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Henrietta & Harriet

By Kenneth Leigh

It was a dank, dismal fall that followed a long miserable summer heat and dryness that year when I turned seventeen and became a man. It was doubly so because I had hay fever and couldn't stop sneezing and the dryness didn't help one bit. In fact, I do believe that it encouraged my sneezes to the point where I would be so weak that I couldn't stand or sit for more than short periods, but had to lie down until my strength returned.

For a formerly active boy of days shy his eighteenth birthday, it was an almost unbearable situation.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Harmon Aaron Shaeffer, the middle child of the Reverend George and Hannah (Harmon) Shaeffer. My older brother, George, Jr., had left home on his eighteenth birthday some six years before my story starts and we have had no word from or about him since that day. I had a younger sister, Lillian, thirteen years old at that time.

We lived in the Church Manse, a big old mansion type with sixteen rooms (the family before us had consisted of eight girls and six boys plus their parents and a grandmother) and a big old horse barn that was located on Center Street at the edge of Kolb Junction, the town where we lived. Father was the Pastor of the First Calvary Church on East Main Street.

And, yes, I said horse barn. You see, we lived in a small town that had not yet become over-run by the horseless carriage in that halcyon year of 1913. My Father owned a matched team of palominos that were his pride and joy and he was never happier than when he was tooling around in his surrey in the summer or his sleigh in winter, visiting his parishioners. There was a large pasture between us and our neighbors, the James', where Father let his team run when not in use for Church purposes. Until he died in the early 1930's, Father resisted buying an automobile and insisted on using his team for his personal transportation. And since he never left our immediate area, he had no need for railroads nor boats either.

Mother had a smaller bay horse and a light buck-board that she used, but we little ones were not allowed to drive the horses until we were past twelve, and then only with strict supervision until Father deemed we were strong and competent enough to be trusted alone.

But, lest you think that we were completely behind the times, let me assure you that our town did have municipal water and sewage facilities and even electric power, gas mains and some of those new-fangled things called telephones! Many of our roads were still dirt with the only paved ones being in towns.

We had two Guernsey cows that had to be milked twice a day, every day of the year. It was a decent chore in cold months because they were nice and warm to snuggle against while you milked. I rather enjoyed milking Bessy and Hazel, except on the hottest days when their tails were constantly swishing the darn flies from their hides!

Still, all in all, it was a pretty comfortable life, my allergy attacks notwithstanding.

However, to compound the situation, we lived right across Center Street from a most disagreeable widow woman and her sissy son, an almost thirteen-year-old boy named Henry. It wasn't that Mrs. Scott was all that old, nor was she an ugly woman because she really wasn't. She was always well dressed, neat about her personal habits, polite and erudite and a good cook, she kept an immaculate house and she was a faithful churchgoer.

The problem was that nothing seemed to please her and no one seemed to be quite good enough for her. Those who tried to make friends with the woman soon gave up in utter disgust after a series of personal rebuffs. Before this, I had been pressed into service several times (at my Father's insistence) to mow her lawn, trim her hedges, weed her garden, and the like. But, no

matter how careful I was, she always managed to find fault with my work, then complain about my attitude.

Then I got the hay fever and I was relieved of these added chores, to my undisguised delight, and Father hired two local boys from his parish to take over on my behalf. However, Henry was pressed into service as a sort of involuntary (on my part) companion for me, someone to help me with many of the things I could no longer manage on my own.

Henry was a pain. There is no other expression that describes him. If he wasn't adjusting my coverlets or plumping up my pillows or placing cool, wet cloths over my forehead and eyes, or asking me dumb questions about how I felt, he was bringing me hot cocoa or a sandwich or reading to me from his favorite books. No, not the "Tarzan" or "Jon Carter" or the western novels of "Zane Grey" that I enjoyed, but the ones he favored, like "The Wizard of Oz" or "Alice in Wonderland" or "Through the Looking Glass" or "The Wind in the Willows" or the one he loved most, "Little Women." He would go on and on about the adventures of those characters until I was ready to scream from frustration.

What made it almost bearable was that Henry had a flair for the dramatic and he breathed life into all his characters. I can still hear his Wicked Witch of the West cackling or his "Off with their heads" after all these intervening years!

Yes, Henry was a pain, but he was company every day, company that I would not have had otherwise. Once I got him past the reading stage, I discovered that he loved card games, especially "Old Maid," "Crazy Eights" and "War." I had to be quick because he was a

sharp, dedicated opponent who dearly loved to win and he always played to win!

Henry had few friends. In fact, he had no friends whatsoever! He had angered every other teenaged boy in the parish by bragging in front of them about his piano playing expertise, his scrupulousness in making his bed and hanging up his clothes and keeping his room clean and helping his own mother around the house and doing his school homework and keeping his prissy clothes clean while playing and like that. He was also the town tattle-tale and kill-joy, making all our lives miserable. The other boys avoided him like the plague and no one told him anything about anything at all.

Invariably, there are such a mother and son in every parish!

That same Halloween, the neighborhood boys decided to "fix" both mother and son. The Scott house had a great retaining wall down the one side along Cherry Road, with heavy coping stones along its full length. The plan was to rip off all those coping stones so that Henry would have a back-breaking day's labor putting them all back and cementing them into place.

I was vaguely aware of the plan but did not enter into this questionable sport, mainly because I had been taught by my parents to respect other people's property and to refrain from malicious acts of destructive vandalism. No matter, I was wrongly accused of its perpetration just the same.

"Someone" (a local busybody with more imagination than fact!) had phoned Mrs. Scott and told her that it had all been my idea and that I had led the gang that had ruined her wall. Actually, I had been totally op-

posed to the prank from its inception, fearing just such a result.

So, the next morning, before I was even out of bed, Mrs. Scott stormed onto our porch, noisily accusing me of master-minding the whole nefarious business. My sleepy denials merely led her to add an accusation of falsehood to my other supposed transgressions.

Gently, Mother turned her away by promising that the coping stones would be replaced. Once Mrs. Scott had departed, she turned to me. "Harmon," she began, holding up my chin so that she could look directly into my eyes, "did you have anything at all to do with this awful business?"

"No, Mother," I replied with absolute truthfulness.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, Mother. Sis and I were over at the Packers' pulling taffy and bobbing for apples until after 11:00, and Henry was right there too!"

"All right," Mother replied, "I believe you. But Mrs. Scott is a poor widow woman and she can't afford to hire a man to put back those stones. Henry isn't strong like you (I had recovered from my hay fever attacks and was almost my old self again!), and he wouldn't know how to do it anyway. So, I want you to be a good boy, and as an act of Christian charity, to go over and repair Mrs. Scott's wall for her and I'll have a talk with her. How about it?"

What could I do?

I could not refuse Mother even though I had made other plans for that crisp fall morning that did not include stonework! And, the job would take my whole Saturday to complete.

Nor would I get any help from the actual culprits! Who, strangely enough, I saw not one of all that day.

It was hard work. The stones had to be fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle and then cemented firmly into place. It was also hot work. Several times, Henry came out with hot cocoa and plates of cookies. I welcomed the breaks and in my thirst, enjoyed the cocoa. I noticed that Henry was rather subdued and quiet, quite unlike his normal chatterbox self.

And, work progressed much quicker than I had thought.

At noon, Mrs. Scott called me onto the back porch and informed me that I could take lunch with her and Henry, if I wished, but I would have to do two things. First, I had to wash up and wear an over-blouse at the table. Second, I had to promise that what I heard and saw inside their home would be forever kept to myself.

"You see, Master Harmon," Mrs. Scott explained, "I wish to make amends for my untimely, erroneous and completely unjustified accusations earlier today. I wish to apologize to you and also show you my appreciation for your willingness to help Henry and myself when we are unable to help ourselves. For to be quite honest, neither of us has the strength or knowledge to repair that wall, and until my finances improve, I could not have hired it done.

"Further, I must shamefully admit that I now know that you had nothing to do with its destruction. Henry told me that you and Lillian (my sister) were with him at the Packers' party last night, and I know that the wall was ruined during that time. Someone, I know not who, phoned me this morning and told me that you

were instrumental in destroying my wall. I must admit that I acted quite precipitously and impetuously in accusing you of such malicious misbehavior. Sometimes I act before I have all the facts.

"Therefore, I hereby apologize and withdraw all the erroneous thoughts I had of you. I have had long discussions with both your Mother and my Henry, and I am totally ashamed of myself for the way I have repaid your good neighborliness. Henry has told how nice you were to him this past summer. Henry has few friends in this parish – in fact, you are the only one!

"And we wish to repay you – at least partially – but we must ask that what you see and hear in the privacy of our home remain just that, private. Do we have your solemn promise? I have talked with your Mother about this and she has assured me that your promise is your bond. It is a point of honor with you, she said." Mrs. Scott paused momentarily.

I looked down at this tiny, intense woman and realized with some shock that she was a very handsome woman and she was much younger than I had thought originally! Her long auburn hair hung loosely about her shoulders in a very girlish manner, and she was wearing a rich silk skirt of a pretty green material, that flirted daringly about the tops of her high-heeled button boots. Her blouse stretched tautly over her breast swell and her wide leather belt accentuated the smallness of her waist above the womanly curves of her full hips.

Her teeth were even rows of brilliant whiteness behind the fullness of her plump, parted lips. Her limpid eyes fixed hesitantly on my face, then dropped shyly, her lashes soft against the upper slopes of her blushing cheeks.

I realized at that moment that Mrs. Scott was not the mean old hag I had envisioned, but was, instead, a very shy and reserved woman. Her seeming animosity had been merely a cover for her shyness and her inability to socialize readily! In reality, Mrs. Scott was barely twenty-six years old, a mere eight years older than I! She had been but twelve years old when she had been married to Mr. Scott. In those days it was not unheard of for a girl to be married at twelve and a mother at thirteen. My own Mother had been married to my Father when she had been but thirteen years old and she wasn't forty yet!

"Please, Master Harmon," she begged softly, "give me your promise. Please?"

I was greatly surprised at the intensity of her request and thought to myself, 'Sure, why not? What harm could it do? People do value their privacy – maybe that's what is causing her apprehension!' Aloud, I replied, "Of course, Mrs. Scott. I promise."

"Thank you, Master Harmon," she whispered gratefully. "I know I can depend on you now." She smiled timidly. "You may call me either 'Harriet' or 'Hattie,' if you wish."

I was some taken aback by this new intimacy, an intimacy that was usually reserved between married persons or close relatives. Her fingertips grazed the back of my hand beseechingly. Instinctively, I knew what to do to reassure her! I bowed over her hand and lifted her fingers, to kiss them gently. "I'd like that, Miss Harriet... er, Miss Hattie..."

"Please, Master Harmon, may we not dispense with the 'Miss'?" she giggled. "As you wish, Hattie," I replied, "But only if you will drop the 'Master'," I added.

"Thank you, dear boy, but I think not. At least for the time being. You will understand why as we become better acquainted," she answered. "Now, please, enter our home!" She tugged my hand eagerly. I obeyed her tug and entered their home.

She pointed the way to the wash room up the curving stair-case to the second floor. I stripped my shirt off and bent over the sink. It felt good to scrub the powdery grime from my body. I dried hastily and opened the door to her hesitant knock. She thrust a silky garment into my hands and plucked my discarded shirt from the stool.

"You may wear this over-blouse, Master Harmon," she stated softly. "It belonged to my late husband. He was just about your size in build – strong, handsome and capable – just like you are!" she blurted boldly, then blushed and hurried from the room.

I pulled the over-blouse over my head, buttoned it closed about my throat and adjusted the soft collar lapels to lie flat. I snapped the sleeve closures snugly around my wrists and noticed in passing the fullness of the voluminous sleeves. I tied the sash about my waist, noting that the tails of the over-blouse hung below the tops of my legs like a girl's flirty little skirt. The material was very soft, almost feminine, but quite comfortable in spite of that.

I combed my hair carefully, and after one final glance at my reflection in the mirror, went downstairs and into the dining room where Mrs. Scott was seated at the dining room table. A woman or girl, obviously the maid, stood – her back to me – beside Mrs. Scott.

She seemed strangely familiar to me, but for the life of me I didn't know why.

"Ah," Mrs. Scott greeted, rising and holding her hand out to me, "our guest has arrived at last!" She squeezed my fingers affectionately, motioning me to a chair beside hers. "You may begin serving now, Henrietta," she told the maid snapping her fingers imperiously.

"Very well, Miss Harriet," a husky, vaguely familiar voice replied.

I stared at the maid, taking a good, long look at her. Then I realized that it wasn't a "her" at all! It was Henry Scott, and he was all decked out as a serving maid! My jaw dropped at least a full yard and I stood involuntarily! Henry blushed, hung his head, curtseyed low, then fled into the kitchen, the door swinging closed behind his swiveling hips. I stared in amazement.

Mrs. Scott's fingers lifted my lower jaw gingerly, closing my mouth, and she laughed softly. "Yes, it is my Henry, Master Harmon, except that it's always 'Henrietta' when he's in skirts," she explained.

I sat back down heavily. "Henrietta? Skirts? But... but..." I stammered.

"Are you so very surprised, Master Harmon?" she asked gently, squeezing my hand in her soft fingers. "Haven't you ever suspected, not even a teensy little bit?

"I... I... probably should be some surprised," I admitted slowly. "But, I'm not... really."

"Then it doesn't bother you that my son dresses as a girl, and I do mean that she dresses as a girl, from the skin out!" She paused to let it sink in a bit, then contin-

ued, "But the truth is, Henry prefers dresses and tight lacing and high heels to any of her limited wardrobe of boys' clothing, and I encourage and indulge her preferences whole heartedly. I have taught Henry to be a girl in all ways possible when in skirts, and I am sure she will acquit herself with more than adequate dexterity and aplomb."

"N-no... I'm not bothered at all," I admitted, blushing furiously. "Henry looks and acts in a most natural, girlish manner in skirts. I... I'd like to get to know him better, in skirts, I mean!" I was flustered and almost tongue-tied, but Hattie didn't notice.

Harriet squeezed my fingers again. "And so you shall! You'll be perfect as her boy-friend! She's very shy, you know. No one but me has ever seen her in skirts, even though she has worn girls' clothing since infancy, you are the first outsider to see Henry as "Henrietta'!"

"But, what about his late Father?" I asked, skeptically.

"I said, 'outsider,' Master Harmon. Of course Mr. Scott knew about Henrietta, and he supported my desire to make our son into our darling daughter. It has been very difficult without his influence and encouragement, I tell you!" Her eyes watered slightly and she touched her hanky to each orb momentarily.

I felt a great outpouring of sympathy for Hattie's lonely situation and, at the same time, felt a surge of sexual arousal in my loins.

"I'll help you all I can, Mrs... er, Hattie," I vowed aloud, blushing deeply.

"I'm sure I can find some special way of thanking you, Master Harmon," she whispered softly, leaning

toward me, her breast swell pressing the back of my hand. Her soft lips touched the corner of my mouth briefly, then she settled back in her seat. "Yes, I'm very sure Henrietta and I can find a way to thank you properly!" She smiled knowingly at my renewed blush.

"Er... Mrs. Scott... er, I mean, Hattie," I stammered, "you don't owe me a thing!"

"Nevertheless, I insist!" Her index finger touched my lips, shushing me.

I watched as she raised a small silver bell, shaking it gently. Its merry tinkle hung in the air briefly. "Come, Henrietta Darling," Hattie called, "you may serve us now. It is all right. Master Harmon understands completely!"

From behind the door came, "Are you sure, Miss Harriet? Oh! Oh! I am so ashamed and embarrassed, and I am sore afraid!"

Hattie nodded to me, indicating that I should speak.

"Yes, it's really all right, Henrietta," I called. "Please come out...?"

After a long moment, the door opened and Henry backed into the room. As he turned, I saw he was carrying a loaded serving tray. His cheeks were flaming scarlet with embarrassment and he kept his head down as he approached the table.

He was wearing a fashionable ankle-length white silk afternoon frock that was completely in keeping with a maid's position. It had a high, frilly bodice with mutton sleeves, an extremely narrow waist and a narrow skirt that had no slit in the hem. If I hadn't known better, I would have thought it was an old-fashioned hobble skirt (which it was)! I saw that his calves were encased in the sheerest of nude-colored silken hose and

he wore fitted button boots of smooth white leather that had at least four inch heels. Around his waist was tied a short bib apron that was much more show than utility!

His hair was combed into a fashionable looking bob and he wore a perky lace cap pinned atop his curls. Large hoop earrings dangled from his lobes and the soft, fall sunshine glittered from the woven-gold choker necklace. Bracelets clinked softly as his wrists moved, and I could see that his finger nails had been painted brightly. His eyelids were made-up lightly and his lips had been coated liberally with a pale red coloring!

Automatically, as I had been taught to do when a woman entered a room, I stood and moved to help with the tray.

"Oh! Oh! No!" he gasped.

"You must not help Henrietta, Master Harmon," Hattie interrupted, "One never offers assistance to one's servants!" she explained.

"But, Henry is my friend," I protested.

Henry smiled in gratitude.

"Henry is not your friend now. She is Henrietta the maid," Hattie continued. "You can be her boy-friend tonight!" She smiled at Henry who blushed furiously.

"Oh, Mother! Er, I mean, Miss Harriet! Please!" he begged.

"Serve our guest first, Miss," Hattie ordered coolly. I watched with admiration as he expertly served the soup and sandwiches. He then poured our hot cocoa before stepping back and waiting patiently as Hattie and I ate heartily.

"It's very good, Hattie," I praised.

"Then tell Henrietta, Master Harmon," she smiled. "She prepared everything with her own two little hands!"

Henry blushed with pleasure.

"It was good," I repeated.

"Thank you, Master Harmon," he whispered with embarrassment as he curtseyed quickly.

"You may serve our coffee now, Miss," Hattie ordered.

Henry cleared the table swiftly and poured. Then he stood back, waiting.

"You may join us, Miss, but you may not interrupt! You must keep quite still."

"Thank you, Miss Harriet," Henry whispered. To me, "Sir... may I...?"

I waved vaguely, unsure of what to do. "Of course..."

Hattie and I had a pleasant chat, and to his credit, Henry did not interrupt us once, although his face flamed brightly from time to time. Of course, Henry was our main topic of conversation, and Hattie was quite candid concerning even the most intimate aspects of Henry's feminine life as Henrietta.

But, I couldn't forget the job still waiting for my return, so I reluctantly resumed my rough woolen shirt, preparing to return to work.

"If you wish, Master Harmon," Hattie proposed, "I'd love to entertain you at dinner this evening. Henrietta can play the piano for us while we dance and she can sing for us during our meal. Do you like opera?

She can sing Mimi's part from "La Boheme" or the title song from "Naughty Marietta" or anything else you might like," Hattie offered.

"Sounds good to me!" I agreed. "But first, the wall..."

"Good! I shall expect you at 6:00 p.m. Don't bother to dress as I'll loan you another of Mr. Scott's outfits," Hattie offered. Then, before I realized her intent, she had pressed up against me and her soft lips had kissed mine quickly. "Say 'good-bye' to Henrietta before you return to work," she teased. She grinned knowingly, kissed me again and was gone, leaving me alone with Henry/Henrietta.

Henry hung his head in shame. "Oh, Master Harmon, I am so ashamed!" he whispered throatily.

I clasped his hands reassuringly. "It's all right, Henry..."

I will never understand why I was so accepting of Henry in skirts nor why I was so attracted to him now, even knowing that he was a boy under his skirts. I mean, I liked girls. And Henry had been less than a friend in my opinion up to this point, much less a "girl" friend! Granted, I did not have a steady girl-friend, but I did date girls from time to time. I think most girls were afraid of me because my Father was a preacher man and proud of his calling.

Still, there was the occasional flick or soda date or dance or like that.

Then why was I so taken with Henrietta?

That was all about to change drastically, though I had no warning at the time.

"Please, Master Harmon... would you call me 'Henrietta' when I'm in skirts?" he asked shyly. "Oh, I am so ashamed for you to see me like this!"

"Of course, Henrietta!" I replied. "You have nothing to be ashamed for," I continued, "You are a very pretty girl," I added.

"Oh, do you really think so?" he asked hesitantly.

"I wouldn't say you were if I didn't think it were true!" I exclaimed.

Henry blushed furiously. "Oh... oh! Miss Harriet says that I am pretty and when I look into the mirror, I think so too, but you are the very first for real boy to ever tell me such a thing!" he admitted softly.

"No one else has ever seen you as a girl?" I asked, knowing from Harriet that this was true.

Henry blushed anew. "Of course not!" he protested. "Only Miss Harriet... and... you..."

"And your Father?"

Henry nodded. "I had forgotten about him," he admitted slowly.

I put my arm around his shoulders and squeezed affectionately. He half turned toward me, his arms going up around my neck as he rose to his tiptoes, his vibrant, soft femininity pressed against my hard body. His face tipped back, his eyelids closed, the lashes curled atop pinkish cheeks, his plump lips parted expectantly, the tip of his pink tongue peeping shyly through his white, even teeth, his breath warm and sweet on my skin. "Oh, Master Harmon..." he whispered invitingly.

My arms dropped to his waist, gathering him close in my embrace as our lips met – at first quite hesitantly,

then with more acceptance and assurance in one another and the moral certainty and rightness of our coming together.

I had dated several girls and had been kissed by many, but none had ever excited me as Henry was doing at that moment! I was hard and swollen in my trousers like never before! Henry clung to me as my hand caressed his rounded bottom unconsciously. He squirmed slightly against me, fully aware of his actions. "Oh! Oh! It works! It really works!" he laughed gleefully. "Miss Harriet said it would and it does!"

"What works?" I asked, bewildered.

"This, Silly Boy," he chortled as his little hand wriggled between us and stroked my straining hardness possessively. Then, he realized what he was doing and he blushed furiously. "Oh! Oh! My!"

I stood still, rooted to the spot in surprise. I continued to hold him close while he grasped my hardness and squeezed without thinking.

He laid his curls against my shoulder and sighed happily. His soft hand continued to squeeze and stroke me gently. "Do you like me this way, Master Harmon?" he asked softly, a slight tremor betraying his anxiety.

I nodded, kissing the top of his head. "God help me, but yes!" I admitted.

"Better than when I'm dressed as a boy?" he teased breathlessly, his hand stroking me maddeningly!

"Lots!" I agreed.

Henry looked up. "Kiss me again, Master Harmon? Please?" His lips were more than tempting, they were irresistible! So, I kissed him sweetly, then gave a jerk of surprise as his pointy little pink tongue darted into my mouth! He squeezed me possessively and I kissed him for the longest time.

Finally, he broke away. "We both have work to do, my Darling," he teased. A quick kiss and an even quicker squeeze, and he was gone. Almost in a daze, I stumbled back out to the wall and began the tedious chore of fitting cap stones together again.

Twice, Henry came out with cookies and hot cocoa. He had changed out of his skirt into knickerbockers, but he was still wearing the same blouse, the same silk stockings, the same high heel button boots and the same full make-up! I teased him about the lack of skirts and the possibility of someone seeing him in heels and hose and make-up and he blushed with embarrassed humiliation, but made no move to leave me alone!

Finally, I shooed him away and he ran back into the house with a merry laugh, running as easily on his high heels as any real girl could!

At long last, the final cap stone had been cemented into place and Hattie came out to inspect my work. I had done a very neat, solid job of it, cleaning up as I had gone along.

Hattie was very pleased with my work. "Amazing, Master Harmon!" she enthused. "It looks quite professional! Thank you so much!"

It was the very first time in my recollection that I had ever heard her express approval about anything!

It was late afternoon when I arrived back home and Mother met me as I came through the side door. "I am very proud of you, Harmon. You did a very good job with that wall and you did it all without complaining. And Mrs. Scott is well pleased too. She came over this

afternoon to apologize for her rash accusations this morning and to invite you for dinner this evening as a sort of thank you for the excellent job you did to make her wall better than it had been before! And of course, I accepted on your behalf and she and Henry are expecting you promptly at 6:00 p.m. So, you'd better hurry and take your bath. I have laid out clean under-drawers, a clean under-shirt, a clean white shirt, a tie and your good suit atop your bed."

"Oh, Mom!" I pretended to protest. "Do I have to?"

"It won't hurt you to be nice to the Scotts. After all, she did not have to come over and apologize at all!" she reminded me.

So, I took a bath, put on my clean clothes and presented myself to Mom at a quarter to six. She adjusted my tie and patted my cheek. "You are a very handsome young man, Harmon Shaeffer, and I am so very proud of you!"

She kissed my lips fondly.

"So, mind your manners and stay as late as you wish. It will be all right. Your Father and I both agree."

I kissed Mom soundly, something I had done since early childhood, thinking nothing of the intimacy of our embrace, strode across the street and twisted the Scotts' door bell at exactly 6:00 p.m.

A beautiful, smiling "Henrietta" opened the door and ushered me in. Then, he closed the door behind us and came straight into my arms, his parted lips up-turned for my attentions.

So, I kissed him soundly!

"Oh, my," came a surprised voice, "I do hope I am not intruding..."

Henry laid his head against my shoulder and sighed happily. "No, Miss..."

"And shall I get a welcoming kiss like Henrietta?" she teased.

Henry stepped aside and Hattie came directly into my embrace, her lips up-turned and expectant. So, I kissed her! I liked kissing Hattie just as much as I liked kissing Henry... er, Henrietta! Again I grew hard and demanding in my trousers, and again a soft hand squeezed and stroked my hardness. The only difference was that this time it was Hattie doing the squeezing and stroking, and not Henry... er, Henrietta!

And then I held both women, one on each arm, while two pairs of bright red lips were kissing me! And two small hands were squeezing and stroking the hard bulge in my trousers!

"You are so right, Henrietta," Hattie murmured, awestruck. "It certainly is of a magnificent size!" They laughed together, sharing their discovery with easy comradery!

Finally, we entered the parlor, me between the swishing skirts of my feminine escorts. Hattie and I sat on the settee while Henry seated himself at the piano. He began to play, "Casey Would Waltz with the Strawberry Blonde," singing his own accompaniment in a clear, sweet, soprano voice.

I stood and bowed to Hattie. "May I have the pleasure of this dance, my Lady?" I asked formally.

Hattie blushed with pleasure and took my hand. "I would be honored, kind Sir!" she replied. Hattie was a superb dancer, quick to follow my lead, light on her feet, soft and compliant in my arms. I found myself enjoying her company immensely. I spun her faster and

faster, her skirts fluttering wildly about her ankles until she gasped for breath.

"Oh, mercy, Master Harmon!" she begged.
"Mercy!" She may have been gasping for breath, but she was laughing with delight and her eyes glowed with merriment.

I deposited her on the piano bench and pulled a surprised Henry into my arms. Hattie began to play "Alexander's Ragtime Band" as I whirled my new partner about our impromptu dance floor. Soon, Henry was gasping and laughing with delight, following my lead gracefully, eagerly, happily.

Then, I played "Chopsticks" while Harriet danced with Henrietta in a graceful two-step. I had never seen two girls dancing together and it took me a moment to realize that "Henrietta" was in reality Henry, a boy, under those swirling skirts! Nor had I realized that two boys could dance together either, even if one of the boys did look like a girl!

Hattie sang a love ballad to me, playing her own music, while I sat on the settee, resting and enjoying the show. I watched her fondly, noticing the extreme narrowness of her waist under the chocolate brown of her silk gown. Her foot tapped the pedals rhythmically as her fingers glided effortlessly over the keys.

Henry (Oh, to Hell with it! From now on, Henry is no longer Henry, but Henrietta! And I shall refer to Henrietta in the feminine gender at all times. A girl Henry wanted to be, a girl Henrietta shall be!), I mean, Henrietta, returned carrying a tray filled with glasses and a little brown cider jug.