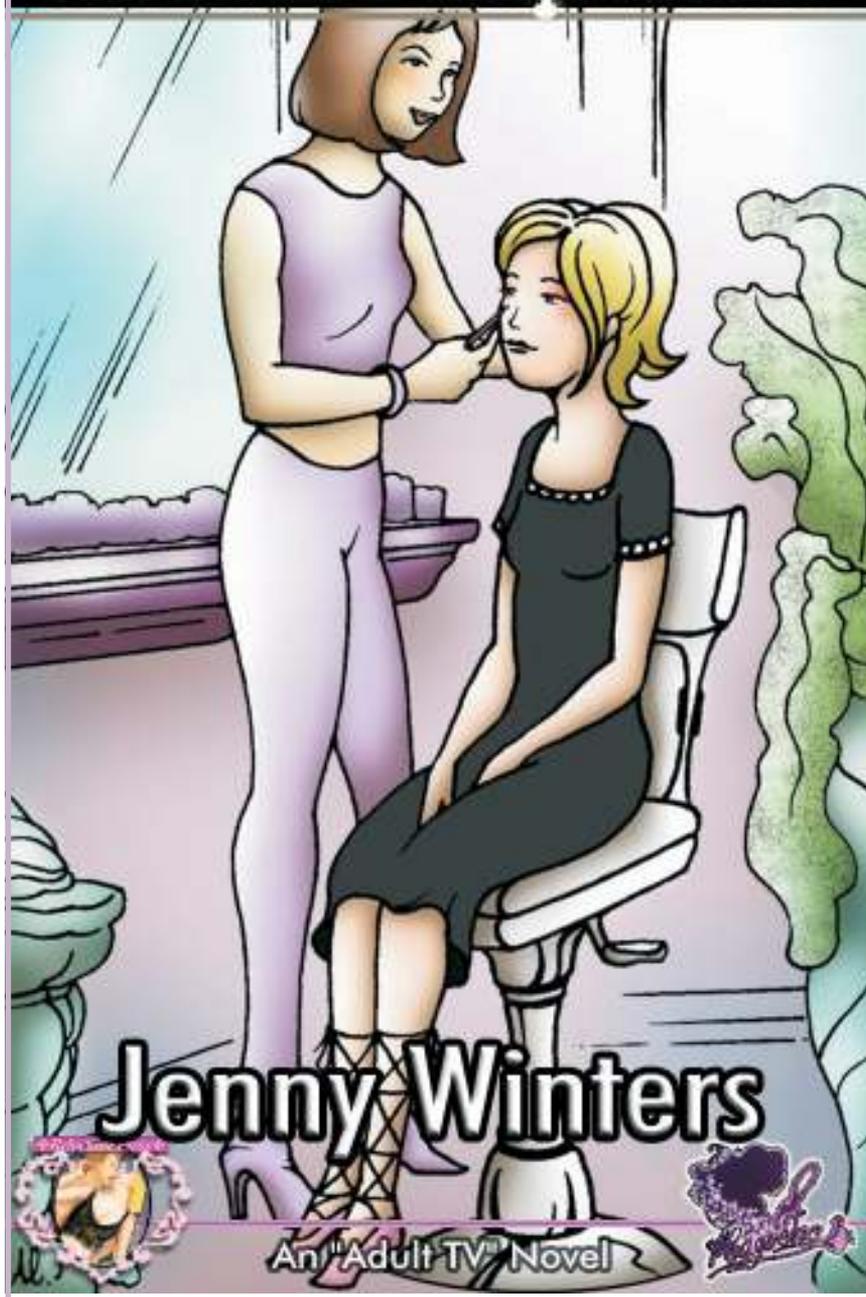


Glen's New Stepmother



Jenny Winters

An "Adult TV" Novel

Reluctant Press TV/TS Publishers

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Glen's New Stepmother

By Jenny Winters

I never ever thought that I'd be getting married. I never dreamed of it as a child or when I saw other ceremonies in churches and restaurants as I passed.

What was all the fuss about white weddings anyway?

I never dreamed I'd be having the perfect dream of a wedding, with the ceremony on the patio at the back of my house. I could walk slowly down the stairs from the balcony of my bedroom on the first floor and look at the guests as I descended.

I had to walk through a bower of flowers, whites and pinks to meet the celebrant at the front where all eyes would be on me.

I never thought of a dress like the one I was wearing. It was silk and strapless. It was tight to my thighs, then flared out in a symphony of silk. There was more to the back of the dress so that my matching heels wouldn't catch in the train.

It seemed strange not to have my wedding set on my left ring finger. I'd worn them there for so long that I wasn't conscious of them. My second ring had been sitting on top of them for our short engagement.

Now, I'd transferred those rings to my right hand. The left finger was empty now, waiting for the new symbol of this wedding to be slipped over the knuckle, to be joined by the matching engagement ring as soon as I could.

I'd chosen the rest of my jewellery carefully too. I had long diamond drops in my ears, so long that they skimmed my shoulders if I tilted my head. A single diamond on a pendant nestled above my breasts. Of course, I could never go anywhere without the heavy gold bangle which I'd worn on my left wrist since my poor deceased husband gave it to me on our wedding night.

My hair was piled elaborately on the top of my head. I'd refused to consider the tiara; that would have been ridiculous. My veil was full and transparent. It draped over my shoulders and down to my thighs at the rear.

I carried a bouquet, matching the colours of the bower.

I almost forgot about the colour. My dress was the palest fawn tinged with pinks. I'd been married before in white and I'd heard the superstition that white shouldn't be worn at a second wedding.

I walked slowly forwards, smiling and acknowledging the smiles of our friends. At the front, my stepson Glen waited for the ceremony to make me his wife. It was the culmination of our beginning and the start of a new chapter.

To all the world, based on appearances, that's what it was, but the backstory was something we never shared with anyone.

I hadn't heard from Glen Powell since we were in college over seven years ago. That was a long time ago and I was surprised that he'd gotten my email address which had changed since then. His had changed too.

He'd graduated and went to medical school; it was inevitable as his father owned a private clinic. They didn't have to work for money; it seemed they simply had money. That was a big difference between us. Exactly how we ended up as college friends I never knew.

After college, I drifted from one no hope theatre company to another. Of course, I didn't know they were no hope companies until I'd invested time and effort in them. Sometimes I even got paid before they went bust.

I hated it that I'd become a professional but casual waiter. I'd thought that coming to the coast would be better for an actor. It turned out to be good for a waiter.

The message wasn't much more than a "Hello, is that you?" sort of thing. I replied carefully. I didn't want to say what a failure I'd been. I guess it's always

like that with old college friends after a gap of a few years.

I was surprised when the reply came back the same day. It was a strange message and asked me to speak to him personally.

"I'll send a special cell phone to your nearest delivery office," the message said. "It will have my number programmed in. Please call me as soon as you can but don't use it for anything else. Call me as soon as you get it."

"He's a doctor. He's can't be some kind of double nought spy as well," I thought. "This seems to more cloak and dagger than a creaky spy movie."

I'd just auditioned for a part in one of those creaky spy movies; one with super heroes and lots of special effects. I didn't get the part.

"He's not the kind of guy to be a leading man." I overheard one of the assistants say to the casting director. "

"Agreed; we couldn't place him. He's too small, too skinny, and it's not worth spending on the special effects to try and make him look rugged."

I guess that was my problem forever. The days of the thin man in a dinner suit as lead in a movie ended a couple of generations ago. My credits were limited to a few frames as Victim Number One, and Witness Number One in some low budget movies.

They were so crap that I've even eliminated the titles from memory. I didn't see them either. I think they were straight-to-video releases.

I answered the email after much thought. It was quite a walk to collect the phone at the post office, so it had to stay there for a few days. I didn't want to have a wasted journey if it was still on the way.

I worked the lunch and afternoon at a restaurant on the beach. I liked the place. It generally had a happy holiday crowd. They didn't complain and they tipped well. I got fed well too.

It was mid-evening when I remembered the mobile. I switched it on as I walked back from the restaurant. I wasn't in any hurry; one room in a shared apartment isn't something you hurry back to.

It was a very basic thing. I think they'd call it a "burner" in crime stories. It looked to be charged and sure enough, there was a number stored there. I considered calling. Should I call or not? I called.

"Hi Les, I thought you'd never call." Glen sounded much as I remembered. "Is an actor's life so busy these days?"

"I've been busier," I made a non-committal reply.

"Does that mean you'd be free for a meeting?" he asked.

"I could be but I think you live a long way from me."

"It's only about four hundred miles," he replied. "I'll send you the fare and you can stay a few days here. I'll book you in somewhere nice."

"I can't afford it," I said.

I'd intended to be more subtle but there was no way I could afford anything but the basics. It wasn't as if we were close like we'd been in those college years.

"It's on me. I've a proposition for you and I need to act fast. I'll send you the fare and the tickets to travel. Does two hundred a day plus expenses sound okay?"

"I guess I can get away at that rate," I replied, immediately wishing I'd asked for more.

"Not a word to anyone about this; it's strictly confidential. Don't tell anyone; don't bring your own mobile." Glen sounded really keen to see me. "Please say you'll come."

"I'll clear my schedule," I said. "When do you want me?"

"I'll get it all delivered to the same place," he said. "It should be there by weekend. Come as soon as you can after that. Call me and I'll make sure everything's ready at this end."

He broke the call. That's when I started to reflect on the conversation. I'd not had a fee offer like that for ages and then it was only for two days. Whatever he had in mind must be important.

As the days passed, I thought more about it. I was determined not to get involved in anything criminal. A little guy like me wouldn't have a good time in prison. I thought back to college days. Was there something there he didn't want to become known? If there was, I didn't know it.

I waited until after the weekend before I went to collect his package. It was bigger than I expected and when I opened it in the back of the delivery office, I froze. One envelope held some open bus tickets for me to travel.

“That’s not luxurious,” I sniffed.

The second envelope made me stop in my tracks. I recognised General Grant’s portrait at once on the fifty dollar bill. I’d never seen so much of him before. I put the envelope in my pocket quickly in case anyone should see.

I walked out into the street, feeling conspicuous with all that in my pocket. I walked a little quicker and into the first pizza restaurant down the block. I ordered casually, then left my bag on the chair. In the bathroom, I locked a cubicle and counted.

I got to two thousand and guessed that there was the same remaining. There was a typed note too. “Use cash for everything,” it said. Whatever Glen wanted, he must want it pretty bad.

I worked my evening shift that day. I left the cash in my locker. I figured it was as secure there as anywhere. I didn’t know what to do but I’d taken the money. I’d better go and see what it was all about.

I told the boss I had to go away for a few days after my next shift. He shrugged like it didn’t matter.

“Call me when you get back,” he said. “I’ll see if there’s anything for you then.”

My roommates were just as “concerned” when I said I’d be away for a few days. They said they’d let my room if I wasn’t back by weekend.

That evening, I packed my rucksack; a change of clothes, some toiletries, and my spare shoes. I remembered what he’d said about leaving my mobile. I noted the few numbers I wanted to keep and then stuffed it under my pillow as if I’d forgotten it.

With all that money, I could buy whatever I needed. There didn’t seem any point in carrying the rest of my stuff. It wasn’t worth it.

I set off early next morning. I knew what time to catch the bus. First, I swung by the restaurant and collected the cash from my locker. I walked to the bus station. I bought a magazine, a sandwich and coffee, and sat to wait.

“It’s like the beginning shots of a bad road movie.” I thought as I watched my bus pulling in.

The bus rolled in on time. It wasn’t a new bus and when I got inside, the smell of body odour hit me hard. I took the front seat to be near the door, hoping that there’d be a draft to clear the air. Fortunately, there was.

The bus set off and hit the freeway which seemed endless. Bus stations came and went, looking pretty much the same. Passengers got on and off, the driver changed with another, and it seemed that I was the only one on the full journey.

I grabbed a quick lunch at one stop after making sure the bus wouldn’t set off without me. In the after-

noon, the driver stopped for coffee and a comfort break. I gratefully took the same opportunity, but once back on the bus, the journey seemed endless.

I got off about eight in the evening. I had no real idea where I was. It looked like a medium-sized town, but in the dark I could have been anywhere.

I called Glen. "There's a small bar next to the bus station; there's only one. You can't miss it. I'll pick you up there in twenty minutes."

It wasn't hard to find and there was no way to go into the wrong one. There wasn't anything else that looked open. A rather bored waitress served me coffee and a piece of pie. I sat watching out of the window, expecting Glen to arrive in something flash and new.

My phone rang again. "I'm out back when you're ready."

"Aren't you coming in?"

"It's better that you come out."

He ended the call. I finished my drink and walked round the building. A battered van flashed its lights. I walked over and opened the passenger door.

"I'd never have recognised you." Glen looked quite scruffy, nothing like the prosperous surgeon I expected to see.

We shook hands and then hugged like old friends do.

"Are you going to tell me what this is all about?" I asked. "So far it seems like I'm in a conspiracy thriller without the violence."

"I've a cabin in the hills." Glen put the van in drive and it rattled towards the road. "I'll explain it all when we get there but first you have to switch your cell phone off."

"Is that important? You're the only one with the number."

"I'm switching mine off too."

He took the phone from me, then took out the cards from both and put them in his shirt pocket. He opened the van door, walked a few yards, and dropped them into a drain.

"You do know that they can be tracked through the antennas as you travel."

I didn't but I took his word.

We followed the road for a couple of miles, then pulled onto a track where the headlights bounced off the trees as the van shuddered to the front of a small cabin.

"I'll get the generator going and then we can talk." Glen led the way to the door and after a few moments, the light came on.

The cabin was really that; one room with a wood burning stove at one end beside a kitchen area and two beds at the other end. Two easy chairs were either side of the stove, with a low table between them. Glen put a bottle and two glasses out.

"Are you going to tell me what this is all about?" I asked. "Why all the secrecy?"

“All in good time.” He pointed me to one of the chairs, filled two glasses and sat opposite. “I need to know if anyone’s going to miss you.”

“I guess not,” I said.

“You’ve nothing in production or whatever you call it?”

“Glen, you’ve probably looked me up somewhere. I’ve nothing. I’m bumming around, pretending I’m still trying.”

“What if I could give you a role for a few years, with all expenses paid and a pretty good life to go with it?” Glen asked. “Could you immerse yourself in something so completely that everything else gets pushed aside.”

“That sounds like you want me to be a spy,” I laughed. “Deep cover; I have to blend in with the natives.”

“Something like that.”

“You can’t be serious.”

“I’m very serious.” He reached for a folder and put it on his knee. “First I need to know. Did you tell anyone about this trip.”

“No, there’s no one that’s going to miss me anyway.”

“Okay, I’d better start at the beginning.” Glen opened the folder and handed me a brochure. “This is Dad’s clinic. He was the director and owned forty percent. My stepmother has thirty percent and a venture capital company owns the other thirty.”

"I don't really understand finance, apart from working out if I can eat from day to day."

"The company came in because Dad needed to raise money for improvements and equipment. You're not a surgeon, so I won't explain it all but it's made the difference. The place is state of the art and the sort of surgery we do is really an art form"

"Does that mean plastic surgery?"

"I'm great with noses and breasts," Glen laughed. "Faces are my real speciality. Dad taught me so well."

"Does he operate too?"

"He died a month ago."

"I'm sorry, I didn't know. I remember when he came to visit you at college. He always included me in the dinners."

"He liked you. He thought you were a good influence on me and kept me on track and away from some of the distractions."

"Maybe I did something right. I still don't see where I fit in though."

"I'm coming to that." Glen refilled our glasses. "Remember I said thirty percent went to my step-mother."

"So it's you and her. I assume you inherited your dad's share."

"That's the problem." Glen took a deep breath. "I'm going to give you the condensed version and you can ask questions later."

“I take it that there’s a problem somewhere.”

“Her thirty percent reverts to the venture capital company if she doesn’t secure it. Don’t ask me how that works. The lawyers tried to explain the hows and wherefores. I still don’t understand them.”

“Surely, she’s on your side.”

“That’s the problem.” Glen stood and walked round the chairs as if collecting his thoughts again. “You never met her. Sandra is a wonderful person, bright, bubbly, and attractive. How Dad caught her, I’ll never know.”

“I remember you leaving college when your mom died.”

“That’s right. Dad was absolutely lost until Sandra came into his life. She was a receptionist in the clinic, just a year or two older than you and I. She rescued him and they had a good life together for a few years.”

“You didn’t get the wicked stepmother then?”

“Not at all, she was so good.”

“You keep saying ‘was’ when you’re talking. Where is she now?”

“That’s the problem.” Glen sat forward. “Sandra had a vascular incident over a year or so ago. She’s in a persistent vegetative state with no hope of recovery.”

“That sounds awful but I don’t know what it means.”

“She makes no response to anything. Her body is being kept alive, but her brain has stopped working.

Dad got her into a private sanatorium under a false name so that he could keep running the clinic as before.”

“That must have been so awful.” I remembered the way he was so kind to me. “He found something good just to have it snatched away.”

“He told me that the only decision left to make was when to switch off the life support. He couldn’t bring himself to do it. He immersed himself in his work. It wasn’t a problem until he died.”

“So why is it a problem now?”

“He told everyone that she was having a period of severe depression and was being treated. She has to reappear otherwise I lose control of everything he worked for.”

“I can’t pretend to understand all that but you haven’t told me where I come in.”

“It’s simple.” He looked me in the eye. “I need you to play a part for me. I need you to become Sandra.”

I looked at him in disbelief, wondering if I’d heard him right. He looked at me, then looked away, stood and returned with another bottle. He filled our glasses silently.

“I don’t see how I could do that,” I said at last.

“Think about it before you turn me down,” he said. “Sandra is a year or two older than you. She has the run of my father’s homes. She has her car and a sub-

stantial income. She has a life of luxury to do whatever she wants within reason.”

“So she’s a rich bitch?” I smiled to show that I didn’t mean that maliciously.

“She was pampered with charge accounts, salons; everything she wanted was there for her. Dad didn’t resent it. Heck, *I* didn’t resent it. She made him happy and, above all, she was a good person. Wouldn’t you like a life like that?”

“If I was to say yes, and I’m not agreeing to anything right now, how could we get away with it?”

“I like that you said ‘we’ there.” Glen smiled.

“Seriously how could I be taken for her?”

“She’s a woman.” Glen looked at me like I didn’t know about women. He was probably right. I wasn’t much good at dating.

“Forgive me for saying this to a distinguished surgeon, but I’m not a woman.”

“She’s a modern woman,” Glen said as if that should explain everything. “No one knows what her natural hair colour was. She was always on at Dad to do her breasts, or her chin, or something else that she wanted perfecting.”

“Did he agree to do all that?”

“He loved her; she could have anything. I think he saw her as his greatest work of art.”

“Remembering your dad, I can understand how he’d want to be kind.”

"I don't think anyone saw her without makeup, not even Dad."

"Are you saying that you could make me look like her?"

"Yes, I could do that easily." Glen thought for a few seconds. "I'm looking at you and thinking as a surgeon. There's nothing major to change. A bit of work to round your chin. Opening up your eyes to be more like hers is an obvious thing."

"Doesn't she have breasts?" I asked sarcastically.

"One on each side." His hands indicated the obvious.

We looked at each other and laughed spontaneously.

"I can't imagine having real breasts," I said.

"It's essential; there's no way of avoiding it." Glen looked serious this time. "It would help you get into character and stay there."

"But I don't know how to be a woman," I protested; this was getting deeper into fantasy. "You want someone to act the part all day, every day."

"You've played a woman's part before. I remember that Shakespeare season you did at college. It was the all-male cast."

"That was on stage. I could do that."

"You looked pretty good offstage too. I remember the last night party."

“Don’t remind me. I think I had too much to drink and got carried away with it all.”

“You were perfectly into your role if I remember correctly.” Glen said. “I remember we went into the trees and you kissed better than anyone I dated that whole year.”

“Don’t say anything more, I don’t want to remember the rest.” It was the closest I ever came to a gay encounter.

“I can’t forget it.” Glen reached for my hand but I snatched it away.

“I was so scared after that.” I remembered all too well. “I was afraid you’d try and seduce me.”

“If you hadn’t had so much to drink, maybe I would have.”

“You don’t mean that.”

“Let’s just say that was back then.” Glen raised his glass to me and we looked at each other silently; he was waiting for me to speak.

“Oh, come on. How long would I have to be your stepmother?” I broke the silence.

“As long as you want to play the part; it could be great fun,” he replied. “We’d have to think of some excuse to end it if you wanted to, but that shouldn’t be too difficult.”

“And what’s in it for me at the end of all this?”

“You’d have the income from thirty percent of the clinic,” he said. “I’d honour that and there’d be some additional settlement.”

“How do I know that you’ll honour it?”

“If I didn’t, I’d be exposing myself to all sorts of charges. You’d have me over a barrel.”

“It’s fantasy; I can’t do it.” I thought of all the impossibilities.

“Please don’t say that,” he pleaded. “Stay here a couple of days and think it over at least.”

“I’ll sleep on it,” I agreed. “I’m making no promises though.”

I was up first in the morning. Glen was fast asleep in the other bed. I set out for a walk to clear my head. I didn’t know where we were so I kept to the track. I hadn’t slept well; there were so many things running through my mind.

I remembered that production when I’d kissed Glen. I did get carried away at that party.

I really enjoyed taking the female lead and playing it up when I was in full costume. It’s not so often that the little actor with the long hair gets a lead role. It had been hard work to learn it all though.

It was modern dress so I had to learn makeup and hair. I had to practise for hours in high heels to get the walk right and then there were the posture and hand gestures. They made me wear breast forms and a bra too for authenticity. I wondered if Shakespeare’s boy actors had been told the same thing four hundred years ago.

But that was then. This was now and something else entirely.

I walked and thought. I was tempted to agree, mainly because I loved dressing up and playing a part. I knew I'd probably have fun being a woman for a while, even if I had to be Glen's stepmother.

Being wealthy would be a great change for me and if he did as he promised, I might be set up for life. I tried to imagine that. I might even stay as a woman for the rest of my life.

Then there was the opposite. If I agreed, he'd want to change my body in ways I'd never imagined. The thought of all that surgery was scary. What if anything went wrong?

I'd have to throw away everything I'd learned in the past. No more being a waiter. I wouldn't miss that, but no more hoping for that breakthrough part in a hit movie.

I knew no one would miss me. I'd no family to ask whatever happened to what's-his-name, that cousin who moved to the coast.

My mind was in such turmoil. I walked back to the cabin without a decision. I had so many doubts, but the devil in me was lurching towards agreeing, no matter how unprepared I was for the consequences.

I think that was where I realised that I'd made a decision but I still wanted to be persuaded that it was the right decision.

When I got back to the cabin, Glen was up and the smell of coffee was most welcome. I sat at the table and sipped a cup as he made some pancakes.

“Have you thought about what I asked?” he asked eventually after avoiding the subject while we ate.

“I’m thinking,” I said. “How good a surgeon are you?”

“I think I’m the best,” he replied. “I couldn’t get the clients and the fees I charge if I was anything less.”

“Who are your clients?”

“I can’t tell you. There are strict confidentiality rules but you’ll have seen my noses, chins and breast in a lot of movies and on television.”

“Someone’s going to know if you do me,” I said.

“I’ve thought of that.” Glen replied. “There’s a clinic I use sometimes when there’s a really sensitive client. It’s on an island in the Caribbean called Saint Barthelme.”

“I’ve never heard of it.”

“It’s French and French-speaking. It’s small but there’s a really modern clinic there, with a wonderful medical team.” Glen reached for his cell phone and thumbed through some pictures.

“It looks really lovely,” I said, picturing myself working on a tan from a lounge beside the beach. “But won’t the people there think it’s strange when I appear as the patient?”

“First you’d be a client, not a patient. Second, they’re paid to be very discreet,” Glen replied. “If they weren’t, then their client list would tumble away so fast that it would destroy the place.”

“But what about photos? Everyone has a camera phone.”

“You wouldn’t be there as Sandra. I’d get you off the island while the bandages were still on. You’d be back at my house for the big reveal.”

“You can do that?” I was doubtful and I saw my chances of lounging in the sun to recover were disappearing fast.

“I can do that; private plane, ambulance via another clinic, then home.”

“You’re convincing me that the transformation could work, but what about the other things. How do I learn to be Sandra?”

“You don’t have to,” Glen replied. “Think about it. She’s had a bad breakdown and hasn’t been seen in over a year. That could account for a lot of things like her changed behaviour, her memory loss, changed habits, even some changes to her appearance that friends might spot.

“You seem to have thought this through,” I sighed. “I don’t know what else to ask.”

“Then don’t ask, just say you’ll do it.”

I thought for a moment. “What do I have to lose? I’ll do it.”

I don't know what made me agree then but as I rationalised it afterwards, it was an adventure, something to brighten a dull life.

Glen looked at me long and hard after I'd said that I would do it. "You don't know how happy I am to hear that," he said. "I've a lot to arrange and you have to disappear completely."

"No one knows where I am," I assured him. "I did as you said and told no one. My old cell phone was left under my pillow before | I got on the bus."

"That's good but you've got to vanish altogether."

"I think I've done that. How could I do more?"

"It's time for your first makeover."

We cleared everything we'd brought out of the cabin. Then after a second check that nothing remained, we rattled away in the van. In the first town, Glen pulled into a used van lot. He pulled a baseball cap over his head and told me to wait.

"We're changing vans," he said when he came back to get his bag. "It's good to travel with cash. It's not traceable."

I got my bag and followed him to an equally battered grey van. We set off immediately. On the road, he took off the cap and dropped it out of the window.

"This feels like we're on the run," I said.

“We’re hiding our tracks as much as we can. We’ll pick up another pair of cheap phones from the next service station.”

As night fell, he pulled into a dilapidated motel. I stayed in the van until he returned and drove round to the back where there were no lights.

“I’m sorry about this but it’s anonymous.”

The room was horrid. The carpet was stained and the beds were lumpy. They might not have ever been changed. The smell was of stale bodies, stale food, and a simple lack of any care.

We ate packs of sandwiches from the service station where he’d bought the phones. He programmed the numbers into each one.

“Don’t use this for anything else but me,” he said.

“Who would I call?” I asked. “Ghostbusters don’t do house calls anymore but I think this place could use them.”

Next morning, we were on our way just after dawn. About ten, we pulled off the road for a comfort break. Glen walked across the road and I saw him using his phone.

“I’ve arranged your first makeover,” he told me. “Go along with everything. I told them you were moving in with your boyfriend and had to change to female for the occasion.”

“You did what?” I couldn’t believe my ears.

“It’s a makeover; a disguise,” he explained. “Make sure that there’s nothing identifiable in your rucksack and abandon it there. You’ve got money. Use it

to pay for the clothes they're going to give you. I told them your sizes. It was a guess, but don't argue."

"Isn't this taking it a bit too far?" I said. "It's paranoia."

"It's being cautious. You've got to disappear."

The place was called "Chrysalis" and it was at the end of a mall on the edge of the next town.

"They're expecting you. You're Alissa as far as they're concerned. I promised them two hundred as soon as you arrived and another seven if they got you ready in five hours."

"That's almost a thousand? Are you made of money?"

"It's an extra fee to make sure that you're their only client and that their cameras are switched off," Glen said as if the money didn't matter. "Give them a hundred for a tip."

"Can you trust them?"

"Who knows, but its more money that they could make by selling the pictures. Call me when you're ready to be picked up. Stick to the story."

I went in. I'd checked my bag. I knew there was nothing traceable and nothing worth keeping.

"Alissa?" The girl, or was it a boy, behind the desk smiled through her heavy makeup.

I nodded and counted out four fifties onto the counter. She took it and nodded. "Charmaine will be right out."

Charmaine was just as doubtful. I didn't know if she was a woman either. She had big breasts prominently on display, whatever she was.

"Come in, dear," she said. "I know you're in a hurry, so let's not waste time."

The room looked clean and smelled of cheap perfume. "I'll leave you to strip, there's a robe behind the door."

I stripped, feeling very vulnerable but thinking that Glen knew what he was doing. I called out that I was ready.

"Have you been waxed before?" Charmaine asked.

"Never," I replied truthfully.

"Well, it's going to hurt but that's the price of beauty."

I didn't ask how she would know. It wouldn't have been a good idea. I was directed to lie face down on a bench covered by a hygiene sheet. The girl from the desk came and between them, they gave me an awful time. I wasn't prepared as the wax was applied to my skin. I screamed when the first strip was pulled off.

"The first is always the worst." Charmaine came to smile at me and laughed.

They did my back, then they did my front. The waxed right in between my rear cheeks and then took every hair from my balls. They did my eyebrows rather more gently than anywhere else, leaving me

with what looked like even brows. They were thinner than before, but not that super thin that was fashionable some years ago. Even I knew that.

“You’re very smooth.” Charmaine felt my chin.

“I never grew any whiskers,” I admitted. “Puberty didn’t get that far.”

“It’s probably as well if you’re moving in with your boyfriend,” she smirked. “He’ll love you hairless.”

I could feel myself shaking as I stood

“You’ve no need to be nervous.” Charmaine pointed to a couple of bags from stores I didn’t recognise. “Your boyfriend told us what to buy and where to get it. He must think a lot of you.”

“I think he does,” I stuttered.

“He’s gone to a lot of trouble to make you into his perfect girl.”

“He’s a sweetheart.” Even as I said it, I wondered where those words had come from.

“You get dressed and we’ll do your makeup.” She smiled and left the room.

I looked through the bags. I think I knew what I’d find. Lingerie from panties and bra to camisole and tights. I knew what to do and I put them on quickly, fumbling with the bra. I fastened it at the front and twisted it round to pull on the shoulder straps. I had no idea of how to adjust them.

There was a black dress with a scooped neckline, tight at the top and with a flared skirt. It was short and finished well above my knees when I pulled it on.