself, the very recent product of my confrontation with Arnold and the ensuing conversation with Miss Rubin, began to deflate. As much as I had wanted to be like a girl, I was intimidated by them. I was at a loss as to how to deal with the teasing I was about to get from these attractive but nasty girls.

"Hi," was all I could get out. To my dismay, they noticed the magazine which, although I had folded the cover inward, showed a full page ad for a new line of lipstick on the back cover.

"Whatcha got there?"

"Yeah, let's see."

"Just a magazine." I said as I tried to walk around them only to have the magazine snatched from my hand.

"Now isn't this sweet? Addie is keeping current with all the latest fashion trends."

"Rita, you have no right to grab anything from him and no right to tease him. Maybe he bought the magazine from a friend or a cousin or something."

"Judy Horowitz, you're getting soft in the head. You know what a fruit Addie really is. You told me..."

I was shocked to see that Judy Horowitz, the embodiment of bitchy snobbishness, was defending me. She cut Rita off before the girl could finish her last sentence.

"Rita, you must be jealous of him," mocked Judy.

"I ought to slap you silly," was Rita's response.

"Try it, I dare you." Judy had her hands on her hips in defiance of the taller, heavier girl's threats.

Now that Judy was calling her bluff, if it was a bluff, Rita was backing off, literally as well as figuratively.

"Do you really think you can both of us when you can't even take me?"

Joan, the third girl, moved away announcing, "Leave me out of this. I don't want to be rolling around on the ground, especially not with a boy watching."

Rita took advantage of the distraction created by Joan's announcement to lunge at Judy who quickly stepped out of her way tripping the larger girl in the process. She quickly grabbed the fallen Rita's wrist and twisted. Rita was forced to roll onto her knees disheveling her skirt in the process. Despite her pain, Rita tried to grab at Judy's ankle only to have more pressure applied by the smaller, faster, and possibly stronger girl.

"I give, I give," screamed Rita through her clenched teeth.

"You pathetic loser. Get up slowly."

"Judy, please, no more. I'm sorry..."

"You will be if you ever talk to me like that again. Now get lost."

"Addie, you're okay in my book, a really neat kid."

As Judy and Joan walked off, Judy called to me over her shoulder. "Hey, Addie, think about hanging out with us around school."

Why are you turning away from me and walking off before I can say anything? You may think your hot stuff but you better not be making fun of me.

Shortly after I returned home the phone rang. It was Mother calling to let me know that she was having dinner downtown with a friend and would be home late.

"Of course, Mother. There's no need for me to wait up for you...No, Mother, I'm not a psychic. It's just that you've been doing this more and more lately... Bye, Mother."

I just hope that friend is a man, a man who'll keep her occupied so I can get on with being who I want to be.

At breakfast the next morning Mother confessed that she has become involved in an intimate relationship with a man. She wanted to invite Marvin to dinner so we could meet and perhaps become friends.

"Why would it matter if he and I are friends if he treats you right?"

"Don't you dare try to embarrass me," Mother exploded. "For one night try to act like a boy; pretend you're not the sissy you really are." She paused to take out her hanky in order to dab at her cheeks which were devoid of tears. "Please, Adam, don't ruin my chance to get the love I need."

"I'll cooperate but you must introduce me as Addie."

Mother sighed and acquiesced. I had own round one.

Judy Horowitz and her sidekick Joan were more than friendly to me on the way to homeroom period. Maybe they were ready to accept me as a friend, maybe even as one of the girls.

We fell into step on the way to our lockers and passed Arnold who was opening his locker. I couldn't resist impressing Judy while taking a dig at Arnold at the same time.

I bumped my hip against his butt and smiled at him when he turned.

"Hi, Arnold. Thought you were going to phone me last night."

Arnold, totally thrown by very femme reaction to his not calling, reacted as if I were a real girl on whom he had a crush.

"Gee, Addie, I had..."

"Now, no excuses! You promised. Call tonight."

"I will, Addie, I will for sure."

Judy snickered as we walked on. Now it was her turn to bump me with her hip.

"Addie, you are too, too much. I would never have guessed that you could flirt with guys, real guys and get them all hot and bothered. And you do it so well!"

I was both flattered and slightly aroused; flattered by Judy's compliments and aroused by the feel of her hip against mine when she bumped me.

On opening my locker I saw a folded note that had been slipped through the louver in the door. It was sealed with a bit of tape. It was addressed to "Addie from Rita" with the caution to open and read in private. I had no positive feelings for Rita after the incident yesterday evening but she had piqued my curiosity with this mysterious note. Of course, it might have been some sort of mocking insult to my rapidly emerging femme qualities. I slipped the note into the pocket of my chinos and went on my way. It remained there forgotten until I arrived at the library to start my afterschool shift.

Dear Addie:

Please don't tear up this note or hate me until you read

the whole thing. I want to let you know that it wasn't my idea to start up with you yesterday. Judy tricked me by saying let's make Addie cry and she called you a miserable little fairy. It was stupid of me to listen to her.

Judy pretends to be friends with people and then uses them and throws them away so watch out your feelings don't get hurt. If you want a real friend you can always talk to me

Please accept my apology.

You friend if you want,

Rita

Damn it! I have no love for Rita but what she's saying fits with Judy's reputation, not that I really know Judy at all. Yeah, but how do I know that Rita isn't trying to get back at me for breaking up her friendship with Judy. If Rita is right, even a little bit right, Judy is making a jerk out of me. But why? And what can I do about it.

"A penny for your thoughts." Miss Rubin's voice aroused me from my rather angry and perplexed reflections. "You look puzzled, puzzled and angry. I'll bet that note has something to do with your mood. Why not talk to me about it. Whatever you say stays between us."

I followed Miss Rubin into her office where I loosed my feelings in a flow of tears, sobbing until I could barely catch my breath. Miss Rubin hugged me in a supportive, non-sexual way which calmed me to the point where I could unburden myself in a coherent manner.

I opened up not only to Miss Rubin but to myself as well. The thought of having to perform the part of an ordinary young man for my mother and her lover was not sitting well with me. I was just gaining the confidence to effectively be what I had so long tried to hide was not, I determined, going to be undermined by Mother.

Miss Rubin assured me that the wise course was to be what I really am because sooner or later Mother's lover would find me out and the reaction would certainly be worse for all concerned.

We went on to talk about Judy who was well known to Miss Rubin for her requests for unusual reading lists, something quite acceptable to Miss Rubin under most circumstances

but questionable in the case of Judy who kept insisting the information was always for someone else.

"That girl is daft if she thinks she fools everyone. She would be a lot better confronting who she really is. Judy Horowitz could take lessons from you in learning self-acceptance both personally and publicly."

Under Miss Rubin's guidance, I came to the conclusion that Judy was not to be trusted and that I would do well to hear what Rita had to say. As for Mother bringing home her lover, I decided that would be the occasion to first wear real panties when not alone.

Miss Rubin knew me well enough to ask what else is on my mind as we prepared to close shortly before nine PM.

"I'm just so afraid that I'll look like a clown, like a fool if I ever try to totally dress as a girl; make up and everything."

"No darling, not if you take your time. Keep in mind that most girls don't wake up one day as fully mature sophisticated women. Take it step by step and you'll be fine."

"Will you help me?"

"Perhaps."

I somehow knew that I would have to show Miss Rubin I was worthy of her time and tutelage, whatever that tutelage might include. But what could I do to prove myself to her? Then as I cleared books that were left on the reading tables I noticed an annotated Hamlet that had been left open.

"This above all: To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man."

When I later told Miss Rubin of my new motto she quoted Oscar Wilde to me.

"A little sincerity is a dangerous thing, and a great deal of it is absolutely fatal."

Then she added, "Especially with that Judy person and all her manipulative ilk."

I was pretty sure that Miss Rubin meant that I had to be guarded in any contacts with Judy. Being true to my own self didn't mean sharing every thought, feeling, and secret aspiration with every girl or boy who offered me their friendship.

Arnold phoned that evening. He sounded contrite and offered to go to a movie "or something" with me the coming weekend.

"Say, let's meet at the museum Sunday afternoon and go to the free concert. We can look at the renaissance costume exhibit while we're there."

Arnold sounded more than a little uncomfortable at the thought of a museum especially one that had classical music concerts.

"But Arnold, sweets, if we meet at the museum you're friends will never know you're hanging out with me."

That sold him on our "date." He was so overwhelmed that he never realized he had no idea where the museum was. The poor schmuck had to stop by at the library the next day to ask me directions. I even drew him a diagram of the first floor showing where we would meet.

The weekend came and with it the awful chore of meeting Mother's friend Marvin. I was actually looking forward to seeing Arnold and taking out on him any irritation growing out of being a party to Mother's dinner. Gee whiz, Mother, why don't you just shack up with him and leave me out of it all together?

Mother had fussed all day cooking and setting the table while I took refuge behind a busy day at the library. There was little chance to consult with Miss Rubin and so the day passed by all too quickly.

As soon as I got home, Mother shooed me into the shower with a pleas to "Act like a boy for a few hours so you don't embarrass me. Don't ruin my chance for..." She stopped and sighed.

I stopped short of embarrassing her but made sure my body language was just femme enough make Marvin uncomfortable without giving him anything too specific to complain about.

The evening with Marvin went well as I learned a few days later. Mother and Marvin decided to get married but I was told there would be no room for me in their new home. How wonderful! But what next for me?

"Would you like to stay with Aunt Helen? You could get your own place and attend a public college.

"We'll wait until after your graduation to marry and move in together so you don't have to make up your mind right away."

"That's great, Mother. I'm really happy that you finally found someone. And I really appreciate your letting me stay on until graduation."

What I really appreciate most of all is that I'll be done with having to put with all your confused and confusing advice. I really am happy for you, though.

"Come, Mother, let me give you a big hug. I sincerely wish you the best."

The day after the so-called dinner party, I made sure to be at the museum just as it opened which was an hour before the time of my date with Arnold. I felt safe with Arnold since he was insecure enough to put up with any outrage I might choose to perpetrate on him. His insecurities about his own machismo led me to be sure he would never tell a soul about being alone with my while I was experimenting with my ability to use the power of female sexual appeal to my advantage. Arnold was only an experimental animal to be used even though I did feel some small degree of affection for the poor sap.

Despite my poor opinion of Arnold, I dressed in a way calculated to arouse him but not so femme as to make me a target in my own neighborhood or on public transportation. I showered and shampooed my hair and used a rinse that would bring out the reddish

highlights in my naturally brown hair. The effect was just right. I left my final styling until I would arrive at the museum. White panties that conformed to my contours left a potential problem. My male genitals might create a less than feminine contour that would give me away under the white slacks I planned to wear. That could be solved for the present by wearing a longish blouse and not tucking it at the waist. Bending at my waist and then kneeling while looking at my reflection in a full length mirror assured me that I could be provocative by allowing the seams and hems of my panties to show through. The thought of being noticed by men who might eye me with lust gave me a sense of power and dominance that I could never experience as an ordinary male. Not having a brassiere, not even one of the newly introduced training bras, I was at a loss as what to wear under my top. Fortunately I had a flat knit tank top under shirt that was too short for me to wear as a boy but was much like a girl's camisole top. I resolved to buy myself a brassiere at the very next opportunity.

Skipping socks, I slipped into my penny loafers. My top was a blue horizontally striped blouse called a French Sailor's top or blouse. The neck was not lower than the collar bone but was cut wide to reveal the shoulder and perhaps just a glimpse of bra strap. Worn over the tank top undershirt the blouse made me look like a sixteen year old in a fashion photo except that my face was devoid of makeup. That I would definitely alter on my arrival at the museum.

Slipping into Mother's bathroom, I took a lipstick, some tissues and went back to my room. There I opened my dresser and took a clutch purse I had bought and hidden in the back of my underwear drawer. I put the lipstick, tissues, my house keys, comb, two r barrettes and some mad money in the clutch purse and left. I had a smug look as I closed the drawer knowing that if things kept going as I hoped my underwear drawer would soon be my panty drawer. I slipped on my smallest watch, fastened the narrow leather strap and gazed admiringly at my small hand with its unpolished but otherwise well cared for nails. I added my birthstone ring, a gift from Aunt Helen who always appreciated and nurtured my femme ways. Then it was out the door and off to my date with poor macho Arnold.

As I walked out the door I realized that walking around with a clutch purse, however much like a man's wallet this one may be, was not a great idea. Neither would it fit into the pockets of my slacks which were tailored for a girl. Sucking in my tummy allowed me to slip it into the waist band of my slacks. Another problem solved for the here and now. Somehow I felt sure that the near future would find me living in a situation where I could abandon these pretenses of being an ordinary guy and live true to myself.

I took the bus to the museum to save cab fare knowing that I would be better off avoiding public transportation on the way home. You'll understand why in a bit. I dropped my fare in the box next to the driver and smiled at him. When I sat down I noticed that he had been eyeing me in the rearview mirror as I sashayed down the aisle. This was a cause for some concern. Was he seeing me as some sort of weirdo? If that were the case would he flag down a police car and have me arrested or would he just throw me off the bus? Then I caught the eye of nice looking college guy who smiled looked at me like any red blooded young American looks at an attractive girl. The driver, to my satisfaction, had undoubtedly been getting what was then called a cheap thrill by studying my rear as I walked. Were I a little more confident I might have winked at him knowingly which would have

put him on the spot. I made a mental note to add that response my repertoire and to practice on men and boys at every opportunity.

The lavatories on the main concourse of the museum shared a common entrance area, a kind of sitting room with a few benches. That was my destination as soon as the museum opened its doors. As I was the first to arrive there and anticipating few other people needing to use the lavatories I went directly into the archway marked "LADIES."

Once inside I went into a stall, latched the door and sat to pee. I tried to create the appearance of how a girl's slacks and panties would appear to another female under the gap between the door edge and the floor by keeping feet and legs so much closer together than a boy would keep them. I also kept my slacks and panties from bunching around my ankles figuring that girls would be as modest as possible except in situations where they had strong reasons to be otherwise.

Aiming my pee stream so as to produce as much sound as possible furthered my efforts to be convincingly femme. After dabbing at my pee slit with some toilet tissue, I stood up, adjusted my panties and then my slacks. I flushed the toilet, took my clutch purse from where I had rested it on the stall's clothing hook and took a deep breath before exiting the stall. No one else was in front of the long sink lined plastic counter under well lighted mirrors. Of course this was not how I pictured my first trip to the powder room. In my imagination this would not have been a tile and plastic public ladies room in a museum but a softly lit room in a classy restaurant or cocktail lounge, a room with pastel walls. Perhaps it might have been in a fine restaurant or in a hotel ball room. I had ten or twenty dollars that my escort had given out of which I would tip the uniformed powder room attendant.



But that was not the reality of the moment so I arranged my tissues, my comb, the barrettes, and my lipstick on the institutional counter and set to work. I used a wet comb to do my hair into side swept bangs. The barrettes gave the appearance of holding my hair behind my ears, giving the illusion that my hair was longer than it actually was. Then lipstick carefully applied so as not to hide the natural cupid's bow of my upper lip. A tissue to blot off more than just the excess resulted in a look that would make any casual observer wonder if I had used any lipstick at all. It was, overall, a more than satisfactory outcome.

After gathering my belongings and returning them to my clutch purse, I strode into the sitting area between the two restrooms. A fashionably dressed woman sat there, her face under upper body concealed behind the Sunday New York Herald Tribune. Her legs were modestly crossed at the ankles. A capacious hand bag lay at her expensively shod feet. Kidskin gloves that matched her shoes ended well above her wrists.

I was wondering whether this woman was as beautiful and as sophisticated as the parts of her I could see suggested. Suddenly the snap of her newspaper being folded caused me to turn back and look at her. She stood up and asked, "Well, Addie, aren't you going to complete your makeup?"

"Gee, Miss Rubin, you look so different. I mean your clothes are so different. Your hair, wow! But how come you're here, I mean in this spot now."

"Addie, honey, I overheard you giving directions to Arnold so there's no mystery to how I knew you would be here. There could be only one reason why you wanted to get here earlier and that would be to finish doing your makeup. You've done so much better than I thought you would, at least as far as you've gone. Now let's get back in there and finish what you've started, and started so well."

Miss Rubin grabbed me my wrist and towed me back into the Ladies Room.

She took me by my shoulders and faced me toward the mirror and then dumped the contents of her huge handbag onto the counter. I looked down at a purse that was color coordinated with her gloves and shoes, some items of makeup that were unpackaged but new, and a leather shoulder bag that was far too casual for Miss Rubin's ensemble.

This array along with the extreme change in color and length of Miss Rubin's hair left me at a loss. She looked at me in the mirror with the sufferance usually reserved for a precocious child who is asking about adult matters.

"Sweetie, I know what's on your mind because you keep staring at my hair. It's a wig! I really didn't want to be recognized when I'm following one of my library girls around on a Sunday so I resorted to a wig. The shoulder bag is for you to keep."

She discarded the massive handbag by leaving atop a trash basket. "Someone will no doubt claim that for their own by day's end. They're welcome to it... Stop looking so incredulous. It's not my style nor should it be yours."

We stood shoulder to shoulder facing the mirror.

"This is eye shadow. Use it sparingly by day. Copy me."