

Hovering Between the Sexes



Abby Rhodes



An "Adult Tv" Novel



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Hovering Between the Sexes

By Abby Rhodes

I put my head up and just as quickly put it down. Tom was still standing by my car and looking around, fortunately not in my direction just then. How long was he prepared to wait? Surely he couldn't stand there *all* night? I was starting to get cold and uncomfortable lying on my front in the damp grass. I wondered if I just went to sleep I could wake up and everything would be okay, Tom gone and me feeling better for the nap.

The good news is that my eyes were well and truly accustomed to the dark by now and I reassessed my location. There were some trees over to my right but no cover between me and them unless I went on my belly all the way but I wasn't prepared to get my dress covered in grass stains and dirt. God knows it was going to be dirty enough without that. To my left there was a short bank leading down to the back of

the car-park and behind me there was an eight-foot drop into a stream. Maybe getting dirty was the best option.

What was wrong with this guy? How many ways are there to say no? Which one would he understand? It wasn't that I didn't like him; I just wasn't interested, but he was determined to win me over and make me his girlfriend.

I suppose I was flattered, up to a point, but I was still a guy and marriage to another guy wasn't what I had in mind. What would we tell the children?

I decided to give Tom 15 more minutes to leave and then ruin the dress.

Damn it, it was two in the morning and a girl needs her beauty sleep.

On top of all that, Tom had one of my shoes.

I suppose this highlights (again) the problems we cross-dressers have when it comes to relationships. Mostly we don't go for guys - we want girlfriends who won't mind if our lingerie is nicer than theirs and accept that we spend more time on primping and maintenance than they do.

No, in case you were wondering, giving up cross-dressing isn't an option.

The evening started well enough. I'd made arrangements to meet up with my girlfriends at the dance they hold downtown every week. The local Jive Club celebrates the birth of Rock and Roll every Friday from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.; a group of us girls who live the petticoat dream always turn up to entrance the crowd with dresses inspired by the 50s and petticoats to burn.

I had this great vintage dress I'd bought at a yard sale. It was a reddish grape colour with black polka dots scattered across it. It had a big skirt and needed a bunch of petticoats to hold it up and out. It was strapless but not cut too low. (That's why I didn't want to damage it. It was sort of irreplaceable.)

There are four of us - Briar, Madelaine, Scarlett and me, Charlotte. I stumbled across Madelaine, literally, in a changing room in a big store. She was coming out of a cubicle and I was in one of those excited moods where I couldn't wait to try on the dress I'd just found so I was moving at speed. I knocked the poor girl down and to my surprise she turned out to be not what she seemed as she flew backwards and her full skirt was flung back over her head. Not only was I presented with some very pretty panties with suspicious contents, her auburn wig was slightly askew as well.

There was no one else around so I introduced myself to a furiously blushing Madelaine. She was relieved to find I wasn't all I seemed to be either.

Straight off I saw she was taking being a girl seriously. She was wearing a black crinkle skirt cut in layers and a pink silk camisole top. I'd seen the top the week before and at that very moment I was carrying a duplicate in a pale green to try on. It says a lot for both of us that we were game to try on stuff in public changing rooms.

I tried the top on and found it was perfect for me. By then Madelaine had finished her own transaction and we went off to the coffee shop to talk. We hit it off straight away and three nights later I was introduced to Briar, an old friend of Madelaine's. Briar was extra feminine and the funniest person I'd ever met. The combination of good looks and a fine wit made for a hell of a girl.

I have to say that Briar was also the best dresser I've ever met. She was fond of figure-hugging and often semi-transparent things that I wouldn't have dared to wear without a seriously firm gaff of some sort, yet, when we asked, she claimed she didn't wear one, ever. I never saw the slightest hint of a bulge so she may have preferred to conceal everything inside. I do that once in a while and I find it uncomfortable, but Briar wears tight jeans. I think I'm a little envious. Although we all wear jewellery, Briar has terrific taste, owning gold necklaces, bracelets, rings and earrings.

Scarlett, that transvestite warrior, sometimes veers toward the eccentric. The first time I saw her she was at a party dressed in an authentic Xena costume and I had no idea she was a guy. I should point out that it wasn't a costume party. Scarlett was clever enough to figure out I wasn't a girl and introduced herself. She was still trying to find a name she really liked and had been Trudy, Anna, Fliss, Jana, Betty, Audrey, Rowan, and that night she was Xena.

She settled on Scarlett a couple of weeks later and declared war on drabness. Her other specialty is costumes of the cosplay variety, although she does a very good latex nurse as well. During the day she's a librarian, currently on her last warning for telling library users to shut the fuck up because people were trying to read.

That's our little group. We see each other a lot and we don't hold ourselves back. We eat out and drink out and go to the movies, TGIF and the Jive Club. We get hit on all the time, especially Briar, and Scarlett keeps getting approaches from weird guys who seem to view her as a fellow freak, sometimes justifiably.

For the record, we live in northern New Mexico, about a two-hour drive from Albuquerque.

The drab side of me, known widely as Anthony, works as a commission salesman selling CDs for a second tier music company. I make more than enough to keep myself in panties and I get a steady supply of music as a bonus. I stick with my natural hair colour, which is brunette. Madelaine, as I mentioned earlier, goes for auburn although she's a natural brunette too. Briar is a blonde and the colour, which is her natural colour, is terrific. She chooses clothes that complement her blonde hair. Scarlett has a mass of reddish ringlets she's been growing for years. The ringlets threaten to get out of control (I've heard the words 'birds nest' mentioned) and she has a series of devices that fail to control the mass of hair. Again, I'm jealous because I'd love my own hair to be that thick. Not that it's thin, but it just doesn't seem to grow as fast. I keep hoping I'll eventually have enough hair to ditch the wigs but that's probably still three months off. In the meantime, I brush my hair back as far as it will go for my day job.

Briar of course, given that everything else about her is so good, gets her hair styled by Jasbinder down at the Hollywood Hair 'n' Nails Salon every second Saturday morning. Jasbinder is a genius and I intended to visit her as soon as I was ready, physically and mentally. Briar has a ponytail, something I always wanted, but since she works as a computer person and doesn't have much contact with the world during the day it doesn't matter if her boss looks at the ponytail and wonders. I see her quite often as Jason and Jason is starting to look decidedly feminine. We asked if she was going to become a real girl sooner or later, but she says no. She is, on the other hand, likely to tell her boss that she won't be coming to work as Jason for much longer. Her ponytail will be perky instead of lying flat along her neck.

I confess that Debbie Reynolds' ponytail has always attracted me. Debbie is one of my heroines.

Madelaine can't decide what to do. She wants to have her own long hair but she lives with her Mom, who's not well, and is as conservative as mothers come. Madelaine works for an even more conservative accountant who thinks army haircuts are best, even for girls. I'm not sure if Madelaine will stay in that job or not. Sometimes she has a little cry because it all seems so unfair. Even so, she's a stylish dresser and has a couple of good wigs, so she should get by for now. Her style is, as they say, being cramped. She intends to go back to college one day and finish her degree, her favourite subject being art. She was only half-way through when she had to go home to care for her mother.

I've been Charlotte for a long time. It's easy because I have my own place and I don't have to answer to anyone about my cross-dressing urges. Believe me, the cross-dressing imperative certainly lives at my place. I slip into something comfortable when I get back from a sales trip, depending on what kind of girl I want to be that evening. I love separates but I also love a dress. I don't tend to do make-up or wigs at home unless I'm expecting a visitor, but visitors are usually one or more of my three similarly-minded friends. The rule, which applies to all four of us, is to ring before you visit so we can make ourselves gorgeous.

My closets are crowded and I wear panties all the time except for visits to the doctor. I read Scandinavian crime thrillers, I like fifties music and collect early vinyl, I follow trends in modern art and often cook my signature dish, sweet and sour pork. I follow trends in local archaeology and I collect 50's nightgown and peignoir sets. I left college with a degree in Ancient History. I tell you that so you know I'm more than just a cross-dresser.

The dance, as I was saying, started well. We met up, as we usually did on a Friday, at the local TGIF a couple of doors down past the Jive Club to have a few drinks and admire each other. We tried for the spirit of Rock and Roll and generally we succeeded. I've described my dress already. I have a collection of authentic 50s petticoats and I vary them every Friday. I have eight square dance pettis too and I love those, especially the big softies.

Scarlett never does costume by halves so she was wearing a red proper poodle skirt with a poodle on it, a real pointy bra under a tight white cardigan top, a scarf, and ankle socks with flat shoes. Her hair was in a sort of exploding ponytail. I don't know how many petticoats she had on, but there were a lot.

Briar was a little more ladylike. Her skirt was full, made out of black cotton with rows of pink ribbon sown around the hem and she had at least three petticoats underneath but her heels were high and her cardigan wasn't quite as tight as Scarlett's. Like I said, more ladylike.

Madelaine was, like me, wearing an actual dress in a dark green made from taffeta and not that different from something Julianne Moore might have worn in *Far From Heaven*. It was fabulous, just below knee length. She'd found a pair of dark green pumps to match and she'd contrasted the green of the dress with a swathe of pink petticoats. She'd done her make-up in a 1950s way and it was like she was a movie star.

The crowd at the Jive Club knew us well by now. They were a dedicated pack of members who went to dance, man, and have a good time. There weren't any wallflowers and we girls enjoyed the dancing and the attention we got. If one of the guys got too personal we reverted to dancing with each other but mostly

the guys just wanted to rock and roll. I think it's another tribute to our credibility that we could go out and dance as girls, not that rock and roll has all that many girl's moves, and not get read, ever. One reason is that we dressed to avoid detection by wearing firm, non-transparent panties so that flying skirts, almost inevitable when dancing rock and roll, revealed nothing.

Which brings me back to Tom. Tom certainly never picked me up as a guy until the trouble started, and it might have saved some trouble if he did. Apparently he'd been checking me out for a while but I hadn't noticed. To say I was surprised when he approached me during a break from dancing and declared that he wanted me to be *his* girl, understates my feelings by a huge amount. Let me say straight off that Tom is a very good-looking guy and I know a couple of real girls who would climb all over him if they got a chance.

I'd danced with him a couple of times but that's all it was, just dancing.

Standing in front of me now and making his declaration, he had a dopey look on his face that made my stomach sink. This was going to be a problem.

I told him, as politely as possible, that I wasn't looking at any kind of relationship right now and thanked him for his interest. I must have sounded like someone rejecting a telephone offer of roof paint. He looked worried for a moment and then the dopey look returned. He hadn't got the message.

"Tom, listen carefully." I raised my voice. "I have no interest in you as a person. I like dancing with you because you move well, but I have no intention of ever being your girlfriend. End of story."

“But Charlotte, I’m happy to wait.” This was said with a sincere look. “I don’t need an answer tonight. Get to know me a little better. Let me prove I can be a really nice, interesting guy. I think we have a lot in common, Charlotte. I think we would make a great couple.”

“I’m trying to be polite, Tom, but please accept ‘no’ as the answer. I do not, repeat, not, wish to get to know you better or find out how nice you are. Please just forget you mentioned this and so will I.”

“I’m sorry, Charlotte, it’s not that easy. I’ve been thinking about this for a while now and my therapist insists that I deal with rejection in a positive manner. I’m unable to accept your suggestion that I forget this, because I really, really know I’d be good for you. Just take a look at yourself, Charlotte. You’re really pretty, you have great taste in clothes and you’re intelligent and friendly.”

Therapist?

“Tom,” I said. “Fuck off.”

He looked crestfallen. Had I got through to him? Did he take the hint? Is ‘fuck off’ a hint? Surely it must be.

I did a sharp about-turn on my high heels and walked off to rejoin the girls.

“Well, that looked awkward,” said Briar. “What did Tom want?”

“Me,” I said.

“Wow. Are you engaged?”

“Shut up, Briar, this is serious. He wants us to be a double act and, get this, he has a therapist who is handling his rejection problems.”

Scarlett offered to help. “Hey, I can put on the Xena outfit and see him off, Charlotte. That sword is quite sharp.”

“Thank you, Scarlett. Possibly a little early for that but I’ll certainly keep it in mind.”

‘Great Balls of Fire’ exploded from the bandstand and Greg Wyatt appeared next to me and asked me to dance. I accepted his offer because Greg is:

Married

A great dancer

Menacing was suddenly important. Greg is a big pussycat but looks like a pro boxer with a quiff. He reminds me of one of those guys in Grease who drove cars and came off all aggressive for no particular reason and I thought he would keep Tom away from me. Sure enough, he did. I enjoyed myself and twenty minutes later I went back to our table to find Tom sitting in my seat and Scarlett offering to disembowel him if he didn’t leave me alone.

“Tom,” I said, “what part of fuck off didn’t you understand?”

“Well, I don’t understand you at all, Charlotte. I mean, why are you treating me like this?”

“Cut them off, Scarlett,” I said. “Maybe a testiclectomy will do the trick.”

Tom turned pale and withdrew into the back of the chair. Scarlett opened her purse and said, “I have a

scalpel in here somewhere,” and started to rummage around. There was a metallic sort of a clink from inside the purse and Tom leapt out of my chair and disappeared across the room.

“Nice one, Scarlett,” said Madelaine. “Who would think a nice girl like you would carry a scalpel for emergencies?”

Scarlett held up a lipstick and a metal barrelled pen. “Clinked together,” she said.

I was starting to worry. I wasn’t convinced Tom had given up on me.

My worries proved to be far from groundless when I went to leave. My car was parked quite close to the club and I almost had the door handle in my grasp when Tom grabbed my arm and started to beg for some attention. I lost my temper then and told him to leave me alone or I would punch him in the nose and report him to the police for persecution, assault and stalking. He looked at me with one of those looks that some people would call withering but which I would call contemptuous so I let him have it in the nose. He howled with pain and came back at me with wild eyes and blood streaming down his face.

So I kicked him in the balls, losing my shoe in the process.

Tom doubled over with pain and I took the opportunity to get in my car and take off. Tom was almost immediately driving too close behind me and I decided to take evasive action. If I went home he’d know where I lived, although he possibly did already, and that would make the situation worse. Thinking about it though, if he’d been stalking me he would know that Charlotte and Anthony lived at the same place and drove the same car.