

ESSENTIALLY FEMALE



TIFFANY MELLIS

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By Tiffany Mellis

I don't really remember my childhood to any fantastic degree. But like any thing else, I suppose that future events were shaped by my childhood and early teens. There's no question about it either, the people who shaped my destiny were female – all of them. It may sound strange, but I didn't seem to be acquainted with many males in my childhood or early teens. Of course, there HAD to be some, but memories of them are ghostlike and fleeting on the screen of my memory.

Don't have any memories of my father of course. He disappeared, when I was in early childhood, but

I never heard my mother say one word of mourning, nor that she missed him in any way. My mother was probably what would be described as a free spirit. Wasn't very tall I guess, but to me was a giantess. Loved me – I guess, but seemed to care more for romantic novels – plays – afternoons with her women's clubs. Don't get me wrong. I may have, sometimes, got the feeling that I was in the way – but her hugs and kisses were genuine to say the least. I remember looking forward to them with great enthusiasm – and she certainly wasn't mean with her affection. A little off-hand in her treatment of me perhaps.

We were fairly well off I suppose. Lived in England in a nice apartment at the time and I had private tutors for a number of years but then some of mother's friends got on her case about my need for a more general type of education, so I underwent that silliness of being packed off to 'public' school, which was by no means public – where I spent – or was supposed to spend my school days amongst kids of my own gender and economic background. Fed, bed, and educated. Saw my mother every so often – NOT nearly often enough I thought when I was first left there – and cried into my pillow. But keep in mind that I was only coming on twelve when introduced to the English public school system.

Even at that tender age, personalities and abilities are already becoming evident. I was small, slender, and very quiet in demeanor. I don't remember my mother having anyone of the male gender to give me some example, so had a tendency to hang back and do as wanted. This did NOT go down too well considering where I was, and I could say that I

was bullied. But that would be a lie. I learned to do what I was told – and when to do it.

There were a few boys who liked to punch me – but that wasn't very often. After all, I did what I was told and didn't argue. No fun in punching out a kid who does what he's told to do. Do keep in mind that the senior boys couldn't allow too much bullying – after all it was a profit making school so if the younger boys raised too much of a fuss, the teachers would be out of a job, so they thought it wise to lean on the older boys. Accordingly there was at least a semblance of control. All the same I had a pretty miserable time. Even kids who were younger than myself seemed to have more confidence so it was a pretty miserable existence I was leading.

But a major change came into my life. We got a new housemaster – a sort of head teacher for one of the various houses that comprised the school. He himself was far too much above a mere pre teen to bother with the likes of me, but like some of the other housemasters he moved his wife and little daughter in with them into the housemasters cottage that abounded my house. As the houses were all named for famous English admirals, the house I belonged to was "Drake".

A girl in a boys school? Unheard of! All of us boys were agog at his daughter, although there was no way that we could possible show our interest – a sort of nonchalant indifference was the approved attitude and I would have gone along, but circumstances dictated otherwise.

The little girl's name was Margaret. A pretty little thing of ten or eleven years. Dimpled cheeks,

pretty ringlets, a mother who doted on her and? I guess the poor little thing was lonely. Girls weren't available – but there was this fantastic pool of young boys to draw from. This friendly little girl said 'hello' to a number of boys, but I think they were simply too shy to DO anything, other than give her a sickly grin, and then get away as quickly as was possible. Ignore her more than likely. Until she came to me!

I passed her one day in the courtyard while her mother was adding something to a bulletin board. I suppose I was staring harder than politeness dictates – I mean I REALLY missed my mother and anything female was the next best thing. Girls of her age don't seem to be put off by someone taking an interest. "Hello!" She said, smiling. "What's your name?"

She really was terribly pretty and I simply had to smile back. "Paul." I said.

"How old are you?" She asked.

"Thirteen." I responded grandly, although I was overstating my age – but only by a month or two.

She was properly impressed and tugged at her mother's coat. "This is my new friend! His name is Paul – and he's REALLY old!"

Her mother was distinctly beautiful. Dark brown eyes. Short auburn hair. Nicely made up (The school frowned upon attractive women who used too much makeup!). She smiled at me and reached her hand down to shake mine. "How do you do, Paul? Do you realize that you're the first possible friend that Margaret has made in this place?"

I didn't answer, being too busy blushing, and she smiled.

"What house are you in Paul?"

"Drake House ma'am."

"Isn't that nice! My husband's the housemaster there. Have you met him yet?" Then she smiled.

"Probably not. He's getting acquainted with the older boys first." Then she took Margaret by her arm. "Say goodbye to Paul, Margaret. Time to go."

"Could he come to tea? Please?" Margaret asked her mother. And that was the beginning of the end for me at that school.

I wasn't asked to tea at that time but later I discovered just how persuasive Margaret could be – even at her tender age as she consistently worked on her mother. So, I became her one and only friend at the school. Little boys weren't allowed to roam the school at will, but going to the housemasters rooms for tea – when I was legally available – started to become commonplace for me. Much to my dismay. A pretended dismay of course.

Just don't get me wrong. I loved it! The tender company of the gentler sex. The unspoken feeling that I was becoming Margaret's beau. The smiling elder woman who was the next best thing to my mother – and the loving adoration of Margaret. What more could a boy want? The answer is 'something else'. Especially when that boy has been the butt of jokes and bullying behavior from all of the boys around him. So when I say that I loved it? I only talk about my internal feelings. To the other boys I told them often, how I 'hated' having to go there. How the only thing that made the visits

worthwhile was how attractive the mother was – she was a ‘smasher’ – and, of course, the cookies and cakes she had me eat as well. The little girl was nothing but a nuisance. HOW I detested her! (So I said, anyway).

This attitude of mine pleased the other boys for a while and, for the first time, I felt that I was close to becoming one of ‘them’. But then jealousy began to rear its ugly head and the boys began to tease me for keeping company with girls – and womenfolk. Started dropping innuendos at first, then outright accusing me of being a sissy. Taunting me – actually leaving a girls doll that one stole from his sister, on my bed one night.

Wrathfully, I threw it away – but soon just about all of the other boys brought it back and started hurting me. After that, I was forced to take MY dolly to bed and cuddle it as I fell asleep each night. Naturally, the bigger boys had to make it worse. It became a nightly habit for them to congregate around my bed just before lights out. There, in front of my grinning peers, I had to kiss my ‘Dolly’ and wish it a tender ‘good night’ then cuddle it into me. (In many ways, it wasn’t really that terrible. After all it was only a few years before that I’d taken my teddy bear to bed for comfort – and any kind of comfort was sadly lacking in my life). But the whole situation was becoming intolerable, and knowing the cause, I tried half heartedly to get away from afternoon teas at Margaret’s but couldn’t.

I discovered something else at that time. I don’t know if it holds true for the male sex – but if you show a female that you don’t want to do a certain thing? It’s almost as if they become honor bound to

talk, nag, or blackmail you into doing it. I couldn't say that I wanted to break off relationships with them of course – but Margaret seemed to feel it and became even more fond of me and my company. Started wanting to kiss me often when nobody was around. Started talking about how happy we'd be when we were married. Yes, yes – one part of me LOVED all of this stuff, but I naturally couldn't show it. Then one afternoon, everything hit the fan.

Before I continue, I guess that there's something else I should add. I know it sounds ridiculous, but my inability to say 'no' to any woman was beginning to show. I was taller and stronger than Margaret (Not by much of course, but already she had bought the idea that males were stronger than females). But? She was just discovering that IF she wanted to kiss me? I couldn't really stop her. See what I mean? So as I blushed, she started to kiss me whenever she felt like it. It so happened then, on that afternoon, a number of convergent facts all came home to roost in one particular instant.

I had just spent some of my allowance on a jelly donut that was made available in what was jokingly referred to as "Our Tuck Shop". A small, hole in the corner type store that sold everything to the boys. It had been raining beforehand and the streets were wet, but it had stopped raining at that moment. Anyway, I came out. Munching on the remnants of my donut. Off on one side were a group of the boys who usually did nothing but cause me trouble. On the other side? Margaret and her mother. From behind me, one of the female history teachers who'd dropped in at the store to get a newspaper.

The two adults stopped with cheery 'hello's', the boys kept coming and Margaret – totally uncontrolled by her mother who wanted to chat, smiled at me. "Hello darling!" She said – and I wasn't sure if the boys heard her or not. "I've missed you SO much! Come and give Margaret a KISS!" And she stepped into me, and started pulling me into her!

"No Margaret! No! Please NO!" I whispered as I felt myself being manipulated and saw her puckered lips and gleaming eyes, getting that sexy look that I had no idea of what to do with. I managed to back off by breaking her grip. But then I started to hear the loud whispers.

"OOOOHHHH! Kissy Kissy! Would you just look at those two girls?" I heard the whispered chorus of the grinning boys as they came on. "Go on Pauline! Give Margaret your kiss! Go ON! Kissy Kissy!"

It was one of those things that haunt you in slow motion for all of your life. All I wanted to do was fend Margaret off as she followed me. I lifted both arms and straightened them out to ward her off. But I slipped on the wet pavement and fell forward as I lost my balance. So she was stepping into me as I fell into her – closed hands first. My left hand missed Margaret's face by a hairs breadth. My right caught her flush on the mouth – and with my follow through, I landed the only punch I ever threw in my life – and did some extensive damage. Split her upper lip and her nose. Knocked a tooth out. Blackened an eye as the fist slid up her face. It was the only punch I ever landed – and it was perfect, although totally accidental. Knocked Margaret onto her back – where she cracked her head and lost consciousness

immediately – while I had a screaming tornado of a mother beating on me.

For some time after that I seem to have lived within a silent zone. Just some faces and voices coming at me. Margaret's mother – no words – just a screaming face with outstretched talons. Margaret's father – expressionless but with a nastiness that I'd never imagined. I don't remember being separated from the scene but I do remember the series of meetings that followed.

Some of my compatriots in front of the headmaster, my mother, and myself. "No. He never DID like her. Said that she wanted to kiss him all the time and he really hated her." Another. "Tried as hard as he could to get away from the teas that he was forced to attend, but said he was scared what the housemaster would do." Another. "Said she was a proper nuisance."

None of them lied. All spoke words in tones that I had used. I DID try to get to Margaret and say how sorry I was, that it had all been an accident, but once her parents found out what I was trying to say, she was herded off to spend some time with an aunt – and the letter I tried to write (I was twelve years old, remember) fell into her parents hands – who immediately maintained that I was just toadying up to the poor little girl. Tore it to pieces.

I remember my mother getting there. She took me to a hotel "To get me away from a nasty environment." She was most sympathetic at first, but as she heard other boys define what I had been saying, she grew a little colder. Still let me know that she loved me, and put me to bed every night – but after all –

she was a woman too, Read me to sleep at bed time. Attended the hearing. A few days later, she and I were together in the headmaster's study as I was expelled. She took what was said in a very controlled manner. Sent her apologies on to Margaret's parents and offered to pay all medical bills associated with what had happened. Then she took me out to the car – and that was me finished with that school.

She was quiet for a while, while I luxuriated in the comfort of the car. Finally she spoke. "I'm very disappointed in you Paul. I know that men have a tendency to be brutish but I expected better things from you. I'd always thought you were gentler somehow."

"I didn't mean it mummy. Honest." I said.

She bridled a little. "How come you didn't say that in front of your friends – all of those nasty little boys? I can understand you hitting a girl – LOTS of boys seem to think that what girls are for – to be bullied. But to deny it? That's not decent at all, Paul. You've been punished for what happened, but please don't start to whine about it or make excuses now. Okay?"

"I'm sorry that all this happened mummy. Please don't be disappointed in me?" I said, almost crying. After all, I couldn't see what else to do. If I told the truth, she thought I was lying. If I said nothing at all, she figured that I'd meant to hit Margaret all the time.

"That's all right, darling. Let's go home." She said, giving my knee a pat, but she wasn't as nice as she usually was..

The apartment was GREAT! I didn't have to go to school at all! Then I discovered why. She didn't want me to go to an inner city school. Not at all! One night after about two weeks, she and I had dinner together. "I've bought me a nice little cottage in a village not so far that I can't maintain contact with my friends. More rooms than I probably need – and quite modern for that part of the country but the extra rooms will probably come in handy when I have friends come down to swim or play tennis. After checking around, there's a nice little school there – a MIXED one – where you might get more used to being around girls. Find that we're not so awful after all. It's open to the public which I don't like very much, but I have the feeling that it might be good for you. Do you have any problems?"

"I like it here mummy." I said carefully.

She grinned. "Of COURSE you do! Lazy little bugger. No school and fooling around all day. But you DO have to go to school sooner or later and this sounds like something we both can live with. Now? Do you have any REAL objections?"

In less than a week, I had been introduced to our 'cottage'. Some cottage! Had its own private grounds, well shielded by huge hedges. The house itself wasn't huge, but far bigger than just mother and I needed. On top of that it had the aforementioned tennis court – and small swimming pool – and attached to the pool? An unheard of thing in these days – a SPA! After moving into this house, it wasn't too long before I was walking to this rustic schoolhouse. The walk was lovely, but it didn't take long before all sorts of nonsense started again. Was quicker this time. You see? I had a 'Toffee accent' –

one that said that as I spoke differently from the other kids, which made me 'different'. Accordingly, it wasn't long before I was being isolated by the nastier boys – and this time? Girls as well. All seemed determined to make my life as miserable as possible.

As it was a day school, things weren't quite as bad as before. I wasn't under my tormentors thumb for twenty four hours a day which was decidedly better than before. But it wasn't too long before gangs of the little bastards – boys AND girls, were waiting for me on my way into school – and on my way home as well. What else can a weak young person do? I took the insults and nasty remarks with my face down and tried to walk in a straight line. Did my best to offend as few of my tormentors as possible.

How long? I don't know. Maybe two or three months. I DO remember that mummy and I had celebrated my thirteenth birthday about a week before. Don't ask me how – but one day, there were a few girls standing directly in my path as I headed home. – GIRLS! I tried to squirm my way past them, but on either side was a line of grinning boys. One of the girls – Dorothy by name had her hands on her hips. I thought that meeting girls head on was preferable to taking boys on. I think I was wrong.

“How come you're wearing boy's clothes then?” She asked her hands theatrically on her hips.

This was so unexpected that I made the unusual mistake of looking her in the eye. “Huh?” I asked. “Of COURSE I wear boys clothes!”

Then she gave me a deadly insult! "Some of us think that you might be a girl in disguise! Why don't you drop your pants and let us see, huh?"

"Will not!" I said, trying to sound brave.

"Come ON!" She grinned, taking a step towards me. "Let Dorothy make sure that you're not a girl in boy clothes by accident."

"Am not!" I said, but could hear the desperation in my voice.

She heard it too I think because her grin got a little wider and she took another step towards me. "Let's not be naughty! Just open your pants up for me. C'mon. Just for a second. Let me have a look. Maybe the other girls too. Just for a second. C'mon!" She cajoled me.

I started to take a step backwards, then realized that two of her friends had circled around my back and that route of escape was closed. "Please Dorothy? I don't want to fight." I was pleading openly now.

"Of course you don't!" She cooed sympathetically. "You know I'd beat you – and I know it too. Just think of how all those boys would laugh if they saw you fight a girl – and lose. Huh? That what you want?"

"No Dorothy." I said quietly.

"Tell you what. Why don't you just let me and my friends make a nice tight circle about you? Then you can open up – just for a second. If you do that, we won't hurt you."

Her and her three friends were crowding around me now and I think that her friends could tell that I

was on the point of giving up because the thought of a BOY being humiliated by THEM was making them giggle quietly. Putting a wet shine on their eyes. Let's face it. This was a macho society we lived in, and boys had often made their lives a misery. Getting their own back on a hated gender? Heaven!

"Promise you won't hurt me?" I bleated softly.

"Well? Probably not." She paused for a second, thinking. "But now that I think on it? I promise that you won't be hurt – but you'll have to join my gang?"

"Your gang?" I repeated, my heart sinking.

"Yes. I don't have any boys that want to join my gang. But if you do, me and the rest of the girls will make sure that no mean boys will ever touch you."

"But your gang is all girls." I said, almost crying now.

"Well? I think it's time you made up your mind. Come and kiss me nicely like girls who want to join my gang do. Ask if you can join my gang. Now! Or I'm going to beat you up!"

The girls behind me pressed me forward toward a grinning Dorothy. "Yes?" She asked imperiously, turning her cheek towards me. I kissed her tentatively. "Can I join your gang Dorothy?"

"As the junior member?"

I shrugged. What was this? But answered. "Yes."

"Do what me and the other girls tell you to do. Do it at once without arguing?"

"Yes."

“Let’s see then. Pull your little penis out and then go and kiss all of the girls, one at a time. Tell them that you’ll do whatever they say.”

“I think he’s crying.” One of the girls said at the side of me.

“That’s all right. Sissy’s cry a lot.” Dorothy said scornfully, then slowly she leaned forward, and I didn’t resist as she opened up my trouser front.

“MY!” She said in some surprise as my erection broke free. “What’s this? I think he’s a boy after all. But I didn’t think he’d be this big!”

A girl spoke beside me. “Dorothy? I’ve got brothers – and I think that their willie’s stand on end when they like something. His’ll shrink back when he stops liking whatever it is that’s causing it.”

“She’s right.” Another said. “I think he likes you, Dorothy.”

“Well? I should HOPE so!” Dorothy laughed. Then she took a hold of my erection. Laughed more. “This feels funny girls! Have a feel when he kisses you all! Come on sissy! Join the gang!”

Just about then, the boys on either side started making noises that they couldn’t see and wanted Dorothy and the other girls to pull back. She looked at them haughtily and told them to piss off in no uncertain manner. I knew – and she did – that none of the boys were very imposing. She gambled that she, along with three of her friends could provide a nastier confrontation than any of those boys would want. She was right. Mumbling and grumbling, throwing verbal threats around, the boys left, and I was left, surrounded by the girls. And now, I was

kissing each in turn, asking them humbly if I could join their gang and promising just as humbly to do as I was told, by any other member of the gang. As I did so, all of the girls in turn took a hold of my erection, laughing at how 'funny' it felt, some of them shaking it quite vigorously – which only seemed to make my erection last longer.

Then, all of them laughing triumphantly, I was allowed to do my pants up, get in the middle and link arms with girls on both sides then be escorted to my front gates, where I was finally set free. Laughing and giggling, they all then retreated back towards their homes in the village.

I had thought that humiliation had reached its full potential at my previous school – but there were facets that I hadn't taken into consideration. Now, things maybe hadn't escalated – but they were different, and certainly not pleasant. The following day they started.

As I indicated, it was a co-educational school with classes having both girls and boys. Otherwise, they were pretty well segregated though. There was a community playground, separated by a gate with boys on one side, the girls on the other, though the gate was not padlocked in any way. It had been a sign of disgrace for a boy to be mishandled by his peers and forced into the girls playground, while the other boys stood and jeered at the sissy playing with girls, even though they kept the gate blocked and wouldn't let him back, no matter how he wept or pleaded. I knew – because this had been done to me at times. Generally though, though boys didn't want to spend too much time doing this - kinda boring -

so it usually wasn't long before the 'sissy' could sneak back.

The day after my debacle was quite quiet for a nice change. Nobody was on my case and I had a good comic book at lunchtime. Quickly, I gobbled my lunch, then found myself a nice shady spot in the playground and settled down to read. I had just been doing this for about ten minutes when I was interrupted.

"Hey Paul?" A girl's voice called out. "Why don't you come on over here? Dorothy would like to talk to you."

"Huh? About what?" I asked, looking nervously around me. At least it was still fairly quiet as most of the school kids, being local, went back to their homes for lunch and the playground was still fairly deserted. I looked over, the girl was one of Dorothy's gang – Anne her name was. She was coming close to the fence that divided the two playgrounds and her face was getting quite angry.

"Didn't you HEAR me? I asked you – nicely – to come over here. Want to argue?"

She was definitely showing signs of belligerence. I stammered. "I'm s . s . .sorry Anne. I j . .j . just thought that lunchtime was going to be over soon and . ."

"Polly? Dorothy WANTS you!"

"Oh. Sorry." I stuffed my book in my jacket pocket then walked to the gate as nonchalantly as possible. I didn't think that any boys heard a girl call me Polly – but I certainly didn't want to take the chance of her repeating it. Luckily the gate didn't

squeak so I moved into the girl playground as quietly as possible. Walking behind Anne, with my head down, I followed her. Stopping and looking up when she came to a halt. Dorothy and another of her gang were sitting under a tree.

“Hi Polly!” She smiled at me. I see you remember Anne. Remember Astrid?”

“Oh yes.” I said weakly. “Hi Astrid.” She nodded.

Helplessly I looked at the three girls. “Please? Could you call me Paul?”

Dorothy, Anne, and Astrid all looked at each other.

“Maybe.” Dorothy said blandly. “We need someone to hold the rope with Astrid so that Anne and me can do doubles.”

“A skipping rope?” I asked. (A GIRL’S game!). “I don’t know how!” I bleated.

“Better learn!” Dorothy laughed and tossed me a rope. “You take one end and Astrid takes the other. Start turning it for Anne and me!”

The next ten minutes were torture. Learning to hold a skip rope is nothing but as Dorothy, then Anne, then both took their turns, while everybody called out girlish rhymes as they skipped – rhymes that I was forced to learn and call out was bad enough. The fact that the corner of my eye could see the line of disbelieving boys hanging on the dividing rail – watching a boy – ME – playing skip rope with girls in the girls playground? Without being forced by boys? Totally unbelievable!

When the bell rang indicating end of lunch, I was finally allowed to go back to the boy's side knowing full well that some boys awaited me impatiently. But with the bell creating its strident command to 'Get To Class' none of them dared hold me back, but the sibilant hissing that met me, let me know of trouble ahead. But what made it FAR worse? Margaret's final words as I'd left her. "See you tomorrow Paul? Same place?"

But? In some ways? Things didn't get so bad – yet managed to fill me with a terrible shame. You see, at break time in the afternoon, everyone knew that the exit to the girls playground was out one door – while the boys took another. Knowing what exit to take was shown to everyone the very first day, and never forgotten. Naturally, from the whispered comments that came my way, there was no questioning the fact that I was in for some awful teasing at the afternoon recess. Almost in tears I heard the bell go and amidst a throng of boys and girls joined them in a march to outdoors – for a foray into hell. But it was not to be.

Suddenly, I seemed to be closely surrounded by bodies, then realized that they were all girls! Some of them Margaret's gang, the others just plain old girls – but it was impossible for me to go anywhere on my own – willy-nilly I was heading for the girl's playground! Then I was out there and Dorothy was linking an arm with me. "Hello Polly! Didn't expect you to come out here so soon. Want to play some rope?"

I was gazing at her helplessly when the playground teacher for the girl side approached us. I had never had her as a teacher but she knew me some-

what. She was obviously at a loss for words, this sort of thing had never happened before. As I said earlier, boys were occasionally 'forced' into the girl side, but they were always in such a sweat to get back to where they belonged that the teachers just smiled and pretended not to see it. Just another prank. But a boy – not desperately trying to get away? Actually looking like he was going to JOIN girls in skip rope?

"Eh. Eh. Paul Adams, is it?" She finally said.

"Yes ma'am." I answered.

"You're in the wrong place. Shouldn't be here. What is going on? A bet?"

"No Miss Ellsbury." Dorothy replied coolly. "Paul prefers this side today. If you'll look over at the boy's side? You'll see that they want to give him a bad time. A REALLY bad time. Maybe even hurt him."

The teacher looked back and could see a whole bunch of boys hanging on the fence with grim looks on their faces, their intent obvious. "Hah Hah!" She tried to laugh. "Just a boyish joke. Back you go, Paul. Back with the other boys!"

Dorothy looked at the teacher. She was only twelve or so at the time, but suddenly you could see the powerful grownup she was going to be. Even I could tell that the adult teacher woman was no match for her.

"I'm a friend of Paul's family." Dorothy lied. "As you're probably aware? His mum is quite well off. Wouldn't surprise me one bit if she got mad and sued the school if her boy got hurt when a teacher

was told that he might be hurt if she forced him into the boys playground. He's not very strong you know."

The teacher blinked. "You think those boys would hurt him?" The fact that she was asking the advice of a youngster seemed to have eluded her.

"Just look ma'am." Dorothy said confidently. "Not going to be any harm if he plays with us today? Don't you think?"

The teacher looked at the ferocious little boys hanging on the divider and watching us. Even at that fair distance their intent was clear.

"I see what you mean." She smiled. "Boys can be such ferocious little beasts, don't you think?"

"Oh yes ma'am."

Miss Ellsbury turned her back and walked away. I think that she, myself, and everybody else thought I was only there for that recess but, looking back, I think that she probably passed on Dorothy's comments. On top of that, the British press was at that time castigating the "Same Old Sexism" shown by the schools and the fact that separation of the genders was under question may have added to the pickle that the teachers of that school gradually found themselves in. In typical ostrich fashion they probably figured that the situation would fix itself if they stuck their heads in the sand – and it probably did.

You see, that night when the school day ended, once again I was dreading the boys ganging up on me. But when I slowly started on my way home –

here is Dorothy again – with her gang and a few more girls. Waiting for me!

“About time!” She playfully scolded me. “Let’s get you home, shall we?” And, once again, I am surrounded by girls and escorted to my gate. Nothing untoward was said to me. It was made obvious fairly quickly that I was expected to join in the chat – but the situation wasn’t THAT bad. On top of that, everyone seemed nice to me, which was a lovely change. But? My emotions were a mess. If I stayed with the group of girls I was making myself one of them. At the same time, I yearned to simply be a boy – but every step I was taking seemed to be getting me away from that goal. At the same time, I could feel that my penis seemed to be enjoying itself under my pants when I was treated like one of the girls.

There were a few boys waiting for me originally – at least I think that they were. But with me seemingly now part of a gang? A gang that may have been comprised of girls, but one that gave every indication that they would fight to protect me? As far as the boys were concerned, I wasn’t worth the risk. So I was left alone by them.

I wasn’t overly surprised when a couple of girls were waiting for me outside my gate the following morning – with ‘my’ supporters growing as we neared the school. Then, face red, I was escorted in through the girls gate and into the school proper – where I was safe. That day made it very clear – I now used the girls gate and playground exclusively – and word must have got around the staff because I was left alone, completely.

I really don't have any exact recollection of how long this period lasted. A month? Maybe two or a little more? I don't remember anything except being thoroughly lost and confused. It was mom that ended it for me. I didn't know why at the time but think I've been able to piece together some of the things that influenced her into making her decision. All thoroughly wrong of course – but I certainly wasn't going to complain. The end result was a major benefit to me.

My life at school was miserable. Yes, I was too much of a coward to throw myself on the mercy of the boys. Was cowed and miserable in presence of the girls – but at least they didn't beat up on me. The shame of joining girls in skip rope, or a ground game called "Peeva", then being with them during breaks and recesses? Terrible. Dorothy also claimed her pound of flesh. Claiming that she felt 'bad' about me not being able to join the girls in conversations about their favorite comics? She handed me the "Girl's Crystal" – a pre-teen story collection that came out once a week. Made DAMN sure I was utterly conversant with everything in it – so could join the girls in their excited conversations about the stories. Often asked for Polly's opinion, then smiled as I gave it.

Frankly? I think that the boys gave up on me entirely. I was NEVER without the company of at least two girls so the boys were reduced to sniggering and referring to me as Pauline. It was some of the teachers who added to my humiliation – especially a few of the women, particularly the woman who was our music teacher. She pretended to be short sighted as she ensured that I was placed in with the girl sec-

tions. Then sometimes she'd pretend to discover her 'mistake' and want me back with the boys. It didn't take long before some of the boys protested that they didn't want a sissy amongst them – so she'd ASK me where I wanted to go. Knowing what my reception from the boys would be – and guessing at how mad Dorothy would act if I were 'traitor; to her and her gang? I had no choice but to opt to be amongst the girls. The teacher would sigh "Very well!" and in amongst the girls I'd go.

So that was one thing. Another? Dorothy's mother.

Dorothy started to have me go home with her. Her mother was nice. Don't get me wrong, but she was one of those brassy blondes who absolutely loved men. (I never did discover who Dorothy's dad was). She was openly askance when Dorothy took me home at first. Made it very obvious that she was concerned that I was up to "no good" – in her words, "a typical boy". But it didn't take her long to realize that Dorothy was my complete boss and superior. Then, she was sardonic all the times. I heard her talk to Dorothy about her 'little sissy boy' at one time. Frankly, I couldn't blame her because I soon discovered that Dorothy didn't like household chores – and I was supposed to 'volunteer' cheerfully in front of her mother to do them. Just think of the amount of fun that they'd both have when I'd do something like that!

Home? It wasn't too bad. Mom was a little concerned about me and constantly asking how I was doing at school. Think I could say anything other than 'Fine'? Don't be silly. The last possible thing I wanted was for mom to start digging into what was



going on. Remember – she was the last and possibly ONLY person on this green earth that thought I was

a typical BOY! Think I wanted to let her know that her son was openly called "Polly" by girls – and Pauline by boys? That he did nothing but play with girls – and did household chores for one of them – who openly bullied him? Come ON!

I did have a good time with mom and her friends who often visited at weekends to take advantage of the swimming pool and tennis court. I was quite the male! Strutting around in my tennis whites (I wasn't good – but mom was teaching me) or in my swim trunks – while the women all whistled at me and made raucous remarks that I didn't quite understand. There were men of course now and then but most of mom's lady friends were divorced or had husbands who were too busy. I didn't care. LOVED the time I spent at home.

After a while, naturally, mom noticed the fact that I'd come home late on the afternoons when Dorothy would have me stay and do chores. "Got a new friend?" She'd coo.

"Aw mom!" I'd bristle. "Just a buddy. Nothing special! Just hanging around!"

"Why don't you bring him here? I'm SURE he'd love the pool and the courts?"

I hid the panic. Spoke thoughtfully as if this was something worth considering. "I don't know mom. His family are awfully poor. I think he'd be embarrassed."

"Oh. Damn!" She'd shake her head and wander off.

At the same time? She wasn't stupid. Could sense that something was out of whack. Time after

time she'd get all casual. "You're not in any trouble – are you darling? Getting mean with girls? Doing things you shouldn't?"

"Mom? C'MON! Everything is great! I'm behaving – honest!" While I was disturbed by what she said, I got this great feeling – a sort of pride in myself? She was thinking I was some kind of tough guy. Somebody that did mean things!

She'd persevere. "But you're acting funny so much of the time. Should I speak to the teachers at school? I'm SURE there's something going on!"

I was terrified of course – her talking to anyone at school would blow any degree of self pride I had – and it wasn't much – but I'd act nonchalant. "If you have to mom – but the kids at school would really give me a hard time if they thought I was a momma's boy."

I could see her practically gritting her teeth at that method of expression. "Well? Just as long as you're not getting in with some rough crowd. Behave nicely, okay?" And that would be my inquisition over for that day.

We had a telephone at that time. Probably one of the few private phones in the area and, naturally, it was well used with mom's friends often calling about this or that. Even at twelve years old, I was well used to it – and mom had made very sure that my telephone manners were well polished. So it was no big deal for me to pick up the ringing phone one morning, fully expecting the call to be for my mother. After I'd said my hello, I immediately said that my mother wasn't available that moment – could I take a message for her?"