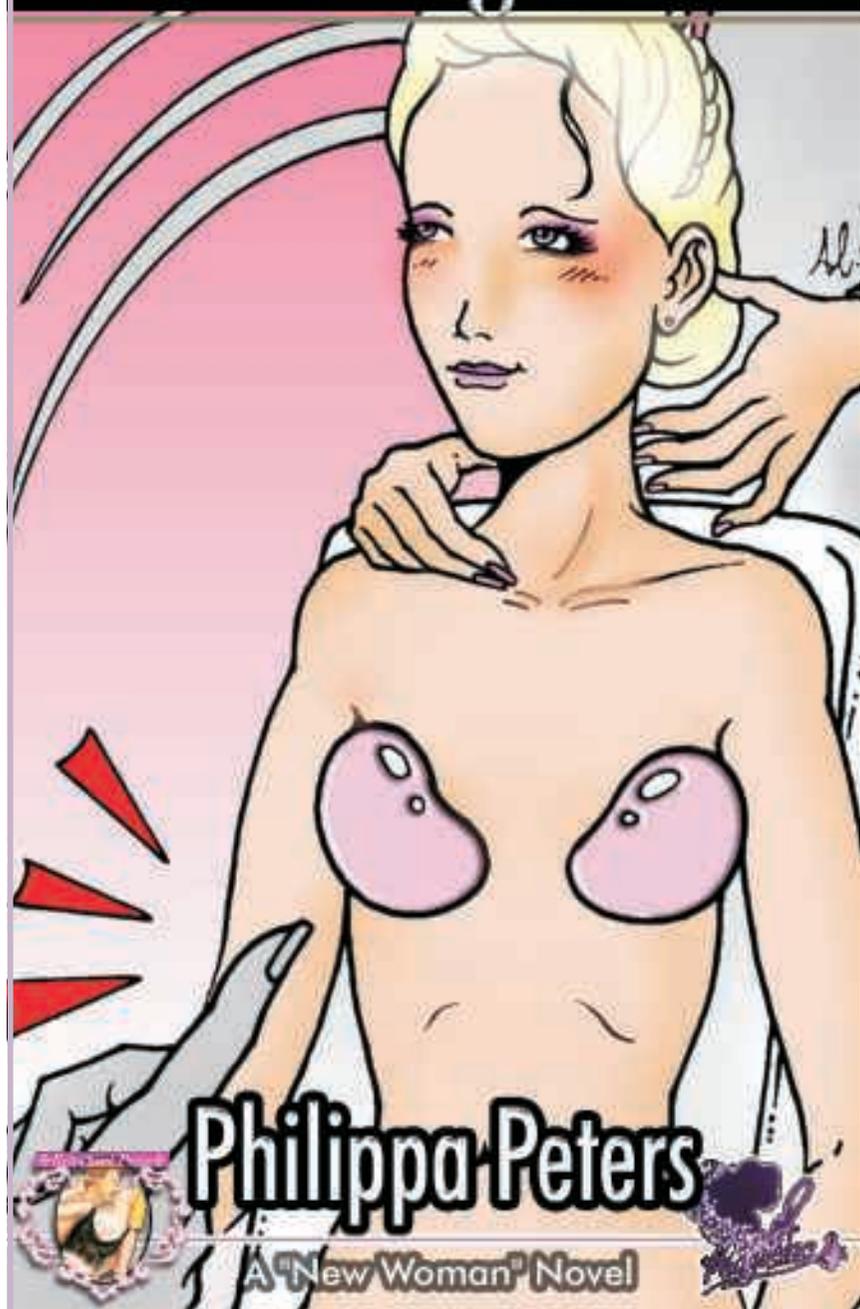


The Making of Julia



Philippa Peters

A "New Woman" Novel

Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers

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THE MAKING OF JULIA

by Philippa Peters

*****I. MATERNITY WARD*****

My co-wife, Lady Melissa, smiled at me as Jackie Ivany's assistants wheeled her into the examination room to have the planet Carmichael's secret contribution to humanity inserted inside her. The Carmichael uterine replicator wasn't a tank but a device placed inside a gender-corrected, 'geecee girl', a boy or man transformed into a woman. The secret device enabled 'her' to carry a fetus placed inside 'her', and give birth, just as if she really was a woman.

If that sounds backward, you haven't lived on Carmichael. You don't know that a majority of the women of Carmichael are not born female. For such 'women' to have children (which could just be decanted from the old-fashioned lab machine uterine replicator as so many women back in the Terran Empire did all the time), the Carmichael uterine replicator wasn't just a toy but a necessity.

Why Melissa should want to be pregnant again made me annoyed, but she did. Why the nurses fussed over her and treated her as an invalid was beyond me as well. Melissa knew, as most

women like her on Carmichael did not, that she was being impregnated with a fertilized ovum inside a uterine replicator. She also knew that the father was our husband, Lord Rohan. She also knew that the ovum came from me, Lady Caroline.

“You two get to look more and more alike each time I see you,” said Jackie Ivany with a smile, coming to give me a hug and a kiss while my new security looked on nervously.

She was right. Melissa and I were both blonde ‘sex kittens’, as we’d be called on Prime. We were long-haired and long-limbed. Biosculpting took care of any imperfections we former males might have had as women. We both had thin, bobbed noses, pointed jaws, bright blue eyes and thick, dark eyelashes. Our sexy, feminine, figures, our breasts bouncy and perfectly shaped, were the same. We often swapped dresses. We wore similar fragrances and shared beauticians. We were quite used now to being identified wrongly as each other in the planetary media.

But there were some essential differences between us. I’d once been Investigator Willen Smit, special investigator for the Interior Security Ministry of the Nebula Kingdom. I’d been trained to survive in murderous circumstances. I was trained to be an assassin at need. Many of the ruling elite on our planet knew it, and cared not to cross the Sutcliffes because of it. What they didn’t know, but my husband did, was that Melissa and I did not start life as females.

Both of us had been subjected, most unwillingly, to nanotech transformations. I’d been a spy. My first husband had thought it amusing to transform me into a woman and make me his wife. Little did he know that his punishment for that would be that he too would be transformed into a woman as I’d been, once my boss, the late Duchess of Galloway, regained the upper hand on Carmichael.

Then had begun the most bizarre part of my totally bizarre life. Somehow, I’d become pregnant! I’d birthed my daughter, Joanne, to my first husband. Jackie Ivany had a research program going on me after that to find out how I’d done that. Had I been implanted with a fertilized ovum and a uterine replicator? Jackie was sure I had been. I’d been told I was a woman and had ovaries that could be turned off and on by a Nebula Kingdom doctor, not



Jackie. This nanotech transformation, unlike every other case Jackie had researched, was different in me. No one else developed working ovaries as I was supposed to have done. I was unique.

To avoid Jackie rummaging around inside me, I always went to the Royal Hospital on Nebula Prime with my 'female complaints' where my late boss, the Duchess of Galloway, Myrna Colach, had her techs work on me. They were the ones who turned on putative ovaries inside me and harvested ova so that my co-wife could be impregnated. I had to be so careful in these periods of time as well. The last time I'd done it, four years' before, guess what had happened. I'd become a pregnant woman myself! A 'one in a thousand' chance, Jackie had said in delight.

She might be delighted but I was definitely perturbed. What was I really, a man or a woman? Oh, I was a man! I functioned as a man when I had to. The nanotech transformation had been a mistake. I shouldn't have been made into a woman. Perhaps it was because my male appendages hadn't been removed surgically. All others who were transformed into women had all maleness removed. Jackie thought there must be other reasons, however, and wanted so badly to examine me, as the 'woman' I was.

I was finally adjusting to being a woman. I thought of myself as a 'real' woman now and took my birth control pills religiously. Rohan, my second husband, had treated me as a woman from the start. He knew I could transform back into Willen any time. He didn't seem bothered by it, even when, once, I was only half transformed back into me, Caroline. There I was, with a penis and breasts. But we'd managed to love one another anyway. I always felt like a woman when Rohan kissed and fondled me. I giggled, I flirted, I affected so many feminine gestures. I loved my frilly dresses and skimpy panties. I fitted in everywhere as a shapely woman. Yes, I was adjusted to being a woman, wasn't I, I thought smugly to myself.

Melissa hadn't stopped with Deborah, the first child from my ovum and Rohan's sperm. She'd had Ewan, from the store of ova I'd left with Jackie, since I was away. Melissa had loved being a mother. She loved having a baby suckling at her breast and she looked so wonderful as she did it, feeding a small child, cuddling him in her arms. She'd even fed Iain for me while I was away. He

looked to Mummy Melissa as much as he looked to me for love and guidance.

One of the problems to being the glamorous wives of the Lord Protector of the planet, Carmichael, was that Melissa and I were always in the public eye. What we did was copied, especially by the ‘women’ who came from the Lannan nanotech ‘research’ hospitals. I suspected that they were programmed to use us as their role models on how to be wives and mothers, but Jackie denied it. She said it was impossible to do. She said mind control was still only for fiction. But I’d been a gorgeous woman, using objects that existed “only in fiction”, for years now.

“I’m glad you came with Melissa,” said Jackie, blonde, swishing her skirts girlishly, like me, inviting me into her private office. It was a showplace, designed by some woman in Lannan who made a specialty of designing offices for important women. It was a sign of the changing times that such an occupation could arise on a world so male-dominated. It was the way we ‘new’ women, girlish from head to toe, our feminine lingerie caressing us every sexy second of the day, loved it.

“Have you talked to Joanne lately?” asked Jackie, wonderfully shapely as the beautiful woman she was. She loved giving me all the feminine hugs and curtseys I was due by my rank.

“I spoke to her a week ago,” I cooed at her, my voice so girlish, more so the longer I was home, dressing, acting as a woman, the loving, wriggly wife of a handsome man. My daughter, Lady Wharton, I’d birthed as a woman. “Is there something about her I should know?”

“Not her,” said Jackie, looking at me intently. “You know she’s been taking maids from us, maids we’ve trained here just as we train them for you?”

A maid on Carmichael is not like one you find in Terran literature. She’s generally an administrative assistant to a woman, to a Lady, on our planet. She’s often the target for all the young soldiers of a barony or baronetcy to pursue as a wife. There were never enough of them until Carmichael found its unique way of reducing the shortage.

Nanotech transformations on Carmichael were first done as research experiments on prisoners, to create clones to work as spies. Transformations became a punishment and controlling tool, on rebels. It was how Lord Cartmoor, who'd led a rebellion against my first husband, had ended up as the co-wife of my cousin, Lady Sheila Carty. Both of them, Sheila and Pauline, had become the beloved wives of Lord Aidan Carty, the present Lord Cartmoor, both mothers of twins.

But like all the other women formed by Lannan and its new facility in Liffey on the Northern Continent, these women were effectively neutered. They could however be impregnated with fertilized ova. Jackie had made it a policy of her labs that the ova, which we bought from every planet we could purchase them, across the Rim Worlds, Shelter Republics and Nebula Kingdom, were always fertilized only by the husbands of the pretty woman who'd carry 'her' child.

"It's not always going to produce a family resemblance," Jackie said to me at one of our garden parties when she was talking about the subject. "Biosculpture does that for anyone who really wants their children to be just like them, anyway."

We 'tubed' many children, still an expensive procedure, but most women from Lannan Laboratories wanted the experience of motherhood. Hence, the flexible replicator placed inside 'new', about-to-be-pregnant 'women', was something only Carmichael scientists could have thought up. 'Mothers' were so disappointed when they had to have caesarean sections to birth their babies. Many, like Melissa, were torn up by the birth of their first child but they wouldn't pass on the experience again, wanting future children coming out of them, 'properly'.

Jackie was annoyed whenever she spoke of it, of the number of her surgeons and doctors tied up in maternity wards, ministering to recovering mothers instead of following up on interesting lines of research Jackie still wanted followed.

"It seems that we've found someone like you," said Jackie directly, finally coming to the point of her question about my daughter. "She's one of the maids Joanne took from us to Whar-ton Castle." All maids and 'geecee' girls, gender-corrected girls,

yes some, like my daughter, Roberta, go through the process willingly, were always 'she' to all of us.

"Antonia Garner went through Wharton Castle on a routine follow-up," said Jackie, not a trace of masculinity, ever, in her mannerisms, in her looks, or in her voice, "and found Julia being sick. She ran a test on her. Antonia thought the girl must have been here for impregnation but she hadn't. Antonia whisked her away from Joanne and brought her to see me. Julia is indeed three months pregnant, totally shocked out of what's left of her mind, babbling on about how this cannot be happening to her, crying, begging me to have you put in contact with her."

"Me?" I asked in astonishment. "Why me?"

Jackie pulled a face. "It might be because of who the father is," she said carefully, wiggling her long, girlishly-shaped legs, on the sofa we shared, as if she was getting ready to run.

"The father?" I asked, the blood rushing to my head as I looked at the concern on Jackie's pretty, exquisitely makeup face.

"Yes," she said, bobbing her long, blonde hair. "She claims the father is Lord Kennard himself. There's no doubt after Antonia's examination of her, and mine, that she's been raped by that man on more than one occasion."

I came out of my chair, livid with rage, swaying on my high heels, my huge earrings and loose blonde hair swirling about my shoulders. That scum of the planet! Lord Kennard Wharton was my daughter's husband! I'd have his guts for my garter belt. I'd have his head on the traitor's gate at Shannondale! I'd have his body parts sliced, diced and displayed in every corner of the Protectorate!

I must have been screaming some of that aloud because Jackie went as ashen-white as her hair and pleaded with me to sit down for a moment, cross my pretty legs and think about it a little, first.

I swung my skirts beneath me, hardly feeling the feminine delight they tried to make me feel. I tried to listen to Jackie reasoning with me about not annoying her patient who was in a state of mortal terror at 'her' pregnancy.

I was fuming, despite my promise to be reasonable, as a worried Jackie took me in to see the pregnant maid. I composed my mind by thinking of the hard cases in our Lord Protector's Security Squad whom I'd send to arrest that finagling, untrustworthy, depraved son of the Whartons. He'd be in a detention cell in the capital before morning. My own female security officer (that's an oxymoron both on Carmichael and across the Nebula, *'female security officer'*), Eloise, would love to get her hands on a man who'd treated women badly, especially when I told her I cared not at all what methods she used to extract the bastard's confession.

Gloating over the punishments I'd have inflicted on him, at least made me stop glowering for a while and look, through the window in the ward's door, at the red-eyed, very pretty, blonde girl, exposing her bare, girlish legs, a yellow, mini-sheath night-dress about her, in what was really a laboratory room. Another woman sat beside her. The two had obviously been talking. The dark-haired girl guiltily withdrew her hand from the blonde's as we entered.

"Dr Antonia Garner," said Jackie proudly as the doctor present, the dark-haired girl, stood and curtsied to both of us, as was due our rank, as Ladies of the Protectorate. She smiled anxiously at us, staring at me in alarm, probably because of my reputation. She had a round bump in her abdominal area as well.

"It sounds so odd, doesn't it?" said Jackie, looking to me, reminding me that she was a native to this world. "A *'woman doctor'* on Carmichael, not just a nurse."

"Oh, milady," murmured the dark girl, the doctor, her red painted lips moving in a frightened smile as she tried to avoid looking at me. "I was a nurse for several years before you asked me to take further training."

"No, Antonia, I hadn't forgotten," said Jackie with a smile, turning to the blonde girl in the bed, who'd drawn up her knees, and was leaning forward, showing us the tight panties she wore as well as her beautiful, shapely breasts overflowing the tight bra, beneath her transparent nightie.

“Julia,” Jackie said gently to the girl in the bed, who was shivering as she looked fearfully at us. “You surely recognized this Lady accompanying me. Lady Caroline Sutcliffe, may I present Julia Morton, a maid to your daughter, Lady Joanne.”

That seemed to make this girl want to cry even more, her thin shoulders shaking as she buried her face in her hands, her long, red-painted fingernails, as well-manicured as my own, in front of her pretty features.

Jackie rolled her eyes, slipped her arm through Antonia’s and left me alone with a weeping, pregnant girl, a girl made pregnant by my daughter’s husband.

*****II. JULIA MORTON*****

“Julia Morton?” I asked her, sitting on the edge of the wide, hospital bed. I smoothed my skirts beneath me with a rustle of silk and crossed my legs as she watched me between sobs, seemingly fascinated by the little, feminine things I did. I tossed my hair back and arranged my earrings properly. “How did you acquire the second name? Almost all of my maids wait for marriage to acquire family names.”

“L-Lady Joanne g-gave it t-to m-me,” Julia sobbed, reaching for a tissue and wiping her eyes as she struggled to control herself. I waited for her to gain some control. She leaned back against her pillows, putting her legs down beneath the sheets. She regarded me very apprehensively. “She thought it most unfair we should immediately be identified as being from Lannan by only having one name.”

“We?” I asked her with a little smile.

The smile worked like a charm, relieving Julia of some of her tension. “Angela, Susan and myself,” she said earnestly. “We left here together for the Vale of Wharton.”

“Three maids?” I asked skeptically. “I didn’t know that my daughter needed so much assistance in cosmetics and dressmaking. Does she have a large number of young officers visiting her that she feels obliged to provide feminine comfort for?”

Including, I thought grimly, that cheating husband of hers. Was it his idea to have so many maids around so that he'd always be serviced even when my daughter was not present to attend to his male pleasure? Oh, if only I could get my hands on him, that two-timing, conniving, traitor!

"I, I always had a lot, a lot, of work to do," Julia stammered. "L-Lady Joanne travels a great deal. She's always so kind to me."

"She knows about your special condition?" I asked her, curious about how much my daughter knew about the 'new women' of Carmichael. I'd hoped it would be nothing or close to it.

"Yes," Julia said, starting to cry again, reminding me so much of Suzie, a maid whom Joanne had unfairly tagged as 'the waterworks'. Suzie had cried because she had, in her former life, been a husband and father to two children. Now, of course, as Lady Stanwich, Suzie was the loving, extremely happy mother of Kevan and Rosalie, and wife of Lord Gavan, who doted on her, perhaps the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen anywhere in the galaxy. Oh yes, and whom I was more than a little in love with myself when my nanotech transformation had made me a man.

"Tell me how you got to be in this special condition," I said to Julia.

"Being captured or, or, or being pregnant?" Julia asked, looking at me, so girlish with such gorgeous blue eyes, ringed with natural, thick, dark eyelashes, like mine. One of the ways of telling Melissa and me apart is that she has sandy eyelashes until she puts on her makeup. Applying eyeliner and mascara are always her first, immediate tasks.

"Where were you captured?" I asked Julia, curious for her whole story.

"The first time was off Tergulla's World," she said. Now, if I hadn't been peripherally involved with the removal of the last King of the Nebula Kingdom, William VII, and his replacement by his wife, Margrit, as the Queen Regent, I'd have blanked at that name. But I'd seen it on a star map as I'd been looking for the world, Bristol, to which William had been exiled.

“That’s a refueling station across Tormond Void, in the Gallean Rift,” I said slowly. “And the last I heard, there was a military detachment there.”

Julia agreed unhappily, apparently finding no incongruity that I’d know of such an out-of-the-way spot, far from the Giant’s Rim Worlds or from any intelligent life for that matter, a perfect prison for a King no-one wanted to see in power again. “We were boarded by, by Black Stripes,” she whispered unhappily, staring at me, revealing to me that she must be from the Nebula Kingdom as ‘Black Stripes’ was what they called soldiers who fought in space. “The captain suggested I disguise myself as a Hordan trader.”

“Which took them all of two minutes to find out you weren’t,” I cut in, wondering why that would be, that ‘she’ should need to be disguised in her former male identity.

Julia nodded, startled, her blonde hair falling onto her face. She recovered her combs that had held it back. Quite naturally, girlishly, she set her hair back in place behind her ears. “They threw me in the brig as I must have been knocked out,” she whispered in her soft, lilting, girlish voice.

“You didn’t tell them who you really were?” I asked her.

“I didn’t get a chance,” Julia whispered again, tears brightening those beautiful blue eyes. “The ship was in action when I came around. I don’t know what for, but it was serious. I couldn’t get anyone to listen to me. A lighter came alongside. All prisoners, there must have been a hundred besides me, were thrown off and put on one of those converted slave ships the Hordan use.

“I asked a prisoner what was going on. He said the *Negus*, the ship I’d originally been on, had attacked the Hammer we’d been taken prisoner on. But some other Hammer or Leviathan, he didn’t know which, had been silent running in the Tergulla’s World system and had blown the *Negus* to pieces.”

“What kind of ship takes on a Hammer in battle?” I asked doubtfully. I read the answer in her face almost right away. “Another Hammer?”

She nodded, her jaw dropping. “It was one of the first ones,” Julia said nervously. “It-It was converted to l-look like a f-freighter, a, a really b-big one, but to have m-most of the fire-power of-of a Hammer-class. If it had taken the ship I was on by surprise, it could have won.”

“A ship defending one of the last supply drops before Bristol?” I asked, shaking my long, golden hair, and sitting up, my breasts pushing forward most femininely in my dress, which seemed to freeze her face for a while. “We both know who’s being held in exile out there.”

I was also glad to know the Nebula Kingdom had an effective defence force out there to keep William far away on his lonely rock.

Julia looked most unhappy. She shivered, looking down again at her so femmy nightie and her rounded, womanly breasts. She seemed not to know quite what to do with her arms. Each time she brushed her breasts, she jerked as if she hadn’t expected them to be there in front of her. I wondered if she’d just had implants; or if her pregnancy had already begun to show, in increased breast size. Mine were always larger, my hungry husband used to say, delighting me in womanly ways with the special attention I got as a ‘mother’.

“How did you end up on Carmichael?” I asked her, feeling just as girlie as she must be feeling, a mother-to-be, a man.

“We were supposed to be dumped on Westmore,” Julia whispered, her femininely thin arms folding beneath her female attributes. “But the picket there was Carmichael. They wouldn’t let the captain do what he was ordered.” Nor should the picket admiral have, as we’d just assisted in ending planetary civil war there, one side having been led by Melissa’s brother and in which she and her ‘sisters’, once upon a time, had been soldiers, male soldiers. “So, the captain started off-loading prisoners into space. We just had skin suits and no records but the Carmichaels picked us up. I, I tried to tell them but they just laughed at me. They-they wouldn’t believe m-me.”

A feeling of dread had begun to seep over me. What kind of individual can commandeer a Hammer-class raider as a trans-

port? What person, upon being lost by that vessel, would be the object of a military action to get him back, a military action between two Nebula Kingdom vessels, both Hammer-class or more?

“Whom did you tell them that you were?” I asked slowly, watching her lovely, feminine face as I asked the question.

“I’m William Henry, Crown Prince of the Nebula Kingdom,” the pretty, ultra-feminine girl said to me, her lovely, painted lips trembling.

It was impossible! I couldn’t be looking at the future ruler of the Nebula Kingdom in his yellow, frilly nightie, his breasts and cleavage girlishly shaped, his face so thin and feminized. The Crown Prince should be the most protected person in the Nebula Kingdom! His mother was holding a Regency for him at the moment. When he became twenty-five, he’d be the next King, the usurpation of his father completed!

Julia began to babble about Queen Margrit and her counselors. He, she called herself that, the Crown Prince, had been insulted in the Regency Council just because he suggested it was time the Leviathans were brought back from the Alien Wars.

Stupid kid. Humanity had lost strings of human populations to alien races after the Terran Empire had overstretched itself. Independent forces in the Derro Delta and the Pearl Stars, twenty per cent of the human worlds in the galaxy, had used terrible tactics, driving asteroids into populated planets, destroying their own worlds rather than fall under the sway of the expansionist Terran Empire. The losses were awful, made worse when alien races attempted to take advantage of the situation by seizing the remnants of shattered human star systems for their own. And what was the worst, the human survivors often co-operated with the aliens in the territorial war that had engulfed the Delta.

The Terrans had wanted to add us to their Empire but needed the limited forces we lent them. Now, the Delta, a huge region of shattered, former human planets, was mainly back in human hands and the bickering had begun over how they should be ruled.

Queen Margrit, from a Derro Delta world herself, had told her, ‘Julia the Crown Prince’ admitted, that if he didn’t like the policies she was pursuing, he could join his father in exile. That night, dissident nobles had persuaded the young prince, according to this lovely girl with breasts straining her lovely bra, that, if ‘he’ joined his father, the Kingdom would rally to them both. The Regency would be no more. Assurances that Kingdom forces would obey William Henry just because he was the Crown Prince had proved to be a myth, ‘she’ said. No-one believed he was who he said he was. Those who did wanted to grab him and return him to his mother.

“So, the naval forces of Carmichael sent prisoners here to Lannan,” I said slowly. Jackie had lied to me, which I’d expected. She’d said, years before, that the mass transformations of the losing side in different wars, was over. She’d said, only those who wanted the transformation of their sex to another, were accommodated now at Lannan. She couldn’t be continuing that program without the consent of the Lord Protector of Carmichael. And the current Lord Protector of Carmichael was my husband, Lord Rohan Sutcliffe. If the forced changing of men into women was still going on at Lannan or at Liffey, my husband was lying to me as well.

I looked at the beautiful girl in her revealing, tiny nightie, thinking of all that she’d just done, destroying the idyllic life I’d been living. I almost got up and left the silly, spoiled prince, or princess now, to his or her fate, to become Lord Kennard’s mistress. Many other lords and baronets had mistresses. The theater was filled with plays about them. Rohan didn’t need one. He had two lovely wives, long-limbed and blonde, high-breasted, and perfectly willing to accommodate his every whim often before he’d even thought of it himself.

One of those oversexed, cuddly, very feminine wives was me, Willen Smit. I was to go with Rohan on his next tour of the fleet, checking up on our sons in the military, Hamish and Roddy. Melissa stayed with the babies and recuperated after being impregnated. Being away with Rohan, usually meant outrageous women’s dresses and hair styles and conjugal visits every spare moment of the day. I expected, I wanted, Rohan to come up with strange and exotic ways to take me as a woman. I didn’t care that

he needed chemical assistance to make me, a woman, have many orgasms in being loved by him. I looked forward to the permanent state of womanly bliss I'd be in, for an extended time.

Now, this little strumpet had spoiled that. I was going to have to talk to Internal Security, the Intelligence arm of the Nebular Kingdom. I was going to be involved in politics again. I'd have to confront my husband about promises made and promises broken. I'd have to confront him like a man which I hated doing. I just wanted to be Rohan's woman, wiggling and wriggling my female body beneath him as he pleased my body with his own. Couldn't this pretty, little girl feel how wonderful it was to be a woman, even a mother?

I should make this Julia accept her fate, I should, make her find a nice boy among the eager officers crowded around Rohan's, and probably Joanne's husband's, office, eager to do their bidding. Yes, then I'd be just like my husband and Jacky Ivany, part of the government still forcing men into womanhood.

"What happened here when you got to Lannan the first time?" I asked Julia.

"I was put to sleep," she said. "And, when I woke up ..." She couldn't finish the sentence. I could have finished it for her. It was quite a shock to be awakened, feel the heavy mounds on your chest, the hair at your neck, and to try to talk. It was like someone else was speaking all the time, even after the fire in your mouth went away.

Then, there'd be the awful shock of nothing between your legs. Mastering the pain was easy compared to the shock of trying to be something you knew that you weren't, a woman. I remembered the exquisite torture, putting on my first panties, stockings, and, worst, my first bra. Oh, the terror at the way my breasts moved! There was the strangeness of wearing a dress and trying to move in high heels, being a woman. I can still recall the first scent I was smothered in and the earrings swinging against my neck.

I'd disagreed with Jackie and my husband about forcing men to become women. They still saw a need to punish prisoners. They thought it all right that a huge male, an abuser of women,

was shortened, weakened, nano-transformed into a woman and set off into a life of pleasing men as a comfort girl. They wanted him to feel the punishment as well or else what was the point of doing it at all? Besides, colonial planets like Carmichael were always short of women, terribly short. Now, we were the envy of other worlds in the Giants' Rim, because we 'attracted' so many, many women for our men. Little did other worlds know.

Jackie worked had teams working on psyche programs to indoctrinate her charges in the joys and expectations of being a woman. Many 'new women' were once soldiers on the wrong side in a losing fight. There were positions for women at all levels in our society. They were trained to become lovers, wives, mothers, even Ladies of the Land, or maids, nannies, actresses, dancers and mistresses. Some even became little girls, daughters to great families, raised to be married off to rising young men.

"You woke up," I said softly. "And you were a girl."

Julia shook her blonde hair, her little earrings spinning crazily on her cheek. "No," she mumbled weakly, her voice so little-girl-ish, tears in her eyes.

"You had to admit it," I told her softly. "Or you'd never have been allowed out of this institution. You have to be a convincing girl to several very strict supervisors."

Julia shuddered more. "They made me shave my legs," she said on the verge of tears again. "I wore high heels and," yes, she had to say it even though she was blushing furiously, "I-I had to wear a tampon." She shuddered. "Every day, I had to walk around with that inside me, as if, as if," she trembled so violently that her legs began to kick out in bed, "I had a, a man's thing inside me."

And you were aroused, I thought nastily, as your smiling guides fully intended you to be. "So did the other girls in your group," I told her reasonably, being as feminine myself as I could be.

Julia looked down. "Angela said she liked it. She whispered to me to tell them that, as well. It was the only way we'd get out of here. Then we'd get them."