

A HUSBAND FOR LOUISE

By Cynthia Leigh



ILLUSTRATED BY ALDEN GEORGE

A 'NEW WOMAN' NOVEL

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[Editor's Note: All personal references to the hero/heroine in this story have been deliberately set in the lower case as a way of demonstrating luci's proper position in comparison to his/her "betters," which is any woman or dominant male.]

A HUSBAND FOR LOUISE!

By: Ms. Cynthia Leigh

Chapter I

"Wear it for me, lulu," the woman ordered, tossing the silken garment to me.

i caught the oriental print sheathe dress, gaped at Ms. Rachel, my mouth wide, my heart thudding loudly as i wondered, vainly, how i might extricate myself from my predicament without any more damage being done to my already shaky reputation.

my Lady Friend, Ms. Rachel Lynne Kline, lolled on my sofa, a knowing, sardonic grin curving her lips as she waited for me to obey her command.

i shook my head. "i don't think that would be wise. . ." i demurred.

"Didn't you tell me that you had been taught to obey instantly when any woman gave you a direct order?" she demanded.

"Well, yes. . . i did, but. . . but. . ." i weaseled reluctantly.

"But nothing! Quit this mucking about and get dressed!" she ordered sternly.

There was no way i would be able to avoid wearing the sheathe for her now! i had told her my secret, that i had been raised to obey all women, and that it was almost impossible for me to resist an imperious, dominating woman's direct order!

Nor did it matter if it were a male ordering me when i wore a dress, the same thing happened, i obeyed him! i had no choice. That had been impressed upon my psyche when i was a child and i could no more ignore my childhood indoctrination than i could stop breathing! Both were an integral part of my personality.

"Yes, Ma'am," i capitulated, curtsying low to her.

Ms. Rachel smiled at me teasingly.

"Oh, you do that so naturally, miss lulu!" she cooed softly. "Obviously, you've been well trained as a maid too!"

i blushed, curtsied again, as i had been taught, and turned to go.

"Wait! Do you have the proper accessories to go with that dress? I mean, do you have the right shade of hose? High heels to match? Undies? A waspy corset? Bust pads? How about make—up? Jewelry? The Works?"

"Yes, Ma'am," i admitted, curtsying shyly, hesitantly, in her direction.

"Great! I want you to get all dolled up for me, and I do mean all dolled up! Do you understand me, lulu?" she asked sharply.

i blushed and curtsied deep.

“Yes, Ms. Rachel, i do understand. You want me to get dressed as a girl from the skin out.”

“Yeah. . . some woman sure did a number on your head, didn't she?”

“Yes, Ms. Rachel,” i agreed. “i suppose. . .”

“Was it your ex—wife?”

i shook my head. “No, Ms. Rachel, she hated to see me wearing skirts!”

“How about an ex—girlfriend?”

i shook my head again. “No, not really. . .”

“And what's that supposed to mean?” she demanded.

“Well, there is Carole Anne. . .”

“Oh, yeah, I'd like to meet her. . .”

i curtsied again.

“Yes, Ms. Rachel,” i whispered dejectedly. “But not her.”

“Your Sister, then? She'd be older, I would imagine. . .”

“No, Ms. Rachel,” i denied. “i'm an only child.”

“There must be somebody else! Who? Your Aunt? A school teacher? A Nun? A girl cousin? Or, maybe it was a boy cousin? How about some special woman friend you haven't told me about? Or, a special male friend? Who?”

“my. . . my. . . Mom. . . and Ms. Angela. . .” i managed finally.

“Ms. Angela? Who is she?”

“Ms. Angela Hackett. She's my Mom's special friend.”

“I see,” she nodded. “Then, I really must meet her someday! And, of course, your Mom. . .”

“Yes, Ms. Rachel,” i agreed, caving in under her relentless questioning. “my Mom would like you. She likes dominant women!”

“Does she now?”

“Oh, yes, Ms. Rachel, and Ms. Angela is the best!”

“That remains to be seen, Missy!” she laughed. “That remains to be seen!”

i curtsied. “Yes, Ms. Rachel.”

“Now,, you'd better scoot and get all gussied up for your debut!”

i scooted. . .

i ran into my bedroom, closed the door behind me, and leaned against it while my poor heart thumped foolishly in my chest.

What had i gotten myself into this time?

Absently, i stripped to my skin and took a shower, being very careful not to get my long, auburn hair wet. i didn't want to waste valuable time drying that!

As i changed, i rehashed the past several months in my mind's eye:

Chapter 2

"i'm quite sure we have the proper accommodations for your client, Ms. Kline," i told the woman on the other end of the telephone. "After all, that's why we're here in the first place."

"Yes, mr. diaz," she laughed, "indeed!"

"We try to succor our less fortunate brethren. . ." i intoned mechanically.

"Yes, mr. diaz," he mocking laughter stung my ears. "I am sure you do!"

"Well, we do try our best to help," i replied piously.

"Oh, I agree," she apologized. "I'm sorry if I have offended you."

"De nada," i grumbled, barely civil.

"I owe you one, mr. diaz."

i had an idea of Ms. Kline in my mind, and what i saw, i liked very much. She was exactly six foot tall, weighed precisely one hundred and seventy pounds, with short black hair and dark eyes, a combination i find irresistible in a woman!

i was determined to know her better. . .

"OK, Let's start by you calling me lou. And, since you owe me one, how about making it dinner tonight? See Ms. Kline, that is the least you could do. . ."

"Great! I'll pick you up about seven and we can dine and dance at this joint I know out on The Boulevard, mr. di. . . er, lou. . ."

"You'll pick me up?" i croaked. "For dining and dancing? A. . . a date?"

"Sure. Why not?"

"But. . ."

"Haven't you heard of Women's Lib?"

"Yes, but. . ."

"But me no buts, mr. lou diaz, just say, 'yes.'"

"Well, yes, then. . . i suppose. . ."

"Fine. Seven, then?" she suggested, only it was not a suggestion! "Oh, and remember to dress informally. . ."

"Seven," i echoed dutifully, "informally. . ."

i heard the phone click sharply in my ear. i had my date. . . with my Lady Attorney. *With her. . . Ms. Rachel Lynne Kline! my ideal woman. . . Wow!*

CHAPTER 3

"This is a nice place," i commented to fill our conversational void.

"Yeah, I sort of like this joint," she answered absentmindedly. "It's better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick."

She spun me expertly, caught me with ease and, pulling me back against her, led me in the fast steps of a twist.

"You dance very well," i added breathlessly, following her lead easily.

"And you follow my lead so easily, lou," she teased.

i blushed. "Well, you never gave me a chance to take the boy's part!"

She chuckled. "I'm just use to doing things my own way, I guess."

"Oh?" my excuse sounded lame, even to me!

"Where did you learn to dance?" she asked, making small talk.

"Ms. Angela taught me when i was a little gi. . . er, when i was a little boy. She liked to dance and thought a kid should learn too. i guess i just lapped it all up. . ." my voice trailed off in confusion.

"Lapped it all up, eh?" she laughed throatily. "I see. . . I think. . ."

"Oh, you know what i mean," i giggled. "i was an apt student."

"She sounds like my kind of woman!" Ms. Kline commented dryly.

"She's a great Lady," i reminisced fondly.

"Well, most women are. Great ladies, I mean."

i laughed in spite of myself.

She looked at me strangely.

"That wasn't supposed to be funny."

"No, but it sure surprised me. . ."

"What? That I made an unintentional pun?"

"No, that you called the place a joint," i improvised quickly. "It's not, of course. It's really quite nice. . ."

"baby, after some of the places I've been in lately, they're all joints!" she laughed sardonically.

"i can imagine. Being an attorney must be exciting work!"

"It's a bore," she snorted. "I don't enjoy it anymore."

"i can understand that! i feel the same way after some of the clients i have to service during the course of a day. Some of these people are something else!"

"Especially the ones I have to deal with! Tell me, mr. diaz, are all drunks obnoxious, or is it just the ones I see?"

"i guess it's the alcohol that makes them so mean and miserable, Ms. Rachel," i replied without thinking.

"you know my first name?"

“You'd be surprised at what i know about you, Ms. Kline!” i quipped airily as she took my elbow and guided me to our table. She insisted on seating me, and i let her push my chair in, blushing when some nearby patrons smirked knowingly.

“Like, for instance?” she continued, sliding into her chair gracefully.

“Like, for instance, what?” i teased, sipping from my water glass.

“Like what else do you know about me?” she drank deeply from her wine goblet.

“Oh. Let's see. . . well, i know that your given name is Rachel but that all your closest friends call you either 'Raitch' or 'Lynne. . .’”

“you know my middle name too?” she squeaked with surprise.

“i know much more about you,” i bragged.

“Like?”

“Like, you were valedictorian of your graduating class at Vassar and you were phi beta kappa and president of your student body for three years, almost unheard of at such an exclusive women's finishing school. And, not only that, you were Team Captain of the fencing squad three years straight!”

“Yeah, well, I guess they were hard up for warm bodies...”

“Not so, Ms. Kline!” i protested. “You held those offices on merit!”

“Yeah, so you say.”

“The record is quite clear on that score, Counselor! i can read too!”

“My, my! Aren't we being a bit defensive?” she teased, her lips turning up.

“i also know that you're a widow, a senior partner in Chassim, Downe, Fiendym & Scroom, PC, one of the oldest, most prestigious, and richest, law firms in The City, and you didn't become that by being any less than extremely competent! You see, i know Larry Fiendym too. . . er, did, before he died, i mean. . .”

“Humph,” she snorted. “And, what do you know of my late—departed?”

“Not any more than he was an alcoholic and that he died three years ago. You met him when you joined the Firm and you married him two years later. i know you were six months pregnant when you miscarried, the night before your husband died, a heart attack. . . the fetus would have been a girl, had it lived. . .”

“you have done your homework, haven't you?” She raised her wine glass to me, smiling mockingly. “His heart failed getting me to a hospital.”

“Yes, i know,” i admitted. “That's why your baby died too,” i added.

“Pray tell, what else do you know about me, my little dumpling?”

i flushed hotly. “i am no one's dumpling, little or otherwise!”

She gazed at me calmly, her red lips parted in a mocking smile.

“you're over six inches shorter than I,” she observed, “and, if I choose to call you my little dumpling, I shall do so! Any objections, counselor?” She grinned. “And even if I do, what can you do about it, my little dumpling?”

“i probably couldn't do a thing,” i admitted reluctantly. “But then, i think you're just a big bully anyway!” i quavered, my voice filled with embarrassment.

“So I'm a bully? So what?” she shrugged. “What else do you know about me?”

“Oh, i know that you like poodles; that you hate cats; that you like omelets; but hate soufflés; that your skin is sensitive to detergents and you prefer nylon and silk to compensate; that you like pants suits and detest skirts, although you always wear skirts or dresses for Court appearances because you believe they give a woman a subtle advantage over a male opponent.”

“That it does. Juries and judges automatically side with a crying skirt!” A giggle escaped her lips. “It's a real bitch when an opposing attorney is a woman in skirts too. That's when I have to rely on knowledge and skill!”

“You've got that in spades,” i enthused. “Everyone says so!”

“Thank you,” she grinned. “But I still think you're prejudiced!”

“i am not!” i protested. “It's the truth!”

“OK! OK!” she laughed. “What else?”

“i know that you like shopping for clothes for others but take little time to buy any for your own use. i know you graduated Harvard Law School and you were a Peace Corps member for two years. i know that you're a registered Republican, but you vote your own beliefs. i know you own a brand new Rolls Royce sedan and that you like to watch Star Trek reruns. i know that you like Double Oh Seven movies, and that you have every one of them on video—tape.”

“Hell's bells, any damn fool knows that!” she scoffed.

“i know that your favorite color is purple. i know that you prefer to sleep in the raw; that your dress size is a twenty—two tall; that you wear size twelve in a woman's shoe; that you wear a size seven panty and that your brassiere size is a full forty—six, Double—D cup. . .”

“Hey!” she squealed with surprise. “That's personal and private information! And none of your fucking business! How did you find out about that?”

“i know,” i teased, “because i guessed it!”

“Bullcrap! How could you just guess something like that?”

“i'm pretty good at guess—estimating a woman's size. i'm a dressmaker. . .”

“you're a dressmaker? I thought you were a counselor at a half—way house?”

“i am, but i was trained to be a dressmaker too.”

“I see!” She looked at me with a new respect in her eyes. “I love it!”

i blushed in confusion. “my Mom taught me. . .”

“More boys should've had Mothers like yours!” she exclaimed.

“Yes, Ma'am,” i replied inanely.

“All kidding aside, are you really a dressmaker?”

i nodded. “Yes, Ma'am, i am.”

"Then why are you wasting your time at a half—way house?"

"i am not wasting my time!"

"You could make lots more as a seamstress."

"i know, but money isn't everything!"

"It isn't?" she acted surprised.

"Satisfaction counts more."

"Humph! you can't eat satisfaction!"

"i make out OK right where i am!" i retorted hotly.

"Oh, I'm sure. . ." she murmured. Then, "I repeat, 'Why don't you?'"

"Because no one will hire a mere male to work as a seamstress for them! And, if i sound bitter, it's only because i am!"

"Open your own shop then."

"But. . ." i stopped short. my own place? i hadn't thought of that!

"If you're any good, women will come out of the woodwork to patronize you."

"i am good, damned good!" i declared proudly.

"Lots of men are. Don't you know that the best couturiers are men?"

"Yeah, sure, i know that! So what?"

"So, sew! you'll never know for sure what you can do unless you try!"

"Yeah, yeah, sure, maybe for some, but not me!"

"Why not, for goodness sake?"

"Because i'm not going to, that's why!"

"chicken!"

"Brawk! Brawk!" i croaked.

She laughed. "OK, let's take in a movie instead, right after dinner, OK?"

"It's a deal. You got one in mind?"

"Yeah. It'll be a surprise."

It was an OK flick, and i liked being with Ms. Rachel. Except i'd already seen it with Carole Anne. . . Damn!

CHAPTER 4

"What's wrong, lou?" Rachel asked.

"Nothing."

"That's not true. I know better. Something has been bothering you for days. Is it another woman? Are you tired of me? I can take it, tell me!"

"Oh, no, Rachel!" i hastened to reassure her. "It's not another woman, well, in a way, it's not. . ." i admitted slowly. How could i tell this woman i loved that i was a TV? No, not a television TV, i'm a transvestite TV! i like to wear girls' clothes in pref-

erence to boys'. . . now how could i tell her that? She'd just laugh at me, make fun of me, and then walk out of my life forever. That had happened to me more often than i cared to remember!

“Something's bothering you, lou. I've had too much experience with reluctant witnesses not to recognize a wrongness when I see it!”

“Don't question me like that!” i protested angrily. “i'm not on trial!”

“No, not yet,” she admitted.

“Then quit treating me like i were!” i shouted, “you can stop with the damned cross—examination already!” i snapped.

“I'm sorry,” she apologized. “But, won't you tell me what's bothering you?”

“Goddess! You never give up, do you?”

“Just tell me. . . please?”

“Nothing!”

“lou, do you trust me?”

“Yes, of course,” i replied absently. The truth was that i trusted no one!

“Then tell me what's wrong,” she coaxed.

i looked at her a long time, then turned and went into my bedroom, closing my door behind me carefully. With my eyes full of tears, i took one of my prettiest dresses from the closet. It was a gorgeous silk print, an Oriental sheathe dress i had modified to conceal my body armor. i caressed it tenderly and smoothed its softness against my chest. i sighed, turned, and opened the door.

Surprised, she glanced up as i entered the living room and moved purposefully in her direction. “Ah, there you are! I thought you'd run away! I'm so pleased that you decided to stay. . .”

i glared at her angrily and threw the silken garment at her. “There! i hope you're damn well satisfied!”

She stroked the dress knowingly. “Very nice. Is it your ex's?”

“No, it never belonged to her.”

“your girlfriend, er, what's her name, Carole Anne?”

i shook my head. “No.”

“your Aunt's? your Cousin's? Surely not your Mother's? Nor Ms. Angela's?”

“Well, of course not!” i denied fiercely.

“Well then, who does own it?”

“me,” i confessed quietly.

“you? I see. I think. . .” Her fingers traced the material's seams.. “It's very well made. Silk is so difficult to work with. you have exquisite taste and good judgment in style, material and workmanship.”

“Thank you,” i managed uneasily. This wasn't going at all as i'd imagined!