

Rainbow-School For Girls
Teacher's Journal



E. B Stevenson



A "New Woman" Novel



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THE RAINBOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS: Teachers' Journal

by E.B. Stevenson

**Erica Marie Roberts, Department of
Fashion Design**

At six-three and 175 pounds with size 42DD breasts, I'm often confused for a male-to-female transsexual. Yet, I was born a girl. I went to some of the top fashion schools in New York while pursuing my degree in secondary education at Yale. I got my Master's in Social Work at the Sorbonne while I was working in Paris. I'm now in my sixth year of teaching Fashion Design at the Rainbow School for Girls' New York campus on Long Island. I'm thirty-eight years old, married to Harry Roberts, my childhood sweetheart, and the proud mother of two girls, Heather and Emily. I live in Patchogue on Long Island, and commute every day to work. After working with some of the top fashion designers of the world in New York,

Paris, Milan and London, I decided I wanted to teach my craft. I came to Rainbow because of the stellar reputation of its fashion design programs; I also wanted to live close to our families on Long Island. The students at this school wear green plaid skirts, white blouses, white knee-high socks and green flats.

The week after Labor Day was an eventful one indeed. My students were designing the bridesmaids' gowns and flower girl's gown for the upcoming wedding of Karen Bodkin, one of the teachers in the English department. She was about to marry John Reilly, one of the teachers in the Science department. Karen and John have both taught at the school for the past three years; they met while they were teaching together at the school's home campus in San Francisco. Two of her bridesmaids, including the maid of honor, are transsexuals. Karen had selected mauve for the bridesmaids, while pink was selected for the flower girl. I was personally designing Karen's wedding gown. She wanted the gown to be so breathtakingly romantic that she would outshine even the flower girl and ring bearer.

The classrooms used by the Fashion Design department were on the ground floor of the Fine Arts building; each room has four changing rooms. A week after Labor Day, I had the third hour Advanced Fashion Design I class, meeting in Room 18, witness the final fitting for the bridesmaid's gown of the maid of honor, Amber Thomas. She's five-nine with shoulder-length medium brown hair and a slender build. Teaching in the English department, she joined us five years ago, when she began her transition from a man named Allen. She had her sex-change operation on her summer vacation two years ago. She was on her planning period; she decided to go to our classroom to get the fitting done. She was wearing a mauve skirt, antique white blouse, white stockings and a pair of white high heels.

“Girls, Miss Thomas is here to get her final fitting done for her bridesmaid’s gown. As you may know, she’s the maid of honor in Miss Bodkin’s wedding to Mr. Reilly this weekend. One of our students from last spring’s Advanced Fashion Design I class designed these gowns based on specifications provided by Miss Bodkin and her bridesmaids. She’s now taking the Advanced Fashion Design II class with Miss Oliver. A wedding is a very special event in anyone’s life; it’s especially the case in the life of a woman. Every woman, regardless of whether she was born male or female, dreams about the day of her wedding. The gowns in a wedding can be as simple as just an ankle-length gown, or as elaborate as a princess-style gown. It takes as long as several months from start to finish this kind of masterpiece. The whole idea behind designing a gown for a wedding is to exude an air of romance. The bride’s wedding day is the most romantic of her life,” I explained.

“Mrs. Roberts, how long did it take to create this masterpiece?” asked Kara Jackson, a sophomore in my class.

“From the design process to the final fitting, it has taken five months. Miss Bodkin and Mr. Reilly announced their engagement at the end of March. We began the design process after we came back from Spring Break. We started fitting the entire bridal party for their gowns in late April. Our fashion design students in our jobs program stayed the entire summer to work on these designs. The first gown was sewn in July; it’s for the junior bridesmaid, Jessica Allen. Her final fitting was done just before the academic year started. Jessica is a freshman at Rainbow-New York. The flower girl’s gown was done in May; the fitting was the final exam for the Intermediate Fashion Design II class. The flower girl is Hannah Bodkin, the bride’s four-year-old niece,” I replied.

“Who would like to help me get into my gown?” Amber asked the class. Kara raised her hand, along with two freshman girls, Carly Martin and Felicia Orton, and another sophomore, Jennifer Wold. “The gown is in Fitting Room Three,” I told them as they went off to the fitting room to get Amber into her bridesmaid’s gown.

I continued my lecture on creating dresses and gowns for special events while Kara, Carly, Felicia and Jennifer helped Amber into her bridesmaid’s gown. A new student named Tessa Chiang, a freshman and a ward of the court from Jersey City, asked me: “Mrs. Roberts, to what extent do the students get involved in a teacher’s wedding?”

“I’m glad you asked that question, Tessa. Our students get involved in most aspects of planning for the wedding of one of our teachers. When one of our teachers is planning to wed, she has the option of having the dresses for her bridal party designed by the students in our department. The bride-to-be is very flexible in this respect; she can opt to have only her gown designed by the students. She also can have the students design only the bridesmaids’ gowns, or only the flower girl’s gown. We have had a few brides at some of our campuses that have had their bridesmaids’ gowns and the flower girl’s gown designed by our students. Most often, she has the students design the gowns for the entire bridal party. Our school encourages our girls to participate in the planning of a teacher’s wedding,” I explained.

Inside the changing room, the girls were gently pulling the skirt of Amber’s gown over the crinoline. “I’ve always dreamed of wearing a beautiful dress like this,” Carly confessed as she was making sure the skirt clung to the crinoline.

“Have you ever been a junior bridesmaid before?” Kara asked her.



"I haven't been a junior bridesmaid yet. I've only been a girl for a year now," Carly replied.

"I was a junior bridesmaid in my sister's wedding last spring. That was before my operation," added Jennifer.

"I was a junior bridesmaid when Miss Jones and Mr. Amberg married last summer," Felicia added.

"Well, how do I look?" Amber asked.

"Look in the mirror for yourself," Carly replied before she turned her around.

Amber was in awe at how she looked. "The gown is beautiful!" she exclaimed.

"Let's show this to our teacher and classmates," Jennifer added.

It was ten minutes later that Amber and the girls emerged from the dressing room. Needless to say, they were in awe at Amber's gown.

When Amber stepped up on the short pedestal in front of the mirror, I continued my lecture. "Note that all gowns for special events, such as for Miss Bodkin's upcoming wedding, are form-fitting. Every detail of her bodice, in this case, has to conform to her body shape. Miss Thomas' gown is measured to conform to her body shape; her bust line is slightly larger than most transsexual women, and her body shape is about the average shape for a woman who wears a size twelve dress. Miss Keith, who will have her gown fitting finalized tomorrow, is a much larger woman, and, like Miss Thomas, is a male-to-female transsexual. Wednesday will be the final fitting for Miss Bodkin's wedding gown. The idea behind fitting gowns for special events is to make sure the dress conforms to her figure."

After I finished the lecture for the day, I walked out with Amber. “Erica, are you and Harry coming to the wedding on Friday?” she asked me.

“Harry and I are coming; we’re bringing our girls to the wedding,” I replied.

“I really look forward to seeing Heather and Emily. What are they doing now?”

“Heather is in kindergarten now; she’s in a full-day program. Emily is in pre-school, also in a full-day program. Harry is still a certified public accountant, working out of our home.”

“I’d like to thank your girls for designing such a beautiful gown. I’m very grateful,” she complimented

“They did a great job,” I said before Amber went inside the offices of the Graphic Arts department to get prepared for her Introduction to Information Systems class.

During my fourth hour Planning and Coordination period, I went to the cafeteria to grab a salad and a glass of unsweetened iced tea. While I was looking at the bridal and fashion magazines, one of my students came into my office. Sheila Ledbetter, a sixteen-year-old high school junior taking my sixth hour Advanced Fashion Design II class and President of the Career Club, had something to tell me, as the faculty advisor for the same club.

“Mrs. Roberts, our guest speaker on careers in law enforcement had to pull out at the last minute,” Sheila informed me.

“What happened?” I asked her.

“Lieutenant Jimmy Kelvin had a death in his family. I got a call from his boss at the Islip Police half an hour ago,” she replied.

“Who in his family passed?”

“His nephew, Ernie, was killed in a roadside bomb attack in Afghanistan.”

I put in a call to a friend of mine at the New York Police Department, Lieutenant Jill Murray. “What’s on your mind, Erica?” she asked me.

“Jill, Lieutenant Jimmy Kelvin from Islip has had to pull out of our Career Club lecture on careers in law enforcement, scheduled for tomorrow. Would you like to fill in?” I asked her.

“My calendar is clear all day tomorrow,” she replied.

“Our group meets at eleven o’clock tomorrow morning in the campus Administration Building, Conference Room Three on the ground floor,” I added.

“I’ll be there; I’ll inform Captain Jarrett,” she told me.

As I was passing in the hallway on my way to teach my Intermediate Fashion Design I class, I saw Sheila in the hallway. “Who did you get to take Lieutenant Kelvin’s place?”

“I got Lieutenant Jill Murray of the New York Police Department to take his place,” I replied.

“I know Lieutenant Murray. She’s a good friend of my Aunt Stephanie. She’s in command of the all-female narcotics team known as the Lavender Team.”

“I understand she helped you get to this school.”

“When I was thirteen years old, I had a major role in a huge fight at a public school in Brooklyn. I tried to break up a fight between two girls, but wound up getting dragged into the fight. I had gotten into a lot of fights starting in the fourth grade, including several with the boys. By the time it was all over, I had given six boys and two girls their black eyes. I was taken

into the Twelfth Precinct, where I talked with Jill for several hours. Her friend, some guy named Conner, came into the office. He's a former Assistant D.A. in New York who's now Prosecuting Attorney for Nassau County. Jill told me about Rainbow; I came here the next day. Ironically, it was the same day my mother was arrested for badly beating her boyfriend. The court named Aunt Stephanie as my legal guardian; she took Jill's recommendation, and enrolled me at this school. This school has changed my life; I have more of an appreciation for the girl I am thanks to you and the other teachers I've had at Rainbow."

"I'm also good friends with Conner's wife, Shauna. She's now Chief of Detectives in Hempstead."

When I got to Room 17 in the Fine Arts building, my students were waiting for me. They were putting the final touches on the dresses for my daughters to wear to the wedding. "Even though my daughters are two years apart in age, many people can't tell them apart. This is why we're designing a fuchsia satin dress for Heather, who's five and a half years old, and a baby blue satin dress for Emily, who's three and a half. I'll be wearing the dress my students from last year's class designed when my sister-in-law, Holly, got married," I told my students.

"Do you have a picture of your daughters?" asked Laura, a fourteen-year-old high school freshman who had her gender reassignment surgery over the summer.

I put pictures of my daughters, placed on my laptop computer, on the screen. "No wonder it's hard to tell them apart," said Yolanda, a fifteen-year-old eighth grader who had become a ward of the court when her mother was sent to jail for a prostitution rap. "They look like twins," added Michele, a fourteen-year-old high school freshman who is transitioning from boy to girl. "These dresses are just

perfect for your girls,” Heather, a sixteen-year-old high school sophomore who is also a ward of the court, told me.

I also walked throughout the classroom, checking up on my students’ work. Heather was working on a pageant dress for Samantha Oliver’s eleven-year-old niece, who was entered in a pageant the following month in Vermont. She was being assisted by Alicia, a fourteen-year-old freshman from Boston who is transitioning from boy to girl. “I’ve shown her the proper way to sew a hem; she’s mastered this skill with plenty of practice,” Heather told me.

I examined the hem on the skirt of the dress. “Alicia, you’ve done a great job on the hem. I see you’re practicing on the seams of the dress,” I complimented.

“I’ve been practicing on the seams of my own dresses and skirts,” Alicia added.

“Keep working on the seams, Alicia. Heather, when you get to applying the lace trim to the dress, you may show her how it’s done,” I instructed them.

“Sure thing, Mrs. Roberts,” Heather told me.

I then walked over to another table, where Michele was working with Yolanda on a dress for Laura, the five-year-old niece of Samantha’s boyfriend, Stephen Steinkemp, an attorney in Suffolk County. “Let’s see what Mrs. Roberts thinks about the lace trim around the sleeves,” Michele told her.

“I think this is a great idea,” Yolanda added.

I examined the sleeves of the dress. “You’ve done a great job on the stitching for the sleeves. Next, sew the lace on the hem of the skirt,” I instructed.

“Yes, ma’am,” Yolanda informed me.

I then walked over to another table, where Heidi, a thirteen-year-old eighth grader from Germany who is transitioning from boy to girl, and Deanne, a fifteen-year-old high school freshman who is a ward of the court in Massachusetts, was working on a Southern Belle gown for Sheila Ledbetter's seven-year-old niece, Susan, the daughter of her older brother, Scott. "I've got to ask you something, Mrs. Roberts," Deanne told me.

"What is it, Deanne?" I asked her.

"Is this skirt big enough?" she asked me.

"Are you using the hoop skirt?" I then asked.

"Yes, we are," Heidi replied, picking up the skirt to show me that they were using the hoop skirt.

"Make sure that the skirt clings to the hoop skirt. Susan would really like to have this costume done by Halloween," I said.

My sixth hour class, Introduction to Fashion Marketing, met in Room 405 of the Fine Arts Building. My students, who were high school freshmen and sophomores, were watching video footage of the fashion shows from last year's New York Fashion Week. They critiqued the fashions from the shows and how they were presented; they handed their surveys to me when the class was finished. For my seventh hour class, Advanced Fashion Marketing, the juniors and seniors I taught were planning a fashion show for the students and staff for the next month.

After class, I co-facilitated the support group for the transgender high school juniors and seniors. John Tate from the English Department and Dr. Dianne Bryan, one of the counselors on campus, were the other facilitators of the group. When the girls sat down, I asked which one would like to start the group discussion. An eighteen-year-old high school senior named Andrea Benson raised her

hand. She's a native of Riverhead, six feet tall, has long blonde hair, slender build, and the only jewelry she wore was a pair of rhinestone stud earrings and a gold necklace with a diamond pendant. It's been four years since she had her gender surgically reassigned in San Francisco.

"What's on your mind, Andrea?" John asked her.

"I don't know how I should say this, but I'm testing the dating waters. I know I haven't been as interested in the guys as the other girls in this group, but after spending so much time on my studies, I feel I'm ready to try my hand at dating," she replied.

"Do you have any guys in mind?" I asked her.

"There's this one guy who is very interested in me. His name is Wesley Franklin; everyone insists on calling him Wes. He's also eighteen years old, and living in Syosset with his parents and younger sister. He graduated from high school this past spring, and he's attending a nearby community college. He knows about me and my past. His parents and sister also know about me and my past. We've been friends since high school; we met shortly after my operation," she explained.

"I've met Wes at some of our dances. He's a really nice guy; many of his friends have also come to our dances. There aren't that many guys who look on you as the girls we are now, and don't care about who and what we were in the past," Dianne added.

The next girl to speak was Georgette, a seventeen-year-old, brunette-haired high school junior from Germany, five-ten with a slender build who had her operation two summers ago. "I've dated a few of the guys, even though I haven't dated Wes. Dr. Bryan is right; there aren't that guys our age that really look on us as girls. I think Wes would be a good guy to ac-

cept a date with, Andrea,” she said with a slight hint of a German accent.

After Georgette spoke, an eighteen-year-old red-head named Traci Keller spoke. She’s a platinum blonde-haired girl, five-eight from Portsmouth, New Hampshire and had her operation this past summer in Montreal. “I dated him last summer, after I had my operation. He really understands girls like us,” she told us.

“What I’m hearing is that he’s very supportive of the girls here. Did he have any family members that went through transition and surgery?” I asked them.

Answering the question was Alix, an eighteen-year-old high school senior from Le Havre, France. She’s five-seven, athletic build, and had her operation in Philadelphia three summers ago. “I spent some time with Wes the fall after my operation. One of his cousins, Wendy Franklin, is a student at the Rainbow School for Girls in Baltimore. She’s a fourteen-year-old high school freshman who had her gender surgically reassigned in San Francisco over the summer. During her transition from boy to girl, she visited Wes and his sister, Karen, who’s a year older than Wendy, several times. On her first visit after beginning her new life as a girl, she toured our school. Her parents live in Annapolis, where both of her parents teach at the Naval Academy,” she replied with a hint of a French accent.

Adding to the commentary was Josie, a sixteen-year-old high school junior from Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania. She’s five-eleven with long black hair, athletic build and had her operation in Philadelphia two summers ago. “I’ve heard his story. In fact, I was in Philadelphia when Wendy had her operation; I showed her how to dilate her vagina. I think a date with him would be a good thing for you, Andrea,” she told her.

At the end of the group session, Andrea told the girls: "When he asks me out, I'm going to accept."

It was five-thirty when I got home from work. Harry was cooking a stir fry meal with beef, chicken and pork. Harry is six-five with a heavy build, light brown hair and wearing a red T-shirt, a pair of khaki slacks and a pair of loafers. He had just finished work for the day; he works from home as an accountant. "Something smells good, honey," I told him before giving him a kiss.

"It's the all-meat stir fry the girls really like," he whispered.

"How was your day?" I asked him.

"I spent all day on auditing the books of a law firm in Suffolk County. I can't believe the mess the firm got these books into. It's been a very busy day," he replied.

"I spent most of the day helping my students with the gowns for Karen Bodkin's wedding later this month. The dresses for the girls to wear to the wedding will be ready for the final fitting at the end of this week," I added.

The girls came in a few minutes later, when Harry called them for dinner. "How was your day at school?" I asked them.

"I learned how to make macramé in art class today; we even counted to 100 for the first time," Heather replied.

"We recited the alphabet three times in class, followed by counting to fifty," Emily added.

"Girls, the dresses I'm having my students make for Miss Bodkin's wedding will be ready for the final fitting by the end of the week," I informed them.

"I just hope we don't overshadow Miss Bodkin on her wedding day," Heather said.

"We won't, Heather," added Emily.

After dinner, I helped Harry with the dishes. We sat down to watch some old television shows when the phone rang. Harry picked it up. "Hello?" he asked. He listened for a moment before giving the phone to me.

"Erica Roberts," I said into the receiver. It was one of my students, Stephanie Wayne, a seventeen-year-old high school senior from Harlem who was sent to our school by the juvenile court four years ago, after her parents were convicted of weapons charges in connection with a gun running ring to rebels in Mali. "We can't seem to get this dress on Jessica," she told me.

"Whose dress are you working on, and who are you working on it with?" I asked her.

"It's a Homecoming dress for Jessica Brewer, a member of the Homecoming Court. I'm working on it with Madison Dever," Stephanie replied.

When I got off the phone, Harry asked me: "Who was it, sweetie?"

"Stephanie Wayne, one of my Fashion Design students. She's trying to get an initial fitting done for Jessica Brewer. I have to get to the school right away," I replied.

"Be careful, sweetheart," he whispered before we shared a kiss.

I arrived on campus around seven-thirty in the evening. I briskly walked to Room 19 of the Fine Arts Building, where Stephanie was waiting with Madison and Jessica. Stephanie is a five-three African-American girl with a slender build and small Afro; Madison

is a fifteen-year-old high school sophomore, five-seven with long medium brown hair. I was in Philadelphia two years ago to observe her gender re-assignment surgery. Jessica was on the pedestal in the middle of the room; the dress they were making for her was a bit tight. "What's the trouble?" I asked them.

"We're having a hard time getting the dress on her," Madison replied.

"Who measured her for the dress?" I then asked.

"Michaela Stephens and Brenda Leach," Stephanie replied.

I took a good look at the dress that was being made for Jessica, and made a simple observation. "The reason is that they made the waist a bit too small for her," I informed them.

"I measured her hips, and it came out to thirty-two inches. This was clearly made for a girl with thirty-inch hips. The waist was also an inch too small; she has a twenty-eight inch waist line, and this is made for a girl with a twenty-seven inch waist line," Madison added.

"Where are Michaela and Brenda?" I asked them.

"Michaela is back home in Burlington, Vermont; her Aunt Susan passed away this morning after a long battle with cancer," Madison replied.

"Brenda had a flashback this afternoon in her dorm room. She went to the clinic for observation," Stephanie added.

"Brenda hasn't completely recovered from post-traumatic stress disorder yet. She's been suffering from the disorder since her father sexually assaulted her when she was thirteen years old," Madison said with concern.

“Stephanie, I’ll tell you what; I’m going to give you and Madison the assignment of doing the alterations to the dress. You may stay after support groups tomorrow to work on the alterations. Jessica, you come back the day after tomorrow, after support groups, to make sure the fit is right,” I told them.

Just as I was leaving the classroom, Madison took me aside. “Mrs. Roberts, may I have a word with you?” she asked me.

“I’m all ears, Madison,” I replied.

“It’s about Brenda. I’ve known her since we were in the eighth grade. The courts in New York sent her here after she was diagnosed with PTSD. Her mother has been dead since she was twelve years old; she was murdered by a pimp after she turned in one of his prostitutes for attempting to offer sexual favors to Brenda’s older brother, Nathan. Less than a year later, her father brutally assaulted her sexually. She had numerous cuts and bruises and looked extremely disheveled when Nathan found her crying in her bed. She said her father assaulted her; he called the police. She lived with a maiden aunt in Bridgeport, Connecticut before the courts decided to send her here; she’s already testified against her father,” she explained.

“Is the trial over?” I asked her.

“Not quite. Closing arguments are scheduled for Friday; after that, the case is handed to the jury. They will be sequestered until a verdict is reached. If he is convicted, he faces up to life in a prison in upstate New York,” she replied.

“I have to tell you something about Michaela,” added Stephanie.

“What is it?” I asked her.

“She was very close to her Aunt Susan. She had her gender reassignment surgery in Montreal thirty years ago. Her aunt spent the first twenty-four years of her life as Gerald; she transitioned for two years before undergoing the operation. Michaela began life as Martin; she began living full-time as a girl when she was eleven years old. Her aunt, who had become a transgender rights activist, helped her during her transition from boy to girl. She accompanied her to Philadelphia three years ago when she had her operation. Her father is Susan’s older brother. The whole family was supportive when Susan transitioned from man to woman; it was the same way when Michaela was transitioning from boy to girl. Shortly after Michaela’s operation, Susan was stricken with cancer. She’s back home in Burlington for her funeral,” she explained.

“I’m going to have to give them another assignment when they get back,” I added.

“Michaela will be back on campus on Saturday. Her aunt will be laid to rest on Friday in Winooski. Brenda may have to return to Ridgeview Institute outside Atlanta for another evaluation,” Madison informed me.

“Was she hospitalized at Ridgeview before?” I asked them.

“She was hospitalized shortly after she was sexually assaulted. The social worker thought that Bellevue Hospital would be unsuitable for her, so her aunt helped pay for a ticket to Atlanta and a two-week stay at Ridgeview. She’s had several relapses since she came here two years ago,” Madison replied.

“Did you tell this to a counselor?” I then asked.

“We were with them when they told their stories to Dr. Bryan,” Stephanie replied.

Just as I was leaving the building so I could let Stephanie and Madison close up, I got a call on my cell phone. It was Monica Gregorian, an eighth grader and one of my Introduction to Fashion Marketing students. "Mrs. Roberts, I have an emergency in my dorm room," she informed me.

"Sit tight, Monica; I'll be right there," I assured her.

I ran to Dormitory Number Four, where the seventh and eighth graders were housed. I arrived around eight-fifteen. Their room number was 4305, on the third floor. "What's the trouble?" I asked Monica.

"It's Pauline, one of my roommates. She passed out on her bed ten minutes ago. I've already called the nurse practitioner," she replied.

Monica, five-six with her black hair done in a bob, slender build, and wearing a pair of pink sweat pants and a pink bodysuit, is transitioning from boy to girl. She came to our school from Atlantic City, where her family runs a restaurant. I took one good look at Pauline, a seventh grader, five-two with short blonde hair, a slender build and wearing a mauve nightgown, on the bed, looking somewhat ashen. She was holding her math book against her breasts; her notebook was off to the right side, with the last complex math problem of her assignment completed.

"What's wrong?" Monica asked me.

"Her pulse and respiration are slower than normal. We'll know more after the nurse practitioner examines her," I replied.

The nurse practitioner, Kara Davis, arrived two minutes after I arrived. She had her bag with her. "Erica, I'm so glad you got here quickly," she told me.

"I checked her pulse and respiration; they seem slower than normal," I informed her.

“Is there anything in her history I should know about?” I asked her.

“Pauline was treated for a vitamin deficiency two years ago. She’s a ward of the court in Maine; her mother lost custody when she was sent to prison for trafficking cocaine across the border from Canada. Her father is living in New Zealand now; her parents divorced when she was eight years old,” Kara replied.

Kara went over to Pauline’s bed to check her blood pressure. Monica added more information. “She has two brothers, Paul and Richard. Paul is in a boarding school in California, while Richard is living with his father outside of Auckland. She also has an older sister, Rachelle, who attends college at Vassar. Since her father has enough to handle with Richard and a house full of foster children that he and his current wife, Kiri, have to watch over, they didn’t have enough room to accommodate her. The courts sent her to Rainbow as a result.”

Kara finished her examination five minutes later; she didn’t have a happy look on her face. “Erica, call an ambulance; Pauline needs immediate medical attention,” she told me.

“Could I use the phone in the room, Monica?” I asked her.

“You certainly may,” she replied before I called 911. After I got off the phone, I told Kara that the ambulance was on its way.

While we were waiting, I asked Kara about the vital signs. “Blood pressure is ninety over sixty, pulse and respiration slower than normal,” she replied.

Shortly before nine o’clock, the paramedics transferred Pauline from her bed to a stretcher. Kara would accompany Pauline to the hospital, while I followed in my Dodge Durango. When I entered the emergency room of a nearby hospital, Kara was pro-

viding the admitting nurse with Pauline's medical history. We waited for an hour for word on Pauline's condition. When the doctor came out of the ER ninety minutes later, he told us that Pauline's appendix had ruptured, and she needed to be operated on right away. Kara signed the forms authorizing surgery for Pauline. After Kara signed the forms, she and I made our way back to campus. I dropped her off Dormitory Number One, where the Health Service offices were. I finally came home around quarter to eleven. The girls were already in bed; Harry was still watching television.

"How did it go, babe?" he asked me.

"I was called to the school to help two students with a dress fitting. As it turned out, the dress turned out to be two inches too small around her hips and one inch too small around the waist line. The students who put this dress together were unable to see this to completion; one student had a death in her family, and another student had a flashback related to post-traumatic stress disorder," I replied.

"I heard you had a medical emergency to deal with after that."

"Pauline Wallace, who's in the seventh grade, passed out in her dorm room just as I was getting ready to return home. Monica Gregorian called me on my cell phone just as I was headed to the parking lot. I ran over to the dorm, and checked her out before Kara Davis arrived to do a more complete exam. Kara and I went to the hospital; Pauline is undergoing an emergency appendectomy as we speak."

"I put the girls to bed around quarter to eight; I returned to watching television. Around nine-fifteen, I made myself a bowl of popcorn. There's some left over in the kitchen."